ART HISTORY FULFILLS TWO LONG-HELD DREAMS

COME CELEBRATE OUR NEW DEPARTMENT!

On September 1, 2014, the Art History Program became the Department of the History of Art and Architecture, the successful result of many years' worth of effort and a huge push over the last twelve months. We are especially grateful to Bill Oedel, the outgoing Chair of the Department of Art, Architecture and Art History for helping us realize this longheld dream. We will be celebrating with a series of inaugural events over the course of the academic year (see page 2 for the program) and hope you will come back “home” to join us. We are also delighted to report the hire of an East Asianist, something we have sought to do for more than two decades (see the interview with Christine Ho.)

We hope you enjoy this newsletter and that you will be inspired to stay in touch and to support our efforts. Please encourage any alumni who no longer hear from us to give us a call (413-545-3595) or to send me an email (laela@umass.edu) so we can reconnect and include them in our Art History community.

Laetitia La Follette, acting chair

INTRODUCING OUR NEW EAST ASIANIST, CHRISTINE HO

1. How did you develop an interest in Chinese brush and ink painting (guohua)? What do you see as its legacy for modern and/or contemporary Chinese art?

In college, I became fascinated with the works of modern ink painter Zhang Daqian, particularly his late paintings that use a technique known as splashed ink to produce a grandiose, aqueous, and richly coloristic presence. Ink painting remains a medium in which it seems nearly impossible, for art historians, curators, and contemporary artists today, to break free of the clichés of tradition and modernity, history and innovation, Chinese and Western. The difficulty of finding an adequate language to describe these works and to illuminate their magnetism is the challenge of writing about modern ink painting and, in many ways, what first attracted me to the study of modern Chinese art.

2. What led you to focus your research on the early Maoist period of the People's Republic of China (1949-1965)? How do you see your work contributing to a more global perspective of modern art, one that illuminates Marxism from a Chinese, not just Western, perspective?

Many modern ink painters – including the figures at the center of my study, namely Fu Baoshi, Li Keran, and Guan Shanyue – had long, prolific careers that extended well into the People's Republic of China after its establishment in 1949. These paintings are largely overlooked because they seem to be divorced from the concerns of socialist visual culture, or, in other words, not propagandistic enough. Yet the early socialist period, as I came to realize through my research, is one of the most experimental and comprehensive periods of cultural change. It was a period in which culture was understood as widely transformative of personal, social, and political relations. Arts officials and theoreticians imagined a situation in which not only artists, but the masses, the people, were hungry for culture and...
INaugural Events 2014 - 2015

We have planned the following events to celebrate our new departmental status. Please join us!

- **September 2**: Opening of the first of our bi-annual exhibitions curated by undergraduate Art History majors in the Commonwealth Honors College’s Greensbaum Gallery under the able direction of Nancy Noble, our Undergraduate Program Director
- **October 8-9**: Amy Hermann talks about Art and Perception
- **October 17**: The 15th annual Roskill Graduate Symposium featuring University of Virginia professor Carmen Higginbotham (MA 1997), who will speak on the representation of black urban labor by American realist painters of the 1930s
- **Early February 2015**: Guest lecture by Dr. Darby English, Professor of Williams College and consulting curator at MoMA
- **February 24, April 7**: Our spring film series with Amherst Cinema
- **March 10**: Our annual spring roundtable with a focus on education and Art History as an anti-poverty initiative
- **TBA**: The opening of the annual show curated by one of our MAs at the University Museum of Contemporary Art and the unveiling of our new website

4. **You join the art history faculty at an auspicious time, at the inauguration of the new Department of the History of Art and Architecture. What are some of the things that drew you to the University of Massachusetts and/or that you look forward to most in the Department?**

It is an exciting and important time when a public institution chooses to assert its commitment to the humanities, which I strongly believe should be available, accessible, and part of the vocabulary of an educated citizen of the world. Art history offers a valuable skill set of patient attention, concentrated observation, focused analysis of cultural meaning, and cultivated intellectual curiosity. I am thrilled to join a department that encompasses such a diverse range of specialties, interests, and approaches, not to mention the highly accomplished Asian Studies scholars at UMass Amherst. I’m also excited about the visiting artists who will be part of campus life, and look forward to engaging with the museum collections that undergird the cultural life of the Five College community.

Curatorial Fellowship

Fractured: The Modern Nude

Co-curated by MA 2014 graduates Brittany Mayo and Maureen McVeigh, this was the culminating project of a yearlong curatorial fellowship sponsored by the Art History Program and the University Museum of Contemporary Art (UMCA) that opened in March. Brittany and Maureen selected 20th-century paintings, prints, drawings, photographs, and film from the collections of the UMCA and the Five College museums to showcase the many artists who represent the fragmented human body. They participated in all aspects of the exhibition and its planning, including grant writing, budget and loan request preparation, installation, and authoring the exhibition catalog, and giving a public gallery talk.

