



Year In Review  
2012–2013



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Furniture mount (Gorgon  
or Medusa mask).  
French, 1785–90.

## Message from the Director

As many of you know, the Bard Graduate Center is proudly marking its 20th anniversary. In the fall of 1993, our doors opened in a single townhouse on the Upper West Side as the first center devoted to scholarly training and inquiry in the decorative arts. With a dramatically expanded footprint, the BGC is today an internationally admired graduate institution and exhibition center embracing the cultural history of the material world. It is a place for advanced study for nearly sixty MA and PhD students taught by twenty-two distinguished faculty. Its stimulating environment encompasses vibrant exhibitions, award-winning publications, and an ambitious calendar of symposia, lectures, and programs for students, scholars, and general audiences.

It is the BGC's nature to chart new territory, and this year was no exception. Our book series, *Cultural Histories of the Material World*, issued its first two titles. In January, we convened an international planning conference to develop "Cultures of Conservation," a major new curriculum project that has been generously funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. As summer began, our landmark survey book *History of Design: Decorative Arts and Material Culture, 1400–2000* was about to go on press.

The BGC's remarkably wide scope is reflected in the research interests of the faculty, in the topics of our students' Qualifying Papers and dissertations, in the range and depth of each year's academic courses, and in the roster of exhibitions. In the Main Gallery, the fall exhibition explored the complex history and cultural significance of the American circus, while the spring show presented for the first time in over fifty years the collection assembled by the Parisian interior decorator, dealer, collector, and ceramist, Georges Hoentschel. The faculty-curated Focus Gallery took as subjects the renowned mathematician Benoît Mandelbrot and an anthropological expedition to northern Burma in 1935. Through these projects we enjoyed partnerships with institutions as diverse as the Big Apple Circus and the French Heritage Society, and from as far afield as Stanford University and near as the American Museum of Natural History.

This welcoming message touches on just a few of the many things that take place daily here on West 86th Street. In the pages that follow, you

can read more about the accomplishments, activities, and interests of the BGC's faculty, students, and staff. I also invite you to visit our website to deepen your familiarity with BGC's commitment to "Learning from Things" and our plans for the year ahead. Whether you are considering applying to the MA or PhD program, wish to know more about past or current exhibitions, or would like to sample the growing menu of multimedia offerings, [bgc.bard.edu](http://bgc.bard.edu) is an indispensable resource.

Thank you for your interest in the Bard Graduate Center. We look forward to welcoming you to our campus as we begin our third decade.

*Susan Weber*

Susan Weber  
*Founder and Director*



Trumpeter.  
South  
Netherlandish,  
ca. 1500.





## Degree Programs

2012–13 was a year of expanded horizons for BGC degree programs. For the first time, the survey course for incoming students included units on Africa and object conservation, part of our Andrew W. Mellon Foundation program in the “Cultures of Conservation.” By the same token, the year’s thirty-seven electives addressed media ranging from jewelry, furniture, ceramics, textiles, and metalwork to cookbooks, photography, and new technology. They covered a geographical spread embracing the medieval Mediterranean (taught by our incoming postdoctoral fellow in Islamic studies, Abigail Balbale), Central Europe, the Americas, and the Kitan Empire in northern China, and involved methodological approaches that included the history of collecting, the history and theory of antiquarianism, the social lives of things, museum anthropology, and archaeological approaches to material culture (taught by our new BGC-AMNH postdoctoral fellow Nicola Sharratt, a field archaeologist working in southern Peru). These diverse perspectives, and more, will be the focus of a new core course for entering students on “Approaches to the Object,” to be pioneered next fall.

Particularly popular were seminars that offered direct access to New York collections, including a seminar with curator Charlotte Vignon on decorative arts at The Frick Collection, and those that brought participants into the exhibition process, including Matthew Wittmann’s “Public History and the Material Culture of the American Circus” (linked to the BGC’s fall exhibition) and Deborah Krohn and Ulrich Leben’s “Exhibition Experience: Design and Interpretation,” linked to the spring exhibition on Georges Hoentschel. Two additional courses prepared for upcoming exhibitions in the Focus Gallery: a history of interface design, curated by Kimon Keramidas, assistant director of the Digital Media Lab, and Nicola Sharratt’s study of Andean woven coca bags.

Instructional activities continued outside the classroom with a Materials Day visit to a bookbinding and conservation studio (April), gallery installation workshops for *Circus and the City* (September) and *Salvaging the Past* (April), and workshops on proposing conference papers, preparing a curriculum vitae, applying for doctoral programs, and searching for jobs. Activity ramped up on the new BGC textbook to be published by Yale University Press in October 2013, a global history of design from 1400 to 2000 that includes contributions from many BGC faculty and students. We expect this volume to become an anchor of our survey course and a tool to facilitate instruction outside our walls. Finally,



