



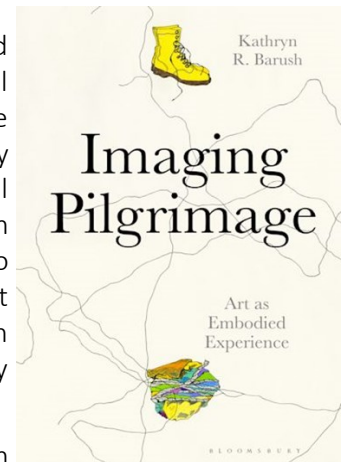
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY OF ART

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER, ISSUE 20, DECEMBER 2021

ALUMNI UPDATES

Kathryn Barush (D.Phil. 2012) continues in her faculty position as Associate Professor and Thomas E. Bertelsen Jr. Chair of Art History and Religion at the Berkeley Graduate Theological Union and Santa Clara University in California, USA. She is pleased to announce the publication of her second book, *Imaging Pilgrimage: Art as Embodied Experience* (Bloomsbury Visual Culture). It has been endorsed by Jaś Elsner (University of Oxford) as ‘a vivid and vital evocation of the visual cultures of contemporary pilgrimage’ and by Simon Coleman (University of Toronto) as ‘deeply engaging to read and to think with.’ She was excited to share some of the material from the book as part of a public panel on the idea of the fragment at the Getty Research Institute. Over the pandemic, Dr Barush collaborated with the British Pilgrimage Trust on a Glastonbury Way virtual pilgrimage with a GPX map and annotated essay which was featured in the *Guardian*.



Other recent publications include an article on the afterlife of Becket’s relics and the modern imagination in the *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* special issue published in conjunction with the British Museum exhibition and a more public-facing essay on contemporary artist and filmmaker Chiara Ambrosio’s zine series ‘As Far as the Eye Can Travel’ in the *Brooklyn Rail*. Dr Barush is in the process of founding a Berkeley Center for Art and Interfaith Pilgrimage and looks forward to sharing more as the project develops.

Ariana Kalliga (GR/UK) is a curator living in Athens. Influenced by her cultural upbringing in Greece, Wales, and the US, her curatorial approach seeks to engage and strengthen transnational connections between Greek & international art practice. Since graduating from the Department of History of Art in 2018, she worked as a Stavros Niarchos Foundations scholar at MoMA’s Architecture and Design Department, on the exhibitions: NeriOxman: Material Ecologies (MoMA, 2020), The Value of Good Design (2019), and Modern Architecture in South Asia: The Project of Decolonization (Forthcoming), as well as the Norman Foster Foundation (Madrid) as an Archives Fellow in 2020. Her research is underpinned by a focus on the present-day legacies of post-war Mediterranean cities through community archives, exhibition histories and film. Since returning to Athens in 2021, she has been curating the non-profit space52, which hosts an annual programme of exhibitions, residencies and publications. Recent space52 events, include: Wolfgang Tillmans’ ‘Life Guarding’ solo show (Athens Queer Archive Festival), and Set To Go, a screening program on dance & movement featuring the Brazilian films of Luiz Roque, Barbara Wagner, among others. She also curated the exhibition, ‘Never Cross the Same River Twice’, alongside French-Togolese independent curator Kisito Assangni in 2021 at space52, Athens, which won the support of the NEON Organization Greece’s prestigious annual exhibition grants.

ALUMNI UPDATES

Ani Kodjabasheva

Greetings to all. I hope you are well and finding light in these challenging times. If anyone is in Bulgaria or visiting the region, or working in arts and architecture non-profits and would like to talk, feel free to get in touch. I'd like to share that I work for an architecture and urbanism non-profit called The Collective Foundation. We do "placemaking" - we develop new public space together with locals. I'm excited to share that one of our projects just won an international competition, the 2021 Idea Challenge by the organisation Civic Europe. We were selected along with 17 other projects from 12 countries out of a total of 551 eligible projects submitted. I and my co-writer for this project are happy and humbled our idea made the cut. We plan to teach high school students how they can change their city for the better and create the urban environment they want. If anyone is curious, you can read about our idea here: <https://civic-europe.eu/ideas/danube-design-lab/>. I also write somewhat regular features for the US-based publications *Artists Magazine*, *Pastel Journal*, and *Watercolor Artist*. Some of these are available to read on my website - www.anikodjabasheva.com.

