Stanford’s art and art history faculty and staff spent the summer moving to the arts district. The McMurtry Building, the new home for the Department of Art & Art History, welcomed students the first day of the fall term in 2015.

Designed by Diller Scofidio + Renfro, along with the executive architect Boora Architects, the 100,000-square-foot building unites the making and studying of art under one roof with a bold architectural gesture: the “making strand” (in zinc) wrapping around the “studying strand” (in stucco) in an interlocking embrace. The building’s innovative spaces present multiple opportunities for exhibitions, performance and programs.

The building allows the department to increase course offerings in art practice by 35 percent over the next two years, responding to student demand. Studios and classrooms are outfitted with new equipment, including high-end digital projectors, 3-D scanners and printers, laser-cutting technology, a CNC router, and digital printmaking technology.

“IF YOU WANT A QUICK SEMINAR ON THE STATE OF ARCHITECTURAL ART, AND DON’T FEEL LIKE HOPPING ON A PLANE TO NEW YORK OR LOS ANGELES, THE MCMURTRY IS CLOSE AT HAND. WHAT’S MORE IMPORTANT IS THAT WHEN DESIGN TRENDS MOVE ON, STANFORD ART STUDENTS WILL STILL BE WELL SERVED.” – JOHN KING | SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

2014-2015 started with a bang! On September 21, 2014, the Anderson Collection at Stanford University opened its doors and one of the finest private collections of postwar to contemporary art in the country found a new home on Stanford’s campus—in a beautiful new building designed by Ennead Architects.

The Stanford Arts Initiative, launched in 2006, invoked a commitment to making the arts fundamental to a Stanford education and to the university’s offerings for our community. Thanks to this commitment, we have added new faculty positions, new fellowship opportunities for graduate students, and new arts programs for every Stanford student, including a general education breadth requirement in “Creative Expression.”

The new facilities in our arts district work to further this mission. Bing Concert Hall (2013), the Anderson Collection at Stanford University (2014) and the McMurtry Building for the Department of Art & Art History (fall 2015) all connect our campus and community around the arts, further research and teaching, and contribute to the creative vitality of the university. They join the increasingly dynamic Cantor Arts Center, our active arts departments and programs, and numerous other campus partners in creating a new era for the arts at Stanford. The pages that follow offer a few highlights. I invite you to discover more at http://arts.stanford.edu.

With all best wishes,

Matthew Tiews
Associate Dean for the Advancement of the Arts
MOHR VISITING ARTIST BASIL TWIST PERFORMS IN THE ANDERSON COLLECTION. HE TAUGHT THE THEATER & PERFORMANCE STUDIES COURSE “PUPPETRY WITH A TWIST.”

The Anderson Collection at Stanford University opened in September 2014. This was a major milestone for the arts at Stanford: one of the finest collections of modern and contemporary American art was on the university’s campus, opening up amazing opportunities for teaching, research, and engagement with the community. The quality and scope of the collection makes it a powerful resource for American art history. Stanford faculty members use the collection to teach classes formerly taught through books and slides. It is also an incredible offering to the community: programs around the collection in its first year here include student-generated events, as well as films, panel discussions, artist talks, and in-gallery conversations.

Highlights from the collection’s first year included painter Wayne Thiebaud’s participation as the inaugural Burt and Deedee McMurtry Lecturer; a screening and panel discussion of *Women Art Revolution* by the prominent artist and filmmaker Lynn Hershman Leeson; and an internationaly recognized puppeteer Basil Twist, this year’s Mohr Visiting Artist, who was named a MacArthur Fellow in 2015.

“...I DON’T THINK IT’S MY IMAGINATION THAT THE WORKS HERE PLAY OFF OF ONE ANOTHER IN Livelier, sometimes Wittier ways than museum works often do. It feels like there’s a synergy to the entire collection, which is maybe another way of saying the collectors have an eye...the ANDERSONS HAVE GIVEN THE PUBLIC A GREAT GIFT.”

