

theplanetaup

Student Newspaper of the American University of Paris

email us at theplanet.aup@gmail.com

February 2010

Questions Answered About AUP Community

An in-depth, statistical breakdown of our student body

By Ashley Pittson



Photo Contributed By Yann-Yves O'Hayon-Crosby

Some of the most common words used by people when describing The American University of Paris' (AUP) student body are "diverse," "global," and "multicultural." The University clearly communicates to students its mission – to provide a skill set in understanding and becoming global citizens – with its mission statement, published repeatedly on its Web site; at orientation; and in the classroom.

However, not everyone has a clear understanding of who exactly AUP students are or what they do. Answers to common questions are available for both prospective and **continued on page 2**

Students Reminded Coup de Pouce is a Gift

By Lauren Limmerick

On February 27, 38 of the 39 students who applied for Coup de Pouce received an award ranging from 119 to 1000 euro.

Ana-Maria Dorobat, SGA communications director, said that one student was ineligible.

Graduate student Theresa Bruketta opened her email to good news. She was awarded a portion of Coup de Pouce money to be used toward the February study trip to London. She said, "This kind of money really does help. It makes it a little more feasible."

Bruketta signed up for the London trip before she learned of her Coup de Pouce status. She was able to secure a spot on the trip while time still allowed her to cancel with reimbursement if she was not granted any or enough Coup de Pouce money for her budget.

Not all students had this ideal timeframe. Anne Landesberger, a graduate student in the MAGC program, was enrolled in a course taught almost entirely in Tunisia over spring break.

Landesberger called the course "extremely expensive" but believed Coup de Pouce would

help alleviate some of the financial burden. However, the deadline to drop the class fell before Coup de Pouce awards were announced.

"Coup de Pouce should be awarded before the add/drop period so students can know if they were awarded the money and make a more informed decision," Landesberger said.

When asked about the issue, some committee members were sympathetic but said Coup de Pouce should never be expected, rather viewed, as Graduate Student Council President Ryan Trostle said, "as a gift."

Coup de Pouce is financial aid awarded to full-time students who are registered in a class with a study trip. The grant, established by the SGA, is funded by a small portion of the profits generated from a handful of vending machines on campus, as well as contributions from the University and the SGA.

Each semester the Coup de Pouce committee gathers to distribute a limited amount of funds to students who have submitted applications. The committee is composed of



Senior, Mark Chakanetsa, received Coup de Pouce to go on the Moroccan study trip in Spring 2009.

the SGA treasurer, the SGA president, the GSC president, the Cultural Program coordinator, the supervisor of financial aid, the VP and director of Student Services and the assistant manager of student services.

The group met on January 29 in the SGA office and took into consideration the quality of the application essay, the student's GPA, financial need, the importance of the trip in the student's academic program, as well as returning student's

involvement in clubs or university organizations. Later that day, students received emails notifying them of their award status.

"It's a funny expression but the literal translation of Coup de Pouce is a helping hand or little boost," Cultural Program coordinator Jennifer Larson said. This semester, students helped by Coup de Pouce, will travel across the globe to study in destinations including Berlin, Casablanca, Kuwait and Florence.

theplanetaup

Editor-in-Chief:

Breana Connor

Content Editor:

Ashley Pittson

Organizational Manager:

Ijebusonma Ndekwa

The opinions that are expressed within theplanetaup are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect The American University of Paris.

Get involved
theplanet.aup@gmail.com.

Whitemask Gets Ready for RENT

By Emily Hancock, President of Whitemask

As most students settle into the new semester, now familiar with their classes and drinking schedules, those involved in Whitemask have a different outlook: they are ready to kick it into overdrive. Auditions are wrapped and now it's time to get down to business. Countless hours will be sacrificed and tears shed before opening night of this spring's musical, at Salle Adyar. As the curtain rises for those who made the cut, however, the toil will have all been worth it.

After much deliberation, Whitemask has chosen RENT as this spring's musical production. The winner of four Tony awards with reproductions in 22 languages since its Off-Broadway release in 1996, RENT is the rock opera to define all rock operas. The story

is of modern-day Bohemia and recounts the lives of a group of young artists striving to discover themselves in the midst of the AIDS epidemic and the increasing technological hold over America. Clearly, the immense project will be a challenge for Whitemask, and it was not until auditions in late January that the club understood, "Yes, we can do this. We will do this. And it will be spectacular."

