ART HISTORY GRADUATE SYMPOSIUM

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

APRIL 8–9, 2022
Friday, April 8, 2022

2:45pm
Welcome
Dr. James Frazier
Dean of the College of Fine Arts

Acknowledgments
Caitlin Mims
Chair, Graduate Symposium Committee

3–4:30pm
Session I: Examining Urban Space and Infrastructure
Session Chair: Haylee Glasel

Genevieve Westerby – University of Delaware
Weixin Zhou – University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
Brandon Sward – University of Chicago

5:00pm
Introduction
Caitlin Mims

Keynote Lecture
Roland Betancourt
Professor of Art History
University of California, Irvine

“The Case of Manuel I Komnenos: Gender, Sexuality, and Racialization in Byzantium”

On Cover: Portrait of Manuel I Komnenos and Maria of Antioch, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1176.
Saturday, April 9, 2022

9–10:30am
Welcome
Dr. Adam Jolles, Chair, FSU Department of Art History

Session II: The Global Medieval & Early Modern World
Session Chair: Emily White

Zhenru Zhou – University of Chicago
Sam Truman – Case Western Reserve University
Jennifer Wendler – American University

10:45–12:15pm
Session III: Asian Art and Identity
Session Chair: Sahara Lyon

Jiaqi Liu – University of Warwick
Dani Putney – Oklahoma State University
Lina Shinwa Koo – University of Brighton

1:30–3pm
Session IV: 19th and 20th Century Works
Session Chair: Emma Driggers

Lini Radhakrishnan – Rutgers University
Mia Reich – University of South Florida
Nadezda Gribkova – University of Illinois at Chicago

3:30-5pm
Round-table: Cultural Heritage Careers and Thinking Outside the Museum
Moderator: Charlie Farrell

Panelists:
Mary Margaret Fernandez, Historic Oakland Foundation
Anissa Ford, Florida State University
John Turner, Florida Park Service

Closing Remarks
Kyle Killian, FSU Department of Art History
Roland Betancourt is a Professor of Art History, Director of the Program in Visual Studies, and Chancellor’s Fellow at the University of California, Irvine. He works on issues of sexuality, gender, and race in the Middle Ages, as well as the uses and abuses of the medieval past in the present with an interest in conspiracy theories and far-right extremism. His most recent books include: *Performing the Gospels in Byzantium: Sight, Sound, and Space in the Divine Liturgy* (Cambridge University Press, 2021), *Byzantine Intersectionality: Sexuality, Gender, and Race in the Middle Ages* (Princeton University Press, 2020), and *Sight, Touch, and Imagination in Byzantium* (Cambridge University Press, 2018). In the edited volume, *Byzantium/Modernism: The Byzantine as Method in Modernity* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), he examines the role of Byzantine art in modern and contemporary art and popular culture.

Dr. Betancourt’s research also covers contemporary concerns, including an interest in new media, online culture, and fandom (i.e. YouTube and YouTubers) as well as an ongoing book project on simulacral spaces and theme parks (i.e. Las Vegas and Disneyland).
The Case of Manuel I Komnenos: Gender, Sexuality, and Racialization in Byzantium

Looking at the image of Manuel I Komnenos in a mid-twelfth-century manuscript, now at the Vatican Library (Vat. gr. 1176), one might be struck by the difference articulated between the complexion of the Byzantine emperor and that of his wife Maria of Antioch, the daughter of Constance of Antioch and Raymond of Poitiers. This painting encourages us to think further about what is being communicated through the color of skin, urging us to think critically about gender, sexuality, and the processes of racialisation at work in the Byzantine world of the twelfth century. Using the well-known frontispiece of Emperor Manuel I Komnenos as a case study, I wish to consider how an intersectional approach allows us to better comprehend the dynamics of racialisation in the premodern world, using our contemporary categories and vocabularies around racial justice as a lens for parsing out the nuances of the past and its archives.
In 1872, Camille Pissarro rendered the water of the Oise River rushing over a low dam with rapid, broken brushstrokes of pure color. A canal barge is moored to the opposite bank, its mast mirroring the young trees that line the bank and lead to the riparian village of Saint-Ouen-l'Aumône in the background. Here Pissarro depicts aspects of daily life on a major tributary of the Seine, but also how civil engineering projects transformed France’s river ecosystem. Throughout the nineteenth century, these projects aimed to create a predictable and reliable transportation network. Riverbeds were dredged, and locks and dams were constructed to overcome two major hindrances to the river system’s commercial exploitation: its inconsistent depth and its tendency to flood. Rivers, like the Seine and Oise, also figured prominently as one of the defining subjects for the Barbizon school and for the Impressionists. In this paper, I consider depictions of the Oise River by Camille Pissarro within the context of the major infrastructure projects and scientific studies undertaken in the nineteenth century, and in relation to Charles-François Daubigny’s views of this same river, to reveal Pissarro’s shift to an expanded set of subjects that registered these sites as engineered and rationalized spaces.

