

Getty

MAGAZINE | SUMMER 2020



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On the cover: *Paper Bird* (detail), 1927, Hiromu Kira. Gelatin silver print. The J. Paul Getty Museum. © Sadamura Family Trust. Story on p. 32.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



As I write this, the Getty community is still reeling from the brutal and senseless killings of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd. We share the anger and anguish of everyone in Los Angeles and the nation over yet more lives senselessly taken. That African Americans and communities of color continue to experience systemic violence and oppression in our country is unacceptable and must stop.

Getty's core values have always been to respect the rights and differences of others; to foster a supportive and diverse community; to encourage freedom of expression; to promote a vital and civil society; and to serve humanity. But we need to do more. For the past months we have been asking ourselves, how can Getty make a difference in advancing equality and diversity, outside and inside our walls? How can we diversify the pipeline of people interested in pursuing careers in art professions? How can we use our leadership role to make long-term, lasting change? As Harold Williams, Getty's founding president, often said, we seek to do what needs to be done that others are not doing and cannot do.

We know this much. Going forward we will deepen our commitment to upholding human rights for everyone, particularly for Black Americans. We will also take responsibility for our actions and address deep-seated inequities in the art world,

including at Getty. Our staff-led Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Council will be critically important in this respect, helping us make meaningful change and navigate the days ahead. Our colleagues who volunteered to serve on the Council, as well as department and program task forces, are already identifying priorities and preparing to tackle this important work.

In the short-term we will support and respect each other. We will listen carefully to each other. And we will be grateful for our part in sharing art and culture, modes of expression and remembrance that calm, unite, and make us better.

Until we can share that art and culture with you in person again—which should be soon—you can stay part of the Getty community through this magazine and our many podcasts, videos, blog posts, online exhibitions, and other ways to visit us virtually. Thinking of you, I am yours sincerely,

Jim Cuno



GETTY WELCOMES KAVITA SINGH AND ANNE SWEENEY TO THE BOARD

ART HISTORIAN KAVITA SINGH and entertainment executive Anne Sweeney have joined the J. Paul Getty Trust Board of Trustees. Kavita Singh is a professor of art history at the School of Arts and Aesthetics of Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi, India. She has published several essays on secularism and religiosity, fraught national identities, and the memorialization of difficult histories as they relate to museums in South Asia and beyond. Entertainment executive Anne Sweeney was formerly president of the Disney-ABC Television Group, and co-chair of Disney Media Networks. She has served on the Netflix Board of Directors since 2015 and has been a member of the Mayo Clinic Board of Trustees since 2016. She also served for 10 years on the Board of Advisers for the Anderson School of Management at the University of California, Los Angeles, stepping down earlier this year. She has been a member of the Getty Conservation Institute Council for three years. ■



Top: Kavita Singh. Photo courtesy of Infosys Science Foundation

Bottom: Anne Sweeney. Photo courtesy of Anne Sweeney

GETTY MARROW INTERNSHIPS STILL ON

GOOD NEWS: The Foundation is continuing its signature Getty Marrow Undergraduate Internship program this summer, despite disruptions from the coronavirus crisis. For the 28th year in a row, the program is providing paid internships in the visual arts for students from backgrounds often underrepresented in the field.

This year, more than 75 internships are available across Los Angeles County at more than 55 museums and arts organizations, including Getty. Participating institutions range from large museums like LACMA to small organizations such as the Center for the Study of Political Graphics (CSPG), a research archive that collects, preserves, and presents political posters related to movements of social change. “We are longtime, passionate participants in the Getty Marrow intern

program and applaud Getty’s ongoing commitment to building more cultural diversity, equity, and inclusion in the arts,” says Carol Wells, founder and executive director of the CSPG, which has been part of the program every year since it started in 1993. “We’re looking forward to offering two internships this summer and providing first-hand experiences of arts careers, even if the way we are working now is very different from years past.”

Because organizations are still pondering their reopening dates and safety protocols, this year’s internships offer flexible formats and timelines; interns will work remotely, on-site, or both, for instance. Internships can also extend through spring 2021, so that students can work part-time into the academic year to finish up projects. ■

A Day with Clay

Just before Getty closed in response to the COVID-19 crisis, a record number of families got fired up about clay in a free hands-on family workshop. Guided by ceramic artist Wayne Perry, participants discovered how artists transform earth and water into the beautiful ceramics on view at the Getty Center, tried their hand at the potter’s wheel, and added a creature to the collaborative clay project. Families then got squishy at the touch table, exploring increasingly durable kinds of clay: earthenware, stoneware, and porcelain. “I could stay here forever,” called out one happy visitor.





Portrait of Rachel Rosenthal, ca. 1990. Photo by Steven Arnold

RACHEL ROSENTHAL ARCHIVE

The Getty Research Institute (GRI) has acquired the archive of Rachel Rosenthal, one of the prominent figures in LA's theater, performance, and feminist art scenes from the 1950s until her death in 2015. The archive represents her entire career and includes her education in Paris and New York; the artistic landscape surrounding Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns in the early 1950s; the evolution of Rosenthal's pioneering "Instant Theater"; her involvement in the feminist movement in the 1970s; and the establishment of her Espace DbD and Rachel Rosenthal Company.

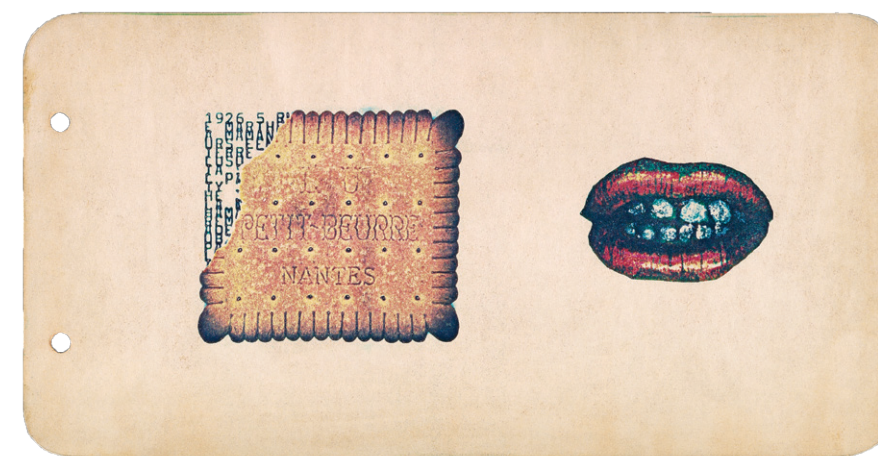
Rosenthal's archive demonstrates the highly autobiographical nature of her work—the collection features more than 60 diaries and journals, unpublished notes on performances, almost a dozen sketchbooks, approximately 30 scrapbooks, 300 performance tapes, and a number of self-produced artist's books. Highlights from the acquisition include notebooks and membership records for Instant Theater, an endeavor she launched after moving to Los Angeles in 1955. Instant Theater presented improvised performances that combined imaginative visual aspects and innovative lighting effects with theatrical presentation.

Other highlights of the archive include a suite of poignant images of the young Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg in the Pearl Street studio they shared with Rosenthal in the early 1950s; rich photographic documentation of Instant Theatre stage sets and performances; and materials from feminist circles that included Barbara T. Smith, Betye Saar, and Miriam Shapiro.

Rosenthal was born in Paris in 1926 and was raised in an upper-middle-class Russian-Jewish family that fled the city after Nazi occupation. At a young age she performed at family parties and took ballet lessons. These early interests, along with her experience traveling and being in exile with her family, influenced her career and artistic work.

By the 1970s, Rosenthal became involved in the feminist art movement and was co-founder of Womanspace, a gallery dedicated to showing the work of female artists at the Woman's Building, an institution for feminist art that operated from 1973 until 1991. (The GRI is currently processing and digitizing the Woman's Building archives.) The acquisition of Rosenthal's archives expands the GRI's holdings of pioneering feminist performance art. ■

—Miles Nool



Page opening, *Petit-Beurre*, artist book, ca. 1976–8, Rachel Rosenthal. Xerox

Brit Peter Brathwaite took Getty’s viral art recreation challenge to a whole new level: he recreated Black portraiture.



As COVID-19 closed in on the United Kingdom in mid-March, opera singer and BBC broadcaster Peter Brathwaite had to cancel all of his upcoming performances until August. Sheltering at home in Bedford, England, he kept busy practicing and researching for future shows, but was still “twiddling his thumbs a bit,” as he puts it. But then he came across the Getty Museum Challenge, an invitation to recreate a famous work of art using ordinary household items.

Left: Recreation by Peter Brathwaite with African print, patchwork quilt, and Bajan chopped seasoning

Right: *A Still Life With Peaches and a Lemon*, date unknown, Juraan van Streek. Oil on canvas. Private collection



Brathwaite has now posted more than 40 art recreations on Twitter, each one featuring a Black subject. He writes “Rediscovering #blackportraiture through @GettyMuseum challenge” in each caption, wanting to remind people that Black subjects do exist in portraiture, and that their stories deserve to be told. “I hadn’t seen many recreations of pieces of art with Black people before I started to do it myself,” he says.

The photos are also part of a more personal endeavor: to connect with his own ancestors through Black portraiture. Two weeks before he discovered Getty’s challenge, Brathwaite had started researching his family tree, particularly his relatives who lived in Barbados and the West Indies. Although he unearthed portraits of white ancestors, he found no images of his Black ancestors; a consequence of having a Barbadian, West Indian background, one that was mixed race. Brathwaite saw the art recreation challenge as an opportunity to honor Black ancestors who never had the opportunity to sit for a portrait.

Brathwaite has recreated portraits featuring subjects of all classes, a nod to the fact that Black people as portrayed in art exist along an economic and social spectrum. Brathwaite’s subjects range from noblemen of high status to servants portrayed

as exotic “accessories.” But rather than precisely imitating the details of each painting, he takes creative liberties that further connect him with his own heritage and also empower his subjects.

He has altered the paintings to include traditional Caribbean clothes, tools, and food; a book of Barbados folk songs; African hair products; his grandmother’s patchwork quilt and his grandfather’s cou-cou stick (reminiscent of a cricket bat, it’s used for cooking the Barbados national dish). He’s even altered his Black subjects’ facial expressions or body positions, so that they no longer appear powerless—as was overwhelmingly the case, he discovered.

Social media commenters have delighted in Brathwaite’s recreations and pointed out details: his inclusion of Barbados cane sugar, his cheeky decision to swap out a chess piece for a Jenga block. Some have recommended other paintings he could recreate, while others expressed appreciation that he’s bringing often-overlooked Black portraiture to life.

Brathwaite says there’s a misconception in the UK that Black history began in England in the 1950s, with Caribbean immigrants known as the Windrush generation. His recreations lay bare the fact that Black people have been a part of the fabric of the UK, and Europe as a whole, for hundreds of years.

While he awaits the re-opening of theaters and performance venues, Brathwaite continues investigating his family tree and finding additional artworks to recreate. He’s also working on a new musical project that will feature music of enslaved communities, resurfacing their songs in much the same way the Getty challenge inspired his resurfacing of Black portraiture.

“I never imagined recreating art would be as expanding as it has become for my mind and my knowledge of paintings,” says Brathwaite. “Once you’ve put yourself in a painting, you view it very differently.” ■

— Erin Migdol



Top: Recreation by Peter Brathwaite with hair products, Côte d’Ivoire prints, patchwork quilt, Jessye Norman album, and family luggage

Bottom: *The Paston Treasure*, about 1670, unknown Dutch School artist. Oil on canvas. Norwich Castle Museum. Image: Browne27, licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International (CC BY-SA 4.0)

Alan C. Braddock is one of 34 Getty Research Institute scholars working on projects related to art and ecology. He tells us how knowledge of ecology and environmental history can make us look at art in timely new ways.



Saint Sebastian Thrown into the Cloaca Maxima, 1612, Ludovico Carracci. Oil on canvas. The J. Paul Getty Museum

cism can enrich the entire discipline of art history. I strongly believe that paying more attention to ecology and environmental history can give us a fuller understanding of human visual creativity and its relation to the world. Each chapter will examine a key term of ecocriticism—“Nature,” “Human,” “Animal,” “Agents,” “Systems”—through studies of historical works of art and ecological issues.

