Spring is like a perhaps hand
During the spring break, Jody Grapes, the Director of Facilities Management, gave me a tour of the green secrets of the New Academic Building (NAB) and the Foundation Building (FB). Many people have claimed that the New Academic Building does not do much to save money, but there are many unknown technologies hidden on the roofs and bowels of both buildings that do much more than they think.

Have you ever wondered what was behind the door on the mezzanine (floor M) after taking the express elevator in the NAB? Behind that door are two 9 million BTU boilers, a steam boiler, primary and secondary water pumps, elevator hoist motors and access to the roof with even more energy saving technologies. Speaking of elevators, buildings and grounds have recently changed the elevators to “fleet mode”, which means that all elevators are now synced to one switch, rather than two. Although this may make it more difficult to get on the service car elevator to move large objects, this mode would reduce the electricity wasted when people push both elevator switches and call two elevators to the floor. Jody Grapes estimates that about $10,000 to $15,000 will be saved per year when elevators run in “fleet mode.” Jody Grapes stated, “Green doesn’t just mean saving money. It also means providing a healthier environment for the building occupants.”

Other things on the roof are cooling towers, which has cool water running through it. Large fans then blow cool wind throughout the building with this running water. This is referred to as “free waterside cooling.” Lastly, the load bank and the emergency generator lives on the roof. The emergency generator activates when it detects a dip in electricity from Con Edison and its 750 gallon tank of fuel can provide enough electricity for about 12 hours of operation.

A useful feature about the machinery on the roof is variable frequency drivers. This allows machines to operate at different intensities contrary to the older, more binary machines, which can only switch on and off. This variable frequency feature allows machines to last longer and save energy.

There is also a rainwater collection tank on the roof in addition to the one hidden above a few steps in the loading dock on the ground floor. Although Cooper does not pay for water (due to an education water act in NYC), rainwater is still collected and is used to supply water for toilets and urinals from the ground floor to LL2 (lower level 2).
Spring is like a perhaps hand

PIGGIES, CHICKS, AND DOGS

JASMINE STEIN (ART ’12)

The Bruce High Quality Foundation, the art-making collective whom you may remember at least from last year’s “Teach 4 America” tour of lectures with their limousine school bus, has included a musical in their 2nd festive Brucenial exhibition. The self-proclaimed arts education fable, titled “Animal Farm”, was performed on March 3rd and 4th by Maria Dizzia, Joe Kay, Matt Nasser, Ian Lassiter, and Liz Olomoff. It delves into the nightmarish fears and ridiculed sense of justice Cooper students and alumni have gone through since President Bharucha’s address in October 2011 if not earlier. The musical eats them whole and regurgitates something squeamishly optimistic about embodying alternative forms of art education. I felt spoken to, so for those of you who missed it or who have only heard distantly of Bruce High Quality, here are some thoughts on the musical and its aims in their words:

1. Did any specific event or release of information around Cooper Union’s dire financial situation prompt the idea for Animal Farm?

   Animal Farm is actually an idea we’ve been kicking around for some time. We wanted to create a fable from our own experience in the art world. Something of a mission statement and a warning parable as a way of coming to terms with our own development and where they might lead. The situation at Cooper helped to give the more general idea something specific to pivot around.

2. a. - Why did you create a one-to-one relationship between Cooper Union and BHQF, instead of talking directly about it? Did it simply give you more freedom to charge ahead with the loosely appropriated and twisted metaphors from the original Animal Farm?

   The piece is a fable. Whatever it is drawing from specifically, it’s intention is to provide a tool for negotiating the future. Our interest in looking at Cooper’s present situation is so that we can avoid a similar calamity with our own educational institution.

3. b. - The narrative went from past, to present, to future, although that progression was muddled by the use of a nightmare. This, the fact that it was a musical, along with the aesthetic of stand-ins, all contributed to its removal from the numb stress that has defined the Academic Year of ‘11-‘12 of currently enrolled Cooper Union students. Then you come out at the end and declare it as non-fiction. What does this do?

   On the one hand we wanted to make a wider audience aware of the situation. On the other hand we wanted to allow people to laugh in the face of disaster.

3. a. How much is this about Cooper Union, and how much about art education in general?

   Institutions generally don’t die fast enough. Assuming they are founded on a good idea for the time, they fail to adapt to the times a changing. And when they do adapt, they leave behind the great aspects of their original missions. The New Museum is an example. And now Cooper seems to track to be another. The whole “change or die” rhetoric we hear now from Cooper’s administration is unfortunately only dragged out when it finally suits conservative power structures.

3. b. You are rejecting the college/university model, in its lack of specificity to the arts. What model do you propose and is accreditation an obstacle to it?

   We aren’t rejecting anything. We are offering another option, one that is collaborative and non-professionalized, because that seems to better suit the reality of being an artist today. In curriculum, Cooper and many other art schools operate similarly. But administratively they operate like professional schools, or worse, like businesses that see students as customers.

   We feel this inconsistency between the administrative philosophy and the curricular philosophy has led to Cooper’s current predicament.

We feel this inconsistency between the administrative philosophy and the curricular philosophy has led to Cooper’s current predicament. And that’s a situation we are hoping to avoid in designing BHQFU.

4. You state that the premise of BHQFU is the conviction that artists can figure out - not just theoretically? - the problem of art education. Please explain how that problem is different for art than for higher education in general.

   Art is more like a language than a professional practice. It’s definition shifts according the concerns of those who choose to conduct their lives through it. There is not a fixed body of knowledge that makes art what it is. Perhaps we could say the same for all human knowledge, but it isn’t nearly as easy to be convincing about that. The notion of “expertise” may still be a valuable tool in some fields. The ‘hard’ sciences, for instance. Whereas the field of art falls more under a persuasion-based value system.

5. How did your experiment in an open educational program run inside Bruce High Quality Foundation University headquarters change your idea of what “should be” - if at all?

   The first iteration (18 months) was an extremely open ended venture. When we reopen this fall, this time as a 501-c3, there will be some minor tweaks to the structure. But the intent is the same.

