The Inn at Swarthmore

ART Collection

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This catalog was made possible by the Inn at Swarthmore, the Kaori Kitao Endowment for the List Gallery, and the Department of Art, Swarthmore College.

Introduction by Zoë Wray ’16, List Gallery intern

On the Selection of Art for the Inn by Professor Randall Exon

Artist Profiles by Zoë Wray

Sarah Van Keuren ’66
Eberhard Froehlich ’86
Nazanin Moghbeli ’96
Alex Anderson ’13

Selected works by alumni and students

Artists represented in the collection of The Inn at Swarthmore

Design: Philip Unetic, UneticDesign.com
Photos on pages 25 & 26 appear courtesy of the artists.
All other photos are by Stacy Bomento.
This catalog is a result of my work as a List Gallery intern for the 2015–16 academic year. I feel fortunate that my internship year coincided with the opportunity to document this celebration of Swarthmore’s artistic tradition. The research I completed for the catalog mainly consisted of interviews with each of the artists profiled here, supplemented by an in-depth study of their pieces. This effort allowed me to become acquainted with the legacy of strong, thoughtful artwork produced by Swarthmore alumni as well as the colorful history of our studio art program. As an honors art history major and aspiring art historian, it has been illuminating to compare the ways artists interpret their work. I am also glad that I had the chance to meet such engaging, brilliant, passionate, and kind fellow Swatties. Because I could not interview and write at length about the work of all the alumni artists represented at the Inn, I chose a diverse group of alumni artists that spans four generations. Together, they demonstrate Swarthmore’s robust tradition of educating moral individuals from all walks of life. Although Sarah Van Keuren ’66, Eberhard Froehlich ’86, Nazanin Moghbeli ’96, and Alex Anderson ’13 engage in different artistic practices—including photography, figurative and abstract painting, and sculpture—they share a fondness and gratitude for Swarthmore, emphasizing the College’s significance in their lives and artistic careers. When we look at the works on view at the Inn at Swarthmore, we remember that behind each work of art, there is love for the community. In addition to the extended alumni profiles, you will find a foreword by Randall Exon about how the work was selected and images of some of the many student and alumni pieces on view. I am deeply impressed by and grateful to everyone who contributed their artistic efforts to the Inn. I also want to thank Stacy Bomento, visual resources curator in the department of art, who photographed most of the images used in the catalog and provided information about the alumni and student pieces. Finally, but especially, my utmost gratitude goes to List Gallery Director Andrea Packard ’85, who gave me the opportunity to intern with her and produce this catalog. She has been my personal and professional mentor throughout this year and provided vital guidance in the creation of the catalog. The close relationship that I was able to develop with her through this internship is an example of Swarthmore’s commitment to providing a supportive community for its students. — Zoë Wray ’16
I am pleased to reflect on the installation of more than 130 art works by Swarthmore College students and alumni at the Inn at Swarthmore—a project that has given rise to this catalog. In the early stages of planning, the design team decided that the art selected for the Inn should be purchased from alumni and current students at Swarthmore College. The administration agreed, a budget was determined, and an art selection committee was formed that included representatives from the architectural design team, the operators of the Inn, the Limited Liability Corporation, Swarthmore College senior staff, and the department of art.

During the committee’s first meeting, they settled on the following guidelines for selecting the artworks:

- The artwork is representative of the college campus, its environs or spirit.
- The work contributes to the overall character of the Inn’s interior design that reflects quietude and repose.
- The work represents the diversity of our college community.

Because we could not select works from all of the artists who have been part of this community over so many years, including many who are enjoying critical and commercial success, we focused on those artists we felt best reflected the guidelines above. We are very proud of the 15 selected alumni artists, whose class years range from 1963 to 2015. Seven of the artists were invited to return to campus to develop works that specifically interpret the College environment. These and other alumni works occupy the Inn’s public spaces—the lobby, restaurant, gathering rooms, and corridors as well as several suites. In addition, approximately 70 works by current students were selected for the guest rooms. These paintings, drawings, photographs, sculptures, and mixed-media pieces represent the high caliber of work created by both majors and non-majors in the department of art.

