

Getty

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An aerial photograph of the Getty Center in Los Angeles, showing its iconic tiered architecture and lush landscaping. A large, stylized '25' is overlaid in the center, composed of concentric bands of blue, green, and yellow. The number is positioned over the central courtyard area, which includes a fountain and a maze.

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INSIDE: HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GETTY CENTER'S 25 YEARS



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WELCOME to a special issue of *Getty* magazine! To celebrate the Getty Center’s 25th anniversary, we’ve revisited 25 Center-related projects—exhibitions, initiatives, and events—that deeply impacted the LA-area community, our national and international visitors, and the world of art historical scholarship.

You’ll find other ways to celebrate with us too: a list of “Getty 25” art festivals in neighborhoods across LA, a map of the Center’s best photo spots, and for you architecture buffs, a timeline of the Center’s evolution from a construction site atop a scrubby ridge to an iconic sight the *New York Times* called in 1997, “a stupendous new castle of classical beauty that has already changed the culture of Los Angeles.” Enjoy!

—Jennifer Roberts, Editor

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On the cover: *Central Garden*, 1997, Robert Irwin. Getty Museum. © Robert Irwin

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE



I’ve been taken back to my first day at the Center on August 1, 2011, when I learned the full extent of Getty’s programs and staff expertise and felt a great sense of humility. To 2018, when I spoke at Columbia University alongside beloved colleagues Vishakha Desai, Edward Luck, Tom Weiss, and Mariët Westermann about the pressing need to protect cultural heritage in war zones—a day that would inform Getty’s series of Occasional Papers in Cultural Heritage Policy as well as a forthcoming book I coedited with Professor Weiss, *Cultural Heritage and Mass Atrocities*, which assembles the work of 38 experts. To 2019, when I traveled to Kuñotambo, a village high in the Peruvian Andes, to celebrate the reopening of an earthen church conserved over 10 years by the Getty Conservation Institute and the Dirección Desconcentrada de Cultura de Cusco.

I’ve thought about the Center’s Getty Medal Award dinners, where we recognized the extraordinary achievements of luminaries like Mary Beard, Yo-Yo Ma, Ed Ruscha, and Thelma Golden, people who never gave up on pursuing a creative life despite the obstacles. I feel privileged to have met and interviewed even more incredible people through the Art + Ideas podcast, letting those artists, conservators, curators, and scholars tell us about their work in their own words.

I’m deeply proud of our Pacific Standard Time series—especially how the many collaborative exhibitions let us reach more diverse audiences. And I’m feeling confident that on her first day here, Getty’s new president and CEO, the distinguished, exceptional Katherine Fleming, will find her new place of work already in great shape and receptive to her vision, knowledge, and leadership style.

I’ve been thinking about the everyday, but no less precious, moments too. Walking across our campus at lunch and catching up with Getty’s talented staff. Leaving my office after a long day, only to be met with one of our glorious, wraparound sunsets. The love and support that all of you, dear readers, have given both to me and to Getty in myriad ways. Taking in the Center’s vast views of mountains, city, and ocean, the distant horizon sparking big thoughts: what kind of impact will Getty have next?

Our next chapters await.

Jim Cuno

Millions of Angelenos witnessed the 10-year construction of the Getty Center—the grading of 24 acres of LA hilltop, the hefting of 84 million pounds of travertine imported from Italy, and slowly, spectacularly, a million square feet of campus emerging into view.

I witnessed some of this myself when I was director of the Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts at UCLA. I remember thinking, what a unique concept, uniting four complementary programs—museum, foundation, conservation institute, research institute—and including design elements that would encourage communication and collaboration among staff. And I remember well receiving two publication grants from Getty at that time.

Fast forward 25 years, and I am on the eve of retiring from Getty after 11 years, while also celebrating the Center’s 25th anniversary. The combination of farewell rituals and “Getty 25” events is prompting much self-reflection—on all that has happened at the Center since opening day, and on experiences that deeply affected me during my tenure.

You’ll find highlights of the Center’s work in this special summer issue. As for personal reflections, I keep thinking back to projects whose impact I witnessed in person—projects that led to those moments at work we all cherish, when we think, yes, this has been worth the time, effort, and resources, because we’re helping, in however big or small a way, to make the world a better place.

Getty Center Timeline

The project to plan, design, build, and move into the Getty Center spanned 14 years. Here are the highlights.



1983

Getty purchases a Los Angeles hilltop site on which to build the Getty Center. Thirty-three architects are invited to submit their qualifications, and seven semifinalists are selected.

1984

Richard Meier is chosen as the project architect.

1985

Getty staff and Meier visit museum sites in the United States, Canada, and Europe. Back in LA, the Los Angeles Planning Commission grants a use permit to the Getty Center.

1986

Getty delivers the architectural program to Richard Meier & Partners and consultants. An inaugural meeting of the Design Advisory Committee follows.



1987

After the Los Angeles Planning Commission approves the site master plan, Dinwiddie Construction Company prepares the site for construction.

1988

Getty chooses an automated tram as the transportation system linking the parking structure at the bottom of the hill and the hilltop buildings. Later that year, the schematic design of the Center is approved.

1989

Thierry Despont is hired to design the Museum gallery interiors. Construction of the north entry parking facility begins.



1990

After visits to stone quarries in Italy, Getty approves Richard Meier & Partners' selection of Italian travertine stone as cladding in combination with metal panels. Grading for the main complex of buildings begins.



1991

The Los Angeles Planning Commission grants final design approval for the Center. Later that year, the Center design is unveiled to the public and the planting of 3,000 California oaks on the hills surrounding the site begins.

1992

Foundation work on many of the buildings begins. California artist Robert Irwin is selected to design the Central Garden.

1993

The first travertine stone piece is set in the East building. Erection of the structural steel for the Auditorium and the East and North buildings begins. Olin Partnership is brought on as the landscape architecture firm.

1994

The 6.7 Northridge Earthquake hits the Los Angeles area in January. Structural steel work is halted on the site due to concerns raised in the earthquake's aftermath. Studies are undertaken to address the concerns. Later that year, the retrofitting of erected steel joints identified as vulnerable begins.



Foundation work for the Research Institute building and the erection of structural steel for the Museum building begin. By the end of the year, the parking structure and tram station have been completed.



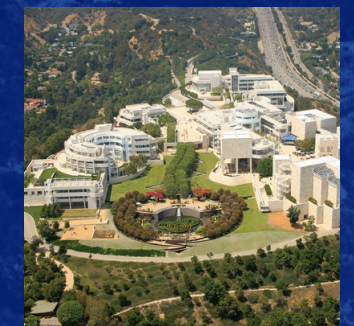
1995

Getty approves Robert Irwin's design for the Central Garden. Erection of steel structures for the Research Institute building begins.



1996

Construction of the Central Garden begins in January. By summer, staff from Security, Facilities, Information Technology, the Conservation Institute, Education Institute, Trust Administration, and the Foundation move to the Getty Center. The first meeting of the trustees at the Getty Center is held in the Board Room.



1997

Staff from the Museum, Research Institute, and Information Institute move to the Getty Center, and construction of the Central Garden is completed. In December, the public is welcomed to the Getty Center for the grand opening.

1997

Welcome to the Getty Center

Twenty-five years ago, the Getty Center established itself as a bold new addition to LA's burgeoning art landscape



Kayamanan Ng Lahi, a Philippine folk and dance arts organization, performs on opening day. Photo: Aaron Paley, Community Arts Resources

ON THE CRISP MORNING of December 16, 1997, hundreds of people gathered at the entrance to the Getty Center in anticipation of this grand, highly visible art institution opening its doors to the public for the very first time. As the *Los Angeles Times* reported, “For years, many of these people had driven by on the freeway gawking skyward to see this romantic place on the hill slowly go up, piece by piece.” The sun had barely started to rise, yet many visitors had arrived hours before. And the cold didn’t seem to bother them; the buzz of excitement kept spirits high, and staff handed out fresh, free coffee to keep guests warm.

At 10:00 am, visitors began boarding the tram for the five-minute ride up the hill. They took in the panoramic views of LA, including the downtown skyline. Stepping onto the arrival plaza, they were surrounded by more vistas—ocean, city, canyon—all framed by Richard Meier’s dazzling architecture, its surfaces clad in some 300,000 cream-colored travertine blocks imported from a quarry near Rome.

Throughout the day, visitors explored the walkways and strolled by the flowers, trees, and water features of the Central Garden, which Robert Irwin had designed as a sculpture. In the five gallery pavilions, examples of mostly pre-20th-century art, by Rembrandt, Van Gogh, and Cézanne, among others, were illuminated by natural light, just as their creators had intended, and five inaugural exhibitions were on view. Many guests became aware of the Getty Conservation Institute, Getty Research Institute, and Getty Foundation, programs that had been scattered through LA and were brought together on one 24-acre campus after J. Paul Getty’s death. They could also watch an orientation film that offered more history, and the film *Art Works: Behind the Scenes at the Getty*.

Community Arts Resources (CARs) curated 14 performances by arts groups representing the diversity of Los Angeles, and visitors were treated to taiko and Filipino, Hawaiian, and Indian dance performances, mariachi music, Cuban salsa, a high school gospel choir, storytellers from around the world, seven art workshops, and more. CARs also



By Sidney Kantono
Communications Coordinator
J. Paul Getty Trust



commissioned giant puppets based on figures in a Getty collection painting, James Ensor’s *Christ’s Entry into Brussels in 1889*, and a procession that included the puppets and people who had participated in a carnival-mask-making workshop.

Visitors might also have caught glimpses of movie stars like Denzel Washington and Diane Keaton, artists like Ed Ruscha, and LA’s mayor at the time, Richard Riordan, all there for the opening-day festivities. Riordan told the audience: “The new Getty Center captures the spirit of our city’s renaissance. [It] will boost tourism, spur job creation, and add to Los Angeles’s rebounding economic base. [It] will also make a tremendous difference in our cultural landscape by giving young Angelenos access to educational resources and sparking their artistic interest and imagination.” East LA rock group Los Lobos, known for the hit song “La Bamba,” performed for the crowd, and hundreds of journalists captured the reactions of the Center’s first guests. Reporters would describe the Center as a “stupendous new castle of classical beauty,” “a cultural fortress,” and “the house that art built.”

Since that inaugural day, the Center has attracted more than 20 million guests, many of whom traveled internationally to visit; presented more than 453 exhibitions; and offered countless concerts, talks, courses, symposia, and other free programs to the

public. And for people like Suzanne Muchnic, who reported on the Center’s opening for the *Los Angeles Times*, the site has played an important role in both her life and career.

“As an art writer for the *Times*, I have had the great good fortune of traveling to the Mogao Cave Temples in western China, and Saint Catherine’s Monastery in Sinai, to report on Getty conservation programs that led to stellar exhibitions. On the job at home, I depended on Getty for an endless supply of subjects—new acquisitions, art shows in the making, research projects—and specialists to interview. Now, in my private life, I continue to frequent the Getty Center for the stimulation of seeing and thinking about uncommon things.”

Reflecting on her first day at the Center, Muchnic says, “I remember thinking that the J. Paul Getty Museum had become much more than a rarefied gem tucked away on the fringe of Malibu. With its cluster of modern buildings on a hill overlooking the city of Los Angeles, the Museum and its greatly enlarged collection was now the artistic heart of an international cultural complex—including conservation and research institutes—that would draw a worldwide variety of visitors and scholars.”

As Muchnic wrote in her *Times* coverage in 1997, “there has never been anything quite like the Getty Center.” ■

Above: Mariachi Voz de America performs folk music of Mexico. Photo: Aaron Paley, Community Arts Resources

Opposite, top: Photo: Bart Bartholomew

Opposite, bottom: Guests create their own Venetian carnival banners and masks and will later be part of a courtyard procession. Photo: Aaron Paley, Community Arts Resources

A year after the Getty Center opened, the Museum's education program was in full swing, treating LA students to views, works of art, and cultures they'd never experienced

A World of Art Just a Bus Ride Away

TEACHER AMIEKOLEH K. USAFI REMEMBERS when she brought her fifth-grade class to Getty for the first time. Many of the students had never ventured outside their immediate community, she says.

“As they approached the Center on the tram, you would’ve thought they were going to Disneyland,” says Usafi. Mesmerized

By Valerie Tate
Communications Specialist
J. Paul Getty Trust



In 1998, students stop to admire James Ensor's *Christ's Entry into Brussels in 1889*.



Above: Middle school students from Magnolia Science Academy take in the view.

Opposite, top: Students learn about the “pink bed,” a visitor favorite. *Lit à la turque*, about 1750–60, attributed to Jean-Baptiste Tilliard. Gessoed and gilded beech and walnut; modern silk upholstery. Getty Museum

Opposite, left: In 1999, students reveal drawings inspired by *Portrait of Leonilla, Princess of Sayn-Wittgenstein-Sayn*.

Opposite, right: Students from Magnolia Science Academy

by the view, one student even told her she’d never seen the ocean before. “Every gallery the students entered amazed them—seeing the large Louis XIV painting, the decorative arts, especially the blue bed. And they also loved sketching the big beetle, viewing Van Gogh, and walking the gardens.”

Usafi always knew that the arts were integral to education, so when the Inner City Education Foundation (ICEF) offered a program at her Title I school, she jumped on board. Through the program, Getty led workshops for educators and collaborated with teachers to incorporate art lessons into K-12 history, science, and English classes. It also provided opportunities for student field trips. “The program gave us teachers the opportunity to reflect on different cultures, and gave our students a more complete understanding of the world,” says Usafi.

ICEF is one example of the multiyear educational partnerships Getty has offered over the past 25 years. When the Center first opened, a major goal was to expand Getty’s impact in K-12 schools. “School communities have consistently been challenged to offer high-quality, sequential visual arts education to K-12 students,” says Elizabeth Escamilla, assistant director for education and public programs at the Getty Museum. “We wanted to make an impact by providing teachers with classroom tools, and professional development focused on how to use the tools.”

Things started small, with about 48,000 students a year visiting the Center. Getty now serves 150,000 students at the Center and Villa.

Over the past 25 years, Getty has also developed hundreds of professional development programs for local elementary school educators. “The guiding principle of our work with teachers is to treat them as partners in our mission to engage young people in the visual arts in exciting, relevant, and fun ways,” says Escamilla.

Getty plans to expand its online educational offerings for those unable to visit in person. Long before the pandemic, Getty had been building a virtual programming portfolio that has taken Getty artworks and experts into homes and classrooms throughout the world, including to audiences who may never visit the Museum. “There is value in both in-person and online experiences, and we want to develop digital resources and virtual programs that bring the collection to life across the globe, while still being devoted and generous with our local visitors,” says Escamilla.

“Now, more than ever, we need places to gather and places to connect, and museums provide that space,” she continues. “Art helps lift our spirits and inspires us to see the world differently. The Getty’s commitment to providing access to young students is an investment in the next generation of creatives, artists, and arts advocates.” ■



Small archives tell big stories
about the city of LA

LA AS SUBJECT

By Anya Ventura
Digital Media Producer
Getty Research Institute



Left: William Estrada, curator of history at El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument, and Carolyn Koza Cole, senior librarian at the Los Angeles Public Library and creator of Shades of LA, at the Mapping LA symposium on June 7, 1999

Below: Visitors browse through exhibition materials at the Mapping LA symposium



WHAT MAKES LA WHAT IT IS? Getty Research Institute (GRI) project manager Karen Stokes believed the answer lay in the city's many archives. In 1994 she launched LA as Subject, a venture that took stock of the collections scattered across the metropolis—in everything from a big university library to a small shoebox—and explored new ways of studying LA through the traces of its past.

The GRI hosted LA as Subject from 1995 to 1999 and celebrated it with the 1999 symposium “Mapping LA: A Global Prototype.” The GRI also distributed copies of *Cultural Inheritance/LA*, a 350-page directory of more than 170 community organizations, libraries, museums, and private collections surveyed by LA as Subject. Among those included in the project, which still continues to this day at the University of Southern California: the archives of the Automobile Club of Southern California, Western Costume Company, and a group of East LA muralists.

