

Bowdoin College Art History Majors Senior Research Presentations

May 9, 2019

Danny Banks '19

Title: Avant-Garde Punk / Punk Avant-Garde: Understanding Historicization of Düsseldorf Punk in Contemporary German Painting

Art History / German double major. The art scene of Düsseldorf, Germany led the nation and world in its experimental practice during the mid-late 20th century. The emergence of Germany's original punk scene there is, however, documented negligently. The fact that key figures in the nation's art scene were closely bound with the birth of the punk movement allows for it to be approached from the unlikely angle of academic art. This project investigates the punk lives of Düsseldorf's artists and the nature of their criticism in order to deconstruct and reformulate histories of punk in art, art in punk, and avant-garde in Germany. Danny's work on this project was under the guidance of Professor Susan Wegner, spring 2019.



Albert Oehlen, *Captain Jack*, 1997, Silkscreen and oil on canvas

Eleanor Brakewood '19

Title: Radical Bodies: Constructing Visibility in Birth and Reproductive Rights Imagery (1932-2018)

Eleanor is an Art History major and Biology minor. *Radical Bodies* is a theoretical exhibition of ten works by women artists. The works in this exhibition seek to reclaim women's narratives by visually representing the physical experience of the female body during labor and delivery and by analyzing women's attempts to control their body through their reproductive health in the late modern and contemporary period. In doing so, *Radical Bodies* visibly prevents the erasure of female bodies in art and creates space for women as artists and viewers to engage with their personal histories of reproductive rights and birth. By deconstructing the stigma that accompanies the birth experience and empowering women to embrace and share their experiences with reproductive health, this exhibition addresses the epidemic of maternal healthcare from both an American and global perspective. This project was completed for Professor Pamela Fletcher's fall 2018 course ARTH 2560 Women, Gender, and Sexuality in Western European and American Art, 1500 to Present.



Barbara Kruger, *Untitled (Your body is a battleground)*, 1989, photographic silkscreen on vinyl, 112 x 112 inches, The Broad Art Foundation, Los Angeles.

Noah Dubay '19

Title: Madame Medea: European Reimaginings in the 19th Century

Noah is an Art History and Archaeology interdisciplinary major and a Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies minor. At the turn of the nineteenth century, the Greek myth of Medea experienced a major revival both on the stage and in the art galleries. A foreign threat not only to her lover and children, but to society as a whole, Medea was the antithesis of the proper European lady – nevertheless, audiences in France, Italy, and beyond couldn't get enough of the maniacal murderess. Noah writes, "Beginning with an examination of the original Greek and Roman texts and visual sources, I considered how Medea transformed between the time of Euripides and of her modern revival. I studied Victorian ideologies (and pseudoscience) surrounding women and mental illness and explored the contemporary art context in Europe and abroad, ultimately piecing together the how and why of Medea's theatrical characterizations and pulling apart the visual references embedded in her painted, sculpted, and printed visages. Over the course of the fall 2018 semester, I worked under the guidance of Professor Susan Wegner and in February of 2019, I presented my research on Roman sarcophagi at the 8th Annual University of Tennessee, Knoxville Undergraduate Classics Conference."



Kinaya Hassane '19

Shaping Canons and Building Legacies: Collectors and the History of African American Art

Kinaya is an Art History major and History minor. In this honors paper, she examines the collecting of E.T. and Auldlyn Williams who are prominent and prolific collectors of African American art. Through extensive archival research, she has been able to start documenting the contents and whereabouts of the art in their collection. By conducting this research, Kinaya aims to highlight the way in which collectors like the Williamses are able to write themselves and their tastes in to the history of African American art. She also aims to expand conventional definitions of collecting that focus on the acquisition of artworks by analyzing the multifaceted manner through which the Williamses advocated for African American artists. Professor Dana Byrd guided Kinaya through the 2018-19 academic year as her honor thesis advisor.



Daniel Dorsa, *Lyn and E.T. Williams in their Manhattan home between two works by Claude Lawrence: left, "Yard — An Ode to Charlie Parker" and "At the Hop,"* 2018, photograph, The New York Times.

James Little '19

Medieval Antisemitic Imagery at the Bowdoin College Museum of Art

James is a Computer Science major and Art History minor. Medieval Passion scenes, often created as devotional imagery for Christian communities, in many respects serve as antisemitic propaganda through the use of visual and narrative stereotypes. Christian pieces that negatively portray Jews are common enough that they can be analyzed as a propaganda-like method of racially distinguishing Jews from Christians, serving to otherize and vilify those who do not worship Christ as God. In his research, James explores the history of Medieval antisemitism and race politics through visual art. Focusing on the treatment of Jews as Christ-killers, he examines some late Medieval pieces of Passion imagery in the Bowdoin College Museum of Art, exploring the racially charged, antisemitic imagery employed in each in order to more accurately describe the experience of Medieval Jews and the state-sponsored persecution that solidified Christianity's place as the dominant religion of Medieval Europe. His presentation is a research project completed for Professor Kate Gerry's spring 2019 course ARTH 3350 Desire and Difference: Exploring Gender, Sexuality, and Race in Ancient and Medieval Art.



Flagellation of Christ

Pierre Reymond (ca. 1513–after 1584)
ca. 1545

Grisaille painted enamel and copper gilt
Wyvern Collection, BCMA 14.2019.8

Amber Orosco '19

Revisiting *A Handheld History*: Academic Applications of the Molinari Collection at Bowdoin College

Amber is an Art History and Visual Arts Interdisciplinary major. Curated by Amber and two other students (Stephen Pastoriza '19, and Benjamin Wu '18) *A Handheld History: Five Centuries of Medals from the Molinari Collection at Bowdoin College*, exhibited June 2018-January 2019 in the Bowdoin College Museum of Art, gave an overview of the aesthetic, historical, and political significance of medallion art from the fifteenth to the twentieth century. The research into the Molinari Collection started during the spring of 2017, looking into questions about medallion history and specific iconography of medals. During the summer of 2017 in-depth iconographical analysis was completed by Amber on the Molinari Medal of Ferdinand VII by Pedro José Maria de Guerrero; Amber also completed an extensive catalogue raisonné of the medalist. Questions about metallurgy and the chemical composition of the medals within the collection came from Amber's extensive studies in chemistry throughout her Bowdoin career. In the spring of 2018 x-ray fluorescence (XRF) analysis was completed by Amber on a small selection of the medals with the help of the Williamstown Art Conservation Center and integrated into the exhibition opening later that summer. Two posters, one

representing the iconography of the medal of Ferdinand VII and the other discussing XRF results, were presented by Amber at the Bowdoin College Presidents Symposium Fall 2017 and 2018 respectively. This work would not have been possible without the guidance and support from Professor Susan Wegner, Anne Collins Goodyear, Co-Director of the Bowdoin College Museum of Art, and countless Bowdoin faculty and enthusiastic numismatic community.