   We want to create a space where artists can learn from each other. This is the principle thing we learned from critiques at Cooper’s art school: put talented people in the same room, ask them to talk, and sometimes something magical happens. That’s a pretty incredible thing.

   It’s unfortunate the administration and board has not sought such inspirational returns.


Cooper Union's Saturday Program

CHRISTOPHER HONG (EE '13)

On a sunny Saturday afternoon, I noticed colorful ribbons tied to several handrails around Cooper. I soon found out that this was an art project as part of Cooper Union’s Saturday Program. The Saturday Program is a project that started in the late 1960s by some undergraduates who felt that the public education in New York City did not prepare the students in this diverse city to become strong college candidates. These undergraduate students recruited high school students and taught the lessons themselves. This program later expanded with summer sessions in 1985, which later became the Outreach Program in 1990. Due to tough financial times, the Saturday Program’s budget has been cut from about $215,000 to about $150,000 (external funding only). With this reduction, one will wonder how much longer the program will survive.

I have to admit, the art I saw that Saturday was indeed amazing and it’s a shame not only that the ribbons had to be taken down, but also this program is heading towards extinction. What can the Saturday Program do to stay alive? Teaching is one way: students are encouraged to apply at the office located on the second floor. The Saturday Program currently trains and employs about 20 Cooper undergraduate instructors. Donations of usable art materials or books are greatly appreciated. Monetary donations can also be made through the cooper website by selecting other and writing Saturday Program FY13 in the memo line or mailing checks directly to them.

Photos by Christopher Hong (EE ’13). Saturday Program students creating artwork around Cooper Union on 02/25/12.
Revenue Task Force Update

SAIMON SHARIF (CE ’15)

Sharanq Phadke (EE’14) and I met to discuss the progress of the Revenue Task Force (RTF). Sharanq, a member of Engineering Student Council (ESC), is the Engineering representative on the task force. The RTF itself has reached its midpoint. There have been six meetings so far, and there are seven to go. A mid-term report will soon be released by Tom Mitchelli (AY), convener of the RTF. This report will be a compilation of the minutes.

There are 14 hours of meetings left before the RTF issues its report to President Jamshed. It will be released during the first week of May. This date allows students and faculty to be aware of any possible changes, but also gives the task force enough time to thoroughly complete its report. President Jamshed met with the task force on February 28th to discuss the situation from a wider perspective and give feedback.

The RTF has been relatively complaint free for the most part with only one complaint. According to Sharanq, “We got a complaint that our minutes hadn’t gone up in a while about a week ago so there was no real information flowing out of the group to the community. This was simply a communication mistake, and the minutes were posted.” For reference, the minutes are posted here: https://taskforce.cooper.edu/revenue_reports.

The task force has done a big picture discussion of the financial situation and discussed “what makes Cooper a special place.” They have decided upon a set of criteria to evaluate ideas including its fit with Cooper, impact on constituent groups, and net revenue inclusive of costs. The full list is available here: https://taskforce.cooper.edu/assets/RTF%20report5.pdf

A template for proposals based on ideas that fit these criteria will be available on the RTF website (https://taskforce.cooper.edu/home) soon.

About ten ideas have been received on the online forum, but more have arisen based on discussions. There have been a few student ideas, but most have come from alumni and professors. Furthermore, alumni are the most active group on the task force forums, but the forum itself is not being used as actively as the RTF had hoped for.

The idea of a fee-based masters and summer programs are being considered but actual numbers have not yet been determined on projected costs and revenues. Another idea being considered is a full-tuition scholarship model, as we have now, but students would pledge to pay some portion of their incomes later.

One interesting idea proposed is to require all engineering students to write a patent as a graduation requirement. Most patents will go nowhere, but a few could turn into startups that provide revenue. One such example is Cooper Cooler which was originally a student project, and is now sold by Revolutionary Cooling Systems. Cooper Union receives a portion of the profits as royalty.

The RTF is far from an isolated group. It has met Maguire Associates, enrollment consultants hired by Cooper Union. It will meet with the Expense Reduction Task Force to discuss ideas between the two groups. The task force is also engaging with Friends of Cooper Union, a group started by alumni, to consolidate ideas between the two groups. Sharanq attended a meeting to help ideas flow to the RTF from Friends of Cooper. He stresses that “we are asking for proposals of ideas that have been researched rather than just a sentence or two.”

Still, ideas are golden and it is worthwhile for students to submit any reasonable ideas they have. Sharanq aptly says it with “The current financial situation is a critical time for Cooper, but it is also an opportunity to change a lot about Cooper for the better. Don’t keep ideas to yourself - now is the time to share them.”

Ideas can be emailed: revenue@cooper.edu or submitted to the forums: https://taskforce.cooper.edu/forum

Follow

After several requests from our readers, we at the Pioneer interviewed Professor Brian Cusack to get more information on the online system being installed at Cooper. Professor Cusack responded in giving us some background.

A few years ago, an IT committee was formed to see what Cooper was lacking and what Cooper was doing really well at and this was a committee chosen by, I believe, President Campbell. Definitely during his time here and Professor Lent was on it and a whole bunch of people as well. One of the findings was that most schools use an ERP, massive enterprise platform that keeps track of all of the data at each of the given schools. All of the records come from one place, when five different offices are looking for your address, they get one answer rather than five different ones. That actually happened to me at one point of time and that happens when you have offices that don’t really talk to each other. They recommended that we should get one of these systems and both President Campbell and TC Westcott agreed that we should. A couple of people representing these types of systems were interviewed and Datatel was picked because it had the most up to date software and it was believed to fit Cooper the best. This decision, I believe, was officially made in January or February of 2011. We put in the hard-ware of March or April of last year. The business office live date was July 1st which we more or less met and checks were being cut by the system since last summer. It was a very long rollout because each of these modules of the software has to be built and all of our separate systems have to be migrated into it, which is quite a lot of work. It was about an 18 month to two year rollout since last summer, so we’re about halfway done. Admissions office’s part is basically done but we’re going to be doing things differently because of the order things had to be done. We’re going to have to wait a bit for it because one of the widgets that was needed was not going to be done by the time they needed to start admissions. Since you never want to change the way you do things halfway through, we did it differently. Currently kids are putting their information into the datatel system.
and when they get accepted, it will be through this system. One of the modules is the student modules and part of it is the ability to register and that is something we will be able to do, with a whole lot of options. You will be able to log onto a website at some time and click register with about 200 other students registering at the same time. You will have to beat people by microscords to get the classes. There will be wait lists for classes that is automatically built into it. If you don’t get your classes, you would do what you do now with the re-advising. We are not exactly sure how the advising would happen. There is a part of the system that does online advising and your adviser would see the classes you want to take and do their part of adding or subtracting. Once that occurs and you have the okay, you will be able to register. That is just one scenario, not exactly what will happen. Part of the uniqueness of Cooper is the way we do advising and the fact that you don’t pay for classes. The advisors are there to make sure you’re taking the right amount and the right type. We lose money if you take five years to do a four year program so it is important to the institution even financially, that the advising takes place correctly. I am not sure about the exact amount but you can ask Professor Hopkins.