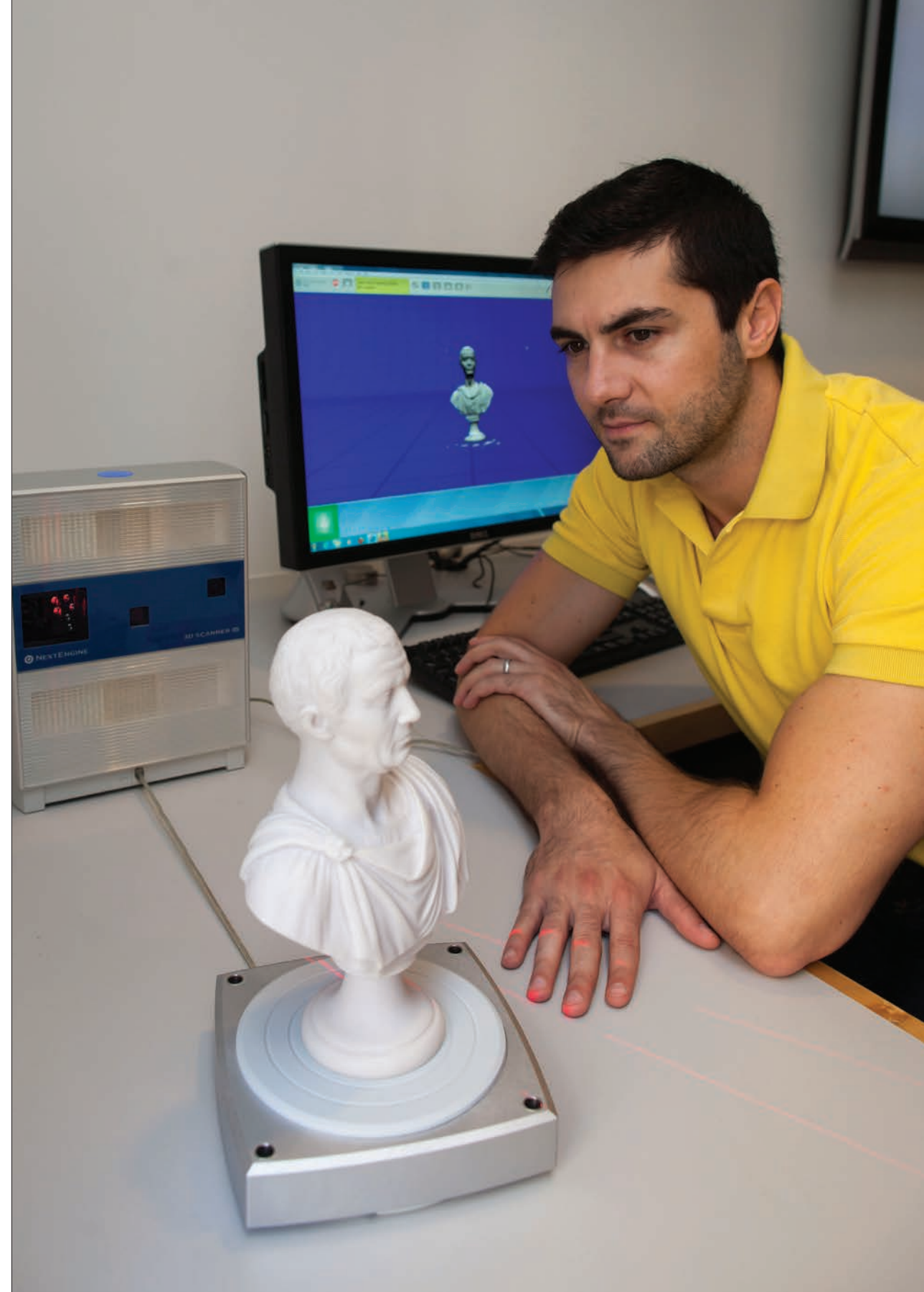
the Bard Travel Program for rising second-year students again headed to London for ten days in May, led by Paul Stirton and myself, for on-site study at the Victoria and Albert Museum, the British Museum, Sir John Soane's Museum, the Royal Pavilion in Brighton, Chiswick House, Syon House, Goldfinger House, and many other places.

The year 2012–13 saw new successes for our students. PhD candidates Pengliang Lu and Jonathan Tavares held prestigious pre-doctoral research fellowships at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. PhD candidates Christian Larsen and Rebecca Perry assisted with the survey course, and Erin Eisenbarth, as the doctoral teaching prize fellow, offered a seminar on the material culture of women in nineteenth-century America. Students at all levels presented their research at scholarly forums in Austin, Beijing, Birmingham (UK), Chicago, Danvers (MA), Denver, Las Vegas, London, Manchester (UK), New York, Paris, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Providence, San Diego, São Paulo, Winterthur (DE), and Wolverhampton (UK), to name just a few. These and other activities were supported with grants from the student travel and research funds, which awarded nearly \$30,000 this academic year. Many of these conference papers related to students' Qualifying Papers, now an established part of the MA program, on topics ranging from the design of the Budapest Zoo and perfumed gloves in eighteenth-century England to Lego-based architecture and Yoko Ono's *Wish Tree*. Nearly all of these papers were presented in brief at the second annual QP symposium on May 3. From a record nine nominations, two QPs were chosen for the annual Wainwright Award: Sophie Pitman's investigation of dolls as disseminators of national and foreign fashions in Renaissance Europe and Nicole Pulichene's study of imperial donor portraiture in the tenth-century Magdeburg Ivories.

This year our graduates had record success in joining top PhD programs: two from this year's class will head to Harvard; two have been offered places at Cambridge (UK); and two more, together with an earlier graduate, will join the PhD program at the BGC. Other graduates will take up prestigious internships, including a year-long appointment at Getty Publications. PhD graduate Jonathan Tavares has won a postdoctoral fellowship at the Art Institute of Chicago, and Donna Bilak will take up a postdoctoral position at the Chemical Heritage Society in Philadelphia. And the cycle continues: twenty-five students will join our MA and PhD programs in the fall of 2013.

Jeffrey Collins  
*Chair of Academic Programs*

Photo:  
Michael Nagle. ■



## BGC Degrees Granted, May 2013

### Doctor of Philosophy

Jonathan James Tavares, Bristol, RI

*Samuel Luke Pratt and the Arms and Armor Trade in Victorian Britain*

### Master of Philosophy

Maude C. Bass-Krueger, Clinton, NY

*Costume History in Nineteenth-Century France: Historicism and Fashion, Historicism in Fashion*

Amy Elizabeth Bogansky, Philadelphia, PA

*The Merchant's Middlemen: Factors, Supercargoes, and the Praxis of Exchange in the Early Modern Atlantic World*

Matthew Burroughs Peters Keagle, Burlington, VT

*"An Uniform Is Granted by All to be Absolutely Necessary": A Cultural History of Military Dress in the Revolutionary Atlantic*

Christian Alexander Larsen, New York, NY

*Aquarela do Brasil: Transnational Flows of Brazilian Design and Material Culture*

Elizabeth Maura McMahon, Akron, OH

*"Robes of Court and Palace": Dress and Queenship at the Court of Henry VIII*

Rebecca A. Perry, Princeton, NJ

*Problematic Bodies: Dressing Pre-Adolescent Girls in the United States, 1930 to 1965*

Masako H. Shinn, New York, NY

*The Expression of Vernacular Elements in Contemporary Japanese Interior Architecture*

Elizabeth A. St. George, Akron, OH

*A "Beautiful Household" for Czechoslovakia: Krásná jizba and Notions of Modern Living, 1927–1938*

### Master of Arts

Richard F. Carroll, North Easton, MA

*Great Expectations: The Manifesto of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and Its Viability for Early Twentieth-Century Society Architects*

