2013 – 2017 Annual Crystal Bridges Day Trip

Maribeth Anders proposed taking students to the Crystal Bridges Museum on a Saturday as a day trip to complement our art survey, art history, and studio art courses. Kim Kwee organized the trip, with the help of David Carpenter, Anna Mitchell, Cindy Nesmith, and many others on staff. The Fine Art Club secured RSO Funds to cover transportation, lunch, and admission to a special exhibit, “American Chronicles: The Art of Norman Rockwell” for 30 students and 5 faculty/staff.

Sarah Vasher
Tori Williams
Young Hyun Shin
June Moon
Jessica Dailey
Tammy Curley
Tammy Love
Spencer Zahrn
Brittney Neal
Tanya Triplett
Pamela Anderson
Christine Belcher
Ashley Strawser
Brenda Beard
Emma Agpalo
Thami Tran
Kelley Freeland
Marrow Richmond
Shonda Hood-White
*Alonzo Hood-White (Shonda’s husband)
Brett Platt
Robert McCarville
Melonie Edwards
Kristy Smith
Pamela Duncan
Elizabeth Kane
Rachel Tyra
Brittany Tims
Andrew Ridgeway
Slater Corbin

Faculty/staff:
Kim Kwee
Anna Tanner
Anna Mitchell
Cindy Nesmith
Mark Barnes
2013 - 1st Annual Crystal Bridges Day Trip – Saturday, April 20
30 students and 5 faculty/staff (three of which drove vans to transport the group)

2014 - 2nd Annual Crystal Bridges Day Trip – Saturday, April 19
37 students and 3 faculty/staff

Jenny Parrish
Kadavius Morant
Chelsea Ivy
Jordan Friddle
Zachary Cypret
Alice Abbott
Nguyen Truong
Morgan Gilbert
Robert McCarville
Gwen Hood-Thomas
Chris Baggett
Edward Johnston
Kevin Burrell
Irma Willis
Doug Merritt
Allyson Abbott
Megan Ladd
Elexius Tibbs
Channon Thomas II
Roshena Bennett (online)
Johnathan Daniels
Logan Cox
Brandon Faulk
Angela Glover
Whitney Bryson
Jennifer Owens
Stephanie Smith
Justin Yeatts
Matthew Bivens
Devin Owens
Jinah Kim
Melonie Edwards
Kristy Smith
Shaquaya Lewis
Daniel Rankin
TeVonshe Hines
Tim Crawford
Ceara Morant

Faculty/Staff: Kim Kwee, Tachelle Nettles, Melody Berning
2015 – 3rd Annual Crystal Bridges Day Trip – Saturday, November 15
40 students and 3 faculty/staff

2016 – 4th Annual Crystal Bridges Day Trip – Saturday, November 17
23 students and 2 faculty

Brij Singh
Victoria Viera
Randy Feliciano
Shi Le Compte
Jade Riley
Treanna Golston
Ryan Pipkins
Sarah Halter
Elizabeth Hornaday
Louise Mandumbwa
Citlamina “Mina” Ilhuicamina
Waltdrikus Dunn
Zaya Odbayar
Tony Foster
Nicole Clarke
Aresha Rougely
Shantel Gravely

Faculty/staff:
Kim Kwee
Bradley Pierce

2017 – 5th Annual Crystal Bridges Day Trip – Friday, November 10
34 students and 3 faculty/staff

Olivia Parks
Zarina Faretdinova
Bobbie Biles
Axel Feliz
Crystal Marie Smith
Ruby Damper
Lauren Aymond
Kaitlyn Schlechtweg
Kunta Kinte Kilpatrick
Garrett Glasco
Noe Artega
Miranda Crudup
Bryan Criswell
Carlos King
In the spring semester, 2014, we took 37 students to visit Crystal Bridges and secured funds for a chartered bus, driver, and admission to “A Taste for Modernism,” which featured works by Picasso, Rodin, Degas, Matisse, and other modern masters.

The next year, we moved the trip to the fall semester. Kim Kwee was on maternity leave, so David Carpenter organized and led the group. The Fine Arts Club submitted a proposal for RSO funds which covered transportation by charter bus and admission to a special exhibit on the Art of Dance. 40 students and 3 faculty/staff attended the museum on Saturday, November 15.

