



Jesus Sanchez studies his specimen in new teaching artist Jamie Sweetman's Beginning Drawing class.

Photo: Rebecca Tuymman

# SketchBook



number 20  
Winter 2006

## We Knew It, Now We Know It!

Evaluation provides evidence for  
Ryman Arts' impact on students

Just look at the art produced in the studios every Saturday, and you can see the impact of Ryman Arts. "But we also knew that students took away more than artistic skills and wondered how else we were affecting them long term," says Executive Director Diane Brigham. Now a comprehensive evaluation of Ryman Arts programs demonstrates that the organization has a positive impact in many ways.

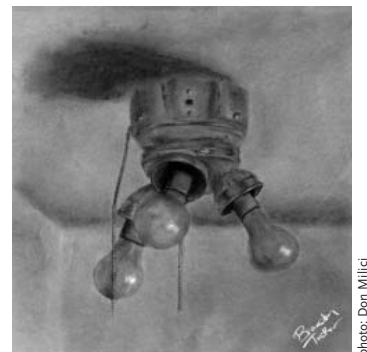
This is the first extensive evaluation of Ryman Arts and marks a "new phase in our maturity as an organization," says Diane, "Data from students, alumni, teachers, college admissions professionals, and external researchers gave us a 360 degree view of the program, allowing us to reflect more deeply on how to get even better as we grow."

The evaluation included surveys, focus groups, portfolio assessment, and demographic analysis led by three outside evaluators (see sidebar). The purpose was threefold: to document the students who have participated in the program over the past five years; to assess student artistic development and other ways the program has impacted youth; as well as to assess strengths and areas for improvement.

Tracking more than 700 students in the program since 2000, researcher Kylie A. Peppler found, for example, that Ryman Arts has been serving students from an expanding geographic area over time, and students came from almost 100 zip codes in the past year. Over 80% of students are from low-income communities.

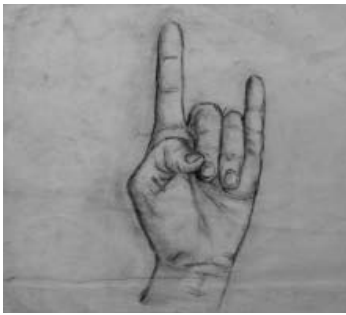
The portfolio assessment rigorously reviewed 45 portfolios from a cross section of students, closely examining drawings made before admission to Ryman Arts and during their participation to track trends in their artistic development, and did in-depth

*continued on page 2*



Brandon Tucker

photo: Don Millicci



Application Drawing



Beginning Drawing

analysis with Ryman Arts faculty on selected case studies. It found consistent and steady growth of student skill, and increasing understandings of shape, value, and dimension, which were the specific skill areas analyzed. One of the side benefits was the opportunity to bring together the master teaching artists to look at student work as a team, and share insights gleaned from looking at a large body of work produced in different classes. And the portfolio assessment tool developed will continue to be used in evaluation of student work. See Alicia's\* artwork [above] for an example of how one student's work became richer and more complex at Ryman Arts.

Dr. Diane Manuel conducted three focus groups to gather perspectives from teens prior to their first class, high school teachers who refer students to the program, and college admissions officers. High school teachers cited the need to make Ryman Arts available to more students, and a desire to increase communication between themselves and Ryman Arts staff.

In the higher education report, Dr. Manuel wrote, "The discussants reflected on a number of qualities noted in Ryman students: focus, work ethic, time management, comfort with criticism, high quality work, first-rate foundation skills and appreciation of the opportunity to be in the program... All these attributes create students who, if they desired, could be successful in a higher education art program."

Students concurred that in addition to artistic skills, they felt they gained "life skills" including time management, self-confidence, persistence, goal setting, self discipline and patience, based on the exit surveys analyzed by Dr. Margaret Menninger and intern Geraldine Lawrence. Not surprisingly, students consistently rated their instructors and overall experience very highly.

