

Getty

MAGAZINE | SPRING 2023



THE CREATIVITY ISSUE



The Beauty of Collaboration

Photographer Tim Walker encourages his close-knit crew to fully express themselves



Women Who Wander

Betye Saar's extraordinary travel sketchbooks



The Link between Creativity and Mental Illness

Does having a mental illness make you a better artist?



In the Studio with Felipe Baeza

Getty's new Artist in Residence gives dreamy form to queer and migrant experiences



Conserving Art While Conserving Energy

Getty scientists get creative about keeping art safe from climate change

- 3 President's Message**
On the science of creativity
- 4 Events**
Frieze Los Angeles; Getty Off-Center; Cocktails with a Curator
- 8 My Getty**
Getty visitors dance, draw, sculpt, and design integrated circuits to get in the zone
- 10 Dog-Eared**
Books that inspired staffers' careers
- 14 Staff Profile**
Getty Restaurant Chef Patrick Florendo learned to cook in always-bustling, delicious-smelling Filipino kitchens
- 16 Our Research Project**
The underground art scene that bloomed in East Germany
- 44 New Acquisitions**
Four rare books honor Marcia Reed's innovative curating and collecting
- 46 Special Collections**
Artists' first strokes of genius are often found in their personal, take-everywhere sketchbooks
- 50 New from Getty Publications**
Peter Brathwaite's Black portraiture; inspiring kids' creativity
- 54 Exhibitions**
Shows to see this spring
- 55 Final Frame**
Before you go: Todd Gray's *Embodiment of the Imperial Ideal*

Editor

Jennifer Roberts

Associate Editor

Erin Migdol

Designers

Vesna De3ign
Jessica Robinson

Design Manager

María Vélez

Contributors

Chelsea Anderson
Elizabeth Bernick
Cole Calhoun
Morgan Conger
Cassia Davis
Virginia Heckert
Laura Hubber
Kirsten Lew
David Martino
Carly Pippin
Isotta Poggi
Anya Ventura
Maureen Winter
Elaine Woo

On the cover:
Box of Delights (detail), 2018, Tim Walker. Model: James Spencer with a Unicorn in a Seventeenth-Century Casket Garden; Fashion: Ludovic de Saint Sernin; Costume: Shona Heath. London. Chromogenic print. Courtesy of the artist. © Tim Walker Studio. On view in *Tim Walker: Wonderful Things*

A V&A Exhibition—Touring the World

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I've been struck by these similarities as I've delved into plans for Getty's 2024 Pacific Standard Time, which will underline and celebrate the connections between art and science. For many of the 50-plus exhibitions, scientists and artists have worked together, arguably better than they could have alone, to address pressing problems of our time. The Hammer's exhibition will inspire debate around environmental and social justice. Several exhibitions will remind us of the stunning artistic and scientific achievements of non-Western cultures: the Autry will present Indigenous visions of the future on our planet, while the Museum of Jurassic Technology will explore architecture—the pinnacle of art and mathematics—as practiced during the golden age of Islamic culture. Other hallowed halls of scientific achievement, Caltech and JPL among them, will also reveal their artistic side, while ArtCenter, LACE, and other uber-cool LA institutions will release their inner Einstein.

Reading about these highly creative projects made me curious about the science of creativity. In exploring it, I've found a lot of fascinating information. As reporter Elaine Woo tells us in this issue, UCLA researchers working on the Big C Project, a study of artists and scientists whose rare talents have earned international renown, have found that visual artists had a higher incidence of "schizotypal" behavior, often described as odd or eccentric—think nonconformism or receptivity to unusual ideas. This type of neurodiversity has long been a critical driver of scientific and creative progress; so to a large extent, to celebrate creative and scientific genius is to celebrate this vital form of diversity.

Roger Beaty, who runs Penn State's Cognitive Neuroscience of Creativity Lab, has studied "little c" creativity—the kind we demonstrate when we make up a bedtime story or come up with a great solution at work. One topic he examines in his article "The Creative Brain" is whether we can boost this creativity. His answer is yes, probably, in the short term. And he offers some tricks that might work, such as: If you're stuck on a problem, take a break to let your mind wander; that might loosen things up and help you find a creative solution. To boost creativity in a more sustained, albeit modest way, Beaty suggests we pick up a creative hobby like painting or learning a musical instrument. But don't get too excited, he says. "Rigorous science on creativity training has yet to be conducted."

I'm glad the scientists are on it, though. And in the meantime, I've always wanted to learn how to play jazz piano. Maybe now's the moment!

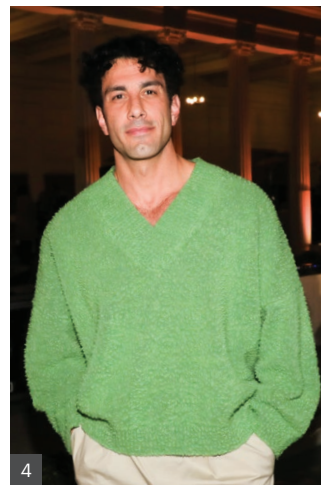
Katherine E. Fleming

There's a quote I love that's often attributed to Albert Einstein: "Creativity is intelligence having fun." That heady and elusive mix—that magical jewel we call creativity—is the focus of this special issue.

Creativity has many forms and facets. There's the kind that might first come to mind, the artistic talent that led Tim Walker to stage his otherworldly photographs, Getty Restaurant Chef Patrick Florendo to reimagine his mom's Filipino comfort food, or Betye Saar to make enchanting sketches in notepads as she traveled around the world.

There's the "thinking outside the box" creativity we've all accessed in times of necessity, like that prompted by the social media challenge Getty launched during the pandemic. We asked the public to re-create a great work of art with just three household items, and cooped-up, freaked-out people sent in hundreds of thousands of ingenious, hilarious images from all over the world. (The challenge was such a hit that it was copied nationwide; in my old job at NYU we did our own version, and someday I might share a memorable picture of my parents interpreting Grant Wood's *American Gothic*.)

There's also a sometimes surprising facet of creativity, quietly demonstrated by people long thought to stand on the opposite end of the creativity spectrum: scientists. Artists and scientists are actually a lot alike. They are curious and truth-seeking; they must think creatively, searching for answers in the unseen; they need deep knowledge and finely honed skills; and they must engage in blue-sky, "what-if" thinking.



Getty Party Kicks Off Frieze Los Angeles

The Getty Villa Museum hosted a glittering launch party on February 13 to kick off the latest edition of Frieze Los Angeles in collaboration with Frieze and the LOEWE Foundation. Frieze Los Angeles is an art fair with global reach that draws leading artists, galleries, museums, and collectors for a weeklong celebration of art and ideas across all forms of creativity.

Getty President Katherine E. Fleming and Director of Americas Christine Messineo greeted a spirited crowd of artists, gallerists, collectors, and members of the press on a crystal clear night at the Villa's iconic setting above the Pacific. Guests enjoyed spectacular views, signature cocktails, and music provided by DJs Amara and Shabby Dee. Visitors, many seeing the Villa for the first time, stopped for a photo opportunity and snapped selfies by moonlight.

The event's Host Committee included Anissa and Paul Balson, Megan and Peter Chernin, Ari Emanuel, Rosetta and Balthazar Getty, Lauren Halsey and Monique McWilliams, Alicia Miñana and Robert Lovelace, Gwyneth Paltrow and Brad Falchuk, Sean and Alexandra Parker, Ed and Danna Ruscha,

Lorna Simpson and Zora Casebere, Michael S. Smith and Ambassador James Costos, Maria Hummer-Tuttle and Robert Tuttle, and Jwan Yosef and Ricky Martin.

Now in its fourth year, Frieze Los Angeles 2023 attracted a record number of galleries and collectors, cementing its reputation as a don't-miss destination on the international art circuit. Guests at the Villa launch party included Chance the Rapper, Owen Wilson, and Los Angeles mother-daughter art icons Betye and Alison Saar, along with emerging and established artists, collectors, and art travelers who celebrated into the night. Visitors toured the Villa's featured exhibition, *Nubia: Jewels of Ancient Sudan from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, and were encouraged to attend the companion show *Adornment | Artifact* at locations throughout the city.

In closing, Fleming thanked Frieze and Loewe for bringing this international celebration of art and beauty to Los Angeles and invited all to return for Pacific Standard Time: 2024—Getty's next installment in the multisite, collaborative exhibition series set to open in the fall of next year.



1. Muna El Fituri and Lauren Halsey
2. Inner Peristyle
3. Ricky Martin
4. Jwan Yosef
5. Reese White, Zora Casebere, and Chance the Rapper
6. Christine Messineo and Katherine Fleming
7. Ambassador James Costos and Michael S. Smith
8. Alicia Miñana, Robert Lovelace, and Katherine Fleming
9. Ibert Schultz, Megan Chernin, and Peter Chernin
10. Rosetta and Balthazar Getty

Photos 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9 by Kyle Goldberg/BFA.com. Photos 5, 6, 10 by Marc Patrick/BFA.com

Katherine Fleming Hosts Getty Off-Center: “The Past Is a Place: Nostalgia and the Hellenic Ideal”

Getty’s president and CEO Katherine Fleming delivered a Getty Off-Center talk in January titled “The Past Is a Place: Nostalgia and the Hellenic Ideal.” Fleming explored how the Hellenic ideal—a yearning sentiment for the antique Greek past—is a perfect example of nostalgia, and asserted that history, not nostalgia, can connect us to our true pasts. Illustrated by works from the Getty collection, Fleming’s presentation juxtaposed images of ancient Greek architecture with classicizing paintings, drawings, engravings, sculptures, and photographs from the early modern and modern periods. A professor of Hellenic culture and civilization and an internationally recognized scholar of Mediterranean, Jewish, and Greek history and religion, Fleming has authored award-winning books on modern Greece. Guests at the hybrid in-person and online event joined in a lively Q&A discussion afterward, participating from across the United States and as far away as the United Kingdom.



Above: Main Entrance, U.S. Treasury, Washington, D.C., about 1870, William M. Chase. Albumen silver print. Getty Museum, Gift of Weston J. and Mary M. Naef



Left: A View of the Parthenon or Temple of Minerva at Athens, 1751, Edward Rooker, after Richard Dalton. Engraving. Getty Research Institute

MaryLou Boone Honored

In January Getty honored noted collector and philanthropist MaryLou Boone for her longtime support of the museum. Timothy Potts, Maria Hummer-Tuttle and Robert Tuttle Director of the J. Paul Getty Museum, welcomed four generations of the Boone family to a festive luncheon at the Getty Center. Boone has made important gifts of French ceramics to the museum from her own renowned collection, is a founding member of the Patron Program, and has supported exhibitions. Potts lauded her generosity and connoisseurship, noting that her gifts make her one of the most significant donors of decorative arts to the museum. Her donations include a large dish made at the Chantilly porcelain manufactory circa 1730–40 that is the only known example of its type. Boone remarked that it is a great honor to be involved with Getty. “I am thrilled that part of my collection has found a wonderful new home!”



MaryLou Boone and Timothy Potts in the museum’s South Pavilion with items donated by Boone, including works from the Chantilly porcelain manufactory made between 1730 and 1745. Photo: Ryan Miller/Capture Imaging



Left to right Designer Nic Taylor, author Jessica Hundley, and curator David Brafman discuss mystical symbolism.

Cocktails with a Curator: Mystical Symbols

On January 14 the Getty Research Institute (GRI) kicked off Cocktails with a Curator, a new series that introduces diverse audiences to treasures from underutilized GRI holdings. During the first event, “Mystical Symbols,” rare books curator David Brafman shared his secrets for decoding esoteric symbolism in art history. Guests were treated to a behind-the-scenes unveiling of mystical material in Special Collections—almost all acquired from the widow of Manly P. Hall, the founder of the Philosophical Research Society. After the viewing, Brafman discussed his earlier work on alchemy and related arcane areas that currently “mystify” him. He was joined by author Jessica Hundley (TASCHEN) and designer Nic Taylor (Thunderwing) to discuss symbolism in their TASCHEN book series The Library of Esoterica and their recent reprinting of Hall’s *Secret Teachings of All Ages* (1928). The sold-out program was paired with themed refreshments.

Become a Getty Patron today!

You’ll enjoy extraordinary access to the art you love and an insider’s experience with your visits to the Getty Center and Getty Villa. When you give, you make a difference—Patron contributions fund Getty Arts Access for learners of all ages.



Scan to learn more or visit [getty.edu/supportus](https://www.getty.edu/supportus)



Staff photographer Cassia Davis recently asked a sampling of Getty Center visitors, “How are you creative?” How would you answer?

Isaac Yi

I always like freestyling, whether it’s music or break dancing, which I recently picked up. I really like it because you get to improvise and express yourself in different ways without being constrained by things like choreography. So yeah, that’s how I stay creative.



Aileen Castañeda

I am a poet with my hands; I find figures in clay. They just come out. Nature inspires me. And light; if you don’t have light, you don’t get to see the shadows, the depth, the three-dimensionality. That’s one of the most important things in my work—having the shadows and the three-dimensional forms.



Xiangdong Jia

I design integrated circuits [a collection of electronic components (resistors, transistors, capacitors, etc.) that are assembled onto a tiny chip and connected to achieve a common goal]. It’s kind of like making art, because you’re building from the very basic to multiple layers, and you’re creating stuff that’s most likely never been done by other people. I like it.

Natterra Bennett

I like to draw characters and come up with stories for them. I really like drawing people; even their clothing and how they sit tell a story. I like capturing that and putting that into my own characters and designs.



Eldad Golub

I find catharsis in movement and in dancing. It just feels good, and I feel creative there. I feel like I have fewer boundaries and that I can improvise. And that’s creativity for me.



Alejandro Cañas Rangel [left]

I really like putting on my headphones and listening to music and then taking pictures. I focus on shapes, colors, and something really abstract that grabs my attention and makes me feel powerful.

