

# Getty

MAGAZINE | WINTER 2024



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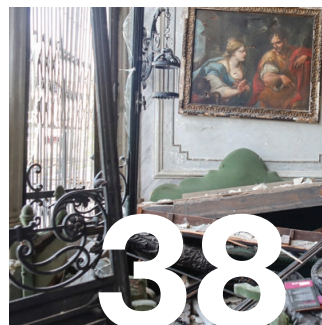




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On the cover: *Eve* (detail), about 1530, Lucas Cranach the Elder. Oil on panel. Norton Simon Art Foundation, Pasadena, California

Opposite page: Katherine E. Fleming. Photo © Julie Skarratt 2024

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



It's easy to think of a new year as a blank page we're eager to fill—either with the things we didn't get around to last year, or with the ways we can undo last year's mistakes. But this year, since taking the helm at Getty, I have a different kind of to-do list, one that connects to our institutional mission.

First on the agenda: the idea of generosity. Getty has been philanthropic since its inception. Following J. Paul Getty's vision, early leaders set out to serve all facets of the art world, including research, display, conservation, publishing, grants, and education. Since the creation of our philanthropy program (the Getty Foundation) in 1984, \$530 million in grants has supported people across the world and fellow art institutions here in LA. Just through our upcoming 2024 iteration of Pacific Standard Time (PST ART: *Art & Science Collide*), we will support some 60 exhibitions and numerous programs to the tune of roughly \$20 million. Our international work has benefited 180 countries on all seven continents (yes, even Antarctica!)—and has supported the emergence of our disciplines as more inclusive, accessible,

and comprehensive. Collaborations with other institutions, meanwhile, have created such groundbreaking exhibitions as *Ancient Sculptures: India Egypt Assyria Greece Rome* (see p. 5), which just launched at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya museum in Mumbai.

But what about outright generosity? I'd like Getty to be known for sharing: sharing its expertise, its collections, its knowledge, and yes—also for sharing its wealth. One early step in doing this has come about through rethinking the Getty Medal. For 10 years the Medal has celebrated stars of the art world—artists, philanthropists, institutional leaders, and scholars who have changed the field for the better. We've honored them each year at a gala dinner that, if the one I attended is anything to go by, is memorable for its glam factor. But what if we toned down the fanciness and instead used some of the money to create a fund honorees could direct as a grant from Getty to a nonprofit of their choosing? Starting in 2024, this is the approach we will be taking; we've renamed the award the Getty Prize and will focus each year on one honoree rather than two or three. Thus we will continue the tradition started by Jim Cuno when he invented the Getty Medal but will amp it up by placing generosity at its very heart.

We've just chosen the first Getty Prize recipient: Mark Bradford, an LA-based abstract artist who will soon choose a nonprofit to support (see the story on p. 4). Mark is an exceptional artist whose work sheds light on societal issues and captivates audiences here in LA and well beyond. A Getty Prize working committee comprised of a small group of staff and trustees unanimously selected him from an impressive list of nominees. How wonderful that we can enable him to support the people and projects important to him. At the core of the Getty Prize relaunch is the idea that Getty needs perspectives other than its own. Mark is helping to bring one, in drawing our attention, and that of the world, to the important work done by his selected nonprofit.

Of course we very much hope that our collaborations with Mark might well continue—as has happened with Getty Medalists Ed Ruscha and Frank Gehry, whose archives we've been sharing through our far-reaching websites *12 Sunsets: Exploring Ed Ruscha's Archive* and *Sculpting Harmony*, wherein Frank tells us how he and his team designed Walt Disney Concert Hall.

I hope it's now on your own new year's list to check out these various websites, along with that of Mark's chosen organization. And I hope you'll also find a way to “pay it forward” yourself, as we've done with the Getty Prize. Celebrating the important work of a third entity by celebrating the accomplishment of our Prize winner feels really good—even nicer than being directly in the spotlight ourselves. Thank you, Mark—and here's to generosity!

Katherine E. Fleming



## Visual Artist Mark Bradford Wins the 2024 Getty Prize

The J. Paul Getty Trust has named Los Angeles-based artist Mark Bradford as the recipient of its annual Getty Prize, the institution's highest honor.

Established in 2013 and formerly known as the Getty Medal, the award recognizes leaders in the cultural fields whose work expands human understanding and appreciation of arts and culture. Beginning this year, the award will go to a single person who can then recognize the work of a nonprofit with a \$500,000 grant from Getty.

"We are thrilled that the Getty Prize will now recognize not only personal achievements and contributions to the cultural sector, but will also actively support other nonprofits in that sector by letting the awardee pay it forward," says Katherine E. Fleming, president and CEO of the J. Paul Getty Trust.

Bradford and the nonprofit he chooses will be celebrated at the annual Getty Prize dinner on May 13, 2024, at the Getty Center in Los Angeles. Nominations are reviewed and awardees determined by the Getty Board of Trustees.

"I am deeply honored to be among the illustrious recipients of the Getty Prize and am grateful for this opportunity to bring such generous support to a nonprofit organization of my choosing," says Bradford.

Bradford's work explores social and political structures that objectify marginalized communities and the bodies of vulnerable populations. His oeuvre includes painting, sculpture, video, photography, printmaking, and other media. In addition to his studio practice, Bradford engages in social projects alongside exhibitions of his work that take contemporary ideas outside the walls of exhibition spaces and into communities with limited access and exposure to art.



Mark Bradford. Image courtesy of the artist and Hauser & Wirth. Photo: Sean Shim-Boyle

Bradford received his BFA from the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) in 1995 and his MFA from CalArts in 1997. He has since been widely exhibited internationally and received numerous awards. Recent solo exhibitions have taken place at the Serralves Museum of Contemporary Art, Porto; the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; and Long Museum West Bund, Shanghai.

Past Getty Prize awardees have included Harold M. Williams and Nancy Englander, who were recognized for their leadership in creating Getty as it exists today, along with Frank Gehry, Ellsworth Kelly, Ed Ruscha, Agnes Gund, Yo-Yo Ma, Kwame Anthony Appiah, Richard Serra, and others. ■



Installation image of *Ancient Sculptures: India Egypt Assyria Greece Rome* at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS). Image courtesy of CSMVS

## Getty and Partners Present a New Model of International Co-curation and Cooperation

For the first time, the Indian public can view great artistic achievements of the ancient Mediterranean alongside the country's own cultural treasures. The Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS)—"a museum of ideas" in Mumbai—presents *Ancient Sculptures: India Egypt Assyria Greece Rome*, on view through October 1, 2024.

In an unprecedented approach in India, objects were chosen by Indian curators to take their place in Indian narratives of antiquity, joining and complementing cultural storytelling from ancient Greece and Rome. Curators from CSMVS chose sculptures and other objects from the Berlin State Museums, the British Museum, and Getty and have exhibited them alongside objects from Indian institutions. The exhibition is made possible through Getty's support.

The exhibition themes explore traditions that shaped ancient cultures, many of which continue to dominate aspects of society today: the role of nature in human lives, the divine form, and concepts of beauty. Displayed beside the museum's Indian collections, the loaned sculptures demonstrate the interconnectedness of the ancient world and the extraordinary longevity of India's cultural traditions.

As India commemorates its 75th year of independence across the nation and around the globe, this project highlights the vast

history of the ancient world and India's position in it. Indian visitors explore India's centuries-old capacity to cradle and sustain a diversity of ideas and cultures, both from within and outside the subcontinent, underscoring thousands of years of cultural diplomacy.

"More than 50 percent of India's vast population is under the age of 25," says Sabyasachi Mukherjee, director general of the CSMVS. "For decades, schoolchildren and university students in India have learned about ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, Greece, and Rome, but until now they have not been able to study firsthand any of the great works of art that these civilizations produced. We see the exhibition as a unique and important educational endeavor that provides our Indian audiences and children with new ways of viewing their own culture as a result of seeing it in relation to other societies and geographies."

The project is a new approach to international partnerships, with the lending partners sending their objects to remain in India for 10 months. CSMVS curators worked with their counterparts at the lending institutions to select the objects and to adapt information and convey the specific assumptions, interests, and requirements of Indian visitors. The process has brought new understandings and raised new questions for all those involved.

"CSMVS has organized a fantastic exhibition that infuses art from European collections and Getty with fresh ways of looking and understanding—and brings CSMVS's own objects into a larger global narrative," says Katherine E. Fleming, president and CEO of Getty. "This is our objective in supporting cross-continent collection sharing." ■

— Alexandria Sivak, International Communications Manager  
J. Paul Getty Trust



# Two Exhibitions Commemorate Walt Disney Concert Hall’s 20th Anniversary



Walt Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles, California, 2004. Photograph by John Sullivan. Wikimedia Commons

Bottom left: Constructing a model of Walt Disney Concert Hall, 1991, Frank O. Gehry and Associates. 35mm slide photography. © Frank O. Gehry. Getty Research Institute. Photo: Joshua White



The digital exhibition *Sculpting Harmony* provides a captivating glimpse into the process of designing the Walt Disney Concert Hall. Website visitors can experience sweeping views of more than 150 models, sketches, and photographs from the Frank O. Gehry papers, new interviews with Gehry, and interactive 3D media.

The in-person exhibition *Modeling Sound*, on view last October at the Walt Disney Concert Hall, showcased six architectural models drawn from the extensive GRI archives, highlighting the critical role of modeling in the building’s design process.

“Despite their importance in the design process, the architectural models in Getty’s collection remain difficult to access and have been rarely seen by the public,” says Maristella Casciato, senior curator of architecture at the GRI. “Following Getty’s acquisition of the Frank Gehry archive, the GRI and Getty Digital partnered to develop innovative ways to access our vast models collection and to provide new opportunities for research, scholarship, and study.” ■

Explore *Sculpting Harmony* at [gehry.getty.edu](http://gehry.getty.edu).

Last fall, Getty introduced both a digital and a physical exhibition to celebrate the iconic Walt Disney Concert Hall. Developed in collaboration with architect Frank Gehry and the LA Phil, *Sculpting Harmony* and *Modeling Sound* delve into the creation of the iconic Los Angeles landmark and introduce the public to the Frank O. Gehry papers held at the Getty Research Institute (GRI).

# A Rare 500-Year-Old Manuscript Gets a Second Life Online

After seven years of work from dozens of specialists around the world, the Florentine Codex—a manuscript from early colonial Mexico rich in Indigenous knowledge—is now widely available to explore online and has been enhanced with Nahuatl and Spanish transcriptions, English and Spanish translations, and searchable texts and images.

“The website makes it easy to search for any topic about Mexica culture and language,” says Alicia Maria Houtrouw, Digital Florentine Codex project manager at the Getty Research Institute.

The Florentine Codex (so named because it resides at the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana in Florence, Italy) is a 16th-century manuscript that details, in both Spanish and Nahuatl, the culture and history of the Mexica (Aztec) people, including the invasion of Mexico City by the Spaniards and their Indigenous allies. Getty partnered with institutions and scholars in Italy, Mexico, and the US to create a comprehensive and enhanced digital edition of the codex that can be explored by anyone interested in learning more about it.

Although the codex has been digitally available via the World Digital Library since 2012, for most users it remains impenetrable—reading it requires knowledge of 16th-century Nahuatl and Spanish and pre-Hispanic and early modern European art traditions. The codex’s images, which provide vivid depictions of Mexica life, were relatively inaccessible until 2012.

“I kept thinking about how today in certain places in Mexico there is violence against Indigenous peoples,” says Eduardo de la Cruz Cruz, director of the Instituto de Docencia e Investigación Etnológica de Zacatecas. “Working on projects like this gives me hope that they can foster greater knowledge, awareness, and appreciation of Nahua culture, which is so integral to the Mexican national identity.” ■

Visit the Digital Florentine Codex at [florentinecodex.getty.edu](http://florentinecodex.getty.edu).



