MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the second annual newsletter for the History of Art Department of the University of California, Riverside. Our academic journey in 2019-2020 held great consequence for the department and the University. It is safe to say that no aspect of our departmental community, from students, faculty, and staff to collaborators, alumni, and friends emerged unchanged. What began as a year of great ambition and promise also introduced us to new and unprecedented challenges, from the global COVID-19 pandemic to the necessary and unremitting call to address racism and social injustice prompted by the Black Lives Matter Movement. We met these challenges with earnestness and empathy, and a renewed appreciation for the responsibilities we hold as teachers and scholars.

As always, our departmental bedrock is our students, who in the past year demonstrated incredible capability, adaptability, and social engagement. Our undergraduate classes filled with students whose commitment to social justice brought new expectations to art and the work it does. Already pressured by COVID-19 and the sudden shift to remote learning, these students rose to the moment—balancing their studies with social distancing and activism. I am thinking for example of students in my spring Intro to American art course who demonstrated thoughtfulness and conviction as they analyzed the street art of BLM protests—events many of them attended.

Our Ph.D. and M.A. students were equally dedicated and hard working. The shift to remote education—and the closure of the library—hit them hard. It attenuated seminar discussions and delayed vital thesis research. Yet they persevered with energy and humor. We were honored to witness their dedication and their consistent support of the department, the undergraduates they TA’d, and (most impressively) one another. Our departmental travel grant and Clark fellowship awardees made art history vital through their work and outreach. Others won coveted and highly competitive external fellowships and internships at top-flight museums, and presented papers at significant national venues. We proudly welcome a new class of six M.A. and two Ph.D. students who will continue this trajectory.

Our faculty and staff matched the achievements of our students. The former continued to produce significant scholarship and remained productive in the face of substantial research challenges. We celebrated the career of our esteemed and now retired colleague Malcolm Baker by hosting conference that was (in my admittedly biased estimation) one of the best ever at UCR. Two faculty members, Kristoffer Neville and Johannes Endres, earned promotion to full professor. Most significantly, we added two extraordinary colleagues to the roster as assistant professors, both newly minted Ph.D.s: Yong Cho who specializes in East Asian art and Savannah Esquivel whose expertise lies in the art and material culture of indigenous and colonial Mexico. Yong comes to us with a Getty fellowship in hand, while Savannah will be the point person for our new faculty-level collaboration with the Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens. We are indebted to the Huntington for their support and foresight in this enterprise and look forward to great things. Ever resilient and forward-looking, our staff exemplifies the ideal of academic support in their ability to face challenges while also creating new opportunities. Of note, Visual Resources curator Sonja Sekely-Rowland deserves special mention for bringing new visual materials grants, along with new possibilities for student support, to us. Likewise, our undergraduate and graduate staff advisors were heroic in keeping students informed and on track during the shifting terrain of spring term. For the future, we are fortunate to have Andrea Herzaz joining us in administrative support.

In such a year, some things did not go as planned. Our spring graduate student conference was cancelled due to the pandemic. Several ongoing initiatives, including plans for the next Wong Forum on Art and the Immigrant Experience, are delayed. Hard conversations about race and justice remain for all of us. Yet I close this message with a sense of purpose and anticipation. In facing the tests of 2020, we build new possibilities for the years to come.

Jason Weems
Professor and Chair of the Art History Department
October 2020

YONG CHO
I am thrilled to join the department as a specialist in the arts of East and Central Asia. In spring 2020, I earned my Ph.D. from Yale University with a dissertation “The Mongol Impact: Reinventing the Arts System in Yuan China (1271-1368),” which is an investigation of how the Mongol ruling house’s preference for fabric images had a lasting impact in the history of Chinese art. This dissertation was awarded the Frances Blanshard Prize by the History of Art department at Yale University. Writing it took me to travel, study, and conduct fieldwork in seventeen different countries across Eurasia, the experiences of which I miss deeply during these days of social distancing and remote meetings. I am currently finishing up or at work on several other shorter-length projects: an article on a stone gate built along China’s Great Wall during the period of Mongol rule, an encyclopedia essay on the visual and material cultures of “the Silk Road(s),” and a paper that historicizes the emergence of the grid as a technology of image making among East Asia’s medieval and early modern makers of Buddhist icons. At UCR, I look forward to working with students in courses that address issues such as the notion of borders in visual culture, visual multiculturalism and multilingualism, the visual and material cultures of mobile societies, sacred objects and their relationship to making, and the idea of “barbarians” in the historiography of art.

