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STETSON UNIVERSITY

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Stetson University Selects James Pearson as New Director for Homer and Dolly Hand Art Center

Pearson shares gallery goals and vision for 2020

DELAND, Florida, Dec. 4, 2019 – [Stetson University](#) has appointed James Pearson, MA, as the [Homer and Dolly Hand Art Center's](#) new director beginning Dec. 10. Pearson was the director of the Southeast Museum of Photography in Daytona Beach. He also will be teaching a museum studies course during the Spring 2020 semester.

Pearson is delighted about the opportunity to lead the Hand Art Center into its next chapter.

"I really want to raise the profile of Stetson University through the use of the Hand Art Center," said Pearson. "I also want to be able to use the Hand Art Center as a way to not only broadcast the university's mission to a larger audience, but to help emphasize and magnify the offerings that are already here and contribute to the university's history and reputation, which is extremely exciting."

Art came naturally to Pearson. His grandfather was a draftsman and calligrapher and encouraged him to pursue art while growing up in Boynton Beach, Florida.

He received his Master of Arts in art history criticism from Stony Brook University in New York and Bachelor of Arts in printmaking and sculpture from the University of North Carolina Asheville.

His background includes being the curator and collections manager of the Wright Museum of Art at Beloit College in Beloit, Wisconsin, and having a curatorial fellowship at the Philadelphia Museum of Art in Philadelphia.

Pearson succeeds Tonya Curran, MA, who left to become the director of the art museum at the State University of New York at Plattsburgh. He plans to continuously provide engaging artwork at the Hand Art Center to Stetson's faculty, staff, students and the community.

"I want to exhibit thought-provoking concepts where folks are engaged with the artwork, either with paintings on the wall, works in the collection or pop-up installations," said Pearson. "I want it to be a little different because the way contemporary society is today, you have to get people's attention and maintain it along with relevance. I want to uphold the legacy of the people who worked at the Hand Art Center before me and enhance the students' experience while they're at Stetson University."

Hand Art Center's Spring 2020 Exhibits and Events

The Hand Art Center will kick off the new year with the "Image for Concept" exhibit, Jan. 13-Feb. 8, 2020. The display features artists Bennie Flores Ansell, Bradly Brown, Amy Theiss Giese and Andy Mattern, who have created camera-less photos by recording lights and shadows with light-sensitive photo paper.

Faculty are also exhibiting their artwork during the spring semester. [Madison Creech, MFA](#), visiting assistant professor of creative arts at Stetson, will be presenting her "Garniture" exhibit, Jan. 13-March 28, 2020. The display features an installation of wallpaper and textiles inspired by artist Oscar Bluemner's artwork.

[Luca Molnar, MFA](#), assistant professor of art at Stetson, will be curating "Over Yonder," Feb. 17-March 28, 2020. The video art show will feature 10 southern artists who are portraying different landscapes of the south, which examine how industry, gender, race, history and violence have shaped the southern United States today.

[Katie Baczeski, MFA](#), visiting assistant professor of art at Stetson, will be curating "Clay Legacies," Feb. 17-March 28, 2020. The show highlights three generations of ceramics and art pieces from the university's permanent collection, and features former visiting art professors of Stetson and students of those professors along with retired and current professors.

An opening-night reception for Creech and Molnar and Baczeski's curated exhibits will be held on Friday, Feb. 21, 6-8 p.m.

New York-based artist [Cyriaco Lopes, MFA of the Americas](#), affiliate faculty at Stetson, will be presenting an "Annunciations: Saints & Martyrs" artist talk about his current body of work, which includes photographs of painted sculptures that queer visual traditions of art history on Wednesday, Feb. 19, 7-8:30 p.m., at the Rinker Welcome Center, 529 N. Woodland Blvd, DeLand, 32723, in the Lynn Presentation Room. Lopes destroys his sculptures after they are photographed for a project and exist only through their mediated representation.

Stetson's art students shine during the Creative Arts' Senior Exhibition, April 14-30, 2020, with an opening-night reception on Friday, April 17, 6-8 p.m. The exhibition will feature artwork by senior digital arts and studio art students.

Complimentary parking is available in the East Arizona Avenue parking lot off of Amelia Avenue and [visitor parking spaces throughout campus](#). Exhibits and events at the Hand Art Center are free and open to the public.

About Stetson University

Founded in 1883, [Stetson University](#) is the oldest private university in Central Florida. Stetson focuses on intense learning experiences in a supportive community that allows students to develop their voice in a connected, inclusive environment. Stetson University ranks No. 5 on U.S. News & World Report's 2019 list of Best Regional Universities (South), and has been recognized as one of The Princeton Review's 385 Best Colleges, 2020 edition. [Stay connected](#) with Stetson on social media.

Contact: Sandra Carr
Media Relations
P: 407-256-5090
E: scarr3@stetson.edu

