

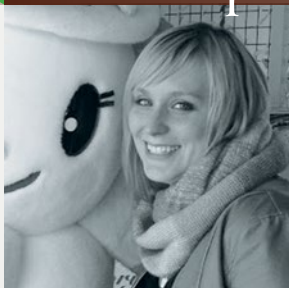
**TCNJ says**

**Hi**

# Student Spotlights

Department of Art & Art History

## student spotlights



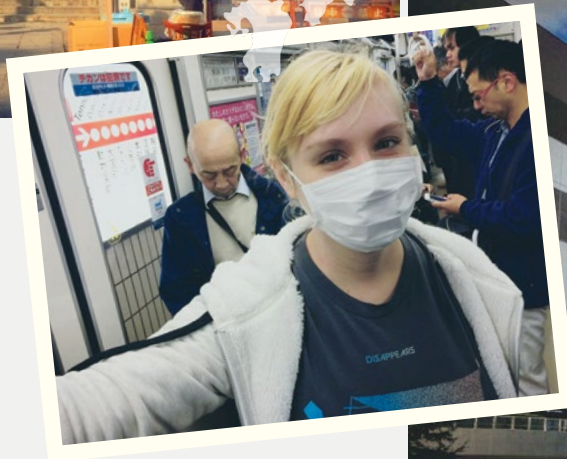
RACHEL WALLING

GRAPHIC DESIGN

CLASS OF 2005

While at TCNJ, I spent a semester abroad in the UK, where I learned how to adapt to unfamiliar environments and experience life in new ways. I spent some time as a graphic design temp, and eventually became the senior art director of a large pharmaceutical ad agency in New York city. Then, a few years ago, I found myself craving a change of scenery. I've always been interested in Japanese culture, so I took an amazing trip to Japan. My fascination with typography, which originated at TCNJ, led me to study Japanese alphabets as a hobby. But I soon wondered, "Can this be more than just a hobby?".

Now, what originally began as a one-year language course has become full-time employment as a graphic designer in Kyoto, allowing me to explore more and feel inspired by my surroundings. Learning how to communicate and design in a completely different language is a challenge, but my solid foundation of skills has been extremely helpful. From food shopping to mountain hiking, every day is an adventure.



My passion for digital art and interactive technology was sparked at TCNJ. I was able to engage in interactive and programmable art while familiarizing myself with a foundation of technical skills I would need to work in a commercial environment.

Following my undergraduate degree at TCNJ, I pursued a Masters in Performance and Interactive Media Art at Brooklyn College. I was then accepted into a four year, fully funded Digital Arts and Humanities PhD program at University College Cork in Ireland. At UCC, I composed musical and theatrical scores, using integrated technologies to coordinate audio and video cues. I collaborated with composers, musicians, dancers, and theatrical technicians to create systems that would supplement their established techniques. My PhD work culminated in a portfolio entitled “(In) Determinacy: Incorporating Openness in Programmed Music and Performance”.

I am currently in New York working on user experience and interface design and front end web development. I continue to work on theater and music projects in my free time.

