

**The University of Texas College of Fine Arts
Department of Art and Art History:
A Modern Institution**

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Since its inception in 1937, the goal of the College of Fine Arts at the University of Texas was to establish a strong identity within the context of the University, as well as within the Texas Arts community as a whole. According to Ezra William Doty, the first dean of the College of Fine Arts, this new branch of UT held the distinction of being the only center for Fine Arts in Texas located within an institution whose explicit goal was to be a “University of the First Class.”¹ Doty, in his written history of the College, declares that during its first 35 years, the main task of the College of Fine Arts was to create programs that would measure up to such a standard.

Although local arts organizations in Austin (most notably the Texas Fine Arts Association) spoke of the need for an Art Program at the University of Texas in the late nineteenth century, the formation of the College of Fine Arts was the result of increasing concern from the University’s own faculty and administrators in the early 1930s.² Faculty from the Liberal Arts College had noticed a deficiency in the number of fine arts classes available to students. Indeed, since the mid 1920s, classes in Music and Music Education had been in jeopardy of being phased out all together due to a lack of funding from the state. In the case of the visual arts, the School of Architecture employed the only three faculty members of the University who were trained in painting, and their classes were only available to students majoring in Architecture. By 1935, the faculty had voted to establish a Committee to develop ideas for a new college within the University, and in 1936 UT President William Battle presented to the state

¹ Ezra William Doty. *History of the College of Fine Arts* (Austin: Morgan Print Co., 1989), 49.

² Ed Prohaska. *Advocating Art: The Texas Fine Arts Association, 1911–1943* (Master’s Thesis, The University of Texas at Austin, 1993), 104–107.

legislature a proposal for the College of Fine Arts, which would comprise the disciplines of Music, Drama, and Visual Art. The Texas State Legislature approved the College of Fine Arts in May of 1937 and appropriated \$64,000 for its establishment, to be paid in two installments over the next two years.

Few art schools existed in the U.S. in the 1930s, so establishing one within a university was relatively uncharted territory. Syracuse University was the first to combine Art, Architecture, and Music, in 1876. In 1910, Carnegie Tech in Pittsburgh (now Carnegie Mellon) became the first university to include Theater in its Fine Arts College, but UT's particular combination of Music, Drama, and Art in its College of Fine Arts was especially rare, and its organization posed important advantages within the context of a state university. By incorporating the Music, Drama, and Art Departments into one cohesive body, the College of Fine Arts became a strong administrative presence for programs which, separately, would not have wielded much authority within the University's bureaucratic framework.³ Also, this unification required only a minimal administrative staff; one dean presided over all three departments, and this was especially important during the College's formative years, when Doty was able to organize curricula, write catalogues, and hire faculty⁴ with relatively little resistance.

Doty's independence as an administrator was the result of a fortunate coincidence, whereby the College enjoyed the security of being a part of a state funded university, and yet was unimpeded by rigid precedents or specific

³ Doty, *College of Fine Arts*, 1–7.

⁴ Bill D. Francis. *50th Annual Art Faculty Exhibition* (Austin: College of Fine Arts – The University of Texas at Austin, 1988).

expectations of what exactly a College of Fine Arts should be. With so few examples to follow, Doty had the freedom to develop a distinct identity for the College of Fine Arts, one that would adhere to the traditions and ideals of the University and of Texas, and also compete nationally as a progressive Fine Arts institution.

Perhaps Doty's most significant choice for the fledgling College's Department of Art—besides his purchasing of slides and easels—was his appointment of Ward Lockwood as its first professor and Chair. After graduating from the University of Kansas, Lockwood studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia from 1914 to 1916, until he enlisted in World War I.⁵ After the war, in the early 1920s, Lockwood attended art school in Paris but he dropped out, deciding instead to paint on his own, first in the city and then in Provence. Lockwood's European sojourn was an enlightening experience, in that he was exposed to the important Modernist movements taking place at the time (Cubism, Dada, Surrealism, etc.), and he became especially interested in the work of Van Gogh and Cezanne. Lockwood's time in France gave him opportunity to improve his abilities of composition, paint handling and draftsmanship. After about a year in France, Lockwood returned to Kansas City, Missouri where he worked in commercial illustration. In 1926, Lockwood and his wife moved to Taos, which since the late 19th century had been a thriving artists'

⁵ All biographical information for Lockwood is from the following sources: Charles C. Eldredge. *Ward Lockwood: 1894–1963* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Museum of Art, 1974); Ward Lockwood. "An Artist's Roots." *Magazine of Art* 33: 5 (May 1940), 268–273; Dean A. Porter. *Taos Artists and Their Patrons, 1898–1950* (Notre Dame: Snite Museum of Art, University of Notre Dame, 1999); John and Deborah Powers. *Texas Painters, Sculptors, and Graphic Artists: A Biographical Dictionary of Artists in Texas Before 1942* (Austin: Woodmont Books, 2000), 310–311.

community. In Taos, two of Lockwood's closest friends were Kenneth Adams (with whom Lockwood had briefly shared a studio in France) and Andrew Dasburg, who had studied closely the work of Cezanne while living in Paris. He also spent time with John Marin when Marin visited Taos one summer, and Lockwood's watercolors after this time share some stylistic similarities with Marin. Although Lockwood had been reticent toward Modernism while living in France, he responded well to the landscape of New Mexico, and his Taos paintings remain some of his most well-known.

