



HISTORY OF ART, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY
ANNUAL NEWSLETTER
2025

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Front cover: Installation view of *Campus Collaborations / Abounaddara: The Ruins We Carry*, BAMPFA, University of California, Berkeley, October 9, 2024–February 23, 2025.
Courtesy of BAMPFA, University of California, Berkeley. Photo: Daria Lugina.

Message from the Chair

Another academic year has passed here in History of Art at the University of California, Berkeley. An academic year that takes us to the midpoint of 2025.

2025... Not just “another academic year.”

All years are unique. All years have their successes. All years have their challenges. Even in the last decade, we have weathered many, many challenges—from budget crises to climate crises, from global pandemics to state-wide strikes, from local politics to international wars that deeply affect our campus landscape. All that said, the challenge of this year has been unlike any other. And all that said, our department’s ability to remain focused on our mission and responsive to dynamic conditions has been nothing short of inspirational.

Indeed, across these pages, you will find much to inspire. Our faculty and students had already planned an incredible line-up of public programming and educational engagement. Who knew how prescient and necessary that line up would be? A one-of-a-kind exhibition on Syria. An ambitious travel seminar to Senegal. A blockbuster speaker series on “Art History and the Subject of Black Studies.” A commencement speech from one of the Bay Area’s top museum leaders. New books, new essays, new courses, new awards, and new grants on the role of the arts in relation to colonial histories, national formations, postcolonial movements, ecological conditions, rising authoritarianism, along with the longer art histories of the world’s varied political cultures. Our collective record of research, teaching, and public service is brimming with ideas that “meet this moment,” most often by learning the lessons of past moments. You will also see members of our department supporting and celebrating each other along the way— whether in a self-published journal, a festive Halloween party, a luminous assembly of news from our alumni, a backyard poster-making session, a poignant graduation ritual, and so much more.

This has been no ordinary year, and yet the History of Art department continues to be extraordinary in maintaining and mobilizing all dimensions of our enterprise. We remain committed to crafting globally relevant art histories, even as we seek to propel globally relevant art futures. To cite Professor Lenssen’s article here, we allow ourselves “to be challenged to recognize that the possibility for change still exists” ... and will always exist.

My thanks to all members of History of Art’s local, national, and international community. It is our privilege to be in service to all of you, and we are ever grateful for your support and energy as we stay the course.

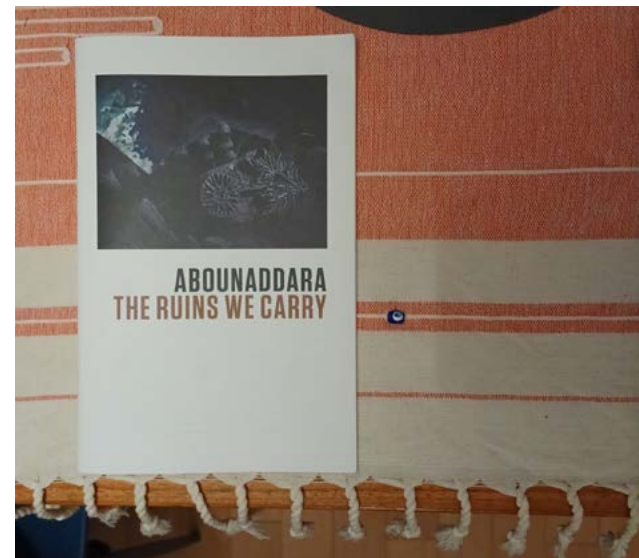
Fiat Lux,
Shannon Jackson
Chair, History of Art
Hadidi Professor of the Arts & Humanities



Anneka at the exhibition

Curating ABOUNADDARA THE RUINS WE CARRY (2025)

Around 5 pm on October 6, 2024, a crowd started to gather in the passageway of the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive. It was the opening day of the exhibition *Abounaddara: The Ruins We Carry*, the first solo US museum exhibition by Abounaddara, an anonymous collective of artist-filmmakers first formed in Damascus, Syria in 2010. My co-curator Stefania Pandolfo (Anthropology) and I had invited friends to join us and Abounaddara co-founder Charif Kiwan—the only named member of the group—for a “first look” of the new film installation, *The Iimagemaker* (2025), followed by a special screening of Abounaddara shorts in Osher Theater. Pushing our way through a velvet curtain to enter the darkened space of BAMPFA’s Gallery Three, we entered an immersive world that was inhabited by a craftsman named Abou Diab, the last practitioner of the art of woodblock stamped fabric in Damascus. We sat on the floor and watched Abou Diab labor in a dimly lit workshop, coaxing alchemical inks out of rotting, rusted matter and printing an array of cosmic shapes onto cloth. *The Iimagemaker* wove together scenes of creation taking place across workshop, urban roof, city souk, and suburban river banks under the surveilling eye of the Syrian Presidential Palace, bringing the viewer into a world of perpetual making and remaking.



Exhibition Brochure



Co-Curators at work



Smitters for Damascus (2007) screening in BAMPFA's Theater 2



Visitors watching the Iimagemaker

The Abounaddara collective, which has shown work at Documenta, the Venice Biennale, and elsewhere, is perhaps best known for the short films of everyday life they made and released to Vimeo every Friday during the 2011 Syrian Revolution and subsequent civil war. We included a selection of these shorts—portraying people engaged in efforts to live with their ruins amid turns of political oppression, revolution, and war—in the exhibition as an hourlong program that screened in BAMPFA's Theater 2 on weekends. Yet *Abounaddara: The Ruins We Carry* raised questions that went well beyond the problems of documentary praxis that initially garnered them art world attention. To make *The Iimagemaker*, a complex montage of sound and image footage collected before the revolution and sutured into a comprehensive experience, required probing the creative-destructive lives of images. Borrowing insight from Walter Benjamin, who speaks of dialectical images bringing what-has-been together with the now in a flash constellation, as well as John of Damascus's seventh-century CE appeal to "matter filled with grace," Abounaddara looked to tumult as a site for historical revelation. The exhibition at BAMPFA proved not to be "about" the brutal wars in Syria at all. Rather, it promised to figure our collective world as a ruin and to explore the possibility of its redemption (as Abounaddara discusses in their brilliant catalog essay, "Waiting for Resurrection" <https://bamlive.s3.amazonaws.com/AbounaddaraBrochureFDigital.pdf>).

In the days that followed the opening, I taught with the exhibition and received from students a number of wildly perceptive essays about *The Iimagemaker* touching on colonial divisions between arts and crafts, on anonymity as a strategy and a plight, and more. But little prepared us for the astonishing developments about two months into the



Opening of Abounaddara



Installation view of one channel of the Iimagemaker



four-month run of the exhibition. On December 8, 2024, the Syrian regime collapsed. After Syrian fighters who had kept the struggle alive in Idlib managed, against all odds, to push forward into Damascus, president Bashar al-Assad abdicated, taking off in a helicopter under cover of night. Watching the events on television and social media from afar, I saw people open up the prisons. Political detainees ran out sprinting for freedom, their bodies stumbling under the weight of their own footfalls following the physical atrophy of incarceration. The results of the November 2024 U.S. elections had left me reeling at the intensity of rising fascist sentiment, and more than a year of a war of decimation on Gaza made it hard to hope for a reversal. To suddenly see images of Syrian prisons flung open was to be challenged to recognize that possibility for change still exists. Abolition is possible, if we choose it.

One of the first things Stefania and I did almost immediately was to return to Gallery 3 in BAMPFA and watch *The Imagemaker* together in an effort to take the measure of the transformation. We again entered the immersive world of Abu Diab, who was at work, still, at the cosmic labor of dying and printing his cloth. He had not changed, and yet it seemed everything else already had. Briefly, I allowed myself to fantasize that restoring this man to a place at the pivot of an unending, creative world had put other things in the world into alignment. Had it resurrected the revolution? All exhibitions necessarily unfold over a long period of time, metabolizing changes in the political balance. But it feels rare indeed, a tender flash, to have traversed the looping, redemptive arc of this one—and to do so at Berkeley, in the company of engaged students and valued friends and, yes, undefeated revolutionaries.

Logistics for this project involved a number of what BAMPFA deems “campus collaborations.” Hatched in conversations with Charif during an earlier visit to campus, it got its formal start in the summer of 2024 when Chief Curator Margot Norton picked up our proposal and invited the collective to exhibit and developed over many asynchronous conversations about concept and space between Abounaddara, ourselves, Curatorial Associate Matthew Miranda, and others at the museum. In turn, so as to make it possible for Abounaddara to make *The Imagemaker* to their exacting sound and color standards, we submitted a successful application to the Mellon Project Grant program at Berkeley (a rare fund with a remit that supports creative and academic work together). A number of students helped us out as well, among them History of Art major Lily Belcher on graphic design.

Installation views of *Campus Collaborations / Abounaddara: The Ruins We Carry*, BAMPFA, University of California, Berkeley, October 9, 2024–February 23, 2025.

Courtesy of BAMPFA, University of California, Berkeley. Photo: Graham Holoch.





Symposium



Charif Kiwan at the Symposium

Symposium: “The Way of Images in a Time of Loss & Upheaval,” February 20 and 21, 2025

To mark the closing of *Abounaddara: The Ruins We Carry* at the BAMPFA, Stefania and I convened a two-day Symposium dedicated to exploring what we termed “the way of images” as an ethical, aesthetic, and political project. We had conceptualized the event several months earlier, but the permanent state of emergency in the world only intensified the stakes of the discussions. Although the end of Assad regime rule had come to Syria, auguring freedom, it came alongside the unending, relentless destruction of Palestine and Palestinian life, bombing campaigns in Lebanon and Yemen, and broad commitment to dehumanization and unfreedom in every domain. We felt strongly that in Syria, a new world was taking shape in joy and worry together. We wrote to colleagues that we saw images as bearing the responsibility to mourn, and to visualize the unimaginable.

Invited scholars at the Symposium took up the task with seriousness, reflecting on material and immaterial life in not only images but also other kinds of ruins. Eduardo Cadava, author of *Paper Graveyards* (2021) among many other books, gave the keynote address. The following day, a Friday, featured a full program of papers. Charif Kiwan of Abounaddara returned to campus for the Symposium, opening with a talk previewing the collective’s latest work with living archives of artisanal forms: the Damascene craft of wood mosaic, with its origins in 19th-century histories of communal aesthetics. This was followed by a panel with Niklaus Largier, Stefania Pandolfo, and myself, to which Debarati Sanyal responded. The second panel featured Ali Altaf Mian, Vyjayanthi Rao, and Natalia Brizuela, with Donna V. Jones responding. Finally, Stefan Tarnowski, Brent Eng, and Samera Esmeir presented papers, and Salar Mameni gave comments. Attracting an overflow crowd, the Symposium enjoyed co-sponsorship from the Townsend Center for the Humanities, the Program in Critical Theory, and UC Berkeley Center for the Science of Psychedelics and the Flourish Trust, as well as the departments of History of Art and Anthropology.

Anneka Lenssen
Associate Professor

Art in These Times



Our students holding the banners we made at the workshop hosted by Darcy Grimaldo Grigsby and Todd Olson
Photos: Lily Callender and Darcy Grimaldo Grigsby

While our country and our university reckon with the agenda of our new federal administration, the HA community has felt the effects—whether in threats to our international colleagues and students, in risks to the safety of our classrooms, in the elimination of academic jobs of our PhD alumni, or in the abrupt withdrawal of NEA and NEH funding to our curatorial and research platforms. Meanwhile, our HA community is responding – in teach-ing, in campus protests to federal cuts, in advising our administration and our student clubs, and in securing alternative funding to propel the cultural sector in times of authoritarianism. Here is just a snapshot of the HA community upholding and mobilizing the arts in these unprecedented times.





PERFORMANCE/ PROTEST

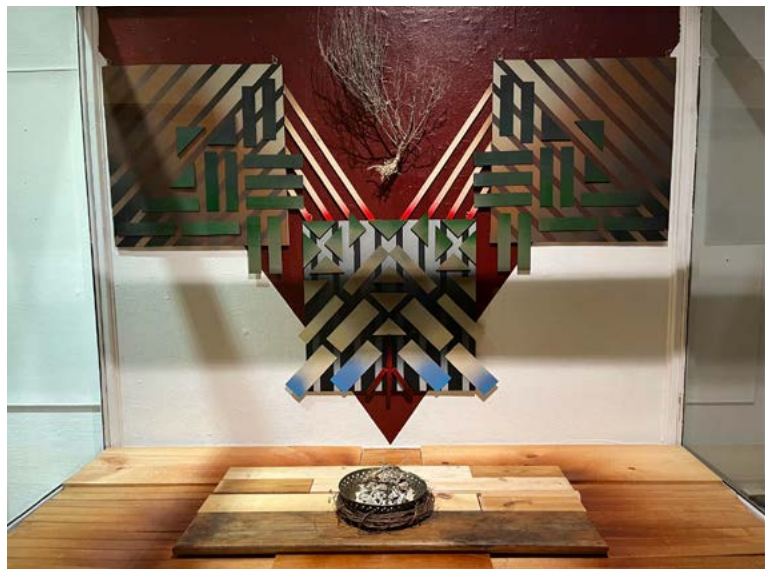
Isabella Camille Brough; Maria Cecilia Norris-Roa; Hannia Paola Jauregui Torres, History of Art Undergraduate Students, Sather Gate, UCB, April 2025

INSTALLATION

Tim Holt, Undergraduate, UC Berkeley, and Veteran The Exchange, April 2025

(industrial grade spray paint on wood, bones, lavender)

Tim writes: "The work concerns the death of PFC Morris Walker (A friend of Tim's since 2nd grade), who was killed in action in Paktika province, Afghanistan August 18, 2009 [and the ensuing deliberations about the responsibility of a soldier who had gone AWOL]. This piece was meant to talk about the levels of power that exist within our society and the illusions that hold them into place. Where there is war, justice cannot exist."



