

Fall 2023

Yale University

Art Gallery



I AM EXCITED TO WELCOME YOU BACK to the Gallery for the Fall 2023 semester. While renovations proceed at the Yale Center for British Art (YCBA), we continue to showcase works from their amazing collection. *In a New Light: Paintings from the Yale Center for British Art*, on view through December 3, offers an opportunity to experience a stellar selection of paintings in a fresh and dramatic setting.

A highlight of the season is *Mickalene Thomas / Portrait of an Unlikely Space*, which opens to the public on September 8 and runs through early January. This exhibition marks the first time that the internationally acclaimed artist Mickalene Thomas (b. 1971, M.F.A. 2002) has explicitly addressed how Black women, men, and children were represented in early American history. Together with cocurator Keely Orgeman, the Seymour H. Knox, Jr., Associate Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, Thomas has transformed our galleries in ways we have never before seen nor could have imagined without her. Using as their jumping-off point a miniature acquired by the Gallery in 2016, they have brought together a group of historical portraits and works by artists who depict Black private life today. The historical-contemporary display is set into a multigallery installation that Thomas specifically designed to honor those who are shown in the pre-Emancipation objects. This exhibition helps broaden the museum field's traditional views on interpretation, and it should not be missed (see page 14).

As the Gallery continues to expand online access to our collections, we are very pleased to announce the release of *Italian Paintings at the Yale University Art Gallery*, our first born-digital publication. Written by Laurence Kanter, Chief Curator and the Lionel Goldfrank III Curator of European Art, and Pia Palladino, formerly Associate Curator of the Robert Lehman Collection at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, this free catalogue is the first comprehensive presentation of the Gallery's holdings of early Italian paintings, considered one of the largest and richest such collections in the world. Entries are being released in batches; scan the QR code below to access more than thirty entries from the first of three volumes.

Behind the scenes, we are continuing a multiyear project to consolidate about 20,000 artworks—currently housed in storage in

Hamden, Connecticut—within a new state-of-the-art facility at the Yale West Campus Collection Studies Center. The shared space, which introduces a paintings-storage system, will allow ready access to the holdings of the Gallery, the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the Yale Peabody Museum, and the YCBA, as described by Jeffrey Yoshimine, Deputy Director for Exhibitions, Collections, and Facilities (see page 12). While this expansion project is underway, the Leslie P. and George H. Hume American Furniture Study Center remains open to the public for tours on the first Friday of the month and by appointment. For more information, visit our programming calendar using the QR code on the opposite page.

I am delighted that we have an opportunity to highlight the important contributions of our fellows. In these pages, you will learn from postdoctoral fellow in museum education Amanda “Semente” Caroline de Oliveira Pereira and postbaccalaureate fellow in student engagement Audrey Steinkamp, B.A. 2022, about their work at the Gallery. Frances Jacobus-Parker, the inaugural Lydia Winston Malbin Scholar of Modern and Contemporary Art, describes her research on Lydia Winston Malbin's trailblazing activities as a collector, which helped galvanize American interest in 20th-century European modernism. We are enormously grateful to the many people who generously endowed these and other fellowship positions, directly supporting the Gallery's research and teaching mission.

Visit our newly designed, mobile-friendly website to explore our superb collections and to discover in-person and virtual offerings for this fall. We hope that you will visit often, and I look forward to seeing everyone!



Stephanie Wiles
The Henry J. Heinz II Director



Master of the Yale Dossal, *Virgin and Child Enthroned between Saints Leonard and Peter and Scenes from the Life of Saint Peter*, ca. 1265–70. Tempera and gold on panel. Yale University Art Gallery, University Purchase from James Jackson Jarves



artgallery.yale.edu/italian-paintings

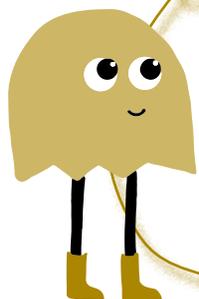


artgallery.yale.edu/visit/calendar

Happenings

Stories and Art

Join us on the first Sunday of the month at 1:00 pm for our family program Stories and Art, in which we tell folktales, myths, and other exciting stories from around the world while looking at art together. Held in English and another language—such as French, Portuguese, or Spanish—each session is designed to inspire children of all ages to view art in new ways by encouraging drawing along with close looking and listening. If waiting a full month for the next set of stories feels too long, you can find prerecorded sessions in English and Spanish on our YouTube channel.



For the most up-to-date schedule for this family program, scan the QR code at the top of this page. No registration is required; meet by the couches in the Gallery lobby.

Teacher Leadership Program

The Teacher Leadership Program is a free, virtual, monthly program that offers educators an opportunity to look closely at art, have conversations, and develop projects that encourage critical thinking through museum-education pedagogies and activities. Educators of all levels and disciplines are welcome to join via Zoom at 4:00 pm Eastern on the first Thursday of the month during the academic year. Sessions are led by Jessica Sack, the Jan and Frederick Mayer Curator of Public Education; Amanda “Semente” Caroline de Oliveira Pereira, the John Walsh Fellow in Museum Education; and Wurtele Gallery Teachers. This past year, topics included strategies for engaging multiple perspectives, language acquisition, and practicing mindfulness, as well as for teaching a range of subjects—from history, literature, and studio arts to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics—through close looking at collection objects. A Teacher Leadership Program session led by Jessica and Semente, for instance, virtually traced the sculpture *Spine* by Katy Schimert, M.F.A. 1989 (shown at right), as a way to think about lines, depth, and perspective. These workshops provide tools for teaching both online and in person.

For more information and to register, scan the QR code at the top of this page.



In a New Light: Paintings from the Yale Center for British Art

Come see *In a New Light: Paintings from the Yale Center for British Art*, on view through December 3. The show features a stunning selection of more than 50 paintings from the collection of the Yale Center for British Art while that museum is closed to the public for a building-conservation project. Spanning four centuries of British landscape and portraiture traditions, *In a New Light* includes masterpieces such as John Constable’s atmospheric and evocative cloud studies (1821–25; shown at left), George Stubbs’s meticulously painted *Zebra* (1763), and Joseph Mallord William Turner’s showstopping *Dort or Dordrecht: The Dort Packet-Boat from Rotterdam Becalmed* (1818), among other highlights.



From top: A Stories and Art session led by Wurtele Gallery Teachers in the Sharon and Thurston Twigg-Smith Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art and Design | Katy Schimert, *Spine*, 2021. Soda-fired stoneware. Yale University Art Gallery, Richard Brown Baker, B.A. 1935, Fund. ©Katy Schimert | John Constable, *Study of a Cloudy Sky*, ca. 1825. Oil on paper, mounted on millboard. Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection

NEW
ON VIEW



Ornament

FREYDA SPIRA
LAURENCE KANTER

OPENING SEPTEMBER 26, *Ornament* is a collaboration with the Yale School of Music, occasioned by the restoration of its historic building housing the Morris Steinert Collection of Musical Instruments. During the closure necessitated by the renovation project, three important and elaborately ornamented early keyboard instruments will be on loan to the Yale University Art Gallery. A 1640 harpsichord by the Antwerp-based craftsman Andreas Ruckers, with its intricately decorated soundboard and lid, exemplifies the Flemish school of harpsichord making at its height. Also featured in the installation is a smaller instrument called a spinetta, made by Francesco Poggio of Florence in 1620, with a lid painted by an accomplished atelier in the Tuscan city. On view alongside these two harpsichords is an early 19th-century Austrian pyramid piano, a stylish Neoclassical ancestor to the upright pianos that would become popular in 19th- and 20th-century homes. These three objects will be accompanied by a selection of around 40 European drawings and prints from the 16th through the 18th century that demonstrate how ornament offers an arena for artistic license. The display of musical

instruments and works on paper emphasizes how patterns and forms have been imitated, adapted, and translated across media by artists and craftspeople alike.

This installation marks a continuation of the Gallery's collaborations with other Yale collections, following most recently on the exhibition *Crafting Worldviews: Art and Science in Europe, 1500–1800*, which assembled objects and artworks from the Yale Peabody Museum, the Yale University Library, and the Yale Center for British Art (YCBA), as well as the current exhibition *In a New Light*, showcasing painted masterpieces from the YCBA.