JOHANNES ENDRES
Besides teaching four courses and seminars for the departments of Art History and Comparative Literature and Languages, I have been able to finish three articles on "Leonardo da Vinci’s Childhood Memory," on “Hans Blumenberg and Leonardo da Vinci,” and on literary strategies of “Ekphrasis and Visual Description in the Writings of Hans Blumenberg.” These articles have been accepted for print by journals and publishers in Europe and the US. Another article on “Vampires and the Orient” was published by German Quarterly, the main outlet of the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG), in spring 2020. Together with Professor Christoph Zeller (Vanderbilt University), I was able to successfully submit the concept for a volume on Collecting in the Twenty-First Century: From Museums to the Web, for publication with Camden House Press. The volume will appear in 2021 and contains contributions from scholars from German Studies, Philosophy, Art History, Media Studies, Intellectual History, Museum Studies, Economics, and Information Technology on new forms and media of collecting in the digital age. I participated in conferences in Berlin/Germany, Portland, and Long Beach and presented on subjects such as “Die Würde des Menschen ist unantastbar: On the Idea of Human Dignity.” I have been active as a reviewer for peer-reviewed journals, academic award committees, and tenure cases. I was myself promoted to full professor, effective July 2020. Also in July this year, I will take over the role of a graduate advisor in our department.

SAVANNAH ESQUIVEL
A deep study of art and the material culture of Mexico and the Hispanic Americas draws attention to the long history of art as a vehicle for social change in the Americas. As a specialist in the art and material culture of Mexico, I am currently at work on two articles. The first examines the intersection of landscape mural painting and environmental crisis in sixteenth-century Mexico. The second focuses on a curious incident of a ghost in a Mexican monastery that interrogates discourses of Indigenous absence and presence in Spanish colonial sources and art historical methodologies. This Fall, I look forward to teaching a graduate seminar on “Art and Indigenous Ecologies in Latin America & the Borderlands,” drawing on The Huntington’s Hispanic collections and the region’s rich history of Indigenous-led environmental activism. Before arriving at Riverside, I recently presented research papers and participated in international workshops in Chattanooga, Chicago, Florence, and Mexico City on topics related to art and settler colonialism and decolonizing approaches to art history. I am very excited to join the History of Art Department in partnership with The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens.
JEANETTE KOHL

In the academic year 2020/21, I will be on two sabbaticals (fall and spring quarters) to finish the manuscript of my new book “The Life of Busts. Sculpted Portraits in Fifteenth-Century Italy.” Following my year as Agnes Gund and Daniel Shapiro member at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton in 2018/19, I served as the interim director of UCR’s Center for Ideas and Society (winter 2020), to which I remain affiliated as the PI of “Being Human,” a new campus-wide initiative for the discussion of interdisciplinary questions between the humanities and sciences. I also am co-chair of the new Medical and Health Humanities Minor at UCR.

Back in the days when one could still travel (2019), I presented my work at Princeton University, the TU Berlin, the university of Florence, the CHIA conference in Florence/Italy, Concordia University and the University of Québec à Montréal, and UCR’s School of Medicine. I never made it to Sao Paolo, Philadelphia, or Warsaw (but hopefully in 2021). In the winter of 2020, Kris Neville, Jason Weems and I co-organized the conference “Engaging Objects” at a farewell to our dear colleague Professor Emeritus Malcolm Baker. Currently, I am in the early stages of developing a project on “Feathers and Wings” with my colleague Barbara Baert at the KU Leuven.