Guillem Seuba Pablo [right]

The way I get myself inspired to be creative is through nature. My first dream is to study biology, and I really like to just simply watch plants or animals and how they manage to survive in their environment. Nature was creative in giving them characteristics to adapt there. A cactus is really creative, for example. It has really creative shapes, really creative leaves, and those are just ways of surviving. Nature really inspires my own creativity and the adaptations I make in my own life. ■



Getty staffers tell us about the books that inspired their creative careers and passions

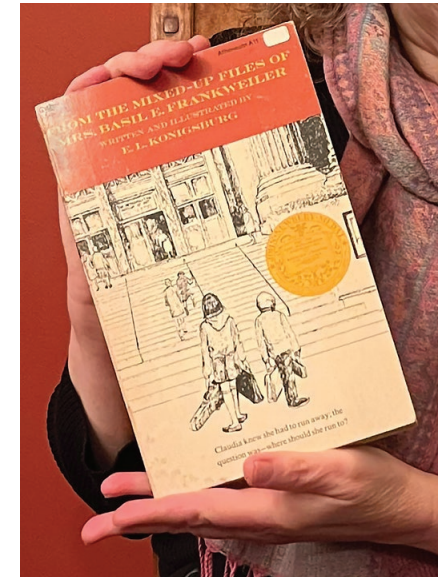
Maureen Winter, Associate Publisher, Getty Publications

Throughout my childhood and young adult years, I was a devoted reader. I loved to read. By and large the books that appealed most weren't the greatest hits of children's literature, although classics like *Charlotte's Web*, *A Little Princess*, and *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret*. I spent lots of time in my hands. I read and reread the Choose Your Own Adventure books so often that the covers fell off. I devoured R. L. Stine's horror. (Please tell me I'm not the only one who remembers *Beach Party?*) I couldn't get enough of Ann M. Martin's *The Baby-Sitters Club* series, and later, once I had decided I was too grown-up for those, Francine Pascal's *Sweet Valley High* series. I'd also read whatever my parents had around, often bestsellers like those by Mary Higgins Clark (*Loves Music, Loves to Dance* holds a special place

in my heart) and Michael Crichton. My goth years had me enamored with everything Anne Rice, and I probably read *Alice in Wonderland* 20 times in high school alone. (I wrote my college entrance essays on it!) The joy that books consistently brought throughout my life and their magical ability to transport me to a different time and place are, without a doubt, what inspired me to pursue a career in book publishing. Could there possibly be anything better than sharing new books with the world? Not for me.

Carolyn Peter, Curatorial Assistant, Department of Photographs, J. Paul Getty Museum

From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler by E. L. Konigsburg entranced me as a young girl of 10 years old. I was thrilled by the story of Claudia and her brother Jamie running away to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and living there for a week, sleeping in a centuries-old grand bed, retrieving coins from a fountain, and eating at an automat. I imagined taking Claudia's place with my younger brother in tow, exploring the nooks and crannies of the magical museum, and discovering works of art each day. Claudia and Jamie get caught up in the attribution of a sculpture of an angel and develop



their own theory as to who created it. By the time they made their way to the mansion of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler to investigate further, I was sold on the fascinating aspects of museum work, archival research, and uncovering mysteries. Every time I visited a museum, I pictured what it would be like to have it to myself and wondered what I might discover there. I give much credit to this book for leading me down a career path as a curator where I get to "live" with works of art and delve into the artists and the stories of the people who owned the art. Once in a while I even get to wander the galleries all alone.

Amanda Berman, Curatorial Assistant, Sculpture and Decorative Arts, J. Paul Getty Museum

I read *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* when I was in elementary school, and the story captivated me. I thought it was so cool that these kids got to hang out in the museum after dark, sleeping in a bed in a period room, and getting involved in an art investigation. It was only years later, when working in museums as a young professional, that I realized how much the book had stayed with me and influenced my career path. The sense of wonder and excitement of discovery is still why I enjoy being a curator today.

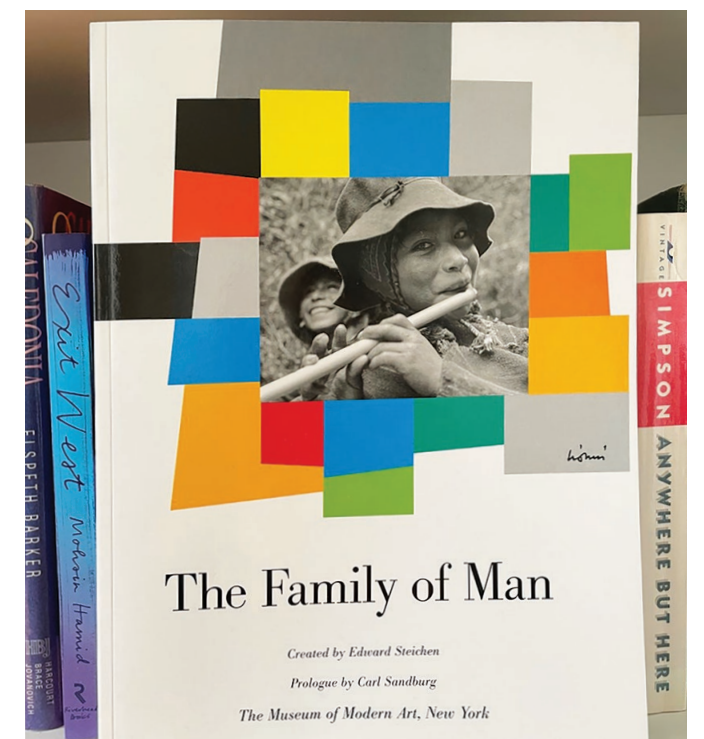
Marc Grobman, Designer/Web Developer, Getty Digital Training and Communication

Back at the dawn of the World Wide Web, I worked as a counselor at housing nonprofits, freelanced as a graphic designer, and created art and designs for friends' zines and my in-laws' budding internet company. We were making it all up as we went along. That's when I found Steven Heller's books. I first read his biography *Paul Rand* but quickly went on to learn about typography and design in his books *Typology: Type Design from the Victorian Era to the Digital* and *The Anatomy of Design: Uncovering the Influences and Inspirations in Modern Graphic Design*

(with coauthor Mirko Ilić). I had been winging it, but I gained inspiration from learning more about the craft and from learning that many of my favorite artists invented modern design, often without any formal training. Before long, I changed my career focus and joined an interactive design firm. I still go back to Heller's books to get my ideas flowing for new projects.

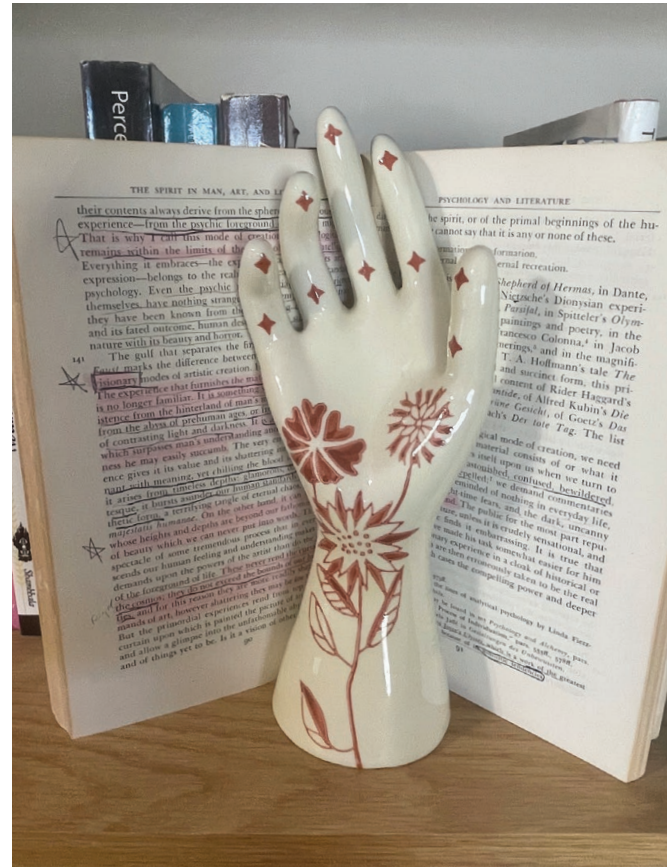
Jennifer Roberts, Senior Editor, J. Paul Getty Trust

Sometimes a photograph feels like a page torn from a novel—your imagination wants to fill in what happened before and after it. Given that, the book that probably prompted my writing career was *The Family of Man*, the catalogue for a 1955 MoMA photography exhibition curated by Edward Steichen and themed on mankind's shared emotions and milestones: love, procreation, joy, sorrow, death. As a little kid I would stare at the "love" images, imagining my adult self immersed in the dizzying passion that Ernst Haas, Ralph Morse, and others had so powerfully captured. Daydreaming turned to writing stories when I was 10, living in Spain, and inspired by George Orwell's *Down and Out in Paris and London*. Many more cherished books followed (Mona Simpson's *Anywhere But Here*, Elspeth Barker's *O Caledonia*, Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West*), and I still write fiction when I'm not editing *Getty* magazine stories. Maybe when I'm writing as I should—with empathy—storytelling helps me better understand, and feel closer to, my fellow human beings in our "family of man."



Zoe Goldman, Podcast Coordinator, Getty Publications

When I was 14, I saw an Aaron Siskind exhibition with my mom and made her get me the catalogue, *Aaron Siskind 100*. The photographs of cracking paint, repaired asphalt, and other mundane details taken out of context to become something new inspired me to get deeper into photography myself. I ended up making photographs all through high school, minoring in photography in college, and working for a photography biennial in one of my first jobs. I don't do a ton with photographs now—not more than anyone else with cats and a baby might do—but spending so long studying and working with photography definitely changed how I look at things. And I can trace that back to time spent poring over that Aaron Siskind catalogue.



Lisa Lapin, Vice President, Communications, J. Paul Getty Trust

I loved storytelling, writing, and researching from a young age, but in high school I was introduced to creative long-form, nonfiction writing by several New Journalism pioneers that resonated, setting me on my career path in communications. *The John McPhee Reader*, a wildly random collection of nonfiction essays by the Princeton professor, and his Pulitzer Prize–Finalist *Basin and Range*, a captivating read about how our vast, precious Western landscape was formed, were my initial inspiration—explanatory journalism at its finest. McPhee could research and creatively weave multiple narratives, making absolutely any topic fascinating. That's what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. Two more powerful nonfiction works propelled me to study journalism: Wallace Stegner's *Beyond the Hundredth Meridian: John Wesley Powell and the Second Opening of the West*, and Joan Didion's *The White Album*, a collection of magazine articles about her life in 1960s Los Angeles. I stayed the course with a journalism degree from USC, 15 years at newspapers, 20 years helping research universities share their stories, and my current work helping the Getty team create quality nonfiction stories about Getty's global impact. *The White Album* includes an essay, first published in 1977, called "The Getty." I remember it well. Life has come full circle.

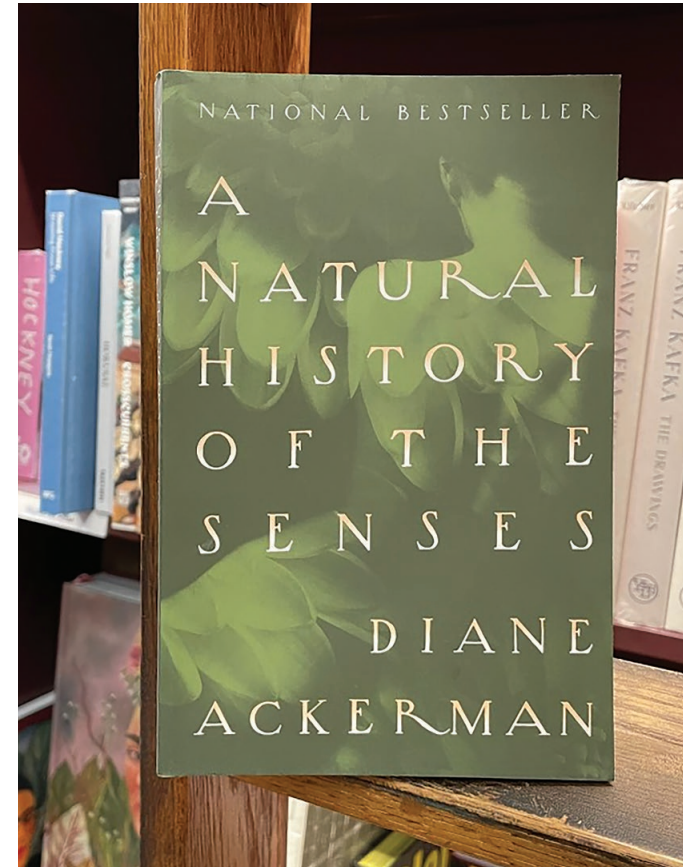


Barie Wolf-Bowen, Assistant Board Secretary, J. Paul Getty Trust

I studied creativity and depth psychology (a field that explores the unconscious mind) in graduate school, and from the start I struggled with what it meant to be an artist. As I progressed through the program, I returned to *The Spirit in Man, Art, and Literature*, the 15th volume in the *Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, over and over. My copy is filled with many underlined and highlighted paragraphs along with several dog-eared pages and notes in the margins. Over time I gradually began to focus on the process of making art as opposed to its outcomes. In the section on psychology and literature, Jung discussed his concept of psychological versus visionary art—psychological art being that which is produced from one's consciousness and dealing with life experiences. Visionary art, by contrast, is a "primordial experience which surpasses man's understanding and to which in his weakness he may easily succumb." Psychological art may be easily understood, while visionary art gives way to deeper discussions on the how and why of its creation. Understanding how personalities enable creativity, which I learned from my studies and this book, has benefited me in every aspect of my life, including creating art in my free time, incorporating creativity in my day-to-day work, and even when viewing exhibitions at Getty.

Elsa Haarstad, Graduate Intern, Getty Conservation Institute

I first came to Diane Ackerman's *A Natural History of the Senses* as a high school student with little interest in my coursework. My main care in the world was being in my studio classes and absorbing anything that could inspire my next drawing or painting. Yet her book became a fast favorite for me. Its section on smell and the fascinating, difficult history of trying to evoke smells through visual or auditory means especially piqued my interest. A decade or so later, whenever I see this book, I am reminded of this eagerness to create. It was around this same time that, through the urging of a great studio teacher, I applied to art school and began finding my way into the world of art and architectural history. While I no longer consider myself an artist, this book and time in my life were fundamental in sending me down the path I am on today and no doubt provided a solid foundation for considering the importance of intangible values within cultural heritage practice.