Nynne Just Christoffersen, Copenhagen, Denmark

*Material Nationality: Denmark at the 1900 Paris World's Fair*

Colin E. Fanning, Pueblo, CO

*The Plastic System: Architecture, Childhood, and LEGO 1949–2012*

Andrew James Goodhouse, Saint Paul, MN

*"Keep Wishing While You Participate": Spiritual Materiality and Social Agency in Yoko Ono's Wish Tree*

Shoshana Batya Greenwald, Brooklyn, NY

*Beyond the Cover: Margaret Armstrong's Life and Work*

Christine Elizabeth Griffiths, Lake Ronkonkoma, NY

*"Not forgetting his perfumed Gloves": Accessorizing Scent in Eighteenth-Century England*

Hadley Welch Jensen, Los Angeles, CA

*Shaped by the Camera: Benjamin Wittick and the Imaging of Craft in the American Southwest (1878–1903)*

Suky Kang, New Orleans, LA

*The Art Museum and the City: The Central Role of Public Education in Museum-City Relations*



Photo:  
Laura Grey.

Photo:  
Michael  
Nagle.



Jay Allen Lemire, New York, NY  
*Of Antiques and Antelope: The Material Strategies of Arthur Stannard Vernay*

Casey Alexandra Mathern, Forest Lake, MN  
*Sepulture and the City: The Marble Cemeteries of New York*

Whitney Lee May, Nashville, TN  
*“Too Solemn to Attack”: Selling Distance from Commerce in the Beggarstaff  
Posters of Late Nineteenth-Century England*

Sophie Pitman, Cambridge, UK  
*Dolled Up: The Dissemination of Knowledge of National Dress and Foreign  
Fashions in Renaissance Europe*

Nicole Pulichene, Wheaton, IL  
*Veiled Hands, Veiled Presence: The Donor Portrait of Otto I in the Presentation  
Panel of the Magdeburg Ivories*

Sarah Rogers Morris, Akron, OH  
*Ornament Beyond Architecture: The Photograph and the Fragment in the Work  
of Richard Nickel*

Laura Speers, Avon, CT  
*Farming, Cooking, and Eating by the Book: English Household Manuals in  
Colonial Virginia*

Sharon Twickler, Easton, CT  
*The Things He Carried: Combing Masculine Identity in the Age of the  
Moustache*

Katherine Marie Tycz, Southington, CT  
*“Per piacermi a lo specchio, qui m’addorno”: Female Figural Mirrors Frames  
in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Italy*

Amber Winick, Miami, FL  
*Zoo Nation: Budapest Zoo and the Lessons of National Romantic Style,  
1908–1950*

Meredyth Lynn Winter, Kansas City, MO  
*“Hand-craft” & Handicraft: Exploring the Material Culture of Late Antque  
Zafār*

Dissertation Writing Awards/Prizes/Assistantships

**Final Year Award**

Sonya Abrego, Eleanor Dew

**Research Award**

Jorge Rivas Perez

**CINOA Dissertation Award**

Jonathan Tavares

**Wainwright Award**

Sophie Pitman, Nicole Pulichene

**Teaching Assistantships**

Christian Larsen, Rebecca Perry



## Fall 2012 Courses

- 500 Survey of the Decorative Arts, Design History, and Material Culture I  
*Jeffrey Collins*
- 539 Mode and Manners in the Eighteenth Century, 1675–1804  
*Michele Majer*
- 544 The Rediscovery of Antiquity *Elizabeth Simpson*
- 566 Rites of Passage: Arts of Marriage and Childbirth in the Italian Renaissance *Deborah Krohn*
- 594 The Material Culture of Childhood *Amy Ogata*
- 613 Ancient Jewelry and Metalwork *Elizabeth Simpson*
- 621 The Renaissance Discovery of the World: Collecting and Collections in the Early Modern Era *Andrew Morrall*
- 778 A Survey of Islamic Art and Material Culture from Early Islam to the Ottoman Period *Abigail Balbale*
- 795 Exhibiting Culture/s: Anthropology in and of the Museum *Aaron Glass*
- 799 Material Culture of Nineteenth-Century American Homes  
*Kenneth Ames*
- 801 Other Europes: Design and Architecture in Central Europe, 1880–1940 *Paul Stirton*
- 832 English Silver *Kenneth Ames*
- 845 American Craft, Design, and Folk Art in the 1920s and 1930s  
*Catherine Whalen*
- 874 The Material Culture of Women in Nineteenth-Century America  
*Erin Eisenbarth*
- 876 Tangible Things: Observing, Collecting, Sorting *Ivan Gaskell*
- 877 Picturing Things: Photography as Material Culture  
*Aaron Glass / Catherine Whalen*
- 878 Sophisticated Design and Fine Furniture—Paris, 1650–1830  
*Ulrich Leben*
- 879 Media and Materiality: How Technology Shapes Media and Media Shape Culture *Kimon Keramidas*
- 880 Archaeological Approaches to Material Culture *Nicola Sharratt*
- 881 Pleasing the Crowd: Public History and the Material Culture of the American Circus *Matthew Wittmann*

## Spring 2013 Courses

- 501 Survey of the Decorative Arts, Design History, and Material Culture II  
*Paul Stirton*
- 530 English and American Ceramics *Kenneth Ames*
- 593 American Furniture of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries  
*Kenneth Ames*
- 632 Topics in Ancient Furniture *Elizabeth Simpson*
- 693 Craft and Design in the USA, 1945 to the Present *Catherine Whalen*
- 730 The Social Lives of Things: The Anthropology of Art and Material Culture *Aaron Glass*
- 733 The Exhibition Experience: Design and Interpretation  
*Ulrich Leben / Deborah Krohn*
- 763 The Monument: Designs and Meanings *Jeffrey Collins*
- 781 The Early Modern Book: Cookbook as Case Study *Deborah Krohn*
- 802 The Arts of the Kitan-Liao Empire (907–1125) *François Louis*
- 820 Chinese Ceramics *François Louis*
- 833 Modern Textiles, 1850–1970 *Michele Majer*
- 834 American Collectors and Collections *Catherine Whalen*
- 859 Interface Design: Material Objects and Immaterial Culture (Focus Gallery Course) *Kimon Keramidas*
- 883 Damage, Decay, Conservation (Mellon Curriculum) *Ivan Gaskell*
- 884 Weaving through the Past and into the Present: 10,000 Years of Andean Textiles *Nicola Sharratt*
- 885 Antiquarianism: History, Theory, Future *Peter N. Miller*
- 886 Exploring the Frick's Collection of Decorative Arts: Perspectives of Art Historians, Curator, and Conservators (Mellon Curriculum)  
*Charlotte Vignon*
- 887 Courtly Culture in the Medieval Mediterranean *Abigail Balbale*