Genevieve Westerby is a doctoral candidate in Art History at the University of Delaware specializing in nineteenth-century European art. Her dissertation examines engineered waterways in French landscape painting. Previously, she was a research associate at the Art Institute of Chicago, where she worked on a permanent collection catalogue project and several major loan exhibitions. More recently, she has interned at the National Gallery of Art, D.C. and at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Genevieve earned her MA in Art History from the University of Denver and a BA in Art History from Webster University in St. Louis.
During the summer of 1958, French cultural theorist and philosopher Paul Virilio (1932-2018) was on vacation along the beach south of Saint-Guénolé when he noticed a German war bunker. In the next seven years, he traveled the northwestern coast of France, and conducted an archaeological inquiry into the abandoned bunkers built by Nazi Germany between 1942 and 1944. After carefully examining, photographing and categorizing the bunkers, Virilio presented his study in Bunker Archaeology published in French in 1975. He also collaborated with the architect Claude Parent (1923-2016) to construct the church of Sainte-Bernadette du Banlay in Nevers, Burgundy (1963-1966).

In this paper, I examine Virilio’s study, in connection with the way that architects and theorists of the time conceptualized the archaeological landscape of bunkers in relation to postwar reconstruction and architecture in France. I focus on the construction of Sainte-Bernadette and other religious buildings such as Le Corbusier’s Monastery of Sainte-Marie de la Tourette (1953-1959). While locals and the press associated Sainte-Bernadette with horrible memories of the Nazi regime, Virilio and Parent invented the oblique function to challenge the dominance of vertical urban order, which was often associated with immobility, social hierarchy and domination.

Weixin Zhou is a Ph.D. candidate in Art History at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, specializing in European modernism and visual culture. Her dissertation investigates the visual world of the French public, especially the working class, during post-WWII reconstruction. Using various case studies, she aims to analyze different initiatives during reconstruction, whether voices from workers, innovations designed by architects and artists, studies led by sociologists, or building projects commissioned by the Catholic church. Weixin is currently the Object-Based Teaching Fellow at the Ackland Art Museum.

Weixin Zhou
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Making “Invisible” Again: Bunkers, Architecture and Urbanism in Post-WWII France
This paper focuses on four performances by Chicano art collective Asco along Whittier Boulevard in Los Angeles during the 1970s. Two of these performances, *Stations of the Cross* and *First Supper (After a Major Riot)*, parody Catholic liturgy and the other two, *Walking Mural* and *Instant Mural*, parody Mexican muralism. Together, these four performances show us a group struggling to speak against stereotypes around artistic production that would seek to domesticate and folklorize them. Although preexisting scholarship on Asco explains these gestures as first and foremost “protest art” against the Vietnam War, situating these performances against the backdrop of Whittier Boulevard allows us to appreciate the radicality of Asco. A major commercial artery through the solidly Chicano East Los Angeles, Whittier Boulevard is overlaid over parts of El Camino Real, the “royal road” that linked the Franciscan missions of Alta California. By engaging with Catholic and muralist imagery, Asco draws parallels between their experience as racial minorities and the colonization of Latin America, which helps us to appreciate the composite nature of Chicano identity formation more fully and gives us an example of how artists might make site-specific work when sites themselves have histories.