– BRUCE HANDY | VANITY FAIR

Anderson Collection in Action

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The Demo’s world premiere of *The Demo* at Bing Concert Hall took as its starting point a pivotal moment in Silicon Valley’s history: Douglas Engelbart’s 1968 demonstration of pioneering technology for personal computing. Engelbart’s egalitarian vision for how technology could expand human intelligence was reimagined as a technology-rich stage work: a unique hybrid of music, media, and performance. The project was part of Stanford Live’s new “Live Context” series, which connects world-class performances to the deep intellectual and artistic resources of the university. Other Live Context projects included “Haydn: Patronage and Enlightenment,” which married performances of chamber, choral and orchestral music with an international conference on the cultural history of 18th-century artistic patronage, and “The Nile Project,” a performance by musicians from eight Nile River Basin nations that was paired with conversations about geography, sustainability, and international politics.

One of the largest collections of work by American artist Jacob Lawrence (1917–2000) in any museum belongs to the Cantor Arts Center, and it went on view for the first time in 2014. Lawrence is an acclaimed figurative painter of the 20th century and a leading voice in the artistic portrayal of the African American experience. The exhibition, *Promised Land: Jacob Lawrence at the Cantor*, gave the collection new life through scholarship, teaching, and publication.

The collection of 56 works (five paintings, 11 drawings, 39 prints and 1 illustrated book) was given in 2014 by Dr. Herbert Kayden and his daughter, Joelle, in memory of Dr. Gabrielle H. Reem, the donors’ wife and mother, respectively. Herbert Kayden died in August 2014.

The collection, exhibition, and accompanying scholarly publication with essays by Stanford faculty, researchers and scions of the donors and the Center “is a leading resource for students and scholars to study Lawrence and the social and political conditions of the historical era in which he worked and the importance of the holdings,” said Jacob Lawrence in a letter to the donors.

Honoring the Kaydens’ entwined commitments to both art and education, the exhibition planning included a course for undergraduate students taught by Elizabeth Kathleen Mitchell, the Cantor’s Burton and Deedee McMurtry Curator of Prints, Drawings, and Photographs. This intensive introduction to Lawrence’s career and curatorial and art historical practices enabled 12 students to design the gallery layout and write exhibition texts.
The Player Piano Project

In 2014 Stanford acquired the Denis Condon Collection of Reproducing Pianos and Rolls, a private collection of more than 7,500 rolls and 10 player pianos — among the most important of its kind. Player pianos — those self-playing pianos popular in the early 20th century — have an important role in music history. Rolls in the Condon Collection include major composers playing their own music — Saint-Saëns, Busoni, Bartók, Debussy, Ravel, Schubert, Grieg, Schumann, and others.

In the wake of the Condon Collection acquisition, Stanford also received two other collections of pianos and rolls. Jerry McBride, Stanford’s head music librarian, said that these acquisitions mark the beginning of an initiative at Stanford, the Player Piano Project. With these collections, Stanford is poised to become among the most important places worldwide for research on this intriguing musical technology and its impact.

What makes this so valuable to researchers now is to be able to hear how pianists of that time played, many of whom were students of the great pianists of the 19th century. Not only does it tell us about piano performance, but about music performance traditions of the time in general.” – Jerry McBride, head music librarian

Imagining the Universe: Cosmology in Art and Science

“Imagining the Universe: Cosmology in Art and Science” brought together scientists, artists, and humanists to explore the nature of the universe. Organized by an interdisciplinary consortium of departments and programs from across the university, the series reflected Stanford’s commitment to campus-wide connections across the sciences and arts. Goals include broadening our understanding and appreciation for the universes of art and science, and appreciating what can be learned about ourselves from the way we depict the cosmos. The series included speakers, performances, and an exhibition at the Cantor.

“The idea for the collaboration came from Peter Michelson, chair of the Department of Physics, who was present at the premiere of Cosmic Reflection, a symphonic composition by Stanford alumna Nolan Gasser [PhD ’01] accompanied by a video created in collaboration with NASA Goddard Space Flight Center,” said Matthew France, associate dean for the advancement of the arts. “Peter’s idea of bringing that piece to Stanford sparked a wide-ranging conversation about art, science, how we seek to understand our cosmos, and what that tells us about being human. This collaboration reflects contributions from numerous individuals and at least a dozen departments and programs from across campus.”
Two science-based courses in 2015 intersected with the world of art to develop improved applications in healthcare and nature study.

The Art of Observation: Enhancing Clinical Skills through Visual Analysis was a medical school course supported by the Bioethics and Medical Humanities Scholarly Concentration. The practice of close observation was the primary goal of the course, which was developed by an interdisciplinary team: Genna Braverman, a medical student; Yinshi Lerman-Tan, a graduate student in art history; Audrey Shafer, MD, a professor of anesthesiology, perioperative and pain medicine and director of the Medicine and the Muse Program in medical humanities; Sam Rodriguez, MD, a clinical instructor in anesthesiology, perioperative and pain medicine; and Issa Lampe, curator of education at the Cantor Arts Center.