INSTALLATION

Gemma Guadalupe Padilla, Undergraduate, UC Berkeley

The Wanted, 2025

(Video projection, red paint)1

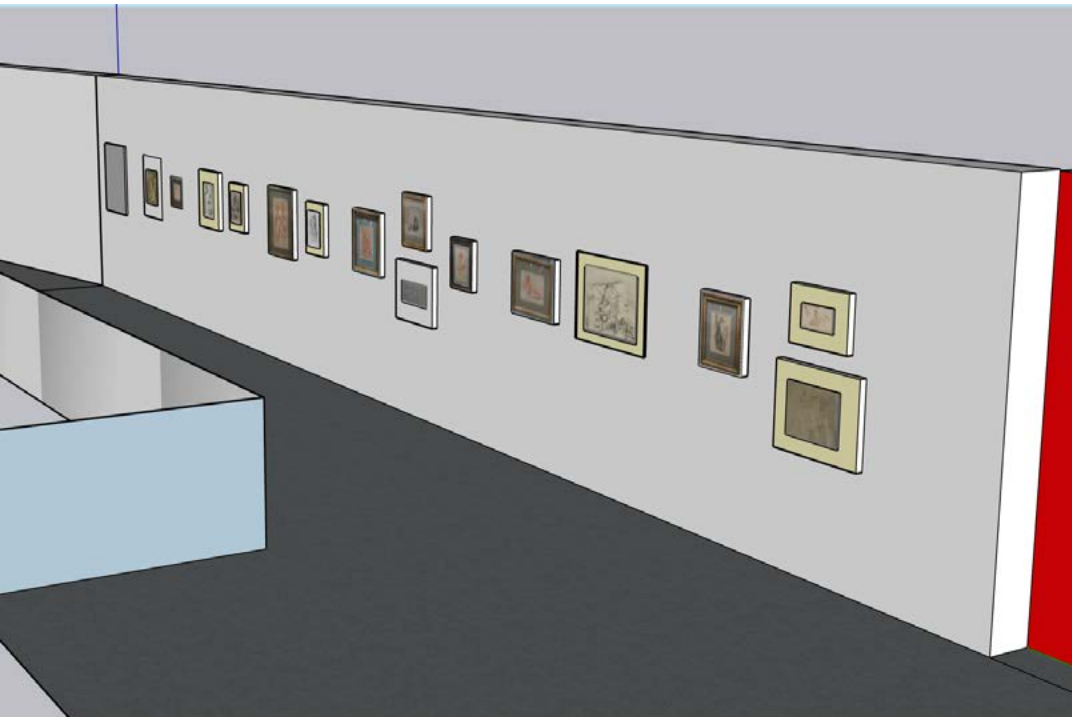


BAMPFA exhibition

Working with BAMPFA Associate Curator Elaine Yau (PhD 2015), Todd Olson curated an exhibition of drawings from the museum's permanent collection ("Lives on Paper, Drawings as Trace") for the Campus Collaborations Teaching Wall. (<https://bampfa.org/program/teaching-wall-lives-paper-drawing-trace>). The exhibition interrogated life drawing as a foundational preparatory artistic practice that ostensibly asserts masculine authority in monumental European painting, yet betrays, through its inclusion of supportive pedestals, sticks, crutches, or walls, the tedious duration of the model's labor and the physical stress of posing. Works ranged from drawings from early modern Italian workshops - gifts of Richard and Mary L. Gray - to Chiura Obata's life drawing of fellow Japanese American forced internees during World War II. The opportunity to exhibit historical works in the permanent collection, otherwise held in storage, enhanced undergraduate art history lecture courses and seminars.



Chiura Obata, United States, born Japan, 1885–1975
1st Congregational Church, 1942
Pencil on paper. Gift of the Obata Family



Sketchup rendering of the exhibition Lives on Paper, Drawing as Trace, curated in collaboration with Todd Olson, on view January 30–March 23, 2025 as part of BAMPFA's Teaching Wall series. Credit: BAMPFA



Lorenzo Lippi: Young Man Holding a Staff, c. 1620; red chalk on buff laid paper; 10 x 6 3/4 in.; BAMPFA, Gift of Richard and Mary L. Gray

GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS



Christine and part of the UMKC team at the Southern Historical Association Annual Conference, Kansas City, Missouri, October 25, 2025. (Left to right: Dr. Viviana Grieco, local historian Christopher Wolff, UMKC undergraduate Emmanuel Fabian, Dr. Alberto Villamandos, and Christine Delia)

This summer, fifth-year PhD Candidate, **Christine Delia**, will be traveling to the University of Kansas City-Missouri where she and a team of UMKC professors and students will oversee the restoration of a series of murals by Spanish Civil War exile and artist, Luis Quintanilla. The fresco murals, *Don Quixote in the 20th Century*, were completed by the artist during the University's first artist-in-residence program in 1940–1941. Quintanilla's work in exile is a central focus of Christine's dissertation and she has been collaborating with the team at UMKC for over a year, presenting at conferences with the team and giving guest lectures to students and the public at UMKC. Both Christine's short-term stay in Kansas City this summer and the murals' restoration are supported by a \$4 million Mellon Foundation Grant awarded to the city of Kansas City to preserve its cultural heritage. While in Kansas City, Christine will work with Professors Viviana Grieco (History and Latinx/Latin American Studies), Alberto Villamandos (Spanish), Joseph Hartman (Art History and Latinx/Latin American Studies), and Izabel Galliera (Art History and Museum Studies) to create educational materials for undergraduates related to the murals' history, subject matter and technique, as well as the artist's life and work in exile.

Krishna Shekhawat was awarded the Maharaj Kaul Grant in 2024 for summer dissertation fieldwork in the old walled city of Jodhpur and the City Palace Museum in Jaipur, India. She also received the Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award in 2025 for HISTART 105 Eco Art: Art, Architecture, and the Natural Environment. From 2024, she has been serving on the advisory board of the UC Berkeley Art History/Classics Library regarding library administration, Scwedia & Partners Foundation for the adoption, restoration, and adaptive re-use of an 18th century stepwell in India. From 2025, she will also begin serving on the advisory board of the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association towards the preservation, adaptive re-use and research on the historic houses and buildings of Berkeley, California designed by iconic architects such as Julia Morgan, Bernard Maybeck, George Kelham, and Greene & Greene among others.



Krishna Shekhawat

Angela Pastorelli-Sosa (2018) was a Tyson Scholar in Residence at the Crystal Bridges Museum of Art (Bentonville, Arkansas). She recently presented "(Re)Mapping Social Histories in Sandy Rodriguez's Codex Rodriguez-Mondragón" at the College Art Association's Annual Conference (NYC).



Ariana Pemberton writes: I've been quite nomadic this past month travelling down the eastern coast of India. My *current* location is in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh but I'll be taking an overnight bus to Hyderabad, Telangana tonight and then continuing back up north to Sanchi (!) after that, but overall moving around every week or so until late-May.



Elizabeth Fair delivering her paper "Carving a Cultural Landscape: Inscriptions at the Angel Island Station" at the Getty Graduate Symposium 2025 in Los Angeles.



Kevin visiting the Ajanta Caves



Elephanta Caves, just outside of Mumbai

Last summer **Kevin Morales-Bernabe** was awarded a FLAS fellowship to participate in a summer intensive program with the AIIS (American Institute for Indian Studies). He spent 2 months studying Sanskrit in Pune. This year, although he was awarded the opportunity to once again join a summer intensive program with AIIS, this time to study Hindi in Jaipur, the funding of FLAS has been frozen.

Piper Cruze Prolago (2024) spent time during the winter break traveling in the Philippines with undergraduate art history senior Marissa Lee to support research for Marissa's senior thesis.

Piper and Marissa spent time in Manila visiting art galleries and religious institutions holding collections surrounding 20th-century Filipino and Filipino-American artists. They also traveled to Negros Occidental, a province in the Visayas, to visit the Victorias Milling Company Compound. Here, they engaged with Alfonso Ossorio's Angry Christ mural at the St. Joseph the Worker Parish to consider church art and architecture made intended to serve laborers at this sugar refinery.



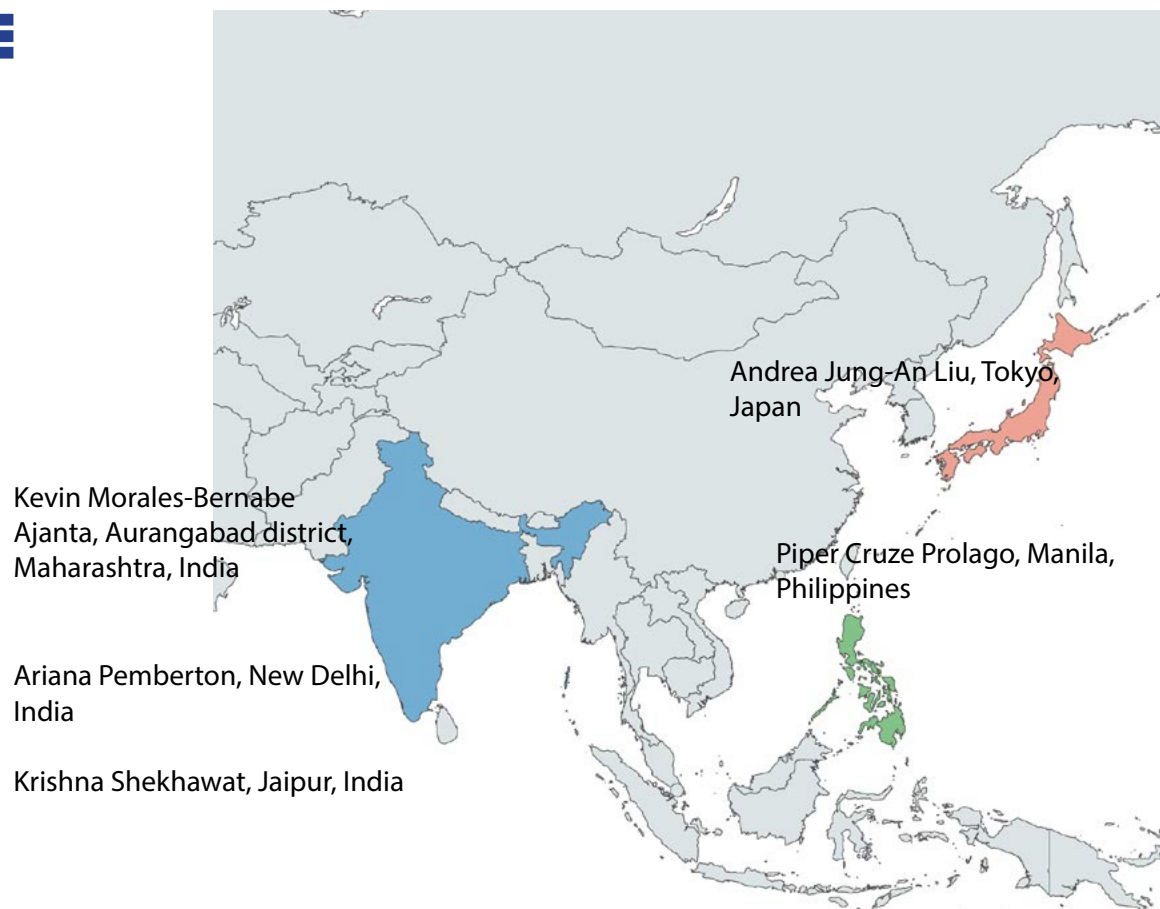
Travel Seminar to Stinson Beach



"L to R: Brishti Modak, Abby O'Donnell, Lily Callender, Piper Prolago, Ellie Penner, Kevin Morales, Sophia Sanzo-Davis"



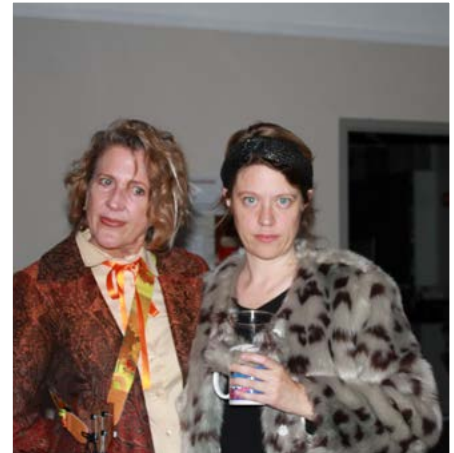
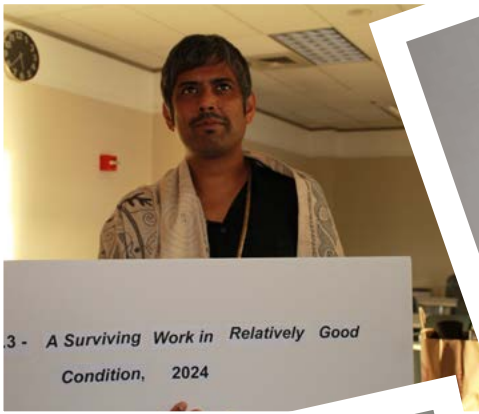
GRADUATE STUDENT TRAVELS



HALLOWEEN

This year, we held our very first department Halloween Party thanks to a wonderful suggestion from graduate student Ellie Penner. Faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates gathered in Doe 308A, transforming the space with their best art historical costumes. A wide range of artworks and artists came to life—Saturn Devouring His Son mingled with a multitude of vibrant Frida Kahlos, while an American Gothic trio strutted the runway, followed by Caravaggio's Boy with a Fruit Basket. Amidst pizza and snacks, expert judges Shannon Jackson and Anneka Lenssen faced the daunting task of selecting winners in the costume contest. With so much creativity, wit, and celebratory spirit on display, the competition was fierce. Time to start planning next year's costumes!

Lily Callender



UNDERGRADUATE NEWS

In September, the Richard Diebenkorn Foundation in Rockridge opened its doors to Berkeley History of Art undergraduates for a special behind-the-scenes look into the inner workings of an artist-endowed foundation. Sixteen students (along with Aglaya Glebova and Atreyee Gupta, as current and former Curriculum Chairs) were treated to an in-depth, two-hour tour of the Foundation's work, including a demonstration on art and archival materials, a walkthrough of content development, and a tutorial on the proofing process and color photography for digital and print purposes. After the tour, which also offered a sense of the diversity of careers in the arts, students had the opportunity to ask questions over an informal coffee with the Foundation's team.

The Department would like to express its deepest gratitude to the Richard Diebenkorn Foundation and its staff including Andrea Liguori, Mary McKinley, Katharine James, Jacquelyn Northcutt, Michael Walker, and Rakia Faber, for initiating and hosting this event.

Student quotes about the event:

Victoria Ramirez: "Getting to see first hand the process of how an artist's work is archived and turned into published books was so inspiring! I learned of new careers I hadn't considered and the team was so passionate about what they do, it made me really excited about my future career."

Lily Belcher: "It was an incredibly eye-opening experience to visit the Richard Diebenkorn Foundation and hear first hand from staff members about the different roles they play at such an intimate company. As an art history student, it is often difficult to learn about careers outside of academia, museums, or auction houses, so I appreciated having the privilege to meet the talented individuals at the RDF."

Cassandra Kesig: "Exposure to the many possibilities for arts and culture career pathways was not only instructional, but encouraging. The RDF is clearly doing some of the most thoughtful and impactful work in the art's nonprofit sphere and I am grateful to them for sharing their mission and process with us."

Josephine Chiang: "The commitment of the Diebenkorn Foundation guarantees that the artist's vision will always inspire and foster the profound appreciation of his work among next generations... Through the Foundation's work, I see Diebenkorn's legacy ongoing, bridging the gap between his enduring enthusiasm and the numerous hearts it touches today."

Aglaya Glebova
Associate Professor History of Art



H.Art Honors Thesis Symposium

H.Art's inaugural Undergraduate Honors Thesis Symposium offered an invaluable opportunity for graduating History of Art seniors to share their meticulous research and accomplishments with the greater Berkeley community. Presenters delivered engaging talks on topics ranging from Kewpie Babies to Agnes Martin. We are thrilled to establish this event as an annual H.Art tradition and are looking forward to the variety of topics our next batch of History of Art seniors will bring to the table.



Undergraduate Awards

Departmental Citation:
Amber Leah Hardisty

Valedictorian:
Cassandra Kesig

Andy Stewart Writing Award:
Daphne Chen

Cahill Prize:
Marissa Lee

Berson Curatorial Internship Award:
Sarah Elizabeth Chapman





see/
saw

History of Art Journal at UC Berkeley

see/saw is an undergraduate print journal devoted to publishing original research in art history and art criticism. Founded at the University of California, Berkeley, our publication shares innovative critical work biannually to foster intellectual discussion among an international network of students. As art historians, we are committed to diversifying the field and developing intersectional critical analyses of the artistic canon. see/saw is especially open to considerations of art and artists that have been historically erased and underemphasized.

This is H.Art's second year of publishing *see/saw*, Berkeley's premier undergraduate journal in art history and theory. The 2024-2025 issue features original research and artwork by sixteen students on an international scale.

