

# Getty

MAGAZINE | FALL 2024



INSIDE: ONLY IN THE '60S | DON'T-MISS PST ART EVENTS | A VISIT TO VAN GOGH'S PSYCHIATRIC CLINIC



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A research trip to the psychiatric clinic whose garden inspired one of Van Gogh's most iconic paintings



**Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.)**  
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On the cover:  
Robert Breer's *Floats* outside the Pepsi-Cola Pavilion (detail), 1970. Chromogenic process. Photograph: Shunk-Kender. © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, 2014.R.20. © Robert Breer/ Kate Flax/gb agency, Paris

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



**P**ST ART: *Art & Science Collide*—the latest edition of the Getty-led, SoCal-wide art extravaganza formerly known as Pacific Standard Time (PST)—is now in full swing. More than 70 exhibitions are spotlighting everything from biotechnology to sustainable agriculture, ancient cosmologies to Indigenous sci-fi, artificial intelligence to environmental justice. Over 100 events, including neighborhood PST ART Weekends, are offering hands-on learning and deep discussions. And five years of wonderfully collaborative work with esteemed art and science colleagues across the region is coming to full fruition.

But here's what really excites me about this year's event.

*Art & Science Collide* has even broader appeal than previous PST iterations, engaging not just arts enthusiasts, but everyone interested in science, environmental and social justice, and LA history. Turning new audiences on to the joy of art is a big goal of ours.

Like the first two PSTs, this year's event unites the LA art community and adds to LA's art historical record. Some context: The Getty Foundation conceived the first PST, Art in L.A. 1945–1980, in 2011 as a way to rescue the archival record of LA's post-World War II art history—knowledge literally scattered in cartons and files across Southern California, difficult to access, and in danger of being lost forever. A mini PST—11 exhibitions focused on LA's modern architecture—followed in 2013, and in 2017 Getty launched the second full-sized PST, LA/LA, to spotlight Latino and Latin American art—an effort long overdue in a city now 49 percent Latino.

This year's PST ART pivots from surfacing LA's art historical record to also celebrating and including SoCal's storied scientific community. Think Caltech, JPL, the Salk and Scripps institutes, and the alchemy that has ensued when scientists and artists have worked together in our uniquely open-minded neck of the woods. Also motivating this year's theme: government leaders and other influencers who question science-based evidence about such basic truths as the human role in climate change and the effectiveness of vaccines. "In an era in which scientific facts are disputed or ignored, we were certainly provoked by that," my predecessor, Jim Cuno, told the *Los Angeles Times* in 2019.

And there's more to love.

*Art & Science Collide* is offering delight and respite from the stresses of extreme temperatures, political tumult, and other challenges we now face. "The arts are medicine," to quote US Surgeon General Vivek Murthy. (See [pst.art](http://pst.art) for more about art's health benefits.) PST ART will also boost LA's economy after the economic chaos wrought by the COVID pandemic. According to a report prepared by the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation, 2017's PST: LA/LA drew some 2.8 million visitors, generated \$430.3 million in economic output (value of all goods and services produced), supported 4,080 jobs, and added \$24.3 million in tax revenues for state and local governments.

With PST ART finally launched, we're now brainstorming more ways to contribute to LA's well-being. What if we invite visitors to engage with the natural landscape surrounding our Getty sites? How can we complement other big regional events, like the upcoming World Cup and Olympics? And we're certainly focused on finding ways to keep the relationships and collaborations we've nurtured during PST ART going, perhaps by weaving them into the next edition of PST, whatever its theme may prove to be.

In the meantime, I'll be visiting every *Art & Science Collide* exhibition and event I can—because this has to be SoCal's best block party ever.

Hope to see you there, neighbor.

Katherine E. Fleming



Kenneth G. Neigh Dormitory Complex, West Point, Mississippi. Designed by J. Max Bond Jr.; completed in 1970. Courtesy of Davis Brody Bond, a Page Company

## Eight Endangered Buildings Designed by Black Architects Awarded Getty Funding

The Getty Foundation and the National Trust for Historic Preservation's African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund have named eight buildings that will receive crucial funding from the Conserving Black Modernism initiative, a \$3.1 million grant program to preserve historic modern architecture by Black architects and designers.

From a dormitory in Mississippi designed by one of the 20th century's most influential Black architects, to a theater in Washington, DC, named after the first Black actor to play leading roles in Shakespeare plays, the grants affirm the importance of African American architects to the history of modernism by preserving their work. Getty funding will support conservation planning and emergency repairs, expand the skills of the people who care for these buildings, and promote broader public understanding of trailblazing Black professionals who contributed to the modern movement.

"With Conserving Black Modernism, we've taken actionable steps to save endangered sites that represent African American activism, creativity, and resilience," says Joan Weinstein, director of the Getty Foundation.

Established in 2022, Conserving Black Modernism is the Getty-funded portion of a partnership program with the African

American Cultural Heritage Action Fund, the largest preservation campaign to support the longevity of African American sites. The Action Fund also announced funding for a total of 30 places representing Black history across the US, which includes the eight locations supported by Getty funding.

African American architects and designers played influential roles in the development of modernism in the United States, yet their contributions have been largely overlooked. While a handful of Black architects and designers gained recognition, most worked in the shadow of larger offices under white architects of record and thus remain relatively unknown. Getty created the Conserving Black Modernism initiative to address this oversight and help write a more complete story of the modern movement.

Six of the grantees are located in the Southern United States. They are: Azurest South in Petersburg, Virginia, the first building designed by a woman architect, Amaza Lee Meredith; Dansby, Brawley, and Wheeler Halls at Morehouse College, Atlanta, Georgia, designed by Leon Allain; the Kenneth G. Neigh Dormitory Complex, West Point, Mississippi, designed by J. Max Bond Jr.; the Universal Life Insurance Co. Building, Memphis, Tennessee, designed by McKissack & McKissack; the Ira Aldridge Theater, Howard University, Washington, DC, named for a 19th-century African American actor and designed by Hilyard Robinson and Paul R. Williams; and also in DC, the Masjid Muhammad, or Nation's Mosque, one of the oldest Black Muslim congregations in the United States, designed by David R. Byrd.

New York State grantees are: the John F. Kennedy Recreation Center, Buffalo, designed by Robert T. Coles as his master's thesis project at MIT and completed in 1963; and the Robert T. Coles House, also in Buffalo, designed by Coles as his home and studio when he was the first African American chancellor of the College of Fellows at the American Institute of Architects.

Conserving Black Modernism is an extension of the Getty Foundation's Keeping It Modern initiative, which awarded, from 2014 to 2020, 77 grants totaling \$11.8 million in support of conservation planning and research for modern buildings and sites around the world. ■



The fireplace at Azurest South, Virginia State University, Petersburg, Virginia. Designed by Amaza Lee Meredith; completed in 1934. Photo: Hannah Price

## Getty Welcomes Pierre Ouillet

The J. Paul Getty Trust has appointed Pierre Ouillet as Getty's new executive vice president of finance and operations. He will join Getty on November 11.

Ouillet is currently vice chancellor at UC San Diego and chief financial officer for both the university and its Health Sciences division, a position he has held since 2014. In that role he has been responsible for financial planning of a budget exceeding \$9 billion, strategic initiatives, procurement, informational technology services, human resources, real estate, housing, dining, and hospitality services.

"We are thrilled to welcome Pierre Ouillet to the Getty team," says Getty President and CEO Katherine E. Fleming. "Pierre's visionary leadership and deep understanding of complex financial landscapes will be instrumental as we continue to elevate Getty's role as a global leader in the arts and education."

At Getty, Ouillet will oversee the Trust's financial strategy, operations, and administrative functions, focusing on enhancing Getty's financial sustainability, operational efficiency, and strategic growth. He replaces Steve Olsen, who recently retired this summer after six years as the Getty's vice president, CFO, and COO.

"I am honored to join Getty, an institution renowned for its commitment to the arts and cultural heritage," says Ouillet. "I visited and fell in love with the Villa on my first trip to California as a student. I have been back at the Center several times since, and I have always felt a strong connection with this incredible institution."

Before UC San Diego, Ouillet served as vice president of finance, resources, and operations at the University of British Columbia. He holds a master of science degree from the University of Maryland and a master of business administration from the European Institute of Business Administration. He is also a Certified General Accountant. ■



Pierre Ouillet. Photo: Erik Jepsen, UC San Diego

## New Art and Science Educational Resources Launched

In tandem with PST ART: *Art & Science Collide*, the J. Paul Getty Museum's Education Department has produced a set of free online art and science resources for elementary-grade students. Six lessons include a variety of activities, science experiments, and short videos featuring teen experts and encourage students to explore connections between real-life phenomena and art objects in the collection.

Students can explore celestial patterns seen in medieval manuscripts, entomology, cloud paintings depicting weather, and other subjects. One video even jumps "inside" a German forest painting to learn about the food chain! For hands-on activities, students are shown how to make sundials, create a shadow puppet show, design an insect's house, and more.

"We wanted learning to be fun for students and offer flexible ways for teachers to incorporate art and science into their curriculum," says the project's lead, digital education specialist Darcie Beeman-Black. "We hope the lessons are also relevant and accessible to students outside LA who can't visit PST ART exhibitions this fall."

For over 25 years, the Museum has offered free classroom resources developed collaboratively with teachers to align with state and national standards. These resources have been used across the United States and in other countries. ■

Explore the new art and science lessons at [gty.art/science](https://gty.art/science).

Jessie Hendricks and Teen Gallery Guide alum Ivy Rodriguez look at Maria Sibylla Merian's almost 350-year-old drawing of an emperor moth's life cycle in the video "The Great Getty Bug Hunt."



Daniel Reid. Photo: Beowulf Sheehan

## Daniel Reid Joins Getty Foundation as Associate Director

Daniel Reid, a recognized voice in the field of grant making and cultural heritage preservation, joined Getty in August to oversee local, national, and international grant making and manage programmatic operations.

Reid will guide the Getty Foundation as it expands into additional focus areas, including sustainability in the arts, broadened partnerships, and new approaches to grant making. He will also steward evaluation and learning processes to assess the impact of Getty's grant-making activities and contribute to strategic priorities across Getty.

"As a passionate believer in the value of the arts and humanities, I look forward to collaborating with Getty staff and external partners to support these vital domains in the face of global challenges," he says.

Reid previously served as executive director of the Whiting Foundation in New York, where he revitalized the foundation's programs and operations. During his decade of leadership, he helped create multiple new programs dedicated to literature, the humanities, and education. He also led the development of Whiting's first international initiative to support the preservation of endangered cultural heritage.

Prior to the Whiting Foundation, Reid facilitated the launching of the CUNY Institute for Education Policy, a think tank for K-12 and higher education, as its inaugural chief of staff. Earlier in his career he was an engagement manager at McKinsey & Company in Chicago, where he led teams to provide strategic, organizational, and operating consulting to corporations and NGOs. He has also provided pro bono strategic support to arts nonprofits and served as a consultant to UNESCO. He is a graduate of Yale Law School, where he authored the thesis "Harnessing Informal Art-Making to Revitalize Local Communities." He received a BA in English and political and social thought from the University of Virginia. ■

## Celebrating Art & Science Collide Sponsors

On September 14, more than 1,000 artists, exhibition and program partners, civic and cultural leaders, and members of the public came to the Getty Center to celebrate the official launch of PST ART: *Art & Science Collide*, the third edition of Getty's collaborative, multi-institution initiative. In a small reception before the event, Getty toasted donors whose philanthropic support amplified the initiative.

Getty board chair Rob Lovelace welcomed guests, highlighting the cooperative spirit of Southern California's cultural and educational institutions in driving the initiative's success. President and CEO Katherine Fleming hailed the impact donors are having on PST ART and Getty's mission. She thanked Lead Partners Bank of America, returning as sponsors for the third time; Alicia Miñana and Rob Lovelace, who made a generous challenge match; and the Getty Patron Program. She also expressed gratitude to Principal Partners the Simons Foundation, Eva and Ming Hsieh, Peggy and Andrew Cherng of Panda Express, Elizabeth Segerstrom, South Coast Plaza, and The Beverly Hills Hotel, as well as Major Supporters Yan Luo, Ellen and Dominic Ng, Haiyan Ren, and Sophia and Anqiang Zhang. Together they join the many Getty trustees and members of the donor community whose contributions helped bring to life the most ambitious PST ART yet.



1. Ming Hsieh, Katherine Fleming, and Eva Hsieh  
 2. Raúl Bustillos, Rob Lovelace, Alicia Miñana, and Garrett Gin  
 3. Malissa Feruzzi Shriver and Maria Shriver  
 4. Jessica Morgan, Joan Weinstein, and Olafur Eliasson



9. Alicia Miñana, Camille Alick, and Antonieta Arango  
 10. Ahmed Best, Andrew Perchuk, and Raquel Horsford

All photos by Ryan Miller/Capture Imaging and Molly O'Keeffe/Capture Imaging



GRI curator Pietro Rigolo (left) shared evidence of queer identities from Special Collections.

### Summer Cocktails with a Curator

Special Collections at the Getty Research Institute (GRI) opened its doors on June 30 to 60 guests for Cocktails with a Curator: Queer Archives. Always a highly anticipated event, Cocktails with a Curator invites members of the public to explore the GRI’s archives and holdings through a curator-led discussion of selected material. Curator Pietro Rigolo presented works from his forthcoming exhibition *The \$3 Bill: Evidence of Queer Lives*, to open on June 10, 2025.

Rigolo’s picks included works from Ron Athey, Judy Chicago, Robert Mapplethorpe, Catherine Opie, and Paul Sepuya, to name a few. Thematic treats—colorful crudités, rainbow shortbread cookies, and a custom champagne cocktail—helped top off an idyllic Sunday afternoon and bid a thoughtful farewell to Pride Month.

### Artist Julie Mehretu Reflects on Her Time at Gemini G.E.L.

On June 8 the Getty Research Institute welcomed New York-based artist Julie Mehretu for a celebration of the final month of the exhibition *First Came a Friendship: Sidney B. Felsen and the Artists at Gemini G.E.L.* In dialogue with the show’s curator, Naoko Takahatake, Mehretu reflected on her first project in 2008 with the Los Angeles artists’ workshop and publisher of limited-edition prints and sculpture and the role printmaking has continued to play in her painting practice. She has since completed 18 projects with the workshop. The conversation felt warm, generous, and contemplative—like listening to two old friends. Mehretu expressed deep gratitude toward renowned printer Case Hudson and also to Gemini’s cofounder, Sidney B. Felsen, who passed away in June. The talk succinctly captured Takahatake’s goal for the exhibition: that visitors learn that Gemini G.E.L. is not only a workshop but also a place where lifelong friendships are made.

Major exhibition support was provided by Jordan Schnitzer and the Harold & Arlene Schnitzer CARE Foundation.



Exhibition curator Naoko Takahatake and artist Julie Mehretu discuss the latter’s printmaking processes and familial relationships with the team at Gemini G.E.L.

### Getty’s Department of Photographs Turns 40

This summer the Getty Museum’s Department of Photographs celebrated its 40th anniversary with a reception and exhibition viewing. The department was founded in June 1984 with the acquisition of more than 40,000 photographs from nine major private collections. Founding curator Weston Naef oversaw the collection and an ambitious exhibition and acquisition program for the next 25 years. Since its inception, the collection has grown to nearly 150,000 works encompassing photography from the medium’s inception in the 1830s to today and from around the globe. Former and current curators, staff, and members of the Photographs Council were in attendance to celebrate the milestone.



Top right: Founding curator Weston Naef speaks to attendees.  
 Top left: Former Museum director John Walsh gives his remarks.  
 Above: Assistant curator Carolyn Peter turns the camera back on the photographer.  
 Left: Department head Jim Ganz addresses the guests.



**Michael Silver Recognized for Getty's First Named Gallery**

Friends, guests, and Getty leaders gathered in August to honor Michael Silver for his remarkable gift endowing the Michael Silver Fund, which supports the people and programs of the Getty Villa. In recognition of his generosity, Getty named the Michael Silver Family Gallery at the Villa. The evening began with a talk by Susanne Gänsicke, senior conservator of antiquities, on new findings about Persian silver rhyta (ceremonial drinking horns) in Getty's collection. Over dinner in the Villa's Inner Peristyle, Timothy Potts, Maria Hummer-Tuttle and Robert Tuttle Director of the J. Paul Getty Museum, and Katherine E. Fleming, Getty president and CEO, praised Silver's dedication to Getty and institutions across LA. In addition to his endowed fund, Silver has been active as a Getty Patron, member of Getty Councils, and generous supporter of research and scientific equipment. Silver, who is founder and CEO of American Elements, the world's leading manufacturer of advanced and engineered materials, spoke warmly of Getty's global mission to elevate the arts and conservation and hoped that the gift will inspire others to join him in supporting Getty.



