CREATE IT: THE FASANELLA EXHIBIT

Create It! The Fasanella Exhibit course has been a collaborative course that has brought together a variety of students from different disciplines including Theatre Arts, Criminal Justice, Psychology, Sound Recording Technology, Plastics Engineering, and many more. Students, outside professionals and UML Cultural Studies faculty member Jennifer Cadero-Gillette worked on one project: the exhibition of the work of Ralph Fasanella, a 20th century self-taught artist. Fasanella created a series of paintings and drawings about mill life in Lawrence and Lowell now on display at the Gallery at Lawrence Heritage State Park from October 12-December 16th, 2013.

Students attend the Gallery at Lawrence Heritage State Park where Fasanella’s paintings are on display

“The reason this class has been so valuable to my education is that rather than a group of students learning in a traditional classroom, it has been a group of colleagues working together on a huge project where each person has a unique expertise to bring to the table and is crucial to its success, which is great experience for working in the professional world.” Phil Minard ('16)

GIVING BACK

Through this exhibition, students have been able to give back to the community in Lawrence. The exhibit and all related events are free and open to the public. Students are serving as docents to explain the historical contexts of Fasanella’s paintings to visitors and the prominent place of working-class citizens who have helped build Lawrence from the ground up. Students will also participate in a film night, showing several documentaries about Ralph Fasanella and his work, and will participate in a symposium where historians and friends of Fasanella will come together to discuss his work. Lastly, all proceeds from the catalogue which students worked on are being donated to the Lawrence Heritage State Park.

WHO’S WHO

Prof. Jennifer Cadero-Gillette: Project Overseer
Cristi Diaz Contreras: Translator
Munish Gandevia: Documentarian
Lilly Gillette: Documentarian
Julieth Giraldo: Translator, Exhibit Poster Designer
Melissa Kiessling: Marketing & Communications Representative

Steve Kinney: Installation Artist
Kyle Luke: Public Relations Representative
Phil Minard: Music Historian
Alex Nevers: Graphic Designer
Fran Palacios: Translator
Rishi Vangapalli: Documentarian

HIGHLIGHTS FROM STUDENT PROJECTS

FILMING THE PROCESS

Three videographers from three different disciplines and more than 6 years in age difference from oldest to youngest - Rishi, Munish and Lilly have been capturing every moment of the project. The goal of the group is to capture the process of creating an art exhibition in a way that pays homage to the artist while reflecting students’ own take on the process. When completed, students hope to enter a film festival.

“Our journey has taught us much about filming and editing, as well as the process of curating and creating an art exhibit.” Munish Gandevia ('15)

CREATING THE INSTALLATION

Steve Kinney ('14) contributed an interactive sculpture installation, portraying a supervisor’s desk and viewpoint in a cross section of one of Fasanella’s textile mills. The interaction came from a viewer’s positioning into the cross sectioned mill, a reproduction of one of Ralph’s mill worker’s using sticky dots.

“The most ingratiating part of this experience was working with dedicated colleagues, with the guidance & support of a very knowledgeable professor. I know that this course will have long term value to the participants’ communications and interactions in the future.” Steve Kinney ('14)

DESIGNING THE CATALOG

Alex Nevers ('16) worked on the design and layout of the catalog containing essays about Fasanella and the Bread and Roses Series. Working closely with the Media Center staff at UML, Nevers learned basic and advanced concepts in several graphic design programs, and eventually was able to teach herself the skills necessary for the task. All proceeds from the catalogue are being donated to the Friends of the Lawrence Heritage State Park.

“This was an incredible way for me to gain experience outside of the classroom and expand my knowledge into other fields which I may not have ventured into otherwise. Giving students the power and ability to create their own, real-world project is intensely difficult, but the pay-off of seeing the exhibit fully put together was more than satisfying.” Alex Nevers ('16)

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