The award gives one graduating student from the Department of Art’s visual studies major the opportunity to host a solo exhibition at a local art gallery, providing them with the means and support to gain experience in this daunting endeavour.

Five years ago, the My First Professional Exhibition award was created. Since then, five talented artists have been given the opportunity to showcase their work in a prominent way. The award gives one graduating student from the Department of Art’s visual studies major (studio concentration) the opportunity to host a solo exhibition at a local art gallery, providing them with the means and support to gain experience in this daunting endeavor. At its inception in 2012, George and Susannah Kurian were looking for a way to honor their friend, the late artist Dorothy MacFarlane, while supporting an emerging artist. This award was a great way to do both, and the Kurians say, “It feels good to support people who need help at this stage of their lives.” Five years after its inception, we reconnected with the award recipients to discover the impact this award has had.

The inaugural winner was Michael Abel, BFA’12, whose exhibition Monumental Contradictions consisted of large-scale paintings or iconic architecture in eight North American cities, each painted in the theme of the city’s NBA team. Abel’s background in art was minimal: “I took an art class before university. I made a portfolio because I wanted to go into architecture and it seemed like a good place to start.” Professors identified his minor in architecture as contributing to the solidity of his concepts, which was a strength in his submission. As a result of the award, Abel was able to produce his first solo show and his first body of coherent work. To accomplish this, he rented his first art studio at an old fish market in Calgary’s East Village with a few local artists and painted almost every day after his day job. Following graduation, Abel continued to pursue his passion in architecture and obtained a master’s degree in architecture from the University of Toronto. He currently works as a project manager at an architecture firm in New York City. Abel continues to paint and through his work attempts to understand the consequences of network culture and how it is physically manifesting our surroundings.

In 2013, Kelsey Cronje, BFA’13, had the opportunity to create Interzones for her exhibition at ArtPoint Gallery. Cronje describes working for four months on the exhibition works and making more than 30 pieces, with some of the largest reaching dimensions of 163 x 203 cm. When asked about the exhibition, Cronje says, “The exhibition was a great success, but what became a greater success was the opportunities that arose as a result.” Since graduation, Cronje challenged herself to become fluent in Japanese and, once accomplishing this, set a goal of applying to one of Japan’s most prestigious art universities, the Tokyo University of the Arts. Thanks to her hard work studying the language and the extensive portfolio she created with the My First Professional Exhibition award, she was accepted into the program. Cronje has continued her international journey by moving to Lyon, France, in 2016. She will be starting university once again and hopes to gain employment following graduation in the field of digital arts. Cronje describes her path as one driven by her solo expedition of 2013, “the ‘My First Professional Exhibition’ Award has had a lasting effect on my life, and gave me that push that I had needed all those years ago to discover my full potential.”
Katie Green, BFA’14, received the award in 2014, and since then has been building off the opportunity by using it as a platform to apply for future exhibitions, residencies and international opportunities. Green titled her exhibition In Stillness and says, “This award allowed me the space to develop a substantial body of work as well as allow me a period of focused time to research and develop my artistic intent.” You may recognize Green’s work from public art installations in Calgary. She recently finished her largest mural to date at eSPACE entitled The Imaginarium. This mural spans a four-storey staircase and engages eight different surfaces, some reaching 26 feet high. In addition to her local work, Green has broadened her landscape to countries such as Germany, Mexico, Taiwan and Belgium. Since graduating and completing her first exhibition, Green has continued to develop her practice in painting, including paper, canvas and the aforementioned murals, in addition to taking a more sculptural approach through mask-making, puppetry and performance.

Chloe Kinsella, BFA’16, produced her exhibition Veils in 2015 and describes the experience as “intimidating but exciting.” The opportunity to create an exhibition of this size taught her the considerations necessary in being a professional artist and gave her the chance to see the ins and outs of the gallery system. Not only did it teach valuable skills to bring into a future career, but it motivated her to continue her studies. Kinsella is currently completing her first year of graduate studies at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design where she is pursuing her Master of Fine Arts in Interdisciplinary Art. Kinsella’s current project deals with the occupation and repatriation of “natural” spaces and parks in Canada. Sparked by an idea she had during the time of her My First Professional Exhibition, where she began exploring textiles, her practice has extended to more performative work where she is creating garments, playing with camouflage and patterning, and performing in natural environments. When asked her advice for future recipients, Kinsella said, “Take full advantage of the gallery space to execute something amazing that you may not have had the means or inclination to tackle previously. It’s not every day that you get free rein or exclusivity in a space.”

