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MAGAZINE | WINTER 2021



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Architects once designed schools to shield children from disease and embolden their imaginations



Diversifying the Arts

Has Getty’s long-standing diversity internship program made a difference?



Art on the Rocks

Getty explores a promising way to save rock art, the most ancient form of human expression



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On the cover: Landscape near Arnhem (detail), 1900–01, Piet Mondrian. Translucent and opaque watercolor over graphite. The J. Paul Getty Museum. Story on p. 42

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE



Although we still have more months of physical separation and uncertainty ahead, 2021 brings with it great hope for us here at Getty. We look forward to a time of healing, to reopening safely, and to continuing the great progress made last year on several recent initiatives and projects.

As part of the African American Art History initiative—our ambitious program to address an incomplete version of American art history—we will tell stories that explore the recently acquired archive of trailblazing LA architect Paul Williams and that of the Johnson Publishing Company, a resource that includes thousands of *Ebony* and *Jet* magazine photographs chronicling African American life and culture in the 20th century. We also have a number of acquisitions in process that will build our collections of art by Black artists.

We will continue to support local arts institutions and artists through the LA Arts COVID-19 Relief Fund by offering a whole new round of grants. Also receiving grants: 45 LA organizations chosen to participate in 2024’s Pacific Standard Time: Art

x Science x LA, an exploration through numerous exhibitions and programs of the fascinating connections between the visual arts and science in the Los Angeles area.

Recognizing that we have much to do from within Getty to support diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI), last year we asked our staff-led DEAI Council and Task Forces to identify problems and priorities, consulted with outside DEAI experts, shifted the focus of board and senior management meetings to the changes we must make, and created a five-goal DEAI Plan. That plan was updated and approved by the board in mid-January after receiving input from more than 250 staff, and we will now implement it, with every member of senior staff taking responsibility for some aspect of its goals, initiatives, and outcomes. Once we’ve fully realized the plan, we will have affected every aspect of Getty—our workforce, the culture of the working environment, exhibitions, public programs, collections, educational material, and how Getty relates to the community.

Wanting to grow and diversify that community, we will greatly increase our digital efforts in 2021. Last year alone our reach on getty.edu and social media channels grew by 41 percent, touching 375 million people. We will also focus on creating more digital content for our K-12 audiences. We continue to work to present our content in new ways, and in digital formats, particularly while our sites remain closed. One example is a new virtual exhibition from the Getty Research Institute, *Return to Palmyra*, which you can read about in this issue.

With plans for this and other 2021 work in place, we feel confident that Getty will emerge from the pandemic and from our country’s social unrest as a stronger and more inclusive organization. Thank you for supporting us on this critical and long-overdue journey.

Jim Cuno

Last fall Getty Patrons and other supporters enjoyed four virtual events in the newly launched “Getty Off-Center” series.

The Sidney B. Felsen Archive

Getty Off-Center’s second-ever program, presented September 10, brought together Sidney Felsen, co-founder of the influential LA print workshop and publisher Gemini G.E.L.; Joni Weyl and Suzanne Felsen, also of Gemini G.E.L.; and Getty Research Institute (GRI) curators Naoko Takahatake and Isotta Poggi. The program kicked off with a toast to Sidney’s 96th birthday and then treated guests to a special presentation on Gemini’s beginnings, highlights from the Sidney B. Felsen Photography Archive at the GRI (which was generously donated by Jack Shear), and Felsen’s personal accounts of friendships with generation-defining artists such as Julie Mehretu, Robert Rauschenberg, and Ellsworth Kelly.



Clockwise from top left: Getty President and CEO Jim Cuno; Sidney Felsen, Joni Weyl, and Suzanne Felsen; Isotta Poggi; Naoko Takahatake

Anne Willan in Conversation

Friends and supporters of Getty enjoyed a morning program on September 26 with guest speaker Anne Willan, a James Beard Award-winning culinary historian, in conversation with GRI Chief Curator and Associate Director Marcia Reed. Hosted by GRI Director Mary Miller, the event previewed Willan’s new book, *Women in the Kitchen: Twelve Essential Cookbook Writers Who Defined the Way We Eat from 1661 to Today*. Willan is herself a cookbook writer (as well as cooking teacher and founder of La Varenne Cooking School in Paris), and in her book she explores the lives and work of Fannie Farmer, Irma Rombauer, Julia Child, Alice Waters, and other iconic women whose cookbooks many of us propped on our counters over the holidays.



Clockwise from top left: Anne Willan, Mary Miller, Marcia Reed

Anne Woollett presented works by Peter Paul Rubens, including *The Calydonian Boar Hunt*, about 1611–12. Oil on panel. The J. Paul Getty Museum



On the Hunt: J. Paul Getty and the Pursuit of Rubens

On October 13 Getty Museum Paintings Curator Anne Woollett discussed the art of Peter Paul Rubens, covering topics ranging from J. Paul Getty’s passion for the artist to the upcoming exhibition *Rubens: Picturing Antiquity*, scheduled for fall 2021 at the Getty Villa.

Major support for *Rubens: Picturing Antiquity* is provided by Jo Carole and Ronald S. Lauder, with generous support from the Leonetti/O’Connell Family Foundation.



Inside the Getty’s Central Garden

Head of Grounds and Gardens Brian Houck and Horticulturist Jackie Flor took Getty Patrons on a virtual stroll through the Central Garden on October 28. Houck and Flor provided updates and highlights of various plant specimens thriving in the Central Garden and shared a few secrets on how the crew of gardeners manages the evolving landscape. The Getty Museum’s Richard Rand presented the history behind artist Robert Irwin’s design of the garden and his intent to make it a living work of art that would be part of the museum’s collection.

Jackie Flor admires a Tatarian aster

Nourishing Genius: Food and Wine in the Time of Michelangelo

More than 1,800 food and wine lovers from around the world joined Fred Plotkin, a specialist in Italian gastronomy, opera, and history, and Julian Brooks, the Getty Museum’s senior drawings curator, as they explored the incomparable Italian Renaissance artist and the wine and food of his region and era. Their audience then joined them for a virtual tasting of Italian wines, cheeses, and breads. Plotkin’s wine recommendations included Principe Pallavicini Frascati Superiore 2018, Villa di Capezzana Carmignano 2015, and Bellafonte Collenottolo Montefalco Sagrantino 2013 (all available at local and online retailers). The fall program was part of Getty’s Drinking in the Past series and complemented the drawings exhibition *Michelangelo: Mind of the Master*.



Participants raise their glasses during the virtual tasting.



Ancient Rome @Home

Students and students-at-heart tuned in from California to Serbia for a week-long digital reimaging of the Getty Villa’s annual College Night. Participants explored themes of Roman daily life with free activities focused on food, style, and games. Makeup artist Rebecca Butterworth recreated an ancient face cream for a makeover inspired by a Roman-Egyptian mummy portrait. Food archaeologist Farrell Monaco recreated a 2,000-year-old dessert of honeyed dates, and chefs from the Getty Restaurant provided modern recipes featuring that ancient ingredient. Curators, conservators, and educators presented daily live talks and nightly trivia challenges on topics ranging from ancient Greece and Rome to pop culture.

The Greek Trilogy of Luis Alfaro

In November the Getty Museum partnered with LA’s Center Theatre Group to virtually premiere MacArthur fellow Luis Alfaro’s *Electricidad*, *Oedipus El Rey*, and *Mojada*, 21st-century, Chicana adaptations of the Greek tragedies *Electra*, *Oedipus the King*, and *Medea*, respectively. *Oedipus El Rey* examines the California prison system’s high rates of recidivism; *Mojada*, the difficulties faced by undocumented immigrants; and *Electricidad*, Cholo gangs and revenge in an East-LA barrio. Readings of the play were filmed in the Kirk Douglas Theatre (with actors standing six feet apart and pantomiming hugging, fighting, and other physical contact) and performed in English with Spanish captioning.



Gabriela Ortega (*Electricidad*) mourns her murdered father as Sandra Marquez (her mother, Clemencia) coolly watches. Image courtesy of the Center Theatre Group



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Michael Silver with Chair Emerita Maria Hummer-Tuttle, Barbara Bollenbach, and Getty Board Chair David Lee at the inaugural J. Paul Getty Founder's Society Luncheon, June 2019

NEAR THE ENTRANCE TO THE GETTY VILLA MUSEUM sits a display of miniature masterpieces of ancient Greek art—carved gemstones, gold rings, jewelry, and coins, some of the rarest and most precious objects in the Getty collection. In recognition of a generous gift from Michael Silver to the J. Paul Getty Trust, the Board of Trustees has named this gallery The Michael Silver Family Gallery.

Michael Silver has been a dedicated friend to Getty and to cultural institutions throughout Los Angeles. Silver joined the Getty Patron Program in 2017 and quickly became involved with the Getty Villa, joining the Villa Council and providing support for Antiquities Conservation to acquire an X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy instrument for the study of archaeological and ethnographic materials. Silver also sits on the Museum Director's Council and the Getty Research Institute (GRI) Council, and he provides annual support for GRI Library Research Grants to undergraduate scholars with a focus on art and science. Silver says that his increasing involvement with Getty's work and commitment to its mission motivated him to make this leadership gift. "I also wanted to inspire my friends and others to consider similar meaningful gifts now, during their lifetimes, when they can enjoy and experience the impact of their philanthropy," he adds. "And I want my daughters to think of this as a generational commitment—Getty is an important member of the Silver family."

The gift establishes the Michael Silver Fund, the proceeds of which will support exhibitions, programs, and other priorities at the Villa. It is the first endowed fund to name a gallery at the Getty Villa.

As CEO of American Elements Corporation, the world's largest manufacturer of advanced and engineered materials, Silver was particularly attracted to the Villa gallery that displays ancient Greek metals and gems, for which scientific analysis can provide critical insight.

"Getty is honored to recognize Michael's thoughtful generosity," says James Cuno, Getty's president and CEO. "It is always inspiring when a donor is so deeply and broadly engaged in our work, and understands how his or her philanthropy can help advance our research and public programs. We're grateful to Michael for his generosity and for his inspiring participation in the life of our institution."

Museum Director Timothy Potts adds, "Michael's enthusiastic engagement with the Getty Villa over recent years has been both a personal delight for me and the source of a very fruitful partnership with our scholarship and research on the ancient world. His deep interest in antiquity, which is such an important aspect of the Museum's history and experience for our audiences, makes him the ideal person to fund the first named gallery at the Villa. We look forward to many more years of collaboration with Michael and his family in the pursuit of new knowledge and deeper understandings of the human past." ■



Artist and perfumer **Jill Zachman** tells us how a story about Getty's conservation work in Bagan, Myanmar, inspired her to create a new fragrance and workshop

I HAVE BEEN VISITING THE GETTY CENTER FOR YEARS—as an artist I find inspiration in the exhibitions, and as a perfumer, I conduct extensive research in the Research Institute's library before creating a new scent. Since lockdown I have stayed engaged with Getty through its newsletters, and an article called "Bagan Is a Treasure" inspired me to create my newest conceptual scent, *Conservation*, and to develop a related workshop.

What does *Conservation* smell like? To me it is the essence of the jasmine offerings, threads of incense, and sun-baked earth that I smelled while doing research in Bagan and visiting its temples.

The Getty story also reminded me of how scent has long been part of our experience of architecture. Maybe a certain smell triggers a memory of a building you once frequented. For me, myrrh and roses send me instantly back to an Indigenous church in rural Mexico. As Nabokov once said, "Nothing revives the past so completely as a smell that was once associated with it." Finnish architect Juhani Pallasmaa put it this way: "The nose makes the eyes remember."

Maybe scent makes us think about the history of a place, as architectural historian Jonathan Foyle wrote in the *Financial Times* several years ago: "Old buildings literally reek of history." I remember standing in the Boston's Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum and enjoying an exhibition about Gentile Bellini and the maritime trade between the Republic of Venice and Asia. The 1903 building was suddenly redolent with salt air and spices.

Maybe builders of historic structures meant for scents to be part of visitors' experiences. Natural historian Pliny the Elder states that at the temple of Minerva near Elis, the ancient Greek painter Panaenus applied plaster that had been worked with milk and saffron, such that the scent remained long after. Emperor Nero is described as having rose petals dropped and perfume sprayed onto guests from the ceiling of his banquet hall. And physicist C. Michael Hogan noted in *The Modern Antiquarian* that Persians used saffron in cave paintings, as the saffron provided a vibrant and scented paint pigment.

Why not conserve a place's original scent? Scent is part of our cultural, as well as physical, heritage. It forms the supple connective tissue that holds our buildings, communities, and collective memory together.

