The Richard Helzer's + Bronze Pencil Award Recipiants 2025

Jovany Guillen Castillo

Jovany Guillen Castillo is a graduating senior in the Graphic Design Program specializing in brand identity, strategic storytelling, and cross-functional design. As a Montanabased designer Jovany crafts bold, intuitive brand identities that seamlessly merge aesthetics with function. His approach is rooted in attention to detail, a love for refined visual storytelling, and resilience to succeed in the future of communication.

Jovany receives this Bronze Pencil Award in recognition of his exceptional creative leadership, dedication to excellence, and significant impact across both the MSU community and the broader design field. Drawing from diverse influences, he strives to create design solutions that not only engage but empower, leaving a lasting impression through clean, strategic, and impactful visual communication.

As a Creative Coach at Blackstone LaunchPad at MSU and the Executive Vice President of MSU's American Marketing Association, Jovany has empowered his peers through mentorship, training, and collaborative branding initiatives. This award also honors Jovany's dedication to intentional design, community building, and purposeful storytelling, alongside his unwavering perseverance and leadership throughout his final semester at MSU.



Janice Kai

Janice Kai is a creative powerhouse! A proud member of the Navajo Nation and a talented, hard-working MSU graphic design senior with a 9-year-old daughter named Paxton. Currently, she serves as the social media marketing director for the American Indian Council at Montana State University. Which supports native MSU students and sponsors one of the largest Powwows in the state. At the same time, she does freelance design work for the legendary pop-up Straw Bale Maze, which magically appears in a local farmer's field each October season.

During her senior year, one could always find Janice either creating a new design or assisting an MSU classmate. Skilled in all the Adobe Suite programs, one of her preferred digital tools being Adobe XD, as seen in her senior capstone brilliantly titled "Sko." This app connects users to Native American Heritage in many forms. Giving the user a chance to explore the Powwow culture. In addition, Sko allows users to learn event etiquette, understand dance categories, and learn about societal news. Beyond being a gifted designer, photographer, and storyteller, Janice's outstanding grit and tenacity are an inspiration to us all.

-Jeffrey Conger

Madeline Trawick

Graduating May 2025 with a Bachelor of Fine Art in Graphic Design and a minor in Art History, Madeline Trawick has proven that she is a force - bringing her unique skills and passion to every endeavor.

Madeline approached every assignment, project, design, paper, and learning experience with unwavering enthusiasm - which was clearly evident in her outstanding academic and creative work. Her creative work was always paired with depth of concept and skillfully executed visuals. She continually pushed to make work that engaged viewers and delivered thoughtful expressions. A Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) Scholarship recipient, Madeline will be graduating with a cumulative 3.95 GPA.

Madeline also excelled outside of the classroom. As the Associated Students of Montana State University's (ASMSU) Arts and Exhibits Student Director, she curated a diverse collection of exhibitions at MSU during her three-year tenure. These exhibitions promoted valuable artistic dialogue that intrigued both students and community members. As student director, she also led the ASMSU Art Market, which offered local artists a platform to showcase and sell their work. Under her compassionate leadership, this event broke sales records each semester and had over \$29,000 in sales this year. ASMSU recognized Madeline as the MSU Program Director of the Year.

The one thing that overshadowed both her academic and community endeavors was the relationships she cultivated across the University.

Madeline has a way of always being there for others. Generously listening, discussing, laughing, and always offering to help.

Madeline embodies the true spirit and talent of the School of Art Bronze Pencil. I feel privileged to have been a witness to her MSU journey for the last four years.

-Bruce Barnhart



Radley Robertson

The Graphic Design program is proud to recognize Radley Robertson for his exceptional achievements, leadership, and community impact during his time at MSU. There are countless words that could describe Radley—innovative, driven, insightful, compassionate, and strategic—and that's only the beginning. One of Radley's most remarkable qualities is his commitment to uplifting others through design.

Radley approaches every project not only with sharp technical skills but also with a thoughtful and inclusive mindset. Whether through UI/UX design, brand identity work, or creative strategy, Radley consistently pushes himself to learn more, refine his craft, and contribute meaningfully to the community around him. As President of the MSU Graphic Design Guild and Director of Graphic Design for the MSU American Marketing Association, Radley has dedicated countless hours to mentoring his peers, leading workshops, and creating spaces for impactful collaboration.

