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Grant Wood Today: Grant Wood Biennial Symposium 2012

University of Iowa School of Art & Art History
Grant Wood Today

GRANT WOOD BIENNIAL SYMPOSIUM 2012

The University of Iowa School of Art & Art History
Welcome
FROM THE DIRECTOR

The expanded third biennial Grant Wood Symposium is the most ambitious undertaking to date. From its inaugural version at the Grant Wood House in 2009 to the enhanced iteration of 2010, we now add an evening keynote event with Wanda Corn, one of the leading Wood scholars of our time. In addition to the four featured presentations in the Saturday morning session, the afternoon includes a gallery talk and a reading. Future biennials are likely to be augmented with venues and sites related to the artist that lie beyond the immediate Iowa City area.

Two further features distinguish the 2012 symposium from its predecessors. This is the first since the establishment of the national Grant Wood Fellowship program that brings two contemporary artists to teach and practice their creative work in the School of Art & Art History and to reside at the Colony House adjacent to Grant Wood's Iowa City home. These artists were selected from an international pool of applicants. An exhibition of some of the work they have accomplished during the time of the fellowship is on display in the Art Building West Gallery. Please take advantage of this opportunity to witness Grant Wood's living legacy in support of the creative process and of a new generation of artists, one painter and one printmaker, representing the two media Iowa's famous image maker found most congenial to his artistic impulses. As funding becomes available and the Colony expands incrementally up to the full complement of seven Fellows, Wood's vision for the promotion of art education and practice, as first embodied in his legendary Stone City Art Colony, will achieve mature and lasting form.

The other important achievement is our venue at the award-winning Art Building West, just this year recovered from the damages of the 2008 flood. Designated by the Paris-based Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development as an internationally “Exemplary Educational Facility,” ABW is the home of the School of Art & Art History, where the Colony and Fellowship Program are administratively located. In that sense, Professor Wood has returned, triumphantly, to his home department after an absence of 70 years. This is a noteworthy historical moment and I anticipate the scheduled events will represent the great advance in scholarship on this important figure in American art that has taken place in recent years. That is the theme of the third biennial—“Grant Wood Today.”

John Beldon Scott
Elizabeth M. Stanley Professor of the Arts
Director, School of Art & Art History/Grant Wood Colony
The Grant Wood Colony
MISSION, DEVELOPMENT, AND FELLOWSHIP

Vision

The mission of the Colony is to nurture creative work and teaching in disciplines relevant to the art and life of Grant Wood—studio art and art history, and eventually expanding to a variety of disciplines. The program exemplifies The University of Iowa’s historic commitment to creative work and pioneering of the MFA degree. The Grant Wood Colony will further embody the “Iowa Idea” of bringing artists and scholars together in an academic context, as first formulated in the 1920s by President Walter Jessup and Graduate Dean Carl Seashore. Our long-term goal is to create a vibrant colony and conference center, woven together by gardens and studio space.

Stages of Development

The Grant Wood Colony has taken possession of 1131 East Burlington Street, and will be adding a second apartment in one of the adjacent houses in fall of 2012. Under the direction of the School of Art & Art History, this house is used for staff offices, a studio, an upstairs residence for one Grant Wood Fellow, and a reception area. The Grant Wood Colony currently produces a biennial Grant Wood Symposium, and the Grant Wood Fellowship Program.

Fellowship Program

The Grant Wood Fellowship program currently provides two one-year, post-MFA/post-doctoral fellowships. Fellows are selected through a national competition and provided with furnished living quarters at the Grant Wood Colony. During the academic year each fellow will teach a total of two courses at the School of Art & Art History, leaving the rest of the time for the artist’s own work and research. A teaching salary, benefits and studio are provided.

