

Connecticut College

## Digital Commons @ Connecticut College

---

Annual Reports

Ammerman Center for Arts and Technology

---

2016

### Annual Report, 2015-2016

Ammerman Center, Connecticut College

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.conncoll.edu/ammermanreports>

---

#### Recommended Citation

Ammerman Center, Connecticut College, "Annual Report, 2015-2016" (2016). *Annual Reports*. 9.  
<https://digitalcommons.conncoll.edu/ammermanreports/9>

This Annual Report is brought to you for free and open access by the Ammerman Center for Arts and Technology at Digital Commons @ Connecticut College. It has been accepted for inclusion in Annual Reports by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Connecticut College. For more information, please contact [bpancier@conncoll.edu](mailto:bpancier@conncoll.edu).

The views expressed in this paper are solely those of the author.

## Annual Report 2015-16

---

### Introduction

We had an exciting year that included an international symposium and a full series of events supported by the Mellon Foundation grant. This is the end of my second year as the Director of the Ammerman Center and I am inspired by the energy and change that is happening in the program. There has been much hard work through collaborative efforts of faculty fellows, students and staff, to move the Center forward with new initiatives in curriculum, community/partners, and resources. Our community is broadening with new fellows whose interdisciplinary interests intersect with the goals of the Center.

We are so fortunate to have received a Mellon Officer's Grant last May (2015) in the amount of \$100,000. The grant *Reimagining Arts and Technology at Connecticut College* throughout this year has supported artists and consultants who have visited campus, met with faculty fellows and presented lectures and workshops to our students and the general public. This grant provided funds for the Faculty Focus Group to travel to other institutions to see their programs and facilities. It also provided funds for a visiting fellow, Caroline Park, to teach a new course AT222a *New Sonic Futures and the Activist Imaginary*. Caroline Park was part of the group of faculty fellows that came together throughout the year to discuss new initiatives and re-define the program. Building a rich, vibrant Center community and curricular program is at the core of *Reimagining Arts and Technology at Connecticut College*. Details of the grant progress can be found at the end of this report.

### CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

#### Student Scholars

This year, our student scholars consist of 13 sophomores, 4 juniors, and 12 seniors. This was our largest graduating class in the Center's history! Our seniors represented a wide range of majors and include Studio Art, Architectural Studies, Music and Technology, Gender and Women's Studies, and Computer Science.

The senior year is an intensive year-long capstone learning experience culminating in a rich interdisciplinary project. It builds upon coursework, independent study, a junior summer internship, meetings with and presentations by visiting artists and researchers through colloquia and symposia, group critiques and the senior seminar.

Our seniors have an important opportunity to be part of an interdisciplinary community to share and support one another. We are designing scaffolding in our program where our seniors will work with and mentor our sophomores and juniors. Our students are working artists and researchers, and as such, it is important for our students to take risks, to experiment

and to fail, to be critical of technology in order to redefine tools and techniques. We believe that the capstone experience is an excellent preparation for the post-college professional experience since it requires a follow-through from concept to implementation and presentation. The process continually engages the students by requiring them to clearly articulate the design and communication of the project. This experience is often found at the graduate level and we are committed to working with students who are willing to engage at this level. This year we provided small grants for our seniors to support their final projects. Funds went to technical support and materials for installations.

This year, our seniors completed their projects and presented them in talks, demonstrations, a gallery exhibition, and interactive site-based installations. On May 6, our seniors demonstrated their projects in the Shain library and at the visualization wall. On May 21, our seniors presented their final research projects at the visualization wall to the Center community in addition to friends and families. As in previous years, the certificate ceremony took place in the Charles Chu Asian Art Reading Room. President Bergeron attended the ceremony, gave advice to the seniors and read a short statement to the students from Judith Ammerman.

## Senior Student Scholars

*Ammerman Senior Student Scholars from left to right: Juan Flores, Marley Slade, Alyssa Klein, Joey Mercado, Hope Palatella, Chelsea Preston, Ray Coti, Julia Proft, Teagan Atwater, Grace Juster, Drew Andre, Ben Webber.*



**Drew Andre** *Music & Technology major*

Senior Integrative Project: **Aura**

Drew worked with light, music and immersive qualities of space. He built the work with Arduino to create interactive sculptural light forms connected to real time sound.

**Teagan Atwater** *Architectural Studies/Computer Science double major*

Recipient of the Ammerman Center for Arts & Technology Bridget Baird Prize

Senior Integrative Project: **New Student Center for Innovation**. Teagan's project was a proposed building and community makerspace between Shain and Cro.



*Exploded view of Teagan Atwater's  
New Student Center for  
Innovation.*

**Ray Coti** *Computer Science major*

Senior Integrative Project: **Immersive Virtual Environment Exploring Gender Issues.** Ray explored his experience on campus and connected it to his hometown of Chicago. He remade architectural forms and public spaces using Unity Software creating a multiuse interactive environment.

**Juan Flores** *Studio Art major*

Recipient of the Art Department First Prize, as well as the external grant from Brandeis University—the Mortimer Hayes-Brandeis Traveling Fellowship Award—a prestigious grant to travel and conduct research in Mexico for one year beginning in July. His MHB project **“Looking for Mexican Techno-Culture through the Country’s Eccentric Electronic and Experimental Sound Scene”** was an extension of his blended Ammerman senior project and his studio art practice.

Senior Integrative Project: **Video Installation Exploring Liminal Space and Borders.** Conceptually powerful installation titled **Residue** explored metaphorical imagery through structural form, painting and video. This was part of a larger body of work for the Art major senior thesis exhibition.

*Juan Flores final installation titled:  
Video Installation  
Exploring Liminal Space and Borders  
The work Residue, installed in the  
White Box Gallery, was a composited video  
and wall painting.*



**Grace Juster** *Studio Art and Computer Science double major*

Recipient of the Ammerman Center for Arts and Technology Smalley/Zahler Award  
Senior Integrative Project: **Printerpack: Wearable Technology that 3D prints Users’ Virtual Activity.** This creative work looked at the relationships between physical and virtual, what is visible and what is not visible. Grace explored these concepts through 3D printing

as a satirical look at data consumption and virtual identity. **Printerpack** was part of a larger body of work for the Art major senior thesis exhibition.