Top left: Michael Silver  
Left: Susanne Gänsicke presents discoveries made conserving silver rhyta at the Villa.



Silver friends and family in the Michael Silver Family Gallery.

Photos by Molly O'Keeffe/Capture Imaging



Patrons tour *Picture Worlds*

**Eighth Annual Patron Sunset Reception**

In June a record number of Getty Patrons gathered for the eighth annual Patron Sunset Reception, toasting another year of supporting art and celebrating community. This year's event was once again held at the Getty Villa and featured an after-hours tour of *Picture Worlds: Greek, Maya, and Moche Pottery*. Patrons were welcomed by Jens Daehner, acting senior curator of antiquities, and curator David Saunders shared insights from the exhibition, the first ever to compare the pictorial ceramic traditions of three distinct civilizations: Greece, especially Athens in the sixth and fifth centuries BCE; the Maya in southeastern Mexico and Central America; and the Moche of northern Peru. Patrons enjoyed cuisine and refreshments inspired by the three cultures. *Picture Worlds* was generously supported by Jeffrey P. Cunard and the Getty Patron Program, with additional support from Charles and Ellen Steinmetz in honor of Professor Christopher B. Donnan, a pioneering scholar of the Moche.



Charles and Ellen Steinmetz

Photos by Ryan Miller/Capture Imaging

### **Memnon: The Untold Story of Troy's Ethiopian Hero**

In early September, guests enjoyed the debut of *Memnon*, this year's annual Outdoor Theater production at the Getty Villa. Coproduced with The Classical Theatre of Harlem, the new script by playwright Will Power focused on the Ethiopian king Memnon, a warrior summoned to aid the Trojans in their long battle with the Greeks. Timothy Potts, Maria Hummer-Tuttle and Robert Tuttle Director of the Getty Museum, welcomed the audience, noting that the ancient tale of Memnon had receded from the canon, but its resurrection highlighted the diversity of the ancient Mediterranean world. The production ran through the month of September, exploring timeless themes of loyalty and belonging.

Eric Berryman and Jesse Corbin in a fight scene as Memnon and Achilles. "Memnon's story is one of true identity and belonging and what that means," says Carl Cofield, associate artistic director of The Classical Theatre of Harlem and director of *Memnon*. "Much like the rest of the Greek canon, it asks big questions. It asks who we are as a society, what do we value, and from whom do we value participation?"



Eric Berryman as Memnon and Jesse Corbin as Achilles. "This character is probably one of the greatest warriors in all of history and mythology, but also very emotional, very moody," Corbin says. "I don't think we get to see that human side a lot in Greek mythology, because everything's larger than life."

Andrea Patterson as Helen of Troy. "To hear Helen speak for herself is wild, because we've all decided that she's the one that caused the Trojan War," Patterson says. "But let's just say she's setting the record straight a bit."



Eric Berryman as Memnon, who had never been considered a true Trojan because of the color of his skin. "This is a play that's trying to say something everybody is trying to talk about, but in a very different way," Berryman says. "The focal point is an ancient hero of African descent, and it's vital to bring back history that was lost, or maybe purposefully forgotten."



**Creative people of all kinds visit Getty for inspiration, including author Henry Lien and his father, fine art photographer Fong-Chi Lien**

**Henry Lien:** I write speculative fiction, which is a fancy way to say science fiction and fantasy without the geek cooties. I use the Getty museums as writing cafés and portals into other worlds.

My books thrust readers into unfamiliar places. Take *Peasprout Chen*, my Asian fantasy series. In it, a young girl leaves her homeland to study at a foreign boarding school teaching a very unusual art form, combining figure skating with kung fu. *The New York Times* described it as “Hermione Granger meets ‘Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon’ meets the Ice Capades meets ‘Mean Girls.’” Art has the power to transport us somewhere far.

The Getty Villa is a time machine to a world that otherwise exists only as remnants of past grandeur. The Getty Center is a time machine that rockets back and forth through centuries. You’ve got maybe my all-time favorite Rembrandt painting (*An Old Man in Military Costume*) enshrined in a campus resembling Star Trek’s Starfleet Academy. These museums are atomizers that render time and space deliciously porous and reality negotiable. I gather my UCLA Writers’ Program science fiction/fantasy students to write at the Getty museums because these spaces demonstrate what we strive to do in words. We can sit in another world around us while we imagine another world within us.

**Fong-Chi Lien:** I was born in Taiwan to a very humble family during World War II, when Taiwan was under American bombardment. When I came to the US, I first washed dishes in a Chinese restaurant. I did not have much education, experience, or English ability. Coming here was difficult, but not without kindness. Eventually, based on my skills, the Associated Press hired me as an electrical engineer. I treasured the opportunity America offered.

I worked for the Associated Press for over 30 years, eventually winning its highest honor, a Gramling Award. When I retired, I thought I would live quietly because the most interesting part of my life was already over.

At the time, my son, Henry, had transitioned from being a lawyer to an art gallery owner. I did not understand this career change. But he exposed me to ideas about art, such as composition, negative space, and the relationship between form and substance. My eyes grew wider and wider. In Taiwan, someone like me did not have the luxury of learning about art. I grew up in a corrugated tin shack with a dirt floor and a mother who had to do manual labor despite having bound feet. Here was a second chance.



Having been an engineer, photography made sense to me since it was art that came through machines. I applied my technical mind to the concepts I learned from my son. Soon, he said I was “ready,” meaning he thought I was good enough to include one of my photographs in a group exhibition at his gallery. When I arrived, he told me my photograph was the first artwork to sell. A young man with a blue mohawk and skateboard came into the gallery, saw it, and said, “I have to have that.”

Within two years, I became my son’s top-selling artist. My artwork has been exhibited and acquired for institutional, corporate, and museum collections. I guess I was wrong about retirement being quiet and the most interesting part of my life being over. My son now calls me “The Artist Formerly Known as Dad.”

Why do I love photographing the Getty museums? When my family and I arrived in this country, we could not afford things like ski vacations or dinners in restaurants. But the art and history museums were affordable or free, so I always took the family there. We didn’t always understand what we saw, but I never forgot that America made opportunities for culture available to everyone. Thus, the museums represented some of the beautiful hope of my immigrant experience.

My current photograph series is entitled *Yellow* and is accomplished with infrared cameras. Because infrared captures colors the human eye cannot see, you must assign a color to represent the unseeable shades.

I chose yellow. I wanted to reclaim yellow from its negative associations with cowardice and its use as a racist slur. I also chose yellow to embrace the idea of California as the “Gold Mountain” of immigrant dreams. ■



Top: Getty Center 1, 2024, Fong-Chi Lien, from his *Yellow* infrared photography series

Bottom: Getty Center 1, 2024, Fong-Chi Lien, from his *Yellow* infrared photography series



Camille Kirk, head of sustainability at Getty

## How “Green” Are Getty’s Exhibitions?

*For the first time, we’re going to find out*

By Erin Migdol  
Editor  
J. Paul Getty Trust

**FROM TRANSPORTING ARTWORKS** to printing signage to building gallery displays, putting on an exhibition can take a lot of energy. Human energy, yes, but also the kind of energy that produces greenhouse gas emissions that aren’t so great for our environment.

But to lower those greenhouse gas emissions (or reduce the carbon footprint), it’s necessary to first know what the carbon

footprint is. As part of PST ART: *Art & Science Collide’s* climate impact program, Getty is taking the unprecedented step of measuring its own exhibitions’ carbon footprints and inviting museums and other institutions in Southern California to do the same.

Sustainability is a relatively new concern in the museum world, and no one, not even Getty, is expected to have all the answers or robust sustainability practices already in place. But as Camille Kirk, Getty’s head of sustainability, points out, you have to start somewhere.

“We’re aiming to get people to be attentive to and aware of what they can do to plan a more sustainable exhibition,” Kirk says. “Can you do it in smarter ways? Can you create less of a footprint? Our goal is to ask ourselves these questions early on in an exhibition’s planning phase.”

### The perfect place to dive in

The seeds of the idea to track these exhibitions’ climate footprints were planted in 2022, during the planning stages of the landmark Southern California-wide arts event PST ART. In meetings with the Getty Foundation, Debra Scacco, a guest cocurator at Cal State Dominguez Hills and cofounder of Artists Commit, a collective dedicated to fighting climate change, recognized that PST ART and its “art and science collide” theme offered a special

opportunity to dive into climate issues. Scacco introduced the Foundation’s PST ART team to Laura Lupton, a veteran organizer in the art and climate space, and the pair asked if Getty would consider taking the lead on organizing a climate impact program for institutions participating in PST ART.

Lupton and her LHL Consulting firm have since held webinars for participating PST ART organizations to discuss how they can adopt sustainability practices, and the Foundation invited all of the partner organizations to complete climate impact reports for their PST ART exhibitions supported by Getty grants. The response has been enthusiastic: nearly every institution has attended at least one webinar, with almost 75 percent of institutions agreeing to submit a climate impact report. The hope, says Heather MacDonald, senior program officer at the Foundation, is that Southern California can establish itself as a leader in the field of art and sustainability.

“I think that’s really the promise of doing this project through PST ART—it’s not just one institution finding the resources to hire a consultant or bring on staff, because we know that’s going to be very difficult for many institutions,” says MacDonald. “Promoting sustainability through a PST ART collaboration hopefully means that we can move a lot quicker—as a regional effort.”

### Turning the microscope on ourselves

For its part, Getty is completing climate impact reports for three of its nine PST ART presentations. Associate Director for Exhibitions Carolyn Marsden-Smith guided the selection of the shows, with an eye toward understanding the footprints of different types of exhibitions: *Sensing the Future: Experiments in Art and Technology*, produced by the Getty Research Institute; *Lumen: The Art and Science of Light*, produced by the Getty Museum and featuring nearly 200 objects from museums around the world; and *Ultra-Violet: New Light on Van Gogh’s Irises*, also produced by the Getty Museum but primarily featuring objects from Getty’s own collection.

Ifrah Asif, graduate intern at the Getty Conservation Institute, and Alex Bispham, graduate intern in exhibitions at the Getty Museum, volunteered to gather the preliminary data needed to start filling out each show’s climate impact report. (Final data will be entered after the presentations close this winter.)

With advising from Kirk and Marsden-Smith, and the gracious help of the exhibitions’ curators, coordinators, designers, and registrars, Asif and Bispham filled out spreadsheets with detailed information in four core areas: travel (for staff conducting research and couriers accompanying works of art); materials (how packing and building supplies were sourced and whether or not they can be reused); shipping (flights and trucks for art movement); and workers and community (who was part of the exhibition team and how the show engages with the local community). This information gave a complete picture of all the steps, resources, and people that brought the exhibitions to life.

The interns also asked what efforts the exhibition teams had already taken to increase sustainability. It turns out they had already made some decisions that were better for the environment, with sustainability being just one factor of many they typically take into consideration. “For *Lumen*, building temporary walls would have been very material intensive and wasteful, because three months later they would have gotten torn down,” Bispham says. “There are fabric scrims being used to divide the space and block light instead, which creates way less waste and is also less labor intensive and more cost effective. A decision that’s made for costs is actually also really beneficial for the climate impact of the project and vice versa.”



Exhibition poster for *Some More Beginnings*, 1969, by Tom Gormley (American, b. 1937). © Experiments in Art and Technology. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (940003).



“Alex and Ifrah have been amazing to partner with, and it’s wonderful that this project created a chance for them to gain additional tools and knowledge as they launch into their careers,” says Kirk. “Our cultural heritage and our planet will both benefit from upcoming leaders in the field incorporating sustainability thinking into their work.”

**The impact of a climate impact report**

The final data will be entered into a carbon emission calculator developed by the Gallery Climate Coalition (GCC) to show the total carbon footprint of each exhibition. The data can then be used as a baseline to compare against future displays, as a source of inspiration for where to try and lower emissions, and to encourage museum staff to consider the climate impact of a show early in the planning process.

The goal isn’t to shame institutions or convince them to stop producing big exhibitions that require a larger carbon footprint, but rather to help build sustainability into the conversation, Kirk says.

“Art has always been used to draw attention to global issues,” Asif points out. “Not just to talk about them, but also to set an example of institutions taking action and doing something about them.” ■



Above: Ifrah Asif, graduate intern at the Getty Conservation Institute  
Left: Alex Bispham, graduate intern in exhibitions at the Getty Museum

Getty



## Getty Patron Program

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## Meet emergency preparedness specialist Les Borsay, famous around Getty for his sunny disposition, quick wit, and commitment to keeping everyone (and everything) safe

**The gist of what I do:** An emergency planning specialist like me is responsible for the safety of an organization during disasters—by making sure that the organization can prepare for, respond to, and recover from any kind of disaster. What does that mean at Getty? That I get to work with amazing people in all departments to ensure that our visitors, staff, buildings, and, of course, all the art are protected from any sort of trouble. I am responsible for fire extinguishers and a whole host of emergency supplies; I work with our technical and facilities staff to make sure our fire and water detection systems are fully functioning; I help train staff to respond to anything from a bloody nose to a leak endangering books to an earthquake.

**California dreamin’:** I grew up in the Midwest—Indiana and Ohio, with summers in Michigan. I was really nerdy; I played Atari a lot. We lived on a farm for a year and had three cows and some chickens. I hated the cows and also hated having to kill and pluck the chickens. My father set fire by mistake to some farmland near the house, and the fire department had to come. And my brother set an old barn on fire when he was a kid. So I did know a little about fire. But that was not exciting to me. I didn’t want to become a firefighter. I didn’t want to go into law enforcement.

When I was a kid growing up in Indiana, I would watch the TV show *CHiPs* and marvel at Los Angeles. Ponch lived in an apartment complex with a pool in the center, and there were always attractive women lying out by the pool. And I’m looking outside at the farm, in what felt like the middle of nowhere, and it’s bleak and cold and miserable. And I’m like, “I need to live in LA.” In fourth grade I had an assignment to contact the city where I wanted to live and get information about it. Everybody else chose Chicago or Indianapolis or Cincinnati, but I sent a letter (in cursive) to the City of Los Angeles. They sent me back brochures showing sunshine, beaches, and mountains—paradise to a kid like me in cold, flat Indiana.

**Making it in LA:** I went to Augusta College, now Augusta University, and majored in communications. Then I came out to Los Angeles to get into the film industry. I wanted to be an actor. I did a couple of commercials and a few other roles, and I did improv for a while. But I had to have a job. I had to eat. So, I worked at the Hotel Roosevelt in Hollywood for a number of

years as a front desk supervisor. Then I decided I didn’t want to do that anymore—I was not good at customer service. I got into a fistfight with a guy, so I thought, “I need to get out of this.” I got a job reselling mortgages on the secondary market. I spent two years at Countrywide, then I got another job at KB Home doing the same thing, and it was miserable. I remember driving home one day and thinking, “Maybe I’ve died and this is hell.” My roommate at the time had just started working at Getty in Human Resources and said, “You know, you should work here.” I saw that Getty had a temp job in security for an administrative position. I had no experience in security, but I was willing to take a chance to go work somewhere else. That was in May 2000.

Once I started the job, I couldn’t sit still. I was always asking: “Alright, what can I do? Can I help you?” At that time, we had a few consultants in emergency preparedness who worked with us, including Frank Borden, who developed the Community Emergency Response Team program. I worked on things like trainings, checking out the fire extinguishers, and being in Getty’s Emergency Outreach Center (EOC) during crises. I was in the EOC during 9/11 when the entire site was shut down. Everybody was sent home, but senior leadership was in the EOC, and I was writing on the whiteboard, watching the TV, as everyone was afraid that something might happen in LA. When my predecessor passed away in 2016, I transitioned into the job. This job is like a comfortable shoe. I didn’t know I needed this shoe, but this is the shoe that fits.

**Keeping Getty safe:** My philosophy is pretty simple: People first. Life safety is number one. It’s a trick question: What’s the most important thing to Getty? You might think it’s *Irises* by Vincent van Gogh. No, it’s not. *Irises* can’t take care of itself. I need to make sure the people are OK so they can take care of *Irises*. If a person is on fire and *Irises* is on fire, I’m putting out the person. Then the next part is, what can we do as far as the site? How can we make sure the site is safe, to make sure the people are safe and the collection is safe? Then the next part is working with the people who care for the art—the conservators and preparators. How can I make sure they’ve got what they need to be able to protect the art?

And people think the priority is always visitors first. No, it’s everybody first. For many of the visitors, this is their first time here, and I don’t get an hour to talk to them about safety and how to use a fire extinguisher and all that. They’re going to be freaked out if there is an emergency. So the security officers and the rest of the Getty staff have to be safe in order to get everybody else to safety.

