Art Isn’t Easy

BY SCOTT EDMISTON, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF THE ARTS

“Sunday in the Park with George” dramatizes how the 19th-century painter Georges Seurat developed his pointillist technique and provides a multifaceted look at what it means to be an artist. Artists are depicted as misunderstood, selfish, obsessive—but able to see a world that others cannot and to bring a magnificent order to that world. The play captures something unusually romantic about the creative life—standing at an easel with a palette on a sunlit Sunday afternoon, capturing forever a shimmering moment in time. “Work is what you do for other people,” one character sings. “Art is what you do for yourself.” But Sondheim and Lapine also reveal the darker, more complex colors beneath the surface. Seurat’s masterpiece does not emerge in a divine stroke of inspiration, but from years of personal sacrifice, methodical experimentation and sheer hard work.

The second act of the musical takes place 100 years later as Seurat’s great-grandson, also an artist, tries to navigate through the contemporary art world. We are shown that an artist’s life today is no longer about the pleasure of paint on canvas. It is a technology-driven process dominated by donors, media, museum politics and the public’s constant demand for something new. Trying to reconcile the purity of creative expression and the reality of survival is something that I see artists, actors and musicians confront every day. Was it easier to be an artist in Seurat’s time, or do we simply view it now through a more romantic frame?

One of the many things I admire about “Sunday in the Park” is the way this two-act, “two-century story creates connections between the art of the past and the present. In the Brandeis School of Creative Arts, our students are continually doing just that—seeking new interpretations of classics through fresh eyes and making new artistic discoveries inspired by the visionaries who preceded them.

For example, in this issue of State of the Arts, you can read about three recent Brandeis graduates who received degrees in art history and are now exploring new paths for visual art in the 21st century. Musicologist Seth Coluzzi offers insight into the fall concert by Fretwork, a British ensemble that unites music of the Renaissance with new music, connecting themes across time. The Rose Art Museum’s “WaterWays” exhibition offers great works from its historic collection, and next door, in studio art classrooms, artists of a new generation are learning media, museum politics and the public’s pleasure of paint on canvas. It is a technol-ogy-driven process dominated by donors, media, museum politics and the public’s constant demand for something new. Trying to reconcile the purity of creative expression and the reality of survival is something that I see artists, actors and musicians confront every day. Was it easier to be an artist in Seurat’s time, or do we simply view it now through a more romantic frame?

And that... is the state of the art.
Composition. Balance. Light. Harmony. This fall, theater, music and fine arts at Brandeis share a common stage — and canvas — in the Brandeis Theater Company’s production of "Sunday in the Park with George." Written by Stephen Sondheim (music and lyrics) and James Lapine (book), the musical premiered on Broadway in 1984 and astonished audiences with its innovative themes and form. Frank Rich, of The New York Times, hailed it as “a musical theater breakthrough,” saying, “Sondheim has transcended four decades of Broadway history to create a truly modernist work... an audacious, haunting and, in its own personal way, touching work.” It received the New York Drama Critics Award, eight Drama Desk awards, three Tony Awards and the Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

Sondheim drew his inspiration from the life and work of painter Georges Seurat (1859–1891). Little is actually known about Seurat, and the musical is largely a work of fiction. The first act depicts the creation of his masterpiece “A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte” and the tumultuous relationship of Seurat with his muse and mistress, Dot. In addition to exploring the creative process, it is a love story about the personal sacrifices that artists must make sometimes in service to their gifts. Sondheim, a prolific and much-honored composer who made his Broadway debut as the lyricist for “West Side Story” (1957), depicts the artist’s process as one of both pain and glory, a blessing and a curse.

The second act leaps ahead 100 years to America, where Seurat’s great-grandson, also an artist, unveils his latest laser sculpture. Consumed with the pressure of securing grants and impressing donors, curators and critics, he feels that he has lost his artistic integrity. He travels to France to visit the Island of La Grande Jatte in an attempt to reclaim his ancestry and his identity as an artist.

In the articles that follow, Nancy Scott, professor of art history in Brandeis’ Department of Fine Arts, and Neal Hampton, an associate professor who teaches music theater composition in the Department of Music, share their insights on Seurat, Sondheim and this theatrical convergence of the visual and performing arts.
From these, Seurat constructed color complements to convey the rhythm and contours in the panorama of modern life. We see this immediately in the pronounced bundle of the woman strolling with her gentleman and in the pat monkey, its back arched in parallel fashion. This tather on a golden chair indicates that the woman is “left.” James Lapine and Stephen Sondheim called her “Dot” and gave her glorious voice as Sondheim’s mistress—which she decidedly was not. Madeleine Kretzsch, her real-life mistress, appears in a later painting of her boulevard titled “Young Woman Powdering Herself” (“La Poudreuse”) and her source for another song in the musical. At the time of Sondheim’s sudden death at age 31, none of his friends knew of Madeleine’s existence, nor of the child she would soon bear.

Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine sought to reimagine theme and variance, rhythm and harmony from Sondheim’s masterpiece. Sondheim reported that he first hoped to use only as many instruments in the orchestra as Seurat’s color tones. He ultimately found that scheme too restrictive (by his own account). Yet he still retained himself to the limited repetitive notes we know so well from the mesmerizing musical score. Lapine had studied the impressionist movement and even visited the site—an overcrowded, very urbanized Île de la Grande Jatte over-loaded with modern high buildings. Georges Seurat pushed himself to understand a scientific method for achieving something utterly new that enchants us still—Sondheim and Lapine added another unforgivable layer to our perceptions and imaginative re-creation of that shimmering, unsettled society that misses high and low life in late 19th-century Paris and that lends itself to the “art of making art” in our own frantic, deal-making times.

Sondheim on the painting: “It’s the most magical of experiences. I can’t talk about it without crying. When you get up close and see what that man did, it’s thrilling. Each one of those [dots] is a choice. Three million choices—how many dots there are. This is the perfect painting for somebody like me to musicalize because it is all about design, and it’s all about echo, and it’s all about the effect of this next to that, or apart from that.”

Since Fénéon, many artists and scholars have debated the impact of Georges Seurat’s “Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte.” The large painting (just over 10 feet wide by seven feet high) was displayed for the first time at the eighth (and last) impressionist exhibition. The distant and near views of the painting created a disjunctive set of reactions: It was both an early freakuism arrangement of figures in a park and an atomic spray of pure color abstraction. Seurat was clearing new ground for perceptions of color and light.

Seurat’s contemporary, Claude Monet, had an eye for color that could not be taught, onlyimitated. While Seurat followed this academic practice, he also brought to it a lifelong seeking for enhancing the sparkle and luminescence of color. By studying the most innovative scientific theories of prismatic color, he ultimately resolved to paint the scene on the Grande Jatte with a limited range of pure color. He divided his palette into 13 pastes of rainbow tones, from deep purples to pale sky blue, then further divided each tone with an equal amount of white. He did this in two portions; there were 39 colors in total on the palette.

Sondheim on the musical: “Seurat experimented with the color wheel the way one experiments with a scale. He used complementary color exactly the way one uses dominant and tonic harmony... Pandoras is in the instrumentation and accompaniment. It seemed effective to use rhythm to reflect putting dots on the canvas.”

Sondheim has said he conscientiously tries not to do the same thing twice (“If you are broken-field running, then it’s harder for people to hit you with tomatoes.”) “Sunday in the Park with George,” which some below is his masterpiece, sounds unlike anything else. Sondheim wrote: It draws inspiration from minimalist music, specifically the work of composer Steve Reich, who pioneered the genre. Listen to how the musical accompaniment of “Finishing the Hat” captures the sparse pointillism of Georges’s brushstrokes, which are subsequently echoed in Dot’s powdering her face. George sings “more red.” Dot sings “more rouge” —two artists at their respective vantage points. Brilliant. Musically subtle asides, “Sunday in the Park”’s struggle for emotional connection is a theme that recurs throughout Sondheim’s canon. Sweeney Todd’s loss of connection with his dead wife drives him to a bloodthirsty rampage. Bobby, the pinioned bachelor in “Company,” can’t commit to a relationship. Georges Seurat’s fictional obsession with painting alienates his mistress; then three generations later, Seurat’s great-grandson returns to Paris in an attempt to reconnect with lost artistic passion.

In this musical, more than in any of his others, Sondheim seems to speak directly to us. Sondheim sings mostly to the audience, rarely addressing other characters in song. The parallels between composer and his subject, of an artist pushing boundaries at the expense of public favor, seem especially clear. Like Seurat, Sondheim has his detractors — some have dismissed his music as too intellectual, lacking warmth, not “hummable.” He addresses this in the song “No Life,” in which a couple languidly dismisses one of Seurat’s paintings: “All mind, no heart, no life in his art.”

But I find great life in Sondheim’s choices, both musical and dramatic. (In fact, many of his songs are about the act of choosing and the consequences.) From my own ventures composing for the musical theater, I know that the hardest choices to make are where to sing (has the character earned the right?) and, then, what to sing about. If either of these is wrong, then whatever song you write probably won’t work in the show. Sondheim said that characters should sing when they become too anxious for their words to be contained or when they become too anxious for their words to be contained.

In “Sunday in the Park,” when the young artist fears that he has lost his way, Dot advises, “Stop worrying if your vision is new. Let others make that decision; they usually do... Anything you do, let’s come from you — then it will be new.” Quintessential Stephen Sondheim, and great advice for creative artists of any age.
Brandeis Theater Company

Through its innovative productions, the Brandeis Department of Theater Arts sets the stage for the future of American theater. Productions are held on two stages in the Spingold Theater Center. Tickets are $18/$20, $9/$10 for students. Enjoy the four-play season for $55/$65. To purchase tickets, go to Brandeis Tickets in Shapiro Campus Center, call 781-736-3400 or visit go.brandeis.edu/BrandeisTickets.