I thank Getty for enriching my personal and professional life and for helping to conserve the complexity of our communal scent. ■



As a 2019–2020 Getty/ACLS Fellow, **Jacopo Gnisci** brought new attention to the long-neglected subject of Ethiopian art. He also identified a stolen Ethiopian crown kept in the Netherlands, prompting its return to its rightful owners.

WHEN I LEARNED THAT I had been awarded a Getty/American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) Fellowship to work on Ethiopian art, I felt a rush of emotions: joy, surprise, and gratitude. Although Ethiopia is home to one of the largest and oldest collections of Christian manuscripts in the world, its extraordinarily rich cultural and artistic heritage is still poorly understood. The fellowship would allow me to work on a study of Ethiopian manuscript illumination from late antiquity to the end of the “medieval” period, and thereby contribute in a small way to a more diversified and global approach to the study of art history. In fact, Ethiopian art has not been taught at any university in the UK—not even at institutions where there is a focus on arts of the African continent.

Prior to the fellowship, I had been working for the University of Oxford on a European Research Council project, “Monumental Art of the Christian and Early Islamic East,” led by Judith McKenzie. I was concerned about breaking the news to her, as I feared my departure might disrupt her project. But I left our meeting with her blessings and heartfelt congratulations, as well as an agreement that I would rejoin her team at the end of my fellowship. Little did I know that I would never see her again: Judith tragically passed away on May 27, 2019. So, I started my fellowship in mourning and with concerns about my future.

Since early academic careers leave little room for respite, I staggered ahead with determination and commenced work on my book. In the midst of my writing I was contacted by a Dutch art detective who asked me if I could authenticate a stolen Ethiopian crown that had been recovered in the Netherlands. By going through my image database, looking at those churches where I knew such crowns were kept, I found an old photo of a priest wearing that very crown. So, when I arrived in Holland, I not only authenticated it, but I also provided evidence of its provenance. The press got the news about a month later, while I was in Ethiopia for fieldwork and some pro-bono teaching. To my surprise, the story was picked up by the *New York Times* and other major media outlets, and most of the Ethiopians I spoke to were thrilled about the news. The crown has now been returned, amidst loud celebrations, to its original monastery.

As part of my research I wrote several articles on manuscript illumination in 14th- to 16th-century Ethiopia. One of these contributions, *Constructing Kingship in Early Solomonic Ethiopia: The David and Solomon Portraits in the Juel-Jensen Psalter*,

features one of Getty’s Ethiopic Gospel books. The article, which has just appeared in *The Art Bulletin*’s December 2020 issue, sets out to challenge Eurocentric readings of Ethiopian illumination in favor of an approach that credits the intentions and creative agency of local artists and patrons. Among other things, the piece presents the first reliable attribution of three pre-16th century illustrated Ethiopic codices to the same artist-scribe. Truth be told, I tend to dislike most of what I write shortly after finishing it, but since the *Bulletin* had never published anything on Christian Ethiopian art, I was thrilled that the co-editors accepted this piece.

The pandemic inevitably caused disruptions to the fieldwork and outreach activities I had planned. I couldn’t access relevant collections in Europe, and lectures I was supposed to give in countries such as Ethiopia and Germany had to be postponed, as did conferences I had organized, including one on the history of collecting African objects in the UK.

Fortunately, at the end of the fellowship I was able to secure a curatorial role at the British Museum. And shortly afterwards, I was offered and accepted a permanent lectureship at University College London. Moreover, as I was writing this piece, I found out that my project *Demarginalizing Medieval Africa: Images, Texts, and Identity in Early Solomonic Ethiopia (1270–1527)* has been awarded a large three-year grant by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft. One of the project’s outputs will be a multi-authored volume on the arts of the Oriental Orthodox traditions that will be dedicated to Judith McKenzie’s memory.

Stabilizing my career will hopefully allow me to devote even more time to the study of medieval Ethiopian art. Meanwhile I have incorporated at least one class on Ethiopia in all of my modules, and look forward to the day when one of my students will apply for a Getty Fellowship with a project on Ethiopia. ■

Jacopo Gnisci is a Lecturer in the Art and Visual Cultures of the Global South at University College London. He previously worked at the Dallas Museum of Art and the University of Texas at Dallas, the University of Hamburg, the Vatican Library, the British Museum, and the University of Oxford. Gnisci has been carrying out fieldwork in East Africa for more than 10 years and has edited the volume Treasures of Ethiopia and Eritrea in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (2019).



Above: Ethiopian painter Gäbrä Märha talks to Jacopo Gnisci about his work. Photo: Antonella Brita

Opposite: Jacopo Gnisci conducts fieldwork in the Church of Ura Kidanä Mehrat in Ethiopia. Photo: Angela Cataldo

Below: *Saint John*, from a gospel book, about 1504–05, Ethiopian. Tempera on parchment. The J. Paul Getty Museum



ARCHIVE OF VENEZUELAN INTELLECTUAL AND PHOTOGRAPHER ALFREDO BOULTON

By Idurre Alonso

Associate Curator, Latin American Collections
Getty Research Institute

IN 2017 I TRAVELED TO CARACAS to research the archive of Alfredo Boulton (1908–1995), hoping to one day bring it to the Getty Research Institute (GRI). Boulton is one of the most important Latin American photographers of the 20th century, a prominent intellectual who helped shape Venezuelan art history, and a man shockingly underrecognized outside of his home country.

Although I had learned about Boulton early in my career, I discovered much more by dipping into his archive. In 1925, for instance, when he was 17 years old, Boulton was sent to study in Switzerland and London, as was the practice in upper-class families. During his stay in Europe he frequently visited Paris, where he became acquainted with the artists of the avant-garde. In 1928 he returned to Venezuela, where a new generation was engaged in discussions about modernizing the country (by strongly opposing the dictatorship of Juan Vicente Gómez) and transforming its culture (by rejecting outmoded styles and embracing the languages of the avant-garde). Over the next four decades Venezuela would become one of the main centers of modernity in Latin America, forming a vibrant artistic scene and putting forward major architectural and urban transformations in its capital, Caracas.

Like the intellectuals and artists of his generation, Boulton sought to reflect his country's characteristics—whether ethnic, geographical, or cultural. Photography was his first vehicle, and he was often the first to use it to record many of the country's landscapes and features—from the Andean region to Margarita Island. In 1938 he was invited by the arts institution Ateneo de Caracas to produce the first solo photography exhibition in Venezuela, *35 Fotografías de Alfredo Boulton*. Two years later he published *Imágenes del Occidente Venezolano*, Venezuela's first photobook.

In 1933 Boulton began his parallel career as an art critic, publishing articles in the Caracas-based *Elite* magazine and *El Universal* newspaper. In 1956 he abandoned his photography practice to focus on his work as a researcher, art historian, and curator. He then dedicated 40 years of his life to building a comprehensive analysis of the history of art in his country, from colonial times to the present, at a time when there was no prior literature he could cite or organized archives and catalogs he could research. He conducted research in ecclesiastic archives for eight years, helped to identify many previously anonymous painters of the colonial period, and published more than 60 books, including his three-volume text *Historia de la Pintura en Venezuela*. In 1968 he picked up his camera again to record the pre-Hispanic pottery of Venezuela, and in 1978 published a book about this neglected subject called *El Arte en la Cerámica Aborigen de Venezuela*.

Boulton also befriended, advised, and promoted contemporary artists. He was particularly close to abstract geometric artists living in Paris, including Alejandro Otero, Jesús Rafael Soto, and Carlos Cruz Diez, but was also interested in the work of Francisco Narváez, Rafael Monasterios, and Armando Reverón, key figures of Venezuelan early modernity. He helped their careers by giving them grants, organizing exhibitions of their work in Venezuela and abroad, and by writing articles and books about them. Boulton was instrumental in the organization of Jesús Soto's exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum in 1974, for instance. In the 1970s Boulton became part of the International Council at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and in 1973 he organized a trip to Venezuela for the group so that they could visit his country's museums and galleries.

Boulton's archive represents his many seminal contributions to art history. It contains his exten-

Eladio Montiel, 1943, Alfredo Boulton. Gelatin silver print.
Getty Research Institute



The living room of Boulton's Margarita Island home: colonial furniture, modern chairs and tables by Miguel Arroyo, a painting by Alejandro Otero, and a mobile by Alexander Calder share a beautifully integrated space. *Pampatar (la casa) / Pampatar (the House)*, about 1954, Alfredo Boulton. Gelatin silver print. Getty Research Institute

sive correspondence with local and international artists, institutions, intellectuals, and collectors, including letters with Alexander Calder, Alejandro Otero, Jesús Soto, Gio Ponti, Arturo Uslar Pietri, Denise Rene, and Beaumont Newhall; his writings for magazines and newspapers; his research materials on pre-Hispanic art, colonial art, the iconography of independence leaders, and modern artists; and a complete vintage collection of his photographic production, with approximately 4,000 vintage and original prints and 20,000 negatives.

The archive, which Boulton himself assembled, was purchased from his sole heir, his daughter Sylvia Boulton, by the nonprofit Alberto Vollmer Foundation, the year Boulton died. In the following two decades, under the direction of Sofia Vollmer de

Maduro (who worked closely with Boulton in the last five years of his life), the archive was organized, catalogued, and made accessible to researchers and institutions. In April 2018 the Vollmer Foundation lent the archive to the GRI for study, and it was finally acquired by the GRI with a partial donation by the Vollmer Foundation in June 2019.

I am currently organizing an exhibition on Alfredo Boulton scheduled to open in summer 2023 at the GRI. The aim of the exhibition, which will be accompanied by an extensive publication, is to highlight Boulton's multidimensional persona and his importance in the construction of a national art canon. The archive will provide a multitude of fascinating materials for the exhibition and book. ■

DOG-EARED

What book have you longed to revisit? Maybe it guided you through a tough transition, enchanted you with its fictional world, or nudged you onto your current career path.

Julian Brooks, senior curator of drawings at the Getty Museum, tells us about a book he read as an undergrad that made him fall hard for art history.

I KNOW THAT TO HAVE A DICTIONARY AS A FAVORITE OR INFLUENTIAL BOOK might seem strange—and perhaps, um, rather dull—but this is the honest truth. While there have been other books that have taken me on extraordinary journeys and been more pleasurable or mind-bending, *Hall's Dictionary of Subjects & Symbols in Art* was a happy and constant companion as I became more and more interested in historic paintings and drawings.

According to the bookplate (ah yes, someone gave me bookplates ...) in my copy, I bought it in August 1989. I was a 20-year-old student in the middle of a degree in theology at the University of Exeter, England, not religious but fascinated by the subject. I was visiting museums more and more frequently, and also studying drawings in the British Museum and at auction viewings. This book was a fabulously pithy, approachable, and portable guide to the subject matter I encountered.

I could look up saints, explore episodes in their lives, and study the objects they held, often gruesome attributes of their martyrdoms. I could try to identify the scenes represented, including many from the classical mythology to which I should have paid more attention at school. Everything I discovered pulled me in: magical lost worlds, stories of love and betrayal, faith and moral dilemma, and powerful symbols with hidden meanings.

I still find *Hall's Dictionary of Subjects & Symbols in Art* a handy companion. It's just fun to dip into, or quickly check some weird (or basic) iconography. ■

DICTIONARY OF SUBJECTS AND SYMBOLS IN ART

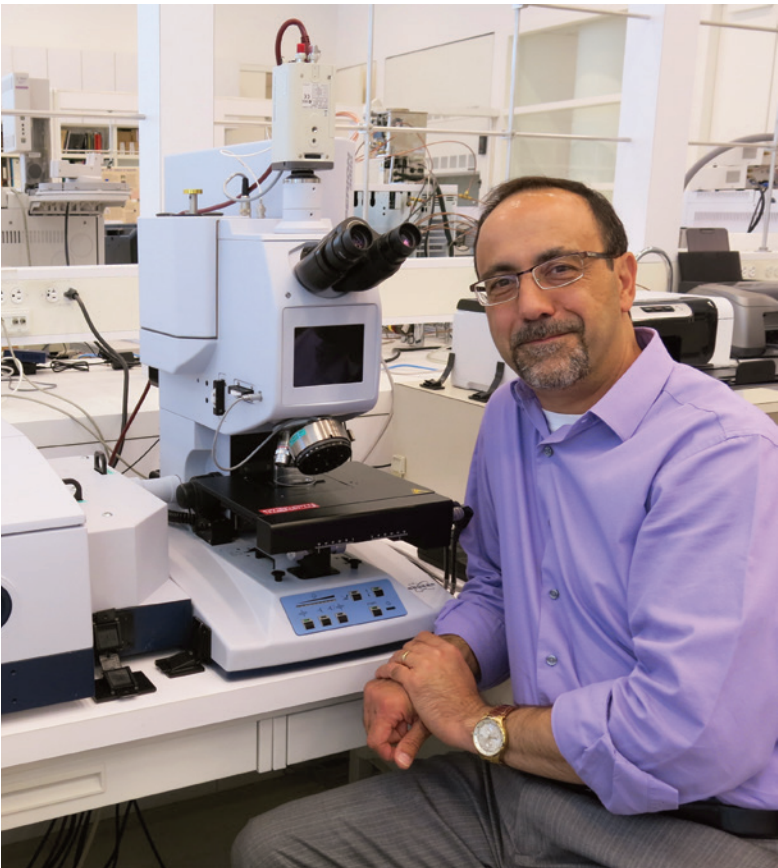


Herant Khanjian, a scientist at the Getty Conservation Institute, combines two childhood passions in his work to preserve art and cultural heritage around the world

The gist of my work: As part of the Science Department, I conduct research that supports the Getty Conservation Institute’s (GCI’s) effort to preserve cultural heritage around the world. I’m on a team that develops ways to analyze material used in artworks and architecture. Right now I am studying the aging behavior of decorative Asian lacquer films. I primarily work in infrared spectroscopy, mapping such things as molecular chemical composition, but I also use techniques like gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS), which lets us detect very low concentrations of various materials. Fun fact: GC-MS has been used in the sports world to test for doping substances.