The show is directed by students Jojo Frey and Eric Snow, neither of whom are strangers to the theatre world. Snow has participated in several AUP productions, most recently in spring 2009's Urinetown. This will be Frey's debut in a Whitemask production. The club sees the cast as fit to blow away the audience.

Those who saw Urinetown will

have the repeat treat of the always lovely Annabelle Wills as Joanne and the feisty Vanessa Tuppan as Mimi. Hunter Capps and Gabrielle Flam, ubiquitous campus personalities with what turn out to be amazing singing voices, will play Angel and Maureen, respectively. The main cast is completed by some new faces to Whitemask, including visiting student with a full baritone, Jason Buchel, to portray Collins, and Adam Zetterlund, whose audition included a tremendous rendition of "Lean on Me," as Roger.

Whitemask touts this as a show that simply cannot be missed. RENT will play April 21, 22 and 23 in Salle Adyar, right around the corner from AUP. Don't miss out. Until then, remember: "No day but today."

questions continued from front page

How well do you know AUP students?

900 students currently enrolled: 774 full-time, 126 part-time; 167 graduate, 733 undergraduate, 65 visiting students

Average admittance: 3.25 GPA, 12 score on French Baccalauréat, 32 score on International Baccalauréat
72 percent of applicants admitted

90 nationalities in undergraduate student body this semester: top nationalities are American 38.6%, followed by French 20.8%, and the rest of the nationalities run like the alphabet from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe.

39 nationalities in graduate student body this semester: top nationalities are American 61.7%, followed by French 9%

Most popular undergraduate majors: Global Communications (141 students) and International Business Administration (108 students)

Most popular graduate programs: Global Communications (67 students) and International Affairs (28 students)

15 student-led clubs
Around 42 involved in SGA

current students, but scattered throughout the university Web site, pamphlets and internal University reports.

"I didn't know much about AUP's student body before I came here," said Sagal Samantar, a sophomore who transferred in last semester. She explained there was not much information about the University online, aside from its own Web site.

Samantar said she was impressed with what she's experienced and discredited what she found on the internet about the school just being "a bunch of rich kids."

"I am really happy to be here... AUP offers a really different experience that has to do with all the people who go here," Samantar said.

Samantar said that there is a lot of cross-cultural exchange going on in her classrooms and that AUP is very rich in its diversity and openness. She feels paradoxically that more could be done to "celebrate" this diversity, citing the example of African-American, Latin-American and Asian-American culture months at her last university in Virginia. "With all the people from all different cultures here, I don't see why we don't do more things like that," she said.

Edwin Buggage, graduate student said, "The geographic diversity of the students equals a diversity of ideas." He said that he enjoyed the interaction in his classes with people from all over the world but looked for continued progress, "You can have a bunch of people together but are they truly together? How does the University promote diversity?"

Drawing on the students' diversity as a resource is one of the challenges of teaching at AUP, said Charles Talcott a professor at AUP for over 11 years. "Where most American or Anglophone universities need to import the international through books, films, or objects; the classroom [at AUP] is always already international and global. The challenge is not to mainstream the cultural difference that is there."

Challenges are also felt by students in trying to get others involved in University and cultural activities.

"There are different degrees of involvement at AUP: there are students who are really involved and who are investing a great amount of energy and passion into their school and there are others who could definitely do more," said Ana-Maria Dorobat, SGA communications director. She added that student apathy

is a problem at any university, especially those in big cities, but that they plan to do more to increase involvement and community awareness.

Few people have the chance to observe the AUP community as Moni Martinez does, server at the university restaurant and bar (the Amex) for over one and a half years. She said she knows a lot of the students here and found it difficult to describe the AUP student body, something that was true for everyone interviewed. She paused and said, "They [students] have a lot of depth in their experiences, more than the average person. It's amazing, you come here and you hear stories you never could have imagined."

Martinez's co-worker, Mano McMaster who has been employed for three weeks, was quick to point out that it's not a utopia of global interaction and intelligence.

The identity of the student body was difficult for anyone to sum up, with obvious "multi-culturalism" at the surface but what is more complicated is how "multi-culturalism" is drawn out and celebrated.

*Sources: Registrar's Office, AUP at a Glance, collegeboard.com, Dominique Meys-Viry, Meghan Jennings

Sports Program Goes Abroad

by Ashley Pittson

The American University of Paris' Sports Program will leave the country for the first time to participate in an international tournament at the end of March. Twelve students will be traveling to Beirut competing in Tennis (Women's and Men's) and Basketball (Men's) tournaments against a consortium of American Universities abroad, said AUP Sports Coordinator Ashkan Shalbaf.