# Faculty Year in Review

## Kenneth L. Ames

The circus exhibition came to the BGC last September and, when it departed, left behind a volume of 400-plus pages edited by Susan Weber and Matt Wittmann. With that project over, I returned to my embryonic study of Manhattan hotels. In hotels, as in the natural world, aging is a liability. My inquiry explores, among other matters, the range of options the hotel industry has adopted for dealing with older structures in a business where new is often best and in a city more oriented to the present and future than to the past. Hotels, however, took a back seat in the fall when I moved from a large and ancient house in Connecticut to a smaller and newer house in Pennsylvania, prompting an aggressive program of deaccession and concomitant musing on post-materialism. Once ensconced in under-furnished spaces, however, new accessions and musings on post-post-materialism swiftly ensued. All of this helps to explain a new autobiographical project in which I test my own experience against material-culture theory and vice versa—a variation on the participant observation technique of sociology. I don't know if I will say anything new, but I can offer evidence to support and illuminate arguments advanced by others. In any case, I'll give it a try.

## Abigail Balbale

After teaching an introduction to Islamic art and material culture in the fall, I offered a spring course on medieval court culture around the Mediterranean, with case studies of Fatimid Cairo and

Norman Sicily and on commodities including slaves, gold, and silk. Outside the classroom, I convened the Trehan Lectures in Islamic Art and Material Culture and am planning a symposium for spring 2014 on objects and the construction of political power in the Islamic world. I continued work on the executive board of the Spain-North Africa Project, which promotes trans-regional and interdisciplinary scholarship on the western Mediterranean. With fellow board members, I co-edited a special issue of *Medieval Encounters*, exploring connections across the Strait of Gibraltar. I also completed an article about the politics of jihad in al-Andalus for a volume forthcoming from Oxford University Press and an essay about the legacy of the Yale medievalist María Rosa Menocal for the *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies*. I am currently working on an article about the transformations of an Arabic inscription as it spread across the medieval Mediterranean, moving from textiles and ceramics to Islamic, Christian, and Jewish architecture. I will present this project to the Society for the Medieval Mediterranean at Cambridge University in July.

## Jeffrey Collins

If only dead fish go with the flow, then this year has found me swimming upstream. Besides new duties as chair of Academic Programs and the Curriculum Committee, I led Survey in the fall and retooled my spring seminar on monuments and memorials to focus on case studies in New York City. During the past twelve months, I lectured in Paris (on costume and satire in the

work of Dutch painter Cornelis Troost, at the Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art); Bern (on eighteenth-century museums for a university research project on "The Interior: Art, Space, and Performance"); and San Diego ("More is More: Piranesi and Design"), for the opening of a new exhibition. I finished five chapters and a joint introduction to the BGC textbook and contributed an essay on the diffusion and exhibition of plaster casts after ancient statues for the book *Benedict XIV: The Enlightenment Pope* (University of Toronto Press, forthcoming). Essays that saw the light include a chapter on the Vatican's Museo Pio-Clementino ("Ideology and Aesthetics in the Age of the Grand Tour") in *The First Modern Museums of Art* (Getty Publications) and reviews of *The Cultural Aesthetics of Eighteenth-Century Porcelain* (Ashgate) in *Winterthur Portfolio* and *The English Prize: The Capture of the Westmorland* (Yale Center for British Art) for *caa.reviews*.

## Ivan Gaskell

My fall semester seminar, "Tangible Things: Observing, Sorting, Collecting," resulted in the January pop-up exhibition and website, *Making a World with One Hundred Things*. My spring semester seminar was "Damage, Decay, Conservation." I supervised two Focus Gallery exhibitions and accompanying publications, *The Islands of Benoît Mandelbrot: Fractals, Chaos, and the Materiality of Thinking* (fall), and *Confluences: An American Expedition to Northern Burma, 1935* (spring). In October I chaired the colloquium "Aura, Authenticity, and Artistic Reproduction" at the American Society for Aesthetics meeting in St. Louis. In February I participated in a workshop on planning the Asian Hall at the American Museum of Natural History. I lectured on trompe

l'oeil at New York University in March and served on the Vetting Committee of the European Fine Art Fair, Maastricht. In April I gave the keynote address at the University of Rochester Visual and Cultural Studies Graduate Conference and a paper on trompe l'oeil at the American Society for Aesthetics Eastern Division meeting in Philadelphia. In May I spoke at a conference on Johannes Vermeer at the New York University Institute of Humanities, and I gave a paper at the University of Wisconsin Think Tank on the future of museums. I accepted an invitation for June to lecture at the University of Göttingen and to consult on the university's museum planning.

## Aaron Glass

This year, in addition to teaching my regular courses on the anthropology of museums and material culture, I developed a new course together with Catherine Whalen called "Picturing Things: Photography as Material Culture." I also served on the BGC faculty committee to develop our new Cultures of Conservation initiative. In the fall, I presented at a National Science Foundation-funded workshop on "Digital Return" at the Smithsonian Institution and gave a paper at the American Anthropological Association conference in San Francisco. In October I coordinated and the BGC hosted a two-day workshop, which was funded by my NEH Digital Humanities Start-Up Grant, and launched a collaborative project to create a critical, annotated digital edition of Franz Boas's seminal 1897 monograph on the Kwakwaka'wakw (for which I also prepared two subsequent NEH grant applications this year). On the publication front, I finished two articles on the Kwakwaka'wakw collection in Berlin's ethnology museum, and I submitted a final co-edited manuscript,

*Return to the Land of the Head Hunters: Edward S. Curtis, the Kwakwaka'wakw, and Cinematic Documents of Encounter*, to University of Washington Press for publication in 2014.