THREE SISTERS
By Anton Chekhov
Adaptation by Tracy Letts
Directed by Adrianne Krstansky
Featuring guest artists Janet Morrison and Craig Mathers
Sept. 30–Oct. 10
East Coast premiere!
The enduring classic about a family’s dreams and the fragile ties that hold them together. Tracy Letts, the Pulitzer Prize– and Tony Award–winning author of “August: Osage County,” has created a compelling new adaptation of Chekhov’s 1900 drama. Irina, Masha and Olga long to find grace in the modern world and return to the happiness they knew as children in their native Moscow. Through their journey of love and loss, they come to realize the true meaning of home.

SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE
Music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim
Book by James Lapine
Directed by Scott Edmiston
Musical direction by Todd Gordon
Nov. 18–21
Join the international celebration of Stephen Sondheim’s 80th birthday. In this Pulitzer Prize–winning musical, the life of Georges Seurat and his most famous painting, “A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte,” come vividly to life. Through light, color and harmony, discover surprising truths about making art, seeing art and how art connects our lives. . . .dot by dot.

LITTLE MONSTERS
By Marisa Alexandra Bech
Feb. 17–20, 2011
A workshop production of a new play produced in cooperation with off-Broadway’s Primary Stages. Possibly gifted poet Sara and her hypochondriac mother live in constant struggle, motivating Sara to find a relationship and a way out. But in her pursuit of the perfect mate through Internet dating, is she really looking for herself?

THE UNDERGRADUATE THEATER COLLECTIVE PRESENTS: FOUR PLAY SEASON

THE 25TH ANNUAL PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE
By William Finn
Directed by Scott Edmiston
Oct. 28–31
Eclectic, rambunctious and fuera de lo normal, this Broadway smash brought the nation’s spelling bee to life! Join the international celebration of Stephen Sondheim’s 80th birthday. In this Pulitzer Prize–winning musical, the life of Georges Seurat and his most famous painting, “A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte,” come vividly to life. Through light, color and harmony, discover surprising truths about making art, seeing art and how art connects our lives. . . .dot by dot.

DOG SEES GOD: CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE BLOCKHEAD
By Bert V. Royal
Directed by Summer L. Williams
April 21–May 1

The Undergraduate Theater Collective presents student-produced plays and musicals in the Shapiro Campus Center Theater. Tickets are $3–$5 and are available at Brandeis Tickets in Shapiro Campus Center, at 781-736-3400 and online at go.brandeis.edu/BrandeisTickets.

Brandeis is home to more than 30 arts and culture student clubs, including a cappella groups; improv comedy troupes; and ballet, folk, modern, hip hop and ballroom dance troupes. Through the Intercultural Center, students of international backgrounds present performances that celebrate their diverse cultural traditions. For more information, visit go.brandeis.edu/clubs.
The Brandeis Department of Music hosts an exceptional series of professional concerts each year featuring faculty and visiting artists. Professional concerts begin at 8 p.m. in Slosberg Music Center. Tickets are $20 (general), $10 (Brandeis community) and $5 (for students). Purchase tickets online at go.brandeis.edu/BrandeisTickets, or call Brandeis Tickets at 781-736-3400.

JOSHUA GORDON AND RANDALL HODGKINSON
PASSIONATELY MODERN: MUSIC FOR CELLO AND PIANO AFTER WORLD WAR II
Sunday, Oct. 3, 3 p.m.
“Admirable chamber musicians who play with passion and sensibility.” —The New York Times

Lamine Touré and Group Saloum
Residency: Oct. 13–16
Concert: Saturday, Oct. 16, 8 p.m.
“a hard-hitting dance mix that delivers both percussive fury and joyful uplift. this is the african music of the future.” —Afropop Worldwide

Traditional and popular African dance music ignite with elements of jazz, funk and reggae. Lamine Touré is widely recognized as one of Senegal’s leading percussionists, and his nine-piece ensemble crackles with the sabar drums that form the backbone of the Senegalese sound, made famous to U.S. audiences by Youssou N’Dour and Baaba Maal.

Born into a family of sabar drummers, Lamine Touré is a key figure in the Senegalese music scene and has performed throughout Africa, Europe and North America. This worldwide travel inspired him to introduce jazz, funk and reggae rhythms into the Senegalese mbalax genre.

Dinosaur Annex Music Ensemble
NEW FRIENDS/NEW SOUNDS
Saturday, Oct. 2, 8 p.m.
7 p.m. preconcert reception

Tickets for Dinosaur Annex are $20 (general) and $15 (students and seniors) and are available exclusively online at www.dinosaurannex.org or at the door.