Andrea Rizutti, BFA’17, produced her exhibition, Patchwork, in 2017 and says that having the opportunity to dedicate a significant period of time to the creation of an independent body of work is an invaluable experience. “As an emerging artist, it can be difficult to book solo exhibitions,” says Rizutti, “so this was an amazing opportunity to learn what goes into planning a solo exhibition with the support of the university community.” With the experience she gained through this award, she was able to secure a second solo exhibition in Canmore at Artsplace with the RISE Emerging Artists Program. Here she brought many of the skills she learned, including designing promotional material, coordinating details alongside the gallery and promoting the exhibition. Her current practice continues to explore identity as a work in progress: incomplete and transitory. In describing this work, Rizutti says, “I am interested in making self portraits that appear as ‘in progress’ or somewhat incomplete through the use of raw canvas, gestural line drawing showing underneath the painting, and loose threads that tie the layers together.” For Rizutti, this reflection of “unfinished” work suggests the idea of identity as something that is built upon over time.
**Lights. Camera. Action.**

Matt Embry, BA’99 (Communications Studies), is president and founder of Spotlight Productions. He has produced and directed nonfiction programs for CBC, Global, CTV, HBO Canada, Animal Planet and Telefilm. He has worked with compelling subjects like Theoren Fleury, Jann Arden, Ian Tyson, the Minhas Family and Naheed Nenshi. His list of credits includes *Hell or High Water: The Rebuilding of the Calgary Stampede* — a behind-the-scenes account of how Calgary overcame the catastrophic flood of 2013.

While on campus, Embry completed courses in the communications studies program and volunteered hundreds of hours at NUTV, the campus television station. Following graduation from his MFA program at Concordia University in Montreal, he got his start at a Calgary-based production company as a director and producer. “I was fortunate to work on high-volume national television programs right away,” says Embry, and from there he navigated his career toward his specialization in television commercials and long-form documentaries.

While working on a commercial for Mountain Crest Lager, Embry met Manjit and Ravinder Minhas. He had been hired as the director for their commercial, but they quickly became close business associates and friends. After creating dozens of commercials together — and having fun while doing it — they decided to launch their own company, Spotlight Productions.

Among his many accomplishments, Embry marks helping raise two beautiful children at the top of his list. A recent addition to the list was when his documentary, *Living Proof*, had its world premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF). “It was an incredible experience for me, my family and our team,” says Embry, adding that “it was wonderful to be able to share a Calgary-based story on the global stage and to hopefully help MS patients and families around the world.”

Embry has been living with multiple sclerosis for over 20 years and uses his platform of film to share his story and the story of those living with MS, in addition to sharing how he succeeds in managing the disease without medication. Embry and his partners at Spotlight Productions are continuing to thrive in Calgary because, as Embry describes it, “the world of film and television in Calgary is very exciting right now. New platforms like Amazon Prime and Netflix are giving Calgary producers the opportunity to reach audiences all around the world.”

What’s next for Embry and his team at Spotlight Productions? A timely documentary about the opioid crisis in Canada and the United States. Look for this production coming soon to a screen near you.

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**Connect and tell your story!**

Alumni from the Faculty of Arts have an entrepreneurial spirit that is evident across our disciplines. From visual and performing arts to strategic consulting, alumni are taking the skills they learn on campus to build careers in industries they care about. Throughout this edition we will feature alumni who are embodying the spirit of entrepreneurship and social innovation.

With more than 56,000 Arts alumni we are limited in our space, but we hope this helps paint a picture of the diverse and innovative projects our faculty and alumni are working on.

We want to hear from you! Share your story, update your contact information or get engaged in one of the many great programs and events the University of Calgary has on offer. We are always looking for alumni to come back to speak to students and share their insight on careers, volunteerism, entrepreneurship and social innovation.

**arts.ucalgary.ca/alumni**

**emily.aalbers@ucalgary.ca**

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**Chloe Kimura, Imagined Objects In Idyllic Places**

**Angela Morgan, BFA ’00 (Art),**

Based in downtown Fernie with work in 14 galleries in Canada, Europe and the UK.

angelamorgan.com

**Enrique Crama III, B.A.’02 (Art History),**

Proprietor of Fine and Dandy, a boutique menswear shop in Manhattan, New York.

finelandy.com

**Bonnie Blasutti-Ciordia, BFA ’03 (Drama in Education),**

Owner and founder of My OM Little Yoga Mat — designed for babies, toddlers and preschoolers.

myomlittleyogamat.com

**Leo Wiesen, BFA ’88 (Drama),**

Founded Bleeding Art Industries in 2002, an award-winning company providing special effects to entertainment and other industries worldwide.