David Zagoury

I was awarded a Postdoctoral Fellowship from the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles for the year 2020-21 (as part of the annual theme 'The Fragment'). Due to Covid-19, the Getty fellowship was not residential but virtual. I physically remained in Rome as a Scientific Guest at the Bibliotheca Hertziana - Max Planck Institute for Art History (where I was previously a postdoctoral fellow). Back in May 2020 I was awarded the Otto Hahn Medal 2019 of the Max Planck Society. The Medal is awarded each year to the most promising young scholars of the Max Planck Society, across all disciplines, who completed their PhD under the age of 30. It is conferred on the basis of the evaluation of the candidate's doctoral thesis by up to four independent scientific jurors nominated by the Max Planck Society. (The Bibliotheca Hertziana posted a more elaborate press release [here](#), and so did the University of Cambridge, where I completed my PhD, [here](#)). Currently, I am the recipient of a postdoctoral fellowship from the Swiss National Science Foundation. The award, named Postdoc.Mobility, funds up to three years of research and travel, and thanks to it in 2021-22 I will be a Visiting Scholar at, successively, the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University (working with Professor Alexander Nagel) October 2021 through February 2022, and at the University of Toronto (working with Professor Evonne Levy) March through August 2022.

Arthur Laidlaw

I am delighted to announce that I will be exhibiting a selection of new paintings at June, alongside sculptural punctuations by Fernando Marques Penteadó. Doubles is the realisation of a group of images produced during – and greatly influenced by – the last eighteen months. The works continue a project begun earlier this year providing brief moments of escape through painting.

Doubles Exhibition Dates 06.11 — 11.12.2021

June Strausberger Platz 19 10243 Berlin



Please don't hesitate to contact me or the curator of the exhibition, Camila McHugh, for a list of works, press release, or a virtual walkthrough of the exhibition.

Images of the show will also be made available via both my Instagram profile and the gallery's, during the exhibition.

WELCOMING NEW STAFF

Terra Visiting Professor of American Art 2021-22 Professor Charlene Villaseñor Black



Charlene Villaseñor Black is currently Professor of Art History and Chicana/o Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. She is a leading expert on a range of topics related to contemporary Latinx art, the early modern Iberian world and Chicanx studies.

Professor Villaseñor Black's expertise will make a valuable contribution to the breadth of subjects offered as part of Oxford's teaching and research in the History of Art. In 2016, she was awarded UCLA's Gold Shield Faculty Prize for Academic Excellence for exceptional teaching, innovative research, and strong commitment to university services. Her proposed undergraduate course at Oxford expands the definition of American art by positioning Hispanic art of the United States, from the 18th-century to the present day, at the heart of what it means to be 'American'. Professor Villaseñor Black is editor of *Aztlán: A Journal of Chicano*

Studies, and founding editor-in-chief of *Latin American and Latinx Visual Culture* (UC Press). Her most recent books include *Renaissance Futurities: Art, Science, Invention and Knowledge for Justice: An Ethnic Studies Reader* (both from 2019), the new 2020 edition of *The Chicano Studies Reader*, and *Autobiography without Apology: The Personal Essay in Latino Studies*, which she co-edited.

While at Oxford, Professor Villaseñor Black will be conducting research related to her current book project and upcoming exhibition, to be mounted at USC's Fisher Museum of Art in 2024, in collaboration with the California Institute of Technology's Graduate Aerospace Laboratories. Entitled *Verdant Worlds: Exploration and Sustainability across the Cosmos*, this project takes as its theme the twin roots of exploration and sustainability in the early modern Hispanic-Anglosphere.

Associate Professor in the History of Art, St Peter's Dr Cora Gilroy-Ware



In her publications, exhibitions and teaching, Cora Gilroy-Ware seeks to challenge the assumed universality of Western hegemonic perspectives. She is particularly interested in the fabrication of ideal beauty from the 17th century to the present day, and the role of classicising sculpture and pictorial art in the reification of "racial" difference. Before coming to Oxford, Cora was a Lecturer in History of Art at the University of York, where she was nominated by the University's Student Union Excellence Awards for Teacher of the Year, 2020-21.

Completed as part of a Collaborative Doctoral project shared between the University of York and the Tate Gallery, her doctoral project on the surprisingly under-researched classical nude in late-eighteenth century British art led to her first book, *The Classical Body in Romantic Britain*, published in April 2020 by the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art in association with Yale University Press. Research for this project laid the foundation for a broader interest in overlooked chapters in the history of visual classicism. With support from the Henry Moore Foundation, she is currently at work on a second book project on adaptations of Greco-Roman art, particularly marble sculpture, among artists of African and indigenous American descent including Phillis Wheatley, Ellen Craft, Mary Edmonia Lewis, Augusta Savage, Selma Burke, Carrie Mae Weems, Adrian Piper and Kara Walker. As a scholar of BIPOC heritage, she seeks to reconcile decolonial methods with traditional art historical areas of concern.