Caitlin Shamberg, Editorial Director, Communications, J. Paul Getty Trust

I love a good dinner party. Our apartment is small, and we sit where we can, plates cradled in our laps, cocktails on the coffee table. I am not a great cook, but I can follow a recipe. A good one inspires me, transports me to another place, another dinner party in an apartment more posh than my own with a handsome dining table and a city view. Paris? New York? Doesn't matter, somewhere with lights and sparkle. And all of this is just the backdrop, because, cheesy as it sounds, it's the people who inspire me to be creative. My friends bring the stories, witty jokes, and encouragement to lead a more creative life, especially after a good meal. I have a shelf filled with my favorite cookbooks and browse at least three of them when planning a dinner. But one that I come back to again and again when I want to try something new and festive is *Simple Soirees: Seasonal Menus for Sensational Dinner Parties*. ■



Getty Restaurant Chef Patrick Florendo creates seasonal, refined dishes with a relaxed, home-cooked vibe

Growing up in the kitchen: When I was very little, I lived with my extended family in the Philippines for a couple years while my parents worked in Australia. In the Philippines it's common to have maids, and I'd be in the kitchen with the maids most of the time because everybody else was so busy. There was always something cooking—breakfast, lunch, *merienda* (afternoon snack), and dinner. Something was always going on in the kitchen, from sorting through rice to cleaning and cutting vegetables.

Ever since then I've loved cooking. I was always in the kitchen while my brothers were off doing other things. The first thing I remember making was fried rice, but I didn't realize you had to cook the rice first. So it was like crunchy rice. I also remember making profiteroles. I was seven years old at the time and kept making them over and over and over, just trying to perfect them. I'd go over to my best friend's house, and while he and my other friends were off playing video games and basketball, I'd be in the kitchen. I've always been the friend that cooks.

A family affair: I loved being in the kitchen with my mom. She cooked every day for our family. At one point she had three jobs, and then she'd come home and cook. She was a great cook. One of her specialties was a Filipino dish called *afritada*. It's basically a tomato-based stew that has soft potatoes, bell peppers, and braised chicken. She was never very articulate about the way she cooked—I'd ask her, "How do you make this?" And she'd say: "It's really simple. You just start with garlic and onions." It wasn't until later when that made sense to me. Keep it simple, and that makes it feel homey. That's kind of what my style of cooking is now at the restaurant.

My dad cooked on occasion, and when he did, it was always something special. He made dishes I had never seen before. He's from the northern part of the Philippines, Ilocos Norte, and he would tell me stories of old cooking techniques from his province, like, "If you're going to cook goat, you have to take a blowtorch and torch the fur onto the skin."



From a hobby to a career: The turning point for me was when I was 19. My family and I had relocated to Tampa, Florida, and I had moved out with a girl, which my parents thought was the worst idea. So they said: "Hey, there's this cooking school in New York, the Culinary Institute of America, and one of your uncles is a professor there. If you want, we could set you up." I knew this was a desperate move to get me away from this girl. But it worked.

One of the other students in my class asked me to be his roommate, and we became good friends. One day he invited me to go with him to his dad's restaurant and help out. Being young and naive, I didn't realize until later that his dad was Jean-Georges Vongerichten, the famous French chef. I spent my culinary school years visiting Jean-Georges's restaurants each weekend. These ultra-fine dining, hip new restaurants became my new standard. That really solidified what the rest of my life was going to be. My first job after culinary school was working

for Jean-Georges at one of his New York restaurants, Spice Market.

Joining Getty: After four years in New York, I moved to Las Vegas and worked at restaurants like Tableau at Wynn Las Vegas and Botero at the Encore at Wynn. After a few years I came to LA to open Drai's Hollywood at the W Hotel and then Rare by Drai's on Sunset Boulevard. Last year I was working on opening a restaurant on the rooftop of the Montage Beverly Hills, but the project never came to fruition. Over the summer I learned that Getty needed a chef. I remembered coming to the Getty Center when I first moved to the States as a young teenager, so I was really excited about the opportunity.

I came into the restaurant for the interview and saw the huge windows in the beautiful dining room, perfectly polished glassware, and tablecloths that draped to the floor. It reminded me of how restaurants used to be in the 1990s—in my opinion, the golden era of high-end restaurants. And now every day I get to drive in and see the sunrise and that dining room, and it just makes me excited to come to work and see what I can make today.

Creating an experience: I'm thinking about the entire experience, from when you enter the restaurant to when you exit. I want our restaurant experience to feel like you've stumbled across a beautiful glass-encased restaurant on top of Los Angeles, away from the noise of the city, with panoramic views, warm and thoughtful old-school service, and food prepared to feel like your grandma is making each dish, but with the refinement of Getty.

Getting the creative juices flowing: I get inspiration all the time. Sometimes I'll get lost in thought about food, whether it's about a new dish, technique, or a recipe that needs to be adjusted. Every day I'll pick up my phone and type something down in the notes app. One morning I suddenly woke up and grabbed my phone

to write a whole menu. At home, if the TV's on, chances are it's a cooking show. And one of my favorite things to do is sit at a restaurant and try a few dishes. I'm not only thinking about the food itself but also the feel of the space, from the music to the lighting to the service.

Before considering a new menu item, I think, will this be really delicious? And how do we refine it so it fits in the setting? I wouldn't consider a dish just because it's a trend or a fad. And it doesn't have to be super complicated. In fact, the simpler the better. It gives us more time to focus on the product.

I like to teach more on "feel and instinctual" and less "technical." If your grandma is in the kitchen cooking every day, every dish is not going to turn out the same every time, because she's not using recipes. She's actually doing more by tasting it as she goes. That's what I encourage here. We keep a menu, but everything's also super seasonal. If you get arugula from a farm, it's not going to taste the same as it did last week, and you can't expect it to. That's the beauty in it, I think.

Plating 101: When we're plating a dish, I tell the cooks, "Let it fall naturally." So if you're making a tomato salad, just kind of let it naturally fall on the plate and don't

mess around too much, because you can feel when it's been overmanipulated. Sometimes there's beauty in just letting it fall. And most times it falls in the right place.

Favorite meal to cook at home: I love cooking breakfast. Tableau at the Wynn Las Vegas offered breakfast, and there I learned that everybody's breakfast is very specific.

You probably like your eggs a certain way. And that's just the eggs. Now think about toast and juice and fruit. Everybody has their preference. Food doesn't have to be complicated, as long as there's thought put into each dish and it's made special for each person.

Spring menu offerings: Springtime is fun because you get to work with so many new products. Everything's "baby." Baby fennel, baby carrots, and everything's mini.

We've been playing around with some fun ideas, but sometimes the hardest thing is narrowing down what will actually make it to our menu. We'll definitely be offering highly seasonal produce from our local farmers. But I definitely won't be plating it with tweezers, or putting some artwork on a plate that people have to interpret. ■



Chef Florendo's crispy-skin branzino with Dungeness crab brandade, chili citrus beurre blanc, and lamb's lettuce



Isotta Poggi (right) and Getty Research Institute curatorial fellow Nadine Henrich review materials related to the research project *On the Eve of the Revolution: The East German Artist in the 1980s*.

Art Always Finds a Way

What happened when East Germany tried to control its artists? They created provocative magazines, for one

By Isotta Poggi
Associate Curator
Getty Research Institute

THE GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE (GRI) project *On the Eve of Revolution: The East German Artist in the 1980s* focuses on the art scene in the final decade of East Germany—a short-lived country founded in 1949 as the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and ruled by a single party geopolitically aligned with the Soviet Union and the Eastern European bloc.

East Germans lived in a surveillance state, and the Berlin Wall, built in 1961, had abruptly ended any planned immigration to the West, leaving them relatively isolated. A militarized zone along the wall made it impossible for East Germans to get anywhere near it, and they could only travel abroad with an exit visa. To leave without formal approval from the regime meant risking being shot.

By the 1980s, though, a reform movement had spread across the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc countries. Younger generations found ways to communicate and exchange ideas through artists' books and magazines produced by independent presses. This genre, known as *samizdat* (from the Russian term for "self-published"), became the lifeline of a "silenced" generation of artists who used this literature to talk, protest, and navigate through the regime's restrictions and reach out to one another.

Samizdat art and literature had a crafty look: volumes were usually bound by hand and assembled original prints and vintage photographs with typescript poetry and essays reproduced on carbon copy paper. The work was also highly collaborative, as an image we use to represent *On the Eve of Revolution* shows.

The illustration is a mind map—a graphic way to represent ideas—drawn by three artists, Micha Brendel, Else Gabriel, and Rainer Görß, who, as young students in Dresden in the 1980s, conceived and visualized the process of creating their own independent artists' magazine. They drew their diagram on a mural-size sheet of paper hung on a wall while brainstorming what the new publication should be about. We know that they wanted to invite artists to submit their most recent creative production and that the founders would select the most innovative work, combining poetry with visual and conceptual art and chance correspondence.

Samizdat could be provocative, too, as demonstrated even by the magazine's title, *USW*, which stands for *Und So Weiter* ("and so on"). Such a phrase is generic enough to have multiple meanings and in that way invited recipients to read between the lines. (The title was devised after another, similar artist's magazine titled *Und [And]*, which the authorities had shut down.) Using such vague language gave artists a new way to exchange ideas with each other.

Samizdat works' layouts were also charged with meaning that readers were to decipher. Note how the visual elements of the image contrast the texts and surround the triangle, inviting viewers to ponder the message more deeply. A photograph of three girls entering the sea, an ad ripped from a Western magazine, represents an escape to an idealized, imaginary destination. The idea of escape is reinforced by a purse featured under the "1" that symbolizes travel, transience, movement, mobility, and communication.

While *USW* folded in 1987, when Brendel moved from Dresden to Berlin, a new magazine was immediately launched with the title *USF* (*Und So Fort*; "and so forth"), as homage to the defunct periodical. The first issue of *USF* was dedicated to the topic of *Flugversuch* (flight attempt) and included the poem "Dessert" by Olaf Stoy, its words squeezed next to a hovering helicopter. This screen print (and design by Steffen Fischer) was juxtaposed with two photographs by Werner Lieberknecht showing an artist attempting to take off from the

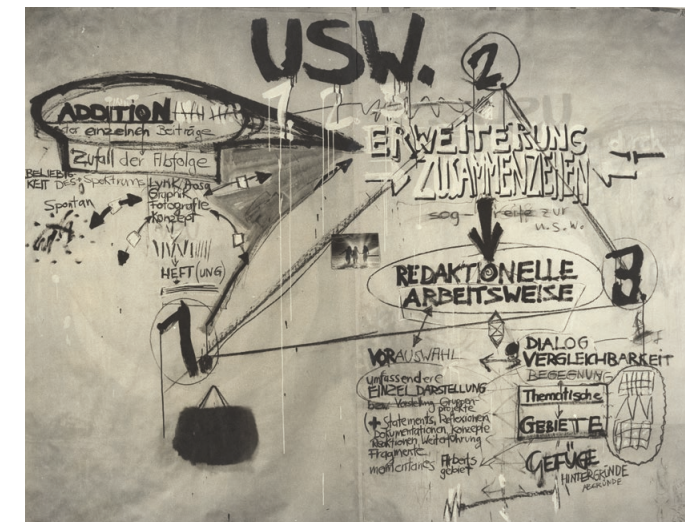
ground with his bare arms. Although the artists' effort to launch into space failed, their poetry and art survived to tell the story of resilience and creativity on the eve of the Peaceful Revolution that spread in East Germany in 1989 and led to the fall of the Berlin Wall and downfall of the GDR regime.

After the Berlin Wall fell, and following German unification in 1990, the East German *samizdat* traveled beyond the boundaries of a country that no longer existed and were collected by institutions like the GRI. The GRI's holdings, a large collection of papers, documents, and artists' books acquired in the early 1990s (and available for research), include examples from

all three magazines along with independently made artists' books with evocative titles such as *Die Tage sind Gezählt* (*The Days Are Counted*) and *Die Stimme des Schweigens* (*The Voice of Silence*).

These works are deeply rich primary sources for understanding East Germany's vibrant art scene in the 1980s. They are something to treasure, since they gave voice to artists who used their creativity and ideas to make a difference.

You can visit our webpage for links to resources and news and stories about the research project (a collaboration with GRI colleague Emily Pugh, principal research specialist) at getty.edu/projects/on-eve-revolution-east-german-artist-1980s/. ■



Concept diagram of the artists' magazine *USW*. *Und So Weiter* ("and so on"), Dresden, 1986, by Micha Brendel, Else Gabriel, and Rainer Görß. Gelatin silver print (original: gouache on packing paper). In *Schaden* 11.1 (June 1986). Getty Research Institute (90-S419). Photo © Micha Brendel and Auto-Perforations-Artistik Archiv



"Flugversuch" in *USF* (*Und So Fort*), Issue 1 (Dresden, 1986). "Dessert" (poetry by Olaf Stoy); Flight attempt (photography by Werner Lieberknecht); Helicopter (screen print and layout by Steffen Fischer). Getty Research Institute (93-b12006). Reproduced with permission

THE BEAUTY OF COLLABORATION

Photographer Tim Walker reveals how magic happened during the shoot for his new Getty commission

By Laura Hubber
Digital Media Producer
Interpretive Content
Getty Museum

Opposite page: *Amphibian and Lewis Walker with Blue Satin* (detail), 2022, Tim Walker. Inkjet print. Courtesy of the artist. © 2022 Tim Walker

BRITISH PHOTOGRAPHER TIM WALKER is known for his surreal, fairy-tale-like images, eclectic artistic influences, and collaborations with other artists. As his close-knit crew—including set designer, make-up artist, stylist, wigmaker, models, casting director, and studio assistant—recently told me during my visit to London, Walker is the photographer they want to work with the most, since he encourages everyone to fully express their artistic selves.

Because Walker considers art institutions like the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and the Getty Museum as sources of ideas, last year Getty commissioned him to create a series of photographs inspired by the museum's collection. He chose two paintings: Dieric Bouts's *The Annunciation* (about 1450–55) and Lucas Cranach the Elder's *A Faun and His Family with a Slain Lion* (about 1526) as starting points for his artistic journey. Nineteen of the commissioned images will complement *Tim Walker: Wonderful Things*, a touring exhibition by the Victoria and Albert Museum that opens at the Getty Center on May 2. The exhibition in Los Angeles is generously sponsored by City National Bank.

Walker spoke to me about the process of completing the commission, why collaboration is an integral part of his creative practice, and how he often finds inspiration from centuries-old works.

"Looking at art from the past gives me nourishment," Walker says. "I think it's a very sexy treasure hunt. There's no better place to seek out something that might spark a vision in your head."

Here are some of my other favorite quotes from our interview and five of the commissioned artworks.



