

SEMI-ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

SUMMER '22
ARTS IN REVIEW

MC Art Beat

Visual, Performing, and Media Arts News at Montgomery College



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Visual, Performing, and Media Arts News at Montgomery College



Cover Photograph from A Day of Elders on African Drumming and Dance
Live and Live-Streamed Performance



Message from the Dean

DEAR FRIENDS OF MONTGOMERY COLLEGE ARTS,

The beginning of the spring semester was greeted with a mixture of both hope and anxiety. On the one hand, it was very encouraging to see more students back on campus. On the other, fears of another COVID variant and outbreak caused a great deal of anxiety. Still, our faculty delivered outstanding classes and inspiring arts events for our students, the MC campus community, and the residents of the greater Montgomery County area.

Since the early days of the health crisis our mantra has been flexibility. This has been especially true in the classroom where faculty members continued to experiment with technology to find new approaches to deliver their class content. Not only were they using new pedagogical approaches, they have continued to experiment with offering the same class in different modalities – face 2 face, remotely, and in distance learning format.

In a similar fashion, our faculty continued to explore new and innovative ways to offer arts events. They planned exciting co-curricular opportunities in the arts, including: inspiring lectures in webinar format; practical demonstrations in-person or remotely; and compelling artistic experiences for our students and the community that had both a live and virtual component. We experimented with offering arts events in a variety of formats and modalities and have learned to be deft and creative while doing so.

For the fall semester, in-person, remote, and simultaneously live and streamed events are being planned. We hope you will attend one of our arts events regardless of your preferred modality. The Fall 2022 Arts Calendar will be out very soon. Please be sure to check our diverse schedule of in-person theatre productions, inspiring dance performances, live and streamed music concerts, compelling artist lectures, informative workshops, innovative gallery exhibitions, and other arts programming at montgomerycollege.edu/artsinstitute. Please join us at an arts event in the near future.

Frank Trezza, PhD

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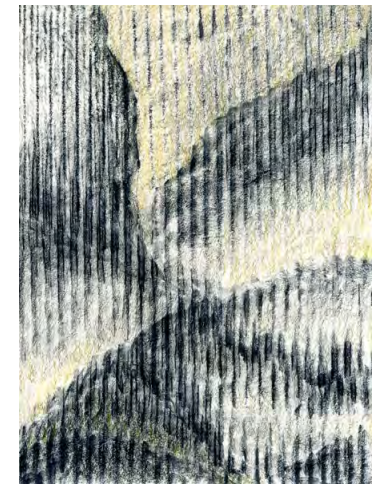
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Special Thanks

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Professor Tiffany Thames Copeland
Professor Kai Fang
Professor Michael Farrell
President Jermaine F. Williams
Zev Feldman
BlackRock Center for the Arts