*Grace Juster (center) presenting her senior project Printerpack at the Ammerman Center Senior Project Demonstrations in Shain Library on May 6, 2016.*



**Alyssa Klein** *Studio Art and Computer Science double major*

Senior Integrative Project: **Push Notification and Sound Installations Exploring Personal Connectivity.** Alyssa explored digital technologies that are part of our daily life and how we connect with one another. Processed sounds from her iPhone were set up as a randomly generated soundscape. This sound art installation was part of a larger body of work for the Art major senior thesis exhibition.

**Joey Mercado** *Gender and Women's Studies major*

Recipient of the Gender and Women's Studies Susan J. Rose '62 prize, Center for the Comparative Study of Race and Ethnicity Award for Public Intellectual Excellence, the Dean of the College Theresa Perri Ammirati Award, and the Dean of Institutional Equity & Inclusion Vanguard Award for Equity & Inclusion.

Senior Integrative Project: **Territories of Difference: An Institutional Sonic Navigation Tour.** Joey's work was a sonic exploration of CC spaces intended to challenge institutional norms and inequalities on campus. The audio-based work was based on experiential learning and reflection to encourage policy change on campus.

**Hope Pallatela** *Studio Art major and Computer Science minor*

Senior Integrative Project: **Chromatic Consciousness: an Exploration of Human Identity Through Textiles and Technology.** This work explored memories and dreams through hands-on materials processes mixed with processed video and lighting.

**Chelsea Preston** *Studio Art major and Psychology minor*

Recipient of the Art Department Jane Bill Prize

Senior Integrative Project: **The Adirondack Park: An Exploration of Space, Place, Sound and Home.** Chelsea created an immersive sound scape installation and 3D sculptures, as part of a larger body of work for the Art major senior thesis exhibition.



**Julia Proft** *Computer Science major and minor in Classics, Linguistics, and Mathematics*

Winthrop Scholar, Phi Beta Kappa, and recipient of the Computer Science Department Computer Science Award.

Senior Integrative Project: **Outhack**. Julia recontextualized Arkanoid, a 1980s video game. By reverse engineering processes, she changed different memory values making the project similar to glitch art, but still playable. Julia is heading to Cornell University to begin her PhD in Computer Science.

**Marley Slade** *Studio Art major and Computer Science minor*

Senior Integrative Project: **Interactive Installation Exploring Drawing and Memory**

This work explored, through technology, ways of drawing with light as an interactive installation where the user created colored line work with a flashlight and the system collected light drawings over time.

**Ben Webber** *Computer Science and Music & Technology double major*

Senior Integrative Project: **Audio Signal Analysis for 3D Spatialization Schemes**

Ben's research was designed for an immersive experience using headphones, where the user had the ability to place both the listener and the sound source positions within a 3D space.

## **Sophomore and Junior Student Scholars**

**Our junior class included four students from a range of disciplines:**

Virginia Gresham, major: *Computer Science*

Noah Landy, major: *Art*, minor: *Music and Technology*

Bianca Scofield, major: *Psychology*, minor: *Art*

Elissa Web, major: *Computer Science*

**Our sophomore class included thirteen students from a range of disciplines:**

Jack Beal, major: *Computer Science*

Rebecca Brill Weitz, (self-designed) major: *Performance Design and Technology*

Lissett Camargo, major: *Art, Psychology*

Emily Green, major: *Dance, Computer Science*

Lauren Linehan, major: *Architectural Studies*

Rishma Mendhekar, major: *Art, Computer Science*

Lee Messier, major: *Art*

Greg Montenegro, major: *Art*

Micaela Nee, major: *Art, Psychology*

Isaih Porter, major: *Computer Science*, minor: *Art*

Harry Solovay, major: *Computer Science*

Alana Wimer, major: *Art, American Studies*

Yi Xie, major: *Film Studies, Computer Science*

## Curriculum

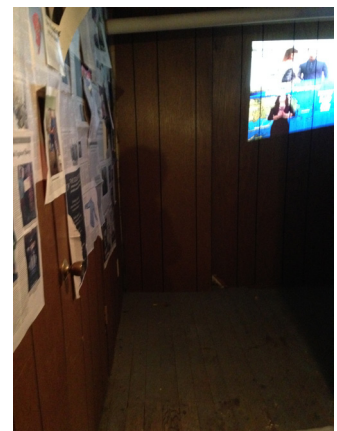
We have made changes to our curriculum through the preliminary work and development of the Mellon initiative that include new cross-listed courses from a wider range of disciplines, a gateway course, a junior year seminar, a revised senior seminar, and integrative internship preparation and reflection. These changes will build a richer experience for our students in the sophomore and junior year that align with the *Connections* curricular changes on campus.

### AT201 Topics on the History of Arts and Technology (Gateway course)

This year we worked on building a more complete series of courses to better prepare students in the certificate program. We now have in place our sophomore gateway course, AT201 *Topics on the History of Arts and Technology*, designed and taught by Steve Luber. Next year we plan to have Nadav Assor teach the gateway course. Our gateway course examined the intimate connection between the desire for artistic expression and the technologies that amplify, distribute, duplicate, and collaborate in the creation, reception, and interpretation of that expression. AT201 also included a lab section of that was held Friday afternoons where students worked on semester-long group projects.

*Final sophomore gateway course collaborative team lab experiments presented in the Ammerman House.*

*Left to right:  
“Givers and Takers” by Greg Montenegro, Micaela Nee, Isaih Porter, Alana Wimer. “The Curve” by Lissett Camargo, Emily Green, Lauren Linehan, Harry Soloway, Yi Xie. “Throughout Media” by Jack Beal, Rebecca Brill Weitz, Rishma Mendhekar, Lee Messier.*



### AT 310 Ammerman Junior Seminar and AT401 Ammerman Senior Seminar

This year, through the Mellon grant, we developed a junior seminar (AT310) experience which will begin in 2016-17. AT310 *Ammerman Junior Seminar* will be a two-credit course offered both semesters and will introduce students to new tools, design thinking process, visiting artists, and preparation for study away. Students in this course will also prepare for their internships and senior integrative projects. I will teach this inaugural course in 2016-17.

AT 401 *Ammerman Senior Seminar*, over the past two years, has been taught by Steve Luber. Steve brought engaging content and thoughtful analysis to material and projects. This course has always been a 1 credit, pass/fail system. Beginning in the Fall 2016, this course will be two-credits and a letter grade which will carry more weight. We expect this new structure to better represent the work in the course.