SARA WENTWORTH

DIGITAL ARTS

CLASS OF 2008



*The Ballad of Charlie & Cate*



*A:Volution*



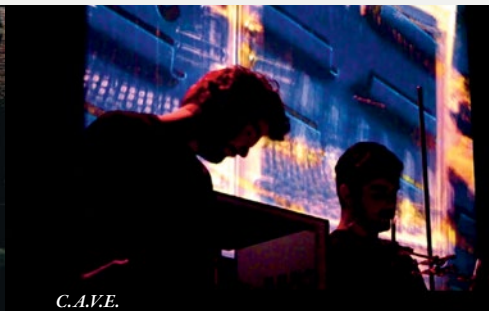
*IV: WILLS*



*ImPrinted*



*KaLeye.desc.optic*



*C.A.V.E.*



*Death of a Salesman*





TOM GEBAUER

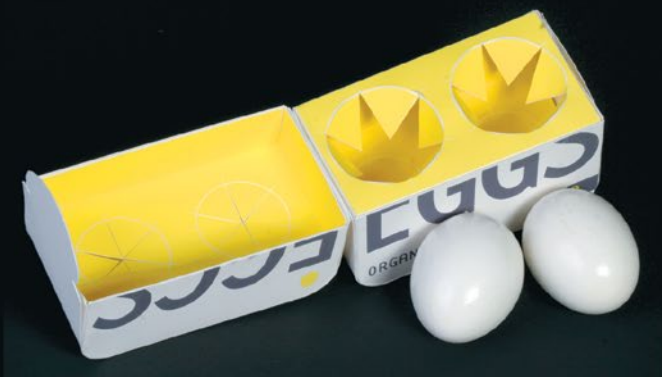
GRAPHIC DESIGN

CLASS OF 2008

My approach to design is influenced by principles of human behavior. I focus on how both individuals and social groups interact with technology. My daily projects include such tasks as designing user interfaces for complex enterprise systems, using quantitative and qualitative research to create innovative solutions, and teaching teen students the importance of design theory in their day-to-day lives. Each day opens a new opportunity for growth and engagement. In the past decade, I have worked for renowned brands including Dow Jones, Yahoo, Johnson & Johnson, and Google, and as the head of product and design in a NYC startup company.

I chose TCNJ because of its exceptional liberal arts programs and diverse student body. While there, I learned that the most rewarding projects are fulfilled in collaboration with peers on campus and in the community. The Art Department faculty inspired me to think deeply about the work I was doing—from intricate design assignments to conceptual art. In turn, I pushed myself to continually acquire the skills necessary to become a better designer. This is a modern and complex world, and I believe designers can make daily life more efficient and enjoyable through technology.

*Artwork created during my time at TCNJ*



I'm an interdisciplinary artist and educator interested in the ways art can be used to explore, reflect, and address the complex systems, identities, and injustices that exist in our world.

I decided to attend TCNJ after I met with art faculty at a prospective students portfolio review. TCNJ professors and classes challenged me to look at the world and my artwork with fresh eyes. My favorite memories include visiting NYC galleries and museums with my classmates. Working closely with professors and the Trenton community led me to a career in community arts. It even inspired me

to pursue a Masters of Fine Arts and teach at TCNJ!

I currently reside in Providence, RI as a teaching artist and professional development coordinator of Providence CityArts For Youth (a non-profit art organization that provides free arts-based programming for over 1100 at-risk youth annually). I am also an administrator of The Rhode Island Teaching Artists Center, a collaborative project run by the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts and CityArts to promote and serve Rhode Island teaching artists.



MICHELLE NUGENT

FINE ARTS

CLASS OF 2009



*Planting Rice*



*Say it with Flowers*





BRANDON RODKEWITZ

PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO

CLASS OF 2010

I chose TCNJ for several reasons. I was very inclined to join athletics, and the art degree offerings made TCNJ an attractive choice; nevertheless, it was the overall educational value of the college that sealed the deal for me.

At TCNJ, I studied Digital Art and Photography. I've always been interested in coding and technology, so naturally, I found digital photography and computer-based design to be exceptionally useful in organizing and cataloging data. A lot of my artwork involved abstraction of forms, I really tried to push into spaces where I couldn't predict the results. I had a lot of fun doing some wild experiments with the camera. I'm still just as passionate about computing, and have even branched out into teaching. For the past few years I've taught web design as an adjunct professor.

Now I'm a professional wedding and portrait photographer. It is an exciting and dynamic honor to document such important moments in people's lives.

My advice to students is this: make friends and forge networks in every department, class, dorm, and club you become involved in! With the majority of the student body living in New Jersey, it's easy to keep in touch on breaks and after graduation. I've acquired so many personal and professional opportunities as a result of the relationships I've secured in this community.



The Art History program at TCNJ helped prepare me for a career in museums. Most courses are run like graduate seminars with discussions and small class sizes. Professors know their students personally, and truly care about mentoring them. One of my favorite undergraduate experiences at TCNJ was when I was awarded a grant to conduct research with Dr. Lee Ann Riccardi. We studied imperial portraits on Roman provincial coins for her book project, *The Reception and Rejection of Roman Imperial Portrait Models in the Eastern Provinces, 235-270 CE*.

