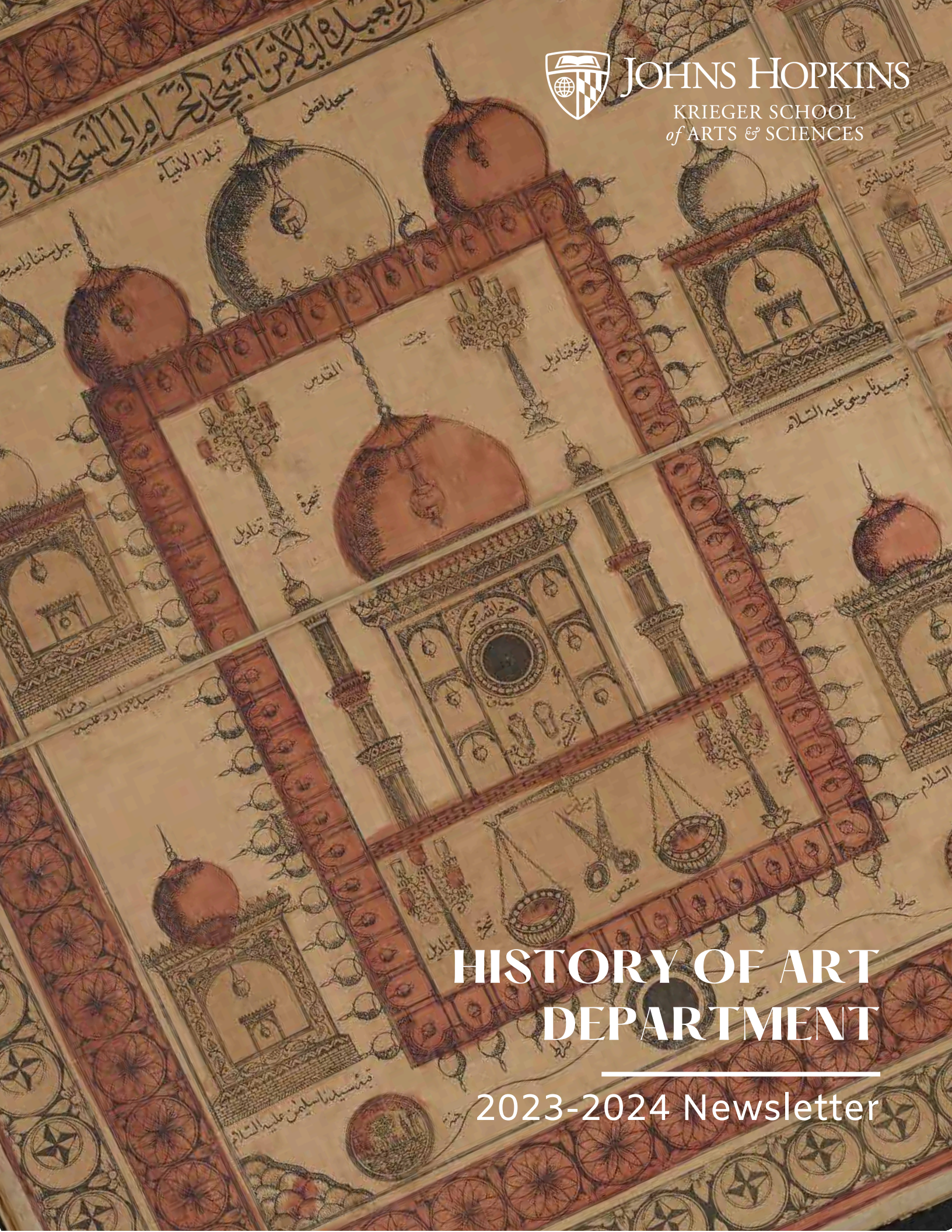




JOHNS HOPKINS

KRIEGER SCHOOL  
of ARTS & SCIENCES



# HISTORY OF ART DEPARTMENT

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2023-2024 Newsletter

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Cover photo: Printed Hajj certificate depicting the Holy Places, 1313 AH / 1895 CE, Special Collections, Sheridan Libraries, Johns Hopkins University. Recently acquired by History of Art librarian Donald Juedes for Dr. Ünver Rüstem. On display in the Macksey Seminar Room, Brody Learning Commons [https://catalyst.library.jhu.edu/permalink/01JHU\\_INST/t3c16/alma991060655516007861](https://catalyst.library.jhu.edu/permalink/01JHU_INST/t3c16/alma991060655516007861)

## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings from the desk of the Department Chair. Not yet the Resolute Desk, I admit, but the accumulated wisdom from an earlier time in this role (2013-16) seems to be slowly returning. First I want to thank my two predecessors: Marian Feldman, who kept the ship on a steady course last fall semester, and before her Rebecca Brown, who weathered unimaginable storms during her three-year tenure, and brought lots of positive change to the department.

Against the backdrop of worrisome conflicts on the world-stage, civil and uncivil protest, and political uncertainty here at home, the History of Art community racked up fresh accomplishments and found much to celebrate. We recognize that change is all around. The workers' union (TRU-UE) that represents graduate students in the Krieger School won extraordinary gains in stipend levels, benefits, and employee protections through the collective bargaining process that concluded in April. KSAS also formalized an arrangement with the Baltimore Museum of Art, designed to open new channels for collaboration between the two institutions. As I write, we witness the inauguration of the JHU/University of Warwick Summer School in Early Modern Ecohumanities, a program led by Stephen Campbell, with sixteen graduate students from seven institutions in history of art, science, medicine, literature and sustainable urban development, plus colleagues from Italy and the UK.

Reflecting on all we've accomplished this past year, I'm pleased to acknowledge our latest graduates. Majors and minors includes Kendra Brewer (who is headed off to start the PhD program at Yale!), Alara Kaplanoglu, Alice Robertson, and Hanjie Guo (fall 2023). Master's degrees were earned by Kay Min (spring 2023) and Rachel Remmes. Among our fabulous PhD students, Christopher Daly, who held the prestigious Mellon Fellowship at CASVA, defended his dissertation, "Painting in Lucca in the Late Fifteenth Century: A Problem in Artistic

Geography" (Oct. 2023). He was followed in late May by Bianca Hand with her dissertation, "What i Assyria Without the Other: The Subversive Role of Alterity in the Reliefs and Architecture of Sargon II Royal Palace at Khorsabad." Meghaa Ballakrishnen also successfully defended in July with her disseration "Untitled: Nasreen Mohamedi, Geeta Kapur, and Art History's Time". We wish all of our graduates continued success. And now, to replenis the ranks and continue the great tradition, we are pleased to be welcoming Le Yin, who will work in Asian modernism under the guidance of Mia Liu, and Ehsan Rajabi, who will begin his work in Islami art under Ünver Rüstem — and make his long-awaited debut in Baltimore — this fall.

With an eye toward the future I am especially pleased to announce a major new gift from our longtime friend and patron, Constance R. Caplan. Connie formalized a plan to provide not only for the continuing vitality of our speaker series in Modern and Contemporary Art, the Caplan-Rosen Lecture, but also for the future creation of a Capla Professorship in Modern Art. This is next-level philanthropy, and History of Art is truly grateful fo Connie's deep commitment to our programming.