Editor-in-Chief
Cassandra Kesig

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Kelcey Christen, Thunder Road, charcoal on paper, 18 x 24 inches.

see/saw

Revolutionary Love: The Sculpture of Adelaida Pologova

Mars Banham, University of California, Berkeley

"She avoided the sarcasm of the so-called dissident art, which built its language by appropriating Socialist Realism. In this, it seems, Pologova resolved the paradox: how can art tell a story while avoiding dull didacticism of program art and staying true to the beauty of form?"
—About My Mother, Alexey Pimenov¹

With tenderness and warmth, Adelaida Germanovna Pologova (b. 1923, d. 2008) softly holds the hand of her sculpture of the Russian poet and playwright Alexander Pushkin (fig. 1). She is accompanied by Sasha Lyagin, her dear friend, courier, and acolyte in her later years. Adelaida, colloquially known as Allochka or Alla, is poised for her photograph, smiling close-mouthed and intently while delicately grasping her sculpture's hand in a guiding, motherly way. Their touch symbolizes an intimate affinity that the two figures inextricably share, as creator and creation, mother and son. Her sculpture-child, in the likeness of Pushkin, is atop a pedestal and compositionally central in the photograph. Adelaida is proud—she retains her association with his stature through their physical engagement, but nonetheless allows

his image to stand for itself. After the completion of a sculpture, Pologova establishes relational dynamics with these figures, physically remaining in dialogue with them even after they are sold. She is cast in shadow, situated aside from the dappled rays of sunlight which brightens her creation and companion, but is content amongst the vibrant panoply of the characters that make up her oeuvre. Behind her in the upper left corner is Valentin Lebedev and His Muse (fig. 2), a 1981 bronze statuette of the foremost researcher of her life and work, accompanied by his beloved dog Artem.

The mutual devotion between man and his best friend is indicated by their respective possession of a single feathery spinal wing. Each figure requires the other to fly—without the other, their gifts are futile and arbitrary. Beside the sculpture sits what is perhaps a fragmented version or prototype of her 1977 portrait sculpture of Boris Petrovich Kocheyevskii (fig. 3). Her friend and student, Boris is depicted as gesturing feverishly with a



Figure 1. Photograph of Adelaida Pologova and Alexander Lyagin in Pologova's studio in the Vladivostok compound of soldiers' families, where Pologova and her sister once lived until her death. Date unknown, likely the 1980s or 1990s.



From Mars Banham's *Revolutionary Love: The Sculpture of Adelaida Pologova*.

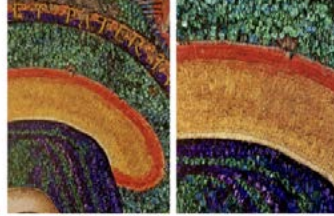
and his brother-in-law Jean Turpin (fig. 4). Weeping Virgin is just one of many devotional images made in New Spain by indigenous artisans and amateurs, but that originated from Christian European prints. "Once it was engraved in the atelier... and had traveled to New Spain... it [was] passed into the hands of Juan Castejo, who again endowed the image with its chromatic power, through the radiant properties of feathers."¹⁰



Figure 4. Weeping Virgin and Juan Turpin, Weeping Virgin, ca. 1590, engraving after a drawing by Under-Gods, High Renaissance, Mexico.

From an early date feathers became the material par excellence to refer to America in general and to New Spain in particular;¹¹ and so early as the 1500s, European engravings and prints were sent to Mexico, and Mexican featherworks arrived in Europe due to the socio-political, "exotic," and luxurious value of the works. To Europeans, feathers represented a souvenir of colonization—a precious, rare, physical piece of the New World. As Luisa Elena Alcalá describes, "it is evident that during the viceregal period, plumes were highly prized as an exotic material for a Creole and European

Figure 5. Details of the Weeping Virgin's feather halo.

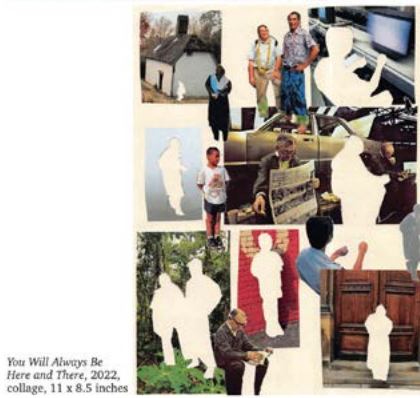


From Allyson Oh's *Feathers and Shells: How Indigenous Identities are Protected and Reinforced through Labor and Medium during Spanish Colonization*.

Yanessa Gem Ilaga University of California, Berkeley



This Means Nothing, 2023 collage, 11 x 8.5 inches



You Will Always Be Here and There, 2022, collage, 11 x 8.5 inches



Figure 1. Nguyễn Phan Chánh, *Young Woman at a Well*, gouache on silk, 1939, 33 x 40.5 cm. Private collection. In Vietnamese painting, from a volume co-edited by Caroline de Murat and Nguyễn Phan Chánh, *Young Woman at a Well*, 2015, 168.

as the imperial examinations had ceased before his eligibility.¹ Nguyễn Phan Chánh has been designated a master of silk painting, a skill he took pride in as it was a traditional form of painting for him and Vietnam itself.² Nguyễn Phan Chánh was educated at *École des Beaux-Arts de l'Indochine*, or The Indochinese School of Fine Arts, further referred to as EBAL. Under the founder of this colonial institution, Victor Tardieu (1870-1937), students were taught western practices under traditional French pedagogy. Nguyễn Phan Chánh would continue his work as a painter after his graduation in 1930, concerning himself with the rurality of Vietnam, highlighting a setting seemingly lost to the modernization

of Hanoi which fascinated his contemporaries.³ This traditionalist perspective offered the artist a medium that would lead to the painting discussed here, *Young Woman at a Well*, a 1939 gouache on silk painting currently held in a private collection (fig. 1). This piece captures the viewer in a young woman's pensive and romantic gaze. This figure is seated at the side of a well, her left arm crossing her body to rest on its basin, not quite touching the water, while her right arm folds under her chest, hidden from sight. Rendered with calligraphic quality not otherwise obvious in the rest of her form, her face engages in a moment of contemplation and thought. Nguyễn Phan Chánh expressed this skill in her

From Michael C. Terrenzi's *A Feminine Rapprochement Between Colonial Values and Vietnamese Tradition: How Art and Literature Portray the Modern Woman of Colonial Hanoi*.

Native Images, Civil Images:

Art Education in Indian Boarding Schools

Sophie Jorcino, University of California, Davis



As He Entered the School in 1882.

TOM TORLINO-NAVAJO

As He Graduated Three Years Later.

Sophia Lavrov

University of California, Berkeley

Saint Sophia: The Divine Wisdom

2024, oil on canvas or panel with gold leaf, 11 x 14 inches



Looking Up



Oh Well



Pretty Girls Make Me Cry



Well

Memory & Remembrance Amid Ephemerality:

Beijing in the 1990s
Through the Works of
Zhang Dali, Yin Xiuzhen,
and Song Dong

Chloe Zhong, University of Chicago



HONORING THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE TEACHERS WHO SUPPORT, TRAIN, AND INSPIRE OUR TRANSFER STUDENTS

Amber Hardisty, a transfer student who joined the Art History Department in Fall of 2023, thanks Professor Carolyn Martin of Berkeley City College for encouraging her to reach for UC Berkeley. Amber was the recipient of this year's Departmental Citation.

Carolyn Martin (MFA in Painting, MA in History of Theory of Contemporary Art, San Francisco Art Institute, PhD in Visual Arts, Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts, David Driskell Fellow and 2024 Ted Coons Dissertation Prize Winner) is an educator and artist who has had an incredible impact on Berkeley City College's Art History students.

I began to study under Professor Martin during my first semester of city college in 2021. Although the class was remote, her experience in teaching carried through the computer screen without fail. Through that class, Professor Martin presented ways of nuanced seeing that fundamentally changed the way I experience the world of art and media around me and convinced me to change my major to art history.

Once we returned to in-person classes, I continued to take more of Professor Martin's courses, and found that she was the perfect person to help mentor me towards transferring to a four-year university. She was always ready to offer support and advice, whether it was a simple conversation after class or encouragement to apply for my dream school and not settle for anything less. I credit her with building up the confidence I needed to push myself forward, and I'll never forget how she cried out of excitement when I was accepted. She was the first person in this field whom I admired and felt recognition from in return, and I hope to one day be able to positively influence someone else's education in the same way she did mine.



Professor Carolyn Martin of Berkeley City College

Ellie Greene, a transfer student who joined our department Fall 2024, thanks her teacher Dr. Catherine Anderson for encouraging her to apply to U.C. Berkeley.

Dr. Catherine Anderson (BA, MA in Art History, UC Davis, Ph.D., Brown University) taught at her alma mater, U.C. Davis, for over 15 years before moving to Sacramento City College (SCC). She says that she decided to teach at a community college because she thought that she would be able to make a bigger impact on her students. As one of those students, I can fully attest to her impact.

Of all the professors I encountered at SCC, Dr. Anderson was one of the most committed to her students' continued success. She often started the semester with a warning that her classes were going to be difficult and a reminder that her goal was to prepare us as future art historians. I credit her teaching style with my ability to immerse myself in classes at UC Berkeley, as I was prepared for the demanding workload and challenging content. Dr. Anderson was also the club advisor for the

SCC Art History club, an organization that we founded together in my last year. She helped build a forum for students, even those who had never even heard of Art History, where we could come together and learn, discuss, and laugh about art through the centuries.

Dr. Catherine Anderson is the reason I go to Berkeley today. She was the first professor who made me believe I could attend a top University and the first person I told when I was accepted. Her exact words were "They would have been fools not to take you and you would be a fool if you don't go." Well, here I am, and I can only hope to continue to make her proud.



Ellie Greene and Dr. Catherine Anderson at Sacramento City College

STRONACH TRAVEL SEMINAR

Foregrounding a transnational framework, the 2024 Stronach graduate travel seminar, "Un/Worlding Contemporary African Art," was led by Professors Zamansele Nsele and Ivy Mills. The first half of the seminar examined Negritude and Pan-African festivals in the twentieth century that played a foundational role in the development of contemporary African art. Our starting point was the 1966 First World Festival of Black Arts (FESMAN), held in Dakar, Senegal. Accordingly, we planned our class trip to Senegal to coincide with the Dak'Art Biennale, originally scheduled for May 2024.

After nearly a year of trip planning, we were thrown a curveball: the recently elected government of Senegal decided to postpone the Biennale three weeks before it was set to open. We then scrambled to rethink our plans. Would we reschedule our trip for the new Biennale dates in November 2024, or would we go in May as originally planned? We learned that many of the auxiliary exhibitions and events would still take place in May. There are hundreds of artists, galleries, museums, and other art spaces that independently organize performances, conferences, exhibitions, and other events to coincide with the official Biennale; these self-funded events take place all over the city and are grouped under the "OFF" designation. Many of these events could not be canceled at such short notice - investments had already been made, artworks had been shipped, plane tickets had been bought - so they were held even though they could no longer be linked to the Biennale. While we all wanted to experience the complete Biennale, some of us could not travel in November. We decided to split the group up and plan two trips: Ivy would lead the May trip, and Zama would lead the November one.



MAY TRIP

Jasmine Nyende (MFA student), Valencia James (MFA student), Michele d'Aurizio (History of Art PhD student), and Darian Longmire (Assistant Professor of Art Practice) joined the May trip led by Ivy.

Our May trip exceeded our expectations; there was so much going on that we wanted to see and not enough hours in our short visit to do everything - but we certainly tried! We attended the jam-packed premiere of Dahomey–Mati Diop's award-winning film on the restitution of African artworks–at Cheikh Anta Diop University, alongside students who challenged the director in a lively conversation after the screening. The screening resonated deeply with our course unit on contemporary artists' engagement in struggles for restitution, and extended the student debates Diop included in the film. We contemplated Aliou Diack's ambiguous, earthy Pelerinage paintings, exhibited in the courtyard of the Maison Ousmane Sow, the former home and studio of the renowned Senegalese sculptor, now a museum where visitors encounter his ensouled figures face to face. At the workshop of curator and textile designer Aissa Dione, we watched weavers at work at different types of looms and marveled at the integration of contemporary installations by Elolo Bosoka and Ibiye Camp into the environment of the atelier. Exhibitions on Afropolitanism, Ecole de Dakar painter Souleymane Keita, and reimagining the museum reactivated our course conversations in wonderful and unexpected ways.

Ivy Mills

Continuing Lecturer, History of Art



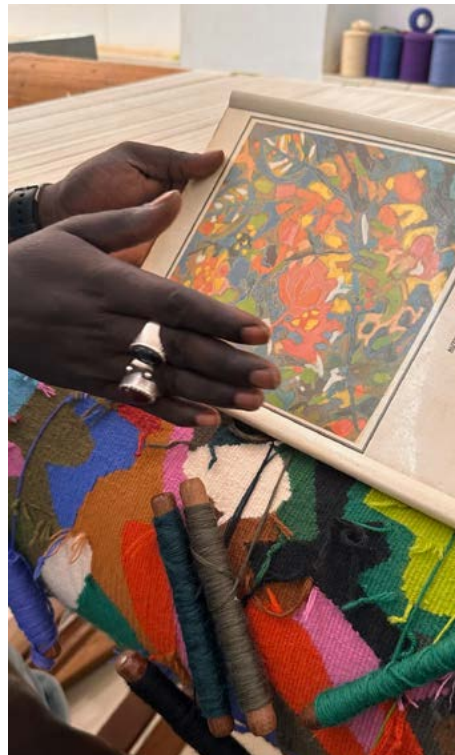
NOVEMBER TRIP

Salimatu Amabebe (chef, MFA student,) Bryant Terry (chef, MFA student), Zana Sanders (PhD student), Alexandra Gessesse (PhD student), Joseph Rager (PhD student), and Zekarias Thompson (MFA student) joined the November trip led by Zama.

We landed mid-morning to a sunny and laid-back Dakar, our program commenced shortly thereafter. We were warmly welcomed at the Raw Material art centre with a talk on the art ecosystem of Dakar, which was accompanied by a guided exhibition tour. This combo set the stage for our immersion into the city's art scene. Later, we enjoyed a flavorful introduction to Senegalese cuisine at the famous Chez Loutcha, the 'Mafe' and 'Yaasa Poulet' dishes were a firm favourite amongst the chefs in the group. At the heart of our seminar lies the art history of the Dakar Biennale. In 2024, it was themed "The Wake" under the curatorship of Salimata Diop. Over several days, we spent considerable time and lost track of time at the Ancien Palais de la Justice, a brutalist style building hosting the 2024 Biennale's exhibition. Built in 1957 as a colonial courthouse and repurposed in 1966 for the Negritude-inspired exhibition "Tendances et Confrontations" at FESMAN. The Palais looms as a colonial edifice, saturated with competing art and political histories. It is a building highly charged by a nostalgia and melancholy of a bygone era. In our study, "Tendances et Confrontations" marked a pivotal moment in African art history, having directly sparked discussions and debates about the definition of 'African modernism' and 'contemporary' African art. Today, under the same ceiling, a splendorous display of artworks addressed contemporary themes of water, climate change, mourning, legacies of social upheavals and extractivism. We also explored events in the fringe program, experiencing the Biennale's dynamic and multifaceted nature. We spent an entire day outside of Dakar at the MSAD Thies Tapestry Centre and at Gorée Island where we travelled by ferry.

