TWO NEW HIRES FOR ART HISTORY

Sonja Drimmer
Medieval Art and Architecture

What fascinates you about English illuminated manuscripts and what got you into this topic?

An art history major in college, I also took a heavy dose of classes in medieval English literature. In my final semester, my English professor asked me to write a review of a CD-ROM of The Canterbury Tales, which drew on a luxuriously ornamented manuscript of the poem. It was a revelation and showed me how much I was missing by reading stories like The Canterbury Tales from printed books that bore little relation to the illustrated and scintillatingly ornamented manuscripts in which they were first presented. What a loss, I thought, that the foundational works of the English literary canon were known to us now as only words, when they were initially composed and encountered by audiences as words-and-images!

During the developmental period of e-readers, when I was doing my MA in England, the innovations in our own literary-visual landscape convinced me of the relevance of my interest in illustrated manuscripts. The manuscript on which I wrote my dissertation is a book made for King Edward IV, c.1472: it contains an English poem that was originally written eighty years earlier for a different king. Through images, ornamentation, and a variety of other "add-ons," the makers of the manuscript transformed a poem into a political pageant, at whose center was the king for whom the manuscript was made. In essence, the incision of images made a poem serve a political agenda that its author could never have imagined. So, for England's first generation of national poets, artists were

Karen Kurczynski
Modern and Contemporary Art

Please tell us about the exhibitions you are co-curating.

With a Danish curator, I am co-curating a centennial exhibition of Asger Jorn (1914-1973) at the Museum Jorn in Silkeborg, Denmark, to open in March, 2014. Ours is a sort of "dialogic retrospective," meaning it will include Jorn's work next to that of the artists who inspired and collaborated with him. Entitled "Expo Jorn," it begins with his earliest inspirations, like Picasso, Kandinsky, Miró, and Le Corbusier, and also features work from the many movements he co-founded, such as the Cobra group (1948–51) and the Situationist International (1957–72). The second exhibition, a traveling show about the Cobra movement, I am co-curating with the Dutch director of the Cobra Museum, Amstelveen, the Netherlands. It will open at the Museum of Art Fort Lauderdale in December, 2015 and features not just the brief years of Cobra proper, but also later, more monumental work by the major artists of the movement, including Jorn, Appel, Constant, Christian Dotremont, and Pierre Alechinsky. This project emphasizes the complex aims and experimental practices of the movement, which combined collectivity and populism with personal expression in a variety of media. We hope to get a new generation of art audiences in the US interested in these artists. Because of its interest in politics and the combination of abstract and figurative elements, in some ways the art of Cobra feels more contemporary than other 1950s painting. I have really enjoyed both of these projects because not only have they allowed me to gain new insight into curating a big museum exhibition, but they are both actively collaborative.
Drimmer continued... 
playing a critical role as agents of reminiscence.
Please explain "remediation" and your interests in it.

A concept first discussed by New Media theorists, remediation is the process by which new media re-imagine prior media forms. Media artists were master remediators. Whether they were using the idea of a cathedral façade to create a stage-set for a royal coronation ceremony, or transform an oral poem into a series of wall paintings, they were fasci
nated with this idea of mutation and homage through the quotation of one media format in another. My project this summer at the Henri Frankfort Fellow at the Wartburg Institute focused on the ear
liest illustrated dictionary of hieroglyphs produced in Europe, which was intended as a gift for King Henry VII of England. It is, with exaggerations, a by
zantine manuscript I had seen almost. Every hieroglyphic illustration in the manuscript is a hand-made copy of an image taken from printed books—a great example of remediation. The manuscript is also international in its own way: it ad
resses an ancient Egyptian language, the text was based on another manuscript made in Greece, it was written by an Ital
ian monk, the illustrations were produced in Paris, and it was presented in England.

