

# FDG&A

## Faculty Development Grants and Awards

Research, Scholarly, Creative, Pedagogical  
and Industry-related Activities, 2014-16

# FDGA

## Faculty Development Grants Awardees for

Research, Scholarly, Creative, Pedagogical and Industry-related Activities, 2014-16

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## All Research, Scholarly, Creative, Pedagogical and Industry-related Activities, 2014-16

Anna Blume, History of Art	Michelle Handelman, Film, Media and Performing Arts	Melanie Reim, Illustration
Brenda Cowan, Exhibition Design II	Joseph Liddicoat, Mathematics and Science	Meeta Roy, Fashion Business Management
Donna David, Communication Design	Philippa Lindenthal, Fashion Design-Art	Theanne N. Schiros, Science and Mathematics
Justine DeYoung, History of Art	Kam Mak, Illustration	Amy Werbel, History of Art II
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Sean Fader, Photography	Kingsley Parker, Communication Design	Melanie Reim, Illustration
Brian Fallon, Writing Studio		
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To access FDGA research reports and for more on Faculty Development Grants and Awards programs, go to:  
[www.fitnyc.edu/cet/faculty-development.php](http://www.fitnyc.edu/cet/faculty-development.php)

## Faculty Development Grants and Awards

Research, Scholarly, Creative, Pedagogical and  
Industry-related Activities, 2014-16

Dear colleagues,

The Faculty Development Grants and Awards (FDG&A) program is dedicated to the professional development of faculty as educators, scholars, artists, researchers, business innovators and industry-related professionals.

As per program guidelines, four categories of activities are funded:

1. Travel to present or participate in conferences or professional gatherings
2. Research, scholarly, creative, pedagogical and industry-related activities
3. Winter or summer professional practica
4. Symposia/seminars to be hosted at FIT

The funding category of Research, Scholarly, Creative, Pedagogical and Industry-related Activities was added in 2014. Presented in this publication are faculty who received funding in this category between 2014-2016.

Selected faculty reports have been highlighted in order to provide guidance to those who might seek funding in the future. In this regard, we are especially thankful to faculty who have so graciously agreed to share their work with colleagues.

Please note that all faculty research reports are available on the FDGA web page (CET web site) at [fitnyc.edu/cet/fdga-research-page.php](http://fitnyc.edu/cet/fdga-research-page.php)



Best regards!

Elaine

**Elaine Maldonado, Professor**

Director of Faculty Development and  
Center for Excellence in Teaching



# Anna Blume

## Professor, History of Art

*BA, Williams College; PhD, Yale University; State University of New York Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching 2011-12*



### American Indian Engineering and Monumental Architecture in the Mississippi River Valley

#### Phase One: Wisconsin, Illinois, Louisiana and Indiana

During this first month of research along the Mississippi I have been able to visit over three major archeological sites and several unmarked forest sites where American Indians have left traces of monumental architecture and earthworks. Being at these sites at different times of the early morning, day and evening has given me a profound sense of the importance of the landscape and the mighty presence and effect of the Mississippi River. Colleagues from

many different disciplines have been exceedingly informative and helpful in guiding me to obscure sites I would not otherwise have known about. These travels – from the monumental pyramids of Cahokia, Illinois to the massive earthworks at Poverty Point, Louisiana – have astounded me in regards the scale and magnificence of American Indian architecture along the lower Mississippi. During the last days of this Phase One of my travels and studies I have begun to look at bannerstones. American Indians as early as 5,000 BC pecked and carved and ground these stones into exceptional abstract forms. They placed these on their atlatls or spear-throwers. My meeting in Indiana with Dave Lutz, the foremost expert on bannerstones, has lead me to believe that these archaic forms will be extremely important to my understanding of the larger earthworks I will continue to visit, reflect upon and begin to write about in Phase Two of my project.

#### Phase Two: Wisconsin and Iowa

During the last six weeks of the summer I studied and collected images of maps and land smveys of the mounds around Lake Mendota, especially those of the Mendota State Hospital site. I was able to meet with Professor James Scherz and to discuss with him his surveying methods dating back to the 1980's. We looked at several of Theodore Lewis's late 19th century calculations together to determine the size of the effigy mounds at the site. Amy Rosenbough, State Archeologist at the Wisconsin Historical Society, gave me access to copies of Lewis's unpublished surveys that opened up an entirely new way of looking at and experiencing these earthworks. I was also able to return to and photograph the Borcher's Beach mound site that is all but consumed by the summer forest. This site has proven to be additionally important because of the trace of garden beds that reflect another treatment of the land parallel to mound-building. Given what I am able to see of the mounds today in relation to

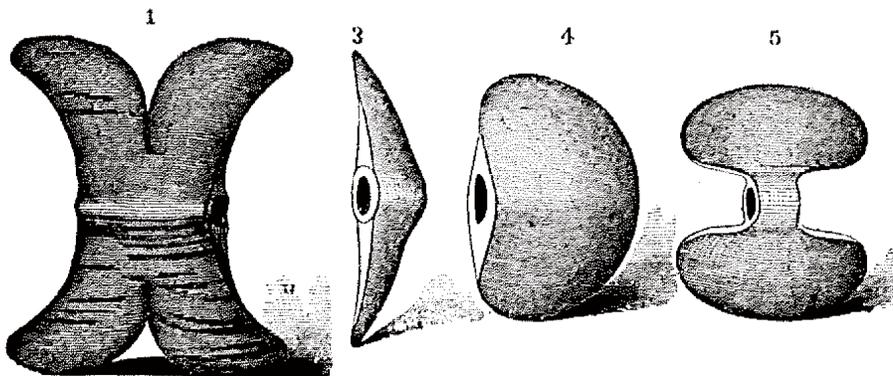
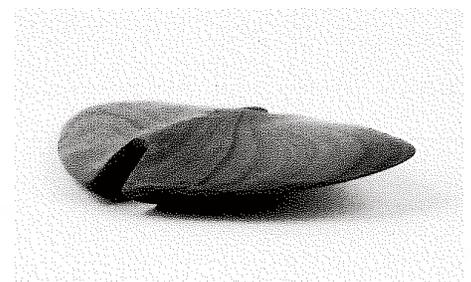


FIG. 114.

Squier and Davis Engraving of Bannerstones, 191h Century



Double Notched Butterfly Banners tone 5000 BC, Logan Museum Collection Beloit, Wisconsin

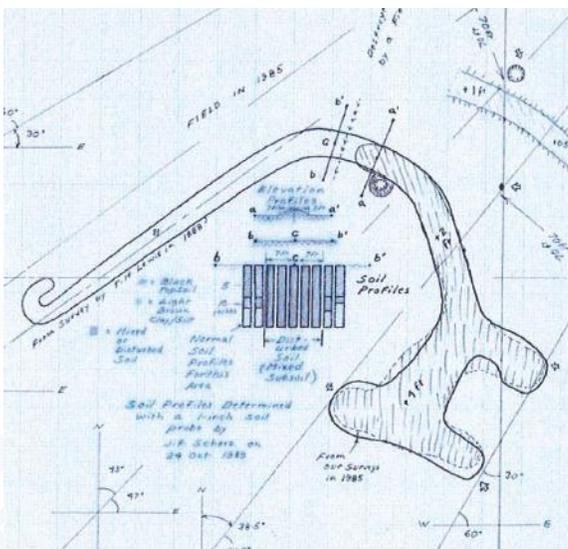
historical and cartographic material, I will continue to focus on the Mendota State Hospital and Borchers's Beach sites along Lake Mendota. These two sites, along with Poverty Point Louisiana and Serpent Mound Ohio will be very important to my study of monumental American Indian Earth works in the Mississippi and Ohio Valleys In addition to the essay I will write on the effigy mounds I have been invited to return to the University of Wisconsin Arboretum to give a lecture on the mounds in October, 2015. I very much look forward to this opportunity to discuss with my colleagues here in Madison my thoughts and ideas. I also look forward to this lecture as an opportunity to give something back to the community and the landscape itself, both of which have been immensely generous to me of these past ten weeks.