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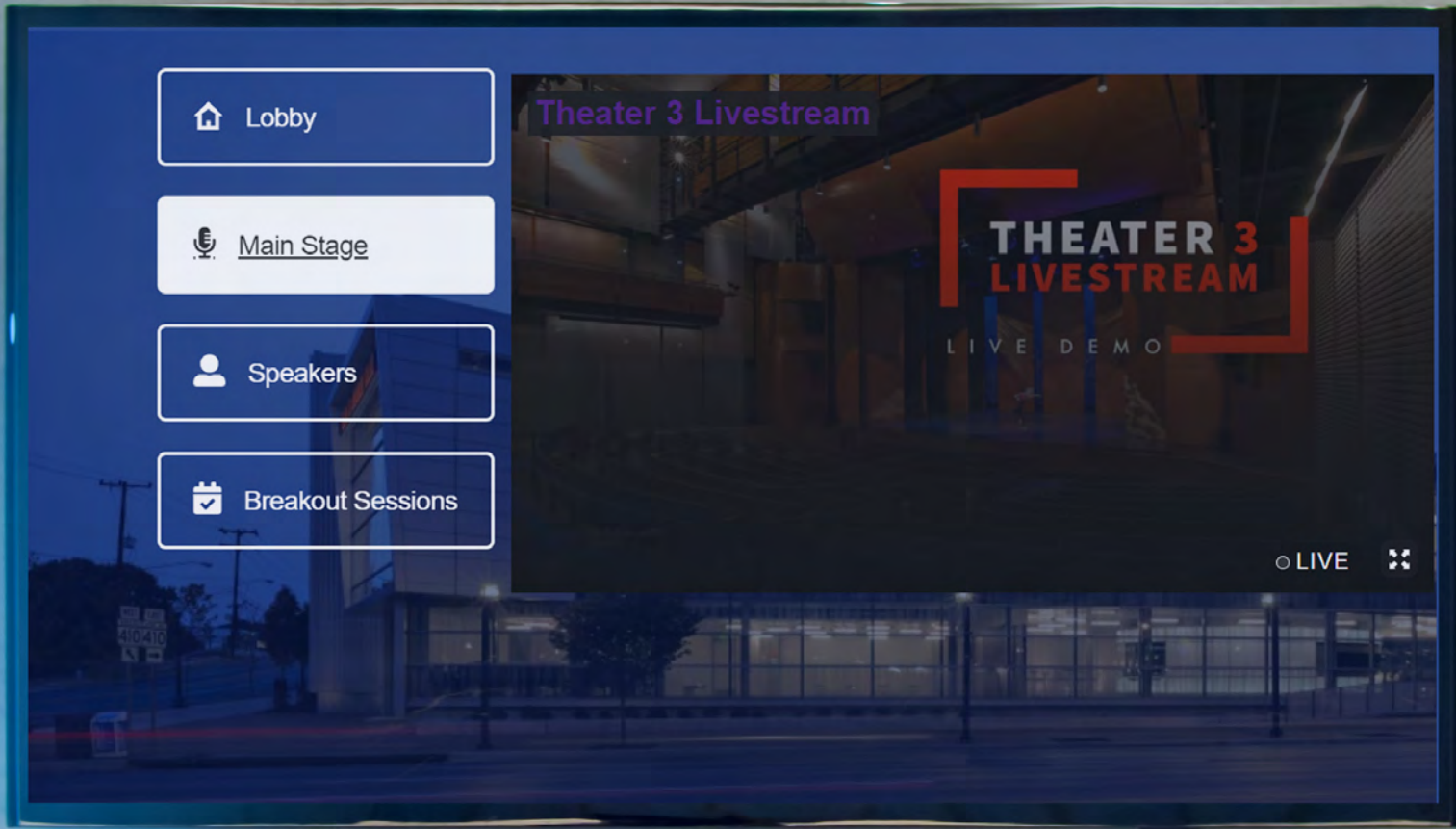
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LIVESTREAMING THE ARTS

at **MC**

If you receive our Fall and Spring Arts Calendars or our monthly Arts@MC emails (and we hope you do! [Click here](#) to sign up for our mailing list.), you might have noticed that many of MC's arts events are now being livestreamed. Concerts, workshops, and artist talks that were once available only to audiences on campus can now be viewed live on YouTube and Zoom. For a list of upcoming events and to register for livestream links, visit the [MC Arts Institute's website](#).



TRUTH TO POWER CAFÉ: ENGLISH WITH AN ACCENT

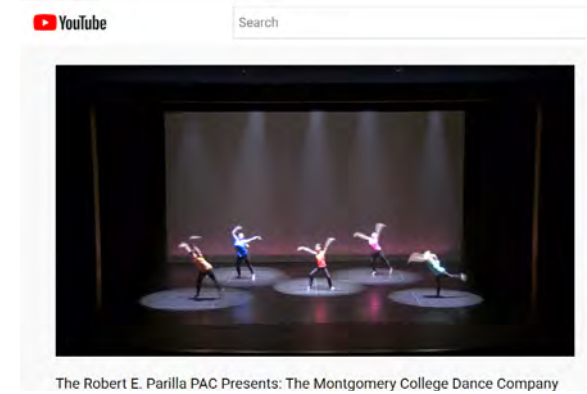
'Who has power over you and what do you want to say to them?'

This one-of-a-kind streaming event opens with a plea for liberty and is told through memoir, poetry, music, film, and live testimony from community participants speaking truth to power as part of a unique transatlantic meditation on time, place and community. includes up to 10 MC participants cast.

Free online event and open to the public.