Freyda Spira is the Robert L. Solley Curator of Prints and Drawings.

Laurence Kanter is Chief Curator and the Lionel Goldfrank III Curator of European Art.

Exhibition made possible by the Wolfe Family Exhibition and Publication Fund.

COMING
SOON

Sheila Levrant de Bretteville

Community, Activism, and Design



JOHN STUART GORDON
BROOKE HODGE

From February 16 to June 23, 2024, the Yale University Art Gallery, in collaboration with the Yale School of Art, will present the first-ever museum exhibition devoted to the work of renowned graphic designer, public artist, and educator Sheila Levrant de Bretteville (b. 1940, B.F.A. 1963, M.F.A. 1964).

Over the course of a career that spans more than 40 years, de Bretteville has been a quiet trailblazer, championing principles of advocacy and inclusion and using design as a powerful activist medium to highlight issues such as freedom of speech and women's rights and to acknowledge overlooked individuals and communities. Incorporating a rich array of materials drawn from the designer's extensive personal archive, the exhibition surveys her pioneering contributions to the field of feminist design, her early professional work, and her series of public-art installations.

Upon joining the faculty of Los Angeles's California Institute of the Arts in 1970, de Bretteville recognized the lack of opportunities for young female students at the largely male-run institution and, the following year, established the school's Women's Design Program. In 1973, together with the artist Judy Chicago and the art historian and critic Arlene Raven, she founded the Woman's Building and the Feminist Studio Workshop in downtown LA. These enterprises became central to the feminist movement on the West Coast and remain legendary for the prospects they afforded women of all cultures and socioeconomic standings. De Bretteville's posters and broadsheets from this period blend word and image to advance woman-focused initiatives, and many, such as the poster shown above, have become icons of feminist design. Shifting her focus from the printed page to the urban environment beginning in the 1980s, she created a series of public-art installations that reflect her commitment to social issues, including immigration and racial equity.

On campus, de Bretteville is best known as the long-serving director (1990–2022) of Yale's illustrious graduate program in graphic design and was the first woman to be awarded tenure at the School of Art. One of de Bretteville's most significant contributions as director was the way in which she encouraged Yale students to realize the vast potential of design to effect change. It has been a

fascinating journey culling through her archive with her in the course of organizing this exhibition: hearing de Bretteville's stories and anecdotes has brought to life not only the objects on view—many of which have rarely been seen publicly—but also the pivotal moments that informed her thinking and her work. Through conversations with former students and colleagues, we have seen how her vision, and her example, has shaped a new generation of graphic design.

John Stuart Gordon is the Benjamin Attmore Hewitt Curator of American Decorative Arts.

Brooke Hodge is an independent curator and writer.

Exhibition made possible by the John F. Wieland, Jr., B.A. 1988, Fund for Student Exhibitions and the Yale School of Art. Organized with the assistance of Pamela Hovland, Senior Critic, Graphic Design, Yale School of Art.

IRMA PASSERI

AMONG THE RICH HOLDINGS of early Italian painting at Yale, Jacopo del Casentino's *Coronation of the Virgin* (ca. 1320–25) stands out for its artistic quality. The panel consists of a single piece of poplar of vertical grain, and the painted composition is executed in egg tempera against a gilded background. The spiral colonettes, on either side of the picture's lower half, are part of a later intervention to embellish or modernize the work. The gilded roundels at the top corners of the frame are also modern: X-radiograph and CT scans reveal plugged cavities beneath each roundel, perhaps once filled with decorative glass or small objects of religious significance, such as relics. The presence of these possible reliquaries, in addition to the intimate size of the image, the wear it sustained from being touched and handled, and the alterations subsequently made to it, suggests that the painting originally served a functional role in its owners' private devotional practices.

In 1967 the artwork underwent a radical, and damaging, cleaning treatment to remove previous restorations—fortunately, with the exception of the spiral colonettes and the gilded roundels. This project was part of a larger, two-decade conservation campaign at the Gallery, beginning in 1951 and ultimately impacting over 200 of the museum's Italian paintings, that sought to reapproach these works from a purist and archaeological standpoint. Modern additions, along with restorations that had been undertaken in the 19th and early 20th centuries, were seen as falsifying the original painted surface and thus were systematically removed, leaving the pictures—Casentino's among them—in a fragmentary state, with exposed regions of loss and abrasion. Against a midcentury pedagogical backdrop that considered conservation interventions—such as reconstructing missing elements or applying varnishes—to misguide the viewer's experience of the object, Yale's approach was regarded by many contemporaries as a gesture of respect toward the artist's creation. However, these treatments disregarded the historical value of older restorations as records of shifts in taste and in the understanding of the works of art in question.

Ironically, this peculiar conservation history of the Gallery's early Italian paintings collection has, in the last decades, provided a broader opportunity to study the issue of loss compensation in damaged artworks. The treatment of the *Coronation of the Virgin* began in 2015 after a long debate around the reconstruction of the lost areas of the picture. These discussions exemplify certain philosophical



Conservation as

The Case of a 14th-Cer

and aesthetic concerns with which conservators and collection curators grapple when confronted with fragmentary works of art: How and to what degree should we mitigate the appearance of damage through restoration? When presenting damaged works, what is our role in guiding the viewer's experience of that damage? To what degree do our conservation attitudes, which are themselves reflective of our cultural backgrounds and aesthetic tastes, shape the way in which works of art are presented and viewed by the public? The treatment methodology I adopted for this

painting, which I determined in dialogue with Laurence Kanter, Chief Curator and the Lionel Goldfrank III Curator of European Art, was informed by careful study of the artist's technique and materials, in addition to the original function of the picture and the specifics of its state of disrepair today. To further advise my understanding of the missing areas, I also consulted related works by Casentino.

Damage affects, and even dictates, how an observer views and perceives an object. In the context of a painted surface, losses introduce foreign forms and patterns that often



s Interpretation

ntury Italian Painting

weaken the overall compositional structure. Reading Casentino's panel is made difficult by the sizeable central lacuna—amorphous in shape, with open, jagged profiles—which extends into the main figural composition, destabilizing it. In light of this, reconstructing the missing areas emerged as a legitimate proposition for making an aesthetic whole of this harshly fragmented art object.

Reconstruction of the losses was based on examination of the artist's later painting of the same subject, today in the Kunstmuseum Bern, Switzerland. Though

they differ in their dimensions, the two examples share many features. Confirming our initial thought, the Bern work displays a similar cloth of honor behind the Virgin and Christ; its well-structured orange and pink quatrefoil pattern could be used to reconstitute the fragmentary cloth in the Gallery's picture. Another valuable guide was the preparatory drawing that was detected in our painting using infrared reflectography. The facial profiles of the Virgin and Christ and the folds of their garments were reconstructed following these same two sources.

After filling the lacunae with gesso, a mixture of calcium sulphate and animal glue, I employed the *tratteggio* technique to inpaint them with reversible materials, such as water-color paint. A reintegration system developed in the late 1940s and 1950s by the Italian theorist of art restoration Cesare Brandi and the conservators Laura and Paolo Mora, *tratteggio* (literally, "hatching") consists of juxtaposing small vertical lines to build the forms and colors progressively, in layers. When the painting is viewed from a standard distance, the hatched lines are undetectable; when seen from up close, however, they are plainly visible, allowing the beholder to distinguish the surviving original from the conservator's work and characterizing the latter as a modern interpretation of the lost portion of the visual field. Indeed, each layer of vertical, colored lines registers the conservator's ongoing critical reading of the pictorial surface surrounding the loss.