SUSAN LAXTON

Even as Covid 19 threatens to hold up archival research for the foreseeable future, Susan Laxton has been busy working on her book on post-industrial photography, and is finishing up a number of projects that engage her ongoing interest in Surrealism and its legacies. Academic year 2019-2020 saw Professor Laxton’s last year as Graduate Advisor in the department, and while she hopes that the grad students won’t forget her, she is looking forward to returning to full time teaching after her Fall 2020 sabbatical. She continues to work (remotely!) with the Getty research group on their newly acquired “Streets of LA” archive, a collection of more than one million of Ed Ruscha’s images of Los Angeles, produced “automatically,” in the manner of Every Building on the Sunset Strip. That project, which includes determining the search criteria for the archive once it goes live online, has been a fascinating introduction to the language of information technology, and the gains and sacrifices that come with electronic preservation. Happily, its culmination will result in an old-fashioned publication addressing both the formation and critique of the archive. In addition, Professor Laxton has been working with an international cohort of photography scholars and practitioners to found Photography Network, a CAA-affiliated society devoted to the history, criticism, production and curating of photography. Our first CAA session, on photographic networks, will go live at CAA 2021, so keep an eye out for the panel. Meanwhile, see the website-in-formation https://www.photographynetwork.net/ for more information, and expect an announcement soon about membership!

LIZ KOTZ

Liz Kotz is continuing her book project on the emergence of interdisciplinary artmaking, through an examination of An Anthology of Chance Operations, the influential collection of scores, poems, drawings, and manifestos assembled by the composer La Monte Young in the 1960s (and published in 1963).

THANK YOU TO OUR FRIENDS, ALUMNI, AND DONORS!

As a founding discipline at UCR, Art History has a storied record on campus, in our community, and around the world. We have many things to be proud of—the work our students and faculty, the growth of our curriculum and programs and, of course, our active role in promoting knowledge of art as a lynchpin for cultural understanding and action. These efforts are made possible by the support of our alumni, friends, and donors. From the Wong Forum on Art and the Immigrant Experience, the Gluck Arts Program, the Barbara Brink and Richard Carrott student travel grants, to numerous individual contributions, we owe our excellence to you!
KRISTOFFER NEVILLE

Kristoffer Neville was promoted to full professor this spring. In 2019 he published *The Art and Culture of Scandinavian Central Europe 1550-1720* (Penn State University Press), which argues that the Scandinavian kingdoms—Denmark and Sweden and their territories—should be considered integral and culturally vital parts of Central Europe. In 2020 he published articles on the nature of royal architecture in *Art History* and on eighteenth-century eclecticism and architectural theory in *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*. In addition, he has been learning how to teach online—an ongoing process, and a miserable alternative to the fun of teaching in the classroom and in museum galleries! He will be on leave in the winter and spring of 2021, but looks forward to spending more time on campus before too long.

FATIMA QURAISHI

This past year, I was invited to present my research on the Makli necropolis at Stanford University’s Primary Source Symposium and also shared aspects of my book project at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in New York. In October, I was invited to contribute closing remarks at The Graduate Conference on South Asia at UCI, a conference which brought together graduate students from across the UC system. I also pressed forward with my second research project on devotional manuscripts in Kashmir and discussed a works in progress at the Global Nineteenth Century workshop and also presented a paper at the annual conference of the American Academy of Religion. I am currently preparing two articles on aspects of the Makli necropolis—one for a special issue of the journal *Philological Encounters* and another for the journal *Word and Image*. I have also contributed a chapter to an edited volume, *Saintly Spheres and Islamic Landscapes* which will be published in December.

It has also been a busy year of teaching as I expanded course offerings in Islamic art and architecture. I designed and introduced two new courses; an upper division course, ‘Sultans and Saints: The Visual and Material Culture of Islam in South Asia,’ and a seminar for juniors and seniors, ‘Arts of the Book: Manuscript Culture in the Islamic World.’ The latter course allowed students to engage with holdings in the university library’s special collections.