LA as Subject emerged against the backdrop of the 1992 Rodney King uprising. “This was a complicated moment, much like the moment we find ourselves in now in terms of institutions reconsidering their relationships with communities—particularly communities of color,” Stokes said in a 2020 interview. “All of us were a part of this conversation, East and

West Side, North and South, Black, white, brown, red, etc.” Her far-reaching vision: to create collaborative partnerships between communities, cultural organizations, and local universities to share resources and information in both directions.

LA as Subject focused on the tinier, rarely used, and at-risk archives in the city. “There’s always been the traditional history of Los Angeles being told through the main repositories, but there’s an additional history of LA that is contained in many of the smaller collections,” Robert G. Marshall, who led the endeavor’s advisory forum, told the *Los Angeles Times* in 1999. The project team hoped that coming together to care for and celebrate these collections would lead to more inclusive narratives about LA. Indeed, Stokes’s work, says Getty research specialist Kristin Juarez, posed important questions about what is considered the subject of scholarship and how we engage with the larger LA cultural landscape, laying the groundwork for strategies developed for the African American Art History Initiative.

As part of the project, the 1996/97 theme of the Scholars Program—the long-standing annual fellowship that hosts scholars from around the country to conduct research at the GRI—was “Perspectives on Los Angeles.” It was the first time the

Scholars Program theme was not related to European art. The inaugural event held at the Harold Williams Auditorium at the newly opened Getty Center featured a panel discussion about literary depictions of LA as both a utopia and an apocalyptic hellscape. At Getty, LA was now becoming a topic of serious study.

And yet the undertaking was never intended to stay at Getty. Stokes developed LA as Subject as a “prototype” and wanted it to evolve. “The idea was to bring these resources together on behalf of the community, not to be owned by an institution but to bring them together for the benefit of the broader LA regional community,” she says. The project has only grown since. As members of the LA as Subject network, the custodians of these compilations can share knowledge about preserving, conserving, and displaying the objects and ephemera related to LA history. In the past 25 years, LA as Subject has also organized the popular annual Los Angeles Archives Bazaar and founded the first Resident Archivist program in the country.

“LA as Subject develops like Los Angeles—it’s very amoebic, it doesn’t have strict borders,” says Liza Posas, an archivist and the project’s current coordinator. “LA as Subject is as unique as the city itself.” ■



Karen Stokes, founder and project manager of LA as Subject, at the Mapping LA symposium

2000

Getty commissioned 11 LA artists to create contemporary works inspired by paintings, sculptures, and drawings in Getty collections



CONTEMPORARY ART TAKES OVER THE CENTER

By Lyra Kilston
Senior Editor
Getty Museum

Installation view of *Departures: 11 Artists at the Getty* with commissioned artworks, from left to right: *Indebted to you, I will have had understood the power of the wand over the scepter*, 2000, Lari Pittman. © Lari Pittman. (Courtesy of the artist and Regen Projects); *Specimen (After Dürer)*, 2000, John Baldessari. © 2000 John Baldessari. Getty Museum; *...time. (AOT 4) (detail)*, 2000, Uta Barth. © 2000 Uta Barth. (Courtesy of the artist)



ONE YEAR AFTER THE GETTY CENTER OPENED, independent curator Lisa Lyons began inviting select LA artists to create new works inspired by Getty holdings. She wanted to build an exhibition around the vibrant resonances between historic and contemporary objects. The result, titled *Departures: 11 Artists at the Getty*, included commissions by celebrated figures John Baldessari, Uta Barth, Sharon Ellis, Judy Fiskin, Martin Kersels, John M. Miller, Rubén Ortiz Torres, Lari Pittman, Stephen Prina, Alison Saar, and Adrian Saxe. It opened in February 2000.

By featuring local artists, Lyons highlighted LA's rich and diverse cultural scene while also enabling the participants to develop an intimate knowledge of Getty's collections. The 11 contributors utilized a variety of media and expressed a range of responses to Getty's invitation.

Many artists focused on particular objects from the collection. Georges de La Tour's *The Musicians' Brawl* (about 1625–30) inspired Stephen Prina's 16mm film. He composed the music for the movie, and a string quartet and French horn player performed it in the East Pavilion. A collection of Cuban stereographs in the Getty Research Institute's archive prompted Rubén Ortiz Torres to install in the Museum Courtyard a customized 1960 Chevy Bel Air that could "dance" thanks to a sophisticated hydraulic system. The fact that Che Guevara drove a 1960 Chevy also inspired Torres's work.

As Alison Saar explored the galleries, she was disappointed by the limited cultural scope of the predominantly Greek and Roman antiquities collection—then housed in the lower West Pavilion. Noticing the prominence given to the *Statue of Hercules (Lansdowne Herakles)*, whose placement empha-

View of *La Zamba del Chevy*, 2000, Rubén Ortiz Torres. A customized 1960 Chevy Bel Air with hydraulics "danced" to a remixed version of "La Zamba del Che" by Carlos Casacuberta and Juan Campodónico based on the original song by Torres's father, Rubén Ortiz Fernández. © Rubén Ortiz Torres. Photo: Stef Allespach

Afro-di(e)ty, 2000, Alison Saar. Mixed media installation comprising wood figure with hammered copper and found objects, inkjet on fabric. © Alison Saar

sized, in her words, his "power and importance within the realm of Western myth and history," she conceived of a new sculpture titled *Afro-di(e)ty*. While a play on the name Aphrodite, Saar based her multimedia work on the Yoruba goddess Yemaya, a nurturing mother figure. As Lyons noted, the piece was "born in response not only to what Saar saw at the Museum but to what she did not see."

John Baldessari homed in on an artwork that would speak to the very act of acquiring and archiving: Albrecht Dürer's *Stag Beetle*, a small 16th-century watercolor. Baldessari replicated and enlarged it to around 11 by 14 feet and pierced its bug with a comically large specimen pin. Former Getty Museum director John Walsh called it "a meditation on what we collect." On permanent view, Baldessari's *Specimen (After Dürer)* remains a visitor favorite for its drama and wit.

Judy Fiskin chose to focus on the symbolism of the Getty Center itself and how it shifted the gravitational center of LA's cultural scene. Her video *My Getty Center* is a playful critique of what she describes as, "A chronicle of the winter of 1997, when El Niño and the Getty Center came to Los Angeles at the same time, generating a few rainstorms, a billion-dollar cultural complex, and an avalanche of hype." Expressing a love-hate relationship to museums in general, and poking fun at the astounding wealth of collectors like J. Paul Getty, the video elicited rowdy laughter when shown to Getty staff.

Each of the 11 artists gave public talks during the three-month run of the exhibition, and their commissioned works are now part of Getty's collections. Among Baldessari's statements: "A masterpiece is only a masterpiece insofar as it informs the present." ■





A dazzling show about visual technology through the centuries distracted and delighted visitors after the catastrophic events of 9/11

View from the Wunderkammer gallery of the *Devices of Wonder* exhibition, 2001–2002.
Photo: Jack Ross & Anthony Peres

By Frances Terpak
Senior Curator, Getty Research Institute
and *Devices of Wonder* Cocurator

DEVICES OF WONDER

HOW HAS IT HAPPENED that we spend so much time looking at a screen—whether phone, computer, TV, or watching a film at a cinema? The 2001 Getty Research Institute (GRI) exhibition *Devices of Wonder: From the World in a Box to Images on a Screen* answered that question, revealing that our fascination with the Internet and today’s visual technologies stretches back several hundred years.

Devices of Wonder traced a history of visual thinking that started with a 17th-century *Wunderkabinett*. This “cabinet of wonders” was designed to hold a host of spectacular natural artifacts alongside cutting-edge instruments, their sum a kind of compendium of world knowledge. Today we find knowledge and new information on our laptops by clicking an icon; back then people gained insights with each *Wunderkabinett* viewing and interaction, prompting new resonances and relationships among the objects on display.

The *Wunderkabinett* was staged as the conceptual underpinning of the show: surrounding it were early-modern instruments, such as a Gregorian telescope, celestial globe, portable mechanical model of the solar system, pocket sundial, Maghribi astrolabe-quadrant (used to determine the position of objects in the night sky), and model of the eye. These objects were mounted alongside rare natural specimens, including an obsidian mirror (used by the Aztecs to divine the future), Gibeon meteorite, and an orange-skinned back coral fan that together promoted learning through interactive study and entertainment.

Throughout the galleries, provocative juxtapositions of modern and contemporary works of art exposed how later artists have been inspired by the

sense of wonder or continued their own voyages of discovery. Frank Gehry’s crocodile chandelier hung above a 1655 engraving illustrating Danish physician Ole Worm’s room-size collection packed with natural specimens. Across the way, American assemblagist Joseph Cornell’s exquisite interactive boxes, sourced from scraps of 20th-century urban and natural debris, were featured below Antonio Diavolo, a trapezist automaton created by master magician Jean-Eugène Robert-Houdin for his famous 19th-century Parisian theater. Early automata, such as a 1764 writing hand built by Austrian clockmaker Friedrich von Knauss, shared Diavolo’s stage, and a life-size clarinetist, created by Cornelis Jacob van Oeckelen in 1838 to tour the Dutch East Indies, stood nearby.

Dazzling, humorous, and offering many surprises, *Devices of Wonder* proved hugely popular, even though it opened shortly after the catastrophic events of September 11, when museum attendance across the US fell dramatically. It’s remarkable that the show opened at all, and on time. Many of the 400 objects were loans promised from public and private collections across the US and Europe, and their shipping became vastly more complicated because of the global fear of air travel.

Fortunately, the largest object in *Devices of Wonder*, Lucas Samaras’s 1966 *Mirrored Room*, had already reached the Museum, shipped early for conservation treatment from its home at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York. Measuring 8 x 8 x 10 feet and covered in mirrors inside and out, *Mirrored Room* delighted visitors by projecting them into an “alternative reality” space



Installation view in *Devices of Wonder* exhibition of *Mirrored Room*, 1966, Lucas Samaras. Mirror on wood. Lent by Albright-Knox Art Gallery. © Lucas Samaras, courtesy Pace Gallery

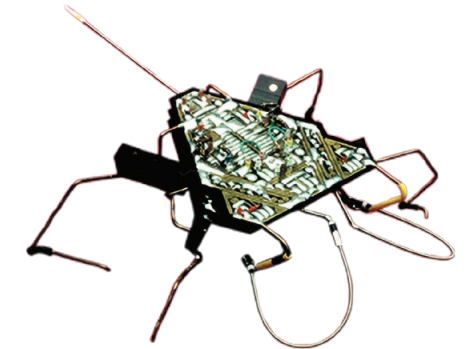
as they approached, entered, or retreated. The work was displayed near examples of its early modern predecessors: small 18th-century mirrored boxes designed to study the angles and physical laws of reflection.

This and other interactive aspects of the exhibition were replicated in the then state-of-the-art *Devices of Wonder* website, which featured several of the rare, sophisticated instruments and magical technologies on display in the show's 12 sections: "Artificial Life," "Special Effects," "Little Epiphanies," and "Home Entertainment" among them. Using Flash, JAVA, and Real Player—2001's latest digital technology—the *Devices of Wonder* website allowed users to play with selected devices, including a "BIObot" developed by researchers at Los Alamos National Laboratory, 19th-century Indonesian shadow puppets, and a multiplying "sorcerer's mirror" from the 18th century. The *Devices of*

Wonder website won a Webby Award for the best site of the year in the "Weird" category, defined by the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences as, "sites so forward thinking they seem strange or abnormal when viewed without the future in mind."

Involving seven years of research and planning, this unique exhibition inspired the GRI's 2001 scholar year theme, "Frames of Viewing: Perception, Experience, Judgment." If you'd like to learn more about that theme and see some of the extraordinary and extraordinarily wide-ranging objects once on view, pick up the *Devices of Wonder* catalog (Getty Publications), which includes essays penned by me and my cocurator, Barbara Maria Stafford. We explore how the devices of wonder that humans have used to augment reality over the past several centuries have shaped perception, altered our consciousness, and inspired the very screens we use more and more. ■

Right: UniBug 3.1, 1998, Mark W. Tilden. Twenty transistors and 50 mechanical parts. UniBug 3.1 is a BIObot that senses light and then moves toward the light source. Image courtesy Los Alamos National Laboratory, Research Laboratory, Los Alamos, New Mexico



Below: View into the Alternative Realities gallery of the *Devices of Wonder* exhibition, 2001–2002. Photo: Jack Ross & Anthony Peres



Meet the people donating their time to help the Getty Center run smoothly

A Family of VOLUNTEERS

By Erin Migdol
Associate Editor
J. Paul Getty Trust

SINCE 2002, LESTARY GUNAWAN has fought the traffic from Pasadena to Brentwood to volunteer at the Getty Center. She's one of 506 people who donated their time that year, becoming part of a tight-knit group who have been known to celebrate holidays at each other's homes, take field trips to additional museums, and even travel together. But Gunawan and her fellow volunteers are all united by their love of the Getty Center.

"We're like a big family; we always have fun together," Gunawan says. "When I arrive here at the Getty Center, it's my happy place."

For 25 years, volunteers have served a vital role at the Getty Center. They greet visitors who've just stepped off the tram and direct them to the Museum and other sites. They staff the Information Desk and are stationed in the Central Garden, at the Museum entrance, and in the Museum Courtyard to answer visitor questions, which can range from "Where is the bathroom?" to "Which painting should I see first?" There are currently around 400 people in the volunteer corps, which is separate from a docent program that provides guided tours of the art and grounds.

The connections volunteers make with others in their shifts also add to the fun.

"You come to volunteer maybe because you're retired, have extra time on your hands, or enjoy art and giving back to the community, but that's not why you stay," says volunteer manager DaNetta Rizzo. "You get to meet people on your shifts, and you come to love each other."

Rhona Singer seconds that. In 1997 she was already a volunteer at both the Autry Museum of Western Heritage (now the Autry Museum of the American West) and the Craft and Folk Art Museum (now Craft Contemporary). Still "looking for something to do," she joined Getty at the suggestion of a friend who volunteered at the Getty Villa and loved it. Twenty-five years later, Singer is still coming every week for her shift.

"Especially in those first years, there was a closeness, everyone knew who you were and cared about you," Singer says. "Getty was an exciting place to be, you enjoyed the people in your shift, it was a nice place to come, and we were proud to be here." But the magic of the Center's opening week hasn't dissipated in the last two and a half decades, she adds. "It's great to tell people you volunteer here."

For Gunawan, the most gratifying part of volunteering is meeting first-time visitors and offering suggestions about how to make the most of their time at the Center. And they really listen, she says.

"It can be overwhelming for first-time visitors, so we give them highlights, and they really appreciate it. That's the most rewarding part for me." ■



Above: Volunteers Paul Millman and Marina Sheinberg greet visitors as they step off the tram.

Far left: Volunteer Jenny Fisher offers directions.

Left: Volunteer Rhona Singer



Moving to the Getty Center—with its generous galleries—prompted the Museum’s Department of Manuscripts to think bigger. A 2003 exhibition exceeded all expectations

THE RENAISSANCE COMES TO THE GETTY CENTER

WHEN THE GETTY MUSEUM OPENED *Illuminating the Renaissance: The Triumph of Flemish Manuscript Painting in Europe* in summer 2003, it was the first manuscripts show ever mounted in the vast space of the Exhibitions Pavilion. The Museum’s move to the Getty Center meant that the show’s cocurators, Thomas Kren, founding head of the Department of Manuscripts, and Scot McKendrick, curator of manuscripts at the British Library, could conceive of an ambitious display that presented the sweeping and influential history of Flemish illumination in its entirety.

Visitors walking into the softly lit galleries were met with more than 130 dazzling objects loaned by nearly every national library in western Europe and from the collections of several castles in England. Here were the finest and most ambitiously

illuminated books produced in Flanders (parts of present-day Belgium and France) between 1470 and 1560, a fruitful period when artists radically transformed the appearance of the illustrated page, introducing the mastery of light, texture, and space achieved by the finest panel painters of the day.