Brandon Sward is an artist, writer, and doctoral candidate at the University of Chicago. He has been a Pushcart Prize nominee, quarter-finalist for the VanderMey Nonfiction Prize, shortlisted for Disquiet International’s Literary Prize, and an honorable mention and finalist for the New Millennium Writing Awards. He’s won residencies at Alternative Worksite, Byrdcliffe, the Hambidge Center, the Institute for LGBTQ+ Studies, Main Street Arts, NAVE, SloMoCo, the Sundress Academy, the Vermont Studio Center, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, the Wassaic Project, and Western Montana Creative Initiatives.
This paper investigates the architectural turn of the largest Buddhist cave complex in late-medieval Dunhuang (in Northwest China) with a focus on the contemporaneous exterior structures. The structures include timber facades that cover the caves’ antechambers cut out from the vertical cliff, timber-structured antehalls on the ground, and earthen shrines and pagodas on the cliff top. These exterior structures, albeit mostly non-extant, constituted the comprehensive built environment of the Mogao cave site. This paper first overviews the diversity of exterior structures through a theoretical reconstruction of several building types including gable-sided facades, eave-sided facades with baoshadormers, and compound architecture comprising a double-or-triple-level pavilion-like facade and a cliff-top shrine. I then look into one of the three zones where the multiple façade types congregate. The three zones, namely, cave cloisters centered around the Southern and Northern Colossal Buddha Caves and “the Three-Story Pavilion,” defined and redefined the appearance of the mile-long complex by means of vertical extension against the pre-existing horizontal passageways and skylines. As the paper argues, the exterior structures were a collective attempt to transform the cave site into a palatial complex amid mountains, which was motivated by a longing for synchronizing the earthly and the heavenly realms.

Zhenru Zhou is a PhD Candidate in the Department of Art History, University of Chicago. She studies Buddhist art and architecture in Medieval China. Her dissertation explores the architecture of the Dunhuang Mogao Caves regarding its hybrid materiality and visuality, construction and reconstruction over time. She studied architecture at Princeton University in 2016 and Tsinghua University (China). She is doing research at the Dunhuang Academy.
In his thirteenth-century astronomical encyclopedia, *L’Image du Monde*, French cleric Goussoin de Metz attempts to guide his readers to knowledge of God by demonstrating the unity of creation. This sense of the book as a tool to be used by the reader is evident in BnF fr. 574. This manuscript, likely painted in Paris around 1320 for Guillaume Flote (1280–1366), an advisor to Philip the Fair, contains twenty-eight detailed diagrams. Although analyses of such diagrams constitute a large part of the study of medieval memory, the figures of the Image have not been considered within this context. Taking BnF fr. 574 as a case study, I will examine how the *Image*’s diagrams serve as mnemonic devices—physical, external locations where information from the text can be stored and returned to for later examination. I will argue that these images work to simultaneously construct and reinforce the place of the reader within the broad system of creation. I will then propose three possible ways of reading the text: first in order, then in iteration, and finally in motion. Finally, I will consider evidence of previous owners’ engagement with the manuscript, and how these interactions further incorporated them into Goussoin’s cosmology.

Sam Truman is a fourth-year PhD student studying medieval art history at Case Western Reserve University. Her research centers on fear and representations of the unrepresentable. She is currently in the early stages of writing her dissertation, which focuses on depictions of ghosts in illuminated manuscripts made in Northern Europe between 1100 and 1500.

Sam received her MA in Religious Studies from the University of Chicago in 2018. She has previously served as a curatorial intern in the Indian and Southeast Asian Art department at the Cleveland Museum of Art.
The few published analyses of Caspar Netscher’s *Lacemaker* (1662) conclude that Netscher captured a straight-forward portrayal of a middle-class housewife modeling ideal feminine domestic virtue. I contend that previously overlooked ambiguities in Netscher’s canvas complicate this simplistic interpretation, in which details, such as the elegant red bodice and sturdy, unfashionable skirt, confuse rather than clarify this space and the woman depicted. Considering the artist’s visual cues within the socio-historical context of the work, I theorize that *The Lacemaker* represents a German immigrant and a maidservant working in a middle-class household, rather than a Dutch housewife as specialists have maintained. By centralizing a working-class migrant, Netscher challenged the expectation that Dutch genre paintings should construct and reinforce ideals of feminine domesticity as a singularly middle-class endeavor. He also challenged biases about outsider identities circulating at the time. Given the negative stereotypes of both maidservants and German migrants, Netscher portrayed this figure in a revolutionary manner: as a woman caught between cultures who, like Dutch women, embodied industriousness and virtue. However, this sympathetic vision did not arouse support in The Hague. Netscher’s *Lacemaker* became an anomaly in his oeuvre, its perplexing details and apparent modesty out of fashion.