We have created complementary and connected syllabi for the Center seminar courses for 2016-17. They are scheduled at the same time but in different locations and taught by different faculty. This structure will allow flexibility to connect the classes throughout the year as well as allow them to work independently.

### **Cross-listed courses**

The Center has been increasing its connections with various departments with programming and cross-listed courses. We are interested in developing more connections with the humanities and the sciences in the future.

#### **Fall 2015 semester—**

AT104/ART104 *Time-Based Digital Art* – Nadav Assor (Art)

AT203/MUS 203 *Electro.Acoustic I* – Art Kreiger (Music)

AT209/ART 213 *Sound Art* – Nadav Assor (Art)

AT218/CS218 *Multimedia* – Ozgur Izmirlı (Computer Science)

AT302/ART 302 *Designing Visual Information* – Andrea Wollensak (Art)

AT309/CS309 *Graphics & Virtual Environments* – James Lee (Computer Science)

AT401 *Senior Seminar in Arts & Technology* – Steve Luber (Theater)

AT 491 *Individual Study*

AT 222A *Post-Digital: New Sonic Futures & The Activist Imaginary* – Caroline Park

#### **Spring 2016 semester—**

AT104/ART104 *CC:Time-Based Digital Art* – Nadav Assor (Art)

AT201 *Topics on the History of Arts & Technology* – Steve Luber

AT214/ART214 *Video Installation* – Nadav Assor (Art)

AT215/ART215 *3D: Scan/Model/Animate/Print* – Nadav Assor (Art)

AT237/DAN237 *Media in Performance* – Shawn Hove (Dance)

AT304/MUS304 *Electro.Acoustic Music II* – Art Kreiger (Music)

AT 402 *Senior Seminar in Arts & Technology* – Steve Luber (Theater)

AT 492 *Individual Study*

#### **Fall 2016 semester—**

Next fall we will cross-list Rijuta Mehta's new course ENG 129 *Modern Media Culture*

### **Internships**

As part of our improved curricular initiative, we are requiring our juniors during their internship summer to complete the *Internship Reflection Document* which includes an internship reflection paper, a daily journal during the internship, and a revised Integrative Project/Idea Development Statement, for the senior project. This summer work formalizes our students' internship experience through thoughtful reflection in the context of their work in the Ammerman Center. The internship journal component is designed to help students record, reflect and analyze their internship experience. Our students also revisit and revise their proposals for their senior year integrative projects. We asked students to research, write, sketch, prototype, and learn new tools over the summer. We recently connected with The Met MediaLab at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and they are interested in working with our juniors



in an internship format. We will plan a trip to NYC this fall to visit the facilities and director. Our juniors are in internships that support their upcoming senior integrative projects:

- Virginia Gresham (CS major) is interning at Yale University Communications Intern, Office of Communications and Marketing.
- Noah Landy (Art major) is interning in Brooklyn at Drink More Records, Brooklyn NY.
- Bianca Scofield (Psychology major) is interning in New York City working at TSU, Marketing Communications Designer at a small interactive design studio.
- Elissa Webb (Computer Science major). Elissa is working at Portola Valley Theater Conservatory, as a Technical Director in Portola Valley, CA.

## **FACILITIES**

### **Our New House at 768 Williams Street**

The Center has been changing and growing over the past two years with larger numbers of students and fellows. The Mellon Faculty Focus Group (FFG) collectively decided that we needed a dedicated space for the Center to help create a sense of community. We contacted the Dean of Faculty in August 2015 requesting a workspace and 768 Williams Street was offered to us. We began using the space last fall after we furnished it with tables, chairs, lights and whiteboards. It became our Ammerman Center gathering space for seminars, artist talks, and student work spaces. It has an open space as a seminar room, a faculty office and a kitchen on the first floor. On the second floor there are 4 rooms that were used as student work spaces.



*The Ammerman House is located at 768 Williams Street and home to student workspaces, seminar room and faculty offices for collaborative research.*

## **EVENTS**

### **Mellon Public Lectures**

Events featured internationally recognized artists and scholars dealing with the wide-reaching implications of opening the connections between arts, science, the humanities and our environment. [Events can be viewed in detail with keywords, live media here.](#)

—On October 27, we hosted our first Mellon consultant, Chris Salter, from Hexagram at Concordia University in Montreal. Over two days, Chris met with students, faculty, staff and



## Lunch Conversations: Sonic Futures and the Activist Imaginary

Visiting guest artists curated by and connected to Caroline Park's course AT222a, presented and performed their work during lunch hour events. They presented their unique areas of expertise from community arts engagement, contemporary culture in visual art and music, and critical thought.

—On September, 17, Caroline Park presented an artist talk *Embodying the Beyond*. Caroline presented and demonstrated her creative work as an experimental composer, musician and artist, self-shaping from daily racial and feminist experience and questioning in order to reclaim and redefine what it means to be human.

—On October 22, Rebecca Mitchell presented *Extreme Aesthetics: The Creation of Self, Gender, Art, and Life as Radical Feminism*. This event was an ambient vocal performance and Q&A talk by Mitchell, a feminist performance & sound artist, vocalist, activist and educator.

—On November 12, Momo Ishiguro presented a talk *Soundscapes for Supermarkets: The Digital Audio Workstation and the New Democratic-Utopian Art*. Ishiguro is a producer, songwriter, and Development Manager in NYC's influential Printed Matter Inc, a non-profit artists' books and publication organization. In her talk she explored how today's rapidly evolving landscape of digital music has created a new mode of cultural production and distribution.

## Workshops and Live Arts Events

The Center offered workshops for Center students and in selected courses.

—In early November, Butch Rovin worked with Sound Art and Center students on live improvisation using amplified objects.

