

# THE POINT NEWS

## MAGGIE PREPARES TO STEP DOWN

By JUSTIN PERRY  
Editor-In-Chief

On January 7, during winter break, St. Mary's students learned of President Jane Margaret O'Brien's intention to resign her post as president of the College through an email message composed by James P. Muldoon, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees. The all-student email explained that, after she officially steps down, O'Brien will take a job with the Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies in Oxford, England. This past Saturday, January 24, The Point News was fortunate enough to sit down with O'Brien and talk about her past, present and future at the College just as the search for her successor was beginning.

*The Point News: What will you miss most about St. Mary's?*

President Jane Margaret O'Brien: Because I will continue to live in this area I will not miss the landscape and, it's strange to say, but the smell of estuarine areas is very important to me. I like the water; I like the edge of the water. I like the seasonal trees; I like the season of winter. I like the way winter is in Maryland. This area is so much my home.

I will miss mornings at the College. I will miss very much the student events. There is rarely an event that I go to where I don't learn something that I'm surprised with.

I will miss the regular lectures and the regular programs that reveal themselves of personalities.

*TPN: Can you speak a little bit about the transformation St. Mary's has undergone in your 13 years as president?*

JMO: We only had 1,046 beds on campus when I came here. One thing that I noticed was the lack of a critical mass, particularly on weekends. Our events have energy, intellectual energy, particularly for a community that is outside an urban area. That's, to me, one of the most important parts of the campus now.

The goal was never to create prestige. It was to improve, as best we could, the learning environment. Our goal was to respond to the state of



President Jane Margaret O'Brien, shown here speaking at the St. John's Site Museum opening, recently announced her intention to resign her presidency at the College.

Maryland's request to grow a place where 18-year-old students could come to college.

*TPN: What were some of the hardest issues you've had to deal with during your tenure?*

JMO: Eric Kafka, who was our Director of Counseling, and I once took a tally – this was perhaps five or six years ago – and found that every semester had started with a crisis. These were very sad personal

events, accidents that had cost the lives of students. I would say that the personal loss in a community, when individuals have their freedom compromised, when lives are lost,

*Continued on Page 2*

## Trays Taken Out of the Great Room

By CAROLINE SELLE  
Features Editor

After a semester of Trayless Tuesdays (and, eventually, Trayless Thursdays), the Great Room is now completely trayless. As of this semester, trays will only be available to students upon request.

The Sustainability Committee and Bon Appetit decided to move forward after receiving the results of the Trayless Dining Opinion Survey, which was sent out to students late last semester.

Before the survey was sent out, "We had been getting a lot of negative emails," said Sustainability Fellow Rachel Clement. The survey was composed to get a more representative sample of the thoughts of the student body.

The survey, which was sent out during the second week of December 2008, showed mostly positive feedback. "Two-thirds of the people who took the survey were willing to pay the small price of going trayless," said Christophe Bornand, the Sustainability Coordinator.

The survey's results showed that although only 48.5 percent of respondents initially thought that going trayless was a good idea, 70.3 percent thought that the environmental and economic benefits of going trayless seemed worth the change. 67.9 percent thought that they would become more comfortable with trayless dining over time.

"A lot of colleges are going trayless be-

*Continued on Page 3*

## Students and Faculty React to Glendening Hall Move

By PETER SPARKLIN &  
KYLE JERNIGAN  
Staff Writer and News Co-Editor

The newest building on campus, Glendening Hall, is the place to go for many of the services offered by the College.

The building is located between the Athletic and Recreation Center and Caroline Hall. It houses many student services, including Residence Life, Academic Services, International Education, First Year Services, the Career Development Center, the Financial Aid office, the Registrar's office, Human Resources, the Business Office, and Academic Affairs. Construction on Glendening Hall was completed over the 2008-2009 winter break, and student services moved there in mid-January.

Students can now go to one building to add or drop a class, pay bills, find a job, or learn how to study in another country. "Being in the center of the resident population... allows us to better serve face-to-face. The location is a huge benefit," said Marc Hume, Assistant Director for Residence Life.

Chris Rodkey, a junior, said that Glendening Hall is "convenient" and that it was nice to have a central location for many of the offices that students need.

Employees in the various offices all commented on the extreme convenience of Glendening. Christopher True, the Assistant Vice President for Finance, said that with all the offices in one building it is much "easier to cooperate."