In faculty news, we are pleased to be welcoming Anthony Meyer as our new Austen-Stokes Ancient Americas Endowed Postdoctoral Fellow, to begin this fall. Although we did not make any faculty hires this year, we collectively learned a lot about the state of Medieval Art History today, and can look forward to renewing our search at a later date. Speaking of medievalists, we congratulate Nino Zchomelidse on her appointment as the Nov Nordisk Foundation Visiting Scholar in Art History at the University of Copenhagen. Believe it or not, Nino is one of five colleagues who will be enjoying research leave this fall. I don't have enough room t detail their comings and goings, but I will say this: someday it will be their turn to hold down the fort, while the rest of us fly off to intellectual adventure

**Mitchell B. Merback**  
**Chair, Department of the History of Art**

# FACULTY

**Rebecca M. Brown** spent the year on leave, completing a book on KCS Paniker (1911–77) and collaborating with colleagues on three additional projects. One grew from the AIIS 60th Anniversary Conference in honor of the late Frederick M.

Asher, her PhD adviser, in December 2022, and is due out in 2024 as a special issue of *South Asian Studies*, co-edited with Sumathi Ramaswamy (Duke University). The second built on a CAA panel and Hopkins symposium focused on industrial photography in India, co-organized

with Ranu Roychoudhuri (Ahmedabad University). That project is forthcoming as a co-edited volume, entitled *Documenting Industry: Photography, Labor, Aesthetics, and the Machine in India*, forthcoming from Routledge in 2024 in Monica Juneja's *Visual and Media Histories* series. The third engages with questions of critical visualizations of museum storerooms by artists, museum professionals, and others; it began at the University of Brighton (UK) when she was a Global Fellow there in Spring-Summer 2023, and continues with an ongoing digital humanities and publication collaboration with Claire Wintle, co-director of Brighton's Centre for Design History. She continues to work on and think with Dayanita Singh, Rina Banerjee, and Madhvi Parekh, and has a side project pondering the methodological implications of astrology for art history.

**Stephen Campbell** The volume Stephen co-edited with Stephanie Porras, *The Routledge Companion to Global Renaissance Art*, appeared last Winter, and a grant from JHU and from Tulane University enabled open-access publication. In the Spring of 2024 he gave lectures at Dartmouth and the Center for Renaissance and Reformation Studies at University of Toronto. The book *Leonardo da Vinci: An Untraceable life - a kind of anti-biography of the Renaissance polymath - is currently in production and will appear from Princeton University Press in January 2025.*

In June 2024 Stephen co-organized a graduate workshop on early modern eco-humanities in Venice with Bryan Brazeau of the University of Warwick, which involved 16 graduate students from various North



The view from academic leave.

American and UK programs and fields (Art History, Urban Development, History, History of Medicine, Comp Lit, Modern Languages) in site visits and seminars that explored the history of environmental maintenance in the Venetian lagoon, and the manifestations of environmental consciousness in literature and visual art.

**Lisa DeLeonardis** spent the year engaged in writing *Santa Cruz de Lancha: Architecture and the Making of Place in Eighteenth-Century Peru*. In the summer, she continued fieldwork at Casa Blanca and assessed post-pandemic site preservation. Upon her return, she was interviewed by the *New York Times* for a *Science Times* exposé "Trampling Earth's Past" (September 26; see also JHU Arts and Sciences Fall 2023) about the pandemic-emergent destruction of fossil sites and human-constructed geoglyphs in the Ocucaje region. In December, her essay "From the Inside Looking Out: Paracas Perspectives on Chavín" was published in the edited volume *Reconsidering the Chavín Phenomenon in the Twenty-First Century* (Richard Burger and Jason Nesbitt, eds., *Dumbarton Oaks*, 2023). DeLeonardis juried CAA-ALAA's Thoma Award for best Latin American exhibition catalogue (2022-23). Next year she will chair the committee. In between university obligations, she consulted for the Walters Art Museum Community Advisory Board and penned wall text for the Americas collection reinstallation. In the spring, she completed analysis of the Shippee-Johnson photographic collection (AMNH, NY) for her book chapter on the ancient landscape. This summer she begins a sabbatical to write *A Shadow Geography*.

**Marian Feldman** After serving as interim chair in fall, Marian returned to the classroom in spring, teaching an undergraduate class on Assyrian art and a graduate seminar with Emily Anderson on ancient crafting and interactions. In addition, she gave talks at the ASOR annual conference in Chicago in November and for local



Professor Feldman with members of her Assyrian art class at the Walters Art Museum. From left to right: Ethan Walter, Cynthia Ni, Amy Wang, Marian Feldman, Hua Xin, and Serin Gleave. Photo by Lauren Cook, class TA.

societies of the AIA in New York and San Francisco in March (unfortunately, both AIA lectures were virtual!). Over summer she will submit the final manuscript to the University of Chicago Press for her forthcoming monograph on ziggurats and collective memory in third-millennium Mesopotamia, and she also hopes to complete several articles.

**Aaron M. Hyman** spent the 2023–24 year immersed in teaching and research in Baltimore. He continued work (with Stephanie Porras, Tulane University) in the "Dutch Americas" humanities lab, which has now cataloged over 400 objects emerging from Dutch involvement in the Atlantic world. Hyman and Porras are currently preparing the 2025 *ww* issue of the *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek*, which will be dedicated to this theme and will represent the first, dedicated art historical study of the Dutch and the Americas in the early modern period. Hyman has also been at work on finalizing his next book project: *Formalities: On the Visual Potential of Script in Art of the Early Modern Spanish World*. An article related to this project was recently published in *West 86th: A Journal of Decorative Arts, Design History, and Material Culture*. In the last year, Hyman's first book was widely reviewed, and he was named to the US's 40-under-40 by *Apollo: The International Art Magazine*.

**Mia Lui** has been teaching new courses such as *Asian modernisms and theories of landscape art* in the past year. She has also been involved in final critiques for studio art students in the Center for Visual Art and in the graduate school for painting at MICA. While working on articles on photography and film that are under review, she is looking forward to doing archival research in London this summer and completing her book manuscript in the coming year.

**Mitchell Merback**, before taking the reins as department chair on January 1st, spent the fall semester on teaching leave to work on his *magnum opus*, "The Consolation of Wisdom." Great progress was made, and the end of the journey looks a lot closer. Continuing with work on Pieter Bruegel and indulging his penchant for over-interpreted masterpieces, Mitch also contributed an essay on *Children's Games* to a *Festschrift* for an admired senior colleague (mums the word until it's published, though). And there's more Bruegel-news. Invited to speak in an interdisciplinary lecture series devoted to "Anger and the Challenge of Historicizing Emotions" at the Center for Historical Research, Ohio

State University, Mitch launched a new project called "Bruegel's Anger." But when half a million solar-eclipse tourists, eager to stand in the Path of Totality, threatened to overrun Columbus on April 8, the talk was rescheduled.