“thoroughly entertaining ... and altogether exceptional.” —The Boston Globe

Experience Boston’s premier contemporary music ensemble, passionately dedicated to presenting the finest music by living composers at the artistic direction of Szu-Ellen Hanashiro-Tokarev and Brandeis faculty member Yu-Hui Chang. The program includes “Wick” by Pulitzer Prize winner Melinda Wagner; Carlos Salinas-Ortiz’s “TrioVariations,” inspired by Paul Klee’s “tweeting machines”; the kaleidoscopic “Little Bitz” by Stacy Garrop; Kneif Makani’s explosive “2”; and Andrew Wagner’s Hurricane Katrina-related “Storm, the Rosy-Fingered Dawn.”

LYDIAN STRING QUARTET 30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
Gala Concert: Saturday, March 26, 2011

Celebrate the artistry of Brandeis’ exceptional resident quartet. For 30 years, the Lydians have received international acclaim for uniting the rich European and American quartet tradition with their own interests in contemporary and world music. Beginning in January 2011, Daniel Stepner, Judith Eisenberg, Mary Ruth Ray and Joshua Gordon will present an exquisite new series of concerts. For more information, visit www.brandeis.edu/arts/concerts/lydian.

Music can widen the path to social justice and peaceful coexistence in the global community. This academic year, MusicUnitesUS presents two residencies by world-renowned musicians. In October, Group Saloum brings Senegalese mbalax to the Afropop world stage, and, in March, Simon Shaheen blends Arabic tradition with classical and jazz into a border-crossing hybrid. Join the exploration through concerts, workshops and open classes on related topics. For a full residency schedule, visit go.brandeis.edu/MusicUnitesUS.

World Music concerts begin at 8 p.m. in Slosberg Music Center and are preceded by a free lecture at 7 p.m. Tickets are $25 general, $15 for Brandeis community ($5 off when purchased in advance) and $5 for students. Purchase tickets online at go.brandeis.edu/BrandeisTickets, or call Brandeis Tickets at 781-736-3400.

SIMON SHAHEEN AND FRIENDS
Residency: March 10–12, 2011
Concert: Saturday, March 12, 8 p.m.

“tasteful best describes the exquisite performance given by [this] virtuoso.” —Detroit Times

Nominated for 11 Grammy Awards, Palestinian oud and violin player Simon Shaheen is one of the most significant Arab musicians of his generation. His music reflects his Arabic legacy while it forges new frontiers, embracing Western jazz and classical styles.

The 2010–11 MusicUnitesUS residencies and world music concerts are made possible in part by a grant from the Brandeis Arts Council and by the CDQ Charitable Trust.
At the turn of the 17th century, musician Salamone Rossi had a unique privilege among Jews in Mantua, a small dukedom in northern Italy: he did not have to wear the yellow badge that signified Judaism. Rossi (c1570–c1630) prospered as a composer and performer of secular music for the ducal court of Mantua as well as the Jewish theater, and he was seen in his own day as the herald of a renaissance in Jewish music. But with his 1623 publication “Hashirim Asher Lish’lomo,” a collection of 33 choral settings of sacred Hebrew texts, he drew harsh criticism from the Jewish community.

Music for the synagogue — improvised melodies based on ancient chants — had remained essentially unchanged for centuries. Thus, instrumental and choral music was banned from the synagogue both as a sign of mourning for the destruction of the ancient temple Bet HaMikdash and to preserve the traditional chants and modes from gentile influences.

Rossi’s works form only part of the program featuring Jewish music for viols by the renowned ensemble Fretwork (a repertory explored recently by Brandeis’ own early Music ensemble). While perhaps not all so entrenched in controversy, each work offers its own synthesis of cultures and styles, from a family of venetians composing for the British royal court in 16th-century London (Joseph and Thomas Lupo) to contemporary minimalist composer Orlando Gough.

Orlando Gough (b. 1953) is one of the United Kingdom’s most important composers for ballet, contemporary dance and theatrical projects. Gough’s works include “Tall Stories,” a staged song-cycle for choir about immigration to New York in the early 20th century; “The Singing River” for 12 choirs, 18 boats, two cranes and a locomotive; and “Open Port,” the closing event of the Stavanger 2008 European Capital of Culture, for 750 singers, brass band and wooden trumpets.

Fretwork’s repertoire draws from the Jewish composers expelled from Spain in 1492, who flourished in their new court and theatrical venues and created vigorous English dances, Dutch fantasies and Baroque Italian flourishes. Gough’s “Birds on Fire” draws on Ashkenazic and Sephardic themes to evoke the interplay of Jews and gentiles in Austria at a time of impending tragedy.

Made possible by a grant from the Brandeis Arts Council.

Rossi’s Renaissance

BY SETH COLLUZZI / ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF MUSIC

Rossi’s is the first publication of music with Hebrew texts (the texts are written in reverse to accord with the left-to-right arrangement of the music) and the first printed example of choral music for the synagogue liturgy. The music proves a true synthesis of the two worlds in which Rossi lived, essentially transplanting the prevailing styles of the Italian madrigal and canzonetta into the synagogue. But even the passionate defense of the venetian Rabbi Leon Modena that prefaced the collection could not spare Rossi from censure — censure that deterred any other composer from following in his path until the 19th century.