Tim Wolfe, Director of Financial Aid, said, "[The move] is a wonderful change for

*Continued on Page 2*



The view of David Kung, a math professor at St. Mary's. He attended President Obama's inauguration ceremony on the National Mall.

## College Community Celebrates Inauguration

By LARA SOUTHGATE &  
AMANDA ZELAYA  
News Co-Editor and Opinions Editor

In Washington, D.C., on January 20, 2009 Barack Hussein Obama was sworn in as the 44th President of the United States of America.

Here at the College, students and professors celebrated by partaking in several group events. Students were invited to watch the inauguration

unfold on several venues on campus; Cole Cinema and the River Center were open for students to watch the event, and the televisions in the Campus Center and Upper Deck were tuned in to CNN.

Although the College never officially canceled classes, most professors did so to allow their students to participate in the inauguration. "I wanted to give the students the op-

portunity to celebrate or not celebrate as they wished," said political science professor Sahar Shafqat, who canceled her classes for the day.

Shafqat added, "I feel that institutionally, there was a desire to mark this historic occasion, saying, 'Look, this is a big deal.'"

In Cole Cinema, students were able to listen to brief talks before the swearing-in took place. Associate

professor of history Charles Holden outlined previous notable inaugural addresses throughout American history, and Assistant Vice President of Academic Services Lenny Howard spoke about Obama's impact on African-American identity, especially in the contexts of success and education. Bon Appetit provided a patriotic flag cake topped with

*Continued on Page 3*

## “Polaroid Stories” Tries to Give Some Street Cred to Ovid

By KYLE JERNIGAN  
News Co-Editor

St. Mary's Theatre, Film, and Media Studies department is hosting a play this year which promises to bring classic Grecian poetry to the world of pimps, prostitutes, and slum lords.

The play takes place on a pier in the outskirts of the play's fictional city. According to Mark Rhoda, it is in this setting that “the characters’ storytelling has the power to transform a reality in which their lives are continually threatened, devalued, and effaced.” According

to award-winning Director Jeremy Skidmore, the play's greatest draw will be how the two seemingly unrelated subjects match up with one another. As Skidmore put it, “We’re taking mythical stories [from *Metamorphoses*] like Narcissus and Dionysis and pairing them with stories from the streets.”

“Polaroid Stories” was written in 1997 by Naomi Iizuka, is a combination of the classic narrative poem Ovid’s “*Metamorphoses*” and real stories from society’s underbelly. To prepare the play, Iizuka spent a year

interviewing prostitutes and street children. The play won Iizuka the 1998 PEN Center USA West Award for Drama.

The play’s characters will also be transformed from immortal mythological figures to “dreamers, dealers, and desperadoes,” according to Rhoda. For example, the Zeus of “Polaroid Stories” will be a lord of the streets instead of lord of Olympus, but he will remain an absolute commanding force; Narcissus also is no longer a God, but a pimp who falls in love with his reflection in a limousine.

Characters such as these will pose quite a challenge to the play’s cast, who will not only have to exude the presence of such immortal figures but do so in some cases with little character background given to the audience.

Skidmore has worked in

professional theatres from Virginia to Oslo, but says that working here with a play as poetic and non-linear as “Polaroid Stories” gives him the freedom to “play around with theatrical ideas I usually can’t” and tell “powerful tales of death, love, revenge.”

The play is still in its early stages as of now, with a cast and opening day yet to be determined. Stage Manager Mary Donahue, however, already anticipates student interest. She said “I think it’s a show a lot of students will really like.”

## Glendening Hall Opens Its Doors



The centrally located Glendening Hall is the new home of various student services at the College.

Continued from Page 1

us and the students; the staff seems to be much happier.”

For some, however, the move isn’t complete. Assistant Registrar Susan Morse, for example, said that her office still requires some work for it to return to its old form.

For any student that wishes to voice an opinion, Integrated Student Service Administrator Nick Tulley said that surveys will be available in the lobby within the next month.

## PLACING COLOR OPENS



As part of the Placing Color exhibit, The Boyden Gallery is displaying paintings by Brett Baker, Kayla Mohammadi, and Carrie Patterson from January 19 to February 28.