MC CULTURAL ARTS CENTER
MC MONTGOMERY COLLEGE

Above: Promotion for *Truth to Power Café* Event, Fall 2020

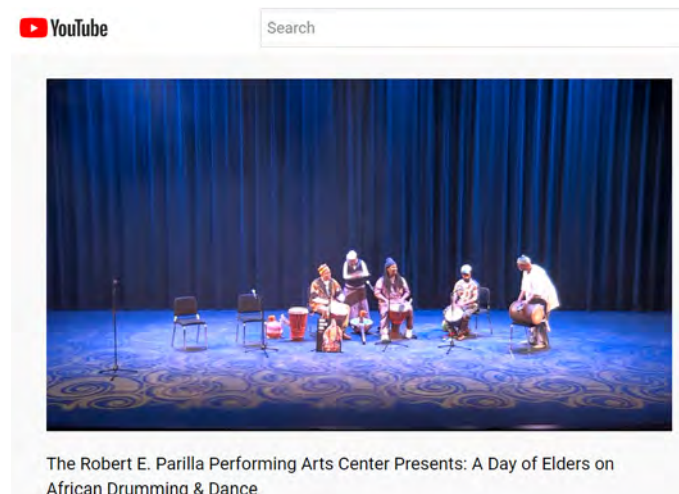


This spring, we were happy to welcome audiences back to campus to enjoy live performances, but we continued to offer virtual and hybrid events as well. Almost every

World Arts Festival event, for example, was open to both live and virtual audiences. From a West African Drum Elders Concert to a symposium and several workshops on African Drumming and Dance, if you could not attend an event in person, you could experience it online. The MC Jazz Ensemble, Maryland Band Directors Band, and spring dance concerts were livestreamed as well.

Director of the Cultural Arts Center, Jason Bruffy, and his staff were already thinking about the possibilities of

livestreaming back in early 2019. Envisioning guest lectures and panel discussions with artists and scholars from all over the world, they had started to install livestreaming equipment when the pandemic began. Suddenly, what had been an “experimental” project, became a necessity. When everything shut down, the question, says Bruffy, was “how do we make ourselves useful to the College?”. By the summer of 2020, the staff had outfitted the CAC’s two theatres for streaming and acquired a portable streaming unit that could



be used in the campus's galleries and classrooms. They began to stream College events, like the Part Time Faculty Summit, via Zoom Webinar. By September 2020, they were hosting the North American premiere of the *Truth to Power Café*, featuring simultaneous live performances by Montgomery College students and musicians, dancers, actors, and poets in London, Mexico, and New York. Meanwhile, the staff at the Robert E. Parilla Performing Arts Center on the Rockville campus was busy installing livestreaming equipment as well. Since fall 2021 audiences have had access to more than a dozen of the PAC's wonderful events on its YouTube channel.

While we hope to welcome more live audiences back to campus this fall, there are some exciting plans for the future of virtual and hybrid events at MC. The Recital Hall in the Rockville Music building is currently being outfitted for streaming smaller concerts and events, and virtual Artists-in-Residence programs and artist speaker series are planned on all three campuses. At the Cultural Arts Center, the staff has been working on what they are calling "Theatre 3." This online virtual performance and conference space, set to open later this summer, is designed to accommodate large, multiday events. It will feature a virtual lobby where participants sign in, main event spaces



Search



The Robert E. Parilla PAC Presents: Li Ly Chang and Andrew John Kosinski in Concert



Search



The Robert E. Parilla PAC Presents: The Montgomery College Jazz Ensemble

for keynote speakers and performances, searchable schedules and event previews, and breakout rooms for smaller gatherings. Plans for a TED Salon-style themed speaker series are underway for the space, which will also be used to stream the CAC's live events.

"Nothing replaces the experience of an in-person event," says Bruffy, but "events can be live and visceral in a virtual space." The creativity he's seen from MC faculty and staff in the last two years has been impressive. "People began experimenting," he says, and the results have been fantastic. Our virtual and hybrid events are lively, interactive

experiences that foster cross-disciplinary collaboration. Not only has streaming allowed us to welcome artists and scholars from all over the world, but it has expanded access to our many arts offerings. Now students on our new virtual campus and in remote classes can attend artist lectures, while alumni and friends of the College can watch concerts and performances from home, wherever that may be. "Hybrid events really are the future," says Bruffy, and MC is clearly well-positioned to continue offering them to our College Community, both near and far.



Art
Enlightens

BLACKROCK
WELCOMES

MC
MONTGOMERY
COLLEGE

MC@BLACKROCK

BlackRock's Annual Benefit Celebrates
Partnership with the College



Dr. Williams Speaks at the BlackRock Center for the Arts, May 12, 2022

On May 12, BlackRock Center for the Arts in Germantown held its annual Art Enlightens event to benefit arts education. This year, the spotlight was on Montgomery College, as it was honored as an outstanding community partner thanks to a new initiative called MC@BlackRock.