Grant Wood Fellows will be encouraged to pursue their artistic endeavors while sharing their invaluable knowledge and expertise with students, expanding the next generation’s awareness of the world outside of the University and preparing them to become tomorrow’s innovators. In addition to cultivating art and artists outside of the traditional guidelines of academia, The Colony will also encourage dialogue and stimulate communication between incoming artists and resident faculty. This will bring fresh perspectives to the University’s existing culture of interdisciplinary collaboration.
Program Overview

EVENTS SCHEDULE ————

Friday, April 13th • Art Building West

5pm – 8pm • ABW Gallery
  Exhibition and reception with 2012 Grant Wood Fellows
  Mariangeles Soto-Diaz and Tyler Starr

8pm • ABW 2nd floor Auditorium
  Keynote Presentation: The Three Lives of Grant Wood’s American Gothic
  Wanda Corn, Professor Emerita, Stanford University

Saturday, April 14th • Art Building West Auditorium

9am – 9:30am
  Shirley Reece–Hughes, Amon Carter Museum:
  Theatrical Productions: Grant Wood’s Visions of America

9:50am – 10:20am
  Luciano Cheles, University of Poitiers:
  The Italian Renaissance in American Gothic

10:50am – 11:20am
  Erika Doss, University of Notre Dame:
  Collecting “Good American Paintings”: King Vidor and Grant Wood’s Arbor Day (1932)

11:30am – 12pm
  Travis Nygard, Ripon College:
  Was Grant Wood a Feminist? Rethinking His Murals

12:10pm – 12:30pm
  General Discussion

12:30pm – 2pm — Break for Lunch

2:30pm – 3pm • ABW Auditorium
  Joan Liffring – Zug Bourret
  The Life of Nan Wood Graham, model for American Gothic

4pm • IMU Black Box Theater
  Exhibition of Blue House: Munich with Professor Joni Kinsey
Program Details

EXHIBITIONS & PRESENTATIONS

Friday, April 13<sup>th</sup>

Exhibition with 2012 Grant Wood Fellows

Friday, April 13th

Exhibition with 2012 Grant Wood Fellows

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Keynote Presentation

In *The Three Lives of Grant Wood’s American Gothic*, Grant Wood scholar and Stanford University Professor Emerita Wanda Corn takes a close look at Grant Wood’s painting and its strange odyssey from the studio of an unknown Iowan artist 75 years ago to its international celebrity status today.

Saturday, April 14<sup>th</sup>

*Theatrical Productions: Grant Wood’s Vision of America*

Theatrical Productions: Grant Wood’s Visions of America will explore how Wood’s interest in theater aesthetically and conceptually shaped his mature artwork. As this presentation will reveal, by envisioning his canvases as stages occupied by actors, props, and scenery, Wood sought to connect his artwork to the broader culture of 1930s America.

*The Italian Renaissance in American Gothic*

Grant Wood’s style changed radically in the late 1920s: his *retardataire* Impressionism gave way to more streamlined, precisely-contoured and well-composed forms. Wood attributed the transformation to the Northern masters he was exposed to during his stay in Munich in 1928. The present paper will argue that his new style was also much indebted to Italian Renaissance art, and in particular to Piero della Francesca. This claim will be made on the basis of stylistic and iconographic comparisons, backed by circumstantial evidence.

*Collecting “Good American Paintings”: King Vidor and Grant Wood’s Arbor Day (1932)*

Grant Wood’s art was widely collected among Hollywood movie stars and directors including King Vidor, well known for directing such films as *The Big Parade* (1925), *The Crowd* (1928), *Our Daily Bread* (1934), *Stella Dallas* (1937), and *Duel in the Sun* (1946). Vidor also collected work by Thomas Hart Benton, John Steuart Curry, Diego Rivera, and Charles Sheeler but remarked that Wood’s paintings—and in particular *Arbor Day* (1932)—“express to me the great truth that everything on earth fits into a pattern
Program Details
EXHIBITIONS & PRESENTATIONS

Saturday, April 14th

of reason and sanity.” Reflecting on Vidor’s adherence to Christian Science, this paper considers the links between collecting Wood’s art, practicing faith, and making movies in interwar America.