What people might be surprised to learn about safety at Getty: The Getty Center and Getty Villa Museum are incredibly well-built. When there’s an emergency, like a local brush fire, people think, “Where do you move the art?” Well, we don’t. These places were built with the idea that we’re going to protect the art. For example, our HVAC system is very good. During the Skirball Fire in 2017, which broke out around the 405 Freeway and Mulholland



Drive, we closed the Center, and the conservators couldn’t come back for a few days. One of the paintings conservators told me, “I was watching the fire on TV and thought, ‘There’s the next year of my life—I’m going to be cleaning paintings,’” because of how much smoke was in the area. But she later told me there were no problems or issues with that at all.

**New threats to museum safety:** Let’s just say when I first started, my predecessor didn’t deal with active shooter situations like we talk about now. Also, 9/11 changed everyone’s thinking, and we started doing terrorism awareness training for our security officers. Before that, emergency preparedness was all about fires and earthquakes, and now it’s, what else could happen?

We’re now doing trainings on dealing with art vandalism or an attempted art theft, and we’ve also started keeping Narcan on site, because on two different school trips at two different museums recently, kids have had to be taken to the hospital after consuming edibles. Fentanyl is so dangerous, and there’s so much out there that kids don’t even know about.

**Biggest learnings:** The Skirball Fire was a major lesson about communicating with our staff. The fire happened in the middle of the night, so we sent out a message to staff saying, “Nobody come in except for essential personnel.” But then one

of the conservators came in anyway, because many of our staff members are so passionate about the artwork and want to make sure it’s okay. So now we don’t say things like “essential personnel.” We say, “people who are part of the emergency response team, and your supervisor will contact you.”

We’ve also learned to anticipate urgent questions from lenders. Maybe you work at the Louvre and just loaned us a Rubens, and you’re seeing this fire on the news. Who are you going to call? You’re going to call somebody in the registrar’s office and say, “What’s going on?” So during the Getty Fire in 2019, which broke out around the 405 Freeway and Getty Center Drive, we got really good about reaching out to the registrars and keeping them informed so they could say: “Hey, this is what we’re seeing. This is what we’re hearing. Everything’s okay.”

**Best part of the job:** There’s never a boring day in my job. And I’ll also say, there’s never a bad day. There are challenging days. But we’ve been lucky because people leave here alive. A big part of that is because the people I work with are so good at what they do. And I like the fact that I get to support great people. When I’ve finished my career here, I can look back on this place and say, “Yeah, this place has a great mission, and I supported that mission.” My role is to help keep people safe. How can you not love that? How can you not like doing that? ■

## Cheese or Seawater in Your Wine?

*Ancient wine expert Emlyn Dodd reveals the things ancient Greeks slipped into their goblets, the games they played at drinking parties, and other surprising practices inspired by fine oinos*

By Stacy Suaya



Sarcophagus with a Wine-Making Scene (detail), 290–300 CE, Roman. Marble. Getty Museum

**WINE AND CHEESE GO TOGETHER**, but have you ever grated goat cheese into your glass? Or topped off a tippie with seawater? Emlyn Dodd says you might have done so “when in Greece” thousands of years ago.

In his work as an archaeologist, ancient wine expert, and recent presenter on winemaking in ancient Rome as part of the Bacchus Uncorked public program series at the Getty Villa, Dodd unearths the world of wine in classical times.

Speaking from London, he pulled back the curtain on a typical symposium (drinking party), what prizes could be won in ancient drinking games, and the “sneaky drinks” women poured themselves during prohibition times.

### What surprising methods and tools did ancient people use to make wine?

Actually, the process of making wine has remained largely unchanged for 8,000 years. It still involves harvesting and crushing grapes, fermenting the juice, and storing the wine in containers. Makers in the republic of Georgia still ferment wine in enormous clay storage jars. In some parts of the Mediterranean, local producers still make wine using ancient methods, such as treading on grapes in simple rock-cut vats and allowing natural fermentation.

### Why did ancient Greeks and Romans dilute their wine?

Even before the Romans, in the classical Greek period, there was a notion that the so-called barbarians drank their wine neat, whereas “civilized” Greeks diluted it with water. In theory, they diluted it to have philosophical, educated conversations in their symposiums without getting too drunk. We have this idyllic image that the Greeks wanted to portray, but we also have evidence contrary to this, where they were getting extremely drunk, whether they were diluting their wine or not.

In his writings, Greek epic poet Hesiod talked about people working in the fields. A farmer would stop work in the heat of the day and dilute wine under a tree in the shade, refresh himself, and quench his thirst. It wasn’t a symposium, but it was a similar dilution ritual with more of a nutritional aspect.

### Did they ever add anything to their wine besides water?

We have a lot of evidence, such as in the writings of Roman naturalists Pliny the Elder and Columella, that substances were added to wine. Some Greek islanders, like those from Kos, were famous for



Emlyn Dodd in the Macquarie University History Museum with its collection of amphorae, 2021. Photo: Michael Amendolia

adding seawater to their wines. It is possible they noticed that with seawater, wine could last longer. They also added honey to create a beverage called *mulsum* and sometimes infused wine with herbs and spices. This may have been to disguise their wine’s bad taste, but we have to be careful with that argument, because taste preferences were very different back then.

### Did wine have medicinal uses in ancient times?

In many treatments in the Greek physician Galen’s books, he talked about some type of wine being used to treat diseases or stomach issues. And in some famous Homeric texts, there was this bizarre drink called *kykeon*, which was a mixture of wine, barley, honey, and grated cheese. It was given to the heroes probably as a type of foodstuff. Essentially, it provided an enormous quantity of nutritional value and calories; it was quite a rounded meal in itself.

### Can you describe a typical Greek symposium? How did these differ from other drinking events?

The Greek symposium really took off as a thing around the mid-first millennium BCE. It was happening in the *andron*, a room

separated from the rest of the house. It was male dominated, and there was a program for when you could eat, talk about philosophy, and drink your wine. Around the same time, in Etruscan culture—as well as in later Roman *convivia* (banquets)—there seems to have been much greater female participation in similar drinking events.

There’s a great Roman novel by Petronius called *The Satyricon* that describes one of these banquets. It was hosted by a man who was once enslaved but who was now an extremely successful, wealthy businessman. He had climbed the social ladder, and he was putting on this extravagant dinner party for his guests. There were ridiculous foods like hares with sewn-on wings to resemble Pegasus and whole pigs stuffed with sausages and black pudding. It was this utter extravagance and grotesque debauchery that we’re given insight into.

### How did drinking practices differ between private homes and public spaces?

If you visit a site like Pompeii or Ostia, just outside Rome, bars still line the streets. *Tabernae* were extremely common in ancient Rome. They served wine and all kinds of hot and cold food too,



Wine Cup with a Bacchic Scene, 25 BCE–25 CE, Roman. Glass. Getty Museum



Wine Cup with a Woman Playing a Drinking Game, about 490 BCE, attributed to Onesimos. Greek. Terracotta. Getty Museum

because much of the population wouldn't have had kitchens in their houses. It was too dangerous, or they didn't have space. Only the elite could afford to have cooks and a kitchen in their house. So, most of the population went out and ate in the streets.

**Were there any popular drinking games in ancient culture?**

One of antiquity's most famous drinking games was *kottabos*, perhaps invented in Sicily in the early to mid-first millennium BCE but quickly spreading to Greece. It was an activity that took place in the symposium. Essentially, you were drinking wine out of a *kylix*, a very shallow bowl with handles on either side. And once you'd finished drinking your wine, dregs were left at the bottom. Some sort of target, such as a disc balancing on top of a pole, was put up, and players would flick their wine dregs out of their cups to try and hit the target and knock it off. Winners would get a prize, like cakes, pastries, kisses, or other erotic acts.

**How did gender roles influence wine consumption in ancient societies?**

There were certain periods of Roman history where we are told by ancient sources that there were bans on women drinking wine. Some of the earliest of these in the Archaic era might have been related to certain types of ritual wine used in religious events, while other types of wine were allowed to be drunk by females. There are also various arguments that during periods of prohibition for women, they were still having "sneaky drinks" in the kitchen because they used wine a lot in cooking.

In other periods of Roman history, people drank freely. There was some equality in terms of access to wine and consumption. This fluctuated over time based on the cultural values of the period. Some emperors tried to relate to Rome's origins and bring back laws of prohibition. It changed over time based on who was in power and what society they wanted to create.

**What were some of the most valued or prestigious wines in the ancient world?**

One of the most famous wines was the Falernian. Some ancient Roman authors described it as being a white wine. One of them talked about it being quite alcoholic. A fresco in Herculaneum, near Pompeii, has pictures of four different types of wine for increasing prices. And a graffito from Pompeii says that you can drink some wine for the price of one, or this better wine for the price of two, but for the price of four, you can drink Falernian wine.

Big political figures like the emperors also influenced when wines came into popularity. It really lined up when Augustus was emperor, and he said a certain wine was his favorite. Suddenly, everyone preferred that wine. And when a later emperor said another wine was his favorite, then everyone preferred his wine. I call it "the role of the emperor as influencer." It's just like influencers today shaping popular discourse.

**What role did the Roman god Bacchus play in people's lives?**

Bacchus evolved in part from the earlier Greek equivalent Dionysos and played various roles in ancient culture, from fertility to wine and pleasure. The Bacchanalia became known as a festival of drunkenness and debauchery with its own dramatic history. The Roman Senate even tried to ban the god's worship at one point.

Bacchus came to be worshipped across most of the Roman Empire (and much earlier, Dionysos was worshipped across a broad area too). By then, wine was deeply embedded in Roman society and culture for myriad reasons (dietary, medicinal, economic, etc.). It was simply part of everyday life. ■

Stacy Suaya is a freelance journalist in Los Angeles. She covers art and architecture for national publications.



Head of Young Bacchus, 1–5 CE, Roman. Bronze with silver. Getty Museum

**Sip like an ancient god**

While these ancient practices may seem strange to today's wine enthusiasts, some wineries are attempting to re-create the flavors and techniques of classical times. Want to experience a taste of antiquity? Wine educator and sommelier Diego Meraviglia, who regularly curates the wine selection for the Bacchus Uncorked programs, offers ways to "throw it back" to ancient times and host your own modern Bacchanalia-inspired gathering.



Diego Meraviglia, president of the North American Sommelier Association, lecturing on Champagne

**How can contemporary wine drinkers re-create ancient wine-drinking culture?**

The concept of a symposium is a good way to go. Pick a theme and a topic, then utilize wine as the lubricant of the discussion. Normally there would be a specific theme in philosophy, such as the concept of death and afterlife, Stoicism, Epicureanism, or more modern relevant topics. It could even be the discussion of a movie, a new play, an event, or an occurrence.

To experience the flavors and characteristics closest to ancient wines, you would want to look into the natural wine movement. This movement rewinds the clock technologically in terms of winemaking, when wine was made with far less intervention. Natural wines are generally a little funkier, and the whites may have this dark orange color, because their skin is macerated and oxidized. If you want to get even closer to ancient times, I would stick to natural wines produced in Italy, Greece, and Spain. Personally, I love a winery called Bressan. Varietal-wise, for whites I'd look for Fiano, Falanghina, Greco, Trebbiano, and Verdicchio. For reds, look for Aglianico, Negroamaro, Sagrantino, and Sangiovese.

If you wanted to add spices, you could try cardamom, cumin, clove, quinine, herbs, licorice, or cinnamon. In ancient Rome, they also used fish sauce and seawater. I wouldn't put fish sauce in my wine, and I wouldn't advise people to go out to the Pacific and grab water to put in their wine. So, maybe stick to spices.

Tables would have been decorated with food, fruit, vegetables, and florals, in terracotta vases, amphorae, and wooden containers. In regard to specific dishes, if we are talking about Romans, even flatbreads with toppings (not pizza specifically, but *pinsa*, an ancient flatbread with a cloud-like crust) would fit. And definitely fruits and vegetables and meats with rice, cooked family style.

**Thirsty for more?**

Attend the next Bacchus Uncorked event, a summer program series that explores art, wine, and culture in the ancient world. You'll hear experts give insightful talks about wine cultivation and drinking practices, then sip a selection of wines specially curated for the program while enjoying the picturesque outdoor setting of the Getty Villa.

## Finding Féral Benga

### Inside an art historian's search for the Senegalese muse of early 20th-century Paris

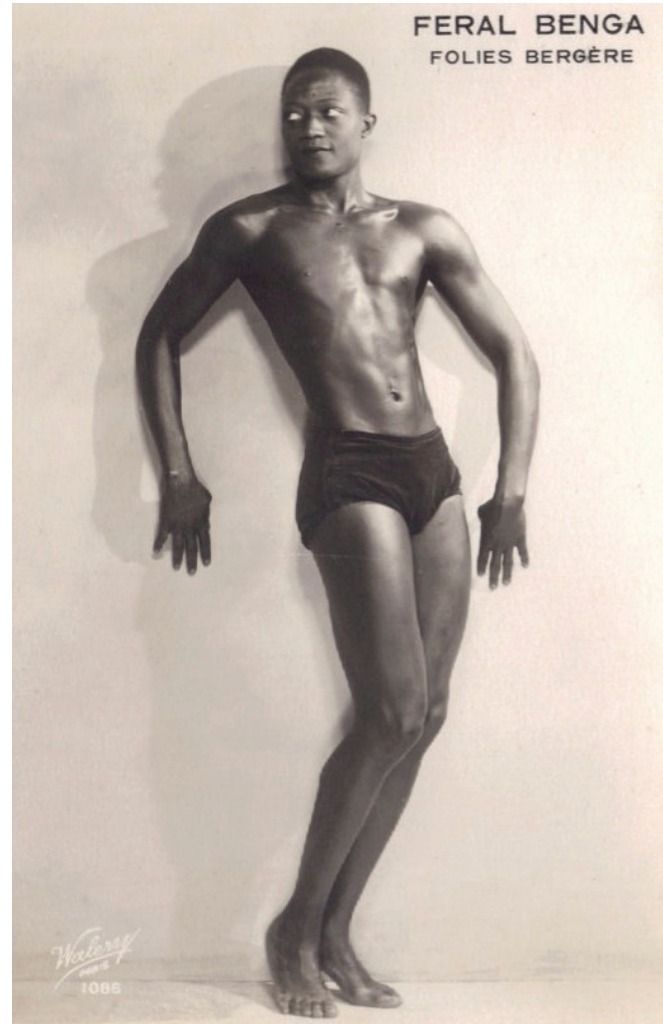
By Anya Ventura  
Editorial Content Producer  
Getty Research Institute

**THE MALE NUDE IS CAST IN A BRONZE** that catches light, body slightly S-shaped, holding a flat, curved saber in the air. James Smalls, an art historian, first thought the sculpture's title—*Féral Benga*—might refer to a type of dance. He was in the process of writing about the sculpture's creator, the Harlem Renaissance artist Richmond Barthé, but now a new set of questions emerged: Who was Féral Benga, and what was his story? More than a decade later, Smalls has some answers.

Féral Benga, whose given name was François, was born in Dakar, Senegal, and ran away to Paris as a teen in the 1920s. Adopting the stage name Féral, which translates as “wild,” he began performing as part of the popular primitivist spectacles designed to appeal to white colonial fantasies. Wearing tight leopard shorts or a loincloth, skin slick with oil, Benga danced alongside his idol, the cabaret entertainer Josephine Baker, in the lavish, risqué stage shows of the Folies-Bergère. Like Baker, Smalls says, Benga consciously exploited sexualized racial tropes to make space for himself within the avant-garde art of the time. But Benga has long been overshadowed by Baker, and uncovering his story has required some serious sleuthing.

For Smalls, who studies the intersections of race, gender, and queer sexuality in visual culture, understanding Benga's contributions to art history means rewriting a story of modern art that has traditionally been narrated as the invention of white men. What figures like Benga reveal is that Africans not only inspired the avant-garde, they also actively shaped it. Benga was not only someone to be looked at—endlessly photographed, painted, and sculpted by others—but an artist who used his body as a creative form of self-expression. “He knew Europeans were very attracted to primitivism, and that's how he made his career,” says Smalls. “But he was a hybrid sort of person: he knew a lot about African dance. He knew a lot about classical ballet and acrobatics and how to contort and move his body to create interesting choreographies.”

After learning of Benga's existence, Smalls began the slow process of piecing together his story. He traced his likeness over the decades, in black-and-white studio portraits, impressionistic oil paintings, and dreamy surrealist films. Smalls read the



Postcard of Féral Benga in Folies-Bergère, about 1930, Lucien Walery. Public domain

memoirs of artists, composers, and other members of Benga's circle, scanning the lines for any mention of the dancer. One of his biggest discoveries came unexpectedly. For a week, he'd been paging through folders in the Josephine Baker archive at the Bibliothèque nationale de France when he saw a photograph of Benga holding a sword in the same pose as in his trademark *danse du sabre*. The resemblance was unmistakable. The photograph was on the cover of a menu from a Senegalese restaurant Benga ran on the rue de Tilsitt, just beyond the radius of the Arc de Triomphe. Barthé had seen the image on the menu and started the sculpture upon his return to New York.