Top: English home page of the Digital Florentine Codex/ Códice Florentino Digital, edited by Kim N. Richter and Alicia Maria Houtrouw, Getty Research Institute, 2023

Middle: Disguised Mexica merchants in Tzinacantlan acquiring quetzal feathers in Book 9 of the Florentine Codex, 1577, Bernardino de Sahagún et al. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence, and by permission of MIBACT

Above: Insects in Book 11 of the Florentine Codex, 1577, Bernardino de Sahagún et al. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence, and by permission of MIBACT



**The Sights and Sounds of Early Colonial Mexico**

To celebrate the launch of Getty’s Digital Florentine Codex—an enhanced online edition of the encyclopedic 16th-century manuscript of early colonial Mexican and Nahua knowledge—Getty and LAist co-hosted a night of musical performances. The Getty Research Institute’s Kim Richter and LAist reporter Adolfo Guzman-Lopez introduced the event, highlighting the codex’s significance to the local region and to humanity itself.

Musical group Xochi Cuicatl opened the performance with original compositions using string and percussion instruments of Mesoamerica and Mexico.

Musician Lu Coy, along with guitarist Jonathan Almaraz, debuted an original score directly inspired by the ancient knowledge within the recently digitized manuscript. Audience members were treated to an immersive, sensory experience inspired by the sights and sounds of early colonial Indigenous Mexico.

The evening concluded with Coy in the fountain, which symbolized Aztec moon goddess Coyolxauhqui’s domain above the aquatic underworld. When asked what the audience might take away from the performance, Coy answered, “the experience of being with our ancestors—who are lonely and longing to have time spent with them.” As Richter said, “This is not a dead history. The descendants of the Nahua and Mexica are among us.”



Top: Getty Research Institute Senior Research Specialist Kim Richter discusses the historical resonances of the Florentine Codex in Southern California with LAist 89.3 host Adolfo Guzman-Lopez.

Above: Musician Lu Coy concludes their set in the fountain.



Musical group Xochi Cuicatl, comprised of family members Christopher, Yolanda, and Alegría García, performed original compositions using Indigenous breath as well as string and percussion instruments of Mesoamerica and Mexico.

**Celebrating Indigenous Peoples’ Day**

On October 7 the Getty Research Institute welcomed more than 600 visitors to a celebration of Southern California’s Indigenous cultural heritage. The day’s events, led by Getty and local partners, included live performances, workshops, and a custom tasting menu. Meztli Projects organized a linocut-stamp workshop inspired by motifs in the Florentine Codex. Posters with illustrations by Weshoyot Alvitre encouraged visitors to find the endangered white sage plant and other California natives at the Getty Center, which is sited on the tribal land of the Tongva/Gabrielino people.

In the garden, musicians Carmina Escobar, Micaela Tobin, and Jacqueline Wilson performed scores written by Pulitzer Prize-winning artist and composer Raven Chacon, who originally dedicated them to Indigenous female composers and musicians. Back on the plaza, guests sampled traditional Mesoamerican cuisine selected by culinary anthropologist Claudia Serrato. Ingredients included cacao, amaranth, and native bay leaves. “This is so cool—it’s the food our ancestors ate!” said one teenager, testifying to food’s unique power across generations and cultures.



Top: Vocalist Carmina Escobar performs Raven Chacon’s powerful score, written and dedicated to her by the artist.

Above: Guests create their own codex in Meztli Projects’ linocut stamp workshop.

Top right: Guests gather in the shade to enjoy bites from Claudia Serrato’s Mesoamerican tasting menu.

Bottom right: Claudia Serrato introduced visitors to “Three Sisters,” a traditional dish made from combining corn nixtamal, black beans, and zucchini. Recipe cards with “Three Sisters” and Cacao Pudding were passed out to guests so they could re-create the dishes at home.







Museum staff Mazie Harris and Christian Morales meet with students at the Creative Career Fair at Inner-City Arts.

### How about a Career in the Arts?

Last fall in the heart of downtown LA, Inner-City Arts, a nonprofit that offers arts instruction to students from underserved communities, held its 10th annual Creative Career Fair. Dozens of artists and professionals from creative organizations gathered to share stories of their careers with over 175 high school and college students and their families. Getty Museum staff were on hand to discuss opportunities like the Unshuttered teen photography program and the summer Getty Marrow Undergraduate Internships. Mazie Harris, curator of photographs, enthusiastically fielded students’ questions about museum, curatorial, and artistic career paths. Founded in 1989, Inner-City Arts addresses diminishing arts education in public schools by offering high-quality arts classes and workshops on its campus thanks to a unique partnership with the Los Angeles Unified School District.



### Gaehtgens Lecture: Art Historian Stephanie Porras

The Getty Research Institute welcomed back Stephanie Porras, a 2003 Getty Marrow Undergraduate Intern, as keynote speaker for its annual Thomas and Barbara Gaehtgens Lecture in December. Porras uses the modern-day concept of “virality” to compare the copying and dissemination of images during the Renaissance with Instagram and TikTok memes and videos. She argues that mimicked creations “are not just copies...they represent an entirely new type of artistic product” and reflect the political, cultural, and socioeconomic dynamics of their time.

Stephanie Porras



### Black College Success Kicks Off

For the second year, Black College Success (BCS) convened at the Getty Center to kick off a new academic year of programming. The group’s mission is to create pathways to college and provide college and career success for Black high school students in South Los Angeles. Nearly 400 teens from nine Los Angeles high schools joined BCS leaders, educators, and partner organizations for an uplifting session on the role education can play in their lives. Speakers included MC Tiarre Monique; Getty Research Institute (GRI) Director Mary Miller; BCS Executive Director Ibert Schultz; GRI Senior Research Specialist Kristin Juarez, who introduced a video about the historic Johnson Publishing Company archive; and Museum Head of Education Keishia Gu, who described Getty’s youth-oriented opportunities and shared encouraging stories from her own educational path. The morning concluded with inspirational remarks from recent BCS College Fellows Delina Haile and Amina Lamar—now enrolled at the University of Southern California and Loyola Marymount University respectively—followed by lunch in the Museum Courtyard and a rousing dance performance by the UCLA Panhellenic Council Steppers.



Top: Students gather for a group photo.

Right: Los Angeles high school students gather in the Harold M. Williams Auditorium.

Top right: Steppers from Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity perform during lunch.

Photos: Chris Valle





**Getty Celebrates the Power of Its Donor Community**

In October Getty President and CEO Katherine E. Fleming hosted the seventh annual President’s Dinner at the Getty Center. She expressed gratitude to donors for the myriad ways their philanthropic support is expanding the horizons of possibility at Getty. She also toasted the international partners in attendance, including representatives of the International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage in Conflict Areas. Guests enjoyed dinner in the Museum Entrance Hall beneath Mercedes Dorame’s spectacular installation *Woshaa’axre Yaang’aro (Looking Back)*. Board of Trustees Chair Rob Lovelace closed the evening by warmly thanking attendees for their generosity and engagement in moving Getty forward as a globally impactful institution.

- 1. Katherine E. Fleming thanks donors.
  - 2. Rob Lovelace toasts guests.
  - 3. Nancy Griffin, Steven Ehrlich, and Adele Yellin
  - 4. Anne-Lise Desmas with Dominique Mielle; Didier Dutour, Cultural Attaché; and Julie Duhaut-Bedos, French Consul General in Los Angeles
  - 5. City National Bank representatives Daniel Calderon and Milton Dellossier
  - 6. Mercedes Dorame’s *Woshaa’axre Yaang’aro (Looking Back)*
  - 7. Tim Whalen, Lynn Booth, and Kent Kresa
- Photos: Ryan Miller/Capture Imaging and Molly O’Keeffe/Capture Imaging







### Arthur Tress and Sheila Metzner Attend Opening

In October photographers Arthur Tress and Sheila Metzner joined exhibition curators Jim Ganz and Paul Martineau, supporters, and guests at a festive opening for a pair of exhibitions featuring their works: *Arthur Tress: Rambles, Dreams, and Shadows* and *Sheila Metzner: From Life*. Timothy Potts, the Maria Hummer-Tuttle and Robert Tuttle Director of the J. Paul Getty Museum, welcomed the artists, praising their distinctive and original visions. After the reception guests toured the shows (on view through February 18) while Tress and Metzner signed catalogues and chatted with viewers.



Left: Arthur Tress signs catalogues.

Far left: Sheila Metzner poses for guests.

### Founder's Society Tours Atget

Last fall the J. Paul Getty Founder's Society met for its annual luncheon and a guided tour of *Eugène Atget: Highlights from the Mary & Dan Solomon Collection*. After the tour, Founder's Society members Mary and Dan Solomon discussed the exhibition with Senior Curator of Photographs Jim Ganz. The Solomons also described their approach to connoisseurship, collecting, and philanthropy. Dan shared his belief that "collectors are only the temporary custodians of these wonderful objects," and that in donating them to Getty, they created a family legacy that allows the photographs to be enjoyed by everyone. The Founder's Society recognizes individuals who become part of the Getty legacy by including Getty in their estate plans to make art accessible for generations to come.



Mary Solomon, Jim Ganz, and Dan Solomon in conversation

All photos on this page: Ryan Miller/Capture Imaging

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Palace in Tenochtitlan depicted in the video game *Dream of Darkness*. Image courtesy Jaguar Games

## Dreaming of Darkness

*How to use a newly digitized version of the 16th-century, 2,400-page Florentine Codex? Create a video game, of course*

**YOU’VE ENDURED A VIOLENT MASSACRE**, but now you’re trapped between an invading foreign army and a powerful god. What would you do?

This is the challenge posed by the horror game *Dream of Darkness*, where players assume the role of Marina—a character based on La Malinche, a real-life Indigenous Nahuatl woman, enslaved by the Spanish, who worked as an interpreter for the conquistador Hernán Cortés during the early 16th century.

The video game, still in development, is set in the immediate aftermath of the Toxcatl massacre, which took place in what is today Mexico City. In the game, Marina—a complicated figure both revered and reviled for centuries—is held hostage by Tezcatlipoca, the Aztec god of both creation and destruction. What would she do to survive?

To create *Dream of Darkness*, game developer Javier Rayón is conducting extensive research with historical sources like the Florentine Codex, the encyclopedic 16th-century manuscript that includes the account of the conquest of Mexico told from the perspective of the Indigenous Nahuas. Now, with the Florentine Codex newly digitized by Getty (see p. 7), artists and researchers like Rayón can experience the book’s trove of knowledge from anywhere in the world.

By Anya Ventura  
Editorial Content Producer  
Getty Research Institute



La Malinche (aka Malintzin) interprets for Hernán Cortés with his army and Moteuczoma with allied *tlatoqueh* (rulers), Book 12 of the Florentine Codex, 1577, Bernardino de Sahagún. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence, and by permission of MIBACT





Preliminary sketches of Marina from the video game Dream of Darkness. Image courtesy Jaguar Games

As the narrative designer responsible for the game's story, Rayón is working with a global team of artists, voice actors, designers, and animators from Mexico, the US, the UK, Spain, Romania, Finland, Nigeria, India, and Papua New Guinea. With his research-intensive process, Rayón wants to depict rich, complex characters while avoiding harmful stereotypes. "Our characters are not the usual male dudes destroying everything," he says.

Rayón, who lives in Mexico City, first turned to video games to create positive change. As a young person, he had wanted to work in government but soon changed his mind after a trip to the European Parliament. "One of the members of Parliament explained to us visiting students that no matter how good your idea or solution, your power relies on the support of the people you represent," he says. "So I decided that I would make games in order to better inform the public." Eventually he founded his own video game startup, Jaguar Games.

Dream of Darkness is constantly evolving as Rayón incorporates feedback from modern-day Nahua communities. "I'm constantly saying: 'Hey, we're going to have this character. What opportunities do you see?' We're not trying to create a documentary, but we try to make it authentic with what Nahua people tell us, while also finding what resonates with today's players." After searching for over a year, he recruited Alberto Zeferino, who grew up speaking Nahuatl in the southern Mexican state of Guerrero, as a voice actor for the game and a cultural advocate.

Zeferino found out about the job opportunity while scrolling through social media one day. He was interested in representations of Mesoamerican culture, and his feed was mostly Indigenous content. But beyond playing characters in community festivals, he had never acted before.