At UCR, I continue to work with colleagues in the departments of History, Comparative Literatures and Language, and English, on the Global Nineteenth Century Workshop, which has been awarded an Interdisciplinary Working Group Award by the Center of Ideas and Society.

MEMBERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ART

FACULTY: Yong Cho, Johannes Endres, Savannah Esquivel, Jeantje Kohl, Liz Kotz, Susan Laxton, Aleca Le Blanc, Kristoffer Neville, Fatima Quraishi, Conrad Rudolph, and Jason Weems


KAITLYN STURGIS

Kaitlyn Sturgis

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JASON WEEMS

Jason Weems continued work on two book-length research projects, one exploring intersections of archaeological and artistic visions of the Americas at the turn of the century, and the other examining photography of and by Native Americans under the New Deal Administration. He also pressed forth with collaborators from UCSB, Stanford, and The China Academy of Art (Hangzhou) on the international research project “Chinese Artists and Artisans in North America, 1850-1950.” This project will take shape with support from the Terra Foundation for American Art. At the same time, Weems began another new and exciting collaborative project with his UCR colleague Conrad Rudolph, entitled “Signature Rocks,” which examines Indigenous and European immigrant landscape inscriptions in the context of nineteenth-century North American settlement. While Weems had all sorts of research travel planned for these projects, those efforts have been postponed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Weems published two articles: one on Edward Hopper’s automobile paintings which appeared in fall 2019, and another on the visual culture of soil conservation in the 1930s Midwest for fall 2020. He delivered a research paper in fall and had a couple more postponed in spring. He advised several students at the graduate level, all of whom are developing original and consequential projects. He continued his work as chair, helping the department to navigate the challenge of COVID-19 and the necessity of Black Lives Matter.

CONRAD RUDOLPH

During the last year, Conrad Rudolph had three major articles appear or be accepted. ‘Medieval Architectural Theory, the Sacred Economy, and the Public Presentation of Monastic Architecture,’ which appeared in the *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* in fall of this last year, takes up the famous ’Bernardine plan,’ showing how through a better understanding of the monastic sacred economy the ’Bernardine plan’ is not really by Bernard of Clairvaux (the leading ecclesiastical politician of his day) at all but a compromise plan of lower spiritual standards, aimed at a broader institutional acceptance. ‘Macro/microcosm at Vezelay: The Narthex Portal and Non-Elite Participation in Elite Spirituality,’ *Speculum*, addresses how an unusually complex concept might be conveyed in a large-scale work of public art to a pilgrimage public that is largely without formal education. “The Evidence of the Training of Tour Guides in the Middle Ages,” in *Tributes to Paul Binski: Studies in Gothic Art, Architecture, and Ideas*, takes up the training of the previously unrecognized medieval tour guide, the principal mediator between the ordinary visitor and the sometimes incredibly lavish and complex art programs—between the public and the public work of art—of the Middle Ages. During this same period, an earlier edited book of his came out in a greatly expanded second edition: *A Companion to Medieval Art: Romanesque and Gothic in Northern Europe*, Blackwell Companions in Art History, 2nd ed. (Wiley-Blackwell, Oxford, 2019), a collection of thirty-nine original essays from leading and upcoming scholars in the field, each historiographically analyzing one of a systematic and editorially determined range of subjects in the development of Romanesque and Gothic art history (eleven new essays were added to the revised original thirty essays; this includes his introductory essay, *A Sense of Loss: An Overview of the Historiography of Romanesque and Gothic Art*).
In May 2020, Chloe Millhauser presented her thesis research at the UC Riverside Center for Ideas and Society’s ‘Virtual Research Conference.’ She then acted as a guest critic for California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo’s 2020 BFA Exhibition, which opened in June 2020. From late June to early August 2020, Chloe worked as an Upward Bound Summer Program Instructor for UC Riverside’s Office of TRIO Programs, where she designed and taught the program’s Art History and Studio Art courses. She is excited to continue teaching as a 2020-2021 Gluck Fellow. Chloe then presented at the London Center for Interdisciplinary Research’s international conference, ‘The Uncanny in Language, Literature and Culture,’ in August 2020, and her essay, “Perspectival Subterfuge: Gerda Leo’s Photographic Uncanny,” will appear in the post-conference published volume. In October 2020, Chloe will present on Raoul Hausmann’s ophthoptonic poetry and photomontage works at the 46th Annual Cleveland Symposium, Bodily Realities: Engaging the Discourse of Dis/Ability. She is also currently authoring a series of three essays on New York galleries for the Art Market Dictionary, forthcoming from de Gruyter in 2020.