Was Grant Wood a Feminist? Rethinking His Murals
Although Grant Wood is often remembered as an easel painter, he also made several sets of murals. The best-known examples remain on display at Iowa State University, while others were temporary, were later dismantled, or were never fully actualized. In this presentation, Nygard will analyze four sets of Wood’s murals, focusing on how the imagery in them could instigate discussions about women’s lives, and especially their labor.

The Life of Nan Wood Graham, model for American Gothic

Blue House: Munich
A New Grant Wood at the University of Iowa: Blue House: Munich explores the history of a 1928 painting by Grant Wood which has been recently acquired by the University of Iowa Museum of Art, its position at a critical juncture in the artist’s career, and the work’s importance for the University’s growing appreciation for its most famous painter.
Symposium Presenters

GRANT WOOD TODAY
Wanda Corn, Keynote Presenter

The Three Lives of Grant Wood’s American Gothic
Having earned a BA (1963), MA (1965) and PhD (1974) from New York University, Professor Wanda Corn taught at Washington Square College, the University of California, Berkeley, and Mills College before moving to Stanford University in Palo Alto, California in 1980. At Stanford she held the university’s first permanent appointment in the history of American art and served as chair of the Department of Art and Art History and Acting Director of the Stanford Museum. From 1992 to 1995 she was the Anthony P. Meier Family Professor and Director of the Stanford Humanities Center. In 2000, she became the Robert and Ruth Halperin Professor in Art History. She retired from teaching at Stanford in 2008. In 2009, she was the John Rewald Distinguished Visiting Lecturer, at the CUNY Graduate Center.

A scholar of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century American art and photography, Professor Corn has received fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, the Smithsonian Regents, the Stanford Humanities Center, the Radcliffe Institute of Advanced Study, and the Clark Institute of Art. In 2006-07, she was the Samuel H. Kress Professor at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts at the National Gallery of Art. She has won numerous teaching awards: in 2007 The Distinguished Teaching of Art History Award from the College Art Association; in 2002 the Phi Beta Kappa Undergraduate Teaching Award; and in 1974 the Graves Award for outstanding teaching in the humanities. In 2006, the Archives of American Art awarded her The Lawrence A. Fleischman Award for Scholarly Excellence in the Field of American Art History and in 2007 she received the Women’s Caucus for Art Life Time Achievement Award in the Visual Arts. In 2003 she was the Clark Distinguished Visiting Professor at Williams College. She has served two terms on the Board
of Directors of the College Art Association and two on the Commission for the Smithsonian American Art Museum. She served on the Advisory Board of the Georgia O’Keeffe Catalogue Raisonné, two terms on the Board of the Terra Foundation in American Art, and is today a trustee of the Wyeth Foundation in American Art.

Active as a visiting curator, she had produced various books and exhibitions, including *The Color of Mood: American Tonalism 1900-1910* (1972); *The Art of Andrew Wyeth* (1973); and *Grant Wood: The Regionalist Vision* (1983) and in 2011-12, *Seeing Gertrude Stein, Five Stories*. Her historiographic article for *Art Bulletin*, “Coming of Age: Historical Scholarship in American Art” (June 1988), became a significant point of reference in the field as has her work on cultural nationalism in early American modernism. Her study of avant-garde modernist culture along the Atlantic rim, *The Great American Thing: Modern Art and American Identity, 1915-35*, was published by the University of California Press 1999. UC Press has recently published Professor Corn’s *Women Building History* about Mary Cassatt and the decorative program of murals and sculptures for the Woman’s Building at the 1893 Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition. She continues to research, write, and lecture on high, middle, and low culture interpretations of Grant Wood’s *American Gothic*. 
Erika Doss

Collecting “Good American Paintings”: King Vidor and Grant Wood’s Arbor Day (1932)