I am especially interested in how historical art foreshadowed the ecological concerns of our time. In the “Systems” chapter, for instance, I look at a 17th-century painting in the Getty collection by the Bolognese artist Ludovico Carracci that shows Saint Sebastian—an early Christian martyr—thrown into the main sewer of ancient imperial Rome. Painted during the Counter Reformation, when the Catholic Church responded to theological and political challenges posed by Protestantism, the picture reveals early modern European moral thinking about pollution, public space, and infrastructure. During the Counter Reformation, Popes undertook extensive projects of urban renewal, hoping to improve the image and living conditions of Rome, a city Protestants attacked as spiritually and physically corrupt. Ludovico was not an ecologist or environmentalist, but his picture’s unusual attention to the sewer reveals a timely awareness of contemporary concerns (waste and the capacity of systems to eliminate or absorb it). By visualizing such a strange and unsavory aspect of urban ecology—the sewer—Ludovico dramatized the violence of early Christian martyrdom in realistic terms that his early modern viewers could understand. (The painting might have been too realistic; his patron decided not to display the work in public, fearing it would not inspire devotion.)

Other chapters of my book will examine very different works of art, from ancient Chinese *Gongshi* or “scholar stones” sculpted by human carving and water erosion, to a pre-Columbian Mayan temple at Tikal implicated in problems of deforestation, to 19th-century visions of wilderness in the landscape paintings of Frederic Edwin Church.

I chose “Implication” as my title because that word comes from the Latin *implicare*, meaning to entwine; in ecology, everything is entwined, entangled, and interconnected. To be sure, social differences and environmental inequities prove that not everyone enjoys the same power or privileges. And yet all of us have a stake in survival. All of us are ecologically implicated in some way. Ecocritical art history can help us see and understand this. ■



Alan C. Braddock is the Ralph H. Wark Associate Professor of Art History and American Studies at the College of William & Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia. His teaching and research explore the history of art, ecology, environmental justice, and animal studies.

All works of art—in all forms, places, and times—tell us about their environment in one way or another. The increasingly precarious state of our planet has prompted us art historians to look deeper into art’s underlying ecological conditions and assumptions, just as literature scholars and historians have been doing for a long time. For the past two decades I have taught courses and published scholarship in this rapidly emerging field of “ecocriticism”—the study of art history in relation to ecology and environmental history.

I became interested in this approach while working on my book about Thomas Eakins, whose well-known scenes around Philadelphia waterways had never been studied closely in light of the city’s 19th-century pollution crisis or problems of environmental justice. Although Eakins is famous for his meticulous realism, he carefully filtered out unpleasant realities from his pictures to present a sanitized view of his home.

As a Getty Research Institute “Art & Ecology” scholar, I have been developing a new book, *Implication: An Ecocritical Dictionary for Art History*. My goal is to demonstrate how ecocriti-



Quieter weekends and closer couches are prompting some of us to glance at our shelves for that special book we’ve longed to revisit. Maybe it nudged us onto our career path, guided us through a tough transition, or enchanted us with a fictional world we still wish was real.

We asked Jim Cuno, Getty president and CEO, to name one book he’ll never lend out.

Cuno: That would have to be Joe Archibald’s 1959 *Falcons to the Fight*. It’s about Jim Lundy, a fictional star halfback of the United States Air Force Academy football team (the Falcons). I was 10 years old when I read the book and had just begun to play organized football.

In real life the Air Force Academy graduated its first class of cadets in 1959. Having received a free and disciplined college education, cadets were obliged to next serve in the Air Force. In the book, Lundy is in his senior year and questions his commitment to the Academy. He confesses his doubts to his father, like mine a career Air Force officer. A week later, when tackled hard, Lundy is knocked unconscious and visited by a vision of his father challenging him to quit the Academy. The Commandant of Cadets tells him that his father was only testing him; that he wanted him to consider the moral gravity of his decision; and that as one of the first cadets in the new Academy, he was setting the standard for all who came after him. “Most of you fellows will have a chance that nobody will ever have again,” the Commandant says. “Many men go through their whole lives

wanting to be the first at something. You’ll be the first big name in United States Air Force Academy football. Everything that the early graduating classes have done here will establish Academy customs and traditions. It will create a desire for thousands of youngsters to follow in your footsteps.”

I don’t know what got me more: Lundy’s commitment to his team, his performance on the field, or his coming to terms with what he saw as his moral dilemma. I’m not sure if I even understood the book on those terms; after all I was only 10. But it left a lasting impression on me and would come back to me in the autumn of 1968, when I entered the Air Force Academy Preparatory School.

I had only ever wanted to play football for the Academy. But as the football season went on I began to question my commitment to the military. My father, now stationed in England, said he would be coming to our final game against Colorado State University. It was early December and the field was lined with snow. As team captain, I rallied my fellow Falcons and spoke to them about the sacrifices we’d made in the few short weeks we’d played together. I told them that although our future was uncertain, we would always remember this final game and this season. When we took the field, I looked into the bleachers and saw my father standing in the glare of the field lights. He had come to watch me play. It was a *Falcons to the Fight* moment, a young boy and his father and a football victory. ■

Mural by artist Nani Chacon. Photo courtesy of Self Help Graphics



A

AS ONE OF THE WORLD'S MAJOR CREATIVE CAPITALS and the nation's second-largest city, Los Angeles is home to well over 100 visual arts museums and nonprofits and many thousands of artists. These institutions and individuals connect and inspire diverse communities, help us understand the problems facing society, and inspire us to imagine different, even better, futures.

But what if these spaces and artists' voices disappeared? What would be left of Los Angeles without its profound spirit of creativity?

Local Effects of a Global Pandemic

COVID-19 has spawned an unprecedented crisis for museums and visual arts institutions in LA and across the country. Americans for the Arts—the nation's leading arts advocacy nonprofit—has presented a stark picture of the challenges facing the arts sector nationwide. In the first month of the crisis alone, total losses of the sector were estimated at \$4.8 billion with nearly \$200 million in lost revenue due to cancelled or postponed events. Los Angeles will be especially hard-hit, particularly the small and mid-sized organizations that anchor communities across the county. These institutions are as diverse as the region itself, their activities ranging from providing arts education to underserved students to presenting groundbreaking art that challenges our perceptions of the world around us.

STRONGER TOGETHER

Getty Relief Funds are helping LA arts organizations and artists survive the COVID-19 crisis

By **Carly Pippin**
Communications Specialist
Getty Foundation

Such activities came to a grinding halt with the arrival of COVID-19. Exhibitions, performances, bookstores, and onsite cafes that would normally attract visitors closed, and many museums reported staff layoffs, furloughs, and wage cuts. These difficulties continue even as restrictions loosen and businesses reopen. Arts organizations desperately want to continue providing spaces for visitors to gather, reflect, and share with one another, but they will need new protocols to welcome people safely.

Visual artists are in a similarly precarious state. With the closures of galleries, auctions, and art fairs, they have foregone many opportunities to promote and sell their work. As independent workers, artists have lost numerous reliable income streams and do not qualify for unemployment benefits. Especially impacted are young people of color just entering the profession, and artists who cobble together part-time jobs across the arts sector or via the “gig economy” to make ends meet.

But there is a bright spot: many of us in this sector are banding together to help arts workers and cherished visual arts institutions. For our part, Getty has initiated two strands of relief funding to soften the pandemic’s blow. We welcome other individuals and nonprofits to join us.

Help for LA Museums and Arts Nonprofits

In April Getty announced a \$10 million commitment to launch the LA Arts COVID-19 Relief Fund, a phased effort to deliver critical support to Los-Angeles based non-profit museums and visual arts organizations. Administered by the California Community Foundation (CCF) and in collaboration with the Getty Foundation, the fund includes an initial phase of emergency-relief grants followed by recovery grants to help struggling cultural institutions develop plans to survive in the post-coronavirus economy, which may involve a long period of financial instability and the need for periodic public closures.

“This is a critical moment for arts organizations, particularly small and



mid-sized ones, which have little working capital and meager, if any, endowments,” says Joan Weinstein, director of the Getty Foundation. “We know there probably won’t be a quick or easy ‘on’ switch that returns any of us to previous norms, so organizations will be stretched to imagine a new reality for their operations.”

In early June the Getty Foundation and CCF jointly announced more than \$2 million in emergency-relief grants, ranging from \$10,000 to \$30,000, awarded to 80 small and mid-sized visual arts organizations facing immediate financial difficulties. Among the most pressing needs of the organizations receiving funds: general operating support to stay afloat and retain staff, legal and human resources assistance, increased digital capacity to connect with audiences virtually, and resources to configure safe galleries and workspaces to accommodate social distancing once reopening is possible.

One of the grant recipients was Self Help Graphics & Art (SHG), the celebrated arts space in Boyle Heights that

fosters printmaking by Chicana/o and Latinx artists. SHG has been deeply rooted in the Los Angeles arts community for 47 years, acting as a creative home for local artists of all ages, from youth to legacy elders. “Closing our doors has meant artists on our staff losing work hours, and others who rely on our building as an accessible space to create and merchandise their work having to halt or find other avenues for income,” says Betty Avila, executive director at SHG.

SHG has prioritized supporting its teaching artists, who have lost nearly \$20,000 in wages since the site’s closure in March. Like so many other grant recipients, SHG is also using the funds to cover operational expenses and to support administrative staff so that they can continue to work from home as needed.

Looking ahead to the coming year, health and safety issues and economic uncertainties will continue to present great challenges to organizations like SHG. “We understand our work to be a critical element of post-COVID-19 recovery, especially when the Latinx commu-

nity has been so hard-hit by the virus,” says Avila. “Our goal now is to find the best way to deliver and maintain the integrity of the arts and community-building experience Self Help Graphics is known for while prioritizing personal health and safety. The broader culture of arts participation and consumption is likely to be altered for our sector for years to come.”

For the Getty Foundation, next steps are to plan for a second, larger phase of recovery funding aimed at bolstering key institutions known for anchoring their diverse communities and contributing meaningfully to the vitality of the arts in Los Angeles. Grants will likely be awarded this fall and will help recipients stabilize, plan for an uncertain future, and work together to serve our local communities.

Help for LA Artists

Recognizing that arts organizations can’t exist without artists, CCF and Getty also united with local arts funders to create a dedicated fund for artists. The Relief Fund for LA County Visual Artists was established this May by repurposing and adding to CCF’s biennial Fellowship for Visual Artists program, which began in 1988 with an initial investment from the J. Paul Getty Trust. In a show of solidarity, additional support was provided by a coalition of

artist-endowed foundations based in Los Angeles: the Mike Kelley Foundation for the Arts, the Sam Francis Foundation, and the Shepard and Amanda Fairey Foundation. The Center for Cultural Innovation, a nonprofit intermediary focused on the financial well-being of those in the arts, administered the fund.

In mid-June, the artist relief fund provided grants totaling \$700,000 to 400 individual LA-based artists who have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. Grants were unrestricted, meaning they could be applied toward whatever urgent needs artists were facing, and priority consideration was given to underserved populations that reflect the region’s cultural and geographic diversity.

Join Us

Each day it is increasingly evident that COVID-19 is the great equalizer; no organization large or small will go unaffected and the need for financial support will persist. Given the long-term consequences of the coronavirus pandemic, Getty and CCF welcome additional contributions from individuals and organizations. To make a donation, please visit <https://www.calfund.org/la-arts-covid19-relief-fund/> or contact Donor Relations at donorrelations@calfund.org. ■



Left: Betty Avila in front of a mural by Oaxacan artist collective Tlacolulokos on the exterior of Self Help Graphics

Right: Artist Alvaro D. Marquez works in Self Help Graphics’ open printmaking studio. Photo courtesy of Self Help Graphics



Capitulo. 21. de como comenzo la guerra entre los mexicanos y los Es

THE FLORENTINE CODEX INITIATIVE

Indigenous Knowledge in the Digital Age

Opposite: Recurrent epidemics gripped central Mexico for nearly a century: smallpox in 1520, salmonella poisoning (the most likely pathology but also identified as hemorrhagic fevers) in 1545, and viral hemorrhagic fevers (cause unknown) in 1576, the sum of which cut the estimated population of Mexico from nearly 22 million people prior to European contact in 1519 to 3 million people by 1600.

Healer caring for patients suffering from smallpox in 1520 during the conquest of Mexico, Book 12 of the Florentine Codex ("Of the Conquest of New Spain"), 1577, Ms. Mediceo Palatino 220, fol. 53v. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence, and by permission of MiBACT

Left: Mexica man calls for war and warrior against Spanish conquistadors in Book 12 of the Florentine Codex ("Of the Conquest of New Spain"). Ms. Mediceo Palatino 220, 1577, fol. 34. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence, and by permission of MiBACT

Picture this.



THE YEAR IS 1576 and a Spanish Franciscan friar sits with a group of Nahua scholars and artists in the scriptorium of Mexico's first college, the Colegio de Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco. They hunch over reams of imported European paper, determined to finish a 30-year project to record the comprehensive Indigenous knowledge and customs of central Mexico, the heart of the Aztec Empire until the Spanish invasion and war (1519–1521). The men race against time as they try to document information about this glorious culture; just outside the college's walls, an epidemic is ravaging the Indigenous population.

