First-Year SOA Students Present Work in ‘Metaphase’

By Katherine Moore

Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) presented the fifth annual Global Leadership Awards at its 5th Annual Gala on Tuesday, April 5. The event, an outgrowth of a successful gala in the School’s history, was held at the Pierre Hotel, recognizing the tremendous public service contributions of individuals and organizations and providing critical support for SIPA fellowships. Li General Brent Scowcroft, saw the award as a symbol of the ongoing collaboration between Columbia and the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone (UMEZ) and the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation, an organization founded by the late Alexander Onassis to enhance research and education in key policy arenas worldwide, was the 2005 honoree.

ABC News correspondent Claire Shipman moderated the event. The evening featured the presentation of the fifth annual Global Leadership Awards, which recognize an overwhelming talent of group of artists I feel strongly that the exhibition accurately presents their work, reflecting both unique practices and thematic tendencies elaborated within, through and between their practices.’

The Miriam & Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery is located on the 8th floor of Low Memorial Library. Gallery hours for this exhibition are Monday through Saturday, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. It is free and open to the public.

SIPA Presents Global Leadership Awards at 5th Annual Gala

The work of 26 emerging artists from the School of the Arts will be on display through April 9 at the Miriam & Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery during the first-year M.F.A. exhibition ‘Metaphase.’ The exhibition has a wide range of media and subject matter as the artists span various topics encompassing the exploration of dystopian urban conditions to representations of the self in photography and video.

Geographic estrangement and social dissonance are themes explored in the work of Ahsuna Ramji, Macro Monteoya, and Qing Liu. Their digital and animated video documents three consecutive generations of women walking through each other’s paths in Ramji’s home country of Nepal. Monteoya’s Epsom salt (Washing) consists of an array of charcoal drawings based on a fieldworker in California awaiting the arrival of his family. In his series, the New Republic, Liu uses non-digital photographic techniques, such as burning and dodging, to create citiescapes where the backgrounds have been either washed out or heavily darkened.

TaeWon Jung and Tamy Ben-Tor explore landscapes of the body and fracturing identities. Jung’s photograph of fish, such as red snapper and triggerfish, explore the textural similarities between the scales and the skin of a human body. Using high-gloss images referencing haute-couture fashion photography, the cuts and slashes in the fish’s body anthropomorphize into seemingly human scars and stab wounds. In her films, performer Ben-Tor embodies racist stereotypes and sociopolitical clichés through her characters to emphasize their ubiquity. She contemporary culture. Visual artist Stelio Memorial Day explores the way the Holocaust is culturally remembered, and Times Square explores notions of success in America as embodied by noncitizens.

A sampling of other artists in Metaphase includes:

- Lynne Chan is a filmmaker and performer who uses her body and her training as a Thai kick-boxer as raw material for her videos. Fighting Solos everywhere documents Chan and fellow fighters preparing for an upcoming match.
- Elise Hill’s painting Untitled depicts the branches of a 20-year-old oak tree resting the beams of strong Georgian sunlight breaking through the spaces between its branches.
- Mara Sprafkin employs silkscreen and collage to organize how the self is perceived. Her collagel 120 Moments Spent Alone on 11/13/04 3:18 a.m. and 3:45 p.m. uses six different types of paper and comprises approximately 120 hand-drawn images of the artist that form a cartographic map of fleeting moments.
- Rob Swainston’s Porta- uccino is a site-specific installation composed of layered, large-format woodcuts and silkscreens on Japanese paper, calls imagery from ancient Egypt through Greco-Roman sculptures and contemporary vehicles of war.

“it was an honor to be invited to curate Columbia University’s M.A. exhibitions’ said Jeffrey Uslip. ‘The 26 first-year candidates represent an

Columbia’s most eminent alumni, was the obvious choice this year for the Andrew Wellington Cordeiro Award, our honor for superior and distinguished public service,” said the dean in announcing the award. “Deeply loyal to his country, he spent over three decades in the military service working under three U.S. presidents. We also recognize his valuable contributions as a national leader in both the government and the private sector.”

General Scowcroft, who celebrated his 80th birthday just weeks before the dinner served as assistant to the president for national security affairs to Presidents Ford and George H.W. Bush. He also was military assistant to President Nixon and deputy assistant to the president for national security affairs under Presidents Ford and Nixon.

Dean Anderson echoed Shipman’s earlier enthusiasm about the degree and the caliber of individuals now attracted to the master’s program. As a highlight of the evening, the dean introduced two current students—Cecilia ‘Coco’ Quisumbing, the daughter of a SIPA alumnus and former news anchor of CNN Asia, and the other a financial lawyer and generalist. ‘Arriving on campus at 64 could have been pretty scary, but I felt very welcome,’ said international lawyer Anthony Gooch, class of 2005. ‘I feel that SIPA is doing a wonderful job of training people. [the school] will be part of the solution to some of the thorniest problems the world has to face in the next generation.”

SIPA presents the Schuyler C. Wallace Award for Distinguished Public Service to a nonprofit organization making a significant difference in bettering the lives of local, national or international communities. Stelio Papadimitriou, president of the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation, accepted the award on his organization’s behalf. In his acceptance remarks, Papadimitriou emphasized the foundation’s work in education and the promotion of classical studies. Yet, the mission of the foundation, named after Aristotle Onassis’ son, is much broader from building a state-of-the-art cardiac hospital in Athens to providing humanitarian aid for the victims of the recent tsunami in Southeast Asia, the foundation has helped thousands of people around the globe,” said Anderson.

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