

# Alumni Profile

## Jaimie Warren, '02 printmaking

KANSAS CITY ART INSTITUTE

A four-year college of art and design

### Photographer

Special projects and research assistant, H&R Block Artspace at the Kansas City Art Institute  
Curator, KCAI Corporate Partners Exhibition Program

Five years after graduating from the Kansas City Art Institute, Jaimie Warren ('02 printmaking) has gained a national and even international profile as a photographer, curator and performance artist. Her "Whoop Dee Doo" shows, which highlight art and performances by Kansas City artists, have garnered enthusiastic reviews from Miami and New York to Osaka, Japan, and her photographs have appeared in gallery exhibitions from Berlin to Beijing. Her book of self-portraits will be published in 2008 by the New Museum in New York; her photographs have been published in more than 15 national and international publications, including *Kasino A4* (Finland) and *Oyster* (Australia); and she received a Linda Lighton International Artist Grant that enabled her to complete a five-week photography project in Tokyo.

**Q: Which of your many projects do you find most satisfying, and why?**

**A:** I would say that exhibiting my work nationally and internationally and trying to curate Kansas City exhibitions in other cities is probably the most satisfying thing for me.

**Q: Why has it been important for you to exhibit work in such far-flung locations and in so many publications?**

**A:** Exhibiting the work where there is no bias — where the viewer is not familiar with any of my subjects — I am able to get a completely honest opinion that has no association with the subjects I am documenting. Additionally, exhibiting my

work in national and international magazines is an incredibly economical and successful way to show my work on a much larger geographical scale. As far as curating exhibitions of work by Kansas Citians in venues outside of Kansas City is concerned, it's costly, but it allows me to showcase the talents of local artists and essentially shock people in larger cities. They are blown away by the quality and edginess of the work these Midwesterners are making.

**Q: Besides "Whoop Dee Doo," what other projects are you working on right now?**

**A:** I'm working on a pilot for a Kansas City public access show highlighting the talents of a wide variety of Kansas Citians. The show is modeled after shows such as "American Bandstand," "Pee Wee's Playhouse," "Soul Train," "The Gong Show" and "The Carol Burnett Show." It's a collaborative effort with Matt Roche and Jori Sackin ('04 painting).

**Q: What did you learn at the Kansas City Art Institute that best prepared you for your career?**

**A:** The art of collaboration. Kansas City is unique because it is a smaller city struggling to make a name for itself, up against larger cities such as New York, Los Angeles and Chicago. When you pair that with a really strong art community and a lot of hard workers, you suddenly have a community that helps each other out with every

concept and project someone has. Everything I have done — from opening an alternative space, to curating shows nationally and internationally, to creating a public-access television show pilot (all on virtually no budget) — has always involved dozens of people helping with everything from creating sets and performing to painting walls and scrubbing floors. The community is so successful because everyone helps for the greater good, and it's a great atmosphere to be immersed in.

**Q: What advice do you have for high school students who want to go to college and major in art or design?**

**A:** Try to make really good friends who make work that inspires and challenges you. Choose the hardest, most challenging teachers you can have — just ask around on campus; you'll find out who they are. Pursue the arts as a career only if you are incredibly dedicated and passionate about your work. There will be many struggles, and it's not easy to make it big in the arts, but it can be one of the most rewarding and exciting fields you could ever imagine.

For more information about Jaimie and her work, visit [www.dontyoufeelbetter.com](http://www.dontyoufeelbetter.com).