Illuminating the Renaissance highlighted the Museum’s strength and expertise in this area and positioned the department as a significant contributor to global scholarship. Accompanying programs included a lecture on the cinematic quality of the illuminations by *Los Angeles Times* film critic Kenneth Turan, an exploration of Flemish fashion by Courtauld Institute of Art historian Margaret Scott, and a concert of Flemish Renaissance music, featuring a choir with flutes, organ, spinet, lutes, viola da gamba, and hurdy-gurdy.

By Lyra Kilston
Senior Editor
Getty Museum

An accompanying catalogue sold out rapidly and was the recipient of *Burlington Magazine*’s Eric Mitchell Prize for best exhibition catalogue in the English language and the International Eugène Baie Award, given every five years by the province of Antwerp for the best publication on Flemish art. It was also the first Getty publication to become a finalist for the College Art Association’s Alfred H. Barr Jr. Award for museum scholarship. At nearly 600 pages, the book has since become an indispensable and oft-cited resource for research on Flemish art.

By the time it closed, *Illuminating the Renaissance* had attracted almost 150,000 visitors, highlighted the Museum’s strength and expertise in manuscripts, and positioned the department as a significant contributor to global scholarship.

The Department of Manuscripts had been founded 20 years earlier with the purchase of more than 100 medieval and Renaissance manuscripts from Peter and Irene Ludwig of Aachen, Germany, who at that time had the finest private collection of western European manuscripts in the world. The group included books from various cultures and was particularly strong in Flemish work. When the Getty Center opened, a gallery in the North Pavilion was dedicated to the presentation of these light-sensitive objects in a series of rotating exhibitions.

Although the market for high-quality manuscript illumination is small and unpredictable—as Kren once noted, “Patience rules”—the department has nearly doubled the collection from its original acquisition and aims to tell a more diverse, and therefore complete, story of the Middle Ages. Recent acquisitions include manuscripts reflecting Jewish and Islamic faiths, and exhibitions are often organized around themes relevant to contemporary audiences—such as *Power, Justice, and Tyranny in the Middle Ages* (2021)—or that tell stories across multiple geographies, religions, and cultures—like *Art of Three Faiths: A Torah, a Bible, and a Qur’an* (2018).

Elizabeth Morrison, senior curator of manuscripts, has witnessed the department’s evolution; she had been with the Museum for seven years when *Illuminating the Renaissance* opened. “This groundbreaking project was the first major loan exhibition I had ever worked on, and it continues to influence my thinking as a scholar and a curator almost two decades later, as is doubtless true for professionals the world over,” she says. “I still remember visitors telling me that this was their first exposure to illuminated manuscripts, and the sumptuous books on display were the most spectacular artworks they had ever seen.” ■

Top: *David and Goliath*, from a book of hours, 1480, Master of the Dresden Prayer Book or workshop. Tempera colors, gold, and ink. Getty Museum

Bottom: *Alexander and the Niece of Artaxerxes III*, from *Book of the Deeds of Alexander the Great*, 1468, Master of the Jardin de vertueuse consolation and assistant. Tempera colors, gold, and ink. Getty Museum





Modernists and Activists

The contrasting work of Julius Shulman and Charles Brittin

IN 2004 the Getty Research Institute (GRI) acquired the archives of two profoundly different LA photographers: Julius Shulman and Charles Brittin. While Shulman’s sumptuous images of mid-century modern homes embodied a lush Southern California lifestyle, Brittin captured the ’50s Venice bohemian scene and, as a member of the Congress of Racial Equality, the frequent street clashes between protesters and police in the ’60s and ’70s. Whereas Shulman documented the work of Richard Neutra, Charles and Ray Eames, and Pierre Koenig—architects who would establish LA as a hub of modernist design—Brittin photographed activists fighting for peace, civil rights, women’s equality, and fair labor and housing.

The photographers did share some common ground. Both captured important moments in the city’s history during periods of rapid change. “Brittin understood that by consciously positioning himself at the front of these events, his camera served as an instrument recording our nation’s history,” says Frances Terpak, senior curator and head of photography and optical devices. Similarly, Shulman’s work chronicled not only seven decades of modern architecture, including the innovative Case Study Houses, but also the historic turn-of-the-century Angels Flight Railway and

By Anya Ventura
Digital Media Producer
Getty Research Institute

Depression-era Union Station for the Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Board.

“Julius Shulman’s relationship with Los Angeles was a two-way affair,” says Maristella Casciato, senior curator and head of architectural collections. “It was beneficial for Shulman and gave fame to LA as the incubator for modern architecture and design in the American West.” His archive, visited by hundreds of researchers, has been one of the GRI library’s most popular collections. Since 2004, the library has fulfilled thousands of requests for images for books, magazines, newspapers, exhibitions and catalogues, films and television, historical preservation applications, ephemera, and more. Meanwhile, the Brittin photographs have been featured at museums such as the Skirball Cultural Center and the Pompidou Center.

When the GRI acquired these archives, it had just started to expand its focus from European art history to Southern California history and culture. From the jewel-like homes perched in the Pacific Palisades to the protests downtown in front of City Hall, these archives preserve contrasting utopian visions of postwar LA.

“Brittin and Shulman document the same city but show completely different views of it,” says Glenn Phillips, senior curator and head of exhibitions and modern and contemporary collections. “Through our collections we try to capture the true breadth of visual culture, from the most experimental avant-garde artworks to the everyday design embedded in our everyday reality. GRI collections capture a really broad world—because visual culture permeates every part of our lives.” ■

Below: *Black Panther Party March*, about 1968, Charles Brittin. Getty Research Institute

Opposite: *Shulman House* (Los Angeles, Calif.), 1950, Julius Shulman. Getty Research Institute



2005



L'Air, designed 1938; cast 1962, Aristide Maillol. Lead. Getty Museum, Gift of Fran and Ray Stark

Works of modern sculpture joined Getty's collection in 2005, gracing outdoor spaces from the bottom of the hill to a terrace overlooking LA

ART ALFRESCO

By Lyra Kilston
Senior Editor
Getty Museum

IN 2005, VISITORS TO THE GETTY CENTER started noticing something different about the grounds and gardens: works of modern sculpture were commingling with the landscaping and architecture, creating a dramatic outdoor viewing experience. The Stark Collection—28 works by such 20th-century artists as Alexander Calder, Alberto Giacometti, Barbara Hepworth, Ellsworth Kelly, Roy Lichtenstein, Aristide Maillol, Joan Miró, Henry Moore, and Isamu Noguchi—had been gifted to the Museum by the estate of late film producer Ray Stark and his wife, Fran, and installation had begun.

Today, visitors first encounter examples from the collection in the Fran and Ray Stark Sculpture Garden, near the tram departure area, including pieces by Dame Elisabeth Frink (*Horse* and *Running Man*) and Moore (*Bronze Form* and *Draped Reclining Mother and Baby*). Artworks by Noguchi (*Tent of Holofernes*), Peter Shelton (*bronzenightshirt*), and Miró (*Personnage*) round out this alfresco gallery.

Once they're at the top of the hill, guests find Maillol's *L'Air* on the grand outdoor staircase and Giacometti's *Standing Woman I* in the Museum's Entrance Hall. The Stark Sculpture Terrace near the Museum's West



Pavilion includes Hepworth's *Figure for Landscape* and Moore's *Seated Woman*, among other works.

The Lower Terrace Garden features six Stark Collection sculptures, including the kinetic, wind-activated *Three Squares Gyrotory* by George Rickey. Saul Baizerman's *Night*, Giacomo Manzù's stern *Seated Cardinal*, and several other pieces animate the South Terrace, on the upper level outside the Museum's South Pavilion.

Managed by the Museum's Decorative Arts and Sculpture Conservation department, the Starks' gift also launched a new area of study, initiating research into the materials, techniques, and preservation of modern outdoor sculpture. The collection includes works made from cast bronze and lead, aluminum and stainless steel, painted metal, and ceramic. One area of research focused on the proper choice and application of protective wax and acrylic coatings, which are subject to accelerated aging from the intense Southern California sun. Getty has since shared the useful findings of that research in the book *Conserving Outdoor Sculpture: The Stark Collection at the Getty Center*. ■

Figure for Landscape, design 1960; cast 1968, Barbara Hepworth. Bronze. Getty Museum, Gift of Fran and Ray Stark. © Bowness, Hepworth Estate

Horse, 1980, Dame Elisabeth Frink. Bronze. Getty Museum, Gift of Fran and Ray Stark. © Estate of Elisabeth Frink



Two, 1977, Robert Adams. Stainless steel. Getty Museum, Gift of Fran and Ray Stark. © Mary Adams/Gimpel Fils

HALLOWED GROUND

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt. Photography by Bruce M. White, 2005

In 2006 Icons from Sinai transformed the Museum into a place of divine encounter

By Julie Jaskol
Assistant Director, Communications
J. Paul Getty Trust



Sinai Triumph of Orthodoxy ceremony, 2006, Getty Center

GETTY MUSEUM CURATOR KRISTEN COLLINS knew the 2006 exhibition *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground: Icons from Sinai* was truly exceptional when she received a lock of hair in the mail with a note asking her to pass it on to one of the Sinai monks, to lay upon the relics of Saint Catherine.

And when security staff had been trained to expect, and gently prevent, visitors from trying to kiss the icons—paintings that depict Biblical stories and saints—which had traveled from their remote home in the shadow of Mount Sinai in Egypt, where Moses is said to have encountered God.

And when people made the sign of the cross, kissed their fingers, and bowed in reverence as they entered the galleries, which had the low lights and sounds of chants and hymns that evoked a place of worship.

After all, the icons from Sinai were not just spectacular gilded images on wooden panels dating from the sixth century—some of the oldest surviving examples from the Byzantine world—they were affirmations of faith, a divine presence taking on a tangible, visible form.

In their remote location in Sinai they had survived the period of iconoclasm in the 700s and 800s, when religious symbols were destroyed by skeptics who opposed the veneration of images. While icons were smashed or painted over across more well-traveled regions of Byzantium, Sinai's stayed safe.

For Orthodox Christians they were, in a sense, “a window to heaven,” says the Very Reverend John S. Bakas, dean of St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral in the Byzantine-Latino Quarter of Los Angeles. “The presence of those portrayed becomes manifested. Believers see them as points of contact with the divine.”



Father Justin at Saint Catherine's Monastery, Sinai. Photo: Robert S. Nelson

And now the icons had come to Los Angeles, creating for most Angelenos the first—and likely the only—opportunity to see them in person. Churches across the western US organized bus trips to see them; believers came from all over the world.

"This show had a chemistry, an energy that I'd never seen before," says Collins. "We put the icons on display, but it was the visitors who activated the exhibition." Justin Sinaites, an American monk who was the newly elected librarian at St. Catherine's Monastery in Sinai, traveled with the icons from his quiet retreat and was greeted with almost the same enthusiasm as the icons. "In the *Los Angeles Times* they referred to me as a rock star," he marvels.

For him, it was important to show the icons in their cultural context. "These were created as objects of devotion, and we had to support people who wanted to approach them at that level," he says. Getty exhibition designers created a meditative space, and programming highlighted the icons' spiritual power.

The exhibition's opening featured an ecumenical array of religious leaders. "The secular spaces of

the Getty were activated, even sanctified by ceremony," says Collins. "It was a testament to the role of imagery in religious practice. I found it powerful and beautiful to see people connect in ways that went beyond the aesthetic."

Father Bakas wasn't surprised by the intensity of the response to the icons. "They take us outside our narrow, ego-centered personalities," he says. "They're reminders of the genius of the artist and what the painting means to them." Rob Nelson, the exhibition's cocurator and Yale professor, wrote that "icons are doors, gates, windows into another world...places where the divine enters the space of the beholder."

The icons' presence in Los Angeles corresponded with the Feast of the Triumph of Orthodoxy, which celebrates the victory over iconoclasm. Father Bakas helped organize busloads of the faithful and led a procession of clergy and worshippers through the Getty Center. "It was inspirational to people who in this day and age need to be inspired," he says.

When Father Justin returned to St. Catherine's after the exhibition, he saw a rise in the number of visitors who came after seeing the icons in Los Angeles. He considers the exhibition catalog (coedited by Nelson) to be a lasting contribution to the field. He continues to travel the world talking about the icons, and he and Collins are still friends and colleagues, in a relationship that spans continents, and, in a way, centuries.

"That show changed the way I worked," says Collins. "It showed the power of an exhibition when you tap into something that your community cares about. I was trained as an academic and I immersed myself in the scholarship. I didn't want to approach the work from a perspective of belief. But part of what drew me to medieval art was its functionality. Until Sinai that was in the theoretical past. Sinai made me see it and feel it in the present." ■

Right: *Saint Catherine Tended by Angels*, about 1420, Spitz Master. Tempera colors, gold, and ink. Getty Museum

Below: *Saint Catherine of Alexandria: Scenes from Her Life*, about 1330, Donato d'Arezzo, Gregorio d'Arezzo. Tempera and gold leaf on panel. Getty Museum



LACMA's Dhyandra Lawson tells us about her career-defining experience as a 2007 Getty Marrow Undergraduate Intern

By Carly Pippin
Communications Specialist
Getty Foundation

Dhyandra Lawson (left) supervises LACMA's Getty Marrow intern Maria Quintero in 2017



Diversifying the Arts



Installation photograph, *Family Album: Dannielle Bowman, Janna Ireland and Contemporary Works from LACMA*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art at Charles White Elementary School Gallery. Photo © Museum Associates/LACMA, by Brica Wilcox

Opposite: *Remember This House*, 2019, Genevieve Gagnard. Installed in *Family Album: Dannielle Bowman, Janna Ireland and Contemporary Works from LACMA*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art at Charles White Elementary School Gallery. Photo © Museum Associates/LACMA, by Brica Wilcox

DHYANDRA LAWSON ALWAYS KNEW she wanted to work in the art world. Growing up, she loved when her mother, a high school art and photography teacher, took her to museums to experience new media, ideas, and cultures. She chose studio art and art history as her majors at Occidental College, and when her thesis advisor recommended a Getty Multicultural Undergraduate Internship, she jumped at the chance to get her foot firmly in the door.

Started in 1993 by the Getty Foundation, the Getty Multicultural Undergraduate Internship program (renamed the Getty Marrow Undergraduate Internship program in 2018) helps diversify the staff of museums and visual arts organizations by offering paid, full-time summer internships across LA, focusing on students or recent graduates from backgrounds traditionally underrepresented in the arts. Prior work experience or an arts education is not required, and for many participants, the internship serves as their first exposure to employment in the visual arts. Over the years, 175 LA museums and other cultural institutions, including Getty, have introduced more than 3,400 interns to career possibilities in the field.

“My experience was transformative,” says Lawson, who interned in 2007 at Inner-City Arts, a creative space for arts instruction in downtown LA. “I learned about the different aspects of an arts organization, from education to development to executive or leadership roles. It helped me define my interests.” Furthermore, Lawson’s internship kick-started her career

by evolving into a part-time position as a programs assistant. Today, she is an assistant curator in LACMA’s Wallis Annenberg Photography Department.

By 2007, the halfway point of what has become a 30-year-strong program, the internships were reflecting their ability to launch careers. Leslie Ito, who interned at Visual Communications as part of the program’s inaugural class, became executive director of that organization in 2003, and in 2007 became director of grant programs at the Los Angeles County Arts Commission. That same year, John Tain, who interned at the Getty Research Institute (GRI) in 1995, was hired as the GRI’s assistant curator for modern and contemporary collections. Today, Ito leads the Armory Center for the Arts in Pasadena, and Tain is head of research at the Asia Art Archive. These two individuals are among hundreds of former interns who have gone on to influential positions in the arts.

In 2007, 19 students also interned across 16 departments at the Getty Center, ranging from Education and Public Programs to Paintings to Grounds and Gardens. Among these interns was Betty Avila, in the GRI’s Programs department, who is now executive director of the community arts center Self Help Graphics & Art, located in Boyle Heights. Another was Jesse Erickson in the Museum’s Department of Manuscripts, who in 2021 was appointed the Astor Curator and Department Head, Printed Books & Bindings, at the Morgan Library & Museum in New York City.

In 2020 the Getty Foundation released an impact report citing data on the program’s influence. Some of the findings: Approximately one-third of all Getty interns have gone on to work in the arts. Almost all of those working in the arts attribute their career decision to the internship program. And the internships are diversifying the sector in other unexpected ways: 80 percent of program alumni regularly visit cultural institutions, and 45 percent have joined arts organizations as members.

