

Gallery hosts faculty art

BY ANNA MEIER
Staff Reporter

Three of Truman's great artistic minds are coming together to display their work in Truman's Art Department exhibit, "3."

Every year the Truman Art Gallery hosts a faculty showcase, but now, instead of showing a few pieces of work from all faculty members, there will be a set of three different artists each year, allowing them to display a larger section of their work. This year, the three faculty artists exhibiting their pieces are Aaron Fine, Priya Kambli and Wynne Wilbur. The exhibit lasts Sept. 8 to Oct. 9.

The exhibit will include work in ceramics from Wilbur, paper from Fine and digital photography from Kambli.

"I do think they're comfortable next to each other, these three bodies of work," Aaron Fine, Truman art professor and art gallery director, said. "And there's quite a range of media, 'cause from digital photography to ceramics, it's like from the newest technology to the most ancient."

Wilbur teaches ceramics at Truman and is also in charge of the Art Education Program. Her interest in art peaked while she was a high school student taking part in her school's music program. After an argument with her orchestra teacher, she decided to leave music behind and try art, and it was something that just seemed to fit.

"I took a ceramics class, and there wasn't a lot that you could tell from the work that I was doing or the stuff that I was making that I was destined to be an art major, but it just seemed like the right place to be," Wynne said. "It was really fortuitous, and I ended up going back to orchestra, ... but it was pretty clear to me that that wasn't my destiny."

Wynne's work in the show is a series of pots made out of a substance called majolica. She emphasizes that her pieces are meant to be functional and usable in everyday life but also that the experience of using them should be a valued one.

"Eating is kind of an intimate thing even with plates, which sounds a little silly ... but you're really interacting with it on a very personal level," Wynne said. "I'm just trying to raise that personal level to an aesthetic level, where there's sort of a special interaction between what you're using and what you're consuming."

Wynne's work also will be featured in a book coming out this fall called "Masters: Earthenware."

Fine's work in mixed media fits well with Wynne's in that it has a certain sense of playfulness. He initially wanted to be an artist around age 4 and was heavily influenced by a family friend with the nickname "Stro." Now, even though Fine's pieces deal with large and often heavy themes, his work has gravitated toward the interesting questions surrounding observation and growth and is instilled with lightheartedness.

"They're big themes ... but I try to temper that because it gets a little pompous," Fine said. "They're themes like life and death, growth and decay, and food and sex and all the things that make up life. It helps that I have a little toddler kid, so ... I'll do playful experimentation with the media to kind of counterbalance that because I don't think life is me making some big statement about the meaning of it all ... but just I'm looking at the world around me and I'm trying to get as much of ... the way I experience life as I can into the work."

One of his pieces on display, entitled "First Word Series," deals with the development of language and the interface between a growing mind and the external world. The text in this piece is based on his son's first 25 words.

"I'm interested in, 'if you only had 22 words in your whole vocabulary, what would they be,' Fine said. "What would be the necessary words, the ones that were worth learning first? Very soon he was speaking hundreds and then thousands of words, but there was a point at which it was just 20 or 25, so I thought that was interesting."

Fine's wife, Priya Kambli, is displaying her work in digital photography from her sabbatical last year. Her work deals with the mix of the two cultures she has been deeply involved by coming from India to America. Her father inspired her to do something with art because he did photography in his spare time. Kambli is using some of her father's photos in the upcoming exhibit.



Members of the Truman Art Department have a chance to display their work in the University art gallery.

ing exhibit.

"I'm sort of dealing with the idea of a hybrid cultural identity, my hybrid cultural identity created by sort of cross-pollination of two cultures within me," Kambli said. "So using my family photographs to kind of re-contextualize them, and with ... fragmented imagery to talk about absence and loss and generation, memory and those sort of things."

Kambli is excited for the culmination of these works being juxtaposed in the upcoming exhibit.

"The common thing between all of us is that we're really dedicated to what we're

doing as image makers and artists and want to pursue our own art making," Kambli said. "Because we feel as teachers it's important for us to be making work so we can teach our classes."

Fine said being a part of this exhibit is one opportunity for faculty artists to get their work out there.

"I don't feel like you're quite an artist just by making the work and then putting it in a closet," he said. "Really it just has to be shared, and it has to be something that other people can see and interact with. Otherwise it's just sort of meditation."

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Bertha Thomas
Assistant Dean of Multicultural
Affairs

Success Center |

Students of all ages can attend workshops for academic guidance

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university students know and do," Phillips said. "A lot of it is common sense, but a lot of it is creating new positive habits when it comes to studying."

In addition to the many workshops that will be featured throughout the semester, the Student Success Center also will hold various tutoring sessions in a variety of subjects. The tutoring will not replace other tutoring programs already in place around campus, such as programs run through the Multicultural Affairs Center and those set up by departments. However, there will be a centralized training program that all campus tutors are encouraged to attend. Bertha Thomas, assistant dean of multicultural affairs, said she appreciates the importance of a tutor-training program.

"I think it will be very, very helpful to have a centralized expert who can help us to train tutors effectively using the techniques and research what's been done over the last 'x' number of years about how to effectively train peer tutors," Thomas said. "I think we'll get expertise and get to centralize it."

To effectively provide the most tutors and times available, the Student Success Center is partnering with the MAC.

"We're going to see what the hours of the Student Success Center are going to be and, instead of duplicating our services, we'll probably have our tutoring at the hours that the Student Success Center isn't open or we'll concentrate on subjects that the Student Success Center doesn't have a number of tutors for," Thomas said.

Even though the center is only in its first year of operation, the idea for this kind of service has been around for quite some time. LouAnn Gilchrist, dean of student affairs, said she has seen the need for this kind of academic support for about 10 years now.

"We were just asking questions about retaining and improving the quality of student experiences, and support for academic success frequently came up," Gilchrist said. "There were a lot of innovative faculty members and offices that had, and still have, I believe, in many cases where they would have programs for specific courses or for specific populations of students, but there were a lot of student needs that fell between the cracks."

Most Truman students don't need basic help but are looking to maximize their potential and learn how to navigate through particularly difficult academic challenges, Gilchrist said.

"I think it would be incredibly important to make this a collaborative effort between student success and creating more powerful learning and teaching environments, so I hope that it can be a process of faculty input, contribution and development as much as it is a support activity for students," Gilchrist said.

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