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VIVID: The NSCAD University Newsletter for Alumni and Friends

VIVID VOLUME 9, SUMMER 2009

Film producer and arts advocate awarded honorary degrees

NSCAD recognized Canadian film producer Joseph Medjuck and art collector and arts advocate Taylor Thomson with honorary degrees at the university's 2009 Graduation and Commencement Ceremony, held on May 15.

A native of Fredericton, N.B., Mr. Medjuck's many production credits include *Stripes*, *Ghostbusters 1&2*, *Twins* and *Trailer Park Boys*. Prior to moving to Los Angeles in 1981, Medjuck taught at the University of Toronto for 12 years and founded that university's Cinema Studies Program. Taylor Thomson, the daughter of the late Lord Thomson of Fleet, is renowned as a passionate art collector. Trained as an actor, she currently owns a film development and production company.

"We are delighted to recognize the contributions of these two outstanding cultural leaders," said Professor David B. Smith, NSCAD University President. "Joseph Medjuck's remarkable



Pictured (l - r) are Michael Donovan, Chair, NSCAD Board of Governors; Taylor Thomson, Joseph Medjuck and Professor David B. Smith.

Photo: Jacob Mailman

career bridges academia and the world of film production. As a passionate art collector and promoter of the visual and performing arts, Taylor Thomson is a figure of influence and leadership in cultural affairs."

Renowned conceptual artist and curator, Micah Lexier, MFA '84, delivered the Commencement Address.

Professor David Smith addresses business audience on Creativity & Innovation



NSCAD President David B. Smith recently hosted a reception at the Port Campus for members of NovaKnowledge, an organization dedicated to the development of a strong, sustainable knowledge-driven economy in Nova Scotia. In his remarks, the President spoke about the university's plans to establish an institute of applied creativity.

"Creativity breeds innovation: new solutions, products and designs, new ways of approaching and thinking. These are the hallmarks of an art and design education," he said. "The Institute will showcase the excellence and flexibility of a NSCAD education."

A recent edition of *Plan 72*, the news digest of the MIT School of Architecture and Planning (SA&P), notes that Professor Smith (SMVis '97) is one of five SA&P alumni and former

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faculty currently serving as university presidents.

Photo: Jacob Mailman

Rob G.C. Sobey appointed to Board of Governors



In January, prominent business leader and visual arts supporter, Rob Sobey, joined the NSCAD University Board of Governors.

Rob is President and CEO of Lawtons Inc. and sits on the board of Empire Company Ltd. Volunteering heavily in the arts and education sectors, he is past Board Chairman of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, past Chairman of the Nova Scotia Community College, current Chairman of the Sobey Art Award Governance Committee of the Sobey Art Foundation, and is serving his second term on the Board of Trustees for Queen's University. He sat on the boards of the Confederation Centre of the Arts, the Royal Nova Scotia Tattoo and the Downtown Halifax Business Commission. Rob was selected as a Top 50 CEO for Atlantic Canada in 2007 and 2008, and in 2009 was chosen as the CEO of the Year.

Rob earned an honours undergrad in Economics and Human Geography from Queens University, an MBA from Babson Graduate School in Boston and the ICD.D designation.

Photo: Jodi Bucholtz, BFA '07

New seats for Bell Auditorium



The Bell Auditorium enjoyed a mini-facelift in late April with the installation of 170 new seats. "The old seating was thirty years old, dating from the time the auditorium was first built," explains Alex Doyle, Director of Facilities Management. "We were down to 89 seats."

In addition to the new seating, the Bell received an overall freshening up, including new carpet runners and safety strips on the stairs, new carpeting at the front of the auditorium and fresh paint on the front and back walls.

Photo: Jacob Mailman

NSCAD ceramics grads accepted to prestigious MFA programs



Jordan McDonald, BFA '09, Meghan Smythe, BFA '09, and Peter McCarron, BFA '01, have been accepted to prestigious MFA programs for ceramics. Both Jordan and Meghan will be attending the New York State College of Ceramics - School of Art and Design at Alfred University, while Peter will study at the University of Georgia.

At the recent 2009 NSCAD Graduation and Commencement Ceremony, Jordan was recognized with the RCA / C.D. Howe Scholarship for high academic standing.

Jordan and Meghan join other NSCAD ceramics alumni who've pursued graduate degrees at Alfred University. Earlier this month, Eliza Au, BFA '07 and Mathew Karas, BFA '07, earned their Master of Fine Arts degrees from the institution.