Fretwork is the finest viol consort on the planet.” —the London Evening Standard

The acclaimed British viol consort Fretwork performs music by Salamone Rossi and other Jewish composers of the Renaissance as well as a new commission, “Birds on Fire,” by the innovative contemporary composer Orlando Gough, known around the world for his work for ballet and theater.
BRANDEIS STUDENT
Ensemble Concerts

Brandeis’ outstanding student ensembles perform music ranging from classical to Renaissance to contemporary jazz. All student concerts take place in Slosberg Music Center, unless otherwise noted, and are free and open to the public.

MUSIC FEST
Sunday, Oct. 17, 1 p.m.
A highlight of Fall Fest weekend! Experience the Brandeis music ensembles in an afternoon of harmonic convergence.

BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY CHOIR
Saturday, Oct. 23, 8 p.m.
Program includes Mozart’s rich, festive and delicate Coronation Mass, K. 317.

NEW MUSIC BRANDEIS
Saturday, Oct. 30, 8 p.m.
World premieres of new music from Brandeis’ renowned graduate composition program.

BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY CHAMBER CHOR
Sunday, Nov. 14, 4 p.m.
Music by the Renaissance composer William Byrd including “Missa for Four Voices.” James Diessen, director.

BRANDEIS WIND ENSEMBLE
Sunday, Nov. 14, 7 p.m.
Ground control to Major ‘Tom’ - blow your mind with music from outer space.

BRANDEIS-WELLESLEY ORCHESTRA
Sunday, Nov. 21, 7 p.m.
Liszt’s “Hungarian Fantasy,” Hindemith’s “Der Schwanendreher” and Sibelius’ Symphony No. 1, featuring winners of the 2010 Concerto Competition: Hannah Saltman, ’12, viola, and Sang-Hee Min (Wellesley ’11), piano.

BRANDEIS EARLY MUSIC ENSEMBLE
Saturday, Dec. 4, 8 p.m.
The Italian madrigal “La Mantovana,” which made its way through history to become Israel’s national anthem (“Hatikvah”) and other works from the early Renaissance, on period instruments. Sarah Mead, director.

BRANDEIS JAZZ ENSEMBLE
Sunday, Dec. 5, 7 p.m.
Who’s afraid of the big band Monk? The coolest ensemble on campus plays music made famous by the Thelonious Monk Big Band of the early 1960s, arranged by Oliver Nelson.

IMPROV COLLECTIVE
Monday, Dec. 6, 7 p.m.
As Nina Simone said, “It ain’t been made up yet.”

CHAMBER MUSIC ENSEMBLES
Tuesday, Dec. 7, 7 p.m.
Classical music at its most intimate.

MESSIAH SING
Wednesday, Dec. 8, 4 p.m.
Shapiro Campus Center Atrium

BRANDEIS STUDENT
Ensemble Concerts

The Rose Art Museum at Brandeis is home to one of the most extraordinary art collections of any academic institution. The collections spans the past century in Western art, from the early European and American modernists up to the 21st century. When not on view, the permanent collection is used as a teaching resource and is available to appointees for scholarly use. The Rose is free and open to the public. Visit go.brandeis.edu/rose or call 781-736-3434.

SOURCE/RESOURCE
Rose Lawn
Through Oct. 31
For the 2010 Festival of the Creative Arts, Brandeis commissioned Source/ReSource, a public artwork by Boston artist Michael Dowling. The Ruth Ann and Nathan Perlmuter Artist-in-Residence, Dowling found his inspiration in the continuing cycle of generations that come to Brandeis — the source — and return to the world as a resource for vision, justice, creativity and social change. The festival opening ceremony at Source/ReSource brought the Brandeis community together for performances of theater, dance and music, spiritual blessings, and a meaningful celebration of our shared values as a community.

ART OF NEW YORK:
The Rose at Brandeis House
Opening Nov. 3
Brandeis House, the alumni meeting place on Manhattan’s Upper East Side, is the site of a special New York–themed exhibition cosponsored by the Rose Art Museum and the Alumni Association. The exhibition includes works from the Rose collection that depict life in the city, by artists including George Bellows, Retcher Martin and Max Weber; and contemporary works by Noel Mahaffey and Richard Estes. For more information, call 212-472-1501.

The Rose Art Museum at Brandeis is home to one of the most extraordinary art collections of any academic institution. The collections spans the past century in Western art, from the early European and American modernists up to the 21st century. When not on view, the permanent collection is used as a teaching resource and is available to appointees for scholarly use. The Rose is free and open to the public. Visit go.brandeis.edu/rose or call 781-736-3434.

SOURCE/RESOURCE
Rose Lawn
Through Oct. 31
For the 2010 Festival of the Creative Arts, Brandeis commissioned Source/ReSource, a public artwork by Boston artist Michael Dowling. The Ruth Ann and Nathan Perlmutter Artist-in-Residence, Dowling found his inspiration in the continuing cycle of generations that come to Brandeis — the source — and return to the world as a resource for vision, justice, creativity and social change. The festival opening ceremony at Source/ReSource brought the Brandeis community together for performances of theater, dance and music, spiritual blessings, and a meaningful celebration of our shared values as a community.