In 1937, Doty traveled to Taos in search of a Chair for the Art Department of UT's new College of Fine Arts. Doty (whose academic accomplishments included multiple advanced degrees and a professorship at the University of Michigan, where he wrote the Master's degree curriculum for the Music Department)⁶ admits that he chose Lockwood not only because the painter had traveled and studied extensively in the Northeastern United States and in Europe, but also because Lockwood had attended a state university.⁷ Lockwood accepted, and he invited his younger friend Loren Mozley to come to Texas as the Department's first instructor.

Mozley had lived and worked in Taos alongside Lockwood, Adams, Dasburg, and Marin.⁸ Mozley attended the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, but left after three years to pursue a career in painting at Taos.

⁶ Doty, *College of Fine Arts*, 9

⁷ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁸ Sources for Mozley's biographical information: Dean A. Porter. *Taos Artists and Their Patrons, 1898–1950* (Notre Dame: Snite Museum of Art, University of Notre Dame, 1999); Powers, *Texas Painters, Sculptors, and Graphic Artists*, 367–368; Loren Mozley, Donald B. Goodall, and Donald Vogel. *Loren Mozley: A Retrospective* (Austin: University Art Museum, University of Texas at Austin, 1978).

Mozley also traveled to Europe; for two years he lived in France, where he studied briefly at an academy in Paris before, like Lockwood, he decided to paint on his own. When Mozley returned to the U.S. in 1931, he spent the next few years in New York City, where he painted and worked as an engraver. In 1936, Mozley drove Georgia O’Keeffe from New York to Taos, and Mozley remained in New Mexico, where he taught alternately at the newly formed Art Department of the University of New Mexico and at the Taos Field School until he left for Austin.

The new College of Fine Arts began its first semester of courses in the autumn of 1938. Enrollment for the first year numbered 109.⁹ Art classes were held in the University’s Main Building—as were art history classes, drama classes, and rehearsals by the Longhorn Band. Sometimes a lack of space for all of these activities was solved by dividing rooms with curtains, and as one might imagine, under certain circumstances these failed to stifle the noise of an adjoining class.¹⁰ But modest quarters did not deter the College from holding exhibitions during that first year.

Exhibitions were a crucial part of the art world of Texas in the first half of the 20th century; they were integral as a means of communication for Texas artists, and they presented a way for Texas to stay abreast of national artistic trends. Furthermore, shows in museums and galleries in Texas attracted artists from across the country. The opportunity to win cash prizes was a significant factor for artists working during the Great Depression. Especially popular were annual juried competitions like the Annual Exhibition of the State Fair of Texas

⁹ “The Texas Art Department.” *Magazine of Art* 35: 3 (March 1942), 109.

¹⁰ Francis, *50th Annual Art Faculty Exhibition*.

(which became the Texas General in 1939), a selective traveling competition that offered purchase prizes in several categories, held jointly by the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, and the Witte Memorial Museum.¹¹ Beginning in 1927, the Texas Fine Arts Association also held an annual juried exhibition in Austin known as the Texas Circuit. Lockwood and Mozley along with other various faculty from the College of Fine Arts served as judges for that competition.¹²

Faculty members also won numerous purchase prizes at general exhibitions in Texas, and their work was consistently included in exhibitions across the country. During his time at UT, Lockwood showed his work at the Whitney Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, the Venice Biennale, and the San Francisco Museum of Art. Mozley exhibited in museums and galleries in New York, Denver, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C. Both artists regularly participated in several annual exhibitions in Texas, including the Texas General, the Texas Circuit and the Texas Watercolor Society.

At first there was a degree of animosity toward the success, or talent rather, of the new artists coming to the University. One reporter remarked that the arrival of the Fine Arts faculty had resulted in the uneven quality of local exhibitions; apparently some local artists' work paled in comparison to those of the new arrivals at the University.¹³ These comments signal at least a little friction as the College of Fine Arts established itself as a visual arts center for

¹¹ Alison de Lima Greene, Shannon Halwes, and Kathleen Robinson. "Introduction: Texas Art at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston." *Texas: 150 Works from the Museum of Fine Arts* (Houston: MFAH, 2000), 17–18.

¹² Prohaska, *Advocating Art*, 146.

¹³ *Ibid.* 135-136.

central Texas. However, the express purpose of the new college was to produce exceptional visual artists for the state, and the popularity and success of the faculty attracted students and more faculty to the University, and therefore to Texas. In this way the artists of the College of Fine Arts were eventually accepted, even embraced, as Texas artists, and the fact that not all of them were native Texans became secondary.

The professionalism that the faculty members brought to the local arts scene in Austin extended to the University community as well. Apparently not all academics were immediately appreciative of the cultural advantages offered by a Fine Arts program. For the first student exhibition, which took place in 1938 in the Academic Room of the Main Building, standards were built and mounted on the room's damask walls, so paintings could hang without damaging the interior. When a comment was made to Lockwood that the foot traffic from the exhibition might compromise the room's thick carpeting, Lockwood reportedly replied that perhaps the carpet should be hung from the standards, and the paintings placed on the floor.¹⁴ This type of response typifies in part the attitude that Lockwood and Mozley brought to the Art Department and the University in general. Understanding that appreciation for visual art in Texas at that time was somewhat lacking, they intended to, if necessary, force an appreciation out of a public that was hesitant to welcome it.