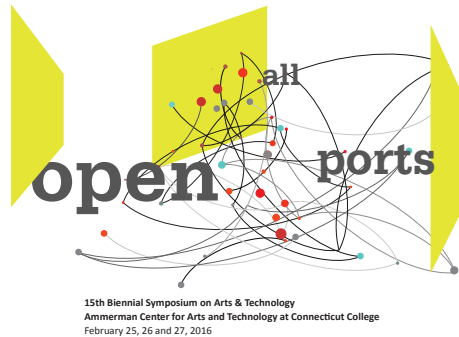
—The January Technology Workshop this year (January 18-22) was taught by Marc Downie and Paul Kaiser of OpenEndedGroup. The January Workshop, *On Location in 3D*, this year focused on 3D film footage from the city of New London. This five-day workshop put advanced 3D film technology in the hands even of those with no prior knowledge of computing. Using everyday tools like cellphone cameras and sketchbooks, students spent much of their time in the field, following their own investigation into the spaces, and history of New London. They created visual essays and were projected in 3D within Open Ended Group's advanced Field programming environment and renderer. [Details of the workshop can be found here in a narrative video.](#)

*Marc Downie and Paul Kaiser (below) with Center students during the January Technology Workshop in Cummings 301 and touring The Garde in New London.*



## BIENNIAL SYMPOSIUM

### Open All Ports: 15th Symposium on Arts & Technology

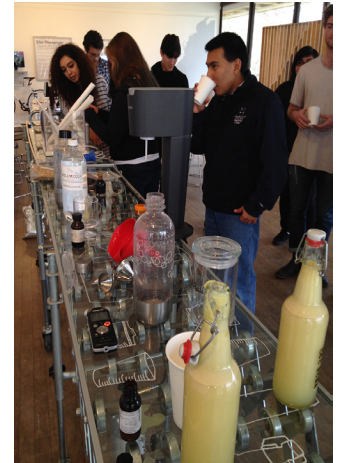


Every other year the Center organizes an international symposium. This year we sponsored our largest symposium with over 100 participants. *Open All Ports* was conceptualized as physical places, demarcating points of passage such as arrival and departure, entry and exit. Virtual ports (such as network and computer ports) undergird our digital connectivity. We now exist in an era in which we attempt to balance access, information, security, privacy and freedom. Ports have gained newfound significance, no longer understood solely as traffic nodes, but as points of a larger exploration and reflection on connectivity and sharing. As such, they lead us to revealing a diversity of perspectives that range from corporeality to virtuality, and from empowerment to vulnerability.

It was important for us to broaden our reach to the larger community for this event and throughout the year, so we organized events with Spark Makerspace and the Hygienic Galleries in New London as part of the symposium. The final listing of events included 30 papers/presentations, 2 panel discussions, 1 keynote address, 21 individual pieces in three concerts, 3 commissioned artist teams, 1 experimental sound show, 2 major exhibitions, 2 receptions, and Ammerman Center senior presentations in the Ammerman house. This symposium was dedicated to David Smalley, the Henry B. Plant Professor Emeritus of Art. Smalley co-founded the Center for Arts and Technology and spearheaded the center's Biennial Symposia of Arts & Technology.

The three day symposium event was highlighted by paper sessions, evening performances, exhibitions, and new works at the intersection of arts, culture, and technology. The keynote address "*Adventures in BiodivCITY*" was given by Natalie Jeremijenko, Associate Professor in the Visual Art Department, NYU and affiliated with the Computer Science Department and Environmental Studies program. Natalie also presented creative social environmental works and proposals for new works in a solo exhibition "*xHIBITION Creative Systems for the Improvement of Local Human and Environmental Health*" in Cummings galleries during the spring semester (January 25-March 4).

*Natalie Jeremijenko held workshops connected to her Cummings xHIBITION Creative Systems for the Improvement of Local Human and Environmental Health where students created xCOLA Manufactory consisting of locally sourced drinks.*



Nadav Assor, Associate Director of Events and Assistant Professor of Art, worked closely with Natalie Jeremijenko in curating the exhibition and overseeing the workshops. Nadav also curated the downtown symposium exhibition at the Hygienic Art Gallery on Bank Street. This show highlighted OpenEnded Group's recent work along with selected symposium artists Katherine Bennett, João Costa, Angela Ferraiolo, Lindsey French, Brittany Ransom, Owen Roberts, Sheida Soleimani, and Kelly Thompson.

*Open All Ports exhibition at Hygienic Galleries in New London on Bank Street. Installation of OpenEndedGroup's work 'Transect.'*

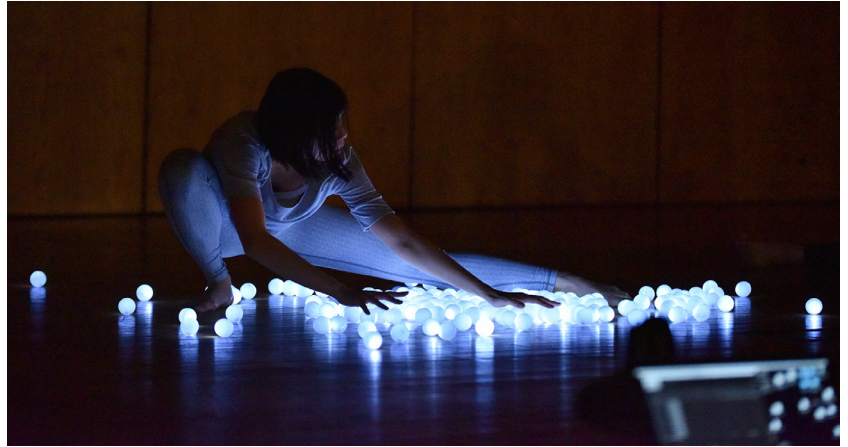


The Center continues to commission new works that premier at the symposium. This year, we selected three interdisciplinary teams from a competitive pool of over 60 applicants. The teams arrived for their residency during the week prior to the symposium. Each team received a stipend, housing, meals, and technical and equipment support. By the end of the week and during the symposium the teams presented new works. This is the 6th year we have sponsored commissioned artists (2006), totalling 18 interdisciplinary teams.

Commissioned Artist team, Snow Fu and Luke Hampton (from Chicago) exhibited their new work in the White Box Gallery in Cummings. "Still" was an architectural video installation that explored perception and physical forms that functioned as a port.

ARCOS Dance (Erica Gionfriddo and Eliot Gray Fisher from Austin, Texas) worked during the week in Fortune Recital Hall in Cummings on a new performance titled "ANNI" (Archival Narrative Network Initiative). ANNI, a transmedia artwork, combined interactive public installation, live performance, and an online exhibit.

*Commissioned artistic team:  
ARCOS Dance Company  
“ANNI” (Archival Narra-  
tive Network Initiative) a  
new commissioned work was  
performed during the Saturday  
evening concert in Evans.  
Directed by Erica Gionfriddo  
and Eliot Gray Fisher.*



*Commissioned artistic teams (left): Snow Fu and Luke Hampton “Still” video installation in White Box Gallery, Cummings. Alexander Dupuis and Kristin Hayter demonstrating work in progress Apparition Coil” in gallery 66, Cummings for Friday evening concert (right).*

Our third commissioned artist team, Alexander Dupuis and Kristin Hayter, created a performative sonic world “Apparition Coil” consisting of live voice processed through electronics and visuals performed through custom video feedback software. Alex and Kristin worked in Gallery 66 and performed on Friday evening in Evans Hall, Cummings.

