

Dean’s Lecture Series debates existence of art

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Today’s lecture started out differently, held in the MTCC auditorium, two speakers took the stage. The first, an Argentinian architect Florencia Rodriguez, well known for her work as an architectural critic and owner/publisher of Plot a subscription based magazine in South America. The second Jean Crousse, founder Barclay & Crousse in Paris, France in 1994 but is currently located in Lima, Peru. Which he founded 5 years after obtaining a Master in Architecture at the Politecnico di Milano in Rodriguez starts her lecture with various images meant to highlight a few concepts. The first is a discussion with the prompt does art even exist in a postmodern world? And second, what does it mean when something can be not only experienced but also shared at the same time to everyone. For this she flashes a picture of the moon landing and precedes to joust at the fact that it’s plausible it never happened.

Next, she brings to light the fact that taboo in the original sense doesn’t exist anymore. No topic is too foreign, no black spots too hidden and what does that mean in today’s present era.

Finally she creates the metaphor that ideas are like tupperware, interchangeable,

replaceable and stackable in ways never before conceived. She uses the above frame to then dive into the role of a critic, acknowledging that this is the first time in history where the entire world has the potential to have a voice. How we now have become obsessed with complaining and is that a good thing? She finishes that part making the statement that we have that urge because we want things to be better, the paradox being that progress and growth is at an all time high and life is the best it’s ever been.

Then she jumps into why she started her critical magazine and the important points she tries to convey through its publication. Believes editing is consistent with a narrative, with hope the reader will establish the connections like a game so to speak. “Plot” is broken into 3 parts: the entertainment, analysis of practices, and theory. Through this she has begun to break the profession into 5 categories.

Non-modern: Specifically with relationship to the past but anchored in reality.

Naturalist: Trying to discover something relating nature to the built environment, basis in science and changing norms in culture.

Artisans/Craftsmen: Using sustainable counterculture means of production. Do it yourself, asking what is and what will be.

Neo tropicanist: The mixing of

international/ universal trophs with local means and culture.

Disruptive: Breaking definitions, heavy use of aesthetics to create pure presence. The second half of the lecture was centered on the work of Jean Pierre Crousse.

He begins by discussing his initial fascination with the many ruins found in Peru and their relationship to the current built environment. Exploring the idea of temporary and permanent, how the earth nurtures our ways of living and how we can intern nurture the Earth. Crousse breaks down his time relating two of his projects and their time line of 20.

The first Casa Equis, an 1800 square foot residential project on the west coast of Peru just outside of Lima. The beautiful form a product of needing absolutely zero climate control systems, because of where Peru is on the globe and the Andes Mountains cause a really unique humid desert environment that deals with sharp changes in vertical elevations. Because of this situation the building acts as a vessel to exploit the beautiful nature landscape. This begins his discussion that architecture is just an extension of the landscape and should never lose touch with where the site is grounded. He uses reinforced concrete, painted in natural earthen tones, formed using pressed board construction to highlight texture.

The second being a convention center build as a memorial to the thousands of lives lost throughout history to terrorist regimes. The title of the project is simply The Place of Remembrance. Here he uses the linear orientation of the site to project a sense of hope by creating a museum as a progression ending on the roof, slowly approaching the horizon symbolizing hope for the future. Using ramps as a system to theoretically slow time, this paired with the rough pressed concrete to symbolize the imperfection of our existence. An important point is his acknowledgement of how unskilled the workers of the area are, using that as a medium to convey uniformity in the quality or lack of in the construction.

Finishing, his forms are reminiscent of the ruins he once played in, it’s clear his goals are to create a built environment that will mirror its existence in future generations. Space will endure as maps with efforts to become a connection through time. He ends stating his view and asks a question. Architecture is and should be a response to the climate/environment preserving that form in time. Then, what does technology give/take from what is possible?

Hawaiian musician Justin Young performs at Hawks Coffeehouse to great acclaim

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Justin Young is a popular contemporary Hawaiian songwriter, guitarist, ukulelist, and keyboardist with four number one hits on the Hawaiian music charts from his 1997 album “Soothe You” alone. He has won “Best Performance By a Rhythm & Blues Artist” and “New Artist of the Year” at the Hawaiian Music Awards, and continues to tour with associated act and fiance Colbie Caillat (for which their engagement is the dominating result in a quick internet search of Young) performing his discography of music.

He graced Illinois Tech students with a performance at the latest installment of the bi-weekly Tuesday evening recurring Hawks Coffeehouse event hosted by Union Board, which took place on Tuesday, March 1 from 7 to 8 p.m. in the MTCC Welcome Center. This event allows attendees to sit and relax with a coffeehouse-style musical performance in a cozy atmosphere, with hot drinks and sweet snacks provided to catalyze the contenting experience. By the time the event actually started, the food catered for that event (Pine-apple Upside-down Cake bites) was nearly all taken, and the 2 gallons of hot chocolate were entirely gone. Additionally, as usual, although there was more than enough coffee remaining throughout the night, Sodexo’s provided paper



Image courtesy of Justin Young

cups for to drink it were gone within 10 minutes of the beginning of the performance to the chagrin of those who arrived late.

Young’s height, as well as the large, starkwhite guitar case with which he arrived, made an instant impression on those that saw him from afar. After a quick sound check with Alien Sound and Lighting at 6 p.m., Justin accepted Reno Fera-Ducatt and Anna Garcia’s re-

quest to come on their WIIT 88.9 FM Chicago radio show “Unknown Talent” (broadcasting live on WIIT from 5 to 7 p.m. every Tuesday) for a brief discussion. He entered the show during a conversation with that day’s guest Electronic musician and multi-instrumentalist Colin McAllister, who was in the midst of explaining his recent attempts at learning the Ukulele. Young joked that everyone born in

Hawaii was born with a Ukulele in their hand and spoke on the notoriety of the instrument in the culture.

His music, folk/acoustic oriented, was reminiscent of elements characteristic of traditional Hawaiian music with Reggae influences. As well, lyrically, the music also took inspiration from the nature, climate, and of Young’s personal experiences with and conceptions of the islands. Among the students in attendance, he was lauded for both his great and soulful music as well as his attractiveness, and it was encouraged that he come back to the school to perform again next year.

As a side curiosity, in the middle of the performance, when the food had long been exhausted, two women with Red Bull branded backpacks walked into the area and began unloading cans of the energy drink from their packs onto the table on which the catering for the event was placed in some sort of publicity stunt by the company. A few minutes after they left, a Red Bull mobile could be seen driving down State Street from the windows of the Welcome Center.

The next Hawks Coffeehouse will take place, after Spring Break, on Tuesday, March 29 from 7 to 8 p.m. with guest musical artist Sam Nelms, leader of the funk band Dizzy Punch, doing a solo acoustic performance.

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