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Exhibit meets resistance

Trev Stair
 Capital Times Reporter

The October art exhibit featuring nude photography by James Bostick has raised questions and eyebrows concerning the function of the Gallery Lounge.

"Postmodern Metamorphoses", a photographic art exhibit by James Bostick, a Humanities graduate student, has created concern over the exhibit's use of nude models, echoing a similar controversy at

Schuylkill campus.

Last September, a reproduction of Goya's "Naked Maja" was moved from a Penn State Schuylkill classroom after the school recieved complaints from feminists and sexual harassment charges were threatened.

"With the work being all nudes, people will have problems with it," said Bostick of his "Postmodern Metamorphoses."

"[The works] are not 'match your couch' kinds of images," said

Bostick. "I don't think its a matter that art needs to be beautiful or decorative. These images are real message pieces. They are meant to be looked at critically."

The Gallery Lounge is a multi-purpose facility and should be placed outside the ordinary constraints of a traditional art gallery, according to Janet Widoff, coordinator of Student Activities.

"When there is an exhibit in an art gallery, peöple could chose not to enter. Here, [the Gallery Lounge] is more of a public domain. Some students have to enter if they want to participate in a classroom activity or lecture," said Widoff.

To avoid any potential problems, Widoff said that many of the lectures and events scheduled in the Lounge have been moved to other venues.

"We chose to book many of the activities out of the area, so that someone would not have to struggle with, 'Gee, I have to go into the room, but I'm not really comfortable,'" said Widoff.

However, some see the duality of the Gallery Lounge as hindering the academic development of PSH's students.

"The whole idea of a college art gallery is not to show 'gift store art,'" said Linda Ross, Assistant Professor of Humanities and Education, and volunteer coordinator for the exhibits that come to the Lounge.

"A college art gallery's mission and role should be to present the student body and college community with challenging art. Art that raises contemporary issues. Art that challenges old ideas about art," said Ross. "Isn't that what academia is for?"

"It needs to be just a gallery. The idea of a multi-purpose space is fine, but art shouldn't be something that enhances an assembly room," said Bostick.

The next month, the Nov. 6, 1992 edition of The Daily Collegian reported that an architecture student's project was taken down after several students found the work offensive.

"It was my understanding that there was a memo sent out to all the campuses to be politically correct and be careful of any



"The Death of Marat"
 One of the series of photographic works from James Bostick's exhibit, "Postmodern Metamorphoses" on display through October in the Gallery Lounge. Each piece in the series reworks a scene from art history or ancient mythology into modern terms.

offensive material for fear of being sued. That trickled down to me," said Bostick.

According to Humanities division head Dr. William Mahar, the university came out with a policy concerning sensitive art after the Goya incident, and the PSH is currently in the process of defining its own. However, no set policy was used regarding Bostick's exhibit, said Widoff.

Concerns over Bostick's exhibit became apparent this summer, when the original cover for the exhibit's postcard invitation was rejected because it displayed full frontal nudity.

"The administration felt that the image reflected badly on the university, and wouldn't print it," said Bostick. A different piece from the exhibit was chosen.

Bostick also said that the college considered displaying his exhibit in another area to avoid any potential problems. "I felt that it was my right to have the show in the Gallery Lounge. I had contacted the ALCU and the Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts, who were both ready to support me," said Bostick.

"Their opinion was that it was a matter of censorship; it's a matter of public relations. It's not really important to me how you word it, it's a matter of not allowing free expression," said Bostick.

Ultimately, it was agreed that the exhibit should remain in the Gallery Lounge. "In general, the Humanities division always supports freedom of expression, so we didn't think the institution, or at least the division, should exercise any prior restraint over [Bostick's] works," said Mahar.

"What I've dealt with at this university is not unique. I've dealt with it at other galleries. I've had galleries tell me that they would love to show my work, but if they do, their funding will be cut off. I've had friends who have had everything from being denied exhibits in certain places to having the FBI confiscate equipment and negatives," Bostick said.

As a result of the turmoil surrounding the exhibit, Bostick has helped organize a symposium, to be held on Thursday, Oct. 28 in

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Police investigation yields no new answers

Denise Kessler
 Capital Times Reporter

University police are trying to determine whether there is any basis to a report of a daytime assault upon a woman in the campus parking lot Sept. 20.

The university's community relations department posted fliers alerting students that police had received second-hand, unconfirmed information that a woman student was "accosted in the central part of the PSH campus."

Mary Anne Van Arsdale, university spokeswoman, said that although the report could not be verified, the fliers were posted after some discussion among university officials as a precautionary measure.

