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Young Teacher Award Citation for Todd McGrain

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Young Teacher Award

Todd McGrain, Assistant Professor of Art

"Todd McGrain, with gifted hands and acute eyes, you bring inanimate masses to life, and your sculpture inspires and impresses all who see it. But not all who have mastered an art can teach it well, and it is your cultivation of the talents of the young artists in your classes that sets you apart. Not all--not even most--of those students will find their life's work in sculpture, however. And your greatest contribution to their lives, and to Lawrence, has been in opening their minds to the meaning of art, to its place in all our lives.

You have asked yourself, your students, all of us, what role self-expression should play in creation, how important is originality, how art and its audience are related. Whether manipulating large masses of metal or crafting the intricate stylings of jewelry, your standards are high, to match your skills. But your students are grateful for far more than your technical expertise. They consistently report their appreciation of your attentive mentoring, of the comfortable rigor of your classes, above all the way you have made art an integral part of their worlds. They learn, as one student put it, valuable lessons in art that can be used later in life. Your own excitement and commitment have, in other words, made clear to them the true role of the art studio in a liberal education, and, in recognition of that important accomplishment, Lawrence is pleased to present to you the Young Teacher Award for 1995."

Citation read by President Richard Warch at Commencement, 1995