Outside the classroom, Radley has made significant contributions to local organizations such as HRDC, Regen Market, and the Blackstone Launchpad, blending detail-oriented design with strong project leadership and communication. Amongst the faculty, we all agree that Radley's ability to balance creative innovation with a clear dedication to service sets him apart. He not only meets expectations but consistently exceeds them, delivering work that is polished, purposeful, and deeply connected to the needs of real-world communities. We are proud to present Radley with the Bronze Pencil award and congratulate him on his achievements while at MSU



-Ashley Fuchs

Emma Bergman

Emma Bergman is receiving this Bronze Pencil award for the excellence and professionalism of her BFA exhibition work, which demonstrates a deep commitment to painting and the painting process. Emma has also played an important leadership role in the School of Art as President of the Drawing and Painting Guild for three semesters (taking one semester off for travel in Italy, of course!) Emma is a double major in Drawing and Painting and Graphic Design, and her active engagement in both painting and design was evidenced in her award-winning project "Of Transparency and Perspective", which won the Norm Asbjornson Hall Student Art Competition in Spring, 2022. The sliding, painted Plexiglas panel piece is still on display on the 2nd floor of Norm Asbjornson Hall and will soon move to its permanent home in Renne Library on the 4th floor stair landing. This is the first NAH student competition project that will be permanently installed on the MSU campus.

Emma's BFA project demonstrates her strong, painterly aesthetic that also reflects her personal philosophy of life. Emma states this about her thesis project:

"The Quiet Mundane captures everyday moments, creatures, and people from my life. My process is as much an approach to living as it is a body of work. Rather than viewing my life as a series of monumental moments, I am learning to appreciate the mundane, the repetitive, and the beauty of small things. Rather than letting the mundane slip by, I am attempting to bring the viewer's focus to the little corner of the world that I inhabit. I believe by observing this, sitting with it for hours, and translating it into paint, I am elevating the mundane to something of importance, as something precious to be savored.

Through painting, I am grounded in my observance of the small and the ordinary while the world is at each other's throats. The quiet mundane is universal. While my neighbors live a different life, with different people, events, and beliefs than my own, they might still find a surprising familiarity in my work. They might find that we share many mundane moments, if not in actuality, then in spirit. In the larger world we are all different, but in many small ways, we are the same. And for me, that is quite monumental."

Emma has developed a clear and powerful voice that is personal, idiosyncratic and resonant with the times in which we live. Congratulations, Emma!



Ella Weise

Today I am pleased to award one of the Bronze Pencil's in Studio Art to a generous, humorous, and infectiously positive member of the School of Art community. It has been my experience when this person was in class that they consistently strived for individual and class excellence and pushed themselves to achieve more and more with each assignment-to and grow. This experience, I have found from conversations with my peers, is not unique to me or the classes I conducted and was what everyone began to expect as the norm for this individual. Hardworking, creative, willing to bring their own style and techniques into the fold, and an asset to the entire community can be said for a few of the individuals I have had the pleasure of working with as majors in the past year however pencils don't grow on trees and this faculty was forced to whittle the list down. Without further ado, it is my pleasure to award Ella Weise with a Bronze Pencil in Studio Arts. -Jim Zimpel

Lily Oliver

6am, before the sun rises, Lily is in the studio, moving, groovin', and creating with intension and passion. Lily is the kind of artist that makes her art practice a priority in her life, not because she feels pressured to, but because she wants to. Her ideas embody various forms and techniques; from ceramic objects to metal sculptures and adornment, to wearable textiles, Lily utilizes any material that best communicates the meaning of the work. No matter the medium, it is easy to spot Lily's work because the aesthetic reflects her: elegant, eclectic, and alluring. I believe Lily will always be chasing knowledge and skills across all art mediums, creating unified, meaningful work, despite the varied material.