bleedingartindustries.com

**Adrienne Tom, B.A.’01 (English),**

In 2008, Tom became Calgary’s first Certified Professional Resume Writer (CPRW). She is Canada’s first Certified Executive Resume Master (CERM).

careerimpressions.ca
Ever since she came to Calgary in 2007, Amal Madibbo, an associate professor in the Department of Sociology, has returned to her native Sudan annually to provide aid to the developing country. She has volunteered with schools in war-torn Darfur, taught in refugee camps, and helped train future researchers at the African country’s universities, among her many acts of service. She’s also worked with Calgary’s Sudanese-Canadian community, to help newcomers integrate.

Until February 2016, Madibbo always undertook these projects using her own funds, making the colossal effort because she was passionate about helping her homeland. This changed when Madibbo was asked to be a part of a new government initiative in Sudan, the Sudanese Partnership for Knowledge Transfer by Expatriate Nationals (SPaKTEN), which encourages Sudanese immigrants to better contribute to the development of their native country.

“This was an important event, because there are so many Sudanese immigrants in other countries, already helping their families and friends, and maybe small businesses back home,” says Madibbo. “But to better contribute, we need to institutionalize that. We need curriculum building. We need better educational and economic investments, investments in hospitals, and business contributions.”

Since 2016, the Sudanese government has continued to increase the funding and human resources allocated to immigration and in support of knowledge transfer. Madibbo is now a member of the Council of Sudanese Scientists and Experts Abroad, a group created to enhance and facilitate the types of activities many Sudanese abroad are already returning to do.

Recently, Madibbo has partnered with four Dutch professors to turn their individual one-off volunteer teaching opportunities into a more established winter school. Together, these professors are teaching classes on topics ranging from sociology, anthropology and medicine, to Indigenous knowledge with a focus on conflict resolution. This group is working with universities in Sudan with the goal of tailoring their expertise to what is needed by the institutions. Madibbo often focuses her teaching on research methodologies for new professors and graduate students.

Moving forward, Madibbo hopes to increase participation from professors in Canada and believes this is possible with the recent increase of Canadian interest in Africa. “To make this a true partnership between the Netherlands, Sudan and Canada, I’d like to see a wider range of expertise from Canadian universities,” says Madibbo. Some of the areas where students have expressed an interest in learning more include statistics and engineering.

Some of the key materials required to successfully teach these engaged and inspiring students are textbooks. Annually, Madibbo works with colleagues and students to collect gently used textbooks to bring with her to Sudan. “Students are so appreciative of the knowledge we bring as professors but are also appreciative of the materials we bring to leave with them to continue their studies.”

Are you interested in helping support Madibbo’s work in Sudan? Do you have a textbook from 2007-18 that is collecting dust on your shelf? Clear that space for your next good read and send your book to Sudan.

Contact Emily Aalbers | 403.220.5827 | emily.aalbers@ucalgary.ca
If you save $50 per month for twelve months, how much will you save? You may think the answer is $600, but for a family living in a low-income household, and participating in Momentum’s Fair Gains program, they could save a total of $2,400 toward school for themselves or their children, or even their own home.

Momentum is a local non-profit organization that uses a Community Economic Development approach to provide hope and opportunity to Calgarians living in poverty. It supports individuals and families to take control of personal finances, secure meaningful employment, start a business, borrow and repay loans for business, and even purchase homes.

By 2015, Momentum’s matched-savings programs were running successfully, but they were looking to expand the reach of these initiatives while maintaining current operating costs. Momentum approached Professor Rob Oxoby from the Department of Economics to gain insight into how to make this possible. Oxoby is the current department head, and his areas of research include behavioural economics and economics psychology, microeconomics and applied game theory, political economy, and social theory.

Although Momentum had a number of Matched Savings programs, its hands-on approach and resource-intensive workshops did not allow the program to broaden its reach without drastically increasing its resources. Combining methods from economics (measuring rates of impatience and preferences toward risk) and psychometric measures (personality information relevant toward savings behaviour and long-term planning), Oxoby worked with Momentum to see how it could streamline its intake processes to assess an applicant’s level of financial literacy and identify the level of support they would benefit from. Oxoby also worked with Momentum on its financial literacy education to help tailor its approach to the newly defined groups of applicants.

By working together, they were able to create a new approach allowing Momentum to broaden its programs and increase participation. Since this collaboration, Momentum has gone from offering four to five different Matched Savings programs that include programs for youth, families and those hoping to purchase a home.