Literally making a show of such force, the College of Fine Arts hosted more than 80 art exhibitions during its first ten years. There was one student

¹⁴ Doty, *College of Fine Arts*, 16.

exhibition each semester, and faculty exhibitions averaged one per year. Furthermore, exchange exhibits with other universities, traveling exhibitions from numerous museums such as the Museum of Modern Art and the Corcoran Museum, as well as local and statewide juried exhibitions broadened both student and faculty awareness of contemporary artistic trends.¹⁵ Lockwood and Mozley became a member of the Lone Star Printmakers, a group comprised of many original members of the Dallas Nine (including two prominent faculty members), and the College held an exhibition of their prints to mark the occasion.¹⁶ Student shows also traveled to different locations—in 1955 an exhibition of student work was shown at the Forum Gallery in Manhattan.¹⁷ This exhibition-oriented attitude corresponded to the emphasis on performance by the Music and Drama departments as well, and in 1941 the College of Fine Arts hosted its first Annual Fine Arts Festival, a weekend-long event that entailed plays, concerts, art exhibitions, as well as lectures by visiting art historians and critics of contemporary art.¹⁸ Such events were an essential part of the College's efforts to train artists for successful careers in their chosen field.

Both Lockwood and Mozley were obviously influenced by the Modernist approaches to painting that they had learned in France, but their time in Taos had cultivated a strong sense of personal expression, some might say mysticism, in their work. They also stressed that an artist should be familiar with art history

¹⁵ Ibid. 41.

¹⁶ Exhibition announcement (n.d.). "Austin – College of Fine Arts" Vertical Files, Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin.

¹⁷ Exhibition checklist (1955). "Austin – College of Fine Arts" Vertical Files.

¹⁸ 1st Annual Fine Arts Festival Announcement (1941). "Austin – College of Fine Arts" Vertical Files.

and contemporary criticism. This resulted in a strong aesthetic conviction, demonstrated by the adeptness with which they handled their materials. Both artists placed their confidence in the ability of their chosen mediums to convey ideas and feelings, and this was a fundamental feature of their artistic practice that they wanted to pass on to their students. Their approach to teaching advocated total creative freedom combined with high standards of technical proficiency. One example is a class created by Mozley to teach the fundamental technical aspects of painting. Students were trained in preparing grounds, grinding colors and handling pigments, and they also learned to make their own frames.¹⁹ This concentration on craft ensured that students at the College of Fine Arts would be prepared to express their ideas with the utmost formal quality.

The College of Fine Arts grew quickly in its first years—by 1941 the entire faculty numbered 44, with 336 students majoring at the College.²⁰ The creative freedom advocated by the Art Department translated into a certain amount of stylistic experimentation for the new visual arts teachers as well. Lockwood, for example, invented a new technique for applying watercolor with wax.²¹ Moreover, the work of much of the early faculty members of the College of Fine Arts attests to a growing sense of community and increased momentum within the new cultural center that developed in Austin. Many of these artists changed their style dramatically, and their work became increasingly abstract. One source of this may be the increased exposure afforded the Art Department by the

¹⁹“The Texas Art Department,” *Magazine of Art*, 110.

²⁰ E. W. Doty. *Music Building Dedication* (Austin: College of Fine Arts, University of Texas at Austin, 1942).

²¹ For a detailed account of this technique, see Eldredge, *Ward Lockwood*, 85.

exhibitions at the College of Fine Arts. Also important is the atmosphere of critique that occurred as a part of the everyday practice of being in an art school.

The burst of creative energy to come out of the artists working at the College of Fine Arts is in part a result of a shared artistic background. Generally speaking, this entails the reception of European Modernism in the United States and especially in the Southwest, and a shared social condition that occurred with the advent of the Great Depression. In the case of these particular artists, general artistic context also includes the opportunity to teach at the University of Texas. In the late 1930s, the opportunity to teach at state university was especially attractive due to the financial security such a position would have offered. The Depression had plunged the art market into a rather desperate situation; Lockwood and Mozley had worked extensively on public murals for the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the earlier Public Works Art Project (PWAP). The experience of working on large scale public art was advantageous in some ways. Lockwood was able to experiment with fresco, and he became quite skilled at it.²² Art Department faculty member Seymour Fogel also worked on public murals even after the Depression. Much of the Art faculty that joined the College of Fine Arts in its first two decades had been commissioned for such public projects, and almost all were familiar in some capacity with the style of painting known as “Regionalism,” “American Scene,” or “Social Realism,” that became popular around the time of the Depression.

²² Again, see Eldredge, 50–76, for a full account of Lockwood’s mural painting process.