According to the exhibit’s website, [www.placingcolor.com](http://www.placingcolor.com), “Placing Color is an exhibition that explores painting as both a place of action and a destination.” The artist’s approaches, “seen together...create places that are both intimate and immense, unified by a sensitivity to the means of painting – touch and color.”

The gallery is open from 11 am to 5 pm Monday through Friday and from 11 am to 7 pm on Wednesdays. A panel discussion will be held on February 4 at 4:30 pm at Boyden Gallery in Montgomery Hall.

-Compiled by Caroline Selle

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## MAGGIE SPEAKS ABOUT SEARCH FOR HER REPLACEMENT

Continued from Page 1

those are the hardest things.

TPN: Why decide to leave the College now?

JMO: It takes a good year for a search process to be developed because there is the Board’s notification; there is the faculty’s notification, the students’ notification, alumni, etcetera. There is the process by which a search firm is hired for a national search like this, a search of this prestige. Then, the collection of candidates, the call to apply and nominate, the vetting and then there is a funnel, basically. 300 applicants, down to 30 airport interviews, down to about four who will come on campus to be interviewed. And, like all colleges, this is such a large family. You have seven constituencies – students, faculty, staff, trustees, alumni, parents and friends – who are going to want to know something about this person. It takes a long time. I wanted to be able to assure that the College had enough time to develop this search.

I have been, for the last ten years, working through a very important relationship for the College with the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies. Their timing, as much as anything, has prompted my timing. We love to ask young people, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” But some people, even into their fifties still haven’t decided where they want to

be when they grow up. I think that’s a wonderful aspect of contemporary life, still being able to dream what our next steps might be. Nobody has to be caught or locked.

At CMRS, I can apply a lot of the fundraising skills that I’ve learned in a place that I’ve become very fond of.

TPN: With the College’s relationship with CMRS, will you still be very involved with St. Mary’s?

JMO: Not the day to day. This question is a very prescient one. What will I miss? I’ll miss the day to day.

TPN: Can you describe the search process for our next president?

JMO: The Board is meeting [on] Thursday. Torre Meringolo will always be meeting with the Board, I will not. The sitting president, in my opinion, should have very little engagement with the selection, except counsel if anybody wishes it. The Board of Trustees has the authority and the privilege, primarily, in the choice of a president. They will be working with the faculty. After their next meeting, the Board will be in the stages of selecting a search consultant. That will probably be done in two months. There will be advertising, a call for nominations and applications.

Our hope is to make this as smooth as possible. The Board asked me to stay on through the selection of the next president and I agreed. They will, during the summer, start to develop the shortlist of



Maggie cracks a joke as she speaks at the James P. Muldoon River Center dedication ceremony.

candidates. So perhaps 300 or 400 applicants, by August or September they should have that down to a small pool. Typically there is an off campus interview. There will be students actually, I didn’t mention this, but there will be students involved. I suspect that [Student Trustee] Jeremy Pevner and [Student Trustee-in-Training] Debbie Travers will be involved in the discussions with the student body, probably [Student Government Association President] Sunny Schnitzer as well. When I was in the search process myself, there were two students on the search committee. That’s very important for communication to and from the student body.

TPN: You mentioned hiring a firm for a national search, but how many familiar faces do think we’ll see in the pool of candidates?

JMO: I think we are a very, very attractive school for a presidential candidate. The term that is often used, if someone is familiar with the institution, is an internal applicant. They come from the internal faculty, which would probably be most likely, or they come

from a slightly extended network of the College. I’m sure there will be those individuals.

TPN: Some recognizable names are being passed around campus.

JMO: You’ll often find in the early part of a search where people will advance candidates and names. But really, until the on-campus interviews it’s a pretty wide-open field. And, as I said, there will probably be 300 candidates.

TPN: Just to pin this down, what are the odds of hiring a candidate who is already employed at St. Mary’s?

JMO: You can only look at the broader national patterns and the pattern is typically for schools to hire from the outside and from similar schools. Probably the most common appointment is a provost from a comparable institution. This will look again, just as it did in 1995 when I was hired, like a very attractive position for candidates.

TPN: You said you won’t be very involved in the search, but what do you think the College should be looking for in its next president?