Van Arsdale last Friday said details about the case remained unconfirmed and sketchy. Police have tracked down several people who heard either second-or-third hand reports about the incident, she said. But the investigation was complicated because those people have given conflicting stories about what, where and how the incident occurred, Van Arsdale said.

"It has been frustrating for the police and for us," she said.

According to a police report, the university first learned of the assault through an anonymous phone call about 12:40 p.m. Tuesday. The fliers were posted that evening.

University police Chief Charles Alesky said anyone who knows anything about the incident should call police at 948-6232 or community relations at 948-6029.

"So far we have no possible proof of an assault," Alesky said. Although the university's police force is currently understaffed, his department is working overtime to keep the campus safe.

"Officers are working 12 to 16 hour days, double shifts and working 60 hour weeks," Alesky said.

Meanwhile, Alesky urged women on campus to use common sense by remaining alert about their surroundings and walking in pairs. The campus also has a service that provides escorts for women who might feel uncomfortable walking alone, available at 938-6232, he said.

"It's best to play it safe all of the time since the crime situation is getting worse in the Harrisburg area," Alesky said.

Towns Wins Award

Sue Barger
 Capital Times Reporter

The International Women's Writing Guild gave top honors to behavioral science teacher Dr. Kathryn Towns for her writing and research.

She received the "Artist for Life" award for her writing and scholarship in education, mathematics, psychology, addictive diseases and women's employment.

The award was presented at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, New York, during a week-long conference in August.

"The most outstanding thing to me was the night they honored the winners," Towns said. "They clapped for five minutes for me. I didn't know what to do."

Towns, of Harrisburg, has worked at PSH since 1968.

The conference brought 450 women from 14 nations and included classes and seminars about writing style.

She was nominated by previous student Susan Baugh, Towns said.

Towns also received a National Science Foundation Fellowship, the Dr. James A. Jordan, Jr. Memorial Award for Teaching Excellence and the Service to Women Award from the Pennsylvania Commission for Women.

Tenure policy questioned by faculty: Humanities boycott committee

Susan Jones-Yurkiewicz
 Capital Times Reporter

In a highly unusual action, the Humanities Division faculty has voted not to form a tenure and promotion committee until disputes with the administration over tenure decisions are resolved.

The September faculty vote is a protest of the tenure denial of Dr. Peter Parisi last spring, which triggered concern among faculty and students. The denial brought to a head long-standing conflicts between the faculty and Provost and Dean Ruth Leventhal over interpretation of tenure requirements, administrative management and collegial review.

At the same time, the Student Government Association has brought the issue to the forefront by listing it as the main topic of the Humanities Open Forum on Oct. 7 in the Gallery Lounge at 12:30 p.m.

"It is an assertion of a genuine desire for a real collegian exchange," Dr. Theodora Graham, associate humanities professor, said of the division vote.

The discontent is not limited to Penn State Harrisburg, said Graham, who serves on the University Faculty Senate. At the September meeting, tenure requirements were a significant topic.

The vote is uncommon for PSH faculty, according to William Aungst, associate professor of science, engineering and technology.

"Faculty members are intimidated," Aungst said. "They know the mentality of the administration doesn't like anyone rocking the boat."

According to faculty sources, the administration met with the Faculty Affairs Committee to hear complaints about the lack of collegiality on campus. The institutional atmosphere is causing low morale among the faculty, faculty sources said.

Union representatives will be on campus late this month to assess the atmosphere among the faculty, said a faculty member who declined to be identified. Faculty members voiced an overwhelming interest to Faculty Affairs Committee members about meeting the representatives.

Dr. Troy Thomas, associate professor of humanities and a member of the division tenure committee for six years, said the vote served as a catalyst to open discussions between the two sides.

"We voted not to form a tenure and promotion committee until she comes to us to explain what her criteria are," Thomas said.

The meeting with the provost is scheduled for October 7, the same day as

the SGA meeting.

Consensus on interpretation of tenure requirements is essential for current tenure candidates, who go through long discussions with their colleagues attempting to meet those requirements.

"We all have a stake in it," Thomas said. "There are those who aren't tenured who need to understand."

In Parisi's case, the administration viewed his record of academic record differently than the division and college committees.

Even though Parisi's teaching record was excellent, Dr. Ernest Dishner, associate provost and dean of faculty, said his academic publishing record wasn't sufficient. Dishner said Parisi needed more articles published in "journals of the first rank."

"The administration thought my publishing was not heavy enough," Parisi said. "But, in the eyes of my colleagues, it was enough."

Publication is a problem involving the quality of the journal and the quantity, Dishner said. Even the rate of article acceptance by a journal is considered. A journal that publishes 95 percent of its submissions would not especially be considered as an academic achievement.

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Tenure Procedure at PSH, Behrend, and Hershey Medical