Why cultural heritage matters: Cultural heritage is a physical interpretation of a period of time, and seeing it and touching it and understanding it makes you even more knowledgeable about historical events and how humanity has evolved over time. Seeing objects being destroyed, like in Iraq in 2015, because they don’t conform to the beliefs of certain people, is a tragedy. It’s gut wrenching. All cultures have played a pivotal role in the development of civilizations. But destruction and pillaging of historical cities and landmarks has gone on throughout history. You always think humans have evolved, that we are much more knowledgeable, and that we understand cultural heritage better now. But we’ve been beholden to the political winds over the centuries, and every time you have political uprising or political change, you see culture being influenced or damaged.

I’m really fortunate to be working at a great institution. I look forward to the end of this pandemic so that we can continue our work in full force.



How I came to love art: I was born in Baghdad, Iraq, to parents who were descendants of Armenian genocide survivors. Neither of my parents had a higher education, but they spoke multiple languages; we were in a city that was culturally and ethnically diverse. Our neighborhood had Arabs, Kurds, Assyrians, and Armenians. It helped me understand that there are culturally rich groups with a long history of

“Every time you have political uprising or political change, you see culture being influenced or damaged.”

civilization. In my neighborhood, immediately you learned two languages: the native language spoken at home (for me, Armenian) and the Arabic that most people spoke in the neighborhood. I was exposed to English through movies and TV shows, but I formally learned it in the fifth grade.

From early on, I was taught in school about the history of Mesopotamia—an ancient region that today would include most of Iraq—and I visited Iraq’s museums and historical landmarks. My dad took us to some of the monuments, I went with other relatives, and in Scouts we took day trips. Whenever the opportunity arose, I took advantage of it. I had the good fortune of visiting the Iraq Museum, and also visited historical landmarks like the ancient city of Ctesiphon, which has the largest unsupported brick arch in the world. History, culture, and art left a big impression on me. Looking at the size and grandeur of the objects left me in awe of how these were created by human beings thousands of years ago. To see the real object that you had seen in a book was something very special.

How I came to love science: I was part of a group of young students who were chosen for an exposition of science that our teacher put together. Teachers from other schools were invited to show scientific experiments, explain how they worked, and emphasize how important it was for our generation to learn about science. That was really neat. We saw things like, how holding a metal ball over a candle shows that metal expands.

Why we moved to LA: My parents and I moved to Los Angeles when I was 14. I had two older brothers who had already left for the States a couple of years earlier. My parents felt like we needed to reunite with them, and also it was their way of offering a better future for all of us, in a country my dad especially admired because he had worked for a US company, the Ford Foundation, as a translator. He had also been exposed to American culture from movies and books.

The first year in LA was challenging because I didn’t know the language very well—I understood some of the words but not everything. The English I had learned in Iraq was UK-centric. We called an eraser a rubber, for instance. It took about a year to become comfortable speaking the language. And I had to learn the culture, because some things that seemed acceptable in the old country were looked at differently in this country. Transitioning to a new country is a process of learning. At the time it was a bit stressful, but I quickly adapted.

How I got to Getty: I attended Cal State Northridge and majored in chemistry. I had taken a couple of classes in computer programming and other subjects, but when I took a chemistry class, it felt more natu-

ral. Working in the lab was wonderful because you got to experiment. In my last year of school, I saw an ad in the chemistry department office about the GCI wanting assistance from a part-time student.


I helped prepare samples to test the composition of air inside the museum’s display cases, storage cabinets, and galleries, to determine the type of organic pollutants that can damage objects. It was a fortuitous opportunity for me to learn how science applies to the arts, because I never saw that connection in school. The field has evolved; students interested in conservation-science research can earn degrees in science and technologies applied to cultural heritage. Then, right before I graduated in 1988, a job opening came up in the GCI’s Science Department.

Best part of working at Getty: Our work is never routine. We’re always seeing or encountering things that are new or different or interesting. You walk through the lab door every morning and you’re not stuck doing the same thing for hours and hours. Even though the analysis does require some repetition, the information and what it means, how it affects other aspects of the project, and other analyses by other people usually make the day unpredictable. And Getty is an enriching, fulfilling place. I’ve had the opportunity to interact, travel, present, partner, and help to preserve our invaluable cultural heritage. ■



Opposite: Khanjian uses an infrared microscope to analyze historical material.

Below: Khanjian inspects sample vials containing extracted organic components prior to infrared microscopic analysis.



Exploring the modernist take
on the open-air school

FRESH AIR AND OUTDOOR LEARNING

IN THE FALL OF 1935, 200 students entered a new type of classroom at Corona Avenue Elementary School in southeast Los Angeles. The press called the classrooms “glass-and-garden rooms,” as each featured a movable glass wall that slid open onto broad patios and gardens. Students could easily push their own lightweight chairs and desks right outside for lessons on the lawn. Ample high windows across from glass walls doubled access to fresh air and light, and the seven classrooms in the new L-shaped wing were linked by an innovative flat-roofed outdoor hallway.

This may not sound like a radical idea; many schools in California now have one-story classrooms with lots of windows and flat-roofed outdoor hallways. But at the time it was a startling change, garnering international attention. Local residents said the new building resembled “an airplane hangar,” or even “a penthouse on Mars.”

Designed by modernist architect Richard Neutra, the new classrooms signaled a major break from conventional American school design. School architecture typically followed an East Coast model, in which classrooms and interior halls were enclosed within a several-story building of thick brick or stone, with desks and chairs bolted to the floor. Neutra’s flexible, indoor/outdoor scheme instead took full advantage of the mild climate and ample space of southern California.

Corona Avenue Elementary School (Bell, Calif.), 1933. Julius Shulman (photographer), Richard Neutra (architect). The Getty Research Institute, 2004.R.10

By **Lyra Kilston**
Senior Editor
Getty Museum



Above: Waldschule für kränkliche Kinder (Forest School for Sickly Children), 1904, Grunewald Forest, Berlin. Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons



Below: Open-Air School for Healthy Children, Amsterdam. Architects: Jan Duiker and A.M. Bijvoet, built 1927–28. Collection of the Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam. Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Commissioned by the city’s school board, Corona Avenue school was referred to as a “test-tube school” because of its experimental nature. The board felt it was high time school architecture caught up to the advances of progressive educational and child development theories, which promoted education that “revolved around the child” and encouraged critical thinking instead of rote indoctrination. The school’s principal, Georgina D. Ritchie, said the new classrooms gave students a feeling of freedom in their studies, unlike the restrictions imparted by the four walls of a conventional classroom. She declared the school “a distinct improvement from the standpoint of health, safety, and educational opportunity.”

We don’t usually think about school buildings as having an impact on students’ health. But at the time this was a common, and urgent, concern. Since the mid-19th century, doctors and public health officials had confirmed that certain incurable, widespread illnesses, such as cholera and tuberculosis, were concentrated in urban areas where people lived, worked, or attended school in dim, crowded conditions. Contagion was compounded by poor ventilation, while a lack of sun exposure was believed to weaken the body’s immunity.

An American education journal from 1916 notes that sending children afflicted with tuberculosis, anemia, or other ailments to an indoor school—which it describes as sometimes dusty, overheated, and badly ventilated—could be “very injurious.” It noted ominously, “The education of the schools is important, but life and health are more important.”

In response to this, the open-air school movement, which promoted fresh air and exposure to nature, was born. Open-air schools allowed students to spend the day mostly outdoors absorbing strengthening rays of sunlight.

Sometimes, open-air schools were merely little wooden pavilions erected outdoors. This was the case for what is considered the first example, the Waldschule für kränkliche Kinder (Forest School for Sickly Children), founded in



Above: Garden project at Polytechnic Elementary School, Pasadena, California, 1935, Harold A. Parker. Image courtesy of the Huntington Digital Library, Huntington Library, San Marino, California

Right: École de Plein Air in Suresnes, France. Image Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons





Charlottenburg, Germany in 1904 for city children at high risk of contracting tuberculosis. The idea spread quickly from Europe to the United States. Due to its mild climate and large population of residents who had settled there to improve their health, California was a logical epicenter. Early examples include Pasadena's Polytechnic Elementary School, designed by acclaimed architects Myron Hunt and Elmer Grey, which consisted of bungalows with copious windows and wraparound porches surrounded by gardens and orange trees. By 1917, a survey by the Bureau of Education found that of the 60 American cities with open-air schools, more than half of them were in California.

After World War I, the architectural style of such schools evolved. By the late 1920s, as a modernist style dominated, architects were designing groundbreaking schools like the glassy, multi-story Open Air School for Healthy Children in Amsterdam by Jan Duiker (still in use today), which Neutra visited, and the sleek Hessian Hills School by Howe and Lescaze in Croton, New York. As Maristella Casciato, senior architecture curator at the Getty Research Institute points out, another relevant example, stylistically, is the École de Plein Air in Suresnes, France, which was completed the same year as Corona Avenue school. Designed by Beaudouin and Lods, the classrooms featured folding

Above: Corona Avenue School (Bell, Calif.), 1953, Julius Shulman (photographer), Richard Neutra (architect). Getty Research Institute, 2004.R.10

Opposite: Ellen Key. Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

glass walls on three sides and all furniture, including bookcases, had wheels for rolling outside.

Neutra's addition to Corona Avenue school was not strictly conceived as an open-air school, but he shared the common belief that buildings emphasizing access to sun and fresh air made their residents healthier, both physically and mentally. Fourteen years after the new wing opened, Principal Ritchie said she had "yet to find in Los Angeles, or anywhere else, a building that can measure up to the primary grade buildings at Corona."

In 1953, when architectural photographer Julius Shulman visited the school, he captured the students enjoying their bucolic outdoor classrooms, showing how the flexibility of the design added to the creativity and independence of the students. In one photograph the children sit on the lawn holding boards on their laps, perhaps awaiting a drawing activity. Behind them, older students have brought their chairs outside to sit in the sun and watch their teacher explain a lesson from a movable display board. In a color print, we see the bright green paint on the outside of the sliding glass wall, a cheerful hue that complements the verdant shade tree, while children in small groups listen to a lesson or paint alfresco on easels. A ball lies on the grass near glass-and-garden rooms, ready for outside play.

Corona Avenue school is still operating, though its campus has been altered several times over the decades to serve its growing student enrollment. According to one account, Neutra's wing has been thoroughly renovated, but its natural light and high ceilings still make it a desirable space.

The year 2020 again brought questions about the benefits of outdoor education to the forefront of our minds, as well as how architecture in general, from office buildings to our homes, may be designed in the future to promote our health. As we move forward, these past innovations offer a heartening example of a time when so many collaborated to nurture and protect the next generation. ■

Educating the "whole child"



In 1900 Swedish designer and social reformer Ellen Key published *The Century of the Child*, a sweeping manifesto calling for the "right to childhood." In it, she vehemently protested child labor (which that year accounted for 18 percent of workers in the United States) as well as conventional education, which she deemed the "murdering of souls in schools." Her book became an international bestseller and presciently positioned the wellbeing and development of children as major 20th-century concerns.

Key's theories were part of the progressive education movement, launched in the late 19th century and popularized by such figures as American philosopher John Dewey and Italian doctor and educator Maria Montessori. Proponents believed that students should be given greater autonomy and trusted to follow their natural curiosity, while teachers were seen as mentors instead of authoritarian rulers. Hands-on experiencing was emphasized, from building to cooking, and critical thinking and play were viewed as crucial tools.