Cora has curated at Tate Britain, the Huntington European Art Gallery and MK Gallery, and held fellowships at the Yale Center for British Art, the Huntington Library, California Institute of Technology, University of Naples L'Orientale and University College London. As an artist herself, Cora is also interested in projects that integrate theory and practice. She has recently edited a book on behalf of the contemporary artist Isaac Julien CBE RA centred on *Lessons of the Hour*, Julien's filmic portrait of the African American freedom fighter Frederick Douglass. She brings her historical expertise to bear on her contemporary art criticism, which has been published in the *London Review of Books*, *X-Tra Contemporary Art Quarterly* and elsewhere.

WELCOMING NEW STAFF

Department Lecturer in History of Art, Christ Church

Saul Nelson



Saul is an art historian of the modern period. His work analyses the global development of modernist art in the aftermath of World War II. It uses this broadened context to rethink the work of artists who have formerly been seen as regressive or conservative, asking how their work might have engaged such vital political concerns as cold war nationalism or the critique of colonialism. An example of this approach, 'Writing to Barnett Newman: F.N. Souza and the End of Modernism', has recently appeared in *Art History*. His work has also been published in the *Oxford Art Journal* and *The London Review of Books*. Saul will be teaching Approaches to the History of Art and Art, Design, Architecture: Meaning and Interpretation. His most recent article is in *Art History*: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1467-8365.12573?af=R>

Department Lecturer in History of Art, Lincoln

Dr Di Wang



My research challenges conventional narratives about the art of early twentieth-century China in relation to the Western art-historical canon, revealing the interconnections between aesthetic pursuits and epistemological modes in the construction of modern Chinese subjects. My first book project, *Anatomical Visions and Revolutionary Bodies*, builds on my doctoral research at Oxford and examines the history of how the 'racialized body' was scientifically assessed and artistically represented across different visual media in Modern China.

Teaching Painting and Culture in Ming China this term has been both challenging and rewarding. I truly enjoyed looking at paintings together with the students with a fresh perspective and learning from them in the process. Although we don't always believe the Ming literati, the class enjoyed views of their gardens and 'travelling' in the idealized landscape they created. The teaching experience has inspired me to host a Chinese language podcast for non-specialist audience, featuring stories about transformative experience of art by contemporary artists from China and the diaspora artistic communities.

STAFF NEWS

Dr Costanza Beltrami

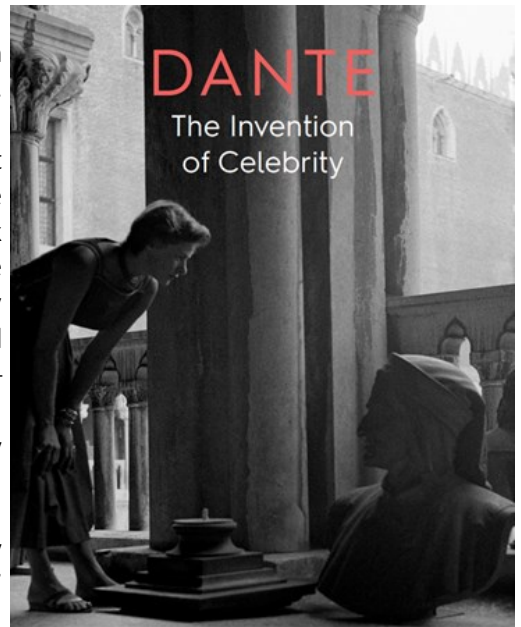
Costanza is the Departmental Lecturer in Medieval and Renaissance Art History. This year, she is enjoying teaching undergraduate and master's courses on pre-modern art and architecture that juxtapose Gothic and Renaissance buildings and place them in global contexts. She is also working on her monograph *Gothic Networks: Juan Guas in fifteenth-century Spain*, an analysis of architectural exchange and collaboration at a time of artistic innovation and growing religious intolerance. When the last issue of this newsletter was published, she had just convened (with DPhil candidate Sylvia Alvares-Correa) the conference *Travelling Objects, Travelling People: Art and Artists of Late-Medieval and Renaissance Iberia and Beyond, c. 1400–1550* (online, 10–11 December 2020). Several speakers and other invited authors have contributed essays for an edited volume. Ranging from Sardinia to Madeira, Antwerp to Potosí, the book's chapters construct a complex image of contacts moving in and out, north and south, east and west of the Iberian Peninsula, refashioning canonical geographies and chronologies of artistic exchange. In July, Costanza contributed to the Ashmolean Museum's conference *Cabinet, Laboratory, Gallery 1500–1800: The Preservation of Art and Material Culture in Europe* (2 July 2021). Conference proceedings will be published as a special issue of *Notes and Records: The Royal Society Journal for the History of Science* in 2022, and Costanza's article is already available online at <https://doi.org/10.1098/rsnr.2021.0045>. Another forthcoming publication explores the idea of modernity at the famous Toledan convent of San Juan de los Reyes. Costanza is Secretary of Artes: Iberian and Latin American Visual Culture Group and Reviews Editor of the journal of British Archaeological Association. Both charities organise lectures and visits, and offer grants and prizes, so please consider joining or submitting your work!