Along with Lockwood and Mozley, two of the most prominent painters to join the Fine Arts faculty in its first years were Everett Spruce and William Lester.²³ The work of Spruce and Lester is often discussed together, due to their similar backgrounds. Both men were original members of the Dallas Artists League, founded in 1932, which represents the genesis of a group of artists known as the “Dallas Nine.” This group, which also includes the painters Alexandre Hogue, Jerry Bywaters, Otis Dozier, and Thomas M. Stell, Jr., is associated with a style known as “Lone Star Regionalism.”²⁴ The work of this group certainly has features in common with the major Regionalist painters of the time—Thomas Hart Benton, Grant Wood, and John Steuart Curry, for instance. But the Dallas painters positioned themselves as distinctly separate from this larger movement; they believed that Benton and Wood depicted the American landscape as too generic and superficial, and declared that the primary concern of the Dallas painters was to develop a style that was distinctly recognizable as a product of their intimate relationship to the landscape of Texas and the Southwest.

Spruce and Lester were prominent members of the Dallas Nine. They both studied at the Dallas Art Institute under Olin Travis and Thomas M. Stell. Travis was one of the first professional art teachers in Texas; in addition to

²³ Unless otherwise noted, the following analysis of Spruce and Lester is the result of consulting these sources: Francine Carraro. *Companions in Time: The Paintings of William Lester and Everett Spruce* (Austin: Laguna Gloria Art Museum, 1993); John Palmer Leeper. *Everett Spruce* (New York: American Federation of the Arts, 1959); Powers, *Texas Painters, Sculptors, and Graphic Artists*, 303–305, 479–481.

²⁴ All information on Spruce and Lester’s affiliation with the Dallas Nine, as well as general information on Lone Star Regionalism is from Greene, Halwes, Robinson. “Introduction,” *Texas: 150 Works*; and Rick Stewart. *Lone Star Regionalism: The Dallas Nine and Their Circle* (Dallas: Dallas Museum of Art, 1985).

founding the Dallas Art Institute with his wife Kathryn in 1926, he directed artists camps in the Ozarks during the summers.²⁵ It was actually on one of these summer trips that Travis discovered an eighteen-year-old Spruce, and offered him a scholarship to study in Dallas. Stell was a native Texan and member of the Dallas Nine, and he was also a nationally recognized painter who had studied at the Art Students League under George Luks, a painter who belonged to the so-called “Ash Can School” in New York.²⁶

Spruce’s and Lester’s shared experiences in Dallas lead to obvious similarities in their early paintings. The time Spruce and Lester spent studying with Travis and Stell acquainted them with the art of the Italian Renaissance, Cubism, and Post-Impressionism, and their paintings from the 1930s convey an interest in experimenting with compositional structure and geometrical forms. Their work of this time also reflects a mutual interest in the surrealistic painting of Mexico—like many of the Dallas painters of this time, the Mexican influence was in many ways stronger than the painting of the French surrealists. Spruce and Lester also shared a distaste for what was known as “Texas Impressionism.” During this time, Everett and Spruce both cultivated a tight and linear style of representation. They often showed work together in group shows in Dallas.

Although they were both to come to Austin (Spruce arrived in 1940, Lester in 1942), the styles of these two painters diverge in the 1940s. The freedom to experiment, combined with that necessity of financial security, allowed both artists to develop a style that was more individualistic. Spruce gradually

²⁵ Powers, *Texas Painters, Sculptors, and Graphic Artists*, 574.

²⁶ Stewart, *Lone Star Regionalism*, 26-27.

abandoned his use of stylized, linear forms to define pictorial space; his compositions became looser, more intuitive and expressive. Structurally his work became more complex; his palette grew darker, and he built up the surfaces of his paintings with layers of glaze and impasto. Spruce won purchase prizes at the Texas General in 1946 and 1948, and various awards at the Texas Painting and Sculpture Exhibition in 1949, 1955, 1962 and 1963. Spruce was also the first Texas artist to have a national reputation. In the 1930s and 1940s he exhibited regularly at galleries in New York and Chicago, and his work was included in the Whitney Museum's 1939 Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Paintings and the 1939 New York World's Fair.

Lester's paintings, in contrast to Spruce's, exhibit the artist's concern with the overall design of his composition. Like Spruce, Lester benefited from a more spontaneous approach to his materials, but this expressive approach resulted in the simplification of forms and a more dramatic use of color. Also, Lester's representation of space flattened into a shallow series of geometric patterns. He eventually made completely non-objective paintings; Spruce's paintings always maintained some—if only slight—elements of realism. Lester won numerous awards and purchase prizes at the Annual Allied Arts Exhibition in Dallas, the Texas Painting and Sculpture Annual Exhibition, the Texas General, and Annual Texas Print Exhibition. In addition to several one-man shows, his work has been included in numerous group shows, such as the D.D. Feldman Collection of Contemporary Texas Art, the Texas Centennial Exhibition, and the Golden Jubilee Exhibition in Dallas.

Spruce and Lester continued to show their work together, and both stayed on at the College of Fine Arts until their retirement. Lester retired as Professor Emeritus in 1972. He remained in Austin and died in 1991. Spruce retired, also as Professor Emeritus, in 1974. He passed away in 2002.

Spruce and Lester readily admitted that the academic atmosphere at the University helped to foster a sense of creative experimentation in their artistic practice. Equally important for many faculty members' artistic growth was the opportunity for travel that accompanies a teacher's schedule. Spruce and Lester both painted scenes of West Texas, especially around Big Bend. Lockwood spent time in New Mexico, Colorado, and California. Mozley's travels are particularly notable—he took extended trips to Mexico during his breaks, and he became increasingly interested in Latin American Art. In the 1960s he took a leave of absence to live in Spain and tour Europe.²⁷ He was by no means the only professor to take advantage of such chances for extended travel.