Leaders in this arena, including Key, also focused on the learning environment, believing that beautiful and natural spaces cultivated the imagination. The era saw advances in school designs that offered easy access to the outdoors for gardening, nature study, and art-making, as well as an unprecedented boom in new playgrounds and summer camps. The right to childhood, it seems, was the right to the outdoors. ■



By Carly Pippin
Communications Specialist
Getty Foundation

Cameron Shaw

Diversifying the Arts

A new report explores the impact of 27 years of Getty Marrow internships

LIKE MOST KIDS IN LOS ANGELES, Cameron Shaw grew up visiting museums with her family and on school field trips. But she never thought of them as places where people actually worked and had careers. That all changed in 2002, when Shaw interned in the sculpture department of the Getty Museum through the Getty Marrow Undergraduate Internship program, which provides paid museum internships to students from underrepresented groups.

“It was the first place I experienced what a career in the arts could look like,” says Shaw, whose internship gave her experience working on rights and reproductions for a sculpture catalogue, and on research and didactics for the exhibition *The Arts of Fire: Islamic Influences on Glass and Ceramics of the Italian Renaissance*. “My internship was also the first place that I encountered young people of color who were interested in the same things I was. There were folks who wanted to support us in those efforts, and so I knew this was something I could do.”

Fast forward to today. Shaw is deputy director and chief curator of the California African American Museum, a Los Angeles-area museum that celebrates the history, art, and culture of African Americans in the American West. Before that she founded Pelican Bomb, a New Orleans-based nonprofit focused on generating global conversations about contemporary visual art. Shaw attributes her career trajectory

to her inaugural museum experience at Getty. “Once I started my internship, there was no turning back.”

The Getty Marrow Undergraduate Internships (formerly the Getty Multicultural Undergraduate Internships) launched in 1993 in response to the beating of Rodney King and the resulting civil unrest, which brought widespread visibility to deep-seated inequities facing people of color in Los Angeles. The Getty Foundation’s goal with the program, just as it was then, is to diversify museums and visual arts organizations so that their staff better reflect the communities they serve—an imperative in Southern California, a region that has long seen a majority-minority population. To date, the Foundation has dedicated upwards of \$14 million to support more than 3,200 interns at 175 arts institutions across LA, resulting in the largest and longest-standing diversity internship program in the visual arts in the United States.

Recently, the foundation sought to quantify the program’s impact on the field and on the lives and careers of participants or alumni like Shaw. To learn the extent to which the program has influenced alumni to choose professional pathways in the arts, the Getty Foundation hired the evaluation firm Engage R+D to analyze alumni data from three surveys administered over the past decade, and also to conduct in-depth alumni interviews. The results are in, and they show encouraging progress towards creating a more diverse arts sector. A sizable portion of alumni pursue careers in the arts, and the vast majority stay connected to the arts in other ways, including museums visits, membership, and board service.

Here are the report’s key findings and takeaways.



Getty Marrow intern Andrew Nguy at the Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens in 2019

Digging into the Data

Getty Marrow internships bring individuals from diverse backgrounds into arts careers

Thirty-two percent of intern alumni go on to work in the arts, a notable percentage considering that demonstrated interest or an educational background in the arts is not a prerequisite to participate. Among alumni not working in the field, 40 percent report that their current job relates to the arts and 46 percent report having worked in the arts in the past.

Nearly all alumni who have chosen to work in the arts attribute this career decision to their internships

Ninety-two percent of those working in the arts say that their internships inspired their careers. For students wanting to pursue careers in the arts, multiple internships give them the skills and experience to do so: 39 percent of alumni who had two internships and 50 percent of alumni who had three or more internships work in the arts compared to 30 percent who had one internship.

The program fosters belonging and makes participants feel welcome in the arts

Nearly three-quarters of alumni (72 percent) felt a greater sense of belonging to a network of museum and arts professionals as a result of their internships. Almost as many alumni (68 percent) maintain ongoing relationships with host organizations or supervisors.

The majority of alumni engage with the arts, even if they work outside of the field

Eighty percent of intern alumni visit museums regularly as a result of their internships. Since their internships, 45 percent of alumni have become museum members and 8 percent have served on the board of a museum or arts organization. (The board service percentage has doubled since 2008.)

What Comes Next?

Although the key findings indicate that the internship program has a direct influence on participants’ arts careers and interests—leading to greater professional diversity in the arts—there is still a need to increase representation within the sector. In LA County, for example, only 26 percent of the population identifies as White, yet this demographic accounts for 59 percent of the arts workforce. Reports from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation focusing on art museums nationwide show even greater disparity, with White staff accounting for 72 percent of the workforce. These statistics help explain why alumni consistently state that the Getty Marrow program is important and relevant to the needs of the arts field. In fact, 95 percent of alumni agree that the objective of the internship program aligns with current needs in the field.

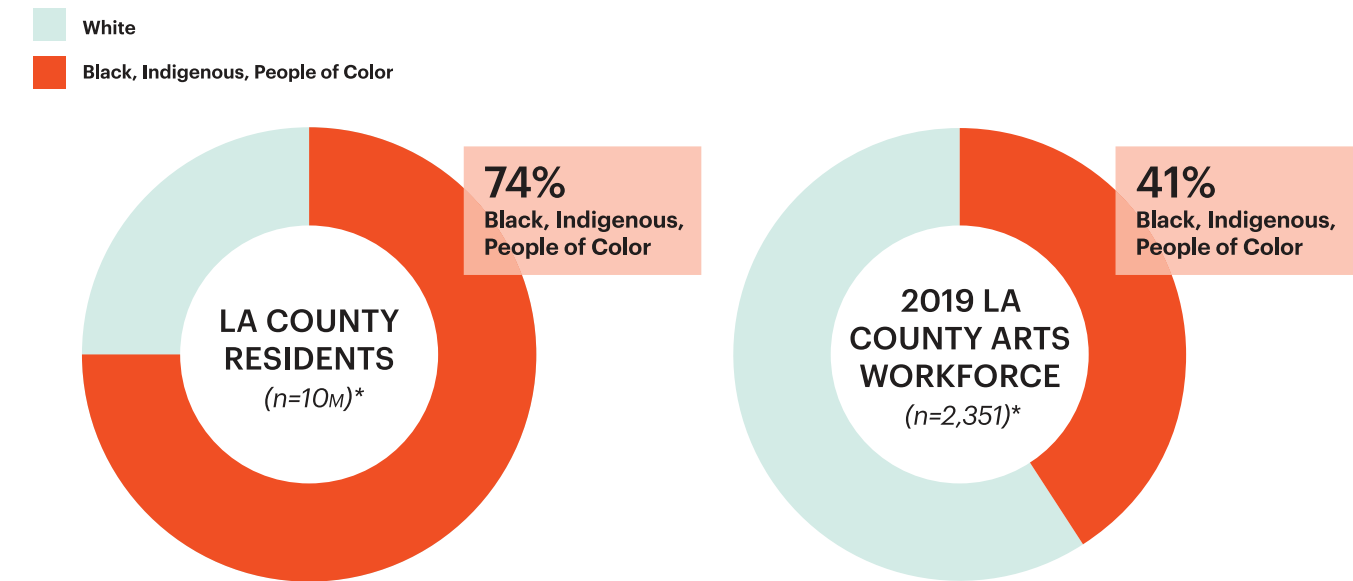
As Getty looks to the future of the internship program, our current national moment—a period of profound awakening to systemic racism and its impact on people of color—has laid bare the need for even more efforts to improve equity and access in

the arts. The Getty Foundation will take the following action steps to enhance the internship program’s impact:

- Expand participation for alumni who self-identify as African American, the most underrepresented group among all former interns now in the arts workforce
- Increase the number of community college participants as a measure of greater equity and accessibility
- Strengthen culturally inclusive mentorship training for intern supervisors so they can develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes to respond to interns’ needs
- Provide more professional development opportunities for alumni in the arts, particularly during the early-career stage when many appear to struggle with securing full-time work

EXHIBIT 1.1

People of color in Los Angeles are underrepresented in the arts



*Source of data https://www.lacountyarts.org/sites/default/files/lacounty_2019_workforcedemographicsstudy_final.pdf. Although this study includes demographics for a number of visual arts organizations, the majority of the participating cultural nonprofits would be categorized as performing, literary, or civic arts organizations. Sample size indicated for the LA County arts workforce was deduced from data provided on page 5 of the report and does not include 61 respondents who declined to self-identify their ethnicity.

Such interventions will enable the program to have an even broader influence and benefit those who need support the most.

To advance change, the Foundation has also opened the doors to closer collaboration with other arts institutions and funders, given the increased number of internship programs focused on diversifying the arts across the country in recent years. Working together can help Getty and others identify gaps in funding, share challenges and solutions, and achieve greater impact so that arts organizations will better reflect the communities they serve as quickly as possible.

Shaw, who’s also looking to the future, has many questions on her mind. “What is the role of a of a museum?” she wonders. “More specifically, what is the role of an African American museum in a city like LA, one of the most racially and ethnically diverse cities in the country?” As Shaw and her alumni peers working in the arts wrestle with how museums can present the art and culture of underrepresented groups, one thing is clear: to tell these stories effectively, museum staff must be diverse. “This country and the world need places where the lives of people of color are valued and reflected,” she says. “The Getty Marrow internship program is so important; it’s not enough to know that these jobs exist, you need someone to help you understand that they are for you.” ■

To read the Getty Marrow Internship Program Impact Report in its entirety, visit <https://www.getty.edu/interns-2020/report/>.



Class photo of Getty Marrow interns in 2019

Francis Cullado’s path from Getty internship to arts leadership

Born in the Philippines and raised in the industrial port city of Long Beach, California, Francis Cullado didn’t grow up going to museums or galleries. But chance encounters with enthusiastic mentors and an internship opportunity helped him forge a career in the visual arts.

Cullado is the executive director of Visual Communications (VC), an organization based in Los Angeles’s Little Tokyo that focuses on the work of Asian American and Pacific Islander filmmakers. He began working at the organization through a summer internship, and now, 18 years later, finds his work more meaningful than he ever imagined.

Cullado’s interest in the arts began in college when teacher Steve Nagano introduced him to documentary films about Asian American civil rights movements. Nagano also urged Cullado to apply for a full-time, paid internship at VC that was offered through the Getty Marrow Undergraduate Internship program. Once Cullado secured the internship, he began traveling to Getty and other museums. “That was the first time I saw a world outside of the Long Beach area,” he says. “After growing up in a low-income neighborhood and seeing the rest of the world as untouchable, I realized that people of color were also a part of this outside world.”

One rite of passage for new interns at VC was ChiliVisions, a program that brought together local community organizations for an annual chili competition. Interns would help plan the event, and a film documenting it would be shared with participants. The program was championed by the late Linda Mabalot, former executive director at VC and another of



Cullado’s early mentors. “I was so enamored with the idea of putting food, cinema, and community together—it was not the typical museum-internship experience,” he says.

Cullado continued to be inspired by the organization’s mission and its close connection to surrounding neighborhoods, and he returned to VC as a full-time staff member after receiving his graduate degree in 2010. He finds the organization’s work more relevant now than ever, especially with the renewed interest in social justice issues nationwide. “As a society, if we fail to center the experiences of our communities, then our artistic and cultural creations will also be placed at the margins.”

Today, Cullado manages a number of VC programs, the largest being the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival, one of the longest-running film festivals in the city. The organization also funds the Armed with a Camera Fellowship, which supports emerging filmmakers under the age of 30 by offering mentoring, training, networking opportuni-

ties, access to facilities and equipment, and a cash stipend to create a five-minute short film. To share the important storytelling and perspectives of often-underserved senior communities, VC also supports Digital Histories, which provides documentary film-making opportunities and training.

Cullado notes that his early exposure to arts professionals from underrepresented backgrounds was critical to his chosen career. And for those considering a similar path, he has some advice.

“There are times when I struggle with imposter syndrome—moments when I don’t think I am qualified or worthy of doing what I do. I overcome these doubts knowing that there are many people who believe in me, people who root for me. I want you to realize that people believed in you even before you started believing in yourself. Know that you are worthy, that you are qualified, and that you are, quite simply, enough.” ■

—Alexandria Sivak

ART on the ROCKS

A

ACROSS THE GLOBE, from the Arctic Circle to the southern tip of South America, an extraordinary number and range of painted or engraved images appear on walls hidden deep inside caves or under cliffs, and on sheer standing rocks and boulders. Some images are geometric and abstract, while others realistically depict prowling felines, giraffes, galloping horses and other grazing creatures, and humans. Their creators remain anonymous and their meaning obscure, but this most ancient form of expression, which predates civilization and writing by tens of thousands of years, demonstrates our very human desire to leave our mark on the world or note our passage through time and place.