It has been tremendously rewarding for the committee to engage with both student and alumni artists. We believe that the selected works will provide a unique experience for those staying at the Inn. We greatly appreciate Swarthmore’s interest in highlighting the work of both seasoned and emerging artists.

— Randall Exon, Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot Professor of Studio Art, Swarthmore College
When Sarah Van Keuren ’66 moved from the Maryland suburbs of Washington, D.C. to attend Swarthmore College, she fell in love with Swarthmore’s Scott Arboretum, its commitment to social justice, and its “edgy, radical feel.” Although Van Keuren traveled extensively and lived abroad, the landscape of southeastern Pennsylvania called her back. For almost 40 years she has lived near the College in Lansdowne, taking photographs that evoke a quiet beauty and quality of timelessness in nature.

Van Keuren’s artistic journey flourished during her years as a Swarthmore student, despite the College’s reluctance to accept art-making as a serious endeavor: In the mid-1960’s, Swarthmore students could not earn credit for art courses. Nevertheless, Van Keuren, an art history major who concentrated on early Netherlandish art with Robert M. Walker, was able to take extracurricular oil painting classes with Harriet Shorr ’60. Van Keuren recalls that “times were changing,” and at Shorr’s instigation she applied for a Swarthmore-funded “research” grant to paint local landscapes. Although she considered graduate studies in art history, Van Keuren decided to pursue her passion for art-making. After leaving Swarthmore, Van Keuren worked for noted printmaker and Pratt University professor Jacob Landau in Roosevelt, N.J. Subsequently, she lived in England for a year and a half, where she focused on her own artistic practice and studied European art collections. Upon returning to the United States, she began to take classes in stone lithography at the Philadelphia College of Art, known today as the University of the Arts. Developing a parallel interest in photography, Van Keuren enjoyed working in layers and sought a way to bring these two artistic mediums together. Under the tutelage of University of the Arts professor Lois Johnson, she experimented with making large photographic negatives and using non-silver processes to print them. In 1988, she received an M.F.A. in photography from the University of Delaware, where she was mentored by John Weiss. Van Keuren eventually became an adjunct professor at the University of the Arts and taught non-silver printmaking courses there from 1980 to 2014.

In 1977, Van Keuren and her longtime partner, Harry Kalish, moved to a carriage house apartment on a beautiful extensive property, belonging to Frank and Janet Mustin ’46. Her artworks for the Inn at Swarthmore reflect her love of the Mustins’ property and similar landscapes in southeastern Pennsylvania. Works such as Fiery Vertical and Horizontal View, which depict the same tree on the Mustin property, trace the changing seasons, celebrate nature’s contrasts, and explore the ways that nature is both enduring and cyclical.

These and other works purchased by the Inn at Swarthmore reflect Van Keuren’s fascination with nature’s cycles of life and death. In Fiery Vertical, the

Sarah Van Keuren ’66

Fiery Vertical, 2006, gum-bichromate cyanotype print, 30 x 22 inches
dark arcing lines of the trees stand out among the hazy orange foliage. *Horizontal View* presents an alternative view of the same scene and a harmonious palette of deep yellow-green, pale yellow, gray-green, maroon, burnt orange, and dusty pink.

Van Keuren’s labor-intensive artistic process allowed her to create photographs that appear painterly. After taking a digital picture of a landscape that particularly moved her, she used an imagesetter to create full-size separate negatives for black, magenta, yellow, and cyan layers. Preshrinking and sizing pure rag paper with liquid gelatin, she began her print by brushing on a layer of black watercolor combined with Arabic gum and light-sensitive dichromate. Laying the negative for the black separation on the coated paper, she exposed it to a light source and then developed it in water. She repeated the same process with watercolor equivalents of magenta and yellow. She printed a final cyan layer by using a light-sensitive cyanotype solution. This complex process allowed Van Keuren to create multi-layered, hauntingly beautiful works such as *Icicles and Snow*. The photograph’s power lies mainly in its spatial ambiguities and diversely textured icicles, snow, trees, and sky. Initially, the icicles seem closest to the viewer because of their position in front of the trees and sky. Yet their soft tones blend with the pale gray sky, pulling them back in space and creating a strong contrast with the solid black shapes of the trees. Although we perceive the trees to be more distant, their saturated color makes them appear more present and vivid than the icicles. The photograph’s spatial compression and imagery of transient melting snow cause the viewer to reflect on changes in both perception and nature. Van Keuren’s close attention to her surrounding landscape makes one notice the complexity that underlies seemingly simple elements in nature.

