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LSA HISTORY OF ART
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

As we enter into a period of fully remote teaching and working, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all those who have helped us maintain a sense of community during the COVID pandemic. Whether on digital platforms or in local parks, we have found ways to connect and interact beyond the walls of Tappan Hall.

Most happily, please join me in welcoming Lihong Liu, Brendan McMahon, Valentina Rozas-Krause, Michaela Rife, Bryan Miller, Deirdre Hennebury, and Jennifer Gear. These seven new assistant professors, lecturers, and postdoctoral fellows moved to Ann Arbor in the throes of the pandemic. They have settled into departmental life and work despite the remote pivot, and they are expanding our fields of expertise to include Chinese art, European and global early modern art, architectural history, American environmental art, Central Asian art and archaeology, and museum studies. They also are energizing our course array and series of flash-talks this year; the first two of these presentations are now available online here.

I also would like to take a moment to express our deep debt of gratitude to Ilene Forsyth. Her extraordinary gift to our department has ensured our community's unbroken successes this year, from supporting undergraduate and graduate museum internships to propelling our faculty in their large-impact, public-facing scholarly endeavors. We look forward to welcoming our next Forsyth postdoctoral fellow next year, and we plan to embark on a search for the next endowed professor of Western Medieval Art as soon as possible.

If you happen to be on campus, please do stop by Tappan Hall. You'll notice that, although the building is rather unpopulated now, it nevertheless shines bright in newly repainted gold lettering. To my mind, our edifice's lustrous letters offer a reminder of the collective brilliance contained therein, radiating out to the world in new and creative ways.

With all my best wishes for happy holidays and a healthy New Year,

- Christiane Gruber

In this newsletter:

A Conversation with New History of Art Faculty

We welcome all of our new faculty members to Tappan Hall and were able to speak with some on their research, first semester, and experiences during a time of COVID.

A Pre-COVID Sabbatical in Manhattan

- Elizabeth Sears

"The Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers is housed in the New York Public Library, on the second floor. A large common space is ringed by offices, each with a door and louvres to allow privacy, each occupied by staff and one of the year's 15 fellows. Offices are assigned by lot at the first meeting: each new fellow dips a hand into a hard hat filled with 15 slips of paper on which a number has been inscribed: I pulled out 11, thought by some to be the best office, a corner office, with a sliver of a view of 5th Avenue skyscrapers and, on one wall, a relic of the original building, bronzed cast-iron book shelves."

Student Internships, Summer 2020

Every year, History of Art and Museums Studies students take on new and challenging opportunities at museums and institutions throughout the country - and sometimes beyond. These internships are often life-changing experiences, and we aim to support these students by offering scholarships for this very purpose.

Although the COVID pandemic has forced students and institutions to meaningfully re-think how an internship would look like in 2020, we are pleased that our students were still able to work on projects at such places as the Dallas Museum of Art, Cranbrook Archives, and the Missoula Art Museum.

eye[over]eye

ŒIL [SUR / على] عين, or eye[over]eye, is the result of Helicon's Arts-Oriented Spring Break trip to Marrakech, Morocco in March of 2020. Featuring images taken from disposable cameras, the show looks to explore the complex nature of photography with special consideration to its violence as a medium in tandem with colonial influences of past and present as seen in Marrakech.

Graduate Program

- Every year, History of Art recognizes graduate students whose research, teaching, and contribution to the department goes above and beyond; this year, the Tappan Award for Excellence in Teaching goes to Susan Dine. The Tappan Award for Outstanding Achievement in Graduate Studies goes to Carlo Berardi.
- Congratulations to Vishal Khandelwal, who has been awarded the Carter Manny Award through the Graham Foundation for his project Belonging Without Aligning: India and the Ethics of Design, 1955–1985
- We welcome our new cohort of graduate students to Tappan Hall: Bailey Sullivan, Julia LaPlaca, Vrinda Agrawal, and Srishti Sankaranarayanan.

Khamseen: Islamic Art History Online

- Sandra Williams

On October 20, 2020, members of the History of Art Department launched *Khamseen: Islamic Art History Online*. *Khamseen* is a free and open-access online platform of digital resources to aid the teaching of Islamic art, architecture, and visual culture. The project is led by Prof. Christiane Gruber and Team Khamseen founding members Sandy Williams, Bihter Esener, Michelle Al-Ferzly, Ani Kalousdian, Yasemin Gencer, and Mira Xenia Schwerda. It is sponsored by the Digital Islamic Studies Curriculum (DISC) at the University of Michigan through the support of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Khamseen currently offers several dozen short-form video presentations on a range of topics in the scholarly discipline of Islamic art history, architecture, and visual culture. These talks are intended to support educators, particularly those who face limited access to institutional and archival resources, and to bring new voices, perspectives, methodologies, artworks, and objects into classrooms. Besides catering to undergraduate and graduate students, the materials are also intended to help educate and inspire interested audiences outside of academia.