As for Lawson, she has been leaning into her role shaping LACMA exhibitions, often prioritizing the visibility of people and artists of color. Last fall she organized the opening of *Family Album: Dannielle Bowman, Janna Ireland and Contemporary Works from LACMA* at Charles White Elementary School, a LACMA satellite that was once the home of Otis College of Art and Design. The show—recently extended to July 30—features over 60 artworks by emergent, contemporary artists of color who examine themselves and history through the visual language of family photographs.

“Family felt like an urgent topic to me in the pandemic context,” says Lawson. “We’ve all been concerned about our loved ones, and low-income communities and communities of color have been

impacted the most. Given the location, I wanted to honor and appeal to younger audiences who have endured so much isolation over the past few years.” The exhibition has since been integrated into the school’s curriculum.

The importance of reaching young people through art has been a through line of Lawson’s work since her internship days. “Working at Inner-City Arts reinforced for me the importance of arts funding for elementary, middle, and high school students. If students are not exposed to art, how can they know if art interests them and if they should consider a career in the field?”

The unprecedented social upheaval due to the Covid-19 pandemic, combined with calls to address longstanding racial injustice and inequity, has made the Getty Foundation more committed than ever to increasing diversity in the arts through the internship program, which is hosting its 30th intern class this summer.

Lawson, who for the second time will supervise her department’s own Getty Marrow intern this summer, is similarly dedicated to the program. “The internships continue to be incredibly important in bringing the art world to life for the next generation. I’m proud to be a part of that legacy. Art reveals truths about the human experience.” ■





Peacock Flower and Metamorphosis of Tobacco Hawk Moth, 1719, Maria Sibylla Merian. From *The Metamorphosis of the Insects of Suriname*, Getty Research Institute

Vibrant Butterflies, Voracious Caterpillars, and Treacherous Treks

Enterprising and adventurous, a mother and her two daughters raised the artistic standards of natural history illustration and helped transform the study of insects

IN 2008 THE GETTY MUSEUM CELEBRATED an extraordinary family of female artists: 17th-century naturalist Maria Sibylla Merian and her daughters Johanna Helena and Dorothea Maria. An exhibition, *Maria Sibylla Merian & Daughters: Women of Art and Science*, presented their vibrant natural history illustrations and still life paintings, which teemed with insect transformations that once challenged both artistic traditions and scientific beliefs. The show also offered visitors a sense of the women's adventurousness. At age 52, for instance, Maria Sibylla sailed with her daughter Maria to the South American Dutch colony of Suriname to study and depict insect metamorphosis.

So that visitors could step into the shoes of a scientific illustrator, the exhibition included stations where children and adults alike could try their hand at coloring black-and-white reproductions. To better appreciate the women's artistry—their illustrations and paintings were by no means literal renderings of dead nature—visitors could compare real animal specimens with the women's depictions of them. The installation included 80 objects in all, 28 illustrated books and 52 framed watercolors as well as insects, spiders, snakes, and lizards.

Text panels and labels contextualized Merian's achievements within the 17th-century worlds of art and science, demonstrating their importance. Illuminating Merian's accomplishments for a general audience was one of the main reasons I wanted to curate this show. When she was born in 1647 in the German town of Frankfurt, scientific classification as we know it did not exist—worms and caterpillars were categorized together because they looked alike, and scholars still believed that flies spontaneously generated from rotting flesh and fruit, instead of from eggs. Merian, a woman without university training, was one of the first Europeans to document insect metamorphosis, all because she, as an artist, had a keen eye and a skillful hand.

Her quest for knowledge took her first to the Netherlands and then to Suriname. Her geographical and scientific explorations, artistic innovation, and great entrepreneurial efforts culminated in publishing three books in 25 years. Many different editions of these books were on display, several in cases at lower levels so that children could carefully study them in relation to actual specimens.

By Stephanie Schrader
Curator of Drawings, Getty Museum, and
Curator of *Maria Sibylla Merian & Daughters:
Women of Art and Science*



View of the *Maria Sibylla Merian & Daughters: Women of Art and Science* exhibition, 2008

Opposite: A biography of Merian for ages 10 and up. Getty Publications, J. Paul Getty Museum

One of the many takeaways for visitors was how Merian never shied away from portraying the brutal cycle of life and death—perhaps because of her own fight for survival as a divorced woman and single mother. Another takeaway, especially for the aspiring artists and naturalists among the visitors, was that Merian’s hard work paid off. Her most important publication, *The Metamorphosis of the Insects of Suriname*, appeared in Dutch and Latin editions from 1705 to 1730. The book shows 90 metamorphoses as well as “frogs, wonderful toads, lizards, snakes, spiders and termites displayed and explained, and all of them painted from life in actual size in [South] America.”

She writes compellingly of large, vibrant butterflies, voracious caterpillars and ants, exotic fruits and vegetables, menacing reptiles, and treacherous explorations into the tropical jungle. Her observations about the local climate, the use of various plants and animals for food, shelter, and medicine, and the Dutch colonists’ mistreatment of enslaved people provide some of the earliest accounts of life in Suriname.

One of the most important folios in the show was Plate 45 of the book: it exemplifies how Merian came to address much more than natural history. In the corresponding text for the life cycle of a tobacco hawk moth and its host plant, the peacock flower, she recounts, “Indians, who are not well treated by their Dutch masters, use the seeds of the peacock flower to abort their children, so that their children will not become slaves like they are.” Merian claimed that “the slaves told me this themselves.” Read in conjunction with the vibrant depiction of the peacock flower and tobacco hawk caterpillar, pupae, and moth, the account of mistreatment and abortion reminds us of the precarious cycle of human life in Suriname. Compared to later, male writers who pronounced that this plant was used by “whores,” Merian’s description is remarkable for its anthropological neutrality.

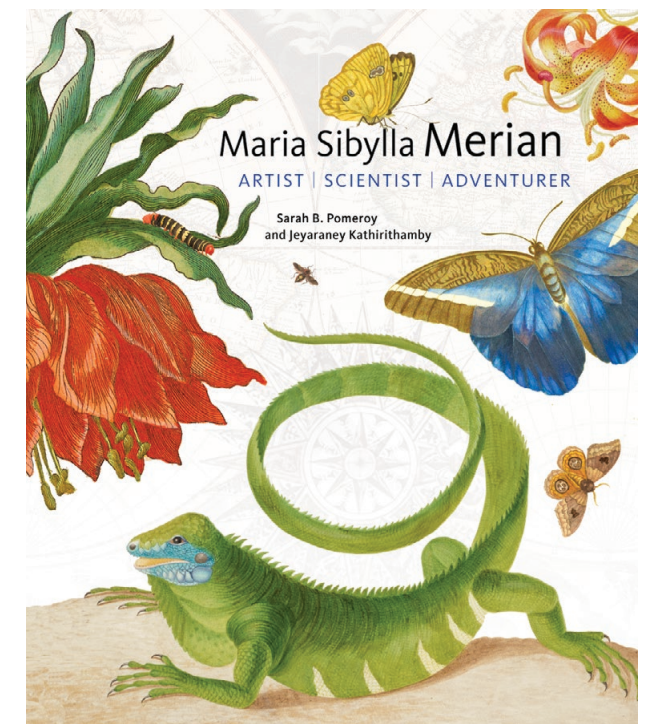
A 1719 edition of *The Metamorphosis of the Insects of Suriname* housed in the library of the Getty Research Institute (GRI) was the exhibition’s centerpiece. So that visitors might study Merian’s delicate linework and vibrant colors more closely



at home, Getty curators produced a small gift book featuring details from the GRI’s edition. Getty gardeners, meanwhile, planted in pots in the Central Garden many of the flowers Merian depicted, bringing the imagery of flora to life for all visitors to the Getty Center. And a later Getty publication, a biography written for ages 10 and up, still enchants budding scientists and artists as well as their parents.

When Maria Sibylla Merian was eulogized by her friend, the poet Christoph Arnold, he remarked upon her courage and perseverance. “It is worthy of amazement that women also dare to write with intent what has given flocks of scholars so much to do!” It is indeed quite amazing what Merian accomplished as an artist, scientist, and entrepreneur. With her daughters’ continued diligence, Merian left her mark—nine butterflies were named after her.

Working together, the three women in their Amsterdam studio not only raised the artistic standards of natural history illustrations, but they also helped give birth to the field of entomology. As the exhibition’s curator, I was, and still am, proud to have been a part of celebrating these women and of the Getty for being the first museum in the US to tell their story. ■



When a new generation of panel paintings conservators came to Getty

HOW TO SAVE A DISAPPEARING PROFESSION



By Alexandria Sivak
International Communications Manager
J. Paul Getty Trust

WHEN ALEKSANDRA HOLA VISITED the Getty Center for the first time in 2009 as a young paintings conservator, there was only one way for her to describe the experience.

“It was like a Christmas present.”

Hola was one of dozens around the world to receive scholarships to attend an inaugural symposium that breathed new life into a disappearing profession—the structural conservation of panel paintings (works executed on wood). A 2008 survey had found that less than 10 people worldwide had the skills needed to properly conserve such objects, and these experts were reaching the end of their careers without a new generation waiting in the wings. Many masterpieces have panel supports, and museums depended on these conservators for the artworks’ survival.

In response to this crisis, the Getty Foundation launched the Panel Paintings Initiative in 2008 in partnership with Getty’s Conservation Institute and Museum to train and mentor young professionals while at the same time preserving important works of art. The 2009 symposium was the first of many residencies, workshops, and convenings that brought these generations of conservators together.

At the Center, Hola met titans in the field of conservation and presented on her own work at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków. Her participation not only sharpened her conservation skills but also created friendships, opportunities, and professional connections that shaped her career. “I was amazed that I could have discussions with the stars of conservation and that they treated me as somebody on the same level—this is very important for transferring knowledge,” says Hola.

The summer following the symposium, Hola helped organize another workshop in Kraków, using Getty aid to bring these experts to peers in her home region. Then another grant provided her a conservation residency at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, working with one of the world’s foremost panel paintings conservators, George Bisacca.

“When you work with an expert, with an exceptional person, you are like a baby that observes every move,” says Hola. “How to hold the chisel, how to keep it on the table, how to sharpen it, how to lift the painting, put it back—none of this you can find in books. You only learn it through observing.”



While at the Met, Hola assisted with the conservation of Pacino di Bonaguida’s *The Virgin and Child with Saints*, an early Renaissance altarpiece painting that was in urgent need of treatment. The project allowed her to improve her hands-on skills when dealing with fragile works of art while continuing to learn from masters of the trade. Once this labor was complete, the piece was exhibited at the Center in 2013 as part of *Florence at the Dawn of the Renaissance*, and Hola got to see her conservation accomplishment displayed on the walls of the very institution that made it possible.

Today, Hola is a member of the Faculty of Conservation and Restoration of Works of Art at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków. She teaches early career panel paintings conservators herself and was able

to bring courses in pertinent subject areas into the academy curriculum. Her relationship with her students is also influenced by the Getty experience. “Right now I’m supervising a master’s degree project, and I try to build a collegial relationship so the student can feel free to ask questions, or just call me with something. This is all part of the learning.”

As documented in a 2018 final report, the Panel Paintings Initiative provided training to dozens of early career conservators like Hola and aided in the conservation of several masterpieces, including *The Ghent Altarpiece* (1432) by Hubert and Jan van Eyck, *Adam and Eve* (1507) by Albrecht Dürer, *Last Supper* (1546) by Giorgio Vasari, and *The Triumph of the Eucharist* (1626) by Peter Paul Rubens. ■

Pacino di Bonaguida’s *The Virgin and Child with Saints* (1323–27) during emergency conservation treatment. The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, Maryland (Gift of the Dr. Francis D. Murnaghan Fund, 1973), 37.2494

Opposite: Panel paintings conservator Aleksandra Hola in the conservation studio of St. Mary’s Basilica in Kraków. Photo: Pawel Gasior. Image courtesy of Aleksandra Hola



The Department of Photographs GOES GLOBAL

By Lyra Kilston
Senior Editor
Getty Museum

By 2010 the Getty Museum's Department of Photographs had increased its focus on contemporary global imagery and was welcoming works by underrepresented artists

IN 1984 THE GETTY MUSEUM ACQUIRED several of the most important private photography collections in the world—those of Bruno Bischoffberger, Arnold Crane, Volker Kahmen/Georg Heusch, Samuel Wagstaff Jr., and others, all focused on European and American works from 1839 to 1945. And so its Department of Photographs was born. When the Museum moved into its new home at the Getty Center 13 years later, the location prompted ideas about what the department might become.

A milestone in its development came in 2005, when the Museum launched the Photographs Council, a donor group that helped expand the department's geographical and temporal parameters by funding acquisitions of works by contemporary artists not yet represented or underrepresented in the collection. A year later the Museum tripled the number of galleries for photography, creating one of the largest spaces in the United States dedicated to the medium. By 2010 the department was in full swing, mounting up to 10 exhibitions a year.

Inspired primarily by the permanent collection, the exhibitions organized in 2010 focused on contemporary documentary photography; monographic presentations of the work of Irving Penn, Frederick H. Evans, and Felice Beato; and themes like laborers, still lifes, and cities. *Photography from the New China* was the first Getty show dedicated to imagery from Asia—in this case, photographs by contemporary Chinese artists—and the display clearly demonstrated that the collection had evolved far beyond those first purchases in 1984. By 2010 the department had begun collecting Asian works in depth, and more were to follow. In 2013 the Museum presented Japan's *Modern Divide: The Photographs of Hiroshi Hamaya and Kansuke Yamamoto*; in 2014, *In Focus: Tokyo*; and in 2015, *Ishiuchi Miyako: Postwar Shadows* and *The Younger Generation: Contemporary Japanese Photography*.



In 2010 the department added 540 photographs by purchase and donation—ranging from documentary and fashion images to landscapes, portraits, and conceptual works by artists from Japan, Korea, China, South Africa, and other countries. It also completed a new cold storage room for the large-scale color photographs it was acquiring with increasing frequency. Such photos require cooler temperatures than works in black and white.

A current focus of the department is cataloguing and digitizing the collection so that it can be enjoyed by photography enthusiasts all over the world, especially those who are unable to travel to the Center. In the wake of the dramatic racial reckoning of 2020, the department has strengthened its commitment to shaping a more inclusive canon of the medium for current and future generations. The team of curators, collection management staff, and administrators hopes that its dedication to acquiring images by previously marginalized local and global artists will, in time, change the footprint of the collection and profoundly enrich visitors' in-person and virtual experiences. ■

Banner for *Photography from the New China*, Getty Center, 2010

Opposite: *Songdowon International Children's Camp, North Korea*, 2007, Hiroshi Watanabe. Inkjet print. Getty Museum, Gift of Hiroshi Watanabe and Kopeikin Gallery. © Hiroshi Watanabe. Acquired in 2010



Above: [Elderly Woman and Man Seated on Stone Ledge Talking], negative January 17, 1992; print September 2002, Kim Ki-cha. Gelatin silver print. Getty Museum. © Kyung Ja Choi for the Estate of Kim Ki-cha. Acquired in 2010



Left: Gallery view of *Engaged Observers: Documentary Photography since the Sixties*, Getty Center, 2010

Opposite: *Untitled*, print 1975; frame 2004, Malick Sidibé. Gelatin silver print with glass, paint, cardboard, tape, and string. Getty Museum. © Estate of Malick Sidibé. Acquired in 2010



WHEN LA BECAME ONE BIG ART MUSEUM

By Carly Pippin
Communications Specialist
Getty Foundation

Pacific Standard Time (PST) debuted in 2011 as the largest cultural collaboration ever undertaken in Southern California

AS CURATORIAL ASSISTANT **NAIMA KEITH** looked around at the objects on view in *Now Dig This! Art and Black Los Angeles, 1960–1980*, the Hammer Museum’s monumental 2011 exhibition, she felt a uniquely personal connection to the pieces. Not only had she spent years researching them alongside curator Kellie Jones, but among the 140 sculptures, paintings, and photographs on display were examples by family friends she had known since childhood, her mother being a collector of works by Black LA artists. Decades earlier, few people, let alone museums, knew these existed; now they were being showcased before tens of thousands of visitors.