And alumni of the program are overwhelmingly positive about their artistic experience and how Ryman Arts changed their outlook for the future. Most went on to college and 62% felt the program gave them the confidence and skill to pursue art as a career. One summed it up, "Ryman was a great experience...It has been one of the most positive and pivotal parts of my artistic life."

### Changes Sparked by Evaluation

"Ryman is one of only a few organizations that wants to evaluate and make changes

Faculty were impressed by the progress they could see in Alicia's portfolio. There is a clear development in depicting weight and physical form.



Intermediate Drawing

based on it," says researcher Kylie Pepler, "I'm really impressed at their eagerness to use and incorporate what we learned." Some specific decisions sparked by the evaluation include:

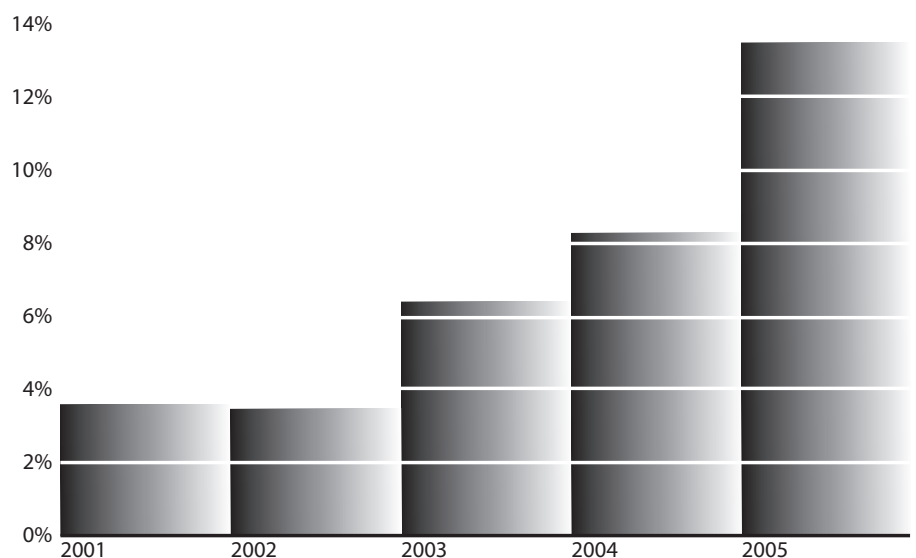
- Committing to consistent, multi-year outreach to targeted schools in low-income areas.
- Creating a part-time position to monitor the progress of students from the "Expanding Opportunities for Talented Urban Youth" project to ensure that they receive the necessary support to thrive in the program.
- Taking advantage of the opportunity to involve alumni in more substantive ways, both through creating enhanced networking among graduates, as well as activities with current students.

The evaluation process has renewed the commitment of staff, board of directors, and faculty to nurturing the next generation of artists. As education specialist Rebecca Tuynman put it, "Now I have an antidote to the anecdotes we used to rely on. I *know* how important our work is to students' art, and lives."

\* case study students' names are pseudonyms.

*"Over 80% of students are from low-income communities. Students came from almost 100 zip codes in the past year."*

### Percentage of Incoming Class from Target Schools



This graph shows a significant increase in the percentage of students coming from targeted urban schools provided with special outreach activities.



Photo: Rebecca Tynnman

*“Ryman was a great experience...It has been one of the most positive and pivotal parts of my artistic life.”*