Engaging communities is one of the three pillars from the Faculty of Arts Strategic Plan, which was launched in May 2016. Oxoby’s work with Momentum is an excellent example of how faculty members can share skills and research to support local community organizations and make academic expertise more accessible.

When asked what the biggest challenge was, Oxoby says there is often a misunderstanding of what an academic can bring to the table: “Our formulas might look complicated, but it’s just a different way of visualizing concrete concepts that are readily applicable.” For Oxoby, the biggest learning was getting the opportunity to look behind the numbers to get a much more personal view on what the data was looking to do.

Oxoby continues to work with community partners and contribute to social innovations through ongoing work with The Mustard Seed Calgary and The Doorway, an organization helping young people on the streets who are choosing to rejoin society. By taking these opportunities to work together we can continue to support the future growth of the transformational services our community has to offer.
What do North of 60 and the nation’s capital have in common? The Internet. At least that’s what drew Mitchell Callahan, BA’07 (Political Science), and Dominik Sauter, BA’08 (Geography), together almost 10 years ago. The story goes that the Internet connection in their residence hall wasn’t very good, and two people, we’ll call them Michael and David, provided an alternative option. This mutual interest would lay the groundwork for a lifelong friendship and ultimately a successful entrepreneurial endeavor.

Mitchell Callahan grew up in Yellowknife, NT, only leaving the area for an occasional trip to Newfoundland or Disneyland. More isolated than many, Callahan distinctly remembers his teachers first hyping up the Internet in 1994: “They were selling the dream that you can talk to anyone, anywhere in the world.” When he got at-home dial-up in 1996, this dream became a reality, and he was hooked. When asked why he chose UCalgary, he says, “There is a kind of cultural affinity, a ruggedness and an appreciation of the land.”

Dominik Sauter’s upbringing in the nation’s capital was slightly different: “I grew up in a hotel. Literally.” Sauter’s parents owned and operated the Swiss Hotel, a boutique hotel in a historic building in downtown Ottawa. He says, “I didn’t get to see much of the world, but the world came to me.” Originally, Sauter thought he would love to go to a school in Switzerland, but when he went for a visit he didn’t like the vibe. “It made me realize that what I really wanted was a Canadian university far enough from Ottawa that I would have the residence experience.”

Following university, Callahan and Sauter went their separate ways. Callahan intended to go to law school, and Sauter returned to Ottawa to start his own hostel. However, as life would have it, their plans changed and circumstances brought these two together again. In a pre-law school visit, Callahan and Sauter built an online video-chat roulette, a site where you would be in a video-chat with someone you don’t know. When this took off they decided to focus their interest in a long-term digital business, and from this, SAU/CAL was born.

In six years SAU/CAL has grown to become an internationally based team of web development consultants who specialize in WordPress and the integration of WooCommerce, an open source e-commerce platform designed for WordPress. SAU/CAL is proud to be one of just a few select preferred vendors. When asked about the decision to recruit people around the world, Callahan says, “Once we realized we could pick and choose the very best from around the world, our lives got better.” While building the company there were highs and lows, times where in desperation for work they took on clients regardless of fit, but learning from these experiences has helped them become better business owners and more strategic in their undertakings.

Both Sauter and Callahan speak highly of their experiences at UCalgary. Sauter says, “I met so many good people, including my wife and Mitch. … UCalgary really gave me the people skills I needed to start and grow a business. No matter how things change technically, those skills will help me for the rest of my life.” Callahan, who also met his wife in Calgary, says his BA helped his writing, research and presentation skills. “Those skills are absolutely critical to business success, along with the art of persuasion,” which he says he also learned in his BA and uses regularly.

Although they have similar educational backgrounds, their drastically different life experiences make them complementary business partners and friends. “When one of us is convinced that the rest of the world has gone crazy,” Callahan says, “we usually find salvation in the other.” And when times are tough, they’ll always have the Internet.
Looking back to propel us forward

Faculty of Arts Strategic Plan 2017-22
Beginning in May 2017, the Faculty of Arts worked with undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, staff, alumni and community leaders to build their strategic plan to help guide the path forward. The result was a drive to engage, inspire and discover.

Energizing Arts sets the direction for the Faculty of Arts through critical inquiry, creative practice and collaborative exploration. The strategy also supports participatory citizenship through informed discussion and evidence-based approaches.

The strategy is built upon three priorities:
• Critical and creative research, teaching and learning;
• Engaging communities; and
• Citizenship, diversity and inclusion.