Now Dig This! was just one of 68 exhibitions to open that fall through the Getty initiative Pacific Standard Time (PST), an unprecedented collaboration of more than 60 cultural institutions in Southern California. PST: Art in L.A. 1945–1980, the first in what is now a series, documented the roots of LA’s post-WWII art scene and how it became a major new force in the art world. Exhibitions and programs took place over six months, and 40 related books were published, featuring new research on the art and artists of the period.

Funded by Getty Foundation grants, this PST put an era of overlooked artistic production on the map. From African American assemblagists to feminist practitioners at the Women’s Building, and from Mexican American artists of the 1950s to the Light and Space inno-

Love Letter #1, 1971, Charles White. Exhibited in *Now Dig This!* at the Hammer Museum. Private collection. © C. Ian White. Photo: Ed Glendinning

Opposite: Artists and museum partners pose during a Pacific Standard Time press conference at the Center on September 27, 2011





Installation view of *Now Dig This! Art and Black Los Angeles, 1960–1980*. Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. Photo: Robert Wedemeyer

vators of the 1960s, the diverse and groundbreaking practices of many underrecognized artists were made accessible to some 1.8 million visitors from Los Angeles and around the world. Exhibitions at the Getty Center included *Pacific Standard Time: Crosscurrents in L.A. Painting and Sculpture, 1950–1970*, an examination of the progression of creative movements in Southern California; *Greetings from L.A.: Artists and Publics, 1950–1980*, a look at photographs, ephemera, correspondence, and other objects that revealed how local artists disseminated their works to a broader public; *In Focus: Los Angeles, 1945–1980*, a presentation of 25 photographs from the Getty Museum’s permanent collection; and *From Start to Finish: De Wain Valentine’s “Gray Column,”* an exhibition focused on the materials and fabrication processes that made Valentine’s large-scale works possible.

In this context, *Now Dig This!* chronicled the vital legacy of the city’s African American masters, whose work was informed by such events as the civil rights and Black Power movements. “We left no stone unturned when it came to researching Black LA artists and exploring their connections with one another,” remembers Keith, who is now vice president of education and public programs at LACMA.

“The goal was to place them in the larger art history of the region. It was a watershed moment.”

Like many other shows developed for PST, *Now Dig This!* continued to have an impact beyond its three-month LA run, traveling to New York and Massachusetts and inspiring a free digital archive that offers full access to artist biographies, video interviews, catalogue essays, artwork images, and more.

“It’s been wonderful watching the long tail of the show’s PST participation,” says Keith. “We’ve seen a renaissance for so many of our artists.”

Because of its historical importance and resonance with audiences, PST has become a mainstay of Getty grantmaking and programming, with subsequent iterations taking place in 2013 and 2017. The Getty Foundation has already awarded more than \$5 million in research and planning grants to 45 institutions across the Southland for the next PST in 2024, an exploration of the intersections of art and science.

“When PST first launched in 2011, no one knew what it was, but now it has created a reputation for itself,” says Keith, who will organize the programming to accompany LACMA’s 2024 PST exhibitions. “The reach and value of PST has only become more understood, and I couldn’t be more excited to be participating once again.” ■



Above: Design for *Artforum* advertisement for *Now Dig This!* featuring *America the Beautiful*, 1968, David Hammons. Image courtesy Hammer Museum, Los Angeles

Right: A young guest pauses during the opening of *Now Dig This!* Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, October 2, 2011. Image courtesy Hammer Museum, Los Angeles

Below: Naima Keith (left) and artist Suzanne Jackson at the opening of *Now Dig This!* on October 2, 2011. Image courtesy Hammer Museum, Los Angeles



*Ray and Charles Eames's
experimental life in an iconic
modern home*

A HOUSE OF AIR AND LIGHT

By Julie Jaskol
Assistant Director, Communications
J. Paul Getty Trust

Corner of Eames House residence exterior
photographed by Mitsuya Okumura. © Eames
Office, LLC. All rights reserved





WHEN YOU WALK INTO THE EAMES HOUSE, high on a Pacific Palisades bluff overlooking the ocean, you notice its open layout, flexible spaces, bright colors, and building materials: glass, steel, plywood, and even an early fiberglass.

The breeze comes in through the open sliding glass doors, and you can smell the eucalyptus trees behind which the house is tucked. A grassy meadow sweeps from the structure to the edge of the bluff, which teems with birds and other wildlife and changes with the seasons.

Ray and Charles Eames built this home in 1949 as part of the Case Study House Program, an influential postwar effort to design affordable modern residences. One of the most intact Case Study examples remaining, it has become a pilgrimage site for architects and lovers of modern architecture.

“On the one hand, Charles and Ray chose to extend the idea of mass production as their approach to this challenge, making a cube of steel and glass, and drawing from a catalog of materials to build a house inexpensively. This is still a timely challenge,” says Lucia Atwood, one of Ray and Charles’s five grandchildren. She is also a board member of the Eames Foundation and, along with her siblings, a passionate steward of the home.

“What were the intentional qualities that make it so special?” she continues. “Experiencing the seasons and the light as it moves through the day, being part of nature, seeing views emphasized with the placement of glass and solids, and how the pair curated the interior furnishings. Those fundamental intangibles are felt by visitors.”

Despite the innovative use of materials, the house, where the couple resided for the rest of their lives, feels simple and honest. Its location on the site was designed to preserve and make the most of the natural area around it, rather than to dominate it. “Also, it’s so livable, embracing those core needs that we share as humans—even those we don’t realize we have,” says Atwood. “We all feel the intentionality of their choices.”

But over the decades of sunshine and ocean breezes, the building began to wear. Some of the innovative materials were not aging well. Atwood and her siblings hesitated to make repairs that might alter the essence of the house. In 2011 they asked the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) to assist their architects, Escher GuneWardena, with some of the more challenging preservation issues, and in 2012 the GCI recommended creating a conservation management plan to guide this and future work in a way that retained the house’s special character and qualities and would keep it alive.



“We had been told up until then that we needed to, essentially, hermetically seal the house to preserve it,” says Atwood. “It was gratifying to talk to so many experts at the Getty, especially [GCI scientist] Shin Maekawa, who validated a more nuanced goal: to provide visitors with a visceral experience of how the house embraced Charles and Ray’s living and working. He and the other team members understood that this is a holistic conservation project: we need to conserve all elements—tangible and intangible, even if they appear to be in conflict with each other.”

In other words, find ways to keep the doors open, the breezes flowing, and the sunlight shining, even if traditional preservation practice would try to control the environment.

“The family very much wanted to preserve a sense of how the house was inhabited,” says Gail Ostergren, research specialist in the GCI’s Buildings and Sites department. “They were very aware of the experimental nature of the house and the way their grandparents lived there.”

A conservation management plan identifies what is significant about a place and develops policies to manage and sustain its significance. This approach is commonly used for older cultural heritage sites, and the GCI wanted to promote its use for modern architecture. As the inaugural project of the Conserving Modern Architecture Initiative, the GCI began a rigorous analysis of the site, its significance, and its challenges.

The plan had to consider the house, its contents, and the surrounding landscape. Far from austere modernism, the home’s interior features a riot of texture and color. Nearly every surface is covered with idiosyncratic objects that Ray loved—among them toys, rocks, candles, and flowers.

“Things I took for granted needed to be codified in the plan,” says Atwood. “For instance, we wrote a manual on how to arrange bouquets the way Ray would have.” There was also the row of eucalyptus trees alongside the house, planted in the 1880s by developer and entrepreneur Abbot Kinney (who founded nearby Venice). “Landscapes are living—they grow and die. The plan acknowledges the significance of those trees, even as they may need to be removed to allow for healthy growth of the remaining trees.”

Even the views from the house need to be saved, whenever possible, along with the meadow that becomes verdant in the spring, attracting generations of animals. “Ray loved to watch the deer, even when they ate the flowers,” says Atwood.

In 2011 the Eames Foundation loaned the entire contents of the living room to LACMA for the exhibition

California Design, 1930–1965: “Living in a Modern Way.” That created the opportunity for the foundation to undertake some urgently needed repairs. GCI conservators and scientists worked with the foundation’s architectural consultants to conduct a paint study, contribute to repairs to the steel windows and doors, advise on a roof replacement, and after extensive studies, guide the replacement of the living room’s deteriorated vinyl tile floor with a new system that included a vapor barrier designed to prevent moisture from damaging the new tiles.

Conservators also investigated and advised on the cleaning and treating of the living room paneling. And they focused on keeping the traces of Ray and Charles’s life in the house, including the marks that potted plants had made against the wall and the rectangular traces of framed paintings, darker than the surrounding areas.

The conservation management plan takes into account the significance of these traces, extending the lived memory of Ray and Charles and how they inhabited the special place they created.

“What I appreciate as a steward and a granddaughter is the role of the conservation management plan in helping future stewards not lose sight of what’s significant when addressing new, as well as ongoing, challenges. It is comforting to know that this plan will guide future stewards as well as our upcoming conservation projects.” ■



Below: Living room in the Eames House after conservation and reinstallation of the collection. Photo: Scott S. Warren. © Getty Conservation Institute

Opposite, top: The Eames House, designed by Charles and Ray Eames in 1949. Photo: Mitsuya Okumura, courtesy of the Eames Foundation

Opposite, bottom: GCI staffer Emily MacDonald-Korth performs paint excavation on exterior metal work. Photo: Scott S. Warren

*A look back at the first luminaries
celebrated by Getty for their unique
contributions to the art world*

A New Kind of Honor: THE GETTY MEDAL

ON A CLEAR NIGHT IN DECEMBER 2013, members of the Getty community—artists, philanthropists, collectors, and scholars—ascended a carpet of blue light up the wide steps to the Museum, following the sounds of a jazz trio. They were gathering to celebrate honorees of the first-ever Getty Medal, an award created by Getty trustees to recognize extraordinary achievement in the practice, understanding, and support of the arts and humanities.

President and CEO Jim Cuno and Mark Siegel, then chair of Getty’s board of trustees, introduced the recipients: Harold M. Williams, founding president and CEO of the Getty Trust, and his wife, Nancy Englander, the Trust’s original director of program planning and analysis. Both were hired in 1981 when Getty was a nascent organization created by J. Paul Getty’s visionary bequest establishing the world’s largest philanthropy dedicated to the visual arts.

Williams and Englander embarked on an intensive period of research and discussions, consulting often with the founding trustees, and a year later emerged with a plan: Getty would be a philanthropic trust with branches dedicated to four core inter-

By David Martino
Donor Relations Officer
J. Paul Getty Trust



Above: Getty Medalist Yo-Yo Ma performs with members of the Silk Road Ensemble

Far left: Getty Medalists Thelma Golden (left) and Lorna Simpson

Left: 2013: Harold M. Williams and Nancy Englander, the first Getty Medalists



ests: grants supporting arts and education; conservation science; scholarly research and art history; and collecting, exhibiting, and interpreting the world's artistic heritage. While Getty's public presence at the time consisted only of the Villa, Williams and Englander envisioned a campus that would unify these independent institutes and serve as a destination for the arts—a vision that became the Getty Center.

As Jim Cuno remarked, "It's fitting that the first award should go to the two people who gave intellectual structure and physical form to Mr. Getty's vision."

Since that first celebration, Getty Medal dinners have continued to be festive events designed to introduce new stakeholders to Getty's work while spotlighting the people driving real change in cultural arenas around the world.

The award's second year honored Lord Jacob Rothschild of the United Kingdom for his decades of influential leadership in the preservation of built cultural heritage. In 2015 architect Frank Gehry received the Medal, and in 2016 it went to artist Ellsworth Kelly and cellist Yo-Yo Ma, "one of our greatest ambassadors for international cultural understanding," as Cuno described him.



Getty President and CEO Jim Cuno and Getty Medalist Ed Ruscha, 2019

Right: 2019: Getty Medalist Mary Beard and Getty Board Chair David Lee

Opposite: Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti addresses guests at the Center in 2019, with an artwork by Lorna Simpson, one of that year's honorees, projected in the event space

Medals were awarded to writer Mario Vargas Llosa and artist Anselm Kiefer in 2017; Thelma Golden, director and chief curator of the Studio Museum in Harlem, Agnes Gund, president emerita of the Museum of Modern Art, and sculptor Richard Serra in 2018; and classicist Mary Beard and artists Ed Ruscha and Lorna Simpson in 2019. Scholar Kwame Anthony Appiah, artist Martin Puryear, and philanthropist Alice Walton were named as honorees in 2020. Their ceremony was postponed due to the pandemic and will take place this October.

Like that first night in 2013, the next Getty Medal dinner promises to be a star-filled evening that guests, and guests of honor, will never forget.

As Professor Appiah said upon hearing of his award: "I have always felt it a great privilege to be invited into conversations with those who sustain the arts. The Getty Medal has established itself by the range and luster of its recipients, and I am honored and humbled to join their company." ■





160 SQUARE FEET OF JACKSON POLLOCK'S PAINT

What it took to conserve
Jackson Pollock's Mural

By Alexandria Sivak
International Communications Manager
J. Paul Getty Trust

INSIDE GETTY'S PAINTINGS CONSERVATION AND RESEARCH LABS, you might spot a Baroque masterpiece in for a cleaning, a Van Gogh undergoing an X-ray examination, or conservators at work on a de Kooning. Sometimes paintings need a little (or a lot) of specialized care, and Getty is one of the few places in the United States where they can visit, free of charge, and receive the attention they need.

Few pieces attracted more interest at the Getty Center than Jackson Pollock's *Mural*. Massive, at about 8 feet tall by 20 feet wide, the painting is considered one of his most important and transfor-

mational works. Walk along its length and you'll see, in its kaleidoscopic swirls and drips, Pollock's evolution from Surrealism to Abstract Expressionism. Rumors endure that he created it in a single wild session—but more about that later.

The painting's long journey to Getty began with art collector and socialite Peggy Guggenheim, who commissioned Pollock in 1943 to adorn a wall of her New York City apartment. *Mural* was rolled and unrolled at least five times during its eight-year journey from Pollock's studio to Guggenheim's apartment and then to the University of Iowa, to

Jackson Pollock's *Mural* (1943) in a Getty Museum gallery in 2014. Oil and casein on canvas. University of Iowa Museum of Art, Gift of Peggy Guggenheim, 1959.6. Reproduced with permission from The University of Iowa



which Guggenheim donated the work in 1951. Each trip caused damage, and more than 60 years later, the paint was dull and dirty, covered with a flaking varnish that needed removal. The canvas sagged under its own weight due to a weak stretcher.

Mural came to Getty in 2012 for a major conservation treatment that would take 17 months to complete. But even with these challenges, the picture left an indelible impression on staff when it first entered Getty's paintings conservation studio.

"It's an extremely mesmerizing work of art, and you do get lost in it," says Tom Learner, head of science at the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI). "I remember standing still in front of it on many occasions and—although this sounds a bit clichéd—just letting the painting talk to me. It was extraordinary."

The experience provided an opportunity to learn more about Pollock's process and offered a once-in-a-lifetime chance for the conservation team to work on such a large and complex piece. One of the first steps was to find out what kinds of materials Pollock used and how he applied them. To do this, scientists from the GCI scanned *Mural* using hyperspectral imaging and X-ray fluorescence mapping.

The scans would reveal which elements were present in the paints, and these elements could be matched to certain pigments or paint types.

Most of the materials were high-end artist oils, but scientists also made a surprising discovery: that the white paint Pollock used to fill sections of the canvas near the work's completion was based on casein, a cheap midcentury house paint. Curious about how he applied some glossy pink splatters to the canvas in its vertical orientation, researchers even tried to re-create his paint flicking in the GCI labs.

"Those tests were completely successful, but one of the consequences of doing them that I haven't really spoken about was the mess that was left in that studio," says Learner. "Even though we had covered every surface and the floor with plastic, that pink paint still got everywhere, in much the same way that water will always find a crack in a building and get inside."