Recent Student Activity

The Material World Quality and the Canon

The panel was curated by MA 2014 student Hannah McKeon and featured presentations on the condition of objects in the Art History Program’s Undergraduate Writing Seminar. The event was co-sponsored by the undergraduate program and the museum.

Annual Roundtable

“Beyond the Major: Cultural Heritage, Art and the Law”

Our 2014 Spring Roundtable “What’s Next? Beyond the Major: Cultural Heritage, Art and the Law” brought together Mary Elizabeth Williams (MA 2008), Azimee Taber (BA 1994), author of Cultural Property Acquisitions: Navigating the Changing Landscape (2011) and Sandra Dong, NAGPRA Coordinator at the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard, to discuss the legal and ethical issues that face museum and other art professionals today, as well as the paths that brought them to their current jobs.
AWARDS AND INTERNSHIPS

M.A. Candidates
To Liz Bola & Leslie Winter for research and language work in Italy
To Jasmine Delacome and Christian Knieck for their internships in museum education at the Wadsworth and MFA Boston, respectively.

B.A. Summer Internship Awards
Michael Pratt and Kate Nadel (Boston Art Museum)
Sarah Oh (Creative Time, NYC)
Kelly Pope (Gropius House, Lincoln MA)

Senior Awards
Felicia Bolsale (academic excellence, writing)
Nicole D’Amato (academic achievement)
Kate Edington (thesis)
Margaret Wardley (Greenbaum Gallery show)
Dara Klotz (spirit)

Christian Knieck (MA candidate) has enjoyed his experience as Teacher Resources Intern at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. His duties included editing the library of online lesson plans for the Museum’s website. His primary contributions were to social studies and visual arts-based lessons on the recently opened exhibit Over There! Posters from World War I as well as the upcoming exhibit Goys: Order and Disorder. He also contributed to science-based lessons for the upcoming exhibit Leonardo da Vinci: Bella e Brutta, The Ideal of Beauty, which will feature a collection of da Vinci’s drawings at the Museum in 2015.

Sarah Oh (BA 2015) spent the summer combining her academic interests in Art History and Sociology as a Development Intern at Creative Time. Creative Time is a New York City-based nonprofit public art organization that brings public art work all over the city, across the country and around the world. One exciting project Creative Time sponsored this summer was Kara Walker’s massive sugar sculpture at the Domino Sugar Factory in New York City. The organization also continues its commitment to social responsibility through Creative Time Reports, a Global Residency program and Summit. As Sarah puts it, Creative Time is true to its name in every aspect—from the work, to the workers, to the daily grind.

Faculty News

Glóruðr Gaknæs took her Research intensive Semester in Fall 2013, during which she worked on her book project Jean-Léon Gérôme and the Crisis of History Painting in the 1850s. Her article “The Paesanico Studium in Nineteenth-Century History Painting: Paul Delaroche and Jean-Léon Gérôme” appeared in an edited volume in Routledge’s Advances in Art and Visual Studies. She also organized and led a talk at the University of Pittsburgh and the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, and co-organized a workshop at the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds in conjunction with the exhibition she curated Polychromic: Surface, Light and Colour.

The Lost Art of Medieval Britain.” She capped off the academic year with travel, first to New York and Michigan to present papers at the conference for the Renais-
sance Society of America and the Inter-
national Congress on Medieval Studies. She then spent the summer in Califor-
nia and London, as a Riley Fellow at the Huntington Library, and then as a fellow of the Bibliographical Society of Ameri-
cas, researching the professional networks of manuscript illuminators in London. She also co-authored, a leading journal of medieval art history, as well as two essays in volumes devoted to late medieval manuscripts, literature, and music. A vacation visit to her husband to the remote Greek island of Anafi made for an adventurous retreat.

Karen Kurczynski co-curated the major August Jorn Centennial exhibition Expo-jorn: Art is a Festival at the Museum Jorn, Denmark, from March 1 - September 14, 2014. Accompanied by a major scholarly catalog, exhibition exercises foregrounded the artistic dialogues between Jorn and his colleagues in the Surrealist, Cobra, and Situationist movements in Europe. The show was complementary to a major retrospective at the Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen, entitled Jorn: Restless Rebel, for which she also contributed a catalogue essay (forthcoming monograph). The Art and Politics of August Jorn: The Avant-Garde Won’t Give Up (Ashgate, 2014) is available at Amherst Books. She is currently planning a major US traveling exhibition on the Cobra movement called Animal Culture: Cobe and the Popular Imaginaries. The show will originate at the Museum of Art in Fort Lauderdale in April, 2016.