In the next stages of the project, *Khamseen* will expand to include a long-format lecture series, multi-media glossary, and podcast series. It thus will function as a rich repository of resources in the realm of digital humanities. Team Khamseen also will continue to strengthen the project's accessibility through closed captioning and by providing content in multiple languages, especially Arabic, Persian, and Turkish.

You can keep up-to-date on all *Khamseen* developments by following @khamseenislamicart on Instagram, @TeamKhamseen on Twitter, and @KhamseenIslamicArt on Facebook.

Art Conservation with Alumna Melissa King

"Art conservation is often described as the equivalent of being a doctor for art. Using that analogy, you might argue that those who specialize in treatment are more like surgeons, and I am more like a primary care doctor. Instead of prescribing exercise and diet, I might prescribe specific light levels or a protective showcase."

Click to read full story

Alumni Spotlight

- American Numismatic Society Announces New Prize in Ancient Numismatics - "The Collier Prize honors the life of Professor James M. Collier. Professor Collier was born in Bellingham, Washington, and completed his PhD in Art History at the University of Michigan in 1975. He served as a tenured professor and department chair in the Art History Department at Auburn University (Auburn, Alabama). Over the course of his academic career, he lectured widely and published on the Italian Renaissance and Early Netherlandish perspective, which was the subject of his doctoral dissertation."
- Feminism in American Art History - Kirsten Pai Buick (Ph.D. '99) presents: *The Flesh Made Word: Soft Power, The Female Nude, and the Autobiography of Louisine Havemeyer*
- Portraiture and Friendship in Enlightenment France - Jessica Fripp (Ph.D. '12), scheduled for January 2021 publication
- Dr. Jasmine Alinder (Ph.D. '99) named new Dean of Humanities at University of California, Santa Cruz
- Dr. Carmenita Higginbotham (Ph.D. '05) named Dean of the Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts
- A New Virtual Tour Takes us Inside Architect Edgar Miller's Masterwork - “Miller’s little-known today because he was ahead of his time,” says Marin Sullivan (Ph.D. '12), an independent curator who was involved in the creation of the virtual tour. “He worked much like contemporary artists do today, crossing disciplines, audiences and pursuits. He was a fine artist as well as an architect and a graphic designer. But, because he didn’t fit into just one category, he got dropped out of history.”

A Conversation with New History of Art Faculty

We welcome all of our new faculty members to Tappan Hall and were able to speak with some on their research, first semester, and experiences during a time of COVID.

– Deirdre L.C. Hennebury

Museums, in their many manifestations, represent permanence and steadfastness in the care for and sharing of "the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity" (ICOM Museum Definition, 2007). This strength has certainly been tested in 2020. It seems fitting, as this unusual semester winds down, to recognize the strength and resilience of our students in the Museum Studies Minor. Working within less-than-ideal circumstances this fall, we have 9 students completing internship practica and a new cohort of 12 declared students.

The internship placements ranged from positions at the Missoula Art Museum and Mackinac State Historic Parks to our own UM campus with engagements at the Kelsey, the Natural History Museum, and the Research Museum Center. Our students have written blogs, designed online exhibitions, supported "Get out the Vote" initiatives, participated in Zoom museum staff meetings, and catalogued digital collections. Due to the pandemic, all internships completed during the 2020 Summer and Fall Terms have been remote. The Museum Studies Program is deeply thankful for our strong and adaptable institutional partners and very proud of our students for rising to the occasion.

Affirming the appeal of the Museum Studies Minor's multi-disciplinary curriculum, the newly declared students represent a wonderful cross-section of UM's undergraduate programs. These include American Culture, Anthropology, Art (BFA), Classical Languages and Literature, Earth and Environmental Science, History, History of Art, and Political Science. We are delighted to welcome these students into the Minor and look forward to nurturing them through our program. Moving forward, the Museum Studies Program will be expanding our MUSEUMS course offerings so that we can more meaningfully engage with faculty, programs, and opportunities across campus.