Cooper Pioneer: Would it have been cheaper to build our own system?

Brian Cusack: Well, it would have been different because it is easy to say why don’t we build our own system. We never would have built everything for instance, accounting or financial aid software. We’re not going to be appraised by tax laws or financial aid laws and we don’t want to touch that with a ten foot pole. We would have always bought those types of software and even development software. Another reason we were looking at software was because the business office software was antiquated and basically unsupportable going forward. The company who made the software had gone out of business a while ago and so it hasn’t been getting any updates since. Then that software for sure had to get replaced so the bare minimum was that at least. Then the students and faculty wanted one record for every student and to do that would be through a system. Could various systems have better communicated with each other? Yeah but it is what it is.

CP: Have there been suggestions ignored?

BC: Well, keep in mind, Bob, John Kibbe, and I did not make any decisions. We did not decide we are getting a software solution, we are implementing it. So if suggestions were ignored you would have to talk to someone because I feel like Bob and I and John Kibbe didn’t ignore any suggestions because we didn’t make any decisions. The committees make suggestions not decisions. The final decision comes from the president and vice president.

CP: Any last words?

BC: This is a two year rollout system. There is going to be a lot of growing pains and unhappy people because of all the extra work that is put on top of them because of this. It is never easy to switch into a new system but that was expected from the get go. If they’re not happy with the system, that’s a different story.

More or less, it has been good so far. You can talk to the individuals who are consumers of the product and probably get an honest answer. I am making sure the nuts and bolts are working behind the scenes and so far it has been. Datatel has been pretty supportive; we’re on the phone with them about random IT questions throughout the week. I will be spending spring break out of town for another training session with them.
Speak and You Will Be Heard

YARA ELBOROLOSY (CE ’14)

We are still accepting surveys. Taking the time to answer the questions means a lot to us and helps us see how our faculty thinks concerning the situation. Even if you don’t want to actually answer any of the questions, we ask that you at least return the blank survey. If you have any other concerns or comments, feel free to write or place a typed note attached to the survey. We thank everyone who took the time to complete the surveys (we appreciate it a great deal!) and we hope to have some more soon. Please submit the surveys to a collection box in the art office in the Foundation Building, The Pioneer’s mailbox in the 2nd floor engineering dean’s office, or The Pioneer’s office, room 209, NAB.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever does.” -Margaret Mead

To the right are the current results of the surveys. We have collected back 19 surveys. One survey taker added three of his/her own questions to the survey:

Question 7: What do you think about Cooper Union’s recent administration?
Answer: It’s terrible.

Question 8: What do you think about Cooper Union’s current administration?
Answer: It could be better, it’s bad.

Question 9: Why do you think Cooper is spending more money on administration and less on faculty/students?
Answer: Classic case of misplaced priorities.

JASMINE AHUJA (EE ’13)

Phonathon 2012

Cooper Union’s annual Phonathon took place during Spring break. Volunteers gathered in the Menschel Board Room (Room LL101) to call alumni and persuade them to donate money. As the pictures show, these volunteers were serious about raising as much money as possible. Cooper Union’s new hires, Catlin Tramel and Joseph McDonald, were the organizers of this important event. Last year, $409,722 was raised as a result of the Phonathon, exceeding the goal of $400,000. Let’s see if we can do even better this year! Results will be posted on www.cualumni.com.

Photos by Christopher Hong (EE ’13). (Left) Phonathon T-shirts. (Top) Volunteers making phone calls at the Phonathon on Tuesday, March 13, 2012. (Bottom) The organizers of the event. From left to right: Jennifer Durst, Cat Tramel, Maura Pine, and Joseph McDonald.
The Official Grand STAIRCASE HANDRAIL Design

The following are the official blueprints for the grand staircase handrail from Morphosis, the architecture firm that built the New Academic Building at Cooper Union. As explained in the Valentine’s Issue, there were safety concerns with the slanted staircase and a handrail was requested by Cooper to be installed. The following blueprints are preliminary designs that still need to be contracted. There may still be changes to the final design. What do you think of the design? E-mail us your thoughts at cooperpioneer@gmail.com. Special thanks to Jody Grapes and T.C. Westcott for providing the handrail blueprints.
Observing Translation

JENNA LEE (ME ‘15)

Observing Translation challenges the idea that exhibitions have to be limited to objects. The exhibition aims to demonstrate that art has its origins in humanity. Though small and only lasting for two hours in the lower level gallery of the Copper Union New Academic Building, this exhibition left a lasting resonance within the audience. Because the exhibition emphasizes the communication between the observers and the performers, Observing Translation is structured so that the audience starts to establish a visual and audio relationship with the exhibition.

The performers position themselves within picture frames and perform songs with a ritualistic and basic feel—demonstrating that the origins of art lie with humanity. The significance of these frames lie in the fact that they capture the transient and miniscule day-to-day emotions that people experience and help imagine a new form of creation that emerges from the relationship between the observer and the performers. Thus, Observing Translation returns the creative process to the domain of people and human relationships.

