



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Art and Museum Studies

Issue 4, Spring 2017



Professor Alison Hilton

Dear Art and Museum Studies Students, Faculty, and Alumni,

It is with a mixture of sadness and gratitude that I announce Dr. Alison Hilton's retirement from the University this June. In addition to founding the Art and Museum Studies MA program, Prof. Hilton has served on the art history faculty for more than thirty years and led the department as chair for almost a third of that time. Generations of Georgetown students have benefited from the original lecture and seminar courses she created on a wide range of topics, including Modern Art and Public Issues, Cultural Cannibalism, Art Confronting Difference, Twentieth Century Women Artists, Myth and Modern Art, Art of the 21st century, The Russian Avant-Garde, and Themes in Russian and East European Art.

A distinguished scholar and academic, Hilton held teaching positions at the University of Connecticut, Indiana University, and Wayne State University, and curatorial and research positions at the Hillwood Museum and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington DC. She has had several fellowships and academic exchanges in Russia, at Leningrad State University, Moscow State University, and the State Tretyakov Gallery. She was part of a bilateral commission of the American Council of Learned Societies and the USSR Ministry of Culture to establish scholarly exchanges directly between museums. Hilton also served on the Board of Directors of the College Art Association. Her publications include a book on Russian Folk Art and articles and chapters on Russian realism and impressionism, the avant-garde, nonconformist art, women and gender issues in Soviet art, and studies of individual artists such as Kazimir Malevich and Natalia Goncharova. She is especially interested in the roles and practices of museums in Russia and Eastern Europe.

In 2006, Professor Hilton launched the Art and Museum Studies MA program. In the eleven years since its founding, the program's innovative curriculum of art, museum studies, and hands-on learning has propelled over one hundred and thirty graduates to careers as museum directors, gallerists, auctioneers, curators, development officers, educators, academic program coordinators, exhibitions officers, and many other roles.

Three years ago, I joined the department as the new Art and Museum Studies director. I arrived with a strong sense of the program's mission to educate students in museum best practices, but its policies and procedures were new to me. Bit by bit, week by week, semester by semester, I learned its logic. It was through that process that I came most fully to appreciate the economy of its structure. From the broadest outlines of its curriculum, to the minutiae of how internships are evaluated, everything about it is seamlessly designed.

For this and so much more, I thank Professor Hilton, and honor her achievement.

This fall I heard from an alumna who emailed in the wake of the recent election to say that she was *"grateful daily for the education which the program provided, and was reassured by the steady stream of smart, thoughtful museum professionals who will continue to graduate from the*

program and lead the art world in what [she hopes] would be a new and brighter direction.”

Professor Hilton agrees, and sends this message to AMUS alumni and new students:
“Museums, libraries, and universities are more important than ever to preserve cultural heritage and encourage creative and critical exploration of our world. Along with Professor Strong, I am enormously proud of you and all that you have accomplished already. Your sense of innovation and responsibility will be even more crucial in the future.”

Please join me in thanking Professor Hilton for the legacy of smart, thoughtful museum and art world professionals she leaves behind. Professor Hilton’s wry humor, sharp mind, and administrative acumen will be sorely missed in the department and in the MA program. She will be impossible to replace.

Best regards,

Dr. Lisa Strong
Director, Art and Museum Studies M.A. Program and Associate Professor of the Practice

Program News

Construction proceeds ahead of schedule on the new Maria and Alberto de la Cruz Gallery, which is tentatively slated to open in January 2017. The project will also include a lobby renovation for the Walsh Building, as well as renovations to the existing Spagnuolo Art Gallery. A signature element of the new space will be a dramatic glass-towered entryway which is just now beginning to take shape.

Last fall, the program was pleased to introduce a new course, *Collections Management*, taught by Professor Jerry Foust. The course was taught on-site at Georgetown’s Dumbarton House and Dupont Circle’s Heurich House. In these museum spaces, students were able to tuck between theoretical discussions of cultural patrimony and collecting ethics and hands-on sessions on condition reporting, object handling and packing, and box making. They also witnessed first-hand Dumbarton House’s installation of a new HVAC system. Students in our incoming class will now be able to enjoy state of the art climate control when the course returns to Dumbarton House in fall of 2017.

In October, the program held its second *Careers in Museums and the Arts* panel discussion, co-sponsored by Jacki Banks of the Cawley Career Education Center, and moderated by Alexandria Rojas (MA '17). The panelists included Andrew Krieger, Senior Art Services Specialist, National Gallery of Art; Dr. Lynn Brostoff, Senior Research Scientist and Analytical Services Liaison, Preservation Research & Testing Division, Preservation Directorate, The Library of Congress; Kathleen Dinsmore, Museums and Visual Arts Specialist, National Endowment for the Arts; and Sarah Cash, Associate Curator, Department of American and British Paintings, National Gallery of Art.