In addition, in Cummings 301, an interactive installation titled *a canary torsi*, by Yanira Castro, Kathy Couch, and Stephan Moore, was open to the public. This work explored interactive gesture as a mirroring environment.

The three evening performances in Evans Hall consisted of 21 individual, live and interactive performances, fixed media, and film works. Featured performances were by commissioned artists ARCOS Dance, Alex Dupuis & Kristin Hayter. Connecticut College faculty presented works that included Bridget Baird, Heidi Henderson, Art Krieger, Caroline Park, Andrea Wollensak. Thomas Labadorf and Patrice Newman performed works in the evening concerts.

*A canary torsi installation, by Yanira Castro, Kathy Couch, and Stephan Moore, was open to the public during the symposium in Cummings 301.*



Our final concert, *Experimental Sound Show* curated by Caroline Park, was held on Saturday evening downtown New London at the new Spark Makerspace. The program featured experimental musicians and performance artists who explored and redefine live composition. This performance included a performance by Ammerman students from *AT 222A Post Digital: New Sonic Futures*, and artists Cecilia Lopez, Jinku Kim, and Asha Tamirisa.

*Ammerman students performing in the Experimental Sound Show, curated by Caroline Park, at Spark Makerspace, Golden Street, New London, as the final event of Open All Ports Symposium.*



Behind the scenes, appreciative recognition of the year-long planning of the events goes to the core faculty and staff that worked so well together to create an outstanding series of events. Nadav Assor, curated the exhibitions, researched and selected our Mellon consultants, and participated in reviewing all submissions for the symposium. Appreciative recognition also goes to Associate Directors James Lee, and Steve Luber, faculty fellows Art Krieger and Ozgur Izmirlı, and Mellon Visiting Fellow Caroline Park for committing their time to the review process and planning of the symposium. Caroline Park curated the Experimental Sound Show at Spark Makerspace. The Art and Music departments, specifically, Jim McNeish, and the theater technical services and media services were all instrumental in organizing, testing and working with artists in rehearsals. Libby Friedman was, as always, an outstanding instrumental manager and facilitator of the group and of all the events.

## **Complete List of Public Events, Presentations and Media Placements**

Community outreach is a critical component of the Center's infrastructure connecting to the students, the campus community and the larger public. Below are the events that the Center participated in and are categorized by the group that planned the event:

### **Organized by Ammerman Center**

—*Center lunch talks* (every Monday in Cro noon-1pm) This weekly informal lunch gathering helped to connect our community. Students and faculty came together to share ideas and a meal. We plan to continue this gathering next year.

—*Spring Banquet*. This was our second January banquet for our student scholars. We introduced the faculty to our students and talked about our research. We also reviewed all of the upcoming events as part of the Mellon grant and the symposium.

### **Organized by the College:**

—*Fall Weekend Open House* on October 10th was our first open house at 768 Williams Street for this weekend event. It was a great success. Students connected with alumni, listened to stories and received professional advice. We had on exhibit in various rooms, student projects for review.

—*Fall Open House* lunch on October 12th was a well-attended event for high school students to meet and learn about the Center.

—*Academic Fair for Admitted Students* held on April 11th and 18th were well attended events with many admitted students (and their parents) talking with Ammerman Center faculty, staff and scholars about the program.

—*Honors Symposium* featured students pursuing year-long independent projects. Teagan Atwater presented his Ammerman senior integrative project "*New Student Center for Innovation*" on April 11th in the Charles Chu Room in Shain Library.

### **Organized by the 4 Centers:**

—*Getting Centered: Academic Center Fair* on September 19th was an enjoyable fall afternoon on Temple Green where all certificate centers set up tables and handed out material about their respective programs. This was an opportunity to introduce the Center to first year and second year students in an informal setting.

—*Center Certificate Programs Integrative Project Research Fair* on April 20th was held in Ernst for students from all 4 certificate programs. It was an opportunity for students to present their year-long integrative projects in poster sessions and demonstrations. This was an exciting moment for students to present their center-related research to the public and is an example of how the senior year "floralia-of-the-mind" could work.

Below is a chronological list of Center events with media coverage. This list demonstrates work completed at the Center including engaging interested parties at the College, advertising our program and making connections with students who are interested in pursuing study within the Ammerman Center. What is not listed are all the meetings held during the year including Associate Directors meetings, Assistant Director meetings, and Mellon Faculty Focus Group meetings.



JULY/AUGUST Worked closely with Josh Jensen and team coordinating an effective social media strategy for the upcoming Mellon events.  
Meetings with Associate Directors in the planning of events and Faculty Focus Group  
MONDAYS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR Informal Ammerman lunchtime gatherings  
SEP 14 Co-Sponsored events in Arts, Technology and Society: Andrea Lanoux, David Kim, Rosemary roberts, Lyndsey Nelson: *Whistling Vivaldi*  
SEP 17 Lunch Conversations: Sonic Futures and the Activist Imaginary with Caroline Park: *Embodying the Beyond: Caroline Park Artist Talk*  
SEP 19 Getting Centered: Academic Centers Fair  
SEP 30 Ammerman Center Certificate Information Sessions (4:30pm and 7:00pm)  
OCT 10 Ammerman Open House at 768 Williams, and Interactive Student Projects at the Visualization Wall in Shain (Fall Weekend)  
OCT 12 CC Open House  
OCT 14 Co-Sponsored events in Arts, Technology and Society, Tirtza Even: *Natural Life* a documentary screening and talk  
OCT 22 Lunch Conversations: Sonic Futures and the Activist Imaginary with Rebecca Mitchell: *Extreme Aesthetics: The Creation of Self, Gender, Art, and Life as Radical Feminism*  
OCT 27 Mellon Consultant on campus for meetings and tours: Chris Salter  
OCT 27 Mellon Public Lecture, Chris Salter: *Alien Agency: Techno-science, Art and the Limits of Knowing*  
NOV 8 Student Sustainability Leadership Symposium, *Call to Action: Strategies for Creative Environmental Engagement* (Nadav Assor and Andrea Wollensak presentation)  
NOV 9 Mellon Public Lecture, Paul Kaiser and Marc Downie (OpenEndedGroup): *On Location in 3D*  
NOV 12 Lunch Conversations: Sonic Futures and the Activist Imaginary with Momo Ishiguro: *Soundscapes for Supermarkets: The Digital Audio Workstation and the New Democratic-Utopian Art*  
NOV 18 Sonalysts Information Recruiting Session with Career Services  
DEC 6-12 Generative Art conference in Venice, Italy: Wollensak/Baird project  
JAN 14 Tour of Harvard iLAB  
JAN 18-22 January Technology Workshop and end of week final presentations. Directed by Paul Kaiser and Marc Downie of OpenEndedGroup. *Downtown New London in 3D*  
JAN 29 AT222a Final Showing of Interactive Projects  
JAN 25-MAR 4 Cummings Galleries Exhibition as part of Open All Ports symposium. *xHIBITION: Creative Systems for the Improvement of Local and Environmental Health*  
JAN 25 Center Spring Banquet  
FEB 1 Mellon Consultant on campus for meetings and tours: Lev Manovich  
FEB 1 Mellon Public Lecture, Lev Manovich: *Data Art, Data Science, and Digital Humanities*  
FEB 21-27 OPEN ALL PORTS 15th Biennial Symposium Commissioned Artists week long residency: ARCOS Dance; Alexander Dupuis/Kristin Hayter; Snow Fu/Luke Hampton  
FEB 22 The College Voice *Through Three Mediums: Ammerman Scholars Reflect on Senior Projects*