The MC Jazztet, led by Professor Alvin Trask, entertained the crowd during cocktail hour, and guests mingled in the center's galleries, theatres, and grand lobby. Before a performance by soul-jazz-funk-singer Madz, BlackRock's CEO, Lynn Andreas-Arndt, presented MC President, Dr. Jermaine F. Williams with an award celebrating the College's commitment to supporting the arts in Germantown. Other members of the College community in attendance included former Vice President and Provost, Dr. Kimberly Kelley, Professor John Coliton, and Collegewide Dean for the Visual, Performing, and Media Arts, Dr. Frank Trezza.

MC@BlackRock is intended to give students on all of the College's campuses equal access to the arts. The idea occurred to Dean Trezza when he

saw that Germantown students had to travel to the Rockville and Takoma Park campuses to attend concerts, theatrical productions, and exhibitions. When he was invited to serve on the board of BlackRock, Trezza saw an opportunity to engage with the center's new CEO, Andreas-Arndt, to create a mutually beneficial partnership. Since its inception in 2019, College performing and visual arts events have been held in BlackRock's beautiful facilities, which include the 220 seat MainStage theatre, the indoor/outdoor Rooftop Terrace, the popular Blackbox theatre, the Kay Gallery, and the Outdoor Stage. All MC events at BlackRock are free to students and open to the public.

This fall, the College will send its production of *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* to BlackRock on



Friday and Saturday, November 4 and 5 at 8 p.m., and Sunday, November 6 at 3 p.m.. Additional performances will take place in the Parilla Performing Arts Center from Thursday, October 27 through Saturday, October 29 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, October 30 at 2 p.m., and in the Cultural Arts Center on the Takoma Park/Silver Spring campus on Friday and Saturday, November 11 and 12 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, November 13 at 2 p.m. This is the first time that a show will travel to all three

campuses, and it will likely be the first of many more collaborations between the College and BlackRock. In the future, the College plans to hold concerts, recitals, plays, workshops, and exhibitions in the center's theatres and galleries.

While MC@BlackRock is new, the College has a longstanding relationship with the center. The Rockville and Germantown Art Department, for example, has offered an internship in



Performance at BlackRock, May 12, 2022



Dr. Trezza and Dr. Williams at BlackRock, May 12, 2022

BlackRock's Kay Gallery for years. While earning college credit and a stipend, MC art students assist with the planning, promotion, and design of the center's exhibitions. Students and faculty of the College regularly exhibit and perform at

BlackRock, and attend events there throughout the year. The new initiative will serve to bring the two institutions even closer and ensure the future of the arts at the College and in Germantown.

Grammy-Nominated Alum Zev Feldman Visits MC Broadcasting Students



When Grammy-nominated record executive and producer, Zev Feldman, was profiled in *The Washington Post* this April, he couldn't help but mention Montgomery College. Even though he was there to promote the release of five new albums, and it has been 30 years since he was a student at the College, MC is never far from his thoughts. "Montgomery College is home to me...it's where I found my inspiration," he says, "it was one of the biggest and most important steppingstones in my life."



Dr. Tiffany Thames Copeland speaks with Zev Feldman at WMCR

Mr. Feldman is currently the Co-President of Resonance Records and a consulting producer of archival and historical recordings for Blue Note Records. Over the last 25 years he has worked for PolyGram, Universal Music Group, Rhino/Warner Music Group, and Concord Music Group. For most of the last two decades he has concentrated on what he calls "musical archaeology," searching for and obtaining the rights to previously unreleased recordings by jazz icons like Chet Baker, Bill Evans, and Wes Montgomery. He co-produced the highly acclaimed Thelonious Monk albums *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* in 2017 and *Palo Alto* in 2020, and his compilation of early work by Nat King Cole was nominated for Best Historical Album at the 2020 Grammys. Feldman won *DownBeat* magazine's International Critics Poll for "Rising Star Producer" in 2016 for his work on a staggering 26 historical jazz recordings that year and he has been

called "the Indiana Jones of jazz" by *Stereophile* magazine. *Variety* describes him as "the most widely admired archival producer working in the jazz field today." Later this year, he will launch his own label.

In May, Mr. Feldman took time from his busy schedule to visit his alma mater and talk to MC Broadcasting students. He called the visit "a big responsibility and an enormous thrill." Walking into the WMCR studio in Rockville's Technical Center brought back "a flood of memories" for the station's former music director. "Wow! It's so much nicer now!" he exclaims, pointing to the studio where he learned to cut and splice tape. Soon, he is reminiscing about the weekly jazz show he hosted called *Maiden Voyage* and nights at Hard Times Café with his friends.