Typically, Zeferino is disappointed by how Nahuatl dialogue is represented in popular culture. When the language is used, he says, it's often "meaningless gibberish" or the pronuncia-

tion is wrong. Acting in the game was not only a chance to get the language right but also to create a positive representation of a culture that for much of Mexico's history has been actively suppressed.

In many Indigenous communities in Mexico, Zeferino says, the languages are endangered. As a young person, he would reply in Spanish when his parents and grandparents spoke to him in Nahuatl. Some parents, he says, don't teach their children Nahuatl for fear of discrimination. And today, while the language is more commonly taught in Mexican schools, the programs are often underfunded. "Once I grew up, I started to realize that our language is important," he says. "I figured, well, if I want to make content where young people from my community can see themselves represented and see that our language has a space in the world—that our language isn't just confined to our town—I may as well shoot my shot and audition."

Dream of Darkness immediately felt different from other video games Zeferino had experienced. "Unfortunately, in gaming, you often see women being overly sexualized and wearing bikini armor," says Zeferino. "But the very first art I saw was a drawing of Marina. She was wearing a huipil, and I was like, oh my goodness, this is actual Mesoamerican clothing."

Zeferino sees himself reflected in Marina. "I don't have any artistic talent myself. I don't really have any musical talent. I don't consider myself much of a writer. But I figured if I have any tool, it's my voice, and my ability to speak the language. In that way, I relate to La Malinche, who also had only one tool at her disposal, and that was her voice."

Facing page: The arrival of the Spaniards and the meeting of La Malinche/Malintzin and Hernán Cortés, drawn by Nahua artists, 1579. From Diego Durán, Historia de las Indias de Nueva España e islas de la tierra firme, fols. 201v–202r. Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España

While La Malinche was judged for translating for the conquistadors—her name today is sometimes used in Mexico as a synonym for betrayal—Zeferino hopes that players will understand her humanity. "We're doing a lot to portray a time period from a perspective that often gets ignored. I like that a lot of the characters that we've been focusing on are people who get sidelined in the typical narrative of the conquest of Mexico. People think of figures like Hernán Cortés, but there were so many other people who had their own lives, their own stories, their own goals and motivations for why they did what they did."

This nuanced approach is still uncommon among video games. "While complex human characters do happen, they tend to appear in the usual medieval castle, or World War II," says Rayón. "Mexico City, Tenochtitlan, is not a conventional setting. Or if it is, it's just the stereotypes, like we're all savages. Fortunately, right now there is this big demand for better representation. And we get a lot of hope by seeing what Getty does, because this is also permeating into games."

Though La Malinche's role in the Aztec-Spanish war has been a subject of debate, she is also recognized as a symbol of cultural fusion. "I really wanted to make games so that we can be proud about our history," says Rayón, who regrets not having been taught the Indigenous Mixe language, because his grandfather wanted to protect his family from persecution. "And we have characters who reflect La Malinche, someone from different worlds. Right now, as borders are closing, people are thinking, 'I can only be comfortable with my own kind.' And while Mexico has had very rough times, I hope we can also be an example of how lots of different cultures can come together."

In the end, what happened in the past, and who Marina really was, will always be uncertain. But what the Florentine Codex shows, with its narratives from both the rulers and the ruled, is the power of creating your own stories. "It is very contested what happened at the Toxcatl massacre. People did die, including our ancestors," says Rayón. "But Marina—was she guilty? That is something that our players can decide." ■







Lucas Cranach the Elder's paintings *Adam* and *Eve* sit on easels in Getty's paintings conservation studio.

## Leave the Cracks, Patch the Hair, and Other Ways to Age Gracefully

*Our staff photographer checks in on Getty's project to restore Adam and Eve*

By Cassia Davis  
Creative Producer  
J. Paul Getty Trust

**THERE'S USUALLY** no forbidden fruit in Getty's paintings conservation studio. Or snakes. Or trees. Until now. For *Adam* and *Eve*—a pair of paintings by German Renaissance painter Lucas Cranach the Elder—the studio is a place of renewal.

The highly detailed, nearly life-size paintings—two of the best known, most captivating works of the 16th-century—are being restored by Ulrich Birkmaier, the Getty Museum's senior conservator of paintings, whom I find tucked away in

the corner of the museum's conservation studio surrounded by tools of the trade.

The paintings are part of the Norton Simon Art Foundation's collection, and in 2021 the Norton Simon Museum partnered with Getty on a two-year conservation project to restore the appearance and structural integrity of the paintings. They had been marred by old restorations, layers of discolored varnish, and physical damage, and Birkmaier and his team have deep expertise in these issues.

### Repairing the Structural Support

Cranach painted *Adam* and *Eve* around 1530 while serving as court painter to the electors of Saxony in Wittenberg (a city today in eastern Germany).

As with many 16th-century paintings on wooden panels, *Adam* and *Eve* were subjected to a common 19th-century practice called “cradling” some 300 years after they left Cranach's studio. The panels were planed down and backed by a grid of wooden slats mounted to the back of the support, the intent being to allow natural expansion and contraction of the wood while preserving a flat surface.

Cradling systems often caused more damage than they prevented though. Forcing the panels to remain flat while the wood expanded and contracted due to fluctuations in the environment concentrated stress at regular intervals across the surface, eventually splitting the wood and resulting in what conservators call a “washboard” effect.

In the conservation studio, the slanting afternoon light highlights the long cracks rippling through the two intricate, unframed paintings.

“The first issue that needed to be addressed was the structural one,” Birkmaier says. “So the first step was basically to remove those old cradles, secure the panels, realign them, and really stabilize and improve their appearance.”

For this portion of the project, the Getty Museum worked with international experts George Bisacca and José de la Fuente, who specialize in large-scale wooden supports. Birkmaier pulls out a screwdriver, carefully spins *Adam's* easel around, and unscrews the protective back cover over the newly constructed support system.

Once the backing is removed, the original panel becomes visible. Birkmaier points out several slender slices of pale wood filling what were once cracks in the back of the painting. Each slender piece is a custom-cut wedge that matches the density of the wood originally used by Cranach. Refilling the cracks with these wedges reestablishes a consistent strength and overall natural curve to the panel.



Top: A segment of *Adam* where a portion of the forehead and hairline was removed and replaced

Above: Ulrich Birkmaier unscrews the newly constructed support system from the back of *Adam*.

Left: Birkmaier holds up a sample of the custom-cut wedges that have been inserted into the panels.



**“We Didn’t Want to Make Anything Up”**

One challenge Birkmaier faced was reconstructing large areas of lost paint, including a section of the forehead and distinctive curls of hair in *Adam*. In a previous restoration, a knot or branch of wood that had compromised the painting was removed and replaced with a new wood segment, which had degraded and needed to be replaced.

Birkmaier is approaching conservation of this section with caution. “We didn’t want to make anything up,” he says. “We didn’t want to invent what Cranach would’ve done because we have no way of knowing. But luckily, we have many, many versions of the painting.”

Cranach created more than 50 scenes of *Adam* and *Eve* in various sizes, probably in response to the popularity of the subject with members of the Protestant Wittenberg court. The *Adam* at the Uffizi Gallery is about the same size and in the same pose as the *Adam* from the Norton Simon Museum. Birkmaier believes that both *Adam* paintings were based on the same drawing or model, so he photographed a portion of the Uffizi *Adam*’s forehead, hairline, and curls, cut it out in Photoshop, and—a first in his years as a conservator—used a projector to trace the image on the *Adam* resting in the studio.

“We realized that the curls actually sort of complete the existing half curls next to the paint loss,” Birkmaier says. “You have the curls falling into his forehead again, which is how Cranach would’ve painted it originally.”

**Revealing Cranach’s Painting Techniques**

Beside *Eve* sits a table topped with a tidy collection of pigments and a cluster of small brushes for detail work. “You can see it’s a very reduced palette,” Birkmaier says, dipping a brush into pink paint. “When you have modern paintings or even old master paintings, you typically have many, many colors in one painting. Cranach worked with a very austere sort of color palette.”

Birkmaier has a meticulous process of inpainting, filling losses, and retouching ahead of him. “These paintings are so carefully constructed,” he says. “They’re so smooth. So when you inpaint or when you do your retouching, filling in these losses of paint, it’s very important to exactly match the surface, the opacity, the color, because it’s almost like painting on porcelain.”

**Discovering a Surprising Detail**

As with many restoration efforts, the conservation of *Adam* and *Eve* not only protects the artworks and prevents future damage to them, it also reveals more of the artist’s process.

Birkmaier gestures to *Adam*’s eyes, pointing out the little spot of light in each pupil. He notes that this microscopic detail, less than a millimeter in size, is meant to be a reflection of a windowpane in the artist’s studio. Rather than a realistic effect, though, this detail was a conventional shorthand used by painters at this time to signal a reflection in the curved surface of the eye.



Detail of the painted reflection in a pupil in *Adam*



Birkmaier uses a fine detail brush to inpaint on *Adam*.

**Knowing When to Stop**

“You don’t want to go too far with a conservation treatment, because it’s going to start to look like an artifice,” Birkmaier says. “There’s a natural aging process these paintings are subjected to. And the pigments change. They change over the decades and centuries, just like we do. So you have to let them age gently. There’s a moment where you have to stop, because you want the visitor to enjoy the paintings and look at them as objects that are 400 or 500 years old.” ■

Cranach’s *Adam* and *Eve* will be on view from January 23 through April 21, 2024, before returning to the Norton Simon Museum.



## As senior registrar at the Getty Research Institute (GRI), Lora Chin Derrien keeps track of the “treasure trove” of archival collections that come through its doors

**The gist of what I do:** I oversee a team of highly versatile and talented registrars at the GRI. It is a choreography to direct the constant flow of activities while maintaining equilibrium. We handle shipping, the receipt of incoming acquisitions, and creation of detailed records in our collections database. Each record includes item description, condition reporting, and review of those records for accuracy. We negotiate terms for incoming loans related to GRI exhibitions and outgoing loans to external institutions. There’s also insurance, object tracking, storage, and inventory.

**A family legacy of collecting art:** I was born in Manchester, England. Due to the Cultural Revolution in Communist China, my parents moved to England by way of Hong Kong in the 1960s after leaving Shanghai. Most of my family’s belongings, including the art, were lost, confiscated, or destroyed. A few things were eventually returned to my family. My uncle passed on these objects to my mother because of her connection to them. I remember this classical female porcelain figurine that she adhered on top of a wooden carved base originally meant to display a piece of veined marble evocative of a landscape painting. She was always collecting objects and reinterpreting them to find her own past and the culture that she grew up in and lost.

Growing up in Southern California was in stark contrast to the distant stories I heard as a child about my mother’s family. My maternal grandfather collected paintings and decorative objects. He displayed them in his house where there was an “Eastern” room and a “Western” room for greeting guests. My father’s side was in the shipping business, so he was surrounded by this cultural exchange with the West from an early age. He attended a middle school founded by Jesuit fathers, and his beautiful penmanship and posture are marks of the discipline that was instilled by this education. I was taught to approach things with that kind of discipline, but I was also given the freedom to explore my interests wherever they led.

**Discovering art through antiquing:** It was paradise to live in Coronado as a child. I loved roller-skating and biking but was less enthusiastic about practicing the piano. When we visited San Diego, my mom and I would go to antique shops there. As a teenager, gallivanting through LA thrift shops was another way I was introduced to old things. I became interested in clothing



because it was accessible, and I was mesmerized by the textures, color, fabric—especially if made in the 1920s and 1930s. I liked that fabrics, tailoring details, and style could inform me about the objects, their cultural origins, and functions within that era.

**A first career in auction houses:** My early jobs were actually in auction houses. I learned about the different levels of work, from acquiring and appraising, cataloging, the client relations aspect of the work, and then objects going on the auction block. It was very exciting. But after a few years, I realized that it was the ideas behind the objects that engaged me. I was less interested in the auction market and understood that I wanted to work in a research setting.