and *Alumi Spotlight: Pheobe Bakanas '10*

FEB 25-27 OPEN ALL PORTS 15th Biennial Symposium on Arts and Technology

FEB 26-MAR 12 Hygienic Galleries OPEN ALL PORTS exhibition

APR 11 Mellon Consultant on campus for meetings and tours: Butch Rovin

APR 11 Mellon Public Lecture, Butch Rovin: *Design Thinking in Music: New Musical Instruments as Creative Solutions*

APR 20 All Centers Integrative Project Fair

APR 26 Co-sponsored visiting artist Steve Lambert *Capitalism Works for Me!*

MAY 3 Honors & Awards Ceremony

MAY 6 Final Senior Project Demonstrations at the Visualization Wall in Shain

MAY 10 AT201 Final Project presentations

MAY 21 Ammerman Senior Scholars: presentations, lunch and certificate ceremony

JUNE 3 Alumni Reunion Posture Portrait public presentation

## Ammerman Grants for Research and Teaching

*Original guides depicting standards for posture study (1920-1960) at Connecticut College. The research team has begun this project in investigating the gendered implications of the posture practices, the movements and presentation of these gendered bodies, in terms of how these movements are posted, captured, and displayed.*



The Center has an annual call for collaborative research and this year we granted \$6,000 to a new interdisciplinary and collaborative project *Recreating The Posture Portraits: Artistic and technological (re)productions of the gendered (re)presentations of bodies at Connecticut College: past, present and future*. This research project is directed by Andrea Baldwin (GWS), Heidi Henderson (Dance), and James Lee (Computer Science), and student assistants include Joseph Castro '19, Emily Green '18 and Rishma Mendhekar '18. The team will conduct study on the posture pictures (nude photos taken of all students that were used to diagnose poor posture), taken in the 1920-1960s at Connecticut College and other New England institutions with the goal of present this research and crafting a performance that combines dance and technology. A public presentation was given by Emily Green and Rishma Mendhekar at the 2016 Reunion. Many alumni enthusiastically participated by sharing their experiences and signed up for follow up interviews. A full schedule of research and travel to other institutions is being conducted this summer including The National Archives in D.C.; Smith College and Mount Holyoke; Harvard and Radcliff; and museums in New York City.

## **Staff, Associates Directors and Fellows**

### **New Fellows**

This year was an important moment to invite new fellows into the program and begin a broader conversation about the arts, humanities, sciences and technology and include:

Andrea Baldwin, Gender and Womens Studies

Heidi Henderson, Dance

Wendy Moy, Music

Michelle Neely, English

### **Faculty Associate Directors**

We had a strong core of Associate Fellows that met regularly to discuss the Center's goals and students' progress. The Associates were also part of the larger twelve-person Mellon Faculty Fellows Group that was charged to evaluate the program and make recommendations. This year was very busy with the Mellon grant that included additional visiting artists and consultants throughout a symposium year.

**Nadav Assor**, Assistant Professor Studio Art continued with his appointment as Associate Director of Events. Nadav was key in selecting our Mellon funded visiting artists and consultants. He organized the artist workshops and lectures, and curated the symposium exhibitions this year. Nadav also worked closely on the conceptual and technical components of our student's integrative projects.

**James Lee**, Assistant Professor of Computer Science continued with his appointment as Associate Director of Technology. James worked on overseeing, coordinating with associated faculty, and maintaining (with IT) hardware and software in the labs used by student scholars. James was key in overseeing our equipment purchases including the Mellon grant purchases connected to our visiting artists workshops. He developed protocols for inventory and monitoring student use, and completely outfitted our new building with equipment available for students and faculty. James also worked closely on the technical components of our student's integrative projects.

**Steve Luber**, Visiting Assistant Professor of Theater continued with his appointment as Associate Director of Curriculum. Steve was instrumental in overseeing curricular programming, heading up the senior seminar of 12 students and coordinating with faculty advisors for seniors on their projects. Steve was key in preparing curricular materials and meeting with Mellon consultants throughout the year. Steve also taught our gateway course AT201 *Topics on the History of Arts and Technology*.

### **Assistant Director**

Libby Friedman, Assistant Director (and our backbone to the Center), increased her workload and support of the Center with both the Mellon grant and the 15th biennial symposium. Her dedication, energy, and motivation keep the program moving forward. She ran the daily operations with an incredible attention to detail, refined planning skills and a great sense of responsibility. This past spring semester we hired a part-time, temporary office assistant, Case Runyan, to assist Libby in the Ammerman office. With the increase work load and more students in the Center, we plan to hire part-time office help next year.

## Funding

We received \$6,000 from private donations that include \$5,000 from Steele Blackall, \$500 from the family of Sara Lesko '09, supplemented by a matching donation of \$500 from Johnson & Johnson. We have requested continued support of \$5,000 from Sonalysts, in Waterford, as our corporate sponsor. Annie Scott, board of trustees member at Connecticut College, and supporter of the Center donated \$2,400 for a new 3D printer.