In my Zoom conversations with students over the past few months, there have been expressions of frustration and resignation regarding the limits that the COVID-19 pandemic has introduced to their lives. Most pronounced, however, have been the statements of gratitude – for the opportunities, for the flexibility of the museum staff in working with them to make memorable and educational experience, for the learning that has been achieved. In my first term as the Associate Director of the Museum Studies Program, I, too, have felt vexed with the situation. The overall feeling, however,

is a positive one I share with our students. I am thankful for my colleagues, my research and teaching, and, especially, the dedicated, curious, and resilient students I work with every day.

– Brendan McMahon

This semester, our departmental community has risen to the challenges posed by the pandemic and moved more fully into virtual spaces. The daily rhythms of life that usually play out inside Tappan Hall have necessarily changed as we all migrate online, but thanks to increasingly digitized collections, we are better equipped than ever before to consider the lives of art objects as we pivot to remote online learning. Despite our immersion in the immaterial expanse of the Zoom Room, though, we are, as ever, embedded in a material world. I write this as Ann Arbor recovers from a windstorm (fallen tree branches have severed the power lines at home, cutting off my access to the electrical grid and the internet) on a laptop computer whose dwindling reserve of power relies in large part on the silvery, featherweight metal lithium (a significant proportion of which is extracted from the high deserts of Northern Chile).

Such meditations on the material world are in some ways natural to art historians. For the past several weeks on Monday mornings, participants in the introductory seminar for our department's first-year graduate students have convened virtually to consider how object-oriented disciplines have addressed materials in the past. This rich legacy is augmented today by new ways of conceptualizing our perpetual entanglement with matter, with scholars turning to an incredible range of thinking—the writing of the ancient Roman poet Lucretius (d. mid-to-late 50s BCE); the work of contemporary Indigenous artist Will Wilson (Diné/Bilagaana, b. 1969) – to open doors to diverse art historical futures. This sense of possibility has guided my preparations for an undergraduate lecture course which uses a material lens to rethink the artistic production of early modern Europe (c. 1500-1800). Each week will focus on a different material as we follow its path from an extra-European point of origin to the workshops where it was used to create art objects that were then consumed throughout the continent. Thinking with materials like elephant ivory, kaolin clay, and cochineal (a potent crimson pigment derived from insects domesticated in Mexico) helps to situate the work of familiar European artists in networks of knowledge that connected them viscerally to people across the globe.

My own path to this materialist pedagogy was paved by the iridescent substances—feathers, shells, mineraloids, and fabrics which appear to change color with shifts in the angle of illumination or view—that are the subject of my book manuscript. In it, I argue that their unique properties made them especially useful to think with for artists and authors in the seventeenth-century Spanish world. Observing their hues flare, flicker, alter, and fade prompted questions about matter itself (was color a property of things or just a mere trick of the light?) that helped people in that context make sense of the rapidly changing world around them and the world they believed was to come.

For these observers, iridescent things blurred the dividing line between the immaterial and the tangible. As we forge ahead into new, ineffable digital spaces, their thinking, as with that of art historians past and present, serves as a reminder of our constant connection to the material foundations upon which those spaces rely.

– Bryan Miller

Among the multiple themes in my upcoming book *Xiongnu: The World's First Nomadic Empire* (Oxford University Press), the most pervasive thread is a concerted effort to bring to light the sophistication of steppe nomadic societies, in their political institutions and in their material culture. It is this latter theme that will run through my seminar on *Arts and Cultures of Steppe Nomads* next semester, winter 2021. This winter I will also give a department Flash Talk on developments in artistic components of political culture, as the nomadic regime of the Xiongnu forged and maintained a supra-regional empire, and as it fundamentally changed through the regime's assertions on the global stage and interactions with the rest of Eurasia during the early era of the Silk Roads. In the vein of giving greater agency to often-marginalized cultures, I have focused on the complex cultural dynamics at play within communities of central Eurasia in my *Arts of the Silk Roads* seminar this semester, presenting students with case studies of "hybrid" art in an increasingly "globalized" world. The central theme in this course has been to dissect numerous media of visual material culture, and their converging components, and to reveal the ways in which cultures in the heart of the continent took an active part in shaping both their worlds and the worlds around them, from Rome to Persia to China. This manner of attention toward cultural dialogues and conflicts between numerous regimes across greater Eurasia brings to the fore comparisons of their varied traditions and trajectories of material culture. Such cross-cultural comparisons will guide my lecture course on *Archaeology of Empires* offered in the coming winter semester. I hope to carry into the *Empires* class the kind of cross-cultural discourse that was so successful in *Arts of War* this semester. In response to challenges of engaging students with art in an environment of remote learning, I also aim to employ the kinds of in-depth examinations of specific examples of art (via on-line resources) that students in my *Arts of War* lecture course enjoyed.