The decision to address the lacunae using the *tratteggio* method matured over several years of discussion and evaluation. What may appear to be an obvious solution in fact resulted from a process of pushing our educated imaginations to unaccustomed limits, always with respect for the art object as a unique creation. Though we found, in the Bern painting, a reliable point of reference to help guide the reconstruction, the extent of the inpainting may continue to be a topic of debate—especially in light of the small size of the Gallery's picture and the prominent location of the damage. For both the conservator and the curator, the *tratteggio* system served as a tool for encapsulating and displaying the progress of our work and our thought with regard to this painting. In this sense, our collective memories are unobtrusively displayed alongside Casentino's *Coronation of the Virgin*—a reminder that every reconstruction is an act of interpretation and, in a broader way, that every restoration proceeds as a series of critical acts that build on one another. Just as the passage of time transforms a work of art, a conservation treatment can initiate a new, regenerative phase for the object, while also carrying a visual memory of the research and thought process of those who steward the work in its museum context today.

Irma Passeri is the Susan Morse Hilles Chief Conservator.

For more information on this painting, see the entry in the recently launched digital publication *Italian Paintings at the Yale University Art Gallery*, available via the below QR code.



artgallery.yale.edu/italian-paintings

The painting following treatment

Expanding Student Engag

The Yale University Art Gallery is one of my favorite places on campus. As a teaching museum, it prioritizes students. The first time I stepped through the doors was for a first-year seminar, in the spring of 2019. Yet, in my four years as an undergraduate, I came to realize that the Gallery is so much more than an academic institution.

As the inaugural Postbaccalaureate Fellow in Student Engagement in the Education Department during the 2022–23 academic year, I contributed to a vision of the Gallery as a hub of students' social lives—somewhere they would feel welcome to visit outside of their course requirements. With a passion for making art accessible to all, I formed partnerships across Yale's campus to create a more engaging space for the community and to raise awareness of the programs and resources that are available to students at the Gallery.

One of my main responsibilities as a fellow was to support the Gallery Guide program, in which undergraduate students complete a yearlong training to deliver thematic Highlights Tours to the public. Once we selected the incoming cohort of Guides, I assisted in the planning and execution of their weekly training and scheduled their weekend tour offerings. Throughout the year, we had many opportunities to use the Gallery as our classroom. For example, I designed two skill-building exercises with a focus on fun and on community building. In one of the joint training sessions for the new and returning Gallery Guides, I brought the students together for an escape room–style puzzle. The Guides developed an imaginary tour, completed a page of Gallery trivia, and partnered to draw artworks based only on each other's description—all with the aim of practicing important skills through collaboration and of fostering deeper friendships. The second session I helped organize took place on the Friday before Halloween. Building on a tradition of inviting the Guides to come dressed as works of art, I planned an activity in which they were tasked with leading an inquiry-based conversation by asking effective questions in front of the artwork that inspired their costume.

Gallery Guides celebrate at the end of the escape room–style activity, February 2023.



AUDREY STEINKAMP

ement at the Gallery



The lobby filled with excited chatter as 3:00 pm approached that afternoon and the Guides walked in dressed as contemporary paintings, midcentury teapots, ancient terracotta statues, and other objects.

After gathering in the museum dressed as works of art, the Guides carried their excitement into the weekend by helping me host the Gallery's first Halloween Scavenger Hunt. In this way, my deep engagement with the Gallery Guide program as a fellow in turn supported me in developing new program offerings for the general public. Throughout the weekend, more than 200 students, families, and other curious visitors took part in this seek-and-find activity, designed to lead participants through as many collection areas as possible. One clue read, "BOO! Find the American artist Edward Hopper's painting of a house, titled *Rooms for _____*. Would you dare to knock on the door?," leading to *Rooms for Tourists* (1945) in the Mary Jo and Ted Shen Gallery of American Paintings and Sculpture. Another prompt was, "The moon is full on the *Kasuga Deer Mandala*, a silk scroll from Japan. What does the deer carry?," encouraging viewers to look closely for the mirror in an early 15th-century painting on view in the Ruth and Bruce Dayton Gallery of Asian Art. The success of the scavenger hunt was largely due to the cooperation of my colleagues across the museum—not only the Gallery Guides but also the curators, whom I consulted as I wrote the clues and who were eager to suggest objects in their collection areas that aligned with a given theme. Participants who successfully completed the entire scavenger hunt received a Gallery tote bag full of other goodies to take home as their prize.

As the fall semester came to a close, I reflected on my own time as a Yale undergraduate and the kinds of events I wished the Gallery had hosted. Based on an idea that Education Department staff had conceived before the pandemic, I began planning Study Days, partnering with the Advancement, Facilities, Security, and Visitor Services Departments to transform the lobby into a place where students could prepare for their finals during the end-of-semester reading period—whether finishing their problem sets, collaborating on group projects, or polishing drafts of their papers. A unique perk of our lobby is its capacity to offer a flexible space where students can alternately work, snack, and take a break to look at artwork, decorate a coloring page, or put together a puzzle with their friends. It was exciting to see attendees who may not have known one another before the event seated together, talking through their assignments. Many brainstormed in pairs or groups or lent a helping hand to another student, some ultimately completing the last of their papers or homework assignments in the Gallery's lobby.

One of my main goals when beginning this fellowship was to host at least one event in which students were encouraged to be creative and make their own artwork. For Valentine's Day 2023, I conceptualized and hosted Hearts and Crafts, a program that brought a making station and photo booth into the lobby and launched a social media campaign to spread the love for art across campus—transforming a cold February day

into an afternoon of gratitude. Members of the Yale community were encouraged to stop by to make valentines for their loved ones while dressed in pink, red, purple, or white. One undergraduate couple came in advance of their anniversary to make cards for each other; sitting on opposite ends of a couch, they colored secret valentines before swapping them and asking someone to take their picture in the pink photo booth. Students were also invited to pick up a small, heart-shaped card that read "I heart this art!" and to take a picture with it in front of their favorite object in the collection.

My efforts to engage students have been made possible by the generous help of my colleagues as well as by teamwork across departments. Together, we have begun to transform the Gallery into an even more dynamic and welcoming space—not only for students but also for a wide range of audiences.

Audrey Steinkamp, B.A. 2022, was the 2022–23 Postbaccalaureate Fellow in Student Engagement.



From left: An undergraduate Gallery Guide in a costume inspired by René Magritte's painting *Le principe d'Archimède* (The Principle of Archimedes; ca. 1940–50), October 2022 | Visitors making valentines for their loved ones during the Hearts and Crafts program, February 2023

Collaboration beyond Yale

ON THE
ROAD

LISA BRODY

Curatorial Expertise On the Road

The exhibition *Figures from the Fire: J. Pierpont Morgan's Ancient Bronzes from the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art* is on view at the Bowdoin College Museum of Art, in Brunswick, Maine, through January 7, 2024. The show represents a collaboration among Bowdoin, the Wadsworth Atheneum, in Hartford, Connecticut, and the Yale University Art Gallery.



I organized this presentation of 20 small-scale ancient bronze sculptures from the collection of the Wadsworth Atheneum, all purchased by J. Pierpont Morgan between 1904 and 1916 and given to the museum by his son in 1917. To complement the Morgan bronzes, my collaborator James Higginbotham, Chair of Bowdoin's Department of Classics and Associate Professor of Classical Archaeology, selected several objects from Bowdoin's own collection of ancient art, which he oversees as curator. Morgan spent years acquiring exquisite works of art. His Greek and Roman bronzes are especially spectacular, representing a variety of figure types—gods and mortals, men and women, animals and hybrid mythological creatures—that range in form from freestanding statuettes to furniture embellishments. He cared primarily about their aesthetic attributes: their superb craftsmanship, quality of composition and execution, and impressive state of preservation. These objects illustrate the very best of ancient bronze working, with carefully rendered clothing, hair, and fur, along with inlays of silver and other luxury materials.

Arguably the most important of these bronzes is *Figure of a Draped Warrior*, the diminutive size of which belies its sense of monumentality. The bearded male stands with weight evenly balanced on both feet, the left slightly in front. The cloak's long, diagonal folds create a sense of movement, while it clings at the back of the body to give the figure dimensionality and solidity. The hand on the hip creates a dramatic pyramidal form. He is barefoot, and thus not battle-ready despite wearing a helmet. The long hair is typical of Archaic Greece, with two locks in front of the shoulders and a mass of long hair gathered in back. Covering his head and face is a Corinthian-style helmet, distinguished by its magnificent crest—running across the head rather than from front to back. There are few parallels for this unusual iconography. Those usually cited are frontal figures on Greek vases, yet it is unclear whether such two-dimensional examples depict similar transverse crests or whether the artist has deliberately skewed the perspective to allow a longitudinal crest to register more clearly from a frontal viewpoint. The figure is one of the highlights of Morgan's collection that can be seen in the exhibition at Bowdoin as well as in the accompanying catalogue, published by the Wadsworth Atheneum.