Jenna Wendler (she/hers), a second-year Master’s student at American University in Washington D.C., received her BA in Art History from Kenyon College in 2017. Her scholarship focuses on early modern Northern Europe, including her culminating research project analyzing the intersection of gender and class in Caspar Netscher’s *Lacemaker*. Jenna has completed research for the Medici Archive Project based in Florence, Italy, and was the collections intern for the Woman’s National Democratic Club in D.C. Jenna is also the visual arts editor for the online arts journal, Venti: Art, Experience, and Aesthetics.
Nie Chongyi, a court ritualist, redesigned ritual paraphernalia used at state sacrifices in the late 950s, which led to the birth of an important ritual manual—Sanli tu. The tenth century was a time when continuous violence not only empowered regional forces, but also destroyed many tangible heritages, including ritual objects and spaces of the former Tang Empire (618-907). Nie responded to the vacuum of a supreme authority over state rituals by deviating from the prevalent Tang standards and proposing to revise ancient ritual practices. Through an examination of Nie’s design of eight liquor cups mentioned in ritual manuals, I would argue that Nie had divided the liquor cups into three categories—sacred ones, profane ones, and hybrid ones—to reinforce the dichotomy between the sacred ritual paraphernalia and daily objects, and to generate a new ritual order. This study not only showcases a tenth-century solution to a changing society and ritual practices, but also prompts answers to some general questions like why designs of ritual paraphernalia were changed and why knowledge on rituals was censored by secular authorities.

Jiaqi Liu has been working on her Ph.D. research project on Song (960-1279) ritual paraphernalia and their connections to inter-state relations since 2020. She gained a bachelor degree in history at the University of Macau, and a master’s degree in art history at the University of Kansas. Before studying at Warwick, she spent a few years doing cultural preservation projects in old villages and teaching in China.
The Hispano-Philippine style of ivory sculpture production in colonial Manila is almost synonymous with the growth of Spain’s global empire from the sixteenth century onward. These sculptures have been studied by historians and art critics alike in terms of Latin American consumer demand, marketability, Catholic devotion and conversion, and “Chineseness,” among other veins of inquiry. Common across these investigations is discussion of the significance of Chinese immigrants within the Spanish colony, who have been consistently identified as the creators of these sculptures. One community of artisans important to Philippine sculpture-making, however, has been understudied: the native Filipinos of colonial Manila, by far the largest group in the city. Why has the role of native Filipinos, despite being documented as painters and sculptors contemporaneous with the Chinese immigrants, been disregarded in the art-historical record of ivory sculpture production? In this article, I address these “silences” within the Hispano-Philippine sculptural archive by historicizing the sociocultural milieu of colonial Manila, performing visual analysis informed by postcolonial theory, and interrogating commonly referenced sources and narratives, an endeavor I maintain will enable art historians to contextualize these sculptures within a larger imperial, intercultural, and intersubjective framework of artistic creation.

Dani Putney is a queer, non-binary, mixed-race Filipinx, and neurodivergent poet, nonfiction writer, and scholar from Sacramento, California. Okay Donkey Press published their debut poetry collection, Salamat sa Intersectionality, in 2021. Their poetry chapbook, Dela Torre, was released by Sundress Publications in 2022. They received their MFA in Creative Writing from Mississippi University for Women and are presently an English PhD student at Oklahoma State University. Beyond creative writing, their research interests lie in Southeast and East Asian art history, nineteenth-century American poetry, and writing center studies. Before pursuing their doctoral degree, they held various positions in journalism and marketing.
Export paintings that depict local images of one’s country with the purpose of being sold to foreign customers emerged in China and Korea in the late eighteenth and late nineteenth centuries, respectively, when the countries opened their ports to Europe and America. Given this historical context, the conventional understanding of export paintings of the two countries has been twofold at large: 1) commodities that reflect Euro-American customers’ tastes for exotic imageries and 2) ethnographic resources that exhibit unique characteristics of each country’s culture. While these interpretations have a valid ground, they often undermine artistic qualities of the painting genre, separating it from the existing painting traditions. To broaden this perspective, my paper aims to suggest plural ways of discerning export paintings through cross-cultural comparisons. In doing so, this study highlights the integral roles of export painters in responding to changing social, political and economic circumstances, posing a critical question for investigation: whether export paintings are images of self-objectification with the instillation of Orientalist ideologies or creative outcomes with artistic agency. While these two stances are not mutually exclusive nor contradictory to each other, this core question allows one to challenge the linear understanding of the history of “non-western” art.