**From Getty to Paris and back again:** I was familiar with the Getty Villa because I had referenced some of the 18th-century decorative arts pieces that were on display there in my honors

undergrad thesis. For a postcolonial paper that I presented in a symposium during my graduate studies, I also looked at paintings in the Getty Museum. It was by chance that I applied for an assistant position in the director’s office at the GRI. After a year, I switched to a different job in collection development. Then, I decided to move to Paris to continue my studies in French language and culture—I had double majored in French and art history at USC. While I was in Paris, I also worked for a textile designer, organizing and archiving her past collections and supervising the production line. After almost two years there I moved back to LA and resumed my old job in collection development, which had coincidentally become vacant. Not too long after, a new position was created in the registrar’s office at the GRI. I transferred to special collections, where I progressed in my experience, and then became senior registrar in 2020.

### Why do we need registrars, anyway?

Documentation is vital, down to the last detail in the object description. While training new staff, I always try to explain that when you’re describing an object for our records, think of the process as distilling an item down to its most essential points. That way, someone who comes after you can read the description and understand that, for example, these photographs are in an album, but something loose has been inserted between the pages. We need to boil it down to whether you can physically re-find what you’re looking for. We also include a condition report of each object in our records, because if something gets damaged, we need to know when it was damaged—was it during transit or was that always there?

Maintaining the security of objects is also challenging, just by the nature of the materials. If we get 10 letters, there could be three or four sheets enclosed in an envelope. We want to account for every single piece, not just the broad description of 10 letters. Things can go missing for an array of reasons and



go unnoticed over time, as seen in the recent scandal at the British Museum. This is why it’s imperative that our security procedures are maintained to the highest standard.

**Treasure hunting (and storing):** When the GRI acquires an archive, we have an inventory, but it’s not on the item level, so every time you open a box, there can be surprises. Every day there could be something arriving, from small photo albums with 100 photos to large archives that require two tractor trailers. Once the crates arrive, then everything we unpack has to go onto shelves in our storage vault. Our collections have greatly expanded and diversified over the years and include 3D objects and framed work. But bookshelves aren’t made to house these types of things.

As a result, we must constantly find creative solutions for how to store these materials securely before processing and cataloging are completed.

**Most challenging collections:** Two more recent collections come to mind, and they’re both from Chicago. I was part of the team that moved the Johnson Publishing Company archive from its original home to the warehouse space in Chicago where the collection is being processed. It was challenging because of the sheer size

of the collection: over 4 million photographic prints, slides, and negatives; 5,000 magazines; 200 boxes of business records; and more. As co-owners, we worked in tandem with the Smithsonian/NMAAHC [National Museum of African American History and Culture] team, devising a shared plan and liaising between them and our Getty team. The second is the Richard Hunt archive. For shipping, we had to consolidate approximately 800 linear feet of materials, some of which were fragile maquettes and wax models, from two studio locations.

**Favorite object at Getty:** I should have an answer as I’m frequently asked this question, but I have a hard time choosing a favorite. Maybe it’s because I feel extremely fortunate that we have access to so much undiscovered material. When I was removing my lawn and landscaping my garden, my interest led to research on medieval gardening. I read about its purpose and design, the tools used, and what type of plants existed in that time. Seeing the depictions of the flowers in our manuscripts, I recognized that many of these are heirlooms that we still plant today. That was an amazing moment to understand our role in preserving and collecting these seeds so they can continue to flourish through time, just like the collections I work with at the GRI. ■



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*The next generation of conservators gathered in LA—an essentially 20th-century city—for a course in preserving newer gems of cultural heritage*

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**By Lilibeth Garcia**  
Digital Content Editor  
Getty Conservation Institute

# MODERN ARCHITECTURE NEEDS PROTECTING TOO

A participant enjoys a tour of the Sheats-Goldstein Residence, designed by John Lautner.



At the dawn of the 20th century, a new world was under construction. Steel, glass, and concrete could be produced on a massive scale thanks to the industrial revolution, and urban development flourished. Suddenly, everything could be made bigger and faster, resulting in new forms of architecture, new cities, and new means of transportation that transformed people's daily lives.

A feeling of optimism permeated the air: children would have greater access to schools, novel building materials would make things last forever and reduce costs for the average person, and maybe, someday, everyone would have a proper, high-quality home.

"All these transformations were profound, and they are reflected in the built environment of the 20th century," says Margherita Pedroni, an Italian-qualified architect specializing in heritage conservation at Getty. "The 20th century brought a lot of innovation with materials, building techniques, forms, and so on—and some of these have become the standard now. But they were groundbreaking at their time."

Pedroni is a project specialist in the Getty Conservation Institute's (GCI's) Conserving Modern Architecture Initiative (CMAI), which since 2012 has been filling knowledge gaps in the conservation of 20th-century cultural heritage. Last August, 26 modern heritage professionals visited Getty as part of CMAI's International Course on the Conservation of Modern Heritage. The course was designed by Pedroni and Chandler McCoy, an architect and project manager of CMAI, to address the issue of modern heritage conservation. Although the 20th century might feel awfully recent, many important modern buildings are currently endangered, and maintaining and conserving them requires a complex array of skills.

The 11-week hybrid course provided participants the opportunity to connect with each other and learn from leading experts in the field. This year's cohort included architects, urban planners, historians, engineers, archaeologists, and conservators from 23 countries: Australia, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Chile, Cyprus, England, Eritrea, Germany, Greece, India, Italy, Kosovo, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lithuania, Malaysia, Nigeria, the Philippines, Singapore, Spain, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States.

After nine weeks of online instruction, the participants gathered in LA for the final two weeks of the course. Through lectures, discussions, and demonstrations at the Getty Center and the Getty Villa, they learned about new research and practices that have influenced modern heritage conservation. They also toured Southern California sites designed by seminal figures in modern architecture. In Silver Lake, for instance, they were tasked with developing a conservation approach for the Reunion House, designed by Richard Neutra. By using a real-life case study, participants combined their interdisciplinary expertise with all the knowledge they had acquired throughout the course—and in the end, had a framework they could use for their own local projects.

### Spurring Collaboration across Borders

"Much of what we see in our cities was built in the 20th century," Pedroni says, "and while there is usually an immediate appreciation for older sites, because they belong to a distant past and are perceived as rare and therefore precious, modern heritage still belongs to our close memory—there's a lot of it, so it is often harder for people to see its values."

That modern architecture is frequently taken for granted makes it vulnerable to development pressures or insensitive alterations. And unlike in the past, when structures often remained untouched for long periods of time, they can now be replaced quickly. Some modern sites also suffer from obsolescence. Modern architecture is known for the maxim "form follows function," but what happens when that function is outdated, like in the case of a vintage theater—how do you adapt it while maintaining its significant components?

Even when a site is appreciated and protected, technical considerations can limit its lifespan and usability. How do you conserve reinforced concrete? What should you do with materials now known to be harmful, like asbestos? How can you make modern buildings more energy efficient?

These are some of the topics covered in the remote portion of the course, through recorded video lectures and live sessions, with professionals presenting their own experiences. Thirty-two experts on modern heritage conservation led the online modules. The instructors brought wide-ranging, international expertise that complemented the diverse group of participants.

"Knowing that our participants would be coming from all over the world, we wanted to make sure the instructors were an international group representing different perspectives and offering a variety of experiences to teach from," says McCoy. "The cohort also offered invaluable networking opportunities, and we hope it will spur research collaboration across borders."

### LA as a Classroom

After the online component was completed, the participants were ready to finally meet in person in LA—an essentially 20th-century city—and tour the "masterpieces" of modern architecture that influenced architects around the globe. They also visited homes, heritage buildings, plazas, and landscapes in locations including downtown LA, the UCLA campus, and the Balboa Highlands in the San Fernando Valley.

One of their trips took them to the seaside Salk Institute for Biological Studies in La Jolla, internationally recognized as one of Louis Kahn's finest works. There they heard from the GCI experts who had developed treatments for the building's teak window wall assemblies, which had deteriorated after nearly 50 years in an exposed marine environment. They also learned about the building's concrete repairs and how the conservation management plan was implemented.

Participant Mejrema Zatrić, an architecture historian at the International University of Sarajevo in Bosnia and Herzegovina,



Salk Institute for Biological Studies, La Jolla, California

says she felt immersed in the "force field" of Kahn's design. "To me it conveyed, perhaps more than any other modernist work I experienced, the epic alliance between modernism and science, and also the importance of conservation in keeping these ideals accessible and as tangible historical facts."

Another field trip took the students to the Eames House, designed by Charles and Ray Eames, a classic example of modern heritage that is also distinctly Californian. Getty has supported conservation and management of the Eames House since 2011, in partnership with the Eames Foundation. At the site, the participants learned about the GCI's latest work: research on cemesto, the modern material used as panels on some of the exteriors of the house. They also studied the award-winning conservation management plan that the GCI created for the structure.

For a conservation management plan to be successful, conservators must address the intangible, as well as tangible, attributes of a place, says Pedroni. "We wanted the participants to really think critically: What is important here? What is the story behind this house?"

### Planning for the Future

On the final day of the course, the groups presented "snapshots" of potential five-year conservation plans for Neutra's Reunion House to help sustain its significance into the future, and the results were impressive. "The CMAI team couldn't have been happier with the experience and professionalism the participants brought to the course," says McCoy. "And both instructors and participants learned from each other."

Sheridan Burke, a Sydney-based 20th-century modern heritage consultant who helped develop instructional content for the course, says the lively final presentations demonstrated the benefits of the interdisciplinary experience the students gained in LA. Burke led a module early in the course on values-based conservation planning, which the participants applied in the Reunion House exercise. She says that the snapshots gave the Neutra Foundation great ideas and a diverse range of directions for its interpretation and conservation work ahead.

But the true effect of the course will likely be seen down the road, in locales far from LA.





Modern heritage professionals visited the Getty Center as part of the International Course on the Conservation of Modern Heritage.

Zatrić is the chair of the Bosnia and Herzegovina branch of Docomomo, a nonprofit that promotes the study and protection of modern places, and she hopes to introduce the concept of conservation management planning to the architecture and conservation communities in the Western Balkans. In this part of the world, expertise on 20th-century heritage conservation is limited.

Much of Bosnia and Herzegovina's heritage was built during the 20th-century postwar period. Zatrić says that most of it is ignored or covertly and unfairly treated as dissonant heritage, sites that reveal structural evidence of totalitarianism, war, persecution, or colonization. One topic discussed at length during the course was advocacy for modern heritage, including how to advocate for heritage that comes from a difficult past.

Equipped with the toolkit provided by the course, participants returned home ready to take on that work. Zatrić says she can already foresee how the course will help her argue for greater value to be placed on modern architecture, especially in the Yugoslav region. She is excited about applying the GCI's approach to the conservation of large modernist works such as the Brutalist sports-cultural complex Skenderija in Sarajevo, which felt overwhelming before completing the course.

“By conserving modernist works,” she says, “we can not only preserve architectural beauty and memory, but also leisure complexes, educational facilities, parks, and other places that are still vital to people.” ■



Richard Neutra's Reunion House in LA's Silver Lake neighborhood

Gerard Lico was commissioned to oversee the restoration of the Metropolitan Theater in Manila in 2016. “It was magical for me because I was returning to my first encounter with beautiful architecture,” he says.



## But It's Not That Old!

*A Getty modern architecture course has global reach*

When 10-year-old Gerard Rey Lico visited the Metropolitan Theater in Manila, he didn't know that the ornate building was art deco and historically significant. But he liked the elaborate fruit ornaments on the ceiling. “Why are there so many bananas and mangoes?” he remembers wondering.

Decades later, Lico would learn that the plaster fruits, along with the tilework and bamboo accents, were a way of “Indigenizing the art deco language” to suit Filipino style in 1931, when the theater was built.

In 2016, some 30 years after that first encounter, Lico returned to the theater for work as a conservation architect. He was commissioned to oversee the restoration of the building, which had been abandoned for two decades and had lost much of its grandeur. The orchestra area had been flooded, and the structure had served as shelter for unhoused people. The bananas and mangoes were falling from the ceiling due to water damage.

Because the theater had meant so much to him as a kid, Lico planned its restoration program with young people in mind. He organized a cleanup drive for the site and sought 50 young volunteers. It would have been more efficient to hire a contractor, but he knew that inviting the community to help would instill a “love and care for the building.”

More than 3,000 applications rolled in. “People, if given the chance to participate in a heritage project—they will come,” he says.