### Anna Blume Phase One Itinerary, 2015

Archival Research at the University of Wisconsin Madison  
 Memorial, College and Art Library, Wisconsin Historical Society

#### Monument Site Visits

6/5	<i>Observatory Hill, Wisconsin</i> Still images of bird and anomalous mounds
6/6, 6/8	<i>Governor Nelson Park, Wisconsin</i> Still and Video images of conical and panther mounds
6/10	<i>AzJalan, Wisconsin 6/10</i> Met with archeologists Sissel Schroeder (UWM) and Lynne Goldstein (MSU) Still images and video  <i>Lake Koshkonong Effigy Mounds, Jefferson County Wisconsin</i> Still images of mounds and lake  <i>Intaglio Effigy, Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin</i> Still images
6/16-6/17	<i>Cahokia, Illinois</i> <i>Indian Knoll, Indiana</i>
6/18-6/20	<i>Poverty Point, Louisiana 6/18-6/21</i> Met with photographer Jenny
6/21	<i>Newbutg, Indiana</i> Met with Banners tone specialist David Lutz
6/22-6/30	Research in the Wisconsin Historical Society



James Scherz detail of Zoomotph body 87': tail: 295' (1000 AD) Lake Mendota, Madison Wi., 1985

## Anna Blume Phase Two Itineraries, 2015

### Archival Research at the University of Wisconsin Madison

Memorial, Robinson Map, Geology and Art Library, Wisconsin Historical Society

### Focus – Woodland Mounds Around Lake Mendota, Wisconsin

Observatory Hill bird, a zoomorph  
Willow Drive conicals, zoomorphs  
Eagle Heights conical, linears  
Governor Nelson Park conicals, a zoomorph  
Farwell's Point conicals, zoomorphs  
Mendota State Hospital Grotto conicals, birds, zoomorphs  
Heim Mound, zoomorph

### Mounds along the Upper Mississippi

Wyalusing Park, Wisconsin  
Effigy Mounds, Iowa

### Meetings with Colleagues

7 /7	Professor Sissel Schoeder UW / Madison Skare Site Visit
7 /8	Professor Robert Birmingham
7 /14	Adam Mandelman, Department of Geography UW Madison
7 /16	Professor Sissel Schoeder at Skare Archaic Archeological Site, WI
7 /21	Amy Rosebrough, Wisconsin State Archeologist, WHS (Theodore Lewis Surveys of Mounds)
7 /22	Professor James Scherz, UW Engineer (surveys of Lake Mendota Sites)
7 /29	Molly Fifield-Murray, UW Arboretum

### Museum Bannerstone Collections

7/9, 7/30	Logan Museum, Beloit College (Nicolette Meister, Curator)
7/17	Wisconsin Historical Society (Denise Wiggins, Curator)
7/20	Art Institute of Chicago Museum, (Richard Townsend, Curator)
7/22	Geology Museum and Library UW (Toby Lathrop)
7/27	Milwaukee Public Museum (Dawn Thomae Scher, Curator)

### Archives and Special Collections

Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison Wisconsin  
Robinson Map Collection, Madison Wisconsin

# Melanie Reim

## Professor, Illustration / Graduate Illustration

*BS, State University of New York College at Buffalo; MFA, Syracuse University; FIT President's Award for Student Centeredness 2012; State University of New York Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Faculty Service 2010-11; Fulbright Scholar 2005-2006*



### Another Woman's Life: Documenting the Bani Weavers

#### Bani, Dominican Republic Winter, 2016

After twenty years of teaching at FIT, in the Spring 2016 semester, I embarked upon my first-ever sabbatical. It was a mixture of sheer joy, excitement, trepidation, and great anticipation. The idea of having this expanse of time in front of me to return to making art, essentially full-time, was very unfamiliar, but most appreciated.

The reportage component of my project is based in the Dominican Republic. There, I was introduced to and granted access to an incredible family of traditional weavers, with a impressive matriarch at the helm, her husband of many years by her side. It is hard to know or extract exactly how old she is; word has it, somewhere between 88 – 100 years old. She is a strong, independent, pipe-smoking, extraordinarily loving woman, whose weathered face and glazed eyes tell the story of toiling under the Caribbean sun, surrounded by her family-nine children, their children and the children's children, all who weave as well. It seems that each member of the family has his/her role, not only with regard to the work, but as I spent more time with them, his/her personality. There is the bookkeeper, the hostess, the joker, the gardener. The love of weaving is clearly admired and

respected by the community, as visitors often pass by. This family could not have been more welcoming to me, and as I sat drawing them in my sketchbook, I also tried to “draw” them out in conversation. They could not imagine how anyone could be so interested in them and what they were doing. However, they are beginning to recognize the beauty and importance of what their craft, as word spreads and commissions unlike any they have had before, come to them. As I visited, they were fulfilling an order of 300 handbags, of their own design, often accented with a gingham fabric that lined the inside and sometimes, feathers and/or beads on the outside, evolving into the community artisans and entrepreneurs. They weave under the tree at the side of their typical Dominican house, a collection of hammered tin, weathered over time, with the expanse of the country's mountains in the background. Through a contact that I have cultivated at *Diario Libre*, one of the country's leading newspapers, my profile, including my FIT affiliation, and work has been highlighted, and a short film made, with plans to expand it should we be able to make additional visits.

As I worked on location, watching the deft hands of the weavers at work, I needed to try it myself – not very successfully! My admiration grew. I felt the need to expand my drawings beyond my page, and created small three dimensional portraits, derivative of my own sketches, not photographs. These, along with oversized digital prints were exhibited in Casa Quien, in Santo Domingo. Through that process, I was approached by a Dominican animator who wants to collaborate with me, bringing them to life through motion graphics.

As I promoted my work and project, I was contacted by Nassau Community College, to exhibit in the Firehouse Gallery this summer. The work will be up through October 2016. I am very honored and feel privileged to bring awareness to the opportunity that I have been given by FIT and the support from the FDGA. The opportunities keep multiplying and I am deeply grateful. Though this second exhibit was unexpected, it is thrilling, and actually provides a unique opportunity to highlight another project that was generously funded by the then, “Teaching Institute”, the Hong Kong Factory Reportage project. An entire showcase at NCC will explain the collaboration and highlight prints from the experience. They are most interested, as they, too, are part of our SUNY family. To date, I have completed three of the four sketchbooks that I intended, with several more in process – it seems that I cannot stop drawing!