Ryman Arts Alumnus, from online survey

## More on Evaluation

- **Ryman Arts 2000–2006: An Overview of the Program and Assessment of Student Portfolio Work**, by Kylie A. Pepler, University of California Graduate School of Education and Information Sciences, Los Angeles, September 2006. Pepler served as principal investigator and Dr. James Catterall, Professor of Education UCLA and co-author of *Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Social and Academic Development*, served as advisor and participated in the design of the project. Faculty members Rush White and Robin Palanker served on the drawing assessment planning team and did the critiques for the case studies.
- *Survey of Alumni 2005* was conducted using an on-line tool and analyzed by independent evaluator Margaret Menninger, PhD., with the assistance of intern Geraldine Lawrence (Ryman '01). Dr. Menninger also did the data analysis for all student exit surveys 2003–2006. Ms. Lawrence did the analysis of students' narrative responses to the surveys.
- Focus groups of students, high school teachers and higher education professionals were conducted by evaluator Diane M. Manuel, PhD. in 2003 and 2004.
- More information on the studies will be featured in future newsletters. To obtain a copy of the Pepler report, or learn more about any other studies, contact the Ryman Arts offices, by calling 213.629.2787 or emailing [info@ryman.org](mailto:info@ryman.org).
- The evaluation project was generously funded by the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. Additional support for this project was provided by the Dwight Stuart Youth Foundation, the Ralph M. Parsons Foundation, the City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department, and the Los Angeles County Arts Commission.

*We thank the funders who made this project possible and the dedicated and thoughtful researchers who participated!*

## Letter from Diane

### Dreaming and Planning

At Ryman Arts, we have been dreaming! Dreaming of ways to impact the lives of even more artistic youth, here in southern California and beyond. Led by President Marty Sklar, the board of directors and staff have channeled our dreams into a strategic planning process to chart our course for the next five years.

We drew on insights gained from three years of program evaluation (featured in our cover story). After reviewing the unmet community need for our unique combination of rigorous advanced artistic training and college and career guidance for talented teens, we realized that we must expand to provide this extraordinary opportunity to more young people. We analyzed how we could have the greatest impact by building on our strong history of collaborations—like those with USC's Roski School of Fine Arts and community groups like Heart of Los Angeles Youth (HOLA)—rather than working alone. We were inspired by our legacy originating with Herbert D. Ryman, whose own career demonstrated the dynamic link between fine arts and industry, to further develop our partnerships with the creative industries that will employ many artists we train. It also became clear that we are not just teaching essential art skills, but essential skills for life, that will put young people on a track to success, whatever career path they choose to pursue.

Thus, our Board unanimously agreed that over the next five years we will increase exponentially the number of students served in the southern California region, and develop a national presence as a force for supporting artistic youth by working collaboratively with other partners. Throughout, we will remain committed to deepening the impact and maintaining the high quality of the student experience at Ryman Arts.

The Board and staff are now finalizing specific strategies, responsibilities and timetables, with the skillful guidance of consultant Terry Monteleone. While the Board will take the lead in building the organizational support we will need, we cannot do it alone. I hope you will dream with us too, and help shape the Ryman Arts of the future. As we grow to meet the vital needs of youth today and in the future, I ask you to consider being “extra generous” to Ryman Arts this holiday season so that we can launch 2007 ready to help more young artists achieve their dreams.

On behalf of young Ryman artists, thank you!

*Diane Brigham*



## Calendar of Events

### The Anatomy of Art:

Exhibition at The Artist's Gallery of student and alumni artwork inspired by the Los Angeles Ballet's *The Nutcracker*

January 16–27

Reception, Saturday,  
January 20

### Spring Semester

Saturdays

February 3–May 5

### Ryman Arts: Herbert D. Ryman and his Legacy

May 3–July 22

Exhibition at the Forest Lawn Museum including selected drawings and paintings by Herbert D. Ryman alongside work by Ryman Arts alumni produced over the past fifteen years.

Reception, Thursday

May 3

### Fall 2007

#### Application Deadline

June 8

## Donate an Art Bin

Again, this year, we "sold" over 70 art bins filled with supplies to equip the incoming spring 2007 beginning drawing class with the tools for success. If you would like to contribute art bins, please send your check for \$50 per bin, note "art bins" on the enclosed envelope, and a bin will be named in your honor for an incoming student.