Lico recently came to LA to learn more about heritage built in the 20th century as part of the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) course on the topic (see story at left). Over two weeks, he visited modern architectural sites, participated in hands-on trainings, and spent lots of time with like-minded colleagues from around the world. These experiences have already

reframed his work both as a conservator and a research director at the University of the Philippines, where he's designing his country's first institute of conservation.

He was also able to explore aspects of the Concrete Conservation project, which the GCI developed specifically to respond to the challenges of conserving modern-era concrete heritage. He familiarized himself with scientific research, field projects, training, and publications on the subject.

By law in the Philippines, buildings 50 years and older are considered important cultural property, and many in this age bracket are made of reinforced concrete, a material used during the American colonial period (1898–1946). Local conservators haven't been sure how to care for a number of these buildings, though. “The Getty Conservation Institute was able to fill the vacuum in our knowledge,” Lico says.

Lico also enjoyed visiting the LA home of architect Richard Neutra, one of his idols. Filipino architects used Neutra's ideas to create public housing in the 1950s and '60s and to solve the problems of mass homelessness in Manila after World War II.

Visiting these everyday examples of modern heritage, and knowing about their impact on public projects in the Philippines, drove home for Lico the importance of preserving these structures—even the ones that aren't visually impressive. “Now, when I go back to teaching, I will debunk that notion that significance is based singularly on aesthetics,” he says.

The course also cemented Lico's belief that the public should engage with heritage conservation—that an essential component of the work is creating opportunities like the experience he offered young people while restoring the theater. The work should also be collaborative, he says. “I realize now that conservation is not just the realm of architects, but also of engineers, conservators, historians, and the people who will use and love the buildings.”

— Sarah Hoenicke Flores, Digital Content Editor  
Getty Conservation Institute





Robert Rauschenberg, Sandy Phillips, and Suzanne Felsen fishing off the Malibu pier, 1969, Sidney B. Felsen. Getty Research Institute, Gift of Jack Shear

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By Anya Ventura  
Editorial Content Producer  
Getty Research Institute

# The Art of Friendship

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*Photographer Sidney Felsen captured artists and printmakers at work and play for more than 50 years*

Sidney Felsen had not originally planned to open a print shop. But in the winter of 1965, the accountant asked his former USC fraternity brother, Stanley Grinstein, if he would like to start a lithography studio.

Their print shop, Gemini G.E.L., would become a place of inspiration for Felsen, whose photographs of artists and printers go on view February 20 as part of *First Came a Friendship: Sidney B. Felsen and the Artists at Gemini G.E.L.*, a Getty Research Institute (GRI) exhibition drawn largely from the GRI archives and curated by Naoko Takahatake.

For Takahatake, the photography archive provided a unique look into printmaking processes and the rise of the medium in America from the late 1960s. But the images also revealed the human side of art making and the creative community that coalesced around Gemini. Over some 50 years, Felsen, now 99, documented artists' professional milestones and also captured more intimate, quotidian moments—breaking bread, listening to live jazz, and enjoying family fishing trips in LA.

## How It All Began

Felsen and Grinstein envisioned a studio and publishing house, modeled after the old workshops of Europe, where artists would collaborate with master printers to create original fine art prints. At Stanley and Elyse Grinstein's Christmas Eve party in 1965, attended by Sidney and his then wife, Rosamund, they asked master printer Kenneth Tyler to join the business. By

that January, the three men were spending evenings dreaming of the artists they would like to invite to launch their new enterprise—"grand old men," Felsen told the *Smithsonian*, such as Mark Rothko, Willem de Kooning, Edward Hopper, and René Magritte. But none took up the offer.

Finally, Josef Albers, who had previously worked with Tyler at the Tamarind Lithography Workshop, signed on to create *White Line Squares*, a series of 17 prints, each depicting nested squares in gradations of a single color. Gemini promoted the new edition by taking out a full-page ad in the June 1966 *Artforum*, handing the copy to the layout person, a young artist named Ed Ruscha. The response was explosive. Hundreds of sale requests flooded in. Gemini G.E.L., which would become one of the leading publishers of limited-edition prints and sculpture in the world, was in business.

## Felsen the Artist

Felsen began taking photos of artists at Gemini in the late '60s and eventually, he says, "had the feeling of history building up." In his work, Felsen chronicled over a half century of Gemini artists who became close friends: Vija Celmins, Tacita Dean, Ann Hamilton, Jasper Johns, Ellsworth Kelly, Roy Lichtenstein, Julie Mehretu, Bruce Nauman, Claes Oldenburg, Robert Rauschenberg, Analia Saban, and Richard Serra, to name a few. As a fly-on-the-wall observer, Felsen captured some exhilarating moments in postwar American culture, as LA was transforming into a global art center.





Self-portrait with two Ellsworth Kellys, 1984, Sidney B. Felsen. Getty Research Institute, Gift of Jack Shear

Though Felsen had long explored photography—he'd been given a 35mm, German-built Kodak Retina for his bar mitzvah, and later picked up a coveted Contax at a Paris flea market as a GI during World War II—it wasn't until Rauschenberg encouraged his art that Felsen's confidence grew. "Bob Rauschenberg was my first major 'supporter' as a photographer," Felsen said in an oral history with the GRI. "He kept complimenting me, which obviously boosted my ego. He was always encouraging me to take his photograph, saying my photos had a happy feeling." Now Felsen's archive of photography, donated to the GRI by Ellsworth Kelly's husband, the photographer Jack Shear, numbers over 75,000 images.

Artists felt comfortable in Felsen's presence, observes Tacita Dean. "When being photographed, everyone has a degree of self-consciousness. I can't work in front of people. It's another eye in the room and the sense that somebody's watching you. But Sidney's photographs don't have that, because Sidney with a camera becomes part of making a print at Gemini. The intrusive eye is not there at all. That's the beauty of those images. It is a rare insight into artists working."

### Where Creativity Runs Free

In the familial, intimate space of Gemini, Felsen documented a community where artists were, and still are, encouraged to experiment freely. It was at Gemini, in 1967, that Rauschenberg created the six-foot-tall *Booster*, then considered the largest hand-pulled lithograph ever made. Rauschenberg had wanted to do "a self-portrait of inner-man," said Felsen, and hoped to use X-ray images of his own body. When the photographer picked the artist up at the Chateau Marmont hotel one morning to head to Gemini, Rauschenberg asked, "Do you have any friends who are X-ray doctors?" In fact, Felsen's oldest friend in LA, Jack Waltman, was a radiologist.

Two years later, in 1969, Rauschenberg created the groundbreaking *Stoned Moon* series, a project inspired by NASA's invitation to witness the Apollo 11 launch, the first piloted flight to the moon. *Sky Garden*, the largest print in the series and one that exceeded *Booster* in scale, incorporated images of rocket plumes, engineering diagrams, and Florida palm trees. The experience of working at Gemini on this monumental series in turn inspired the artist's *Stoned Moon Drawing*, a collage that combined NASA images, photographs by Felsen and Gemini photographer Malcolm Lubliner documenting Rauschenberg's around-the-clock proofing sessions, and Rauschenberg's own typed reflections, such as "ART IS SOCIAL."



Roy Lichtenstein with a mask cut out from a proof for *Painting Series*, 1983, Sidney B. Felsen. Art © Estate of Roy Lichtenstein. Getty Research Institute, Gift of Jack Shear





“Gemini gave you the feeling that they could do anything you wanted,” Oldenburg said in *Artists at Gemini G.E.L.: Celebrating the 25th Year*. In 1968 he had asked if Gemini would be interested in producing a print with a sculptural component. “It was almost like the way we started Gemini,” Felsen told the Smithsonian. “We had no idea what we were doing, but we said, ‘Sure.’” It certainly helped that LA had dozens of prototype shops for the movie and aerospace industries. The edition, *Profile Airflow*, was a lithograph depicting the outline of a 1936 Chrysler Airflow overlaid with a soft, translucent rubbery relief of the car, fabricated with help from a Disney mold maker, in swimming pool teal.

In his photographs, Felsen records the energy and dedication of the artists and the power of their collaborations with master printers and fabricators. The work of creating a print is a “give-and-take, experimental, passionate, exhausting time,” he said. “I really saw...the spirit of what it is to be creative and how demanding it is and how much effort has to go into it.” He captures the hard work, both the labor and joy, of creating the new. “What’s unique about Gemini—the doors are completely open for the artist to do whatever they want,” says master printer Jill Lerner. “It’s a place where creativity runs free.” ■

Julie Mehretu working on Mylar for her etching *Auguries*, 2010, Sidney B. Felsen. Getty Research Institute, Gift of Jack Shear



# KEEP CALM AND CARE ON

On August 4, 2020, a vast explosion ripped through Beirut, Lebanon, killing 218 people and creating a shock wave felt as far as Cyprus and Turkey. The explosion—the largest nonnuclear blast in modern history—was caused by a fire that ignited thousands of tons of ammonium nitrate stored in dangerous conditions at the Port of Beirut.

In addition to the human cost, the city's artistic center, near the harbor and home to museums, galleries, and heritage buildings, suffered far-reaching destruction. Just 20 yards from the port sits the stately Sursock Palace, a private residence constructed in 1870 by the Sursocks, a leading Beirut family that had built a collection of 16th- and 17th-century Italian paintings, antique furniture, and other valuables. As the blast radiated from the docks, shards of glass and shrapnel struck hundreds of palace artworks, including *Hercules and Omphale* (1630), a monumental painting by famed Italian Baroque artist Artemesia Gentileschi. Getty conservators are currently hard at work on the painting's repairs. (More on that in a bit.)

“When it happened, I was at home four miles away, but it felt like an asteroid had hit right next to me,” says Kerstin Khalife, a paintings conservator who has lived in Beirut for 20 years.



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**Conservators are learning to care for paintings damaged by disasters or conflicts through Getty training grants**

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**By Carly Pippin**  
Communications Specialist  
Getty Foundation

Damaged furniture and artworks inside Sursock Palace in Beirut, Lebanon, on August 25, 2020. Some of Beirut's last surviving historical quarters were destroyed when ammonium nitrate detonated in a port hangar. Photographer: Hasan Shaaban/Bloomberg via Getty Images



Trained in conservation at the Stuttgart State Academy of Art and Design in Germany, Khalife is head of conservation at the Beirut Museum of Art (BeMA), which will open in 2026 with a collection of Lebanese and regional art. She also works as a freelance conservator for the Sursock Museum (located near Sursock Palace), a modern and contemporary art institution founded in 1961 by later generations of the Sursock family. The day after the explosion, she went to the area to assess the wreckage and quickly realized that caring for Beirut’s destroyed collections would require all her skills to date—especially tear mending.

“The tear-mending technique, and its delicate reattachment or insertion of threads in a torn canvas painting, is a tremendously important skill and far less risky for saving the painted picture itself than previous methods,” says Antoine Wilmering, senior program officer at the Getty Foundation and the organizer of its Conserving Canvas grantmaking initiative.