How did you decide to become a me
dieval art historian?
I gravitated to the Middle Ages because of the sense of unicity I experienced (and still do) when I encounter contact with its cultural output. The Middle Ages presents so much that is familiar to us now, but always with a twist. A great example is the "political poster," the subject of my next project. During times of po
litical unrest, say the Wars of the Roses, different factions would commission artists to create massive posters that use images to announce the legitimacy of a giver or contender to the throne. One of their techniques was to use images of Biblical storylines or allusions to the legends of Troy to make moral points about the people they support. It's refreshing and some
times starting to see the continuities with as well as the differences from politics and campaigning in our own time. Above all, I'm intrigued by the ways in which the Middle Ages stimulate my thinking about the world of today (and vice-versa), and I think weodiously après picturesque as well.

Koczynski continued... 
-one of the aspects that drew me to Jorn's work in the first place.

How did you first come to work on Asger Jorn? What fascinates you in particular about his work?
I first discovered Asger Jorn in a seminar on post-WWII European art. My dis
sertation focused initially on Jorn's work from 1957 to 1961, but my research in Denmark uncovered a wealth of mate
rials. I, for example, found an article in the "Handelsblad" titled "The New Danish-Handball" in which I learned that Asger Jorn founded during WWII, which openly promoted so-called "degenerate" art during the Nazi occupa
tion of Denmark. This movement was barely known in the U.S. but contained all the seeds of the famous postwar movement, Cobra, which preceded the SI.

The thing that interested me most about Jorn was the way he combined collective politics with personal expression. Jorn who was also a philosopher, anthropol
ogist, and artist, drew on his experiences as an artist who'd been studied many times over, I wanted to find a topic with a lot of room for new interpretation; that is why I was drawn to postwar European art in the first place. This project involved learning Danish and Italian—and brushing up on my French and German—for my archival research. It also focused on the foundation of the art history program at Radnor in the first place: looking closely at works of art and trying to figure out what they mean to different audiences, in di
verse social contexts. What they mean to

the artist is only a starting point.

What did you find especially appeal
ing about coming to the Art History Program at the University of Massa
chusetts?
I believe strongly in public education, and in universities that actively support learning for all kinds of people. Art his
tory can be an esoteric field, and moder
n art has its particularities, so my major goals as a teacher are to make it more accessible, exciting, and relevant to students and the larger community. I also went to a large, active public univer
sity (Michigan) and UMass feels very familiar to me. It sort of feels like com
ing home.

Recent Program Events
17th Annual Mark Roskill Graduate Student Symposium

The Martha's Vineyard Museum, a small institution in the process of expanding to a new facility and digitizing its collection, has provided valuable lessons about mak
ning the best of limited facilities and an ever more limited budget. The museum staff have been dedicated to making this experience an educational one for me. Despite their busy schedules, both curators have been very helpful in pro
viding guidance and mentorship and each week one department gives a lecture on an aspect of museum management from exhibition design to grant writing and marketing. I've been cataloging the muse
um's collection of model ships, and have chosen one model to be on display later this month, accompanied by my own la
bel. In addition, I've been working closely with the chief curatorial assistant, first in installing an exhibit about three artists who used inspiration and materials drawn from the sea. I am also documenting loan objects to be displayed in an exhibit titled "One on the Late: The Martha's Vineyard Striped Bass and Bluefish Derby". Finally, I am writing an article to be featured in the Vineyard Gazette about the art scene on the Vineyard during the early twenti
eth century. Thanks to the generosity of the Art History Program in awarding me an Anne Mochon scholarship, I will be able to afford to extend this opportunity through September.

Sarah Bernatas (MA 2013)

Sarah Bernatas with model ship at the Martha's Vineyard Museum

Thursday, October 18th 2012, 5:00 pm
Hemen Hall, Room 207
University of Massachusetts, Amherst

In addition to welcoming these two new assistant professors, over the last year the Art History Program also hosted the 17th Annual Mark Roskill Graduate Sym
posium and inaugurated a new guest lec
ture series, both in the Fall. The Spring saw the 8th student-curated exhibition at the University Museum of Contemporary Art ("Shaping the View"), the 8th An

Sarah Browne (MA Candidate)
The Textiles and Fashion Arts Depart
ment at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston manages a collection of tens of thousands of objects, ranging from an
cient Egyptian textile fragments to gloves and shoes from contemporary fashion houses. During my summer internship in the department, I learned how to use the Museum System, which is the collec
tion management software used by most large art museums. Most of the time was spent adding information to object files (descriptions, measurements, photo
graphs, dates, and any context I could find). I also had access to the extensive Textile and Fashion Arts Library, and had the opportunity to closely examine and take notes on garments from fashion designers I have grown up admiring. My main focus of the summer was on a large gift the museum received comprised of contemporary ensembles, many of which will be featured in a upcoming "Think Pink!" exhibit, opening in October.