The course involved Stanford medical faculty members participating in gallery sessions in the Cantor and the Anderson Collection and applying the lessons learned to the clinical setting. Each of the students also had the opportunity to go on rounds in a hospital ward with one of the participating physicians to apply observation skills to real patients.

Natural Perspectives: Geology, Environment, and Art was an undergraduate course in the School of Earth, Energy & Environmental Sciences. Taught by Richard Nevle, deputy director of the Earth Systems Program, and Sara Cina, undergraduate program director for the School of Earth, Energy, and Environmental Sciences, the course was a multiday field trip that used guided drawing exercises led by artist Mattias Lanas to augment the exploration of the regional geology, ecology, and environmental history of the Eastern Sierra and Owens Valley. Students visited several sites of geologic and environmental significance, used drawing as a tool for close observation, and recorded their reflections in field journals.

The objectives of the course were to generate an understanding of the natural processes shaping Eastern California, foster new skills and techniques for artistic expression, and spark an appreciation for how scientific and aesthetic perspectives complement and enhance one another in the study of natural history.

To the process of drawing, students record their thoughts, generate questions and insights, and rekindle a joyful sense of wonder about the natural world, “Richard Nevle, deputy director of the Earth Systems Program
The Architectural Design Program is host to a variety of collaborative and experiential studios. Students involved in this design-build seminar investigated the use of glass as a structural system and spatial medium. Examining the physical and visual properties of engineered high-strength glass, students developed structural systems and spatial configurations that expanded an understanding of what glass can do. The seminar culminated in a full-scale installation of the developed design on campus. The experiential objectives of the seminar draw upon Colin Rowe’s definition of phenomenal transparency as a unique spatial order, in which the perception of space is fluctuating and in constant activity. The installation will act as a filter through which the surrounding context will be redefined, resulting in a complex spatial experience.
danceroom Spectroscopy

Danceroom Spectroscopy (dS) is the world’s first large-scale, interactive molecular physics experience, and was created by scholar, scientist and artist David Glowacki, a Royal Society research fellow at the University of Bristol, currently in residence at Stanford. Glowacki found two collaborators on campus to engineer a public version of dS in the Stanford Art Gallery and a multimedia performance at the Cowell Theater in San Francisco: artist Camille Utterback, an assistant professor of art and art history, and composer and sound engineer Michael St. Clair, a lecturer in the Department of Theater & Performance Studies.

Visitors to the Stanford Art Gallery installation used the dS setup to create real-time projections on the surrounding walls of their “energy avatars” and manipulate a simultaneous atomic physics simulation, generating both graphics and sound.

Making and Teaching

In 2015 Stanford lecturer and alum J. Christian Jensen, MFA ’13, received an Oscar nomination in the documentary short category for his film White Earth, a winter portrait of North Dakota’s oil boom. In 2014 he won a silver medal from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Student Academy Awards for the same film.

Jensen began his career in nonfiction television—working with National Geographic, PBS Frontline and regional PBS programs. Having lived in both Brazil and China, he is particularly interested in films about newly industrialized nations. He is developing a feature film (I’m from Bahia) about art and Afro-Brazilian identity, premiered in 2009 throughout the United States and Latin America.

Jensen has been sharing his talents with students across the campus, teaching introductory film production courses in the new “Creative Expression” university breadth requirement.

“It’s a huge honor to be able to translate the theoretical principles and practical experience I gained while making White Earth and other films as a graduate student at Stanford into a course designed to introduce undergraduates to filmmaking and storytelling principles. I feel incredibly lucky to have had the teaching opportunity fall on the heels of White Earth’s success, and it has really helped me better mentor the students in my course — many of whom have ambitious film projects of their own that they are pursuing outside of class.” — J. Christian Jensen, lecturer and documentary filmmaker
Evita

Eva Perón was reimagined on the Stanford stage in the spring musical Evita. The production, by the Department of Theater & Performance Studies, included the book and songs from the Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice original, but also drew on conflicting historical depictions to provide new perspectives on the familiar story. “We created a version of Evita in which Eva basically gets to tell her own story,” director Sammi Cannold, ’15, said.