JMO: Knowing college presidents,

the most successful college presidents are academics. They are also almost long in the tooth, old, in management. Having an individual who has experience already in the core operating issues of a college or core operating issues of larger entities would, to me, be an absolute requisite. It’s as important to me as the academic leadership. The absence of either of those could create an imbalance in a person’s performance on behalf of the institution.

These days, having experience in fundraising is considered important, or having experience in legislatures. But I find those definitely secondary to strong management and financial understanding of institutions and academics. Beyond that, the president sets the tone for an institution. There are way too many books and movies that describe the dysfunction that occurs when heads of schools are troubled or distracted or in other ways not functioning. All members of the community have to be very involved. You really want consensus and excitement about one candidate in the end.

## RETRACTION

In the December 9, 2008 issue of *The Point News*, the article “Counselors Overcome Challenges” contained multiple factual errors. First, the Director of Counseling Services MJ Raleigh was incorrectly referred to as MJ Reynolds and Counselor Maria Haugaard was incorrectly referred to as Mary Haugaard. Second, the budget referenced within the article for fiscal year 2008 is outdated; the counseling budget for fiscal year 2009 is \$226,000, which according to Dean of Students Laura Bayless has increased this fiscal year because of the addition of staff members, including for the first time a permanent half-time counselor. Furthermore, part-time Clinical Psychologist Debbie O’Donnell’s caseload may not be a representative of the average Psychologist’s caseload, and cannot properly be compared to the caseload of the Counseling Services center. *The Point News* apologizes for any confusion caused by the inaccuracies in this article.

## Students Enjoy Inauguration On Campus and Off

*Continued from Page 1*  
strawberries and blueberries for the celebration, and afterwards, Michael Cain, the head of the political science department and Director of the Center for the Study of Democracy, led discussions.

The event was organized by the Center for the Study of Democracy and the Office of Student Activities. "We all worked on this together to bring faculty, staff, and students together," said Kelly Schroeder, Assistant Dean of Students.

By 11:30 a.m., Cole Cinema was packed, and latecomers were forced to hover by the cinema doors. The room was mostly silent throughout the ceremony, with applause after each event from the inaugural prayer to the inaugural address. A ripple of laughter shot through the room with Pastor Rick Warren's pronounced, almost fierce blessing of first daughters "Malia" and "Sasha," and a similar wave of "Awwww" washed over the crowd whenever the two girls appeared on-screen. Many found the oath of office and its difficulties endearing, especially from such a calm person as Obama.

"It was interesting to see some of his stumbles," said junior Brad Dodson. "It let us know he's human, just like us...and realize that we're in this together."

Obama's speech fetched a standing ovation from those not already forced to stand, and the overall mood in the room was

electric. "[This is] where civic tradition kicks in," said Holden. He said that it was amazing to see so many people come together, and not just for a tragic event like an assassination or Sept. 11. He described the feeling as "like the excitement of the campaign, ...one last time, or kind of reaching the peak."

If students thought they were cramped in Cole Cinema, the screen showed that the turnout in D.C. was enormous. "There was something like 2 million people in Washington," said Cain.

Mathematics professor David Kung was one of the many people present for the inauguration. "It was fantastic," he said. "There was a crush of people everywhere." Kung received the tickets to attend the inauguration through his parents' congressmen back in Wisconsin.

Professor Jennifer Cognard-Black also received tickets from a senator in another state. "We immediately tried to get tickets from our Maryland representative, but we received an auto reply that thousands had asked already," she said. She managed to get tickets from her mother in Nebraska. They turned out to be some of the best, placing her "only a football field away" from the action. "It turned out to be the glamorous section; we stood in line with Susan Sarandon and Wesley Snipes," she said. "We felt very lucky to be there."

According to Cain, this inauguration was particularly excit-



Junior Ricky Ramos attended Obama's inauguration and photographed the festivities.

ing for two reasons. The first was that the nation was seeing the end of an administration that had been on the decline, and the second that Obama was the first African-American to be elected President of the United States. "The first time for anything makes it important," said Cain. "Kennedy was the first Catholic and his inauguration was very important for people. [Obama] being first makes it important."

Cognard-Black thinks that so many people turned out not only for the historical importance of the event, but also because of Obama's humility and truth. "I think [he's so popular] because he just projects and presents truthfulness. He actually honors the other side...I don't think we've seen that level of graciousness."