In 2016, students were asked to write reports about their experience on the trip. They were asked to answer these questions:

1. Describe one work of art that caught your attention.

2. Was this experience pleasurable or uncomfortable?

3. What seemed to be the theme of at least one exhibition that you saw?

4. Make some observations about museum or gallery you visited. Was it crowded? Bright? Clean? Welcoming?

5. Answer more specific questions about visiting Crystal Bridges:

   a. What kind of place? Public? Private?
b. How was the space being used?

c. Did anyone welcome you? Did anyone offer to help you?

Some examples of reports are copied below:

“This trip has been a memorable one to me. The purpose of this trip was to see the world outside our own shell. We got a deeper insight and better appreciation for Arts after getting this wonderful opportunity to discover the world of Arts. The trip was educational as well as fun. The best part was that there was no additional fee for the trip. It was all sponsored by the college. Thank you very much Mrs. Kwee for organizing this trip. I liked venturing in the nature trails and explored the many works of art through those trails. This was my first trip outside in the United States and I loved it. We were free to roam and see things by our own. There were no forceful rules binding us except for the time limit. Though the journey was long but it was fun. We had a clean and spacious bus which had television facility. We watched about two or three movies in it. This visit gave me a sense of friendliness. I would recommend to hold more such tours so that we get the opportunity to broaden our thinking and vision of the world. I am very grateful to Mrs. Kwee who organized this beautiful trip to Crystal Bridges.”

Brij Singh

“1. Describe one work of art that caught your attention. There were several pieces that caught my eye, but one that stands out was a piece by Evan Penny. It was a future self-portrait of what he did not want to become. What was it about this work of art that was so memorable? It was so realistic. It was alarming how realistic it was. Try to describe what attracted you to the work you selected. As soon as you walked in the door it was right there and looked like a real man.

2. Was this experience pleasurable or uncomfortable? I had the best time going to Crystal Bridges. It was a very pleasurable trip and I am so glad I went. Try to explain why it was positive, negative, or some of both. It was a positive experience, because I
had never gone to an Art Gallery before, and now I look forward to going back to this one and experience others as well.

3. What seemed to be the theme of at least one exhibition that you saw? The theme in one of the exhibition’s I saw were the paintings pertaining to dance. It was various painting of dance from all over the world. I really enjoyed this exhibition.

4. Make some observations about museum or gallery you visited. Was it crowded? Bright? Clean? Welcoming? It was a bit crowded due to the fact of it being on a Saturday, but was very manageable. It was very bright and the “Maman” by Bourgeois greeted us as we walked in to the entrance of the museum, which was very cool for me since we studied this piece of art in class. There were people there as we walked in to the front door to welcome us and to answer any questions we may have. They were very helpful.

5. Answer more specific questions about at least one of the places you visited: Since visiting Crystal Bridges, I have gone to the Arkansas Arts Museum twice.


b. How was the space being used? To display various art pieces from around the world.

c. Did anyone welcome you? Did anyone offer to help you? Yes, on my first visit, I had someone greet me and answer my questions. They were very helpful.”

Elizabeth Hornaday

“As terrible as it sounds, when I first heard my instructor tell the class at the beginning of the semester that we would be required to visit an art exhibit in order to complete our final paper, I was a bit bummed. I am a 4.0 student who at that time, would have much rather done hours of research on a piece of artwork than to have traveled to a museum to analyze a work of art for myself. Throughout the semester in my Introduction to Arts class, my instructor, Mrs. Kwee, taught us quite a bit about how to properly examine a piece of artwork, and my visit to Crystal Bridges last Saturday helped me to realize just how much more I have begun to truly appreciate art. It is clear to me now that this sincere appreciation of the piece of art that I chose for my final project would have never been accomplished through Internet searches, no matter how much time I spent making them.