During the run of the production, artifacts from the Hoover Institution’s Juan Domingo Perón papers, Eva memorabilia and contemporary video interviews of Argentines were featured in a companion exhibition in the Memorial Auditorium lobby.

Hairspray

Stanford’s oldest and largest theatrical organization, the Ram’s Head Theatrical Society, drew parallels between civil rights movements in the 1960s and today in their spring production of Hairspray. James Sherwood, ’17, produced one of the largest shows ever at Stanford in terms of the size of the cast and crew, but what excited him the most was that this production of Hairspray set up a civil rights dialogue for students and the audience. It did so in the context of theatrical innovation. Matt Lathrop, ’16; Stephen Hitchcock, ’18; Sherwood, and the student group LITES (Lighting Innovation and Technology Education at Stanford) sourced LEDs from China to create a video wall that functioned as the changing set. The floor-to-ceiling, wing-to-wing wall of lights was programmed to represent, among other sets, the Baltimore skyline, the candy-colored set of the Corny Collins Show and a starry night (see photo page 25).

Mirror Image

Mirror Image, an original student-written musical, premiered at Stanford in the spring as Louis Lagarde’s senior capstone project in music composition. The opening number, titled “Mirror, Mirror,” was featured at the New York Musical Theater Festival in the Student Leadership Project Concert in the summer of 2015.

72-hour Musical Theater Contest

The 72-Hour Musical Theater Contest was the first in Stanford history, and possibly in anyone’s history. In one whirlwind weekend, small teams were given the challenge of creating a musical theater piece (one song, one scene, and one dance) — in only 72 hours. Three days of intense creative endeavor culminated in a live, cabaret-style performance in which teams presented the results of their hard work before a panel of experts. The prize — which went to a work called “Gravity,” with a quirky take on the history of science — was $5,000 for the creation of a workshop performance of a new theatrical work inspired by the contest.

Marvelous Musical Theater

There was a breakout of marvelous musical theater in 2014–15. Highlights included Evita, Hairspray, Mirror Image and the 72-hour Musical Theater Contest.
Talisman, a Stanford Treasure

Founded at Stanford University in 1989, Talisman is an a cappella group dedicated to the sharing of stories through song. Originally created to sing music from the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa, Talisman has expanded its repertoire to include music from cultural traditions from all around the world.

For its 25th anniversary concert in February 2015 at Bing Concert Hall, Talisman welcomed back alumni from the past 25 years to perform the music that has brought so many people together. The concert featured performances from the South African touring company of MADIBANESS, led by Sipho Mnyakeni, and featuring Anele and Neliswa Mxakaza from Idols South Africa.

Over the years Talisman has performed at several Bay Area schools, and in communities in California on the East Coast, and in the Southern United States and embarked on tours in South Africa, where the group cultivated lasting relationships with communities and organizations such as the Amy Biehl Foundation. It also conducted workshops with the Soweto Gospel Choir and Johannesburg’s legendary Isibaya Choral Society. In April 2015, the group traveled to Atlanta to perform with the Immaculate Conception’s Infantry Choir, a group of singers who are homeless.

“Talisman was created to explore and perform substantive, cultural music. This has become our mantra as we strive to give voice to the vast collection of human stories told through rich and vibrant song.”

– excerpt from the Talisman mission statement

Stanford Art Gallery Breaks a Record

During the fall quarter of 2014, the Stanford Art Gallery welcomed a record-breaking 10,303 visitors — more than doubling the attendance for any previous exhibition.

The attraction was an exhibition called All Tomorrow’s Parties, which marked the first time that undergraduate students were offered the opportunity to install their work in the historic space. A jury comprising representatives from the Art & Art History department, the Cantor Arts Center and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art selected work by 23 students — in the end, 18 different majors were represented, showcasing the breadth of talent across the university.

The exhibition’s success led the department of Art & Art History to repeat the exercise. The second annual undergraduate exhibition moved to the McMurtry Building and was the inaugural exhibition in the Penny & Jim Coulter Gallery in fall 2015.
Creative Careers

Stanford offers numerous professional development opportunities for students who want to explore a career in the arts. In addition to a wide variety of Stanford-sponsored summer arts internships and satellite campuses in Washington, D.C., and New York that offer art courses and internships, two signature Stanford programs stand out.