Martina Lantin, who graduated from NSCAD in May with her Master of Fine Art in Craft, is also heading "stateside," having accepted a residency at the Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts in Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

Pictured above: Cup / 2008

Photo: Jordan McDonald, BFA '09

NSCAD film students awarded Film Nova Scotia scholarships



Thanks to generous support through Film Nova Scotia's Film Production Fund Scholarship, five fourth-year NSCAD film students each received \$2,500 towards the production of their thesis films. This year's films: *Dog Girl* by Heather Young, *Insert Colour Here* by Heather DiPinto, *Porcelain* by Chantale Reid, *Ghost Vase* by Joel McLeod and *Belly of the Whale* by Tiffany Clarke premiered April 30 at Empire 8 Cinemas in Halifax.

Another NSCAD student, David Stewart, saw his film, *Home Invasion 2007*, selected as one

of 13 from across the country for the prestigious Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) Student Film Showcase. The Showcase screens the finest in student films and celebrates the burgeoning talent of Canada's young filmmakers.

Despo Sophocleous, BFA '08, receives Governor General's Silver Academic Medal



This year's Governor General's Silver Academic Medal was awarded to Despo Sophocleous, BFA '08. Originally from Sydney, N.S., she is now studying jewellery design at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich, Germany under the instruction of Professor Otto Künzli.

While completing her undergraduate degree at NSCAD University, Despo received 12 internal scholarships, including the top two senior undergraduate awards: the Prince Edward Scholarship and the Joseph Beuys Scholarship. In December 2008, the Nova Scotia Talent Trust honoured Despo with both the Charlotte Wilson-Hammond / Visual Arts Nova Scotia Award and the Lieutenant-Governor's Award. These prestigious awards are rarely given to the same recipient, and recognize Despo's commitment to excellence and her ascending reputation as a jewellery designer.

Pictured above: *Untitled, 2007*

Photo: *Despo Sophocleous, BFA '08*

Photography student earns SNAP!Stars recognition



Interdisciplinary photo-based artist Sol Legault was selected the NSCAD winner in this year's *SNAP!Stars* competition, open to third- and fourth-year photography students from participating Canadian and US art schools. As one of ten winners, Sol received a \$1500.00 award and travelled to Toronto to attend the annual ACT SNAP! Auction.

Sol, a photography major with a minor in drawing, is entering his final year at NSCAD. As an artist, he is interested in exploring relationships between the body and technology and the body and culture, including ideas of identity, ambiguity, connection/disconnection, distortion, resistance and fusion, from a queer perspective.

SNAP!Stars is made possible with the generous support of the Magenta Foundation and TD Canada Trust. The award serves to increase the visibility of emerging young photographers while supporting the fundraising work of the AIDS Committee of Toronto.

Pictured above: *Tara*

Photo: *Sol Legault*

National and international accolades for jewellery students



NSCAD jewellery students and recent alumni are enjoying high-profile recognition this year. In February, the works of students Berkley Brown, Ann Pocket, BFA '09 and Emily Gill, BFA '09 were selected for *Secret Identities*, an exhibition at the Ontario College of Art and Design (OCAD) featuring Canada's emerging talent in jewellery design.

Works by students Ann Pocket, Emily Gill and Emily Doiron were chosen for *Surfacing*, the Enamelist Society's 8th Annual Juried Student Enamel Exhibition. This juried international competition runs from August 1 -26 in Oakland, California, and highlights the work of students in accredited degree programs throughout the world.

In the upcoming Lark Books publication, *Stitched Jewels*, pieces by Emily Gill and Vanessa Neily, BFA '08, are featured alongside those of established international artists showcasing the possibilities of fabric as a medium for jewellery making.

And this just in: Lafrenière & Pai Gallery in Ottawa has named Emily Gill as winner of its Sixth National Student Jewellery Competition.

Pictured above: *Floral Brooches, 2008*

Photo: *Emily Gill, BFA '09*

Sandy Graham wins international sculpture competition



NSCAD's Sandy Graham has been named winner of the Trillium Public Art Competition, an international juried design event,

sponsored by the Planning & Design Centre in partnership with the W.M. Fares Group. His winning design will be installed in front of the new Trillium development, currently under construction in downtown Halifax.

Graham's design, an interpretation of the lighthouse, features seven sculptures fashioned out of steel. In the opinion of the jury members, "The iconic image of the lighthouse, a beacon and a symbol of protection, has special resonance for this region. The grouping of lighthouses set in an urban site becomes a monument to a time, place and way of life that are at risk."

Graham, a technician and instructor at NSCAD, won out over finalists from the U.S. and Australia. In addition to the commission for the sculpture, expected to be installed by 2010, he receives a \$5000 grand prize.

NS Government pilots design students' recycling bins



An award-winning waste separation system designed by NSCAD students is being piloted by the NS Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. The recycling bins, originally a class project of Professor Glen Hougan's "Design Studio 3: Ecologically Centred Product Design," won the 2008 RRFB Mobius Award for Innovation in Waste Reduction.

