CLOTH AND CLAY

Quilts are temporary objects that become worn with use and faded from light, so they last the longest if no one ever sees or handles them. But rather than store the fragile patterns away in a closet for preservation, the Gallery Space at Wagner has them on display for all to enjoy their colorful combinations of geometric shapes. Now on view through October 30 is *Fugitive Geometries: Quilts by Elizabeth Yew*. The artist learned how to quilt in the early 1980s while stationed as a US public health service officer in Kentucky. Yew hand-stitches layers of cloth together with a running stitch, which transforms the formerly flat surface and creates textures to break up the light and make the patterns more lively and complex.

Also on exhibit from November 12 through February 12 is *Earth Soul Fire: The Ceramics of David Elcott*, having studied with master artists from the Middle East, Africa, and Asia, Elcott works with clay as a form of meditation. The Taub Professor of Practice in Public Service and Leadership at the Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service fuses his ceramic practice with a range of passions and influences, such as Bible text, social justice, and country guitar.
Set Fire to the Rain

When Austrian photographer Hans Weiss moved to New York City, its towering skyscrapers fascinated him. "As symbols of power and money, they force you to look upward and to feel small," he says. "But on rainy days I noticed they fell down into the puddles forming on the streets." So Weiss lowered his lens and began shooting the reflections—yielding glimpses into an eerie alternate world.

His unearthly photographs will be on display in Deutsches Haus at NYU from November 13 through December 22 in the aptly titled exhibition Apocalypse. As Weiss explains, "In these images New York is set on fire—with buildings and trees in flames, distorted, falling apart, or being flooded."

UNCOVERING A TUSCAN GEM

In Siena, City of Secrets (The University of Chicago Press), Jane Tylus, faculty director of NYU's Humanities Initiative, offers both an intellectual memoir and a guidebook to this medieval and modern city. A professor of Italian studies, Tylus goes beyond Siena's famous horse race—the Palio, seen here in Corrado Fornà's 1837 oil painting—to bringing to life lesser-known aspects of its past and present. The city's arts and architecture, its history as a banking capital, its saints, and its eclectic neighborhoods are all explored in the book.

UNDRESSING SHAKESPEARE

A costume by any other name would enrich Just as deeply— or so suggests a collection of essays, edited by Gallatin School of Individualized Study faculty Patricia Lassen and Belle Mirabella, on how the meaning of costumes enhances our understanding of Shakespeare's plays. Shakespeare and Costume (Bloomsbury Arden) which includes scholarly essays that weigh costume from literary, dramatic, design, performative, and theatrical perspectives—examines the historical context of clothing in the Bard's plays, delving into topics such as royal self-fashioning, festive livery practices, and conceptions of race and gender exhibited in clothing choice.

The book draws on documentary evidence in designers' renderings, printed illustrations, paintings, photographs, newspaper reviews, and actors' memoirs to chronicle costume design in specific Shakespeare productions, from the reopening of the London theatres in 1660 to the present day.

—James Devitt