“When you’re a fashion photographer, you become acutely aware of fabric and how fabric falls and how it’s cut and how it sits on a person. For me, *The Annunciation* is about the beauty and finesse of a depiction of fabric. But when you’ve been photographing people in dress for so long, the beauty of nudity is very inspiring. As a fashion photographer, it was always about clothes. I think the freedom of nudity is human-kind at its most beautiful.”

“I had always been really taken with Cranach’s paintings, and interested in the body shapes of the women he painted: very narrow shoulders and then a big belly and wide hips, and then down into very skinny, skinny, skinny legs. When I first saw them, I found them quite ugly. And then I questioned why I found them ugly. But when I went to the Getty Museum, I saw them as something so supremely beautiful. That body shape, the depiction of feminine faces with very thin eyebrows, the very translucent skin.”



Above: *The Annunciation*, about 1450–55, Dieric Bouts. Distemper (pigments in animal glue) on linen. Getty Museum



Right: *A Faun and His Family with a Slain Lion*, about 1526, Lucas Cranach the Elder. Oil on panel. Getty Museum



Zuzanna Bartoszek: *Cupid Complaining to Venus*, 2022, Tim Walker. Inkjet print. Courtesy of the artist. © 2022 Tim Walker

“I spend a lot of time preparing for a shoot. I spend three months thinking about how we’re going to make the pictures. I’ll speak to Shona Heath, my set designer, about the set, and to the hairstylist, the makeup artist, and the stylist, and get everyone into the mood of what I’m trying to articulate. But then you just want people to be let off the leash of your imagination and to give you something back. You can really feel that the project’s coming to life.

“The biggest challenge is always that reality you’re fighting. You go to the studio, look through the camera, and it looks too flat and real. There’s no magic. And the magic of the painting that’s inspiring us all is palpable, and I worry that I can’t make the photography rise to that level. You just have to keep photographing, keep working with the people in front of you, keep moving around. You keep getting people to stand here, sit here. Let’s try that on. Let’s change the light. And then finally a photograph happens.”



Salvia and Two Giant Peaches, 2022, Tim Walker. Inkjet print. Courtesy of the artist. © 2022 Tim Walker

“This photograph was the first one that showed me where the shoot could go. Like, ‘There you go, the door’s open. We all know what we’re doing now.’ The whole process of photography is very chaotic and unformulaic. There’s no rhyme or reason to why things work. You just sweat and sit it out until the magic happens. The thing that makes this picture for me is my camera lens. I have a dial that can turn the picture from blue to yellow. I saw the camera slip in my hand, and then the yellow came on and I carried on taking pictures without realizing that the filter that casts a greeny, yellowy light was on. Then Shona threw the peaches in and suddenly the peaches mirrored the hair. The simplicity of that picture was exactly what I was trying to say.”

“There’s no rhyme or reason to why things work. You just sweat and sit it out until the magic happens.”

“The wig Pablo Kumin made for Salvia, the model, became the character Salvia was playing. The wig really dictated that because it sits on the head and if you move it too far back, it falls off. It’s like that finishing school thing where you have to walk and balance a book on your head. You’ve got to be very, very steady. That kind of gave Salvia her character. I look at transgender people [like Salvia] and I’m always impressed at them pushing boundaries and making new possibilities. They’re really pioneers. They’re light bringers of what could be possible for the future.”



Salvia as Queen, 2022, Tim Walker. Inkjet print. Courtesy of the artist. © 2022 Tim Walker

“I think a fundamental word in photography is playing, and I think people can only really play when there’s a relaxed atmosphere. I think being photographed is intimidating. I think it’s about making an environment that’s friendly and relaxed and human and caring. You really want people to forget about the camera and do something true to them. Just let people play and experiment and enjoy exploring their ability.”

Salvia Riding Lewis Walker Standing on Rust Satin, 2022, Tim Walker. Inkjet print. Courtesy of the artist. © 2022 Tim Walker



“My job is to make a photograph that celebrates an aspect of humanity, that looks at the past, and also looks at the future, sort of like a bridge between the past and the future. It’s about making something that is a collaboration, and that everyone you’re working with can say, ‘I’m really proud of that moment. I’m proud of that picture of myself. I’m proud of that picture of my styling. I’m proud of that set. I’m proud of that whole picture.’ And it’s about making something they’ll always hold as valuable to them. I think that’s my aim as a photographer: to make something that is universally for the team.” ■

Tim Walker

A Getty-funded exhibition at the Gardner celebrates Betye Saar's sketchbooks and the creativity generated by travel

WOMEN WHO WANDER

A

A BUDDHIST CHANT in an Indonesian temple. A bustling Moroccan marketplace. A Haitian Vodou ceremony.

In the 1970s, cultural encounters like these launched artist Betye Saar into a nearly six-decade love affair with travel. Now 96 years old, Saar has visited more than 31 countries, documenting her experiences along the way in vividly colored travel sketchbooks combining hand-drawn observations with knick-knacks, ephemera, and found items collected from her destinations.

It took until 2019 for a small selection of these sketchbooks—which Saar has long considered more personal documentation than art—to be displayed. They were featured in *Betye Saar: Call and Response* at LACMA and revealed for the first time to the public the depth of Saar's creative process and the breadth of her inspiration. Now the full range of her sketchbooks is receiving attention in *Betye Saar: Heart of a Wanderer*, on view through May 21 at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston.

"I love stepping off a plane and not understanding the language being spoken or why people are dressed a certain way," says Saar. "Right away you're on an adventure."

Opposite page: *Egypt Sketchbook*, pages 7–8, 2000, Betye Saar. Watercolor and collage. Courtesy of the artist and Roberts Projects, Los Angeles, California. Photo: Paul Salvesson



In *Heart of a Wanderer*, these adventures are captured in 26 sketchbooks representing Saar's sojourns to Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas. Covered with bold, saturated watercolors alongside gleaned materials such as dried flowers, currency, and stamps, the books capture the emotion and excitement of venturing abroad. The exhibition is supported in part by the Getty Foundation's Paper Project initiative—designed to elevate and celebrate works on paper—and will entice visitors to reflect on their own travel experiences and dive deeper into Saar's creativity.

"Betye always tries to transport you, to make you feel like you're seeing something different and outside of everyday life," says Diana Greenwald, the William and Lia Poorvu Curator of the Collection at the Gardner and show organizer. "Because the sketchbooks have been closed for decades, except for Betye rifling through them, they're incredibly vibrant. They make you yearn for far-off places."

Although she would become a cosmopolitan, Saar's early decades focused on Los Angeles. Born in the city in 1926, Saar went on to study design at UCLA and education and printmaking at Cal State

Long Beach. She called herself an artist by age 35, first focusing her talents on prints and then transitioning to assemblage (the mixing and matching of objects) to create sculptures with mystical, religious, and familial themes. In the 1970s her work was deeply influenced by sexism and racism in American culture, a key example being *The Liberation of Aunt Jemima* (1972)—a box-shaped assemblage of a gun-toting Aunt Jemima that reclaimed the syrup-brand character as a symbol of Black empowerment. A breakthrough for Saar, the artwork established her as a leader of the Black Arts Movement, a group of politically motivated Black artists, poets, writers, dramatists, and musicians in the 1960s and 1970s.

In the ensuing years, as her daughters got older and her reputation flourished, Saar began leaving familiar places behind to pursue artistic inspiration, often looking for quirky or off-the-beaten-trail experiences. "Whenever I'd give a lecture, I'd ask, 'Is there anybody here in the audience who knows of an alternative place of worship, with shrines or relics, or a hand-built or folk art environment?'" Saar found different spiritual practices to be of particular interest. "There's always someone who'd say: 'Well,

Malaysia Sketchbook, page 5, 1988, Betye Saar. Watercolor and collage. Courtesy of the artist and Roberts Projects, Los Angeles, California. Photo: Robert Wedemeyer



there's this guy that lives down the street from me. He has his funny little yard.' And that's where they would take me."

"She's incredibly curious and interested in a foreign experience, gathering not only things along the way but also ideas and feelings, which are presented as real-time reactions in her sketchbooks," says Greenwald. "Physical and emotional materials gathered while traveling inspire her finished sculptures."

Creative Curating

Greenwald was just kicking off a new curatorial position at the Gardner when a chance visit to the LACMA exhibition exposed her to Saar's sketchbooks. She was immediately struck by the similarities between Saar and Isabella Stewart Gardner, the charismatic heiress who created her eponymous museum in 1903.

Aware of the Getty Foundation's Paper Project initiative, which also helps curators of prints and drawings grow their skills and engage contemporary audiences, Greenwald recognized the opportunity to create something special: a study of two magnetic women seeking artistic inspiration in two very different time periods, yet who shared the same adventurous spirit and keen aesthetic eye.

"The Gardner is one of my favorite museums," says Saar, who lectured there in 1994 and subsequently devoured *Mrs. Jack*, a biography of Gardner by Louise Hall Tharp that details Gardner's myriad travels.

Between 1867 and 1895, Gardner and her husband visited 39 countries via boat and rail and on foot. And like Saar, Gardner had a penchant for travel journals, adorning pages with watercolors and memorabilia—photographs, botanicals, menus, and postcards—from visits to Italy, Egypt, Sudan, Russia, and beyond. Gardner's 28 albums became repositories of international inspiration, from a black-and-white snapshot of a carved wooden *mashrabiya* in Cairo to a rapturous handwritten entry on her visit to East Asia: "Japan is not a land where men need pray, for it's itself divine." Just as with Saar, whose sketchbooks led to later sculptural assemblages, Gardner's albums would ultimately inform her art collection and museum, known for its many temporal and geographical architectural influences.

"It has been an incredible opportunity, creating a meaningful dialogue between past and present," says Greenwald, counterposing the two women wanderers. "Working with Betye and hearing her travel reactions has helped me better understand Isabella's goals in creating an experiential museum focused on placing particular objects together based on intuition."

Travel snapshots from Betye Saar's datebook for her trip to Haiti, 17–23 July 1978. Courtesy of the artist and Roberts Projects, Los Angeles, California. Photo: Robert Wedemeyer



The project enabled Greenwald to play with innovative ideas. For one, she has collaborated with a sound designer to develop exhibition audio clips. Visitors to *Heart of a Wanderer* will wind through galleries arranged by continent, using a QR code to be greeted by global sounds from the 1970s, just as Saar would have experienced. “Whether it’s music or conversation, machinery or nature, it will immerse you in a completely different context,” says Greenwald.

Greenwald has also designed an interaction between a large cabinet in which Gardner placed

numerous souvenirs and Saar’s assemblage *Objects, Obsessions, Obligations* (2013), a small shelf of found objects. “Not every contemporary artist is comfortable with a Gilded Age, 19th-century installation next to their work,” says Greenwald, who approached Saar with the idea and received her blessing. Also, knowing that Saar likes density, Greenwald steered clear of the typical “white cube” museum experience, instead using color and placing many works together. “In Betye fashion, we’re building an assemblage of assemblages.”

Japan Sketchbook, pages 11–12, 1999, Betye Saar. Watercolor and collage. Courtesy of the artist and Roberts Projects, Los Angeles, California. Photo: Paul Salvesson

Betye Saar at Getty

In 2018 the Getty Research Institute announced the acquisition of Saar’s archive as part of its African American Art History Initiative, an effort to collect, study, and disseminate African American art history. Ranging from 1926 to the present, the archive features documentation of Saar’s entire career and life as an artist.

“As a child of the Depression, I learned at an early age the importance of saving things,” said Saar in 2018 about the acquisition. “I’ve taken great pride in preserving these items for some 80-plus years. I am very pleased that the Getty Research Institute shares my desire for ‘saving things’ and that they will be providing a home for many of my collections so that they will be accessible by scholars, the arts community, and the generally curious alike.”

Heart of a Wanderer reminds us why works on paper are particularly important. Without her sketchbooks to help her refine concepts and ideas, Saar’s assemblages might never have come to fruition or been as impactful as they were on the trajectory of 20th-century art. Nor would Saar have been able to revisit time and again the sensations and emotions of travel she so effectively captures in her more finished works. Fortunately, the public now has increased access to these important troves.

“Works on paper like Betye’s are where you really see the immediacy of an artist’s creativity,” says Greenwald. “Oil paintings are often built up over time with many layers, and that can obscure the process. But paper’s not like that—it’s all there to see. If you want to understand the unfiltered hand and instinct of an artist, look at their sketches.” ■

Acid Lab

How another curator used a Getty grant to innovatively display works on paper

The Kunstmuseum Basel in Switzerland is introducing 21st-century audiences to the traditional printmaking technique of etching through a digital, interactive exhibition.

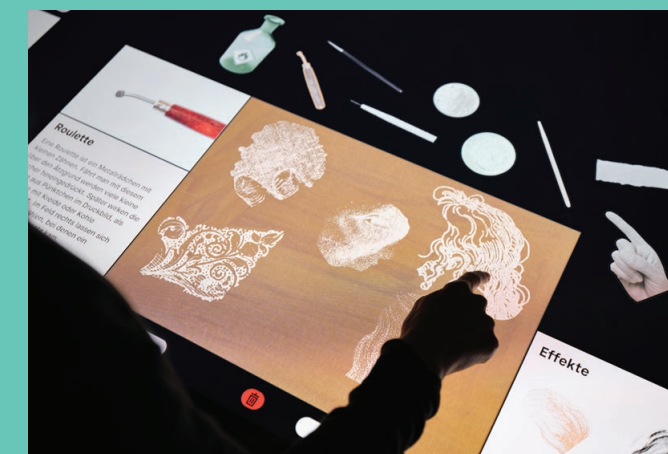
The *Acid Lab*, developed with grant support through Getty’s Paper Project initiative, lets visitors simulate etching on digital “etching tables” with immersive touch screens. For 800 years artists have made etchings by carving a design into a metal printing plate with acid and then inking the plate before pressing it onto paper.

Users can play with all the tools of the trade—plates, acids, varnishes, and different carving needles—to create a variety of image effects. They can then view each experimental outcome alongside an artwork from the museum that incorporates the same technique and read a short story about the artwork’s origins.

“Although images on a screen can never replace the intimate experience of looking at the original sheets, digital experiences are powerful ways to reveal insights hidden from the naked eye, or direct attention to unnoticed material qualities,” says exhibition curator Marion Heisterberg.

Visitors to the *Acid Lab* get the best of both worlds, as the gallery also features three dozen etchings from the Kunstmuseum dating from the 16th century through the years of Impressionism and 20th-century abstraction. After practicing with the digital tables, visitors can apply their newfound knowledge to the process of looking closely at works on paper by Albrecht Dürer, Edgar Degas, Richard Serra, and others.