Luciano Cheles

The Italian Renaissance in American Gothic

Luciano Cheles has taught at the Universities of Lancaster and Lyon, and is currently Professor of Italian Studies at the University of Poitiers. His research has focused largely on Italian Renaissance art, contemporary social and political graphics, and the reception of Piero della Francesca in 19th and 20th century Britain, France and America. He has lectured extensively on these topics in Europe and the US. His publications include: The Studiolo of Urbino: An Iconographic Investigation (Penn State Press, 1986); Grafica Utile (Ecole des Arts Décoratifs, Strasbourg, 1995); The Art of Persuasion, co-edited with L. Sponza (Manchester University Press, 2001); and the exhibition catalogue Milton Glaser nella città di Piero (Comune di Sansepolcro, 2007). He was Terra Foundation Senior Fellow at the Smithsonian Museum for American Art in 2006-2007.

Erika Doss

Collecting “Good American Paintings”: King Vidor and Grant Wood’s Arbor Day (1932)

Doss is also co-editor of the “Culture America” series at the University Press of Kansas, and is on the editorial boards of *Memory Studies*, *Public Art Dialogue*, and *Material Religion: The Journal of Objects, Art, and Belief*. Her current research project is “Spiritual Moderns: Twentieth Century American Artists and Religion.”

**Joni Kinsey**

*Blue House: Munich*

Joni L. Kinsey is Professor of American Art History in the School of Art & Art History at the University of Iowa where she has taught since 1991. She received her PhD from Washington University in St. Louis and specializes in the history of landscape painting, and theory and art of the American West and Midwest. She is the author of *Thomas Moran’s West: Chromolithography, High Art, and Popular Taste* (University Press of Kansas, 2006); *Plain Pictures: Images of the American Prairie* (Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996, winner of the Eugene M. Kayden National Book Award for 1996), and *Thomas Moran and the Surveying of the American West* (Smithsonian, 1992) as well as many articles and chapters of books. Her research on Grant Wood includes “Cultivating Iowa: An Introduction to Grant Wood,” in Jane Milosch, ed., *Grant Wood’s Studio: Birthplace of American Gothic* (2005), and “Revolt Against the City: Art and Home in Iowa,” forthcoming from Ashgate Press.

Professor Kinsey is also the curator of the Eve Drewelowe Collection, a remarkable corpus of hundreds of paintings, sculptures, works on paper, and personal effects of Eve Drewelowe, who bequeathed the collection to the School of Art & Art History in the late 1980s. Drewelowe received the first Master of Fine Arts degree in painting awarded at the University of Iowa in1924, and her collection is a remarkably broad ranging representation of modern art and the issues that affected women artists in the twentieth century.
Joan Liffring–Zug Bourret

The Life of Nan Wood Graham, model for American Gothic

Joan Liffring–Zug Bourret was a photographer for over thirty years before becoming a publisher. She founded Penfield Press in 1979, followed by Penfield Books in 2001, which includes all books published and distributed by Penfield Press. “Premiere Iowa woman photographer of this century” was the reference to Joan at a special ceremony held by the State Historical Society of Iowa acknowledging her gift of over 500,000 black and white negatives and color images now archived in the Society’s collection.

Her photographs are in many collections, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art which holds two from her “Women 1957-1975” series. Exhibitions of her work have been held in many museums and galleries: the New York City Camera Club, Iowa Art museums and others. A retrospective of her work has been on tour in Iowa since 1996 and at a museum in Freeport, Illinois in the spring of 2000.

Joan’s documentary photographs were instrumental in the 1960’s civil rights movement, leading to open housing and employment in Cedar Rapids and Muscatine, Iowa. She was elected to the Iowa Women’s Hall of Fame in 1996; she is also included in the Who’s Who of Iowa Women, and in a thesis about women newspaper photographers in America by Margaret Thomas, University of Texas, Austin. Joan collaborated with Julie Jensen McDonald on the book Grant Wood and Little Sister Nan, and Nan Wood Graham on My Brother Grant Wood. The Cedar Rapids Museum of Art holds over 250 photographs by Joan in their permanent collection. Many photographs by her are framed in displays at Kirkwood Community College.
Travis Nygard

*Was Grant Wood a Feminist? Rethinking His Murals*

Travis Nygard is an Assistant Professor of Art History at Ripon College in Wisconsin, where he teaches courses on art history, theory, and visual culture. His doctoral dissertation, titled *Grant Wood and the Visual Culture of Agribusiness*, was completed in 2009 at the University of Pittsburgh. In addition to the Regionalist artists, he is fascinated by the history of food and farming, as depicted visually.