We capped off our semester with a lecture by Tuliza Fleming, Curator at the new National Museum of African American History and Culture. Ms. Fleming spoke about the challenges and rewards of building an art collection from scratch with a small budget. She also addressed the particular skill set required by curators, including donor cultivation and fundraising in addition to the ability to recognize new artistic talent.



Professor Hilton at the Groundbreaking for the Maria and Alberto de la Cruz Gallery, Walsh Building, Georgetown University, February, 2017. Photograph courtesy of Al Acres.

Faculty News

Alison Hilton taught a seminar on themes in Eastern Europe and Russian art this spring, and included discussion of museums and galleries in this region. Her recent and current research projects are "Discovery, adaptation, and synthesis: Russian women artists in emigration," an essay for the exhibition catalogue *1917 Russian Phoenixes in the West* at the Galerie ARTVERA'S in Geneva and an article, "Iaroslavna's Lament and its Echoes in Late Nineteenth-century Russian Art" for a collected volume on new, critical approaches in Russian art history. Next October she will take part in an international conference, *Translations and Dialogues: The Reception of Russian Art Abroad* at the Università Ca' Foscari Venezia with a paper entitled "How to Formulate the New Art: National Singularity and Tentative Modernism at International Exhibitions."

Anne Kingery-Schwartz and colleagues from the American Institute for Conservation (AIC) Health & Safety Committee presented a talk as part of the general session at the AIC annual meeting in Chicago in May. The talk, "Not a Known Carcinogen: Health and Safety Considerations of New and Innovative Treatments," focuses on how conservators can protect themselves and their colleagues from materials where there is limited or no health and safety information. The talk uses a case example of cyclododecane, a wax that sublimates (goes from a solid to a gas) at room temperature. It is a material widely used during large collection moves and in various treatments.

Mike Lesperance's interpretive writing was recently recognized with a 2017 "Excellence in Exhibition Label Writing" award from The American Alliance of Museums for text at Fort Scott National Historic Site exploring the refugee crisis that engulfed the region during the Civil War. Lesperance was recently elected Vice Chair of AAM's Council of Professional Networks.

Jayme McLellan's career is the subject of an essay in *Living & Sustaining a Creative Life: Artist as Culture Producer*, edited by Sharon Loudon, published by Intellect Books in March 2017 and distributed by University of Chicago Press. There's a 95 stop book tour underway including a discussion at Georgetown University on October 30, 2017. Her recent independent curating includes *Living On The Land*, Salisbury University, June 1–August 5, 2017.

Lisa Strong, along with Department Coordinator **Maggie Ayres**, participated in the American Alliance of Museums Museum Advocacy Day this spring and is now armed with even more facts and figures to justify government funding for the arts.

Michelle C. Wang co-edited a volume of the journal *Ars Orientalis* titled "The Performative Agency of Buddhist Art and Architecture in Asia." In it, she published an article on miracle tales of animated sculptures titled "Early Chinese Buddhist Sculptures as Animate Bodies and Living Presences." It appeared alongside six other articles addressing aspects of Buddhist art and architecture in China, Japan, India, and Southeast Asia. Her book manuscript *Maṇḍalas in the Making: The Visual Culture of Esoteric Buddhism at Dunhuang* was recently accepted for publication by Brill.

Featured Alumni

Lynn Clouser (MA'08) received her BA from the University of Delaware in Art Conservation, having interned in conservation labs at Winterthur Museum, Library and Gardens and Hagley Museum and Library. While at Georgetown, she focused primarily on preventive conservation with an internship in the registration department at the National Portrait Gallery and as the Andrew W. Mellon Summer Conservation Fellow at the Barnes Foundation in Merion, PA where she worked on an emergency plan for the Ker-Feal estate and completed the treatment of a 19th century dealer frame.



After graduating from Georgetown, Lynn worked as a cataloguer at Winterthur Museum in the curatorial department, focusing on Chinese export porcelain, silver and textiles. In October of 2012, Lynn started as the assistant curator of The Drexel Collection at Drexel University. The Drexel Collection was founded in 1891 and today has approximately 6,000, 19th century fine and decorative art objects. As assistant curator, Lynn acted as collection manager and database administrator as well as curating a number of displays of the permanent collection. In January 2015, Lynn was promoted to assistant director of The Drexel Collection and in January 2017 she was

promoted to director after steadily improving the collection management practices and increasing the collection's role as a resource for academic departments.