Due to the significant histori-

cal context of this inauguration, many people had their young children watch and understand that history was being made. "We took our 11-year-old son," said Kung. "Having him see the turnout for this helps him appreciate the historical importance of the moment."

Cognard-Black and her husband, also took their daughter to the inauguration. In fact, she said that they probably would not have gone if not for their daughter, Kate. "Because of Kate, we're parents of an only child, and we really think of what experiences are vital for her."

Like many of his past speeches, President Obama's inauguration speech was heavily analyzed. Different people saw different things in it. "He definitely placed his inaugural address within the

context of inaugural addresses, ...hearkening to a sense of unity and purpose," said Holden.

Holden added that although Obama "said some nice things about the [former] president," he was "a little bit sharper in marking an Obama administration as being different from the Bush administration."

"I think that looking at it in terms of Mr. Obama's speeches, it wasn't his best speech," Cain said. "The content of it, not the delivery, was as good as the one given to the Democratic Party, but it was a sobering speech and I think it was an appropriate speech."

Cognard-Black was touched by Obama's speech, and like Cain, felt it was appropriate for the country's situation. She was also very impressed by the way that she felt he addressed issues without pointing fingers, and she reaffirmed that this is why he appeals to so many people. "I don't think it's just because he's a liberal and because he's young. I think it's because he has ethos," she said.

However, not everyone watching the inauguration at the College was an Obama supporter. President of College Republicans Sara Metz was one of the first people to trickle into Cole Cinema. She stayed for the entire event.

"I felt uncomfortable, obviously, being a Republican," she said. She said that despite the excitement electrifying the room, "I was trying to be analytical."

Regarding the speech, Metz said "There were some things I was elated about," although sometimes she "felt like it was kind of partisan."

Still, "it was a good experience, even though I felt out of place," she concluded. "It was a historic event."

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*The Point News* is published bi-weekly during the academic year by the undergraduate students of St. Mary's College of Maryland. The ideas and opinions expressed on its pages are not necessarily those of the College.

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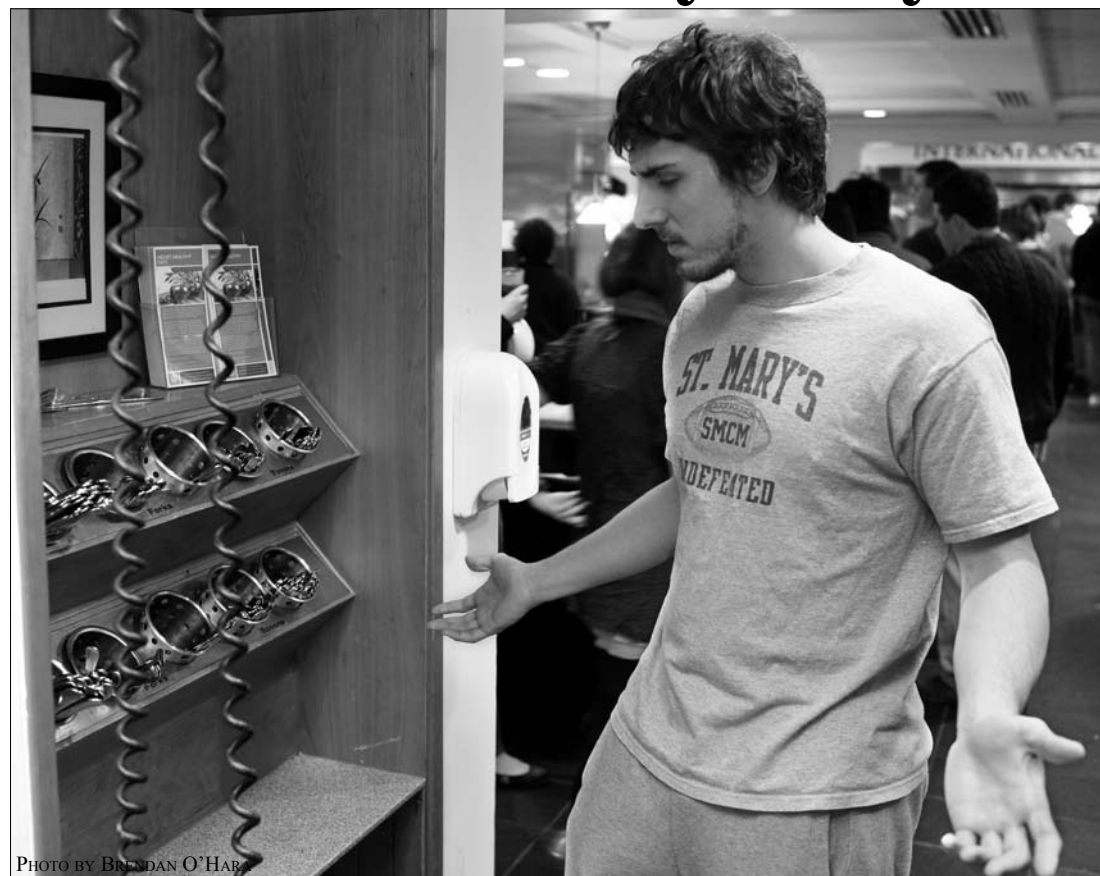
## Great Room Goes Totally Trayless