Shirley Reece-Hughes

*Theatrical Productions: Grant Wood’s Visions of America*

Shirley Reece-Hughes is the Assistant Curator of Paintings and Sculpture at the Amon Carter Museum of American Art. In 2011, she curated two fiftieth-anniversary exhibitions at the Amon Carter, *The Allure of Paper: Drawings and Watercolors from the Collection* and *Will Barnet: Relationships, Intimate and Abstract*. She is currently developing an exhibition on Grant Wood and theatre, which focuses on Wood’s painting, Parson Weems’ Fable. Previously, Reece-Hughes worked for the Dallas Museum of Art, where she developed works on paper exhibitions on James Abbott McNeill Whistler and Thomas Hart Benton. She is a contributing author to collection catalogues for the Amon Carter, the Dallas Museum, and the Albrecht-Kemper Museum in St. Joseph, Missouri. In 2006, she received her PhD from the University of Kansas, where she received a Henry Luce Foundation research grant for her dissertation work on the Texas artist, David Bates. Reece-Hughes also received the Davidson Family Fellowship at the Amon Carter in 2007 for her work on artist-immigrants and their collecting of American folk art.
2012 Grant Wood Fellows

GRANT WOOD COLONY
Mariangeles Soto-Diaz

Mariangeles Soto-Diaz activates the critical potential of abstraction, using its formal language to articulate social and political issues, including gender. In 2011 her work was included in the exhibition “An Exchange with Sol Lewitt” at MASS MoCA. Other highlights for this year include curating a show at Soho20 Gallery in New York titled “Gifting Abstraction,” in which she conceived a gesture of hope for the economic recession by setting up a temporary gifting economy within the exhibition. At the Staging Gallery at the University of Iowa she created an installation of new black monochrome paintings addressing the increasing violence in her native country of Venezuela. She also has an essay in a forthcoming book on motherhood and art edited by Rachel Epp Buller and published by Ashgate Press, and was invited to present at “Share and Stakeholders,” a feminist symposium at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles sponsored by The Feminist Art Project and held in conjunction with the College Art Association conference.

Soto-Diaz holds an MFA from Claremont Graduate University and an MA from the School of Critical Studies at the California Institute of the Arts. She is represented by the Ruth Bachofner Gallery in Los Angeles and by the Soho20 Gallery in New York City. Her writings have been published in peer-reviewed academic journals such as Meridians: Journal of Feminism, Transnationalism and Culture, Postcolonial Studies, and Contemporary Aesthetics.
The Grant Wood Fellowship has been a wonderful experience. Teaching motivated students at the stunning Art Building West designed by Steven Holl, researching at the library, being part of the distinguished School of Art & Art History at the University of Iowa, and experiencing the distinctive character of Iowa City while having the space to work and reflect on my practice has been generative in ways that will stay with me for years to come.

During the course of my Fellowship, I created two new series integrating conceptual and abstract languages, which I installed at the Staging Gallery (Fall) and the ABW Gallery (Spring). I finished an art essay for publication and began a new one, curated a show in New York City, presented at a CAA panel held at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, began to curate an Art Festival in New York and started three new artistic collaborations with artists here and abroad.
Tyler Starr

BIOGRAPHY

Tyler Starr was born in 1974 in Hartford, CT. He received his Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT, and a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN. In 1998, Starr was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to study at the Academy of Fine Arts, Krakow, Poland. He graduated with a PhD in Studio Arts from the Tokyo University of Fine Arts in March 2011 where he was a recipient of the Japanese Ministry of Education Scholarship. His work has been featured in solo exhibits and juried shows at venues such as Gallery cf in Tokyo, the International Biennial of Contemporary Prints-Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art of Liège, Belgium, the 2nd Bangkok Triennial International Print and Drawing Exhibition, and the Tokyo Wonderwall 2009 at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo Japan.