ART OF NEW YORK:
The Rose at Brandeis House
Opening Nov. 3
Brandeis House, the alumni meeting place on Manhattan’s Upper East Side, is the site of a special New York–themed exhibition cosponsored by the Rose Art Museum and the Alumni Association. The exhibition includes works from the Rose collection that depict life in the city, by artists including George Bellows, Retcher Martin and Max Weber; and contemporary works by Noel Mahaffey and Richard Estes. For more information, call 212-472-1501.

The Rose Art Museum at Brandeis is home to one of the most extraordinary art collections of any academic institution. The collections spans the past century in Western art, from the early European and American modernists up to the 21st century. When not on view, the permanent collection is used as a teaching resource and is available to appointees for scholarly use. The Rose is free and open to the public. Visit go.brandeis.edu/rose or call 781-736-3434.

SOURCE/RESOURCE
Rose Lawn
Through Oct. 31
For the 2010 Festival of the Creative Arts, Brandeis commissioned Source/ReSource, a public artwork by Boston artist Michael Dowling. The Ruth Ann and Nathan Perlmutter Artist-in-Residence, Dowling found his inspiration in the continuing cycle of generations that come to Brandeis — the source — and return to the world as a resource for vision, justice, creativity and social change. The festival opening ceremony at Source/ReSource brought the Brandeis community together for performances of theater, dance and music, spiritual blessings, and a meaningful celebration of our shared values as a community.

ART OF NEW YORK:
The Rose at Brandeis House
Opening Nov. 3
Brandeis House, the alumni meeting place on Manhattan’s Upper East Side, is the site of a special New York–themed exhibition cosponsored by the Rose Art Museum and the Alumni Association. The exhibition includes works from the Rose collection that depict life in the city, by artists including George Bellows, Retcher Martin and Max Weber; and contemporary works by Noel Mahaffey and Richard Estes. For more information, call 212-472-1501.
The ancient Greeks understood the power of transition that water holds. From liquid to solid to vapor, water is the symbol for metamorphosis. In Taoist tradition, water is considered an aspect of wisdom, shaping itself to what contains it and moving in the path of least resistance. “WaterWays,” an exhibition selected from the Rose’s permanent collection, invites viewers to consider water as subject, metaphor and muse.

On view are works by a range of artists using a variety of techniques. Some painted waterscapes in situ, poetically exploring the relationship between ocean and land, water and earth. Others used the fluidity of their medium to express color and mood, throwing paint (like the abstract expressionists) to achieve “action painting” or pouring it onto the canvas (like the color field painters), allowing the paint to soak and pool onto the surface.

We cannot go far from water. The recent tragedy in the Gulf of Mexico is something that affects us deeply, that registers in the water table of our own bodies. In one way or another, the artists in “WaterWays” have embraced that aspect of themselves through their work. Featured artists include William Kentridge, Rona Conti, Fairfield and Eliot Porter, Annette Lemieux and John Marin.


Fairfield Porter was a painter and a noted art critic. His paintings reveal an understated extraordinariness found within everyday moments. He was primarily self-taught, and his use of bold pools of color, merged with a realistic sensibility, serves to highlight the subtle moods of his subjects. Much of Porter’s body of work is set within wooded areas of Maine and the Hamptons, and it largely captures portraits of friends and family, homes and their interiors, and the surrounding landscapes. His approach to image making is plainly revealed by his own words: “When I paint, I think that what would satisfy me is to express what [Pierre] Bonnard said Renoir told him: Make everything more beautiful.”—Samara Minkin ’94


Forget It! Forget Me! 1962
Roy Lichtenstein
Gevirtz/Mnuchin Purchase Fund
© Estate of Roy Lichtenstein

Roy Lichtenstein found his raw material in the world of pulp comic books, elevating the low-art genre into high art through a process of selection and exaggeration. By removing panels from their narrative context and enlarging them into epic proportions, he made them at once iconic and fraught with mysterious meaning. “Forget It! Forget Me!” is rendered in his signature style. The ostensible subject matter, the story of a relationship gone sour, is immediately apparent, but without the panels extending on their side, the single moment remains inexplicable. Lichtenstein pays tribute to the graphic power of these mass-market productions while simultaneously deflating the rhetoric and pretensions of high art by replacing them with obviously canned emotions and stilted dialogue. Ironically, though Lichtenstein borrowed his material from the world of cheap, mass-produced images, his signature distillations have now become a shorthand signifier of “high art” that can be used to impart instant glamour to commercial products.—Miles Unger ’81 From “The Rose Art Museum at Brandeis.” New York: Abrams, 2009.