Zamanele Nsele
Assistant Professor, History of Art





Judith Lee Stronach (1943-2002), art historian, journalist for Amnesty International, and teacher, was committed to effecting social change through the arts. The fund enables Berkeley's History of Art department to offer annual faculty-led on-site study weeks focused on direct experience of art, architecture, and sculpture throughout the globe.

History of Art Lecture Series 2024-2025

What are the intersections between Art History and Black Studies? Focusing on the theme of *Art History and the Subject of Black Studies*, the Department of History of Art's 2024-25 lecture series brought renowned scholars, critics, and curators to Doe Library to explore the many ways in which Black Studies offers a critical art historical lens and challenge traditional accounts that exclude or misrepresent Black artistic contributions and perspectives. Themes ranged from medieval Islamic talismans to modern and contemporary art as speakers considered how Black artists and their work have been historically situated within Art History, as well as how the discipline has engaged with marginalized Black experiences.

The stakes of the topic, in the words of the speakers:

Race Before Algorithms: On Medieval Talismans | Lamia Balafrej, University of California, Los Angeles

"Medieval talismans have generally been defined as efficacious, prognostic artifacts, endowed with protective or therapeutic qualities—all in all, as powerful yet politically rather benign objects. Few scholars have expanded the discussion to consider, critically, what remains a talisman's essential operation: creating, indeed sensing, a distinction between

ART HISTORY and the Subject of BLACK STUDIES

Tuesday, October 29, 2024

Lamia Balafrej
University of California, Los Angeles
"Race Before Algorithms: On Medieval Talismans".



Wednesday, November 13, 2024

Eddie Chambers
The University of Texas at Austin
"Keith Piper's 13 Killed and the Challenge to the Art School".



HISTORY OF ART LECTURE SERIES, 2024-2025

Thursday, February 27, 2025

Andrea Myers Achi
The Metropolitan Museum of Art
"Africans in Byzantium: Kings, Merchants, and Holy Men"

Stoddard 2025 Lecture



Wednesday, March 12, 2025

Huey Copeland
University of Pittsburgh
"From the Object of Art History to the Subject of Black Studies"



All Events
308A Doe
5:00 p.m.



Lamia Balafrej delivering a lecture

insider and outsider. This talk will explore potential examples of talismanic discrimination from the Mediterranean to Southwest Asia with an emphasis on frontier talismans, considered in tandem with medieval conceptions of race, ethnicity, and foreignness. A comparison with predictive algorithms, known for perpetuating racial bias, will also prove helpful in teasing out the medieval specificities of race-making technologies, while providing a transhistorical, contrastive framework for understanding race as technology.

Keith Piper's 13 Killed and the Challenge to the Art School | Eddie Chambers, The University of Texas at Austin

"In the early 1980, Keith Piper, then an art student at Nottingham Trent Polytechnic, produced a remarkable piece of work. The work was titled '13 Killed' and was a tribute, a memorial, to the short lives of thirteen youngsters of Black Caribbean heritage, who perished in a dreadful house fire in New Cross, southeast London, in 1981. There were suspicions among Black people that the fire was a result of a racist firebombing of the party that was taking place in the house that became such a catastrophic inferno. Using assemblage and mixed media, Piper created an astonishing work that addressed the tragedy but also, importantly, went against the grain of the dominant art school ethos that sought to perpetuate an ivory tower ethos and shied away from forthright social interventions in the art school studio. Over four decades after the making of the work, this talk will examine '13 Killed', its original context, and the ways in which it represented a formidable challenge to the art school."



Eddie Chambers talking with Zama Nsele

Africans in Byzantium: Kings, Merchants, and Holy Men | Andrea M. Achi, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

"In Fall 2023, The Metropolitan Museum of Art presented the critically acclaimed exhibition Africa & Byzantium, which explored complex connections between North and East African communities and Byzantium. This landmark exhibition included significant loans from thirty-six lenders, including prominent institutions in Tunisia and Egypt. Reviews highlighted not only the visual splendor of the artworks but also the growing interest in the African individuals who commissioned, traded, or were depicted in Byzantine art. This talk builds on the research conducted for the Africa & Byzantium exhibition, offering new case studies that examine the visual and literary portrayals of Africans within the Byzantine context. Dr. Achi will also address the challenges of revealing these often-overlooked narratives from an art historical perspective and provide insights into the broader implications for understanding cultural interactions in the medieval world."



Guest lecturer Andrea Myers Achi

STODDARD LECTURE 2025

DARCY GRIMALDO GRIGSBY'S INTRODUCTION:

What a delight to welcome back one of our department's illustrious PhDs. Huey Copeland graduated in 2006 with a position already secured at Northwestern University where he taught from 2005 to 2021; between 2021 and 2024 he had an appointment at University of Pennsylvania. He is now Andrew W. Mellon Chair and Professor at the University of Pittsburgh.

Among Copeland's publications are *Bound to Appear: Art, Slavery, and the Site of Blackness in Multicultural America*, (University of Chicago Press, 2013); *Black Modernisms in the Transatlantic World*, a volume of essays co-edited with Steven Nelson, 2023; and two books forthcoming spring 2026: an edited volume of essays, *October File: Glenn Ligon*, and *Touched by the mother: black men, american art, feminist horizons*, a long-awaited, utterly bracing collection of Copeland's essays written since 2003 up to the present (University of Chicago Press).

Huey Copeland is a superb scholar and critic of contemporary art. I pause because Copeland's scholarship fundamentally challenges us to face the vexing question: should he/we specify that his focus is contemporary Black art or that he is a Black critic, add queer, add male? What is gained and what is lost by underscoring the Blackness of the art and the author? Should art and author be marked while white supremacy remains unmarked (to rely on the linguist Lynda Waugh)? Copeland asks himself again and again whether his field is art (and art history) or Blackness (and Black studies). His scholarship asks if he can speak both at once. His thoughts have varied over time...his thinking has radicalized, and his voice has become more outspoken, sometimes raw, but always complex and thoughtful. Brilliant, restless, suspicious of consoling narratives, Huey Copeland continually challenges himself and he gives us, his readers, the gift of entering his capacious thinking, his shifting beliefs, and his acute awareness of his own scholarly and personal evolution amid shifting political landscapes.

My 2022 book *Creole. Portraits of France's Foreign Relations in the Nineteenth Century*, acknowledged how long Copeland has been my interlocutor. In 2015, I dedicated my *Art Bulletin* essay, "Still Thinking about Olympia's Maid," "to Huey Copeland because we have conversed about this painting since he was the graduate instructor for my 2002 lecture course on Art and Colonialism. I thank him for his work and friendship." Today I once again say thank you.



Huey Copeland's stimulating Stoddard Lecture entitled "From the Object of Art History to the Subject of Black Studies" drew a large audience of faculty and graduate students from numerous departments on March 12, 2025. His seminar the following day, "Blackness and other Aporias of Continental Philosophy" was also lively and well-attended.



Graduate students converse and laugh with Huey after seminar.

HUEY COPELAND'S THANK YOU:

thank you all for hanging out, arranging such a swell time, and for showing the love! i can't say how energizing it was to get a berkeley audience's feedback on this new project and to be back where it all started.

being physically in town spurred all kinds of memories (and not just of lois the pie queen): i vividly recall meeting ruthie gilmore outside of chowchilla women's prison and running into anne [Wagner] and tim [Clark] in san francisco post-9/11 to protest the war on terror, underlining how the "berkeley way," for me at least, often meant melding the intellectual with the activist.

it's great to see that tradition carries on, especially given the sharpness and commitments of your wonderful students. i am so honored to be part of this community.

The Mary C. Stoddard Lecture Fund was established in 2002 with a bequest of Mary Stoddard to provide a visiting lectureship in the history of art, with a focus on decorative arts, Islamic arts, and the history of textiles. Mary C. Stoddard received her B.A. in the History of Art from the College of Letters and Science at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1947. She was a designer, builder and manager of residential properties, and also an art historian, specializing in the decorative arts and in textile conservation. She traveled widely and was very active in the art world of the Bay Area, including the Hearst Museum, the de Young, and the Asian Art Museum.



Mary C. Stoddard

As the program continues into its second decade, we recognize the far-reaching generosity of Mary Stoddard and thank her family for their annual presence at the prestigious art history lecture series that her endowment makes possible.

Commencement



Shannon Jackson, Chair, History of Art



Lesdi Carolina Goussen Robleto
Ph.d. 2025



Cassandra Kesig, valedictorian



Makeda Best, keynote speaker



Makeda Best

Deputy Director of Curatorial Affairs
Oakland Museum of California

Commencement Address

Following are keynote speaker Makeda Best's prepared remarks for Art History's commencement ceremony on Monday, May 19, 2025:

It's an honor to be with you this morning.

The invitation to speak to you today coincided with my agreeing to co-author a new book about having a career in the humanities today. In order to write it, I've been reflecting on my own professional emergence during a difficult period in American history. The book starts in fall 2008 when I was a graduate student at Harvard University. September 2008 was an exciting time – the world seemed to be moving toward something new in the arts. "Social practice" artists were challenging boundaries of making and of looking and of materials. Museums were opening newly designed campuses, and drawing new audiences. A headline for 2008 article in *The New York Times* asked, "So is the *M.F.A. the new M.B.A.*?" "Left-brain work," the article continued. -- the kind done by the logical, linear part of the human brain -- can increasingly be done more efficiently by computers or technocrats abroad. In response, in fields like the automotive industry, and businesses have begun turning the helm over to creative thinkers and artists." My field, photography, was finally and quickly moving from being a field dominated by a few curators and guided by a few books, into something else that felt more critical and robust, and vital to the contemporary world.

What happened next was the global financial crisis of 2008. Words and phrases trickled across the screen on the news shows: "housing bubble," "subprime loans," Washington "Lehman Brothers," bank failures, "Big Three" bailout. I tried to keep up, but wasn't sure how I would be impacted. Anyway, I was busy writing my dissertation and I was working as the head graduate teaching fellow

for the art history survey. My days were spent organizing objects for installations and sections for the nearly 300 students and my 5 teaching fellows. The class was so popular that on the first day of shopping, the fire marshal came because there were students in the aisles. Even if they had no intention of being art historians, students were interested in the material. Students would say they felt that taking such a course was part of the college experience, what it meant to be a smart and responsible person. At the end of lecture, students often applauded the lecturer before leaving the auditorium and spilling out into the sunny street. Every week dozens of them would request to swap sections – they wanted to go up to New Hampshire, they explained, they were knocking on doors and "organizing" for Barack Obama. The crisis continued, and even though it was happening, it felt somehow old and past, a part of a version of America that wasn't going to survive anyway, like surely the election would fix that too.

That's not what happened, of course. The period of economic decline that followed the financial crisis of fall 2008 soon had a name: the Great Recession. At the time, it was the "unprecedented" event. It was the thing that was supposedly a surprise, but whose red light was flashing all along. 2009 was the first year since World War II that the world was in recession, a turn around on the boom years of 2002-2007.

In my world, I returned to campus in the fall of 2009 to be head teaching fellow again, this time for a different

course. I excitedly anticipated the same crowds of students and broad enthusiasm for the survey course, this time for a survey on photography. But, turnout was shockingly low, barely 60 students. Campus was subdued, everyone was talking about STEM education and jobs in Silicon Valley. This time students weren't talking about taking our courses as an important part of their college experience. Instead, they talked about how it was time for safe bets – courses that would directly benefit their careers in the non-humanities fields. I wondered about my own decision to study art history, and if I'd weighed it carefully enough. I wondered what I would be doing if I wasn't pursuing a PhD. I'd spent years taking my time exploring different arts careers. I'd worked at an art school and thought I would go into educational administration. I'd worked in arts grantmaking. I'd worked for an art magazine, I'd gone to art school. I wondered what it all added up to and I felt the conspicuous absence of having anything to "show" for it. In mid-October 2009, there was a freak white out snow storm.

What I thought I was observing on campus – student skepticism about the humanities – was actually fact. While the Humanities were doing well prior to 2008, with the economic decline, that changed. All of the sudden, STEM was everywhere. Someone somewhere thought it could be clever to add "art" and to make it STEAM, but that never really caught on. I loved art history, but the "Humanities" more broadly wasn't something I thought about, nor did I think about or articulate why I thought the humanities mattered to society or maybe I just assumed that it was obvious.

The time to decide to finish my dissertation and graduate (i.e. get a job) arrived. Only, there weren't any jobs. Finishing was a conscious decision, because I knew I didn't actually have to finish in May of 2010. The expectations may have been outlined in my admission

offer, but there was plenty of evidence that students didn't actually finish in five years. It was easy to wait for better conditions – when the jobs came back, when this, when that – a time that was probably around corner, we sat around saying. Being in school gave me an identity, and clear milestones. What happened next is I decided to finish my dissertation and to graduate, to finish anyway despite not knowing at all what I was going to do.

My grandparents on both sides had grade school educations. Their grandparents had been enslaved people. Pursuing a doctoral degree was the stuff of their wildest dreams. Without a job at the end of all that study, I felt like I let them down. I remember going to my advisor,

Robin Kelsey's office, in the days after the ceremony and he greeted me as "Dr. Best." He must have saw the look on my face because he then said, it doesn't seem like it now, but all of this, what you did, it does mean something.

I went home. What happened next is, I had to learn to make it mean something, and eventually, I stopped thinking about what "success" or "the right path" looked like, and how others had defined it. At every one of the milestones that I passed, I realized I had concocted something in my head about what it would mean, and the day when I reached the milestone would come, and it would go. And then I would just start thinking about the next one. And on and on.

I was on a path, but I hadn't stopped and tried to understand what made it mine. Being out of school and not having a sense of what I was going to do or "be" yet was scary. Facing the unknown was also familiar. In art school, and in my life making before then, I'd always started out with nothing. Photography, the medium I focused on for my studio art degrees, is a lot of trying and waiting. Processing film, printing and drying your photographs, with analog photography, you literally

There doesn't have to be one path, and everything doesn't hinge on one decision. The only thing, the one constant is you

count the minutes, and you do it again and again and again. You throw stuff out all the time. You have an image in your head of what something will look like, it doesn't look nearly as interesting when you make it, and so you begin again. The picture you actually like is often the one in the next frame. Now, in my "real" life, I could notice the times of trying, the waiting, and what could be seen as a "waste" of time, of materials, always in the end brought me closer to something that mattered to me. So, as I returned home, I began to think what led me to all of this, and what had I actually wanted from it?

I thought about what inspired me to study photography: the PBS Civil Rights history documentary series Eyes on the Prize first aired, and magazines like Vanity Fair. I didn't know that there was something called "the history of photography" or where to learn about it – in those days, there was one survey book anyway - but I knew then I wanted to learn more about the images. My photographic education came more from a learned sense of photography in the world. Through magazines and books and making myself, I'd pieced together my own personal curriculum. That education taught me about how photography could tell the American story. It taught me lessons about how contradictions could be held with great beauty within a frame.

Back home in 2010, I looked back on these experiences that led me to pursue photography, and I knew I wasn't wrong. I knew I was also lucky – I'd found something in my life that fascinated me, and I knew that many people never have that and that many people never have the luxury of having it – like my grandparents. I was even more connected to them than I knew. It wasn't the degree that was the big achievement, that was just the end result, the piece of paper. The achievement, what they and their generation gave me, was the freedom to

discover and to think that following my truest passion was even possible. That was their wildest dream.