## David Jaffee

In 2012–13 I have been busy as a residential fellow at the Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History at Harvard University, working on my project “Envisioning Nineteenth-Century New York: New York as Cultural Capital, 1840–1880.” I have been looking at how a new middle-class culture, centered in the domestic parlor, emerged around the lithographs, stereoviews, and illustrated newspapers produced by New York’s cultural entrepreneurs. That work comes out of my teaching at the BGC on the material culture of New York City. The fruits of that research will be available in a variety of venues, and we will also have a fall 2014 Focus Gallery exhibition on the topic. I wrote an essay for the catalogue of the recent exhibition *John Rogers: American Stories* at the New-York

Historical Society, a retrospective of the nation’s most popular and enterprising plaster sculptor from the Civil War to the Gilded Age. Finally, the BGC will be hosting another NEH Summer Institute for College and University Teachers on “American Material Culture: 19th Century New York,” after our extremely successful 2011 institute.

## Pat Kirkham

My main task during this past academic year has been to direct through to completion a large BGC project, a “survey” style publication entitled *History of Design: Decorative Arts and Material Culture, 1400–2000* (to be published in October 2013 by Yale University Press). Keeping it within the target of 315,000 words and 800 images has been challenging, as has editing the work of the twenty-seven authors who are introducing the time periods 1400–1600, 1600–1750, 1750–1900, and 1900–2000 in the Americas (North and South), Africa, Europe, the Islamic World, India, China, Japan, and Korea. My co-editor Susan Weber and I are

grateful to everyone one involved, especially Heather Jane McCormick (project director and BGC class of 1996) and Martina D’Alton (copy editor). I also spoke on Design Collaboration at Parsons/New School, on Design History, Material Culture, Interdisciplinarity, and Collaboration at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, and on Ray Eames: Artist and Designer at the Columbus Museum’s Decorative Arts Symposium, *American Renaissance to the Modern Age: A Woman’s Touch in the Decorative Arts*.

## Deborah L. Krohn

One evening last September, I arrived at the royal château of Blois and marveled at the regal white stone, sun-stained in the twilight. The next two days were spent at a conference on the material world of French Renaissance dining, exploring the relationship between the Italian queen Catherine de Médicis and the arrival of Italian foodways in Renaissance France. My paper centered on a cookbook that Catherine owned, Bartolomeo Scappi’s *Opera* (published in 1570), the subject of my own forthcoming book. In November I delivered a paper in the Book History Colloquium at Columbia University, exploring marginalia in the same cookbook. In February New York hosted the College Art Association annual conference, where I spoke on the relationship between art history and the decorative arts. In April, as the days lengthened, I witnessed the culmination of the latest BGC/MMA exhibition collaboration, *Salvaging the Past: Georges Hoentschel and French Decorative Arts from The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, for which I was co-curator and co-editor of the catalogue. After years of planning, there is nothing quite as satisfying as watching artworks emerge from packing crates to take

their place in the galleries. The day after the exhibition opened, I was off to the Renaissance Society of America conference in San Diego to speak on the Italian Renaissance menu.

## Ulrich Leben

My interest in the decorative arts and material culture was fostered early on by my hands-on experience and my developing connoisseurship in direct contact with the objects, and by an apprenticeship in cabinet making before I entered university. After completing a PhD dissertation on the French cabinetmaker Bernard Molitor (1755–1833), I received postgraduate funding to work on the Free Drawing School of Paris. Since the mid-1990s I have been working as associate curator for the Rothschild collection at Waddesdon Manor, Buckinghamshire. Since 2002 I have been a consultant for the conservation project of the historic furniture and reception rooms at the Hôtel Beauharnais, residence of the German Ambassador in Paris. Since the fall of 2012, I have been working on the exhibition on the French architect-collector Georges Hoentschel, whose unique collection of historic woodwork fragments in 1906 was given by J. Pierpont Morgan to The Metropolitan Museum of Art. This experience of living abroad in different cultures for long periods of time has enabled me to develop a greater awareness of differences and mentalities that are not always obvious and oftentimes simply overlooked.

## François Louis

I was on leave during the fall semester 2012 and used this time to conduct textual research for a book on the material culture of the Liao dynasty



Photo:  
Laura Grey.



(907–1125). This project aims to present a significant but little-known period in the history of China's northern frontier in light of archaeological finds and transmitted paintings. The artifacts speak to a cultural side of the Liao elite that challenges traditional Sino-centric views found in numerous source texts, which present the Liao elites as crude barbarian nomads. Issues of cultural and dynastic identity, the formation of a Sino-nomadic Liao elite, and its reception in the Chinese states south of Liao are thus at the core of this study.

## Michele Majer

Last June I represented the BGC at the INHA/BGC Seminar in Paris, along with my BGC colleague Jeffrey Collins and doctoral student Maude Bass-Krueger. Over three days, the participants from both museums and academic institutions presented papers on various aspects of the seminar's theme, "Du projet à l'objet: une approche critique de l'histoire du vêtement." My own paper examined the construction of the couturier as an artist in the French fashion press between 1900 and 1920. In September I joined with two colleagues, Marilyn Cohen and Marie-Leen Ryckaert, to present a panel on the swimming pool in film at the Design History Society's annual conference on the material culture of sport, held in Brighton. I spent much of the summer—appropriately and happily—watching all of Esther Williams's movies in preparation for my paper "Esther Williams and the Swimming Pool as Spectacle." And, as a longtime reader and admirer of Proust, I was delighted to be invited to give a talk at the Providence Athenaeum as part of their annual "Proustfest" program and in conjunction with an exhibition at the Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, "Artist/Rebel/Dandy:

Men of Fashion." My teaching this year has included "Modes and Manners in the Eighteenth Century" and "Modern Textiles, 1850–1970."

## Peter N. Miller

I promised last year to report on "Peiresc and the Mediterranean." After twenty years of thinking, I finally finished writing last summer and have spent the year changing a word here and there, now and again. I spoke about it in a Work in Progress seminar at the BGC, at the Bibliothèque Mazarine in Paris, at the Académie des Inscriptions in Paris, and at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence, where a conference was devoted to it. I also gave a talk in Antwerp about Peiresc's visits to the workshops of Paris and the collection of artisanal recipes he took away for such things as artificial marble and molding plaster. A meeting in Berlin in October led to the invitation to co-organize a workshop in June on the question of whether there was antiquarianism in the Islamic world. And I have begun thinking about my Focus Gallery exhibition on Aby Warburg's curatorial acts of the 1920s, scheduled for 2016.