Faculty of Arts Internationalization Strategy 2017-22
Globally Engaged Citizenship in a Changing World
Launched in November 2017, this strategy was inspired by the university’s Internationalization Strategy (2012), and responds to strengths, opportunities and goals specific to the Faculty of Arts. At a time when our world is more globally interconnected than ever, universities need to promote internationalization as a way to enrich our individual students and contribute to the greater good of our societies, at home and beyond.

The Faculty of Arts is committed to increasing inter-cultural awareness among students; strengthening research and knowledge production; and fostering global partnerships, cooperation and solidarity.

The strategy is built upon four priorities:
• Increase Prominence of Arts Internationalization Activities and Initiatives
• Internationalize Arts Programs and Curricula
• Enhance International Teaching and Learning Opportunities for Faculty and Staff
• Increase the International Dimension of Research in Arts

Find these strategies at arts.ucalgary.ca/strategy

Q & A

Lourdes Juan, BGs’05, Medes’10,
The founder of Hive Developments and Soma Hammam & Spa

Lourdes Juan, BGS’05, Medes’10, is the founder of Hive Developments, an urban planning firm, and Soma Hammam & Spa, which focuses on traditional treatments. Juan is also the founder of Leftovers Foundation, an organization that prevents food from being thrown in the garbage and ensures it gets to service agencies in need. The Leftovers Foundation benefits local agencies such as the Calgary Drop-In Centre, Calgary Interfaith Food Bank, Alpha House, Making Changes Association and Ian from the Cold.

In 2017 she was awarded the Faculty of Arts Celebrated Alumni Award.

What was the first business you founded?
Technically, it was Hive Developments, but Soma Hammam & Spa was incorporated a few months after. It was the year I graduated from my master’s in 2010.

What did you learn from the first business that you brought into your next endeavours?
When I first started my businesses, I was really naïve when it came to cash-flow projections and hiring. Although it’s an ongoing process, I’ve learned over the years to manage cash flow and build great teams.

What do profit and non-profit businesses have in common? And how are they different?
In my opinion, they have more in common than they differ. For-profit and non-profit businesses exist to solve problems. Both types of organizations must provide impact, transparency and employment. They are different in that non-profit organizations are bound to social change. In my experience, for-profit businesses can have a level of corporate social responsibility, but that’s different from working toward social change.

What support is there in Calgary for business owners?
Calgary has a very supportive entrepreneurial climate. For the most part, people want to support local, and they aren’t afraid to tell businesses how to do better. I think that’s a form of support and it’s important for small businesses to grow and be the best they can be. Support for me has come from other entrepreneurs that are at different stages of our business. We share challenges, celebrate wins, give advice and lend an ear when needed.

What support is there in Calgary for people looking to found their own non-profit?
There are a lot of great organizations that support non-profits in Calgary. I’m a big fan of Social Venture Partners, which provides mentors and board support as well as the accelerator programs for newly formed non-profits and social enterprises.
With another school year coming to an end, we take a moment to reflect on our accomplishments and look to the future. Last year, 2017 saw the launch of both our Strategic Plan and Internationalization Strategy, which have helped shape our direction and unify our goals across this diverse faculty. In November, the University of Calgary Psychology Clinic opened, thanks to the generosity of two alumni, Lori Egger, BA’87, MSc’90, PhD’94, (Psychology), and Steve Laut, BSc’79. This state-of-the-art, in-house psychology clinic will provide a sophisticated research environment for faculty and graduate students. Chacmool, the annual archaeology conference spearheaded by our students, turned 50 and welcomed over 300 participants to our campus. And our researchers continue to push the boundaries in areas such as dance science and research on the effects of pre-natal stress.

Looking ahead, we see a renewed energy toward entrepreneurship and social innovation. This magazine has featured some of our alumni and faculty who are already making great strides in these areas. With the continued diversification of industries in Alberta, we are seeing an increased interest in entrepreneurial thinking across all departments. To help address this in a faculty as large and diverse as ours, there are two things we can do. The first is to disrupt traditional ways of thinking in our disciplines and to consider new opportunities outside of the norm. The second is to develop courses and curricula that specifically encourage entrepreneurial thinking. We want to see our students approach problems with creativity and critical thinking, whether they are in psychology or they are dancers or visual artists.

Finally, in 2018 the Faculty of Arts will mark over 60,000 degrees granted. This is an exciting milestone for our young and diverse faculty. Many of these alumni have re-engaged with the university through events, volunteering, giving and mentorship. The coming year will see an increase in mentorship opportunities available. To those alumni who have not yet had the opportunity to re-connect, keep an eye out over the coming year for an opportunity that might interest you.

For more information, please contact

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