Eventually I got the tenure track job, did the peer reviewed book. And then I left teaching full time to become a curator. Eventually, I threw out the 20 or so banker's boxes of paper that had amassed in the process of writing my dissertation and then book. Somehow, I felt

attached to those boxes of paper, as if I needed proof of what I had done. I had to let go of the feeling that I needed to keep those boxes of paper, that I had to do another book with that material because there was plenty of material there, because that would be "the thing to do." And it turns out, now one of the two books I'm working on is the follow up to my first book about Civil War photography. But it's different, and I'm starting new. It's hard right now, but I know what will happen, I'll try, some things will work out, some things won't. I'll begin again.

The other book I'm writing isn't at all about the Civil War. For two years, I've been working with predoctoral fellows at the Smithsonian American Art Museum as an advisor. Because of that work, my co-advisor and I were approached and asked to write about this – about what happens, about having a career in the humanities and what that means today. The point of the book is that the research, the information gathering, all of that is a muscle that you learn to use. That's the part that's just work. The part about what is true to you is the hard part. There doesn't have to be one path, and everything doesn't hinge on one decision. The only thing, the one constant is you – what drives you, what brought you here, and the question, what is the vision that you want to share?

Thank you for sharing part of your special day with me. Congratulations to you, and to your families.

My photographic education came more from a learned sense of photography in the world. Through magazines and books and making myself, I'd pieced together my own personal curriculum.

FACULTY NOTES

Diliana Angelova
Associate Professor
Early Christian and Byzantine Art

For Diliana Angelova, the 2024-2025 academic year combined productive research with meaningful scholarly engagement.

In August, an Abigail Hogden Publication Fund grant enabled her to gather colleagues and experts to review her draft book manuscript on the enduring legacy of classical art and culture in Byzantium. She will continue honing its arguments and revisiting her old stomping grounds during her upcoming sabbatical year at her doctoral alma mater in Cambridge, Mass.

In fall 2024, she published an article in a volume on Byzantine gender and sexuality that prefigures some of the book's arguments on the meaning of Byzantine classicism. Angelova also advanced her work on Rome's trade connections with ancient India. She presented her findings on the ancient Red Sea ports of Myos Hormos and Berenike at the Stanford symposium dedicated to the 75th anniversary of Braudel's *La Méditerranée*.

She expanded her research interests and broke new historiographic ground with a paper on the meaning of racialized figures in Byzantine erotic art for the *Unruly Iconographies* conference organized by the Index of Medieval Art at Princeton.

She continued her work as editor of *Studies in Iconography: A Journal of Medieval Visual Cultures*. Volume 46, featuring seven splendid articles and several book reviews across 278 pages, will be published in time for at the annual Medieval congress in Kalamazoo, MI.

Angelova standing in front of the Deësis mosaic (the Virgin Mary and John the Baptist interceding for humanity with Christ), 13th c., the galleries of the Mosque of Aya Sofia, formerly the Church of the Holy Wisdom of God, June 2024.





It has been a wonderfully busy year for Aglaya. In addition to traveling to Uzbekistan with the Stronach graduate seminar in Spring, she visited Venice in the summer, where he got to see a major exhibition of Uzbek art from the 1920s and 1930s. While there, she was delighted to run into PhD student Michele D'Aurizio at the Biennale.

In July, Aglaya stepped into a new role as Faculty Director of the Institute of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ISEEES). Among the highlights of the Fall semester at the Institute were an interdisciplinary fieldwork research workshop for graduate students and a collaboration with the PFA on a Sergei Parajanov symposium, which accompanied the Centennial screening series. With the co-sponsorship of History of Art, ISEEES hosted stimulating book talks by Christina Kiaer and Adair Rounthwaite.

Adair also visited Aglaya's undergraduate seminar on modern sculpture, gender, and materiality. As part of the seminar, we enjoyed an in-depth Curator's Tour of the To Exalt the Ephemeral exhibition by Berkeley PhD student Tausif Noor, recently appointed BAMPFA Curatorial Associate. Aglaya gave talks on sculpture, gender, and materiality in Soviet art at Amherst and Wesleyan, as well as the Department's Brown Bag colloquium in the Fall. She also delivered talks by Zoom at China's Design Museum, Princeton, and the Free University of Berlin. When it came to in-person experiences, she was very happy to reconnect with fellow Berkeley PhDs Karl Whittington, Daniel Marcus, and Erica Levin in Columbus, Ohio, and Stephanie Pearson in Berlin.

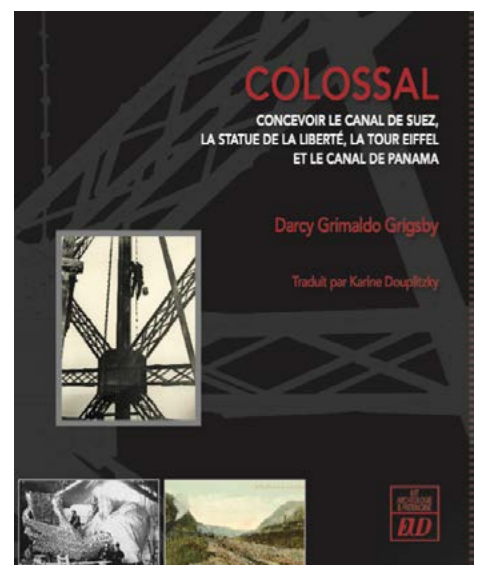
Aglaya was thrilled that her book on Aleksandr Rodchenko received the 2024 Best First Book Prize from AATSEEL (American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages). In 2025, she is on sabbatical in Munich and Berlin, working on a new project on energy and exhaustion in the art and architecture of the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc. She has been getting used to real winters again.

Darcy Grimaldo Grigsby
Professor
European and American Art
Since 1700

The inimitably named Daniel Peacock, Assistant Curator at the George Eastman Museum, visited me last fall to study my collection of thousands of amateur, handcolored photographs. I am delighted that my gift to the museum will be celebrated by a lavish publication of my book, *HANDCOLORED: When People Painted on Camera's Photographs. (1839-1960s). A Love Letter and a Looking Book (forthcoming fall 2026)*. I continue to derive utter joy from these odd, humble, amateur objects.

If *HANDCOLORED* elicits laughter and release, returning to the magisterial painting *Oath of the Ancestors* (1822), an homage to the Haitian Revolution by the Guadeloupean painter Guillaume Lethière, son of a slave and French planter, has been sorrowful. The painting has undergone so many assaults: slow deterioration followed by the earthquake of 2011 that killed 300,000 Haitians and broke the painting's back. French conservators skillfully mended the battered canvas and the Louvre has just mounted their first exhibition in Lethière's honor, a remarkable achievement initiated by the Clark Art Institute, specifically Olivier Meslay and Esther Bell. The sumptuous accompanying catalogue includes my essay stemming from a 2002 publication and a chapter in my recent book *Creole. Portraits of France's Foreign Relations in the Nineteenth Century* (2022). But political crisis in Haiti prevented the painting from traveling; I stand in the Louvre on opening night mourning its absence. I have never seen the painting itself. Recognition of Lethière has also been compromised by conservative politics in France, including those in the Louvre. The exhibition was warmly received in the U.S. but almost no reviews have appeared in the French press. A solitary and reactionary French critic gave me what many call "a badge of honor" by castigating my essay in particular. He decried my "scandalous" observation that the icily blanced, blonde God figure functions as a white Father overseeing his black and brown sons. How shocked are the privileged when the unmarked are marked. Thankfully, a much needed conference at the INHA brought together scholars committed to the history of empire and its ongoing impact, including Haitian art specialist, Carlo Célius.

This year I also contributed two essays to the catalogue for *Discover Degas* and *Miss La La* at the London National Gallery of Art. And finally the French translation of my 2012 book *Colossal. Engineering the Suez Canal, Statue of Liberty, Eiffel Tower and Panama Canal* was just released by Presses Universitaires de Dijon as *Colossal. Concevoir le Canal de Suez, la Statue de la Liberté, la Tour Eiffel, et le Canal de Panama*. This book is entirely indebted to Karine Douplitsky who received her Ph.D. in our department and also remarkably has been trained as an engineer. I thank her for her initiative and hard work.

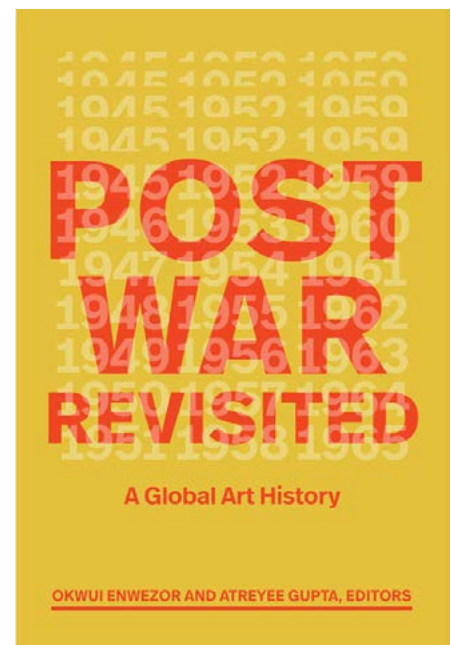
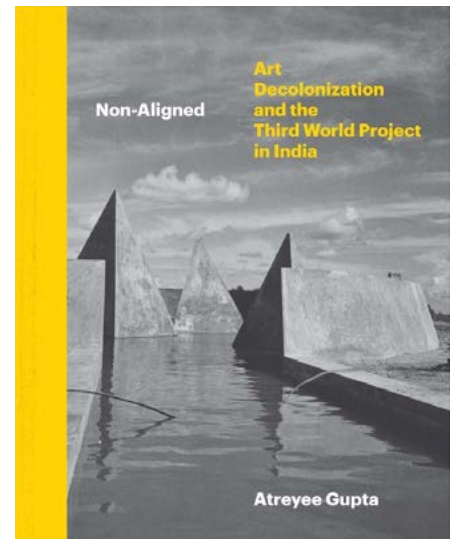


Finally, let me say how much our young students continue to inspire and energize me—I include a photograph of students in my lecture course on late 19th-century French art who attended an optional discussion on a rainy day during Thanksgiving week. Even now, despite a pervasive grief, I am immensely gratified by what we do.



Atreyee Gupta
Associate Professor
Global Modern Art; Modern and Contemporary
South and Southeast Asian Art

2024-25 was Atreyee's first academic year as Associate Professor, one that ended with the publication of *Postwar Revisited*—A *Global Art History* (Duke University Press), which she was co-editing with Okwui Enwezor at the time of his passing in 2019. She is now looking forward to the publication of another book, her first monograph, *Non-Aligned: Art, Decolonization, and the Third World Project in India* (Yale University Press), which is slated to be released in Fall 2025. That aside, she celebrated the achievements of her students: Among other highlights was Tausif Noor's appointment as Curatorial Associate at the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive and Brishti Modak's leadership at the Eighth Annual Berkeley/Stanford Symposium. She was delighted to welcome her advisee Ellie Penner, who completed her first year in the History of Art Department. As this academic year draws to an end, Atreyee is looking forward to her upcoming sabbatical, which will give her the much-needed time to focus on researching and writing a new book on South Asian American art.



Jun Hu
Assistant Professor
Chinese Art and Architecture



Jun Hu with students from his graduate seminar “Currents: Painting in Seventeenth-Century China” at the Berkeley Art Museum & Pacific Film Archive. Photo credit: Elaine Yau, Associate Curator and Academic Liaison, PhD Alum, Class of 2015.

Jun Hu spent the academic year 2024-2025 on leave. While the much-needed respite allowed him to continue to work on his book *The Perturbed Circle: Chinese Architecture and Its Periphery*, he also conducted archival research on his next project which looks at Japan’s production of art historical knowledge, circa 1910-1945, as its engagement with archaeological fieldwork became increasingly intertwined with colonial expansion and technologies of an all-out war. The time away also made it possible for him to study and write about the work of Lee Kang So (b. 1943), the Seoul-based artist whose retrospective *Where the Wind Meets the Water* opened at the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea in November 2024. He returns to teaching this year. Among other things, he is extremely excited to revisit BAMPFA’s wonderful collection of Chinese painting with students from his graduate seminar “Currents: Painting in Seventeenth-Century China.”

Shannon Jackson
Hadidi Professor, Chair, and Affiliate Faculty
Contemporary Art, Media, and Performance



Shannon Jackson continued to serve as Department Chair for the History of Art, the most important element of her professional (and even personal) life this year. It has been quite a time, and she appreciates the incredible commitment of staff, students, and faculty in helping us all maintain an even keel during a dynamic year. Along the way, Shannon was privileged to serve on several advisory boards and to speak at a variety of venues, including keynote lectures for the Dis:Connect platform at the University of Munich (LMU), for ZKM (Center for the Arts of Media) as a Kuratorium member (Kalsruhe), for the American Society for Theatre Research (Seattle), for "Exhibition Ecologies" at the Documenta Institut (Berlin), and also as a keynote lecturer for Musik Installationen (Nuremberg). In the domain of campus service, Shannon also took over leadership for the Environmental Arts and Humanities Initiative and was privileged to lead an array of programming and a faculty/graduate seminar on the subject, including a camping trip to the UC Blue Oak Ranch Reserve. As co-PI with Judith Butler, Debarati Sanyal and Denise Ferreira da Silva, Shannon received a large \$2.6 million Mellon grant on the role of the social role of the arts in the United States entitled, "A Counter Imaginary in Authoritarian Times."

In the domain of international public service, she was privileged to serve as a lead evaluator for the European Research Council in Brussels, Belgium, ultimately distributing over 22 million euros to worthy projects throughout the European Union. She was recently named a Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholar; in that role, she will deliver public lectures on the arts, performance, ecology, and social engagement at colleges throughout the country in 2025/26.

Shannon continues to serve on the boards of BAMPFA, the Minnesota Street Project Foundation, the Kramlich Art Foundation, and other sites committed to the role of the arts in public life.





Lauren and her son Isaac fighting arrival jet lag at Andechs Monastery.

During the 2024 to 2025 academic year Lauren Kroiz returned to the department after a year on sabbatical and a few others in campus administration. This year she's especially grateful to be teaching undergraduate classes on women's suffrage, feminism, race, and representation, alongside a graduate seminar on utopias. Lauren also completed research travel for her new book, tentatively titled *Living Power: Women's Suffrage and Modern American Art*, traveling to New York and Framingham, Massachusetts to learn more about sculptor Meta Warrick Fuller. She authored the lead catalogue essay for an exhibition on Thomas Hart Benton's Western painting. A highlight of Lauren's year was a trip with her kid that included historic Bavarian beer and pretzels, a talk about the High Sierra at an interdisciplinary conference on mountains in Salzburg, and her first visit to Vienna.

Henrike C. Lange
Associate Professor
Italian Renaissance Art and
Architecture

2024-25 marked the beginning of Prof. Lange's first sabbatical. Periods of intensive research in Europe were interspersed with time spent recovering historical materials from the department's former *Phototeca* and archive. The tight schedule was determined by [Moffitt Library prior to its closing for renovation](#). The basement housed long-forgotten collections, notes, donations, and papers by Walter Horn, Jean Bony, Darrell Amyx, Leopold Ettlinger, Michael Baxandall, Loren Partridge, Andrew Stewart, and Grace Fisher Richards (Julia Morgan's UC Berkeley sorority sister in the 1890s).