By Kim Richter

Senior Research Specialist and co-head
of the Florentine Codex Initiative
Getty Research Institute



Left: Book 11 provides names and descriptions of the flora and fauna of Mesoamerica. The codex's authors were well-aware that they were describing animal species unknown to European audiences and therefore relied on comparisons and metaphors to flesh out their descriptions. The butterfly fish—or papalomichin in Nahuatl—is flat, has antennas, and can fly out of the water like a butterfly, whereas the jaguar fish (ocelomichin) has a head with a short snout and black spots like a jaguar.

Butterfly and Jaguar Fish in Book 11 of the Florentine Codex ("On Earthly Things"). Ms. Mediceo Palatino 220, 1577, fols. 62v and 63. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence, and by permission of MiBACT

have been working with an international team of scholars to make the codex more accessible through online publications, scholarship, symposia, educational resources, and the contribution of 4,000 multilingual entries to the Getty Vocabularies, databases of terminology for art, architecture, conservation, and other disciplines. Those entries are in English, Classical Nahuatl, contemporary Eastern Huasteca Nahuatl, and Spanish. Although the Florentine Codex is not held by the GRI, Getty has unique expertise and resources to undertake the monu-



Right: Amantecatli or feather worker preparing tropical bird feathers for a feather mosaic in Book 9 of the Florentine Codex ("The Merchants"). Ms. Mediceo Palatino 219, 1577, fol. 64v. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence, and by permission of MiBACT

Fast forward nearly 500 years: we are in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, an experience that deepens our appreciation of what the friar, Bernardino de Sahagún, and his team managed to create under such duress. Inspired in content and organization by European encyclopedias, they compiled a 2,500-page, 12-book encyclopedia, the *General History of the Things of New Spain*, better known as the Florentine Codex (named for the city where it is housed). The folios of this compendium on the culture, politics, natural science, and history of the Nahuatl-speaking Mexicas are richly and colorfully illustrated.

Once completed, the codex was sent to King Philip II of Spain in 1577, but by 1587 had ended up in the hands of the powerful Florentine Medici family, who safeguarded it over the centuries. Included in UNESCO's Memory of the World Register, the Florentine Codex is considered the most important manuscript of early colonial Mexico, renowned for its bilingual (Spanish and Nahuatl) presentation of Pre-Hispanic culture and the history of the conquest of the Aztec Empire.

Mexico's Indigenous Cultural Heritage and Knowledge at Risk

Something else we can deeply appreciate about the codex in this moment: its creators' determination to record a culture at risk due to willful destruction, transculturation, conversion, and epidemics brought on by the conquest. Cultural heritage all across the world has been facing threats from overdevelopment, neglect, ethnic cleansing, violent conflict, and climate change. Getty considers the situation so dire that it recently launched Ancient Worlds Now: A Future for the Past, a decade-long, \$100 million initiative to promote a greater understanding of the world's cultural heritage and its value to global society—through education, research, and conservation efforts.

One Ancient Worlds Now project already underway is the Florentine Codex Initiative, a collaboration between the Getty Research Institute (GRI), the Seaver Institute, and the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, the latter a historic library with 11,000 manuscripts, including the codex, in its collection. Since 2015, we

mental effort of making the codex freely accessible to a global audience. We have committed to disseminating the manuscript's historical knowledge of Mexico's Indigenous cultures because it holds special meaning in LA, a city with the second largest concentration of Mexicans after Mexico City. Because a significant percentage of this population is Indigenous, Getty seeks to honor their cultural heritage and their contributions to our Angelino culture and language, including such things as our groceries: avocado, tomato, and chocolate are all words derived from Nahuatl, and foods that originated in the Americas.

To interpret this important manuscript and make it more accessible to both contemporary Nahuatl speakers and a global audience, the Getty team has collaborated from the beginning with native Nahuatl

Below: Chocolate derives from the Nahuatl words for bitter water (*xococ atl*), because central Mexican Nahuas drank the beverage unsweetened. To froth the refreshing, nourishing drink, they poured it from one vessel to another. The word *cacahua*, appearing here on the right folio of the codex, is a loanword from the Mayan *kakaw*.

Fruit trees, including the cacao tree (*cacahuacuauhtli*), in Book 11 of the Florentine Codex ("On Earthly Things"). Ms. Mediceo Palatino 220, 1577, fols. 122v and 123. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence, and by permission of MiBACT

Opposite: Motifs for works of gold, such as a Huastec man and various animals, Book 9 of the Florentine Codex ("The Merchants"). Ms. Mediceo Palatino 219, 1577, fol. 50v. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence, and by permission of MiBACT

speakers, especially Eduardo de la Cruz Cruz of the Instituto Docencia e Investigación Etnológica de Zacatecas, a leading international institute dedicated to revitalizing the use of contemporary Nahuatl and to teaching the Nahuatl language to students and scholars worldwide.

Los Angeles also has deep scholarly knowledge of the manuscript. The GRI team is collaborating with three renowned local experts who serve as co-heads of the initiative: Jeanette Favrot Peterson, Professor of Art History at the University of California, Santa Barbara; Diana Magaloni, Deputy Director at LACMA; and Kevin Terraciano, Professor of History at the University of California, Los Angeles. Additionally, the GRI collaborated with Professor Manuel Aguilar and his students at California State University, Los Angeles, last year to organize the symposium *1519, the Arrival of Strangers: Indigenous Art and Voices Following the Spanish Conquest of Mesoamerica*. Through the symposium we reevaluated the impact of the Spaniards' arrival on the shores of Mexico 500 years ago and also celebrated the enduring resilience and great cultural, historical, and artistic achievements of Indigenous peoples of New Spain.

To me, a scholar of Pre-Columbian art history and specialist in the art of the Huasteca region (northern Gulf Coast of Mexico), the Florentine Codex provides invaluable insights into the cultural, linguistic, and ethnic diversity of Mesoamerica—the advanced Pre-Hispanic civilizations of Mexico and Central America. Although the codex's authors descended from the great Mexicas, one of three factions of Nahua peoples who controlled the Aztec Empire, they describe the customs of other groups, too. Many of those other groups did not use a pre-Hispanic writing system and were only infrequently mentioned in colonial sources.

A note on the cultural bias of the Nahua authors and artist of the codex. Because the Aztecs conquered many cultural groups and exacted heavy tribute payments from them, all facts about other cultures must be treated with caution and an eye for bias. One description in the codex immediately comes to my mind: the lesser-known Huastecs are described as terrifying tattooed barbarians who always went about naked and drunk—a view that does not entirely accord with how the Huastecs represented themselves in their art. This manuscript represents conquests two-fold, therefore: the pre-Hispanic conquests perpetrated by the Aztecs and the conquest of the Aztecs by the Spaniards and their Indigenous allies.



A Power Tool for Researchers: Enriched Digitization

One outcome of the initiative is to offer an enhanced digital edition of the codex, so that the manuscript can be freely available and searchable for all. The "Digital Florentine Codex," available in 2022, will present the newly digitized codex alongside Nahuatl and Spanish transcriptions of its texts and their English translations. It is being built using international standards (including International Image Interoperability Framework, or IIIF) and will allow users to view multiple texts and associated images at once. The key aim is to go beyond simply digitizing





Spaniards tossing dead bodies of Moteuczoma Xocoyotzin and Itzcuahtzin, last independent rulers of Tenochtitlan and Tlatelolco, respectively, into the water; Book 12 of the Florentine Codex (“Of the Conquest of New Spain”). Ms. Mediceo Palatino 220, 1577, fol. 40v. (detail). Courtesy of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence, and by permission of MiBACT

the manuscript—we want to enrich it in a way that gives researchers deeper access.

All texts will be searchable. Likewise, the roughly 2,500 images will be tagged with keywords to make them searchable, too. So if a researcher would like to find all images and textual references to “Moteuczoma,” “Quetzalcoatl,” or “turquoise,” for example, she could do so. This focus on images, the most understudied part of the manuscript, will bring the beautiful visual culture of ancient and colonial Mexico to a broad digital audience.

For Book 12 on the history of the conquest of Mexico, users will also be able to listen to audio recordings of the Nahuatl text and access summaries in contemporary Eastern Huasteca Nahuatl. Nahuatl, once the lingua franca of Mesoamerica, is one of 68 Indigenous languages still spoken in Mexico. It is considered an endangered language today with an estimated 1.5 million speakers. The codex is thus not only invaluable for its content, but is also an important historical record of this language.

“Bringing the essential text and imagery to 21st century examination and in a 21st century format for a world-wide audience is the Getty Research Institute ambition,” says Mary Miller, director of the GRI.

Competing Narratives about the Conquest of Mexico

The GRI will also produce a digital publication on Book 12 of the Florentine Codex, presenting new scholarly research about Indigenous perspectives on the conquest. Book 12 describes the arrival of Spaniards in 1519 to what is today Mexico and the war on both Tenochtitlan, the Mexica capital of the Aztec Empire, and Tlatelolco, the neighboring sister city, between 1520 and 1521. In the decades following the collapse of the Aztec Empire, Spanish historians penned the history of these events largely based on the accounts of conquistador Hernán Cortés. Indigenous voices were left out of these official Spanish histories.

Book 12 is the longest and most important surviving history of the conquest of

Mexico from the Mexica point of view and represents one of several divergent Indigenous perspectives. Book 12 also reveals significant discrepancies between its Spanish and Nahuatl texts. The column of Spanish text is much shorter, giving abbreviated descriptions of events. Images of vivid battle scenes, heroic deeds by Mexica warriors, and atrocities committed by Spanish conquistadors and their Indigenous allies fill the resulting voids in the Spanish column. Our essays explore evidence of Nahua agency and local patriotism as well as apparent degrees of caution when dealing with controversial topics, such as the killing of the Mexica ruler, Moteuczoma Xocoyotzin.

This research will help illustrate how Mexica authors and artists of Book 12 interpreted and judged the war, celebrated the resistance of their ancestors, and reflected upon their role in the new colonial era. It will also bring the particular narrative captured in the Florentine Codex into conversation with the latest research on other early-modern Spanish and Nahua sources, elucidating the multiplicity of accounts about this defining period in world history.

Indeed, the Florentine Codex initiative aims to change how the history of the conquest of Mexico is taught in schools. In collaboration with the Latin American Institute of UCLA directed by Professor Terraciano, we are organizing a digital workshop for K-12 teachers from the Los Angeles Unified School District this summer. Experts in the field will provide lessons on the historical sources and current research about the conquest, and participants will create lesson plans on the topic following Common Core Standards. Until now only the European perspective has been taught, despite conflicting Indigenous narratives. We will emphasize the multiplicity of views in creating these educational resources and make them freely available online. In a school district where the majority of children are Latinx, the urgency to update how we tell this history has never been greater.

Takeaways for Right Now

In the midst of our current COVID-19 pandemic, it is fascinating to recall the research on the Florentine Codex conducted by Dr. Magaloni, which has revealed how the “Great Pestilence” of 1576, the two-year hemorrhagic fever Sahagún and his collaborators endured, also contributed to the breakdown of supply chains. In the case of the Florentine Codex, this meant that the bicultural team making the codex ran out of precious colors to paint its nearly 2,500 images, forcing artists to resort to black ink in the last part of the book.

The research by Dr. Rebecca Dufendach, Research Specialist at the GRI, shows us that interpretations and memories of the recurrent waves of epidemics—called *cocoliztli* in Nahua sources meaning “pestilence, sickness, disease”—varied during the colonial period. Sahagún explained his interpretation of the epidemics in a note in Book 9 and lamented that the “people are becoming extinct with great rapidity, not so much from the bad treatment accorded them as from the plagues God sends them.” Yet this explanation was not found in the text or images of the codex created by the Nahua authors and artists who worked with Sahagún. In sharp contrast, they wrote that exposure to contaminating filth, or *tlahzollí*, from the Europeans caused ill health for the warriors and leaders who were defending Tenochtitlan and Tlatelolco. In Nahua culture, any intrusion of filth resulted in bodily, household, and community-wide disequilibrium and brought ill health.

Also interesting in this moment: Sahagún and some of his Nahua co-authors effectively practiced physical isolation as they retreated to the college and completed the Florentine Codex, not unlike the group of Florentines in Giovanni Boccaccio’s *Decameron*, a 14th-century collection of entertaining, racy, and humorous novellas intended to help pass the time during social isolation necessitated by the plague. We know that, probably as a result, Sahagún, who at that point was of old-age and feeble health, survived, as did a few of his Nahua colleagues. The codex also reminds us of the need to take care of medical professionals and supply them with the necessary protective equipment, so that they, too, don’t become “exhausted, sick, and dead,” to quote Sahagún.