And did Pollock really create *Mural* in a single, frantic night? Analysis of a cross section of the paint layers taken from microscopic samples reveals that the first four colors he used (cadmium lemon,

GCI scientists Tom Learner and Alan Phenix examining Jackson Pollock's *Mural*. University of Iowa Museum of Art, Gift of Peggy Guggenheim, 1959.6. Reproduced with permission from The University of Iowa

cadmium red, teal, and umber) were probably painted in quick succession while still wet, but that the others were not. So, while Pollock might have applied these initial layers all over the canvas in an all-nighter, he certainly didn't finish the piece in one go.

Once Getty Museum conservators had a better idea of what they were working with, they dug into the long task of treating a huge painting. They removed the old varnish, meticulously cleaned the picture from top to bottom, and built a curved stretcher to support the canvas. The newly conserved *Mural* debuted at Getty in 2014.

"It was one of those moments when the science, technical art history, and conservation come together to really improve or dramatically change the interpretation of a canvas," says Laura Rivers, a paintings conservator at Getty who worked on the project.

Rather than return immediately to Iowa, *Mural* racked up more than 20,000 miles while traveling to

other museums, among them the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, the Royal Academy of Arts in London, the Museo Guggenheim Bilbao in Spain, and most fittingly, the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice, Italy.

For Rivers, the project was an opportunity for all Getty programs to work together in a way they rarely did before. "*Mural* was one painting, and it just impacted everybody. In a funny way, the fact that the painting couldn't even be moved without 20 people was symbolic of the huge effect it had on the institution as a whole."

The conservation project adds a valuable chapter to the painting's already rich history. The techniques developed and refined by the team and published in their book have helped the conservation of other Pollock paintings and works by artists from that era. After its world tour and 10 years after entering Getty's doors, *Mural* will finally hang on the wall of the new University of Iowa Stanley Museum of Art in fall 2022—looking better than ever. ■

Getty staff working together to lift Jackson Pollock's *Mural*. University of Iowa Museum of Art, Gift of Peggy Guggenheim, 1959.6. Reproduced with permission from The University of Iowa



HistoricPlacesLA

By Julie Jaskol
Assistant Director, Communications
J. Paul Getty Trust



A website launched in 2015 lets people see historic sites in their communities and led to the new African American Historic Places Project

The Watts Happening Cultural Center. Photo: Stephen Schafer, © 2020 SCHAFFPHOTO.com



WHEN THE WATTS HAPPENING CULTURAL CENTER opened its doors in 1970, it became a hub of artistic activity filled with music, dance, theater, and literature. Actors Eartha Kitt, Raymond St. Jacques, Roger E. Mosley, William Marshall, and Paula Kelly taught classes. Dancer Marge Champion served on the board of directors and built a dance floor so that kids weren't practicing on concrete. Author Budd Schulberg created the Watts Writers Workshop that

used the Cultural Center for classes. There were courses in modeling, sewing, fencing, set construction, sculpting, art history, and drama. There was a preschool, choir, and rock-and-roll group.

The restrained Modernist building housed the influential Mafundi Institute, which celebrated Black art and artists, and a small café that would later become the Watts Coffee House. Designed by prominent Black architects and civil rights leaders Arthur Silvers and Robert Kennard, it featured on its facade the proudly unrestrained Mafundi mural by artist Elliott Pinkney proclaiming, "Power Unity Love Peace."

The Mafundi Institute closed in 1975, but the building continued to house important nonprofit community services, a credit union, and schools. In the 1990s the Watts Coffee House opened to some fanfare, with memorabilia on its walls celebrating Black artists, musicians, and community members, and becoming the only full-service restaurant in Watts.

But in 2019 the City of LA decided the building was ripe for redevelopment, and in 2020 issued a request for proposals for new uses for the site. Fearing the loss of a precious cultural landmark, the community organized to preserve it, led by Father Amde Hamilton, a member of the Watts Prophets, an influential group of poets and musicians. The neighborhood reached out to Rita Cofield for help.

Cofield grew up just outside of Watts. She had gotten a bachelor's degree in architecture and planning at Howard University and was acquiring a master's in heritage conservation at USC.

"They knew my background and what I was studying and that I was part of the community," Cofield says of the activists who called on her. "I was asked to attend a Neighborhood Council meeting where city council staff said that the building had no historical significance, but I knew that it was identified in SurveyLA."

SurveyLA, a partnership between Getty and the City of LA to inventory and map LA's historic sites, had identified the building's cultural and architectural significance in its citywide inventory several years earlier.

From 2010 to 2017, SurveyLA conducted field surveys throughout the entire city—more than 880,000 legal parcels in almost 500 square miles. It



identified places of social importance, architecturally significant buildings, historic districts, bridges, parks, gardens, streetscapes, and more.

To make the SurveyLA data easily accessible and useful, in 2015 Getty and the City of LA created HistoricPlacesLA, a website that allows people to see the historic resources in their community. Type in "Mafundi Institute" in historicplacesLA.org, and you'll see how the site qualifies as a historic resource.

Cofield's effort to save the Watts Happening Cultural Center was successful. The combination of an effective nomination, community support, and the SurveyLA data about its significance proved too powerful to ignore. The City of LA declared the site a Historic-Cultural Monument, and the redevelopment proposal has been shelved for now.

But SurveyLA and HistoricPlacesLA also revealed a sobering fact: fewer than 3 percent of LA's historic sites tell the story of Black life in LA.

In response, the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) and the City of LA Office of Historic Resources recently launched the African American Historic Places Project to identify and preserve landmarks that tell Black stories.

Cofield was asked to help lead the project, and she joined the GCI last March to focus on it. "One of our goals is to nominate 10 historic resources, and also to look for the explicit and implicit bias in preservation practices that could contribute to such inequity," she says. The project's current task is to create an advisory committee to help prioritize nominations.

"We need to bring the community into the conversation about its heritage," she says. "We're trying to give the community more of a voice in what they deem important, give them strategies to preserve, protect, and highlight what matters to them. Historic preservation is not just about architecture. It's about stories and neighborhoods. The stories create places that matter." ■

Inside the Watts Coffee House. Photo: Stephen Schafer, © 2020 SCHAFFPHOTO.com

Opposite: Associate GCI Project Specialist Rita Cofield, manager of the African American Historic Places Project. Photo: Lisa Boss-Wright



Bringing Ancient Music to the Cave Temples of Dunhuang

"Kojiro Umezaki Performs
in the Cave Temples of
Dunhuang at the Getty"
(available on YouTube)



*A Silk Road Ensemble
member looks back on
his Getty residency*

SITTING IN A SMALL, DIMLY LIT SPACE, musician Kojiro (Ko) Umezaki begins a song on the shakuhachi (Japanese bamboo flute). The instrument requires precise breath control and intense focus, and both are evident in Umezaki's face as he plays. The piece, "Empty Bell," traces back to Japanese mendicant monks of the Fuke school. And inspiring his notes are the divine creatures rendered within this space—an elaborately painted ancient cave temple replicated at the Getty Center.

Umezaki's performance, and the cave temple, helped celebrate a 30-year collaboration between the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) and the Dunhuang Academy to conserve and manage the Mogao Grottoes, a Buddhist cave temple site situated along the Silk Road near the city of Dunhuang in China. Since the GCI couldn't bring the actual caves to the Center, it chose the next best option—install replicas of a few of the cave temples, complete with interiors exactly painted by a group of skilled Chinese artists, on the Center's arrival plaza.

For the exhibition, *Cave Temples of Dunhuang: Buddhist Art on China's Silk Road*, visitors explored the replicas and learned about the GCI's efforts to protect the real site. Guests also saw rare objects from the Library Cave on display at the Getty Research Institute, and immersed themselves in a 3D experience that set them inside Cave 45, one of the original cave temples. If they were lucky, visitors came on a day when members of the Silk Road Ensemble, including Umezaki, brought the replica caves to life with music.

By Alexandria Sivak
International Communications Manager
J. Paul Getty Trust

The Silk Road Ensemble, founded by famed cellist Yo-Yo Ma, is a group of diverse musicians who cocreate music from lands connected by the Silk Road network of Eurasian trade routes. For the GCI, it was a natural choice to invite the ensemble to explore the caves and play music inspired by them, and working with the University of California, Los Angeles, it brought several of the performers to the site as summer artists in residence.

The musicians chose instruments that reflected the many countries and regions through which the Silk Road meandered, prepared compositions both original and historical, and played for visitors as they explored the caves. Umezaki decided to perform in Cave 285, which contained paintings that combined Indian influences with pre-Buddhist ancient Chinese deities.

“Empty Bell’ is specifically designed to focus on breathing and meditation, so it seemed to fit nicely in that context for me,” says Umezaki. “It spoke to the essence of what those caves might represent now, looking back on the history of Buddhism and how it translated into Japan during that period when Dunhuang was still particularly active.”

Other Silk Road musicians at the Center included Kayhan Kalhor, who played the kamancheh (long-necked Persian fiddle); Haruka Fujii and Wu Man, who performed a duet on percussion (gong) and pipa (Chinese lute), respectively; and double bassist Jeffrey Beecher, who played a composition he hoped would evoke for modern-day travelers the ancient pilgrims’ experience of the cave temples as places of introspection.

While their performances attracted large crowds on busy weekends, on weekdays the musicians played for smaller school groups from across Los Angeles. “Being able to share with students, especially younger ones, a history that goes back centuries and across geographical boundaries—that’s memorable and special,” says Umezaki. ■

Chinese artists at work on a replica cave for *Cave Temples of Dunhuang: Buddhist Art on China’s Silk Road*



The Pacific Standard Time initiative was all about recognizing cultural connections, not divisions

By Jennifer Roberts
Senior Editor
J. Paul Getty Trust

SIX YEARS AFTER LAUNCHING Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945–1980—a widely acclaimed 2011 effort to document the birth of the LA art scene collaboratively in galleries across the city—Getty spearheaded an even more ambitious Pacific Standard Time.

2017's PST: LA/LA explored the far-reaching subject of Latin American and Latino art in dialogue with Los Angeles. Its partners spanned hundreds of miles—from Santa Barbara to San Diego, Santa Monica to Palm Springs—and visitors were offered more than 80 visual art exhibitions at more than 70 cultural institutions, upward of 500 performances and public programs, dedicated K-12 educational offerings, and some 60 publications—all made possible by \$16.5 million in grants awarded by the Getty Foundation to arts organizations large and small.

Why focus on Latin American and Latino art in LA? “Getty was founded on the principle that the arts transcend political borders and help us better understand different cultures, times, and places,” said Getty president and CEO Jim Cuno at the time. “In this spirit, we have launched PST: LA/LA, and through it we can recognize the cultural connections that unite us and build bridges instead of walls.” The initiative also recognized LA’s long relationship with Latin America and the city’s majority Latino population.

From the Autry’s exhibition on the influential photojournalism of LA’s bilingual newspaper *La Raza* to the Huntington’s survey of South American nature images, thematic exhibitions brought understudied collections to museum walls throughout the region. Monographic shows shed light on underrecognized artists such as Laura Aguilar, Carlos Almaraz, León Ferrari, Anna Maria Maiolino, and Gilbert “Magu” Luján.

Four PST: LA/LA exhibitions were presented at the Getty Center. *Golden Kingdoms: Luxury and Legacy in the Ancient Americas*, a major collaboration with the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, brought together South American and Meso-

CELEBRATING LATIN AMERICAN AND LATINO ART IN LA



american objects that conveyed the majesty of pre-Columbian kingship and ritual. *The Metropolis in Latin America, 1830–1930* looked at a century of rapid urban growth, sociopolitical upheavals, and cultural transitions in six Latin American capitals. *Making Art Concrete: Works from Argentina and Brazil in the Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros* explored the avant-garde artists of the Concrete movement and what Getty researchers and scientists discovered about these artists’ materials, methods, and motivation. And *Photography in Argentina, 1850–2010: Contradiction and Continuity* offered visitors a wholly new perspective on the country through 300 images by 60 Argentine artists.

The Center’s exhibitions and events, together with those of PST partners across Southern California, had a monumental impact on the general public and the art world alike. Audiences outside Southern California would be affected too: nearly two dozen PST shows traveled to museums around the country

and the world. The *New York Times*’s Holland Cotter wrote in his review of PST: LA/LA, “I guess there’s a God. During one of the meanest passages in American national politics within living memory, we’re getting a huge, historically corrective, morale-raising cultural event, one that lasts four months and hits on many of the major social topics of the day: racism, sexism, aggressive nationalism.”

And there was PST: LA/LA’s economic impact. The Los Angeles County Economic Development Corp released a report showing that the 2017 PST drew an estimated 2.8 million visitors (34 percent of whom had traveled from outside Southern California), generated \$430.3 million in economic output (total value of goods and services produced), supported 4,080 jobs, and added \$24.3 million in tax revenue to state and local government coffers. As Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti said of the PST, “An investment in the arts is an investment in our future.”

Above: *East L.A. High School Walkouts, 1968*, La Raza Photographic Staff. *La Raza Newspaper & Magazine Records*, Coll. 1000. Courtesy of the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center. On view in 2017 in LA RAZA at the Autry Museum of the American West

PST: LA/LA’s educational components proved a boon as well. Undergraduates at the ArtCenter College of Design in Pasadena developed experimental installation designs for *Golden Kingdoms*. LA County teens were invited to enter a student art contest and win college scholarship funds (their prompt: “LA is ____ Am I LA?”). And a special grant program supported a robust suite of activities for Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) K-12 teachers, students, and their families—namely professional development for educators, free student field trips to exhibitions, free family museum field trips, and a student art challenge—all organized around PST: LA/LA’s themes of art, activism, borders, diaspora, displacement, identity, and globalism.

Overall, the program engaged 50,000 students, many from the region’s most underserved schools. Five hundred teachers participated in professional development sessions and saved the printed resource guides to use in future classes. And special field trips and family days enabled some 12,500 students and family members to visit PST: LA/LA partner museums.

“The support for teachers and students to gain this vital exposure outside the classroom is critical, especially the commitment to reach the most underserved schools in our district,” said Rory Pullens, then head of LAUSD’s arts education branch. “With the support of the Getty Foundation, thousands of students across the county are being transported into a cultural and artistic experience that is certain to make a lasting impression.” ■



Left: Grand Prize winners from the PST: LA/LA student contest. Left to right: Sara Monroy, Jamila Jordan, Citlalli Miranda, Karina Cruz, and Jostin Guacamaya, who worked together on *Unknown Destinations/Destinos Desconocidos*, a short documentary-style film about undocumented immigrants living in Los Angeles.

Above: (*New Granada Expedition*), “*Aristolochia*,” José María Carbonell. Archivo del Real Jardín Botánico (CSIS) Madrid, DIV. III A-891. Work on view in 2017 in *Visual Voyages: Images of Latin American Nature from Columbus to Darwin*, The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens

GETTY LAUNCHES THE AFRICAN AMERICAN ART HISTORY INITIATIVE

*The study of African American art
is fundamental to a full understanding
of American art history*

IN THE EARLY 1960S, Los Angeles rivaled New York as a major center for contemporary art. Larry Bell, Billy Al Bengston, and Robert Irwin seized national attention with “Cool School” pieces inspired by LA’s abundant light and space, and African American artists Melvin Edwards, Charles White, and Betye Saar created assemblages and other groundbreaking work animated by the civil rights movement.

This latter group, largely marginalized by white-dominated galleries and museums, found a supportive audience in the many African Americans migrating to LA for its economic opportunities and ethos of social acceptance. Alternative exhibition

spaces sprang up in homes, churches, and artist-owned galleries, and eventually traditional venues in the city, and around the country, took notice.

And yet, more than 60 years later, many consider African American art an under-researched and under-funded field. As Saar, now 95, told the *Los Angeles Times* in 2018, “It’s taken a long, long time for the art world to figure out that there are African American artists. And it still has a long way to go.”