I want particularly to thank Matthew Hargraves, Director of the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, and Anne Collins Goodyear and Frank H. Goodyear, Codirectors of the Bowdoin College Museum of Art, for their support of this project. I am also grateful to my curatorial colleagues at the Wadsworth Atheneum for their collegiality and generosity: Linda Roth, Director of Special Curatorial Projects and Charles C. and Eleanor Lamont Cunningham Curator of European Decorative Arts, and Vanessa Sigalas, Associate Curator for Collections Research.

Lisa Brody is Associate Curator of Ancient Art.



Consolidating the Collections

JEFFREY YOSHIMINE

IN 2002, AS PART OF PREPARATIONS for the decade-long renovation of its downtown location, the Yale University Art Gallery created an off-site repository for its displaced collections. Within three adjoining industrial buildings borrowed from the Yale University Library—known as the Library Shelving Facility (LSF)—the Gallery developed an innovative modularized solution for art storage, retrieval, and transportation. Allowing for the most space- and staff-efficient management of the museum’s growing holdings across all media, the systems devised for this facility were subsequently studied and imitated by both institutional and private-sector professionals interested in high-density storage.

Today, more than 20 years later, the Gallery is beginning the process of returning the LSF to the University’s library and of consolidating its collections in newly constructed spaces at Yale West Campus. To enable this transition, Yale is creating approximately 40,000 square feet for art storage—25,000 of which will fall within the existing footprint of the Collection Studies Center (CSC) at West Campus,

while the other 15,000 square feet will be located in a purpose-built annex. Once completed, in the fall of 2024, the construction project will yield high-density and compact spaces in which to house three-dimensional material not just for the Gallery but for other University collection units as well, including the Yale Center for British Art (YCBA), the Yale Peabody Museum, and the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

The move will concentrate the Gallery’s off-site holdings in one facility, thereby streamlining storage, teaching and study, transportation, and staffing activities and resources. Efficiency benefits will accrue to many teams at the Gallery—but especially those in the Collections, Conservation, and Visual Resources Departments, as well as the Registrar’s Office, all of which will be able to better focus their interactions with the collections at this single external location. Primary and satellite offices for many curatorial and professional departments already exist at the CSC, and the logic for this proximity will only expand with the collection’s consolidation.

In a larger way, the initiative represents a new direction for the Gallery and the University. Paralleling the work being conducted by Yale to make enhanced information available about collection materials across campus—whether in museums, archives, or libraries—the storage facility’s design will allow collections to embrace a shared operating model. A prime example of this is the joint paintings-storage space of over 9,000 square feet, equipped with a user-friendly pull-out system of screens for storing paintings, framed works on paper and textiles, rolled paintings and textiles, and other items in a temperature-, humidity-, and light-controlled environment. Painting-screen space will be divided among the Gallery, the YCBA, the Peabody, and the Beinecke.

Housing the Gallery’s more than 3,000 paintings, and similar numbers of framed and rolled objects, just footsteps away from the Margaret and Angus Wurtele Study Center will offer visitors ready access for close looking, which until now has only been possible in the galleries. With the storage organized by curatorial department, users—including curators, scholars, faculty, and students—will be able to survey paintings not on public view and easily have selections pulled into the Wurtele Study Center for closer examination.

To accomplish this collections move, the Gallery has embarked on a multiyear project that is parceled into distinct, activity-focused categories. “Year Zero” preparations, which have been underway since June 2022, will be completed early this fall. Conservation staff are nearly finished conducting condition checks of all paintings and updating records. Conservators have assessed almost all material to confirm that it is in suitable condition to transport, while registrars have been verifying that artworks are correctly identified, numbered, and entered into the collections database. During the first year of the move, which will span from October 2023 through September 2024, staff will pack all

material with an eye to both safe transport and, in some cases, permanent storage. The move itself—of approximately 18,000 objects, across all curatorial departments—will occur between fall 2024 and late 2025. Finally, in a post-move phase extending to March 2026, Gallery staff will fine-tune the permanent storage arrangements.

Adjacent to the Wurtele Study Center as well as the Leslie P. and George H. Hume American Furniture Study Center, the paintings-storage facility represents the latest—but certainly not the last—effort by the University and the Gallery to provide sector-leading access to collections for the purposes of teaching, exhibition, and research. A master-planning exercise will be scheduled to identify the next steps toward achieving the vision of “One Yale”—the University’s capital campaign promoting interdisciplinary collaboration across campus—of which the CSC has been such a central part. Stay tuned for further details.

Jeffrey Yoshimine is Deputy Director for Exhibitions, Collections, and Facilities.



Museum technician Vicki Onofrio (left) and paintings conservator Kelsey Wingel (right) hang a painting for temporary storage in the Margaret and Angus Wurtele Study Center, Yale West Campus.

NEW
ON VIEW



Mickalene
Thomas /
Portrait
of an
Unlikely Space

KEELY ORGEMAN

MICKALENE THOMAS (b. 1971, M.F.A. 2002) has gained an international reputation for her paintings and photographs of Black “muses” posed in lushly decorated domestic interiors, as well as for her installations that envelop viewers in such environments. In *Mickalene Thomas / Portrait of an Unlikely Space*, opening on September 8, the artist and I, as cocurators, have assembled a group of small-scale portraits of Black women, men, and children from the pre-Emancipation period alongside works in a wide range of media by contemporary artists who address similarly intimate subject matter. This historical-contemporary display, the first of its kind, is enfolded in a multigallery, living room-style installation created by Thomas. As her first major engagement with early American history, the exhibition represents an expansion of Thomas’s practice. She has designed a homelike setting—filled with large photocollages and wallpaper as well as upholstered furniture, all with period-specific textile patterns drawn from clothing and quilts handsewn by Black women—in which the individuals pictured in the antebellum works become her muses. Interspersed with the historical portraits within the installation, the contemporary contributions from Mary Enoch Elizabeth Baxter, Sula Bermúdez-Silverman, Lebohang Kganye, Wardell Milan, Adia Millett, Devin N. Morris, Betye Saar, and Curtis Talwst Santiago offer possible points of connection to related themes of kinship, interiority, and private life today.

Upon entering the exhibition, the visitor immediately sees a remarkable miniature depicting a formerly enslaved woman named Rose Prentice (1771–1852). The Gallery’s acquisition of this artwork in 2016 inspired Thomas and me to conceive a project around such rare surviving portraits of Black sitters from the pre-Civil War era, a vision that evolved through our process of collaboration. We have arranged the depicted subjects into categories that emphasize characteristics of their appearance or states of being in order to reveal not only small details that could easily be overlooked about the individuals but also something more universal about self-presentation that many of the sitters seemed to consider in the making of their portraits. Organized around the idea of “Solitude,” the first grouping opens with the miniature of Prentice, whose yearslong enslavement led to her separation from her biological family and her restriction to domestic work even after being freed, circumstances that may have caused her to be portrayed alone, without a spouse, a child, or other kin who could have owned her likeness

as a keepsake. Thomas’s installation provides viewers with a space in which to bear witness to such instances of isolation—brought about by slavery’s denial and erasure of any social structure that would support Black kinship—while linking the sitters (each of whom, like Prentice, has few or no documented associations to others) into a circle of nonfamilial members. Another artwork in the “Solitude” section of the show is the dollhouse-like sculpture *Repository I: Mother* (2021; see page 16, at left) by the artist Sula Bermúdez-Silverman (b. 1993, M.F.A. 2018), which similarly embodies the vulnerability inherent in the idea of home that is so central to this project. Tiny fissures have formed in its walls, which are composed of sugar, making the crystalline structure appear as though it might give way to gravity at any moment.