The support I was granted from the CET was used to travel to and from the DR, car rental and fuel, and expenses related to two exhibitions. I intend to return to continue to document, as well as to visit other weavers that have been brought to my attention, through my presence in the country. As the weavers and their families and workers get more familiar with having me in their environment, drawing, they are becoming more comfortable and more forthcoming. I look forward to continuing creating this story and exploring their craft.



# Brian Fallon

## Associate Professor, Director of the Writing Studio

*BA, University of Kansas; MA, Colorado State University; PhD, Indiana University of Pennsylvania*



During the course of this research project, I visited eight German universities and met with directors of writing and language centers. In total, I met with nearly 75 different people and conducted 11 official interviews with tutors, students, faculty, and program directors. My original research question asked how German writing centers were preparing to educate the large number of refugee students predicted to enter the university system.

On the ground in Germany, I quickly learned that plans to educate refugee students were rapidly unfolding under less than desirable time constraints. As a result, many of the writing centers had no immediate plans to work with refugee students as they did not anticipate meeting with these students for another year. The real action was happening at the language centers, many of which are closely related to the writing centers, and I had access to faculty and staff working in these areas.

The primary challenge for these language centers focused on German language proficiency, ensuring that refugee students possessed the requisite language skills to be successful at the university. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages helps determine linguistic skill level in any language, ranging from A1 (very basic beginner) to C2 (proficient mastery). The German language centers were told that students enrolling in their classes would be at a B2 and needed to achieve C1 to enter the

university. The reality in many language classes is that students were at an A2 or B1, meaning there was little chance these students would be prepared to start their studies on time. It also meant that the language centers often had to turn students away even though the refugees had been told the Universities would welcome them—they simply were not equipped to handle the initial demand in some cases.

Many teachers reported to me that, in addition to linguistic demands, there were a number of psychological, emotional, and cultural issues that became clear as courses got underway. The German system prides itself on treating learners equally, but there is a difference between a student studying abroad from the United States and a student who experienced the trauma of political and/or environmental distress and an arduous migration. Instructors at Gottengen Universität, for instance, reported that many refugee students are glued to mobile phones during class waiting to hear news from home, and when that news is delivered, it can be devastating.

In the writing centers, I met a number of student tutors participating in community organized efforts to teach refugees German. In addition to community organizations, campus groups also organized meetings where students could develop and practice conversation skills. I participated in one of these classes with two students from Syria and one from Afghanistan. (Their German was far more advanced than mine.) These meetings provided opportunities for language practice and getting to know refugee students better. The goal is to understand better the students' preferences in order to communicate more effectively and genuinely with this population.

While at Leibniz Universität in Hannover, I learned of an individual whose story highlights the complexity of refugee status and education in Germany. This particular student was already studying as an international student in Germany while the crisis in Syria advanced. His hometown was destroyed and along with it went his family's financial security. He no longer had the €8,700.00 required to meet the financial resources needed to secure a visa. Consequently, this student was faced with two difficult options: 1. Discontinue his education and return to war-torn Syria or 2. Seek political asylum as a refugee but forfeit the right to return to Syria to see his family. He chose to remain in Germany as a refugee to continue his studies.

The German language centers are witness to a number of stories like the one above and are working closely with other offices on campus, like the international student offices, to provide adequate support for students both linguistically and psychologically. At the time of my visit, language and writing centers had a number of questions about the feasibility of matriculating nearly 70,000 refugee students across Germany's university system. Their budgets are already strained and tentative, and they are being asked to prepare students for learning and communicating in the German academic system.

Despite their tremendous budgetary struggles and worries, my findings suggest that writing and language centers across Germany are theoretically and pedagogically prepared to meet the demands of multilingual refugee students. Most of the writing and language centers I visited take an approach to language learning that sees diversity as a resource. Their practices are often guided by a translingual approach, which "sees

difference in language not as a barrier to overcome or as a problem to manage, but as a resource for producing meaning in writing, speaking, reading, and listening” (Horner et al. 303).

Furthermore, many of the applied linguists teaching in these programs discuss rhetorical and language differences to help the students make informed decision about how to communicate. These approaches are important because many of the students are not learning German as a second language. In fact, one of the refugee students I met spoke German as a his sixth language. To deny the rich tapestry of language traditions that this student experienced before learning German would be like focusing on a single thread and missing the beauty of the tapestry in its totality.

In addition to the experience of refugee students at these Universities, I was also able to learn about German approaches to writing center work, peer tutoring, and writing pedagogy. While the German writing center community has adopted many practices from U.S. writing center scholarship, their unique educational context makes for differences that are fascinating and instructive. German students tend to work on longer, more involved writing projects and are more likely to spend several sessions with a tutor over the course of that writing process. Although the notion of peer tutoring and collaborative learning have been adopted to the point where Germany has a national peer tutor conference, the concept is held suspect by even the peer tutors themselves. This is due to the translation of “peer” into German and to the cultural accessibility of U.S. scholarship on collaborative learning and writing centers to German tutors. Likewise, it became evident that the U.S. academic community is missing out on the copious German writing pedagogy

scholarship simply because the concepts are difficult to translate across languages and academic/cultural contexts.

Since my site visit to these eight campuses, I have been accepted to present this research at one of the leading conferences in my field, the Conference on College Composition and Communication. My paper, entitled “Writing Centers and Political Migrants: Cultivating Pedagogy in Response to Geopolitical Crisis,” will cover the issues addressed in this report and share a more detailed account of the interviews conducted for this project.

On a practical note, I learned a great deal from my German colleagues and have brought back several practices from their writing centers, which like the FIT Writing Studio, often act in a writing across the curriculum capacity. I am now strengthening our workshops, marketing, and session tracking based on my experiences at these writing centers. Furthermore, I feel confident that our investment in translingual approaches to writing center pedagogy are important, especially given the number of multilingual students we tutor at the Writing Studio. I am grateful to the Faculty Development Grants and Awards committee for helping make this research possible. The opportunity to observe the courage, dedication, and intellect of refugee students, peer tutors, and my German colleagues was awe inspiring.

## Research Activities

Dates	University	Activities
6/20/16 – 6/22/16	<i>Bochum Universitat</i>	Met with writing center directors, attended staff meetings, interviewed directors and tutors.
6/24/16	<i>Osnabrück Universitat</i>	Met with and interviewed language center director and teacher.
6/25/16 – 6/27/16	<i>Hamburg Universitat</i>	Met with writing center director, attended staff meeting, spoke with tutors, and interviewed leader at the UHHift program for refugee students.
6/28/16 , 6/30/16 – 7/1/16	<i>Leibniz Universitat</i>	Met writing center director, multilingual writing center director and staff, language center director, faculty, and interviewed a student volunteered. Attended a language learning group for refugees and guest taught an English language class.
6/29/16	<i>Gottengen Universitat</i>	Interviewed international writing center director and German language instructors. Attended staff meeting.
7/4/16	Darmstadt Universitat	Met with writing center and language center directors.
7/5/16	Goethe Universitat (Frankfurt)	Met with writing center director and directors of the refugee program. Interviewed a tutor /student involved with the refugee outreach program.
7/6/16	Studentenwerk (Berlin)	Met with writing center director and attended a staff meeting.

