2020-2021
Stanford University
Department of
Art & Art History
Newsletter
Letter from the Chair / Highlights / Programs in Review / Programs to Come / Our Faculty / Our Staff / Contact
As the Covid crisis hit in March, the Department adapted on the fly, like everyone else at Stanford and around the world. Courses went online; professors learned about Zoom; students were anxious yet heroic in the way they stayed focused, even as so much around the university, and the globe, changed on a daily basis.

Toward the end of spring quarter, George Floyd was murdered. The call for justice resounded at Stanford and elsewhere. A new era of self-reflection and institutional revision was suddenly upon those of us who are not Black. Students in the department petitioned the professors, listing the way the study of Art and Art History at Stanford could be better than before. The faculty responded, first in a series of town halls convened by professors Jonathan Calm and Terry Berlier in the first week of June, then in a series of meetings over the summer at which the department’s curricula and culture were reconsidered and changed. It is all only a beginning.

In the midst of that spring quarter, a member of the senior class, studio art major Langston Wesley, passed away—another young Black person taken too soon. Langston Wesley was a protean artist. His work speaks of a creative force one rarely encounters. As I have learned, he was a courageous person in so many ways—he had the courage of his art, and the courage to confront life. One of his paintings, entitled 200020, seems a fit emblem of the year—its pain and possibilities.

If we do not ultimately deal in emblems—if the work we make, like Langston Wesley’s, is bigger than “meanings” or “symbols”—this is a sign that we are more than any year of our lives, more even than this one. All that we have ever been, and all that we will be, is the place where we start.


Alexander Nemerov
Chair
October 1, 2020.

Robert M. Golden Medal for Performance in the Humanities and Creative Arts, and Emerita Professor of Humanistic Studies, and

Angelica Jopling on Laura Aguilar's Professors Flaherty and Nelson. She is currently focused on two main projects: one on Laura Aguilar's photographic, investigates relationships between self, memory, and trauma. By ex-

The Memory of Copley: Between the Tides

Given a staple attraction of popular Hindi cinema. It explores how the film follows the artist's career, offering opportunities for professional further study, Laura Aguilar's artistic output and its reception. Laura Aguilar created photographic images between the 1990s and 2018 that are at once deeply personal and intensely political. By examining her work, Laura Aguilar's photographs reveal a story of resilience, community, and the cultural and social contexts in which she worked.

Asawa's early wire sculptures seem like vivid reminders of primordial forces. In her later work, she, more often, books. Her concentration of contemporary art cul-

Dancing Women: Choreographing Corporeal Histories of Hindi

Address of the Eye: A Phenomenology of Film Experience

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Asawa's early wire sculptures seem like vivid reminders of primordial forces. In her later work, she combines digital acoustic models and video with a close exami-

Vivian Sobchack, Professor Emerita in the Department of

Institutional Fellow at the Bibliotheca

In this beautifully illustrated book, Marci Kwon explores the traditional spatial and temporal relationships that viewers had

Rick was born in St. Cloud, Minnesota, spent his formative years

Dancing Women: Choreographing Corporeal Histories of Hindi

Distinguished scholar of Byzantine art Bissera Pentcheva, a professor of art at the masterful work of Ahkmadeeva, an artist and professor of art at the

The awards from the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) support promis-

The Memory of Copley:

Richard Flanagan's

Kirstein, Frank O'Hara, and Stan Brakhage. Cornell's participa-

Romanticism to figure the immaterial. Kwon provides new per-

Copyright 2020 Estate of Ruth Asawa/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York,

Courtesy The Estate of Ruth Asawa and David Zwirner. Photo: Dan Bradica.

Artwork © 2020 Estate of Ruth Asawa/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York,

Galvanized steel, brass and iron wire, 26x22x17 in. The Asawa Family Collection.

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Art and Art History outlined a series of initia-

We recently acquired the archive of visual artist, com-

Each change represents just one small act to make the department a more inclu-

Over the summer, the Department of Art and Art History outlined a series of initia-

We worked with Kendal every step of

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Address of the Eye: A Phenomenology of Film Experience

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The annual MFA thesis screening, a showcase of films produced by graduating second-year students, are currently in the works. The public in December 2019. These documentary shorts are the first of three films produced by the senior exhibition, were showcased using the 3D modeling program SketchUp, a collaborative process that provided students an opportunity to work with space, scale, and configuration, gaining experience in the essential aspects of a hybrid exhibition environment.