Pieter Bruegel the Elder, *Children's Games*, signed and dated 1560, oil on oak panel, 116.4 x 160.3 cm. Photo courtesy of Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

**Catherine H. Popovici** spent the summer in Honduras, completing the fieldwork for her first book manuscript, "Variable Atmospheres: The Stelae of the Copán Valley, Honduras." In collaboration with the Instituto Hondureño de Antropología e Historia, she trekked across the valley landscape, drawing and photographing the sculptures surrounding the Maya polity of Copán. "Variable Atmospheres" was recently awarded the ACLS H. and T. King Fellowship in Ancient American Art and Culture. On campus this past academic year, Catherine taught two seminars: one explored the quarrying and sculpting of Mesoamerican stone monuments and the second took a hemispheric approach, exploring how power was wielded through objects across the Indigenous Americas. Beginning in August 2024, Catherine will join the Department of Art History at Indiana University, Bloomington as the Robert E. and Avis Tarrant Burke Postdoctoral Fellow in Ancient and Indigenous Art of the Americas.

**Ünver Rüstem** spent the 2023–24 year continuing to work on his current book project, *Turkish Habits: Ottoman Costume and the Art of Self-Representation*. Having presented on the special role of turbans in Ottoman funerary commemoration at the Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting in Montreal in November, he gave an invited lecture on the same topic at SOAS, University of London, in January. He devoted the Spring semester, during which he was on sabbatical leave, to researching costume albums, items of historical dress, and other relevant objects and documents in collections in various European and Turkish cities,

# FACULTY

including Amsterdam, Ankara, Athens, Bologna, Paris, and Venice, and he was invited to present his finding at University College London in May. A highlight of his academic year was a trip to Istanbul and Cyprus that he and his co-organizer, Jennifer Stager, undertook with a group of graduate students in January. With interests spanning the chronological and cultural diversity of the sites they visited, the group had an extremely enjoyable and productive time sharing their knowledge and learning from one another.



Participants in the Istanbul-Cyprus trip on the precinct wall of the sixteenth-century Süleymaniye Mosque, Istanbul, at sunset.

**Caroline Lillian Schopp's** academic year had a key-term: excursions. Together with Prof. Aaron Hyman, she taught the Introduction to Art History, which included group excursions to the Center for Prints, Drawings, and Photographs, the Matisse Center, and the Joyce J. Scott retrospective, all at the Baltimore Museum of Art, as well as section excursions led by TA Clare Frances Kemmerer to the permanent galleries of the BMA. With her seminar "On Weaving: Feminism, Ecology, Care," Caroline led excursions to the JHU Center for Visual Arts to visit the workshop of local fiber artist and CVA Lecturer Sasha Baskin, where everyone got the chance to use Baskin's eight-harness floor loom; to the BMA for the Elizabeth Talford Scott exhibition, where curator George Ciscle introduced the group to the principle of "universal design," the Joyce J. Scott exhibition for a close look with curator Cecilia Wichmann at the use of unconventional materials and techniques of Scott's woven works, and, with curator Frances Klapthor, to look at ancient Andean textiles woven on backstrap looms, all works pulled from storage; and finally, with the support of a grant from the Faculty-Student Engagement and Enrichment Fund, twice to the National Gallery of Art in DC to see the exhibition *Woven Histories: Textiles and Modern Abstraction*, including a curator's walk-through with Lynne Cooke. For the final assignment, undergraduates wrote an exhibition review of *Woven*

Histories that considered the course readings and seminar discussions from throughout the semester.

Caroline was especially pleased to serve on the faculty board of the Program for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality (WGS) this past year, and looks forward to resuming this role when she returns from her leave



Students in "On Weaving: Feminism, Ecology, Care" on a curator's walk-through of *Woven Histories: Textiles and Modern Abstraction* with Lynne Cooke (center-left) at the National Gallery of Art in DC (April 18, 2024). (photo: C. L. Schopp)

in 2024-25. She could not have been more honored and humbled to receive the 2024 Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching and Mentorship.

**Jennifer Stager** "Locating a Collective Lyric I" The Hopkins Review 17.1, a collection of essays, poems, and visual works engaged with the pleasures and frictions of collective practice co-edited with Leila Easa, came out this winter. Jennifer taught the third iteration of her research-driven course the Antioch Recovery Project, expanding their research on its atomized mosaic corpus.

Invited talks took her to the Corcoran, Stanford, the University of Georgia, and TAG Santa Fe. Supported by a Catalyst award, Jennifer continued her work on *Making Medicine: The Arts of Healing in the Ancient Mediterranean*. In January Professor Ünver Rüstem and Jennifer traveled with graduate students to Istanbul and Northern Cyprus for an unforgettable trip.



ARP.3 (The Antioch Recovery Project Fall 2023) and Dr. Dospěl Williams at Dumbarton Oaks

**Daniel Weiss** returned to teaching this year, leading an undergraduate seminar on museums. He also lectured widely, including at the Smithsonian Institution, Dumbarton Oaks, the American Academy in Berlin, Yale University, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the North Carolina Museum of Art, and he gave the Ashby Lecture at Cambridge University.

**Nino Zchomelidse** enjoyed a research leave in the fall 2023 semester, working on imperial Byzantine documents, written in chrysography, sealed with golden bulls, and signed by the emperor's hand in red calligraphy. She discovered several authentication practices that were shared with the royal and imperial Carolingian chanceries in the medieval west. This research is part of her book project on the visibility of Ottonian legal documents. In the spring, she continued to work with the graduate students as DGS and finished an article on the centrality of ancient Rome, both in terms of an idea and as a site, for the conception of two unusual legal documents that will be published in a volume on Rome in the Tenth Century. She also accepted an invitation to join the Saxo-Institute of the University of Copenhagen (Denmark) as guest professor for the Academic Year 2024-2025. This professorship is funded through a grant from the Novo Nordisk Foundation.

## AUSTEN-STOKES POST-DOCTORAL FELLOW 2024-2025

**Anthony (AJ) Meyer** received his Ph.D. in Art History from the University of California, Los Angeles, with a focus in the Indigenous Americas from the ancestral through the early modern. Meyer's current book project examines how Nahua religious leaders known as *tlamacazqueh*, or "the givers of things," used artistic skill and knowledge to make and animate sacred artworks in both the Mexica Empire (1325-1521 CE) and transatlantic world of colonial New Spain. These skills fell under a Nahua concept of artistry called *tōltēcayōtl*, and he focuses on seven skills that leaders mastered; namely, how they studied (*ixtlamachtiā*), cut (*tequi*), carried (*māmā*), placed (*tlāliā*), arranged (*huipāna*), tied (*ilpiā*), and wrapped (*quimiloā*) sacred artworks from materials such as sap, amaranth, bark, flint, shell, and plant fibers. As the Austen-Stokes Ancient Americas Endowed Postdoctoral Fellow, Meyer is keen to advance his book and related article projects through conversations with faculty and students, as well as bring his expertise of Indigenous languages, materialities, and religions to the classroom.



