The first thing you notice about the art studio in the new Tarbutton Building is the light. The studio is all glass on one side, part of which are doors that open onto an enclosed patio. “The studio has beautiful light,” says Camille Cottrell, assistant professor of art history and visual arts. “The studio is a relatively small space, but it is designed so well that you can get fifteen to twenty people in here working, with lots of good energy.”

This small but powerful studio space is the perfect setting for Oxford’s small but powerful visual arts program. The visual arts program is in its second year and was created by Cottrell, an accomplished printmaker who came to Oxford from the University of Georgia to head up both art history and visual arts. It is at Oxford that all the elements came together—light, good energy, and learning—both for the arts program and for Cottrell. The philosophy, students, and support at Oxford have made for a unique arts program.

“I have always worked at big universities with lots of faculty,” says Cottrell. “This position is so different from any position I’ve ever had.” At Oxford the program is small, and the art faculty so few (just her), that Cottrell has been able to develop an integrated method for learning art. Art students take both art history and studio art, and as a result, the students understand art differently. “What is created is an intimate dialog between artist and scholar,” says Cottrell, “and traditionally art isn’t taught that way.” The philosophy of learning both disciplines at the same time makes students finer at both, believes Cottrell.

The students themselves add an interesting element to the mix. In Cottrell’s classes, which include art history survey courses and foundation courses for studio arts, you find future art majors (about thirty-five last year), but you can also find future premed, history, and French majors—not your typical art class demographics. Cottrell credits the liberal arts atmosphere at Oxford for giving students valuable skills for studying art.

“These are the best art students I’ve ever had in my life,” says Cottrell. “It’s a serious analytical thing that we do in the studio. My art students use the same dedication and discipline in the art studio as they do in their other classes.”

Emily Pope ’04Ox appreciates Cottrell’s enthusiasm. “She’s very passionate about what she does,” she says. Pope signed up for art classes with Cottrell her first semester at Oxford, and she liked them so much she has taken studio art or art history every semester. She now plans to major in art history when she continues at Emory. “Professor Cottrell makes art more interesting and more important than I ever thought it would be,” says Pope.

Cottrell owes a lot of her program’s success to the support she has gained from Dean Dana Greene. “Oxford has a great tradition of art history, but it has never devoted many resources to studio art,” says Cottrell. “Dana believes you can’t have a true liberal arts program without visual arts, and she has given great support to help me get the program going.” With that support, Cottrell’s art program has strengthened, and she has been able to develop other art ventures on campus. She shows student and faculty work in two galleries on campus, and she has begun a tradition of hosting visiting artist shows as well. Recently Oxford was one of the host venues for the Atlanta Celebrates Photography exhibit, which also showed at such esteemed sites as the High Museum and the Faye Gold Gallery in Atlanta.

In spite all this growth, Cottrell does not want to lose what makes her art program unique. “I’d like to grow the department to be a substantial art department in the Southeast, but I want it to remain an intimate, integrated experience,” she says. Just as the studio space itself seems to strive for an unusual blend of light, space, and energy, so does Cottrell’s program strive for an unusual blend of learning and creativity. “We are going to make something different, something finer,” she says.
Health Issues Dominate Oxford Peace Lecture

Mental health awareness, childhood immunization, conflict resolution, and the Carter Center’s worldwide disease-prevention efforts were subjects discussed by former first lady Rosalynn Carter during her Samuel W. Mills Peace Lecture, Wednesday, February 18, at Oxford’s Allen Memorial Methodist Church. Carter spoke to a crowd of several hundred, then answered questions. She donated to the library a signed copy of a children’s book her husband, former President Jimmy Carter, wrote about conflict resolution, saying that conflicts can be resolved the same way for everyone regardless of age.

Founder and chair of the Carter Center’s Mental Health Task Force, Carter devoted the first portion of her talk to the importance of mental health, a subject she has stressed since becoming the first lady of Georgia in the 1970s.

Carter then presented a solution. “The way to overcome the stigma is for a neighbor, friend, or coworker to come out and say they suffer from depression. It takes the fear away,” said Carter. Carter also expressed concerns about child immunizations in this country. When her husband became president in 1977, she said just fifteen states required children under two be immunized against diseases such as measles.