Student Kelsey McCullough's artwork sold at the event

Photo: Don Milici

## AN AFFAIR OF *the* ART 2006

### Best Yet in its 17th Year

On the evening of October 7th, Ryman Arts new and old supporters, artists, and alumni gathered to celebrate Ryman Arts' 17th annual *An Affair of the Art*. In the warm and art-filled atmosphere of Marty and Leah Sklar guests enjoyed viewing artworks for sale, and lively reunions with friends. We are pleased to report that the event earned \$95,000, making this *Affair* Ryman Arts' most successful yet!

Patron event speakers, John DeCuir Jr. and Raul Rodriguez, whetted the guests' appetite for art, each sharing their views on the importance of supporting young artists.

Throughout the evening, a generous mood was in the air, and the high caliber of art work for sale not only encouraged guests to give through their purchase, but also served as a reminder of Ryman Arts' mission: to nurture motivated and promising young artists as the next generation of accomplished, exhibiting artists. Special thanks go to the 80+ volunteers who contributed their time and expertise to make this evening a success, especially installation designers, Maggie and Jim Elliott. On behalf of the Ryman Arts board of directors, staff, artist faculty, and, of course, our teens, *thank you* for your support of education and the arts.



Raul Rodriguez, designer of 16 Tournament of Roses Floats for the 2007 Rose Parade revealed the behind-the-scenes process of designing and producing the parade spectacle.

Photo: Gary Krueger



A designer himself, John DeCuir Jr., presented the designs of art director John DeCuir Sr. for some of Hollywood's greatest hits (*Hello Dolly*, *Cleopatra*, *The King and I*, etc.).

Photo: Gary Krueger

# Reflections on Immigration

The artwork below was produced by Ryman Arts students who participated in a joint studio art program with Heart of Los Angeles (HoLA) in which drawings and paintings revolved around the topic of immigration.



Untitled Hand  
Francisco Palomares

*My piece focuses on jobs immigrants can obtain without papers or a work permit, working slave wages. It is symbolic of a dream that many, just like my family, have of being able to hold something and call it yours.*



How We Got Here  
Christian de Vera

*I remember the experience of saying goodbye to my family and friends and classmates in the Philippines. I remember traveling by plane and especially the reason why me, my parents and my brother decided to come to America. We came to find a new life—education, better jobs, new friends and a new way of living.*



Masking Who I Am  
Andrea Aguilar

*It's ironic, but the whole idea of my work is not to hide who I am culturally or personally, but to reveal it. Being half Guatemalan and half Mexican, I chose a handmade mask given to me by my cousin who had traveled to Guatemala. It resembles a Mayan mask. What better than a living, breathing culture that still produces great art for my own art?*



I Know My Roots  
Jessica Balvaneda

*People can't tell my heritage by looking at me. Sometimes they think I'm Filipino or Asian, which doesn't offend me. It's nice to know that maybe I'm not recognizable, making me my own person. Recently, I discovered several things about my Mexican background. The name "Balvaneda" is of Portuguese origin and I also may have some German ancestry. It's exciting to know that I have all these different cultures and different blood in me, but I couldn't really find a way to represent my heritage. You would almost have to see inside me to know me, you would have to see into my brain, into my insides. I am the product of those who came before me. It is in that manner that I know my roots.*

Photos: Libby Hartigan



## Behind the Scenes



Welcome to **Wayne Hunt**, our newest Ryman Arts board member. Wayne Hunt is founding principal of Hunt Design Associates, an internationally recognized consulting design practice specializing in environmental graphic design and exhibit design. The Pasadena, California firm's clients

include Kennedy Space Center, Hollywood Bowl, The Walt Disney Company, Henry Ford Museum, Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry, Rockefeller Center as well as numerous cities and public institutions. Mr. Hunt has been active in design education for over twenty-five years and is Adjunct Professor of Design at Art Center College of Design.