During my senior year I had the opportunity to interview art collector and founder of the Rubin Museum of Art, Donald Rubin. The interview was featured in a catalogue accompanying a TCNJ Art Gallery exhibition entitled “Goddess, Lion, Peasant, Priest: Modern and Contemporary Indian Art from the Shelley and Donald Rubin Private Collection”. These experiences inspired me to pursue my M.A. in Art History.

For the past two years I worked at the Smithsonian National Postal Museum helping care for their art collections. I recently transitioned into a new role at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC where I help run the administrative functions of the Conservation Division.



EMILY CONFORTO

ART HISTORY

CLASS OF 2013







ELIZABETH TRIPOD

ART EDUCATION

CLASS OF 2017

Immediately after I graduated, I became an art teacher at Knollwood Elementary School in Piscataway, NJ. I teach children from Kindergarten to 3rd grade, as well as an advanced “Leap” art program for talented 3rd graders; it’s one of my favorite activities. Select students and I explore art in-depth and create our own paper, bind books, weave, paint sets for the school play, and draw.

I will be forever grateful to The College of New Jersey. The amazing faculty and staff helped me gain experience in the classroom in incremental steps, so I never felt out of my depth. The Art Education classes taught me how to write art-specific curricula and simultaneously build a portfolio of my own works. The program also helped me build a network; I made connections with art teachers, administrators, and school districts. I would not be where I am today if I had not come to TCNJ.





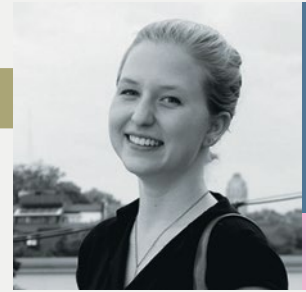
ALYSE DELANEY, PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO, CLASS OF 2017

I am a photo and video-based installation artist. My practice investigates relationships between place and memory, location and identity. My favorite part about studying visual arts at TCNJ was becoming a member of the community.

During my senior year, I participated in the department's study abroad trip to Havana, Cuba. This experience had a lasting impact on my individual art practice and on my global perspective. On the trip, I created a video installation which is now being exhib-

ited in Seattle, WA. My work has also been exhibited at galleries in Chelsea and Brooklyn. As an undergraduate, I participated in internships at the Rubin Museum of Art and the Hearst Corporation. Since graduation, I've interned at the Guggenheim Museum and I currently work for the Frick Collection and Princeton University.

Overall, TCNJ provided me with a comprehensive education in contemporary art making, and gave me valuable resources for career development.



*Santa Clara, Cuba*



*41°04'38.0"N (II.) D,  
That On Which We Are Standing, 2017*



NATALIE LA SPISA

GRAPHIC DESIGN

CLASS OF 2018

The influences of effective design are everywhere. Within the phones we use, the signs we see, the books we read; it affects, and in a sense determines, the way our culture visually communicates. I find it incredibly empowering to make content that improves connections and communications between people.

TCNJ classes taught me the importance of design and its impactful applications in the modern world. Whether I was branding a company or designing promotional materials for student organizations, I was creating content that I was excited about.

My favorite memories from TCNJ come from serving on the executive board of All College Theatre as Publicist wherein I combined my love of theatre with my prowess in graphic design. TCNJ was community in which I was valued and received the support needed to pursue my passions.

Alturale



ECHO  
THEATRE COMPANY



ARBRE  
EST. 2015

CHOICE &  
CONSEQUENCE

APERTOUR



ASPCA Spotlight





My main area of study is in painting. My thesis paintings refer to personal photographs that trigger a resurgence of memory or emotion. I embrace the concept of distortion and misinformation to produce a work that inspires internal reflection, and stimulates the mind's eye.

I enjoyed the spaciousness of TCNJ's facilities and the extensive range of equipment provided for student use. The accessibility of these amenities helped produce works that matched my vision while introducing me to fresh, exciting possibilities.

The department is academically rigorous; classes employ both historical and contemporary literature to offer us contextual insight and ideas for our own work. In these classes, I learned that verbal and written communication can intensify the impact my physical works have on others.