"This is a really exciting opportunity," said Shalbaf, who explained that AUP received the invitation to the tournament from The American University of Beirut last semester. The tournament will be from March 24-28. Students paid for their airfare while the university is covering the hotel cost.

Shalbaf, who has been working as the sports coordinator since the program's inception two years ago, said that he hoped more students would come. It was originally intended that Men's Soccer and Women's Volleyball would join but Shalbaf said that many athletes

couldn't attend because of cost (flights ranging from 300 to 500 euro), complicated visa procedures, and simple "indecisiveness."

Shalbaf said he was happy to take the twelve but didn't expect to be very strong competitively since the sports program is very new and some players will be missing. "More than anything I am excited to be there to build bridges. It will be a great occasion to meet other people, other sports coordinators, have fun and see Beirut," he said.

Senior Sam Yeyah, who's going to play basketball, echoed Shalbaf's sentiments, "I'm most excited to go and represent the AUP community abroad. It will be great to promote AUP and share with other universities."

However Yeyah said, "First of all, we want to win."

Most of the games will happen March 25 and 26 with the finals and award ceremony on the 28. The athletes have all evenings free to socialize and enjoy Beirut.

"It will be fun," said Shalbaf, "... maybe one day we can invite them over."



Photos Contributed By Tala Alem

History and Mediterranean Dept. to Merge

By Alexandre Dab

Starting next semester, the Department of European and Mediterranean Cultures (EMC), headed by Professor George Wanklyn since 2006, will merge with the History Department.

Professor Stephen Sawyer, current History department chair and a full-time faculty member since Fall 2008, will be in charge of this newly merged unit that will be known uniquely as the Department of History. News of this merger raised concerns among both faculty and students.

Acting Academic Dean Gail Hamilton said of the decision, "Currently the two departments are relatively small in terms of numbers of professors and majors, although they do heavily serve visiting students. Many of the courses offered by the departments are cross-listed ES/HI, especially the Cities courses."

Hamilton added, "At one point European Cultural Studies and

History were united in the same department, so this academic structure is not new." Wanklyn has chaired the EMC department, in its different forms, since 2003.

Both Sawyer and Wanklyn agreed that the merger is mainly "an administrative decision meant to improve management efficiency." For his part, Sawyer said, "This will be an opportunity to develop a more consistent curriculum."

He envisioned a renewed course of study layered as follows: 1. the city as a historical entity; 2. European and Mediterranean cultures as a strong force in shaping modern civilization; and 3. world history for a global understanding of more recent issues. The department will offer three different majors: History, EMC and a brand new Urban Studies option.

Sawyer asserted that the EMC program as it exists today will

remain unchanged by the merger and that "it will make no difference for students who want to major in EMC." Wanklyn said he agreed to the merger because "[he] can see something of the argument for it." However, he expressed concern about the loss of a dynamic intellectual and pedagogical center that the EMC department has been over the years.

"Although the number of students majoring in EMC is small," said Wanklyn, "this department's strength is its polyvalence and its singular academic outreach, since it offers the largest number of cross-listed classes."

Professor Marie Roussel, who has worked closely with Wanklyn on the development of many ES classes as well as the AUP-Sorbonne partnership said, "By dissolving the EMC department... AUP will lose one of its most dynamic departments, which

played a major historic role in the university's originality and went hand in hand with AUP's particular location."

Hamilton said the main reason for the merger, "Is really about developing programs and not – to be blunt – about cost-cutting."

Mindful that academic programs are in constant evolution and can always be improved, Wanklyn said he was reassured that the program he and other professors from various departments have spent years developing will keep its essence – at least in the near term.

The longer-term future of the EMC major may not be so clear. Wanklyn suggested that the newly merged department be called "History, and European and Mediterranean Cultures" instead of just "History." The proposal was rejected. For more information contact: gwanklyn@aup.fr or sawyer@aup.fr.

Tips to Utilizing Internship Opportunities

By Laura Roberts

Do an internship: this advice is written in every career guide. Learn about a profession; apply your studies; gain hands-on experience. But after sending out CVs, going on interviews, and landing a position, there's the first

"...an internship will provide you with a solid foundation for your next step."

day of work—what happens next?