Anthony Meyers.

## EMERITUS FACULTY

Professor Emeritus Herbert Kessler was recently awarded two honorary doctorates, one from Masaryk University in the Czech Republic (26 October 2023) and another at the Université de Poitiers, France (30 May 2024).



Prof. Kessler at Poitiers ceremony.

# STUDENT NEWS

**Bianca Hand** completed a 24-Month Ittleson Fellow at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, and defended her dissertation on May 28th. After graduation, she will join the Classics Department at the University of California, Davis, as an Assistant Professor.

**Ella Gonzalez** spent the year as a Fulbright Fellow in Athens, Greece, based at the American School of Classical Studies, where she conducted dissertation research. She has several forthcoming articles, as well as a forthcoming edited volume in September titled *Gender Violence, Art, and the Viewer: An Intervention* (Penn State University Press). This summer, she taught an introductory art history survey course at Pepperdine University.

**Andrew Harvin** finished his second year of coursework. He traveled to Malta in Spring 2024 for the Sixth Workshop on Gender, Methodology, and the Ancient Near East (GeMANE 6) where he presented a paper on bull-leaping figures at Tell el-Dab`a, Egypt. This summer, he traveled to London, Paris, and Greece for an on-going research project revolving around the circulation of luxury goods in the Early Iron Age Mediterranean. In August, Andrew will begin the Robert and Nancy Hall Graduate Curatorial Fellowship at the Walters Art Museum.

**Kimia Maleki** In January 2024, Kimia along with other students enrolled in the course "An Empire's Diversity: Ottoman Architecture and Patronage beyond the Imperial Court" traveled to Istanbul and Cyprus. Led by faculty members Ünver Rüstem and Jennifer Stager, the trip also attracted students with a broader focus on the Ancient Mediterranean and Near East. The trip began in Istanbul where we had the opportunity to visit Hagia Sophia- coincidentally on the first day the upper galleries with stunning Byzantine mosaics reopened.



History of Art graduate students with Prof. Rüstem and Prof. Stager.

We explored the Topkapı Palace Museum, attended religious ceremonies such as the Divine Liturgy at the Patriarchate (Greek Orthodox church), and participated in a gathering at a Sufi lodge. Due to Covid I was unable to travel on to Cyprus where the group visited several ancient sites, including the Lala Mustafa Pasha Mosque, originally known as the Cathedral of Saint Nicholas in Famagusta.

**Matthew Sova** after returning from his two-year Kress Institutional Fellowship at the Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte in Munich, spent much of the 2023-2024 academic year giving papers at academic conferences, including the CAA 112th Annual Conference, the 54th Annual Middle Atlantic Symposium in the History of Art, and the 59th International Congress on Medieval Studies. In addition to his scholarly activities, Matt married his long-term partner of seven years, Kaylee, on 22 February 2024. He is planning



Matthew and Kaylee Sova immediately after their ceremony, February 22, 2024.

to spend the summer completing his dissertation and preparing for a course that he will teach in Fall 2024 under the auspices of a Dean's Teaching Fellowship.

**Celia Rodríguez Tejuca** began fall of 2023 with a semester-long fellowship at the John Carter Brown Library. She then traveled widely to perform archival work in the US, Mexico, Peru, Bolivia, Spain, and France, thanks to the support of an Andrew W. Mellon



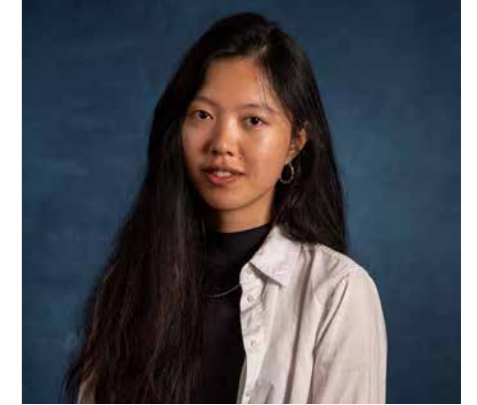
Participants of the V Transregional Academy on Latin American Art at the Museo de Arte de Lima (MALI).

Pre-Doctoral Fellowship from CASVA and a Dibner Research Fellowship from the Huntington Library. This was a productive year for engaging in discussions and receiving valuable feedback on her dissertation at various academic meetings such as: the Southern Methodist University Art History Graduate Symposium, where she received the First Paper Prize; the workshop "Collecting, Growing, and Exploring in Early Modernity," housed at La École Pratique des Hautes Études-Sorbonne; and the V Transregional Academy on Latin American Art in Lima, organized by the Deutsches Forum für Kunstgeschichte Paris, the Bibliotheca Hertziana - Max Planck.

## NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS



Ehsan Rajabi.



Le Yin.

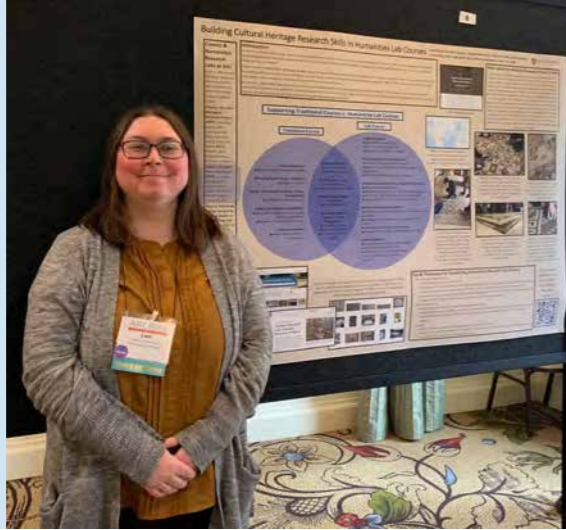
At the 2024 College Art Association Conference held in Chicago, IL, Catherine H. Popovici, the 2022-24 Austen-Stokes Postdoctoral Fellow, and Anthony Meyer, the incoming Austen-Stokes Postdoctoral Fellow, co-chaired a panel entitled "Visual and Material Surfaces in the Ancient Americas." The panel explored the concept of the surface for ancestral Indigenous communities, working to identify the contours of these visual and material layers. Paper contributions by Eric Mazariegos (Columbia University), Laura Wingfield (Kennesaw State University), Megan E. O'Neil (Emory University), and Cassandra Smith (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) offered diverse scholarly perspective working across the Americas, encompassing North, Central, South, and the Circum-Caribbean regions. Topics ranged from the fusion of Tairona architecture and metalwork to the interconnectedness of ceramics, humans, and other-than-humans in present-day Costa Rica, from the corporal surfaces of the Late Classic Maya to the performativity of architectural surfaces on Kiva Murals.