Another painter who joined the Fine Arts faculty early was Boyer Gonzales Jr.; he actually arrived year before Spruce, in 1939.²⁸ A native of Galveston, at the age of ten, Gonzales began spending summers at the Woodstock Art Colony in New York where his father, Gonzales Sr., built a studio for himself after deciding to give up his career as a cotton broker to be a full-time painter. At Woodstock the young Gonzales became acquainted personally with painters like

²⁷ Department of Art Newsletter (1964). "Austin – College of Fine Arts" Vertical Files.

²⁸ The following sources have been consulted to compile Gonzales' biographical information: Powers, *Texas Painters, Sculptors, and Graphic Artists*, 194–195. Martha Utterback. "San Antonio." *Texas Painting & Sculpture: 20th Century* (Dallas: Pollock Galleries, 1971), 12–13; James Graham Baker, "Boyer Gonzales, Jr." *The Virtual Texas Art Museum*. <<http://archone.tamu.edu/texmus/museum/GonzalesBJr/GonzalesBJrBio.html>> [May 4, 2005].

George Bellows and Robert Henri, two prominent teachers at the Art Students League and members of the “Ash Can School.” Gonzales settled in Woodstock to paint in 1931, after graduating with a degree in Architecture from the University of Virginia, and it was at Woodstock, while assisting the painter Henry Lee McFee, that Gonzales gained his first experience as a teacher. McFee also influenced Gonzales’s painting style by exposing him to Cezanne. In 1937, Gonzales accompanied McFee to San Antonio to establish a painting school that eventually became part of the Museum School of Art at the Witte Memorial Museum. Gonzales accepted a position as a painting instructor at UT in 1939, but stayed only a year before accepting a position at the Chouinard School of Art in Los Angeles. However, after serving in World War II, Gonzales returned to the College of Fine Arts as an assistant professor. During his time in Texas, he exhibited at the Corcoran Biennial, the New York and San Francisco World’s Fairs, and he had one-man shows at the Witte Museum and the Museum of Fine Arts Houston.

Gonzales remained in Austin until 1954, when he moved to Seattle to direct the School of Art at the University of Washington. Gonzales is a prime example of how the successful administrative structure of the College of Fine Arts eventually influenced newer Fine Arts programs at other Universities. As director at UW, he combined studio, art history, and art education under the purview of the School of Art.²⁹ He retired as Professor Emeritus of UW in 1979, and he continued to paint until his death in 1987.

²⁹ Doty, *College of Fine Arts*, 52.

Other notable painters who were working at UT in the College's first years were Eugene Trentham, who arrived in 1940 and Julius Woeltz of San Antonio, who joined the faculty in 1941.³⁰ Along with its nationally renowned stable of painting faculty, the College of Fine Arts in the years before World War II also employed successful and talented artists working in other media. In 1941, Charles Umlauf joined UT's faculty as a sculpture instructor.³¹ Umlauf was not the first member of the College of Fine Arts to teach sculpture—William McVey, a renowned art deco sculptor from Houston, had been working in that capacity since 1939³²—but Umlauf is probably the most well-known professor of sculpture from this period. Originally from Michigan, Umlauf studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and the Chicago School of Sculpture. Umlauf was one of the few sculptors in the Southwest who still utilized the “lost wax” method of casting, a complicated procedure for working in bronze. He also worked in stone, marble, wood, and terra cotta. Umlauf frequently employed classical religious or mythological subject matter, although his style was highly individualistic—both Modernist and Romanesque. Umlauf's figures often have stylized hair and drapery, elongated features and large hands. This exaggeration and abstraction of form becomes increasingly mannered in his later sculptures. Umlauf's sculptures are a prominent feature of the University of Texas campus, and in the state his public sculptures number more than work by any other single sculptor.

³⁰ Department of Art (c. 1951-52). “Austin – College of Fine Arts” Vertical Files.

³¹ Biographical sources for Umlauf: Department of Art (1954). “Austin – College of Fine Arts” Vertical Files; James Graham Baker. “Charles Umlauf.” *The Virtual Texas Art Museum* (2002). <<http://archone.tamu.edu/texmus/museum/UmlaufC/UmlaufCBio.html>> [May 4, 2005]; *Umlauf Sculpture Garden and Museum* (1997–2004). <http://www.umlaufsculpture.org/about/about_sculptor/index.html> [May 9, 2005].

³² Doty, *College of Fine Arts*, 17.

He continued to teach sculpture at the Art Department until he retired in 1981 as Professor Emeritus. Umlauf passed away in Austin in 1994.