– Michaela Rife

At this point, it's a cliche to say that starting a new position in a pandemic is difficult. Fortunately, my transition to U-M was made easier by the welcoming Tappan community. My first three months in Ann Arbor have largely been devoted to conceptualizing my first book project, a rethinking of my dissertation on New Deal post office murals in the American Great Plains. Opportunities to present my work for the Department's "Flash Talks" series, at the Society of Fellows first-year colloquium, and informally in discussions, facilitated new approaches to my material, which was welcome after spending so much time with my case studies over the past few years! Ironically, working on this project during the pandemic has also given me a different

perspective on my subject. How did living through an unpredictable disaster with no apparent end affect these artists and communities? While my dissertation focused on the environmental history of the Plains with some attention paid to the Dust Bowl, the book will engage more specifically with environmental disaster as a framing device. Now I am starting to look down the road towards new chapter drafts and a book proposal.

Undoubtedly, the most exciting project that I've been working on this past term is my course for winter 2021, "Environmental Art History," a fourth-year seminar in the History of Art and the Program in the Environment. My goal for this class is to introduce students to a wide range of art historical work that engages with environmental topics and frameworks. More importantly, I want students to see how much room there is for their own work to shape this young field. I'm hopeful that this interdisciplinary course can also open up art historical methodologies for environmental studies students. Topics will include critiques of landscape painting, histories of material and extraction, the visual culture of industry, and the art of environmental justice. I am looking forward to these conversations shaping my own thinking next term, when I also plan to begin early work on a second project on American art and coal mining.

– Valentina Rozas-Krause

My first semester with the History of Art Department has been filled with online experiences, conversations with inspiring colleagues, and adjustment to this new institution. During these past months I have been working on my book manuscript *Memorials and the Cult of Apology*, which is based on my dissertation. My work examines how contemporary memorials have come to embody more than memory. It begins with a simple observation of the growing demand for apologies across the globe and the related proliferation of memorials that aim to atone for past injustices. In effect, apologies are being materialized into memorials, a phenomenon of global importance, which presents a major shift in national self-representation. In the broadest terms, my research is an intervention into the cultural history of the built environment. My manuscript builds an empirical and theoretical understanding of multiple aspects of apology and memorialization, of their material forms, the actors involved, and the diverse effects built apologies produce. It uses five representative case studies located in Berlin, Buenos Aires, and San Francisco, to develop this argument. An essay on what I have termed 'the cult of apology' was recently published by **e-flux**.

In its essence, my research is about how minority groups strive to be heard, respected, and recognized by a dominant majority. During the past ten years, I have worked with memory and human rights activists, and survivors fighting against past and present racism, bigotry, prejudice, and antisemitism in Berlin, Buenos Aires, Santiago, and San Francisco. My work sheds light on the role that materiality, art, architecture, and urban design can play in shaping communities, and increasing our sense of belonging to the

world and to our past. Among the many things I have learned from this experience is that collective memory, and in particular memorialization, are critical tools to deepen justice, diversity, and inclusion.

In the Winter semester I will be offering *Architecture and Memory*, a course that incorporates some of these issues by examining the ever-fluctuating relationship between memory and the built environment in light of recent associations between memorialization and hegemonic racism. The vanquishing of monuments in the US and across the world, speaks to the welling up of rage and discontent against them—Confederate, patriarchal, colonial, racist, genocidal—, all spatial reminders of structural and representational inequality. It also reveals a special affinity between social protests and monuments; between citizens occupying the streets to demand justice and the dead bronzes standing in their way. Simply put, our monuments no longer reflect who we are. (I wrote a short piece about this for **PLATFORM**). Acknowledging that the way we represent our past is changing, this course asks: *How do current monuments "stand up," and what can we do about it?* Reading widely across history, memory studies, and the built environment from the late-nineteenth century to the present, the seminar will give students the ability to trace memorialization as an historiographical artifact and to analyze its role in contemporary cities. In addition, students will visit and study local monuments, memorials and museums to develop individual research projects.

Besides teaching, I look forward to two conferences in the first half of 2021. I will present new research about a clandestine detention center in Buenos Aires at the Society of Architectural Historian's conference, as part of a session co-chaired by Ana María León, and I will be co-chairing the session "Queering Memory" at the College Art Association conference. The latter will contribute to an edited volume about memorialization and gender that I am working on, tentatively entitled *Breaking the Bronze Ceiling*.