The next section continues the framework of human interconnection by cohering around what Thomas and I call “Togetherness,” with each of the historical portraits attesting to an interpersonal relationship of some kind, whether couples and family members or other persons assumed to be closely acquainted given their proximity in the picture. For example, a pair of daguerreotypes points to

the relationship between two sisters, Isadora Noe Freeman and Mary Christina Freeman, and their mother, Christiana Williams Freeman, a formerly enslaved woman who married the Presbyterian minister Amos Noë Freeman, both becoming antislavery activists and educators in their communities of Portland, Maine, and later Brooklyn. As part of Thomas’s transformation of the galleries into a homelike space, these historical photographs are staged in a cabinet directly opposite two miniature sculptures produced in Johannesburg by Curtis Talwst Santiago (b. 1979) that portray Black leisure within the domestic sphere.

To reach the third section of the exhibition, the visitor passes through a small, wallpaper-clad corridor in which three photographs from Thomas’s 2011 *Courbet* series (see image below) are displayed. Under the theme of “Posing,” the sitters shown in the third grouping each assume a self-aware attitude or posture, whether having been encouraged or coerced to pose in their finest clothes or having chosen of their own accord to present themselves in such a self-conscious way. Nearly half of the portraits represent men and women with documented names, such as Martha Ann “Patty” Atavis, a domestic



Mickalene Thomas, *Courbet #1 (Melody: Sitting)*, 2011. Polaroid. Private collection. © Mickalene Thomas

caregiver who was enslaved in Baltimore for most of her life (see below, at right), while the others feature items of clothing and adornments that set apart the now-anonymous individuals. These portraits are juxtaposed with two paintings by Wardell Milan (b. 1978, M.F.A. 2004), including *Knight of the White Camelia, no. 6*, titled after a white-supremacist organization that became active in the American South in the wake of the Civil War. Although it seems at first glance to be a study of a single, alluring subject, the work reveals its complexity upon sustained looking, of the sort encouraged within Thomas's contemplative installation.

The visitor then moves into the fourth section and encounters—in a case centered on its own wall—the small assemblage *Imitation of Life* (1975) by Betye Saar, the only late-career artist included in the show. Pointing straight to the heart of *Mickalene Thomas / Portrait of an Unlikely Space*, Saar has taken the stereotype of the Black caregiver and exposed different aspects of her identity. The grenade that the figure holds in the right half of the work symbolizes her agency, whereas the child seated on her lap at left encapsulates her attachment to a family of her own—thus aptly introducing the

theme of the final section, “Holding.” This title refers to portraits whose potential meanings are primarily communicated through the sitters’ depicted actions, especially in instances where little or no other consequential information is known. A few of the inanimate accessories featured in these images can be interpreted as emblems of the individuals’ specialized skill or trade, as in the case of the daguerreotype of a man from Greene County, North Carolina, named Haywood Dixon, who nestles a carpenter’s triangle against his chest—a rare representation of enslaved Black labor within the genre of portraiture.

For the Gallery’s exhibition, Thomas has constructed a particular kind of “Black interior,” to use the scholar Elizabeth Alexander’s dynamic term, one in which displaying small, cherished objects in cabinets and on shelves becomes an expression of a woman’s touch, specifically that of a mother. “The living room is where she reveals who we are,” Alexander writes. Here, in the exhibition, traces of such labor and care are scattered across the surface of almost every object, whether a 19th-century miniature on ivory or a 21st-century sculpture made of sugar—drawing the mind to stories

both personal and collective, to histories of enslavement implicated in their narration, and to notions of domestic life explored throughout the spaces of the exhibition.

Keely Orgeman is the Seymour H. Knox, Jr., Associate Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art.

Exhibition and publication made possible by Clifford Ross, B.A. 1974; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; the Terra Foundation for American Art; the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Mary Cushing Fosburgh and James Whitney Fosburgh, B.A. 1933, M.A. 1935, Publication Fund; the Janet and Simeon Braguin Fund; and the Joann and Gifford Phillips, Class of 1942, Fund.

The exhibition is complemented by a catalogue by Keely Orgeman, with texts by Thomas as well as Deborah Willis, University Professor and Chair of the Department of Photography and Imaging at the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University. The publication will appear in October 2023 to allow for the inclusion of extensive photography documenting Thomas’s evocative installation. For more information, visit artgallery.yale.edu/publications.



From left: Sula Bermúdez-Silverman, *Repository I: Mother*, 2021. Isomalt sugar, epoxy resin, wood, Plexiglas, Himalayan salt, and LED light. Courtesy the artist and Josh Lilley Gallery, London | Unknown artist, *Martha Ann "Patty" Atavis (ca. 1816–1874)*, ca. 1850. Daguerreotype. H. Furlong Baldwin Library, Maryland Center for History and Culture, Baltimore, Cased Photograph Collection

A New Acquisition



in Prints and Drawings

FREYDA SPIRA

The Yale University Art Gallery has acquired an extraordinary collection of more than 190 Italian drawings, watercolors, and sketchbooks through gift and purchase from the New York collectors Roberta J. M. Olson and Alexander B. V. Johnson.

Totalling over 400 individual sheets, this superb trove is among the finest in private hands anywhere in the world and gives a wide-ranging view of drawings produced by Italian artists between 1780 and 1890—a period generally known as the *ottocento*. Together, these materials define and illuminate multiple trends that were at play during this pivotal century in the art and politics of the Italian peninsula, a riveting story that is not being told in any other public or private collection in the United States. With this remarkable acquisition, the Gallery has become the largest repository of, and the primary research center in the country for, 19th-century Italian art.

Among the incoming works is an exquisite drawing from the 1790s by the Neoclassical artist Luigi Sabatelli, *Orestes and the Furies*. It is exemplary of the virtuosic calligraphy in pen and brown ink that characterized Sabatelli's output during his early years in Rome. Likely a model for a later drawing or print, this unfinished piece also offers valuable information concerning Sabatelli's working method. Specifically, it demonstrates his concentration on composition and expression—including the push and pull of bodies in space—as well as his quick and sure hand.

In addition to Sabatelli, major artists from all the regional schools are represented in depth in the Olson-Johnson collection, such as Andrea Appiani, Lorenzo Bartolini, Giovanni Boldini, Giacinto Gigante, Pelagio Pelagi, Bartolomeo Pinelli, and Tommaso Minardi. The gift also contains singular examples by highly significant figures, such as Giacomo Balla, Antonio Canova, and Giulio Aristide Sartorio. In almost every instance, the incoming works are by artists not otherwise found in the Gallery's collection, although the museum has a long history of collecting European and American works of art across the spectrum of the 19th century—an age of ascendant nationalism. The Olson-Johnson acquisition follows in that tradition, increasing the breadth and range of the Gallery's holdings and of the histories that can be told.

Freyda Spira is the Robert L. Solley Curator of Prints and Drawings.

David Goldblatt: No Ulterior Motive

TIFFANY SPRAGUE

IN 2018, WITH GENEROUS SUPPORT

from Jane P. Watkins, M.P.H. 1979, the Yale University Art Gallery acquired over 700 prints by the South African photographer David Goldblatt (1930–2018). Best known for his black-and-white images of the apartheid period (1948–ca. 1994), Goldblatt created subtle, complicated, and intimate portraits of a nation in crisis. He eschewed overt depictions of violence in favor of a documentary approach, which included captioning his images with straightforward yet revealing commentary. Covering a wide range of subjects connected to South African history and politics, Goldblatt’s photographs probe the effects of institutionalized segregation and settler colonialism.