Lina Shinhwa Koo is a PhD candidate in History of Art and Design at the University of Brighton. Implementing interdisciplinary and cross-cultural research methods, Koo’s research is focused on the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century art and design history of Korea, Japan and China. She received a BS in Art History from the Fashion Institute of Technology, State University of New York and an MA in History of Art and Archaeology in East Asia from SOAS University of London. Koo previously worked as a Curatorial Assistant for Korean Art at the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.
In the 1880 portrait, *Lydia crocheting in the Garden at Marly*, I argue that Mary Cassatt visually recorded symptoms of the malady that ultimately consumed her sibling. When compared with earlier portraits of Lydia, there is evidence of startling weight loss and signs of insomnia. In this paper, I explore Cassatt’s images of her sister painted in the final years of Lydia’s life to identify potent, but overlooked signifiers of disease and death on her form. Taking care of her sister allowed Cassatt to develop a deeper intimacy with the vulnerable body and honed her eye to recognize corporeal traces of disease. Her educated gaze rendered Lydia’s skin almost translucent, revealing symptoms that are no longer subtle once brought to the surface. These images showcase the trauma of Cassatt’s care-giving experience and serve as a precursor to a remarkable shift in her subject, marking a turning point in her career when she began to paint pictures of children held by their caregivers. I draw upon archival sources such as the Cassatt family’s correspondence and papers to establish that her oeuvre serves as a repository of the trauma of her lived experience.

*Lini Radhakrishnan is a PhD candidate in Art History at Rutgers University, writing her dissertation on Mary Cassatt’s representations of women and children, anchoring the artist’s visual vocabulary in contemporary medical and social history. At Rutgers, Lini was an intern at the Zimmerli Museum and currently is an editorial and research assistant. She did her Bachelor of Science majoring in Chemistry and worked as an IT Project Manager in Mumbai before switching fields. She holds a BA in Fine Arts from Rachana Sansad AFA, Mumbai (2015), an MA in Art History, and a Curatorial Certificate from Rutgers University (2019).

Lini Radhakrishnan
Rutgers University

Mary Cassatt’s Portraits of Her Sister, Lydia: Tracing Signifiers of Disease and Impending Death
In contemporary museum studies discourse, scholars have begun to reexamine both the role of the curator and exhibition space in their joint effect on visitor experience. Underpinning the relationship of these three parties is the element of language, or more commonly known within this discipline, the wall label. This label intrinsically “frames” its adjacent artwork as it proposes a certain narrative, one that is crafted by curators and communicates ideas and themes deemed important by its writers. However, what about art that eludes one singular interpretation, such as abstraction? Could proposing an exclusive narrative be detrimental to the multiplicity of meaning that abstract art promotes?

Considering these issues, this paper examines Painting with Red Spot (1914) by Wassily Kandinsky and its current “framing” at the Centre Pompidou in Paris to analyze both the relationship between language, abstraction and meaning making, and the complicated role of artist intent that accompanies exhibiting Kandinsky. This paper argues that “framing” Kandinsky’s P.W.R.S in relation to the artist’s contradictory embrace of kitsch in 1914 will provide a framework for his stylistic experiments at this time in his career, offering the proper stepping-stones to encourage contemplation while still leaving room for a multiplicity of meaning.