STAFF NEWS

Professor Gervase Rosser

Gervase Rosser has been spending his research time with Dante, on whom – in the 700th anniversary of the poet's death – he has curated an exhibition at the Ashmolean Museum: 'Dante: The Invention of Celebrity'. This has been an opportunity to bring out of the shadows many wonderful objects and images inspired by Dante's *Comedy*. The question – Is it possible to communicate in visual images the greatest creation of the human mind in poetry? – has been fascinating to explore through the work of the many artists who, from the Renaissance to the present, have responded to the challenge. Gervase also published an illustrated essay with the same title as the exhibition, reflecting on Dante's profound engagement with the complex relationship that human beings have had – and continue to have – with fame. The cover shows a photograph of Ingrid Bergman and Dante looking at one another: the actor deliberately constructs her own fame in the reflected light of that of the poet.

In addition to the Ashmolean exhibition, Gervase curated a smaller display at the Bodleian Library: 'The *Divine Comedy* from Manuscript to Manga' and another at Christ Church Picture Gallery.



Also under the sign of Dante, Gervase invited to Oxford the French choreographer Luc Petton, who presented at the Weston Library a screening of a film of his ballet, *Ainsi la Nuit*, which is inspired by the *Divine Comedy*. Luc's company has danced for twenty years with birds and animals: all of his work prompts us, as humans, to re-think our relationship to the natural world. The dance is extraordinary, and the humility of the human dancers in the presence of the wolf, the vulture and the owls (who lead the dancers, rather than the other way around) resonated perfectly with the central theme of Dante's poem, which is the need to set aside ego, give space to the other creature, and be generously open in our relationships.



Luc Petton,
Ainsi la Nuit,
dancer with
wolf



Luc Petton,
Ainsi la Nuit,
dancer with
vulture

And pursuing further the theme of Dante and the transhuman, Gervase involved in his exhibition and in related programming the artist-robot Ai-Da. Readers of Dante now include intelligent computers. This is just one symptom of our rapidly changing world, in which AI is playing an ever-greater role. The Ai-Da Robot Project has the aim of raising awareness and fostering conversation about a subject which will radically change our lives in the coming years. Ai-Da made Dante-related artworks which were displayed in the Ashmolean exhibition. She also came 'in person' to an exceptional 'Ashmolean Late' event, where she performed a poem composed by the robot herself in response to a canto of Dante's *Comedy*. This was the first such performance ever to take place in the world. The encounter is generating considerable public and press interest.



STAFF NEWS

Professor Geoff Batchen

Geoff Batchen continues to publish various kinds of writing about art and photography, including an essay about the history of stereographic daguerreotypes in the journal *History of Photography* in 2020, a pair of interviews in the Slovenian magazine *Membrana*, a Foreword to an exhibition catalogue devoted to the work of the Australian sculptor Margel Hinder, and two video-interviews recorded for the Indian on-line resource *PIX*. He also continues to work on a pair of exhibitions, due to open at the Bodleian Library in January 2023. One of them, titled *A New Power: Photography in Britain 1800-1850*, looks at the invention and dissemination of the photographic image, with particular reference to its appearance in publications. The second will focus on the William Henry Fox Talbot Archive and will again feature early photographs and related items. Two books will be published to accompany the exhibitions.



William Henry Fox Talbot, *A scene in a library*, 1844 salt print from a calotype negative

Professor Geraldine Johnson

Geraldine Johnson recently completed two years as the Senior Censor of Christ Church after serving as Junior Censor for the previous two years, along with a one-year stint as Head of the History of Art Department and a four-year term as an Elected Member of Council, Oxford University's governing body. She is now on a much-needed sabbatical during which she will be completing a number of research projects. These include a book on sculpture and photography for Reaktion Books, a major edited collection entitled *The Theories and Methods of Art History* for Wiley-Blackwell, and a monograph on art and the senses in Renaissance Italy for Cambridge University Press. One of the chapters in the latter volume will include material from an article published in December 2020 in *Renaissance Quarterly* entitled "[Embodying Devotion: Multisensory Encounters with Donatello's *Crucifix* in S. Croce.](#)"

Last but certainly not least, History of Art D.Phil. alum Deborah Schultz has co-edited a volume with Geraldine entitled *Photo Archives and the Place of Photography*, which will be published next year by Bloomsbury Press.

Many thanks to all our contributors!

Do please get in touch if you have news to share

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