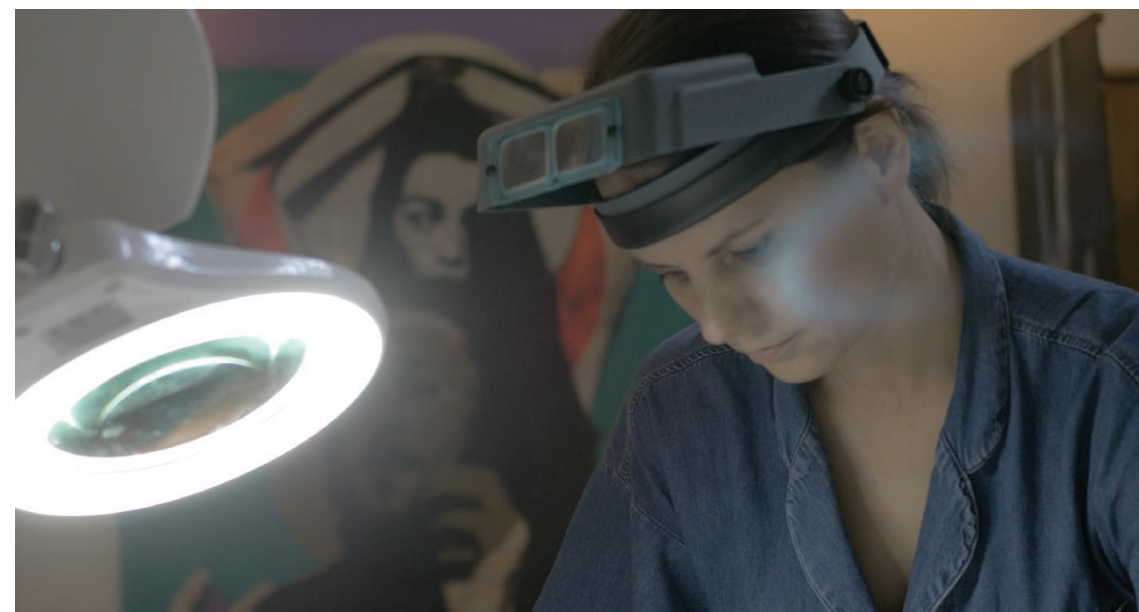
#### Dental Probes, Suture Materials, Free Microscopes

Since 2018, Conserving Canvas has funded 35 projects around the world designed to train conservators in both traditional and cutting-edge techniques. “Our goal has been to bring senior conservators with years of canvas-related experience together with their younger counterparts to share knowledge.”

Shortly after the blast, Khalife was thrilled to learn that the Getty Foundation had funded a tear-mending workshop hosted by Germany’s Cologne University of Applied Sciences. She and another conservator from BeMA, Nayirie Jean Keuteklian, applied. “Tear mending is a critically needed skill in Beirut,” Khalife says. “The explosion was catastrophic, and in addition, many of our artworks have been stored and neglected for 70 years, or else been damaged by the Lebanese Civil War [1975–1990]. I couldn’t wait to learn.”

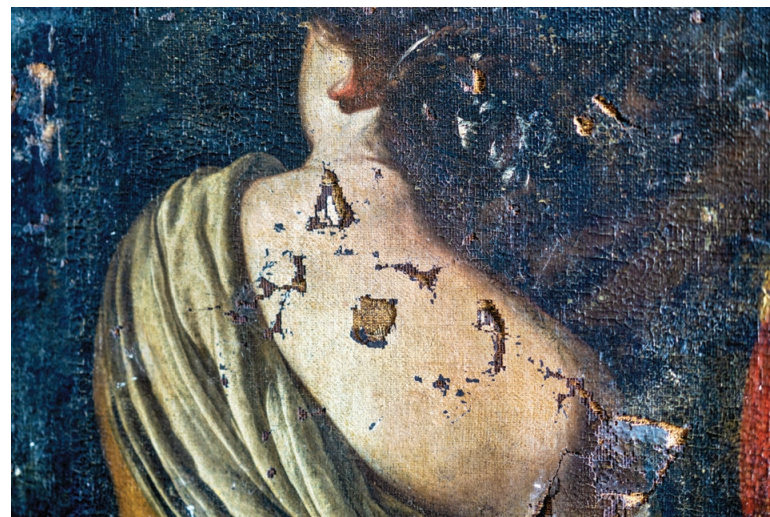


In June 2021 Khalife attended Fusion 1: mare nostrum, a Getty-funded workshop led by two of the field’s reigning experts, German conservators Petra Demuth and Hannah Flock. Together, Demuth and Flock have pioneered the adoption of tear mending worldwide through in-person training seminars. Named after the Roman term for the Mediterranean Sea and available to Mediterranean-area practitioners, this workshop was different from their others: it was virtual and could therefore offer digital-only instruction of tear-mending methods via close-up microscopic views that could be recorded live and transmitted to and from participants working at their home institutions. The virtual format not only reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions due to less air travel by attendees, it also allowed conservators facing pandemic travel restrictions to participate.



Above: Single thread bonding. Photo: TH Köln Heike Fischer

Left: Paintings conservator Kerstin Khalife. Photo courtesy Kerstin Khalife



Top: Nayirie Jean Keuteklian, a conservator at the Beirut Museum of Art, participating in the Fusion 1: mare nostrum tear-mending workshop co-led by Hannah Flock (seen on laptop). Photo courtesy Kerstin Khalife

Above: Damage to *Hercules and Omphale*, 1630, Artemisia Gentileschi. Oil on canvas. Sursock Palace Collections - Beirut, Lebanon

Khalife’s experience at the workshop proved transformative. First off, Demuth and Flock mailed high-caliber tools and instruments—dental probes, suture materials, adhesives, and a special heated tip for tear mending—to each participant, some of whom, like Khalife, lived in places where accessing such items is difficult. Best of all, everyone received a microscope equipped with a lens for photographic recording (aka a “trinocular stereo microscope”). So while Khalife looked through the microscope, the video camera simultaneously displayed the conservation work she was doing with her hands. The instructors in Cologne, and eight other participants on Zoom in Italy, Slovenia, Spain, Croatia, Greece, and Portugal, could follow along as she undertook intricate thread manipulations such as reweaving loose, frayed thread ends.

“To be connected with one another over the microscope and to see Petra and Hannah demonstrating with such close-up magnification—it was better than if I’d been in the same room,” says Khalife. “And incredibly, Getty offered us the microscope to keep afterwards. So now my colleagues and I can raise awareness about tear mending with other conservators and cultural heritage professionals. Everyone wants to learn it.”

#### Glass-riddled and Torn, but on the Mend

Since the workshop, Khalife has applied her new skills to dozens of glass-riddled paintings, including her current undertaking, the restoration of a modern Lebanese canvas with over 70 tears. In 2022 she helped dust, crate, and ship Gentileschi’s *Hercules and Omphale* from Sursock Palace to the Getty Center for emergency conservation treatment.

Here in Los Angeles, Ulrich Birkmaier, Getty’s senior conservator of paintings, has been orchestrating the comprehensive repair of *Hercules and Omphale*, which suffered a 20-inch tear from the blast plus numerous other rips and splices. In addition to tear mending, Birkmaier and a team of Getty conservators will perform chemical analysis of the four-centuries-old paint to learn about Gentileschi’s process, reline the back of the work, and reconstruct various areas of paint loss. The painting will go on view at Getty in 2025 before heading back to Beirut.

Meanwhile, the demand for tear-mending training has gained so much momentum that Demuth and Flock will lead another Getty-funded workshop this year at the National Museum in Gdańsk, Poland. This time, two midcareer conservators will attend from Ukraine, as that country’s paintings collections face significant threats from the ongoing war with Russia.

“Hannah and I feel compelled to do more trainings, because we live in a place where we are free and experience relative stability, and this is our way of taking responsibility in the world,” says Demuth. “It’s our job to pass on our experience and skills to our colleagues everywhere, despite the extreme inequalities people face. We are honored to do this work.”

Although tear mending can be performed just as readily on a 200-year-old tear as one from two days ago, its emergence as a go-to technique makes it invaluable to conservators who face catastrophes, wars, or other challenging circumstances. But the most important part of preserving a painting, Khalife believes—beyond tear mending or any other technique—is how a technician performs behind the microscope. “It’s so critical how you, as a conservator, deal in a crisis. You must stay calm. You must stay focused. Fortunately, conservation helps us do that.” ■

To learn more about Conserving Canvas, visit [www.getty.edu/projects/conserving-canvas/](http://www.getty.edu/projects/conserving-canvas/).





# Learning the Art of Conservation with the Johnson Publishing Company Archive

By Cassia Davis  
Creative Producer  
J. Paul Getty Trust

*A hands-on workshop shows students how to conserve historic Ebony and Jet magazine photographs*

**LAST SUMMER A GROUP OF STUDENTS** from historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) headed to Chicago for a hands-on conservation workshop with materials from the Johnson Publishing Company (JPC) archive, including images from *Ebony* and *Jet* magazines.

The five-day workshop was part of a new series launched by Getty to introduce undergraduate HBCU students to conservation as a potential career path. While engaging with the JPC archive, students from a variety of disciplines learn the principles of photographs conservation—how to identify photographic processes, assess the condition of photographs, and perform entry-level treatments such as surface cleaning, all under the guidance of expert photographs conservators.

The workshops are part of an effort to diversify the conservation profession, ensuring that a plurality of voices—including historically underrepresented minorities—get to decide what is preserved and how.

Instructors began the workshop with a primer on photography conservation and then broke down the intricacies of the work with practical demonstrations. Participants viewed JPC archive materials,

created documentation for the archive, rehoused slides, and cleaned and repaired photographs.

Qiana Thornton, a biochemistry major at Chicago State University, was surprised by the amount of science involved in conservation. “I knew chemicals were used to develop photography, but I didn’t realize how much chemistry was a part of it.” Thornton’s advisor had recommended the workshop as a way for her to explore science in a different field.

“I just wanted to come and put my hands on something at first, and to help it exist,” Thornton says. “To have this experience, it made the average person’s photos more important, more necessary. A photo’s not just something that’s nice to look at; it’s necessary for the people after you to remember who they are, and where they’re going, and why you are doing things.”

A photo that strongly resonated with Thornton was of Mahalia Jackson (known as the Queen of Gospel) singing at a podium for a crowd of protesters during a Civil Rights march to free political activist Angela Davis. “She’s representing people who had to march and fight,” Thornton says. “Because that picture exists, it keeps that feeling alive.”



Opposite page: Qiana Thornton reports on the condition of a contact sheet of images.

Right: Workshop instructor and photographs conservator Ronel Namde holds a photo of Angela Davis, one of the four million photographic prints, slides, and negatives in the Johnson Publishing Company archive.





Left: Keturah Bowles listens to an instructor as she prepares to rehouse slides.

Below: Copies of an original cover of *Jet* magazine with Aretha Franklin



Tyler Walker uses a sponge to gently wipe an image.



Top: Nette Davis holds a microscope over the cover of an original copy of *Jet* to get a closer look at the surface.

Above: Matthew Patterson points out an example of surface deterioration on a contact sheet or Qiana Thornton and instructor Ronel Namde.

For Keturah Bowles, who studies 2D studio art at Chicago State University, the images that struck her the most during the workshop were the original mock-ups and airbrushed images of Aretha Franklin for the cover of *Jet*, a national weekly launched in 1951. “It just resonates—because even though so much time has passed, women are still airbrushing their figures.”

Bowles says that repairing tears in the photographs will help her own art practice. “When a photograph is ripped, you can see how all those fibers are intertwined. And so if I’m wet felting wool or something, that’s the same idea. It’s all fibers.”

Tyler Walker, who majored in business management and environmental science at Hampton University and is now starting his own portrait photography business, says he finds many similarities between conserving the environment and conserving photography. “If you don’t treat the land well, how can you learn from it? And if you don’t treat photographs of this history well, what can you learn from it?”

Walker says that working with the archive gave him a deeper understanding of the historical importance of positive Black representation in magazines like *Jet* and *Ebony*, the latter a monthly launched in 1945 and the first magazine to address African American issues, personalities, and interests in a positive and self-affirming manner. “I’m moving through this world that people before me have fought so hard to try and allow me to have. Conservation, preservation, I know both entail a greater appreciation of what was.”

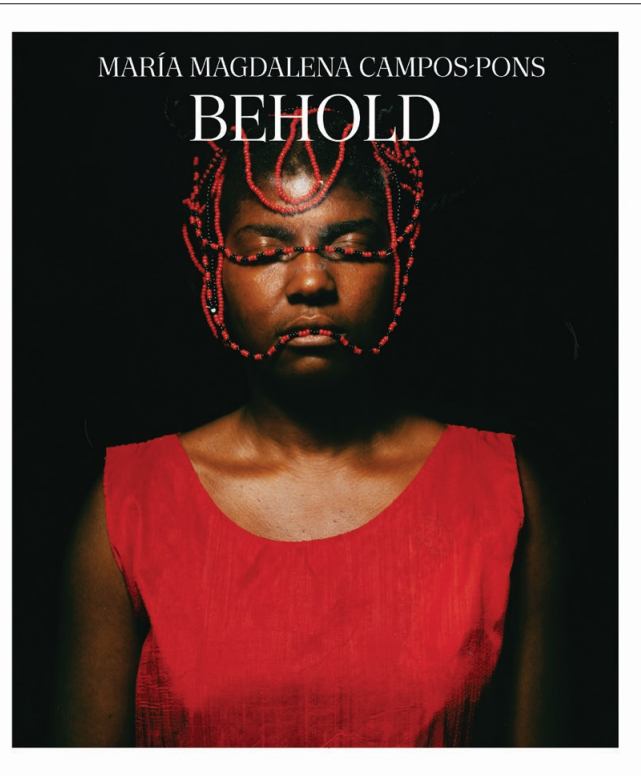
Nette Davis, a fashion and photography student at Norfolk State University, says that looking at the original magazine covers for *Jet* and *Ebony* offered insight into the work and creativity that went into designing these magazines. “So many of them are the first African Americans or first Black people to be in these positions, so it’s a real eye-opener. I would definitely recommend this kind of workshop to other people in the photography field. I feel like we need to know this stuff and have a chance to experience it.”