The *Acid Lab* is on view through May 14, 2023.



A digital etching table in the *Acid Lab* exhibition at the Kunstmuseum Basel. Photo: Max Ehrenguber



The Vexed Man, 1771–83, Franz Xaver Messerschmidt. Alabaster. Getty Museum

By Elaine Woo

Does having a mental illness make you a better artist? Reporter Elaine Woo spoke with Getty curators, local neuroscientists, and other experts to find answers to this divisive question

THE LINK BETWEEN CREATIVITY AND MENTAL ILLNESS

W

WHAT MAKES GREAT ARTISTS GREAT? The eminent art critic Clement Greenberg jotted down his theory in a 1961 diary:

The best American artists + writers of my time = alcoholics or on the verge of alcoholism; or megalomaniacs; or hysterics. Pollock, Faulkner, F. Lloyd Wright, Still, Newman, de Kooning, Rothko. On the other hand, the manic-depressives: Cal [Robert] Lowell, Delmore Schwarz . . . David Smith a hysteric? Ken Noland a manic-depressive like me.

Greenberg's suggestion that exceptionally artistic people tend toward mental disorder is deeply embedded in our culture, traceable to the ancient Greeks and Romans and lent credence over the centuries by

creative geniuses as different as Robert Schumann, Vincent van Gogh, Sylvia Plath, and Robin Williams. "Madness," according to Socrates, "is the channel by which we receive the greatest blessings."

The notion of the "mad genius" is, however, as controversial as it is persistent.

In the curatorial world many people shy away from it, leery of reducing great art to the sum of a creator's neurosis or psychosis. Yet in the scientific world, the possibility of a link between mental illness and creativity has inspired researchers for at least 70 years.

Some experts, such as Johns Hopkins University psychiatry professor Kay Redfield Jamison, find strong evidence that mood disorders, such as depression and bipolarism, are more prevalent among artists and writers than in the general population.



The “mad genius” trope has endured, Jamison said in an interview, “possibly because there’s a real element of truth in it.”

That view is echoed by USC neuroscientist Antonio Damasio. “The experience of suffering that is a hallmark of mood disorders may well stimulate creative endeavors, especially in the arts,” says Damasio, who is known for his work on the role of feelings and emotions in decision-making.

But, as he notes, these disorders represent only one major category of mental illness. Research into madness and creativity ranges across a broad spectrum of complex psychopathologies and creative pursuits, making comparisons difficult and consensus beyond reach.

“I believe one thing is certain,” Damasio says. “Major forms of psychopathology are rarely compatible with major creativity.”

The Big Cs

In a 2019 study, researchers at UCLA investigated the idea that psychopathology is more common in “Big-C creatives,” artists and scientists whose rare talents have earned international renown. “We found more of the opposite in some ways,” says Kendra S. Knudsen, the study’s lead author. “We found that individuals without a lifetime history of a psychiatric disorder scored higher on a test of creative thinking relative to those who had at least one lifetime diagnosis.”

The study also found, though, that the visual artists had a higher incidence of “schizotypal” personality traits—behavior that is often described as odd or eccentric, such as nonconformism and receptivity to unusual ideas and experiences, but which does not amount to full-blown mental illness.

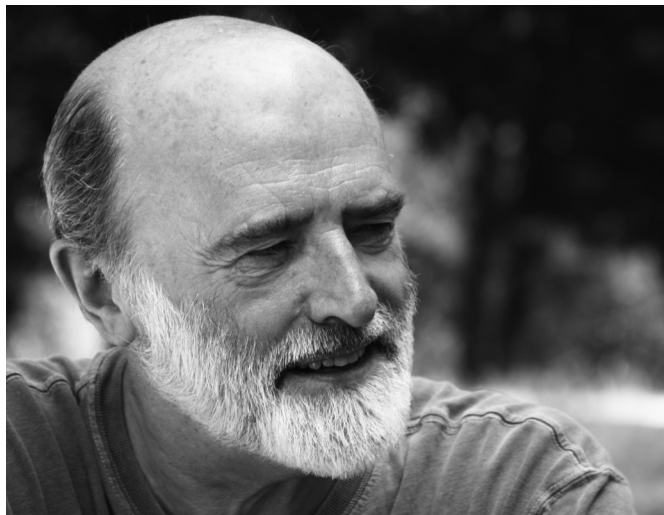
The study emerged from the Big C Project, which is using neuroimaging and other methods to investigate how the brains and behavior of ultra-creative people may make them outliers compared to the rest of us.

Robert M. Bilder, the Michael E. Tennenbaum Family Chair in Creativity Research at UCLA and Big C Project director, puts it another way. “What we see is that the people who are most identified as being creative achievers may have certain traits that overlap with those of people with certain kinds of mental disorders, but they usually do not have mental illnesses as we define them today.”

Bilder suggests that asking whether genius is associated with mental illness is the wrong question. “I guess the right question is, what is the nature of the relationship between creativity and emotional and psychological adjustment and well-being? Because I think it’s important to understand that both of these things occur on a spectrum.”

The Tortured Artists

Looking back through history, it is impossible to separate some of the world’s greatest artworks from the tortured psyches of their creators. A sublime example is Van Gogh, the beloved Dutch artist whose 1889 painting *Iris* is one of the Getty Museum’s greatest treasures.



Above: Kendra S. Knudsen, research coordinator for the “Big-C Creativity” project at UCLA’s Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior and founder of the Creative Minds Project at UCLA

Peter C. Whybrow, MD, director emeritus of UCLA’s Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior and the Judson Braun Distinguished Professor of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences at UCLA’s David Geffen School of Medicine

The painting depicts in thick, swirling brushstrokes of violet, green, yellow, orange, and blue a tightly cropped view of irises in bloom. Scholars and critics have praised its exquisite composition, while Getty visitors have found *Iris* mesmerizing for a variety of other reasons, seeing joyful exuberance in its intimate view of nature or sadness in the solitary white blossom the artist placed amid a swath of purplish ones.

It may surprise some museumgoers to learn that *Iris* was one of the first works Van Gogh produced at a psychiatric hospital in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence in southern France, where he voluntarily confined himself for a year following an act of self-mutilation. How could someone so ill as to slice off his left ear (and subsequently present the chunk of flesh to a brothel maid) produce such a masterpiece of form and color? *Iris* was far from an exception: Van Gogh completed more than 150 paintings at that hospital, an astonishing output that included his most famous work, *The Starry Night*.

Jamison wrote in *Touched with Fire*, her 1993 book on manic-depressive disease and the artistic mind, that Van Gogh’s paintings from that period “reflect lucidity of the highest order,” which is not to say he didn’t have problems. Such clarity of

mind “is not incompatible with occasional bouts of madness,” she wrote, “just as extended periods of normal physical health are not incompatible with occasional bouts of hypertension, diabetic crisis,” or other kinds of metabolic disease.

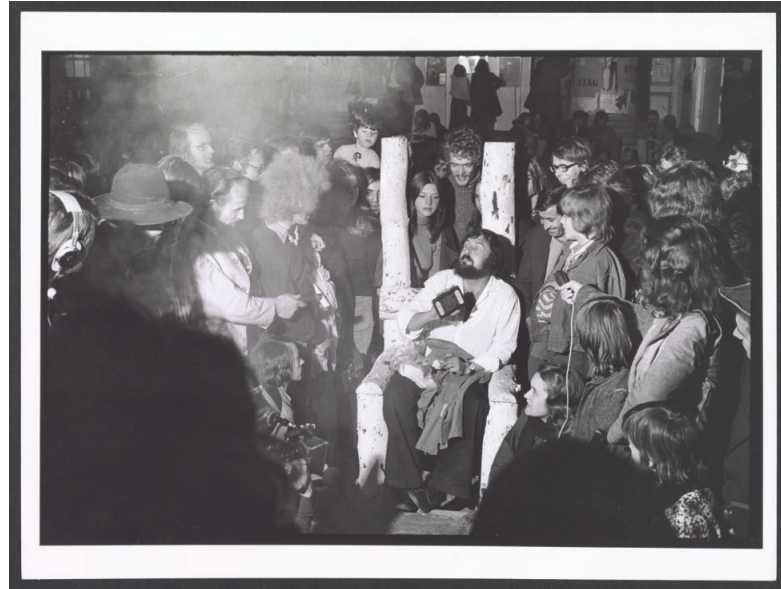
It may be that many creative geniuses thrive on the border between mental order and disorder, “the edge of chaos,” where novel ideas are born, Bilder says. “The balance of stability on the one hand and flexibility on the other hand is critically important to be able to do anything.”

The nature of Van Gogh’s illness has long been a matter of debate, with diagnoses having included absinthe poisoning, schizophrenia, syphilis, and borderline personality disorder. Today, it is generally believed that he had bipolar disorder, which is characterized by extreme fluctuations in mood, energy, activity levels, and concentration. The symptoms often emerge in step with the seasons.

“*Iris* is a good example of when his mood swings were under some control,” says psychiatrist and author Peter C. Whybrow, who was director of the UCLA Neuropsychiatric Institute in the late 1990s when he first delved into Van Gogh’s career and medical history.



Iris, 1889, Vincent van Gogh. Oil on canvas. Getty Museum



Harald Szeemann (center) in a photograph displayed in the Getty Research Institute's 2018 exhibition *Harald Szeemann: Museum of Obsessions. Documenta 5: Questioning reality-Image worlds today, 1972*, Balthasar Burkhard. Harald Szeemann Papers, Getty Research Institute

Van Gogh worked frenetically in late summer—“in spasmodic fury,” as an art student once described his process, Whybrow notes. But his mania tended to recede in the winter, when depression set in, leaving him barely able to lift brush to canvas.

Mental illness “embellished his creativity and gave it tones, to use a painterly metaphor,” Whybrow surmises. “But it is not correct to say that his art was driven by it. Mental illness shaped some of the work but doesn’t explain his brilliance as an artist.”

Another example is the 18th-century German sculptor Franz Xaver Messerschmidt. He is best known for a series of more than 60 busts, called Character Heads, which are admired by scholars for their stunning realism and modernity and fascinating to viewers because of their sheer weirdness.

Far from models of gentility, the heads have, variously, wild eyes, jutting necks, comically arched brows, and mouths agape as if in a scream. One particularly riveting piece is *The Vexed Man*, on view at the Getty Center. It shows a middle-aged man with a face screwed up in a deep grimace. Beholders of these sculptures may disagree on the emotions portrayed, but it’s hard not to regard them as deeply unsettling.

In an account left by Christoph Friedrich Nicolai, a bookseller who visited Messerschmidt at his studio in 1781, the sculptor confided that he was tormented at night by ghosts. To exorcise them, he pinched himself in various parts of his body and repeatedly modeled the resulting facial expressions in front of a mirror until he could capture them in metal or stone.

Some experts postulated that Messerschmidt had Crohn’s disease or lead poisoning, both of which can cause severe pain. But one of the most-cited posthumous diagnoses came from

psychoanalyst and art historian Ernst Kris, who concluded in 1932 that Messerschmidt had paranoid schizophrenia.

The death of his patron and whispers of his “confusion in the head” apparently led Messerschmidt to break from his life in Vienna, where he had been a sculptor to the royal family, to spend his last years as a recluse. He produced the final bust in the series the year he died, 1783.

Art Reflects Life

Glenn Phillips, senior curator and head of modern and contemporary collections at the Getty Research Institute (GRI), thinks it can be valuable to understand the psychological dimensions of an artist’s life.

“Sometimes you really need to know the artist’s story to understand why they’re making the things they are, because it comes so profoundly out of their lived experience,” he says. “It’s kind of a first way into the work.”

The art world has recognized the contributions of people with mental illness. Swiss curator Harald Szeemann, who is often described as the 20th century’s most influential exhibition maker, “had a whole group of artists with mental illness that he worked with at various points in his career,” says Phillips, who organized *Harald Szeemann: Museum of Obsessions* at the GRI in 2018.

In a groundbreaking 1963 exhibition, Szeemann showcased the work of psychiatric patients, including Adolf Wölfli, an artist diagnosed with schizophrenia who became an emblematic figure in the Art Brut movement for the thousands of fantastical drawings and illustrations he made during three decades in a Swiss psychiatric hospital. Szeemann championed art by people with mental illness, writing in a 1963 essay that while



such artists realized their talent “only with the onset of mental illness,” their work should be judged as art and not merely the “results of art therapy.”

But don’t knock the power of art as a medium for managing mental and emotional health.

At places like Painted Brain, a peer-run mental health nonprofit in the MacArthur Park neighborhood near downtown, and the Los Angeles–based Creative Minds Project, people with mental health challenges come together to express their inner thoughts and feelings through art.

“I think it’s healing to access different ways of thinking to understand our world and the world of others,” says UCLA’s Knudsen, who founded the Creative Minds Project more than a decade ago through a partnership with UCLArts & Healing. “I think there is a bidirectional relationship, where our emotional experience can shape our creative thinking and our creative thinking can also shape our emotional experience.”

Van Gogh understood the connection.

“The more I am spent, ill, a broken pitcher,” he once wrote, “by so much more am I an artist—a creative artist.” ■

Elaine Woo is a freelance journalist in Los Angeles.

Artworks by Adolf Wölfli in *Visionäre Schweiz*, 1992. Left: *Lemonade-Lina. 1 Cognac barrel. Page 36*, 1904, pencil on newsprint. Center: *The Zion Star in Its Natural Formation. St. Adolf -Great-Great-Great-God-Father-Egg*, 1919, pencil and color pencil on newsprint. Right: *Argowin-Serpent*, 1905, pencil on newsprint. *Jeremias Gotthelf from Lützelflüh*, 1905, pencil on newsprint. Adolf Wölfli Foundation, Kunstmuseum Bern. Photo: Verena Eggmann

Clement Greenberg quote © By permission of Sarah Greenberg Morse for the estate of Clement Greenberg. Getty Research Institute, (950085)

In the Studio with Felipe Baeza

A peek into the creative process of the Getty Research Institute's new Artist in Residence

By Anya Ventura
Digital Media Producer
Getty Research Institute



TACKED TO THE WALLS of Felipe Baeza's studio is a collection of images. Black-and-white photographs of male nudes and the stone heads of ancient Aztec warriors. A 17th-century illustration of a cactus, its fat paddles fanning out to the sky. Pinup calendar models. The tracing paper outlines of many hands, each one appearing to be grasping at something.