Art is My Occupation (AiMO) is an interdisciplinary collaborative program that empowers students to explore their personal and artistic identities, connects them to professional creatives, and provides career guidance and resources. Over the last three years, AiMO has served more than 600 students through its programs, events, and classes. The organizing team includes representatives from the Institute for Diversity in the Arts, the Department of Art & Art History, the Department of Music, the Department of Theater & Performance Studies, Stanford Arts, Stanford Career Education, Stanford Live, and the Cantor Arts Center.

The Stanford/ Warner Music Group Leadership Initiative is to identify and develop a new generation of Stanford students from across various educational disciplines for leadership roles in the ever-changing music business. Technology is shaping the future, and Stanford students have the opportunity to be in the middle of the music industry’s evolution. “This innovative new collaboration brings together the extraordinary creativity and entrepreneurial vision of leaders in music, tech, business and education to inspire and educate the music industry’s next generation of leaders,” said Cameron Strang, CEO and chairman of Warner Bros. Records and Warner/Chappell Music.

Inspiring Guest Artists

Oprah Winfrey delivers the annual “HARRY’S LAST LECTURE ON A MEANINGFUL LIFE” as the Rathbun Visiting Fellow in the Office of Religious Life.

Stanford hosts numerous guest artists across multiple disciplines every year, providing students with a witness to the artist’s life.

This goal of the Stanford/Warner Music Group Leadership Initiative is to identify and develop a new generation of Stanford students from across various educational disciplines for leadership roles in the ever-changing music business. Technology is reshaping the future, and Stanford students have the opportunity to be in the middle of the music industry’s evolution. “This innovative new collaboration brings together the extraordinary creativity and entrepreneurial vision of leaders in music, tech, business and education to inspire and educate the music industry’s next generation of leaders,” said Cameron Strang, CEO and chairman of Warner Bros. Records and Warner/Chappell Music.
Architectural Design Program
The Architectural Design Program seeks to integrate engineering and architecture in ways that blend innovative architectural design with cutting-edge engineering technologies. In addition to preparing students for advanced studies in architecture and construction management, the program’s strong math and science requirements prepare students well for graduate work in other BMEs, such as civil and environmental engineering, and business.

Creative Writing Program
Established at Stanford in 1946 by Wallace Stegner, the Creative Writing Program has expanded over the years to attract graduate and undergraduate students that often cross the gap between the newest students and the talented pool of Stegner Fellows and lecturers—all of whom are working writers with a passion for good writing and a real ability to teach it.

Dance Division
The Dance Division, part of the Department of Theater & Performance Studies, offers a range of classes that approach dance as a performing art, cultural practice, political act, or embodiment of ideology and beliefs. All of the dimensions through which one comes to experience dance—from studying a range of dance techniques, choreographing and performing, to viewing and critically and historically assessing dance—are represented in the course offerings.

Department of Art & Art History
The Department of Art & Art History is an interdisciplinary department offering undergraduate and graduate degrees in art history, art practice, documentary filmmaking, and film studies. Courses offer myriad opportunities to engage with form and meaning in the visual arts, and to explore their historical development, their roles in society, and their relationship to other artistic disciplines.

Department of Music
The Department of Music has been a pillar of the Stanford community since its founding and formalization as a department in 1947. It promotes the practice, understanding and enjoyment of music in the university, offering a broad array of educational opportunities with concentrations in composition, performance, musicology, ethnomusicology, and music technology.

Department of Theater & Performance Studies (TAPS)
The interdisciplinary department welcomes students from across the university to be involved in intensive, innovative and intellectual work and fosters student engagement with performance in multiple modes. They learn analytically skills through research-based scholarship. In concert with its academic mission, the department produces numerous events through its creative program. Workshops and artistic productions include canonical plays, commissioned dance works, re-imaginings of plays and events by visiting artists.

Design Program within the Mechanical Engineering Design Group
The Design Program (formerly the Product Design Program) is offered jointly with the Department of Art & Art History and concerns itself with conceiving and designing products for the benefit of society. This process requires resolution of constraints arising from technical, aesthetic, human, and business interests. The Design Group’s philosophy combines an emphasis on creativity, technology, and design methodology with consideration for human values and the needs of society.

