In May 2012, 21 Young Harris College students embarked on an immersive tour of Italy led by Dean of the Division of Fine Arts and Department of Art Chair Ted Whisenhunt, Director of Study Abroad and Lecturer of English Eloise Whisenhunt, Ph.D., and Campus Gate Art Gallery Director and Adjunct Instructor of Art Scott Dean.

The group studied Italian art, literature and culture while touring museums, cathedrals and historical monuments in many of Italy’s cultural and historical centers including Florence, Rome, Venice, Lucca, Pisa, Siena and Cinque Terre.

“Studying and traveling in foreign places broadens students’ horizons and world views. Suddenly other cultures and world events become more real for them,” Ted Whisenhunt explained. “I love seeing their faces when they experience some of the milestones—looking up at the Sistine Chapel, climbing the leaning tower of Pisa and walking around St. Peter’s Basilica.”

To prepare for the excursion, students enrolled in a comprehensive course that provided an introduction to aspects of Italian culture and history through lectures, selected readings, class discussions and hands-on activities.

“Instead of feeling completely overwhelmed in Italy, students had a foundation on which to base their travels,” Dr. Eloise Whisenhunt said. “For instance, students read Brunelleschi’s Dome and were clearly excited to get inside the dome in Florence and see the implements Brunelleschi invented to build it.”

In Venice, the group toured St. Mark’s Basilica and the Peggy Guggenheim Collection.

During the trip, each student made an on-site presentation regarding specific landmarks or cultural elements of the cities.

“Unlike other art classes, it was incredible to actually see what we had studied,” said junior education major Katheryn Woods of Cleveland, Ga. “Visiting Michelangelo’s ‘David’ was particularly memorable for me. Standing in the presence of such a huge and well-known statue was incredibly mind blowing.”

To offset tour costs, a percentage of all 2011-2012 gifts to YHC’s Friends of the Arts (FOTA) fund were used to reduce expenses for YHC students. FOTA contributions also made it possible for freshman art major Grace Patterson, of Blairsville, to have an unforgettable encounter.

“Not only was I able to gaze at wondrous masterpieces of artists like Bernini and Caravaggio during this trip, but I also had the amazing opportunity to spend a few hours with my cousins and great aunt who live near Lucca,” Patterson said. “Meeting them for the first time was extremely memorable and had a huge impact on me.”

“Trips like this provide opportunities that students may never have again, especially not in this affordable way,” added sophomore English major Heather Poole, of Young Harris. “This journey allowed me to make new friendships that are still growing. The whole experience was irreplaceable.”

Scan this QR code to watch video highlights from the tour. Visit yhcitalytour.blogspot.com to relive the excursion.
Message From the Dean

Dear Friends of the Arts,

The Division of Fine Arts has an exciting calendar of productions, exhibitions, performances and special events planned for this academic year. Our division continues to grow with new baccalaureate degrees, increased enrollment, improved facilities and additional faculty. Also, I am assuming the role of division dean. I welcome this opportunity and hope to continue the great legacy of quality and excellence that the art, music and theatre departments are known for at Young Harris College. As dean, it is my privilege to introduce new faculty and share some news with you.

This fall, the Department of Art will begin offering upper-level courses for the new bachelor’s degree in art. As part of this growth, we are pleased to welcome Jeremy Waltman to our faculty. He is a talented artist who works in the digital arts, drawing, painting, film, video and sequential art. Jeremy has exhibited his works internationally, published two graphic novels and is completing his first feature-length film. He will teach digital arts and upper-level art studio courses in addition to overseeing our new digital arts lab.

In the Department of Music, Dr. John Wayman will head up our music education program. John comes to YHC from the University of Georgia and brings his extensive knowledge of college-level and K-12 teaching. John has written articles regarding music education that have appeared in numerous publications. We also welcome two adjunct instructors of music, Simon Wildman and Dr. Vern Richardson.

We look forward to meeting educators from across our state when YHC hosts the annual conference of the Georgia Music Teachers Association (GMTA), Nov. 1-3. Congratulations to YHC’s own Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Keith DeFoor, who wraps up his term as GMTA president this year.

Our new Department of Theatre Chair Chris Crawford brings a wealth of knowledge from both the professional and academic sides of theatre lighting and design. Chris has worked as a production manager and lighting designer for several companies in the Atlanta area, including TRRU Production Services and the Atlanta Civic Center. The theatre department also welcomes Greg McGrath, who will teach acting courses. Greg earned his M.F.A. in acting from Illinois State University and has performed at the Actor’s Theatre of Charlotte and the Illinois Shakespeare Festival.

Our facilities continue to improve as the YHC Fine Arts Annex develops and transforms. We are completing a facelift on our band room that includes new carpet, paint, lighting fixtures and, most importantly, acoustic sound-reducing panels. We are thrilled about our new Macintosh computer laboratory, or “Mac Lab,” that will allow students to acquire new media skills. Other exciting additions to the Annex include a film darkroom, covered outdoor welding space and improved studio and office space.

This year brings more talented students and faculty to the Division of Fine Arts than ever before. We hope you will join us for events and visit campus to check out our progress. Thank you for your generosity to the Friends of the Arts—your support helps make all of this possible.