Final thoughts

What is clear to me, and to everyone who has studied the Florentine Codex, is that it is a testament to the resilience of Nahua culture, the Nahuatl language, and Nahua memory in the face of war, conquest, and epidemics. As we work on the Digital Florentine Codex and intensively study the historical narrative of Book 12—all while quarantined in our homes and anticipating the quincentennial of the conquest of Mexico next year—we can’t help but feel a kindred spirit with the bicultural team that created the manuscript in the midst of the 1576 epidemic. Perhaps we are even sustained by a similar motivation: that in a time of crisis, when the world seems to be turned on its head and few things seem as meaningful as they did before, the dissemination of knowledge from the past is one of the few things that does make sense. ■



Nea Paphos

*A brief look at a world-famous
archaeological site and the plan to
sustain it for future generations*

By Anna Zagorski, Research Specialist
with Martha Demas, Senior Project Specialist
and Leslie Friedman, Project Specialist
Getty Conservation Institute

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THE ISLAND COUNTRY OF CYPRUS—strategically located for trade in the Eastern Mediterranean—has absorbed and transmitted influences from diverse cultures since ancient times. The sprawling archaeological site of Nea Paphos, once Cyprus’s capital, is especially rich in cultural heritage, boasting highly significant remains from the Hellenistic, Roman, early Christian, and Byzantine periods, as well as monuments from the Medieval period. It’s no surprise that Nea Paphos, along with its extensive rock-cut necropolis, is part of a World Heritage site, or that today it is the most visited of all the archaeological sites, monuments, and museums in Cyprus.

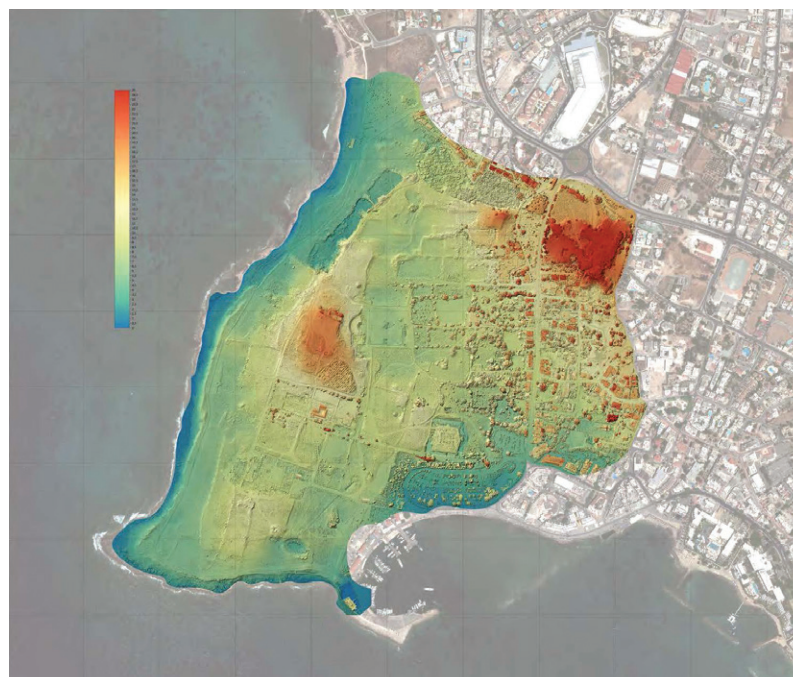
The Getty Conservation Institute’s (GCI’s) work in Nea Paphos dates back to the late 1980s, when it partnered with the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus (DoA) on the conservation of the site’s Roman mosaic of *Orpheus and the Beasts*. This collaboration continued—with other projects related to the conservation of mosaics in their archaeological context—and now the GCI and DoA are working together to develop a conservation and management plan that will address a wide range of needs at Nea Paphos. The plan will lay out how to conserve and present mosaics and architectural remains, manage and inform visitors, and protect the site’s environmental features. A comprehensive mapping and inventory of the site is already underway. Due to its complexity and large expanse, Nea Paphos had no complete site-wide map, but only localized plans created by different excavators over many decades. A GIS (geographic information system) in development will incorporate the mapping, inventoried buildings, and other site elements, as well as key information about the mosaics and decorative elements. The GIS will be used by the DoA for management, conservation, and research purposes, and will assist in their conservation planning.

Here’s a brief tour of Nea Paphos and a closer look at the conservation issues being addressed by the GCI and the DoA.



Above: The GCI and DoA are undertaking comprehensive mapping and inventorying of Nea Paphos, which includes the three areas indicated in orange: The Archaeological Site, the Necropolis (Tombs of the Kings), and Fabrika Hill, all surrounded by the modern city. Image: Carleton Immersive Media Studio

Below: Digital surface model of the Paphos site showing elevation of topographical and archaeological features, with red indicating the highest level and blue indicating the lowest. Image: Carleton Immersive Media Studio



Pages 24–25: Although much of the Hellenistic city was destroyed by earthquakes and extensive Roman rebuilding, the impressive rock-cut foundations of the city wall, gates, towers, and ramps survive from this period. Photo: Silvio Rusmigo

Above: Tombs of the Kings. The excavation of the bedrock to create these multi-chambered, peristyle underground tombs also provided building stone for ancient Paphos. Photo: Carleton Immersive Media Studio

The Nea Paphos World Heritage Site

The Nea Paphos site incorporates three parts, the best known of which is the main Archaeological Site. Located two kilometers north of the archaeological core are the so-called Tombs of the Kings, whose construction coincides with Ptolemaic rule in Cyprus during the Hellenistic period. Other archaeological remains, in the Fabrika Hill area, are separated from the site by a modern commercial street. They include a theater of the Hellenistic-Roman period; monuments of the early Christian, Byzantine, and Medieval periods; and underground quarries and rock-cut chambers. The fragmentation of Nea Paphos into three separate areas presents planning challenges for understanding, visiting, and physically linking the site. These issues will be addressed as part of the process of developing the conservation and management plan—which, in turn, will serve as the long-term road map to protecting Nea Paphos for future generations.



Managing the huge number of visitors and enhancing their experience—while protecting the site—is key to ensuring the future of Nea Paphos. Elevated walkways and viewing platforms on the site and inside the shelters protect the mosaics and other ancient remains while providing visitor access.

Right: The numerous figural and geometric mosaics throughout the sheltered House of Dionysus are the biggest draw for visitors to the site.

Below: The Theseus mosaic with its beautifully patterned depiction of the labyrinth, gives its name to the remains of a palatial building complex known as the Villa of Theseus, which consisted of more than 100 rooms and was the residence of the Roman governor. Photos: Scott Warren



Above: In the Fabrika Hill area, the Christian shrine complex of Agia (Saint) Solomoni may have begun as a Roman tomb. Locals and tourists still use the shrine, leaving rags or pieces of clothing tied to the doors or a tree as votive offerings to Agia Solomani. Photo: Silvio Rusmigo

Left: Remains of the columns and mosaic floors are a small part of the largest early-Christian church in Cyprus, the seven-aisled basilica of Chrysopolitissa. The basilica reflects the major influence of Christianity, from the fourth to sixth centuries, on the city's spiritual and physical fabric. The 17th-century church of Agia Kyriaki (in the background) was built in the basilica's ruins. Photo: Scott Warren





Safeguarding the Mosaics

Nea Paphos is especially renowned for the diverse and beautiful mosaic pavements that decorated its private Roman residences and early Christian and Byzantine churches and shrines. These magnificent mosaics reflect the status of Nea Paphos as the capital of the Roman province and later as an important early Christian center. Many mosaics have survived for nearly 2,000 years and continue to delight, inspire, and educate us. Though made of stone and glass, they were created to be interior floor coverings and need to be protected from the outside environment.

While the Nea Paphos mosaics are well cared for, they still require enhanced methods of stabilization and presentation, as well as improved preventive measures, such as reburial and, most urgently, sheltering options for their long-term protection and display to visitors. The *Orpheus and the Beasts* mosaic, the subject of the GCI and DoA's first collaborative project (1988–1989), remains reburied, awaiting a permanent protective shelter. In 2019 the GCI and the DoA launched a call for new shelter concepts that will integrate conservation needs with architectural design and visitor access.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has delayed a number of activities at the site, the project moves forward with the selection of finalists in the design of new shelter concepts. The shortlisted architects were announced at the end of June and asked to further develop their design concepts. Once it is safe to travel, they will have an opportunity to visit Nea Paphos prior to developing their final proposals.

Protecting Flora and Fauna

Nea Paphos also offers locals and visitors a place to enjoy natural beauty and a refuge from the bustling, crowded modern city. Protecting this beautiful landscape from encroaching urbanization will be part of the conservation planning for the site and will involve adding informative and discreet signage, visitor itineraries on the walking paths, and improved interpretation and visitor information. ■



Top: Seen in the foreground, a large bath complex was buried to protect the mosaics until they can be sheltered. Also pictured, the two protective shelters now on the site—one over mosaics in the House of Aion, seen on the right, and a second much larger shelter over the House of Dionysus with its red roof visible to the right of the lighthouse. Photo: Silvio Rusmigo

Left: The *Orpheus and the Beasts* mosaic post conservation and prior to its reburial. Photo: Vassos Stylianou

Right: Detail of a mosaic depicting the first bath of the mythical hero Achilles as an infant; the mosaic decorated what was once a reception room in the Villa of Theseus. Photo: Scott Warren

The Nea Paphos project is part of the Getty's recently launched Ancient Worlds Now initiative to promote a greater understanding of the world's cultural heritage and its value to global society. (The Florentine Codex Initiative (p. 16) is another Ancient Worlds Now project.)



Cyprus is on one of the major bird migration routes between Africa, Europe, and Eurasia, and more than 200 species of migrating birds regularly pass through Nea Paphos. Others, such as the crested lark (*galerida cristata*), are year-round residents of the site. In addition to being an important host to so many species of birds, Nea Paphos also contains exceptionally beautiful flora, particularly in the spring when fields of red poppies and yellow crown daisies, as well as *cyclamen cypricum*, the national flower of Cyprus, are in bloom. Top photo: natalya. Bottom photo: Silvio Rusmigo

BEFORE THE WAR

THE JAPANESE CAMERA PICTORIALISTS
OF CALIFORNIA

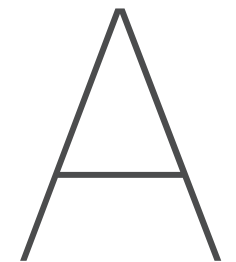
Untitled (Two Palms),
before 1924, Taizo Kato.
Gelatin silver print. The J.
Paul Getty Museum

By Lyra Kilston
Editor, J. Paul Getty Museum

Reflections on the Oil Ditch, about 1925,
Shigemi Uyeda. Gelatin silver print. The J. Paul
Getty Museum. © Family of Shigemi Uyeda



*The J. Paul Getty Museum
recently acquired a collection
of nearly lost photographs
assembled by collector Dennis
Reed over the course of 35 years*