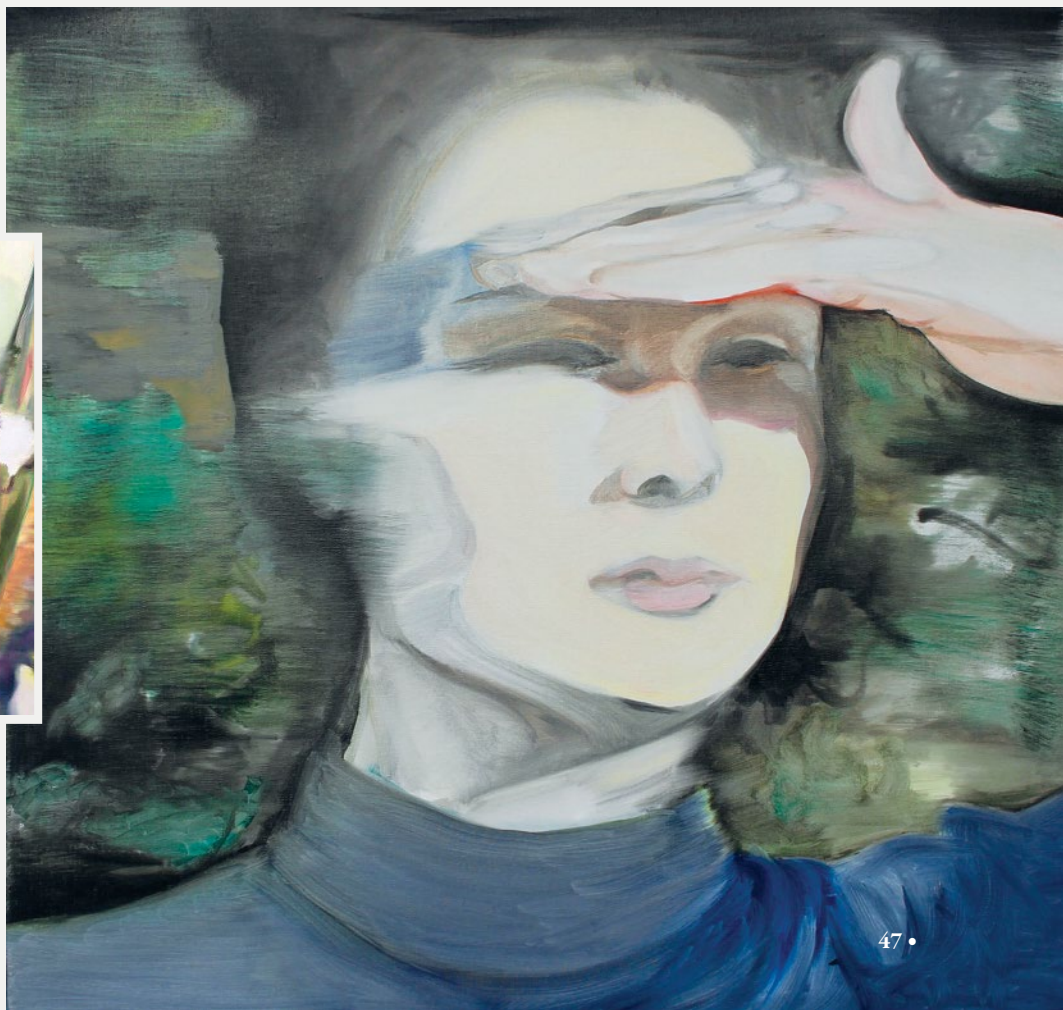
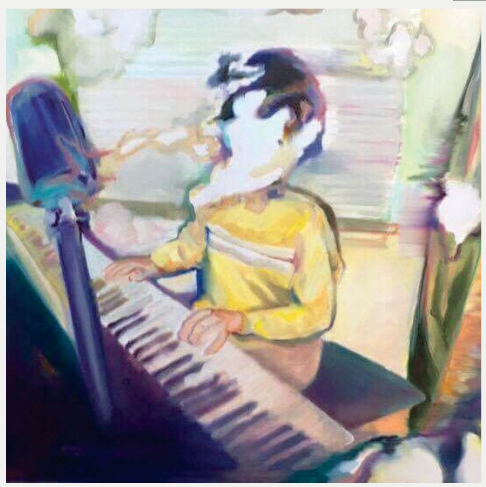
I gained a strong understanding of the fine art business when professors acquainted me with gallerists and artists in NYC, Philadelphia, and the greater tri-state area.