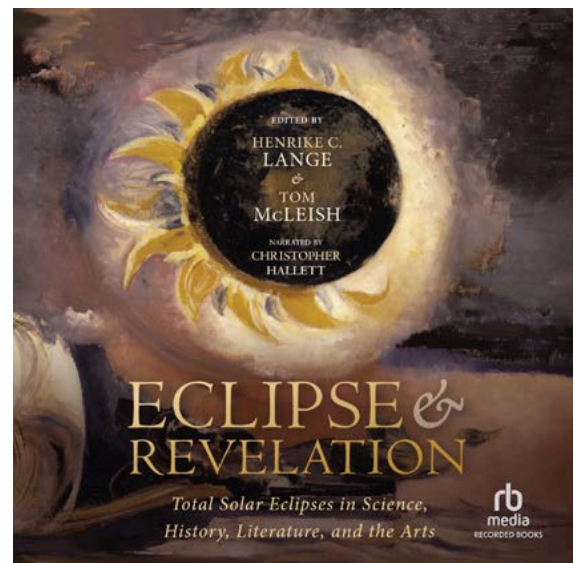
One new publication aligns with Lange's stewardship of this archive: "*Berkeley als geistige Lebensform: Alfred Einstein's Arrival in the Bay Area*," discussing émigré German-Jewish Italian Renaissance musicologist Alfred Einstein (in: *Alfred Einsteins "Das italienische Madrigal"*, ed. Bolz).

While the LA fires delayed long-planned work at the Getty, spring 2025 remained dedicated to fieldwork for Lange's projects in painting, sculpture, and art/science-humanities. In London, the National Gallery's "Siena" exhibit and the Science Museum's "Versailles: Science & Splendour" (on court artists / scientists) exemplify her current interests.

Finally, the solar corona keeps illuminating Lange's sabbatical. The [Summer 2024 York Festival of Ideas \(UK\)](#) gave Henrike an opportunity to report on her US-Southwest book tour for her new volume, [Eclipse & Revelation](#). The York festival premiere was delivered in dialogue with curated video clips featuring her co-editor Tom McLeish FRS (1962–2023). Lange's time in Europe was then dedicated to the preparation of the eclipse manuscript for producing an [audiobook, narrated by Chris Hallett](#) (ID Studios, London) and released by RB Media.



The Sunset View Cemetery seen from the location of Alfred Einstein's grave in El Cerrito (Photo: HCL).



Audiobook cover for *Eclipse & Revelation*.



It has been a year of oscillating between the enduring joy found in teaching students at UC Berkeley and the intensifying pains we feel in the struggle to defend public education. A highlight amidst it all was the exhibition *Abounaddara: The Ruins We Carry*, which Anneka Lenssen co-curated at BAMPFA and which culminated in a symposium, “The Way of Images in a Time of Loss and Upheaval” (described elsewhere in this newsletter). Other good moments included travel to give a number of talks: at Cornell in the Fall as part of an ARTMargins workshop on archives of modern art in the Global South, and at Swarthmore, MIT, and Carleton College in the Spring. Anneka marked the new calendar year by submitting the enormous, multiply authored and co-edited volume *Chronicle of the 1980s: Representational Pressures, Departures, and Beginnings in the Arab World, Iran, and Turkey* to the American University in Cairo Press. She is enjoying her year as a Townsend Fellow, and has endeavored to devote the time recovered from teaching to writing her second monograph, *Modern Art in the Breach: Baghdad, 1941-1945*. In April, she will give a lecture on aspects of this story at the Giacometti Foundation, Paris, and hopes to combine the trip with a stop in Alexandria, Egypt, to see a few surviving paintings from the period. Finally, Anneka was immensely flattered (shocked, really) to be named the recipient of the 2025 Faculty Award for Outstanding Mentorship of GSIs, an award based on nominations from her own GSIs and students past and present.

Margaretta Markle Lovell
Professor
American Art and Architecture

During fall 2024 Prof. Lovell taught a new graduate seminar, “Land, Landscape, Art,” that took field trips to resource sites such as the Rumsey Map Collection at Stanford and that produced wide ranging research on Cherokee cave art (and Josiah Wedgwood), Middle Mississippian Mounds (and the early Smithsonian), Western Survey art and photography, Iranian mapping practices, and early twentieth-century German emigre architects adapting European Modernism for the American Southwest. In terms of research Lovell’s *Painting the Inhabited Landscape: Fitz H. Lane and the Global Reach of Antebellum America* was recognized by Historic New England with a book prize, lecture, and article. A Black woman from Gloucester, MA, and a contemporary of Lane’s who married an *Arap* (a Tsar’s footman) is the subject of her next book, a topic touched on in the documentary film about the African diaspora in Europe, “We Were Here” screened on campus in February and sponsored by the Jay D. McEvoy Chair. Locally, the ongoing Two Neighborhoods public art history project, enabled by a Mellon Foundation grant, resulted in a lecture, brochure, and self-guided tour for 600 of the university’s neighbors. In the spring Prof. Lovell introduced about 100 members of the public, on site, to the Temple of the Wings, a revolutionary house designed by Bernard Maybeck and built in 1911 in Berkeley without bedrooms, kitchen, or exterior walls, embodying a utopic vision of domesticity unencumbered by the complexities of cooking, bric-a-brac, or furniture.



“Land, Landscape, Art” Seminar at Stanford’s Rumsey Map Collection

Zamansale Nsele
Assistant Professor
Modern and Contemporary African & African Diasporic Art



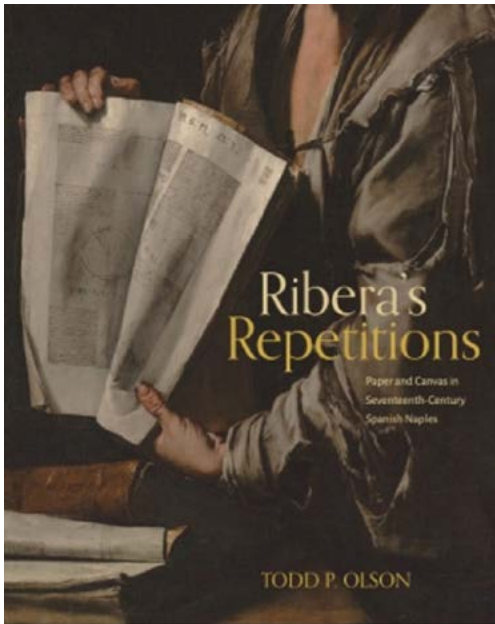
This photo captures a moment of anticipation before ascending the "208 steps" to the base of the African Renaissance Monument.
Photo taken by: Dr. Tadiwa Madenga

My year was defined by new roles and responsibilities! In the Spring of 2024, I organized and chaired my first panel at the CAA Conference: "New Wave Global Blackness and Contemporary Art Without Borders." The session had a great attendance, the four papers presented were brilliant, and the panelists traveled from diverse locations, including the UK. It was also a pleasure to reconnect with colleagues and friends from the CAA-Getty Travel program. At the book fair, I engaged in productive conversations with editors at publishing presses regarding the publishing process, this was highly informative for my ongoing research.

I also had the privilege of co-teaching the Judith Stronach Travel Seminar on contemporary African art—culminating in my trip to the Dakar Biennale in the fall and Ivy Mill's trip in spring 2024. This marked my first experience leading an international group seminar. More details about the Stronach Seminar and our trips are shared elsewhere in this document.

I was honored to accept invitations to speak at the University of Chicago and Wesleyan University about my essay from *The Imagined New*, a book I co-edited. Additionally, the California State University in Sacramento invited me to discuss an essay I wrote for MoMA on the artist Gladys Mgudlandlu, South Africa's pioneering Black female modernist landscape painter. I also participated as an interpretation partner for Leilah Babirye's exhibition, "We Have a History," at the de Young Museum—a sculptural exhibition that offers a queer perspective on African history and archives. In the fall, I began my role as Resident Faculty at Christian Hall, where I engage with undergraduate students who have an interest in art. We hang out and paint on Monday afternoons, and each semester, I take them on several art walkabouts to various Bay Area art museums.

Todd Olson
Professor
Early Modern Art



This was a year of RIBERA! My book *Ribera's Repetitions: Paper and Canvas in Seventeenth-Century Spanish Naples* (Pennsylvania State University Press) was released in January 2025. I also contributed an essay in the exhibition catalogue, *Ribera. Ténébres et Lumière* (Petit Palais, Paris 2024-25), and during two trips managed to visit the quite fabulous Paris exhibition curated by my friend Annick Lemoine, including in the company of our PhD's, Karine Douplitsky (2020) and Thadeus Dowad (2022).

My work on seventeenth-century artists also included a catalogue essay for the forthcoming catalogue, *Painting, Power, Performance: Simon Vouet (1590-1649)* (Petit Palais, Paris and Legion of Honor Museum, San Francisco, 2026-27), curated by Emily Beeny, and an article "Touching Stone: Rembrandt's *Aristotle with the Bust of Homer*" *Oxford Art Journal*, forthcoming 2025.

Isabella Lores-Chavez, Associate Curator of European Paintings at the Legion of Honor Museum, visited my undergraduate seminar dedicated to Still Life. She shared her practice-based art historical research and expertise in Netherlandish art. Sim Hinman Wan (Visiting Asst. Professor, University of Pittsburgh), who investigates early modern colonial Dutch Indonesia, shared his research with the seminar (by Zoom).

Returning to Caravaggio, I participated in a Jubilee year colloquium organized by the French Academy

(Villa Medici) and the French Embassy in Rome. I joined the advisory committee for a "Summer University" for international PhD candidates at the National Institute for Art History (INHA) in Paris. It was a great pleasure to direct the proseminar with the incoming class of graduate students. In the Berkeley tradition of amazing grad cohorts, Piper Cruze Prolago, Hannah Jasper, Abby O'Donnell, and Ellie Penner bonded, who also welcomed Bayan Seidalina (University of Oslo) and Sofia Sanzo-Davis (African American Studies & African Diaspora Studies). Finally, I directed a record-breaking five richly diverse undergraduate honors theses!



It is a habit of mine to go for a walk in the Palais Royal pleasure gardens every afternoon at five, whatever the weather. That's me you see there, always by myself, daydreaming on d'Argenson's bench. I have conversations with myself about politics, love, taste or philosophy. I give in to my mind's every fancy. - Denis Diderot

Lisa Pieraccini
Continuing Lecturer
**The Material Culture of the Ancient Mediterranean,
Etruscan and Roman Art**

Lisa is enjoying her recent and current seminars...from her Digital Humanities, Cultural Heritage & Art History (spring of 2024) to her spring 2025 seminar on The Etruscans: *Pasts, Present and Futures*. Students in the Etruscan seminar are partaking in a special Etruscan exhibit that will take place in spring of 2026 in the Doe Library (artifacts will be coming from the Hearst Museum's Etruscan collection). A related article by Lisa, "(Dis)Embodied Etruscans: Ancient Caere in the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum," highlights some of the terracotta votive heads students are currently studying. In the fall of 2025 Lisa will be teaching a special seminar on *Collections, Curation & Provenance* which will be part of a student pilot program for MAPRA (Mediterranean Antiquities Research Alliance). These activities are connected to a large international Etruscan exhibit which will open at the Legion of Honor in San Francisco in the spring of 2026. The Mario Del Chiaro Center, for which Lisa is Interim Director, along with planning the Del Chiaro Annual Lecture (May 2, 2025) keep her very busy! Since 2022 Lisa serves as the President of the Archaeological Institute of America's San Francisco Chapter and organizes, with a fabulous team of graduate students, several lectures a year on campus - scholars from various fields and time periods participate annually. With a United States Capitol Historical Society Fellowship, Lisa is studying depictions of Native American Women in the US Capitol and will travel to DC again this spring. She enjoys her role as a council member for the Chancellor's Native American Advisory Committee here at UC Berkeley. And finally, she is extremely grateful for the undergraduates at UC Berkeley and their growing interests in the material culture of the ancient world!

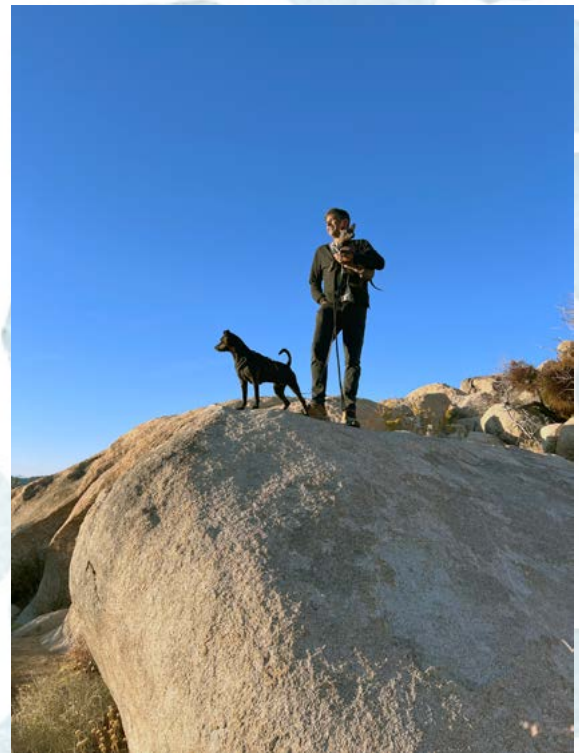


Sugata Ray
Associate Professor
South and Southeast Asian Art

Discussing the little cat that was observing the naked philosopher in his Paris apartment, Jacques Derrida famously noted: "The animal looks at us, and we are naked before it. Thinking perhaps begins there." Inspired by the Xōlōitzcuintli psychopomps Che Guevara and Xipe Totec, thinking with—rather than of—the nonhuman animated Sugata Ray's research, teaching, and service last year. Among the many public talks that Sugata delivered this year was a keynote at the Lahore Biennale on cross-species intersubjectivity and the Commencement Address in the Department of South & Southeast Asian Studies. His publications included an essay on the now-extinct dodo and Dutch bioimperialism in the *Journal of Early Modern History* and a catalog essay on avian precarity for an exhibition at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. As the Faculty Director of the South Asia Art Initiative, Sugata continues to organize talks, coreferences, and Scholar and Artist Residencies at UC Berkeley to foster interdisciplinary research and creative collaborations on the arts of South Asia and its diasporas. He also served on the North Field Clean Energy Plant Program Committee and on the Executive Committee of the Designated Emphasis in Renaissance and Early Modern Studies. He was thrilled to join the editorial board of the Royal Institute of British Architects' *Journal of Architecture* and Brill's *Studies in Art & Materiality* book series.