Sarah Van Keuren has exhibited her work at varied galleries and institutions including the Museum of Contemporary History, Plovdiv, Bulgaria; the Eleanor D. Wilson Museum, Hollins University; the Center for Contemporary Arts, Santa Fe; the Museum of Long Island; the Woodmere Art Museum, Philadelphia; the Philadelphia International Airport; and Rantagalleria in Oulu, Finland. Her work is represented in prestigious collections such as the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the National Museum of American Art, the State Museum of Pennsylvania, and the Free Library of Philadelphia. She is the author of *A Non-Silver Manual*, which is available for free at: alternativephotography.com.
Eberhard Froehlich ’86 never took art classes growing up in Princeton, N.J., but he found himself constantly drawing. Because his father taught biblical hermeneutics at the Princeton Theological Seminary, his home was filled with books. Froehlich remembers feeling attracted to the printed page’s “simple, unified quality” and its monochromatic text. Although Froehlich had a set of colored pencils, he always drew with one pencil at a time and delighted in the indents it made in the paper. When he was 15, Froehlich’s parents gave him a two-volume edition of Adolf Menzel’s drawings. Menzel’s intimate portrayal of everyday life inspired Froehlich. “My own first drawing from observation was of a raisin I placed on the table very close to my face,” he recalls. “And it was not the raisin that was important to me—it was the degree of focus I would need to do the drawing.”

Froehlich’s fondness for simplicity and curiosity about how everyday situations can convey essential truths have continued to inform his art. As Froehlich explains, “Nobody else seemed to care about these aspects very much: things like eating, drinking, getting in and out of cars, walking, opening doors, throwing something away, squinting into the sun, putting on your coat. I love the repetitive nature of these kinds of things—it gives them a kind of truth claim... Drawings and paintings of those things are more convincing to me than staged scenes.”

As one of the first students to pursue a major in studio art at Swarthmore, he was undeterred by the fact that the major was not as comprehensive as it is today. Whereas currently nine credits are required for a student’s major subject, students in the 1980’s who studied any of the applied arts, including studio art, theater, dance, and music, were only allowed to take five arts courses for credit. This restriction, along with family pressure to study something more “substantial,” motivated Froehlich to pursue a double major in classics and studio art. Nevertheless, Froehlich was energized by the opportunity to live and study with diverse peers on a beautiful campus. Professor Randall Exon was a significant mentor to Froehlich and introduced him to oil painting, a skill Froehlich developed through painting portraits of fellow students.

Upon an invitation from the committee charged with selecting art for the Inn at Swarthmore, Froehlich returned to campus during the summer of 2011 and again in fall and winter to paint from observation. It was the first time Froehlich had visited campus in 20 years, and the first time he had painted it since he was a student, which gave him new inspiration. Although he had been primarily interested in painting fellow students when he attended Swarthmore, this time Froehlich wanted to capture the campus’s common spaces and iconic elements—sites or objects that elicit
memories for nearly all people who study, work, or teach here. In his paintings for the Inn he simplifies and generalizes places such as the Rose Garden and Parrish Beach through a muted earth-tone palette, minimal detail, and abstract forms that suggest a quality of timelessness rather than a particular season or time of day. Froehlich hopes that doing so allows viewers to project their own memories onto the image. As the artist states, “I’m not interested in expressing my individuality through my work. I want to disappear from the painting and have viewers relate to it through their own memories and associations.”