# Philippa Lindenthal

## Associate Professor, Fashion Design

BA (Diplom Univ.), University of Applied Sciences, Hamburg; Master of Arts, Royal College of Art, London



My research focus is on the value and implementation of Music in the Phases of Inspiration, Creation, Presentation and Distribution of Fashion. Subjects will include the creative director for DIOR, Raf Simons, who played electronic music loudly in the Atelier of Directrices as part of the creative process; Simons also implemented music during a fashion show at JIL SANDER, blending Hitchcock's film music with electronic music and thereby creating new contexts and elements of style. The collaboration of two artists in different media will be investigated in the DJ collaborations of Stefano Pilati for Yves Saint Laurent and the Belgian Designer Ann Demeulemeester's longtime collaboration with Patti Smith.

I will also explore how the different aspects of fashion, like inspiration, color concepts, and look can be communicated with music into the stores. My goal is to highlight values in Fashion. Haptics, the structure of Stofflichkeit, and the analysis of compositions in music and fashion can be explored. This research will also compare aspects of music in fashion shows in the mid 20th century, where the audience was more limited and music did not have a crucial part, to current days when the newest trends are instantly communicated to everybody. Whereas once exclusiveness was the norm through selective personal invitation and more time-intense development phases, the integration of social media like Instagram asks for new concepts.

### Proposed research for gathering information in archives of the following institutions including the estimated time-line:

06/06/16	Meeting with Curator Dr. Annabelle Gorgen-Lammers of the <i>Hamburger Kunsthalle</i> for an interview on this topic. Masterpieces by Vasily Kandisky of the collection of <i>Hamburger Kunsthalle</i> as one source of inspiration for fashion. The research on translation of Color in Sound (Skrjabin) is the main theme in this context.
06/08/16	Interview with JIL SANDER directrice Angela Lange in Hamburg
06/09/16	Visit of <i>Museumfir Kunst und Gewerbe</i> , and the Archives reviewing Dior, Yves Saint Laurent dresses in Hamburg, possible meeting with curator Dr. Claudia Banz for a conversation on Fashion & Music
06/18/16	<i>Lipperheidsche Kostumbibliothek</i> , Berlin, meeting with Dr. Adelheid Rasche, research at the special collection prints and books of the library
06/20/16	<i>UdK Bibliothek</i> (University of the Arts Library) Berlin
06/24/16	<i>Kunstgewerbemuseum</i> , Berlin, meeting with Dr. Sabine Thiimmler to research through the archived costumes

Before I came to FIT I held several lectures on new ways of Fashion Design Presentations and Music at the JAK Academy and the Academy Fashion Design in Hamburg.

The Data expected to be generated can be used for a presentation at FIT. During the process of this Project I seek publishing and speaking opportunities. I hope to speak at a conference in Berlin and at IFFTI. Global Development – It offers possibilities for further collaboration.

# Sean Fader

## Adjunct Instructor, Photography

*MFA, School of the Art Institute of Chicago; MA, Digital Arts from the Maryland Institute College of Art; BFA, New School University; NYFA Fellowship in Photography Award 2013*



### Fool's Paradise

I was recently accepted for a twelve week residency at The Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts in Omaha Nebraska. The Bemis Center has been hailed as “one of the great treasures of its kind in the country” by Jane Alexander, former Chair of the National Endowment for the Arts, and was recently recognized as one of the “Top 10 residencies around the globe” by ArtInfo.

Bemis Center residences are fully funded but I am seeking additional financial assistance through FIT's Faculty Development Grant to cover travel and some material expenses.

My residency at The Bemis Center will run from January 13th to April 8th, during which time I will create photographs and short videos from my deceased grandfather's secretly penned screenplay. Grandpa's unrealized film Fool's Paradise was discovered in my Grandmother's attic 35 years after his death. It is an absurd comedy depicting a motley cast of characters negotiating the dark limbo

space known as Fool's Hotel. Fool's Hotel is inhabited by famous literary and film characters who represented creative forces for my grandfather and who do not live life by rational means. I will play the main character, Professor, who is the Chair of Logic and Philosophy at an unnamed English university. He finds himself stranded in Fools Hotel and the film follows his attempt to escape. During my residency I will make photographs and short videos based on key moments in the film; building props, sets, and costumes. Using my skills as an ex-actor, photographer, videographer, and artist, I will begin bringing my grandfather's piece to life. I never met my grandfather but this project will allow me to commune with him and realize generations of unrealized dreams.

This work will be the next step in my creative investigation examining the photographic event as the site of performance. The most recent of which was #wishingpelt, which began with a live event. Over the course of nine days, I stood motionless on a platform for a total of 80 hours. Visitors to the #wishingpelt were invited to whisper a wish in my ear, run their hands through my chest hair, and seal their wish with selfie tagged on Instagram with #wishingpelt. Their wishes are forever private and their photos were immediately made public. The website [www.wishingpelt.com](http://www.wishingpelt.com)

and Instagram's #wishingpelt hashtag aggregate these photographs, creating an archive of the public's experience. These intimate performances are sealed by photographic contracts and shared publicly, fulfilling the demands of social media, while maintaining private moments of intimacy. Over 2500 individuals participated, documented in the photographs they uploaded to Instagram. Afterwards, I received over 400 emails from visitors thanking me for making their wishes come true and for changing their lives. What at first seemed like a preposterous proposition was, instead, a dialectical and disarming way to produce intimacy within social media's compulsory exposure.



# Theanne Schiros

## Assistant Professor, Science & Sustainability

*Adjunct Research Scientist at Columbia University; PhD In Chemical Physics, Stockholm University; Grunström Award in experimental physics; international sustainable development outreach with Engineers without Borders and Finca Morpho Permaculture; Stanford University as a postdoctoral researcher; research fellowships at Columbia University*



### Pathways to practical, scalable systems for sustainable development

### Finca Morpho Permaculture Farm, Puerto Jimenez, Costa Rica

This January 2016 I traveled to Puerto Jimenez, Costa Rica during January of 2016 to explore permaculture farming and the design of zero waste communities and participate in instruction, design, and building of sustainable architectures/dwellings and agriculture systems. Project-based instruction and demonstration of these strategies on the permaculture farm greatly expanded my knowledge about challenges, limitations and scalability issues in practical applications and facilitated pathways to appropriate solutions based on local resources and needs.

The practicum involved project-based knowledge transfer in:

- Permaculture: aquaponics, black soldier fly, husbandry, biodynamic farming
- Sustainable energy systems
  - Biowaste to biogas and fertilizer (see: “zero waste living”)
- Zero waste living
  - Reuse of all plastic, e.g. as building materials when mixed with adobe.
  - Do it yourself (DIY) products based on organic, locally sourced materials

- Teaching: workshops on practical, scalable pathways to sustainability, and the biogeochemical cycles at work in the permaculture initiatives.