When institutional archives yielded few other traces, Smalls set up a Google alert for Benga's name and eventually hit a small jackpot. He found that a woman was selling four-inch postcards of Benga, once circulated as publicity for his shows, in small batches on eBay. She had inherited the photographs from her

father, whose job had been emptying the houses of abandoned estates. “She had a whole box of these images. And on a couple of them, ‘Féral Benga’ was written. She didn't know anything about him,” Smalls says.

Every several months, a new bundle of photos surfaced online that Smalls promptly bought. Now and then, the seller would throw in a few extra loose candids she'd found: Benga drinking from a water fountain, posing on the beach, or smoking a cigarette at a party. “I had to create his archive,” says Smalls. He wanted to purchase the entire collection, but the owner refused; he was ultimately outbid for the rest by a Swiss gallery. Now, a small collection of the pictures hangs in Smalls's dining room: images of a glistening Benga in his signature acrobatic poses.

It's an arduous task to assemble the scraps of a story that few at the time bothered to record, either through prejudice, negligence, or simply imperceptiveness in the face of history as it's happening. And not surprisingly, mysteries abound with Benga's biography. In the soapy, dramatic worlds of bohemian Paris and New York,

much of what has been written about him, according to Smalls, is simply gossip or innuendo and often exaggerated. Benga's primary medium was his body, and he didn't document anything that survives. Yet it remains important, Smalls says, to tell Benga's little-known story. Since his beginnings as an art historian, Smalls has always been drawn to the overlooked and so-called lesser movements, what was once relegated to the footnotes, because it is within the seemingly minor that women, queer individuals, and people of color are so often found. Though his fame was fleeting, Benga remains a symbol of the deep impact of queerness and African culture on visual art.

Smalls did discover more though. By the end of World War II, Benga knew that the glamorous, feather-strewn world he'd helped create had vanished. While he was once said to have owned a custom-made convertible and 20 French poodles, such decadence had faded by the late 1940s. Primitivism, the “authentic” African music and dance he'd performed at the Folies-Bergère, was no longer in style; his days as a dancer were mostly over. During the occupation of Paris, he'd grown ill. “He

was a very different man, very changed,” says Smalls. Benga then reinvented himself as an impresario. Now in his early 40s, no longer so lithe, he opened a nightclub, La Rose Rouge, which became a home for the young African intellectual scene that grew alongside the Left Bank bohemia of Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir. As mentor to a new generation of African artists, Benga brought the idea of Négritude, the celebration of Black culture first developed by the Caribbean writer Aimé Césaire, into the world of the performing arts.

Benga is buried in a family sepulcher in the Saint-Denis cemetery in Châteaurox, France, the names ornately etched on a piece of glass that reflects the graveyard's granite crosses. As part of his research, Smalls traveled to the cemetery and scoured municipal records, looking for descendants, who never materialized. What to do with an unknown past? How to combat the erasures of history but find a new story—to insist upon it? The rest of what we know is this: in 1956, Benga reconciled with his family in Senegal—he had been disinherited for “the lifestyle that he supposedly led between the two World Wars,” says Smalls. He married his first cousin, moved into a house in the middle of France with his uncle, the town lawyer, and within a year was dead.

In 2025, with no remaining family members to renew it, the hundred-year lease on the family plot will expire. Benga's remains will be exhumed and placed in an ossuary, and the gravestone removed. If the lasting evidence of Benga's life is mostly visual, it seems poignant that his body—his true medium, which once bore such an excess of meaning—would be so vulnerable. Smalls hopes that he can persuade the French government to protect Benga's grave—to designate it an important landmark—and keep his memory alive. ■

James Smalls is an African American Art History Initiative scholar and part of the Getty Scholars Program, which supports innovative research about art.



James Smalls at his desk

By Erin Migdol  
Editor  
J. Paul Getty Trust

# IRISES IN BLOOM

Aerial view of Saint-Paul-de-Mausole,  
Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, France. Photo:  
aerial-photos.com / Alamy Stock Photo



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*Tracing Vincent van Gogh's footsteps at the psychiatric clinic where he painted one of his most enduring works*

In May 1889, after a mental health episode culminated in Vincent van Gogh severing his left ear, the artist, accompanied by the Reverend Frédéric Salles, arrived at the psychiatric clinic Saint-Paul-de-Mausole outside Saint-Rémy-de-Provence and voluntarily committed himself for treatment.

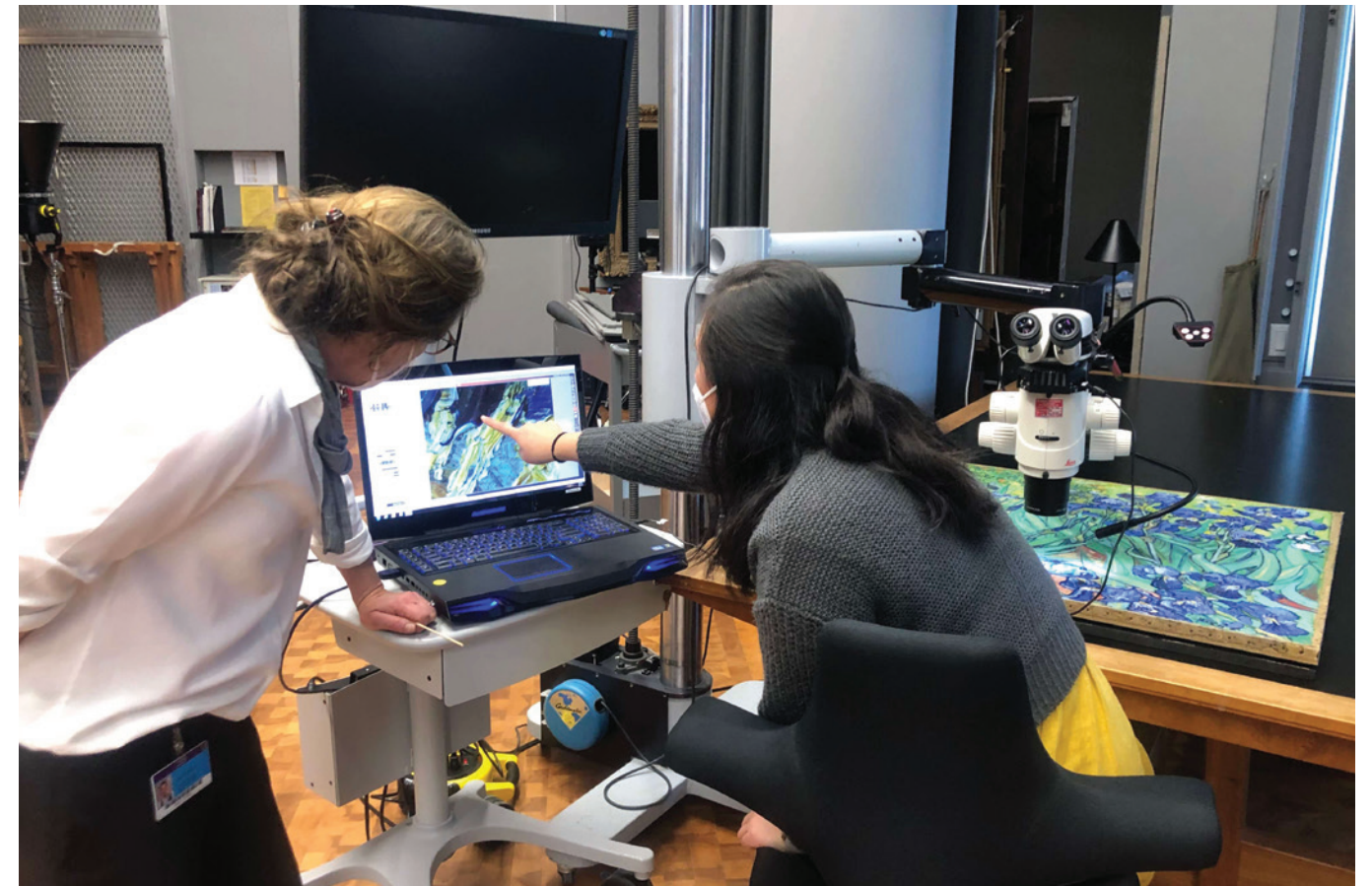
Van Gogh would spend the next year there in what would become one of the most productive artistic periods of his life—he finished around 130 paintings while undergoing inpatient therapy. One of these works was *Irises*, which he based on the bearded blossoms that bloomed and danced in the breeze in the clinic's garden.

Van Gogh died in 1890 in a presumed suicide just a few months after leaving the clinic. Over a century later, *Irises* is one of the most cherished works in Getty's collection. Getty conservators had long wanted to examine the artist's materials and technique and investigate whether there were any indications of deterioration, such as color changes to the paints he used. They also wanted to add to the international scholarship on Van Gogh and his materials by conducting their own research.

*Irises*, 1889, Vincent van Gogh.  
Oil on canvas. Getty Museum



Devi Ormond and Dr. Jean-Marc Boulon search the clinic's grounds for plant material that matches what was found embedded in the paint of *Iris*es.



Devi Ormond and paintings conservation fellow Michelle Tenggara study a magnified section of *Iris*es.

As part of this process, Getty Museum associate paintings conservator Devi Ormond and Getty Conservation Institute research chemist Catherine Patterson took a walk in Van Gogh's shoes. They visited the same clinic where he had lived and painted *Iris*es and were given access to the private garden, where they looked for clues about the flowers he had so energetically painted. Their findings, plus additional scientific research conducted on the work, is the focus of the new Getty Center exhibition *Ultra-Violet: New Light on Van Gogh's "Iris*es," part of Getty's exhibition series PST ART: *Art & Science Collide*.

"Once you embed yourself in that time and place, you realize just how much Van Gogh must have been suffering personally, and yet was able to create this amazing work of beauty," Patterson says. "And there's something about that that was just incredibly moving."

#### Peeling back the layers of *Iris*es

Interest in taking a more in-depth, scientific look at *Iris*es goes back nearly 10 years. But a big challenge always loomed: finding the right time to take *Iris*es off the gallery wall for study, when

museum visitors thronged to see the popular work. In 2020 the museum closure prompted by the COVID pandemic offered an unexpected opportunity; with no visitors in the galleries, *Iris*es could come down to be researched. Ormond and Patterson examined the painting using a variety of imaging techniques: stereo microscopy to magnify the work, infrared reflectography and x-radiography to look through its layers, and macro x-ray fluorescence scanning to identify its chemical elements.

One of their first delightful discoveries: a tiny bit of plant material in the corner of the painting. They also proved their suspicion that the irises had originally been violet, not blue. Van Gogh had described the irises as violet in a letter to his brother, Theo, and the red paint Van Gogh used is known to be susceptible to fading when exposed to light. And in the studio one day, they found a small area of damage in the paint in one of the blue irises. When they removed it, they lifted out the top blue layer of paint and saw preserved purple paint underneath. "We got to see Van Gogh's original purple for the first time in 130 years," Patterson says.

Those two discoveries inspired them to visit the clinic—which is still operating—to see the garden in person. "We thought, if

he said he painted violet irises, well, there should be violet irises in the garden,” Ormond says. “So let’s see if we can go and actually see these irises, if they’re still there.” (Bearded irises are perennials and can survive for long periods.) But Van Gogh didn’t always paint things that literally existed—*Starry Night*, for example, is an imagined view of the sky—so was that his intent with *Irises* too?

Ormond located the phone number of Dr. Jean-Marc Boulon, the clinic’s medical director, and called him. She explained their discoveries and asked if the garden had changed much since the 19th century. Boulon assured her it hadn’t. Ormond wondered if a gardener could send a picture of the plant material or tell them what it was. Boulon said there was no gardener, but asked if they would like to come to the garden and have a look for themselves.

“This was a huge privilege to be invited, because the garden is not open to the public,” Ormond says.

In May 2022, Ormond and Patterson made their way from Los Angeles to Saint-Paul with two goals in mind: to see if they could identify the plant material, and to see the irises in bloom exactly 133 years after Van Gogh painted them.

#### Inside the clinic

Once they arrived at the clinic and walked into the garden, they made a discovery they weren’t expecting. “Off we went, full of anticipation, only to find that most of the irises had already bloomed and died,” Ormond says.

Still, the trip offered an enlightening introduction to the garden, clinic, and life that Van Gogh may have led there. Ormond and Patterson determined that the plant material they had discovered in the painting most likely came from the umbrella pine tree found in the garden and all over the south of France. They also determined the exact location where Van Gogh had painted *Irises* and possibly another work, *Lilac Bush*, now housed in the State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg, Russia. They took photographs of the garden for Getty’s exhibition designers to use as inspiration for the future show and spent hours just sitting in the garden in quiet contemplation, enjoying it much as it would have been in Van Gogh’s day.

Boulon introduced them to the patients and staff and showed them around the clinic: the lunchroom; the old shower room, where patients used to undergo a now-defunct practice called hydrotherapy; and the art studio Valetudo, which Boulon created for patients to participate in art therapy.

Irises bloom on the grounds of Saint-Paul-de-Mausole psychiatric clinic.



“Dr. Boulon is a trained psychiatrist, but he’s also a practicing artist,” Patterson says. “It feels like he’s embodying the best of the Van Gogh story and using it to better the lives of individual patients. It was a very affecting experience to see that and to realize that we were brought to that experience by Van Gogh over this distance of 133 years.”

#### Van Gogh as an artist and scientist

When Ormond and Patterson returned home, they were eager to figure out a way to bring the garden to Getty and show visitors what they had experienced. They decided the best way would be to create a video documenting the garden and the clinic—and to their delight, Boulon was open to this idea. Apart from a brief shot in the 2018 movie *At Eternity’s Gate*, this was the first time filming would be allowed in the garden.

Ormond and Patterson also felt it was important to try and actually see the irises in full bloom. So in

2023, Ormond returned to Saint-Rémy, this time in April instead of May, with Getty’s film crew in tow. Happily, the irises were blooming. “They were really violet, and they were everywhere,” Ormond says. “It confirmed that what we had seen in the painting was now what I was seeing in real life. And that was pretty extraordinary.”

While the crew filmed the garden and clinic and conducted interviews with Boulon, Ormond spent more time in the garden and took a day trip to Arles, the nearby town where Van Gogh had lived before seeking treatment at Saint-Paul.

In the exhibition, visitors can delve deeper into the ways art and science interact and reinforce one another in the study of *Irises*. Like all of Getty’s PST ART: *Art & Science Collide* exhibitions, *Ultra-Violet: New Light on Van Gogh’s “Irises”* revolves around light: how Van Gogh’s understanding of light and color informed his painting, how light changed some of the colors in *Irises*, and how conservators and

scientists harnessed the power of light to uncover the artist’s materials and methods. On the exhibition’s website, visitors can also watch the video filmed at Saint-Paul to get a glimpse of the place where Van Gogh painted *Irises*.

Touring Saint-Paul and seeing the spot *Irises* was painted opened Patterson’s eyes to the ways art and science intersected within Van Gogh himself. “The visit made me stop and think about Van Gogh as a scientist, as an observer, as somebody part of an ecosystem putting on canvas what he was seeing and experiencing,” Patterson says.

For Ormond and Patterson, getting a firsthand glimpse into Van Gogh’s mental state allowed them to step outside their usual scientific framework for viewing art and peek at the very human challenges Van Gogh was coping with when he painted *Irises*. And that made the painting all the more spectacular.

“I was looking at the work’s amazing buildup of paint and swirling of colors and realized that I had

neglected to look at the context in which he was doing this,” says Ormond. “He had cut off most of his left ear. He was all bandaged up. He was being excommunicated essentially from people he knew in Arles. And I think he was very much aware that something was seriously wrong with him. This unique experience at Saint-Paul-de-Mausole has really helped me to step back and see the painting from a more humane point of view. Taking into account the mental state in which Van Gogh created this masterpiece makes it all the more poignant.” ■

The psychiatric clinic at Saint-Paul-de-Mausole outside Saint-Rémy-de-Provence



Dr. Jean-Marc Boulon and Catherine Patterson

# Experiments in **Art and Technology** (E.A.T.)

In the fall of 1966 more than 10,000 people gathered in the 69th Regiment Armory in New York, a yawning Beaux Arts–style building reminiscent of a medieval fortress, to see a series of performances titled *9 Evenings: Theatre & Engineering*. Ten artists and 30 engineers had come together to create the event, and musicians, dancers, visual artists, and theater makers used nascent technologies like real-time sound manipulation, biofeedback, and video projections to create new works of art.