Exhibition Description from Program:

Observing Translation (2012), an exhibition of photography and live performances, marks the first work for which artists Tyler Gathro and Yarminiah Rosa have collaborated. The work aims to present a variety of emotions, from anger and apathy to compassion and joy through language and the human body. Use of vocal tone, staging, photography, and the written word provokes viewers to consider translation and human interaction as art. The artwork only exists because you are. How our thoughts, relations, and experiences are interpreted and translated is what defines life as performance, art object, and/or story.

(Right) Photos by Jenna Lee (ME ’15) of the exhibition.

(Left) Script given to Jenna by an actor at the exhibition.
Frankie’s New Cola Vending Machine

On March 13, 2012, Frankie received a large package. It was his brand new soda vending machine! “I’m very happy,” Frankie said, “because we have the Foosball and the vending machine so you know make everybody just stay in this room. The Foosball came from I don’t know, from somewhere. But the machine came from the Coca-Cola guys. But I have to buy the products.”

Each bottle of soda sells for $1.50 and Frankie said that he makes $0.40 cents a bottle. The bottles of soda are a lot cheaper than vending machines in NYC where soda sells for $1.75 or more.

When asked about buying a normal snacks vending machine, Frankie said, “No, I think it’s difficult because in summer, there’s a lot of creatures in the machine. But I’m planning to have another soda machine in the Foundation Building because kids are requesting.” Students in the Foundation Building may soon see a brand new vending machine.

The Foosball table is already in Frankie’s possession and will be put in a corner of Frankie’s Kitchen. It should be set up soon.
GREEN SECRET
(continued from page 2)

saves about 250,000 gallons of water a year!

On LL1 (lower level 1), there are two main chillers which produces chilled water and cools the building. In addition, a 350 ton plate and frame heat exchanger is there to efficiently provide free waterside cooling of water. This cost $100,000, but it saves $50,000 a year, paying itself off after two years.

The next stop on this tour was the Foundation Building. We went to the deep bowels of the building and very similar technology exists in this 153 year old building. There are heating hot water pumps, dual source hot water heating, heat recovery chillers, a plate and frame heat exchanger, chilled water pumps, condenser water pumps, and variable frequency controllers. There are also machine shop tools for maintenance to cut and thread their own pipes for repairs rather than outsourcing to other companies.

On the roof, there are cooling towers and a 150 KW co-generator along with three 3-million BTU boilers. This co-gen was installed in 2009 and is a bit smaller, but still allows for major savings. The co-gen can potentially relieve the load of one of the boilers. With this technology, Cooper was freed from the clutches of Con Edison’s steam system and saves about 28 million pounds of steam, which costs about $1 million per year, just by using other utilities that are cheaper, such as electricity and gas, and newer technologies.

This year, buildings and grounds purchased 30% of Cooper’s gas and electrical needs up front at a discounted rate, saving about $70,000. Mr. Grapes hopes that after another few years of analysis, he can better estimate the returns of the co-gens in the NAB and the FB to increase the advance purchase of gas and electricity up to about 50%.

With the reduction from four major buildings on the Cooper campus (51 Astor Place, Hewitt Building, Foundation Building, Residence Hall) to three (Foundation Building, New Academic Building, Residence Hall) and the usage of new energy efficient technologies, the cost of operations decreased from $1.8 million to $1.3 million and it is estimated that the new co-gen in the NAB will save an additional $200,000 as stated earlier, bringing down the yearly operational costs of Cooper to about $1.1 million. Now, that’s a lot of green, especially in Cooper’s current financial situation.

Photos by Christopher Hong (EE ’13).

Page 2
Jody Grapes in front of the NAB co-generator and heat recovery chillers.

Page 10
(Top) NAB emergency generator.
(Middle-left) NAB cooling towers.
(Middle-right) NAB Rainwater collection tank.
(Bottom) Air handlers, which supplies most of the NAB with 100% fresh air.

Page 11
(Top-left) FB chilled water pumps and condenser water pumps.
(Top-right) FB heat recovery chillers.
(Middle-left) FB plate and frame heat exchanger.
(Middle-right) FB plate and frame heat exchanger.
(Bottom-left) FB co-generator.
(Bottom-right) FB cooling towers.

Note the similarities between a 153 year old building, the Foundation Building, and a 2 year old building, the New Academic Building.
Spring is like a perhaps hand
The Cooper Pioneer March 2012

2nd Place:

The idea is to get rid of the existing handrail on the right side of the Grand Staircase point of view from lobby up to the staircase) up to the indicated dot where the new handrail is indicated by the dashed lines. The existing handrail from the fourth floor will extend to the new handrail. The "old" handrail will be removed and the space will be filled with posters on stands promoting The Cooper Union in any way.

- Mina Min

Honorable Mentions:

- Kanghwan Kim

- Ramon Sandoval

- Uyen Nguyen

1st Place:

"...a set of two rails spaced approximately 3 feet apart will run through the center of the Grand Staircase. These rails will frame a red half-tubular slide that will provide "express" service between the fourth and ground floors."

- Nick Wong

The proposal is to create sub-platform above the staircase while still allowing circulation. In another word, to resize the staircase to a more human scale. There is already handrail, we just need to reconfigure the space to make it safe make it useful. To me, in order to activate the space, a handrail is just not the solution.

- Vincent Hui

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- Vincent Hui

The Cooper Pioneer March 2012
Faces of Cooper

Who’s who in Cooper. Find out.

Photos by
Christopher Hung (EE ’13)
Sara Jane provided her own photo
Robert Uglesich provided his own photo
Cooper Pioneer: Where are you from?

Marina Guiterrez: New York City. I went to New York City schools and I am a graduate of the Cooper Union School of Art. As a student here, I began to work with the Saturday program as an undergraduate staff and upon graduation, began working as staff.

Victoria Febrer: I am from New York City and I went to Cooper Union. I was in the Saturday program as a high school student and I worked as a teacher while I was at Cooper Union, and now I am here again.

CP: Can you tell me about your educational and professional background?