This project involved extensive knowledge transfer including teaching contributions to the community on the farm and hands on learning outcomes of living and working on the farm. My contributions involved teaching and demonstrations on: soil chemistry and compost testing; renewable energy conversion technologies; and materials for next generation electronics (2-D van der Waals materials



**Figure 1.** Sustainable building structure utilizing dried bamboo strips and adobe.

and heterostructures) and next generation fabric (grown from kombucha bacteria culture and yeast and dyed with natural pigments grown on the farm).

I learned a great deal about maintaining a zero-waste community via sustainable

building structures based on non-recycleable plastic bricks and or bamboo mixed with adobe made from mud, sand and clay on the farm, as well as practical applications and successes of implementing permaculture principles, including different strategies for composting different forms of bio-matter, from black soldier fly larvae to production of biochar and enhancement of the soil the farm, located on mostly sandy terrain at the edge of the ocean. By converting agricultural waste into a powerful soil enhancer that holds carbon and makes soils more fertile, Finca Morpho is boosting food production and security, limiting deforestation and preserving cropland diversity. In teaching with senior faculty member Prof. Karen Pearson, we discussed and demonstrated (with simple experiments) the science behind the benefits of biochar including:

- Reduced leaching of nitrogen into ground water
- Possible reduced emissions of nitrous oxide
- Increased cation-exchange capacity resulting in improved soil fertility
- Moderating of soil acidity
- Increased water retention
- Increased number of beneficial soil microbes

This project-based knowledge transfer on sustainable energy conversion and food production was inspiration only to my research on solar energy conversion and storage (artificial photosynthesis), and interest in connecting these investigations to real world applications. The experience also supported my commitment to educational outreach, particularly with



**Figure 2.** Growing and dyeing microbial cellulose. The fabric is grown from SCOBY culture, dyed with plant pigments found on the farm, such as Malabar Spinach berries, shown here, turmeric and chili powder. The fabric dries to a leather-like texture.

regard to underrepresented groups in STEM fields. Beyond this, my experience at Finca Morpho stimulated innovative approaches to my current teaching of the “science of sustainability” through the biogeochemical cycles and human disturbances to them through fossil fuel use and industrial agriculture (monoculture). It was highly education and inspirational also in my role as a faculty advisor to the biodesign challenge at FIT). I leveraged this experience with growing fabrics from SCOBY (symbiotic colony of yeast and bacteria) cultures using tea, sugar and apple cider vinegar and natural dye methods to advise F.I.T. student team “Bioesters” in the 2016 Biodesign Challenge. We created biopolymers from microbial grown cellulose, algae and chitin and knit and laser cut the fabric and biopolymer filaments into functional and flexible form factors. We also calculated the carbon and water footprints of these materials relative to cotton and polyester and showed that these materials we fabricated have a dramatically lower environmental footprint than conventional textiles based on agricultural and petroleum-based polymers. Our team won the F.I.T. competition and are going on to compete in the National Competition at the MoMA on June 23, with an extended exhibition at the School of Visual Arts.

This experience strongly enriched my teaching program in chemistry and the physical sciences by showing footage

and first hand interaction with small-scale solutions to global challenges. Participation in instruction, design, and building of sustainable energy and agriculture systems on the farm directly enabled me to share this perspective and learn about potential challenges,



**Figure 3.** Co-teaching acid-base chemistry (left panel) and a soil-testing workshop (right panel) with Prof. Karen Pearson. The session ended in a hands on workshop in which we tested the pH and ions present in soil samples from different composting methods.

limitations and scalability issues in practical applications. It also provided a platform to connect with the Natural Dye Garden and Muslim Compost teams at FIT. In fact, I’m excited to share that my chemistry class next semester will do hands on soil testing of the compost here at F.I.T. to test whether the soil has low enough concentrations of potential toxins to be used to grow food, or simply natural dyes and other plants at this juncture. We

will extend this investigation to explore the chemical composition of compost, which includes conventional textiles and dyes. Investigation of the potential toxicity of dyes used in “fast fashion” products will certainly have an impact on our students and help identify opportunities for sustainability in the production and consumption of textiles, from raw materials to end of life.

Collaboration with senior faculty member Professor Karen Pearson at Finca Morpho facilitated and supported coupling between research and sustainable development and project-based learning. It also strengthened and expanded a shared vision of the role of science, presented in an accessible framework, as central to teaching sustainability to FIT students of all majors. This is, in fact, a cornerstone of continued knowledge transfer in this project. An important outcome will be to define directions and create instructional materials to give students tools to address

the greatest challenge of our century: development of sustainable pathways to providing food, energy and water for the 7-9 billion people sharing the resources of our planet.

# Karen Pearson

## Professor, Science and Math

*Associate Chairperson of the Department, Science and Math; BA, Clark University; PhD, Washington State University; State University of New York Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching 2010-11*



The FDGA supported the production of new educational materials featuring the “science of sustainability” in innovative and accessible frameworks via travel to Puerto Jimenez, Costa Rica during January of 2016. The opportunity is resulting in the development and sharing of educational content that includes the creation of a photographic repository to supplement examples (and problems) in learning modules in the science curriculum at FIT related to environmental footprints and design choices, available to all full and part-time faculty via a new web space. In conjunction with the preparation of classroom materials the display cases on the 8th floor of the “C” building will be updated to feature realistic and provocative pathways to sustainability from both the local (local urban innovations) and global level to develop student interest and knowledge related to sustainable agriculture, energy use and the design of zero waste communities. Display area will focus on understanding permaculture farming and related field

research on biodynamic farming, hyponic growing, composting, water purification and renewable energy sources. Completed display updates can be expected by 4/1/2016.

The focus on permaculture farming and the design of sustainable (zero waste) communities was explored by observation, interviews and participation in knowledge transfer related to problem-based learning, including off-grid energy conversion such as solar photovoltaics and biowaste to fuel. Residency at the Finca Morpho permaculture farm provided a conduit for FIT students to visually experience field research related to biodynamic farming, hyponic growing, water purification and the renewable energy sources. While in residence at the farm I participated in research related to improving farming practices including composting and the regeneration of waste (human and physical) into sustainable energy sources including fuel and nutrient rich soil. Pathways for continued discussion and work on the textile compost project where created.

The focus of this project was 4 tiered, (1) development of digital media content and knowledge related to sustainable agriculture and design of zero waste communities; (2) to the creation of a

photographical repository to supplement examples (and problems) in learning modules in science curriculum at FIT related to environmental impact and design choices; (3) to engage FIT students in wanting to develop a more complete understanding of science topics in sustainability including understanding permaculture farming and related field research on biodynamic farming, hyponic growing, water purification and renewable energy sources; and (4) expose students to avenues and opportunities to direct their creativity and interest in sustainability to practical projects with impactful outcomes for communities and ecosystems.

# Donna David

## Associate Professor, Communication Design / Graphic Design

*BS, Ohio State University; MFA, The New School / Parsons*



June 26, 2016

This workshop kicked off the focus of my current sabbatical: maps and map making. The content provided basic information about map making, but what was even more interesting was the approach the other students brought to their own work.

The workshop was led by Connie Brown, an artist who specializes in hand painted maps. We started with a lecture about the parts of a map: physical features, place names, insets, neat lines, compass rose, scale, title(s). This led to discussion of how design can influence the message of a map. Ms. Brown presented several samples of her work to support the lecture.