Regarding Painting
Rose Art Museum
Opening Oct. 7

This fall, a selection of major paintings are on view in the Foster Gallery. “Painting refers to the act and the object, and the exhibition examines both. Visitors are encouraged to look closely—to revel in the physical properties of the medium, consider how the form of a painting intersects with its content, gain access to the artists’ processes and ideas, and realize their own crucial role in finding a painting’s meaning.”


Fairfield Porter was a painter and a noted art critic. His paintings reveal an understated extraordinariness found within everyday moments. He was primarily self-taught, and his use of bold pools of color, merged with a realistic sensibility, serves to highlight the subtle moods of his subjects. Much of Porter’s body of work is set within wooded areas of Maine and the Hamptons, and it largely captures portraits of friends and family, homes and their interiors, and the surrounding landscapes. His approach to image making is plainly revealed by his own words: “When I paint, I think that what would satisfy me is to express what [Pierre] Bonnard said Renoir told him: Make everything more beautiful.”—Samara Minkin ’94

The Kniznick Gallery at the Women's Studies Research Center is where research, art, and activism converge. Located in the Epstein Building at 515 South Street (across from the Brandeis/Roberts train station), the gallery is free and open to the public weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. or by appointment. For more information, call 781-736-8102 or visit go.brandeis.edu/wsrc.

This exhibition of color photographs by photojournalist Dana Romanoff explores the changing role of women in rural Oaxaca, Mexico, who become sole breadwinners for their households when their husbands and sons emigrate to the United States in search of work. The traditional men's world of the farm is shaken when the sons leave. Romanoff's work as a freelance photographer and multimedia producer has appeared in numerous magazines, anthologies and newspapers and has been nominated for a Pulitzer Prize. She was short-listed for the 2010 Anthropographia Multimedia and Human Rights Award and has been shown at film festivals around the world.

Many notable critics, curators and writers have graduated from the Department of Fine Arts at Brandeis, including Adam Weinberg ’77, director of the Whitney Museum of Modern Art; Kim Rorschach ’78, director of the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University; and author Miles Unger ’81. The current generation is exploring art in unexpected places, through new technologies, and is definitely not letting the economy get them down.

**ADAM GREEN ’07: POP-UP MAN**

My roommate dragged me to my first art history class, Jonathan Unglaub’s Renaissance course. It really appealed to me, and I ended up majoring in art history and economics.

A career in art did not occur to me until my senior year, when I interned for Kimberly Danzawski, the registrar at the Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Museum. Handling and caring for the Rose’s superb permanent collection was both inspiring and humbling. Then one day I came across a stack of auction catalogs. I already loved and appreciated art aesthetically. Now I was curious as to why artworks, like more traditional assets, had prices that shifted due to economic factors as well as changes in artistic taste. The art market, I decided, would be a fascinating field. The next step was to pursue a master’s in art business from Sotheby’s Institute of Art in London, and now I work at Christie’s in New York and produce a podcast on the art market for ArtTactic.

You might think that this is a terrible time to enter the business. Actually, the economic downturn and the resulting plethora of vacant retail spaces all over Manhattan inspired my business partner and me to open a so-called pop-up gallery, taking a cue from the short-term specialized retail stores around the city. After talking to nearly 100 real estate firms, in March we found month-to-month space just south of the Flatiron building and opened Volume Black. We’ve held three group exhibitions so far of work by emerging artists from both within and outside of New York.

Recently the art market has showed substantial signs of recovery, far sooner than most within the industry had anticipated. It will be interesting to watch over the next three or four months to see whether this growth is sustainable or whether a double-dip is imminent.

**SARAH BRIN ’08: EXPANDING VISION**

I believe that in order to make a life in the arts, you have to combine thinking and doing. So to get a bigger picture of a time period or region, I would plan themes for my undergraduate seminars, like Russia, or modernism. And to learn how to solve real-life problems and manage projects, I worked at the Rose Art Museum and with the Festival of the Creative Arts, which gave me responsibility as well as the space to experiment and figure out what kinds of things I liked to do. The emphasis at Brandeis on social justice and pluralism influenced my desire to move toward art as social practice and away from the megamuseum, gigantic biennial phenomenon. Now I’m in a graduate program in art and curatorial practice at the University of Southern California that focuses on challenging the traditional ideas of what a museum can be, as well expending art’s reach to historically excluded publics.

My research interest is in intersexuality, especially in public spaces. So maybe I already have my dream job! I cofounded and curate ArtArtha, which installs artworks in unoccupied retail space around Los Angeles, and I’m helping design an alternative reality game at the Hammer Museum that will send museum-goers in search of real-life information in physical space. At school, I direct the Hillel Gallery, which means a lot to me because of my family’s history of Jewish leadership and social action in Los Angeles.

Eventually I’d like to get a Ph.D. in something like critical studies or modern thought, because teaching is important to me. In a perfect world, I could get paid to read the Internet and get people excited to make things and to be nice to each other.