As an intern at a marketing communications agency, my responsibilities are not far removed from those of my boss. I work full, busy days and am expected to manage my responsibilities

without much supervision. Some of these responsibilities are less than glamorous; the fast-paced world of marketing comes with a heavy side of administrative work, much of which falls on an intern's shoulders. It also however comes with creative brainstorming, thought-provoking strategic work, and high-stakes project management-transferable skills that I can put to use in my future "real job."

However, it can be difficult to deal with the mundane tasks an intern is often given, when what you really want is to gain exposure to the more interesting, higher-level aspects of the field.

Jessica Pettus, AUP graduate student and intern at a Parisian tech start-up company, said, "As someone [who had] a few years

of work experience before coming back to school, to return to intern status [was] a real challenge."

Niloufar Maghame, an AUP student currently interning in the marketing industry, echoed Pettus' frustration. "It can be challenging ...because you feel like you can do more than basic tasks- but without the foundation, you'll just fall later [on]," she said.

Maghame summed up the value of an internship: it is a foundation. And, whether you find, as I have, that your internship has given you a basis for a future career, or you realize that your interests lay elsewhere, an internship will provide you with a solid foundation for your next step.

Interning Tips:

Internships in France can be

intense: often like holding a real job, but without decent pay, so look for an internship that really interests you. In fact, AUP cannot legally accept an internship that is not related to your coursework, according to Maggie Pazderski, AUP's internship coordinator.

Internships are not obligatory for beginning a successful career. Based on 2008-2009 figures, only about 20% of the AUP student population completed internships over the course of their AUP studies.

Zero credit internships are a growing trend—but to register for one after your credits are complete, you will have to defer graduation. Get the facts from the Internship Office so you know what your options are.

Letter to the Editor: Library Responds

It is with great disappointment that the library staff read the opinion article by Anna Beer in the last edition of The Planet. We would like to address the admitted overstatement made by the author about the "ridiculous size of our library" and that the Library provides "the least amount of resources possible."

Some may view the size of our library as "ridiculous," however it is a reflection of two main factors: the size of our campus and a new world-wide trend in academic libraries. Libraries are changing from storing large amounts of materials to facilitating access and teaching how to find information in our world rich with information. In such a world libraries no longer pretend to have it all. In the case of AUP, the Library has a solid core collection of books, e-books, e-journals, online encyclopedias, databases, etc. and when need comes, we assist the user in the transition to other Paris libraries or the internet.

Can't find what you are looking for? We will get it for you. This past semester, the Library ordered more than 400 documents and books from other libraries for the community. To order, use the forms found on our homepage (see



Photo Contributed By Tala Alem

Library Services: Forms).

In 2006 the Library conducted a user satisfaction survey, which motivated multiple changes. Another survey will begin soon to help us better understand current students' preferences and needs. We encourage students

to get involved, to do so contact Michael Stoepel (mstoepel@aup.fr). Students can also suggest how we can improve our services by writing to library@aup.edu.

If you do not know how to use the Library resources or need help finding any of the things mentioned

above, visit us or use <http://library.aup.edu/refhelp.htm>.

We want to thank Anna Beer for creating this opportunity to explain some of our services to the community.

Jorge Sosa
University Librarian

French Confirm and Defy Stereotypes

By Katie O'Donnell

It was visiting student orientation at the American University of Paris and Dean of Students Marc Monthéard was succinct: "French people are full of contradictions."

Ever since I decided to spend a semester at AUP, I had been forewarned about interacting with the French, especially *Les Parisiens*. From their supposedly brusque manner to their severe aversion to tourists (and Americans in general), I braced for the worst.

Throughout his address, Monthéard was good-humored about notoriously "French" affectations and frank about the less savory aspects of being foreign in a city full of people who disdain foreigners.

Parisians, for instance, strive to be outwardly discreet in a way that most Americans (like myself) have given up on altogether. Restaurants are suspiciously quiet and in most public places, companions speak in soft, muted tones to one another.

This unspoken code of etiquette is observed even on the metro, as I learned when an older gentleman on the RER scolded my companions and I (in heavily-accented English) for "shouting," before retreating behind his newspaper.

Other lessons learned? In Paris, the "magic words" are just as magical as when I learned to use them back in kindergarten. *A s'il vous plait* and a *merci* can

almost always relax a raised eyebrow. When it comes to routine greetings, the French really go above and beyond. A *Bonjour*, *Monsieur/Madame* and an *au revoir* at the end of any exchange are mandatory.