## UNDERGRADUATE CORNER

**Kendra Brewer** was a graduating senior who has spent this year completing her honors thesis, "Mediating (with) Mendicants: Power Negotiations and Cultural Continuities at San Juan Bautista de Cuauhtinchan," under the guidance of Dr. Aaron M. Hyman. As part of this project, Brewer conducted field and archival research in Mexico, studying early colonial sites throughout the State of Puebla as well as records in Mexico City, using the support of the department's Austen-Stokes Ancient Americas Research Stipend. This year, Brewer also had the opportunity to co-curate an exhibition at the Walters Art Museum, *Stitched Memories: The Art of Elizabeth Talford Scott* (February 8 - May 12), as part of a MICA course accessed through the Baltimore Student Exchange Program. This fall, Brewer is excited to begin her Ph.D. in Yale University's History of Art department, where she will be continuing her work on the ways art reflects cross-cultural interactions in Mesoamerica.



Detail from the original retablo of San Juan Bautista de Cuauhtinchan. San Juan Bautista de Cuauhtinchan Mural by Unknown Nahua and/or Pinome Artist(s). c.1554-1591. Fresco. San Juan Bautista de Cuauhtinchan, Cuauhtinchan, MEX. Image by Kendra Brewer.



Ensor-Bennett presenting her poster on April 3, 2024 at ARLIS

## The Visual Resources Collection

The Visual Resources Collection (VRC) was pleased to complete a space refresh over the past summer allowing for the fall semester to begin with more space for student use. Visitors to the [Johns Hopkins Digital Collections](#) will be able to see additions to our digital collections over the past year.



The VRC's space refresh for Fall 2023.

VRC Curator Lael Ensor-Bennett presented her poster "Building Cultural Heritage Research Skills in Humanities Lab Courses" at the 52nd Annual Conference of the Art Libraries Society of North America (ARLIS/NA) April 2-5, 2024 in Pittsburgh. Her poster focused primarily on the "[Antioch Recovery Project](#), a Classics Research lab" with Primary Investigator Professor Jennifer Stager.

Congratulations to the VRC employees who graduated this academic year or will graduate in the coming months: Cristina D'Errico, Hanjie Guo, Shalala Leny, Dylan Lucke, and Alice Robertson. We are grateful for their hard work and commitment to the collection.

The VRC applauds senior student employees Shalala Leny and Alice Robertson who were both recipients of the Eugene Leake Award for outstanding achievement in the Center for Visual Arts this spring. Moreover, the CVA's Student Annual Exhibition 2024 included three works of art by Leny and Robertson which incorporated deaccessioned VRC 35 mm slides, signaling a fascinating intersection between their JHU coursework, artwork, and student jobs. Of her work, Robertson wrote, "Both my subject and medium are the film



Robertson, Alice. *Untitled Series*, 2024, photographed at the CVA Student Annual Exhibition 2024, May 10, 2024.

slides themselves; each individual square of film features a painting, sculpture, or photograph taken directly from the collection that the university once used to teach with...By combining images of 'fine art' via techniques traditionally considered 'craft,' like sewing and beading, my series questions the conventional rigidity of the discipline...Given renewed life, the sewn-together film appears as swatches of light and color from a distance, but up close, the slides are transformed and arranged to create a new story about the canon."

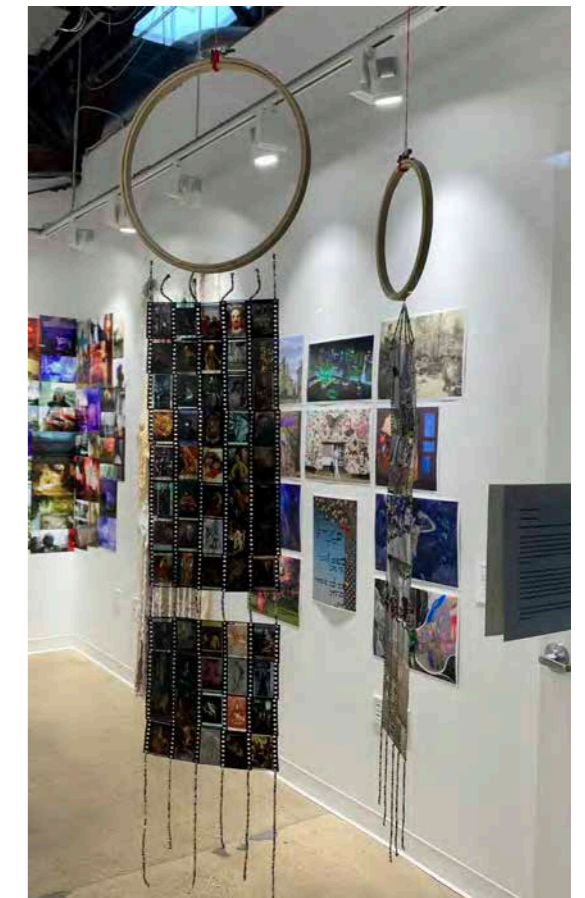


Leny, Shalala. *Memory's dress*, 2024, photographed at the CVA Student Annual Exhibition 2024, May 10, 2024.

Each individual square of film features a painting, sculpture, or photograph taken directly from the collection that the university once used to teach with...



Robertson, Alice. *Untitled Series*, 2024, photographed at the CVA Student Annual Exhibition 2024, May 10, 2024.

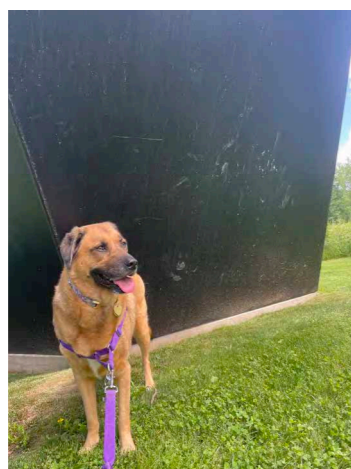


Robertson, Alice. *Untitled Series*, 2024, photographed at the CVA Student Annual Exhibition 2024, May 10, 2024.

**Nicole Berlin (PhD)** is currently the Assistant Curator of Collections at the Davis Museum at Wellesley College. From March to April 2024, she held a One Month Research Fellowship at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, DC. While in residence, Nicole conducted research for her upcoming loan exhibition and project focused on the 1930s excavations of the ancient city of Antioch, which brings together archaeological and archival material from Princeton University, Harvard University, Dumbarton Oaks, the Worcester Art Museum, and the Baltimore Museum of Art. Excavating Antioch: The Archaeology of an Ancient City, opening fall 2026 at the Davis Museum, is further supported by a grant from the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation, which Nicole received in April 2024.

**Christopher Daly (PhD)** successfully defended his dissertation "Painting in Lucca in the Late Fifteenth Century: A Problem in Artistic Geography" in October 2023. In August 2024 he completed his tenure as the 2021-24 David E. Finley Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, and in September 2024 he will join the Metropolitan Museum of Art as the 2024-26 Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in the Robert Lehman Collection. Other accomplishments from the year include the article "The Adoration of the Child by the Ghirlandaio workshop rediscovered in Zhytomyr," co-authored with Rafał Quirni-Popławski, which appeared in volume 14 of the Colnaghi Studies Journal, and five entries for the catalogue of the exhibition "Bellissimo! Italienische Malerei aus dem Lindenau-Museum Altenburg," held in Summer 2024 at the Augustinermuseum in Friburg. He also received a 40 Under Forty Award from his alma mater SUNY New Paltz (BA '12).