Cynthia Neri Lewis, together with UCR’s Jennifer Schepers Hughes, and as part of the University of California’s Critical Mission Studies Grant, co-edited a “Dialogue,” on California Mission art that will appear in the (late) summer issue of the Latin American and Latinx Visual Culture Journal, UC Press. Dr. Hughes and Cynthia also co-wrote the Introduction to the Dialogues and Cynthia also contributed an essay, “Imagined Mission Spaces: Challenges in Visual Culture Interpretation.”

Ph.D. candidate Camilla Querin received the Outstanding Teaching Assistant in the Department of the History of Art for the 2019-2020 academic year. In February 2020 she presented at the College Art Association (CAA) Annual Conference in Chicago. Her paper “The Tranca-Ruas Generation: Afro-Brazilian Strategies of Resistance in Art of 1970’s Brazil” was part of the Open Session for Emerging Scholars of Latin American Art sponsored by the Association for Latin American Art (ALAA). Her essay Heritage Sites: How Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous Communities Leverage Archaeology and Architecture to Protect Their Histories and Challenge the Hegemonic Heritage Discourse was published in the UC Press Journal Latin American and Latinx Visual Culture. (https://online.ucpress.edu/lalvc/article/2/1/82/109571/Heritage-Sites-How-Afro-Brazilian-and-Indigenous)

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: JESSIE PARK

Jessie Park (née Huh, MA 2008) was recently appointed the Nina and Lee Griggs Assistant Curator of European Art at the Yale University Art Gallery. Her position started in April 2020. Prior to this appointment, she served as the Rousseau Curatorial Fellow in European Art at the Harvard Art Museums from 2016 to 2019. While at Harvard, she oversaw the museum’s collection of European paintings and sculpture from the medieval to the Baroque era, organized a reinstallation of 17th-century Dutch and Flemish paintings, and contributed to the exhibition, “Mutiny: Works by Géricault” (2018-2019). She also held curatorial positions in the Drawings Department at the J. Paul Getty Museum and in the Department of European Art at the Huntington. At these institutions, she assisted with international loan exhibitions including “Looking East: Rubens’s Encounter with Asia” (2013, the Getty) and “Face to Face: Flanders, Florence, and Renaissance Painting” (2013-2014, the Huntington), which was presented concurrently with the exhibition she curated, “Crossing the Alps: Artistic Exchange and the Printed Image in Renaissance Europe.” After receiving her MA at UCR, Jessie did her PhD at the University of Arizona, where she completed her dissertation, entitled “Sculpting and Weaving Alliances: Alabaster Funerary Sculpture and Tapestry in the Habsburg Netherlands, 1506-1549.” A chapter of her dissertation will appear in an edited volume on 16th-century European festivities in the age of Holy Roman Emperor Charles V (1500-1558). She also has a forthcoming article in The Art Bulletin on the production of colonial Asian ivories in the Spanish Philippines during the 17th century. Jessie mentors and offers curatorial guidance to students at the undergraduate and graduate levels on a regular basis. She welcomes any current UCR students who are interested in pursuing a curatorial career.

UPDATE FROM THE VISUAL RESOURCE COLLECTION

The 2019-2020 academic year has been a stand-out for the Visual Resource Collection (VRC) filled with both large and small success stories. To begin, we were able to extend limited employment opportunities to two of our recent Art History graduates, John Tran (’18) and Richard Guzman (’19). Seeing our graduates hone their professional skills is deeply rewarding. With their help, the VRC has launched a new website (vrc.ucr.edu).