TAPS UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS PERFORM ROSENCRANTZ + GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD, DIRECTED BY STANFORD ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE AND PULITZER PRIZE—NOMINATED PLAYWRIGHT AMY FREED.
The Hasso Plattner Institute of Design (d.school) is a multidisciplinary teaching facility with roots in the Department of Mechanical Engineering at Stanford University. The d.school is a "laboratory of ideas" and follows the spirit of Stanford’s d.school. The lab is open to Stanford undergraduate, graduate and professional school students who want to take on real-world projects. The d.school asks faculty and staff members to mentor senior faculty.

Institute for Diversity in the Arts + Medicine & the Muse Program

The Institute for Diversity in the Arts (IDA) + Committee on Black Performing Arts (CBPA) is an interdisciplinary program in the humanities that involves students in cultural and creative initiatives. The IDA’s role is to support the arts in creating and fostering environments that are inclusive and welcoming to all students and students to the arts. The IDA’s artistic expression mission is to create, support and advance powerful, collaborative, and transformative arts and academic programs.

Mediation & the Muse Program

The Mediation & the Muse Program provides an opportunity for medical students, faculty, staff and community members to explore the intersection between creativity, humanistic critical inquiry and value-driven social science with medical and biosciences. These interactions are collaborative, interdisciplinary reweaves of innovation and innovation.

Product Realization Lab (d.Lab)

The Product Realization Lab (d.Lab) is a multidisciplinary teaching facility with roots in the Department of Mechanical Engineering at Stanford University. The d.Lab is open to Stanford undergraduate, graduate and professional school students who want to take on real-world projects. The d.Lab asks faculty and staff members to mentor senior faculty.

Arts Immersion

Arts Immersion is a fully-integrated, experiential learning experience that gives Stanford students an insider’s view into cultural capitals. Students travel with Stanford Arts classes to explore the arts, meeting institutional leaders, policy-makers, and arts practitioners. They visit museums, galleries and concert halls, see their dance rehearsals, take part in art exchanges, and work with master teachers who draw on their traditional arts practice.

Arts in the Center and Arts Immersion

The Arts in the Center is a cross-disciplinary program that provides the opportunity to create a comprehensive program that integrates arts across the disciplines. The Arts in the Center is a cross-disciplinary program that provides the opportunity to create a comprehensive program that integrates arts across the disciplines. It includes rethinking the role of the arts in undergraduate education and fostering interdisciplinary collaborations and partnerships that bring the arts into the center of the academic experience. It includes rethinking the role of the arts in undergraduate education and fostering interdisciplinary collaborations and partnerships that bring the arts into the center of the academic experience. It includes rethinking the role of the arts in undergraduate education and fostering interdisciplinary collaborations and partnerships that bring the arts into the center of the academic experience. The program features two main tracks: interdisciplinary research within the arts for students majoring in a particular arts discipline who wish to incorporate the arts into their academic and career interests, and professional opportunities for students majoring in a non-arts discipline who complete a capstone project incorporating the arts.

Arts Immersion is an innovative, week-long program, where students travel with faculty to New York City, Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles, immersing students in the arts and culture of the major cultural capitals. Students travel with Stanford Arts classes to explore the arts, meeting institutional leaders, policy-makers, and arts practitioners. They visit museums, galleries and concert halls, see their dance rehearsals, take part in art exchanges, and work with master teachers who draw on their traditional arts practice.

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MEMBERS OF RAM’S HEAD THEATRICAL SOCIETY, ONE OF STANFORD’S OLDEST STUDENT GROUPS, PERFORM HAIRSPRAY. THE PRODUCTION FEATURED AN ORIGINAL LED WALL DESIGNED AND FABRICATED BY L.I.T.E.S., A STUDENT ORGANIZATION WITH A FOCUS ON THEATRICAL LIGHTING DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY.
Reflections

As I finish my four-year term as director of the Arts Institute and welcome my successor, Peggy Phelan, who has a joint appointment in English and Theater & Performance Studies, I should like to take a moment to describe the state of the arts at Stanford. Arts thrive on collaboration, and thanks to the efforts of so many people — from colleagues, students, the university administration, Advisory Council members, and alumni — we are witnessing a remarkable collective commitment to integrate the arts into a Stanford education and into campus life more broadly.

The arts are no doubt a reflection of the kind of university that Stanford aspires to be. To judge by the transformed landscape — literally, with the arts district, and figuratively, with significant curricular and programmatic changes that have been implemented — they have a prominent and indispensable role to play in the university’s academic mission. This sharpened programmatic focus is reflected in these key developments: 1) the reform of undergraduate education to include Creative Expression as a general education requirement; 2) the creation of new possibilities for connecting arts practice and academic study and research; 3) linking arts events with classroom activities.