Four years in the making and published by the Gallery with the Art Institute of Chicago (AIC) and Fundación MAPFRE, Madrid, *David Goldblatt: No Ulterior Motive* is the first posthumous monograph on Goldblatt and accompanies his first American retrospective since 2010, which will be presented at each of these three venues—traveling from Chicago to Madrid and, finally, to New Haven, in February 2025. The exhibition and catalogue are built around the collections of the Gallery; Yale’s Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, to which the artist entrusted his personal archive; and the AIC, a committed repository for the work of South African photographers generally. The strength and diversity of these respective holdings result in an expansive dialogue around Goldblatt’s

practice. For example, the publication offers images and texts by South African photographers one to three generations younger than Goldblatt, including Lebohang Kganye, Zanele Muholi, and Sabelo Mlangeni: some write on his photographs, while others discuss his influence on their own output, or even his active mentorship. These contributions amplify the book’s core scholarly essays by Judy Ditner, the Richard Benson Associate Curator of Photography and Digital Media at the Gallery, and Leslie Wilson, Associate Director for Academic Engagement and Research at the AIC. Illustrating all of the images in the show, an extensive plate section encompasses not only stunning vintage gelatin silver prints but also contemporary carbon ink prints and pigmented inkjet prints expertly produced under Goldblatt’s supervision by his longtime collaborator Tony Meintjes. Reproductions of correspondence, research files, and contact sheets—among other selections from the artist’s personal archive—shed further light on this photographic legacy, which spans from 1949 through 2017.

In contrast to Goldblatt’s focus on presenting discrete series of work in tightly edited books, *No Ulterior Motive* makes a major intervention by reframing his oeuvre thematically, converging work from across series to show continuities and revisions throughout the seven decades of Goldblatt’s career. Mixing earlier black-and-white work with the color

photography that he took up after apartheid, the exhibition and publication organize his pictures into sections such as “Assembly,” “Disbelief,” “Dialogues,” and “Extraction.” The resulting exposition draws out the artist’s core interests in working-class people, the landscape, and the built environment.

Goldblatt devoted his life to documenting his country and its people. This ambitious project aims to open a new chapter in considerations of his work, assembling a wide range of voices to place the photographer within an expansive network that extends across multiple geographies and generations. *No Ulterior Motive* shows how the illogic of segregation that Goldblatt so carefully portrayed is neither specific to South Africa nor a bygone historical phenomenon.

Tiffany Sprague is Director of Publications and Editorial Services.

David Goldblatt: No Ulterior Motive will be available in November 2023. For more information, visit artgallery.yale.edu/publications.

David Goldblatt



Celebrating 50 Years of Friends of American Arts at Yale

The Friends of American Arts at Yale was founded in 1973 to support the Yale University Art Gallery's renowned holdings of American art.

The story of American art at Yale is nearly as old as the college, although two moments were pivotal: John Trumbull's donation of more than 100 of his own paintings in 1832—which led to the construction of the first art museum on a college campus in America, what is today the Gallery—and a series of gifts by Francis P. Garvan, B.A. 1897, in honor of his wife, Mabel Brady Garvan, beginning in 1930. These foundational contributions have attracted other significant examples of American art to Yale, making it one of the great collections of its kind in the world. The creation of the Friends established a new chapter in that long history and helped transform how Yale exhibits and teaches American art.

Between the mid-1940s and early 1950s, the American collection languished with the deaths of two of its most important stewards: John Marshall Phillips, who had been curator of the Garvan Collection and director of the Gallery, and John Hill Morgan, who had the honorary title of Curator of American Painting. During the following decade, Mabel Brady Garvan made financial commitments to activate the collections that had been given in her name by her late husband. Curator Meyric Rogers and his successor, Jules D. Prown, increased the visibility of Yale's American paintings, sculpture, and decorative arts through research, exhibitions, and



Curator Theodore E. Stebbins, Jr., B.A. 1960, leads a workshop for Friends in the Trumbull Gallery, 1973.



scholarly catalogues. These efforts culminated in 1973 with the opening of the innovative installation *American Arts and the American Experience*, designed by the firms CambridgeSeven, of Massachusetts, and Chermayeff & Geismar, of New York. Paintings and decorative arts were comingled in a series of vignettes—including chairs mounted to walls—that emphasized both context and connoisseurship. The approach influenced a generation of museum displays. Those who oversaw the Gallery's holdings of American art at that time, Charles F. Montgomery, Curator of the Garvan and Related Collections, and Theodore E. Stebbins, Jr., B.A. 1960, Curator of American Painting, realized that if these developments were going to maintain their momentum, additional annual support was needed. With the help of an advisory committee, and particularly at the suggestion of the noted collector Robert L. McNeil, Jr., B.S. 1936S, the Friends of American Arts at Yale was formed.

The purpose of the Friends was to provide resources and endowments for the regular operations of the curatorial department, then known as the Garvan and Related Collections. The founding members were Julia and Alfred E. Bissell, B.A. 1925; Mabel Brady Garvan; Kay and Walter M. Jeffords, Jr., B.A. 1938; Nancy and Robert L. McNeil, Jr.; Rachel and Paul Mellon, B.A. 1929, L.H.D.H. 1967; and Esther and Samuel Schwartz. Following Montgomery's sudden death in 1978, the Friends raised funds to endow the Charles F. Montgomery Professorship in American Decorative Arts in the Department of the History of Art. By this time, the Garvan and Related Collections had split into the Department of American Decorative Arts, with Patricia E. Kane, Ph.D. 1987 (one of the authors of the present article), as curator, and the Department of American Paintings and Sculpture, under curator Helen A. Cooper, M.A. 1975, Ph.D. 1986. Also in 1978, the Gallery applied for a National

Endowment for the Arts Challenge Grant to build the museum's endowment. The Friends pledged to raise \$750,000 to underwrite the yearly activities of the American departments. For the 25th anniversary of the Friends in 1998, members of the group joined in endowing the senior position in the Department of American Decorative Arts, currently held by Patricia E. Kane, while Friends members Holcombe T. Green, Jr., B.A. 1961, Benjamin Attmore Hewitt, B.A. 1943, Ph.D. 1952, and Alice M. and Allan S. Kaplan, B.A. 1957, endowed the other curatorial positions.

With this operational funding complete, the Friends turned their attention to creating endowments to support acquisitions, exhibitions, and publications in the two departments. *American Art: Selections from the Yale University Art Gallery*, which was published in summer 2023 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Friends, was supported in part by the Friends Publication Endowment Fund. Many who contributed catalogue entries have held internships and fellowships established at the Gallery by the Friends. The book also features numerous objects purchased with the support of the Friends Acquisition Endowment Fund or with funds from named endowments started by individual members of the organization. The exhibition fund began generating income in 2016 and, that same year, supported *Art and Industry in Early America: Rhode Island Furniture, 1650–1830* and *Yosemite: Exploring the Incomparable Valley*. Since then, it has financed every exhibition undertaken by the two departments.

From its founding, the Friends have benefited from special opportunities to study American art and to socialize with like-minded individuals. Workshops have been at the heart of Friends programming since the group's inception. In the 1970s, it was unusual for an American museum to offer intimate, hands-on sessions with collection objects, but the workshops drew on a long tradition of teaching with objects at Yale. Many alumni fondly recall John Marshall Phillips's famous undergraduate course "Pots and Pans," in which students handled everything from silver and pewter to ceramics and glass. The legacy of workshops continues, as curators and their colleagues offer new approaches to close looking.

In addition, the Friends have coordinated members-only trips to important destinations for American art. The excursions typically involve special access to private collections, be they close to home or far afield. The group traveled to London in 1976 to celebrate the opening of *Towards Independence*, an exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum organized by the Gallery in honor of the country's bicentennial. In 2018 a weekend in Maine featured visits to the homes of the American painters Winslow Homer, at Prouts Neck, and Jamie Wyeth, on Monhegan Island, as well as special tours of the stellar collections at Bowdoin and Colby Colleges, in Brunswick and Waterville (see image at left).

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of its founding, the Friends will host an event on November 9 and 10. This will include the Oswaldo Rodriguez Roque Memorial Lecture by Kathleen A. Foster, M.A. 1972, Ph.D. 1982, the Robert L. McNeil, Jr., Senior Curator of American Art and Director of the Center for American Art at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, addressing the history of displays of American art. The following day will be spent in workshops at the recently created Collection Studies Center at Yale West Campus, reminiscing on a half century of the Friends while also looking ahead to future collection projects and new research.

John Stuart Gordon is the Benjamin Attmore Hewitt Curator of American Decorative Arts.

Patricia E. Kane is the Friends of American Arts Curator of American Decorative Arts.

