No rest for UWO faculty taking sabbaticals in 2014-2015

by Natalie Johnson - Thursday, August 28, 2014


Although the word “sabbatical” means “to rest from work,” there’ll be no recess in 2014-2015 for two University of Wisconsin Oshkosh art professors and nine other faculty members who are taking a break from the classroom to focus on their creative and scholarly work.

Jessica Calderwood, who typically creates jewelry in metal and enamel, is getting a crash course this summer in ceramics, porcelain and slip casting, as part of a semester-long sabbatical.

“Life being art is the thing that I am doing the most,” she said, as she dusted off a piece of greenware she created in the shape of a giant dandelion seed.

Calderwood is commuting daily to Kohler for three months as an artist-in-residence with the John Michael Kohler Arts/Industry Program. The sabbatical is a welcome time of rejuvenation for Calderwood, who earned tenure at UWO just two months ago.

The dandelion seed project, which will soon stand on a pair of shapely female legs, is part of a body of work Calderwood is calling Floral Fictions. “I’m interested in the symbolism of floral forms as they relate to the female form,” she explained.

Her work is said to be “imbued with personal stories and vibrant color” and “to make statements about contemporary life.”

Gail Panske, professor of printmaking, is also taking a full-year sabbatical to create a new series of artwork inspired by the novel Forgotten Country by Catherine Chung and a collection of poems by Lauren Alleyne.

“The sabbatical allows me to spend concentrated time in the studio … something required to really engage in one’s creative practice and allow the artwork to develop,” she said. “For me at least, this can only happen when I can get in the studio for eight to 10 hours a day, every day.”

Panske also will spend the month of April 2015 as an artist-in-resident in Algarden, Sweden.

“Residencies are just one way to expand one’s creative practice and to grow professionally … all of which comes back to the classroom when I return to teaching,” she said. “One practical example is I have learned different ways of doing things in the printmaking studios I went to work in during sabbatical. Every studio has a different set-up and can have very different approaches to various printmaking techniques. This all influences my instruction as does the interactions I have had with artists from across the country and around the world.”
Besides Calderwood and Panske, the following faculty members have been granted sabbaticals this academic year:

- Jeri-Mae Astolfi, music, second semester, to collaborate with internationally acclaimed Israeli-American composer Yehuda Yannay on his 2012 theatre piece for solo piano, “Midwestern Mythologist,” and a new work to be created for piano and live electronics.
- Kevin Crawford, chemistry, second semester, to develop skills to test for low levels of pharmaceuticals, personal care products and endocrine-disrupting compounds in water and sediment from Lake Winnebago and the lower Fox River system.
- Douglas Haynes, English, full year, to finish researching and writing his narrative, nonfiction book, “Every Day We Live is the Future: How Managua Reveals Tomorrow’s Urban World.”
- Larry Herzberg, philosophy, first semester, to explore aspects of epistemology and the philosophy of emotion, including collaboration with specialists in emotion research at the University of Geneva, Switzerland.
- Paul Klemp, English, second semester, to write two scholarly essays and an introduction that will develop his historical understanding of the English Civil Wars.
- Edward Martin, music, second semester, to explore the microtonal music composition of the marimba.
- Susan Ridgely, religious studies and anthropology, full year, to complete the research and writing of a book entitled, “Shaping Our Children and Our World in His Image.”
- Stephanie Spehar, religious studies and anthropology, full year, to examine the behavioral ecology of Bornean orangutans in human-dominated landscapes.

More:

- Learn about [sabbatical opportunities at UW Oshkosh](http://www.uwosh.edu/today).