As he sits down with Professor Tiffany Copeland's advanced Radio Station Operations class, Feldman tells the

"Montgomery College is home to me... it's where I found my inspiration...it was one of the biggest and most important steppingstones in my life."

—Zev Feldman

“Learn to work with every personality. Be kind. Have empathy. Make friends. And say yes to opportunities as they are presented.”

–Zev Feldman

students about his first day at MC: “I was scared walking through those doors, wondering what was going to happen. I thought I was going to slip through the cracks of life.” In high school, he explains, he struggled with dyslexia and feared that college wasn’t for him. He knew that he loved music, but never envisioned a career in it. “I just wanted to find something in life to make me happy. I was working overnights at a gas station and coming to MC was a big gamble.” Luckily, he found the Communication Arts Technologies (now known as the Media Arts and Technologies) Department and things started to “click.” “If I hadn’t come here, I don’t think any of this would have happened. There was something about Montgomery College...the specialized learning, the smaller classes, the hands-on training with the teachers, that really made the difference for me.”

Feldman tells the students that his time at MC “was really about taking advantage of everything the College had to offer.” Becoming the music director of WMCR, for example, “was an amazing opportunity,” that kickstarted his entire career. When he brings up the radio station, his enthusiastic audience of broadcasting majors stops him to ask questions about how things worked in the pre-digital age. Feldman describes calling record labels to ask for music to play on air and how, one day, someone at Polygram Records asked if he had ever considered an internship. He had not, but MC Professor Emeritus Leroy Froom encouraged him to take it and found a way for him to earn credit while he worked. Six months later, Feldman was hired to work in the mail room at Rhino Records, and by the time he was 25, he was the label’s sales manager for the entire Northeast.



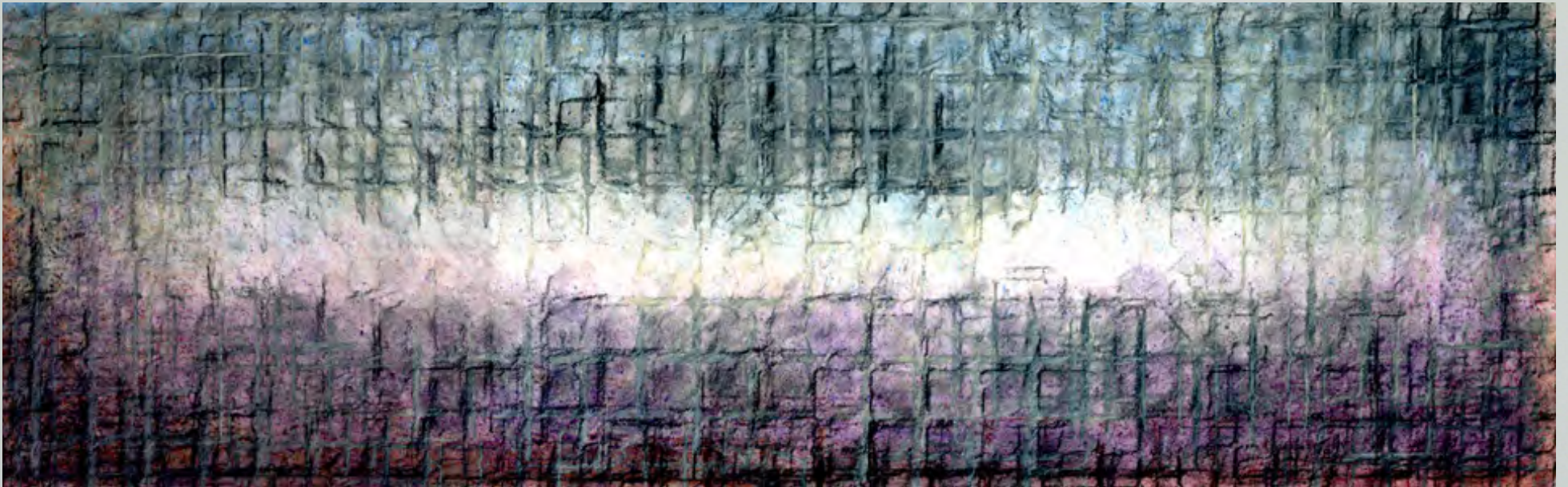
Zev Feldman poses with MC Students and Faculty at WMCR

Feldman and the students go on to discuss career opportunities in the music industry and the skills associated with various jobs. They talk about how records are financed, produced, and marketed, and the future of the music business. As they do, Feldman repeats his mantra, “luck is what you make of it.” His best career advice for people starting in the music industry? “Learn to work with every personality. Be kind. Have empathy. Make friends. And say yes to

opportunities as they are presented.” At this, he invites the students to schedule individual meetings with him to discuss their career plans. As they thank him for his generosity, Feldman reflects one more time on his years at MC, saying: “Montgomery College is an incredible institution. I am so proud and I stand very tall when I tell people that this is where I come from...I want people to know that this is an important place...it will set you up for a career and a lifetime.”