Mark D. Mitchell is the Holcombe T. Green Curator of American Paintings and Sculpture.

COMING
SOON

Munch and Kirchner

Anxiety and Expression

FREYDA SPIRA

OPENING IN FEBRUARY 2024, the exhibition *Munch and Kirchner: Anxiety and Expression* focuses on the spectacular prints of two famous Expressionist artists. While they operated in very close circles, Edvard Munch (Norwegian, 1863–1944) and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (German, 1880–1938) surprisingly met only once, at an exhibition of modern art in Cologne in 1912. Their artistic productions and their biographies overlap in fascinating ways, however: both were experimental printmakers who exploited the perceptual and emotional powers of color and abstraction in service of creative expression, portraying

what they perceived to be a fragmented, harrowing reality.

The period of the late 19th and early 20th centuries in Europe was marked by growing nationalism. In the wake of the resulting turmoil of World War I (1914–18), still among the deadliest conflicts in human history, a collective sense of societal and moral decay pervaded not only in Europe but also the rest of the world. Against this traumatic backdrop, and alongside the rise of the Nazi regime in Germany, contemporary thinkers cultivated an interest in recognizing and treating mental illness, including through the

new psychoanalytic methods of the Austrian neurologist Sigmund Freud. Both Munch and Kirchner experienced existential crises, endured bouts of depression, grappled with substance abuse, and received psychiatric care, yet they continued to create works of art that encapsulated their radical visions of the world. Their artistic products—which are incredibly innovative across various printmaking media—reflect, and indeed often reflect upon, these confrontations with mental and physical health.

The accompanying catalogue publishes for the first time the large group of prints by Munch and Kirchner in the collection of Nelson Blitz, Jr., and Catherine Woodard, along with examples from the Yale University Art Gallery's own rich holdings of German Expressionist works on paper, as well as other prints from public and private collections across the United States. Lovingly put together over the course of 40 years, the Blitz-Woodard collection contains woodcuts and lithographs by Munch, many printed in color and some with hand-coloring, in addition to the most extensive private collection of Kirchner prints. With 60 full-page plates and two substantive essays, the publication is also the first to examine the work of these two influential Expressionists through the lens of their shared struggles with mental health.

Freyda Spira is the Robert L. Solley Curator of Prints and Drawings.

Exhibition and publication made possible by the Robert Lehman, B.A. 1913, Endowment Fund.

The catalogue *Munch and Kirchner: Anxiety and Expression* will be available in February 2024. For more information, visit artgallery.yale.edu/publications.



Edvard Munch, *Toward the Forest I (Mot skogen I)*, 1897, printed ca. 1908. Woodcut printed in black, blue, bluish green, and orange. Collection of Nelson Blitz, Jr., and Catherine Woodard

Following a Colle

PEVSNER, ANTOINE (Russian) 147.
1886-
Sculpture - Copper
"Figure" 1925
20 1/2"h.
Signed on upper surface of base:
"Pevsner"



Photo. by J.Klima, Neg.No.K62-17.

FRANCES JACOBUS-PARKER



For more information on the Lydia Winston Malbin archive, scan the QR code below with your smartphone's camera.



beinecke.library.yale.edu/collections/highlights/lydia-winston-malbin-papers

From left: Malbin's catalogue card for Antoine Pevsner's *Figure* (1925). Lydia Winston Malbin Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New Haven, Conn. | Malbin at home in Birmingham, Michigan, with Umberto Boccioni's *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space* (1913, cast 1950). Lydia Winston Malbin Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Collector's Paper Trail

IN THE SUMMER OF 2022, I joined the Yale University Art Gallery as the inaugural Lydia Winston Malbin Scholar of Modern and Contemporary Art. The first year of the fellowship was dedicated to researching its namesake, Lydia Winston Malbin (1897–1989), a Detroit-based collector known especially for her interest in early Italian Futurism. Although I am a scholar and curator of modern art, I had not heard of Malbin before beginning this project—a fact that appealed to me. I have always been drawn to lesser-known histories and figures for the ways in which they invite us to reexamine established narratives. Often, finding primary sources about such subjects is a challenge, but in this case Malbin herself provided me with ample material: her personal archive is preserved in 100 boxes at Yale University's Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

From preliminary reading and through conversations with Malbin's family, I learned the broad strokes of her life. I became acquainted with her groundbreaking efforts to introduce modernism to Detroit, including organizing the city's first-ever exhibition of abstraction, in 1942 (a "flop," in Malbin's words). Over the 1940s and 1950s, she and her first husband, Harry Lewis Winston, assembled a remarkable and unusual collection of modern art. They prioritized personal connections with artists, traveling to Europe to purchase works directly from them or their surviving family members and developing close friendships with many in the process: Jean Arp, Luce and Elica Balla (the daughters of Giacomo Balla), Raffaella Boccioni Callegari (Umberto Boccioni's sister), Benedetta Cappa Marinetti (the widow of Filippo Tommaso Marinetti), Antoine Pevsner, Gino Severini, and others. Malbin also built formative relationships with prominent curators and gallerists, including Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Rose Fried, Peggy Guggenheim, and Alfred Stieglitz.

To orient myself in the archive upon my arrival in August of 2022, I started at the beginning, requesting folders on artworks by Josef Albers and Arp, then Balla and Boccioni. These folders contained a wealth of primary-source documents—import and shipping forms, receipts, letters from artists or their family members, photographs of artworks and their makers—often along with photocopies of relevant scholarly literature. Letters from Albers correct the title and date of one work and provide detailed directions and sketches for how to hang another. A note from Benedetta Cappa Marinetti explains that a painting by Giacomo Balla (that she sold to Malbin) had been made for her when she was studying with the artist. I also came across historical curiosities. Import papers reveal that customs officials classified Boccioni's bronze *Development of a Bottle in Space* (1913, cast 1950) as subject to taxes on the grounds that, in order to be considered art, the work must depict an *animate* object, which a bottle was not—no matter the sense of movement this sculpture conveys.

By the end of that first day at the Beinecke, I realized this project presented an unfamiliar challenge. Malbin was a meticulous recordkeeper; a file for a single work of art could span several hundred pages. Detailed diaries and countless photographs register her acquisitions and her visits with artists. She was also a prolific correspondent: the archive contains hundreds of letters and postcards she exchanged with her art-world contacts. My task lay not primarily in locating materials of significance but in figuring out how to navigate the sheer volume of material Malbin had preserved.

I soon discovered that she had, with characteristic foresight, left behind a guide, of sorts, to her own archive. In the last few years of her life, Malbin compiled the highlights of her archival holdings in a multi-volume scrapbook, titled "A Story (or an Autobiography) Concerning a Collector of Modern Art (Futurism) Expressed through Documents." Its photographs, documents, and explanatory captions together provided me with a road map of the important relationships, exhibitions, and acquisitions that had shaped Malbin's trajectory as a collector. With the scrapbook as my guide, I began to ask a broader set of questions: What did the creation and preservation of this archive—clearly an incredible, lifelong labor—mean to Malbin? And what did these efforts communicate about her approach to collecting?

In essays, interviews, and public addresses, Malbin wrote and spoke thoughtfully and forcefully about the role of the collector of modern art. In her words, this figure must act as a "link" between the artist and the world, developing in-depth knowledge of the artist's life and ideas and then sharing that knowledge, and the artist's work, with the public. True to that aim, Malbin exhibited her collection widely. But creating and sharing the *archive* was equally integral to that mission. She regularly welcomed researchers and university classes into her home to consult her files and library; one surviving document describes the collection as "a small study museum." Over the course of my research, I came to see Malbin's archive as the ultimate legacy of her deep commitment to artists, to scholarship, and to education—a commitment that now lives on at the Gallery through the Lydia Winston Malbin fellowship.

Frances Jacobus-Parker is Visiting Assistant Teaching Professor in the Department of Art, Art History, and Design at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana, and the former Lydia Winston Malbin Scholar of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Gallery.

The Lydia Winston Malbin archive is the subject of a forthcoming article by Frances Jacobus-Parker in the 2022–23 *Yale University Art Gallery Bulletin*, available in January 2024. For more information, visit artgallery.yale.edu/publications.