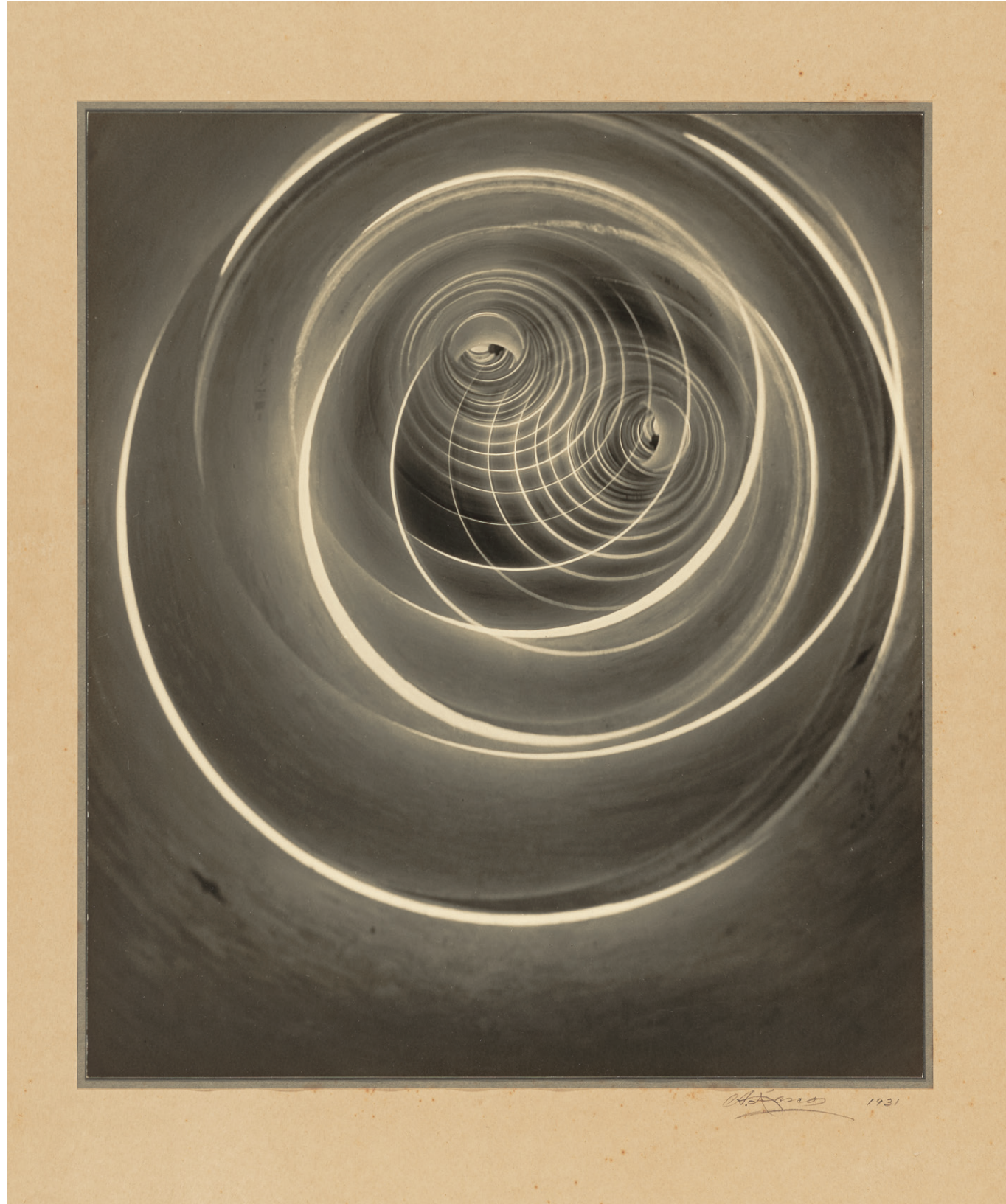


AN ARTWORK CAN HAVE MANY LIVES. It might be publicly admired for centuries, or cloistered in a private room, or just stranded in a dusty closet. Or, as is the case with the Getty Museum's recent acquisition of 79 Japanese American photographs, it could be stored for years in a black plastic trash bag in the garage of a plant nursery in Culver City, until the right person comes along to find it.

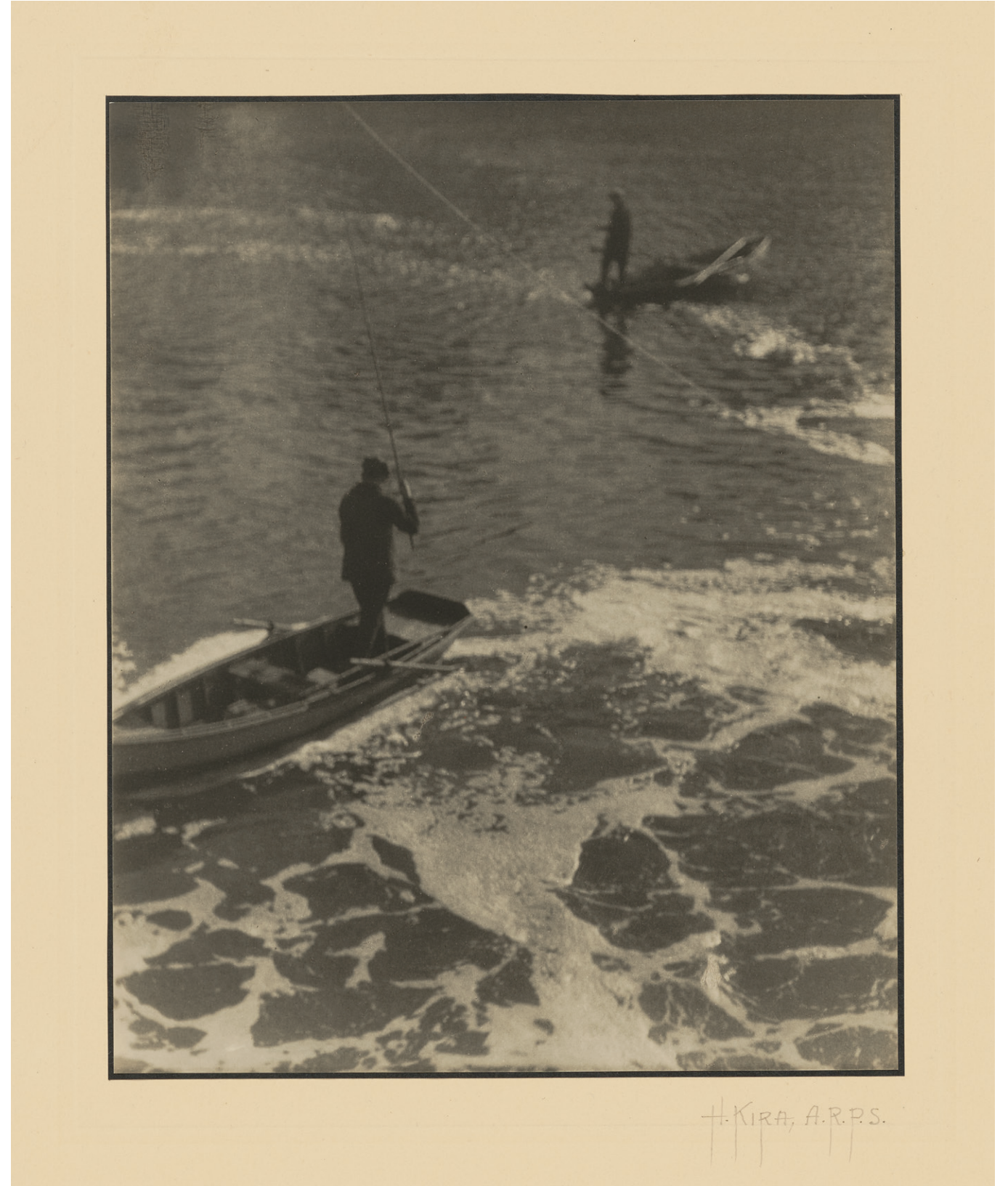
The right person, in this case, was Dennis Reed. An artist, professor, and collector, it was Reed who eagerly drove to that plant nursery one cool December morning in 1981 to meet the niece and heir of photographer Shinshaku Izumi. On the day Reed visited to ask about her uncle's photographs, she brought out a pile of trash bags in a wheelbarrow. Reed recalls, "I reached in and pulled out one fantastic photograph after another. It was so exciting."

Before World War II, Izumi had been part of the Japanese Camera Pictorialists of California (JCPC), a photography club in Los Angeles's Little Tokyo neighborhood. The members were a mix of amateurs, hobbyists, and professional photographers who shared darkrooms, gathered for formal critiques, and mounted small exhibitions. At the time, such clubs were vital centers for mentorship and study, as very few schools offered art-photography curricula.

The standards upheld at JCPC were rigorous, and members' work was frequently included in selective photography catalogs and international yearbooks. Despite a climate of prejudice



Perpetual Motion, 1931, Asahichi Kono. Gelatin silver print. The J. Paul Getty Museum



Fishing, 1925, Hiromu Kira. Gelatin silver print. The J. Paul Getty Museum. © Sadamura Family Trust

that kept Japanese American photographers out of many local museum and gallery exhibitions, their artistic reputation became known around the world. Salon exhibitions in Paris (1929) and London (1933), among others, featured an outsized number of prints by West Coast Japanese American photographers, and admirers included such artists as Helen Levitt, Margarethe Mather, László Moholy-Nagy, and Edward Weston.

The escalating war brought this vital community to an abrupt end. In December 1941, as part of the Enemy Alien Act, cameras were declared contraband in the hands of Japanese Americans, and house raids

followed. A few months later, over 120,000 Japanese Americans were forced to leave their homes and businesses behind, boarding buses that would take them to temporary housing before they were sent to internment camps. In the scramble to pack their entire lives into a single suitcase, many photographers hid, sold, or destroyed their cameras and artwork.

Reed first learned about this lost history after seeing a photograph in the drawer of a Los Angeles gallery. He recalls picking up a “really gorgeous” Modernist image from the 1920s of puddles on the ground. He turned it over, expecting to see a familiar name on the back. Instead, it was signed by Shigemi Uyeda, whom Reed had never heard of. The gallerist explained that there was a group of Japanese photographers who worked in LA before the war. Reed, a lifelong fan of Japanese aesthetics and design, was immediately intrigued.

When Jim Ganz, senior curator of photographs at the Getty Museum, first visited Reed and saw another print of Uyeda’s—*Reflections on the Oil Ditch* (p. 33)—he too was captivated by the work. “I find it truly mindboggling that photographs of this quality and originality were not merely forgotten, but in many cases, actively hidden away. Uyeda’s photographic oeuvre was saved during the war by being concealed in a false ceiling of his home.”

Reed began researching West Coast Japanese American photography clubs and trying to track down their members’ work. He culled a list of 186 names from photography catalogs in archives of the University of California, Los Angeles, then set about cold-calling them from the phone book, with the help of his students at Los Angeles Valley College. The vast majority of calls were dead ends. But one day a student ran down the hallway after contacting an old friend of Izumi’s, shouting, “I found one! I found one!” Slowly, by tracking down friends and relatives of the artists over the course of the next 35 years, Reed eventually assembled a collection of 79 photographs made between 1919 and 1940, which the Getty Museum acquired in 2019. Art critic Christopher Knight deemed Reed’s dogged pursuit of this lost history “archeological.” Recalling his days of hunting down the prints, Reed says, “I felt like Indiana Jones.”

“We are thrilled to have acquired this important collection,” says Timothy Potts, director of the Getty Museum. “The photographs record a critical diversification in the character and subject matter of the medium in America that has not yet been fully appreciated or celebrated. The backstory of their creation, dispersal, and rediscovery is a significant, if lesser-

Uyeda’s photographic oeuvre was saved during the war by being concealed in a false ceiling of his home.



Summer Breeze, about 1925, Dr. Kyo Koike. Gelatin silver print. The J. Paul Getty Museum

Opposite: *Study #2*, about 1927, Tomihisa Furuya. Gelatin silver print. The J. Paul Getty Museum

known, part of 20th-century American art history. We’re proud to add them to our growing collection of photography by Asian artists and to preserve this work for future generations.”

Reed’s collection has been exhibited a few times over the past decades, both in Southern California and at venues like the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York and the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. Virginia Heckert, curator of photographs at the Getty Museum (and at the time acting head of the department), saw portions of the collection at Reed’s home in 2013, then again in the 2016 exhibition *Making Waves: Japanese American Photography 1920–1940* at the Japanese American National Museum in Little Tokyo. She notes, “Some of the images seem very Pictorialist, but with a specifically Japanese sensibility—a high horizon line, vertical format, shadows. Others depict common Japanese subjects, like ceramics and flowers. Some seem soft and picturesque, but others have harder lines and darker tones that give them a more Modernist feel.”

In the 1920s and ’30s, photographic style was transitioning from the soft-focus, atmospheric aesthetic of Pictorialism—a term used to separate interpretive art photography from straightforward documentation—toward the more geometric, sharper forms of Modernism. “Reed’s collection shows that transition in intriguing ways,” says Heckert.

For Reed, the decision to part with his collection wasn’t easy. Reflecting on his years of uncovering this work, he laughs, “We didn’t replace the horrible linoleum in the kitchen because I was spending my money on these photographs! But I wanted to be sure that this material was placed where it would be valued and cared for, and the Getty Museum had the right combo of expertise, facilities, and personnel.” He looks forward to other scholars and curators engaging with this collection, making new discoveries, and placing it into new contexts.

The Reed collection will be made available to researchers in the Department of Photography’s Study Room by appointment and will be exhibited at the Getty Museum in the future. ■

Meet Brian Houck, manager of Getty's 700 acres of grounds and gardens since 2015, introverted "plant person" since day one



How your passion for plants began: My dad was very interested in the outdoors—we lived in Orange County and he took us camping throughout Southern California. Being a natural introvert, like many plant people, I really enjoyed observing the natural world and thinking about it and trying to draw conclusions. I was the geek who used a flashlight to read under my covers, but I was reading plant books and my mom would yell at me to turn off the light.

My mom cultivated my interest in plants. She taught me about plants and took me to the store to get me a hydroponics set—that's gardening without soil, big in the 1970s. For a quarter a week I also took on the responsibilities of my own family's yard—I mowed the lawn

and pruned shrubbery. I was introduced to bougainvillea at an early age, and we also had an amazing pineapple guava—you can eat the flowers, which is hilarious fun.