For example, Froehlich’s The Chair celebrates Swarthmore student life. Every Swarthmore student knows of the “big chair,” a sculpture made by Jake Beckman ’04, and most have sat on it. Froehlich reverently depicts the chair bathed in a golden pool of late afternoon light that is tranquil, reminiscent of the balmy spring days that beckon students to study, sleep, and socialize outside on the “beach” that is Parrish lawn. Froehlich positions the viewer a short distance behind the chair, inviting him or her into the painting’s space to approach the chair and bask in the warm, soft light. It is this warmth that greets first-year students when they arrive for Orientation Week, and that which seniors savor when they leave at Commencement. A similar light and simplicity pervades all of Froehlich’s works in this series, bringing us back to our days at Swarthmore and the memories we made there.

Eberhard Froehlich has mounted more than 15 solo exhibits in the United States, Canada, and Germany. He is represented by the Artefin gallery in Berlin, which presented a solo exhibition of his work in October 2015. After graduating from Swarthmore, Froehlich earned his M.F.A. from the New York Academy of Art in 1999. He has participated in many plein air painting festivals. Most recently, he won the grand prize at the Adirondack Plein-Air Festival in Saranac Lake, NY. He earned second prize in the professional division at the 2012 Ogden Plein-Air Arts Festival in Ogden, Utah. He lives in Montreal, where he teaches painting at L’Académie des Beaux-Arts de Montréal ACADEM, and the Pointe-Saint-Charles Art School.
At first glance, Nazanin Moghbeli ’96 appears to lead two lives. She works most of the week as a cardiologist, treating heart patients and interpreting diagnostic imaging. The rest of the week, she enters the art world, creating abstract drawings consisting of sinuous black lines. Persian calligraphy and music inspire her work, and they are as integral to her life story as medicine.

Her mother, Manzar Moghbeli is a calligrapher, and her father, Dr. Homayoon Moghbeli, is a cardiologist. Her parents’ careers exposed her to both art and medicine from an early age, and throughout her childhood she always kept one foot firmly planted in each discipline. While living in Iran from ages 4 to 9, Moghbeli experienced Iranian art, architecture, and music, learning traditional Persian calligraphy techniques and practicing Iranian miniature painting with a teacher. When she enrolled at Swarthmore College on the pre-med academic track, she knew she wanted to continue practicing art. Her interests culminated in a double major in studio art and biology.

While at Swarthmore, Moghbeli’s professors encouraged her multidisciplinary studies because they understood the ways in which art and science were interconnected. Moghbeli’s embryology professor, Scott Gilbert, compared embryonic formation to the creation of art. She also cites studio art professors Randall Exon and Celia Reisman as well as List Gallery Director Andrea Packard ’85 as guiding figures. Moghbeli is deeply grateful that Swarthmore made it not only possible, but fruitful to study both the humanities and the sciences, despite the workload such a program would entail. “For me it was transformative to spend four years at Swarthmore delving deeply into these disparate disciplines. If I had gone anywhere else, I do not think I would have been as supported and encouraged to study both art and science.”

Moghbeli’s deceptively simple, calligraphically inspired works of ink on paper seem unrelated to traditional Western painting styles. Yet she applies some of the same formalist principles used to analyze representational art when evaluating her own work. While making art, she asks herself myriad questions, such as whether her lines convey a sense of depth, move the eye compellingly, or contribute to a structurally cohesive composition. One of her larger works, Seen, resonates like a music piece, possessing a beginning, a crescendo, and a resolution. The painting can be seen to begin from the left with a wide black line that asserts its presence to the eye on the paper. Although dark, this line is not fully opaque. Its gradations of black range from dark to light, imbuing the line with complexity and leading the viewer through the rest of the composition. As one follows the line up to the right corner, a frenzy of thinner, wispier lines seem to dance or suggest a chorus of instruments joining a strong soloist. The bold dark line circles back into
itself while the smaller lines lead the eye outwards, ending gracefully but with an emanating energy that has not quite been exhausted. Looking at Moghbeli’s work leaves the viewer excited rather than spent.