Sugata Ray at the mausoleum built by the Mughal emperor Jahangir for his beloved antelope Hansraj in Sheikhupura, Lahore. Photo: Ming Tiampo

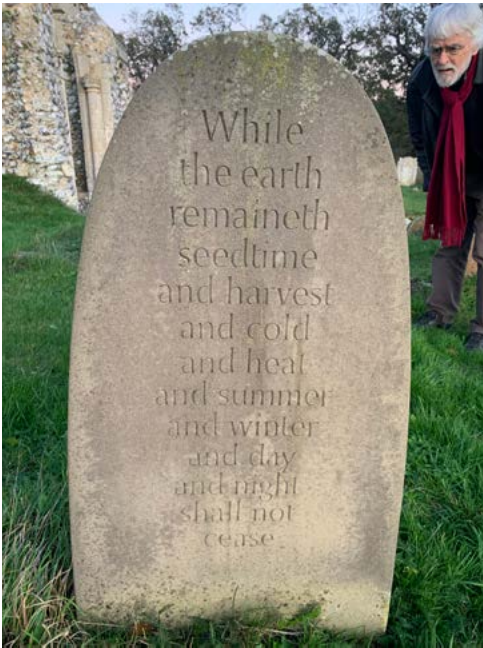
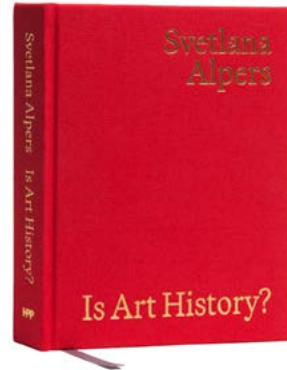


Che Guevara, Xipe Totec, and Sugata Ray contemplating ecological configurations at the Joshua Tree National Park. Photo: Atreyee Gupta

Emeriti

SVETLANA ALPERS

Svetlana Alpers *Is Art History: Selected Writings* was published by Hunters Point Press in September, 2024.



TIM CLARK

A book entitled *Those Passions: On Art and Politics* was published in spring 2025. It gathers essays written over the previous 25 years. I went on writing for the *London Review of Books*: 'Knife at the Throat' (on Frantz Fanon) appeared in September 2024, and 'A Brief Guide to Trump and the Spectacle' in January 2025.

WHITNEY DAVIS

In July 2024 Whitney was awarded a Distinguished Scientist & Scholar Award from the NOMIS Foundation, Zürich, a multi-million-dollar grant that will support a five-year multi-institutional project on "depicturation"—the idea that pictures we've seen substantially affect the way in which we see the "real" (or extra-pictorial) world. The idea has appealed anecdotally to art historians—in a sense, it is the basis of their very profession—but it remains controversial among psychologists and anthropologists. Little is known about its evolution in deep human time and its cross-cultural and sociological diversities. The project will explore the theme through conferences, publications, faculty buy-outs, interviews with experts, and research collaborations. In 2024, Whitney lectured on the topic in Cambridge and Brno and at the NOMIS Awards ceremony in Zürich. His book *Visions of Art History* is forthcoming from Edinburgh University Press; it contains eighteen chapters dealing with the ways in which art history and cognate disciplines conceive the relations between "visual art" and "visual perception." In the past year he also presented talks and completed publications on the use of color in modern abstract sculpture, prehistoric hand-axes and the "origin of geometry" in human artifacts, Greek sculpture and Freudian/Kleinian ego theory, "queer art history before queer art history," Ragnar Josephson's theory of artistic creativity, private collections of homoerotic art in Weimar Germany, and institutionalized practices of attentive and non-attentive "looking" in art history.



Whitney speaking at the Sir John Soane Museum, London, July, 2024. Still from documentary film on Whitney's work. © gropperfilm/NOMIS 2024.



Whitney Davis (right) speaking at the NOMIS Distinguished Scholar & Scientist Award ceremony, Zürich, October 17, 2024 (left to right: Helga Nowotny, former chairperson of the European Research Commission; Andrea Ablasser, University of Lausanne; Elena Conti, Max-Planck Institute for Biochemistry). Photo: David Biedert, NOMIS Foundation.

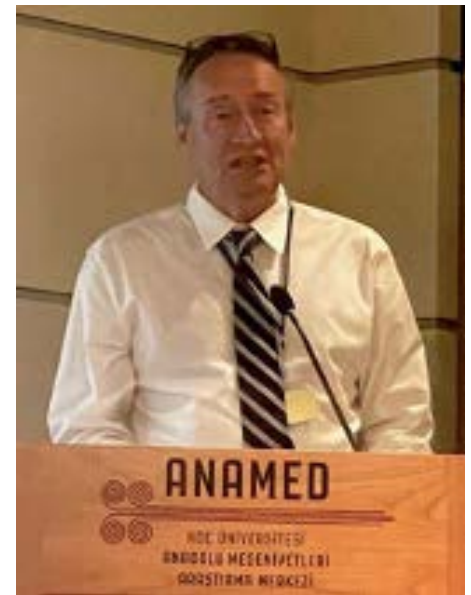
CHRIS HALLETT

In June 2024 Chris spoke at two conferences, in Flensburg (Germany) and Paris, showcasing his recent work with Rubina Raja on Caesar's Forum in Rome. The Flensburg lecture will be published in the conference proceedings, due out in 2025.

July saw the fourth and final trip of the Getty Travel Seminar, organized together with R.R.R. Smith and Esen Ogus, visiting sites around the Sea of Marmara. The trip concluded an international symposium, held at ANAMED (Beyoğlu) in Istanbul (see photo).

During the summer Chris conducted fieldwork in Aphrodisias in Türkiye; and in September gave a lecture at the Legion of Honor in San Francisco, 'Archaic Wooden Statues in Augustan Temples, 36-20 BC'. Afterwards he traveled to London to record his second audiobook: Henrike Lange's *Eclipse and Revelation*.

In December 2024 Chris spoke on 'Painted Portraits and Individualized Roman Mummy Masks' at a conference, *Portraiture on the Peripheries*, held at the Royal Academy in Copenhagen; and in spring 2025 he delivered two lectures in Rome: the first at John Cabot University, the second at the Finnish Institute in Rome—the keynote address for the workshop, 'Urban *loca amoena*: Rome, Ostia and Pompeii'; he also participated in a 'Scholars' Day' at the Art Institute of Chicago, accompanying the exhibition, *Myth and Marble: Ancient Roman Sculpture from the Torlonia Collection*.



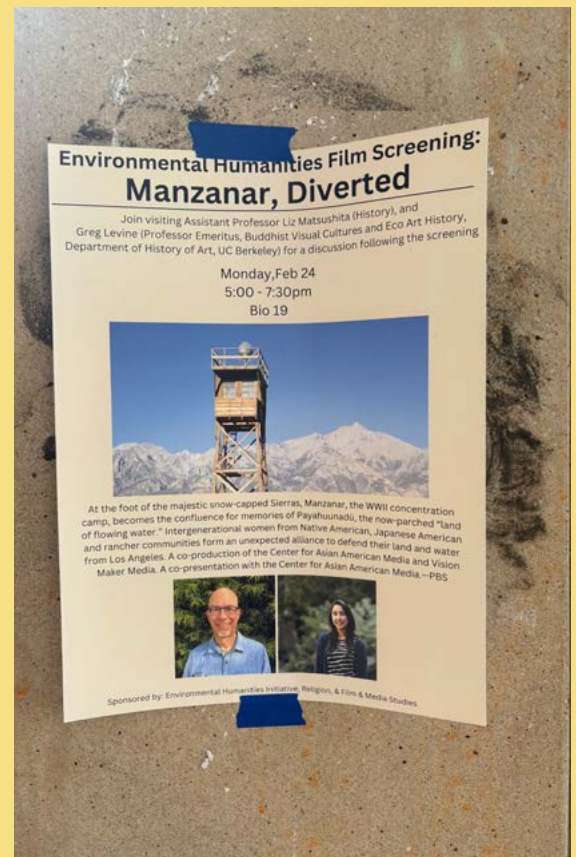
Chris at the concluding symposium of his Getty funded Project, 'The Many Lives of Ancient Monuments'.



At the temple of Hadrian at Cyzicus, Türkiye

GREG LEVINE

All roads (well, Interstate 5, that is) seem to lead Levine to Reed College, which quite pleasantly involved bumping into Berkeley grads-now-faculty, including Michelle Wang, Shivani Sud, and Juniper Harrower. Last fall Levine gave an invited lecture at Reed on a statue of a Buddha (a "prison Buddha") carved in 1942 by a Japanese immigrant unjustly incarcerated without due process and right of habeas corpus at the Manzanar concentration camp. Topic and timing were by intention: "Never Again!" is, yet again, a matter of *right now* in the so-called (but fascist) "land of the free." Levine was back at Reed in February to be respondent for a screening of the film *Manzanar Diverted* (dir. Anne Kaneko) for the Environmental Humanities film series; visit Shivani and Dana Katz's class, "Ecocritical Art Histories," which offered an inkling of Reed's teaching/learning environment; and to hand-off a friend's Japanese Koto gifted to Reed's Music Department. Somehow PDX food continues to outshine the Bay Area. Long-planned March and April trips to Joshua Tree (continuing desert walking and writing) and to Yale (reprising Manzanar's "prison Buddha") nudged Levine out of Oregon; then it was back home for the glorious summer.



ANNE WAGNER

What was certainly the most important of my art historical achievements was the submission of my most recent and very likely my final scholarly work. To be published by Yale New Haven in the autumn, it is titled "Sculpture and the Making of the Human." Each chapter treats a different material used by sculptors and traces the various ways artists have used it over the millennia (sic). I have pinned down what scholars understand as the earliest uses of each of the traditional media.

Anne Wagner with Sanjukta Sunderason, Jordan Troeller, Kajri Jain, David Getsy, discussing Kyoko Tonegawa's *Primeval Breath*, c. 1988, at the "Restoring 'Human' To Art History" Conference at Yale University, October 21, 2022. Photo by Kevin Hong.

Undergraduate Alumni News



Leah Binkovitz

Leah Binkovitz (History of Art, '10), a senior editorial writer at the Houston Chronicle, has been awarded the 2025 Pulitzer Prize for Editorial Writing as part of the Chronicle's editorial board. The winning series, "Dangerous Crossings(link is external)," exposed critical failures in rail safety in Houston's East End, including the tragic death of Milby High School student Sergio Rodriguez, and helped prompt a \$350 million grant program approved by the Texas Senate to improve pedestrian safety statewide, as reported by the Houston Chronicle.

After writing her honors thesis, which compared viceregal entrance ceremonies (*Entradas*) in colonial Mexico to contemporary Latinx art ("Ritualized Space and Spatialized Ritual: The Weapons of State and Resistance from New Spain to the United States-Mexico Border"), Leah went on to a career as an investigative journalist and entered a Sociology doctoral program at Rice University. In an email to her thesis advisor Todd Olson, Leah wrote about her plans: "This may seem like a big jump from art history, and in some ways it is. But what I loved about art history was its ability to read personal as well as larger social narratives into a single work of art. I see that same intersection, the person and society, in the areas of sociology that interest me: namely how we live today and why. I'm interested in urban sociology, race and identity and neighborhoods." As a graduate student, she wrote: "The other day a professor made an offhand comment about how ill-prepared a student of sociology might be had they majored in art history, and I had to laugh because most of my theory readings thus far have leaned heavily on things we had already begun to engage as art history undergrads. We know better. And of course, the writing...oh the writing. I continue to value the rigor of art historical writing that actually forces the author to sit down and see, not just think. Way too few students and scholars do this, and it hampers their research at every step, I think. That same professor then talked about his studies of people who cross the U.S.-Mexico border regularly and well... turns out he is interested in hearing more about my art history thesis and thinking about getting it in shape for publication."

Ashley Heng (BA 2024, MA Candidate, University of San Francisco, Urban & Public Affairs)

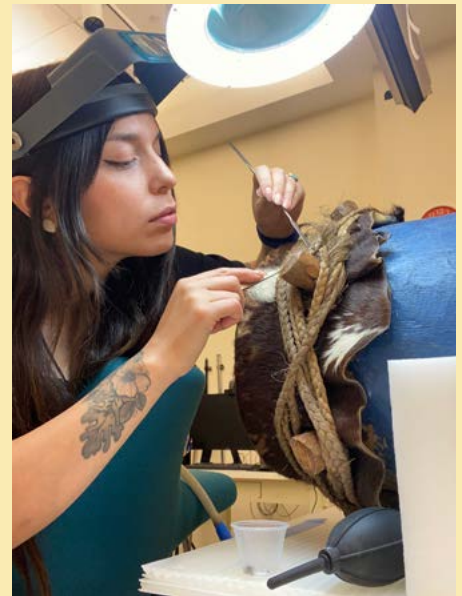
Last summer, I had the opportunity to intern at BEAM Education Foundation, a nonprofit organization in Chiang Mai, Thailand. This internship was part of my participation in the Borderland program, organized by the International Alliance of Research Universities (IARU) and the Regional Center for Social Science and Sustainable Development within the Faculty of Social Sciences at Chiang Mai University. I visited Mae Sot, Thailand, a border community where I worked alongside refugee educators and leaders to support educational programs for refugees from Myanmar.

I learned about this program from Professor Khatharya Um, who played a key role in shaping its development and has become an exemplary mentor for me. Her dedication to Ethnic Studies and Southeast Asian Studies has been instrumental in expanding opportunities for students like me to collaborate with community groups, organizations, activists, and leaders at the forefront of critical social challenges in the global south.



Renee Castro-Ring was selected for the prestigious Andrew W. Mellon Opportunity for Diversity in Conservation Workshop (UCLA/Getty) in 2023, where she gained an intensive introduction to the field of cultural and art conservation. Following this, she was chosen for their Internship Program, which led to a 10-week internship at the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C., during the summer of 2024. Currently, Renee is fulfilling her organic chemistry credits at Berkeley City College in preparation for graduate school applications. She has also recently secured a year-long internship in object conservation at The deYoung Museum in San Francisco. In addition to her studies in chemistry, Renee creates artwork for ABG Art Group and regularly exhibits her work in local galleries.

View more updates on her public instagram @ladyreniart



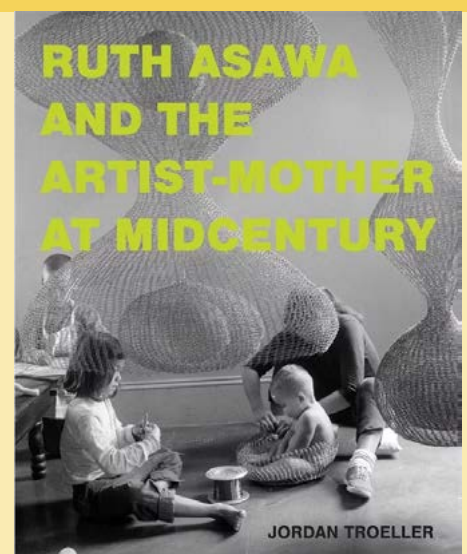
Renee Castro-Ring



Cara Green

Cara Green received her Masters in Fashion & Textile Studies: History, Theory, Museum Practice with a museum curation focus from the Fashion Institute of Technology in May 2024. Her master's thesis, titled "Inheriting A Nasjonaldrakt: The Synchronicity of Memory & Tradition in My Great-Grandmother's Norwegian Bunad," is publicly accessible on the ProQuest database. Cara's research, partially funded by The Decorative Arts Trust, explores the origins, evolving traditions, and contemporary inheriting and wear practices of traditional Norwegian dress. She presented this research at two international conferences in 2024 hosted by the Fashion Studies Network and The Association of Dress Historians. In Fall 2024, Cara's review for Bard Graduate Center's exhibition "Sonia Delaunay: Living Art" was published in the Costume Society of America's journal Dress. In September, Cara fondly reflected on her early beginnings in the History of Art department while visiting the Scrovegni Chapel in Padua—the subject of her first written assignment in Darcy's transformative HA11 class in Spring 2019.

Jordan Troeller (BA '07) is a Junior Professor of Contemporary Art and Aesthetic Practices at Leuphana Universität Lüneburg, where she leads the research group The M/Other Project: Creativity, Procreation, and Contemporary Art, funded by the VolkswagenStiftung. She just published a book on Ruth Asawa.