Like many revolutionary things, the performances were beset by technical malfunctions and were sometimes poorly received. Many viewers came away angry or bored. Yet born from this ambitious series of performances was Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.), an organization founded by engineers Billy Klüver and Fred Waldhauer, along with artists Robert Rauschenberg and Robert Whitman. Klüver, a physicist at Bell Telephone Laboratories, had connected the New York avant-garde to colleagues pioneering the kinds of technologies that would define the information age: lasers, computers, electronic sound. In fostering these one-on-one collaborations between artists and engineers, the idea was that the gap between the realms of art and cutting-edge technology might be bridged, encouraging innovation and new forms of creative expression.

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*Getty's PST ART exhibition Sensing the Future explores how a postwar group of artists and engineers tried to invent the future*

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**By Anya Ventura**  
Editorial Content Producer  
Getty Research Institute



Robert Breer's *Floats* outside E.A.T.'s Pepsi-Cola Pavilion, Osaka, Japan, 1970. Chromogenic process. Photograph by Shunk-Kender. © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, and Robert Breer

In the postwar era, against the backdrop of the Vietnam War and *Silent Spring*, Rachel Carson’s damning documentation of the effects of pesticides introduced during World War II, the technology produced by the military-industrial complex had emerged as something wondrous, but also sinister. Without the humanizing touch of the artist, would an increasingly technological society become cold, mechanized, and authoritarian? “E.A.T. is founded on the strong belief that an industrially sponsored, effective working relationship between artists and engineers will lead to new possibilities which will benefit society as a whole,” Klüver and Rauschenberg wrote.

Together, as they were preparing for the wild experiment that was *9 Evenings*, artists and engineers invented solutions to problems that didn’t yet exist. “The artists asked about buildings with walls made of warm air,” wrote artist Simone Forti, who would appear in one performance singing an Italian folk song while inside a sack. “Masses of materials that would decay before your eyes. They asked about being lifted on growing masses of Styrofoam. About television systems that could instantly turn live action into slow motion.” These fantastical visions, she continued, formed “a first meeting ground for two groups of people who had sought each other out and who didn’t yet know how to work together.”

Featuring artists like John Cage, Lucinda Childs, Yvonne Rainer, Rauschenberg, and David Tudor, who would all go on to achieve world renown, *9 Evenings* made use of now-common technologies that were then confined to the military and corporate labs. The new technologies being invented at Bell Labs found new uses. Rauschenberg’s “Open Score” enacted a tennis match in which each thwack of the ball triggered a light to go out in the Armory, followed by individuals, tracked with infrared cameras, whose movements were projected on large screens. In “Grass Field,” sensors attached to Alex Hay’s body captured physiological data that was then translated into sound. Cage’s “Variations VII” featured manipulated sounds mixed from external sources around the city—from the Department of Sanitation to the tank for composer Terry Riley’s pet turtle—to create an ever-changing soundscape in real time. Thirty photocells aimed at bright lights beneath the performance tables triggered the release of the sounds to speakers situated around the Armory.

The project was like a science experiment, Klüver told one interviewer, “and therefore full of risks.” Still propelled by the belief that artists had something valuable to offer the corporate world, E.A.T.’s next step was a PR blitz to recruit engineers. Members began a newsletter, *E.A.T. News*, staged open houses, and gave public lectures at a 16th Street loft on topics like lasers, television, and computer graphics. They organized tours of Bell Labs and IBM for artists (called “E.A.T.-ins”) and set up a booth at the annual meeting of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. The hardware developed for *9 Evenings*—all the amplifiers, speakers, and switchboards—formed a lending library for New York artists. Most strikingly, they devised a punch card system, an early form of computing, as a kind of matchmaking service that paired artists with engineers to realize specific projects. It was, in fact, an

early database. The group functioned somewhat like an analog people-powered search engine, making connections and distributing information to those who needed it. Soon, E.A.T. counted 4,000 artists and engineers from around the world as members.

In the late 1960s, the activities of E.A.T. spread beyond the traditional boundaries of the New York art world. In 1970 the group staged a series of iconic multimedia performances at the Pepsi-Cola Pavilion at Expo ’70 in Osaka, Japan. While a specially engineered fog shrouded the exterior of the pavilion’s geodesic dome, a highly polished spherical mirror inside created a continuous 360-degree reflection. Under the umbrella “Projects Outside Art,” the group began rooftop gardens and telecommunication centers for children. Throughout the course of the 1970s, E.A.T. also developed artists’ cable broadcasting, and educational television programming for rural Indian villages, with the help of NASA and experimental satellites. By applying an artist’s way of thinking to contemporary problems, their work, ever ahead of its time, could be considered a proto version of social practice art, or design thinking.

“Art desires technology’s seeming omnipotence, its cold power, its cutting-edge materials and processes,” writes art historian Michelle Kuo. “Technology wants art’s creativity, its free thinking, its radical innovation.” If military think tanks and corporate labs like NASA and AT&T sought



John Cage, “Variations VII.” 1966, performance still. Photograph by Peter Moore. © Northwestern University. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, 940003

“universal connectivity,” she posits, E.A.T. realized this dream with a “new kind of network.”

The legacy of E.A.T. is found not only in the artworks left behind but also in the community infrastructures produced to create them. In an age where “creativity” is a buzzword, the founders of E.A.T. knew early on the importance of risk-taking and interdisciplinary collaboration and how artists can help us find our way in a wild, technologically saturated world. ■

*Sensing the Future: Experiments in Art and Technology* is on view at the Getty Research Institute through February 23, 2025.



Billy Klüver and Fred Waldhauer, 1966. Photograph by Elliott Landy and Peter Moore. © Northwestern University. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, 940003



Performance inside the Pepsi-Cola Pavilion, 1970. Photograph: Shunk-Kender © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2014.R.20). Gift of the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation in memory of Harry Shunk and János Kender



Still from *Artist Dialogues* video on Lita Albuquerque (forthcoming), showing the re-creation of *Malibu Line*, 2024

# IN THEIR OWN WORDS

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*In the YouTube series Artist Dialogues, contemporary creators get real about the unique challenges of conserving their art*

In 1978, artist Lita Albuquerque used the LA coastline as a canvas. She dug a 41-foot-long shallow trench on a cliff overlooking the Pacific Ocean and filled it with a brilliant powdered ultramarine pigment, creating a mark that appeared to continue into the horizon. Titled *Malibu Line*, the work gained renown in the contemporary art scene for drawing the viewer's attention to the earth and sky in a visually concise and compelling way.

Two years later, overgrown with flowers and grass, it was gone.

Historically, the main goals of art conservation have been to make the original materials last as long as possible and/or to diminish the appearance of damage. Thanks to this approach, as we walk down the halls of the J. Paul Getty Museum at the Getty Center and Getty Villa, we can still marvel at the same artworks that inspired humans hundreds and thousands of years ago.

But how do you conserve more recent art, like site-specific works exposed to environmental changes, as in the case of *Malibu Line*? What about Alison Saar's paintings, which repurpose found objects with their own history of aging, or Fred Eversley's lenslike sculptures, created with modern materials such as polyester resin?

These are some of the artworks discussed in *Artist Dialogues*, a video series produced by the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI). Available on YouTube, the 10-minute videos feature interviews with contemporary artists from various genres and mediums, delving into their overarching philosophies, materials, and working methods, as well as their thoughts on conservation. The short films also provide a behind-the-scenes look into the artists' studios and/or follow their creative process as they work. Recent dialogues have been screened at the Getty Center, accompanied by live Q & As with the participants.

Art from the 20th century to today is infinitely diverse in both material and concept, necessitating a variety of approaches to conserve it. One common thread, though, is the need to understand what qualities in an artwork, whether material, aesthetic, or conceptual, are important to preserve.

Now in its 11th iteration, the series is a glimpse into the conservation process of consulting artists about the properties that define their output, capturing their varied attitudes toward nontraditional materials and art practices. Condensed into an easy-to-digest format and featuring their voices alongside footage of them at work, the dialogues offer a unique opportunity for artists to share these perspectives with the public, often for the very first time.

### A microcosm of contemporary art

The idea for *Artist Dialogues* began with chemist and conservator Tom Learner, head of science at the GCI, and conservator Rachel Rivenc, head of conservation and preservation at the Getty Research Institute. In 2016, while working at the GCI,

Rivenc authored the Getty publication *Made in Los Angeles: Materials, Processes, and the Birth of West Coast Minimalism*, an analysis of conservation issues surrounding the work of Light and Space artists such as Larry Bell, Robert Irwin, Craig Kauffman, and John McCracken. Drawing inspiration from Southern California in the 1960s and '70s—its sun, sea, cars, film industry, and space technology—these innovators produced works that investigated the interaction of color, light, and space, creating sensory experiences for their viewers.

Bell, for example, utilized a technique known as “vacuum deposition of thin films” to apply a metallic layer to plate glass, altering how it absorbed, reflected, and transmitted light, to stunning effect. These artists often borrowed emerging technologies from local industries, and their fabrication processes were so novel that researchers and conservators have only recently begun to study them in depth.

Through her research, Rivenc found that the conservation issues of Light and Space artworks, which utilized industrial materials in untried ways, were emblematic of broader



Still from *Artist Dialogues* video Alison Saar: *Found Spirit*



conservation problems in contemporary art. LA-based practitioners have since continued to challenge conventional creative methods, breaking new ground in conceptual art—where the material is secondary to its meaning—while also creating a rich landscape of street and public art and expressing the diverse identities in the city, foregrounded by the Black and Chicano art movements of the 1960s.

Learner and Rivenc reasoned that contemporary art production in LA—a young, multicultural city open to experimentation—could offer a kaleidoscopic view of how artists approach materials, processes, and conservation everywhere.

To explore artists’ processes in a way that would be accessible to a wide audience—from conservators and curators to art historians and the public—

*Untitled (parabolic lens)*, (1969) 2020, Fred Eversley. 3-color, 3-layer cast polyester. Courtesy of the artist and David Kordansky Gallery. Photo: Jeff McLane. © Fred Eversley

Learner and Rivenc conceived the *Artist Dialogues* series. The video interviews would also provide opportunities to cultivate connections between the GCI and local contemporary art scenes.

Rivenc oversaw the series for its first few years, which began by featuring pioneers of the Light and Space movement. More recent episodes include LA-based artists taking an eclectic range of approaches, including Gabriel Kuri, David Lamelas, Laura Owens, Saar, and former Getty artists in residence Gala Porras-Kim and Analia Saban.

Today the series is managed by Ellen Moody, a conservator who joined the GCI in 2020 but had become acquainted with the videos while working at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, where she consulted the series to understand the process behind some of the works in MoMA's collection.

“Getting artists to think about the future of their work can be a hard ask, as they tend to focus on its creation,” Moody explains. “But when pressed to reflect on the long term, new insights emerge about what really matters to them. These insights not only guide future conservation strategies but also deepen

our understanding of the work.” She now seeks to interview artists whose pieces have interesting challenges that demonstrate the many different forms conservation can take.

### Conservation pathways

The videos do not seek to capture a fixed perspective (as artists' views may evolve over time) or offer a direct how-to for preserving a work. Instead, they illustrate the expansive range of contemporary art conservation.

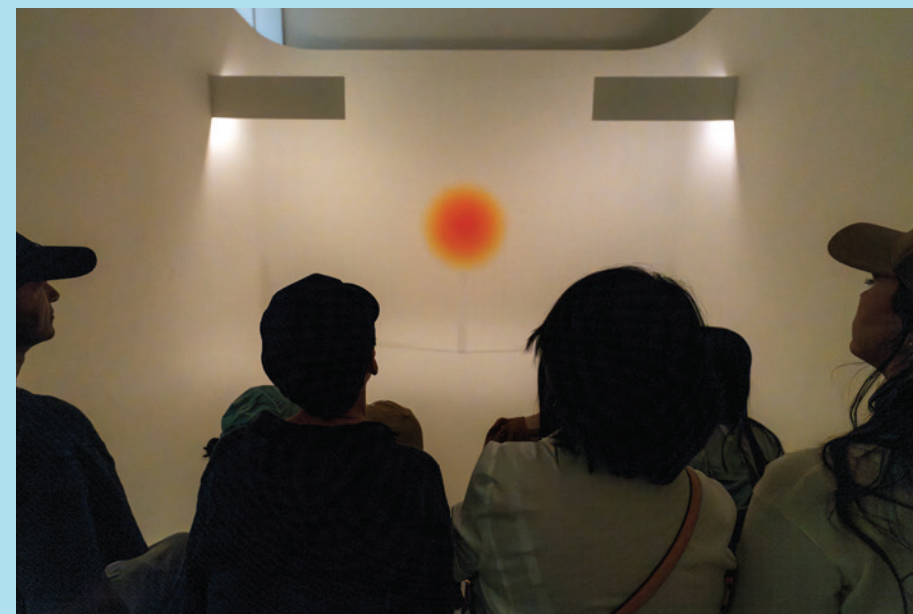
This variety is evident even among Light and Space artists who worked in Venice, California, in the 1970s. Some, like Eversley, are confident that their polyester artworks may never need to be conserved. “My earliest pieces haven't changed one iota since they were made,” he says. “The color's stable. The plastic's stable. Ninety-nine percent of my pieces have never been conserved.”

Others, such as Helen Pashgian, prefer full restoration of their sculptures should they get only slightly chipped or scratched. “You can sand and polish the scratched part, but then you have to repolish the whole piece.”

Helen Pashgian's meditative sculpture and light installation *Untitled (Lens)* challenges human perception. Using light to take the viewer utterly beyond the outside world, her work energizes and focuses the mind, creating transformative experiences.

This installation is featured in the exhibition *Lumen: The Art and Science of Light*, which is on view at the Getty Center through December 8.

*Lumen* is part of PST ART: *Art & Science Collide*, the latest edition of Getty's Pacific Standard Time arts initiative. Over 70 PST ART exhibitions are launching this fall across the Southern California region.



Visitors at the *Lumen: Helen Pashgian* installation at the Getty Center; *Untitled (Lens)*, 2023, Helen Pashgian. Cast urethane. Courtesy of the artist. © Helen Pashgian



*Clara*, 2002, Alison Saar. Acrylic paint on cast iron skillet. © Alison Saar. Image courtesy Louver, Venice, CA

Then there are those who find beauty in change, like Bell. “There is a patina that comes to everything with age. I don't try and fight that patina; I like it.”

Certain artists, such as Albuquerque (whose *Artist Dialogues* episode is currently in production), see their works as having limited lifespans, like life itself. In her video, she works on a re-creation of *Malibu Line* 40 years later and reflects on what conservation means for ephemeral works. “Through the use of color and certain geometries, there's an image that stays in the mind,” she says. “The trace that remains will always be there.”

The diverse perspectives of contemporary artists echo the nuanced approach of conservation, a field that is evolving to incorporate the age of a piece while keeping it intact.

Saar is the most recently profiled artist in the series. Getty hosted a public screening of her episode, “Alison Saar: Found Spirit,” at the end of August, followed by a Q & A with the artist. Her sculptures, installations, and prints explore issues of gender, race, and heritage through the incorporation of humble found materials. For example, Saar has used cast-iron skillets as surfaces for portraits and as symbols of domestic labor.

Saar's mother is the acclaimed artist Betye Saar, and her father, Richard Saar, was a ceramicist and art conservator, so the question of conservation is not new to her. In a way, it has even enriched her work with an added layer of meaning.

“The paintings that were on skillets were really about the invisible population of domestic workers,” she says in her interview. “And actually the idea that they will fade in time and be absorbed by that, I think is true to the idea that these are people largely invisible and ignored by society, and they come out of the darkness and may have to retract into the darkness again. We'll see. You just have to make the work and really have faith in what it's going to be, and if it doesn't exist forever, that's fine.” ■

Watch *Artist Dialogues* on YouTube and sign up for Getty's e-newsletter, Get Inspired, at [subscriptions.getty.edu](https://subscriptions.getty.edu) to learn about the next *Artist Dialogues* screening at the Getty Center.

# PST ART PROGRAMMING TAKES OFF



*Listener*, 2018, Kite. Performance in Linz, Austria. Includes floor projections, audio channels, and hair-braid interface. Photo by vog.photo. © Kite

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*From dancing robots to rocket launches, region-wide public programs explore the intersections of art and science on a monumental scale*

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By Jessica McQueen  
Communications Specialist  
Getty Foundation

Brain wave recordings, hi-tech braids, and dreams. These are some of the elements at play in Oglala Lakshóta artist Kite's upcoming performance titled *Wičháŋpi Wóihanbleya (Dreamlike Star)*. Her body will become machine as she performs musical scores by manipulating sensor-laced plaits of hair, translating dreams of women and two-spirit community members from the Lakshóta visual language into experimental sounds and video. As one of the few contemporary Indigenous artists today working with artificial intelligence and machine learning, and as head of Bard College's new Wihanble S'a Center for Indigenous AI, Kite experiments regularly with computer scientists and other technologists to invent new art forms.