Monthéard closed by assuring the doomed-looking group blinking back at him: Parisians are neither half as "high and mighty" as they think they are, nor half as unpleasant as everyone else thinks they are. So far, my own interactions with the French have run the gamut from friendly to, at worst, apathetic. Perhaps the average Parisian is, in some small way or another, contrary to as well as consistent with stereotype.

AUPword

Is our Community Diverse?

Photos By Ijebusonma Ndekwa



Elyssa Mae Quejano
Freshman

"There are so many different nationalities here at AUP. So in that case, many students learn different cultures that they bring to this community."



Mareike Enghussen
Grad student

"After having read about the alleged large diversity at AUP, I was surprised to find out that in the grad program the large majority of students are American or at least culturally American."



Elena Bordarier
Junior

"Very Diverse! We are like a hundred nationalities. We have people who have lived and studied in different places and we interact with them and learn about their cultures."

FILM OR COMMUNICATIONS
MAJOR?
INTERESTED IN BROADCASTING
OR FILMING A TV SHOW?

VIDEO PRODUCTION

FINAL CUT PRO

HD CAMERAS

WEBSITE

EVENTS

FILM FESTIVAL

PANAM(E) TV PRODUCTIONS

artsandculture

theplanetaup february 2010

Arts Arena Draws on International Talent

By David Blumenfeld

New students are often told how many prominent speakers and events AUP has to offer. Some perceive this as people desperately trying to sell their events or organizations to the student body. However the calendar of events shows that AUP does act as a platform for prominent, creative and inspiring individuals.

The Arts Arena, created three years ago, is by any measure one of AUP's most successful initiatives, bringing the prominent and world-renowned to the university.

A few examples on the calendar this academic year are: Editor in Chief of the The New Yorker magazine; Robert Gottlieb, Director of the new Centre

Pompidou-Metz contemporary art museum; Laurent Le Bon, Robert Storr, Dean of the Yale School of Art and commissioner of the 2007 Venice Biennale.

While the organization is concerned with the arts, it also underlines the relationship between the arts, finance, economics, cultural policy, and development.

On March 23 there is an event entitled Activist Arts. In partnership with UNESCO, the Arts Arena will host a distinguished panel to discuss how the creative arts can build cultural understanding. On May 9-10, 2010, the Arts Arena joins forces with the United Nations Association Film Festival (UNAFF); selected documentary films will be screened, focusing

on themes such as human rights, racism, the environment, and war and peace.

Professor Margery Safir's graduate students, in the Public Art module, will help to select the films.

The Arts Arena has built a large and devoted base of fans. The Grand Salon, in which most of The Arts Arena's events take place, usually fills up and extra seating is needed for those who want to attend the events.

The Arts Arena is a unique university initiative in that it is supported by memberships, which is composed of many individuals not necessarily directly affiliated with AUP, but who are members of the international community. These events offer students the

opportunity to attend presentations by notable figures in the art world and to network with the numerous distinguished members of the Arts Arena.

“While the organization is concerned with the arts, it primarily underlines the relationship between the arts, finance, economics, cultural policy, and development.”

For upcoming events, consult the Arts Arena page on AUP's website under the News & Events tab on the homepage or at www.aup.fr/arts or on Facebook. To be added to the mailing list, and for inquiries about volunteer opportunities, write to artsarena@aup.edu.

Calling All Artists

By Geena Gershenberg

AUP students' artwork will become part of the AUP Permanent Collection thanks to an initiative by Art Professor Ralph Petty. He is holding a competition for student works in all mediums except sculpture (due to inadequate space).

Twenty-five works will be selected. Deadline for submissions is March 16. Petty said that he, along with selected faculty, administrators and student workers would have the final say in deciding which makes it into the collection.

Petty thinks that many AUP students are very talented

but that it could be frustrating for them to reach their potential in the art facilities currently available at the university.

At the moment AUP shares a “less than perfect” studio with the church in front of the Grenelle building. Petty said that he hopes that this competition will open up the AUP community's eyes to some of the great talent that exists within it. In addition to a greater awareness of the arts, he hopes that the competition and future collection will elicit support from

administration and alumni for expanding Fine Arts at AUP. “We need support to help us get some kind of room,” he said.

Students will benefit by being able to state that their work is in a permanent collection (if selected) on their CV and gain exposure in the art world both in and out of the AUP community.

The collection will be exhibited from April 29 to May 22 in the lobby of the Combes building.

