



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Kelsey Projects "Feed the Adjuncts"
Divisible Gallery @ Front Street Warehouse
1001 E 2nd St Building 100, Door BC, FL 2nd
Dayton, OH 45402

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FEED THE ADJUNCTS
ONE NIGHT ONLY- POP-UP ART EVENT



COLLEEN KELSEY "Feed the Adjunct", 2016 ink and watercolor on paper 6 h. x 8 inches

Participating Artists: Nicholaus Arnold, Wesley Berg, Matthew Burgy, Clara Coleman, Leesa Haapapuro, Sara Janowski, Ashley Jude Jonas, Colleen Kelsey, Jean Koeller, James Lockett, Edmund Merricle, Marsha Pippenger, Francis Schanberger, Frank Travers

FEED THE ADJUNCTS is a social political, ONE NIGHT ONLY, pop-up art event featuring 14 local Dayton artists who teach part-time at one of the 4 local universities/colleges and art high schools that rely on part-time workers. Adjuncts are considered the fast food workers of the academic world. Currently one out of 3 adjuncts are living in poverty with average earnings of about \$2700 each course per semester. (1) These depressive conditions have gradually been happening over the last 35 years. Slowly administration duties have been stripped from professors as universities create more administrative positions. This has resulted in the bloating of



administration departments by 60 percent between 1993 and 2009. (2) In effect this has stripped funding for full-time tenured positions. In 1969 80% of faculty positions were tenured or tenure track. According to AAUP, American Association of University Professors, today 50 percent of the teaching positions are filled with “contingent” part-time adjuncts and it continues to grow with 70 percent of instructional staff being either part-time or non-tenure track appointments. (3)

Local adjunct and established painter Jean Koeller has adjuncted on and off for the past twenty years, with time at all four local universities including the Dayton Art Institute. Koeller currently teaches part-time at Stivers School for the Arts. Koeller explains it this way, “I understood that when I began teaching, adjuncting was a way to “cut your teeth,” or “on the job training so to speak” but there isn’t much reward once you have become seasoned or good at what you do. There is a set wage and it never changes per class and you’re always living by the skin of your teeth, waiting to be granted a class or two each semester and it’s not a guarantee, so, one is always on edge.” Often adjuncts teach more than full-time tenure professors just to earn above poverty level wages. This leads to what Koeller describes as the “constant struggle with time, place and with no reward, no increase in wages year after year, no benefits or power over your circumstance”.

Local Adjunct Professor Wesley Berg recently accepted a position teaching in Texas for a year. Wesley reflects that “the adjunct system is letting down the students. My students in Foundation Drawing were pretty disappointed that I wouldn’t be back next semester. I’m sad to leave them. But I have to leave because I don’t make a livable wage or receive basic health benefits, even though I teach a full load of classes. I feel like I’m abandoning those students, when instead I want to put all my energy into teaching them.”

Fellow adjunct Colleen Kelsey agrees. “I have been teaching for over 8 years now and adjuncting for six of these. After time in the class teaching, planning lectures, grading, prepping demos and all the other work it takes, I probably only make around \$7 an hour. And someday that all goes to a babysitter who watches my three kids”.

Adjuncts have to be inventive, often coming up with outside sources of income. This is especially true in the dry summer months of unemployment. Year round Koeller teaches private lessons and in the summer she runs painting sessions. “Summers are the hardest since you know you have to find other employment and I have to say, it is twice as hard to find summer jobs due to the fact that you’re competing with high school and college kids, for again, minimum wage and the older you get, it’s even more evident that you’re not hireable for a short period of time. Then there is the issue, how do I (personally) keep painting and carve out that time to concentrate on what I thought I was meant to do?” explains Jean Koeller.

Historically the adjunct position was created in inequality, especially gender/ racial inequality. In the 1950s and 60s if a women professor was to become married she would automatically be demoted from her full-time teaching status to a part-time position so as to take on more of her “wifely duties” around the home. Colleen Kelsey experienced a contemporary version of this inequality. “While I was pregnant with my daughter Zoe I had to go on unemployment. It was so demoralizing, I wanted to work but they wouldn’t hire me because there is no maternity leave for adjuncts. Who was going to hire a very pregnant woman or a woman who just had a baby? And there have also been times when classes get canceled, there are just no guarantee, security or benefits,” says Colleen Kelsey. “As an artist who has invested years and thousands of dollars in my education, it is disheartening to be treated as a disposable commodity. But I keep teaching for the love of the subject and my students,” Kelsey concludes.