VPMA RETIREE SPOTLIGHT

Professor Michael Farrell



Overture by Michael Farrell



Michael Farrell poses with Colleagues

Professor Michael Farrell retired last December after 21 years in the Rockville and Germantown Art Department.

In addition to teaching drawing and design, he was chair of the department from 2012 to 2017 and oversaw the restructuring of the College's Art discipline degree offerings. Farrell was a recognized leader college-wide, particularly for his work on the General Education Committee and his role as a General Studies Advisor. He played a key role in many of the department's greatest successes and was a dedicated teacher who will be deeply missed by students and colleagues alike.

Farrell received his BFA and MFA in Painting from the Washington University School of Art, as well as a BA in Economics from Middlebury College.

His work is exhibited frequently in galleries throughout the Washington, DC area, including at the Glenview Mansion Gallery and VisArts in Rockville, BlackRock Center for the Arts in Germantown, Gallery 555 and the Apex Gallery in DC, and the Montage Gallery in Baltimore. It can be found in numerous public and corporate collections as well, including the Duke Energy Corporation in North Carolina, the Wilson Building Permanent

Collection in DC, the District of Columbia Art Bank Collection, the National Association of Home Builders, and the Montgomery County Public Arts Trust.

When his friends and colleagues at MC heard of his retirement, they felt compelled to recognize his many accomplishments. In a scrapbook that they sent to his new home in Maine, they compiled memories, photos, and well-wishes. In addition, some colleagues shared their thoughts on Farrell's retirement for Art Beat.

His successor as department chair, Professor Tendai Johnson, wrote:

Michael Farrell's impact on the... department is far-reaching. His knowledge of curriculum, the College's Policies and Procedures, and his passion and commitment to student success touched the lives of many of our students, both as an exceptional instructor and program advisor. As chair, he shepherded our programs' curriculum through the required realignment of all programs to 60 credits. He contributed extensively to the College's current General Education program and helped us understand and craft our General Education course recertification in a way that meets the needs of our programs, while aligning course

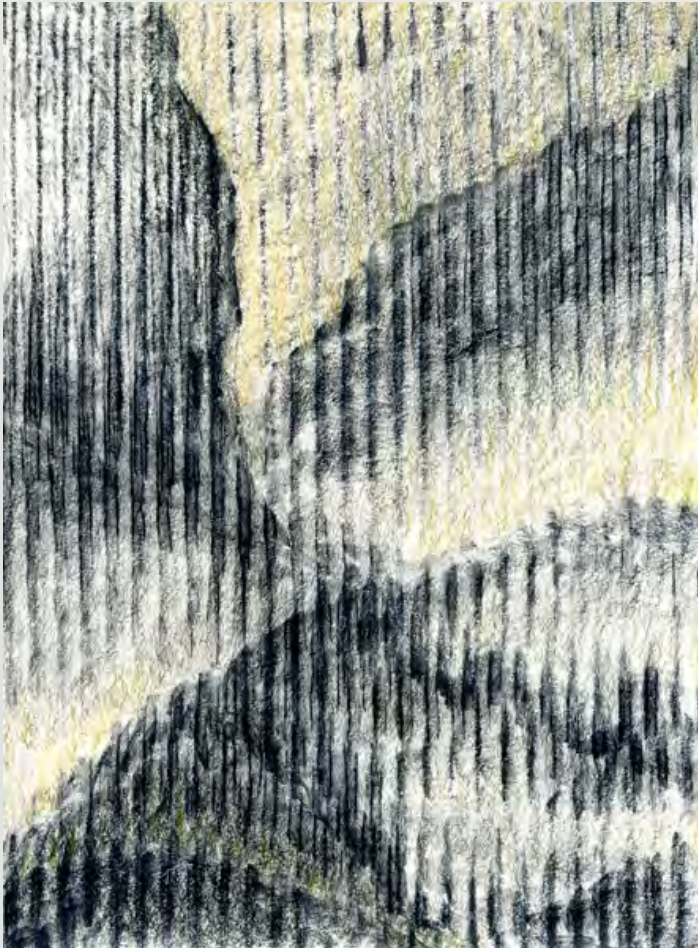
learning outcomes to the General Education goals and competencies. He also served on the NASAD Accreditation Self-Study Committee, and helped model a successful document that led to the College's accreditation. He was always thorough and addressed each challenge with meticulousness. With all his leadership and active participation in Department, Discipline and Collegewide issues, Michael was evidently most at home with his students - either in the classroom or advising a student in his office. His presence is missed by all - faculty, staff and most of all, students.