Symptoms of these developments are not hard to find. The number of freshmen enrollments in Creative Expression classes has increased from 874 in 2012 to 1,158 in 2013. The Arts Institute’s interdisciplinary Honors in the Arts program is now entering its third year. And the annual arts immersion trip to New York City forms part of the introductory seminar called “Art in the Metropolis.” In addition, this year’s thematic programming has included several substantial projects, among them “Imagining the Universe” and “Haydn: Patronage and Enlightenment.”

In their bountiful and critical mass, the arts reflect well on the university. At a recent talk on online learning, I was struck how the word “space” was being required to do a huge amount of work by referring variously to something physical (the campus), to something virtual (cyberspace), and to something mental (personal experience). May Stanford continue to flourish in all of these senses as “A Space for the Arts.”

STEPHEN HINTON IS THE AVALON FOUNDATION PROFESSIONAL IN THE GLADNEY, PROFESSOR OF MUSIC, AND THE OUTGOING DENNING FAMILY DIRECTOR OF THE STANFORD ARTS INSTITUTE.
“STANFORD UNIVERSITY, ONE OF THE UNIVERSITIES RANKED HIGHEST BY U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT, HAS BEGUN SETTING A PRECEDENT FOR HOW OUR LARGE UNIVERSITIES CAN PRIORITIZE ARTS AND CULTURE. THIS MOVEMENT TO INCLUDE ARTS AND CULTURE WITHIN ITS CAPITAL CAMPAIGN AND USE IT AS LEVERAGE TO ATTRACT STUDENTS INDICATES A SHIFT IN PERSPECTIVE AT THE COLLEGIATE LEVEL.” – JENNIFER SWAN | NONPROFIT QUARTERLY

Roble Gym

Roble Gym, a historic structure that opened as the women’s gym in 1931, is being renovated with a new flexible configuration, black-box-style theater and improved dance and rehearsal studios for the Department of Theater & Performance Studies. The renovation will also include the Stanford Arts Gym, a one-of-a-kind drop-in art-making studio and performing arts space, creating a flexible space for everything from informal performances to theatrical rehearsals. The gym will also be a place for arts projects with the sense of student ID. Opening 2016.

Looking Ahead

Roble Gym

Roble Gym is being renovated to provide program space for theater and dance productions within the curricular offerings of the TAPS department and a multipurpose arts gym (Arts Gym) for students working on independent art projects.
The tremendous growth in the arts at Stanford has transformed this university — its campus, its curricula and its community. Alumni, parents, and friends, in their support of the University, have enabled Stanford to grow into a dynamic arts district with world-renowned art, music, and dance programs.

The Department of Art & Art History moved into its new home in the McMurtry Building in September 2015. Earlier in the year, the Anderson Collection at Stanford University hosted artist Wayne Thiebaud as the inaugural speaker for the McMurtry Lecture, as well as presenting other academic and community programs. In addition to programs in the humanities, Stanford has presented more than 60 performances, including programs in the visual arts and music, as well as offering its first summer series. The Center for Creative and Cultural Studies, building on the collection was a prominent theme, with exhibitions featuring the newly acquired Jacob Lawrence collection and "New York Corner (Corner Saloon)," a 1913 painting by Edward Hopper.

The future is bright for the arts at Stanford, as more friends of the University join this effort as donors, members, volunteers, and audiences. For them, and for our students, it holds the promise of creative expression in vibrant and unprecedented ways.

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MATTHEW TIEWS, Associate Dean for the Advancement of the Arts

2014-15 Arts Advisory Council

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"THE BIRTHPLACE OF YAHOO AND GOOGLE, STANFORD UNIVERSITY IS NOW RAMPING UP AND SHOWING OFF ITS CULTURAL RESOURCES."

– JORI FINKEL | NEW YORK TIMES

THE ANDERSON COLLECTION, THE CANTOR ARTS CENTER, AND STANFORD LIVE PRESENTED "ARTS ROLL," A MULTIDISCIPLINARY FESTIVAL FEATURING AN OUTDOOR ROLLER-SKATING RINK TO CELEBRATE ANOTHER YEAR AS PART OF STANFORD'S VIBRANT ARTS DISTRICT.

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