The College of Fine Arts also holds the distinction of being the first Texas University to develop a program in Printmaking. Constance Forsyth was hired in 1940 to develop the Department's Printmaking division; she was also the first female faculty member of the Art Department.³³ Forsyth had studied at the John Herron Institute in Indianapolis, where her father was a teacher, and also at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia. She took summer classes at the Broadmoor Academy in Colorado Springs. Her teacher had been Ward Lockwood, who had actually introduced lithography to Broadmoor in the early 1930s. Forsyth had become familiar with the public mural paintings of that era assisting Thomas Hart Benton on his murals for the 1933 Century of Progress Exhibition in Chicago. While in Texas she exhibited at the Texas Watercolor Society, the D.D. Feldman Collection of Contemporary Art, the Texas Circuit, the Annual Texas Print Exhibition, and the National Exhibition of Prints at the Library of Congress. Forsyth retired from UT as a Professor Emeritus in 1973, and she remained in Austin until she died in 1987.

After World War II, enrollment at the College of Fine Arts increased dramatically; the Art Department alone had 574 students by 1945. To accommodate this influx, the Art Department moved east on campus to the present site of the Winship Drama Building, where some temporary army

³³ Forsyth's biographical sources: Powers, *Texas Painters, Sculptors, and Graphic Artists*, 173–175; Department of Art (c. 1951-52). "Austin – College of Fine Arts" Vertical Files.

barracks (also leftover from the war) had been constructed to house classes. This would be the home of the Art Department for the next fifteen years.³⁴

The faculty of the Art Department also grew in the years following the war. In 1946, Seymour Fogel and Ralph White, Jr. joined the painting faculty. Fogel trained at the Art Students League in New York and the National Academy of Design, and in 1933 he had been an apprentice to Diego Rivera for Rivera's Rockefeller Center Murals.³⁵ By the time he began teaching at UT he had completed several of his own murals, including one in the WPA Building commissioned for the New York World's Fair in 1939. Fogel ultimately completed twenty-two murals using various media, such as mosaic and stained glass. Seven of his murals are in Texas. Although Fogel was obviously no stranger to the Regionalist paintings of the 1930s, much of his painting from the 1940s signals a dramatic stylistic shift toward non-objectivity. Fogel had few non-objective contemporaries in Texas, and his work is notable as some of the most abstract painting produced by any Texas artist during this time. Fogel's aesthetic attitude was quite formal; he expressed a strong interest in texture and paint application. Sometimes he achieved his abstract forms and shallow depiction of space deductively, carving away layers of painted surface with a palette knife. Fogel won first prizes at the D.D. Feldman Collection of Contemporary Texas Art, the Texas General, the Texas Circuit, and the Gulf-Caribbean Art Exhibition. Fogel resigned from teaching in 1954, although he

³⁴ Francis, *50th Annual Art Faculty Exhibition*.

³⁵ For a comprehensive list of Seymour Fogel's artistic and professional accomplishments, including a selected bibliography, see Chelsea Weathers. "Seymour Fogel's Resume." *Texas Modern Art* (2004). <<http://www.texasmodernart.com/pages/6/index.htm>> [May 10, 2005].

maintained a home in Austin for years before retiring to Weston, Connecticut. He worked at various locations in the 1960s and 1970s, constructing murals, serving as a painting consultant for the Architectural League of New York, and accepting residencies at Michigan State University and the Springfield Art Museum in Missouri. Fogel died in 1984.

Ralph White came to the College of Fine Arts in 1946 after graduating from the Pratt Institute in New York City.³⁶ White had been a student at the Minneapolis School of Art at the University of Minnesota, but he quit to join the war. As an Air Force cadet White was stationed in San Antonio, and during that time he met Julius Woeltz, a faculty member at the College of Fine Arts since 1941, who acquainted White with some other members of the UT Art Department. White stayed at UT for over 30 years, and his painting style evolved over that time. He was an adept portrait painter, but like Fogel, formal techniques for applying paint to surfaces became a major factor in his paintings. White's paintings could be extremely abstract; however, he also taught courses in Design, and his work from the 1940s and early 1950s includes several major advertising commissions. He won numerous awards and purchase prizes, had several solo exhibitions, and participated in over 100 group shows. White retired Professor Emeritus in Fine Art in 1982. He passed away just last year, on September 10, 2004.

³⁶ Ralph White's biographical information is from Department of Art (c. 1951–52). "Austin – College of Fine Arts" Vertical Files; and John Graham Baker. "Ralph White." *The Virtual Texas Museum* (2002). <<http://archone.tamu.edu/texmus/museum/WhiteR/WhiteBio.html>> [May 4, 2005].

In 1947, Kelly Fearing joined the Art Education division of the College of Fine Arts.³⁷ Born in Arkansas, Fearing attended Louisiana Tech University, and he taught at Texas Wesleyan College at Fort Worth from 1945 until his appointment at UT. Fearing was one of the original members of the “Fort Worth Circle,” a group of printmakers instrumental in introducing European Modernism to Texas in the 1940s. In 1950, Fearing earned an MA from Columbia University. Fearing is an accomplished painter, draftsman, and printmaker. Fearing’s European influences during the 1940s and 1950s include the surrealism of Joan Miro and Paul Klee. Most noticeable about Fearing’s formal style are his delicacy of line and the intricate detail of his compositions. His work has remained figurative throughout his career. Although many faculty at the College of Fine Arts claimed that a sense of mysticism or spirituality guided their work, Fearing’s influences are perhaps the most overtly religious of his UT contemporaries. As a professor of Art Education at the College of Fine Arts, Fearing developed a strong and progressive program based on his theory of “visual awareness,”³⁸ the idea that sensory stimulation is integral to human development. In the mid 1950s, Fearing organized the Junior Art Project, a program offering Saturday art classes to elementary school children with exceptional artistic promise, as a way to introduce young people to art and allow

³⁷ Biographical information on Kelly Fearing has been gathered from Department of Art (c. 1954). “Austin – College of Fine Arts” Vertical Files; Amy Freeman Lee. *Kelly Fearing A Retrospective of Drawings and Other Works on Paper: 1945–1985* (Albany, Texas: Old Jail Art Center, 1985); Amy Freeman Lee, Mark L. Smith, and Elizabeth Ferrer. *The Mystical World of Kelly Fearing* (Austin: Creative Research Laboratory, University of Texas at Austin, 2002).