Farrell's longtime colleague, Professor Ken Jassie wrote:

In thinking about the many years of working alongside Mike, I am reminded of his skill in handling matters pertaining to curriculum. To me, he was not only the long-time chair of the Curriculum Committee (even while serving as Department Chair), but the Curriculum Czar. He shepherded courses through the Collegewide Curriculum Committee; he guided the Art Department through the General Education organization; and he had a knack for understanding and being able to explain the arcane details of the various administrative

processes. Above all, he put forth immense efforts and showed the utmost dedication in serving his students, the Art Department, and the College.

Ms. Belva Hill, who worked with Farrell for over a decade, wrote:



Five Points by Michael Farrell

It was such an honor to work with him as the Administrative Aide for the department. I saw firsthand how much he cared about student success, the faculty, and staff, and how hard he fought for all of us to the best of his ability. Mike had many irons in the fire and he juggled them all with dignity and grace. He was very organized, and we would laugh when I told him that I wanted to be just like him when I grew up. I miss having him in the department, but I am more than happy about his well-deserved retirement. Mike Farrell is one of the best people I know. I thank God for allowing Michael Farrell

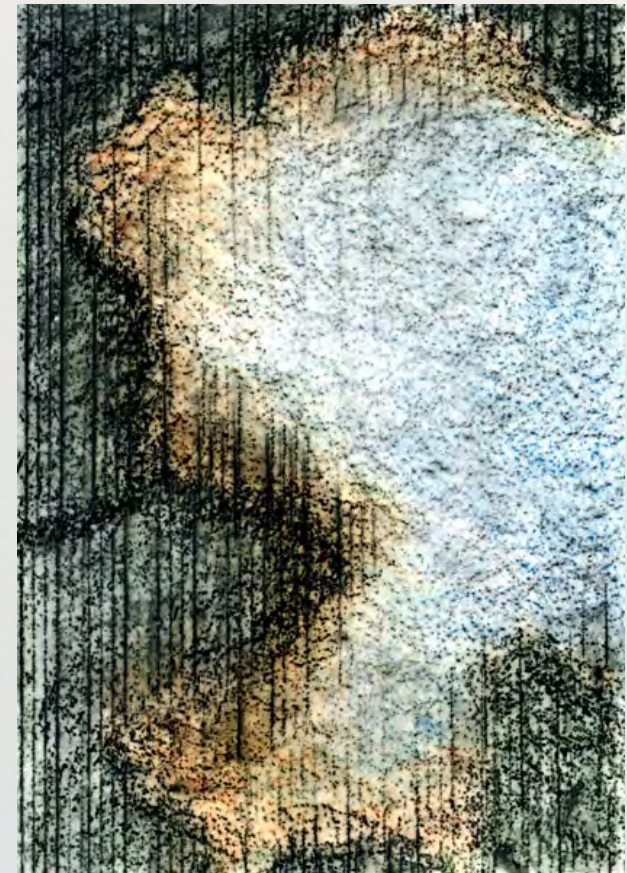
to be a part of my life's journey.

Others thanked him for his support and guidance and praised his dedication to the students.

Professor Sumita Kim, who joined the Art Department the same year as Farrell, wrote:

When I passed (his) office during lunch hours, nine times out of ten, (he was) talking to a student, often with an unfinished apple or sandwich in his hand. When I needed advising myself, I took advantage of his generosity. Without exception, whatever topic it was, he had an answer to my question, and often produced a relevant document, by just swerving his office chair 45 degrees and magically pulling it off within 5 seconds from his impeccably clean and organized desk. I will greatly miss (his) quiet sense of humor as well as (his) ability to generate a laugh in such unexpected ways.

The many people who reached out to thank Professor Farrell are a testament to his hard work and tireless commitment to the College and its



Caspian by Michael Farrell

community. He will be missed by his many friends at MC, who wish him the best in retirement. In recognition of his service to the College, the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to award Farrell a Bronze Medallion and Emeritus Status upon his retirement.