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A Pre-COVID Sabbatical in Manhattan

Professor Elizabeth Sears writes on her experience in New York with the Cullman Fellowship.

by Elizabeth Sears

The interior of the Cullman Center at the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building.

The Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers is housed in the New York Public Library, on the second floor. A large common space is ringed by offices, each with a door and louvres to allow privacy, each occupied by staff and one of the year's 15 fellows. Offices are assigned by lot at the first meeting: each new fellow dips a hand into a hard hat filled with 15 slips of paper on which a number has been inscribed: I pulled out 11, thought by some to be the best office, a corner office, with a sliver of a view of 5th Avenue skyscrapers and, on one wall, a relic of the original building, bronzed cast-iron book shelves. The Cullman Fellowship is a writing fellowship, making available a community, access to the extraordinary resources of the NYPL, and, above all, time. It is part of the contract that fellows come in more or less daily, Monday to Friday, and do not travel too much outside New York (special permission required). Weekly lecture-lunches, coffee and tea, and an array of newspapers and periodicals (as well as picture puzzles for a mind-clearing change of pace) are supplied. There is communal pressure to produce, a gently pressuring intensity. People in our year, as in previous years, got a lot done. On average, I heard someone say, books come out 2-3 years after the fellowship year. The fellows are all writers with a plausible need to use the holdings of the NYPL: novelists, poets, translators, journalists, as well as 'scholars' – but even among the academics, many teach in writing programs, and most do cross-over work, employing agents/editors who help them to get their work before the public. Among my (uniformly interesting) cohort, I might name a few: Sally Rooney (very up-and-coming novelist writing her third novel); Susan Bernofsky (prize-winning translator re-translating Thomas Mann's *Magic Mountain*), Bill Goldstein (interviewer, creator of the NYT books website, preparing a biography of Larry Kramer), Eric Sanderson (wildlife preservationist working at the Bronx Zoo, author of *Manahatta*, a book providing the deep eco-history of the island, before Henry Hudson stepped foot on it in 1609, now extending his purview to the boroughs)... Tours of the library, given by curators, bring out the wealth of its holdings: Map Room, Manuscripts and Archives, Berg Collection – at the last one sees such literary treasures as: Charlotte Brontë's portable writing desk (containing locks of

hair of family members), the first manuscript version of Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, Nabokov's copy of Kafka's *Metamorphoses* with notes, a drawer full of objects owned by Jack Kerouac.

Salvatore Scibona, Director of the Cullman Center, and Fellows in the Berg Collection looking at Jack Kerouac's 'stuff'

I was at the Cullman Center to write the book, *Warburg Circles, 1929-1964: A Movement of Ideas*. It has to do with the mid-century mission of scholars affiliated with the Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek Warburg (Warburg Library for Cultural Science) in Hamburg: the library and staff transferred to London in 1933 to become the Warburg Institute; many Warburgians went even further afield, some, including Erwin Panofsky (and his student, my own mentor, William Heckscher), landing in the United States. My book – which draws on archival work in now some 30 archives – falls into three parts, and I wrote up sections of all while in New York. The third part is devoted to tracing diasporic histories in an interlinked set of 'short stories'. This is where the holdings of NYPL came in. All the files of the 'Emergency Committee for Displaced Foreign Scholars,' which operated from 1933 to 1945, its offices on 45th Street, were deposited in the library after the war. Stacks of documents make it possible to learn the logic of bureaucratic decisions and to trace in exquisite detail the lives of academic refugees in desperate straits, to discover just how they were helped (or not) as they tried to settle in this country, and to see what happened when they got here. The contrast is with the archive of the sister organization in Britain, also founded in 1933, the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning (SPSL) – which now operates as the Council for At-Risk Academics (CARA), still today helping scholars 'to escape to a place of safety where they can continue their work.' I had earlier made use of the SPSL archive, deposited in the Bodleian Library in Oxford; it was a gift to have time to work with the EC papers in New York. I gathered details for several stories and wrote up one: a brief history of the German art historian Walter Friedländer, who was 60 when Hitler came to power, old enough that American universities, thinking of pensions, were reluctant to support him, a scholar who would somehow survive in the US by teaching, mostly at the IFA, backed by Panofsky and others; it is a story of mid-century American politics and bureaucratic hurdles, a story full of bitterness, humor, frustration, compassion, and friendship, a tale that shows one European making his way in alien American institutions.