Anne Mochon Endowment Grants for Summer Internships

Mureen McVeigh behind the scenes at the National Gallery of Art

My first assignment focused on assem
bling bibliographies for several of the Gallery's sculptures attributed to Ver
rocchio. It has been especially fascinat
ing to see how opinions on attribution and perceived quality have evolved since the works were given to the Gallery. I also worked to amass provenance infor
mation on Italian Renaissance sculptures don
ated by H. Kress and the Kress Foundation, using the papers of Jacques Seligmann et Cie, (a prominent Paris and New York art dealer) now in the Archives of American Art. Perhaps the most exciting aspect here was my discov
ery of an assertion of a particular early ownership of an 18th century bust by Houdon, a detail which led to extensive research on the work's creation and ini
tial history. The claim proved unlikely, but my research turned up valuable and previously unknown information.
I have been lucky this year to have other summer internships on the Museum of just about every depart
ment in the Gallery, from conservation to exhibition design. The best part though was the opportunity to work closely with experts in their field, including Nancy Yeole, the head of Curatorial Records and Files, a researcher of Nazi-era provenance who appeared in the documentary "The Rape of Europe". I hope to spend more time delving into this fascinating world of provenance research. I also was able to visit storage with sculpture curator Alison Lucha and give my opinion on a very in
teresting Leohiad relief of the Madonna and Child with Saints, a wonderful exer
cise in looking at that has inspired thoughts for a future paper topic (see picture).
Ghilu Çakmak, Assistant Professor of Nineteenth-Century European Art, has completed her second year in the program and is working on a new project. She co-ordinated a new graduate seminar and coordinated the team-taught survey course Introduction to the History of Art: Renaissance to Present. She served on the nascent position search committee as well as graduate admissions committee. Under the auspices of an Andrew W. Mellon Mentoring grant given by the Center for Teaching and Faculty Development, she invited three major university press editors to UMass for lectures and workshops. Her contributions to three edited books and a journal will appear in late 2013. An exhibition she co-curated at the Leeds Art Gallery and the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds, UK entitled “Polychromies: Surface, Light and Colour,” opened in November 2012, and will stay in view until March 2014. In Fall 2013, she is taking advantage of the College’s Research Intensive Semester (RIS), which releases her from teaching to work on her book manuscript.

Walter Denny spent the 2012-2013 academic year on sabbatical, serving in fall of 2012 at Nasser David Khalili Visiting Professor of Islamic Art at Queens College in New York City. In October he received the George Hewitt Myers Award for Lifetime Achievement in the field of study, from the Textile Museum in Washington DC. He has continued his busy schedule of writing, public lectures, scholarly papers, and consulting, as well as his work Marshalls & Major Wolf Senior Consultant in the Department of Islamic Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In fall 2013 he began his one-year Samuel Cook Faculty Fellowship, and has planned, with the UMass Alumni Association, a study tour of Turkey, scheduled for early June of 2014. He will return to full-time teaching in fall of 2014.

Laritza La Follette served as Director of the Program for a second year, during which she chaired the medieval search committee, served on the modern too, and was an active participant in the weekly restructuring meetings this past spring to move Art History to departmental status as of Sept 2014. She organized the annual Roundtable, “The World Beyond the Major: Art History and Jobs in Publishing,” drafted the Program’s successful application for a pilot track in Art Museum Studies and saw two of her students, Ewa Matycezyk and Daniel Healey, accepted into PhD programs at Boston and Princeton Universities. Her first volume, Negating Culture: Heritage, Ownership, and Intellectual Property was published in July.