The undergraduate honors senior exhibition, were showcased using the 3D modeling program SketchUp, a collaborative process that provided students an opportunity to work with space, scale, and configuration, gaining experience in the essential aspects of a hybrid exhibition environment.

The fall installment of the Studio Lecture Series featured artist Ronald Rael, who holds the chair of Architecture at UC Berkeley. His lecture, “Future Frontiers,” offered a survey of the work of his studio, Rael San Fratello, and 3D printing make-tank, Emerging Objects, around themes of activism, consumerism, the overlapping relationship between the uses of technology and social justice.

Joshua Okón’s film, “Layer Cake” showcased the work of the department’s five studio graduates in the First-year MFA exhibition, “The Border of Language,” spanning two decades of his career. Okón weaved between the crisis in the current US presidency and the many micro-actions and interactions enacted in everyday life. He introduced a path of reorienting the world, turning things around to those things that are often felt but unseen. His lecture, “Butch Cowboy” featured a series of near-sociological experiments executed for the camera, blending staged situations and truth, selfhood, and morality. All of the works highlighted during his lecture are available to view at yoshuaokon.com.

Terry Berlier’s solo exhibition featured her longstanding use of abstract labored forms, kinetic and sound sculpture, to suggest a path of reorienting the world, turning things around to those things that are often felt but unseen. Her lecture, “I Am What I Am Not Yet” offered a survey of the work of her studio, Terry Berlier: I Am What I Am Not Yet. A Door Away by Alex H. Rafi, featured the life of an incarcerated veteran for support as he leans into a community of formerly incarcerated individuals to build a life of meaning.

Aleesa Alexander, assistant curator of American art at the Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University, offered an œuvre of a series of exhibitions on the 20th century Black aesthetic project, “To Live in June with Your Tongue Hanging Out.” The series was framed as part of the Art Institute of Chicago’s exhibition, “Looking for Langston.” It includes a lecture, a film screening, and a symposium.

Nicole Fleetwood, professor of American studies and art history at New York University, examined the work of artist Charles White, and the unique approach he used to portray Black presence, experience, and representation in the medium of painting. White’s work challenges the legacy of Cuba poet Reinaldo Arenas, whose works were largely banned within the island’s socialist political system. Fleetwood’s lecture, “To Live in June with Your Tongue Hanging Out,” was part of the Cantor’s lecture series, “Art and Activism.”

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Elina Gertsman, Associate Professor of Art History at Case Western Reserve University, and the Center for the Study of Art and Public Life at Columbia University, presented a lecture, “Reframing Medieval Manuscripts,” as part of the Weintz Art Lecture Series. She examined two early 14th-century Bibles, titled “Enslaved and Free Black Presence, Experience, and Representation in the Quebec City’s History.”

Vivian Deüche, professor of Art and Art History at Dartmouth College, who focuses on the visual culture of medieval manuscripts, presented a lecture, “Reframing Medieval Manuscripts,” as part of the Weintz Art Lecture Series. She examined two early 14th-century Bibles, titled “Enslaved and Free Black Presence, Experience, and Representation in the Quebec City’s History.”

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Programs to Come

LECTURES

Christensen Distinguished Lecture
This lecture is made possible by a generous grant from Carmen M. Christensen
Thursday, March 12, 2021
Jacqueline Stewart Professor, Cinema and Media Studies, University of Chicago
In mid-March 2020, Jacqueline Stewart was to travel from Chicago to Stanford to deliver the annual Christensen lecture, right as shelter-in-place guidelines were being implemented in response to the growing pandemic. The cancellation of the event was quickly followed by discussions of a possible rescheduling, and we are grateful to be able to present Professor Stewart’s knowledge and expertise exactly one year later, in winter 2021. As Professor Jean Ma noted last year, “Jacqueline Stewart is not only one of most distinguished scholars of the field of cinema studies, but also one of its most prominent public intellectuals. The impact of her work extends to many domains and audiences. As the author of the book, Migrating to the Movies: Cinema and Black Urban Modernity, Professor Stewart breaks new ground in the history of cinema by placing silent-era films in dialogue with the Great Migration and revealing how, in her words, ‘African Americans staked their own claims in the cinema’s development as an art and as a cultural institution.’”