"The walls are usually plastered with images I find in books or just notes that I write to myself," Baeza says. Very little is ever thrown away. "I keep everything, every single little strip of paper." Periodically, "there's so much visual noise in the studio that I take everything off. And then I start from a blank slate."

Baeza is the Artist in Residence at the Getty Research Institute (GRI), part of a cohort of scholars who arrived at Getty this year to conduct research around the theme Art and Migration. It's fitting for Baeza, who immigrated from Mexico as a child, and whose artwork gives dreamy form to queer and migrant experiences—what he calls "fugitive bodies."

Baeza grew up in Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood, home to a large Mexican American community whose culture, and struggles for justice, are celebrated in bright street murals splashed across buildings and alleyways. Yet despite living in a neighborhood where evidence of creativity is everywhere, Baeza never imagined a career as a "capital A" artist. "I never thought that would be a possibility for myself," he says. He didn't grow up in a family of artists or go to many museums as a child. "A lot of us don't have the time for imagination. In a perfect world, we would all have time for imagination. Having time is a privilege."

Baeza's path changed when he got into the Cooper Union in New York City, which at the time was free. The support with tuition was significant to him because due to his immigration status, he was unable to apply for federal financial aid. He studied art in college, found employment in a print shop, and went on to study at the Yale School of Art, where he was given the supreme luxury of time. At Yale he began creating lush, densely layered works that blended printmaking, painting, and collage. In these compositions, classical nude bodies are often found suspended in darkness, in surreal worlds neither here nor there, their bodies sprouting thick clouds of vegetation.

At the GRI, Baeza has been reflecting not only on the migration of people but also objects. Having access to archives that reveal the movement of things, and how their stories change over time, has been transformative. "It's been overwhelming, but in such a good way, because there's just so much to look

T

at, and it's hard to even know where to start." In addition to perusing the GRI's extensive collection of artists' books, he has explored the records of the Stendahl Art Galleries, which, in selling pre-Columbian art to Hollywood high society of the 1930s and '40s, played a large role in how these ancient pieces assumed new meanings as they traveled across borders.

Baeza's work has also been influenced by conversations with scholars from around the world whose research similarly addresses questions of mobility and belonging. What happens to objects once they are sealed in the museum for display and placed alongside other disparate works from around the world? What is the museum's responsibility to these things? As with many human beings, Baeza points out, these items have often been forced to migrate from their original homes.

What Baeza desires most in his art making is to find freedom, he says. In his work, bodies often float against washes of deep red, dark gray, and midnight blue. In their monochrome color the figures can be difficult to discern, but with careful viewing, they reveal themselves slowly, before receding back into the darkness. To be a migrant or a queer person—identities pushed to the margins of society—is to exist in this floating world, a "mode of suspension," as he puts it. But at the same time, this can be a space of freedom. He doesn't want to romanticize these ways of living, he says, "but in that mode, there's also the possibility to thrive."

It is in the studio—drawing, carving, sanding, and cutting out scraps to assemble fantastical new landscapes from the fragments of the old—that Baeza experiences this potential. Each day feels like a venture into the unknown. "My practice leads to more questions than answers," he says. When he's blocked, he draws or collages, often with no intention to create artwork to exhibit. "It's about protecting that joy," he says.

He keeps the scraps created through the process of collage, never knowing how these fragments might find a place in future projects. "I like having the possibility that the work is giving life to other work." Collage, after all, is a technique often applied in the aftermath of destruction, from world war to the Watts Rebellion, as a way of putting the pieces back together, not as they were before, but in cracked, beautiful new forms.

For Baeza, creativity is a life-giving force. "What's been fruitful is thinking about the ways that people have survived in those situations, and in those suspensions," he says. "For me, that survival has been through the imagination." ■



Installation view in the Thornton Portrait Gallery at The Huntington. Left to right: Joshua Reynolds, *Diana (Sackville)*, *Viscountess Crosbie*, 1777; Thomas Gainsborough, *The Blue Boy*, 1770; Thomas Gainsborough, *Elizabeth (Jenks) Beaufoy, later Elizabeth Pycroft*, ca. 1780. Image courtesy of The Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens

CONSERVING ART WHILE CONSERVING ENERGY

By Cole Calhoun
Communications Specialist
J. Paul Getty Trust

As climate change escalates, how do museums keep art safe when galleries and storage spaces run too hot or too cold, too humid or too dry? Scientists at the Getty Conservation Institute are proposing creative solutions

IN 2022 A FAMOUS 18TH-CENTURY PAINTING traveled over 5,000 miles by plane in a double-crate system carefully crafted by Getty Museum preparators. Often referred to as *The Blue Boy*, the painting, *A Portrait of a Young Gentleman* by Thomas Gainsborough, was on display at The Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens for 100 years before making the long trek to the National Gallery in London for a four-month exhibition.

The Blue Boy's advanced crate was designed to mitigate potential extremes in shock, vibration, temperature, and relative humidity. Sensors installed at the back of the frame and on the inner and outer crates collected data on the work's transit environment, all of which was tracked by the Managing Collection Environments (MCE) team at the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI).

The resulting data showed a stable environment during the painting's journey and was added to MCE's expansive database to help inform professionals about potential risks during an object's loan process.

The Blue Boy required such careful handling and tracking because extremes in shock, vibration, temperature, and relative humidity can cause artworks to break, decay, or fade. Since the 1970s, museum professionals have adhered to a strict set of climate control guidelines: art objects must be kept at a temperature of 70°F ± 4°F with a relative humidity of 50% ± 3%, to be precise. But this limited range requires large amounts of energy, is expensive, and can be extremely difficult to sustain. As climate change continues to put pressure on how institutions operate, museum professionals around the world are facing the new climate reality with urgency and proposing mitigation solutions.



Staff load *The Blue Boy* into Getty's double-crate system at The Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens. Image courtesy of the Getty Conservation Institute

The GCI launched the MCE initiative 10 years ago to develop strategies for the sustainable exhibition, transit, and storage of art objects. Through research and fieldwork, MCE investigates how artworks respond to temperature, relative humidity, vibration, and lighting. The goal: to use evidence—both in terms of data and experience—to reassess a long-established set of narrow climate control parameters that are energy intensive and may not be needed for object preservation. Scientists and conservators at Getty and beyond are getting creative to find more energy-efficient methods to preserve collections.

“While the heritage conservation field is generally risk averse, new guidelines created over the past decade suggest that wider environmental ranges may be appropriate for many types of objects,” says Vincent Laudato Beltran, associate scientist at the GCI.

Measuring Object Change

One way to monitor how an artwork is responding to its environment is through acoustic emission monitoring. This highly sensitive technique helps trace physical changes to objects by measuring the energy materials release during brittle cracking events, to essentially “listen” to how objects respond to their environments. The technique allows professionals

to detect changes at a micro level before any damage is visible, acting as an early warning system.

The MCE group is currently working with the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) in Melbourne to investigate how a 16th-century Flemish altarpiece depicting the Passion of Christ responds when exposed to changing temperature and relative humidity conditions.

Data compiled from acoustic emission monitoring suggest that strict indoor climate control strategies in place over the past several decades could be adjusted. If environmental conditions were relaxed, institutions could dramatically lessen energy consumption from HVAC systems and increase possibilities for exhibiting and loaning objects.

In most cases, very strict control of temperature and humidity fluctuations in museums is dictated by the desire to avoid climate-induced physical damage to art objects. The MCE team is using innovative micromechanical methods to characterize historic materials, and in this way support research conducted on artificially aged ones. Systematic research shows that risks of physical alteration—even at moderate variations of temperature and relative humidity—remain low. With that in mind, more flexible environmental conditions can be allowed without compromising the safety of art objects.

The Case for Art in Transit

For decades, couriers were required to physically accompany artworks traveling on loan to other institutions. It is now becoming increasingly clear that new transportation practices must be developed to reduce the industry’s carbon footprint.

During the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Art Institute of Chicago loaned the Mary Cassatt painting *After the Bullfight* to the Chrysler Museum of Art in Norfolk, Virginia. Rather than traveling the 885 miles with a courier, the work journeyed alone by truck and plane in a modular, reusable crate with advanced live trackers that monitored its environmental conditions virtually.

Due to the pandemic and the overall need to find more economical and sustainable solutions, the Art Institute of Chicago experimented with virtual technology that proved successful in measuring the painting’s temperature and relative humidity, as well as tracking events such as plane departure and arrival.

“This in-depth tracking of art in transit could redefine the role of couriers in the art field,” says Cayetana Castillo, associate vice president of collections and loans at the Art Institute of Chicago.

The work’s environment had to maintain a temperature between 60 and 80 degrees Fahrenheit and a relative humidity of between 40 and 60 percent, and the team was able to track fluctuations in environmental conditions in real time. This information will help experts decide if they need to revise their policies for shipping objects, as well as assess the financial impact of their current processes and examine new technology and innovations in logistics.

“The more data institutions collect when art is in transit, the better we can understand the magnitude of risk during this period,” adds Beltran. “This may lead to a reassessment of current loan agreement parameters and potentially broaden access to objects across the museum field.”

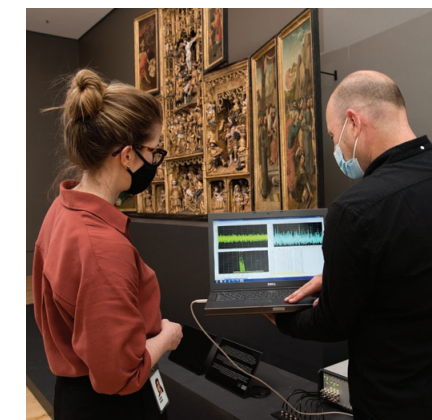
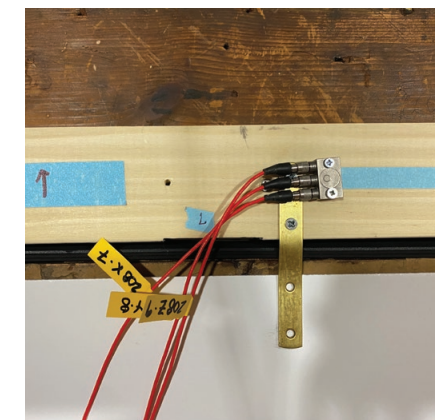


Supporting Conservation Practice

Building on its research and fieldwork, MCE continues to disseminate key findings to help professionals approach new challenges in collection environments. This includes expert meetings, specialized workshops, and multidisciplinary courses that combine virtual and in-person components with extended mentoring.

A forthcoming example is a four-day workshop called *Changing Climate Management Strategies: Sustainable Collection Environments and Monitoring Object Response*, organized by MCE and the NGV. To be held at the NGV in Melbourne in August 2023, this workshop will address obstacles in developing and implementing more adaptive environmental management strategies in museums and will target heritage professionals from diverse backgrounds working in Australasia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and East Asia to support the regional heritage community. MCE is also looking to develop additional sustainability workshops in other geographic regions, including Europe and Los Angeles.

Stay tuned for additional MCE research, fieldwork, workshops, and courses related to sustainable environmental management, art in transit, museum lighting, and more. ■



Above: Incorporation of the acoustic emission monitoring system into the visual display and narrative of the Flemish altarpiece *Carved Retable of the Passion of Christ* (1511–20). Photo by Predrag Cancar. Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Left: A triaxial accelerometer installed on the wooden backing of *The Blue Boy*. Image courtesy of the Getty Conservation Institute

Right: National Gallery of Victoria conservators check data compiled from acoustic emission monitoring on the 16th-century Flemish altarpiece. Photo by Predrag Cancar. Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

The Art of Collecting

An acquisition of four works honors a curator's legacy

MARCIA REED UNDERSTANDS that collecting is part of the creative process.

“I have almost never seen an artist who wasn’t also a collector,” she says. “Artists collect to gather ideas.”

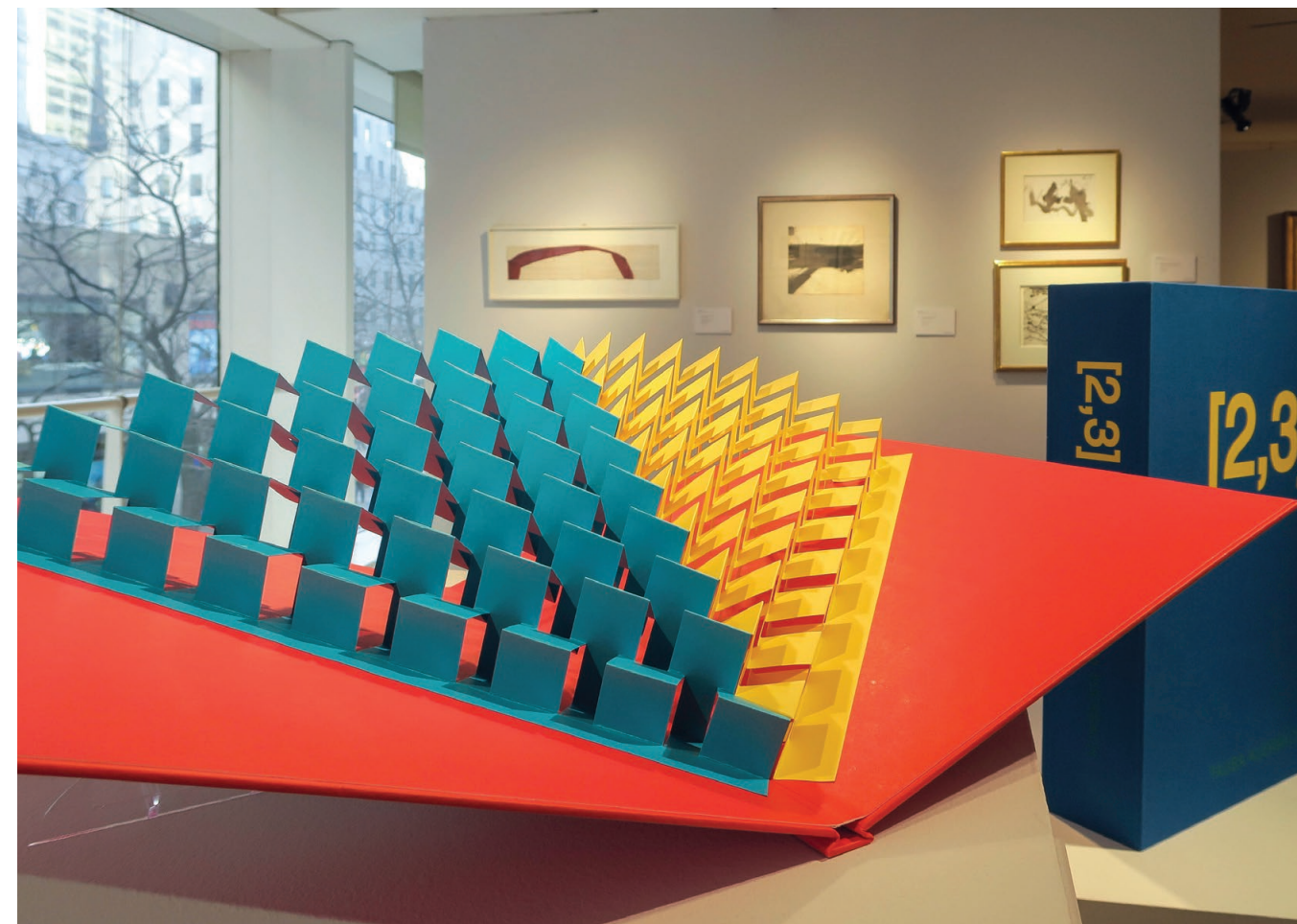
The act of collecting is itself creative, adds Reed, who retired last year as chief curator at the Getty Research Institute (GRI). “As a curator, I collect because I am always thinking about connecting single works and collections in meaningful ways.” This drive to think about how things speak to one another helped her build out the Special Collections division of one of the largest art libraries in the world.