Moghbeli’s Iranian heritage figures prominently in her style and process, and her mother continues to be one of the artists she admires most. But she hopes that viewers do not need to know the Persian calligraphy and music traditions that inspire her in order to enjoy her paintings. This sentiment is mirrored in Moghbeli’s own artistic taste. Admitting somewhat jokingly that, “I don’t like art that needs to be explained,” she prefers to engage with artwork based on its formal qualities more than its contextual associations. The artists she admires have diverse artistic traits, from the bold, tempestuous brushwork of Willem de Kooning to the placid, contemplative color studies of Richard Diebenkorn. Moghbeli also appreciates artists such as Tricia Brown, whose work involves movement as its own subject. Like Moghbeli, Brown practices multiple disciplines as a dancer, choreographer, and visual artist. She creates her invigorated works by placing charcoal between her toes and then dancing on a large piece of paper. Similarly, Moghbeli incorporates movement and energy into her work. She uses different kinds of arm and wrist movements suited to her pieces’ varying sizes. In a small work such as Molana, Moghbeli moves her wrist with slight precision. The tensile vitality evoked by these small but precise movements animates this drawing, recalling the patterns made by ocean waves on sand. When she works on a larger scale, Moghbeli uses more of her arm, her largest works requiring full arm movement.

Moghbeli’s artistic passion is clear when she discusses the ways that art influences her work as a cardiologist. Often treating patients who have significant, even life-threatening heart problems, Moghbeli feels that art helps her connect with people who might be short on hope. “Doing art,” she explains, “connects me to something meaningful about why we’re placed on earth. I draw on that when I talk to patients.

Nazanin Moghbeli received an M.D. from Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, completed her residency at Brigham and Women’s Hospital, and is currently Associate Director of the Women’s Cardiovascular Program at Penn Medicine, a facility of the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. She has exhibited her art in the Philadelphia area at Burrison Gallery, University of Pennsylvania, and LGTripp Gallery.

Nazanin Moghbeli, ‘96, Untitled I, 2014, ink on paper, 11 x 14 inches

Nazanin Moghbeli, ‘96, Molana 6, 2013, ink on paper, 8 x 11 inches
Alex Anderson ’13’s childhood home in Seattle, Wash., was filled with East Asian art. During his early artistic experiments, he found inspiration in the East Asian aesthetic and nature’s visual language. When choosing colleges, he was drawn to Swarthmore’s especially open-ended liberal arts curriculum and rigorous standards. Its beautiful arboretum tipped the balance.

At Swarthmore, studio art professors Randall Exon and Syd Carpenter became Anderson’s key mentors as he pursued a double major in studio art and Chinese. Carpenter encouraged him to spend the fall of his junior year at the Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute in Jingdezhen, Jiangxi, China, where he decided to devote his life to making art. In Jingdezhen, which is known as the porcelain capital of China, Anderson felt encouraged by the public support for ceramicists and the large number of artists who were making their living through art. Captivated by the Chinese aesthetic, he applied for and received a Fulbright grant to study ink painting and ceramics at the China Academy of Art in Hangzhou, Zhejiang.

Anderson’s commissioned piece for the Inn at Swarthmore, titled Magnolia Vessel, takes inspiration from the abundant magnolias that bloom on campus every spring. While researching the piece, Anderson learned that a specific species, called the Swarthmore Sentinel Magnolia, was selectively bred for the Scott Arboretum. This flowering tree, which grows near Bond Hall, has distinctively white, upright blossoms. Anderson based the design of the vessel after the Sentinel Magnolia in order to celebrate the importance of the Scott Arboretum and evoke the beauty of spring.

Anderson also used the magnolia motif to explore the contrast between our sense of the perfection of nature’s design and its inevitable decay. As Anderson reflects, “Beauty, in all its perfection, is the first thing to pass.” The delicately sculpted elements and glazed surface of Anderson’s work emphasize its richness and beauty as a lavish, rarefied art object. Insects painted in gold enamel climb around the vessel’s leafy tendrils. As symbols of death and transience, Anderson’s delicate insects call attention to the duality of beauty and decay.

Through such juxtapositions, Anderson’s work invites reflection. Discussing his aspirations, Anderson muses, “I hope the viewer derives a certain pleasure, and that my work serves as a point of departure for contemplation. I recently read Theodore Shaw’s aesthetic theory about art cultivating a certain rareness. Rareness is the force in art that combats the tiring and blasé nature of everyday life. It is a quality in successful work that makes the viewer pause and behold the object in a way that makes him or her more present. I want my sculptures to evoke this rareness.” Anderson wishes the viewer to pause and appreciate a distillation of natural beauty. He constructs each work as a fantasy of heightened reality, because, as he states, “nature does not simply stop for us to gaze at it forever.”