The workshop was hosted at the Osher Map Library where we did our research. Library staff displayed parts of their manuscript map collection and lectured about them, just for us. This was fascinating and also inspirational. We were able to handle and look at antique maps. Among the items displayed with civil war battlefield maps, early maps of the world and sketchbooks of grade school girls from the 1800s. The girls would create small atlases as they learned about geography by drawing maps. The work was exquisite.

What will stick with me the most is witnessing how each student emphasized their point of view. Each person had a different level of experience with maps, drawing art work and telling a story. Projects ranged from mapping the journey of Sir Ernest Shackleton, an explorer of the South Pole to a simple map of China. My map was about a trip I made to Detroit. All of the work was done by hand. Computers were only used for reference. During these three days of intense work, I was able to watch each student's process from start to finish. It was a small group, so we got to know each other's projects and intent very well.

It was good to be a student. I think this is important for any teacher, allowing you to listen to another teacher's approach and how she worked with each person on their level. Her goal was to have us all satisfied with what we have accomplished, the goal was not to "finish".

I was surprised to see the success everyone had with their maps, despite the varied skill levels. This reinforces my idea that students can use maps to learn about design principles of layout, typography, hierarchy and color.

As stated in my sabbatical proposal, I intend to use the information gathered in the course to help FIT faculty use a new approach to their subject matter. Creating a map involves research, planning and portraying a point of view. Maps are a great teaching tool for almost any subject, supporting the idea of "learning

by making". Working by hand, with pens, pencils and tracing paper slows the student down and forces them to think about what they are presenting. I have seen that, although it takes time, anyone can make a successful map – and a successful project is a good way to end any lesson. I look forward sharing this information with my colleagues at FIT.

This workshop truly inspired me creatively. I will use these lessons as I continue to make maps and map art during my sabbatical.

# Lourdes Font

## Associate Professor, History of Art / Fashion & Textile Studies

BA, Middlebury College; MA, PhD, New York University; 2010-11 State University of New York  
Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activities



I would like to thank the committee and the Office of Academic Affairs for granting partial funding for my recent research trip to Paris. I am submitting my report late, past the deadline of June 29, because I extended my stay in Europe and only returned from the trip on June 28, and since then I have been dealing with a health issue, which thankfully is now much improved. I understand that I may not receive the funding award because of the lateness of my report.

The purpose of my research was to learn more about some of the first American fashion designers active in Paris in the early twentieth century, a subject I have been working on since my sabbatical leave two years ago. I have published an essay in a French exhibition catalogue, and have another, bilingual publication pending. My goal was to answer lingering questions in time to make editorial changes to the second publication, and before pursuing the publication of a longer, definitive account of these designers in English.

I arrived in Paris on June 1. By that time I had determined that the most promising sources were at the Archives de Paris, where business and real estate records are kept. I spent June 2 through June 5 there, first consulting with an archivist to devise an efficient strategy. On the first day I concentrated on the *Bottin du Commerce*, the directories, by name, street

and occupation, of businesses in the city. I was interested in confirming the dates of operation for all of the designers in question and in learning the full names of two couturières – “Marjolaine” and “Mme Arnold.” During this phase of the research I learned that the house of “Maljolaine,” which I believed had closed soon after the outbreak of World War I, since it disappears from the fashion press that had covered it quite favorably, was actually still in business as late as 1920. I discovered that there were not one but two couturières named Arnold; it then became necessary to track both of them through the years at their various addresses and try to determine which was the American Arnold. I was able to push the establishment of another couture house, Green, back a year to 1908, and among the Archives’ photographs of Paris streets, I found a photograph of its location on the rue de la Paix.

The next phase of the research was in the *fichiers du commerce*, bound volumes containing facsimiles of forms registering businesses. Having narrowed down the dates of their openings, I was able to find the forms for Green and for one of the Arnolds; the information in the *fichiers* then lead to the *Actes de Societe*, the actual legal documents pertaining to the companies. Through them I learned that one of the Arnolds was a team of two couturieres, one French and one Belgian, and therefore the other was the likely American couturiere. Unfortunately I did not find “Marjolaine” in the *fichier du commerce*, probably because registering a private business was not compulsory until

after 1920, the last year the house was in operation. This was very disappointing; however I consider the finding that the house remained open throughout World War I and beyond to be quite significant. I will explore other possible sources and continue to pursue the question of “Marjolaine’s” identity.

On the whole I am satisfied that in only four full days (I left Paris on Saturday, June 6) I learned enough to make significant additions and corrections to my account of these designers. In the early mornings and evenings when the Archives de Paris were closed, I visited exhibitions, including the *Velasquez* exhibition at the Grand Palais, the *Lanvin* exhibition at the Musee Galliera, the 1971 *Collection du Scandale* exhibition at the Fondation Saint Laurent, and the exhibition on buttons at the Musee de la Mode et du Textile (Arts Decoratifs). At the end of my trip I was in Belgium, where I saw the Dries Van Nolen exhibition in Antwerp and the exhibition on Belgian Fashion at the “Bazar” pavillion in Brussels, the latter co-curved by one of my graduate students. All of these experiences will inform my teaching next semester and for years to come. On June 28 I travelled to the Paris airport from Brussels by train to catch my return flight.

# Meeta Roy

Assistant Professor, Fashion Business Management

*BA, McGill University, Anthropology; MBA, ESSEC Business School, Paris*



In the summer of 2016, I conducted research in London and Paris to support my upcoming manuscript “The Business of Luxury.” The book will explore key luxury management challenges, including luxury and the technological environment, understanding tomorrow’s borderless consumers and creating sustainable value. As part of the research, I conducted a survey of luxury retail environments with a special focus on technology-driven, experiential elements and Omnichannel strategies. Locations included, in Paris, The Printemps, Galleries Lafayette, Le Bon Marche and flagship boutiques on Avenue Montaigne and the Champs-Elysees. In London, store visits included Harrods, Browns, Selfridges, Harvey Nichols, Liberty London, John Lewis, House of Fraser, Westfield and flagship boutiques on New Bond Street and surrounding areas.

I also conducted interviews, including in Paris, Laure Desjeux-Dubois, Global IT Programs Officer, Chane.I, Floriane de Saint Pierre of Floriane de Saint Pierre & Associates, Federico Barbieri ex SVP Digital & ECommerce, Kering, and Thierry Nataf, The Luxury Consulting Company. In London, I spoke with Jacqueline Crocker, Digital Director, DeBeers, Imran Amed, Editor and Chief, Business of Fashion and Matthew Drinkwater, Head of Fashion Innovation Agency, London College of Fashion, Matthew Dixon of Hudson Walker International and Theresa Austin of Austin Westberg Consulting. In New York, I have interviewed Mary Chiam, SVP Merchandising & Planning at Mada Operandi and Christine Barton, Senior Partner and Managing Director at Boston Consulting Group.

I thank the committee for their support and look forward to sharing the results of my work.

