

By [Barbara Melendez](#)
[USF](#) News

TAMPA, Fla. (Mar. 28, 2011) – Florida’s luxuriant greenness, heat and humidity influenced [Janaina Tschäpe](#)’s design for the two striking murals that will greet all who enter the University of South Florida’s remarkable new state-of-the-art School of Music building’s concert and conference facilities on Holly Drive.

As the towering wall paintings – named *Forest Spirits* – evolved into their final forms, various elements were derived from memories or were inspired in the moment.

Whether it was the music she played – from punk to classical and everything in between – or the sunlight, or thoughts of Brazil and Florida, Tschäpe incorporated it all into a project she labored on from eight to nine hours a day for four weeks – loving every moment.

She was particularly excited about working on such a large scale.

“To be able to have a vision that is also connected to something, the fact that this is a concert hall, made it very appealing,” she said.

And she enjoyed working with green, a color she finds “very mysterious. It’s hard to paint with green but I love it, it has a bit of the forest, it’s organic and lush,” qualities that stand out in both murals – one accented with a little more red and the other with a little more blue.

It is fitting that the work of an artist of multi-dimensional creativity and a global lifestyle should be a permanent part of USF. Living between New York City and Brazil where she grew up, the multitasking Tschäpe works in various media – she paints, draws, photographs, sculpts and produces films and videos. Raised in Sao Paulo, she now resides in New York and her work has been shown throughout the world including Tokyo, London and Berlin. She was part of the [The 59th Minute with Creative Time](#) in Times Square in New York City and has shown her work at the Centre de Art a Albi in Toulouse, the Fotomuseum in Winthethur, the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia in Madrid and the Irish Museum of Modern Art among others.

Dachau-born Tschäpe’s [relationship with USF](#) began in 2004 when she was commissioned by the [Contemporary Art Museum](#) (USFCAM) to develop a new high definition video installation titled Blood Sea, which was filmed at Florida’s Weeki Wachee Springs where the mermaids wore sculptural costumes of her design. Independent curator, Jade Dellinger developed an exhibition for USFCAM that featured this work and a series of related photographs, drawings and photogravures published by USF’s acclaimed workshop, [Graphicstudio](#).

At Graphicstudio, Tschäpe experimented with several printmaking techniques including lithography, photogravure, and direct gravure. Recently, she returned to work in residence to produce a series of three bronze sculptures of jellyfish and several new etchings. Prints published by Graphicstudio are collected by leading museums including the National Gallery in Washington D.C., the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.

“I love working with them,” she said of the Graphicstudio staff whose expertise has earned them a spot among the nation’s top-10 printmaking programs according to U.S. News & World Report’s latest rankings. “There’s a lot of knowledge there and to be able to access it is really great. They really go into your ideas and suggest things that are very helpful.”

Right now, Tschäpe is in New York City. “My daughter is in school and I’m happy when I can stay home with her,” she said.

But being home still means being very busy preparing for a drawing show in Berlin slated for this coming June. She will be back in Florida briefly for the official ribbon cutting ceremony at the School of Music, which presents an opportunity to show her daughter her handiwork and to take

her to one of Florida's beautiful beaches – and perhaps the surrounding landscapes that inspired her spectacular murals.

The murals fall under the [Public Art](#) program administered by the [USF Institute for Research in Art](#). Project budgets are derived from one half of one percent of State construction funds and capped at \$100,000. An institute committee commissioned the works, which cost approximately \$95,000.

The dedication reception for the two murals, sponsored by USFCAM, will be held Mar. 31 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the School of Music. For more information, visit <http://ira.usf.edu/events.html> or call (813) 974-1756.

[Barbara Melendez](#) can be reached at 813-974-4563.