The performance, which takes place on November 2 in Downtown Los Angeles at REDCAT, is one of hundreds of programs accompanying the landmark event PST ART: *Art & Science Collide*.

The new edition of Getty's PST ART initiative (previously known as Pacific Standard Time) celebrates art and science's entwined histories and futures through exhibitions, programs, and related publications and resources that offer dynamic ways to engage with these topics. Visitors who want a closer look at Kite's art, for example, can touch one of her interactive braid pieces on view in the Autry Museum of the American West's PST ART exhibition *Future Imaginaries: Indigenous Art, Fashion,*

*Technology* or see other works on view at REDCAT's gallery or The Brick. "To meet the globe- and history-spanning theme, *Art & Science Collide* features our most ambitious programming plan for PST ART yet," says Zachary Kaplan, who leads public programming for PST ART at the Getty Foundation, which supports each edition of the initiative through grants to dozens of regional organizations. "Together with our partners at cultural and scientific institutions, we've designed a calendar of major events to help locals and visitors alike explore the exhibitions, discuss the urgent issues they present, and feel inspired to engage even more in art and science."

The programs offer dynamic experiences for art aficionados and science lovers of all ages and range from immersive performances to a satellite launch, and from hands-on workshops to discussions on climate change and sustainability. Regional art weekends, involving multiple institutions in neighborhoods from Northeast LA to San Diego, and community hubs, offering activities such as art making and habitat restoration projects, round out the robust offerings.

The programming, organized by Getty, PST ART-presenting partners, and community-based organizations continues through spring 2025.

Here's a sampling of what to expect in the coming months. Event details are subject to change, so be sure to check out [pst.art](http://pst.art) before heading out.

**Free the Land! Free the People! A Study of the Abolitionist Pod**

Crenshaw Dairy Mart  
Through February 15

**Highlight:** Full-day programming on October 19 as part of the West LA to South LA PST ART Weekend

Crenshaw Dairy Mart (CDM) uses the healing powers of the arts to address poverty, economic injustice, and prison abolition in local communities impacted by food and housing insecurity and the prison industrial complex. For PST ART, CDM is building on its 2021 *abolitionist pod* project, in which it prototyped and built autonomously irrigated, solar-powered gardens within geodesic domes. Health and wellness workshops using herbs and flowers, organic gardening and micro-farming presentations, a community farmers market, and a Black farmers’ meetup are among the programs designed to reimagine community care and model how art and science can collectively address social issues. The events accompany an exhibition at CDM about the *abolitionist pod* project.

Weekly Somatics Centering Practice inside the Crenshaw Dairy Mart abolitionist pod (prototype) for the Fellowship for Abolition and the Advancement of the Creative Economy (CDM-FAACE) Inaugural Cohort 2022–2023. From left to right: CDM Program Director Vic Quintanar, CDM Cofounder alexandre ali reza dorriz, CDM-FAACE 2022–2023 Inaugural Creative Projects Intern Aiyana Sha’niel, CDM-FAACE 2022–2023 Inaugural Fellow Autumn Breon, CDM-FAACE 2022–2023 Inaugural Fellow Oto-Abasi Attah, CDM-FAACE 2022–2023 Inaugural Program Intern Magic Udeh, 2023. Photo: Gio Solis



**PigeonBlog**

October 19, 2:30 pm, at Crenshaw Dairy Mart  
November 16, 11:00 am, at Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery (LAMAG)

Pigeons outfitted with miniature air pollution tracking devices may seem like a scene from a sci-fi film, but this spectacle will become a reality with *Pigeon-Blog*, a reactivation of a grassroots scientific-data-gathering project by late artist Beatriz da Costa. Audiences can attend pigeon releases; access the bird-collected data online and in an accompanying show organized by LACE and on view at LAMAG about da Costa’s many collaborations with scientists, activists, and other artists; and even learn how to build their own pollution-measuring monitors. “I’m hoping we can spark discussions around creating access to science without fear or dependence on big institutions,” says Daniela Lieja Quintanar, guest curator of the exhibition and current REDCAT chief curator and deputy director of programs. “Being able to generate your own information as a community is important, especially in this country, where knowledge is gated by corporations and government.”



*Pigeon Blog*, 2006–8, Beatriz da Costa with Cina Hazegh and Kevin Ponto. Courtesy of the Beatriz da Costa Estate

**Opening Doors**

Beckman and Ramo Auditoriums, Caltech  
October–December

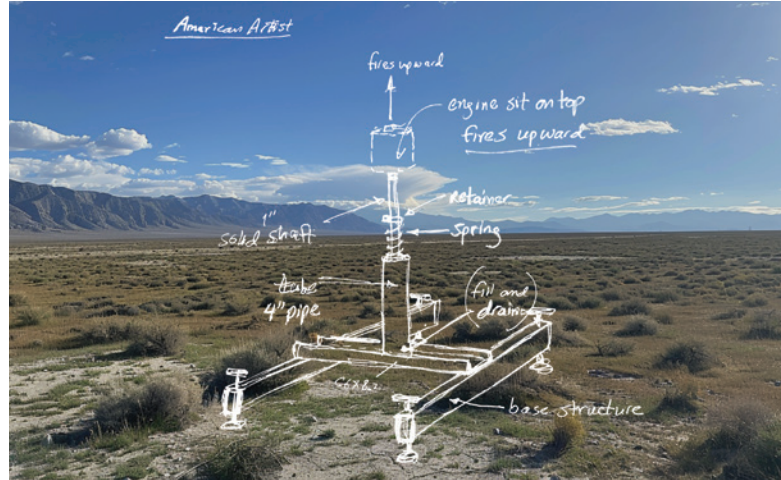
For the past century, the internationally renowned science and engineering institute Caltech has fostered discovery and innovation across its campus and research facilities (including NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory). The institute also presents performances, concerts, and screenings through its CaltechLive! programming and for PST ART is presenting a full suite of dance, music, and theater events. An industrial robot named KUKA will take center stage with Taiwan-based dancer/choreographer Huang Yi and his company in a performance celebrating the future of humanity and technology. Other highlights include LA-based Invertigo Dance Theatre’s blending of movement, music, and AI to explore the life of English mathematician Alan Turing, and a choral concert focused on the climate crisis by Grammy Award–winning vocal ensemble Tonality.



Huang Yi and KUKA. Photo: Summer Yen. Courtesy of Huang Yi Studio +



*Formulae & Fairy Tales*, Invertigo Dance Theatre. Photo: George Simian



AI-generated image of the Mojave Test Area, hand-drawn diagram of GALCIT test replica by Dave Nordling, image courtesy the artist

**American Artist: The Monophobic Response**

Los Angeles County Museum of Art  
November 1–4

This past summer, a rocket engine was fired on the ground in the Mojave Desert as part of American Artist’s performance *The Monophobic Response*. Inspired by Octavia E. Butler’s novel *Parable of the Sower*, which takes place in an imagined dystopic 2024, American Artist meticulously crafted and filmed a re-creation of a 1936 static fire test—a process that trials a rocket engine on the ground—that initiated the United States’ venture into space travel. The work draws parallels between Butler’s fictitious 2024 US presidential race and this November’s real-world election, presenting thought-provoking takes on survival and liberation in a world where rapidly changing technological advancements bring dystopian elements into our daily lives. An installation on view at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art will let visitors get a glimpse of artifacts from the rocket test and documentary footage.

**PST ART: Art x Science Family Festival**

La Brea Tar Pits, hosted by Natural History Museum of Los Angeles  
November 9–11

Children aged 4 to 14 and their families are invited to discover how art and science come into play at the La Brea Tar Pits, a site that is literally at the nexus of these disciplines, being both situated along LA’s Museum Row and an active paleontological research site. This free, three-day exploratory science festival will include hands-on creative workshops on themes ranging from local pollinators to exoplanets, tar pit excavation tours, roving science demonstrations, and live performances. “Both art and science are so rich within Los Angeles; it makes sense to be telling the local community how fantastic that is in an accessible, engaging way,” says Gill Duncan, project producer at Edinburgh Science, an educational nonprofit presenting the festival in collaboration with Getty and PST ART partners. Edinburgh Science has successfully engaged multigenerational audiences for over 30 years by creating innovative celebrations of science and technology. “We aim to inspire and encourage our audiences, particularly young people, to learn, create, and explore the wonder of the world around them,” says Duncan.



Visitors enjoy Edinburgh Science Festival events. Photo: Stuart Armitt. Courtesy of Edinburgh Science

**Noon to Midnight**

Walt Disney Concert Hall  
November 16, 12:00 pm–12:00 am

Live performances and sound-based installations will fill the entire Walt Disney Concert Hall campus as part of this 12-hour experimental music festival presented by the LA Philharmonic in partnership with the Los Angeles Master Chorale. The event’s

theme is field recording, a musical movement centered on audio captured outside a studio. Audiences will hear the work of emerging artists and that of pioneers who first brought field recordings into the realm of live music. Plan to come early and stay late to experience installation and media pieces that delve into the “wild” world of bioacoustics, GPS-enabled soundwalks, ambient works blending prerecorded sounds, and a presentation of the film *Lightscape* by Doug Aitken with a live soundtrack.



Interior of the Walt Disney Concert Hall, Farah Sosa. Courtesy of the LA Phil

**Quantum Vibrations Listening Sessions**

Locations and times vary

This free, four-part music series borrows its title from legendary composer and music theorist Pauline Oliveros’s idea of “quantum listening,” defined as “listening in order to attune to our bodies, the earth and one another in an increasingly loud and noisy world.” Curated by Josh Kun, a professor in the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism and vice provost for the arts at USC, each listening session features artists who use music to explore scientific questions and concepts, including nuclear research, desert biomes, and nonhuman music makers. The events take place on October 4 (Audubon Center at Debs Park), October 17 (Getty Center), November 9 (La Brea Tar Pits), and November 17 (Ebell of Los Angeles).

**The Gift**

Jerry Moss Plaza at The Music Center  
February 8

Humans have been observing the sky for tens of thousands of years. The immersive performance and installation *The Gift* invites participants of all ages to pause and explore what we can learn about ourselves—and each other—by looking at the stars. Gathering at reading tables on Jerry Moss Plaza at The Music Center in Downtown Los Angeles, audiences will be enveloped in music from an original orchestral score while encountering an illustrated book conveying the story of two stars whose fates are intertwined. A special preview of the event was presented for young audiences inside the 100-inch-telescope dome at the Mount Wilson Observatory in September.

## More PST ART Programming

### Off the Wall: Transformative Currents Conversation Series

Oceanside Museum of Art  
October 17, 6:00–7:30 pm

A roundtable discussion with curators, artists, environmental reporters, and others examining the impact of sea level rise on Southern California’s art community and how art and science can enact positive change

### PST ART Hub

Wende Museum  
October 19, 4:30–9:00 pm

A celebratory afternoon and evening filled with screenings, talks, vendors, workshops, and more

### Artist Conversation and Weaving Performance: Tanya Aguiñiga and Porfirio Gutiérrez

Fowler Museum  
October 19, 1:00–4:00 pm

A dialogue and weaving performance with interdisciplinary fiber artists Tanya Aguiñiga and Porfirio Gutiérrez in conjunction with the Fowler Museum’s PST ART exhibition *Sangre de Nopal/Blood of the Nopal*

### Resonance

L.A. Dance Project  
November 16, time and locations vary

A series of site-specific dance performances across Los Angeles that uses the science of empathy to encourage public dialogue, promote self-reflection, and mobilize civic action

### ECOTONES

The Brick and Active Cultures  
Dates and locations vary

A programming series led by artists and artist collectives on local agriculture, biodiversity, foraging, and rituals of food and herbalism

### San Diego Community Art Day

Balboa Park  
November 23, 10:00 am–5:00 pm

A community art day offered by PST ART’s San Diego partners—the San Diego Museum of Art, Mingei International Museum, and ICA San Diego—with performances, cyanotype workshops, gallery walk-throughs, forest therapy walks hosted by Usal Project, and more

### Live Night: Cruising Bodies, Spirits, and Machines

United Theater on Broadway  
December 7

A celebratory night of experimental performances by Rafa Esperaza, MUXX Project (Lukas Avendaño), EYIBRA (Abraham Brody), NNUX (Ana López-Reyes), and Oswaldo Erréve

### PST ART: Ideas Festival

The Ebell of Los Angeles  
February 8

The close of this edition of PST ART, with luminaries from culture and science gathering for talks, workshops, performances, and more

### PST ART Weekends

A series of regional activations that break up PST ART into easily traversable weekend-long experiences, with talks, workshops, performances, and live DJ sets by NTS Radio

West LA to South LA  
October 18–20

Orange County and Long Beach  
November 1–3

Hollywood to Expo Park  
November 16–17

San Diego and La Jolla  
November 23–24

Downtown LA  
December 7–8

For more information about all *Art & Science Collide* events, exhibitions, educational materials, and more, visit [pst.art](http://pst.art).

PST ART is supported by lead partners: Bank of America, Alicia Miñana & Rob Lovelace, and the Getty Patron Program. Principal partners: Simons Foundation, Eva & Ming Hsieh, and Panda Express.



Artists Porfirio Gutiérrez and Tanya Aguiñiga hold their faces in front of their weavings in front of a hill near Gutiérrez’s hometown of Teotitlán de Valle, Mexico. Photo: Javier Lazo Gutiérrez

*Festival in Motion* by Salia Sanou. Photo by Josh S. Rose. © LA Dance Project



*Wake* by Jill Johnson and David Poe. Photo: Josh S. Rose. © LA Dance Project



Garnett Puett at work on his “apisculpture,” *Cochecton*, New York, July 1986. One of his sculptures is on view in the exhibition *Breath(e): Toward Climate and Social Justice* at the Hammer Museum. Photo: Gillian de Seve

# River of Life

By Anya Ventura  
Editorial Content Producer  
Getty Research Institute

## Carolina Caycedo collaborates with communities across the Americas to envision a fossil fuel-free future

On a recent afternoon in Getty's Central Garden, artist Carolina Caycedo unfolded her *Serpent River Book*, a 72-page collage of archival images, maps, poems, lyrics, and satellite photos of the rivers of Colombia, Mexico, and Brazil.

One by one the pages unfurled, accordion-style, to form one long stream—"a river of information," Caycedo says—which was then carried aloft in a single-file procession through the Getty Center.

The *Serpent River Book* series—combining scholarship, visual art, how-tos, and proposals for a communal energy infrastructure—is part of a larger body of work called *Be Dammed* that explores the complex issues surrounding the construction of hydroelectric dams: the displacement of Indigenous communities, loss of biodiversity, and the commodification of water resources.

Of Colombian descent, Caycedo was born in London and grew up in different places around the world. For her, water is significant for how it transcends national borders, a shared global language. With a background in public art, she became interested in rivers when she realized how they functioned as a kind of communal space in rural communities across the Americas, a common good threatened by capitalist development. "I feel strongly about defending this public realm," she says.

To create the project, Caycedo collaborated with activists and Indigenous community groups who are on the front lines of ecological collapse, working together to imagine a future not dependent on fossil fuels. The answer to our current environmental crisis is not just about building more solar farms or buying electric cars, the work suggests, but requires a much larger, radical transformation of how we relate to the physical world. If Western thought places humans outside nature—with elements like rivers and forests seen simply as exploitable resources—Indigenous perspectives treat waterways as living relations, vital links in the web of life. For instance, the Whanganui River in New Zealand was granted legal personhood in 2017, reflecting the Maori belief in its living essence.



Carolina Caycedo, Getty  
Artist in Residence  
2023–2024

The *Serpent River Book* also reveals how ancestral knowledge—the tools and techniques passed down through generations—models ways to live more sustainably. Honed over time, these technologies often represent traditional ways of doing things—from agricultural practices like crop rotation and water irrigation to handicraft techniques like weaving and pottery. Drawing on the wisdom of the past to address current environmental challenges, these technologies reflect a deep connection to and respect for the natural world.

Caycedo, who spent this past year as Getty's 2023–24 Artist in Residence, logged long hours in the Getty Library conducting research for the second volume in the *Serpent River Book* series. "I think the librarians here must think I'm crazy," she says, "I have about 200 books." She looked at everything from 19th-century travel albums, depicting ancestral technologies like rice harvesting, to contemporary art, drawing inspiration from Getty's large collection of artists' books by Sam Winston, Cecelia Vicuña, Agnes Denes, and others. "Research in the archives is a way of building a genealogy," she says, connecting her work to a larger web of relationships.