Professor Kai Fang

From MC Student to Faculty Member



“I believe each student is unique. As such, there’s no universal, templated strategy that works for connecting with every individual.”

Professor Kai Fang brings energy, enthusiasm, and empathy to his teaching at Montgomery College. A creative-struck optimist, he keeps an ear towards students and an eye on industry. Professor Fang also has an eye on the future of creative fields, comparing the advent of blockchain technologies and Web 3.0, to the Web 1.0 Boom in the 1990s.



Professor Fang inspires confidence in his students, and his kind demeanor ensures students feel comfortable talking with him about their academic paths. Professor Fang credits: true listening; remembering his own time as a student; learning from his students; and being open-minded as keys to his success in the classroom, noting, “Teaching is an experiential profession, and it takes both IQ and EQ to be effective.” He continues, “I believe each student is unique, as such, there’s no universal, templated strategy that works for connecting with every individual.”

The memories Professor Fang relies on as part of his empathetic approach

to students include those from being a student himself at Montgomery College. He was first inspired to study Graphic Design in a Photoshop class taken at MC with Professor Ed Riggs in the late 90s. Professor Riggs encouraged Professor Fang to pursue a degree at the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, CA. These early conversations with Professor Riggs proved powerful for Professor Fang in guiding his career in digital arts. He reflects, “You never know how you might shape a student’s entire life with just a short, seemingly inconsequential conversation. I try to remember that anytime I’m spending time with a student, it’s a powerful responsibility and an awesome honor.”

Professor Fang feels he fell into teaching, saying, “We all have something we are passionate about that we can offer the world. This is really what spawned the popularity of platforms like YouTube and Twitch where people are simply sharing what brings them joy to the world, and that sort of enthusiasm is infectious.”

Though he appreciates the evolving technologies at digital artists’ disposal, he insists, “...learning a digital tool won’t automatically make someone a great designer. It’s the combination of having a great idea and mastery of the tools that results in great work.” Professor Fang fully embraces this duality of ideas

and technology, continuing, “The advertising, communications and design fields are a trend-based industries; to create work that resonates with consumers, tomorrow’s artists must have their pulse on pop culture and what the current Zeitgeist is in the world. While in school, it’s easy to become isolated because the campus is like its own little ecosystem, but to maintain relevance, you must not only be students of academia but students of society.”

In terms of the future for digital arts, Professor Fang sees the industry on the cusp of a “second digital renaissance,” with the developing Metaverse and Web 3.0 blockchain technologies which have “the potential to transform many industries, all of which will impact digital arts education.” He goes further in his predictions in visualizing incredible design needs for this new virtual world amounting to no less than a radical paradigm shift.

Professor Fang began teaching part-time at MC in 1998, while simultaneously carving out a full time career in creative direction and innovation in the digital arts field.

Professor Fang made the transition to Full Time Faculty during the Pandemic, and as he recounts the unprecedented upheaval during that time, he also reflects that “...once we settled in and students, teachers and administration all embraced an attitude of collaboration and flexibility, I was proud of the entire MC community for coming together to make it work.” Though this was a challenging time for all, Professor Fang appreciates the advancements and learning opportunities for faculty during this time of online-only

learning, saying, “Now having returned to the physical classroom, I continue to implement these tools in my courses and feel like having both options has enhanced the learning experience for the students.”

Professor Fang teaches a variety of classes at MC, including the co-listed Art and Graphic Design Class, ARTT/GDES 116, Digital Tools for the Visual Arts, and both Introductory and Advanced Level Graphic Design Classes. Professor Fang is dedicated to meeting and engaging with a variety of learners at MC. In addition to teaching during the week, he also often teaches on the weekend, where he connects with students who have strenuous

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Anytime I’m spending time with a student, it’s a powerful responsibility and an awesome honor.”

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To maintain relevance, you must not only be students of academia but students of society.”



Professor Fang works on a class assignment during his time as a media arts student in the 1990's

weekday schedules, those seeking a career change, and those looking to enhance their skills for better work opportunities.

Professor Fang is very active in other efforts at the college related to the digital arts. He currently serves as a Coordinator for Graphic Design, where he provides valuable insight into curriculum and student-centered scheduling practices.

He will join the team this Fall in collaborating on future *MC Art Beat* Publications.


CONGRATULATIONS

Dr. Tiffany Thames Copeland

2022–2023

FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR



Learn More 
about Dr. Thames
Copeland's Work