Carter said she was proud that Georgia was third in the nation in the percentage of children under two who have been immunized, but expressed disappointment that the national average (76 percent) has dropped.

Turning her thoughts globally, Carter discussed the Carter Center’s disease-prevention efforts in the developing world, specifically the center’s battle against Guinea worm. Carter said there once were 3.5 million cases of Guinea worm worldwide, now there are just 35,000, primarily in Africa. She spoke of a recent trip she and the former president took to the west African nations of Togo, Benin, and Ghana.

“We give hope where none exists,” she said of the Carter Center’s work, “and we give people a reason to believe that things will get better.”

The Mills Peace Lecture was established by John and Elizabeth Mills to honor their son, Samuel, a former student at Oxford, who was killed in a car accident in 1986. The lecturer must be a Georgian who has contributed significantly to peace and understanding. The lecture is sponsored by the Pierce Program in Religion. —Eric Rangus

PORT Project Opens Doors for Students

Like any portrait, detail is essential to divine who the subject is. The Oxford College PORT project has brought this detail to the college experiences of its students. PORT, which represents a portrait, a portfolio, and a portal, is an online system allowing students to track their activities in a more enriching way than a resume.

Joe Moon, dean of campus life at Oxford College, said he and his staff first conceived of this project five years ago.

“Oxford students have a lot of leadership, but because Oxford is only a two-year college, we worried that students did not consider the lessons they learned from their activities and experiences,” he says. “At first we were going to create a college-maintained transcript of student activity to supplement the academic transcript, but research found that this is hard to maintain, and students didn’t really buy in.

Oxford’s campus life staff wanted to go beyond a list and have an in-depth way to track students’ activities. PORT offers a way for students to write about their experiences with leadership positions, research papers, and volunteer activities. As with a journal, students can write about their frustrations, their achievements, and the skills they’ve learned.

“A resume is a very brief listing of activity or work life, and a mention of a major or degree; a PORT should bring depth to a student’s experience at college,” says Moon. “Students add activities, and then there are about fifty descriptors for them to check, such as life skill or social experience, that allow them to clarify what types of activities they are participating in.”

Another important PORT attribute Moon emphasizes is goal setting, whether it be a personal, academic, career, or human relations goal. This helps students to make thoughtful goal-directed or goal-responsive choices in their academic careers and extracurricular activities.

“We ask students to think about where they are heading and what they want to do,” says Moon. “For example, if their goal is to be admitted to graduate or medical school, their PORT should have something related to that.”

Faculty advisers can use PORT to gain a glimpse into students’ lives. When students want a recommendation from a professor, PORT gives an explanation of the skills a student has taken from involvement on campus and in the community.

The success of PORT at Oxford can be attributed to its being an institutionalized program. Students in this year’s first-year class are the first to have goal setting as a part of the freshman seminar, and to also have PORT required when applying for campus leadership positions. Moon believes that at this level, students’ involvement must be a transition between high school and college, a shift from being a joiner to an engaged participant.

“High school is passive and about joining as much as possible; at college that appears thin and superficial,” says Moon. “Students are beginning to build a portrait of themselves in college, which makes being thoughtful about extracurricular activities that much more important.” —Megan Jentz
Oxford’s Inclusiveness Exemplifies Education