## Andrew Morrall

My year divided fairly neatly into teaching and supervision in the fall and a research leave in the spring. In my early modern collecting seminar, I was consistently impressed with the students' interests and enthusiasms, which pulled the class's center of gravity firmly toward the products of global exploration and transcultural interactions—witness to the ineluctable "global turn" of modern historiography. I have spent my sabbatical working on a book-length project on craftsmen and the *Kunstammer*, plus several smaller

articles, which necessitated travel to England and Germany. Otherwise, the year has been punctuated by a number of related conference talks: in Nuremberg in July, at York University in September, at the CAA in New York in February, in St Andrews and at the RCA-V&A, in London in March. A stint on the jury of the RSA's Nelson essay prize kept me busy through January. Of a number of pending articles, two were published this year: "Inscriptional Wisdom and the Domestic Arts in Early Modern Northern Europe" (*Beiträge zu Historischen Kulturwissenschaften*, Universität Trier); and "Ovidian Poetics and Natural Philosophy in the Sixteenth-Century Northern European *Kunstammer*" (Proceedings of the 33rd Congress of the International Committee of the History of Art).

## Amy F. Ogata

My book *Designing the Creative Child: Playthings and Places in Midcentury America* appeared this spring from the University of Minnesota Press. Last fall, I was fortunate to teach a seminar on the Material Culture of Childhood during the Museum of Modern Art's exhibition *Century of the Child: Growing by Design*, which gave the class a rare opportunity to see a vast international selection of goods designed for children in the twentieth century. I also presented a paper on the playhouse at the International Congress on the History of Art (CIHA) in Nuremberg, Germany. Although thematically tied to the book, this paper looked more closely at the relationship between the cardboard box and building toys and the specific case of a Seattle architect who designed toys, playhouses, and an entire cardboard village in the 1960s. I also co-wrote a short book on the English graphic and toy designer Fredun Shapur, who worked for the American

toy company Creative Playthings in the 1970s. A semester sabbatical allowed me to conduct preliminary research for a new project on the metaphor of the metallic in the French Second Empire and to continue work on the catalogue for *Swedish Wooden Toys*, an upcoming BGC exhibition.

## Nicola Sharratt

As the BGC/AMNH postdoctoral fellow in museum anthropology, I am developing a Focus Gallery exhibit on *chuspas*, small woven bags from Peru and Bolivia traditionally used to carry coca leaves. A selection of *chuspas* spanning 1,500 years is the vehicle for exploring how two materials (hand-woven textiles and coca), which are often presented as unchanging and quintessentially Andean, are embedded in, affected by, and contribute to social interaction, ritual practice, and global as well as local economies. As part of the preparation for this exhibit, I taught a seminar in the spring entitled "Weaving through the Past and into the Present: 10,000 Years of Andean Textiles," which introduced BGC students to Andean textiles through a broad geographic and temporal survey. In the fall, I taught the seminar "Archaeological Approaches to Material Culture," which drew on my training as an archaeologist. Before the academic year started, I spent the summer of 2012 in southern Peru directing my excavation project "Living through Collapse: Household Archaeology of Tiwanaku State Breakdown," funded by the National Geographic Society.

## Elizabeth Simpson

My research on the wooden artifacts from the royal Phrygian tombs at Gordion, Turkey, has continued—with

Photo:  
Michael  
Nagle.



the successful completion of year 32 of fieldwork in the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, Ankara, and the Archaeological Museum, Istanbul. My second monograph on the collection is in progress: *The Gordion Wooden Objects, Volume 2: The Furniture and Wooden Artifacts from Tumulus P, Tumulus W, and the City Mound* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, forthcoming). I published a new report on the work of the Gordion Furniture Project, "Royal Wooden Furniture and Fine Wooden Artifacts from Gordion" (in Brian Rose, ed., *The Archaeology of Phrygian Gordion: Royal City of Midas*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 2012). Also in progress is *The Adventure of the Illustrious Scholar: Papers Presented to Oscar White Muscarella*, of which I am editor. BGC courses taught include seminars on ancient art and culture: "Ancient Jewelry & Metalwork," "Topics in Ancient Furniture," and "The Rediscovery of Antiquity."

## Paul Stirton

The year 2014 will be the centenary of the outbreak of World War I, so we can expect a torrent of events, symposia, and publications over the next few

years offering new (and familiar) interpretations of this momentous conflict. The Austrians were quick off the mark, holding a conference in Oxford last year that explored the differing effects of the war in the Habsburg Empire. What began, for me, as a simple talk on the visual culture of Hungary during the war years has since expanded into a broader project on the impact of the war on Hungarian design, art, and intellectual life. The first results of this will appear in two articles, one devoted to Hungarian graphic propaganda and the other to the influence of the Vienna School of art history on intellectual life in Budapest. Apart from this ongoing interest in Hungarian architecture and design, I continue to edit *West 86th: A Journal of Decorative Arts, Design History, and Material Culture*, along with an excellent team, including Dan Lee and Laura Grey. *West 86th* is now in its third year and developing in ways we could hardly have anticipated when it was launched in the spring of 2011.

## Susan Weber

This year was marked by the completion of editorial and design work on two of my projects: a retrospective on British

designer William Kent and a textbook on decorative arts, co-edited with Professor Pat Kirkham. I have also begun research on John Lockwood Kipling (1837–1911), a man of letters, artist, and teacher who stood at the heart of England's Arts and Crafts movement and worked to secure recognition for the crafts skills of India. Between 1865 and 1875, he taught at the Bombay School of Art. After a century of British influence and imports to South Asia, craft traditions had suffered, but Kipling traveled away from industrial Bombay to find, observe, collect, and record these dying skills as part of village life. Reversing the adverse influence of British exported goods, colonial taste, and academic art-school training systems, Kipling championed the revival of local historical crafts and design. In 1875 he was appointed principal of the new Mayo School of Art (today Pakistan's National College of Art and Design) and curator of its museum in Lahore. His son Rudyard described him in the novel *Kim* (1904) as the "Keeper of Images" in the "Wonder House." John Lockwood Kipling could be characterized as the William Morris of India.