During the winter of 2009, two of the students – Jenna Langille, BDes '09, and Claire Worthington, BDes '09 – further refined the design in an independent study with Professor Hougan. With support from the province's Environmental Technology Development Program, the students partnered with ABCO Industries of Lunenburg, which manufactured the prototype recycling bins.

The NSCAD student design makes source separation simple. Thanks to the shape and size of the openings, along with the use of colour and graphics, cross-contamination of waste streams is minimized. The easy-to-use bins are currently being tested in selected provincial government offices in Halifax.

Photo: Graham Gerhardt, ABCO Industries

NSCAD faculty members awarded SSHRC grants



Dr. Sandra Alföldy, Associate Professor in the Division of Historical and Critical Studies, and Glen Hougan, Assistant Professor of Design, have each been awarded funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

Dr. Alföldy, currently on sabbatical, received a Standard Research Grant of \$53,835 for her project, entitled "From domestic to epic: 20th century Canadian craft, design and industry." With a team of six graduate students, Dr. Alföldy will seek to construct a social history of the relationship of twentieth century Canadian craft with design and industry.

Professor Hougan is a co-applicant with Dr. Catherine Conrad, Department of Geography at Saint Mary's University, on a project to help develop a sustainable community-based watershed monitoring program in Nova Scotia. Under the Canadian Environmental Issues – Public Outreach Grants category, they received \$46,636 to design and test a prototype water quality monitoring toolkit intended for use by environmental community groups across the province.

Tom Ferrero wins two NICHE Awards



Tom Ferrero, who taught in the jewellery department during the 2009 Winter Term, recently won NICHE Awards in two professional categories: Jewellery-Silver and Metal-Sculptural. The prestigious annual NICHE Awards competition celebrates excellence in innovation in Canadian and American craft.

"I have always had a love for Science Fiction and Fantasy and the genres' ability to transport its audience to exotic and distant places," says Tom. "I hope my artwork captures people's attention with its visual splendour but retains people's attention by spawning thoughts of the future and spectacular new worlds."

Tom will be returning to NSCAD, having recently accepted a full-year position as Assistant Professor of Jewellery & Metalsmithing, effective September 2009.

Pictured above: Aganon's Device

Photo: Kevin Montague

Graeme Patterson, BFA '03, named Atlantic finalist for Sobey Art Award



Graeme Patterson, BFA '03, has been named Atlantic finalist for the \$50,000 2009 Sobey Art Award, Canada's preeminent award for contemporary Canadian art.

Originally from Saskatoon and now living in Halifax, Graeme's projects are sculptural installations consisting of video, robotics, audio, music and

interactive components. Graeme generally works in miniature, using a 1:10 scale, and his installations attempt to bring the viewer into the world of play he exists in while creating his stop-motion animations.

Selected work from the shortlisted artists will be featured in an exhibition hosted by the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia (AGNS) from September 5 to November 5, 2009. The winner of the 2009 Sobey Art Award will be announced at a gala event at the AGNS on October 15.

NSCAD alumni shortlisted for HRM Mayor's Award of Distinction



Daniel Hutchinson, MFA '08, Jonathan Johnson, BFA '04 and Ivan Murphy, BDes '92 are among this year's five finalists for the Mayor's Award of Distinction, Contemporary Visual Art. This award recognizes an emerging artist who, in the early stages of his or her career, demonstrates exceptional talent, unique artistic expression and a commitment to the arts in the Halifax Regional Municipality.

The shortlisted works are currently on display in Halifax Hall, City Hall until June 17. At the conclusion of the exhibition, the works of the winner and the two honourable mentions will be purchased for HRM's permanent collection, to be displayed in public locations across the municipality.

Pictured above: *Act II (Panel 1)*, 2008
Photo: Daniel Hutchinson

David Ross Harper, BFA '06, to study at Art Institute of Chicago



David Ross Harper, BFA '06, will be pursuing his Masters degree at the Art Institute of Chicago on a full-tuition Trustee Scholarship. "The Fiber & Material Studies program is an exciting department that focuses on practices of art making embracing the exploration of new materials and methods," says David. "I'm excited for the opportunity to extend, develop and refine my practice."

David's sculptural installations speak to the intersections of personal and universal mythologies, gender issues and identity, and are notable for their mix of embroidery, taxidermy and woodworking. Over the past several years, David's work has been exhibited widely across Canada, including solo shows in Toronto, Calgary and Dawson City, Yukon. He recently completed a three-month residency at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and won the HRM 2008 Mayor's Award of Distinction, Contemporary Visual Art.

Pictured above: *The Last to Win*, 2008
Photo: Steve Farmer

Click on [Alumni News](#) for more information on recent exhibitions, awards and achievements by NSCAD alumni worldwide.

VIVID is published quarterly by the Office of University Relations, NSCAD University. All submissions should be addressed to communications@nscad.ca.