Reflecting on Oxford’s diverse humanity with our first alumni

 secsometimes I wander the corridors of Seney Scudder Hall examining the class photographs from the late nineteenth century that line the walls. The sober and earnest young men who look out at me are dressed in the requisite high collar and formal coat and tie. They are Methodist and Caucasian, except for the lone Yun Chi’-Ho, Class of 1893, the first Korean to be educated in America. Trained for the professions—the ministry, medicine, law—the future of these young men was to lead Georgia and the South into the twentieth century. They would accomplish this with great success. As I scan their Scot-Irish-English faces, I wonder what they would think if in 2004 they were somehow resurrected. A great fanfare. But for our nineteenth-century alumni, women and non-Caucasian classmates, the world they knew and the one we have created here at Oxford today, I would ask them to recall their small classes, engaged teachers, and the vital student life they experienced. In that regard, life has not changed at Oxford. I would suggest they remember their Methodist heritage, which is rooted in John Wesley’s belief—that as he said, “The world is my parish.” The Wesleyan tradition fosters a wide-spreading openness to all people—males and females, those of different socioeconomic backgrounds, those who were outside the established community. I would also ask our antique alumni to reflect on the purpose of their classical liberal arts education, with its fundamental commitment to intellectual breadth and to exploration of connections between specialized forms of knowledge. I would remind these forefathers that religious sentiment and intellectual commitment require that one reach out to that which is unknown, that which is different. Such action produces not only great heartedness, but understanding and wisdom too. I would welcome these long-resuscitated alumni and ask them to celebrate with us our inclusion of women with whites of every shade of brown, of Christians with Jews, Muslims, and Hindus. I would remind them we are kin and kith, all part of the Emory lineage that they began long ago. And I would assert that the open inclusiveness of this little college makes it a better environment both for the mind and heart. Vive la difference.

Dana Greene
greene@emory.edu

Stay in touch with your alma mater, Dana Greene

HONORS AND DISTINCTIONS

continues...

• Euber Brodeh 02’Ox’04C was one of our students—university-wide—who were selected for the prestigious Robert T. Jones Scholarship for study next year at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland.

• Tina L. Elderby’s 03’Ox’05C has received the 2003 Princeton Review scholarship at Emory College and has been awarded a full scholarship for Scholars Summer Study Abroad.

FACULTY ET STAFF


• Feng Chen and Wendy Dirks will participate in the Gregory Seminar in May.

• Gayle Dobert participated in the 2004 Hall Institute trip to India. She will attend the University Advisory Council on Teaching’s training seminar for master teachers in May.

• Adrienne Vey will participate in the Oxford/Emory College exchange. Darrell Stokes, Department of Biology, Emory College, will teach here in 2004–2005.

• Myra Jacobs, Fang Chen, Christine Loftin, and Gobiao Yang will attend a faculty retreat in March at Callaway Gardens sponsored by the Emory College Center for Teaching and Curriculum.

• Kristina Jensen, reference instruction librarian, has been accepted to the teaching track of the ACRL Institute Program for Information Literacy.

• Patti Owen-Smith’s article “How We Understand: Undergraduate Writing to Assess Insight” appeared in the Journal of Student-Centered Learning.

• Included in Peter Seiden’s 2004 edition of The Teaching Portfolio: A Practical Guide to Improved Performance and Promotion/Tenure Decision (Anker) are two chapters by Oxford faculty, Myra Frady’s “Developing and Implementing the Teaching Portfolio at Oxford College of Emory University” and Steve Henderson’s “Sample Portfolio.”

S ORTS

Heather Voelkel’s 04’Ox dream is to have a big house with a lot of children running through it with glee. Her dream is not about giving birth to a lot of children but rather giving hope to abandoned kids. “I want to get kids off the street and give them a sense of direction,” she says. “A number of people gave me a sense of direction, and I want to do that for the kids.”

As a soccer player, Voelkel was the team’s top scorer with thirty-two points in twenty games last season, which ranked her fifth in the region. She was also named to the all-conference first team for the second consecutive year.

“I really like soccer, but there are many other things that I also enjoy,” Voelkel says in an understatement after one reviews the list of activities on her resume.

In the last two years alone, she has taught English as a second language to adults, tutored kids in an after-school program, volunteered with a community garden project, taught marine biology to inner-city children, and coached youth soccer. After she graduated, Voelkel wants to serve in the Peace Corps and Teach for America.

Her service-oriented zeal can be traced back to her parents who were actively involved in Mexico in their parents, alumni, and friends. Dennis Spruell of Monroe, Georgia, father of basketball player Andy Spruell, the football and basketball club president.