When asked what about Ryman Arts compelled him to join its board of directors, Mr. Hunt replied, "I've made a career in design and teaching design at the college level, but we need to start earlier, at high school. Ryman Arts is a terrific first step to a life in the arts." Speaking of his goals as board member, Mr. Hunt stated that, "Opportunities for designers and artists are expanding rapidly -- designing the future will be big business. I want to help Ryman Arts students take that first step to a creative future."

Hunt's commitment to Ryman Arts took root when he agreed to redesign our graphic identity pro bono and assigned it to his senior designer, Insung Kim after discovering he was a Ryman Arts alumnus.

Our future young artists will benefit enormously from Mr. Hunt's support and expertise.

*"Opportunities for designers and artists are expanding rapidly—designing the future will be big business. I want to help Ryman Arts students take that first step to a creative future."*

We would like to extend our deep gratitude to **Ronald Gother** who recently retired from the board of directors after moving full-time to Palm Desert. Mr. Gother served on the board for 13 years and became involved with the organization as a close friend and colleague of Herbert D. Ryman. Mr. Gother recalls, "Having known and admired Herbert Ryman for many years, when Ryman Arts was formed and I was asked to join its board, I immediately said, 'yes.' I have many great memories which I will cherish." Mr. Gother is a retired partner at Gibson Dunn Crutcher, LLP and is the founder and president of the Desert Community Foundation.

## Ryman Alumni

### Behind the Scenes at Rhythm & Hues

Alumni and staff, led by Ryman Arts Alumni Association Chair, **Oscar Magallanes (Ryman '93)**, toured the highly acclaimed visual effects studios of *Rhythm & Hues* in November. From the film clips of their work on *The Chronicles of Narnia* and the art-filled hallways to the cutting-edge computer graphics systems, all was awe-inspiring. Alumni chatted informally with designers about the value of drawing and painting skills in the production of computer graphics and got a sneak peek of the visual effects for upcoming movies. Thank you to founder and president, John Hughes and guide Scot Byrd for the warm welcome. We look forward to future behind the scenes tours—stay posted through our upcoming alumni page at [www.rymanarts.org](http://www.rymanarts.org).



Photo: Rebecca Tuymman

#### **You Can Help Deserving Young People Realize Their Artistic Dreams**

Your gift of:

**\$100** provides one outreach drawing workshop at a local high school

**\$500** provides a complete set of professional art supplies for 4 students

**\$2,000** provides 1 student scholarship

**\$10,000** provides 5 student scholarships

We are also able to accept planned gifts. The Herbert D. Ryman Legacy Society recognizes those generous benefactors who have indicated their intention to include Ryman Arts in their estate plans. We would be happy to work with you and your financial advisor to explore the mutual benefits of such a gift. Please contact Diane Brigham at the Ryman Arts office for more information.



Alex Marschall

photo: Don Millicci

## Teaching essential skills for art and life

### Herbert D. Ryman: Artist and Mentor



Herbert D. Ryman at work

Our annual career day and alumni behind-the-scenes tours expose young artists to the wide range of professional possibilities. Take it from our namesake, Herbert D. Ryman: hard work, passion, and talent are the key ingredients for professional success and personal happiness.

After graduating from the Art Institute of Chicago in 1932, Herbie moved to Hollywood, California to live with his sister, and sought work in the midst of the Great Depression. He was surprised to learn that major motion picture studios employed fine artists to illustrate and paint scenes. He submitted his portfolio to MGM and soon launched a successful career move into Hollywood. The industry was booming, Herbie recalls, *“At one time I had twelve art directors and each one seemed to think I was working for*

*them alone and I did it all. I was determined to do the best I could, so I gratefully worked week in and week out. Cedric Gibbons suggested that I could be a great art director and be recognized worldwide, but I said, ‘No.’ I didn’t want to be anything but an artist. To be able to do the work I love was everything in life.”*

—Herbert D. Ryman on his early art profession pursuits from *A Brush with Disney: An Artist’s Journey*



Herbert D. Ryman  
*Two Extras Waiting for their Cue on the Movie Set*  
Oil on canvas, 1935