Our new site better reflects changes in our mission while connecting users to the department’s online image collection, ImageCloud. Our partnership with the Gluck Arts Program at UCR also enjoyed a productive year and we are pleased to announce that the VRC Gluck Global Fellowship has been renewed for 2020-2021. Through our partnership with Gluck, the VRC opens its doors to area middle schools as part of the Gluck VIP Day. These yearly visits are always a highlight for the VRC and this year proved no exception as we shared a quick walkthrough of the history of photographic processes with 140 students. We also have big news to celebrate. The VRC, in partnership with the Image Resource Center at UCSB and the Society of Architectural Historians (SAH), has been awarded a 2020 Humanities Collections and Reference Resources Foundations Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The nearly $60,000 grant will fund a two-year pilot project that surveys at-risk 35mm slide collections of the built environment created and held by members and partner institutions of the SAH. Building on the success of the Color Film Emergency Project, the team will look to create a consortium to improve preservation outcomes by creating a framework for processing, online sharing, and long-term storage. The majority of the grant funds are earmarked as awards for graduate student participation at both UCR and UCSB. Internship opportunities exist for undergraduate art history majors who may also wish to participate. Interested students should contact VRC Curator, Sonja Sekely-Rowland.

Alumni Updates

Chelsea Herr (MA ’14) received her Ph.D. from the University of Oklahoma in 2020 and has been appointed the Jack and Maxine Zarrow Curator for Indigenous Art and Culture at the Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa, OK. Robert Millard (MA ’09) went on to receive a Ph.D. (also in Art History) from Pennsylvania State University in 2017, and for the past several years he has taught Art Appreciation at Yakima Valley College in Yakima, Washington. Recently, the journal I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance published the article, “Death and the Maenad” (www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/10.1086/682721). Kaelyn Rodriguez (MA ’14) completed her Ph.D at UCLA (’20) and is now tenure track Art History faculty at Santa Monica College starting Fall 2020. Samantha Rodriguez (’12) went on to complete her law degree at UCI Law in 2016. After graduating, she began working at a small public interest law firm whose mission and focus is immigration removal defense. Currently, she works for the Los Angeles City Ethics Commission after having made the transition to local government in 2018. Jolin Tran (’18) is pursuing a Master of Architecture at the University of Washington.
Work in Progress Series: 
Professor of Art History, Kristoffer Neville, Ph.D. 
November 5, 2019

This informal work-in-progress presentation explores some strands of early modern history writing, with a particular interest in the linkage of history and topography, the latter of which routinely encompassed architecture in the early modern period. After presenting the basic outline of my project, I look at the ways that some prominent writers integrated topography into their historical work, and how topographers incorporated history into their work. In both cases, it contained the seeds of an architectural history that was more inclusive both geographically and chronologically than other, more familiar early modern publications on architecture.

Digital Art History Is the Continuation of Art History by Other Means

Peter Bell, Ph.D. 
Friedrich-Alexander-University, Erlangen-Nürnberg
January 8, 2020

Digital art history is a branch of art history that has been developing for a long time (since the 1960s), but only recently has it become increasingly institutionalized. In the middle of the digital transformation, the question arises as to how the methods of art history change as a result. Does the use of the computer enrich our methodology or do we fall back by implementing a new formalism? The talk discussed this and related questions. The examples were taken mainly from the collaboration between art history and computer vision, and focused on leading European initiatives in the digital humanities and digital art history (i.e. Time Machine Project, Arbeitskreis Digitale Kunstgeschichte, CHAIROS).