³⁸ Mark L. Smith. “Matter and Spirit: Mediating the World.” *The Mystical World of Kelly Fearing*, 11.

art education students to practice working with children.³⁹ He is a recipient of a Ford Foundation Grant, awarded in 1978. Fearing has participated in hundreds of group shows, and his solo shows include two retrospectives, the most recent in 2002. Fearing retired Professor Emeritus in 1987. He continues to live and work in Austin.

In addition to an increase in the number of faculty and students, the years after World War II also mark a significant shift in the administrative practices of the Art Department. Lockwood, who had been absent from 1942 to 1945 while in service as a personnel officer at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, accepted a professorship at the University of California at Berkeley in 1947. Mozley was the acting Chair during the war, but after Lockwood's resignation, the position of Chair rotated every two years amongst the Studio Art faculty.⁴⁰ Between 1947 and 1954, the position of Chair was held by Gonzales, Spruce, Umlauf, and Lester.⁴¹

In 1954, Donald Weismann became the first Chair of the Art Department who was not a member of the Studio faculty. The College of Fine Arts was one of the first national institutions to offer degrees in Studio Art, Art Education, and Art History within a single department. The inclusion of all three of these areas of practice in this way was even more novel in the 1930s than the formation of the College itself.⁴² However, the Studio faculty, partly because they had been for years the only eligible faculty members to hold the position of Chair, had always

³⁹ Program for Junior Art Project Forum (1954). "Austin – College of Fine Arts" Vertical Files.

⁴⁰ Doty, *College of Fine Arts*, 34.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 109–111.

⁴² *Ibid.* 33–34.

been the most influential branch of the Art Department. By 1953, Doty had noticed some deficiencies in the funding of the Art History and Art Education divisions, so in 1954 he hired Weismann to balance the authority within the Department.⁴³ Weismann had been the Chair of the University of Kentucky, and his training was primarily in art history and art education. However, he was also an active painter. His style is based heavily on art theory and architectural forms. He was the subject of thirteen one-man exhibitions and sixty-six group exhibitions. He has also written fifteen books and hundreds of papers on the arts, art theory, and art history. Weismann retired from UT in 1980 as Professor Emeritus, and he now lives in Denton.⁴⁴

Michael Frary also joined the Art Department faculty in 1954. Frary was originally from Santa Monica, California, but he grew up mostly in Southern Florida.⁴⁵ He attended the University of Southern California on a swimming scholarship, and in 1940 he graduated with a Bachelor's in Architecture. A year later he earned his MFA in painting from USC. After serving in the U.S. Navy during the war, Frary worked briefly at MGM Studios as an art director. He also studied briefly in Paris at the Academie Grande Chaumiere. Before joining the College of Fine Arts faculty, Frary taught art briefly at USC and UCLA. Frary's work has been consistently representational, and his style is as distinct as it is variable. His paintings may compress space and reduce forms to stylized geometric shapes, or they may incorporate deep recessions of space to convey

⁴³ Ibid. 50–51.

⁴⁴ Powers, *Texas Painters, Sculptors, and Graphic Artists*, 546.

⁴⁵ *26th Annual Faculty Exhibition* (Austin: College of Fine Arts, University of Texas at Austin, 1964); John Graham Baker. "Michael Frary." *The Virtual Texas Art Museum* (2002). <<http://archone.tamu.edu/texmus/museum/Frary/FraryBio.html>> [May 4, 2005].

are haunting and surrealistic landscapes of land and sea. He is adept at oil painting as well as watercolor, the latter of which is useful for capturing scenes quickly. This is especially important for Frary, who used his time off from teaching to travel and paint in Europe, South America, and South Africa. In addition to his two-dimensional work, Frary also has designed tapestries for public commission. He has won more than 180 awards and prizes, and his paintings have appeared in more than 200 exhibitions. He retired Professor Emeritus from the University of Texas in 1986 and still lives in Austin.

Other artists who joined the Fine Arts faculty in the 1950s include Paul Hatgil, a ceramist and metalworker who taught pottery and sculpture; John Guerin, a successful watercolorist and printmaker; and painters Robert Graham, Jr., Luis Eades and Dan Wingren, Jr., and Hiram Williams. The community of artists that comprised the Art Department in its first 25 years, only a fraction of which are mentioned here, benefited in various ways by being a part of such a novel enterprise as the founding of a College of Fine Arts in a state university. The orchestration of Doty and Lockwood ensured an environment in which the financial security and time to travel offered by a position at the new College would benefit its teachers, and in turn its students.