The *Serpent River Book* is designed to be "activated" through movement, installation, and collective study. Just as communities like Idaho's Nez Perce tribe, who Caycedo has collaborated with, give offerings to nature to repay what they've taken for sustenance, Caycedo sees her project as a way to give back to the communities she works with. "As artists, we take images and information but forget to leave stuff," she says. The book, after all, is a portable medium. Throughout history, books have functioned as technology for sharing information

across vast distances, spreading ideas and culture through images and text. While sometimes used as colonial tools, they also enable communities to practice creativity and resistance. As modes of exchange, books give voice to the underrepresented, expose injustice, and tell new stories different from the ones upheld by the dominant culture.

In a world based on extraction, in which bodies and lands are continually ransacked by capitalism, Caycedo's art is an important enactment of reciprocity, joy, collaboration, and creative resistance. "What are the processes that uphold life?" she asks. Through artist's books, videos, sculptures, and performances, her work is ever evolving to platform the voices of others. "The work we create can host and take care of other people's struggles and preoccupations," she says, "and for me, that is what art is really about."

Carolina Caycedo's work will be on display in the PST LA exhibition *We Place Life at the Center/Situamos la vida en el centro*, running through March 1, 2025, at the Vincent Price Art Museum.



Excerpt from *Serpent River Book*, 2017, Carolina Caycedo. © Carolina Caycedo. Courtesy of the artist



*I Will Come from the Ocean—Mooomvene Kimaaro*, negative 2022; print 2023, Mercedes Dorame. Inkjet print. Getty Museum. Purchased with funds provided by the Photographs Council. © Mercedes Dorame

## Photographs by Mercedes Dorame

**THE J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM HAS ACQUIRED** eight photographs by Los Angeles-based artist Mercedes Dorame from her series *Everywhere is West*. The inkjet prints depict flora and fauna found on the Channel Islands of Santa Cruz and Santa Catalina off the coast of Southern California, lands inhabited by members of the Tongva tribe for generations.

Dorame's work examines her ancestral connection to the Gabrielino/Tongva tribes, their history, and the land that historically sustained these Indigenous communities. For this series she made several trips to Santa Cruz and Santa Catalina Islands to document tidal basins, asphalt seeps, and rugged landscapes, focusing on plants and animals found in these locations.

The abalone, a mollusk that has long sustained the Tongva and other Indigenous communities along the California coastline, became a recurring subject in her work. Abalone shells have played an important cultural and ceremonial role for the Tongva peoples, but due to overharvesting, largely by non-Native groups, the presence of abalone shells has been in dramatic decline in many California coastal areas.

The newly acquired photographs relate directly to the Museum's recent Rotunda Commission *Mercedes Dorame: Woshaa'axre Yaang'aro (Looking Back)*. Dorame invited visitors to imagine Catalina Island from the Tongva people's perspective and sculpted five abalone shells as large as 12 feet tall that hung from the ceiling.

Born in Los Angeles, Dorame received an undergraduate degree from UCLA and a master of fine arts from the San Francisco Art Institute. She teaches at the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia. Her work can be found in the public collections of the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, among other institutions. ■

—Valerie Tate, Senior Communications Lead,  
J. Paul Getty Trust

## Rediscovered Masterpiece of the Flemish Renaissance

**THE GETTY MUSEUM HAS ACQUIRED** *Madonna of the Cherries* by Quentin Metsys, strengthening its collection of Netherlandish painting.

Long believed to have been lost, the 16th-century work's recent rediscovery offered Getty an opportunity to acquire one of the most significant paintings of the Flemish Renaissance to appear on the market in decades.

"The tender beauty and accessibility of Metsys's representation of the familial bond between the Virgin Mary and Christ child represents a major innovation in early Netherlandish painting that greatly heightens the emotional impact of the image," says Timothy Potts, Maria Hummer-Tuttle and Robert Tuttle Director of the Getty Museum. "Painted at the height of his career, and preserved today in excellent condition, *Madonna of the Cherries* is among Metsys's most appealing and influential compositions. Acknowledged as a masterpiece in its day, the painting became especially famous in the 17th century, after which its whereabouts were lost. I have no doubt that its spiritual and artistic resonance will make it one of the most beloved works in our collection."

Rich with symbolism, the cherries have celestial connotations as the fruit of heaven, while their color signifies the future blood of Christ's Passion. The still life in the foreground elaborates on the theme of his sacrifice on the cross, with a yellow apple referring to his role as the new Adam.

The first recorded owner of *Madonna of the Cherries* was prominent early 17th-century art collector Cornelis van der Geest, who, according to contemporary accounts, resisted efforts by the sovereigns of the Spanish Netherlands to obtain the painting from him. All traces of the panel were lost following its sale to an anonymous buyer in 1668. It resurfaced at auction in Paris in 1920 but was no longer recognizable due to a thick layer of discolored varnish and overpainting, including a green curtain drawn over the background landscape. It reappeared once again in 2015 at a Christie's auction, still marred by the later additions, and labeled a studio version—a painting from the workshop of Metsys. After a subsequent conservation treatment that revealed its exceptional quality and condition, scholars recognized it as the original masterpiece by Metsys.

Metsys was the foremost painter in Antwerp during the early 16th century. He was known for his compelling portraits, sophisticated use of color, and representations of emotion and expression. As Antwerp established itself as a center for

creative innovation, Metsys introduced to the region new types of portraiture and secular painting. In the 17th century, he was esteemed as the "father" of the Antwerp school by collectors and leading artists of the time, notably Peter Paul Rubens.

This is the second painting by Metsys to enter the Getty collection, following the 2018 acquisition of *Christ as the Man of Sorrows*. *Madonna of the Cherries* is on view in the Getty Center's North Pavilion. ■

—Cole Calhoun, Senior Communications Lead,  
J. Paul Getty Trust



*Madonna of the Cherries*, about 1520–25, Quentin Metsys. Oil on panel. Getty Museum



Job 2980: Case Study House No. 22 (Los Angeles, Calif.), 1960; photograph by Julius Shulman, architect of work depicted, Pierre Koenig, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10)

## Facts about the LA art scene that might surprise you

Los Angeles County boasts a vibrant cultural ecosystem of more than **3,499** arts nonprofits and over **150,000** working artists. **10%** of jobs in LA are classified as “creative.” (Source: World Cities Culture Forum, February 2024)

Number of...  
 museums: **219**  
 music venues: **409**  
 art galleries: **230**

Most visited art museums:  
**#1**, Getty Museum at the Center: **1,251,134** visitors (Center and Villa combined: **1,693,047** visitors)  
**#2**, Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens: **1,090,475** visitors  
**#3**, LACMA, **902,237** visitors  
**#4**, The Broad, **895,949** visitors

Newest museum: Lucas Museum (opening date **2025**). Oldest: Southwest Museum (opened in **1914** in Mount Washington; now owned by the Autry Museum but closed due to safety issues). Among the most eccentric: the Museum of Death and the Bunny Museum.

Number of college visual and performing arts programs: **61**. That number includes **4** art schools: ArtCenter, Otis, CalArts, and Laguna.

LA has more working artists than any other major metropolitan area in the US. Not that it’s all fun in the sun. When the Los Angeles Artist Census conducted its last survey in 2020, **51%** of the 1,560 respondents (LA-based visual artists) reported they were looking for work  
**49%** of employed respondents had no employment benefits  
**61%** had no paid sick days  
**77%** had no paid time off  
**76%** earned under **\$60,000**, and **46%** earned under **\$30,000**  
 The top two challenges for living in LA were cost of living (for **61%** of respondents) and housing affordability (**47%**).

LA galleries showed **29%** of “star” artists compared with **23%**

of “emerging” artists, while the city’s museums showed **50%** of “star” artists and **21%** of “emerging” artists. Between 2017 and 2021, **38%** of shows at LA galleries and **36%** of shows at its museums were of women artists. (Source: UBS/economist Clare McAndrew 2022 report)

**152**: number of commercial art galleries in Los Angeles. By neighborhood: **18** Downtown; **16** south side of downtown; **4** in Chinatown; **8** Koreatown/Echo Park; **23** Hollywood; **15** West Hollywood; **18** Fairfax/La Brea/Melrose; **10** Mid City; **11** West Adams; **10** Culver City; **8** Beverly Hills; **11** other parts of LA county. (Source: Art-Collecting.com)

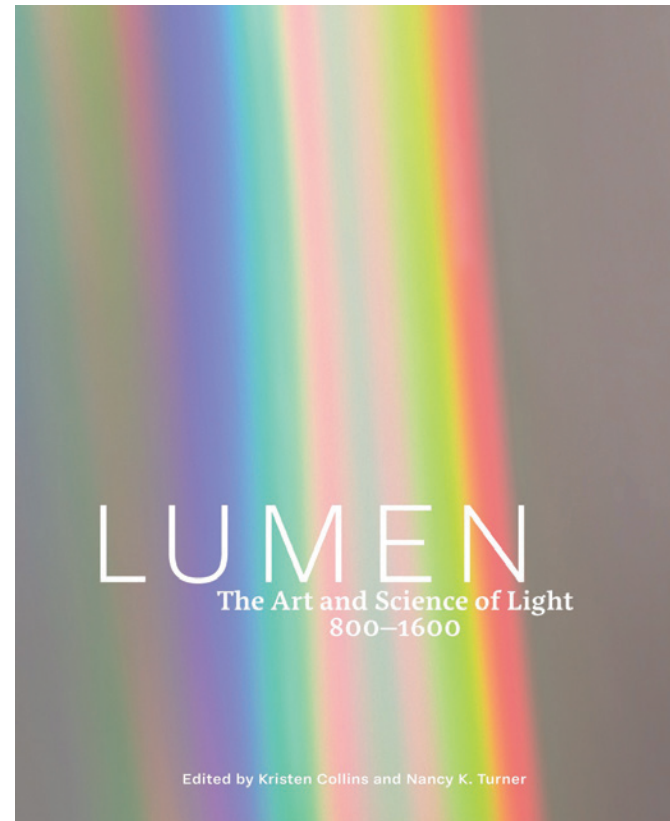
The art industry contributes **835,000** direct and indirect jobs—almost **one in every six** in Los Angeles County. **\$113 billion** in sales and receipts is generated by the art industry in Los Angeles County. (Source: Otis Report on the Creative Economy of the Los Angeles Region: The Power of Art and Artists)

Top celebrity art collectors affiliated with LA and the estimated value of their collections:  
 1. Madonna (**around \$100 million**)  
 2. Beyoncé and Jay-Z (**\$70 million**)  
 3. Leonardo DiCaprio (**over \$10 million**)  
 (source: Masterworks)

Number of annual art fairs: **4**. (Frieze LA; Felix Art Fair; LA Art Show; SPRING/BREAK Los Angeles)

Getty-led PST ART, a landmark regional art event occurring every five years, has become the **#1 largest art event** in the United States.

Highlights of this year’s PST ART iteration, *Art & Science Collide*, on now:  
**800+** artists represented  
**70+** cultural and scientific institutions participating  
**700+** public programs and events  
**6** PST ART Weekends throughout Southern California  
**150+** national and international media attending press tours of participating institutions



Renaissance. The Latin word *lumen* had multiple meanings: it described a source of light (such as a lamp), a bright color, or the light of the eye. The word *lux* denoted the light of heavenly bodies, of daylight, or of dawn. Throughout the years between 800 and 1600, here referred to as the long Middle Ages, the study of astronomy, geometry, and optics provided a framework that was utilized by theologians and harnessed by artists to better understand and evoke the sacred, as well as to rationalize their world. This story is equal parts science, poetics, and craft: through the manipulation of materials such as gold, crystal, and glass, artists created dazzling light-filled environments, evoking, in the material world, the layered realms of the divine. Using artworks as well as scientific texts and instruments, *Lumen* aims to highlight the wide range of intellectual traditions that contributed to medieval scientific thought.

Stories of modern science often begin with the European Enlightenment in the 1600s and 1700s. But throughout the Middle Ages, in Islamic regions and in the Latin West, natural philosophers observed and recorded the movements of the cosmos and improved and refined ancient theories of light and vision. Their knowledge networks stretched across the medieval world, connecting the most sophisticated thinkers of Islamic regions to Christian philosophers and theologians in western Europe. A rich tradition of translation and commentary not only preserved ancient science but also continually developed it. Ancient scientific texts dealing with astronomy, mathematics, and optics were copied, enriched, and transformed by Jewish, Muslim, and Christian scholars, theologians, and artists working in religious institutions, royal courts, schools, and universities.

During the Middle Ages scientific inquiry increased human knowledge and spurred innovations such as spectacles, or wearable magnifiers. In the melding of science and craft, the medieval era also gave rise to the medium that was to become the defining art form of the Christian West: the stained-glass window. The monk Theophilus (active 12th century) dedicated one chapter of his text *De diversis artibus* (The Various Arts) to stained glass—the earliest medieval discussion of the art form. This medium, more than any other, has become synonymous with the topic of light in the medieval era. But by focusing on light’s many other manifestations in the premodern visual arts, this volume aims to explore the scientific underpinnings of medieval artisans’ understanding and manipulation of light and to demonstrate the ways that such knowledge fed the theological symbolism of both light and vision.

The first section, Astral Light, demonstrates the legacy of ancient science as it was translated into a medieval idiom and utilized for purposes such as timekeeping or the determination of religious feast days. The second section, Light and Vision, examines the mechanics of vision as it was understood and used by medieval philosophers and artisans. The third and final section, Aura and Performance, explores the deployment of the knowledge of light and its properties in sacred spaces. Throughout the exhibition and this volume, a selection of contemporary

## Lumen: The Art and Science of Light, 800–1600

Edited by Kristen Collins and Nancy K. Turner

Sumptuously illustrated with dazzling objects, this publication explores how medieval Christian, Jewish, and Islamic artists, theologians, and thinkers worked hand in hand to study the wonders of light. Here’s an excerpt.

**TO BE HUMAN IS TO CRAVE LIGHT.** Throughout time, in varying ways and in different cultures, humans have associated light with the divine. Although in contemporary society religion and science are often positioned as distinct enterprises, in antiquity and the Middle Ages the properties of light were part of intersecting theological, artistic, and scientific debates concerning the nature of the cosmos and the mechanics of vision.

*Lumen: The Art and Science of Light, 800–1600*, like the exhibition it accompanies, explores light as it was conceived and represented in the arts and sciences of the Middle Ages and



Four Diagrams with the Sun and the Moon, about 1277, CE, Franco-Flemish. Tempera, gold, and ink on parchment. Getty Museum, Ms. Ludwig XV 4 (83.MR.174), fols. 149v-150

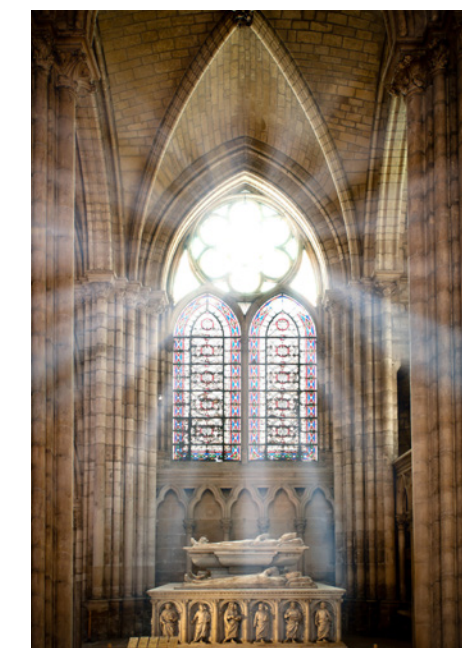
artworks is placed in dialogue with medieval and Renaissance works to emphasize the key aspects of movement and active engagement as they relate to light, perception, and the participatory nature of medieval vision. Underlying many of the optical theories of the premodern world was the idea of a dynamic connection between the viewer and the object viewed. Just as the contemporary artworks and installations included here engage moving light to chart the passage of time and to create a sense of wonder and awe, we hope to convey the premodern experiences of light in sacred spaces and appreciate the scientific underpinnings that informed the creation of art during the long Middle Ages. ■

*Lumen: The Art and Science of Light, 800–1600* accompanies an eponymous exhibition at the Getty Center on view through December 8.