Mia Reich is a current Art History graduate student at University of South Florida and is set to graduate in May of 2022. She received her Bachelor’s in Art History from New College of Florida, where she completed an undergraduate thesis that examined unfinished artwork in the Renaissance through the lens of Michelangelo and the notion of “artistic genius.” Her current area of focus is 20th century abstraction and museum studies, primarily where the two intersect through visitor engagement. Both between and during her degrees, Mia served on the curatorial team of the Sarasota Art Museum for two years.
This paper examines the early works of Soviet conceptual performance art group Collective Actions, founded in 1976, and focuses on the way the group employed the concept of “emptiness” as a motif throughout its practice. Namely, I consider the 1979 action *Place of Action*, organized by Andrey Monastryrski and Nikita Alekseev, and pay particular attention to how the organizers engaged with the aesthetic quality of emptiness and worked to articulate the possibility of human practice within an empty space.

Notions of nothingness, emptiness, and dematerialization dominate the visual language of much conceptual art in post-war Western and late-Soviet contexts and articulate a critical position vis-à-vis the old, assumed to be retrograde, notions of structure, institution, and aesthetic form. I propose to consider performance art practices of Collective Actions as negotiating a productive relationship between spatial emptiness and collectivity through an artistic practice that relies on, at the time suspect, categories of structure, composition, and social form. Collective Actions, I argue, take one of conceptualism’s dominant tropes—that of nothingness, dematerialization, boundlessness—and render emptiness not a byproduct of the disenchanted negation of the old but as a particular quality of the newly articulated space, available for aesthetic exploration.

*Nadezda Gribkova* is a doctoral student in the department of Art History at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Her academic interests include Russian and European Avant-Garde, Soviet national artistic movements, unofficial art and literary practices under late Socialism, Russian-American cultural exchanges, conceptual art, new media theory.
Cultural Heritage Panelists

**Mary Margaret Fernandez** is the Director of Special Events, Special Projects & Volunteers at Historic Oakland Foundation, whose mission is to preserve, restore, enhance, and share historic Oakland Cemetery. She oversees Oakland Cemetery’s large-scale programming and manages over 300 active volunteers. She has been involved in museum work, the arts, and non-profit organizations for over a decade, with a professional emphasis on BIPOC representation at historic sites. Fernandez received her Master’s degree in Latin American Art History from Rutgers University and her Bachelor’s degree in Art History from Florida State University. She holds the position of South-Eastern Regional Director on the board of the American Association of Museum Volunteers.

**Anissa Ford** is the Assistant Director for Experiential Learning and Career Liaison for the College of Fine Arts and College of Music at the Florida State University Career Center. Anissa has a Master’s in Arts Administration and Bachelor’s in Art History. After graduation, Anissa worked for nearly 10 years as a museum educator, directing a range of art museum programs for all ages, including working with FSU students as interns and staff. Anissa transitioned into career services in 2021 to continue supporting FSU students with their career decisions and career readiness.

**John Turner** received a Bachelor’s degree in Philosophy and Asian Studies from Florida State University. While considering a further career in academia several years went by, pursuing vintage vehicle hobbies while working in a German car repair shop. Changing directions to public history he started volunteering at a historic house museum, which led him to jobs at the Florida Master Site File, the Museum of Florida History, Mission San Luis, and the Knott House Museum. Following a decade in the private sector working as an exhibit fabricator, he began a career with the Florida Park Service. He has been working in their Historic Collections Facility and Archives for the past seven years.
Thank You

Our special thanks to the student speakers who made time to share their research with us, to the roundtable panelists for sharing their expertise, and to the keynote speaker, Professor Roland Betancourt, for presenting his wide-ranging and influential work.

Many thanks to the members of the Graduate Symposium Committee of the Department of Art History and their advisor, Jean Hudson, whose assistance was essential for the success of the symposium. The Committee would like to thank James Frazier, Dean of the College of Fine Arts, Adam Jolles, Chair of the Art History Department, Kyle Killian, Assistant Professor, and Sheri Patton, business administrator, for their cheerful assistance.

Günther Stamm Prize
The Department of Art History faculty evaluates the student papers on the basis of originality and presentation, and recognizes one participant with the Günther Stamm Prize, in memory of a founding professor of the Department of Art History.

Athanor
Papers presented at our symposium are considered for inclusion in Athanor, a publication for art history graduate students sponsored by the Department of Art History. Athanor is indexed by the Bibliography of the History of Art and is held in the collections of research libraries worldwide. Athanor is published online by Florida Online Journals and can be accessed at journals.flvc.org/athanor.