MG: Well let me tell you a little about the Saturday program since not everyone knows. Even in a small school, it is hard to communicate and get things across. The Saturday program was started by a group of undergraduates in 1968 and continues to be taught by teams of undergraduates who are actual instructors. We guide and help them with professional guidance but the students get a direct contact with teaching and everything involved in it. The students who attend are New York City public high students. There are about 230 students who attend and the program lasts the full academic year, from October to April, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. It is a very intensive program which gives enough time to do exploration. A number of our graduates have come to Cooper and many other places in the arts and many are working in the arts today. In a sense, that is our first step in sustainability, sustaining the community and continuing Peter Cooper’s mission. The students in 1968 really re-envisioned Peter Cooper’s missions and were inspired by his visionary ideas. They decided to put their hands where their hearts are and extended the programming to a high school level.

VF: After I finished high school, I was taking classes at the Art Student’s League and wanted to do something more meaningful. I heard about the Saturday Program, I believe on the website, and I called and asked if I could work as a volunteer in the office. I started attending classes as well and then I was accepted to Cooper the following year.

CP: What is your role in Cooper? What is your department’s role in Cooper?

MG: When I was in high school, I hadn’t heard about the Saturday Program, else I would have come since it is free and accessible. I was encouraged later to apply and after a second application, I came here.

VF: In high school as well.

CP: What brought you to Cooper Union? When did you start working at Cooper?

VF: After I finished high school, I was taking classes at the Art Student’s League and wanted to do something more meaningful. I heard about the Saturday Program, I believe on the website, and I called and asked if I could work as a volunteer in the office. I started attending classes as well and then I was accepted to Cooper the following year.

VF: To be able to teach as an undergraduate really is a wonderful experience. It is a great opportunity to learn how to manage the classroom and also an opportunity to learn the material which you are studying at Cooper in a more thorough way. It is a completely different experience to learn to articulate what you’ve learned to someone else. I now help the Cooper Union students who are teaching for Saturday Program become better teachers for the students from New York City Public Schools.

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Seeing the students year after year, and getting in touch with Alumni of the program, everyone has great memories of the Saturday Program and the Cooper Union.

MG: I could also say as an artist, I think of this as part of my art’s practice. Seeing the curricula creative, constantly infu.sed in innovation, the responding of the students and changes in the world, as an artist it really is wonderful.

CP: What advice would you give to Cooper students?

MG: Appreciate the opportunity. Take as many classes as you can. Audit the ones you can’t. You have incredible faculty and peer groups, not just in your own school, but in the other schools as well. There really are wonderful people to be found. You should also come and work with us. It is a wonderful way to learn what you are doing and we even hire engineers.

VF: Take advantage of everything the school has to offer. Really interact with people from all the schools because one of the most enriching things for me was attending the architecture critiques, even though I was an art student and seeing what they were doing. I learned a lot just from being there. Try to teach for the Saturday program because it was a very enriching experience for me and for my art practice. The inspiration that came from the students was unbelievable.

CP: Who is your favorite professor at Cooper? Why?

MG: I think Hans Haacke was my favorite. He was a conceptual artist and I tell him that and he looks at me in bewilderment because our work doesn’t appear to be the same but what he taught me was ideas, the ways of approaching and analyzing.

VF: My favorite professor is Lorenzo Clayton and he taught me that there is no problem you can’t solve when you are trying to create work and get ideas across. He really pushed me to try new ideas, materials, ways of thinking, concepts and just ways to get your ideas across.

MG: I should also add that someone who really kept me going through trials of student life was Day Gleeson, who always had encouragement to give.

VF: Day Gleeson was also an inspiration for me.

CP: What do you and your family do to help the environment (recycle, use an eco-friendly car, clean parks, bring your own shopping bags to the grocery store, etc.)?

MG: I am really committed to our environment. I try to be as active as possible. I work against the hydrofracking of New York. I turn off the lights when I am not in the room and I do a cold shut down on all of my equipment. I recycle my cans and yell at everyone who isn’t because it seems such a little thing to do. We could at least do that much.

VF: I have my own garden where I grow vegetables. I compost all my organic waste. I also recycle everything I can. I try to be local products whenever I can like food, goods, and accessories.

CP: What do you do for Earth Day?

MG: Not a lot. I remember the first Earth Day but Earth Day should be every day.

VF: I’m afraid I don’t do anything either.

CP: Do you think the New Academic Building is green? Do you think it deserved the platinum LEED certification?

MG: I am afraid I am not knowledgeable in what that actually certifies but I don’t think I fully understand it to make this judgment.

VF: I am not familiar with those official standards.

CP: What tips do you have for being “green” or environmentally friendly?

MG: Our green inspiration is in part because we’re both environmentally conscious and economically thrifty. The program has always recycled materials. At the end of the year, we put out a barrel asking people to donate useable materials that are no longer wanted but we want them. We will use them for the students in the program. We also do scavenging when things are leftover in coordination with the art, architecture, and painting offices. We also have a longtime membership with materials for the arts donations warehouse where we get a lot of materials. It is a huge recycling program for the arts in the city. I don’t know the percentage but it is a lot of materials that we use in classes that are recycled. The portfolio class we teach makes sketchbooks out of recycled materials, such as newspaper or advertisements or using old drawings to draw on the back or the front. It is not only helpful in that we’re recycling materials but in the inspiration they draw from the old artwork.

VF: I have seen really exciting lesson plans born out of inspiration from donated materials. Sometimes seeing the materials that can be reused can lead to really dynamic ideas for expression.

CP: What do you think about Cooper’s financial situation?

MG: I think it is really essential that Cooper continues as a free institution because it is a symbol globally of a different way of thinking, in a time where intellectual material is thought of as proprietary or copyrightable. The exchange of ideas in all the disciplines is essential to us growing as a culture and humanity. Cooper is really a symbol of that, by combining different disciplines and schools and that it is representing this idea of education being almost a right as people. Especially in these days when we are looking at the public education system and seeing Bloomberg closing schools down. Let’s fix the public education system and do more of an investment in the public sphere because that’s where everyone will benefit from. Cooper is a very important emblem of that. Instead of restricting things further and further by quantifying it on money and treating it as corporate entity, Cooper goes past all of that and succeeds.

VF: I think it is vital for Cooper to maintain its full tuition scholarships because it levels the playing field, making talent and hard work the determining factors receiving this high class education and working hard to continue your education as you stay in school. It is just so important to have Cooper as the symbol and the leader in this form of education.