Yet Reed wasn’t interested in filling the shelves with objects just so they could gather dust; she believed that the contents of archives were as worthy of exhibition as traditional artworks. As she puts it: “It’s important for libraries to be as lively and interesting as museums. I want to make collections accessible so they can be shared with others.”

Credit that sentiment to her background as a librarian. When Reed was the art, archaeology, and music librarian at the University of Missouri-Columbia, she saw in the library’s collections a trove of untapped material for display. Yet chances to exhibit books were few. “It bothered me that the library cases were sitting empty while the building was full of interesting objects,” Reed says. “So I asked and received permission to do several exhibitions and catalogues on shoestring budgets.”

When Reed was hired at Getty in 1983 as a reader services librarian for the new Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities (now the GRI), the situation wasn’t much better; the library was small, and there wasn’t a push to promote its collections. Nevertheless, Reed and a colleague redeployed some empty vitrines languishing in the Getty Villa’s basement and put together their own small exhibitions, just for staff, of newly acquired collections—including rare books.

Marcia Reed leads a tour of the exhibition *Artists and Their Books / Books and Their Artists* at the Getty Research Institute, 2018.



That’s how Reed found her calling. “I thought, you know, this is something I could actually do, since my library training focused on rare books. I just never thought there would be rare book collections in an art library.”

Since then, Reed has made a career advocating for how books fit into our understanding of visual culture, expanding the notion of what kinds of media should be part of art history.

To honor her enduring imprint on the GRI’s collections, the GRI Council, which provides philanthropic support to advance the study of the arts, recently acquired four works in her honor. An illustrated book by Pierre de Bretagne (1723) and a Christofle & Cie album of photographs (1872) relate to the art of festivals and gastronomy—an initial, important collecting area for the GRI and the basis of Reed’s 2015 exhibition *The Edible Monument*, which focused on artworks made of food for early modern European festivals and royal courts.

A third acquisition, an 18th-century volume with drawings of William Hamilton’s collection of ancient Greek vases, marries Reed’s love of the history of art history, illustrated books on art, and the history of collecting. Finally, a large pop-up book by Tauba Auerbach signifies the importance of artists’ books to the GRI’s holdings. Reed helped develop this collecting area through her acquisition of the Jean Brown archive, which contains about 4,000 artists’ books.

So, the next time you’re poring over a magnificently illustrated volume on display in the GRI galleries, thank Reed and her creative, innovative collecting.

—Kirsten Lew, Associate Digital Media Producer,
Getty Research Institute

[2,3] by Tauba Auerbach (published 2011) on display at the *Post-war to Present* exhibition at Christie’s Inc. auction house, New York City. Patti McConville / Alamy Stock Photo



But First, Sketch

Consider the sketchbook, small enough to tuck into a pocket or bag, as the artist's version of the personal diary

LEONARDO DA VINCI WAS KNOWN to pull a sketchbook from his pocket and set down ideas in quick drawings. Although this may seem unremarkable today, Leonardo was, in fact, part of the first generation of European artists trained from a young age to make rapid, spontaneous sketches and to preserve them in a bound volume. Paper was a valuable commodity, but as it became more widely available, artists increasingly took up sketchbooks to capture and store their first sparks of inspiration.

Artists still love sketchbooks—for jotting down visual ideas, seizing a sudden burst of inspiration, experimenting with different concepts, or recording what they see around them. Sketchbook drawings

can be informal and highly personal, allowing us to peer over an artist's shoulder and follow a creative journey. But because relatively few sketchbooks have come down to us intact—many were disbound at some point and their individual pages cut loose and scattered far and wide—Special Collections at the Getty Research Institute (GRI), along with the Getty Museum, are notable for preserving a substantial number of intact artists' sketchbooks.

Researchers can enjoy the intimate experience of handling these objects—holding them, turning the pages, tracking the artist's thoughts by moving from page to page—and by doing so, may make exciting discoveries. Many of these sketchbooks have also been fully digitized, allowing anyone, anywhere, to leaf through them virtually.

Sketchbooks created as part of an artist's education are an important component of the GRI's collections. From the later 1400s to the turn of the 20th century, European artists began their training by executing drawings after the works of celebrated makers, both living and dead, as well as antiquities. This type of artistic education was further codified beginning in the later 1600s, when several European countries founded national academies for

the training of painters, sculptors, and architects, institutions that advocated for them to travel to Rome and make drawings after ancient and Renaissance art. The GRI collection is especially rich in sketchbooks created in the late 18th and early 19th centuries by French artists who spent time at the Académie de France à Rome.

Getty's 19th-century sketchbooks also illustrate how European artists moved away from the style and subjects associated with academic art and turned to depictions of everyday life—the foundation of Impressionist and Postimpressionist art. In 1847, for example, Rosa Bonheur, an accomplished painter of animals, filled a sketchbook with her observations of life in rural France, including drawings she made while standing in the fields during the harvest. Edgar Degas similarly used a sketchbook to record views of daily life, including women hard at work doing laundry. In the following century, a young Mark Rothko would also sketch what was before him: a houseplant, comfy armchair, fellow painters at work at an easel.

Sketchbooks of the 20th and 21st centuries have also been used for artists' early studies, travel records, and as preparation for and documentation of specific projects. As American sculptor Malvina Hoffman



Antoine-Léonard Dupasquier, a sculptor who studied at the Académie de France à Rome, filled his sketchbook with drawings of antiquities he saw in the Vatican. *Studies of Antique Figures*, 1779, Antoine-Léonard Dupasquier. Pen and ink with wash on paper. Getty Research Institute, (2005.M.6)

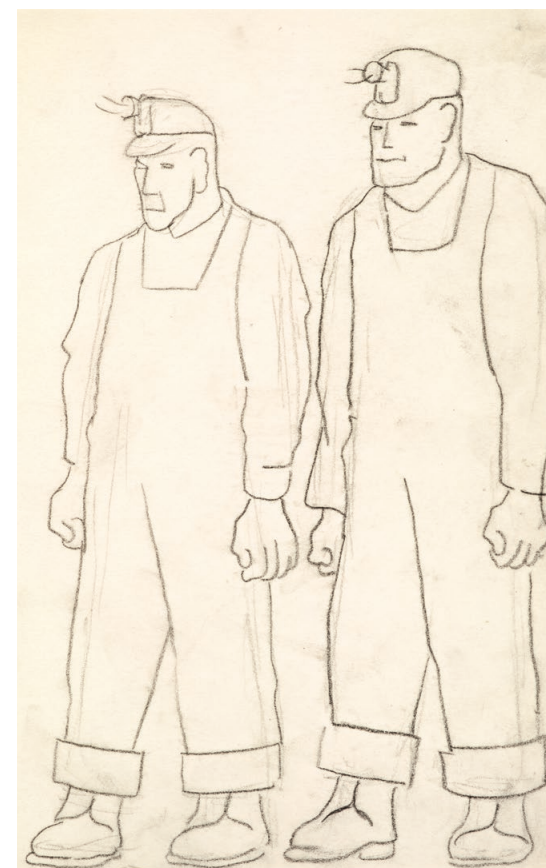
Above: *Designs for Book Ornamentation*, 1910, Pickford Waller. Pen and ink and watercolor on paper. Getty Research Institute, (850360)



Reyer and the Washer Woman, about 1877, Edgar Degas. Graphite. Getty Museum



Study of a Farm Worker and a Horse Pulling a Cart, 1847, Rosa Bonheur. Graphite on paper. Getty Research Institute, (850837)

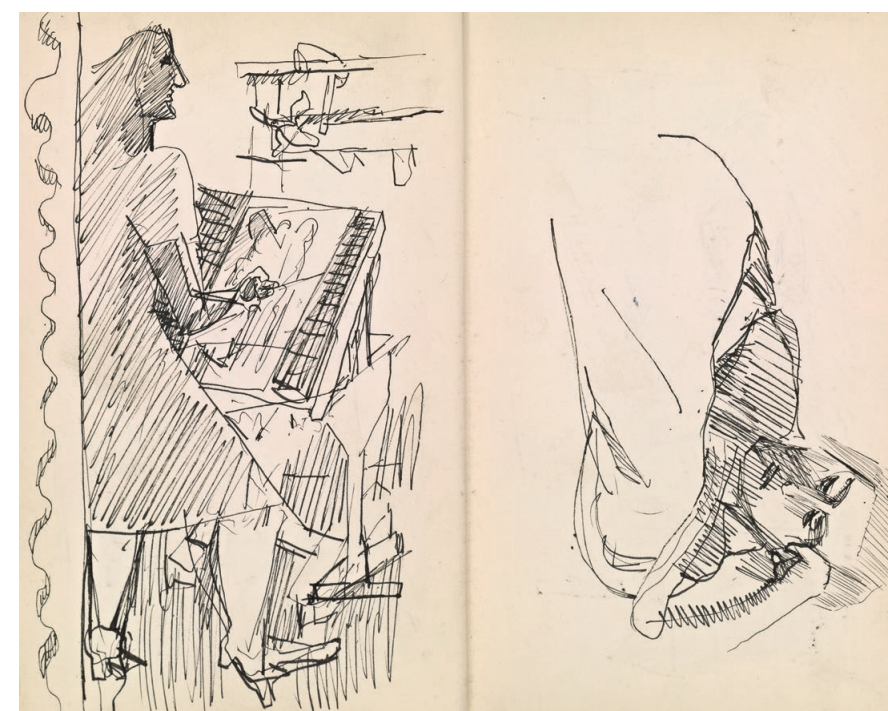


traveled through the Americas, Europe, and Asia in the early 1930s, for instance, she took photographs, wrote notes, and made portrait drawings in preparation for a bronze sculpture series commissioned for the Chicago Field Museum exhibition *The Races of Mankind*. And when Diego Rivera was planning murals for sites in San Francisco, he visited local mines to draw laborers directly from life.

Many sketchbooks have entered the GRI as part of larger artists' archives, including those of Eleanor Antin, Frederick Hammersley, Maren Hassinger, Richard Hunt, David Lamelas, and Barbara T. Smith. And in addition to the sketchbooks of painters, sculptors, and printmakers, the GRI also preserves large numbers of those made by architects, designers, and craftspeople working in the applied arts across Europe and America. Examples include 28 sketchbooks from the Pickford Waller design firm, made between 1896 and 1926 and devoted to art nouveau patterns for book covers, bookplates, and page borders, and the fascinating sketchbooks created by influential architects Steven Ehrlich, Hans Hollein, Daniel Libeskind, J. J. P. Oud, Hans Poelzig, Aldo Rossi, and Lebbeus Woods.

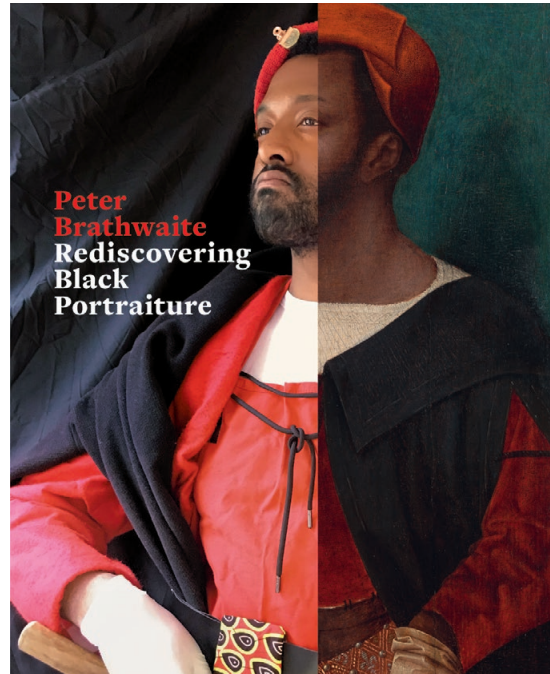
If you'd like to learn more, the Sketchbooks Research Guide (getty.libguides.com/sketchbooks) offers a more thorough introduction to the GRI and Getty Museum's sketchbooks along with a brief overview of their historical development and sustained artistic use from the Renaissance to the contemporary.

—Elizabeth Bernick, *Research Associate II, Scholars Program*
Getty Research Institute



Above: *Two Miners*, 1931, Diego Rivera. Graphite on paper. © 2023 Banco de México Diego Rivera Frida Kahlo Museums Trust, Mexico, D.F. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. The Getty Research Institute, (960078)

Woman Painting, about 1938, Mark Rothko. Pen and ink on paper. © Kate Rothko Prizel and Christopher Rothko / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Getty Research Institute, (2002.M.8)



Rediscovering Black Portraiture

Peter Brathwaite

SINCE EARLY 2020, PETER BRATHWAITE has thoughtfully researched and reimagined more than one hundred artworks featuring Black subjects. *Rediscovering Black Portraiture* explores embodiment, representation, and agency through 55 of Brathwaite’s most intriguing re-creations, as well as personal reflections from the artist and essays by Cheryl Finley and Temi Odumosu. In this excerpt, Brathwaite discusses his motivations and practice with contributor Mark Sealy.