I was due to give my lunchtime Cullman talk, 'Academic Refugees of the 1930s: The Dispersion of the Warburg Circle,' on March 11. COVID struck. On March 9 the lecture was canceled (though the invitations had gone out, the food had been ordered). On March 11 and 12, I tried hastily to finish up work at the NYPL (and at the Leo Baeck Archive, where I had been working with unpublished Panofsky papers). I was one of the non-New Yorkers among

the fellows who early on opted to leave NY. On Friday the 13th I flew to Detroit. Some months later, May 22 – the last day of the Cullman year – I gave my paper on Zoom. Looking back, I am grateful to fate: how fortunate to have had seven months in Old New York, living in a studio apartment on 10th Avenue between 57th and 58th, to have made much (if never enough) of the endless opportunities to view creative performance and created objects, precisely then, at the end of the pre-COVID era.

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Student Internships - Summer 2020

A conversation with our students and how they spent their summers (remotely) across the globe working in museums and art conservation projects.

Every year, History of Art and Museums Studies students take on new and challenging opportunities at museums and institutions throughout the country - and sometimes beyond. These internships are often life-changing experiences, and we aim to support these students by offering **scholarships** for this very purpose.

Although the COVID pandemic has forced students and institutions to meaningfully re-think how an internship would look like in 2020, we are pleased that our students were still able to take part in whatever ways they could. Click each accordion box to expand individual students' stories.

– Eva Caston

"This summer I worked as an intern at the Dallas Museum of Art with curator of Latin American Art Mark Castro. My primary project was researching a debate within the field about the language used to describe art made during Spanish colonization. Opinions range the gamut (colonial, viceregal, Spanish Americas) and provoke questions about the prevalence of Eurocentrism, hybridity and anti-blackness within the discipline. This research was a part of a larger project of redesigning and renaming the Latin American galleries.

While initially I was tasked with scouring scholarly sources, it became clear that it was essential to involve the Dallas community in the decision making process, especially as I am neither Latinx nor from the city. My historiography was limited by only considering academic perspectives, and needed to account for the visitor and their experiences in the gallery. I worked with Danielle Lemi, a researcher with the museum, to devise focus groups that would discuss their reactions and interpretations to the language currently employed and alternatives. Although I was at the museum too briefly to see what came from the study, I hope that they continue to think about not only the language used but more broadly about what decolonial work looks like in the museum and in the field."

– Michelle Al-Ferzly

"Through June and July 2020, I interned at the Dallas Museum of Art under the supervision of the Curator of Islamic and Medieval Art, Dr. Heather Ecker. Over the course of my ten-week internship, I conducted research on the scientific tradition of Islamic astronomy from the 7th to the 17th centuries, in preparation for a forthcoming exhibition at the DMA. As part of the project, I investigated the substantial corpus of

Islamic manuscript illustrations depicting star constellations and other elements of the cosmos in the medieval and early modern periods. My experience at the DMA was a wonderful opportunity to expand my knowledge of Islamic science and visual culture, and I am honored to have played a small part in setting up the groundwork for a promising show in Islamic art at the museum."

– Phoebe Danaher

This summer, I worked at the Cranbrook Archives. I was an archival assistant working to update the Archive's metadata for their 3000-image collection. Many of the photographs pictured the Cranbrook Educational Community's and Christ Church Cranbrook's history, and a few hundred of them lacked dates. I used three methods to find a date range:

1. For landscape or architectural photographs, I could give an approximate date range by looking at a) when the building pictured was constructed, and b) the photographic medium. The second way of discovering date was less reliable, as I am not a photograph historian, but I could make simple judgments like whether the photo looked to have been shot on panchromatic film, which helped to date photographs taken between 1910 and 1930.

2. For photographs of or including people, I assessed the clothes the subjects wore, which gave me an approximate date of about a decade. This method of dating varied based on the environment in which the photos were taken. For example, in a staged portrait, the subjects wore fashionable, neat clothing, and were easy to date. However, many of the photographs pictured art students at work in their studios, where fashion was not a key consideration. For these photos, the following approach worked better.

3. In many cases, the photos showed prominent figures in either Cranbrook's history or the history of American art and design. For example, I came across dozens of pictures of the Saarinen family in all their generations. If a photo did not have a clear date and the clothing pictured did not help me, I could look up the names of the people pictured and date the picture by how old they appeared in it.