CP: What do you think about the student body trying to help resolve the financial situation?

MG: I think that the power of students is underestimated. I think right now we have student involvement but usually we don’t have that. I think a form of sustainability is to continue the student involvement since they really are concerned about the school since the school is essential to their future. I think it would make sense to have a social service credit or credits. Not so much that it would be onerous on someone but in a way that someone would complete it by working in one of the offices at Cooper. That would be a way to structure ongoing involvement of students, so there are always students in the conversation.

VF: I think it is wonderful that the students are getting involved, even more when the Alumni are involved.

CP: Do you have any closing remarks?

MG: Peter Cooper’s spirit lives in various offices throughout Cooper and I think we should really celebrate what we have and make sure it continues for the future.

BY YARA ELBOROLOSY (CE ’14)
Chief Technology Officer, 
Associate Professor of 
Computer Science
Room 813 NAB

Bob Hopkins: I was born in Chicago, Illinois, but for most of my adult life, I have lived in Edison, NJ. Between Chicago and Edison I've lived in Florida and California.

CP: Can you tell me about your educational and professional background?

BH: Educationally, I have degrees from St. Joseph’s College (BS Mathematics/Computer Science) and Fordham University (MBA). While an undergraduate, I was employed as a student employee of the Computer Center. I found this experience to be so rewarding and helpful, I continue to employ this practice today.

After graduation, I was offered a job at Fordham University. The job was to establish a computer facility in the Lincoln Center campus, and to provide technical support to the community located at that site. Two years into that job, I was contacted by The Cooper Union, and the rest is history! Over the years I have had the opportunity to consult in various industries including telecommunications, health care, other academic settings, and commerce. Recently, my time has been pretty much focused on the many new initiatives facing our institution.

CP: When did you first learn about Cooper Union?

BH: I learned about Cooper in 1971 while employed at Fordham. It seems that Cooper had acquired a software package from IBM for use on their computer system. This package happened to be one that I had a great deal of experience with while I was in college. I provided some technical assistance and support. Resulting in an offer to apply as Manager of the Computer Center.

CP: What brought you to Cooper Union?

BH: The opportunity at a very early part of my career to essentially put together “from the ground up” an IT facility, was what initially attracted me to Cooper. I was hired in October of 1972, and it took me a very short time to realize the true attraction for me to Cooper was the energy and enthusiasm of the students, the programs offered, and the faculty.

CP: What is your role in Cooper? What is your department’s role in Cooper?

BH: The title of Chief Technology Officer kind of explains what I do in the broad sense. I jokingly refer to the statement “...if it has wires and is not working, it is my problem.” I view my role to be one that manages and plans technology and the growth of technology for the institution. Additionally I have the opportunity to serve as a professor teaching computer science in the School of Engineering.

CP: How much do you like your job at Cooper?

BH: I think the job defines me and I do like it a lot. It’s a worthy career.

CP: What advice would you give to Cooper students?

BH: To continue to communicate well. Be open to change and growth. The ability to communicate well is critical to all our students. Since I’ve been at Cooper, the talent and drive of our students have been astounding! The best ideas can be lost if we lack the ability to share them with others. Students must be able to articulate their dreams and ideas in a way worthy of their education.

CP: Who is your favorite professor at Cooper? Why?

BH: One of the greatest things to happen to me while at Cooper was to be appointed to...
I am very proud of our students and their demonstration of support and concern in a positive way is admirable.

The Cooper students who spoke to me were so full of great prophetic fires. I love a Cassandra.

The Cooper students who spoke to me were so full of great prophetic fires. I love a Cassandra.

I think my used batteries into the jar. I’m known to randomly pick up trash in my neighborhood, and to give litterers the crazy stink-eye. Some of my favorite experiences have involved visiting and working in places that are committed to minimizing waste.

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The Cooper students who spoke to me were so full of great prophetic fires. I love a Cassandra.
Cooper Pioneer: Where are you from?
LM: I am a native New Yorker.

CP: Can you tell me about your educational and professional background?
LM: I got my master’s degree from NYU in interpersonal communications. I got my undergraduate degree from Hunter College in human communications. I have been here long enough that I don’t have to mention anywhere else. I have been here since 1981.

CP: When did you first learn about Cooper Union? What brought you to Cooper Union? When did you start working at Cooper?
LM: I was actually working for the New York Blood Center. Someone who was temping at the blood center was also working at Cooper Union. She was leaving Cooper Union and as she was leaving, she recommended me for the job. I accepted and the rest is history.

CP: What is your role in Cooper? What is your department’s role in Cooper?
LM: We are back office. We help support for the fundraisers, for development, and alumni relations. I have two people who work in my department. Sue McCoy is systems and she is over me. We have two people who work for us. I do all of the ad hoc reporting for the school, throughout the school for various departments and many other various things.

CP: How much do you like your job at Cooper?
LM: I do, I really do. I like it here. It is interesting, very, very interesting and challenging. One thing is I used to work under the Alumni relations and work with the students. I miss that, I used to come in contact with them a lot but here I don’t. I could get to them know to come in contact with them a lot but here I don’t. I could get to them know.

CP: What advice would you give to Cooper students?
LM: I’d say that it’s important to remember to think in the long-term, about what you’d like to do after graduation. I would also say that technology is really important these days, regardless of your major…. I think how we learn and communicate with one another is being reshaped by the digital world and it’s really important to pay close attention to that shift.

LILLIAN MINTON
Database Manager
5th floor, 30 Cooper

Sharla Sava
Associate Director, Center for Writing
Cooper Union Writing Center · 306 NAB

Sharla Sava: Toronto, originally. I graduated from the University of Toronto. Then I moved out west for grad school, so I’ve also spent some time in Berkeley and Vancouver. I guess I’d say I feel at home on the east / west coasts.