# Justine DeYoung

## Assistant Professor, History of Art

*BA, Williams College; MA Northwestern University; PhD, Northwestern University*



The trip to Paris, Lille and Hamburg (June 3-12) was extraordinarily helpful in shaping my thinking not only about my chapter on depictions of fashionable women on horseback in the 19th century, but also about the whole book manuscript.

In Tourcoing (a suburb of Lille), I had a special appointment before the museum opened to examine three of the works by Carolus-Duran in the collection of MUba Eugène Leroy. They had pulled them from storage especially for my visit (no small task as *Au bord de la mer* is more than 11 feet tall) and I was able to study and photograph them for several hours. I had a series of invaluable conversations about the works with the chief curator and director of the museum, Evelyne-Dorothee Allemand. Mme Allemand alerted me to an exhibition and publication that I was not previously aware of and shared the works' curatorial files with me as well, which I spent several hours studying.

In Hamburg, I had the opportunity to examine Renoir's *Morning Ride* (another monumental work) closely and was thrilled to also be able to spend time in their special exhibition ("Manet-Sehen: Der Blick der Moderne"), which unexpectedly contained two other paintings that are central to my book project.

Time in Paris afforded me the opportunity to study and photograph more than 300 historic garments on special exhibition at Les Arts décoratifs ("Fashion Forward, Trois siècles de mode (1715-2015)") and examine nearly 100 more at the Palais Galliera ("Anatomy of a Collection"). Those exhibitions as well as my visits to the Musée d'Orsay and Louvre will benefit not only my book project, but also enrich my teaching here at FIT.

# Brenda Cowan

## Associate Professor, Exhibition and Experience Design, School of Graduate Studies

*BFA, Fine Arts, School of Visual Arts; M.S.Ed, Museum Education and Leadership, Bank Street College of Education; co-founded Exhibit A Design Group, Inc.*



### Introduction

The intent of this research is to define and examine the psychological underpinnings of the intrinsic relationships between people and objects, and from that understanding develop impactful strategies for generating museum exhibition experiences that explicitly promote health and opportunities for healing. Our premise is that exhibition experiences are potent and unique in their ability to foster wellbeing and contribute to psychological healing, and that by identifying and articulating the inherent role that objects play in our everyday health and wellbeing we can design experiences with objects that explicitly foster healthful outcomes. This document introduces the reader to the theory of Psychotherapeutic Object Dynamics (Cowan 2015), provides a summary of the first phase of research that generated the theory, and presents in full the second and most recent phase of research, a case study involving donors to the September 11th Museum and Memorial. Implications for further applied research conclude the document.

### Background and Body of Scholarship

This research is founded upon the irrefutable knowledge that objects are both deeply meaningful and absolutely necessary in the lives of people. The journey of the study begins with the question why. It can be said that people have an innate and primal dialogue with

objects, an inextricable meaning-based relationship that functions in the manner of a continuous and often subconscious or unintentional nonverbal dialogue. Objects can extrinsically communicate our own concepts and thoughts with intent; conversely, they can internally translate complex concepts, thoughts and actions; they can prompt memory, connect us with others, access subconscious experiences and emotions; they can foster transpersonal experiences that include heightened creativity, spirituality, and self-awareness, and they can prompt us to action. This study seeks to understand and articulate the reasons people attribute these characteristics to objects and have such profound object experiences. Moreover, the study delves into the underlying psychological underpinnings of human-object relationships and explores the premise that at its core, the human-object relationship is necessary to psychological health and wellbeing.

This study was prompted by foundational work in the museum and material culture professions particular to the phenomenological and evocative nature of objects, the influence of everyday objects in the lives of people, the nature of object-based meaning making and the defined characteristics that shape those meanings. The body of literature as shaped by the fundamental works of John Dewey, Lois Silverman and George Hein provides us with a framework for studying object relationships within the museum environment and examining the role of the exhibition to foster meaning making where objects hold the power to illustrate, explain, captivate and enable visitors to relate to content in a personally significant manner. The work of Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi has

provided an essential guiding definition of overarching object characteristics, including power (vitality and energy), self (personal identity and continuum), and society (relationship and hierarchy). Sherry Turkle's work with objects leads us to the evocative nature of objects as silent partners and life companions, repositories for memory and history, and as provocateurs of thought and action. Most recently, Latham and Wood present to us the Object Knowledge Framework, a new way of defining multidimensional people-object relationships in museum environments. Their study includes looking at interrelationships between work in phenomenology and the ways in which humans on an instinctual level seek to make meaning out of objects, as explored in museum-based research. In their Object Knowledge Framework, Wood and Latham assert four key characteristics of object experiences, including Unity of the Moment; Object Link (objects as repositories); Being Transported (the transpersonal); and Connections Bigger than Self (numinous qualities including reverence, spirituality and connections with higher things).

Additional foundations for our research are found in psychoanalytical and sociological theory in which objects signify human factors such as self and identity, the relationship of individuals to family/society (Rochberg-Halton, 1984, Fowler, 2010), and personal power/primal self (Nguyen, 2011). Of particular interest is the work of Pierre Lemmonier who describes objects as being multidimensional devices of non-verbal communication that perform social intercourse, or communication that is a part of everyday life yet not always consciously recognized. The object

converges, or instantaneously activates a coalescence of feelings, circumstances, and domains of experience in the context of its making or use. Lemmonier refers to objects in this respect as “perissological resonators” whose material use triggers emergent, nonverbal statements speak what words cannot and can communicate “unspeakable truths.”

Additionally, two researchers of note provide information on the relationship between therapy and museums, each suggesting that exhibition visitation has a direct healing impact on audiences. The insightful work of Andree Salom (at the Center for Transpersonal Studies in Colombia) infuses his research with many of the themes explored by Csikzentmihalyi, Hein, Silverman, Latham and Wood. Most particularly, Salom defines the numinous characteristics in certain objects, and the emotive quality of exhibition spaces, as kindlers of transpersonal experience in exhibitions, opening up visitors to flow states, spiritual inspiration, self reflection, deepened awareness and mindfulness. In similar fashion, “Muse Therapy” is the term used by Manoru Adachi at the Nagoya University Museum, where he has studied the healing impacts of arts-based museum programming – in conjunction with object-based exhibitions – on primary and secondary school-aged students. He focuses on mental stress in students, and how multiple visitations and multi-sensory interaction with museum specimens indicated “recovery from the problems” (of mental stress).

Altogether, this groundwork has encouraged the first two phases of research leading to the definition of Psychotherapeutic Object Dynamics, and will continue to underscore the work towards practical museum-based applications.

## Psychotherapeutic Object Dynamics

Psychotherapeutic Object Dynamics refers to the inherent relationships between an object and its characteristics, the dynamic actions between the object and a person, and the resultant psychological impact of those actions. The theory suggests that objects are, on a fundamental level, essential to psychological health, wellbeing and healing. The theory also explains why objects have undeniable and common evocative and phenomenological characteristics inherent to meaning making. Furthermore, the theory illustrates broader sociological concepts of power, self and society.