## Ittai Weinryb

Among the many stories that intrigued me during the past year was this one, which especially preoccupied me: Chancellor Conrad, a late twelfth-century writer and the tutor of Holy Roman Emperor Henry VI, wrote to a friend in the monastery of Hildesheim about a legend in which Virgil made a fly out of bronze and placed it above the gates of Naples. The sole purpose of the bronze fly was to prevent other flies from entering the city. My research on bronzes of the twelfth century has led me to believe that Conrad chose

to describe the bronze object because of the complex technique that was used to make them. Lost-wax casting is a technique in which molten bronze is poured into a mold and becomes, *ex nihilo*, an object. This technique appeared magical in the Middle Ages and undoubtedly explains the supernatural powers ascribed to Virgil's objects. Another project in which I am engaged deals with votive objects, or ex-votos, which are made and given by church devotees either as a means of soliciting assistance from a deity or as a token of gratitude to a deity.

## Catherine Whalen

Currently I am working on two projects concerning craft and design in the United States since the 1960s. The first is a book titled *Paul Hollister: Collected Writings on Studio Glass*, co-edited with Irene Hollister. This volume brings together important published work by this noted critic and historian of the studio glass movement, accompanied by essays on his significance to the field and an annotated bibliography. This work is supported by a Craft Research Fund Grant from the Center for Craft, Creativity and Design. Secondly, I have initiated the BGC Craft and Design Oral History Project, a new digital archive of interviews with contemporary craftspeople and designers. This project responds to the growing academic interest in this subject area, in which oral histories are a key resource for scholarship. The interviews are conducted by graduate students in the seminar I teach regularly on postwar American craft and design, providing them with training in an important methodology for research on current practitioners in these fields.

# Admissions, Internships, and Career Development

## Incoming Students, Fall 2013

After a very successful recruitment season, which included three open houses at the BGC in the fall and trips to more than twenty graduate school fairs all over the country, the admissions cycle ended with a wonderful Accepted Students Day on March 20, 2013. The outcome of all this culminated in an entering class for the fall of 2013 that will include three new PhD students and twenty-two new MA students. Work begins in the fall with new student orientation on August 19, 2013. We are delighted to welcome the following students to our community:

### Entering PhD Cohort

Martina D'Amato, MA, BGC  
Christine Griffiths, MA, BGC  
Hadley Jensen, MA, BGC

### Entering MA Cohort

Jaecun Ahn, Wellesley College and the Courtauld Institute, London  
Emily Banas, Stonehill College  
Virginia Fister, University of Chicago  
Andrew Gardner, American University  
Robert Gordon-Fogelson, Brown University  
Linden Hill, Barnard College  
Susan Hunter, Duke University  
Linnea Johnson, Wellesley College  
Jill Joshowitz, Yeshiva University  
Annabel Keenan, Emory University  
Jane Killmar, Dominican University  
Erica Lome, Bard College  
Jaimie Luria, Sarah Lawrence College  
Claire McRee, Wellesley College  
Julia Pastor, University of Wisconsin  
Kirstin Purtich, Brown University  
Ariel Rosenblum, Massachusetts College of Art and Design  
Mary Sauerwein, Truman State University  
Minda Stockdale, Colorado College  
Beatrice Thornton, New York University  
Lanzhen Wang, Rice University  
James Zemaitis, Oberlin College

## Internships, Summer 2012

BGC MA students are required to do an internship for which they receive three credits toward the degree.

<b>Tenann Bell</b> The Metropolitan Museum of Art	<b>Hadley Jensen</b> Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology, UC Berkeley	<b>Sarah Rogers</b> Museum of Modern Art
<b>Nynne Christoffersen</b> JAM Archives and The Metropolitan Museum of Art	<b>Suky Kang</b> American Federation of Arts	<b>Yitzchak Schwartz</b> The Metropolitan Museum of Art
<b>Colin Fanning</b> Metropolis Magazine	<b>Anna McDonald</b> The Metropolitan Museum of Art	<b>Laura Speers</b> Mount Vernon Hotel Museum & Garden
<b>Zahava Friedman-Stadler</b> Museum of Jewish Heritage	<b>Sarah Pickman</b> Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum	<b>Sharon Twickler</b> Nicholas Roerich Museum
<b>Andrew Goodhouse</b> Storefront for Art and Architecture	<b>Sophie Pitman</b> Victoria & Albert Museum	<b>Katherine Tycz</b> The Metropolitan Museum of Art
<b>Christine Griffiths</b> Museum of the City of New York	<b>Nicole Pulichene</b> The Metropolitan Museum of Art	<b>Meredyth Winter</b> The Textile Museum

### BGC Career Development and Alumni Events

This year, Academic Programs and the BGC Development Office continued "Conversations with Alumni," an informal series about careers aimed at current students and alumni. The fall event focused on careers in auction houses and featured four alumni on a panel discussing the range of career paths open in the auction house and the commercial world. About thirty-five alumni and current students attended. The second conversation of the year centered on careers in teaching. The series was launched last year with an evening of presentations and talks by BGC graduates working in the museum world. In addition, the alumni BGC Career Development Wiki has now been available to current students and alumni for a full year. Each month jobs are posted in the areas of academia, museums, historic houses, development and fundraising, digital arts, auction house galleries, and other opportunities. Information about grants, internships, and calls for papers for conferences is also posted. BGC students and alumni can always avail themselves of a session to improve their CVs and make an appointment for a career-counseling session. This year we also introduced a workshop for second year students entitled "Starting a Job Search." On the academic front, BGC students have been accepted to PhD programs at the University of California, Berkeley, the University of Chicago, the University of Texas at Austin, Harvard, Yale, Indiana University Bloomington, and the University of Michigan.

Elena Pinto Simon,  
*Dean for Academic Administration and Student Affairs*





## Research Institute

### A Note from the Dean

In September the BGC collaborated with the Institute of Fine Arts (NYU) to host a three-day conference on the issues involved in representing the living aspect of objects. In October a symposium was held to mark the opening of the circus exhibition that focused intensely on the relationship between the circus and animals. Also in October, a workshop launched Professor Aaron Glass's project to build an annotated digital edition of Franz Boas's pioneering ethnography *The Social Organization and the Secret Societies of the Kwakiutl Indians*, funded by a digital start-up grant from the NEH. In November the BGC collaborated with MoMA to explore the intellectual roots and artistic questions around childhood, education, and play that were highlighted in the museum's *Century of the Child* exhibition. April was the busiest month, with three symposia. Early in the month, "Digital/Pedagogy/Materials/Archives" brought together experts from across the country to discuss teaching and scholarship issues revolving around the storage of digital artifacts. Mid-month saw a scholars day and symposium devoted to the just-opened BGC exhibition on Georges Hoentschel. And at the end of the month, themes from an upcoming BGC exhibition, on the kitchen and table in early modern Euro-America, were presented to the public and then discussed by the exhibition's scientific committee.