I continued to be singularly focused on plants as an adult, which made my career choices easy—I didn't really have a choice. I knew this is what I was going to do.

Horticultural background: I was lucky enough to do an internship for almost a full year at a large public garden on the East Coast called Longwood Gardens, which cemented my career choice and passion to be in public horticulture. If you do a Google search for Longwood Gardens and look at the incred-

ibly creative gardens they have, you'll think, "Who are these people? They're doing this?" It's nuts. I thought to myself, "I have found my community." I then worked at Cal State University, Northridge as the botanic garden manager for the biology department, which meant making sure the biology classes had a supply of flowering plants from all plant families at all times of the year. Then I went to Chicago, got my master's degree in nonprofit management, and worked as the director of horticulture at Chicago's Lincoln Park Zoo.

The zoo is really fascinating. You have to know what's acceptable for the animals to eat. I learned crazy facts, like zebras are particularly allergic to red maples, the best wood to put in a gorilla exhibit is Osage orange, and willow is particularly attractive to rhinoceroses.

From a zoo to the Getty? Joining Getty was a natural fit because I had already been involved with creating a department, introducing new processes, and taking the landscape to a place it hadn't been before. I was one in the admiring crowds when the Center's Central Garden was first unveiled, so it was a no-brainer, joining the Getty when the opportunity came up. I didn't have a background in art, but I love public horticulture and I consider plants to be like a slow art performance.

A typical day: I go about running the grounds department and managing the crews for both the Center and Villa, which means I focus on being the cheerleader, supporter, communicator, and project manager to help everybody else put things in action. We have three supervisors, horticulturalist Jackie Flor, and a crew of head gardener, senior gardeners, and gardeners. It takes a lot of hands to properly manage each aspect of the landscape, and the entire grounds crew has been working so hard throughout the Getty closure to keep our plants healthy and beautiful.

For the Central Garden, designed by artist Robert Irwin, and all the land-

scapes around the buildings, designed by Laurie Olin, Dennis McGlade, and others at the OLIN firm, we look at those designers' intention for the spaces. When the original plants used in the design struggle or die, we choose new plants that we think will match the original intention and work better in the environment.

Favorite spot on the grounds: It's at the heart of the property which nobody can get to except for the grounds staff, on the way up to the weather station. There's a grove of native oak trees which were here long before the Getty Center. There are probably a dozen trees in that one spot. When the oaks grow slowly on their own they take on twisted forms, because their growth is adjusted by things like seasonal rainfall, wind patterns, and any fire that went over them. They have a marvelous sense of character because the history of their life is recorded in their shape.

Part of the grounds people tend to miss: Dennis McGlade worked some truly sophisticated botanical messages into our landscape. For example, as you walk down the steps to the cactus garden, you will pass the euphorbias and aloes, "Old World" succulents from Africa. Then when you get to the cactus garden, you see agaves and the columnar cactus—"New World" plants from the Americas. So very intentionally, Dennis separated those two categories so you could have a taxonomic conversation. I don't think most people know that.

I was the geek who used a flashlight to read under my covers, but I was reading plant books and my mom would yell at me to turn off the light.

Favorite flower: I don't have a favorite flower of all time. But my favorite flowers this week are the dahlias in the Central Garden. They start blooming in June and July, and they have a lot of flower power. The flowers are ridiculously large and colorful, and there are a lot of them on each plant.

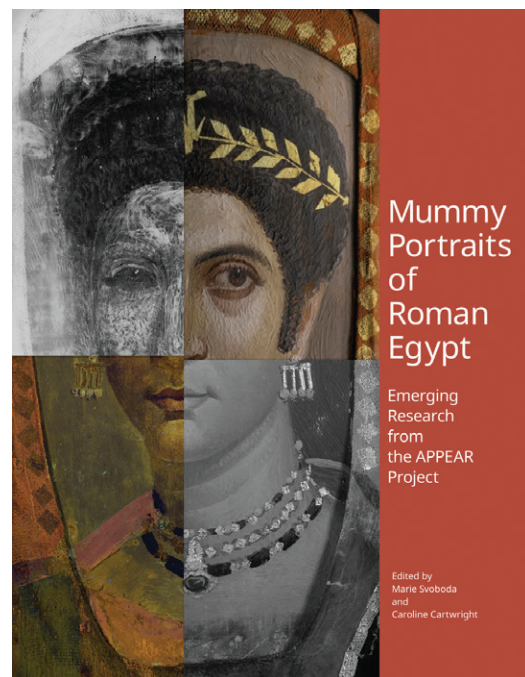
Fun flower fact: Angel's trumpet, which you'll also find in the Central Garden, is bat pollinated; that's why it only smells in the evenings.

How Getty's gardens stay weed and disease free: We use historic horticulturists' best practices—for example, mulching reduces water loss, prevents weeds from growing, and improves the soil as it slowly decomposes. Improving those conditions allows the plants to have more optimal growth, and a healthy plant naturally resists disease and pests. We combine those best practices with trendy water conservation techniques like drip systems or gravel mulches. We also take an Integrated Pest Management approach, which reduces risk to human health and the environment, and choose pest-resistant plants, particularly in areas where we have a strong aesthetic to maintain. But one of the best defenses is to observe the plants. We regularly inspect and monitor them, and then if we do have a concern, we can deal with it when the plant is young and small and save ourselves a lot of grief.

Tips for home gardeners: Just worry about managing three things first: Water, light, and fertilizer. The other thing I would tell people is that my crew and I have killed more plants than you ever will. So find a way to not take it personally. Practice your observational skills and try again. Knock yourself out and go have some fun. Because gardening is cheaper than therapy.

Best way to enjoy the grounds: Come early. The grounds in my world are best seen when there are fewer people around.

What you love most about your job: I spend a lot of time at my desk dealing with Excel spreadsheets and on phone calls managing projects. The most fun part is getting out to the landscape, observing what's going on, and talking with the crew. I'm always amazed that just doing that is officially part of my job. Wait, you're paying me to go out and look at a landscape, evaluate it to make sure it's doing what it should be doing, and figure out ways it could be better? It doesn't feel like work to me. And, I get to be around people who use proper plant names all day long. ■

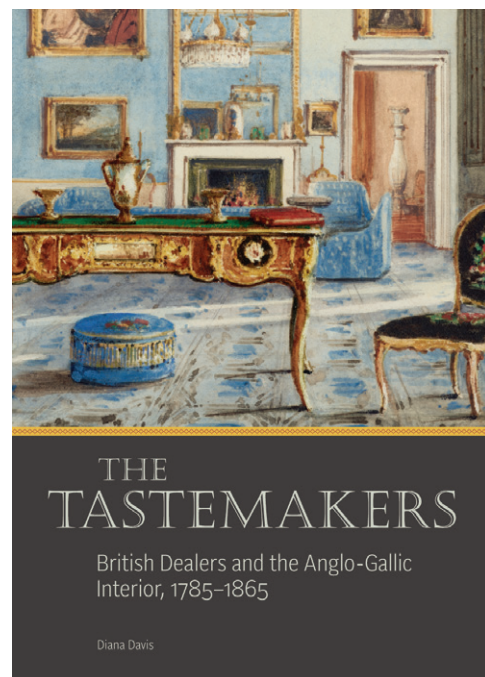


**Mummy Portraits of Roman Egypt
Emerging Research from the APPEAR
Project**

Edited by Marie Svoboda and Caroline Cartwright

Once interred with mummified remains, nearly 1,000 funerary portraits from Roman Egypt survive today in museums around the world, bringing viewers face-to-face with people who lived 2,000 years ago. Until recently, few of these paintings had undergone in-depth study to determine who made them and how. An international collaboration known as APPEAR (Ancient Panel Paintings: Examination, Analysis, and Research) was launched in 2013 to promote the study of these objects and to gather scientific and historical findings into a shared database. The first phase of the project was marked with a two-day conference at the Getty Villa, and the papers and posters from the conference are collected in this publication, which offers the most up-to-date information available about these fascinating remnants of the ancient world.

J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM
228 pages, 8 1/2 x 11 inches
169 color illustrations, 26 diagrams and tables
Paperback
US \$60.00



**The Tastemakers
British Dealers and the Anglo-Gallic
Interior, 1785-1865**

Diana Davis

Diana Davis demonstrates how London dealers invented a new and visually splendid decorative style that combined the contrasting tastes of two nations. Departing from the conventional narrative that depicts dealers as purveyors of antiquarianism, Davis repositions them as innovators who were key to transforming old art objects from *ancien régime* France into cherished “antiques” and, equally, as creators of new and modified French-inspired furniture, bronze work, and porcelain.

GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE
320 pages, 7 x 10 inches
60 color and 64 b/w illustrations
Hardcover
US \$65.00

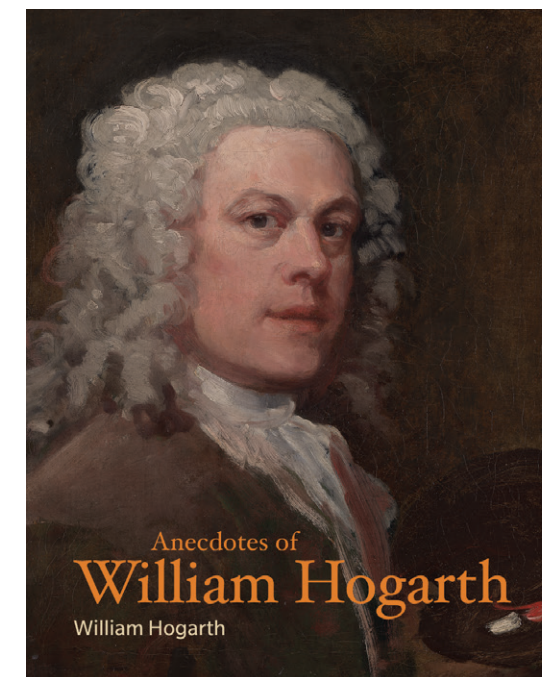


**The Conservation of Medieval Polychrome
Wood Sculpture
History, Theory, Practice**

Michele D. Marincola and Lucretia Kargère

Medieval polychrome wood sculptures are highly complex objects, bearers of histories that begin with their original carving and adornment and continue through long centuries of repainting, deterioration, restoration, and conservation. Abundantly illustrated, this book is the first in English to offer a comprehensive overview of the conservation of medieval painted wood sculptures for conservators, curators, and others charged with their care. Four case studies on artworks in the collection of the Cloisters in New York, a comprehensive bibliography, and a checklist to aid in documentation complement the text.

GETTY CONSERVATION INSTITUTE
296 pages, 8 1/2 x 10 1/4 inches
175 color and 30 b/w illustrations
Paperback
US \$70.00



Anecdotes of William Hogarth
William Hogarth

One of the most visible, popular, and significant artists of his generation, William Hogarth (1697-1764) is best known for his acerbic, strongly moralizing works, which were mass-produced and widely disseminated as prints during his lifetime. This volume is a fascinating look into the notorious English satirical artist's life, presenting *Anecdotes of William Hogarth, Written by Himself*—a collection of autobiographical vignettes supplemented with short texts and essays written by his contemporaries, first published in 1785.

J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM
192 pages, 4 1/2 x 5 3/4 inches
48 color and 1 b/w illustrations
Paperback
US \$12.95



Museum Arts Access

The Getty Museum Arts Access Program, created over 20 years ago, provides students with access to the visual arts at the Getty Center and Getty Villa. This program meets a critical need for arts enrichment and facilitates experiences that help students view the world in new and exciting ways.

Each year more than 160,000 students are led on docent-guided tours through Getty's permanent collections and special exhibitions. Docents use student-centered learning strategies to facilitate thought-provoking dialogue. In 2019 the Getty Museum Arts Access Program began to offer 100 percent of school visitors a docent-guided tour, thus becoming the largest guided tour program of any art museum in the United States.

Getty's top priority is to use this program as a vehicle to engage K-12 students from Los Angeles's Title I schools. Title I schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District receive supplemental funds to help students meet their educational goals. These schools also have disproportionately low access to arts education compared to students from higher income schools.

Schools within 30 miles of Getty sites are eligible for funding to underwrite the cost of their buses. These subsidized school visits are entirely free for students and teachers: a bus provides

transportation to and from Getty's museums. At the end of each school visit, students receive a free parking pass so they can return with their families, and each year thousands of people take advantage of this opportunity.

The Museum Arts Access Program reaches beyond our school visits by making more than 1,000 online educational resources available to teachers, students, and their families. Our series of creative at-home family activities, lesson plans, and guides help bring art into the classrooms and homes of people around the world.