TANDIA MCLAREN

FINE ART

CLASS OF 2018







ANGELA ROSSI

ART EDUCATION

CLASS OF 2018



*Student teaching*



*Installation shot of Untitled*



*Commencement Speech during the graduation ceremony*



*Opening Reception for "The Value of Art"*



*TCNJ's Silent Disco*

I made the most of my time as an undergraduate by saying “yes” to every opportunity. I worked as a Gallery Assistant, a College Ambassador, and an Orientation Leader. I served leadership roles in organizations like the College Union Board (CUB) as a Live Event Coordinator, as Treasurer of Kappa Pi, and as Fundraising Chair of Kappa Delta Pi. All this I accomplished while simultaneously expanding my installation-based studio practice. Involving myself in these student organizations gave me extraordinary opportunities like planning the 2016 Fall Concert, participating in the BFA Thesis Exhibition: Synapse, and giving the Commencement Address at Graduation.

I was lucky enough to curate my own exhibition, The Value of Art, which featured work from my student teaching placement at Rivera Community Middle School of Trenton, NJ. With so many wonderful memories, I could not imagine attending a different college. At TCNJ, I enjoyed unforgettable experiences, formed lasting friendships, and prepared for future success. As I apply to jobs in art and museum education, I feel primed for the road ahead.

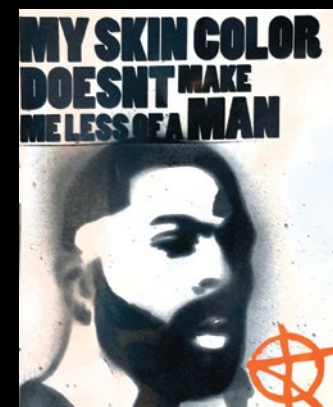
I am a rising senior studying Graphic Design with a special interest in motion graphics. I chose TCNJ because the students and faculty provide an intimate and encouraging community for personal and professional growth. I enjoy collaborating with other students as it will prepare me for my future in the workplace. During my first three years at TCNJ, I improved my work, making it more effective both conceptually and visually. It allowed me to establish a very professional, personal, and unique graphic style. While taking Typography, I learned that each and every design element in a work has the capacity to be improved. Concurrently, I familiarized myself with the constraints of deadlines, and the need to balance creative thinking with efficiency.