Working through the Cranbrook Archives helped me to understand the inherently political nature of archive work. For example, the Archive and many like it use a tagging system from the Library of Congress, which includes outdated and sometimes inappropriate terminology, like referring to Indigenous Americans as "Indians." A great deal of the photographs of women from in the early-to-mid twentieth century would refer to them as "Mrs. [Husband's Name]." An archive is a multi-generational memory, for better or for worse. The Cranbrook Archives is engaged in restorative work through updating the archives as well as standardizing its metadata, and I was proud to be a part of that process this summer.

– Sophia Layton

I pursued a virtual internship with the Missoula Art Museum (MAM) in the summer of 2020. They are a contemporary art museum located in Montana's Missoula Valley. After hearing the programs I applied for pre-pandemic were entirely canceled, the prospect of working for a museum I grew up with was comforting and inspiring. I applied on quite short notice, but they accepted me with open arms. I quickly fell into step with weekly education and staff zoom meetings.

I was delighted to be offered the task of researching, conceptualizing, and writing an online course inspired by an upcoming exhibition covering the work of a Japanese American artist, Takuichi Fujii. Pursuing a minor in Asian Language and Cultures, this was an excellent opportunity to expand my knowledge on the Japanese American Experience. The exhibition was centered around Fujii's experience in Internment during WWII. The course would be made available to middle school classrooms all over Montana. I adapted the exhibit into five modules and a concept which I came up with called the "virtual goodie bag." It is essentially a Japanese and Japanese American popular culture playlist with movies, books, music, and television. MAM's small staff granted me much authority on this project.

About halfway through my internship, I was discussing an exhibition the MAM was hosting of contemporary artist Stephen Braun. It became quickly apparent that the use of racist and antisemitic imagery in the exhibit was heedlessly inflammatory and threatening to visitors. This situation was especially perplexing considering the museum's ongoing discussions around anti-racism. I wrote a statement which sparked the museum to self-reflect and to begin rewriting the wall-text. Carrying along this discussion taught me how to walk the line between questioning authority and appeasing it. I was happy to play a part in the museum's recognition of its biases and its stance on neutrality. The potential of blank museum walls has always been thus, "what artists are you saying no to when you say yes to artist XYZ?"

After spending all my time for this internship working remotely, and creating a virtual learning experience, my thinking about the museum mission and the museum as a physical space has become complicated. Museums have empty walls to fill and while that is an epic responsibility, profound learning experiences can happen miles and miles away from the brick and mortar of it all.

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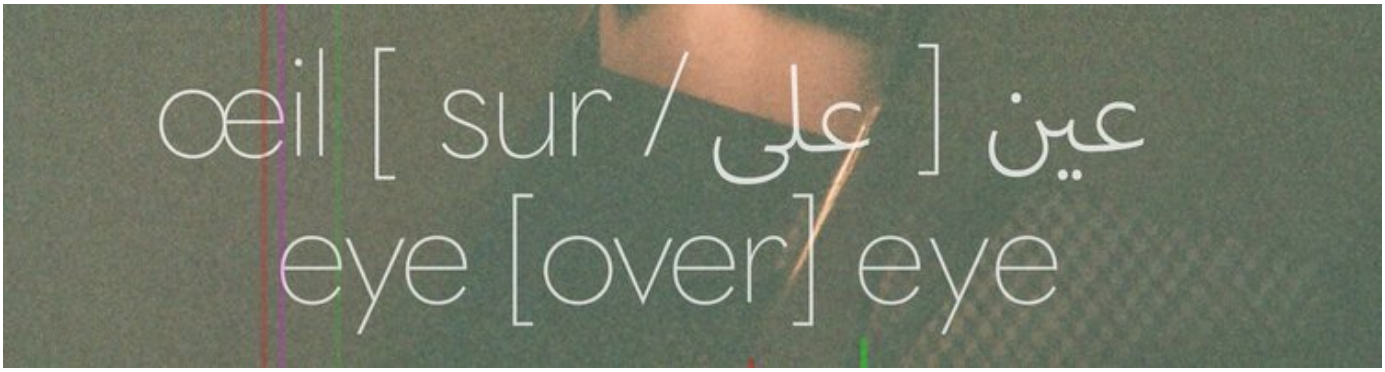


ŒIL [SUR / على] عين, OR EYE[OVER]EYE, IS THE RESULT OF HELICON'S ARTS-ORIENTED SPRING BREAK TRIP TO MARRAKECH, MOROCCO IN MARCH OF 2020.