Although I may have initially signed up for the trip to Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in order to save myself some gas, time, and stress of having to travel to a museum by myself, I left ecstatic, because I finally had an understanding of why some people put so much value into painted canvasses, ambiguous sculptures, or a pile of green candy on the floor, a piece done by Felix Gonzalez-Torres. This trip taught me in a tangible, unforgettable way that art is about so much more than just what the viewer can notice with one glance.
Our trip to Crystal Bridges began with a three-hour trip from the college to the museum, which we spent on a Little Rock Tours bus. I was shocked that we had such a comfortable transportation experience; it was a very pleasant surprise. The bus was fully equipped with wireless internet access, flat screen televisions, a restroom, and a very polite driver.

Upon arrival to the museum, we loaded a shuttle bus to get to the entrance of the museum. I mentioned to my friend that I was really wanting to do my project on a sculpture of a spider we had previously studied in class known as “Maman” by Louise Bourgeois, but since it was an outdoor sculpture, I was afraid that I would have to hike over a mile in the cold to view it. To my surprise, as I walked towards the entrance of the museum, I stopped and found myself standing directly under “Maman”! It was so exciting to see that massive, 30-foot tall spider up-close and in-person that I had previously learned about in class. The spider has a presence of its own—it puts off this vibe as if it could almost be alive, ready to attack anything that would pose danger to it. It was truly magnificent. One would think that after such an exciting surprise, nothing inside the walls of the museum could trump it as my top pick for the final paper.

After taking several photographs of the massive spider and calming my excitement at the sight of it, I travelled inside the museum to get out of the cold and was immediately greeted by a man near the front door who handed me a map, gave me oral directions to the gallery of modern art, and told me he was there to answer any questions I might have. The museum was beautiful. I travelled past the dining area of Eleven, the museum’s restaurant, and towards the 1940s to Now Gallery. As I walked through the double glass doors into the gallery, I stood before roughly 50 pounds of individually wrapped green candies laid out on the floor. What’s comical is that I did not even notice the work composed of candy until later, because I looked straight past it to a piece called, Enassamishhinijweian. I’d hate to have to say that title five times fast. Enassamishhinijweian is by an artist named Tom Uttech, and to call it breath-taking and thoroughly thought-provoking is an understatement. It features a scene in a forest that is cluttered with the rapid movement of animals and flocks of birds, except for a single bear which sits alone, back faced to the audience, viewing a sunset. There is something unexplainably captivating about the painting and even after viewing every single work of art in that exhibit and an entire temporary exhibit that the museum had available on the art of dance, I could not shake my intrigue for the painting of the lone bear in the forest staring at the sunset. After I parted with Uttech’s piece to explore the rest of the exhibit is when I noticed the floor of candy, which I soon learned the story behind. The piece was inspired by the artist’s partner who died of AIDS, and every viewer was invited to take one of the candies. This piece successfully reminded me that art does not have to be displayed on a canvas or created with everyday art material in order to be valuable art.

That is the point when I took a break to eat lunch at Eleven to consider my options and to decide on the piece I would choose for my final project. The restaurant was inside a glass-enclosed bridge and overlooked a pond that caused light to shimmer all
throughout the dining hall. Amidst the natural beauty, I enjoyed *The Eleven Burger*, which included Grilled Black Angus Beef, melted Monterrey Jack cheese, and roasted garlic aioli, all next to gourmet chips and a crisp pickle. It was probably the best burger I’ve ever eaten.

After a meal, such as the one mentioned above, I was more than energized to decide on which piece of art I wanted to do my assignment on, and I chose Uttech’s *Enassamishhinijjweian*. Per my instructor’s previous suggestions in class, I chose to go back to the piece to sit and look at it for a while. In case I weren’t already delighted enough with my experience at Crystal Bridges, my time sitting in front of that piece of art somehow enriched my experience at the museum even more. There was a bench directly in front of the piece of art, almost as if the art curators knew that this was a piece that would require the observant viewer to sit and think on it awhile, and that’s just what I did. Although my instructor told us several times that she truly did not expect us to sit before our chosen artwork with pen in hand and take notes, I couldn’t help but doing so. I knew that time would not allow me to return to the museum before my project came due and somehow, I also knew that the creativity that was flowing within me, enabling me to examine and gain understanding of the work of art, would not be the same after I was home, having to look at it through a computer screen. As I sat on that bench, taking notes on the elements and the principles of design utilized in the piece, I got the experience of being able to talk to passersby and listen to their commentary. Although some women ignorantly called the focal point a cat instead of a bear, there was one older gentleman who shared insight with me about all the different species of animals included in the piece. Although his act of pointing out which of the animals were wolverines may not have helped me in my formal analysis paper, it did help sate my curiosity, and made me feel that I had just a little bit more of an understanding about the piece which incorporated such a vast array of creative and naturalistic elements.