Cal Curators Meet Berkeley grads shaping the art world.

by Dano Nissen '18

Illustrations by Patrick Welsh

Rory Padeken '06 decided curation would be his future in his final year at Berkeley, when he was introduced to the found photography work of Tacita Dean. "[The professor] passed around her own copy of [Dean's] book and let us touch and flip through its pages." Padeken says he was "hooked," and the work later became the subject of his master's thesis. Padeken worked his way from processing admissions and memberships at museum front desks to becoming a curator at the San José Museum of Art. There, he curated exhibitions like *California Dreamin'*, a futuristic and fantastical reimagining of Southern California; video and photo installations from Dinh Q. Lê on war, displacement, and the Vietnamese experience; and *Border Cantos*, which examines the humanitarian crisis at the U.S.-Mexico border. Padeken is currently the Vicki and Kent Logan Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Denver Art Museum.



Grace Kook-Anderson '01 gravitated to seminars at Cal. For a shy student, they helped her find her voice and explore her identity as an Asian American woman, she says. In particular, a seminar led by Amy Lyford, Ph.D. '97, on modern and contemporary art influenced her deeply. Since 2017, Kook-Anderson has been the Arlene and Harold Schnitzer Curator of Northwest Art at the Portland Art Museum and specializes in regional art from California and the Northwest. Among her curatorial work is the 2019 exhibition *The Map Is Not the Territory*, which she described as "a collective practice that meditated on our connections to the land, bringing Indigenous values to the forefront and celebrating the region's kinship."



As someone who grew up creating art, **Heidi Rabben '04** thought she would be a studio art major at Berkeley. But after taking an art history course, she says she “discovered there was a discipline linking my long-standing interests in writing, visual analysis, storytelling, and history with art practice.” Her catholic interests led her to coursework in astronomy, Buddhism, philosophy, and English. She was also active all four years in Danceworx, Cal’s oldest student-run dance organization. Rabben, who is currently the senior curator at the Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco, says she was drawn to curation because it’s “inherently multidisciplinary.” In addition to curating, Rabben is a writer, editor, and researcher with a focus on international contemporary video and installation art. She recently curated an exhibition of fellow Cal alumnus Nicki Green’s, MFA ’18, called Firmament, which explores “identity, transformation, and reinvention of Jewish traditions.”

When he transferred to Cal from community college, **Tyler Cann '95** envisioned himself becoming an art history professor. But his time as a student docent at the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA) changed that. One exhibition in particular inspired him to pursue curation. In a Different Light was about contemporary art from a queer perspective. The exhibition’s co-curator, Lawrence Rinder, who would later serve as BAMPFA’s director, introduced Cann to the process of curatorial work. “I look back, that moment was really illuminating.” He thought about that show a lot, he says, while assisting in the curation of Art after Stonewall, 1969–1989, in 2020, at the Columbus Museum of Art. The award-winning exhibition brought together more than 165 artists to mark the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall uprising. Cann, who also has a master’s degree in art history from Harvard, is now senior curator of modern and contemporary art at the Honolulu Museum of Art.

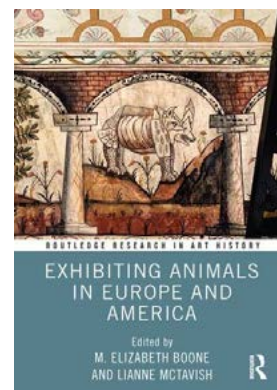


Clara Kim '97 says she “accidentally” fell into art history while taking a humanities requirement at Berkeley. “[It gave] me the permission to pursue a field that was never that accessible to me growing up in a first-generation Korean American family,” says Kim, who was born in Seoul. Currently the chief curator and director of curatorial affairs at MOCA in Los Angeles, she focuses on a “revisionist, decolonial perspective of art” in relation to transnational migration and diaspora. Her curation has appeared in museums worldwide, including Walker Art Center, Redcat, and the Tate Modern. At the Tate, she curated a retrospective on the work of Twelve Years a Slave director Steve McQueen. She would later interview the director as part of the Berkeley Arts and Design Thursdays lecture series. Kim is currently working on a retrospective of Hawaiian artist Paul Pfeiffer and is in the research phase of an exhibition about artists who were affected by World War II internment in the United States.

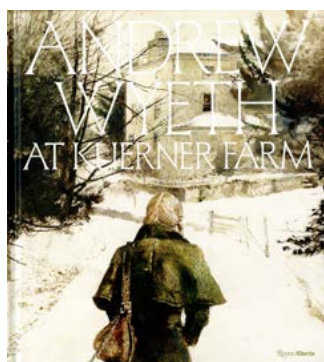
PhD ALUMNI NEWS

Elise Archias is back in the classroom after a year as a fellow at UIC's Institute for the Humanities. In November, she gave a lecture at The Courtauld drawn from her current book project on Joan Michell and Melvin Edwards called "[Art and Management](#)."

M. Elizabeth (Betsy) Boone has published a new edited volume, *Exhibiting Animals in Europe and America* (Routledge 2025), that seeks to understand how our ways of positioning (and ex-positioning) animals have separated us from the other-than-human animals that are an integral part of our interconnected world. Bringing together the visual and material culture of display with recent theoretical study on human-animal relations, the book draws attention to ways in which we might rethink this history and map pathways for the future. The authors cover topics that span the sixteenth through the early twentieth centuries and focus geographically on Europe and America, with significant content related to Canada, Indigenous America, and Latin America.



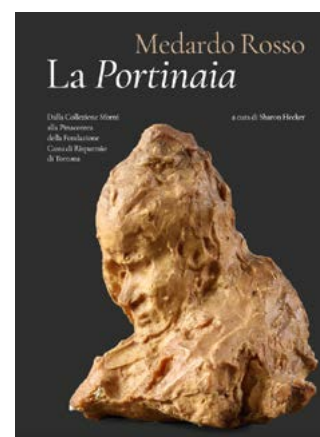
Letha Ch'ien (Ph.D. 2014) achieved a 26.6% increase in majors against a 38% enrollment drop at Sonoma State University as a tenured associate professor. Nevertheless she was laid off alongside half the school's degree programs and the best of colleagues. She finishes an NEH fellowship this year and continues to write public scholarship for Smarthistory, the San Francisco Chronicle, and elsewhere.



Will Coleman (Ph.D. 2012) is in his third year of an unusual and rewarding role between the Brandywine Museum of Art in PA, the Farnsworth Art Museum in ME, and the Wyeth Foundation for American Art. He co-curated the nationally traveling exhibition *Andrew Wyeth at Kuerner Farm: The Eye of the Earth* and edited the accompanying catalogue, published by Rizzoli Electa. He gave papers at CAA, SECAC, and the Association of Historians of American Art symposium, where it was a treat to catch up with Emily Moore.

Jez Flores-Garcia (Ph.D. 2024) is the Assistant Curator at the Manetti Shrem Museum at UC Davis. She is the curatorial lead for digitizing the permanent collection of over 5,000 objects.

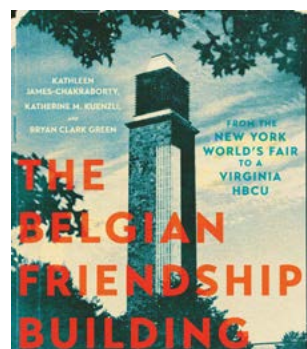
Sharon Hecker (Ph.D. 1999) In 2024, I published the edited volumes: *Medardo Rosso, La Portinaia*. (Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Tortona, 2024) and *Disguising Disease in Italian Political and Visual Culture from Post-Unification to COVID-19* (Routledge, co-edited with Arianna Arisi Rota). I also published an essay on Remo Bianco, plastic and postwar trauma in *Sculpture Journal*; and three essays on Medardo Rosso in *Dialoghi sulla scultura in bronzo* (Il Prato, 2024); *The Burlington Magazine* (December 2024); and in an exhibition catalogue on Rosso and Lehmbruck for the Lehmbruckmuseum in Duisburg. I organized the International Catalogue Raisonné Association annual conference on "New Thinking About the Catalogue Raisonné". I also spoke on The Art Law Podcast on "Italy's Expansive Control over Cultural Heritage". I recently prepared an exhibition of Lucio Fontana's ceramics at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice (October-May 2025).



Christina Kiaer (Ph.D. 1995) curated the exhibition “Collective Threads: Anna Andreeva at the Red Rose Silk Factory,” which opened at the Museum of Modern Art-Costakis Collection in Thessaloniki, Greece on December 6, 2024. Kiaer edited the accompanying exhibition catalogue and wrote the lead catalogue essay. Happily, textile art expert and fellow Berkeley art history alumna Julia Bryan-Wilson contributed an essay to the catalogue. Kiaer continues to teach in the department of art history at Northwestern University, where she is the Frances Hooper Professor in the Arts and Humanities and department chair.



Katherine Kuenzli (Ph.D. 2002) spent the summer of 2025 in Berlin and Nürnberg completing research for her book project devoted to Anni Albers. She also continues to learn how to weave, which is a full-body experience! Her article on Anni Albers’s 1949 solo exhibition at the MoMA is forthcoming in *The Art Bulletin* this June, along with a co-authored book, with Kathleen James-Chakraborty, on The Belgian Friendship Building and its two lives at the 1939 New York World’s Fair and a Virginia HBCU. This spring she will be a guest professor at the École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris.



Namiko Kunimoto (Ph.D. 2010) gave a talk on Shiraga Kazuo for the Amagasaki Cultural Center in Japan, gave a keynote address at the UCLA grad studies conference on Action and Perception, and presented “Feminism, Bourgeois Liberalism, and Shimada Yoshiko’s *Becoming a Statue of a Japanese “Comfort Woman,”*” at the University of Chicago. She published “Olympic Labor and Displacement: Babel and Its Towers” in the *Review of Japanese Culture and Society*. Kunimoto’s 2nd book project, *Imperial Animations in Transpacific Contemporary Art*, will be published in 2026 by the University of California Press.

Evie Lincoln (P.D. 1994) I retired from teaching in July, 2024. Although teaching at Brown was the best job I could have dreamed of, not teaching is also lovely and leaves more time for travel. I am writing a book on a family of woodblock printers in early modern Rome, and have published an [essay](#) about one member of the family, Girolama Parasole, with the National Gallery of Art as part of their research project on the Accademia di San Luca.



William Ma (2008 B.A., 2016 Ph.D.) was part of the Attingham Summer School in June 2024, gaining an invaluable chance to study Chinese wallpapers in more than two dozen English country houses. In September, he was reunited with fellow Cal art historians past and present: Diana Greenwold, Susan Eberhard, and Elizabeth Fair in Bozeman, Montana. We took part in the groundbreaking conference “Representations of East Asian Migrants and Settlers in the Western United States, ca. 1850-1929,” funded by the Terra Foundation and hosted by the Montana State University, sharing our latest research on Chinese American art. Ma continues his contribution to the field of Asian American art by currently working on a chapter devoted to the history of Asian arts in Louisiana in an upcoming anthology *Asians on the Third Coast*. William Ma is the assistant professor of art history, focusing on Asian art, at the College of Art + Design, Louisiana State University.

Since September 2023, **Laure Marest** (Ph. D. 2017) serves as the Damarete Associate Curator of Ancient Coins at the Harvard Art Museums in Cambridge, MA. She oversees a collection of over 20,000 coins, mainly ancient Greek, Roman, and Byzantine. She is currently working on a plan to reinstall the permanent collection and is enjoying teaching again. Laure recently put the final edits on two articles exploring the role of reconstructions—both painted casts and digital models—in understanding ancient Greek and Roman polychromy (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2025).

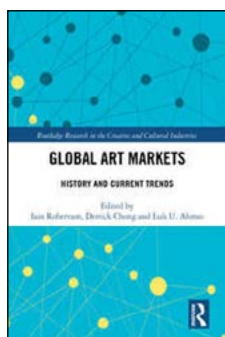
Ara Merjian was a consultant on the exhibition, *But Live Here? No Thanks: Surrealism and Anti-Fascism* at Munich's Lenbachhaus and co-edited of the 700-page volume, *Surrealism and Anti-Fascism* (Hatje Cantz, 2025). He published a translation from the Catalan of Maria Àngels Anglada's novel *Aram's Notebook*, currently nominated for the Republic of Consciousness Prize. More recently he published *Fragments of Totality: Futurism, Fascism, and the Sculptural Avant-Garde* (Yale, 2024) and *Futurism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2025). He edited the Brooklyn Rail's issue on Surrealism's centenary last fall, and co-curated a small exhibition, *Metropoli: Visionary Architecture from Futurism to Rationalism*, at NYU's Casa Italiana. He had a great time at this year's CAA with fellow Berkeley alumni, Sabine Kriebel, on a panel reconsidering Neue Sachlichkeit. His latest book will come out in October with Verso: *Beat, Black, Queer: Pasolini's Other America*.



Joshua Shannon (Ph.D. 2003) Professor and Director of Graduate Studies, Art History and Archaeology, University of Maryland, spent spring 2024 as Visiting Professor at the University of Hong Kong. He is now finishing his fourth book, *How and Why to Look at Art in the Time of Climate Change* (under contract, University of California Press).

Orna Tsultem (Ph.D. 2009) continues her tenured position as Associate Professor and Edgar and Dorothy Fehnel Chair in International Studies at Indiana University's Herron School of Art and Design. Her monograph *A Monastery on the Move: Art and Politics in Later Buddhist Mongolia* (Honolulu: Hawaii UP, c2021) received Art Book accolade from the International Convention of Asia Scholars at Leiden University. She curated an exhibition, titled "Mongol Zurag: The Art of Resistance" in Venice, Italy, in April-November 2024, which received praise by reviewers in several outlets, such as British artist David Goldenberg's review article "Foreigners Everywhere". Orna co-chaired a panel at CAA's Annual Conference in February 2025 in NYC, and she will deliver a keynote speech at the German Oriental Studies Conference (DOT) in September 2025 to be held at Friedrich-Alexander University in Erlangen-Nuremberg. Orna will join a Getty-funded international project *Mongol Connections* organized by Prof. Sussan Babaie at the Courtauld Institute of Art.

In fall 2023, **Elaine Y. Yau** (PhD 2015) was named Associate Curator and Academic Liaison at the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive. In that role she has continued her primary project of curating an exhibition from the African American Quilt Collection and editing a related catalogue. The show and the book, *Routed West: Twentieth-Century African American Quilts in California* opened June 2025 and runs through November 30, 2025. She had the honor of delivering the department's commencement address in May 2024. In addition to supporting BAMPFA's exhibition program, Elaine collaborates regularly with faculty and students to make the collections accessible through the museum's study centers.



John Zarobell (PhD, 2000) published two chapters in edited volumes this year and co-organized a conference at SPUR Urban Center (SF) in August 2024, entitled "Comparative Urbanism: Learning from Jakarta", which featured urbanists from Jakarta in conversation with academics and practitioners in the Bay Area. The first chapter, "The Art Market Out of Sight", about freeports and their role in the art market, came out in *Routledge's Global Art Markets: History and Current Trends*, edited By Iain Robertson, Derrick Chong and Luis U. Afonso—this came out in January, 2025. For the *Routledge Companion to Art and Capitalism*, ed. Danielle Childs and due out in 2026, he contributed a chapter entitled "Misavowal: documenta fifteen and the Rhetoric of Power in Global Culture".

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