*Continued from Page 1*  
cause it saves a lot of energy, money, food and labor costs," said Clement. A study conducted by the Sustainability Committee concluded that going trayless would reduce food waste by 30 percent.

Not wasting as much means not buying as much, said George McClusick, Bon Appetit's general manager at St. Mary's. Going trayless will have environmental and economic benefits. "Our company is very into sustainability. We strive to do these initiatives," he said.

Although most comments are positive, there has been some negative feedback.

"I think it's one of those things that will take time and eventually people will forget they even were offered," said Clement.



Junior Vaughn Bryant reacts to the new trayless policy in the Great Room.

## TFMS Film Series - Outing the Home Movie

TFMS's Second Annual Film Series will explore how home movies inflect issues of gender in narrative, experimental, and documentary film. Internationally acclaimed, award-winning filmmakers Michelle Citron, Daniel Reeves, and Jennifer Hardacker will be joined by film scholars and archivists Patricia Zimmermann and Pamela Wintle to screen and discuss a variety of work that incorporates home movie footage. Topics include gender and family relationships, war and masculinity, and the home movie as sociohistorical document.

Screenings begin at Cole Cinema on Feb. 2nd and last until the 23rd in weekly Monday screenings beginning at 8p.m. Screenings are free and open to the public.

**Michelle Citron:** Monday, February 2

For the film series, Citron will screen *Daughter Rite*, a ground breaking experimental narrative about mothers, daughters, and sisters, along with her work-in-progress, *Leftovers*.

An award-winning media artist, Michelle Citron has made numerous media pieces, including the CD-ROMs *As American as Apple Pie*, *Cocktails and Appetizers*, and *Mixed Greens*, as well as the acclaimed films *What You Take for Granted* (1984) and *Daughter Rite* (1980).

Citron's work has been shown at museums and film festivals around the world, including the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney, The Kennedy Center, the American Film Institute, and the New Directors, Berlin, London, and Edinburgh film festivals. Her award-winning book, *Home Movies and Other Necessary Fictions* (1999), has been cited for its "extraordinary blend of autobiographical and film writing which offers a radical new way of thinking and writing about film."

Recipient of two National Endowment for the Arts Filmmaking Grants and a National Endowment for the Humanities Media Grant, Citron is chair of the Department of Interdisciplinary Arts, Columbia College, Chicago.

**Daniel Reeves:** Monday, February 9

Daniel Reeves has worked in sculpture, film, video, and installation since 1970. His works are held by numerous international collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Stedelijk, Amsterdam; and the San Francisco Museum of Art. Recipient of numerous national and international prizes, including three Emmy Awards for *Smothering Dreams* (1981), an autobiographical film that deals with the myths and realities of war through his experience in Vietnam during the Tet Offensive, his films and videos focus on personal, political, and spiritual themes, from socially condoned violence to the divine nature of existence.

Reeves will screen the award-winning *Obsessive Becoming* (1995), along with his work-in-progress, *End-to-End*, a time-based digital installation in triptych format. *Obsessive Becoming* is a film that combines family psychological and physical abuse with war and technological iconography, infusing the construction of masculinity in the twentieth century. Blending old technologies like family photos and home movies with new digital imaging systems, the film refutes the borders between media, families, nations, and identities, morphing them all into a continuous stream of history, memory, fantasy and political ethics.

-Submitted by Mark Rhoda

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