The Getty Research Institute (GRI) wants to change that. In October 2018 it launched the African American Art History Initiative (AAAHI), an ambitious program to establish the GRI as a major

By Jennifer Roberts

Senior Editor, J. Paul Getty Trust



Fashion designer Stephen Burrows posing in his studio with model Barbara Cheeseborough. Photo: Moneta Sleet, Jr. Johnson Publishing Company archive, Getty Research Institute. Courtesy Ford Foundation, J. Paul Getty Trust, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and Smithsonian Institution



Betye Saar in her Los Angeles studio (2015). Photo by Ashley Walker; courtesy of the artist and Roberts Projects, Los Angeles

center for the study of African American art history. The initiative's first action was to acquire some of Saar's notebooks.

The GRI has since rolled out many more plans, all developed in consultation with senior consultant Kellie Jones, MacArthur Fellow and professor in art history and archaeology at Columbia University; an advisory committee of leading scholars, artists, curators, and champions of African American art; Rebecca Peabody, head of research projects and academic outreach, where AAAHI is anchored; and LeRonn Brooks, associate curator of modern and contemporary collections. As the first African American curator for Getty and the first to hold this position, Brooks has been helping to acquire Getty's collections of African American artist archives while creating AAAHI public programming, building departmental and institutional partnerships, and working with AAAHI's first fellows.

Initial collections included the Johnson Publishing Company archive, one of the most massive records of Black culture in the 20th century, with more than four million prints, slides, and negatives from *Ebony* and *Jet* magazines; groundbreaking LA architect Paul Revere Williams's archive; and the Whitney and Lee Kaplan African American Visual Culture Collection, an encyclopedic trove of thousands of catalogues and other materials on Black artists.

AAAHI's first fellows are Cherise Smith, professor of African and African diaspora studies and art history at the University of Texas at Austin, and Tobias Wofford, assistant professor of art history at Virginia Commonwealth University. Smith is using her nine-month residency to work on a book that looks at how artists Carrie Mae Weems, Charles Gaines, Cauleen Smith, and Rodney McMillian explore traumatic episodes in American history, especially those associated with the Jim Crow-era South. Wofford is examining African American contributions to the visual landscape of California through the case studies of Grafton Tyler Brown, Sargent Claude Johnson, and Williams.

In other AAAHI news, Kristin Juarez recently came on board to work with AAAHI projects and programs; Simone Fujita has become Getty's first bibliographer of African American Art; Steven D. Booth, an inaugural archivist of the Barack Obama Presidential Library, joined Getty to organize, inventory, and catalogue the Johnson Publishing Company archive; and GRI research assistant Alex Jones has delved into photographer Charles Brittin's archive and digitized items for an exhibition on dancer Blondell Cummings.

AAAHI's first major research project, *Blondell Cummings: Dance as Moving Pictures* led by Juarez, Peabody, and Glenn Phillips, has already yielded an award-winning book and an exhibition at Art + Practice in South Los Angeles. The team also organized a faculty open house, introducing Cummings's work and related GRI holdings to professors from across the country, and Art + Practice held a robust series of related public programs.

"AAAHI's areas of activity mirror those of the GRI," says Peabody, who works closely with the initiative's oral history program, scholar and intern programs, research projects, and academic outreach. "We're actively acquiring primary and secondary research materials and generating new archives in the form of oral histories; supporting scholarship at multiple levels, from undergraduates to senior scholars, and in the form of our own institutional research projects and partnerships; and sharing the results of our work through exhibitions, publications, and public programs."

To create the oral histories, the GRI is working in partnership with the Oral History Center at the University of California, Berkeley, to interview prominent African American artists, including Gaines, Howardena Pindell, and members of

the Kamoinge Workshop, a photography collective founded in New York in 1963.

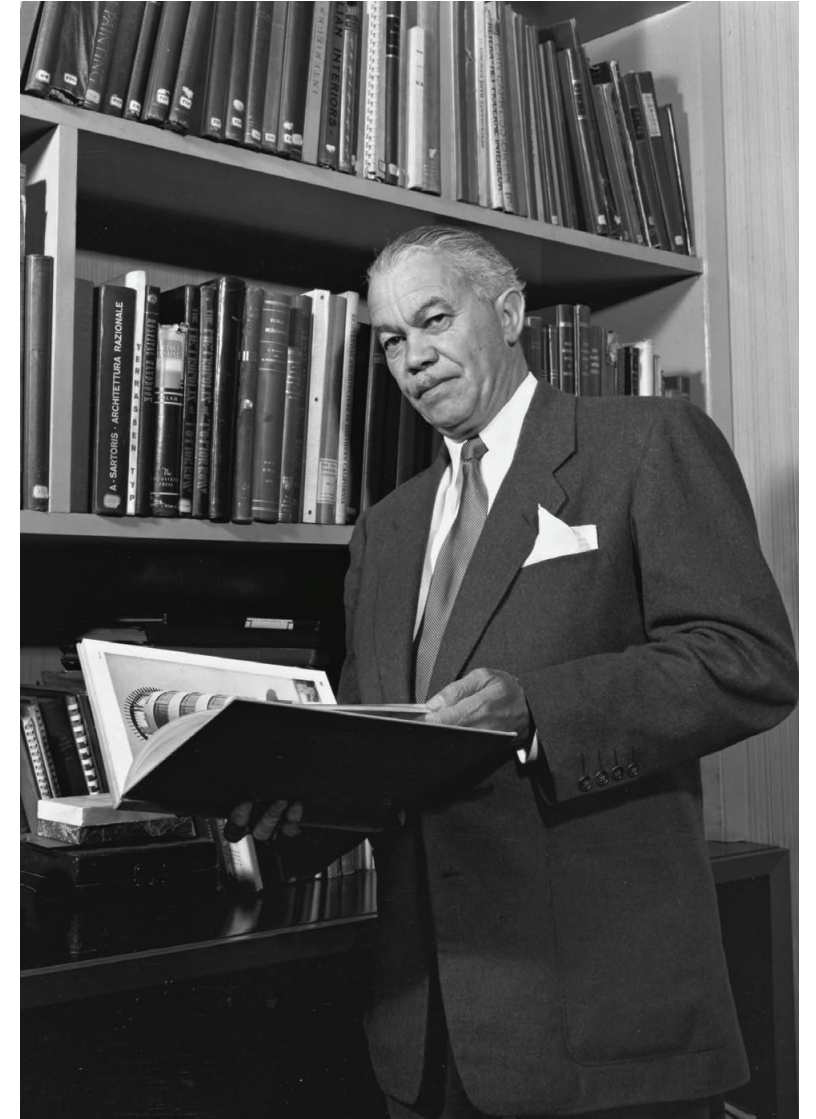
Other upcoming AAAHI projects include a fall exhibition on the Johnson Publishing Company, cocurated by Brooks and colleagues at the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture; a 2025 exhibition on Williams, cocurated by Getty, USC, and LACMA; and a second major research project, led by Juarez and Peabody, on artist and art historian Samella Lewis.

AAAHI's projects will greatly impact a whole new generation of art historians, says Brooks. "African American artists innovated new forms and approaches to art and artistic practice but have seldom been credited. But if those stories aren't told, you can honestly go through an art history program and think African American artists were never there. These are the wrongs we're addressing in our work." ■

Right: Portrait of Paul R. Williams, 1952, Julius Shulman. Gelatin silver print. © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute

Bottom left: Blondell Cummings for *Ms.* magazine photoshoot, 1994. Courtesy of Cherry Kim. © Cherry Kim

Bottom right: Lerone Bennett, former senior editor at *Ebony* magazine, in his office at the Johnson Publishing Company, 1973. US National Archives and Records Administration. Photo: John H. White. Public domain image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons



THE SAFEST PLACE FOR ART



A 2019 fire near the Getty Center only looked like a close call. Our buildings, grounds, and galleries were built to resist flames and protect people and artwork from smoke

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

WHEN A MAJOR BRUSH FIRE BROKE OUT in the early morning hours of October 28, 2019, the Getty Center went on alert. Dubbed the “Getty Fire” because of its proximity to the site, the blaze consumed more than 600 acres to the north and west of the Center. Fire trucks drove up the hill, teams of firefighters took positions on-site, and the Center became a staging area as nearby hillsides burned.

Many people were immediately concerned about the safety of firefighters, nearby residents, and staff and also the precious artworks and archival collections housed at Getty. Were there plans to evacuate the collection?

There was no need: the art and archives were already in the safest place possible. The Center has always been a marvel of anti-fire engineering both indoors and outdoors, with its materials, design, construction, operations, and controls all built for safety.



A Burn-Resistant Landscape

Because Southern California often sees wildfires, the Getty Center’s architecture and landscaping were designed with fire prevention in mind. The buildings were constructed with highly flame-resistant stone, concrete, and protected steel. Spacious travertine plazas surround the buildings and would slow down a blaze.

Watering systems are continually adjusted based on conditions on the ground, and burn-resistant plants span the Getty campus and the surrounding land. Additionally, the grounds team clears storm drains, maintains roads, and ensures that all irrigation systems are working.

“Emergency planning and safety are things we do all year round,” said Mike Rogers, Getty’s director of facilities, shortly after the blaze. “That’s part of our Getty culture, to think about fire safety.”

Keeping Art Safe Inside

Inside the Getty Center, the art galleries, library, and artwork storage areas are equally well-engineered, with state-of-the-art features that make them the safest possible places for art and archives during a fire.

Walls consist of reinforced concrete or flame-retardant steel, while the buildings were designed with fire separations: doors can isolate any problem areas from the rest of the site. “With separations, if a fire starts, it doesn’t have the ability to travel,” Rogers said.

To guard against smoke that could harm people and damage art, a carbon-filtered air conditioning system maintains a pressure flow that keeps smoke and ash out. “If there’s a fire in the building, we have ways to manage smoke so people can evacuate safely and firefighters can get in and deal with it quickly,” Rogers said.

Fire sprinklers are plentiful but are kept completely dry to avoid accidental water intrusion. They are activated only as a last resort. In addition, a one-million-gallon water storage tank on-site can serve as an alternate or additional water supply that can support sprinklers and hydrants as necessary.

“We have a very significant building here,” said Rogers. “It was well thought out and carefully constructed, and it’s carefully maintained and operated. I’m proud of that and of our incredible team. We feel very safe here.” ■

How our community got creative with items on hand for the #GettyMuseumChallenge

ARTWORKS

Re-created by Geniuses the World Over

THE FIRST MONTHS OF THE COVID PANDEMIC meant hunkering down inside, quarantining with family, pets, and uncertainty. At the same time, many people were looking for ways to be creative and stay connected to art. Getty issued a playful challenge on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram to re-create a favorite artwork using just three objects lying around the house.

And wow, did the Internet respond! Thousands of submissions later, the creative powers and sense of humor of our community uplifted us all.

The challenge, inspired by the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and a brilliant Instagram account (Between Art and Quarantine), was adapted with the invitation to use digitized and downloadable artworks from Getty's online collection or from other museums.

Re-creations came pouring in: a Jeff Koons using a pile of socks, a restaged Jacques-Louis David with a fleece blanket and duct tape, and MacGyvered costumes out of towels, pillows, scarves, shower caps, coffee filters, bubble wrap, and—of course—toilet paper.

The challenge overwhelmed our social media team. As more and more brilliant images were made, the crew rushed to respond.

While we couldn't find hand sanitizer or have dinner with friends, there was still art.

Here are some of our favorites.

By Sarah Waldorf
Digital Communications/
Social Media Specialist
J. Paul Getty Trust

Renaissance Lasagna Noodles

Christian Martinez's daughter Bella was six years old and had a love of nature that drew her immediately to this page from a Renaissance manuscript. Encountering the challenge over breakfast, the family let their imagination run wild for this brilliant re-creation. "Pasta being life for a six-year-old, it was first selected, followed by the boiled eggs, which happened to be cooling off to the side," says Martinez. Next came a brown paper bag as the canvas, and a basil stem from the previous night's dinner. "It was truly wonderful to let art be the answer and escape in such a volatile environment," he adds.



Imaginary Insect, Tulip, Spider, and Common Pear in *Mira calligraphiae monumenta*, 1561–62; illumination added 1591–96, Joris Hoefnagel, illuminator, and Georg Bockskay, scribe. Watercolors, gold and silver paint, and ink on parchment. Getty Museum, Ms. 20, fol. 25 (86.MV.527.25). Re-creation on Twitter by the Martinez family with lasagna, matches, produce, and paper bag

Interior with Easel

This early 20th-century Scandinavian interior spoke to Tracy McKaskle "because we are all confined to home," she says. "I really love the lighting in the painting and found the placement of the picture on top of the wall very unusual." For her re-creation, she stood on a chair and carefully placed some pins to hold the little picture, moved her dining room furniture out of the way, then perfectly placed an easel with a blank canvas.

Interior with an Easel, Bredgade 25, 1912, Vilhelm Hammershøi. Oil on canvas. Getty Museum. Re-creation via Facebook DM by Tracy McKaskle with picture, pins, easel, and unpainted canvas





The Harp and the Vacuum

Transforming into an ancient harp player with a vacuum cleaner “was the first thing that came to mind when I was looking at your collection,” says Irena Ochódzka, who posed herself in this amazing sculptural re-creation. “It seemed like a good idea to combine a more seriously inspired harpist pose with something as mundane as a vacuum cleaner.”

Harp Player, 2700–2300 BCE, Cycladic. Marble. Getty Museum. Re-creation via Facebook DM by Irena Ochódzka with canister vacuum

Laughing Fool with Giraffe Ears

Tiffanie Pierini Ho re-created this delightfully macabre Netherlandish portrait (from the Wellesley College collection) with task lighting in her home office. “I knew I had a giraffe onesie with ears, and a Christmas sweater with cuffs, so those were my main costume,” she remembers. The staff was the challenge: not wanting to go whole hog with papier-mâché or clay, she tried balancing some toys on her shoulder, but they kept falling off. “I ended up drawing the head on a large Post-it and sticking it to the wall, and just calling it a day.”

Laughing Fool, about 1500, attributed to Jacob Cornelisz van Oostsanen. Oil on panel. Image: Davis Museum at Wellesley College. Re-creation via Facebook DM by Tiffanie Pierini Ho with giraffe onesie, Christmas sweater, glasses, and sticky note



The Astronomer and the Tray Table

Ann Zumhagen-Krause got started on this picture-perfect reenactment of a Vermeer masterpiece at the Louvre by scrolling through a Google image search for paintings of interiors, looking for ones for which she might have the right objects, lighting, and setting to re-create. “I got my husband involved—he’s as much of an art enthusiast as I am,” she says. “We covered a tray table with a blanket, added our globe, found a chair with the same outline, and had fun with positioning. The light coming in the window was good, and we had a blast with it.”

The Astronomer, about 1668, Johannes Vermeer. Oil on canvas. Musée du Louvre, Paris. Image: Wikimedia Commons. Re-creation on Twitter and via Facebook DM by Ann Zumhagen-Krause and her husband with tray table, blanket, and globe

The Tiny Laundress

Elizabeth Ariza and her daughter re-created Cézanne, Manet, Degas, and this painting of a laundress by Greuze. “My daughter and I were searching for paintings to re-create, and in this case, we really loved the composition,” she remembers. “She loves to dress up and act; she’s a natural actress.”

The Laundress (La Blanchisseuse), 1761, Jean-Baptiste Greuze. Oil on canvas. Getty Museum. Re-creation on Instagram by Elizabeth Ariza and daughter in modern-day laundry room





Michelle Tenggara, Post-Baccalaureate Conservation Intern in Getty's Paintings Conservation Department, assists on the conservation of Vincent van Gogh's *Iris*

By Erin Migdol
Associate Editor
J. Paul Getty Trust

The pandemic forced the Getty Center and Villa to close, but it also created two big opportunities

FINDING A SILVER LINING

WHEN COVID-19 STRUCK IN 2020 and lockdowns began all over the globe, Getty and other art institutions closed their doors to the public and sent most personnel home to work virtually. Galleries usually filled with visitors suddenly stood silent, and Getty invited would-be visitors to stay connected through a slew of virtual offerings. But a silver lining also emerged: here was a chance for staff to launch two projects that would surely prove easier to complete with no crowds around.

One of those projects was a detailed analysis of Vincent van Gogh's *Iris*, a landmark painting in the Getty Museum's collection for more than 30 years. Because the work is so widely loved, it is always on view. It doesn't travel to other institutions and rarely comes off the wall. But the unprecedented closure meant that staff could do something completely unplanned: move *Iris* into Getty's conservation studio and laboratory for an in-depth examination.