When it was time to leave, my friend grabbed a tea and I grabbed a smoothie at the museum’s drink bar, and we loaded the bus. Our instructor asked us if we had a good day and simply replying with “yes” was such an understatement. I realized after hours spent in the museum that my eyes had been opened to two things. One being that my pride in Arkansas had been revitalized; I have visited museums in Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New York, and Washington, D.C., but believe it or not, none of them impressed me like the museum in our very own Arkansas did. Secondly, my eyes were opened to what a truly good job Mrs. Kwee has done teaching us about art. A lot of teachers don’t take their jobs seriously—I don’t know why they teach, but it can’t be because they want to expand the minds of their students. Mrs. Kwee is no such teacher. It is obvious to her students that she teaches because she loves what she does, and she wants her students to be able to appreciate the arts as well, even if it’s not what they choose to major in. Although some classes leave the student completely unchanged, this class has truly taught me to appreciate art, and were it not for the trip to Crystal Bridges, which I never would have taken had my instructor not organized a class trip to go there, I can honestly say that I would not have realized how much my views toward art in general have changed. I truly appreciate having been a part of Pulaski Tech’s 2016 trip to Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art.”
Sarah Halter

“I had the wonderful opportunity to go on a field trip with the CHARTS department to northwest Arkansas and visit the Crystal Bridges Museum. When we first arrived we were greeted with a huge rustic spider sculpture named Maman by Louise Bourgeois. This was very interesting because we learned about that specific work of art in the beginning of the semester in my Intro to Visual Art class. I was pleasantly surprised that Maman is displayed six different locations and the Crystal Bridges Museum was one of them.

When entering the museum there were many passages leading to work of art. In my Intro to Visual Arts class we studied Mary Cassatt’s, Boating Party. The main reason why we studied it was due to the analogous color scheme, colors being next to each other in the color wheel. I was able to see her other works of art. I thought it was really interesting. When walking through other exhibits I was able to see more contemporary art pieces. We studied abstract work and I was able to see an abstract painting of a building getting blown up. During the fieldtrip we were given free tickets to a Dance exhibit. This gave art students the opportunity to see paintings and other art pieces that have to do with dance. Those paintings also had movement due to the dancing. I was able to distinguish the lines and value of paintings that helped with illusion.

I had a good time at the museum, it was my first visit and will like to go again next year! I was able to have fun looking at all the pieces of art and the artists we’ve studied.”

Mina Ilhuicamina

“Standing outside of crystal bridges took my breath away. I was amazed. My amazement begun driving us to the museum where they had some open art pieces on the grass, also a beautiful tree made of iron. On my way into the museum, there it was, maman. When I learnt about this art piece in class I thought I had to go to Spain and find this piece of art and here it is in all it beauty, I was so tall and amazing. At the door, I was met by a greeter that showed me where to register. After registration, the greeter came back and showed me where to start. I was hungry but the restaurant was close. That was the down side to my visit. I went through the different galleries, going down the stairs from the presidents’ display was an art work of strings, they were different colors and they form a wave. It took me a few minutes to take it all in. there also some sculptures that made me think twice if they were real or not. The museum was not crowded at all, maybe because I got there at 4pm but it was clean, smelled great and very welcoming. The space was very well used, they even had 4000 candies on the floor that you could take with you, they tasted very good. I would definitely return to this museum, it is a great get away in spite the long drive.”

Nicole Clarke

In 2017, Kim Kwee took a smaller group of 6 students to the “Art + Architecture + Nature” Symposium at Crystal Bridges. Students heard internationally known artists and historians give talks and participate in discussion panels.
In the fall, we took 34 students to the museum to see a special exhibition of Chihuly glass.