Nancy Noble completed her second year as Undergraduate Program Director. She developed and taught the Art History Program’s first undergraduate course in Museum Studies as well as a course on American landscape art for the major’s Junior Year Writing requirement. In January she gave a talk on Toulouse-Lautrec, American art, and celebrity culture at the New Britain Museum of American Art. She continued her work on an exhibition focusing on nineteenth-century American artists with Weaver Seamer Adams and Washington Allston. In late spring Nancy began work as a fellow at The Corcoran’s Honors College (CHC) art history majors to curate the inaugural exhibition in Egan Gallery, an exhibition space in the University’s new CHC Residential Community. The CHC art history majors of Mass Amherst students from the University Archives will open in September 2013.

Timothy M. Rohan during the past year gave several lectures on the work of American architect Paul Rudolph (1918-97). These included the annual Harry Halverson Lecture on American Architecture at Wellesley in November and the keynote address for the undergraduate history of art symposium at UMass Dartmouth. He was also invited to publish a piece about Rudolph in the 2013 spring issue of CLOG, a leading journal for architectural discourse. Tim was pleased to see that interest in Rudolph is growing because his monograph about the architect from Yale University Press will appear in Spring 2014. Here on campus, he had a busy year, continuing as graduate program director, serving on the medieval search committee, chairing the search for the modernist art history position and offering a new graduate seminar on postwar architecture and affluence. All rewarding activities, but he happily decamped to Italy at the end of the semester with his partner Richard. He enjoyed seeing Monika Schlimme in Venice and looking over her research. It was a wonderful way to start the summer that he will remember fondly during the new school year.

The Art History faculty is delighted to report the following awards earned by outstanding senior and junior majors, announced at a celebratory gathering at Prof. La Follette’s house in May.

Amelia Kleinitz ’13 was honored for academic research and Tori Bonazolli ’13 and Audrey Cava ’13 for overall academic excellence (look for their pictures elsewhere in this newsletter).

This year’s Spirit Awards went to Kate Edrington ’14 and Amelia Kleinitz ’13 for impressive work in the Image Collection Library and significant contributions to our faculty searches, including the making of several posters. The faculty would also like to acknowledge the Field Museum by the College of Humanities and Fine Arts field upon Nicole D’Artilio ’14 and Kate Edrington ’14.

Congratulations!

(From left to right) Daniel Healey ’12, Kate Edrington ’14, Amanda Kleinitz ’13, and Franco Campana ’13.

Alumni News

Undergraduate

Stephanie (Lewis) Cyr (BA 2003) was appointed Assistant Curator of the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library in February 2013. She has curated two exhibitions thus far for “Boston’s Age of Mapping: A Public Places” (Nov. 2012-April 2013). At the Map Center she works with maps from the 15th century to the present.

Kim Ritsen (BA 1997) is currently a pastel artist in Northern Florida that shows pieces in different galleries in Jacksonville and St. Augustine. She is a member of St. Augustine Art Association, First Coast Pastel Society and Art Guild of Orange Park. Recently she received a People’s Choice Award for one of her pieces. She has been asked by the Epley Foundation of America to contribute a painting to a 2013 art therapy publication.

Tiffany Sprague (BA 1997), Director of Publications and Editorial Services at the Yale University Art Gallery, returned to the campus in April 2013 to present her paper in museum publishing. The spring roundtable, “The World Beyond the Major: Art History and Careers in Publishing,” in December 2012, Tif- fany completed the interpretative mater- als for the renovation and reinstallation of two of the Gallery’s three historic buildings. She is now working on the upcoming publications “Francesco Van- ni: Art in a Renaissance Sons” and “Many Things Placed Here and There: The Dorothy and Herbert Vogel Coll- ection at the Yale University Art Gallery.”