CP: Can you tell me about your educational and professional background?
SS: I am a writer and university educator, and my work combines art history (my M.A.) and media studies (my PhD). At the moment I would say that my scholarly research is concerned with tracing the role and status of the image in the environment of digital culture. I’m interested in photography, in particular, because since its invention during the 19th century it has played a central role in modernization, also becoming a battleground for debates between artistic and popular culture. While under-represented in media studies scholarship, the photo-based work of contemporary artists (including Jeff Wall, Cindy Sherman, Thomas Demand and others) has, I think, made meaningful contributions to the definition and theorization of visual culture. My current book manuscript, Cinematic Pictures: The Art of Jeff Wall, is about the growing popularity of staged or cinematic photography.

SS: I have to say that Cooper Union always held a mythical status for me – a commitment to free education, combined with a campus located in central Manhattan. I heard about the school many years ago, although I can’t recall precisely when. Cooper Union has an exchange program with Emily Carr, an art school out west, in Vancouver, so maybe one of my students told me about it. Or maybe it was Ken Lum who first told me about it, when I studied with him. Ken spent some time living in New York when he was an art student himself, and I think he had some friends or spent some time here.

SS: The day the new building opened was also my first day at Cooper Union – the beginning of September, in 2009. I began as a Senior Writing Associate in the Center for Writing. I had been in touch with the Director, Gwen Hyman, and she was the one that hired me. I recall being absolutely gobsmacked by the energy and productivity of the Center for Writing. It’s a very stimulating place to be: on any afternoon you can find yourself talking about The Tempest, the art of staging or cinematic photography. My current book manuscript, Cinematic Pictures: The Art of Jeff Wall, is about the growing popularity of staged or cinematic photography.

SS: I became the Associate Director at the Center for Writing last fall. My job is to assist the Director to keep everything running. That means that in addition to meeting with individual students I help with things like scheduling, website maintenance, outreach, professional development, reporting and record-keeping. I know that scheduling etc. might sound boring, but I have discovered that I find it rewarding to participate in administrative initiatives that measurably improve student learning at the university level. We maintain a very busy writing center, meeting with ten to thirteen Writing Associates and about 150 weekly hour-long sessions for students at all levels of study (e.g. freshmen to master’s). My passion for, and commitment to, teaching communication skills (written, spoken, and digital) in the classroom have been stimulated and rewarded by the writing center environment. I believe that individual student learning opportunities, such as we offer here at the Center for Writing, provide an essential foundation for successful college and professional life.

SS: I’d say that it’s important to remember to think in the long-term, about what you’d like to do after graduation. I would also say that technology is really important these days, regardless of your major…. I think how we learn and communicate with one another is being reshaped by the digital world and it’s really important to pay close attention to that shift.

BY CHRISTOPHER HONG (EE ’13)
Building and thought that they might let me use their bathroom because I was a student member. The guard at the front desk wasn’t impressed with this character in running shorts – I needed to have ‘serious business’ with them to get in. I saw a sign at the front desk for the ‘manpower placement division’ so I told the guard that I was looking for a job. It didn’t work – he called that office and they sent someone down with a list of physics jobs in Manhattan. We stood in the lobby, going through the list, and there on the last page was a listing for “Assistant Professor of Physics – The Cooper Union” – my alma mater! The deadline for applying was that very day!

We stood in the lobby, going through the list, and there on the last page was a listing for “Assistant Professor of Physics – The Cooper Union” – my alma mater! The deadline for applying was that very day!

LM: You are very fortunate to be students here at an excellent institution and don’t forget it when you leave. As you can see, what can happen when you do. It is wonderful places so don’t forget it. Always reach back, that is my advice, to give someone else the opportunity you have.

CP: Who is your favorite professor at Cooper? Why?

LM: I really can’t honestly say because I only know a few of them. I know Rod Knox, and Elizabeth O’Donnell. I think she is wonderful; I come in contact with her every now and then. There is a professor in the humanities department whose name I can’t remember but I love her. We get along very well. I also get in contact with Bob Hopkins and I think he is wonderful. He has been here 100 years like me so I would say he is excellent and very caring. Dean Baker, I know he is not a professor but I think he’s great with the students and he’s doing a wonderful job. Yash Rishbud.

CP: What do you and your family do to help it is during your college years. (How scary is that)?

CP: If you can say something to Peter Cooper, what would you say?

AW: Good job! But can you explain the financial model to me again?

CP: What tips do you have for being “green” or environmentally friendly?

AW: I have two cats. I pet them at every opportunity. I support PETA and encourage others to do the same.

CP: What do you think about Cooper’s financial situation?

AW: I’m curious that those charged with the responsibility for overseeing our finances didn’t take decisive action before now. If they saw it coming, and they claim that they did...

CP: What do you think the student body trying to help resolve the financial situation?

AW: Our incredible student body could be a large part of the solution. I’d like to see every student in the engineering school attempt to patent an invention as a graduation requirement. Some number of those inventions would be commercially valuable. Very much in the spirit of our founder. Good for our students, good for the institution. I’m working on a proposal.

CP: Do you have any closing remarks?

AW: Did I mention more study and less play?

BY CHRISTOPHER HONG (EE ’13)
Robert Uglesich: I primarily grew up in Los Angeles. My parents are both from small fishing villages in Croatia and they settled in a part of the city which had a large expatriate community from Dalmatia. When I was a teenager, my dad’s work took us to Puerto Rico. We lived on the west coast in a town called Mayaguez and I finished high school while we were there.

CP: Can you tell me about your educational and professional background?

RU: I studied applied physics at Caltech. During that time, I got involved with an astronomy research project, which I found really fascinating and decided to further pursue this interest, eventually graduating from Columbia with a PhD in astrophysics. At that point, I switched fields and joined a neuroscience research lab at The Mount Sinai School of Medicine as a postdoctoral fellow. I spent five years at Mount Sinai working my way up to a professorship in biomatics and neuroscience.

CP: When did you first learn about Cooper Union?

RU: Probably around 1995. In grad school, my friends and I would trek down to the E. Village and I remember passing by Astor Place and being curious about this school that I had never heard of. I did some research on my own and was surprised to find out that it was a full-scholarship institution with a fairly illustrious history.

CP: What brought you to Cooper Union? When did you start working at Cooper?