By Anna Zagorski
Research Specialist
Getty Conservation Institute

*The best way to
save rock art,
the most ancient
form of human
expression, is to
involve the local
community*

The Cueva de las Manos in the province of Santa Cruz, Argentina, is famous for its paintings of hands. The rock art is 9,000–13,000 years old. Jon Arnold Images Ltd / Alamy Stock Photo



Much, perhaps even most, rock art has weathered away over the millennia except when protected in caves, incised on durable rock, or by burial. In some parts of the world, pigment is scraped off for medicinal use, or animals degrade the art. Wooden walkways for viewing art have caught fire, causing serious damage and soot deposition. Even well-meaning applications of chemical consolidants that seal paintings have unwittingly caused damage, resulting in sloughing off of the surface over time. Indeed, applications of almost any material compromise future treatments.

While there are now more ongoing efforts to save rock art, and every country with rock art has legislation to protect it, threats continue to imperil this heritage, especially graffiti—the ubiquitous bane of rock art. In the US, defacing rock art in national parks is prohibited under federal law and may be punishable by a fine and imprisonment. Still, high-profile cases of graffiti and tagging continue, with some perpetrators taking selfies and posting them on social media. Legislation alone is not the answer.

For more than 30 years, the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) has engaged in the conservation and management of rock art through training courses, conferences, and projects in the United States, Australia, Mexico, and southern Africa. During this

period we have increasingly brought to the attention of professionals, decision makers, and the public the dire condition of rock art sites around the world and the apparent indifference of society to the threats these sites face from neglect, vandalism, looting, and, increasingly, the effects of tourism. Moving forward, it is clear that hands-on physical conservation must be considered in tandem with cultural practices to secure the physical and spiritual aspects of a rock art site.

Communities Must Care

One of the best ways to safeguard rock art, we now know, is to involve the local community in the management of a rock art site. This approach is particularly effective in places where the Indigenous population feels directly connected to the local rock art. In the Warddeken Indigenous Protected Area in Arnhem Land, Australia, for instance, children of the traditional owner families are taken on trips to visit remote rock art sites as part of their cultural education. They also learn how Aboriginal rangers are looking after the sites today. Park ranger Jeffrey Lee, Djok Senior Traditional owner of Koongarra land in Australia’s Northern Territory, withstood the pressures of the uranium mining industry and personally asked UNESCO to declare his land part

The Mountford Site in West Arnhem Land, Northern Territory, Australia. The rock art depicts barramundi fish and magpie geese. Below it are members of the Gunbalanya community and the Njanjma Rangers, an Aboriginal group that has taken responsibility for the care and maintenance of the natural and cultural resources within their traditional lands. Photo: Tom McClintock



of the Kakadu National Park. “I want to ensure that the traditional laws, customs, sites, bushfood, trees, plants, and water at Koongarra stay the same as when they were passed on to me by my father and great-grandfather,” he has stated.

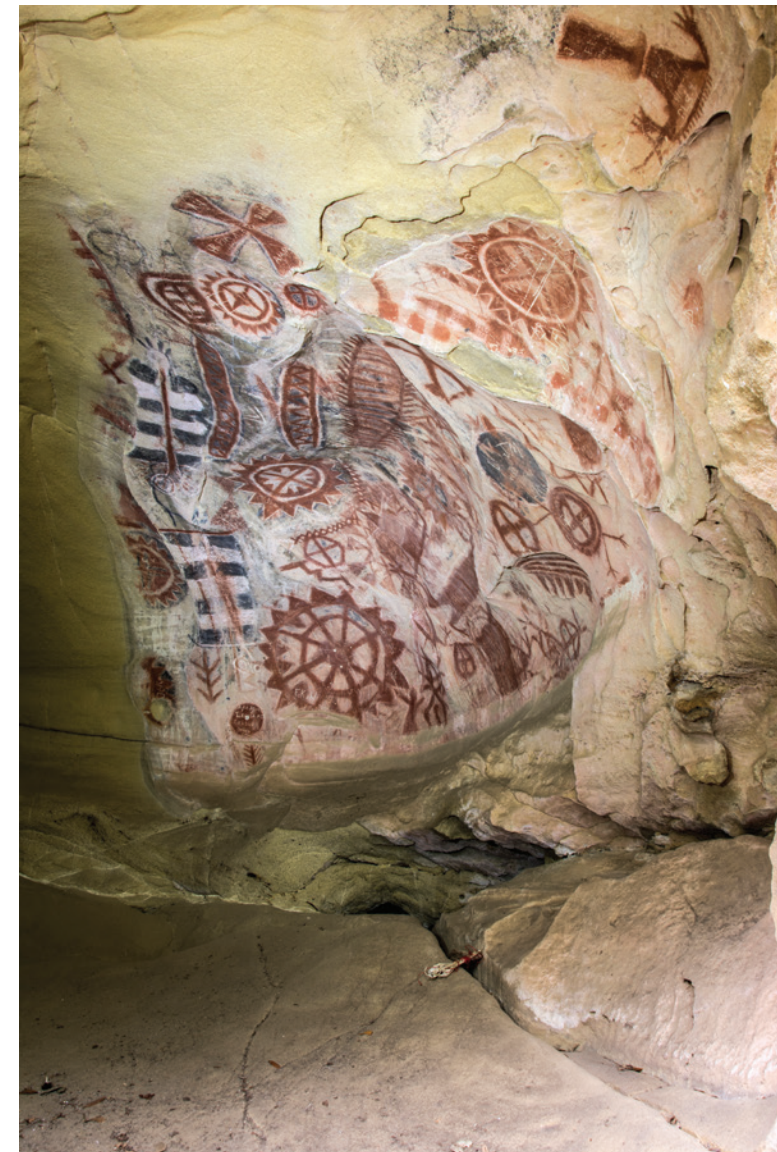
Traditional cultures have claimed their forebears’ art in North America and elsewhere in the world, too. When the highway north from Albuquerque, New Mexico, was proposed, Native American tribes were among those who made impassioned pleas for the preservation of the integrity of their sacred landscape, although to no avail—the preexisting Petroglyph National Monument was bisected by construction of the road. In parts of Africa, local communities who manage rock art sites such as Tsodilo Hills in Botswana rely heavily on tourism. Tourism is also important at the famous site of Foz Côa in northern Portugal, where Paleolithic art is engraved on outdoor exposures of rock. The local community manages the site and provides guides and other services to visitors.

Getting Others to Care

We strongly believe that for beneficial change to occur, many more people must protect and value the vast body of rock art that spans the globe. Our shift toward exploring effective means of communicating the significance and values of rock art has progressed from organizing

Above: Game Pass Shelter, Drakensberg, South Africa. This rock art panel, created by the San/Bushman community, depicts eland antelope, along with running and anthropomorphic figures, and is among the many rock art sites in Maloti-Drakensberg Park, a transboundary World Heritage Site.

Right: Painted Cave, a Chumash rock art site in Santa Barbara County, California. Until an iron gate was erected in front of the site in 1908, the rock art was subject to vandalism, mainly in the form of graffiti. Photo: Tom McClintock



training courses to seeking linkages and networking between professionals across a wide range of interest groups.

A 2014 GCI-organized workshop held at the World Heritage site of Kakadu National Park in the Northern Territory, Australia, proved key to solidifying this shift. The resulting report, *Rock Art: A Cultural Treasure at Risk*, identified the four pillars of rock art conservation policy and practice: public and political awareness; effective management systems; physical and cultural conservation practice; and community involvement and benefits. These pillars now provide the foundation for further development of the work we and other organizations and professionals are undertaking to reach a wider international audience.

With this wider audience in mind, we held a follow-up conference three years later in Namibia, home to two important rock art sites, Brandberg and Twyfelfontein, the latter Namibia’s first World Heritage site. We hoped to provide a meeting point for influential thinkers beyond the usual professional rock art researchers and conservation specialists. We also wanted input from creative thinkers who derive artistic inspiration from rock art, and to reach a broader audience through film or other artistic undertakings. It was vital to hear from Indigenous peoples—the traditional owners and custodians of rock art sites—about how they manage sites; what those in organizations had learned in the course of developing and managing volunteer groups, fund-raising for rock art, and building partnerships; and

A panel of petroglyphs including the well-known image of the lion with the crooked tail. Twyfelfontein World Heritage Site, Namibia.



how they use media and the web to reach the widest audiences and influence policy makers. Although conservation and the need for conservators to deal with graffiti and the interpretation for the public were concerns of conference participants, the focus remained on how to build public and political awareness, and the benefits of community involvement.

What was clear from the beginning of the event was how much the artists and filmmakers enjoyed the exchange with professional researchers, and how much site custodians gained from learning ways to build effective volunteer groups. This exchange between peoples from different backgrounds injected new liveliness into the discussions. We soon felt a strong conviction that such events are truly beneficial.

Most significantly, the GCI developed a working relationship with the Bradshaw Foundation—an organization based in the United Kingdom dedicated

to online dissemination to a general audience of content related to rock art—and established the Rock Art Network. The Network is made up of individuals and institutions committed both to the protection and conservation of rock art around the world and to the promotion of public and political awareness of this irreplaceable world heritage. More information about the Rock Art Network and resource materials are available on and disseminated through the Bradshaw Foundation’s website.

Forty individuals from 18 countries affiliated with the Rock Art Network believe that this bottom-up approach to building relationships and networking will be more effective than top-down, contractual, or legal agreements. It is our hope that over time this approach will prove sustainable and successful, and that we should all be able to leave our mark without defacing those who came before us. ■

The “Alcove of the Lions” in Chavet-Pont d’Arc Cave in southern France. The drawings were made using wood charcoal. The earliest rock art in the Chavet Cave dates back about 36,000 years and includes over 400 drawings of animals—mammoth, lion, woolly rhinoceros, horse, bison, auroch, ibex, cave bear, red deer, reindeer, megaloceros, ox, and owl—as well as signs, palm prints, handprints, and hand stencils. Photo: Jean-Michel Geneste / Ministry of Culture, France

A RETURN TO PALMYRA



Revisiting its 2017 online exhibition, The Legacy of Ancient Palmyra, the Getty Research Institute presents a new, Arabic-English experience, an interview with the world heritage site's former director, and a look at the city's fascinating history

Temple of Bel sanctuary, Palmyra, Ursula Schulz-Dornburg, 2010. Photo courtesy of the artist

Opposite: Waleed al-As'ad, six years old, standing in front of his father, Khaled al-As'ad, with the Syria-Japan delegation at excavations of Douara cave, Syria, ca. 1975. Photo courtesy of Waleed al-As'ad



B

BORN AND RAISED IN PALMYRA, Syria, Waleed Khaled al-As'ad can trace his family's lineage in the city back five generations. Now a refugee in France, he hopes to someday return to Palmyra, an important world heritage site that suffered widespread destruction by ISIS in 2015 and 2017.

In *Return to Palmyra*—launching February 3, 2021, as a follow-up to Getty's first online exhibition, *The Legacy of Ancient Palmyra*—al-As'ad explains what it was like growing up near such imposing ruins while being mentored by his distinguished archaeologist father, Khaled al-As'ad, remembered today as a martyr for having paid with his life trying to protect this ancient urban center. The elder al-As'ad preceded his son by 40 years in the post of Director of Antiquities and Museums at Palmyra. For Waleed, the urgency of returning is underscored by the site and its inhabitants' interdependence.

By **Frances Terpak**
Curator and Head of Photographs
Getty Research Institute



Above: *Temple of Bel*, Louis Vignes, 1864. Albumen print. Getty Research Institute, 2015.R.15

Opposite: Valley of the Tombs, Palmyra, Ursula Schulz-Dornburg, 2010. Photo courtesy of the artist

“We cannot build the ancient site without residents in it or around it,” says al-As’ad. “We cannot build or ignore the ancient site and only concern ourselves with connecting water to the homes or reviving them. We have to build up the people, bring the people back to their homes with logic and rationality, following the rules and regulations concerning management of world heritage sites. Then we can think about restoring Tadmor [Palmyra] correctly.”

Return to Palmyra is also a return for Getty. In the 2017 exhibition, the earliest photographs taken at Palmyra in 1864 are featured alongside 18th-century prints after drawings of the city. Since both the photographs and drawings were made by French travelers to the site, the earlier exhibition presents a largely Western viewpoint while also exploring the reception of Palmyra in the West.