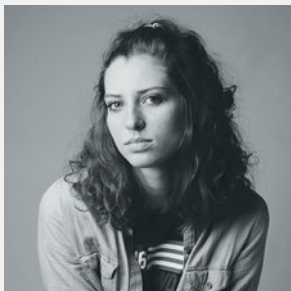
ANTHONY HERNANDEZ

## GRAPHIC DESIGN

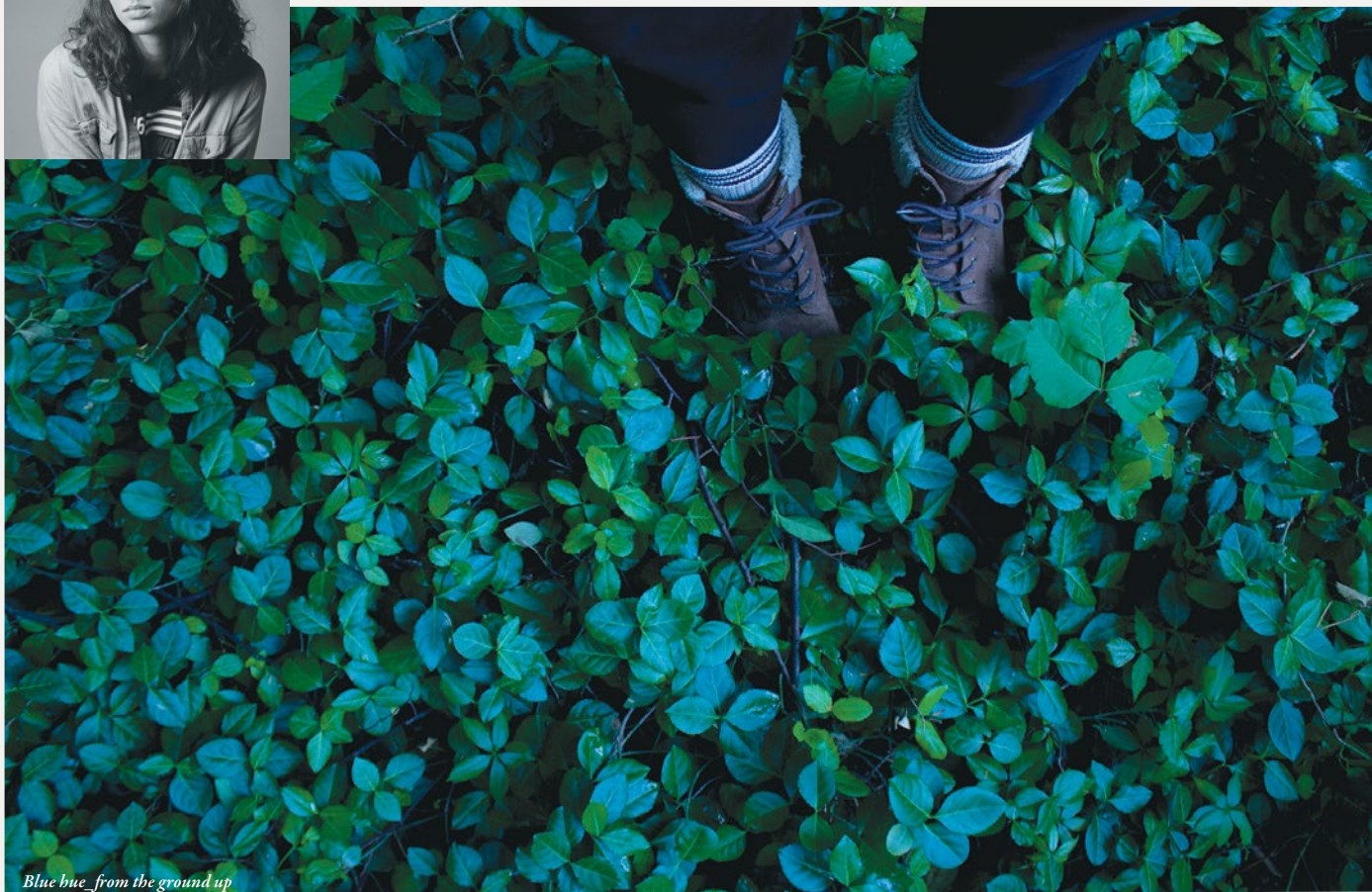
### CLASS OF 2019







OLIVIA BRAND, PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO, CLASS OF 2019



*Blue hue\_from the ground up*

The first time I visited TCNJ, I was blown away by the welcoming atmosphere. The students and faculty are extremely friendly, the campus is stunningly beautiful, and tuition is affordable. TCNJ art classes are small in size, thus providing students the opportunity to develop close relationships with professors. Throughout my years here, I have learned that photography is more than just making things look beautiful – it is recognizing that beauty already exists around us, and sharing that perspective with others.

At TCNJ, I took part in an independent study aiding my professor in her research. She has since become a close friend and a strong connection to many future career opportunities. If four years ago I was told I would be a professional newborn photographer at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital by age 21, I would have been flabbergasted. TCNJ has given me the confidence to say that my artwork is career-worthy, and because of this I am proud to call myself a TCNJ student.



STEPHANIE MAKRANCY, FINE ART, CLASS OF 2020



A self-taught artist since childhood, I would always be found drawing, painting with watercolors, and crafting. Everything I create is influenced by the concepts of wonder and fantasy, and infused with romantic and supernatural elements. My art lies somewhere between the macabre and the beautiful, and I enjoy constructing slightly surreal environments. I am passionate about creating narratives in my work through digital art, sculpture, printmaking, photography, video, and painting.