**DANA ROMANOFF ’00:**

The emphasis at Brandeis on social justice and pluralism influenced my desire to move toward art as social practice and away from the megamuseum, gigantic biennial phenomenon. Now I’m in a graduate program in art and curatorial practice at the University of Southern California that focuses on challenging the traditional ideas of what a museum can be, as well as expanding art's reach to historically excluded publics.

My research interest is in intersexuality, especially in public spaces. So maybe I already have my dream job! I cofounded and curate ArtArtha, which installs artworks in unoccupied retail space around Los Angeles, and I’m helping design an alternative reality game at the Hammer Museum that will send museum-goers in search of real-life information in physical space. At school, I direct the Hillel Gallery, which means a lot to me because of my family’s history of Jewish leadership and social action in Los Angeles.

Eventually I’d like to get a Ph.D. in something like critical studies or modern thought, because teaching is important to me. In a perfect world, I could get paid to read the Internet and get people excited to make things and to be nice to each other.
The Brandeis Department of Fine Arts invites students to experience art as both scholarship and a process of creation. It offers programs in studio art and art history, and its postbaccalaureate program is recognized as one of the finest in the country. Student exhibitions are held in the Dreitzer Gallery, the Rose Auditorium, the Narrows Gallery, and in the center's Kniznick Gallery. In June, the director of academic programs, Haley, will curate an exhibition of her work, "The Art Of the Matter." In May, Charles Darden, M.F.A. '12, will present his thesis exhibition, "Dimensions 1 and 2." The exhibition will feature original work in painting, sculpture, drawing, and printmaking. The exhibition will be on view at the Narrows Gallery from May 4–22, 2011.

The Rose Art Museum welcomes Kristen Parker and Gabby Hailey to the staff. Parker, the collections manager and registrar, previously worked at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, where she archived, collections manager and manager of the contemporary art and public programs department. Hailey, the director of academic programs, comes to Brandeis from the Davis Museum at Wellesley College, where she was the Linda Wyatt Gruber 85 Curator of Painting, Sculpture and Photography.

The Independent Music Awards honored clarinetist Owen Enright with "Best World Album," for "Kelenia," which fuses traditional Malian and Jewish music with modern jazz. Enright's recent performances have included Lincoln Center, Joe's Pub and the Knitting Factory.

The Brandeis University 2010 honorary doctoral degree recipients included singer/songwriter Paul Simon, who performed "The Boxer" at the main commencement and spoke at the School of Creative Arts commencement in Spingold Theater Center.

Brandeis University's 2010 honorary doctoral degree recipients included singer/songwriter Paul Simon, who performed "The Boxer" at the main commencement and spoke at the School of Creative Arts commencement in Spingold Theater Center.
Free Ticket Offers and Email Reminders
Join the Arts at Brandeis E-List for the inside scoop on plays, concerts and fine arts at Brandeis, as well as free and discount tickets to arts events in Greater Boston. See go.brandeis.edu/arts.

Arts at Brandeis Calendar Online
A monthly online calendar with more information and additional programming, including film, dance, lectures and related symposia, is available at go.brandeis.edu/arts/calendar.

Purchasing Theater and Concert Tickets
To purchase tickets for events at the Spingold Theater Center, Slosberg Music Center or Shapiro Theater, visit go.brandeis.edu/BrandeisTickets or stop by the Brandeis Tickets office in the Shapiro Campus Center, Mondays–Fridays, noon–5 p.m.

Tickets are available for pickup or purchase in the lobbies of Spingold, Slosberg and Shapiro one hour before curtain. Reservations are recommended. Any person requiring special or wheelchair accommodations should call Brandeis Tickets at 781-736-3400.

Visiting the Rose Art Museum
Admission is free. The museum is open Tuesday–Sunday, noon–5 p.m. For more information, visit go.brandeis.edu/rose or call 781-736-3404.

Visiting the Kniznick Gallery
Admission is free. The Kniznick Gallery at the Women’s Studies Research Center is open Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m. For more information, visit go.brandeis.edu/wsrc or call 781-736-8102.

Supporting the Arts
To keep the arts at Brandeis accessible and affordable, we rely on the contributions of our community. When you make a tax-deductible gift to the arts at Brandeis, you can direct it to support the Rose Art Museum, the Brandeis Theater Company, the Brandeis Concert Season or the larger arts community through the Office of the Arts. Please show your support by making a donation online at go.brandeis.edu/arts.

Parking
All major Brandeis arts venues are located on Lower Campus within easy walking distance of each other. Free parking is available directly behind Spingold Theater in the Theater Parking Area (T Lot). There are accessible parking spaces in front of Spingold, Slosberg and the Rose.

Programs, artists and dates are subject to change. For updates and additional arts events, visit www.brandeis.edu/arts. For directions to Brandeis University, call 781-736-4660 or visit www.brandeis.edu.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF STATE OF THE ARTS? TAKE A SHORT SURVEY ONLINE AT WWW.BRANDEIS.EDU/ARTS AND YOU’LL BE ENTERED INTO A DRAWING FOR A FREE ROSE ART MUSEUM CATALOG.