Ted Whisenhunt
Dean, Division of Fine Arts
YHC FINE ARTS GRADUATES
Pursue Creative Careers

Young Harris College’s 13 recent fine arts graduates share countless memories: rehearsing for hours, traveling on a performance tour of Europe, receiving standing ovations during sold-out shows. Theatre major Austin Freeman, ’12, of Hartwell, and music majors Genevieve Rodriguez, ’12, of Calhoun, and Tara Shiver, ’12, of Covington, will cherish these memories as they embark on new paths.

Shiver received the Chair’s Fellowship from the Savannah College of Art and Design where she will pursue a master’s degree in arts administration. She hopes to fuse her passions for the arts and nonprofit organizations by working at a college, concert hall or museum.

“I chose a music degree because it challenged my abilities. I had terrible stage fright issues and now they are down to small butterflies,” Shiver said. “I also wanted to grow in my knowledge as a musician, and the faculty has been such a great resource.”

She served as a clarinetist at McConnell Memorial Baptist Church in Huawasse and a recreation director at the internationally renowned Interlochen Arts Camp in Interlochen, Mich. Among many other campus involvements, Shiver served as president of the Mu Phi Epsilon music fraternity.

Rodriguez will enter Lee University’s graduate program in music education with plans to obtain a doctorate degree and pursue a career in higher education. She gained valuable experience working at the Interlochen Arts Camp and an after-school program in Blairsville, in addition to serving as choir director at Mountain Presbyterian Church in Blairsville.

“I definitely gained discipline as a musician and as a person at YHC, and my love for music has also grown,” she said. “I will never forget my professors. They are an inspiration and help me persevere.”

Freeman spent the last two summers performing in the outdoor drama Unto These Hills in Cherokee, N.C., and plans to pursue a career acting onstage and in films. He was involved in more than 25 Theatre Young Harris productions while staying active in Greek and religious life on campus.

“I was given the opportunity to flourish at YHC, and I made some of the greatest friends of my life in that valley,” Freeman reflected. “The memories of my days there are already looked upon with a sense of nostalgic longing and intense pride.”

THEATRE YOUNG HARRIS ANNOUNCES
2012-2013 Season

Theatre Young Harris will present an exciting new lineup of performances for the 2012-2013 Mainstage Series, which opens in September with its children’s show, Jack, Sept. 19-22, a play that retells the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. Next, Theatre Young Harris will present Tina Howe’s satirical comedy Museum, Nov. 8-11 and 15-17. In February, the group will present Mel Brooks’ Tony Award-winning musical The Producers, Feb. 22-24. The series will close with Steven Dietz’s heartwarming and humorous play Becky’s New Car, April 11-14 and 18-20.

The Studio Series will open with a musical theatre revue on Sept. 15, followed by Sarah Ruhls wildly imaginative comedy Dead Man’s Cell Phone, Sept. 21-22, and Yasmina Reza’s Tony Award-winning play God of Carnage, April 16-17.

Season tickets will be available in person through the YHC Box Office, located in the lobby of Goolsby Center, by phone at (706) 379-4307 or online at yhc.edu/tickets.

For the Love of the Arts

Young Harris College alumnus and Friends of the Arts platinum member Marvin McArthur, ’65, had a memorable start to his liberal arts education. His first “teacher” was his classmate—and future Grammy Award winner—Ronnie Milsap, ’64.

“At YHC, I became acquainted with classical music from Ronnie,” McArthur recalled. “I learned to appreciate what I had been missing during all those formative years.”

In addition to his involvements with YHC’s debate team, yearbook staff and Baptist Student Union, McArthur ventured outside his comfort zone and joined the Delta Gamma Drama Society. His artistic abilities were encouraged by his advisor and lifelong friend, Jean English-Hurst.

“I still have a close tie to the arts at YHC because of the influence it had on my life as a student,” said McArthur, who helped construct sets before acting in plays like Antigone and See How They Run. “I have wonderful memories of hours spent rehearsing with talented artists who helped generate my love for the arts.”

Today, McArthur resides in Marietta with his wife, Liz, and works as an engineering supervisor for WellStar Development Center. The couple visit campus whenever possible to attend fine arts events, and they enjoy catching up with friends at annual events like Homecoming and Alumni Weekend.

McArthur also supports scholarships by participating in the Clay Dotson Open golf tournament and backs YHC Athletics as a member of the Diamond Club.

“I spent some of the best years of my life at YHC,” he said. “We should all give back to the community that helped form who we are.”

McArthur spreads his love of the “Enchanted Valley” wherever he goes and shares his pride in the progress that has been made at his alma mater in recent years.

“I talk to prospective students all the time and offer them insight into the best small college in America,” he said. “The fine arts education at YHC has always had a great reputation, and I know the College will keep on introducing great artists and musicians into the world.”
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Your support enables the Division of Fine Arts at Young Harris College to continue offering quality programming that benefits student development and enhances the local cultural landscape. Friends of the Arts supports Young Harris College’s goals to enable students to grow and learn in an environment of uncompromised artistic and academic freedom and integrity.

For more information, contact Jennifer McAfee at (706) 379-5318 or jmcafee@yhc.edu.

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