## Social Media

In conjunction with the Office of Communications, we have a rich and current website. As we are re-imagining the Center, the website has reflected our new direction through current interaction design. It served as an active communications space all year for the Center reflecting current social media strategies, and trends in digital communications. The Center symposium page received the most hits on the college sites and served as our main communications tool both on and off campus during the events. The website gathered the Center's Facebook and Twitter postings in real time, keeping our publicity up to the minute and current.



We have worked very closely with the Office of Communications and are grateful for their dedication to the program. The website served as an accurate reflection of the Center, and has drawn potential students to inquire about the Certificate Program. It presents a revitalized direction for the next generation in the context of contemporary practices in digital media. The Office of Communications also produced another short video about the activities of the Center. This year, the January Technology Workshop with OpenEndedGroup (Marc Downie and Paul Kaiser) was highlighted.

## Mellon Initiative Reimagining Arts & Technology at Connecticut College

The Ammerman Center has successfully concluded a year-long study as part of the \$100,000 Mellon Foundation Officer's Grant *Reimagining Arts & Technology at Connecticut College*. This initiative was designed to expand programming and curriculum at the Ammerman Center for Arts & Technology and place its work at the center of a responsive, engaged, and creative liberal education at Connecticut College. In May 2015, the faculty approved a comprehensive revision of Connecticut College's general education program—*Connections*, its framework is strategically designed to guide our students through an integrated four-year liberal arts education. The new *Connections* curriculum is the lens through which the Ammerman Center is reimagining its own curriculum.

### Summary of Progress and Accomplishments

This grant supported programmatic reform and sustained collaboration both within and beyond our campus community through the following activities:

- formed an interdisciplinary Faculty Focus Group (FFG) that worked together in sub-committees to revise the mission statement and identity; work on curricular goals in alignment with *Connections* including a junior seminar, and revisions to the senior seminar, senior independent studies and the role of advisors; research community connections; and secured new facilities/equipment;
- traveled to nearby institutions that have established arts and technology programs and facilities to explore global/local connections;
- hired a visiting fellow from Brown University to advise students, participate in FFG conversations and teach an AT222A *Post-Digital: New Sonic Futures & The Activist Imaginary* during the fall semester; and
- hosted consultants/visiting artists to be on campus for the fall and spring semester of the 2015-16 Academic Year.

#### *Interdisciplinary Faculty Focus Group*

The Faculty Focus Group (FFG) was charged with the task of revising the Center's certificate program, hiring a visiting fellow, and coordinating site visits and traveling to other institutions to inform programmatic direction at the Center for Arts & Technology and to develop inter-institutional collaborations. The FFG was comprised of the following:

- Nadav Assor, assistant professor of art
- Lyndsay Bratton, digital scholarship and visual resources librarian
- Elizabeth Friedman, assistant director of the Ammerman Center
- David Kim, professor of religious studies
- Art Kreiger, professor of music
- Ozgur Izmirli, associate professor of computer science
- James Lee, assistant professor of computer science

Steve Luber, adjunct assistant professor of theater  
Emily Morash, visiting instructor of architectural studies  
Ross Morin, assistant professor of film studies  
Caroline Park, visiting Mellon Fellow (Brown University)  
Ariella Rotramel, assistant professor of gender and women's studies  
Andrea Wollensak, professor of art, Center director  
Senior Ammerman students were invited and attended many of the FFG meetings

*Travel for site visits to other institutions*

Our site visits were insightful and gave the group an inspiring and broader view of what similar institutions offer through curriculum, studio and work space, technology and technical support. Our site visits were completed in May 2015 and included visits to Brown University, Yale University's Center for Engineering Innovation and Design (CEID), Hexagram at Concordia and Université of Quebec at Montreal (UQÁM).

*Visiting Fellow taught new Special Topics AT course*

In April 2015, members of the FFG interviewed candidates for the visiting fellow position and hired Caroline Park, a PhD candidate in the Multimedia and Electronic Music Program (MEME) at Brown University. Caroline taught a new AT222 course *Post-Digital: New Sonic Futures & The Activist Imaginary* that was cross-listed with the Music Department.\* She also organized *Lunch Conversations: Sonic Futures and the Activist Imaginary* which consisted of three visiting artists during the fall semester who presented their work at noon in the Ammerman House. These presentations were open to the public and co-sponsored by Ammerman, GWS, and Music.

*\*AT 222: Post-Digital: New Sonic Futures & The Activist Imaginary*

This hybrid critical theory and creative production course examines the aesthetics of today's post-digital landscape through sound, with an emphasis on the last five years of popular experimental electronic music and its intersections with race, sexuality, artist activism and identity science fiction and the contemporary world. Students work with creative technology in weekly labs for exploratory and experimental artmaking.

Caroline also advised five Ammerman Center students throughout the year, participated in the FFG, and was integral in reviewing performance/music submissions for the symposium. She presented in the paper sessions and performed with Heidi Henderson in an evening symposium event, and curated the *Experimental Sound Show* at Spark Makerspace on the final evening of the symposium.

*Consultants/ Visiting Artists*

We had six consultants and visiting artists that visited the Center. These visitors met with the

FFG and students, toured our facilities, met with the Dean of Faculty, ran workshops, and presented a public lectures, which included:

- October 27, 2015. Chris Salter, Hexagram at Concordia University in Montreal. Public lecture: *Alien Agency: Techno-science, Art and the Limits of Knowing.*
- November 9, 2015. Paul Kaiser and Marc Downie from OpenEndedGroup. Public lecture: *On Location in 3D*
- February 1, 2016. Lev Manovich, The Graduate Center, City University of New York. Public lecture: *Data Art, Data Science, and Digital Humanities*
- January 18-22, 2016. Paul Kaiser and Marc Downie from OpenEndedGroup taught the January Technology Workshop to Ammerman sophomores. Workshop: *On Location in 3D* focused on 3D film footage from the city of New London.
- February 26, 2016. Natalie Jeremijenko, The Steinhardt School at New York University. Public lecture: *Adventures in BiodiverCITY*
- April 11, 2016. Butch Rován, MEME Program, Brown University. Public lecture: *Design Thinking in Music: New Musical Instruments as Creative Solutions*

## **Progress Made Toward Reimagining Center Identity and Mission Statement**

### *Revised Mission Statement*

The FFG discussed at length the direction of the Center; its identity, and importance of re-defining the mission statement. Ross Morin directed this initiative, and the group developed a new statement that is below and posted on our website.