FEATURING IMAGES TAKEN FROM DISPOSABLE CAMERAS, THE SHOW LOOKS TO EXPLORE THE COMPLEX NATURE OF PHOTOGRAPHY WITH SPECIAL CONSIDERATION TO ITS VIOLENCE AS A MEDIUM IN TANDEM WITH COLONIAL INFLUENCES OF PAST AND PRESENT AS SEEN IN MARRAKECH.

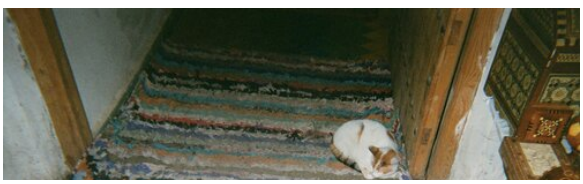
THUS THE TITLE, WHERE THE READER'S PRIMARY LANGUAGE SYSTEM DETERMINES WHICH PERSPECTIVE IS PRIORITIZED. FRENCH, REPRESENTING THE TWENTIETH CENTURY COLONIZING FORCES THAT SPECIFICALLY USED PHOTOGRAPHY TO PROFILE AND STEREOTYPE THOSE IN MOROCCO, IS MET WITH ARABIC, THE MOST COMMONLY SPOKEN LANGUAGE IN THE COUNTRY.

IN AMAZIGH, THE INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE OF MOROCCO, EYE[OVER]EYE CAN BE TRANSLATED AS TIET[GHOF]TIET.

Be sure to register here for a summative webinar December 19th featuring student presentations of the exhibition accompanied by an open roundtable discussion featuring academics, curators, and artists.

Sponsored by the University of Michigan History of Art Department and Cameramall.

CLICK AN EYE TO VIEW A CURATION...



Leena Ghannam [Image: I

A Conversation with Alumna Melissa King on Preventive Conservation

"Art conservation is often described as the equivalent of being a doctor for art. Using that analogy, you might argue that those who specialize in treatment are more like surgeons, and I am more like a primary care doctor."

by Melissa King

Melissa preparing samples of textiles for her research on mold mitigation with essential oils (photo credit: Laura Mina)

When I was an undergraduate (class of 2010) in the History of Art Department, I learned about the field of art conservation and immediately knew it was the path for me. It combined my love of art history, studio art, and the sciences. As an undergraduate I gained my first experiences in conservation at the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology thanks to an introduction from Dr. Christopher Ratté during an Anatolian Archaeology class. I had a long journey building experiences in conservation before finally being admitted into graduate school at the Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation (class of 2020). I am so grateful for both Dr. Ratté and Dr. Sears who assisted me by writing recommendations for this competitive graduate application process.

Once in graduate school you have to decide on a specialty. These specialties traditionally include: paintings, objects, paper, library & archives, furniture, photographs, and textiles. I ended up going a completely different path and became the first student to formally train in the US with a specialization in preventive conservation. Preventive conservation is certainly not a new concept for our field (in fact, it may be one of the oldest and most widely practiced). It encompasses the efforts to minimize the degradation of objects from all of the risks known as the "10 agents of deterioration" (light, pests/mold, temperature, humidity, physical forces, water, fire, pollutants, dissociation, thieves/vandals).

I have had graduate internships at the Brooklyn Museum, English Heritage, the Smithsonian's Museum Conservation Institute, and the Smithsonian's National Museum of Asian Art. I am currently the Samuel H. Kress Fellow in Preventive Conservation at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History where I am completing a risk assessment to evaluate storage options for the large vertebrate specimens currently stored on open shelving. In the Fall of 2021 I will start as the Annette de La Renta Fellow in Preventive Conservation at the

Metropolitan Museum of Art's Department of Scientific Research to examine pollutants in the galleries and vibration from musical events. I have also completed research into mold mitigation on textiles with the use of essential oils, ways to measure mercury vapor from degrading 19th century looking glass mirrors, and utilizing data science to evaluate temperature and relative humidity data for indoor spaces.

Art conservation is often described as the equivalent of being a doctor for art. Using that analogy, you might argue that those who specialize in treatment are more like surgeons, and I am more like a primary care doctor. Instead of prescribing exercise and diet, I might prescribe specific light levels or a protective showcase. I love that preventive conservation allows me to work with all material types and collaborate with so many different experts, from entomologists to HVAC engineers. What I especially love about preventive conservation, however, is that it promotes equity in the conservation of cultural heritage. Everyone has objects that they cherish and wish to preserve, and all of you are practicing preventive conservation whether or not you realize it.

Melissa preparing temperature/humidity sensors and moisture sorbents to put into a display case at English Heritage's Ranger's House in London (photo credit: Rebecca Bennett)

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