The drive coincides with the establishment of a booster club for Oxford athletics. The club was set up to coordinate fundraising for the program to its parents, alumni, and friends. Dennis Spruell of Monroe, Georgia, father of basketball player Andy 05’Ox, is the club’s president.

Club members will receive tickets, polo shirts, t-shirts, car decals, and newsletters, depending on how much money they donate.

Parties interested in contributing to the Oxford athletics endowment fund may contact Edgar Flores, athletics director, at 770.784.4672 or eflore@emory.edu.

“My number one purpose in life is to serve God with my heart and my soul and my mind and my strength,” Voelkel says.

“Heather is a great example of the student-athletes we want to attract to Oxford,” says her soccer coach and the school’s athletics director, Edgar Flores. “And her laugh, well, you can hear it from the other side of the campus.”

The echo of that booming laugh would fit well in a large house full of playful children.

John Arenberg

Soccer isn’t Heather Voelkel’s only game.

DEAN’S MESSAGE

Myra Frady’s

Teaching Portfolio: A Practical Guide to Improved

Teaching (Anker) are two chapters by Oxford faculty, Myra Frady’s “Developing and Implementing the Teaching Portfolio at Oxford College of Emory University” and Steve Henderson’s “Sample Portfolio.”

Reflecting on Oxford’s diverse humanity with our first alumni

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Her service-oriented zeal can be traced back to her parents who were actively involved in Mexico in a civic organization, Feed the Hungry. Dad provided expertise in agricultural development to the local farmers, while Mom set up and taught in a school for children.
Alumni Lead in Local Politics

I n January 2004 an Oxford alumni coup occurred. Don Ballard ’48Ox was elected mayor of Oxford, and Sam Ramsey ’59Ox-’61B was elected mayor of Covington, Georgia.

Ballard, who had served as city attorney for fifty-one years and spent twenty-six years in the legislature (representative for fourteen years and senator for twelve years), enjoys being mayor because, as he says, “You get to do something for your fellow citizen.” Ballard is a attorney at Ballard, Stephenson, and Waters, and he has been practicing for fifty years.

Though he was interested in political science while at Oxford, and eventually majored in it at the University of Georgia, Ballard had no plans for politics during his college years. He entered the political realm later in life, because he “watched things work for years and has gotten an idea about what needs to be done,” he says. “Now I can do something about it.”

While Ballard is beginning his first mayoral term, Ramsey is serving his third term as mayor of Covington. He cites his business administration major at Emory for part of his success in managing Covington and working with the four large companies within its boundaries. The rest, he says, is due to a “great city manager and a great group of city employees.” Covington received Georgia Trend magazine’s City of Excellence award in 2003.

Like Ballard, Ramsey had little interest in politics during college. He began his political career when he served on Covington’s planning commissions for seventeen years and then spent eleven years on the city council. But his “political blood” made a career in politics seemingly unavoidable.

Ramsey’s great grandfather was tax commissioner in Newton County, and his grandfather was sheriff of Rockdale County and mayor of Conyers. In addition to running Ramsey Furniture in Covington, politics is a good career fit for him.

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The Association of Emory Alumni and Oxford College are proud to announce

EMORY WEEKEND

A University-wide celebration of old friends, professors, new graduates, and all things Emory. Beginning in May 2004, Alumni Weekend will become Emory Weekend, a prelude to Emory’s liveliest time of year: commencement. Alumni of all ages are invited to come home for Emory Weekend.

To learn more, visit www.emory.edu/ALUMNI/EMORYWEEKEND2004/ or call 404.727.6400 or toll free 866.727.6485

Oxford in Print

• Tommy R. Sikes ’83Ox of Meridian, Mississippi, is pastor of the First Christian Church and has published his second book, Wind Chimes: Inspiring Stories of Grief and Grace that includes stories about Oxford College, Chaplain Sammy Clark, and life as a student at Oxford College.

Looking for Class Notes?

In order to post all alumni submissions in a timely manner, class notes are now featured on the web. For up-to-date coverage of alumni news, visit www.emory.edu/OXFORD/Alumni/ClassNotes.

Giving to Oxford is just a click away.

www.emory.edu/OXFORD/Alumni/gifts

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