Erin Webb (BA 2008) left the deCor- dova in December to join the Harvard Art Museums as the Coordinator of Fellows and Membership. They are gearing up for an exciting re-open- ing in late fall of 2014. She also just started another master’s degree - Mas- ter of Liberal Arts in General Management from the Harvard Extension School. She misses UMass a lot, particularly the Image Collection Library.
Graduate
Clara Barnhart (MA 2005) is thrilled to report that she is moving back to the Pioneer Valley with her family. She cannot wait to reconnect with the UMass art history program. Awarded a 2013-2014 Luce/ACLS Dissertation Fellowship in American Art and the 2013 Joshua C. Taylor Predoctoral Fellowship at the Smithsonian American Art Museum (declined), she is writing her dissertation, "Murals, Montage, Modernism: The Public Art of Thomas Hart Benton, Ben Shahn, and Stuart Davis in the 1930s United States." 

Meg Bernstein (MA 2011) just completed an MA in Religion and Visual Arts at the Yale Divinity School and Institute of Sacred Music, and begins her PhD in art history at UCLA on aesthetic architecture in the fall.

Theresa Biagiarelli (MA 2004) is currently on the board of directors at The Storm Creek Museum, CT. She curated this past summer’s exhibit on the 75th anniversary of the 1938 hurricane. Visitors are welcome and admission is free. There are also internship opportunities for interested students.

Jonathan Castagno (MA 2005) continues to work as Education Director at the Grand Rapids Art Museum. His department recently expanded to include Digital Media, launching the museum’s first iPad App focusing on the Jamaa Print Collection. He also has been voted onto the Board of Directors for the Museum Education Roundtable and will be attending his first Annual Meeting at the Museum of Natural History (Washington, DC) this August. He and his wife, Megan, welcomed their son (Thomas Carmel) in August 2012 (pictured below).

Sara Champlin (MA 2012) has completed her first year in the PhD program at Unit: Wisconsin Madison. This summer she joined a new archaeological project at the ancient site of Trow in Turkey.

Patricia (Reyes) Corteza (MA 1990) is retired and living at Martha’s Vineyard. As an Art Historian at the Martha’s Vineyard Museum, she is creating object records in the museum’s database, and serving as a docent in their early 17th century house.

Monica (Zimmerman) Fassdziej (MA 1995) is still teaching art history and art appreciation at local community colleges. She recently added an online class through the Art Institute. Her four children are healthy and well. She appreciates the art history department keeping track of everyone and doing the newsletter.

Aimee Froom (MA 1993), Art History Professor for Trinity College in Hartford, has courses on Medieval and Islamic Art and Architecture in and around Paris. She does freelance consulting and tours in Paris, and has two publications coming out this fall.

Elizabeth Galletani (MA 2005) enjoyed her first trip to Paris in February as an art courier. She is currently working on a reinstallation of the two Assyrian reliefs at Williams College Museum of Art as well as two upcoming projects: an exhibition of Ragamala paintings from India and the next Labeltalk exhibition. Her and her husband, Rob, celebrated their anniversary and their daughter’s birthday in June. They are thrilled to welcome a second daughter in October.

Andrew Huber (MA 2011) now lives outside Philadelphia and works for Freeman’s Auctioneers and Appraisers as the Curatorial Department--a department that focuses on Old Masters through 19th century American and European Art--working as an associate specialist. In much more exciting news, he is engaged to Stephanie Peterson (MA 2011). No wedding date is set yet, but they are shooting for Summer 2014. (See picture below.)

Andreas Gehrke (MA 1993) continues his studies in Spanish/Portuguese art history. In November 2012, he chaired a session on Portugal and Spain at the History conference in Lisbon hosted by the prestigious Gulbenkian foundation. In February, he gave a talk on the Elegy on the Death of Prince Baltasar Carlos at the invitation of Universidade de Zaragoza in Spain. In October, he will talk about some of his recent discoveries in Portuguese art of the 17th century at Montreal University.

I esley (Keimer) Herzberg (MA 2006) was promoted from Collections Manager to Curator of Collections at Hancock Shaker Village in May 2012, after the opening of her exhibition "A Promising Venture: Shaker Photographs from the WPA" which remains on view at HSV through October 2013. She is working on a number of new exhibitions for 2013 and beyond. She and her husband, Matt, are expecting their son at the end of June, when they will get big brother Jacob in the Herzberg household.