We are grateful to our generous partners for helping us enrich the lives of students through the visual arts. The Museum Arts Access Program is supported by:

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WHAT GOOD IS A DREAM HOUSE?

Photographs in Julius Shulman's archive document Southern California domestic interiors of the 1970s

By Gary Riichirō Fox
Research Assistant
Getty Research Institute

IN THE SPRING OF 2008, Julius Shulman attended a crowded book launch at A+D Museum in Los Angeles, California. Then 97 years old, the prolific architecture photographer was there to celebrate the debut of *Dream Homes: Los Angeles*, a coffee-table book filled with glossy photographs of high-luxury domestic architecture. Shulman had contributed a few images and a short foreword to the text.

Unrelated to the evening's events, A+D Museum was also hosting a traveling exhibition, *After the Flood: Building on Higher Ground*, documenting the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. *After the Flood* in part sought to rethink housing as a response to environmental catastrophe, and the exhibition at A+D highlighted 13 prototypes for homes deemed affordable, ecologically friendly, and disaster-resistant.

As the evening unfolded, Shulman addressed the crowd, unprompted: "Here we are for something called *Dream Homes*, but no one gives a damn for New Orleans and the thousands of people in these big pictures showing the disaster." Pointedly he continued, "What good is a dream house if you haven't got a dream?"

Then, as before—but especially in that moment of crisis—the domestic, for Shulman, was political.

Julius Shulman got his professional start at 26 when five or six shots he'd snapped of modernist architect Richard Neutra's 1936 Kun House happened to make their way across the architect's desk. Neutra invited Shulman to visit his office, and there the architect purchased the photographs Shulman had taken with his portable Vest Pocket

Kodak and recruited the photographer to document a number of other projects. Soon Shulman was busy taking photos for many of the leading modernist architects of the period including Gregory Ain, JR Davidson, Harwell Hamilton Harris, Pierre Koenig, Rudolph Schindler, Raphael Soriano, and Frank Lloyd Wright.

Painstakingly composed and carefully staged, Shulman's photographs are typically noted for their celebration of the crisp forms, sober lines, and unadorned materials that characterized modernist architecture in Southern California. He often enlivened his scenes with cinematic props like lush foliage or well-dressed actors. Among his output in this period were the indelibly iconic images of *Arts and Architecture* magazine's Case Study House program.

Opposite: Langslet House (Long Beach, Calif.) (image 5455-11K), 1977, Julius Shulman. Architect unknown. Getty Research Institute (2004.R.10)

Below: Leisure Village (Camarillo, California) (image 5634-8K), 1978, Julius Shulman. Architect unknown. Getty Research Institute (2004.R.10)





Top: Paul Jacobsen, House (Calabasas, Calif.) (image 4748-4K), 1971, Julius Shulman. Architecture by Paul Jacobsen. Getty Research Institute (2004.R.10)

Bottom: Coacalco Housing (Mexico City, Mexico) (image 4740-12K), 1971, Julius Shulman. Architect unknown. © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10)

Opposite: Paul R. Williams, 10800 Ambazac Way House (Los Angeles, Calif.) (image 6074-5K), 1982, Julius Shulman. Architecture by Paul R. Williams. Getty Research Institute (2004.R.10)



Though his work is perhaps most immediately associated with this strain of California Modernism—heroic yet refined, austere yet full of life, and very often the work of white, male architects—his subject matter was more diverse than this narrative lets on. Shulman’s career spanned decades, and in that time he turned his camera onto subjects as varied as his aesthetic and political commitments. He continued taking photographs well into his 90s, somewhat reluctantly chronicling the slow ebb of the modernist project and the advent of postmodernism in architecture and design. A selection of photographs from the Julius Shulman Papers at the Getty Research Institute tells this story, the story of another Shulman, perhaps less characteristic of his overall oeuvre, but no less telling of what was at stake for him in the architecture of domesticity. Together, these photographs represent the work of designers, some known and others unknown, as well as incremental alterations by occupants and owners, as they reconsider the aesthetics of domesticity around 1970.

Shulman finds evidence of a sensibility shifting away from the austerity of modernist design. Photographed in 1971, a bedroom in a house in Calabasas, California, designed by Paul Jacobsen, features Jacobean florals in red, yellow, white, and green as they dance indiscriminately across wallpaper, curtains, valance, and comforter alike. Tiered lace cascades from a bedside table. Atop the expanse of green shag carpeting, naturalistic motifs recur.

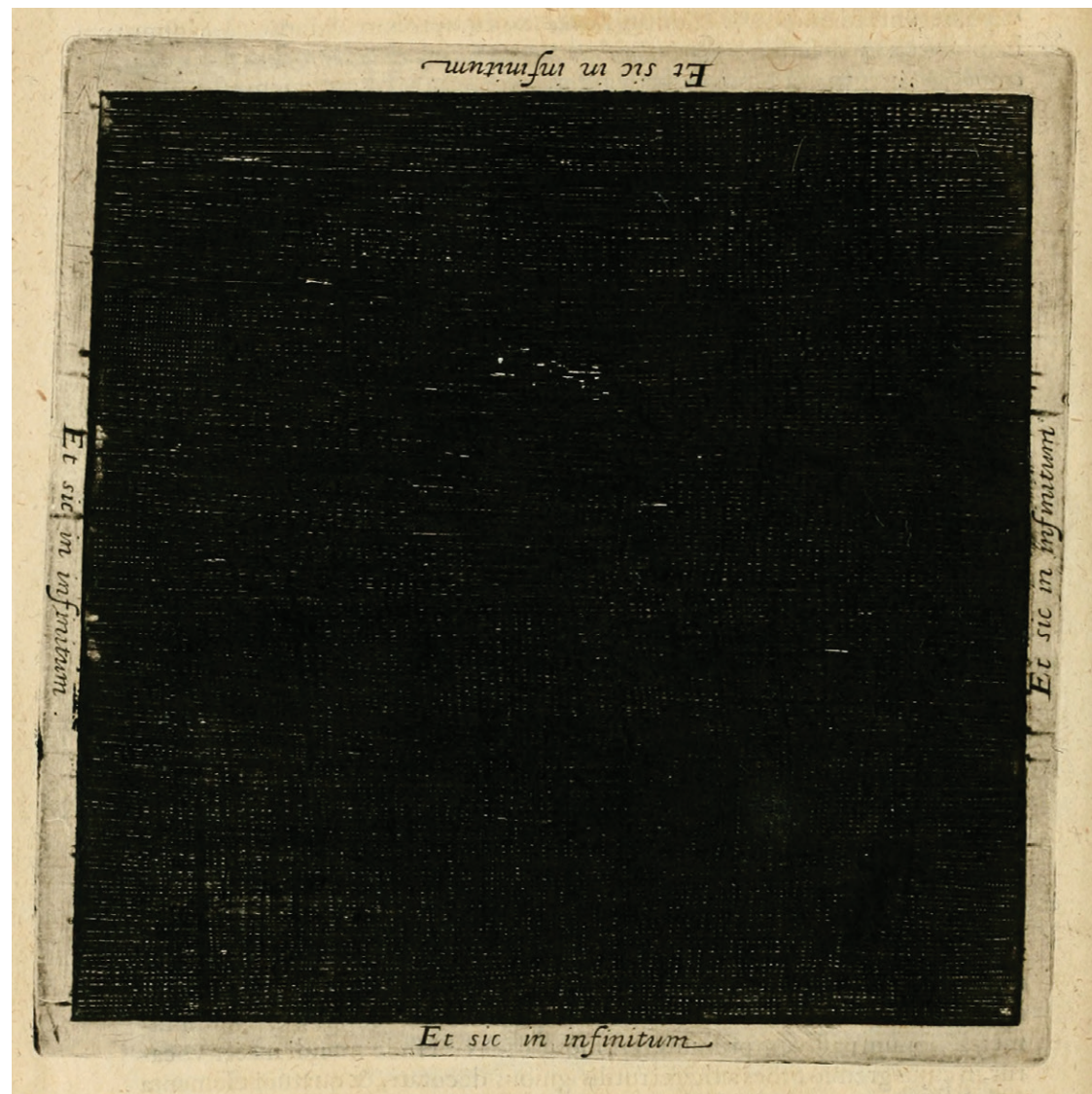
At this same moment, the busy Shulman photographed the Coacalco Housing development in Mexico City. There he finds a bedroom clad in olive green. Nestled between silk flowers in yellow and white and a floral print in red, a twin bed is capped by a headboard alluding, perhaps, to a miniaturized Cathedral front. A paisley doll reclines against the centuries-old historical motif, playfully reimagined. The allusion echoes what would come to be identified as a key



strategy in postmodernist design: light-hearted, historical reference that was thought to appeal to the general public.

A return to historical precedent was visible elsewhere in the period. In 1970 the American Institute of Interior Designers and the National Society of Interior Designers designated a Tudor-revival house, originally designed and built in 1928, as “Design House West.” The house had been among architect Paul R. Williams’s earliest projects after he became the first Black architect inducted into the American Institute of Architects. Here, 33 interior designers redesigned the home’s interiors and opened it to the public as a showcase of contemporary design. Shulman’s photographs, produced later, capture a kitchen clad in patterned tile and encased in carved wood, with almost-Solomonic columns and naturalistic scrollwork framing the stove. The revival of Williams’s quasi-historical artifact was an early example of postmodern architecture’s embrace of historical motifs.

Shulman was at best ambivalent about postmodernism. In a 1990 interview, he alternately called that architecture “hideous,” “horrendous,” and “horrible” and cited it as the primary reason he’d slowed down his professional activity by the mid-1980s. And yet, his oeuvre nevertheless chronicles the wane of modernist austerity in favor of a form of excess—marked by exuberant forms, vivid color, bold graphics, expressive ornament, and playful historical reference—perhaps identifiable as postmodern. This small selection of images illustrates this reconsideration of the aesthetics of domesticity around 1970. It is likely doubtful that these interiors, fashionable at the time, would have met the aesthetic and political criteria that Shulman laid out throughout his career and made a particular point of in 2008. Yet, they nevertheless highlight the domestic interior as a site of reimagining, as a site available to ad hoc alteration, and as a site open to speculative potential. ■



A FINITE VIEW OF INFINITY

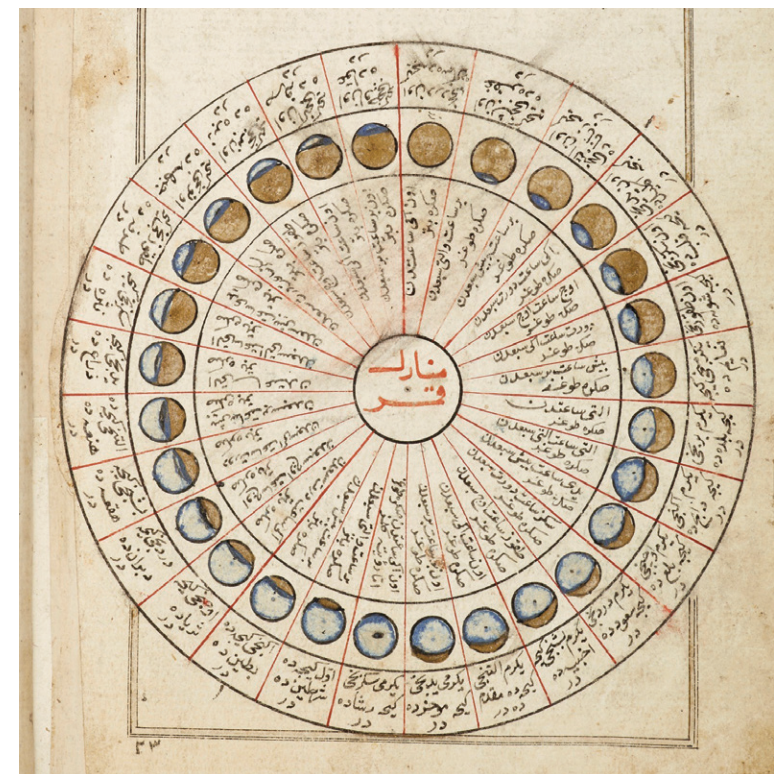
How artists and scientists around the world once made sense of the night sky

By David Brafman
Associate Curator of Rare Books
Getty Research Institute

WHILE WE ALL (SAFELY!) WITNESS THIS SURREAL AND SPECTRAL TIME, stars in the sky have stayed in isolation for billions of light-years, just to twinkle at you from a very safe distance in space and time. If you are existentially musing about the deep, dark Infinite and your place in the vastness of it all...

Don't worry! You're not alone. A virtual glance at the Getty Research Institute's rare-book collections on the intersection between art, science, and spirituality reveals how others around the world expressed through art what came to mind as they gazed at the stars, contemplated the cosmos, or meditated on how to envision the invisible—some of them during their own unsettling times.