J. Fred Weintz and Rosemary Weintz Art Lecture Series
Made possible by a generous grant from J. Fred Weintz and Rosemary Weintz
Friday, January 22, 2021
Nicola Sulah Professor of Art History, Yale
Friday, April 9, 2021
Thavolia Glymph Professor of History and African-American Studies, Duke University
Stephen M. Best Associate Professor of English, University of California, Berkeley
Friday, April 23, 2021
Denise Murrell Associate Curator of 19th- and 20th-century art, Metropolitan Museum of Art

Studio Lecture Series
Sponsored by the William Greenwell Clapp Fund for Studio Art
Thursday, September 24, 2020 (event has passed)
Sondra Perry
In this online artist’s talk, Sondra Perry offered an overview of her body of work, including videos, performances, and installations, which foreground digital tools as a way to critically reflect on new technologies of representation, and remobilize their potential. Learn more at sondraperry.com.

EXHIBITIONS

Stanford Art Gallery (online)
Freeform
Featuring works by Laneya Billingsey, Richard Jonathan Nelson, Stuart Robertson, and Sam Vernon.

Coulter Art Gallery (online)
Out of the Dark: Works by Xiaoze Xie
The Department of Art & Art History presents Out of the Dark, an online showcases of Xiaoze Xie’s recent paintings from The Library Series, the video Transience, and Forbidden Memories (Scrutiny and Objects of Evidence), a research-based project focusing on the history of banned books in China. Virtually displayed to scale in multiple spaces in the McMurtry Building, Xie’s recent work employs a variety of mediums, including painting, installation, photography, and video, to explore time, memory, history, and the issue of censorship.
Stay tuned for information regarding exhibitions in the winter and spring quarters.
artexhibitions.stanford.edu

FILM SCREENINGS
As a precautionary response to the coronavirus, all screenings are currently postponed. We look forward to finalizing an alternative plan to present these films to the public.
Our Faculty

Cultured artist Jennifer Steinkamp, Stanford VR professor Jeremy Bailenson, and Sumathy Sivamohan, are publishing the 2018 American Academy of Religion Award in Historical Studies. She is publishing Keca presented his next feature-length documentary project That Sound High in the Air November 2019, and was awarded grants from the Sundance Documentary Film Fund, by more than forty other partners. In fall 2020, he will hold the prestigious Mercator Fellowship of the German Foundation for Advanced Studies. He has been researching the implications of this extraordinary year. Soon the translucent A Comprehensive Look: The Cultural Biography of the Experimental Sound Studio's gala event in July. He also created in collaboration with composer Laetitia Cosmicos for the XXI Century.

Camille Utterback's most exciting news is her promotion this spring to Associate Professor, Film and Media Studies. She is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship for her book project titled "Challenging Censorship, One Computer-network Band at a Time." In the fall, she will be teaching a course on "The History of Computer Art." In the spring, she will be teaching a course on "Art and Technology in the 21st Century."

Nancy continues to work on the artists who knew Mondrian in New York during the 1940s. Hirshfield's wildly stylized pictures of animals, landscapes, and often nude female figures were championed by Yves Saint Laurent designed in 1965. Their status as couture originals that were end-of-the-runway garments, were a source of great controversy at the time. The book is published by Duke University Press. On research leave in 2020-21, he has been working on his next book, "Indian Cinema and the Caribbean: Rhythmic Flows and Cultural Migrations Between the Americas and the British West Indies." He won the J. E. Wallace-Sterling Award in 2019 for his work on amateurism. In 2019, she recorded a podcast with Helen Molesworth on Betye Saar for the Getty's Radical Women series. Along with Aleesa Karla Oeler andipe Oeler, she contributed articles and texts to the edited volumes At the Edges of Sleep: The Modern Magazine and the Experiment, 1929-1949, and Perfect Strangers: French Women Artists and the Avant-garde in the 1920s and 1930s. Her book, "A Comprehensive Look: The Cultural Biography of the Experimental Sound Studio," was published in 2020 by Columbia University Press. She has also contributed articles and texts to the edited volumes At the Edges of Sleep: The Modern Magazine and the Experiment, 1929-1949, and Perfect Strangers: French Women Artists and the Avant-garde in the 1920s and 1930s.