Rebecca Hiester (MA 2009) is Education Coordinator and Marketing Specialist at Blue Heron Glass in Charleston. She designs new classes and workshops for adults as well as designs and builds unique stained glass panels for sale. She also is Museum Educator at the Gibbes Museum of Art in Charleston, gives tours and volunteers with the curatorial department there and works on a variety of projects including temporary exhibits and record-keeping.

Rebecca Karp (MA 2008) is enjoying her second year as the Assistant Curator of Education at the Mound House Museum of Art at Dartmouth College. She manages the docent program and oversees school and community programs. She recently presented on a panel entitled: "Making Art, Enduring History: Leadership Strategies for Collaboration and Communication" at the annual conference of the Art Education Association.

Rachel Laffo (MA 1974) reports that after working as a freelance curator, writer, lecturer, and public art tour leader in BC, she moved to Denver, CO area since 2009, she started a new position in February 2013 as the Director of the Richmond Art Gallery in Richmond, British Columbia.

Ewa Maryczyk (MA 2012) has spent the last year working at Boston’s Institute of Contemporary Art as a Visitor Services Gallery Assistant, Gallery Operator and intern supervisor. She had the great opportunity to lead tours and give gallery talks during the ICA’s show “This Will Have Been: Art, Love and Politics in the 1980s.” She guest lectured on “Institutional Critique” for a course on art after 1945 at the Art Institute of Boston. This fall she starts her PhD at Boston University, where she will focus on Polish art of the 1970s and 1980s.

Beaurece Stearn (MA 1979) was promoted to Full Professor in the Art Department at Bridgewater State University. She also participated in the Temple Mount Sifting Project in Jerusalem in 2012, where she identified, quantified and categorized Ottoman-era ceramic fragments and wrote the public publication working with the project supervisor, Dr. Gabriel Barkay of Bar Ilan University.

Christoph Sadowski (MA 1996) recently presented his findings on Alfred Bonnardot, an important early figure in paper conservation at a conference in Copenhagen. His paper was published in Conservation in the Nineteenth Century by Archetype, London in May. He is currently working as a conservator for special collections at the Weissman Preservation Center, The Harvard Library.


Gifts made to the Art History Program can be used to support a wide range of activities that benefit all students, including publishing this newsletter, guest lectures, the Roundtable and the Mark Roskill Symposium. Gifts to the Anne Mochon Internship Fund support MA candidates in internships each year.
Art History Program
317B Bardett Hall
Amherst, MA 01003-9269
Phone: (413) 545-3595
http://www.umass.edu/arthist

Faculty

Gürlü Çakmak
19th Century European Art
gcakmak@arthist.umass.edu

Walter Denny
Islamic, Museum Studies, Orientalism
wdenny@arthist.umass.edu

Sonja Drimmer
Medieval Art
sdrimmer@arthist.umass.edu

Karen Kurczynska
Modern & Contemporary Art
kurczynski@arthist.umass.edu

Laetitia La Follette
Director - Art History, Ancient Art & Cybertechnology
laelaf@arthist.umass.edu

Nancy Noble
Undergraduate Program Director
Adjunct Professor
American Art
nnoble@arthist.umass.edu

William Oedel
Chair, Art, Architecture & Art History Department
American Art
wtoedel@arthist.umass.edu

Timothy Rohan
Graduate Program Director
Architecture
trohan@arthist.umass.edu

Monika Schmitten
Italian Renaissance and Baroque
mschmitten@arthist.umass.edu

Kristine Haney
Professor Emerita
Medieval, Decorative Arts

Craig Harbison
Professor Emeritus
Northern European

Anne Mochon
Professor Emerita
Modern, Contemporary

Art History & Image Library Staff

Robin Coolbeth
Art History Program Assistant
coolbeth@arthist.umass.edu

Mike Foldy
Library Assistant II
Image Collection Library
mfoldy@library.umass.edu

Brian Shielbourne
Head, Image Collection Library
bps@library.umass.edu

Annie Sollinger
Metadata Librarian
Image Collection Library