*The Ammerman Center is a community of students, faculty, staff, artists, and scholars dedicated to exploring the dynamic relationships between the arts, technology, and culture through experimentation, research and creation.*

*The mission of the Ammerman Center is to inspire and foster the production of creative, scholarly, collaborative, and interdisciplinary work by offering innovative educational experiences such as courses, workshops, symposia, colloquia, internships, mentoring and advising. Each year, the Center community produces innovative and engaging exhibitions, performances, publications, and public presentations. The Center promotes Connecticut College's core values of inclusivity, understanding and respect across economic, environmental, and cultural identities through the creative and scholarly connections made across campus, within New London, and throughout the world. The Center's mission proceeds from the understanding that theory and practice are inextricably linked, and that creative work and scholarship conducted side-by-side lead to rich, responsible, innovative, and often radical critical thinking, experimentation, and problem solving.*

The FFG discussed broadening the identity and representation of the Center through its name by adding “culture” and considering the revised name: *Ammerman Center for arts, technology & culture*. We will finalize this initiative this fall semester.

**Progress Made Toward Curricular Transformation and alignment with *Connections***

During the academic year, Center fellows and staff were active participants in the campus-wide *Connections* planning process bringing to the table the perspective of the Ammerman Center. Through the Mellon initiative, the Ammerman Center has begun to implement an exciting and expanded curriculum that aligns with *Connections* and includes goals of fostering an integrative and intentional approach to learning as well as broadening our approach to applications in digital technologies. Below are descriptions of new and revised courses; course proposals for modes of inquiry, and global/local and community connections.

*New AT201 History of the Topics of Arts & Technology (Gateway course), AT 310 Ammerman Junior Seminar, and AT 401 Ammerman Senior Seminar*

The FFG’s first step toward redesigning the curriculum was to introduce a gateway course for students in the second semester of their sophomore year. The new gateway course AT201, *Topics on the History of Arts and Technology*, was offered in the 2015 and 2016 spring semesters and taught by Professor Steve Luber. The course examines and questions the definitions of art and technology, their intersection, as well as their historical and contemporary impact. It also offers critical analysis of the availability and influence of technology on artists, artistic styles, trends, materials, and philosophy, as well as how artistic expression helps drive technological innovation. Additionally, the course includes student collaboration on creative projects in weekly labs. Student evaluations reflected a greater context for arts & technology and a cohesive approach to work in the class room.

*New AT 310 Ammerman Junior Seminar and revised AT401 Ammerman Senior Seminar*

We developed a junior seminar experience which will begin in 2016-17. AT310 *Ammerman Junior Seminar* will be a two-credit course offered both semesters and will introduce students to new tools, design thinking process, visiting artists, and preparation for study away. Students in this course will also prepare for their internships and senior integrative projects.

*Revised AT 401 Ammerman Senior Seminar*

We changed AT401 from a 1 credit, pass/fail to a 2 credit with a letter grade. We expect this new structure will better represent the amount of work in the course. Both the junior and senior seminar are scheduled at the same time but in different locations and taught by different faculty. This structure will allow flexibility to connect the classes and building on center community throughout the year, as well as allow them to work independently.



*Modes of Inquiry (MOI)*

We have reviewed our roster of AT courses and have assigned MOI's. Most of our courses fit into *Creative Expression, Critical Interpretation and Analysis, Quantitative and Formal Reasoning, and Social and Historical Inquiry*. We are working to find courses from the sciences to cross-list that are a good fit within the *Scientific Inquiry and Analysis* MOI. In addition to aligning our courses with MOI categories, we plan to pursue a list of optional Engineering courses at the Coast Guard Academy.

*Global/Local Engagement Engagement*

In the new *Connections* program, every student is required to pursue purposeful engagement in a local or international context that may include study away, an internship, or community-based learning. Members of the FFG have been involved with the *Global Engagement Council* on campus and have worked on articulating global/local engagement goals within the frame of the Center. Digital literacy is an important component of the Center's mission, and through classes and workshops, students acquire concepts and skills that prepare them for rich and interdisciplinary work. Our students engage with others in collaborative projects through connected courses both on campus and remotely. Through professional internships, study away, and connected classes, our students engage as digital citizens as they critically observe and collaboratively connect in local and global information and take initiative in projects through new networking and communication technologies.

We have four juniors who will be in Copenhagen next fall and we plan to connect with them via Skype for collaborative projects during the Junior Seminar course.

**Progress made towards improvement of technological equipment and facilities**

*Technological equipment*

The Center purchased equipment to support our students in Mellon funded workshops. This equipment included a 3D and a short throw projector, 3D glasses and hub, speakers and amplifier, monitors, video players, cables, and sound/mixing equipment.

*New facilities: The Ammerman House at 768 Williams Street*

The College administration has been supportive of the Mellon initiative and the Center by providing access to a small building on Williams Street to serve as student workspaces, visiting artist space and a seminar room. This new space has provided a home base for students, faculty and staff involved in the *Reimagining Arts & Technology* initiative.

**Concluding Remarks**

2015-2016 was the busiest year the Center has had to date and included the planning and successful orchestration of the 15th biennial symposium, a visiting post-doctoral fellow and six Mellon-funded visiting consultants and artists throughout the year, as well as the largest

number of senior certificate students in the history of the Center. The Center has momentum and has been re-energized with new courses, a new seminar and student work space, and new relationships within the College and the larger community as well as inter-institutional connections, a curricular structure aligned with *Connections* on campus and plans for a new *Connections* integrative pathway.

The Mellon Foundation Officer's Grant we received provided an important opportunity to solicit ideas and recommendations from a diverse faculty focus group and the visiting consultants and artists. We are grateful to the Mellon Foundation and President Bergeron for supporting the Center's re-imagining initiative and are looking forward to the multi-faceted enhancement of the Center and development of inter-institutional connections. Our work will continue over the summer and into next year as we continue collaborative and developmental efforts started during the grant period and begin enacting initiatives based on the feedback and ongoing discussions.

Respectfully submitted by

*Andrea Wollensak*

*Judith Ammerman '60 Director, Ammerman Center for Arts and Technology*

*Professor, Studio Art Department*