**Tamara Golan (PhD)** just finished up her year of research leave as an Andrew Mellon fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. She recently won the HGSCA's Emerging Scholars prize for her 2023 article in Art History on the legacy of Grünewald in the GDR, which came out of the very first seminar paper



Boomer Golan posing with Tony Smith's New Piece (1979) at the IAS in Princeton.

she wrote for her advisor, Mitch Merback, over 10 years ago(!).

**George L. Gorse (BA)** gave a paper in Baltimore this past October at the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference on "Genoa in Triumph" which ended with images of Baltimore and Genoa as "sister cities" and their harborfront redevelopments. This gave him a chance to revisit the city, the Walter's Art Gallery, and Baltimore Museum of Art and their "Making Her Mark" exhibit on women artists from 1400-1800, Co-curated by Andaleeb Badiee Banta, Senior Curator and Department Head, Prints, Drawings & Photographs at the BMA, and Alexa Greist, Curator and R. Fraser Elliott Chair, Prints & Drawings at the AGO.) a dear friend. Congratulations! Georges' old roommate, Peter Garner walked the campus - for George, this was the first time since graduation in 1971 - and he reminisced about their experiences and buildings they occupied during the Vietnam War demonstrations, before going to the BMA show. What memories, transformative! Discovering Art History our junior year when Peter suggested they take Phoebe Stanton's legendary two-semester survey course to study together, when George did not know what art history was? The rest is history and here he is, thanks to Peter and Phoebe! Thank you, Hopkins! He discovered his future and identity as an Art Historian! Forever grateful, George Gorse, Viola Horton Professor of Art History, Pomona College. PS Professor Rebecca Brown is one of his students, so proud of her!

**Hanjie Guo (BA)** completed her degree last December in History of Art, marking the culmination of her undergraduate journey. During the last semester, she wrote a senior thesis on the material and emotional "stickiness" of a performative work of Adrian Piper, advised by Professor Schopp, and took a seminar on the arts of the Ottoman Empire with Professor Rustem. While Hanjie is grateful for the invaluable support provided by Professor Schopp throughout her thesis project, she also treasures the opportunity to delve into Islamic art in Professor Rüstem's class, especially given the current global conditions. Following her graduation, she began working at Cai Guo-Qiang's studio, where she previously interned with the Hall Museum Internship Scholarship. Here, she aims to continue her pursuit of the humanities and critical thinking, drawing upon the intellectual tools acquired at the university.

**Leslie King Hammond (PhD)** received the Creative Alliance Lifetime Achievement Award; Advisory Board for the Smithsonian's HANDWORK 2026 initiative; curatorial team for the 2026 exhibition of John Wilson with the MFA, Boston and the Metropolitan Museum of Art; Baltimore Museum of Art Scholars Advisory Board for the current Joyce J. Scott retrospective and contributed essays for the Barnes Foundation exhibition on William Edmondson and Sonya Clark at the Museum of Art and Design.



John Wilson, Eternal Presence, 1987.

**Kent Lydecker (PhD)** continued to scratch the itch of curiosity from Cambridge, MA. Having earned the PhD at JHU while on a leave of absence from the National Gallery of Art, he worked a total of eleven years at that institution. Kent was then at the Art Institute of Chicago for five years, then eighteen years at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (he did not have the honor of overlapping with Dan Weiss), and six years at the Museum of Fine Arts, St Petersburg, FL. In February, he and his wife Toni and travelled to Italy and were able to visit with their dear friend (and Kent's dissertation director) Richard A. Goldthwaite before his passing. While in Florence, they encountered Max Hernandez in the galleries of The Bargello. You meet the most interesting people in art museums!

**James Pilgrim (PhD)** completed his first year as an Assistant Professor at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. His article "Jacopo Bassano and the Flood of Feltre" appeared in the September 2023 issue of The Art Bulletin. His book on Bassano is under contract with The University of Chicago Press.

**Antongiulio Sorgini (PhD)** In 2023, Giulio co-organized a workshop on the global cult of the Virgin of Loreto that was hosted by the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz (a sequel to a conference held at the Courtauld Institute of Art in Summer 2022). In January of 2024, an article on Loreto that he co-wrote with Erin Giffin appeared in The Routledge Companion to Global Renaissance Art (ed. Campbell and Porras). More recently, Giulio was hired as the Coordinator of Internships and College Programs at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

**Thomas R Schmuhl (BA)** continues to practice law with a concentration on a wide range of sophisticated international matters. In 1990 with a small group of lawyers from around the world, he founded an international network of law firms that has expanded over the years to include 100 member firms encompassing about 10,000 lawyers on every continent. He is currently the Executive Editor of the Multilaw Guidebook to Global Business Entities. Tom lives in the Philadelphia area.

**Sarah Spinner Liska (BA)** was appointed as the new director of the Kent State University Museum.



Dr. Sarah Spinner Liska (B.A. History of Art & French, M.A. Humanistic Studies, 2002)

# History of Art

## LECTURE SERIES

On September 20th, the department welcomed Christopher P. Heuer, Professor of Art History at the University of Rochester and a recognized authority in the art of the Northern Renaissance, to deliver a lecture entitled “Antiquity Without Humans.” At the center of Heuer’s presentations was an intriguing panel painting of considerable size by the Flemish painter Cornelis van Dalem (1530ca-1573), today preserved at the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen (Rotterdam). Across a rocky landscape, Dalem represents the dawn of civilization: the painter, who received a classical education, imagines the first human community and visualizes the way in which humans engaged with natural materials and resources to survive in a hostile environment.



Faculty and guests gather in department seminar room for Heuer lecture.

In the first part of the lecture, Heuer read the painting alongside some well-known passages from Lucretius’ *On the Nature of Things*, tracing parallels between the classical text and the Flemish landscape. In the second part, Heuer located the making of the painting in its historical context, interpreting its peculiarity in light of some significant urban developments occurring in Antwerp, the city in which Dalem lived at the time. Beyond the curiosity that Heuer’s presentation sparked around a little-studied landscape painting, the lecture invited the History of Art community to think about the relationship between the environment and art history and the many unexplored ways ecological concerns/crises have been registered in pre-modern objects.

To paraphrase an oft-cited insight made in 1927 by the Austrian writer Robert Musil: nothing in this world is as invisible as a monument.

Its very domineering size, didacticism, and materiality discourage, even repel, attention. For Musil, the monument is a self-defeating form of art, precisely because it is situated in the public sphere, where one can walk right by it. Nearly 100 years later, on October 11, 2023, the Austrian art historian Mechtild Widrich (SAIC) offered another perspective on the problem of the visibility of monuments in her Seminar Series Lecture, “Monumental Cares: Commemoration and Activism in Contemporary Art.” Widrich proposed that monuments are best understood not as static objects but as mediated spaces of interaction, both available to and constitutive of dispersed heterogeneous publics. Uncoupling the physicality and materiality of monuments from the work of commemoration they ostensibly set out to do, Widrich advocated for forms of artistic activism that carefully resurface history, without expectations of a unanimous celebratory reception. Her lecture considered performative works by Carey Young, Ai Weiwei, and Emilio Rojas. In different ways, these artists intervene in, without occupying, contested public spaces, enacting Widrich’s titular term, “monumental care.” The lecture was generously co-sponsored by the Alexander Grass Humanities Institute (AGHI). A review of Widrich’s book, *Monumental Cares: Sites of History and Contemporary Art* (Manchester, 2023), by History of Art Professor Caroline Lillian Schopp, can be found on [caa.reviews](https://caa.reviews).