Matthew Patterson, who studies photography at Norfolk State University, is still pondering his career path and wants to get as much experience in as many fields as possible. When a professor told him about the workshop, he jumped at the chance.

“I’m still learning,” Patterson says. “I’m learning from my grandparents and my great-grandparents. There’s so much out there to learn in your lifetime, and knowing about your culture is important for families and communities. If you don’t know your culture, can you really say you know who you are?”

Patterson says he can use the knowledge gained at the workshop in his own life. “The older members of my family have but so much time left, and one of these days a lot of those photo albums are going to get passed down to me. I think with the information that I’m learning now, I can make sure the photos will be passed down for generations after mine.” ■





## María Magdalena Campos-Pons: Behold

Edited by Carmen Hermo

**MARÍA MAGDALENA CAMPOS-PONS**, a Cuban woman of African descent, has established a unique multidisciplinary artistic practice that embodies ancestral spiritual traditions in installation, photography, painting, performance, and film. This monograph, the first critical look at the artist's oeuvre in nearly two decades, surveys the concerns, materials, and places invoked throughout her 40-year career. Thoughtful essays explore her vibrant, arresting artwork, which confronts issues of agency and the construction of race and belonging and challenges us to reckon with these issues in our own lives. Here's an excerpt.

From her earliest days in Cuba, Campos-Pons manifested a deep artistic talent that was recognized by family and institutions. Her earliest works claimed the female body as a territory of debate, forefronting questions of control, freedom, and sexuality. Her work continued to express issues of the body as a site of feminism and racialized histories in Cuba during a time when the nation was beginning to lay claim to its own memory of the

transatlantic slave trade, and Campos-Pons was drawing from her experience as the great-granddaughter of an enslaved man. As the artist moves through this collective memory, she enacts the process of embodiment that marks her work.

Campos-Pons's artistic career came about very soon after the feminist language of intersectionality was first enunciated by Black feminist scholars and thinkers, long before this idea entered the mainstream conversation. The artist made an awareness of the inseparability of race, gender, and sexuality central in her representations of the women in her family, including her grandmother, mother, and sisters, with whom she is particularly close. She introduced the role of spiritual practice and the traditions of her ancestors through imagery focused on the familial histories of Black Cubans. Individual and collective histories emerged from memories of her family home at La Vega in Matanzas, where they resided in the former barracks that held her great-grandfather on the sugar plantation. The poignant and powerful knowledge of her dwelling's violent history forever changed her sense of self and initiated many works focused on the slave trade and the economy of goods such as sugar and rum.

Once Campos-Pons married, had a child, and began her journey to permanent residence in Boston, she learned that what is left behind is worth the new encounter. Yet she also experienced a sense of self-exile, as she saw issues differently once outside Cuba. The embargo and restrictions on travel to Cuba profoundly separated Campos-Pons from her family, and as a new mother she began a reexamination of her relationships with the women who had been closest to her. She began relating her personal history with women's work—the domestic labor that is done collectively and establishes a sense of connectedness in the home—and rituals of laundering, ironing, and folding clothes became a source of ceremony. Imagery of sheets folded and embroidered with the multiple languages she speaks brought a powerful domestic tension and a more reflective feminism to her oeuvre. Her body became the ground of a deeper collective memory and a more complex performative life, beyond gender and sexuality, at the site of an economy of labor tied to her experiences and feminism.

Newly influenced by artists she was encountering, such as Ana Mendieta, Lorna Simpson, and Carrie Mae Weems, Campos-Pons also pushed forward her own sense of sensitively representing the Black body. She realized that, even in Boston, she was operating from the positionality of an African heritage lived in contemporary Cuba, which set her work apart from that of African Americans rooted in the racial capitalism of the United States. Drawing on ceremonial and spiritual traditions related to her Black diasporic identity—reaching out through and beyond the context of the Caribbean and United States to connect to Yoruba-derived traditions in Brazil, Haiti, and other places of syncretism—Campos-Pons honored and innovated, through allusions to Santería, artworks inspired by domestic altars as well as the healing

powers of her father's Yoruba herbalism practice. In much of her work, the body is the land and the soil, the corpus of culture, sometimes wounded or fragmented. The body carries the footprints of the one who left, the migrant.

Campos-Pons uses memory, both individual and collective, to bring about historical recognition and spiritual cleansing. For her, memory is never an exact replica of an original experience but rather a creative and mediated expression. Water acts as memory and a journey in her visual language, implying the incomplete, discontinuous, and often ambivalent nature of memory, its porous and permeable nature used by Campos-Pons as a bridge over time and distance, the past and the present, the painful and the hopeful. The possibilities of this interstice reflect the long journey of an artist on the edge of new discoveries of form and meaning. ■

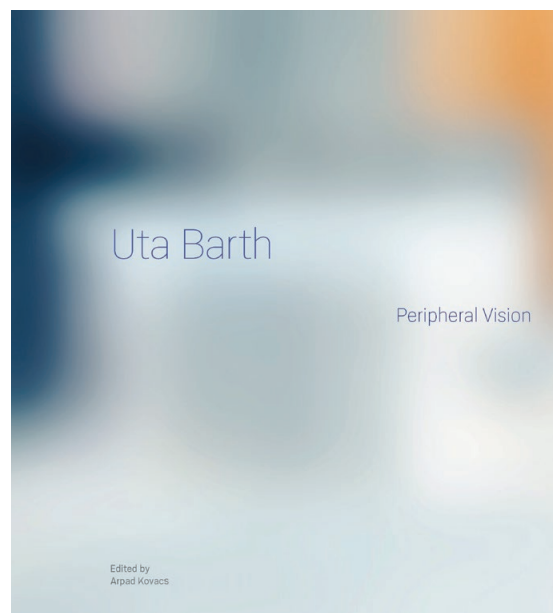


*The Right Protection*, 1999, María Magdalena Campos-Pons. Polaroid Polacolor Pro photograph. Collection of Francesca Biancacci and Fabio Sbianchi. © María Magdalena Campos-Pons. Image courtesy of the artist and Galleria Giampaolo Abbondio, Milan



*Abridor de Caminos (The One Who Opens the Path)*, 1997, María Magdalena Campos-Pons. Composition of 10 Polaroid Polacolor Pro photographs. Boston, Polaroid Collection. © María Magdalena Campos-Pons. Image courtesy of the artist



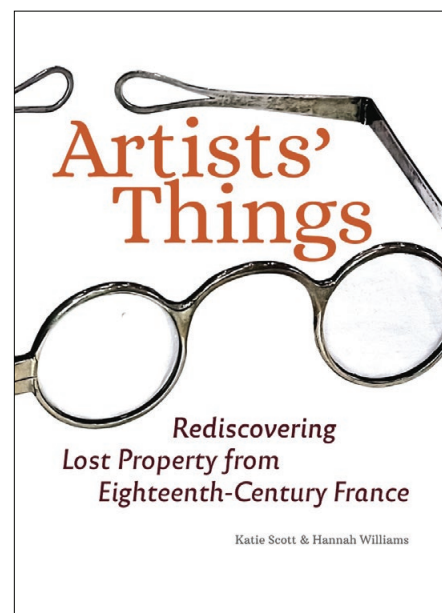


**Uta Barth: Peripheral Vision**

Edited by Arpad Kovacs, with contributions by Lucy Gallun and Jeremy Gilbert-Rolfe

Los Angeles-based contemporary artist Uta Barth has spent her decades-long career exploring the complexities and limits of human and mechanical vision. In this richly illustrated monograph, curator Arpad Kovacs and contributors Lucy Gallun and Jeremy Gilbert-Rolfe chart Barth's career path and discuss her most significant series, revealing how she has rejected the primacy of a traditional photographic subject and instead called attention to what is on the periphery. The book includes previously unpublished bodies of work made early in her career that add much to our understanding of this important artist.

J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM  
240 pages, 10 × 11 inches  
332 color illustrations, 9 gatefolds  
Hardcover  
US \$60

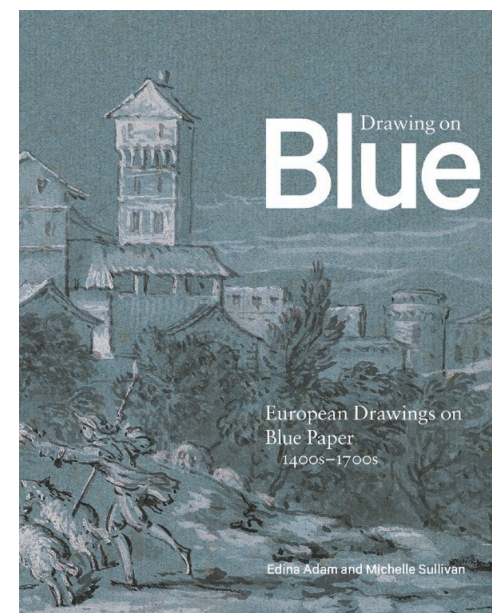


**Artists' Things: Rediscovering Lost Property from Eighteenth-Century France**

By Katie Scott and Hannah Williams

This innovative book looks at objects that once belonged to artists, revealing not only the fabric of the 18th-century art world in France but also unfamiliar—and sometimes unexpected—insights into the individuals who populated it, among them Jean-Antoine Watteau, François Boucher, Jean-Baptiste Greuze, and Élisabeth Vigée-LeBrun. From the curious to the mundane, from the useful to the symbolic, these items have one thing in common: they have all been eclipsed from historical view. In this fascinating read, the authors engage with fundamental historical debates about production, consumption, and sociability through the lens of material goods owned by artists.

GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE  
374 pages, 7 × 10 inches  
140 color and 50 b/w illustrations  
Paperback  
US \$60

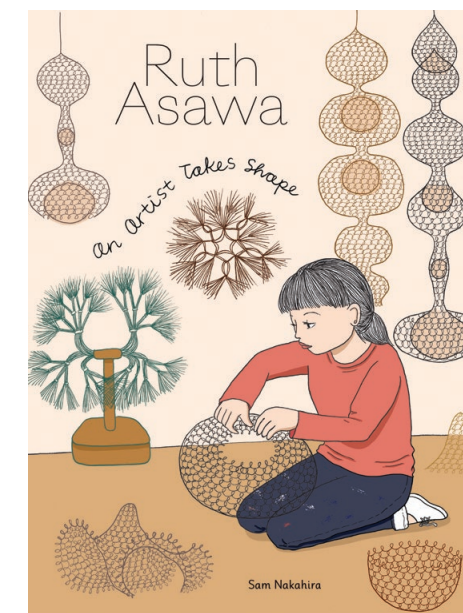


**Drawing on Blue: European Drawings on Blue Paper, 1400s-1700s**

By Edina Adam and Michelle Sullivan

The rich history of blue paper, from the late 15th to the mid-18th centuries, illuminates themes of transcultural interchange, international trade, and global reach. Through the examination of significant works, this volume investigates considerations of supply, use, economics, and innovative creative practice. How did the materials necessary for the production of blue paper reach artistic centers? How were these materials produced and used in various regions? Why did they appeal to artists, and how did they impact artistic practice and become associated with regional artistic identities? Bringing together the work of the world's leading specialists, this striking publication is essential reading on the history, materials, and techniques of drawings executed on blue paper.