Malbin at home in Birmingham, Michigan, 1972. Lydia Winston Malbin Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Photo: Bill Rauhauser

Centering Joy

with



Team Experience
Builder Touch

The Team Experience Builder (TEB) was designed as part of Yale University’s tool kit for managers and offers a platform for groups of colleagues to book unique tours at the Yale University Art Gallery. During these specialized visits, participants have an opportunity to forge community and strengthen relationships by engaging in active conversation, team-building exercises, and close looking.

Experiencing joy together is central to these tours, which provide a chance to spend time with art and with one another in a less goal-oriented setting than the office. John Whelan, Vice President for Human Resources at Yale, announced the TEB initiative in late February 2023, emphasizing the importance of employees feeling connected and valued. The 60- to 90-minute tour can be both a catalyst and container for what Whelan has called “moments that matter” among team members through the deep conversations that stem from looking at art objects from across time and around the world. Since the launch of the TEB project, sessions have linked works from the African, Asian, European, and contemporary galleries, among other collection areas.

Following initial conversations between Emily DeFrances, Senior Manager of Recognition and Engagement in the University’s Office of Public Affairs and Communications, and the Public Education sector of the Gallery’s Education Department regarding this potential collaboration, I was invited to develop these sessions, which are in line with my passions and expertise in community building and wellness through arts education. Looking at art together serves as an opportunity to practice mindfulness, visual literacy, communication, compassion, understanding, vulnerability, and slowing down, as well as to listen to and connect with others. Especially as we have gradually transitioned back to being at work in person over the last three years, these skills prove increasingly crucial. The art museum affords a low-stakes environment in which to cultivate these, particularly vulnerability: sharing observations, perspectives, thoughts, questions, creativity, and one’s personal connection to the artwork is a way to relate openly with peers across roles, departments, and disciplines.

This practice of coming together is key to building trust, which is a component essential to healthy communities and especially to “leading with joy,” as discussed in two texts that have influenced my work on these tours, *Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds* (2017) by the writer, activist, and facilitator adrienne maree brown and *Leading with Joy: Practices for Uncertain Times* (2022) by the leadership experts Akaya Windwood and Rajasvini Bhansali. To construct the curriculum for the TEB tours, I pull a combination of research methods and pedagogical strategies from my doctoral work and from the teaching tools that the Gallery’s Education Department has cultivated. For example, the training of the graduate-student Wurtele Gallery Teachers—designed and led by Jessica Sack, the Jan and Frederick Mayer Curator of Public Education—has informed my approach.

What makes the TEB tours unique, however, is the privilege they afford to center joy and human connection with no academic goals or formal learning objectives. When selecting collection items, I focus on highlights from each curatorial area and an overarching theme, such as “multiple perspectives” or “expression and gesture.” In-gallery exercises involve working in pairs or in groups to generate word associations as well as drawings of artworks based on verbal descriptions by one’s partner, along with other activities that emphasize sharing individual and collective perspectives, like jointly writing poetry. Unlike most of our tours, learning is not the central purpose of a TEB visit but is instead an inevitable benefit of engaging curiosity and making discoveries together. This process allows team members to witness one another’s humanity. This



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space of indirect learning and of sharing new experiences can yield joy, confidence, and a renewed sense of what they know about themselves, their colleagues, and the world.

One manager reported, “You truly brought out the best in everyone, and they continued to talk about it during happy hour.” It is extraordinarily rewarding to receive feedback such as this in recognition of our work to center joy while participants look at art and exchange their perspectives—all with the aim of strengthening communities and providing transferable skills that can enhance leadership and interpersonal communication, encourage broader understandings of history and culture, and broadcast the resources that Yale has to offer its employees. It is also an

honor to meet Yale staff from many different sectors of campus who, through our collective labor, give life and function to the organism that is the University. Through our shared observations, thoughts, and questions about art objects, we represent a microcosm of the world. How we exercise being present, channeling joy, listening, and sharing our voices influences how we exist in the world.

TEB tours are an invitation to practice the qualities that help all employees prioritize wellness, creativity, compassion, and care in both professional and personal environments. Further, the methods from the tours are now being incorporated into other public offerings and teacher workshops at the Gallery. The TEB initiative is a way to think about the strategies

and importance of facilitating human connection as we recover from the pandemic’s isolation and take accountability for the kinds of communities we wish to create.

Amanda “Semente” Caroline de Oliveira Pereira, Ph.D., is the John Walsh Fellow in Museum Education.

During a Team Experience Builder tour, M. Stang, a Wurtele Gallery Teacher and Ph.D. candidate in American Studies and Film and Media Studies, leads participants from the Yale Center for Clinical Investigation in conversation in front of Vincent van Gogh’s *Le café de nuit* (The Night Café; 1888).

The magazine is published two times per year by the Yale University Art Gallery.

1111 Chapel Street
New Haven, Connecticut
artgallery.yale.edu

General Information: 203.432.0600
Museum Store: 203.432.0601

Gallery Membership

At the Yale University Art Gallery, membership is for everyone. Our free membership program reflects a commitment to community accessibility and invites all audiences to develop meaningful connections with the Gallery's collections, exhibitions, and programs. As a member, you enjoy subscription to the Gallery's magazine, online newsletter, and monthly Note to Members; discounts on Gallery publications in the Museum Store; and reduced-rate parking at the Chapel-York Garage.

Learn more about membership and sign up online by visiting artgallery.yale.edu/join-and-support/free-membership. For more information, contact art.members@yale.edu.

Reciprocal Organization of Associated Museums

Donate \$100 or more to the Gallery and receive access to the Reciprocal Organization of Associated Museums (ROAM). This program includes over 400 museums across the U.S. and Canada, providing free admission to members while traveling. ROAM is continually expanding, so check the list on the Gallery's website for new and exciting additions.

Gallery Patrons

With the involvement of many staff members as well as partnering institutions, the Gallery Patrons program fosters opportunities to participate fully in the daily life and activities of the museum. This past year's events included private exhibition tours, daylong art excursions, visits to professionalized art fairs, and opportunities for international travel.

Gallery Patrons play a vital role in the museum's vision of activating the power of art to inspire and create a more inclusive world. To become a Gallery Patron, contact Claire Serpi at claire.serpi@yale.edu.

The program offers individuals a way to strengthen their relationship with the Gallery and to meet a diverse group of artists, benefactors, collectors, and enthusiasts.

There are three annual tiers:

Patrons Circle: \$1,500
Curators Circle: \$5,000
Director's Circle: \$10,000

Are in-person group tours available?

Yes. Check our website for the most up-to-date information on scheduling guided and self-guided group visits.

Does the Gallery offer public programs?

Yes. Check our online calendar and social media accounts for information and updates on in-person and virtual programs.

Connect with the Gallery on Social Media

Follow the Gallery on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter for the latest news about exhibitions and programs, behind-the-scenes photos, and exclusive content. Watch videos of past lecture series, artist talks, and more on the Gallery's YouTube channel. Share your favorite Gallery experiences and artworks with us by tagging your posts and photos @yaleartgallery. To learn more, visit artgallery.yale.edu/connect.

Parking

Visitors can park in metered spaces on nearby streets or in the Chapel-York Garage, conveniently located at 150 York Street.

Land Acknowledgment

Yale University acknowledges that Indigenous peoples and nations, including the Eastern Pequot, Golden Hill Paugussett, Mashantucket Pequot, Mohegan, Niantic, Quinnipiac, Schaghticoke, and other Algonquian-speaking peoples, have stewarded through generations the lands and waterways of what is now the state of Connecticut. We honor and respect the enduring relationship that exists between these peoples and nations and this land.

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For information on how to support the Gallery's programs, contact Brian P. McGovern, Director of Advancement and External Affairs, at 203.436.8400 or b.mcgovern@yale.edu.

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In a New Light: Paintings from the Yale Center for British Art
March 24–December 3, 2023

Mickalene Thomas / Portrait of an Unlikely Space

September 8, 2023–January 7, 2024

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Ornament

September 26, 2023–February 18, 2024

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