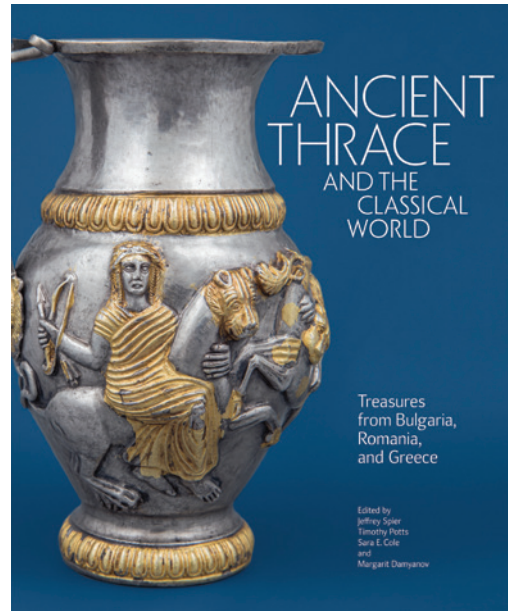
J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM  
272 pages, 9¾ x 12 inches  
222 color and 3 b/w illustrations  
Hardcover  
US \$60



Pentecost, about 1040 CE, German. Tempera colors, gold leaf, and ink on parchment. Getty Museum, Ms. Ludwig VII 1 (83.MI.90), fol. 47v



Light entering the upper choir of the Basilica of Saint-Denis, France. Panther Media GmbH/Alamy Stock Photo. Photo: kylshin

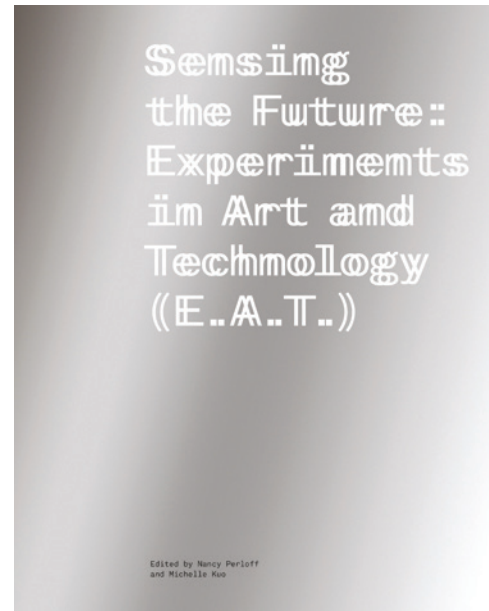


**Ancient Thrace and the Classical World: Treasures from Bulgaria, Romania, and Greece**

Edited by Jeffrey Spier, Timothy Potts, Sara E. Cole, and Margarit Damyanov

The Thracians—a collection of tribal peoples who inhabited territories north of ancient Greece, an area that comprises present-day Bulgaria, much of Romania, and parts of Greece and Turkey—were renowned for their skill as warriors and horsemen, as well as for their wealth in precious metals. Thracians left few written records, and knowledge of their history and customs has long been dependent on brief accounts from ancient Greek authors. This volume reproduces more than 200 glorious objects dating from the end of the Bronze Age, around 1200 BCE, to the end of the first century CE, when Thrace became part of the Roman Empire. Experts explore topics such as Thracian royal tombs, the Greek colonization of the Black Sea coast, Thracian religion, and more, placing Thracian culture in a broader historical context that highlights its complex relationships with the surrounding region.

J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM  
336 pages, 9½ x 11½ inches  
340 color and 10 b/w illustrations, 2 maps, 1 table  
Hardcover  
US \$65

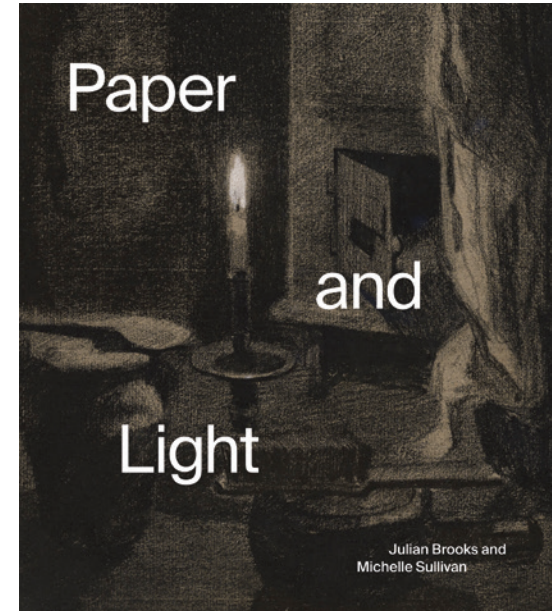


**Sensing the Future: Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.)**

Edited by Nancy Perloff and Michelle Kuo

In 1966, Billy Klüver and Fred Waldhauer, engineers at Bell Labs in Murray Hill, New Jersey, teamed up with artists Robert Rauschenberg and Robert Whitman to form a nonprofit organization, Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.). E.A.T.'s debut event, *9 Evenings: Theatre & Engineering*, integrated art, theater, and groundbreaking technology in a series of performances at the 69th Regiment Armory in Manhattan (see p. 40). Its second major event, the Pepsi Pavilion at Expo '70 in Osaka, Japan, presented a multisensory environment for the first world exposition held in Asia. Through the examination of films, photographs, diagrams, and artists' records from the E.A.T. archive at the Getty Research Institute, this volume provides a new perspective on multimedia art in the 1960s and '70s and highlights the ways E.A.T. pushed the role of the artist beyond the traditional art world.

GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE  
128 pages, 8 x 10 inches  
28 color and 38 b/w illustrations  
Paperback  
US \$30



**Paper and Light: Luminous Drawings**

By Julian Brooks and Michelle Sullivan

The treatment of light and shadow is one of the building blocks of drawing. From techniques such as highlights and reserves, to material selection and the creation of translucent tracing paper, to the use of light as a medium for viewing artworks, artists for hundreds of years have found innovative and dazzling ways to create light on a sheet of paper. This publication examines the central relationship between paper and light in the world of drawings in western European art from the Renaissance to the 20th century. Focusing on drawings from the collection of the J. Paul Getty Museum, as well as from the British Museum, Musée du Louvre, and others, and featuring masterful works by Edgar Degas, Leonardo da Vinci, Parmigianino, Nicolas Poussin, Odilon Redon, Georges Seurat, and others, *Paper and Light* will entice readers to look longer and more closely at drawings, deriving an even deeper appreciation for the skill and labor that went into them.

J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM  
112 pages, 8½ x 9½ inches  
145 color illustrations  
Paperback  
US \$24.95



**Gesina ter Borch**

By Adam Eaker

Dutch watercolorist and draftsman Gesina ter Borch (1631–1690)—the younger half-sister of painter Gerard ter Borch (1617–1681)—is one of the most well-known female artists of the 17th-century Dutch Republic. Her oeuvre is securely attributed and thoroughly catalogued, with three albums of her watercolors and calligraphy known today. Surprisingly, though, she has never been the subject of an independent monograph or sustained discussion. Adam Eaker revisits Ter Borch's role during the genesis of Dutch “high-life” genre painting and, in doing so, examines the construction of gender and social classes by comparing her art with that of her brother. Eaker questions a historiography of women's art that frequently valorizes painting over other media and values work for the market over “amateur” production. This monograph offers a fascinating exploration of Ter Borch's life and work and a more nuanced understanding of the ideologies and achievements of Dutch genre painting.

GETTY PUBLICATIONS  
144 pages, 7½ x 9⅞ inches  
82 color illustrations  
Hardcover  
US \$45

## EXHIBITIONS

Make free, timed reservations for the Getty Center and Getty Villa Museum at [getty.edu](http://getty.edu).

### Getty Center

#### Exploring the Alps

November 12, 2024–April 27, 2025

#### Abstracted Light: Experimental Photography

Through November 24, 2024

#### Sculpting with Light: Contemporary Artists and Holography

Through November 24, 2024

#### Lumen: The Art and Science of Light

Through December 8, 2024

#### Rising Signs: The Medieval Science of Astrology

Through January 5, 2025

#### Ultra-Violet: New Light on Van Gogh's *Iris*

Through January 19, 2025

#### Paper and Light

Through January 19, 2025

#### Magnified Wonders: An 18th-Century Microscope

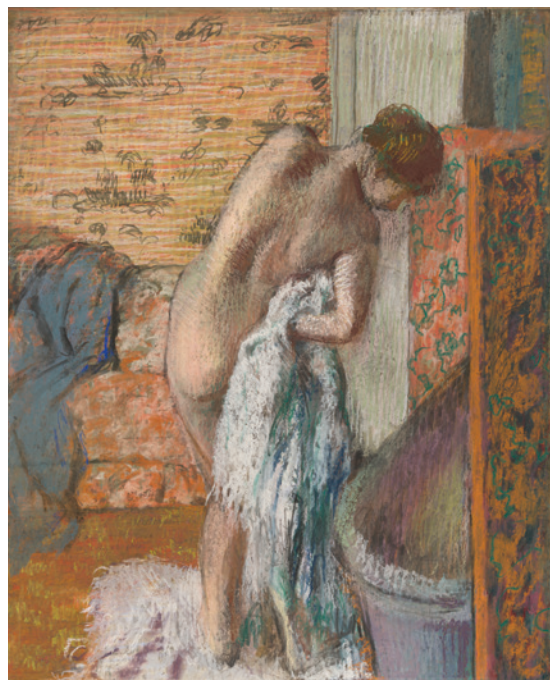
Through February 2, 2025

#### Sensing the Future: Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.)

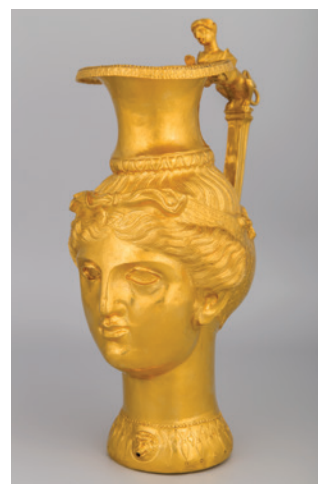
Through February 23, 2025

#### Charles Ross: Spectrum 14

Ongoing



Left: *After the Bath (Woman Drying Herself)*, about 1895, Edgar Degas. Pastel and charcoal on tracing paper laid down on board. Getty Museum. On view in *Paper and Light*



Above: *Spouted Jug with the Head of Aphrodite*, 325–275 BCE. Gold. Found in Panagyurishte, Bulgaria. Regional Archaeological Museum, Plovdiy, Bulgaria. Photo: Todor Dimitrov. On view in *Ancient Thrace and the Classical World: Treasures from Bulgaria, Romania, and Greece*



Left (top): *Wellhorn and Wetterhorn, Left of the Rosenlauri Glacier*, 1865, Jacques Alexandre Ferrier. Albumen silver print. Getty Museum. On view in *Exploring the Alps*



Left (bottom): *Untitled (Muqarnas)*, 2012, Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian. Mirrors, reverse-glass painting, and plaster on wood. High Museum of Art, Atlanta; Purchase with funds from the Farideh & Al Azadi Foundation, 2019.174. Artwork © The Estate of Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian. Photo: Mike Jensen. On view in *Lumen: The Art and Science of Light*

### Getty Villa

**Ancient Thrace and the Classical World: Treasures from Bulgaria, Romania, and Greece**

November 4, 2024–March 3, 2025

**Sculpted Portraits from Ancient Egypt**

Through January 25, 2027

### Online

**Mesopotamia**  
[mesopotamia.getty.edu](http://mesopotamia.getty.edu)

**Persepolis Reimagined**  
[persepolis.getty.edu](http://persepolis.getty.edu)

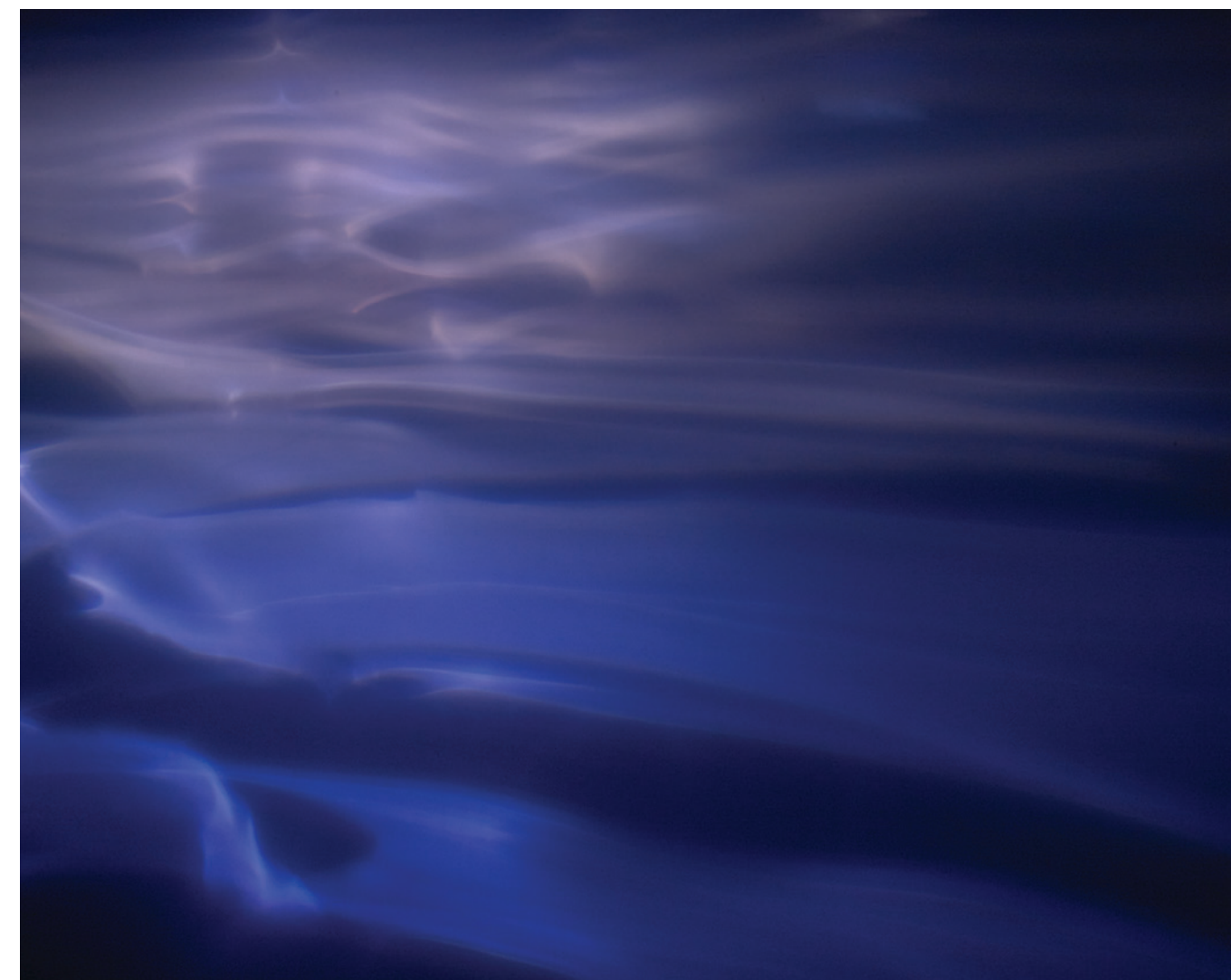
**Return to Palmyra**  
[getty.edu/palmyra](http://getty.edu/palmyra)

## FINAL FRAME

Thomas Wilfred (American, born Denmark, 1889–1968) was a pioneer in light art, which he called “Lumia.” From the 1910s to the 1960s he designed and built a series of mechanical devices that generate choreographed displays of moving abstract forms. Wilfred meticulously handcrafted each of these portable units, packing them with electrical and lighting elements that project predetermined visual sequences onto a frosted-glass screen. *Nocturne*, one of his slowest-moving Lumia works, runs for nearly six years before its composition repeats. Although Wilfred did not intend his displays to represent specific subject matter, this piece, with its evocative title and subtle atmospheric effects, suggests dusky cloudscape.

—Jim Ganz, Senior Curator of Photographs,  
Getty Museum

*Nocturne, Opus 148*, 1958, Thomas Wilfred. Metal, glass, electrical and lighting elements, and a frosted-glass screen in an oak cabinet. Carol and Eugene Epstein Collection. Image courtesy of Yale University Art Gallery. On view in *Abstracted Light: Experimental Photography*



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# Recording Artists: Experiments in Art and Technology

***“It couldn’t be done today. It was just before its time  
and it’s too late now.”***

—Artist Robert Rauschenberg describing *9 Evenings: Theatre & Engineering*, a 1966 event of fantastical music, theater, and dance performances enhanced by lasers, infrared cameras, and other revolutionary tech

In season three of *Recording Artists*, artist and futurist Ahmed Best examines the groundbreaking art-science organization Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.). Weaving archival audio with commentary by contemporary artists, scientists, and art historians, this season investigates how artists and engineers collaborated to explore the creative potential of new technologies. Learn about E.A.T. cofounders, artist Robert Rauschenberg and Bell Labs engineer Billy Klüver, as well as Japanese artist Fujiko Nakaya. Tune in now at <https://www.getty.edu/recordingartists/>.



Artists Deborah Hay and Robert Rauschenberg confer during rehearsals for *9 Evenings*, 1966. Getty Research Institute



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