Kosmos means “order” in ancient Greek. It also means “ornament” and “adornment” (as in “cosmetics”). The ordered cosmos of medieval Islamic stargazers was also adorned, as were the books used to aid in teaching celestial science. In an Ottoman version of *The Wonders of Creation* by Zakariyā al-Qazwīnī (Iranian, about 1203–83), the cycle of lunar phases is depicted



Opposite: *Et sic in infinitum* (And so on and so forth forever and ever), Johann Theodor de Bry, (Netherlandish, 1561–1623). Engraving

This page from top: *Manāzil qamr* (Mansions of the Moon) (detail). Watercolor, artificial gold paint, and ink on paper. In a Turkish adaptation of Zakariyā al-Qazwīnī, (*Kitāb al-'ajā'ib wa'l-gharā'ib* - *Book of Wonders and Oddities*) [Istanbul] 1553

An orator contemplating cosmic motion, Diego Valadès, designer. Copperplate engraving. In Diego Valadès, *Rhetorica Christiana* (Perugia 1579; 1388–209)

as an ornamental ring, golden as the moon waxes, pearlescent as it wanes. *Al-nizām*, an Arabic word for systematic order, particularly of the celestial kind, is derived from the verb *naẓama*—“to string pearls.”

Al-Qazwīnī was born in Iran, but moved to Baghdad, then the scientific and cultural capital of the Islamic world. In 1258 he was witness to the siege and reputedly horrific sack of Baghdad by the Mongols. He composed his *Wonders of Creation* during the ensuing occupation.

Diego Valadès (1533–1582?) has been described as the first American to publish a book in Europe. Born in Mexico, apparently to a Nahua mother and a Spanish conquistador, scholars claim that he was the first *mestizo* to join the Franciscan order and receive a thoroughly Catholic education. In his illustrated Christian rhetoric, Valadès argues that a Christian orator can only move souls by first comprehending how God employs the Divine Spirit (i.e. Holy Ghost) to animate the motion of the cosmos (“*anima*” is Latin for “soul”). The author designed and apparently engraved most of the illustrations for this book.

Valadès became the Franciscan missionary to the Chichimeca in northern New Spain perhaps as early as 1555, the year that a devastating pandemic—symptoms comprised those of smallpox, measles, and influenza—ravaged the population of Mexico City. (See related story on p. 16.) In 1570, he was sent to Rome as a Franciscan emissary—and perhaps a prop for the “civilizing process” of a Franciscan education—and composed his *Rhetorica Christiana*. He never returned to Mexico, and so never witnessed a 1576 pandemic outbreak there.

Robert Fludd (English, 1574–1637), physician to the English King James I, envisioned the divine decorative arrangement of the universe in collaboration with printer-publisher Johann Theodor De Bry and artist Matthäus Merian the Elder (father of the botanical artist and entomologist Maria Sibylla Merian). All three were radical religious reformers who sought to reconcile Christian theological doctrine with pagan Greek thought and the blending of science and spirituality advanced by Islamic natural philosophers. Fludd's encyclopedia *On the History of the Macro- and Microcosm*, i.e., our physical world and the metaphysical one beyond was undertaken at the outset of the Thirty Years' War. Otherwise known as the Wars of Religion, this theological dispute may have claimed the highest body-count in the history of European violent conflicts.

Appearing from a cloud labeled “Yahweh” in Hebrew (i.e., “Jehovah”), a celestial arm holds Mother Nature handcuffed to a chain as she showers milk

onto the world, nourishing its growth. Chained to her is a monkey perched on the Earth and grasping a globe—a simian symbol for humanity, the species that grasps how to “ape” nature. The cosmos wheels around them, ordered in ascend-

ing hierarchy from earthly elements to planets to the etherial spheres of heaven, where cherubic angels embody stars.

In 1616, a year before Fludd’s mammoth work began to go to press, Pope Paul V summoned Galileo Galilei to Rome, accusing him of heretically supporting the heliocentric theory of the universe. In Fludd’s cosmological vision, Earth still appears at the center.

Ferdinand Verbiest (Netherlandish, 1623–88) was a Jesuit missionary, first stationed in Macau, and then summoned to Beijing in 1660 primarily as a teaching assistant in astronomy at the Jesuit mission. Four years later, a wave of hostility toward Christian teachings led to the imprisonment of Jesuit scientists, Verbiest among them. Famed in Jesuit annals is the account of Father Verbiest, weighed down by chains, earning the scientists’ freedom by delivering an impassioned and eloquent defense in Chinese of Jesuit science and its imprisoned practitioners. In 1668, the young Kangxi Emperor held a public event, in which European astronomy and mathematics were pitted against traditional Chinese teaching of those fields. European science, represented by Verbiest as its champion, emerged as victor.

Having earned the trust of the young Emperor, Verbiest was commanded by him to construct a series of modern European astronomical instruments, and to produce a book illustrating and explicating them in Chinese. A copy of that two-volume woodblock-printed set is preserved in the GRI’s rare book vaults. Among its woodcuts is one showing the Earth (still!) at the center, with cardinal directions indicating the position of stars and planets in the surrounding celestial sphere. The Kangxi emperor became Verbiest’s student. The Jesuit, however, never succeeding in converting him to worship the Christian God, called in Chinese by Verbiest, “Lord of the Stars.”

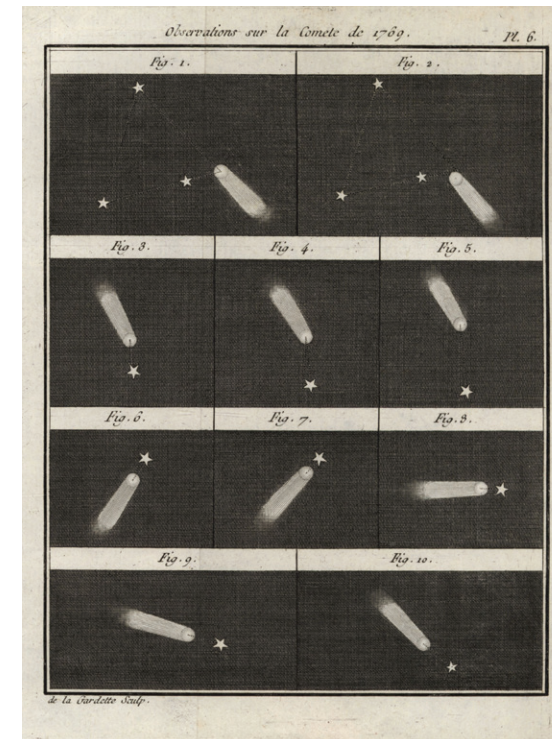
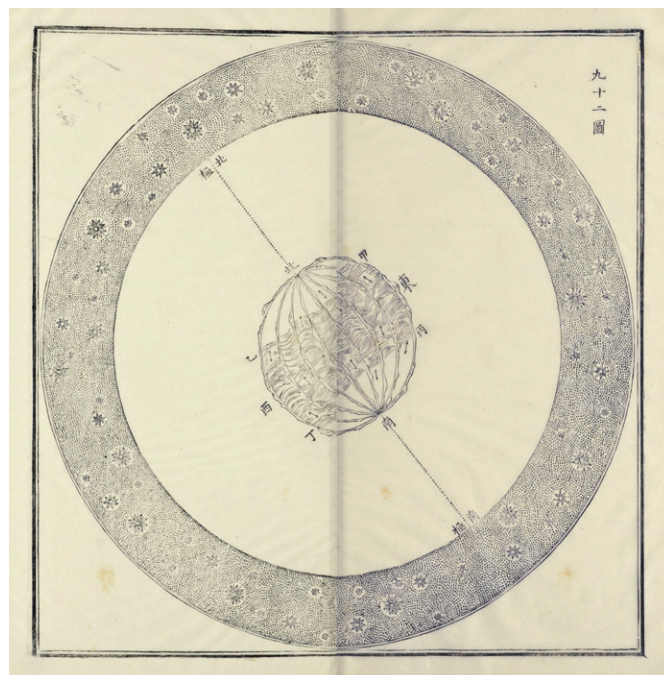
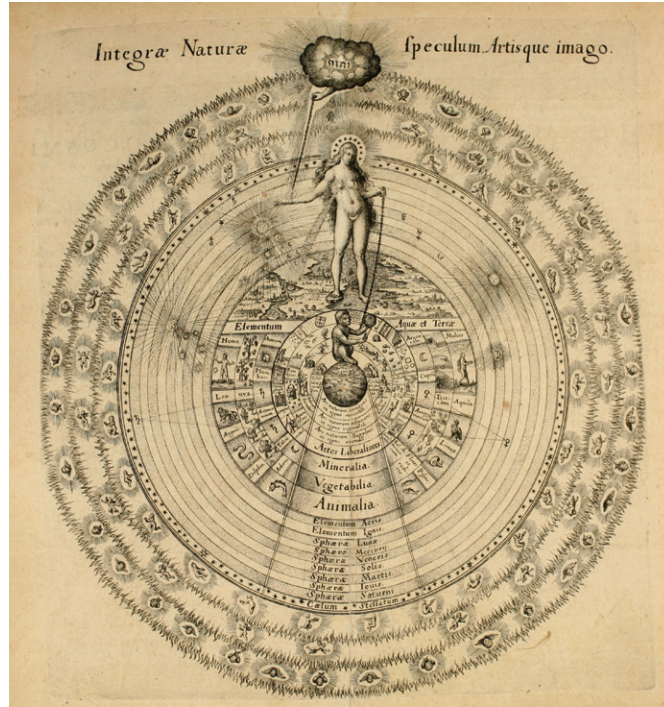
Guillaume Le Gentil de la Galaisière, a respected astronomer in the French Academy of Sciences, was part of an international consortium of scientists who attempted to realize an idea first

This page, from top: An image of Art as the Mirror of All Nature, Matthäus Merian the Elder (Swiss, 1593–1650). Copperplate engraving. Robert Fludd, *Utriusque cosmi maioris scilicet et minoris... historia* (On the History of the Macro- and Microcosm). Oppenheim, De Bry, [1617–24] 1378–183. Frontispiece to vol. 1

Ferdinand Verbiest (1623–88), Zhu yi xiang : [er juan] / Nan Huai ren. [Latin title:] *Liber organicus astronomiae Europaeae apud Sinas...* ([Beijing] 1674; 1392-684), p. 163

Opposite, from left: *Observations sur la comète de 1769*, [?] de la Gardelle, engraver. Copperplate engraving. Le Gentil de la Galaisière, Guillaume Joseph Hyacinthe Jean Baptiste, *Voyage dans les mers de l’Inde... à l’occasion du passage de Vénus, sur le disque de soleil...* (Paris 1779-81; 41-309) Vol.1, pl. 6 (after p. 707)

“A finite view of infinity,” artist unknown. Engraving, etching, and mezzotint. Thomas Wright, *An Original Theory or New Hypothesis of the Universe* (London 1750), plate 31



suggested by Edmund Halley (of comet fame): What if we measured the distance of the Sun from Earth by observing the transit of Venus across the face of the Sun from different parts of the world on 6 June 1761? The mandate of the French contingent was to take measurements from a region in the Indian Ocean. Le Gentil set out for Pondicherry, a French-held port city on the SE coast of India. On 6 June the sky was clear, but the vessel was caught at sea, unable to land, and accurate findings could not be recorded. Venus would transit across the sun again in eight years, and then not again for at least another 105. Le Gentil determined to remain for those eight, in the meantime charting coasts, researching the history of Hindu astronomy and related mythology, and recording observations of various stellar phenomena.

On 3 June 1769, the sky was overcast, and the opportunity for measurement was lost. His return trip was laborious, first beset by dysentery and then a storm at sea. He returned to Paris after 11 years away, only to find that storms, shipwrecks, and pirate attacks had resulted in none of his correspondence ever reaching Paris. He had been declared legally dead, his wife had remarried, and his coveted position at the Royal Academy was filled by someone else. His relatives had also bankrupted his estate “avec une grande enthousiasme.”

An astronomer, architect, and garden designer, Thomas Wright (English, 1711–86) was the first to correctly postulate that clusters of starry nebulae were in fact galaxies too distant for us to discern clearly, and that the luminous blur of the Milky Way was simply an optical effect caused by our immersion in it.

He had an unidentified artist employ engraving, etching, and mezzotint to express through inkiness a sublime and impenetrably dark depth of infinite clusters of galaxies. Wright describes this plate as “a finite view of Infinity.” ■

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Furgatch House (San Diego, Calif.), (image 4613-9K), 1970, Julius Shulman. Architect unknown. © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute (2004.R.10). Story on p. 44.