



Summer 2008

Face Value

Marie-Susanne Langille
Illinois Wesleyan University, iwumag@iwu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/iwumag>

Recommended Citation

Langille, Marie-Susanne (2008) "Face Value," *Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine, 2002-2017*: Vol. 17 : Iss. 2 , Article 1.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/iwumag/vol17/iss2/1>

This is a PDF version of an article that originally appeared in the printed Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine, a quarterly periodical published by Illinois Wesleyan University. For more information, please contact iwumag@iwu.edu.

©Copyright is owned by the University and/or the author of this document.

FACE VALUE

A portrait photographer shoots for the essence of her Illinois Wesleyan subjects.

Portraits and introduction by MARIE-SUSANNE LANGILLE

One of the first images that imprinted itself on my mind was on a poster I bought for my freshman dorm room at the University of Toronto in 1981. The picture was from an exhibit of the work of the English artist Julia Margaret Cameron. The sad and vulnerable face of “The Mountain Nymph Sweet Liberty,” framed by long hair, untidy and loose, stared back at me from 1866.

That a face photographed more than 100 years ago could be so arresting was a revelation to me. I didn’t know anything about the female subject or the photographer, yet suddenly I shared something with them both. That is the power of portrait photography. We receive a gaze directed at the photographer, who is a stand-in for all subsequent viewers. We partake in an intimacy for which we were never present.

So before I knew I was a photographer, or one who would specialize in portraits, I was moved by this potent exchange between subject, photographer and viewer over time and space.

The power of this experience motivated me through a graduate degree in photojournalism at the University of Missouri, years of work as a newspaper photographer and as an occasional contributor to the Associated Press and the *New York Times*. Now I pass on my passion for the alchemical transaction of portrait photography to my students at Heartland Community College, Illinois Wesleyan and Illinois State University.

I have been privileged to photograph a few of the many individuals who make up the vibrant IWU community. Looking at their portraits does not mean you know them, but it is an intimation of what’s inside

PAMELA MUIRHEAD



An associate professor of English at IWU as well as a Class of '68 alumna, Muirhead is pictured with items from an exhibit on the history of African Americans in McLean County that she guest-curated for the McLean Museum of History. She teaches courses in American and African-American literature and researches folktales, black women writers and African-American culture. Behind Muirhead is a portrait of the first black woman to hold an office position at State Farm Insurance Companies.

ANGEL GARCIA



Garcia has worked as a member of the Physical Plant staff for 20 years, mostly at the Shirk Athletic Center. He came to Bloomington from a town north of Guadalajara, Mexico. An avid Wesleyan basketball fan, he mops the floor during home games and often travels to the team’s away games. Of the Titan men’s basketball players he says, “They are like my brothers.”

E. MELBA JOHNSON KIRKPATRICK



Kirkpatrick is a 1932 IWU graduate and headed the University's Drama Department from 1938 to 1943. A champion of the arts in Bloomington for several decades, she has received both the McLean County Women of Distinction Award and Illinois Wesleyan's Distinguished Alumni Award. Named by her parents after the mercurial Australian soprano Dame Nellie Melba, Kirkpatrick recently celebrated her 100th birthday.

FRANK A. BOYD



His reputation as one of the sharpest-dressed professors on campus belies the fact that Boyd proudly buys much of his clothes from consignment and second-hand shops. An Alabama native, Boyd is associate dean of faculty and associate professor of political science. He teaches courses in international political economy, development and international-relations theory. Boyd has served as a staff member and consultant to the Council of Freely Elected Heads of Government, and has participated in elections-monitoring projects in Latin America.

MATTHEW HARDEN



“Chopin and I understand each other,” Harden says. His piano teacher urged him to play other works, but he kept returning to the music of the Polish composer and pianist. A graduating senior, Harden felt most at home in the School of Music’s Presser Hall, but took time to pursue other interests. The biology major was also a six-time NCAA Division III All-American in track. His future plans may include running professionally in Europe.

RACHEL ANDERSON



Before graduating magna cum laude this spring, Anderson made history as the first Titan named NCAA Division III Female Track Athlete of the Year. Winning two events, she led the Titan women's track team to a first-place tie in the national NCAA Division III outdoor track championship in May and also helped the team capture the indoor national title. A business major, Anderson plans to be a pharmacologist.

LAWRENCE NEFF STOUT



When not teaching calculus and linear algebra or researching category theory and fuzzy logic, Stout plays the fiddle. He inherited the instrument from his grandfather, “who played for dances on it when he was in college at Purdue from 1912 to 1916,” he says. “He got it from his father, who got it from a great-uncle. This traces it back somewhat earlier than its likely date of manufacture, so perhaps one shouldn’t trust family stories about instruments!” The mathematics professor can be heard playing Irish dances on Monday nights at Lucca Grill in downtown Bloomington.