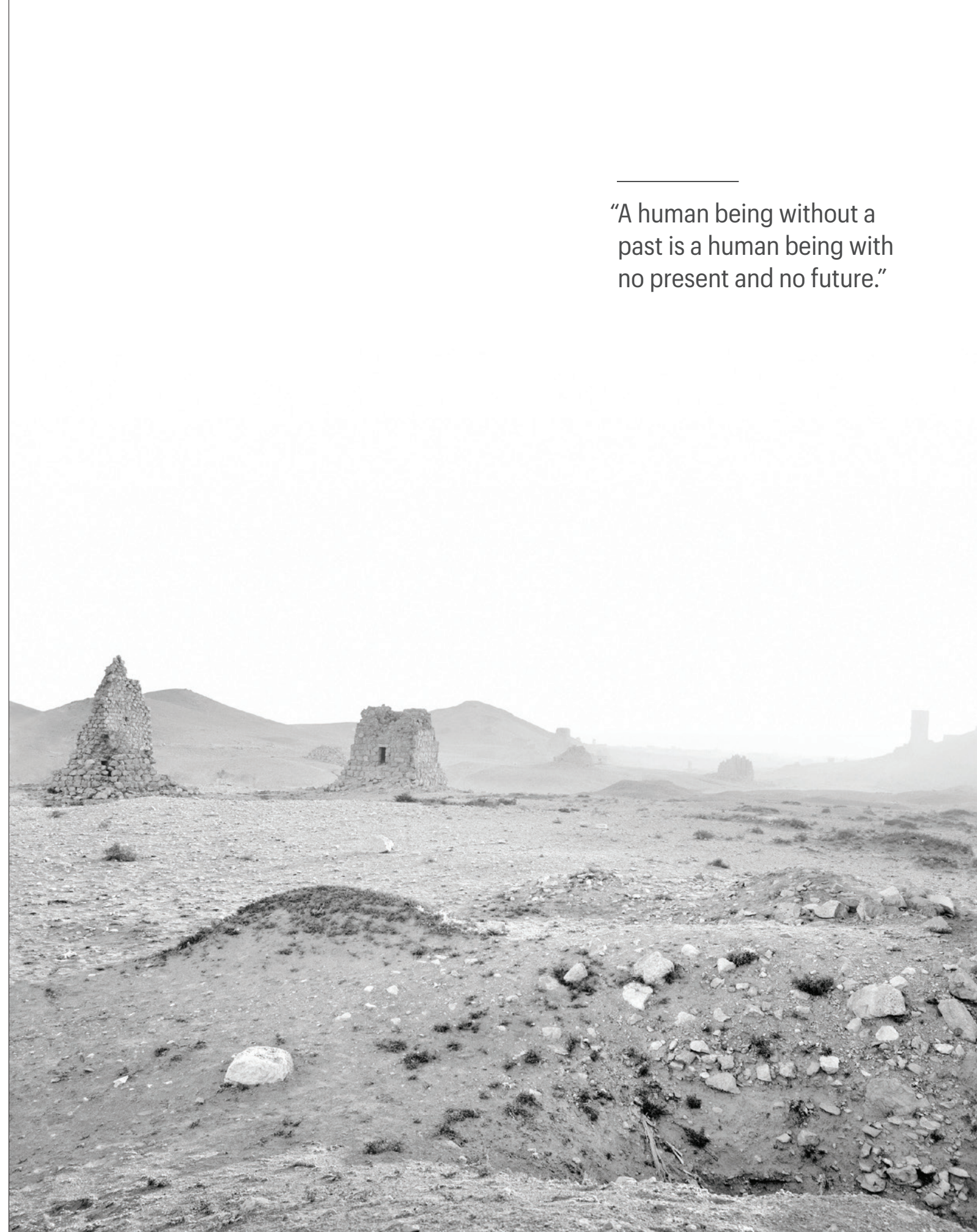
Alternatively, the new project presents a mirror Arabic-English website that foregrounds a regional

perspective and some of the site’s earliest visual documents, making them available to an Arabic-speaking audience. In addition to an interview with al-As’ad, the project features a historical essay by Joan Aruz, presenting a local context for the significance of this multicultural city and a case for why rebuilding its community is imperative.

A Magnificent City, a Courageous Queen

Why should we care about the past or about the destruction of a world heritage site such as Palmyra? Al-As’ad responds eloquently to this question in his interview. “I hope that everyone understands . . . how important it is to preserve these human heritage sites in general, whether registered on the UNESCO list or not,” he says. “Preserving history is how we preserve our identity [and] personality, how you preserve the components of the self. As my father, God rest his soul, used to say, ‘A human being without a past is a human being with no present and no future.’”

“A human being without a past is a human being with no present and no future.”





Above: Queen Zenobia arrives in Damascus. Photo: Youssef Badawi/EPA/Shutterstock

Opposite from top: Imaginary view of Tetracylon, anonymous artist after Louis-François Cassas, ca. 1799. Proof-plate etching. Getty Research Institute, 840011

Colonnade Street with Temple of Bel in background, Georges Malbeste and Robert Daudet after Louis-François Cassas. Etching. From *Voyage pittoresque de la Syrie, de la Phœnicie, de la Palestine, et de la Basse Egypte* (Paris, ca. 1799), vol. 1, pl. 58. Getty Research Institute, 840011

est architectural projects of the first century CE, the Temple of Bel could accommodate thousands of people within a courtyard that measured 200 meters on each side. Across the city, extending for one kilometer, an extraordinary colonnaded street articulated with bronze statues served as the main business and social thoroughfare, while also providing a direct link for religious functions from the temple to a vast necropolis outlined by distinctive tower tombs at the city’s western edge.

In addition to the significance of its ancient monuments and its claim as the longest continuously inhabited site in the world, Palmyra owes its fame to Queen Zenobia. Renowned for her wisdom and beauty, she cultivated an intellectual and open society, promoting tolerance among her subjects and protecting religious minorities. She led an army against the Roman Empire in 269 CE, and upon her defeat was famously reported to have been brought back to Rome in golden chains.

Zenobia’s courage in leading her people to overthrow Roman authority embodies the spirit of Palmyra. She has come to stand as a symbol of hope for all people facing oppression. Zenobia and her legacy have been memorialized in Middle Eastern and Western cultures alike for nearly two millennia through a range of cultural productions, from operas to literature and other art forms. Perhaps the most dramatic recent manifestation of this was in 2015, when a statue of the queen was erected in Damascus as an act of defiance against ISIS militants.

For the millions of Syrians who have had to flee their homeland, Zenobia’s forced departure foreshadows their current plight. Though the fate of Palmyra as a historic site has become an international issue, recovering its history explicitly depends on the fate of its residents, as al-As’ad poignantly expresses.

“No human being can ever abandon his homeland,” he says. “‘Love forever belongs to the first love / No matter how many homes on earth a lad adores / His love will ever be for the first,’ as the Arab poem goes. A person’s homeland is part of his identity, a part of his psyche. Childhood memories, memories of family and relatives. This place is a part of your personality. Wherever you go, you will harbor a desire to return.” ■

The Getty Museum's recent acquisition of 39 Dutch drawings brings works long held in a private collection into the public domain

SO MUCH DUTCH

By **Stephanie Schrader**
Curator of Drawings
Getty Museum

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TWO YEARS AGO the Getty Museum's Drawings Department learned that a private collector wanted to sell us a group of his Dutch drawings. The works we selected provide an outstanding survey of the artists, styles, genres, and subjects in 17th-century Dutch art, and acquiring them made the museum's Dutch drawings collection among the most important in the United States. Moving them from a private collection to the museum allows our visitors and researchers to explore the subjects and techniques that make artists of the Dutch Republic so renowned and beloved.

Getty curators and conservators collaborated to research the works, and a careful selection of 39 extraordinary Dutch drawings, primarily dating to the 17th century, now belong to the Getty Museum. The acquisition comprises 18 landscapes and seascapes; nine figure drawings and portraits; seven religious and allegorical compositions; and five nature studies. Artists represented include well-known Dutch masters Rembrandt van Rijn, Jacob van Ruisdael and Hendrick Avercamp, painter Piet Mondrian, and rare artists whose work hardly ever appears on the market: Cornelis Vroom, Hendrick Dubbels, Jacob Pynas, and Gerrit Pietersz Sweelinck.

Landscapes, Real and Imagined

Although the purchase of a red chalk drawing by Rembrandt officially launched our Drawings Department in 1981, the museum had fewer than 150 Dutch works on paper in its collection, and many artists and genres were not represented. By selectively purchasing drawings from a private collector, we increased our Dutch holdings by one third and filled in lacunae.

Gaps included drawings by 17th-century Dutch artists who traveled to Italy to depict ancient ruins and sun-filled landscapes. The Getty had only three examples of this genre. One fine addition is Jan Asselijn's *Ruins in a Landscape* from around 1646. The work conveys a fragment of an ancient Roman structure located on the south side of the palace of Septimius Severus on the Palatine Hill. Placed in the immediate foreground and reaching to the top of the sheet, the ruin appears massive as it sparkles in bright Italian sunlight. Precise strokes in wash, short parallel hatching, and darker dots enhance the ruin's three-dimensional form, which towers over a slight hill on the left. Plants grow out of nearly every crack and crevice of the monument, underscoring its role as a decrepit remnant of the past. Drawings of Italian landscapes allowed Dutch collectors



Metamorphosis of a Small Emperor Moth on a Damson Plum, plate 13 of the *Caterpillar Book*, 1679, Maria Sibylla Merian. Translucent and opaque watercolor over counterproof print. The J. Paul Getty Museum



Above: *Ruins in a Landscape*, about 1646, Jan Asselijn. Brown watercolor over graphite. The J. Paul Getty Museum

Right: *Landscape with Ruins*, about 1615–16, Jan van de Velde. Pen and black ink with gray wash. The J. Paul Getty Museum



to travel, peer inside ancient structures, and experience the stark contrast of light and dark, all from the comfort of their own homes.

The Asselijn sheet stands in stark contrast to *Landscape with Ruins*, the newly acquired drawing by Jan van de Velde that dates to about 1615–16. Van de Velde, who did not travel to Italy, imagined ancient ruins in a dark and moody manner. In his depiction of stone architecture overgrown with vegetation, the rhythmic meandering of dark black lines, dots, and dashes creates a fantastical scene of a crumbling bridge over a river. The artist delighted in juxtapositions: the play of dark and light, riders dwarfed by ruins, and man-made structures amid natural decay. This fantastical scene shows off the artist's imaginative powers, inviting the viewer to marvel at his decorative pen lines.

Dutch artists' depictions of both imaginary and real landscapes are now one of Getty's great strengths. The newly acquired Jacques de Gheyn II's *Mountainous Landscape with a Chapel* of around 1600–03 was highly coveted by me, mostly because De Gheyn, a prolific draftsman, made only a small number of landscapes. In the center of this rare sheet, a picturesque chapel stands on the edge of an abyss. At right a panorama with a meandering river appears all the more expansive because of the low horizon. Curving, zigzag pen lines animate boulders, shrubs, trees, and clouds, creating an imaginary landscape that vibrates with life.



Above: *Mountainous Landscape with a Chapel*, about 1600–03, Jacques de Gheyn II. Pen and brown ink. The J. Paul Getty Museum

Right: *Norwegian Landscape with a Timber Yard*, 1644, Allart van Everdingen. Pen and brown ink with watercolor over black chalk. The J. Paul Getty Museum



De Gheyn's fantastical representation gave way to a more naturalistic documentation later in the 17th century when artists drew from life more frequently. Allart van Everdingen, for example, traveled throughout Scandinavia and made drawings of the countryside after being shipwrecked on the coast of Norway around 1644. On his return to the Netherlands, he introduced the Nordic landscape genre to Dutch collectors, creating a niche market. In the newly acquired *Norwegian Landscape with a Timber Yard*, van Everdingen featured rustic farm buildings made of rough-hewn planks, a tall bell tower, and neatly stacked logs of various lengths. Meticulously painted in vibrant watercolors, this signed drawing is the first by van Everdingen to enter the Getty Museum's collection.

Figure Studies, Religious Compositions, and Nature Studies

The purchase of several figure drawings doubled the Getty's Dutch holdings of this genre. Often made to help artists prepare a painting, figure studies provided an array of poses and range of emotions. A standout in this group is Ferdinand Bol's *Reclining Female* of about 1655–61 on blue paper. Bol participated in one of the earliest art academies that practiced drawing the female nude from a live model. In this study from such a session, black chalk renders the model's contours, while white suggests the luminous sheen of her skin. Bol later used this figure in one of his paintings. Her idealized, sensuous form presents a significant departure from the bold naturalism of the museum's other Dutch figure drawings.