Despite her dedication to her own art practice, Lily is always willing to stop what she's doing to help, guide and teach others. Lily is patient, articulate, and eager to help. As a former employee of Tin Works, and aspiring art teacher at the Emerson, Lily is integrated and invested in our arts community here in Bozeman. I'm confident Lily will influence hundreds of peers and young artists, sharing her passion for creating and inspiring others to show up and make the best work they can.

Lily's hard work, passion and kindness is what makes her stand out as an artist and student. Congratulations Lily, this bronze pencil is well earned.

-Tori Burchill



Oscar Sloop

As a student in the Ceramics Department, Oscar's energy and his enthusiasm for pottery was infectious. His work focused on making well-designed, atmospheric-fired utilitarian pots; an activity that requires years of dedicated practice and countless failures in order to achieve the quality of work he produced. He was a fantastic member of our studio community and a mentor to many of the newer students, always willing to share his knowledge. Oscar served as the Ceramic Guild president, helping to organize fundraising events, group exhibitions, visiting artists and our annual field trip to NCECA. From digging and processing local materials to splitting endless pile of wood, Oscar was always willing to put in extra effort with a positive attitude. He was instrumental in building our most recent salt kiln and wood kiln, organizing teams of students to assist with the final touches so he could make use of them during his thesis semester. Those kilns are in constant use and will serve many students in the years to come. We have no doubt that Oscar will go on to make important contributions to the ceramics community and we are happy to award him a Bronze Pencil for his achievements at MSU. -Jeremy Hatch



Danielle Johannsen

Dani Johannsen is receiving a bronze pencil this year because of her dedication and commitment to every art project she tackles. Over the past few years, I have witnessed her exacting attention to detail and determination to master every technique, from wood block prints to etchings and lithographs, book arts and screen-printing. You can see the level of detail and abundant layering of line, pattern, and color she assembles into the seven screen-print portraits she has up in the Helen E. Copeland Gallery. In this series, titled, "Fur and Feather: A Family Portrait", Dani presents specific family members through symbol and metaphor with warmth and a charming sense of humor. One of my personal favorites is The Counselor, a bespectacled Dachshund in a plaid sweater, cup of coffee at the ready. In addition to Dani's quality artwork, she has maintained a consistent 4.0 grade point average at MSU. Her intelligence and artistic vision will no doubt take her wherever she wants to go from here. Congratulations and good luck!

-Gesine Janzen



Ali Rysted

On behalf of the art history faculty, it's our pleasure to confer the Bronze Pencil in Art History on Ali Rysted, who has distinguished herself for the qualities of excellence, intelligence, maturity, and generosity in all her classes. Ali is exceptional in that she mastered the art of data assimilation and original composition by her second year at MSU! In the course of her studies, she offered thoughtful observation and cogent criticism on topics ranging from Bernini's fountain of world rivers in Rome, to Vigée Le Brun's portraits of the royal family at Versailles, to Renoir's urban pedestrians in Paris. She was an exemplary peer as well, helping her fellow students in search of missing notes, study strategies, and viable arguments. Ali participated in the spring 2024 SOA Italy semester, where her delight in visiting the major museum collections of Rome, Naples, Venice, and Florence can only be described as infectious. She plunged into the wonderfully rich but occasionally chaotic experience of working on-site with enthusiasm and focus. For her on-site presentation in Rome, Ali remained unflappable in the face of an unexpected obstacle -- a large and quite unsympathetic police guard surrounding her monument that day. She quickly regrouped, made a few adjustments, and gave all of us a polished and engaging presentation. She was invariably well-prepared, mature, courteous, and a wonderful traveling companion. Ali subsequently applied her knowledge of Italian art history in a graduatelevel seminar on Neoclassicism, where she studied how Americans incorporated classical traditions into women's art education. For her last semester at MSU, Ali wrote a persuasive undergraduate thesis challenging 18thcentury German historian Johann Joachim von Winckelmann's unfavorable comparison between calm Classical Greek sculptures, which he held in high regard, and movement in Italian Baroque sculptures, which he derided, to show that baroque artists turned out work in a classical vein at some point in their careers. She has indicated the pursuit of an M.A, in art history to be among her future plans.