RU: My position at Mount Sinai was primarily research-oriented and teaching opportunities were limited. I was missing the teaching aspect of my career and in 2002 I managed to obtain a position as an adjunct instructor in the School of Art. I started out offering a regular course in optics and then a few years later I developed a new course pattern formation. It wasn’t until 2006 that I moved over to the engineering school.

CP: What is your role in Cooper? What is your department’s role in Cooper Union?

RU: I am a full-time professor in the Physics department and I have also developed a small research program in neuroscience. Physics is the foundation of all natural sciences and the physics department teaches courses, which are part of the core requirements for students in the Engineering and Architecture schools.

CP: Do you have any closing remarks?

LM: I am also going to say what Jesse Jackson says, “Keep hope alive.” That’s all, just be hopeful. Don’t give up, we have been in crisis before, so don’t give up. Keep preserving. Continue with the contributions. You could start up a grassroots organization to raise money for Cooper if anything. I do it with my church to raise money for a school in Texas and every year, we donate about $30,000. Get your parents to contribute. I don’t think most parents appreciate that their child is getting four years of scholarship. If we can get parents to contribute, we can overcome this. We are a rare school, to have four years of a scholarship. We are blessed, the students are blessed.
new and joining a CSA in our neighborhood. One thing that I still do which was ingrained from childhood is to try to conserve water. In the northeast, we are a little spoiled with abundant water resources but access to sufficient clean water supplies is a problem in many parts of the world. Growing up in an arid part of the country I developed somewhat of an appreciation for this.

CP: What do you do for Earth Day?
RU: Nothing special. I hope that some of the environmentally conscious things that make a difference are already part of my daily routine.

CP: Do you think the New Academic Building is green? Do you think it deserved the platinum LEED certification?
RU: There are certainly features in the building (co-gen plant, light sensors, HVACs, water restrictors, etc...) which were designed to limit natural resource consumption and improve efficiency but, like with many things, the design vision and the practical implementation are not the same. We are all aware of deficiencies in the building and I hope that these are just part of the growing pains associated with occupying a new building rather than significant engineering or design failures. As for the LEED certification, I am not an expert on the process so I can’t comment directly on whether or not we ‘deserved’ the certification. My personal opinion is that simply intending to be ‘green’ is not sufficient. If we actually care about running an environmentally conscious physical plant we have to quantitatively demonstrate that we are meeting our targets.

CP: What tips do you have for being “green” or environmentally friendly?
RU: Be aware of your consumption. Places where I think it’s relatively easy to change your behavior and be ‘green’ is with regards to energy consumption. For example, setting your thermostat a little higher in the summer and a little cooler in the winter to save on heating and cooling costs.

CP: What do you think about Cooper’s financial situation?
RU: I think that we find ourselves in a very unfortunate situation, which seems to have been developing over a long period of time. It is human nature to try to apportion blame but I think that some of these efforts have been unproductive. My hope is that we will be able to find a fiscal solution, which preserves the ideal of Cooper Union as a place that provides an outstanding educational opportunity to those who might otherwise not be able to afford it.

CP: What do you think about the student body trying to help resolve the financial situation?
RU: It’s encouraging to see that the students care about the future of Cooper. They are a transient population but I hope that this involvement on their part represents a lifelong commitment to the institution.

COMICS

EARTH DAY BY RAMON SANDOVAL (EE ’12)

BY ROBIN KUTNER (CHE ’13)

Art by Celeste Pfau
KENKEN
MARCUS MICHELEN (CE ‘14)

KenKen is a Japanese paper puzzle by Tetsuya Miyamoto much like Sudoku, only it involves both math and logic. It roughly translates to “cleverness-cleverness.”

Instructions: Like Sudoku, each row and column must contain the numbers from 1 to 5. The number in the upper-left corner of the bolded shape made up of squares is the number you need to get by using the operation next to the number. For example, the “20x” rectangle in the top right corner can be filled in with a 4,5 or a 5,4.

The solution to this puzzle will be released next week. The solution to the KenKen from Mini-Issue #10 is to the right.

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1: 3 5 4 2
4: 5 1 2 3
5: 2 3 1 4
2: 1 4 3 5
3: 4 2 5 1

CRYPTOQUOTE
MARCUS MICHELEN (CE ‘14)

A Cryptoquote is an encoded quote. It is encoded such that each and every occurrence of a letter is substituted with a different letter of the alphabet. Using clues such as frequency of occurrence and placement, the original quote can be found. For instance, the word XBDIKCXXBZ could be deciphered to reveal the word LONGFELLOW.

BHG LHUKTTLOKHIU EJJT WBH
FBAK UILHON ZLOOKQ BHC
FJQK WJFRTKV ... LU UBAKN B
UJXWI JE OKHLXN - BHC B TJU
JE WJXQBOK - UJ FJSK LH UK
JRRJNLUK CLQKWULJH.
-KQU KLHNUKLH

MORE COMICS

CHORE BY RAMON SANDOVAL (EE ‘12)

EARTH DAY COMIC BY UYEN NGUYEN (ME ‘14)

A Note on the Spring Issue’s Title:
The title may look familiar to some of you. It is the title of E. E. Cummings poem, Spring is like a perhaps hand, which is also the first line of the poem. It is from The Complete Poems: 1904-1962 by E. E. Cummings. The phrase “perhaps hand” gives Spring a very spiritual, invisible power. Hands are humans’ tools to create and invent, not only to help other humans, but the world and its life as well.
FOCUS
(FRIENDS OF COOPER UNION STRATEGIES)
3/21
(NAB ROOM LL101 @ 7 PM)

TIME TO FOCUS. WE’VE GENERATED HUNDREDS OF PROPOSALS TO SAVE COOPER UNION, PROTECT THE MISSION STATEMENT AND CLOSE THE DEFICIT. JOIN US AS WE TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT THESE PROPOSALS, REFINE THEM AND START TO BUILD A WAY FORWARD.

GREEN BY UYEN NGUYEN (ME ’14)

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Spring is like a perhaps hand

Front and back cover art by Celeste Pfau (Art ’12)

‘Spring is like a perhaps hand’ is a title of a poem by e.e. cummings