Above: *Reclining Female*, about 1655–61, Ferdinand Bol. Black and white chalk. The J. Paul Getty Museum

Right: *Young Man Leaning on a Stick*, about 1629, Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn. Pen and brown ink. The J. Paul Getty Museum



Opposite: *The Crucifixion*, about 1650, Samuel van Hoogstraten. Pen and brown ink with gray wash, red chalk, and heightening with white opaque watercolor; corrections in white opaque watercolor. The J. Paul Getty Museum

Rembrandt's *Young Man Leaning on a Stick* of about 1629 not only adds to Getty's impressive number of drawings by the master (the total is now 12), it also provides a poignant early pen and ink example by the artist. Rembrandt was captivated by the humanity of his subjects, an interest powerfully conveyed in this drawing of a humble beggar standing in profile, leaning on a stick. With just a few deft pen lines, Rembrandt captured the bend of his back and the turn of his foot, the messy curls of hair and ragged clothes, the fixated gaze and laughing expression.

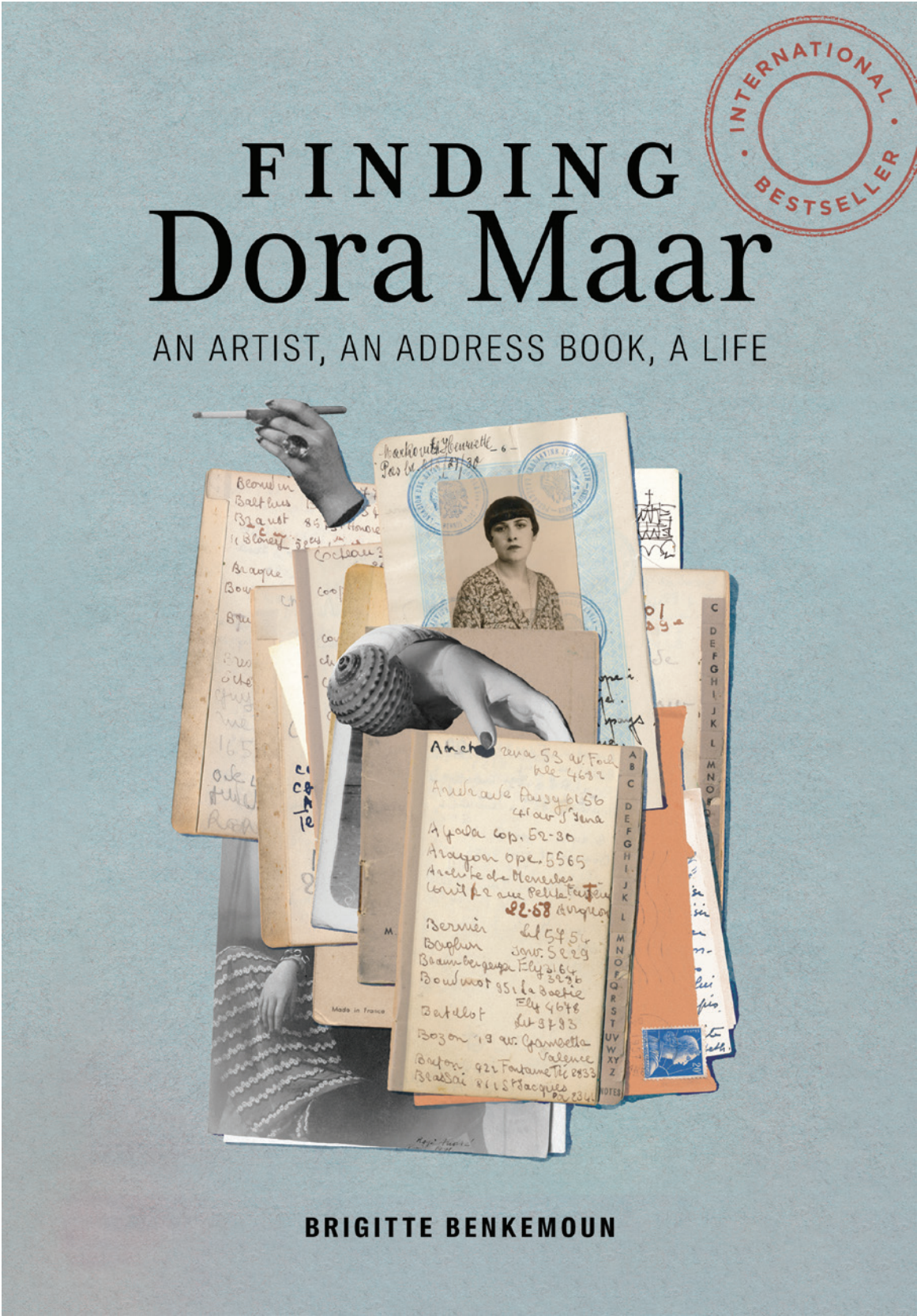
You will also find emotionally charged imagery in the recently acquired religious compositions, such as Samuel van Hoogstraten's *Crucifixion* of about 1650. Here van Hoogstraten lives up to his reputation as the best storyteller among Rembrandt's pupils, making this drawing an important addition to the museum's collection (and one that took much negotiation, so reluctant was the collector to let go of it). In this biblical scene of Christ's death on the cross, the mourning women contrast with the callous soldiers who gamble for Jesus's clothes with their backs turned. A woman cradling her newborn child in the left foreground provides another poignant narrative detail. Dramatic scenes like van Hoogstraten's made biblical stories all the more compelling and believable.

With the final genre of drawings—nature studies—purchased, we added exceptional depictions of flora and fauna, and also proudly increased our woefully small number of drawings by female artists. Maria Sibylla Merian is known for her pioneering study of flora and fauna in the Dutch colony of Suriname, in South America, but she began her career by observing the life cycles of caterpillars in German gardens. Merian's *Metamorphosis of a Small Emperor Moth on a Damson Plum* of 1679 is a vibrant depiction of the full life cycle of a moth from an egg to maturity. Here Merian perfectly captured



the verdant foliage of the host plum tree, with what she described as a "beautiful green caterpillar" crawling on its branch. With new acquisitions like this one, the Getty Museum can now feature Merian's celebrated work in the fields of art, entomology, and ecology. Together, the five newly acquired nature studies demonstrate the Dutch fascination with the natural world and the interdependence of art and science in the early modern period.

The 39 drawings—all of the highest quality, and some exceptionally rare—have transformed the museum's Dutch holdings and will let us present a more complete history of Dutch art. I am honored to have spearheaded bringing them to Los Angeles and look forward to sharing this landmark purchase with you in an exhibition in 2022, *From a Collector's Cabinet: Recently Acquired Dutch Drawings*. ■



FINDING DORA MAAR: AN ARTIST, AN ADDRESS BOOK, A LIFE

Brigitte Benkemoun

French journalist Brigitte Benkemoun wrote this bestselling biography of enigmatic artist Dora Maar (1907–1997) after inadvertently buying Maar’s used Hermès diary and discovering 20 pages of telephone numbers and addresses for great postwar artists. In the following excerpt, the author explores Maar’s budding relationship with “B” contact André Breton, cofounder of the Surrealist movement.

Breton
42 rue Fontaine
TRE 8833

Breton must have appeared in Dora’s successive address books at least since 1933. In that era he reigned as leader of the Surrealist movement, which he had created with Aragon and Soupault in 1924, and then further developed with Éluard and Desnos. We must imagine what they represented then: the most brilliant and original avant-gardes on the artistic scene. One would have been eager to meet them, to be accepted into their circle, to listen to them in the cafés of place Blanche, challenging the established order and bourgeois conventions. Every day, whoever showed up, wherever they gathered, Breton held forth, and the others after him, on everything and nothing in what was often a school-boy atmosphere, under the effects of white wine or Curaçao. Sometimes things turned ugly and there was slapping and fighting over nothing more than a wrong word or idea.

Breton and his friends were interested in the unconscious, dreams, and the occult. They experimented with alternate approaches to reality through automatic writing, hypnosis, and sometimes drugs. They invented a new kind of poetic expression but also had ambitions to change the world. Rimbaud and Marx combined.

When she first attended the Surrealists’ gatherings, Dora was said to be the mistress of the writer Georges Bataille. Her erotic capital increased tenfold, with all the fantasies about the orgies and sadomasochistic ceremonies she supposedly engaged in with him. But in fact no one knew anything for certain. After a long falling out, Bataille and Breton had joined forces in the mid-1930s to oppose the threat of Nazism, the rise of fascism,

and the far-right leagues. Together they created the Counter-Attack group. Dora was one of the few women to take an active part in it. Today we underestimate the courage and nerve it then took to be the only female militant among all those men. But brilliant, intelligent, cultivated, passionate, radical, combative Dora was not afraid of anything!

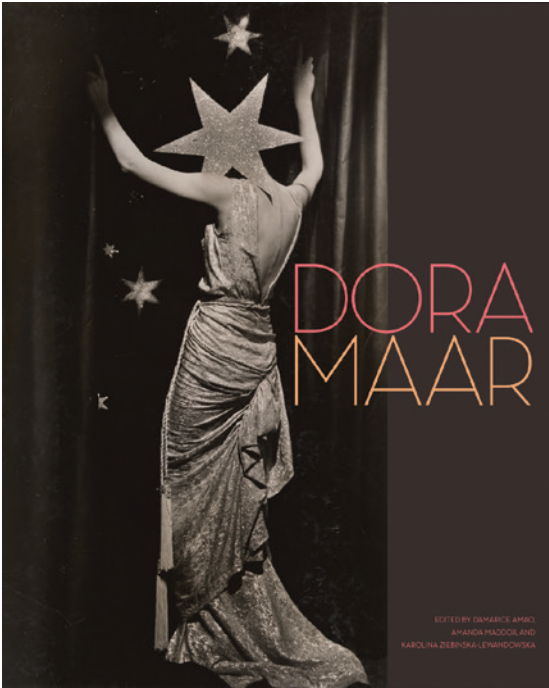
Distancing herself from Bataille, politically and sexually, she moved closer to the Surrealists. Without becoming wholly part of the movement, she was attracted to their artistic and political development, which paralleled the evolution of her own photographic work. She also corresponded to the idea they had formed of the ideal woman: beautiful, rebellious, artistic, talented, inspiring — even a bit hysterical. Physically, she was a very pretty brunette, elegant and sophisticated, with a beautiful oval face, bright eyes that changed with the light, and long hands with polished nails. Man Ray photographed her in this period, a woman both sensual and commanding.

The painter Marcel Jean remembered having seen her arrive one day “at the Café de la Place Blanche with her hair disheveled and falling down over her face and shoulders, like someone just rescued from drowning.” Everyone at the Surrealists’ table, or almost everyone, let out admiring cries. I can well imagine Breton expressing his unrestrained enthusiasm. Nevertheless, what a surprise to see someone who was always described as dressed to the nines show up so disheveled. Surely she must have wanted to surprise, to create an unexpected scene. Or else she was not well, already fragile and sometimes in trouble, as she was later when Picasso abandoned her.

Of this group, she knew Éluard best, whom she had met through Prévert, but she was most fascinated by Breton. Instinctively, she always preferred the chefs over the sous-chefs. Especially because he was much less brusque than he was often said to be. With women, he even demonstrated astounding gentleness and gallantry. When a woman entered the café, a dazzled smile lit up his face, and he rose and kissed her hand. It was one of the many rituals he also imposed upon his Surrealist friends. Dora was not insensible to it.

She was especially flattered that he took an interest in her photographs and publicly acknowledged her talent. In 1936 he selected one of her works for a Surrealist exhibition: *Le Père Ubu*, a monstrous portrait of an armadillo fetus. But he also appreciated the power of her more socially engaged work and encouraged her experiments in dreamlike, poetic collage. She was already famous as a fashion and advertising photographer, and now she was gaining recognition as a Surrealist artist.

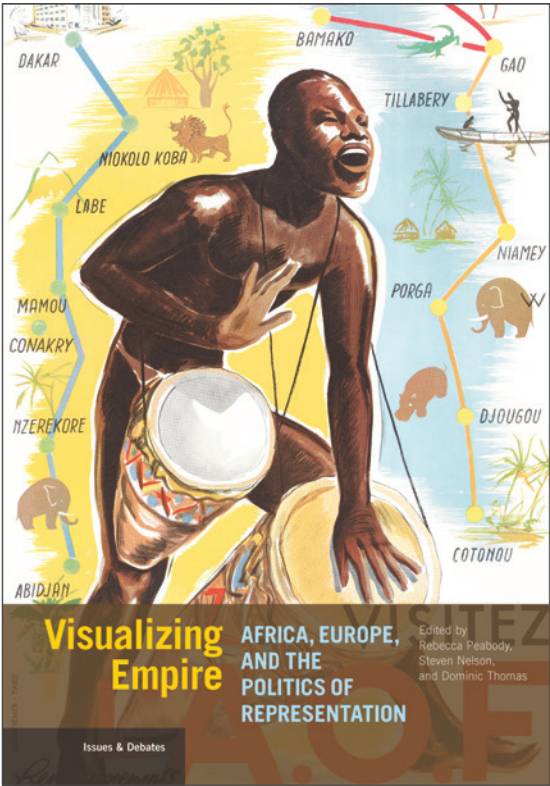
This excerpt is taken from Finding Dora Maar: An Artist, an Address Book, a Life, translated by Jody Gladding, published by Getty Publications © The J. Paul Getty Trust. All rights reserved.