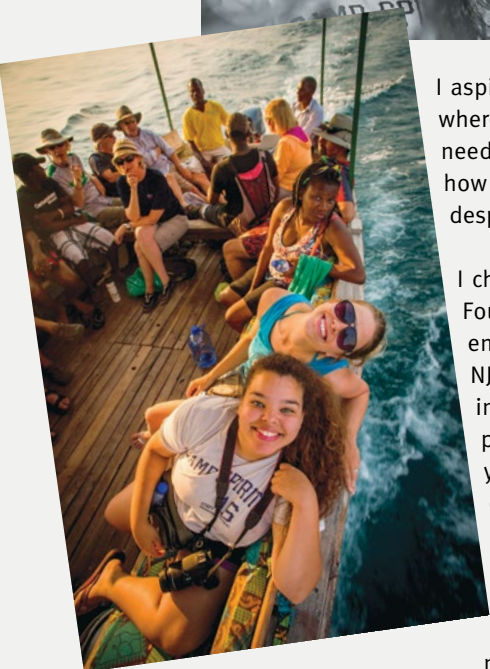
Studying in TCNJ's Art program has been transformational; the community has helped me develop my signature artistic style and voice, growing my confidence and capability. I have received so much love and support from my professors and peers. The skills and techniques that I learned at TCNJ have given me a solid artistic foundation, bringing my career aspirations within reach.



ESTEFANY RODRIGUEZ

ART EDUCATION

CLASS OF 2020



I aspire to teach art in urban communities, where students often lack the opportunities needed to succeed. I've witnessed first hand how art can inspire children to flourish despite the odds they are against.

I chose TCNJ because of the Bonner Program. Four years prior to my entry to TCNJ, I engaged in community service in Camden, NJ. I wanted to continue my community involvement and civic engagement in the place I would call home for the next four years. I have learned so much from my experiences as a Bonner scholar, such as the institutionalized oppression of minorities in local inner-city neighborhoods. My background in social justice and civic engagement through non-profit work, my work as a Bonner

scholar, and my experiences as an AmeriCorps member at TCNJ have motivated me to join the Peace Corps after graduation. Eventually, I plan to start a non-profit summer camp that focuses on art education for students who have had the arts cut from their schools due to funding.

I have made incredible connections with TCNJ faculty, who motivate me, and with non-profits in the city of Trenton, who continue to fuel my passion for social justice and Art Education.

(The TCNJ's Bonner Institute has three main programs—Community Engaged Learning, Bonner Community Scholars, and Community Engaged Research and Initiatives and educate students while simultaneously addressing community-identified needs.)



*From "Inside Out" 50 portraits" project*







RYAN ABRAMOWITZ

ART HISTORY

CLASS OF 2021



I find Art History incredibly fascinating, it invites me to interpret and interact with the world, to uncover the patterns in which art is born and evolves throughout time. My favorite periods to study are undoubtedly the Baroque and Post-Impressionism movements. Recently, I traveled to Rome and Florence to study ancient, Baroque, and Renaissance art and architecture. The trip helped me realize how my passion for Art History had grown, and made me appreciate how dedicated, intelligent, and personable TCNJ professors are.

I originally thought a minor would satisfy my interest in the subject, but after this trip, I knew I needed to follow my passion and major in Art History. While at TCNJ, I've joined two choral ensembles and have served as Vice President of the a cappella group "The Trentones" performing and competing in the International Championship of Collegiate A Cappella (ICCA's). I have also dedicated time to volunteering in the community: on a local farm, with Meals-on-Wheels, and in a Trenton middle school. TCNJ has afforded me with amazing friends, unforgettable experiences, and the extracurricular activities I love the most. I chose TCNJ because I wanted to surround myself with people who are just as dedicated to their schoolwork and future as I am.

My plans include graduating from TCNJ, serving in the Peace Corps, going to graduate school to pursue a Doctorate degree, and then hopefully teaching in a University.