During his Grant Wood Fellowship he created “Burning Wants” consisting of a digital animation and offset printed booklets that were exhibited at the Haas Arts Library at Yale University. He is also developing work for a solo exhibition at York College in Pennsylvania. His imagery commemorates the unintended consequences and contradictory intentions that commonly appear in politics, protest movements, construction projects, and everyday desires.
“The Fellowship is structured to provide the ideal opportunity to gain teaching experience while offering time and support to create new artwork.”

The Grant Wood Fellowship came at an extremely fortuitous time for my wife, son and I. I had just graduated with a PhD in Studio Arts from the Tokyo University of the Arts when the earthquake struck in March. The aftershocks and continuous concerns about radiation from the nuclear meltdowns in Fukushima encouraged me to search for opportunities to leave the old rickety neighborhood where we lived and I was surprised to discover the posting for the Grant Wood Fellowship while scouring the Internet. We are here in Iowa City with a sense of relief and inspiration.

The Fellowship is structured to provide the ideal opportunity to gain teaching experience while offering time and support to create new artwork. Grant Wood encouraged artists to make imagery that relates to what they know best including things in the immediate vicinity. This perspective was reinforced by his time overseas. In a similar way I have been using the studio time to further digest some of the lessons I learned during my seven years in Japan. By extracting ideas from the traditional Japanese woodcut technique, I have been developing a new arsenal of materials and editing skills to apply to American imagery.
Mariangeles Soto-Diaz

Color’s Ordinates and Affinities

This new work developed through my encounter with one of the special collections at the University of Iowa’s library. I was intrigued by the Centro de Arte y Comunicación (CAYC) Collection which is part of the expansive vision that was Fluxus. Central to this collection are the “easily reproducible,” fragile blueprint drawings that were made in the 1970s for an unprecedented exhibition titled “Towards a Profile of Latin American Art,” a collaboration among an international collective of conceptual artists seeking to establish connections between North and South America. As a collective, the CAYC supported “systems art,” and was dedicated to the “promotion and development of projects and shows in which art, technology and community concerns [were] combined in an effective interchange.” They were committed to art as a contextual, idealistic and critical tool, conceptualizing it as a “process of humanization, which opposes the insanity and violence of our society.”

The fact that the CAYC’s drawings — along with their utopian intentions — were fading with the passing of time tinted the work with urgency for me. Through my work, I seek to reinterpret and extend this utopian sensibility that characterized, albeit differently, both the Fluxus and Geometric Abstraction movements. Despite glaring differences between CAYC and Grant Wood’s local vision for the Stone City Art Colony in 1932, Wood’s efforts to help struggling artists get through The Great Depression had a similar hopeful, relational spirit at its core: that of affirming the importance of community among artists which in turn secures art’s future. I feel fortunate to have been selected a Grant Wood fellow and to be part a part of this new, forward-thinking initiative of the School of Art & Art History at the University and am deeply thankful to all who made it happen.

“Through collective actions that encourage interconnection, I intend this work to counter the prevalent self-referential, solitary practice embedded in the tradition of abstract painting.”
In this installation of paintings, I combine conceptual and abstract languages to address a collaborative transnational space made possible using digital forms of communication. Each painting works as both unit and part of a larger whole, in connection to others, creating a constellation of works. The titles of the paintings are instructions that point to ways of creating collective communicative situations using the paintings themselves. Through collective actions that encourage interconnection, I intend this work to counter the prevalent self-referential, solitary practice embedded in the tradition of abstract painting. The communicative effects of the works are latent—yet to be experienced. If you are interested in participating in any of the collective events proposed in the titles, send an email to the artist (mariangeles-sotodiaz@uiowa.edu) with the title of the event in which you wish to partake.
Lover’s Leap

Love and destruction tend to go hand-in-hand. Geographical sites stamped with the name *Lover’s Leap* are located all over this country and Mark Twain noted that the bluffs along the Mississippi in particular have been stamped with these legends of distraught maidens throwing themselves from the precipices. Muscatine, Iowa, where Twain lived for a time, was well known for its supposedly popular jumping off points.