Dora Maar
Edited by Damarice Amao, Amanda Maddox, and Karolina Ziebinska-Lewandowska

Dora Maar was active at the height of Surrealism in France and was recognized as a key member of the movement. But her standing as the one-time muse and mistress of Pablo Picasso—his famous “Weeping Woman”—has long eclipsed her creative output and minimized her influence. Richly illustrated with 240 key works showcasing Maar’s inimitable acumen as a photographer, this book examines the full arc of her career for the very first time. Subjects include her innovative commercial and fashion photography, approach to the nude and eroticism, engagement with political groups, affiliation with the Surrealist movement, and hitherto unknown work from her reclusive late career, providing a dynamic and multi-faceted examination of an important artist.

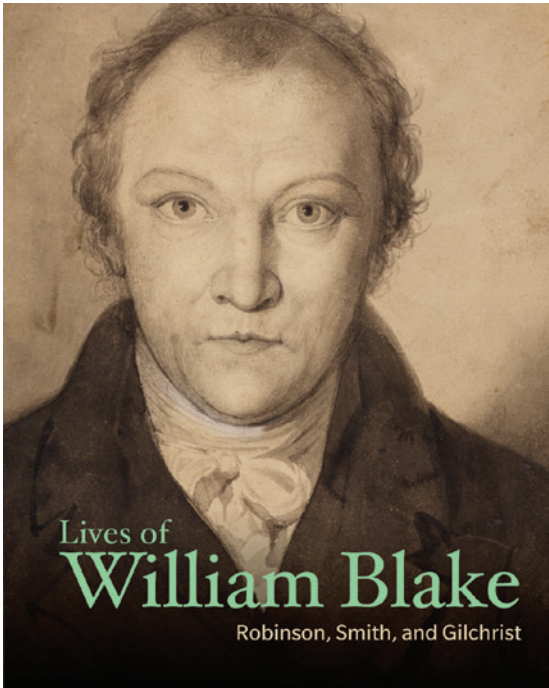
J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM
208 pages, 9 x 11 1/4 inches
234 color illustrations
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Visualizing Empire
Africa, Europe, and the Politics of Representation
Edited by Rebecca Peabody, Steven Nelson, and Dominic Thomas

By the end of World War I, having fortified its colonial holdings in the Caribbean, Latin America, Africa, the Indian Ocean, and Asia, France had expanded its dominion to the four corners of the world. This volume examines how the French Empire encouraged an engaging material culture to normalize its colonial project and racialized ideas of life in the empire. Drawing from documents and media held in Getty Research Institute collections, *Visualizing Empire* analyzes aspects of colonialism manifest in the art, popular literature, games, maps, films, and exhibitions that represented, celebrated, or were created for France’s colonies across the seas.

GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE
200 pages, 7 x 10 inches
88 color and 5 b/w illustrations
Paperback
US \$55.00



Lives of William Blake
Henry Crabb Robinson, John Thomas Smith, and Alexander Gilchrist

William Blake was a painter, printmaker, poet, and mystical thinker who became one of the leading figures of Romanticism and who is held up as a paragon of artistic originality and creativity. This volume presents the earliest critical essay on his art by journalist and diarist Henry Crabb Robinson, as well as illuminating biographical texts by John Thomas Smith, a fellow artist and personal friend of Blake, and writer Alexander Gilchrist. An introduction by Martin Myrone contextualizes these writings, which provide a rich, nuanced view of the life and fantastic work of an artist who today occupies a revered place in the pantheon of visionary artists.

J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM
192 pages, 4 1/2 x 5 3/4 inches
60 color illustrations
Paperback
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Fluxus Means Change
Jean Brown’s Avant-Garde Archive
Marcia Reed

Throughout the 1960s, Jean and Leonard Brown assembled an extensive collection of Dada and Surrealist publications and editions, including influential works by Marcel Duchamp. After Leonard’s death in 1970, Jean reinvented herself and her collection, collaborating with Fluxus impresario George Maciunas to acquire Fluxus works and contemporary genres such as artists’ books, multiples, and mail art. Drawing on the Jean Brown Archive at the Getty Research Institute, this book looks at the innovative art she collected, the artists she befriended, and the many ways they challenged the art world establishment and upended artistic traditions.

GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE
144 pages, 10 x 10 inches
103 color illustrations
Hardcover
US \$50.00



“How to Study and Write about Natural History,” by Jacques de Sève (French, active 1742–1788, draftsman), Dominique Sornique (French, 1708–1756, engraver). Illustration from *Histoire naturelle générale et particulière avec la description du cabinet du roy*, volume I, by Georges Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon

Opposite; *Stag Red Deer* (*Cervidae*), Jacques De Sève (draftsman), Lempeur (engraver). Illustration from *Histoire naturelle générale et particulière avec la description du cabinet du roy*, Volume VI, by Georges Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon.

THE BEAUTY OF THE BEASTS

The Getty Research Institute’s Marcia Reed walks us through the animal portraits in Natural History, the Comte de Buffon’s ambitious and influential study of “all things in the universe”

By Marcia Reed
Chief Curator, Associate Director
Getty Research Institute

IN THE FIRST VOLUME of his *Histoire Naturelle* (*Natural History*), the Comte de Buffon, Georges-Louis Le Clerc (1707–1788), wrote that he wished to compile “an immense history, embracing all things in the universe.” This ambitious goal was of course more than anyone could accomplish. And yet, Buffon did leave an impressive legacy in his comprehensive Enlightenment opus, in which the techniques and knowledge of science are tasked with making sense of nature.

Born in Burgundy in southern France, Buffon came to Paris to study as a young man, and lived there for the rest of his life, enabled by a family inheritance. Unlike latter-day *National Geographic* writers who travel widely, Buffon was anchored by his position as director of the King’s Garden, now the Jardin des Plantes. Initially a mathematician, he was admitted to the French Academy of Sciences in 1734. A respected world-class intellectual, Buffon was subsequently elected to both the Académie Française in 1753 and the American Philosophical Society in 1768. As the royal garden’s head from 1739, he increased its holdings of specimens with plants and animals, alive and dead, and published them in *Natural History’s* 36 volumes with supplements.

Buffon’s *Natural History* was intended to be a reference work like the encyclopedia and dictionary published by his contemporaries, Diderot and Voltaire. The *History’s* specific focus was quadru-



ped, birds, and fish, as well as minerals. It departed from the lore of medieval bestiaries—books that described the habits and appearance of real or imagined animals in moralizing terms—by offering sophisticated theories of creation and detailed observations, including through graphic dissections. Buffon’s scientific compilation comprised texts written by himself and others, now read and studied by scholars. What has lived on for centuries are the engaging illustrations of animals by diverse artists. These images have also extended the popularity of earlier books such as bestiaries and Aesop’s fables.

From the appearance of the first three volumes in 1749, completed by the early 19th century, the *History* was a bestseller and prompted many subsequent editions and translations. Volume 1 opens to an emblematic chapter head “La Manière d’étudier et de traiter l’Histoire Naturelle” (“How to Study and Write about Natural History”). Illustrating “The Genius of Nature Contemplating the Universe,” it shows a woman, casually dressed *en déshabillé*, amid a crowd of various creatures. Putti wrestle them into submission as she reads an open book on her lap. Specimen jars are shelved above her, and she

Le Chat d’Angora (The Angora Cat), 1756, by Bu-vée (French, 18th-century, designer, illustrator), Louis Legrand (French, 1723–1807, engraver). Illustration from *Histoire naturelle générale et particulière avec la description du cabinet du roy*, volume VI, by Georges Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon

Opposite from left: A portrait of Buffon with a globe and animals at his feet. Monument to Buffon, about 1776, Augustin Pajou. Fabricated red chalk. The J. Paul Getty Museum

Le Rhinocéros, 1754, by Jacques de Sève (French, active 1742–1788, designer), Jean-Charles Baquoy (French, 1721–1772, engraver). Illustration from *Histoire naturelle générale et particulière avec la description du cabinet du roy*, volume XI, by Georges Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon



leans on a table laden with astronomical instruments: an armillary sphere, a telescope, and a quadrant. Along with such animated group portraits introducing the books’ chapters, the full-page illustrations of animals are notably sympathetic and expressive, characterizing their physical qualities as well as personalities. Buffon’s vision of nature is not a scary one. His animals seem almost tame, as if they were posed in an elegantly appointed home or placed there like beloved taxidermied pets. They gaze out at us, as if wanting to engage. Among the domestic animals there is a truly handsome group of dogs—loyal hounds and adorable small



breeds—and a feisty group of cats who look like strong contenders for the “Best in Show” ribbon. Rather than portraits of strange and wild creatures—like the fantastic and frightening images of earlier natural histories—Buffon’s animals appear friendly, perhaps constructing a bridge between man and nature by presenting detailed knowledge of its denizens. Buffon’s *Natural History* served as a sourcebook for artists, and the images were often copied in later publications and in other media, such as paintings. Getty visitors might still recall the 1749 painting by Jean-Baptiste Oudry of Clara

the rhinoceros, featured in the 2007 exhibition *Oudry’s Painted Menagerie*. Such monumental paintings were made for elite patrons with private collections. Meanwhile prints of natural history subjects, like those made for the original *Histoire*, circulated widely. Those bound in books were often removed and collected. Favorite animals were occasionally hand-colored, mounted, and framed individually. An 18th-century encyclopedia of natural science for erudite readers, the prints popularized animal portraits for centuries. ■

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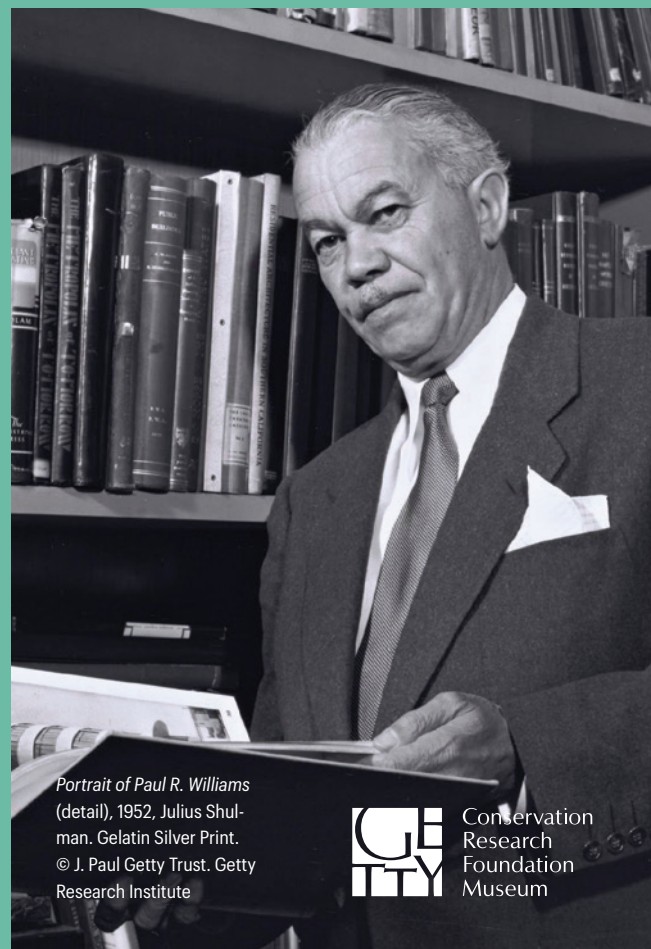
Art + Ideas

“In addition to having an incredible God-given talent, Paul Williams had this positive thought process, this will to believe that his life was going to make a difference to other architects and African Americans trying to make a difference.”

—**Karen Hudson**

Join Jim Cuno as he talks with leaders in the arts and humanities about their work and current concerns. Learn about Black LA architect Paul R. Williams from the perspective of his granddaughter, Karen Hudson, and curator LeRonn Brooks; hear the stories of Japanese American photographers in pre-World War II LA; and much more.

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Portrait of Paul R. Williams
(detail), 1952, Julius Shul-
man. Gelatin Silver Print.
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