As director, Lynn is responsible for a variety of different museum positions including collection manager, exhibitions designer, curator, development and educator. She is responsible for three galleries, with four to six rotating exhibitions per year, both internal and loaned. Lynn also manages the permanent displays of the collection located in the Anthony J. Drexel Picture Gallery, throughout Drexel's Main Building and across its three campuses. She actively connects the collection to academic departments at Drexel to provide relevant exhibitions and displays to the students and faculty. She works with students in Drexel's museum leadership program, entertainment and arts management and art history, offering hands-on experience in exhibition planning and design and collection management. As director of an academic collection, Lynn has discovered the joy of teaching students about the museum field and about our cultural heritage using the artifacts in the collection.



Elizabeth Walker (MA'13) Born and raised in Baton Rouge, LA, Elizabeth graduated from Birmingham-Southern College in 2011 with a B.S. in business administration with minors in art history and economics. During a semester in Amsterdam taking in Europe's many cultural institutions, she started to see the interrelatedness of museums and business. She transferred this perspective into a post-graduate internship at the Louisiana Art & Science Museum where she rotated through every department, gaining a more holistic understanding of museum operations. This solidified her decision to pursue higher education focusing on museums, and Georgetown's program

proved most appealing owing to its small class size, mix of practical and theoretical training, and opportunities for travelling and interning.

While at Georgetown, Elizabeth interned with the department of Scholarly Programs and Publications at the Smithsonian's Freer Gallery of Art and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery. Intrigued by this field, she enrolled in "Arts of Asia and Their Markets" for the semester at Sotheby's in London. Frequent gallery visits and a trip to The European Fine Art Fair in the Netherlands expanded Elizabeth's view of the art world and motivated her to seek even more variety in her experiences; for her final semester, she secured an internship with the world's leading exhibition design firm, Ralph Appelbaum Associates in New York, NY.

Elizabeth was introduced to the intricate and fascinating work of exhibition design during her first project as an RAA content coordinator: the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. She soon joined the firm in a permanent capacity and has been working on projects such as the Nordic Heritage Museum (Seattle, WA), the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum (Austin, TX), the Royal Alberta Museum (Edmonton, Alberta), and the Jebel Buhais Geology Park (Sharjah, UAE). A typical day finds Elizabeth switching between creating and coordinating. She not only leads content development exercises like brainstorming, storyboarding, and building interpretive frameworks, but also manages projects through liaising with clients and tracking text and images

to facilitate graphic production.

Elizabeth draws on her Georgetown experience every day: her grounding in the history and responsibilities of museums, and her understanding of the practical details required to run them, gives her the ability to bridge designers' intentions with clients' goals.

Working with the brilliant minds behind such culturally significant places like the Holocaust Museum, the Clinton Presidential Library, the Newseum, and most recently, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, inspires Elizabeth to continue working in service of fostering museum environments where all people can learn, connect, think, and grow.

Alumni News

Joanna Baker '16 was recently named Head of Collection Management in addition to her previous title of Head of Visitor Services at the Kreeger Museum.

Marni Dropkin '13 has taken a position as Associate Exhibition Project Manager at International Arts and Artists.

Kristin Enright '13 celebrated one year as Teacher Programs Educator at the Art Institute of Chicago and presented on the use of art with English learners at the National Art Education Association convention in New York in March.

Gillian Fruh '08 has become Manager for Exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Kendra Greendeer '16 will be continuing at NMAI until fall, when she will begin doctoral studies in Art History at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Tisha Greenwood '15 was named Executive Director of the California Museum of Art Thousand Oaks.

Claire Hendren '15 will be presenting on collectors of Hudson River School 'studies from nature' and Impressionist pieces at the Writing Impressionism Into and Out of Art History conference at the Courtauld Institute in the Fall.

Cecilia Jackson '16 was named Gordon Darling Graduate Intern, Prints and Drawings, National Gallery of Australia for 2017-18

Evian Kuznik '16 was recently promoted to Art Consultant, Cernuda Gallery, Coral Gables, Florida. She is also the recipient of a 2017 Peggy Guggenheim Fellowship.

Rochelle Safo '15 was featured in a recent Washington Post article on her digitization project at the National Museum of Natural History, "This is How You Photograph A Million Dead Plant Specimens..." (Feb. 8, 2017)

Ann Scoggins '15 recently accepted a position as Grants Management Specialist (Trainee) in the Partnership Division, at the National Endowment for the Arts.

Ana-Alicia Siqueiros '12 joined the Gallery Relations team at Artsy in January.

Ann Wadsworth '15 is now Office Coordinator for ARTnews/Art in America.

Terra Warren '16 is Curatorial Administrative Assistant and Director, Collection Assessment Committee at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.

For general AMUS program information and deadlines, please consult our website art.georgetown.edu. Send student, alumni or faculty updates to gradamus@georgetown.edu.

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