J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM  
160 pages, 8 × 10 inches  
107 color illustrations  
Paperback  
US \$35



**Ruth Asawa: An Artist Takes Shape**

By Sam Nakahira

This graphic biography on renowned Japanese American artist Ruth Asawa chronicles the genesis of Asawa as an artist—from the horror of Pearl Harbor to her transformative education at Black Mountain College to building a life in San Francisco, where she would further develop and refine her groundbreaking sculpture. Asawa never sought fame, preferring to work on her own terms: for her, art and life were one. Featuring lively illustrations and photographs of Asawa's artwork, this graphic retelling of her young adult years demonstrates the transformative power of making art.

Ages 13 and up

GETTY PUBLICATIONS  
112 pages, 7 × 9 inches  
13 color photographs and b/w drawings throughout  
Hardcover  
US \$19.95



Right: *Women Work for Victory*, about 1941–43. Silk-screen. Getty Research Institute, 2023.M.38

Below: *Cross Out Slums*, 1941, Lester Beall. Lithograph. Getty Research Institute, 2023.M.38



**IN THE EARLY 1970s**, New York-based art collector Merrill C. Berman leaned into his interest in socially engaged visual culture, graphic design, and posters—an area of collecting that the mainstream art world had not embraced. With a particular eye for European and American art that engaged and reflected the century’s social and political upheavals, Berman developed one of the most comprehensive collections of its kind in its scope of materials, art historical range, breadth of subject, and quality of works.

The Getty Research Institute (GRI) recently acquired 600 works from his collection, including Works Progress Administration-era posters, social justice and LGBTQ+ collections, and an African American culture, activism, and protest collection. Together, these works illustrate critical chapters of the nation’s history from diverse perspectives.

The collection will be cataloged over the next several years and made available to researchers.

“With this transformative acquisition, the GRI can boast a preeminent research resource for situating graphic design within the broader narratives of American art and history,” says GRI Director Mary Miller.

## Getty Acquires Historical Prints, Posters, and Other Materials from 20th-Century American Movements

## Getty Adds Maren Hassinger Archive

**THE GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE (GRI)** has acquired the archive of visual and performance artist Maren Hassinger.

The archive details Hassinger’s affiliations with Los Angeles-based African American artists, as well as often-undocumented African American art exhibitions, organizations, artists, lectures, and meetings during an era of exclusion from the mainstream art world. Hassinger also frequently experiments with natural forms, such as bushes, trees, and branches, and explores the tensions between organic objects and industrial materials such as iron and steel.

“In a career spanning more than 50 years, Maren Hassinger has distinguished herself as a true innovator whose mastery of

visual and performance art practices has influenced generations of artists,” says LeRonn Brooks, curator of the African American Art History Initiative at the GRI.

The archive encompasses a wide variety of material—ranging from the early 1970s to the late 2000s—including original sketches, drawings for large-scale projects, photographs, correspondence, print media, handwritten notes, documentation of exhibitions, and audiovisual material. The collection will be cataloged and made available to researchers.

“After all my trials and tribulations in this field,” says Hassinger, “it is gratifying to know that my work will be preserved for future engagement.”



Maren Hassinger, *On Dangerous Ground* (artist in studio), 1981, Maren Hassinger. © Museum Associates/LACMA. Courtesy Susan Inglett Gallery





*White Flower on Black Ash Cliff, Langahlidh, Iceland, negative June 20, 1972; print 1975, Eliot Porter. Dye imbibition print. Getty Museum, Gift of Daniel Greenberg and Susan Steinhauser. © 1990 Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas*

## Environment-related facts that might surprise you

Miles seen on a clear day looking west from the Getty Center to Catalina Island: **44.25**.

Miles seen on a clear day looking east from the Getty Center to Mount Wilson: **25.28**.

We say “clear” day, because LA has the **#1** worst smog in the US (**out of 227** metropolitan areas). (American Lung Association State of the Air Report) LA isn’t as bad as it used to be though. Number of unhealthy/hazardous air days in LA in 1997, the year the Getty Center opened: **217**. In the latest counting (2022): **94**. (Los Angeles Almanac)

Nature at the Getty Center: **500** plants in Robert Irwin’s Central Garden. Gallons of water conserved by regularly adjusting for drought since 2016: **5 million**.

Number of mountain lions or coyotes on Getty property last year: Getty Center, **8**; Getty Villa, **8**. (security cameras)

Number of deer eaten per week by LA mountain lions: **1**. (National Park Service) Number of Getty visitors eaten by mountain lions: **0**.

Among the **12+** other species you might spot at Getty: bobcats, golden eagles, California bats, western toads, harvester ants, desert cottontails, California thrashers (birds), southern alligator lizards, and gopher snakes. (National Wildlife Federation)

Animals living inside the Getty Museum: webbing clothes moths, the bane of art museums. **6,000**: number of hours it took to deep clean the Museum during a 2020 outbreak of these moths.

Nature we’ve welcomed into our collection:

- **775** photographs of Yosemite taken by **51** different makers from 1859 to 2003.
- **2,104,392** “nature”-related resources at the Getty Library, and amongst the works in its special collections, a **60**-plate, 1719 edition of *The Metamorphosis of the Insects of Suriname* by German botanist and artist Maria Sibylla Merian. (Her groundbreaking work debunked the ancient Greek theory that insects were created through spontaneous generation; i.e., maggots grew from rotten meat, moths from old wool.)
- **14,000+** raw materials (rocks, wood, insects, etc.) housed in the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) Reference Collection and used by conservators worldwide to solve art-related mysteries.

Made from some of those materials: the pigments ultramarine blue, once the **#1** most expensive color in the world, and cochineal red, brought to Europe after the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs and made from female cochineal insects living on cacti. **70,000** cochineals = **1 pound** of dye. (Brittanica)

More GCI coolness: conservators there have worked to preserve earthen architecture for **18** years. **30 percent** of the world’s population lives in houses made of earth, a material long proven to be affordable, readily available, and sustainable.

Art and science meld again next fall when Getty-led PST ART: *Art & Science Collide* presents **65** exhibitions throughout Southern California. PST exhibitions focused on... the environment: **22** ecology and sustainability: **9** water and oceans: **8**



## EXHIBITIONS

Make free, timed reservations for the Getty Center and Getty Villa Museum at [getty.edu](http://getty.edu).

### Getty Center

**Conserving Eden: Cranach's Adam and Eve from the Norton Simon**  
January 23–April 21, 2024

**Drawing on Blue**  
January 30–April 28, 2024

**First Came a Friendship: Sidney B. Felsen and the Artists at Gemini G.E.L.**  
February 20–July 7, 2024

**Blood: Medieval/Modern**  
February 27–May 19, 2024

**Graphic Design in the Middle Ages**  
Through January 28, 2024

**Sheila Metzner: From Life**  
Through February 18, 2024

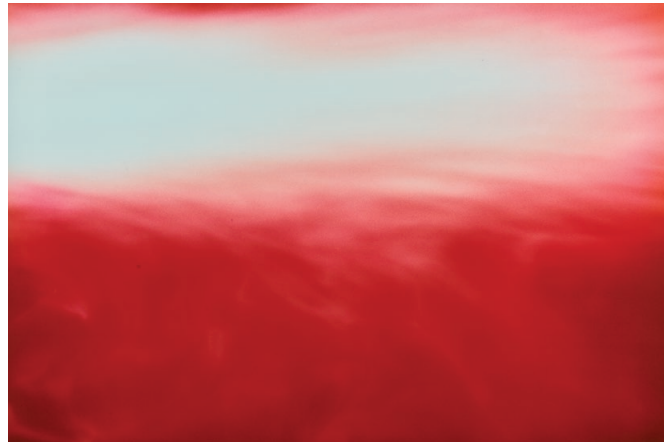
**Arthur Tress: Rambles, Dreams, and Shadows**  
Through February 18, 2024

**REMIX: Recent Acquisitions of Photographs**  
Through March 3, 2024

**Porcelain from Versailles: Vases for a King and Queen**  
Through March 3, 2024

**Mercedes Dorame: Woshaa'axre Yaang'aro (Looking Back)**  
Through July 28, 2024

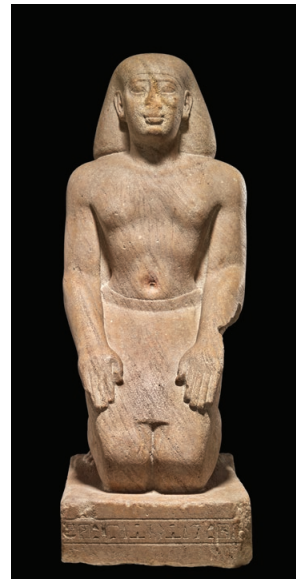
**Untold Stories of a Monumental Pastel**  
Through October 20, 2024



*Bloodscape X*, 1987, Andres Serrano. Silver dye bleach print. Getty Museum, Gift of Robert and Dolores Cathcart. © Andres Serrano, courtesy of the artist and Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris/Brussels. On view in *Blood: Medieval/Modern*



Left: *Study of Triton Blowing a Conch Shell*, about 1600, Annibale Carracci. Charcoal with traces of white chalk on blue paper. Getty Museum. On view in *Drawing on Blue*



Right: *Kneeling Statue of Nakhtorheb*, about 590 BCE, Egyptian. Quartzite. British Museum. Image © The Trustees of the British Museum. All rights reserved. On view in *Sculpted Portraits from Ancient Egypt*

### Getty Villa

**Sculpted Portraits from Ancient Egypt**  
January 24, 2024–January 25, 2027

**The Egyptian Book of the Dead**  
Through January 29, 2024

**The Gold Emperor from Aventicum**  
Through January 29, 2024

**The Horse and Rider from Albania**  
Through January 29, 2024

### Online

**Sculpting Harmony**  
[gehry.getty.edu](http://gehry.getty.edu)

**Mesopotamia**  
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## FINAL FRAME



*Untitled*, 1930s–40s, Osamu Shiihara. Gelatin silver print. Getty Museum. © Estate of Osamu Shiihara

In the mid-1920s, accelerated by the devastation of the Great Kantō earthquake, a modernist approach to photography emerged in Japan: *shinkō shashin* (“New Photography”). Emphasizing the unconventional use of perspective, *shinkō shashin* offered a visual language for modern times. This stylistic revolution left an indelible mark on Osamu Shiihara, then a young painter and photographer studying at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. After graduating in 1932, Shiihara set up a studio in the town of Imazu in west-central Japan, where he joined the Tampei Photography Club, a group strongly influenced by the German avant-garde. While the photographers associated with *shinkō shashin* tended to focus on urban themes, here Shiihara adopts a bird’s-eye view of the natural world. Synthesizing elements of Japanese pictorial tradition with the international “New Vision” in photography, Shiihara pushes the horizon line to the upper left edge of the frame and transforms a snowy hillside into an unfamiliar moonscape.

—Antares Wells, Curatorial Assistant,  
*Photographs, Getty Museum*



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# Recording Artists Season 2: Intimate Addresses

*“During the early 1960s...his notebooks are full of collages, including one called A Case for Bombing Pause....Patterson, a new composer in Cage’s circle, was imagining ‘bombing pause’ as an almost musical interval in which a peace might form.”*

—Tess Taylor on Benjamin Patterson

Hear how a classically trained African American double bassist could only play for a US symphony by joining the army and moving to Germany in the wake of WWII. In season 2 of Getty’s Webby Award–winning podcast, actor Anna Deavere Smith brings artists’ letters to life as Taylor, art historians, and contemporary artists unpack the words and lives of Patterson, Marcel Duchamp, Frida Kahlo, M. C. Richards, Nam June Paik, and Meret Oppenheim. Tune in at [getty.edu/recordingartists](http://getty.edu/recordingartists).

Page from sketchbook, “A Case for Bombing Pause,” about 1960, Benjamin Patterson. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (890164). Courtesy Estate of Benjamin Patterson



AND THEN, MAYBE...IF THE  
PAUSE LASTS A LONG TIME,  
WE WILL STOP FIGHTING  
AND GO HOME TO RAISE SHEEP.



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