Leticia La Follette, Director of Art History for a third year, continued her work as VP for Professional Responsibilities for the Archaeological Institute of America, serving in the fall on the search committee

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Timothy M. Rohan’s book, The Architecture of Paul Rudolph (Yale 2014) was published this spring. He was gratified to receive positive reviews from many magazines and websites. The on-line, architecture magazine Place: excerpted a chapter and Londot’s Architectural Re-
view commissioned him to write a piece about Rudolph’s reputation. Tim spent the spring and summer promoting the book, beginning with a walking tour of a Rudolph building in Boston followed by a talk and book signing in Los Angeles at the Dell on Design conference. He discusses the book in a public lecture at

Timothy M. Rohan at the "Dwell on Design" Conference in Los Angeles, CA on June 22, 2014

Umass on Tuesday, September-16 in Gor-
don Hall at 6:00pm. Campus, Tim was active in the search for the now Asianist for Art History and with the Public Art Committee. He completed his fifth and final term as graduate program director and looks forward to returning to teaching full time.

Last spring, Menka Schmit did not miss the new course, "Venus, Art, History, Environment," which she is de-
veloping as an interdisciplinary General Education class this year. Her graduate course the previous fall on domestic art and architecture in Renaissance Italy, led to two M.A. publishable papers, by Eliza-
beth Bola and Maureen McNeigh. She was an active member of the university’s Faculty Senate (Senator Schnitter), es-
pecially with regard to the construction of a new building to replace Bartlett Hall. She was an invited participant on a panel on the state of research in the field of Venetian art at the Renaissance Society of America Conference in New York (where she was delighted to meet up with -

Graduate students, Christian Knieck (middle), with his fellow teaching assistants Morgan Grant and Inheekt. As at the entrance of Over There! Posters from World War I, a new exhibit at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston.
former students Iara Durands and Tara Nadeau). She continues her research and writing on the Venetian collector Andrea Odoni and on painted palace facades in Venice.

ALUMNI NEWS

Graduate

Elizabeth Bola (MA 2014) spent two months in Macerata, Italy this summer with a UMass candidate, Leslie Winter. She volunteered at a summer camp teaching children ages 6-12 to speak English. On the weekends, she traveled to immerse herself in as much art as possible. She has accepted a position at the Dallas Museum of Art, starting in September, a 9-month long paid internship as the McDermott Intern for Gallery and Community Teaching. This will allow her to explore various areas of museum education and be a part of a school outreach program called Go Van Gogh.

Lia Bola at the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, in front of Tititian's Venus of Urbino from 1538

Emily Greenwood (MA 1999) is currently the Department Head of Visual Art and IB Art at Ibn Khdsdoo National School in Bahrain. She looks forward to doing her level 2 International Baccalaureate training in September. She believes IB Visual Art is the best subject to teach at the high school level! Emily and her husband have also been enjoying time with their son, Flynn Douglas, and recently celebrated his first birthday.

Emily Wilson (BA 1997) and her family relocated one year ago to Las Vegas, NV from New York City. After freelancing for 16 years as a photographer in NYC (http://emilywilsonphotography.com), she now works full-time for Downtown Project (http://downtownproject.com/). She is very proud to be part of such a passionate group people working to transform Downtown Las Vegas.

Graduate

Jill A. Hodnicki (MA 1981) returned in February 2013 as the Director of Curatorial Management and Research in the Development Office after a 15 year tenure in the Development Office at Mount Holyoke College and spending 15 years commuting from Western Massachusetts to University of Hartford, in West Hartford, CT. She loves being back at UMass and hopes to attend some exciting inaugural events!

Yael Rice (MA 2004) is completing a three-year post-doctoral fellowship in Islamic Art History at Amherst College. She will assume a ten-track position as Assistant Professor of History of Art and Asian Languages and Civilizations in fall 2015.

Amparo Martinez Rusotto (MA 2004) assumed the role of Head of Sales in the Old Masters & British Paintings department at Christie’s Auctioneers in London. She has been with Christie’s since 2006.

of Art Handler at the Worcester Art Museum. Her first job was to install and light the Knights exhibition that opened at the end of March, the result of the integration of Higgins Armory collection. One of her last projects was to create an environment for works on paper, which necessitated taking a large case of wood and plywood and sealing it completely to prevent humidity variations. The display case now houses 6 works, which are highlighted in the show. Abstractions in Blue.

Julie Thomson, Timothy St. Bahia, and Anna G. Grant at “Keep Your Eyes Upon the Donor: Donor Shops Past and Present of Brooklyn Museum and Manhattan” exhibit held at Brooklyn City Hall

Ewa Mastyczyn and her husband, Dave

IN BRIEF

Ben Burt (BA 2010) started law school at Boston College this fall. Aimee Froom (MA 1993) has been named Curator of Islamic Art at the Houston Museum of Fine Arts. Steven Kern (BA 1981) is now Director of the Newark Museum Art. Ewa Mastyczyn (MA 2012) a PhD student at Boston University gives her first paper at CAA in February 2015, on Russian and Eastern European Art. Amaanda Phillips (MA 2001) started teaching Islamic Art at the University of Virginia in the Fall. Kendra Weisbin (BA 2011) has become Assistant Curator of Education at the Mount Holyoke Art Museum.

We talk to the following individuals for their generous donations this year:

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