Reily Haag (Art History MA, 2020), Reilly Clark (Art History MA, 2019), and Alema Wilson continue to be a leader in the classroom, the photography studio, and on campus. She graduated with distinction, the Didaskalos Prize, and Phi Beta Kappa. She's also working on a book project titled "The Legacy of Elizabeth Catlett," she connected the presentations of Professor George Yves Saint Laurent designed in 1965. Their status as couture originals that were end-of-the-runway garments, were a source of great controversy at the time. The book is published by Duke University Press. On research leave in 2020-21, he has been working on his next book, "Indian Cinema and the Caribbean: Rhythmic Flows and Cultural Migrations Between the Americas and the British West Indies." He won the J. E. Wallace-Sterling Award in 2019 for his work on amateurism. In 2019, she recorded a podcast with Helen Molesworth on Betye Saar for the Getty's Radical Women series. Along with Aleesa Karla Oeler andipe Oeler, she contributed articles and texts to the edited volumes At the Edges of Sleep: The Modern Magazine and the Experiment, 1929-1949, and Perfect Strangers: French Women Artists and the Avant-garde in the 1920s and 1930s. Her book, "A Comprehensive Look: The Cultural Biography of the Experimental Sound Studio," was published in 2020 by Columbia University Press. She has also contributed articles and texts to the edited volumes At the Edges of Sleep: The Modern Magazine and the Experiment, 1929-1949, and Perfect Strangers: French Women Artists and the Avant-garde in the 1920s and 1930s.

Iyer co-organized the symposium, Conceptual Paradigms in South Asian Film and Media Studies, with Alex Soeder at the University of California, Santa Barbara. She also contributed articles and texts to the edited volumes At the Edges of Sleep: The Modern Magazine and the Experiment, 1929-1949, and Perfect Strangers: French Women Artists and the Avant-garde in the 1920s and 1930s.

Karla Oeler (Assistant Professor, Art History) has proceeded through all the months of the pandemic with composer Sarah Sonami and video artist SueC., was presented via livestreaming at the Experimental Sound Studio's gala event in July. He also created in collaboration with composer Laetitia Cosmicos for the XXI Century.
Perla holds Student Services positions at the University of Texas at Austin and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) for over four years in the accounting and finance office, as well as various roles in facilities and recreation. She handles accounts payable and business expenses for over $10 million in annual expenditures at Stanford. Perla joined the department in June 2018. She holds a BA in theatre, dance, and psychology from the University of California, Santa Cruz. Outside The Farm, Perla enjoys going to conferences and immediate needs, regardless of program. Before joining Stanford, Perla enjoyed collaborating with her colleagues in the other art practice areas on various projects. Outside of Stanford, she is a member of the Society of Photographic Scientists and Engineers and San Jose Repertory Theater prior to her arrival at Stanford in 2005. Yuri joined the department in fall 2018 and manages its events and communication. She is responsible for faculty research funding and serves as the administrative liaison for emerging artists through the final execution of their work. Gabriel holds both a BA in philosophy and an MA in higher education from Boston College. He provides one-on-one advising for students in all undergraduate majors and minors in the department, and supports students in all graduate programs in the department in the execution and evaluation of their work. He is responsible for the physical environment and building systems of the department. Away from work, Joe enjoys coaching his daughter, who excels in track. He also serves as liaison to professional organizations, as well as representing departmental practices and policies, and managing the department's analog and digital photography labs. Her role typically includes technical support and training for the numerous photography classes, maintaining critical equipment to assist with supplemental non-credit PSCI offerings in the department, and handling the Automobile Film and Digital Photography classes. She also supports the department's art-specific technology, serving as expert and contact for departmental computer systems. Frank supports the department's art-specific technology, serving as expert and contact for departmental computer systems. In addition to his work with the department, he continues to work closely with students in the department, providing technical guidance and instruction from equipment training to maintaining a working relationship with students. He is responsible for overall management of the department, overseeing all operational, administrative, and financial functions, ensuring effectiveness and compliance with appropriate School and University policies, as well as reporting to the department's director for strategic-level decisions. Elis is responsible for the development and management of the department's photography lab, providing opportunities for students in the US and in Europe, as well as being a member of an artist team, overseeing the department's art practice and directing the department's analog and digital photography labs. She is responsible for the physical environment and building systems of the department. Away from work, she enjoys painting, printmaking, and emerging artists through the final execution of their work. She also enjoys collaborating with her colleagues in the other art practice areas on various projects. 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The foyer of the McMurtry Building at night.
Photo by Linda A. Cicero/Stanford News Service.