In the 1960s the College of Fine Arts faculty included such artists as William Levers, William Hoey, Bill Francis, and Vincent Mariani.⁴⁶ In 1961, art historian and critic Donald Goodall became the first “permanent” Chair of the Art Department.⁴⁷ He also became the director of the Huntington Art Gallery on

⁴⁶ *26th Annual Faculty Exhibition.*

⁴⁷ *Francis, 50th Annual Art Faculty Exhibition.*

campus (now the Blanton Museum of Art).⁴⁸ Goodall remained Chair until 1973, and during his time at UT he organized exhibitions for members of the Fine Arts faculty and wrote essays on their work. In 1963 the old army barracks were demolished and the Department moved into a new Art Building, which remains the home of the Art Department today.⁴⁹ In the 1970s a new building was erected to house the Art History Department and the Fine Arts Library. The Departments of Music and Drama each occupies its own complex of buildings on the eastern side of campus.

The Art Department of the College of Fine Arts has maintained a strong identity within Texas. Encouraging and facilitating the highest possible levels of creative freedom and technical skill in its graduates has been the mission of the Department of Art at the University of Texas. Doty once remarked on this idea of artistic freedom, “The Art Department faculty, especially, fostered a creative environment which not only produced many fine painters but also liberated the creative potential in graduates who then became professionally and avocationally involved in other arts.”⁵⁰ In other words, sometimes the early arts faculty was so liberal with their mission of artistic license that they inadvertently encouraged their art students to abandon their chosen field for another. Examples of this phenomenon include Harvey Schmidt, who graduated with a BFA in the 1950s and subsequently wrote the music for the “Fantastiks”; studio major Robert Benton, who after his time at UT moved to Hollywood to write for the movies—

⁴⁸ The Blanton is not directly affiliated with the College of Fine Arts, although students are welcome to use its facilities and there has always been a dialogue between the two organizations.

⁴⁹ Art Building Dedication (1963). “Austin – College of Fine Arts” Vertical Files.

⁵⁰ Doty, *College of Fine Arts*, 50.

most notably, he is credited as the writer for *Places in the Heart*, starring Sally Field and Danny Glover; and Farrah Fawcet, who majored in Art at UT before also leaving for Hollywood.⁵¹

Of course, there have been instances of graduates from the Art Department becoming successful visual artists. Bill Reily, William Bristow, William Berry, and Cecil Lang Casebier were all students of Spruce.⁵² Ishmael Soto was a sculptor who studied with Umlauf and McVey.⁵³ Travis Rhea, Bill Stegall and Michael Tracy also studied at the College of Fine Arts.⁵⁴

The College of Fine Arts now offers various degrees in the field of Art Education and Art History, Design, and the Studio program offers emphases in Painting, Sculpture, Printmaking, Photography, Ceramics, Metals, and Transmedia. Currently there are 62 faculty members in the Department of Art and Art History. Some artists working as faculty today include printmaker Kenneth Hale, who also serves as the Chair of the Department; painters Melissa Miller, Michael Mogavero, and Bill Wiman; and sculptor Mel Ziegler. A total of 834 students enrolled as Art students in 2005—673 as undergraduates, 161 in graduate programs.⁵⁵ The National Research Council recently ranked the Art Department's MFA program in Printmaking sixth in the nation. Its MFA program

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Leeper, *Everett Spruce*, 8–9.

⁵³ Exhibition checklist (1955). "Austin – College of Fine Arts" Vertical Files.

⁵⁴ Bill Stegall and Travis Rhea were included in the exhibition *Texas Contemporary Artists* at Knoedler Gallery in Manhattan, summer 1952. Exhibition catalogue (New York: M. Knoedler & Company, 1952).

⁵⁵ A full list of faculty and enrollment statistics is available on the Department of Art and Art History website <http://www.utexas.edu/cofa/a_ah/> [May 10, 2005].

in Painting ranked seventh.⁵⁶ The MFA programs at UT are relatively small and rather selective; only 32 students were enrolled in 2005 as Studio graduate students. Prominent graduates with successful careers as teachers, commercial artists, and professional artists continue to graduate from UT with degrees in Art.

The faculty of the Art Department in the 1940s and 1950s shared similar artistic backgrounds; many had experience working on public art during the Depression, and the influence of Regionalist painting was also strong. Many of these artists, although not all from Texas, shared an ideal that artistic expression is intimately connected to the artist's own sense of place, as well as a strong command of one's materials. The many exhibitions that came to the College of Fine Arts also ensured that the faculty was very aware of contemporary artistic trends, and their work reflects an awareness and influence of the modernist art of the time. However, the loyalty to their own artistic integrity and to their mission to create in with the college a center for arts that was distinctly a product of Texas, each artist's work from this time is unique to his or her own personal aesthetic. Taking advantage of financial security and the opportunities for travel, in addition to an academic atmosphere in which artists could share ideas and their work with respected colleagues, these artists made Austin their home. Their works are emblems of creative freedom and individual expression, and they exist today as some of the most explosive and dynamic examples of Texas modernist art.

⁵⁶ "University of Texas – National Graduate School Rankings" [PDF format] Available online at The University of Texas website <<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/refsites/college.html#rankings>> [May 10, 2005].