Event flyer for Widrich lecture.



Graduate student Andrew Harvin introduces Dr. Teriba before lecture.

On the evening of Halloween in 2023, the JHU History of Art graduate students welcomed Adedoyin Teriba, Assistant Professor of Art History at Dartmouth, for a lecture entitled “Language, Dwelling, and Desire in the Lagos Colony (1910s).” Teriba’s lecture, drawn from his upcoming book, *Architecture’s Figures: Assimilation and Cultures in Colonial Nigeria*, attended to interactions between “Black Westerners” or Afro-Brazilian counter-settlers and the local population of Southwestern Nigeria in the early nineteenth century, especially as exemplified through the creation of new architectural forms and changing conceptualizations of domestic space. The “Èbùn” house, constructed by Balthazar dos Reis, a Brazilian carpenter of African descent for Andrew Wilkinson Thomas in 1913, served as Teriba’s key case study. This building blends traditional architecture with new materials and techniques, shifting perceptions of the home but and requiring innovations in the Yorùbá poems and figures of speech conventionally in ritual place-making practices. Questions were raised following the lecture concerning the role of photography in documenting Afro-Brazilian migration to the Bight of Benin; inter-religious exchanges of architectural knowledge in the construction of churches and mosques in Brazil and Nigeria; and the role of ritual in shaping new architectural forms in the Lagos Colony.

## Distinguished Lecture in the Art of the Ancient Americas

In collaboration with the Embassy of Peru, Washington, DC, the Department welcomed Professor John Ochsendorf from Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Morningside Academy for Design on March 14. In his lecture, “Inka Suspension Bridges: Engineering A Pre-Industrial Construction,” Ochsendorf called attention to the neglected role of suspension bridges in scholarly research, and advocated for a transdisciplinary approach to their study. He drew from his expertise on fiber engineering and linked the fiber arts to bridge construction, and the khipu. His work is informed by Indigenous specialists who continue to construct and repair the bridges in the Andean highlands. For the student forum, Ochsendorf discussed the methodologies of material science engineering and archaeology, drawing from his work on the structural and aesthetic qualities of Guastavinotiles and Inka fiber arts.



Utilizing traditional Inka techniques, Andean specialists construct a fiber suspension bridge on the National Mall, Washington, DC.



# Department EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

On September 12, 2023, the Department of Art History held its annual Fall Reception. Professors, students, and guests from across the university and local museums were eager to come together to reconnect and network with colleagues both old and new.



History of Art guests gathered in the Gilman Atrium

In December 2023, students from Professor Jennifer Stager's History of Art survey course and Professor Nandini Pandey's first-year seminar explored the "Ethiopia at the Crossroads" exhibit at the Walters Art Museum.



Group photo of Prof. Stager & Prof. Pandey with students at the Walters Art Museum.

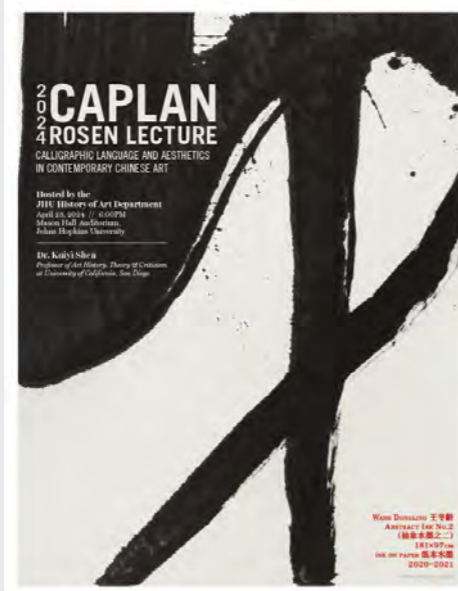


Dr. Kuiyi Shen in Mason Hall Auditorium

## 2023-2024 CAPLAN-ROSEN LECTURE

Written by: Mia Lui

This year on April 23 in the Mason Hall auditorium on Johns Hopkins University campus, Professor Kuiyi Shen, distinguished art historian and curator of modern and contemporary Chinese art, delivered the annual Caplan-Rosen Lecture titled "Calligraphic Language and Aesthetics in Contemporary Chinese Art." Shen has been a crucial figure in establishing modern Chinese art history as a field in English scholarship, and has dedicated his career to writing about the multicultural and multimedia history of Chinese art in the twentieth century. Audiences comprised many faculty and students from Johns Hopkins University, University of Maryland, and Maryland Institute College of Art. Curators from the Baltimore area such as the Walters Museum and Baltimore Museum of Art as well as local artists and art students.



In this richly illustrated talk, Shen highlighted the importance of calligraphy in contemporary Chinese art. Calligraphy, one of the foundational art forms in Chinese cultural history, entered contemporary Chinese art as soon as modernist art reappeared in China in the 1980s at the end of the Mao era. Drawing from his long relationship and veteran experience working with contemporary artists as a curator and scholar, Shen in this talk demonstrates the many different ways artists engaged with calligraphy in their work, and provides a helpful categorization. According to him, they fall into three groups. The first group shares a strong link to traditional calligraphy, but with a modern twist. They tend to maintain the traditional principles of calligraphic art and their modern methods are concentrated in formal explorations (see artist Wang Dongling's work in the

poster for this talk). The second group are artists who apply calligraphic elements to other forms and media of art. The third group is, and the most interesting one, are those who interrogate the art history of calligraphy in their work. Artist Xu Bing's works are a great case in point, who asks questions about calligraphy and the Chinese writing system. While exercising a deconstructive approach to the structure of the Chinese characters and the composition of Chinese scripts, Xu's art also invites philosophical inquiries

into language, the act of writing, the transmission of text, through his re-employment of Chinese calligraphic art in new media, and sometimes new scripts (made-up characters or alphabetic scripts fusion as square word calligraphy).

Shen acknowledges that it is difficult to discuss calligraphy because it is easily neglected as merely a vehicle for meaning: one is tempted to read what it writes, not to see itself as an art form. However, as contemporary Chinese artists' experiments demonstrate, calligraphy straddles between many different concepts: it is simultaneously text and image, ideographic and pictographic, writing and drawing, figuration and abstraction, and the list continues. It lures us to approach it from the perspectives of these given concepts, but also completely eludes them. Shen suggests that though calligraphy continues to be a challenging intellectual field, its conceptual ambiguity also promises critical potentials. It can be a space to accommodate not only formal innovations but also social-political criticality for contemporary artists.