MARK SEALY: Peter, it’s a pleasure to discuss the work you’ve been making. It’s interesting that you start by picking through moments in history, all the way back to the Domesday Book, that seminal document in the formation of English identity. Here we have this incredible image of you “hanging” on a letter in the book.

PETER BRATHWAITE: I’m delighted to be speaking with you, Mark. I’d had no idea there was someone who looked like me in that book! The slightly haphazard way in which I encountered each image meant that I didn’t find this one until about halfway through the project.

MS: It’s quite painful if you look at the detail of it. It’s almost as if the letter of the Domesday Book is lynching the Black subject.

PB: I was a bit taken aback by the clenched teeth. He really seems to be hanging on for his life. Someone asked me recently, “What have you learned by embodying these characters?” One big thing is the inherent trauma attached to so many of these images. Stepping into them means that I inevitably end up living aspects of the pain. So I deliberately search for joy and humor too. That’s my coping mechanism for approaching this art.

MS: So much of Western art is about standing in front of something and reviewing it rather than feeling it. But if you spend more time with some of these images, you begin to feel a sense of embodiment in different times and places. What I love about photography and painting is the silence of the moment that happens in that space.

PB: With my interpretations, I think generally people read the humor first and then unravel what’s bubbling underneath, observing the steps and moments of stillness that go into the making of these re-creations. I like to imagine that the signposts I provide help people relate to my own work of decoding the original artworks. For me, this process is a bit like reading a score. I’m looking for the subtext, and reading what the composer has given me, and mapping out how to interpret it.

MS: Our ideas of who we are can’t be separated from the erasure that happens through culture. Black individuals in history—Black lives matter, but they’ve also been erased. What I like about this project is that these bite-size moments are sort of like jazz. When you look at them, they go off, Coltrane-like, in all sorts of directions, and each one has the capacity to open up different systems of knowledge that connect the dots of the picture in new ways. In that respect, one of the most successful reconstructions, I think, is Diego Velázquez’s *Kitchen Maid with the Supper at Emmaus*.

PB: That was quite challenging to put together. When I was looking at the original painting I was drawn to the darkness. I was trying to decipher the woman’s emotional state—whether she knew what was going on behind her and who those people were. It was incredibly difficult to shrink myself into her pose, and all the time I was trying to understand her relationship to what was happening over her shoulder. Which meant I had to find something to stand in for what I was “seeing” through the back of my head. I chose Johann Sebastian Bach’s *Saint John Passion*, which, to me, is perfection in music. It is also an articulation of faith and my relationship with faith. Then in front of me are domestic, earthly things. The pot is a gift from my mum. I couldn’t stop it from gleaming as much as it does. It’s funny how the dynamics of an image are altered by what’s available.

Kitchen Maid with the Supper at Emmaus, about 1617–18, Diego Velázquez. Oil on canvas. Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland, NGI.4538



Re-creations by Peter Brathwaite (with photographic partner Sam Baldock) © Peter Brathwaite



MS: What pulls you into this moment is that it’s seemingly so quiet. Here’s a Black maid in the kitchen (welcome to our world!). But then you’ve got this incredible aspect behind: Christ appears to the disciples. The radical theatricality of that is brilliant. Then there’s this pot, which almost becomes Christ’s presence, made manifest through this present from your mother, which is, in a sense, life itself.

PB: When I look back at these images, sometimes it’s hard to distinguish what was improvised and what was intentional.

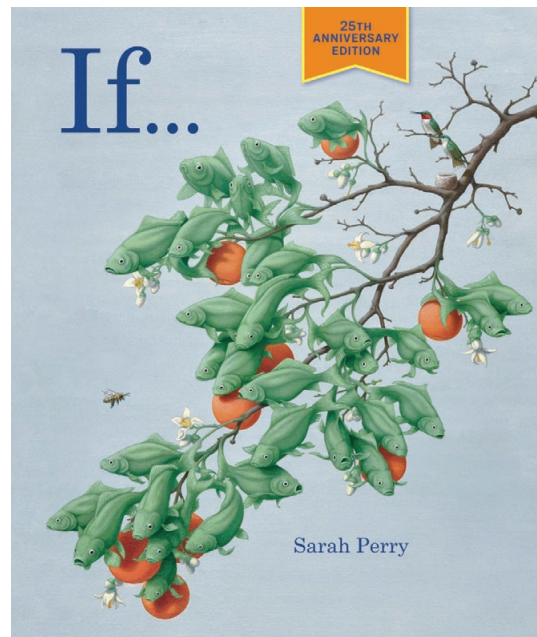
MS: We know that some artists, like William Hogarth, used Black subjects in their paintings to refer to some kind of transgression. But the way that you’ve made this, instead of being a sideshow, she’s center stage.

PB: Yes, and specifically someone of mixed heritage. The work’s traditional Spanish title describes her using the derogatory term “mulatto.” It is a label that scars my heritage, and something I must unpick whenever I’m looking into the archive at family names. I was very much wanting to give her presence and agency, and shed these terms of classification and stratification. There’s a lot about hierarchy here, especially hierarchy in the face of the divine. ■



Above: *Initial I*, in *Abbreviation of Domesday*, about 1241. Illumination and gilding on parchment. Kew, England, National Archives, E 36/284 f.196 p102

Creativity for Kids

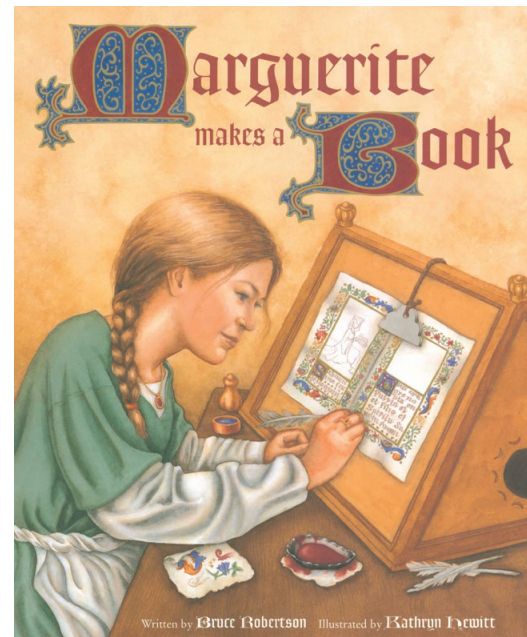


If...: 25th Anniversary Edition

Sarah Perry

Take a fantastical journey through an inspiring world where anything can happen: leaves turn into fish, cats fly with wings, humans have tails, frogs eat rainbows, and dreams become visible. First published in 1995, Sarah Perry’s delightful picture book of “surreal possibilities” was Getty’s first children’s title. Twenty-five years later it remains a visual feast that children of all ages enjoy. Reissued to celebrate a remarkable book’s 25th anniversary, this enhanced edition includes new illustrations and a reader’s guide to the secrets of *If...* and is sure to appeal to a brand-new generation. Suitable for ages three and up.

J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM
48 pages, 8 1/2 x 10 1/8 inches
41 color illustrations
Hardcover
US \$16.99



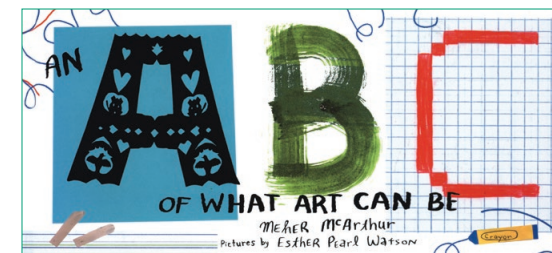
Marguerite Makes a Book

Bruce Robertson, illustrated by Kathryn Hewitt

Paris in the 1400s. A young girl named Marguerite delights in assisting her father, Jacques, in his craft: illuminating manuscripts for the nobility of France. His current commission is a splendid book of hours for his patron, Lady Isabelle, but will he be able to finish it in time for Lady Isabelle’s name day?

In this richly illustrated tale, Marguerite comes to her father’s aid. She journeys all over Paris buying goose feathers for quills, eggs for mixing paints, dried plants, and ground minerals for pigments. This delightful book, brought to life by the finely detailed, evocative art of a renowned children’s book artist, was inspired by an illuminated manuscript in the collection of the J. Paul Getty Museum. Suitable for ages eight and up.

J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM
48 pages, 9 x 11 inches
46 color illustrations
Hardcover
US \$19.95



An ABC of What Art Can Be

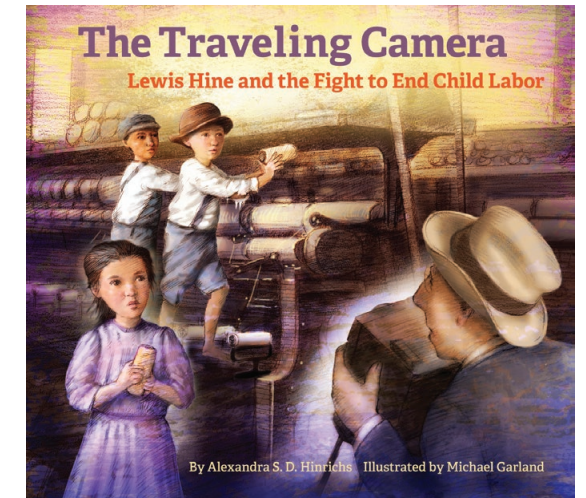
Meher McArthur, pictures by Esther Pearl Watson

This delightful book is a colorful reminder of the many things that visual art can be, and become, and do. Whether it’s weaving or making pottery or working on your computer or turning junk into something unexpected and wonderful, *An ABC of What Art Can Be* is an invitation to look around and think creatively—outside the boring box. After all,

*A is for artist, creator of art,
Making all sorts of things with the hands and the heart.*

Suitable for ages four and up.

J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM
40 pages, 11 x 5 1/4 inches
40 color illustrations
Hardcover
US \$17.95



The Traveling Camera: Lewis Hine and the Fight to End Child Labor

Alexandra S. D. Hinrichs, illustrated by Michael Garland

Stunning visuals and poetic text combine to tell the inspiring story of Lewis Hine (1874–1940), a teacher and photographer who used his art as a tool for social reform. Working for the National Child Labor Committee, Hine traveled the United States, taking pictures of young children toiling under dangerous conditions in cotton mills, seafood canneries, farms, and coal mines. He often wore disguises to sneak into factories, impersonating a machinery inspector or traveling salesman. He said, “If I could tell this story in words, I wouldn’t need to lug a camera.” His poignant pictures attracted national attention and were instrumental in the passage of child labor laws. *The Traveling Camera* contains extensive back matter, including a time line, original photos, and a bibliography. Suitable for ages six to nine.

GETTY PUBLICATIONS
44 pages, 10 x 9 inches
21 color illustrations, 32 b/w photographs
Hardcover
US \$17.99

EXHIBITIONS

Make free, timed reservations for the Getty Center and Getty Villa Museum at getty.edu.

Getty Center

Tim Walker: Wonderful Things
May 2–August 20, 2023

Play and Pastimes in the Middle Ages
May 16–August 6, 2023

Beyond the Light: Identity and Place in 19th-Century Danish Art
May 23–August 20, 2023

Our Voices, Our Getty: Reflecting on Drawings
Through April 30, 2023

Connections: Asia
Through May 7, 2023

Dawoud Bey & Carrie Mae Weems: In Dialogue
Through July 9, 2023

Barbara T. Smith: The Way to Be
Through July 16, 2023

Pastel Portraits: Drawn from Life?
Through September 17, 2023

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

Getty Villa

The Gold Emperor from Aventicum
May 31, 2023–January 29, 2024

Online

Mesopotamia
mesopotamia.getty.edu

Persepolis Reimagined
persepolis.getty.edu

Return to Palmyra
getty.edu/palmyra



Left: *Why Not Be Oneself?*, 2018, Tim Walker. Model: Tilda Swinton; Fashion: Gucci, Marc Jacobs, Vela, UNOde50, A. Brandt + Son, Lisa Eisner Jewelry. Renishaw Hall, Derbyshire. Chromogenic print. Courtesy of the artist. © Tim Walker Studio. On view in *Tim Walker: Wonderful Things*



Below: T. Michael Jagger and Catherine Miller in *Nude Frieze*, performed at F-Space, Santa Ana, CA, 1972, Barbara T. Smith. Getty Research Institute. On view in *Barbara T. Smith: The Way to Be*



Left: *Portrait of Christine Mitoire with Her Children*, 1783, Adélaïde Labille-Guiard. Pastel on three sheets of blue paper, mounted on canvas. Getty Museum. On view in *Pastel Portraits: Drawn from Life?*

FINAL FRAME

Todd Gray (American, born 1954) has worked in photography, performance, and sculpture for nearly 50 years, exploring issues of Black identity and masculinity as well as historical and contemporary structures of power. In recent years, influenced by the writings of Jamaican-British sociologist Stuart Hall (1932–2014)—specifically the idea that resistance to established cultural norms is a form of power—Gray has considered how he might resist conventional presentations of photographs. He mines his extensive archive of personal photographs, selecting and juxtaposing images of lush African landscapes, classical European architecture, and formally designed gardens. He mounts each image individually, often in thrift store or old museum frames, layering and stacking them to create narratives that activate viewers’ participation.

This work combines the bust of a Nigerian man in modern Western attire, the Temple of Love at Versailles, and dense jungle foliage. Gray says it addresses the colonization and Westernization of Africa and, more personally, the pressure he felt as a young man to integrate into majority culture by minimizing or erasing the signifiers of his own Blackness.

—Virginia Heckert, Curator, Department of Photographs
Getty Museum



Embodiment of the Imperial Ideal, 2021, Todd Gray. Three archival pigment prints with UV laminate in artist frames. Getty Museum. Purchased with funds provided by the Photographs Council. © Todd Gray

**The J. Paul Getty Trust
Communications**
1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 400
Los Angeles, CA 90049-1681

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE
PAID
LOS ANGELES, CA
PERMIT NO. 3389

Recording Artists

“I had freedom . . . when I painted. When I painted, I was completely and utterly myself. And for that reason, it was extremely important for me. It was more than a profession, you know. It was even a therapy.”

—Alice Neel

Hear artists describe their work, lives, and relationships in Recording Artists, a Getty podcast series that highlights the Getty Research Institute’s archival materials. *Radical Women* (Season 1) features the stories of Alice Neel, Lee Krasner, Helen Frankenthaler, Betye Saar, Yoko Ono, and Eva Hesse. Look for Season 2 later this year!

getty.edu/recordingartists/



Alice Neel with paintings in her apartment, 1940. Photo: Sam Brody. © Estate of Alice Neel