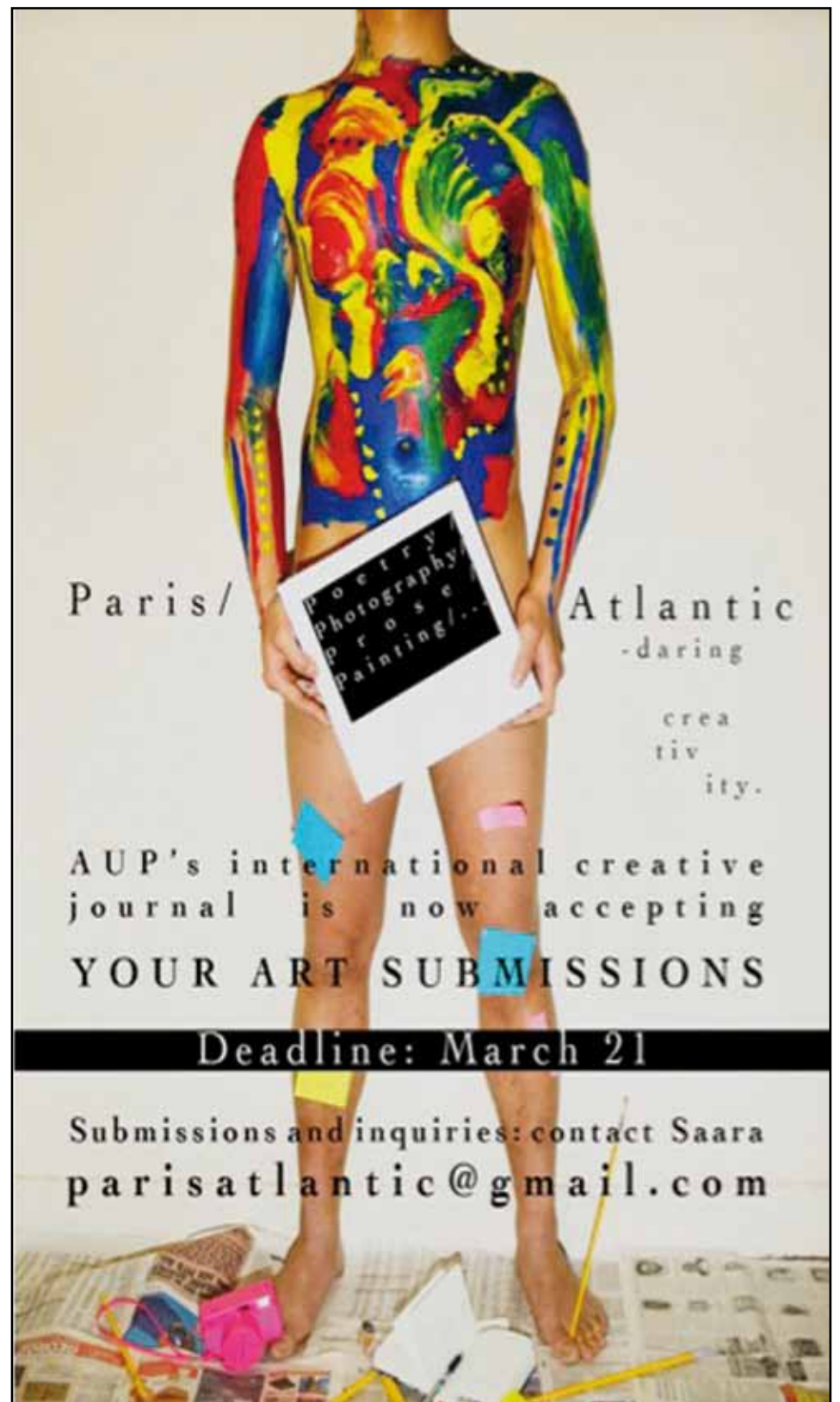
The gallery will continue to have rotating exhibits in Combes. After this show, the student pieces in the permanent collection will be distributed

throughout the AUP buildings, adding color and personality to the AUP community and slowly infusing the school with art. The collection will also be featured on the university website.

Petty's ultimate goal is to create a catalog including photographs of the works, descriptions, a photograph of the artist, and a very brief bio.

Currently, the permanent collection resides solely in faculty offices.

“The first show on April 29 – May 22 will be held in the lobby of Combes.”



Paris / Atlantic
-daring
creativity.

AUP's international creative journal is now accepting
YOUR ART SUBMISSIONS

Deadline: March 21

Submissions and inquiries: contact Saara
parisatlantic@gmail.com