The unintended consequences and contradictory intentions that commonly appear in everyday desires, politics, protest movements, and construction projects are subjects of my artwork. These areas all include concrete examples of attempts to “fix” things considered wrong in the world. But no matter how monumental the effort, the effects of these attempts are inevitably awry.

The narrative structures of the animation “Burning Wants” and the accompanying booklet are inspired by the Rollo Peters’ collection of stage designs on hotel stationary at the Haas Arts Library at Yale University. A key part of the imagery for this commissioned project comes from Rollo’s performance in “The Age of Innocence” as Newland Archer with his yearning to run off with the countess to Japan, a country I had just recently left with my family following the earthquake and meltdowns at the nuclear power plant in Fukushima. Additional imagery comes from an event in the neighborhood in Tokyo where I lived called the Yanaka Five-Storied Pagoda Double-Suicide Arson Case, Paradise Alley (one of the red-light districts outside of U.S. military bases in Japan), and references to the mysterious fire that occurred at Yale’s Paul Rudolph Hall in 1969 amongst political tensions.
My artwork reflects the train of associations and rapid discoveries made possible by the digital dissemination of information. The word “wallowing” encapsulates a critical element of my work. The word has several definitions. One is to revel in an emotion and another is to struggle through something like mud. My artwork commemorates these dual human conditions.
Next fall, the Grant Wood Colony and Fellowship Program will expand from the home base at 1131 E. Burlington to include a two-bedroom apartment in an adjacent property, allowing more housing for the second incoming Fellow. Our goal is to eventually house up to 7 Grant Wood Fellows in a variety of disciplines, including the performing arts, creative writing and literature, and the humanities, reflecting the diverse interests of Grant Wood himself. We hope to add a Grant Wood conference center, studio space, and expanded grounds to create a communal creative space in an academically and artistically enriching environment for the artists themselves, the University community, Iowa City and the region.

The Grant Wood Fellowship Program is unique in its scope, combining both academic teaching opportunities with resources and support for dedicated creative work. This Fellowship has already received national attention and momentum, with applicants from across the United States and internationally. The 2012-2013 search is well underway, with an impressive applicant pool and growing reputation. It is anticipated that the visibility and prestige will only increase, bringing a new awareness to the legacy of Grant Wood and the University of Iowa. With your support, Grant Wood's dream of an enduring, fully functioning artist colony can be realized and made permanent.

The mission of the Grant Wood Colony is to nurture creative work and teaching in disciplines relevant to the art and life of Grant Wood—studio art and art history, and eventually expanding to a variety of disciplines. The Grant Wood Colony will further embody the “Iowa Idea” of bringing artists and scholars together in an academic context. The Grant Wood Colony produces a biennial Grant Wood Symposium, the Grant Wood Fellowship Program, and currently possesses a property which houses one Grant Wood Fellow with plans to purchase an adjacent property in the fall of 2012.

Every gift brings us closer to realizing the vision of the Grant Wood Colony. Now more than ever, private support for the Grant Wood Colony is needed to fully achieve the potential of its mission. Your gift will be used to help fund future symposia as well as support Grant Wood Fellows in the School of Art & Art History.

If you would like to support the Grant Wood Colony in achieving its mission, please contact Chris Wilson at:

Chris Wilson, Associate Director of Development
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
University of Iowa Foundation
Office: (319) 467-3814
chris-wilson@uiowa.edu
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