Although he is a young artist, Anderson has already exhibited his work both in the United States and China. His numerous awards include the Fulbright Grant for independent study in foreign countries. Most recently, Anderson’s work was selected for the 50th Anniversary National Council on Education in the Ceramic Arts National Student Juried Exhibition in the graduate students’ division. He is represented by the 2016 University of California, Los Angeles with a major in ceramics; he continues to practice painting as well.
Selected Works by Alumni and Student Artists
Katia Lee ‘06, Broad Green (Summer), 2010, oil on canvas, 38¼ x 38 inches.

John Wehmiller ’66, Golden Oak, Winter, 2012, digital photograph, 15 x 20 inches

Meredith Leich ’08, President’s Garden, 2016, watercolor on paper, 11¾ x 15 inches
Cookie Dou '15, Urban Scene No. 1, Crosswalks, 2015, watercolor on paper, 10 ¼ x 6 5/8 inches

Hannah Bown '15, Pond, 2015, digital photograph, 22 x 29 ¼ inches
Emily Lipner ’15, Chairs (diptych in red), 2015, gouache on paper, each image 12 x 9 inches

Olivia Mendelson ’16, Calder Mobile in Quad, 2015, collage, 12 x 14 inches
Gavriella Mallory ’17, Untitled, 2015, oil and collage on board, 21 ¾ x 28 inches

Jeremy Chang ’16, Landscape, 2015, oil on canvas, 12 x 20 inches
Jeremy Chang '16, Landscape, 2015, oil on canvas, 24 x 42 inches

Ava Cotlowitz '15, Cow Study II, 2015, acrylic and oil on canvas, 12 ½ x 13 ½ inches
Rebecca Monarrez ’05, Pillow Study, 2015, oil on canvas, 30 x 30 inches. On loan to The Inn at Swarthmore from a private collection.

Leila Breitman ’17, Fabric Study, 2016, oil on board, 16 x 20 inches.
Gracie Farley ’17, Untitled (four studies in collage), 2015, oil on paper, collage
ABOVE 6 x 4 ¼ inches RIGHT 6 x 6 inches

Elizabeth Kramer ’15, Bar Tabacchi, 2015, mixed media on canvas, 16 x 14 inches
Alumni Artists

Michael Ahn ’10
Jesse Amar ’91
Alexander Anderson ’13
Eberhard Froehlich ’86
Meredith Leich ’08
Tasha Lewis ’12
Katia Lom ’06
Laura Post ’09
Nazanin Moghbeli ’96
Norman Sarachek ’60
Barbara Seymour ’63
Becca Van Fleet Webb ’03
Sarah Van Keuren ’66
John Wehmiller ’66
Alice Zinnes ’77

Artists whose works were purchased while they were enrolled at Swarthmore

Nyantee Asherman ’15
Hannah Bown ’15
Estefania Brambila-Olmedo ’16
Leela Breitman ’17
Jeremy Chang ’16
Carolyn Corbin ’15
Ava Corlissowitz ’16
Cookie Dou ’15
Iris Fang ’15
Gracie Farley ’15
Dirya Ferdous ’17
David Holmgren ’18
Christine Jung ’17

Emma Kates-Shaw ’16
Elizabeth Kramer ’35
Emily Lipner ’35
Gaviella Mallory ’17
Alexander Mandel ’18
Olivia Mendelson ’26
Rebecca Monarrez ’05
Chris Moyer ’55
Henry Ortmeyer ’18
Gene Temple Price ’15
Kelsey Rico ’16
Joon Sung Park ’17
Dionne Wilson ’15
Elizabeth Upton ’16
Tess Wei ’17

Hannah Bown ’15, Tree Trunk, 2015, digital photograph, 22 x 35 ½ inches

Alexander Mandel ’18, Amphitheater (detail view), 2015, digital photograph, full image: 17 x 25 ½ inches