Psychotherapeutic Object Dynamics is defined by five dynamics: Releasing/Unburdening, Giving/Receiving, Composing, Associating, and Making that coalesce around fundamental scholarship in the disciplines of material culture, museum studies, psychology and psychotherapy. In application, the theory suggests that object-based exhibitions can be explicitly designed to enhance the psychological healing capacities of museum visitors and to attend to the everyday psychological health and wellbeing of museum audiences and participants. The individual dynamics are defined as follows:

### Releasing/Unburdening

The action of releasing an object from a state of highly associative ownership into a place or state with the intent of entirely and permanently removing it from its former association (meaning) and state of ownership.

### Making

The action of generating an original or newly-formed object as a means of experiencing and implementing the fundamental creative process, and in doing so undergoing progressive stages of psychological growth and healing.

### Associating

The action of maintaining – and keeping within close physical proximity to – an object in an effort to perpetuate the knowledge/memory of the associations attributed to the object, including experiences, emotional states, places and people.

### Giving/Receiving

The action of donating or offering to another person or people an object with the intention of its being accepted, and the resultant act of its being received with its attributed meanings being mutually understood and held intact.

### Composing

The action of bringing together and juxtaposing objects with the intent of forming and expressing concepts or ideas so as to coalesce, examine and convey meanings that cannot otherwise be fully or entirely explained or expressed.

## Phase I Field Research Summary Conducted June – July 2015, Cowan

This first phase of research examined potential areas of confluence between object interpretation and meaning-making in museum practice with objects as used in therapeutic practice. Grounded in the body of scholarship defining the phenomenological and evocative nature of objects, their influence in the lives of people, and the characteristics that shape those meanings, the purpose of the research was to explore the reason for those meanings, their fundamental psychological underpinnings. Converging the disciplines of museum and object studies, psychology and psychotherapy, the study followed the premise that people have an innate and necessary relationship with objects I refer to as primal dialogue, that is essential to personal meaning making and to an individual’s psychological health. To explore this premise, object-based therapy was determined to be an appropriate

and unique arena for study, leading to primary research in the use of objects at an adolescent therapeutic wilderness program (Trails Carolina), and with a psychologist and psychotherapist expert in the making of objects as a means of self-discovery and actualization (Professor Ross Laird). The therapeutic work with objects at each venue correlates with research in the roles and interpretation of objects in museum exhibitions, as well as objects in relation to sociocultural identification, self-identification, power, and humanity. The study's focus was placed on self-made objects and those found in nature, as opposed to branded and commercially mass-produced objects. At Trails Carolina (Lake Toxaway, North Carolina), interviews were conducted with the facility's Clinical Director, Director of Students and Field Manager. Additionally, two days were spent in the field with a group of adolescents engaged in the therapeutic process where observations were made of object-based individual and group therapy sessions, as well as wilderness lifestyle practices. At the Museum of Cultural Anthropology (Vancouver, British Columbia) Professor Laird was interviewed about his approach to creativity-based therapeutic practice and his expertise regarding the psychological impact of objects. The primary research findings resulted in a new theory of Psychotherapeutic Object Dynamics that illustrates how objects are inherent to an individual's wellbeing and psychological health. The theory's five primary dynamics include Making, Associating, Releasing/Unburdening, Composing, and Giving/Receiving.

## Phase II Case Study Executive Summary Conducted June 2016, Cowan, Laird, McKeown

### Overview

The intent of the second phase of research was to seek evidence for, and to further define, the theory of

Psychotherapeutic Object Dynamics by way of concrete examples involving a museum environment. In coordination with the National September 11 Memorial & Museum (New York, NY), a case study was conducted with object donors to the institution's collections. Performing the case study were Brenda Cowan, Associate Professor of Exhibition Design, School of Graduate Studies at SUNY/FIT, Professor Ross Laird, PhD, Interdisciplinary Creative Process, MA, Counseling Psychology, and Jason McKeown MS, LMFT, CPE, DCC, Director of Clinical and Family Services Trails Carolina.

The National September 11 Memorial & Museum was selected because of its unique collections-donor relationship that suggested explicit demonstrations of Psychotherapeutic Object Dynamics. Eleven in-depth interviews were conducted between June 8th and June 11th, 2016. On behalf of the research team the institution sent out a voluntary call via mail to a prospective interview population. For the purposes of this study, the subjects were identified solely according to their relationship to the event and to the object(s) they donated. Participants included five widows, three survivors (including one who also lost a husband and one who lost a cousin), one mother who lost a son, one first responder, and one on-location journalist. The case study explored the psychotherapeutic benefits of the participation of the object donors in the institution's acquisitions, the personal identification of the donors with their donated objects, and the psychological experience of the donors through the process of donation.

The interviewing methodology utilized a heuristic approach focused on generating qualitative data. This narrative-based approach invited participants to explore and express the idea of donation, the event itself, the donated object(s) and their meanings, and what if any, healing/meaning was found in the object experience for the interviewees. The

researchers sought to identify patterns of intent, experience, and emotional outcomes in both the short and long-term. Some of the object donations were made immediately following the event, whereas others were made sometime in the ensuing years. The most recent donation was four months ago. In some cases, subjects were approached by The National September 11 Memorial & Museum and asked to consider donating, while others made the initial contact. In every case, subjects gave objects willingly and some are considering donating additional items at some point in the future.

### Overarching Findings

The data collected reinforced commonly held understandings of the meaningfulness of objects in everyday life, the potency of objects within museum environments, the value of participation, co-creation and open-content generation in exhibitions, and identified particular modes of design that are psychologically and interpretively impactful. Multiple subjects referred to their objects as "witnesses" to the event and to their own experience, and as the means by which the story of the event and their roles within it will be told. Most subjects referred to the need for the objects to keep the memory of their loved one alive, and/or the need for the objects to provide an accurate accounting of the details of what occurred. One subject clearly explained that the objects she donated carry a great deal of weight (responsibility), which can be reasonably said for all of the subjects interviewed. In many instances, subjects referred to The National September 11 Memorial & Museum as a place where their objects will be kept safe. The objects will be protected, and in that regard the institution is an ally. One subject specifically referred to The National September 11 Memorial & Museum as a "therapeutic ally." In the profession's current discourse regarding the role of participation and co-creation in museum content generation as well as

the responsibility of museums to their constituencies, the importance of that message cannot be overstated.

Our review of the data collected from the eleven interviews show multiple examples of four of the five object dynamics in play: Associating, Releasing/Unburdening, Composing, and Giving/Receiving. Anecdotes from the subjects regarding the meanings of the objects, their relationships with the objects, their decisions and actions of donating, and the impacts of the experiences provide supportive illustrations of those four dynamics as well as further information regarding the healthful and healing impacts of the donation process. Although the researchers had not anticipated Composing or Making appearing within the data, evidence of Composing emerged in substantive and qualifying ways, and Making was indicated (although to a much lesser degree). The role of place emerged in a few instances, and in the next steps of the study we will consider place for potential inclusion as an object dynamic.

Throughout the interviews, subjects provided information that firmly represented established object characteristics and experiences including: objects as repositories of experience, bearing witness, perrisological resonators, life companions, calls to action, self identity, life continuum, and primal power. Specific illustrations of the object dynamics also emerged throughout all eleven interviews in various ways. Those examples are identified in the Collected Data section of this report, organized by interview question with substantiating quotes from the subjects.



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