This technical analysis, led by Getty Museum associate conservator of paintings Devi Ormond and Getty Conservation Institute scientist Catherine Patterson, sought to reveal details about Van Gogh's process while he resided at a psychiatric hospital in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence. Goals of the study included gaining a better understanding of the artist's technique, what materials and pigments he used, and whether the media have changed or degraded over time.



The artwork was examined using a variety of noninvasive imaging techniques. Stereo-microscopy gave a highly magnified view of its surface, allowing the complex mixture of pigments in each stroke to be visualized. Infrared reflectography and X-radiography provided a way of looking through the layers of the painting, revealing preparatory coatings or changes. Macro X-ray fluorescence scanning allowed the chemical elements in the work to be identified and visualized, and the pigments to be inferred.

Iris is now back on the wall, but Getty conservators and scientists will continue this study, scrutinizing the data and comparing it to information from Getty and other collections about Van Gogh's oeuvre.

Ormond came to Getty from the Van Gogh Museum more than 10 years ago and has always wanted to study the painting thoroughly. "A ray of sunshine for me, during these dark times, has been having *Iris* in the conservation studio," she said during the examination.

Another bright spot in 2021 was that the pandemic proved an ideal time to handle some unwelcome guests discovered hiding in places such as the pink 18th-century French daybed.

Those visitors were webbing clothes moths: one-centimeter-long insects that eat wool, silk, and dust during their larval stage. At the start of the pandemic, weekly pest moni-

toring (part of regular preventive conservation activities at the Museum) revealed an uptick in the number of these bugs found in traps routinely placed around the galleries.

Pest activity is a common, inherent challenge for all museums, and multiple factors led to the increased moth activity. For one, when Getty first closed its doors to the public, it was spring: breeding season. The dark, undisturbed galleries provided ideal environments for these light- and activity-avoiding moths to thrive. And the dust and debris that had accumulated in hard-to-clean places over the last 25 years gave the moths a ready supply of food. Anecdotal reports from institutions all over the world suggest that webbing clothes moths are becoming a more common museum pest and that global moth populations are growing—possibly as a result of climate change.

How to remove webbing clothes moths? For museums, the best answer is cleaning. Many artworks have delicate surfaces that are negatively affected by chemical spray treatments, so conservators rely on good housekeeping practices as well as anoxia (oxygen removal) and freezing treatments to eliminate pest activity.

Getty staff spent months vacuuming furniture and textiles, dusting paintings, and deep-cleaning walls, floors, baseboards, moldings, display cases, air returns, and spaces behind and below objects. Textiles are often made of wool and silk, making

them particularly vulnerable to moth activity, so these objects were additionally frozen or put into anoxia chambers to kill any moths, larvae, or eggs that might have been present.

While some work continues, most galleries are now fully cleaned, dust- and bug-free.

"Pests are an inevitable part of collections care, and throughout this process we have learned so much about not only our galleries and how pests move through them but also about our ability to quickly coordinate and execute a project of this scale," says Madeline Corona, assistant conservator of decorative arts and sculpture. ■

Above: Conservators and preparators are about to deinstall a tapestry using a rope and pulley system. Left to right: Michael Chomick, Carey Stehle, Tracy DuVernet, Lillian Wimberly, Madeline Corona, and Michael Mitchell

Opposite, top left: Conservator Madeline Corona vacuums and inspects the front of a tapestry before deinstallation.

Opposite, top right: Members of the preparations team isolate the blue bed with a lightweight plastic to protect it from moths after completing a thorough vacuuming.

Opposite, bottom: Conservator Michelle Sullivan dusts the underside of a side table with a HEPA vacuum.

The Incredible Tale of *WOMAN-OGHRE*

More than 30 years after being stolen from the University of Arizona Museum of Art, Willem de Kooning's painting *Woman-Ochre* (1954–55) is now on view at the Getty Center

ON THE DAY AFTER THANKSGIVING 1985, a man and woman followed a staff member into the University of Arizona Museum of Art (UAMA) as soon as it opened at about 9:00 am. The woman distracted a security guard while the man went upstairs and cut *Woman-Ochre* from its frame with a sharp blade, ripping the canvas off its backing, and rolling the painting up to conceal it. The two hurried out of the museum and never returned. They had been inside for less than 15 minutes.

In 2017 the owners of an antique store in New Mexico discovered the work and immediately returned it to the UAMA. No one has ever been prosecuted for the theft, and the case remains unresolved (though a new documentary, Allison Otto's *The Thief Collector*, does name two suspects).

Getty and the UAMA announced in 2019 that *Woman-Ochre* would travel to the Getty Center for study, repair, cleaning, conservation, and documentation. The Getty Museum's Paintings Conservation department and the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) offered their facilities and expertise free of charge.

Badly damaged in the heist, the painting was a special challenge for Getty's team of conservators and scientists. First, they had to investigate which materials de Kooning had employed and how he applied them to the canvas—identifying his pigments would help the team create the best conservation plan. De Kooning is known to have often used fluid house paints for his works, sometimes mixing them with conventional artists' oils, and these were detected in abundance on *Woman-Ochre*. GCI scientists also utilized macro X-ray fluorescence (MA-XRF).

"The painting came to us in very poor shape," says Ulrich Birkmaier, senior conservator of paintings at the Getty Museum. "The brutal way in which it was ripped from its lining caused severe paint flaking and tears, not to mention the damage caused by the blade that was used to slice it from its frame. To bring a painting from such dire condition to a place where it can now be safely exhibited is an immense achievement."

By Alexandria Sivak
International Communications
Manager, J. Paul Getty Trust

"The XRF scans were truly revealing," adds Tom Learner, head of science at the GCI. "Not only did they help indicate which pigments de Kooning had used in the work, they clearly showed the dynamism of his painting technique. The scans also confirmed how aggressive the theft was—each of the thin bright lines on the scan for calcium represents a paint crack that formed as the painting was torn off its lining canvas."

Additionally, a cross section of the paint layers showed how de Kooning had used charcoal sketching and detailing at multiple stages, and microfading light sensitivity testing revealed that some of *Woman-Ochre*'s red passages had faded slightly over time.

Getty senior conservator of paintings Ulrich Birkmaier inpainting *Woman-Ochre*, 1954–55, Willem de Kooning. Collection of the University of Arizona Museum of Art, Tucson; Gift of Edward J. Gallagher, Jr.



UAMA staff members Nathan Saxton and Kristen Schmidt inspect *Woman-Ochre* before its transfer to the Getty Center. Artwork © 2022 The Willem de Kooning Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo courtesy the University of Arizona Museum of Art / Bob Demers / UA News



Getty paintings conservator Laura Rivers removes discolored varnish from the surface of *Woman-Ochre*. Artwork © 2022 The Willem de Kooning Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Conservators had two main treatment goals: to bring the painting closer to its original appearance, and to make the painting structurally sound so that it could safely travel and be exhibited. In addition to damage from the initial theft, the robbers had also attempted to reframe the painting using a cheap stretcher, made crude paint and tear repairs, and applied an inferior varnish to one that had already been added. All these issues had to be addressed.

Under a microscope, Getty paintings conservators first reattached individual areas of lifting and flaking paint using custom tools. Then, with specialized solvent mixtures, they carefully removed the two discolored varnishes. These efforts finally revealed de Kooning's original painted surface.

With the paint bonded to the canvas and the varnishes removed, a new lining reunited the

artwork's original edges with the canvas cut from the frame. Finally, conservators began the painstaking process of filling each area where paint was lost, using reversible conservation pigments. (Contemporary conservators perform their work in a minimally invasive way, with reversible materials that can be removed later if needed.) The result is a painting that has indeed been brought closer to how it looked before the theft.

"*Woman-Ochre* is a crown jewel in the collection of the University of Arizona Museum of Art, and we can't wait to have it back in our galleries this fall," says Andrew Schulz, vice president for the arts at the University of Arizona. "In the meantime, we are grateful for the opportunity to share this extraordinary work—and its equally extraordinary story—with a broad audience." ■



Willem de Kooning and his wife, the artist Elaine de Kooning, in an improvised studio in East Hampton, New York, with paintings and drawings on the subject of women, 1953. Photo courtesy Tony Vaccaro / Tony Vaccaro Studio. Artworks © 2022 The Willem de Kooning Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



Getty's next PST initiative explores how artists and scientists can team up to address some of the most challenging issues of our time

PACIFIC STANDARD TIME: **2024**

By Erin Migdol
Associate Editor
J. Paul Getty Trust

Concept art for Planet City, a research project at SCI-Arc by Liam Young with Jennifer Chen, M. Casey Rehm, Damjan Jovanovic, Angelica Lorenzi, and John Cooper as part of PST. Concept image designed by Liam Young with VFX Supervision by Alexey Marfin © Liam Young



CLIFFORD V. JOHNSON'S STUDENTS at the University of Southern California know him as a professor of physics and astronomy forever fascinated by the nature of space and time.

What they probably don't know is that he's also on a quest to put science back into mainstream culture, and has been advising artists, filmmakers, and other storytellers about how to incorporate science into their work.

"For me, science and art are partners in how I engage with the world," says Johnson. "I feel like a more complete individual in the universe when I'm using both fields."

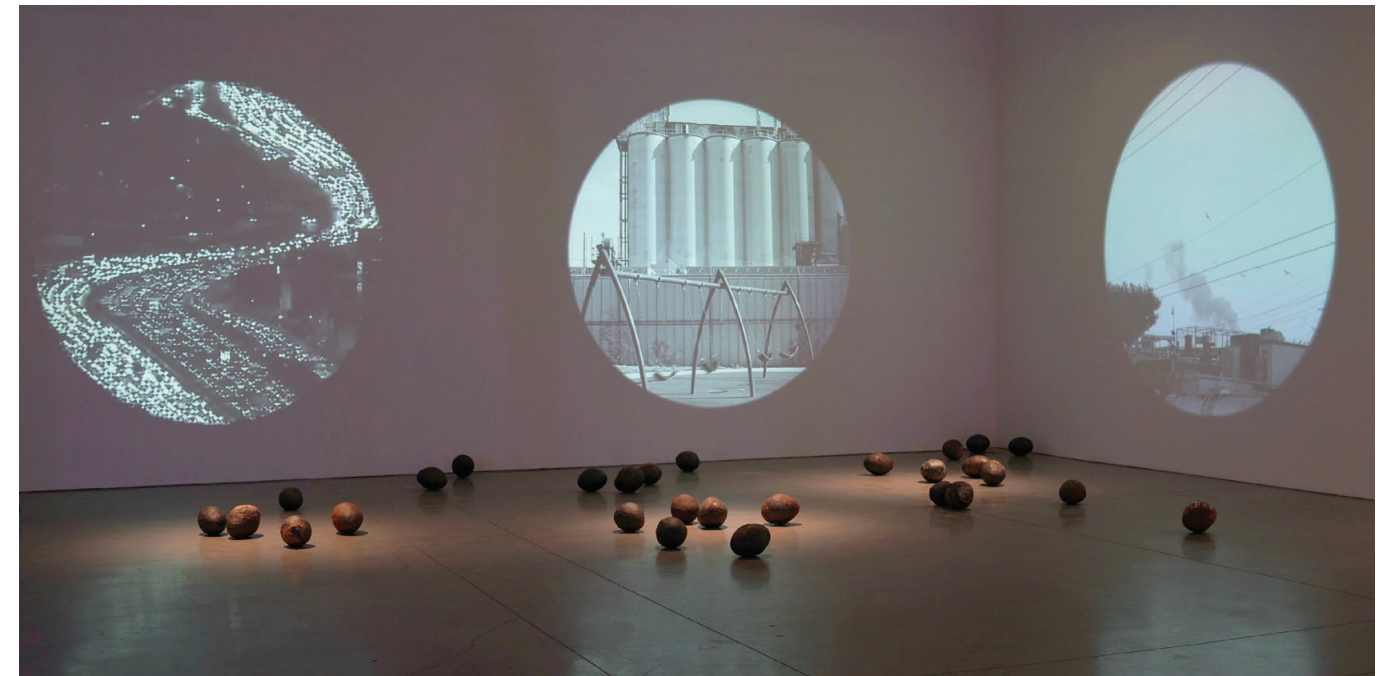
Johnson was part of a panel of scientists and artists who gathered in 2020 for the announcement of Pacific Standard Time (PST) 2024, the next iteration of a series of Getty-led, region-wide collaborations among Southern California cultural organizations. Past PST initiatives have explored art in Los Angeles from 1945 to 1980 (2011) and Latin American and Latino art in Southern California (2017). This newest PST will present a range of exhibitions and programs focused on the intersec-

tions of art and science, from ancient times to the present day.

While these two fields may have drifted apart in popular culture, overemphasizing their differences ignores key advances they have made together—such as how photography revolutionized the depiction of the cosmos, or how many dyes and textiles are crafted from plants.

Supported by more than \$5 million in Getty Foundation research grants, 45 cultural, educational, and scientific institutions throughout Southern California are now hard at work planning exhibitions and programs scheduled for fall 2024. These events will delve into the many ways that science and art have come together, and come into conflict, to yield shared insights.

"Art and science share a common commitment to curiosity and a quest for the unseen," says multidisciplinary artist Tavares Strachan, whose work will be featured in several PST exhibitions. "Whether that is a scientist using a microscope to look at what is invisible to the human eye, or an artist like me studying scientific pioneers who have disappeared from



or were never included in the history books, both of us are driven to explore. It's what we do and how we survive."

Among the many institutions participating in PST 2024 are the California African American Museum, California Institute of Technology, Southern California Institute of Architecture, and Academy Museum of Motion Pictures. Pressing issues to be explored range from climate change and environmental racism to the Covid-19 pandemic and artificial intelligence. Many PST projects will also center diverse forms of Indigenous knowledge and position Native peoples as future-facing innovators well equipped to meet today's ecological challenges.

Regardless of each PST exhibition's individual theme, the participating organizations are embracing teamwork. Lisa Cartwright, professor of visual arts, communication, and science studies at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), is overseeing the PST project *Oceanographic Art and Science: Navigating the Pacific* being undertaken by UCSD's Institute of Arts and Humanities and Birch Aquarium at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography. Cartwright believes that projects coproduced by artists and scientists help us debunk the idea that great work is the product of "individual genius."

"Work that truly changes how we think, that helps us imagine our way forward through crisis, is always more collaborative, more interdisciplinary, and more dependent on community engagement than we probably realize," she says. ■



Top: *Vacuoles: Bioremediating Cultures*, 2019, Maru García. Installation with 29 ceramic pieces containing lead-contaminated soil from South East LA and three-channel video projections. Part of a PST research project at Self Help Graphics & Art. Photo: Maru García © 2019 Maru García

Above: *Stirs Up the Dust*, 2011, Wendy Red Star. Pigment print on fine art pearl. Part of a PST research project at the Autry Museum of the American West. Gift of Loren G. Lipson, M.D., Autry Museum, Los Angeles; 2018.16.1. Courtesy of Wendy Red Star and Sargent's Daughters, NY © Wendy Red Star

Opposite: *Range Trumpet*, Deborah Stratman and Steve Badgett, part of a research project at the Center for Land Use Interpretation (CLUI). Photo courtesy CLUI



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Tacita Dean
Through August 28, 2022

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Through August 28, 2022

Judy Baca: *Hitting the Wall*
Through September 4, 2022

The Lost Murals of Renaissance Rome
Through September 4, 2022

The Fantasy of the Middle Ages
Through September 11, 2022

In Focus: Sound
Through October 2, 2022

Unshuttered: Reconnecting with...
Through October 16, 2022



Above: *Two Bass Hit, Lower East Side, 1972*, Beuford Smith. Gelatin silver print. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Endowment. © Beuford Smith/Césaire. On view in *Working Together: The Photographers of the Kamoinge Workshop*

Left: *Fairies in a Bird's Nest*, about 1860, John Anster Fitzgerald. Oil on canvas. Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Museum purchase, Grover A. Magnin Bequest Fund and Volunteer Council Art Acquisition Fund. On view in *The Fantasy of the Middle Ages*

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