# EVENTS & ACTIVITIES



Students view artwork at the Walters Art Museum.

A visit to the Sheridan Libraries Special Collections, guided by librarian Donald Juedes, allowed History of Art survey course students to delve into the world of illustrated books and manuscripts.



Donald Juedes and students reviewing special collections materials.

Professor Mitchell Merback, graduate student Grace Walsh, and undergraduate Hadeed Habib represented the History of Art department at the Johns Hopkins 2024 alumni weekend departmental showcase on April 5, 2024. Alumni engaged with department representatives, acquired copies of the department newsletter, and explored the Visual Resources Collection through hands-on experiences with 35mm slides.



Students Grace Walsh and Hadeed Habib at the History of Art alumni weekend table.

Students embarked on a day-long excursion to New York City led by Professor Daniel Weiss, where they visited the Metropolitan Museum of Art. They had the opportunity to interact with curators, exhibition designers, and conservators, as well as experience the museum's extensive art collection.



Prof. Daniel Weiss and students exploring the new skylights at The Met.

# IN MEMORIAM

The History of Art Department deeply mourns the loss of our esteemed colleague, friend, and former Walters Museum curator, William Gerald Noel. He tragically passed away on April 29, 2024, following an accident in Edinburgh, Scotland. Dr. Noel joined our department as an Adjunct Professor in May 2001 while serving as the Curator of Manuscripts and Rare Books at The Walters Art Museum. Throughout his time with us, he was a brilliant and beloved colleague who provided invaluable mentorship to our Zanyvl Krieger Curatorial Fellow and History of Curatorial Fellows, sharing his expertise in museum practices.



## Donors & Gifts

The Department extends its sincere gratitude to our donors whose generosity during the 2023-2024 academic year has been invaluable. Your support enables us to uphold our commitment to academic excellence. We would like to recognize the following individuals:

**Susan MacMillan Arensberg**

**Alice Beckwith**

**Anthony M. Bond**

**Constance R. Caplan**

**Ayesha Court**

**Jaroslav T. Folda**

**Michael I. Giden**

**Anne Hedeman**

**Russel A. Herz**

**John H. Moorhead**

**Daniel Weiss**

**Mary L. Wood**

## Upcoming events

2024-2025  
Lecture Series

OCT  
7

**EDHEM ELDEM**  
(Gazici University)  
6PM

MAR  
04

**NASSOS  
PAPALEXANDROU**  
(UT Austen)

NOV  
14

**CATHERINE FOSTER**  
(State Cultural  
Heritage Dept),  
cosponsored by  
NES & Classics)  
4:30PM

MAR  
11

**CLAIRE WINTLE**  
(University of  
Brighton)

NOV  
19

**ANTHONY J. MEYER**  
(JHU/NYU)

APR  
01

**DISTINGUISHED  
LECTURE IN THE ART  
OF THE ANCIENT  
AMERICAS**  
Kelley Ann Hays-Gilpin  
(Northern Arizona  
University)

FEB  
18

**LAMIA BELAFREJ**  
(The University of  
California, Los Angeles)

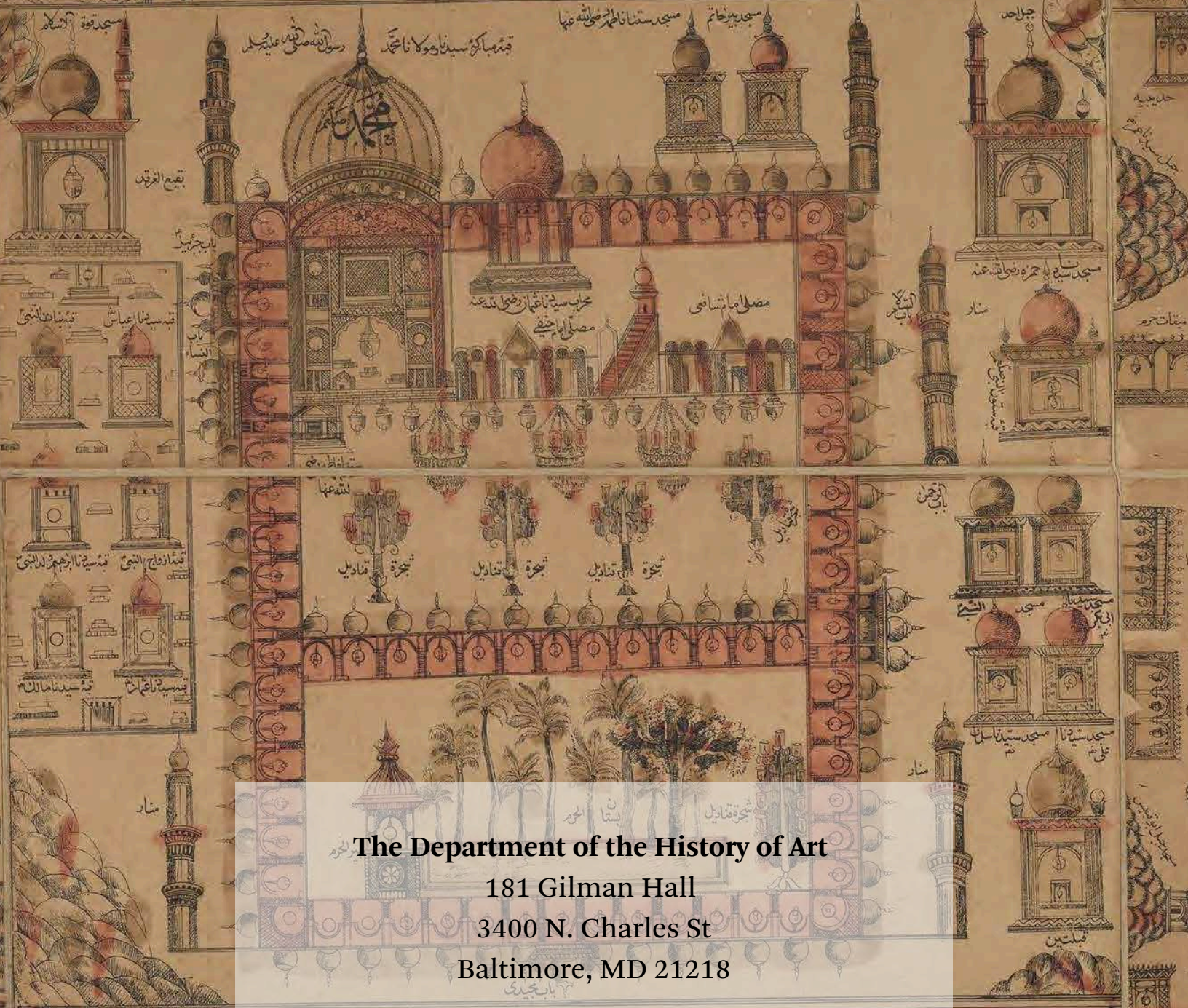
APR  
22

**CAPLAN-ROSEN  
LECTURE**  
Karin Zitzewitz  
(University of Minnesota)

Visit <https://arthist.jhu.edu/events/> for more information



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