In the 2012 report by The Coalition of Faculty Workforce it was found that women make up 61 percent of the part-time faculty population, likewise as all faculty members do, they rely heavily on student evaluations to keep their positions. (5) A recent study has shown that student evaluations are “systematically biased against women”. An online course was setup where a male faculty member posed as a female “Paula” and also a male as “Paul”. In virtual drag he taught two separate but similar online courses. The students gave the “female” faculty lower ratings compared to the high marks they gave the “male” faculty member. (6)

With regards to racial biases in 2014 the House Committee on Education and Workforce issued a 36-page report on the “contingent faculty” problem. In their report data shows that “The proportion of African-American in non-tenure-track positions (15.2 percent) is more than 50 percent greater than that of whites (9.6 percent)”. (7) This disparity is laid out even further in an article by Tressie McMillan Cottom “The New Old Labor Crisis”. She goes on to point out that prejudices are built into the whole of the academic system. “African-Americans make up just 5 percent of full-time faculty. If you leave out the high proportion of black Ph.D.s working in historically black colleges and universities, black full-time faculty in the U.S. barely clears 4 percent.” (7)

To teach is a noble calling, it is challenging job and it is a job of service that speaks to our better natures. James Hoff says it best about the adjunct system “it is unjust because it cynically manipulates the better angels of the human spirit – the desire to help and to share one's interests and values, to cultivate meaningful relationships, to inspire, and to teach – in order to save a few bucks.” The pop-up art exhibition **Feed the Adjuncts** aims to bring light to the national adjunct crisis and support our local art adjuncts before their dry summer months.

FEED THE ADJUNCTS

At **Feed the Adjuncts** some artists will be making their work on site, others are installing their work directly, all medias featured. All art sale proceeds go directly to the Art Adjunct Profs. BYOB.... Feed the Adjuncts is planned in collaboration with Wesley Berg Studios. This pop-up exhibition space is donated by artist and Divisible Gallery Director Jeff Cortland Jones.

TIME:

FRIDAY, MAY 20TH, 6-10 PM

LOCATION:

Divisible Gallery, Front Street Warehouse
1001 E 2nd St
Building 100, Door BC, FL 2rd
Dayton, OH 45402

FACEBOOK EVENT: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1028202993918647/>



SOURCES:

- (1). Clara McCarthy, "Adjunct Professors fight over crumbs on campus", Washington Post, August 22, 2014
https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/adjunct-professors-fight-for-crumbs-on-campus/2014/08/22/ca92eb38-28b1-11e4-8593-da634b334390_story.html
- (2). Caroline Fredrickson, "There is No Excuse For How Universities Treat Adjuncts", The Atlantic, September 15, 2015 <http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/09/higher-education-college-adjunct-professor-salary/404461/>
- (3). American Association of University Professors <http://www.aaup.org/issues/contingency/background-facts>
- (4) Veronica Popp, "For An Adjunct Professor, Academic Power Dynamics Feed Into Rape Culture", Bitch Media, February 11 <https://bitchmedia.org/article/adjunct-professor-academic-power-dynamics-feed-rape-culture>
- (5) "A Portrait of Part-Time Faculty Members", The Coalition of Academic Workforce, June 2012
http://www.academicworkforce.org/CAW_portrait_2012.pdf
- (6) Anya Kamenetz, "Why Female Professors Get Lower Ratings", January 25, 2016
<http://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2016/01/25/463846130/why-women-professors-get-lower-ratings>
- (7) Tressie McMillan Cottom, "The New Old Labor Crisis: Think being an adjunct professor is hard? Try being a black adjunct professor", Slate, January 24, 2014
http://www.slate.com/articles/life/counter_narrative/2014/01/adjunct_crisis_in_higher_ed_an_all_too_familiar_story_for_black_faculty.html