

## **Biennale Sessions Workshop synopsis**

Cheri Ure, Lee Cagley, and Brenda Jones

**October 19-21— Workshop** led by ISU Professors, Lecturers, Professionals and Instructors:  
*Lee Cagley, Brenda Jones, Cheri Ure, Simone Bove, Claudia Campone, Pia Schneider*  
*and the ISU Fall 2017 Rome students (Art and Visual Culture, Graphic Design and Interior Design.)*

### **Workshop Title: “Joyful Uncertainty”**

The title “*Joyful Uncertainty*” provides the challenge and inspiration to which individual ISU Study Abroad students of the Millennial generation were asked to respond by creating self-portraits in the form of visual representations using type and/or original imagery depicting those contrasting terms as they are about to begin their journey from the university into the workforce.

The Millennial Generation members are digitally savvy, expert communicators using social media to network and to create community that ranges from local to global. The Millennials are often referred to as the “Me” generation. Each portrait—the individual “Me”—combines with the self-portraits of classmates to establish a diverse collective cacophony of visual voices. The Biennale topic of “*Long Live Art*” is approached by these students who have grown up during the Great Recession, the most globally economically challenging time since the Great Depression, yet they maintain idealistic optimism for their future generally expressed by liberal politics and elevated social justice awareness. Using artful expressionistic techniques, these portraits of self-commentary will stimulate thought, raise consciousness, provoke questions and positively inspire others to joyfully overcome doubt just as these students have persevered on their life journey path positively fostered by their art and design classes as the wave of the world economy again rises.

**The Biennale Sessions workshop installation will shed light in this moment of time on the tension experienced by the students depicting their joyful possibilities and their fearful anxieties for their life journey that lies ahead in this uncertain world.**

The pedagogical intent is to use these artful individual expressions of self that work together as a collection to create a response that resounds with a multi-generational viewing audience showing that the “Me” generation members have similar positive outlooks and concerns that are shared with the generations that preceded them. The expected response is one of recognition and understanding that will validate the insightful depictions of self and life’s journey, thereby uniting generations via art.

### **Materials**

Freestanding foam core silhouette cutouts of the human form are the interpretive self-portraits. The surface of each silhouette cut out will be activated by adhering digitized print outs of original imagery and/or typographic collages and/or mixed media applications. Inspired not only by their own unique expressions of their personal life situations, but also by the voices made visible following examples currently seen in the streets such as graffiti lettering and imagery, each student will create a response of meaningful artistic expression, making each of their voices visible, resulting in a collection of symbolic selves that together represent a snippet of time in their journey of life. To supplement and conceptually support the self-portraits, typography may be positioned on the floor that will serve to further represent moments of meditative thought as well as act as stepping stones creating a path of commentary that is like a journey indicating both a separation and a reconciliation of the opposites of joy and uncertainty.