Woven Silk as Embodiment: Tapestry and Imperial Portraiture at the Yuan Court from a Mongol Perspective

Yong Cho, Ph.D. 
February 20, 2020

The Mongol ruling house during China’s Yuan dynasty (1271-1368) emblazoned portrait images of deceased emperors and empresses along with tantric Buddhist mandalas intended to represent their ritual embodiments. Interestingly, these images – portraits and mandala – were woven completely in silk using the technique of tapestry with slits (knot). This was a dramatic departure from established traditions in China and North Asia, where such images were either painted or sculpted. What accounted for this transition in medium, with Yuan rulers opting to produce images of their own bodies as silk tapestry? Examination of the available visual and textual evidence suggests that Yuan rulers understood the process of weaving silk as an especially efficacious means to producing embodied images, where the subject was understood to be present, rather than merely represented. Evidence also shows that such woven images were a product of collaboration among artisans from different corners of the Mongol Empire – a testimony to the cosmopolitan outlook of rulers who, even as they rose to power in China, did not relinquish their ties to the steppe.

Situating Sovereignty: Art and Indigenous Experience in Sixteenth-Century Mexican Missions

Savannah Esquivel 
March 11, 2020

How did Indigenous Mexican communities experience the art and architecture of sixteenth-century missions? I situate monastic mural painting in the broader discourse of Indigenous sovereignty and local knowledge systems to displace the traditional narrative of European colonial hegemony that dominates the study of art and religious conversion. Through analysis of the relationship between murals, architecture, and their viewers, I argue Indigenous artists drew on their experiential knowledge of their land to structure new social and political relations through Christian art. This new account of colonial Mexican art thus challenges modern notions of the Mexican missions as primarily places for religious conversion and European colonization.

Engaging Objects: Looking at Sculpture with Malcolm Baker

February 21, 2020

Center for Ideas and Society, UCR, College Building South

Looking at art with Malcolm Baker is always an adventure. This conference celebrates Distinguished Professor Emeritus Baker’s scholarship and his time at UCR. Baker is an eminent authority in the history of sculpture, especially in 18th-century Britain, France, and Germany. Within that field, he developed a keen interest in portraiture and the history of collecting and display. Professor Baker had an important career as a curator in the UK, first as Assistant Keeper of the Department of Art & Archaeology at the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh, then as Keeper, Deputy Head of Research, and Head of the Medieval and Renaissance Galleries Project in the Victoria & Albert Museum in London. He taught at the Universities of York, Sussex, and at USC before joining UCR’s Department of the History of Art as Distinguished Professor. As chair of the Art History department at UCR he was a key figure in developing and consolidating its ties with the Huntington Library and Gardens and the Getty Museum and Research Institute. Professor Baker’s joy in front of works of art colors his teaching, and students love his classes. During the conference, we will look with friends and colleagues at some engaging objects to honor his career and his unique approach to art and its display.

The conference ran the full day, beginning at 10am and concluding with an evening reception. Speakers included: Daniela Bleichmar (USC), John Brewer (Cambridge), Faya Causey (National Gallery of Art, Washington DC), Thomas E. Cogswell (UCR), Anne-Lise Desmas (Getty Museum), Steve Hindle (Huntington Library), Jeanette Kohl and Kristoffer Neville (UCR). To conclude the day, Malcolm provided us with a valedictory keynote!
We the History of Art Department band together in solidarity with our students and protesters locally, nationally, and globally in condemnation of antiblackness and systemic racism. We raise our voices in outrage against racist injustice in all forms that Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color face in this country today, from police violence to the disparities in healthcare made evident by COVID-19. We mourn the needless deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Nina Pop, Ahmaud Arbery, Sean Reed, Tony McDade, and too many others that have paid the price of the long national shame of racism. We will not stand for it. We must change.

At UC Riverside, we have long promoted our campus as a place of inclusion, diversity, free-thinking, and social betterment. In the past weeks students have raised their voices and called for our support. We must ensure that our actions match our ideals. We now call upon our leadership, and all parts of the campus including our own department, to directly engage this vital moment to empower a university shaped at every level by the ethos of Black Lives Matter. This means an escalating commitment to understanding the day-to-day realities of Black students, staff, and faculty.

We in Art History will take this time to be sure that our practices support these core values. We will care for those around us. We want our students to know that we support them. We encourage them to reach out to us for counsel and understanding. Our commitments as teachers, scholars, and human beings guide us.

The Members of the History of Art Department