An international meeting to discuss "Cultures of Conservation," a project funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, marked the midpoint, if not the high point, of this year of learned gatherings. The Mellon initiative "Cultures of Conservation," which will develop over the next five years, was launched with a planning meeting in January. Conservators came from the Shanghai Museum, the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage, the Opificio delle Pietre Dure, the Pitt-Rivers Museum, Te Papa in New Zealand, and the Glasgow University program in textile conservation, as well as from the Straus Center at Harvard, the Yale Art Gallery, the IFA's conservation program, the Smithsonian, the Getty, UCLA, and the Museum of Fine Arts Houston. Partner institutions in our Cultural Sciences Campus—The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Frick Collection, and the American Museum of Natural History—were also represented in force. The first Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow and the first Andrew W. Mellon Visiting Professor were hired soon after, and the program of events for next year was laid out. All Mellon events are listed at [www.bgc.bard.edu/research/initiatives/cultures-of.html](http://www.bgc.bard.edu/research/initiatives/cultures-of.html)

The BGC's learned publications had a busy year. *West 86th* had the rare distinction of a review in the *Times Literary Supplement's* annual survey of learned journals (one of only five to be so singled out) and received first prize from the American Alliance of Museums for best designed scholarly journal. The first two books in Cultural Histories of the Material World, our book series with University of Michigan Press, were published in the academic year that ended in June 2013, with three more scheduled to appear in the next twelve months. The final stage of editorial work on the BGC's *History of Design: Decorative Arts and Material Culture, 1400–2000* (Yale University Press) brought up the publication date to fall 2013, in time for the BGC's 20th anniversary

This year saw the installation of our third BGC/AMNH (American Museum of Natural History) post-doctoral fellow. Nicola Sharratt came to us from the Field Museum in Chicago and is an archaeologist working on pre-Inca Peru. Her Focus Gallery exhibition, opening in spring 2014, which animates her fellowship period, is *Carrying Coca*, a study of 1,500 years of textile bags used by the Andean peoples to carry coca leaves.

As the year comes to an end, we are preparing to host our second NEH Summer Institute for College and University Teachers, devoted to American Material Culture with a focus on nineteenth-century New York, and organized by David Jaffee. This program received more applications than all other Summer Institutes offered by the NEH.

Finally, even West 86th Street no longer seemed adequate to contain our ambitions, as we began a pilot “telepresence” program to beam ourselves into a seminar room at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin for a talk on artist’s recipes in the sixteenth century. More of this is planned for 2013–14, and we also will be streaming all our events, so keep your internet devices at the ready.

#### Statistics

- 25 weeks of the academic year:
- 26 evening seminars and lectures
- 16 lunchtime talks
- 4 faculty work-in-progress seminars
- 10 symposia or learned meetings
- 2 digital salons screening new student and faculty work
- 7 library workshops and 5 digital tools workshops

Peter N. Miller  
Dean

Photos:  
Laura Grey and  
Adrian Perez





## Cultures of Conservation: An Andrew W. Mellon-Foundation Funded Initiative



On Friday, January 25, 2013, the BGC launched its newest curricular initiative, “Cultures of Conservation,” a five-year project supported by a generous grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. This initial planning meeting had thirty-two participants, half from New York institutions and half from around the country and the

world. The local group included conservators from partner institutions in our Cultural Sciences Campus in Manhattan: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the American Museum of Natural History, The Frick Collection, the Institute of Fine Arts (NYU), and the Museum of Modern Art. The other half insured that our vision of conservation would be sufficiently cosmopolitan. Represented were institutions as varied as the Shanghai Museum, Te Papa, the Indian National Trust for Cultural Heritage, the Opificio delle Pietre Dure, Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum, Pitt-Rivers Museum, the Centre for Textile Conservation and Technical Art History at Glasgow, the Straus Center at Harvard, Yale University Art Gallery, the Smithsonian’s Museum Conservation Institute, the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, the Getty Conservation Institute, and the UCLA/Getty Program on the Conservation of Archaeological and Ethnographic Materials.

A series of presentations about possible ways in which conservation practice and knowledge could intersect with the questions and interests of humanities professors was shaped by a previously circulated orientation document. A wide-ranging discussion focused on how technical knowledge and practices could be taught to non-scientists and on the differences between artistic and ethnographic or archaeological materials. The committee also discussed in detail the various parts of the project, which will include a visiting professorship, postgraduate fellowships, an evening seminar program, summer internships, and new course development.

Photo:  
Adrian Perez.

## Pop-Up Exhibition: *Making a World with One Hundred Things*

“Why do precisely these objects which we behold make a world?”  
—Henry David Thoreau

The fall 2012 seminar “Tangible Things: Observing, Collecting, Sorting” examined the formation and uses of nearly fifty museum collections focused on areas that ran the gamut of disciplines from A to Z, anthropology to zoology. The seminar then built its own comprehensive collection in the same areas of inquiry. For ten weeks, the ten seminar members each brought an item to class relating to that week’s topic of study. The first nine topics were books and manuscripts; medicine; botany; natural philosophy; mathematics, physics, and astronomy; geology and zoology; anthropology and archaeology; history; commerce and law; and art. The tenth week was devoted to the study of ambiguous objects and things that were difficult to classify. All items were very modest, preferably found or purchased for not more than \$5.

As Thoreau observed in *Walden* (1854), the objects which we behold make not *the* world, but *a* world. The resultant pop-up exhibition, *Making a World with One Hundred Things*, ran from January 15 through 24. The seminar members were Hadley Jensen, Suky Kang, Sarah Pickman, Sophie Pitman, Nicole Pulichene, Laura Speers, Edward Styles, Katherine Tycz, Meredyth Winter, and Professor Ivan Gaskell.



Photo:  
Vanessa  
Rossi.



## Symposia

September 27–29

### Beyond Representation: An Interdisciplinary Approach to the Nature of Things

This three-day symposium at the BGC and the Institute of Fine Arts-NYU featured talks concerning the agency, presence, and ontological status of crafted things, witnessed in a shift of interest across several fields from questions of iconography and meaning to questions of affect and efficacy. Speakers attempted to answer questions about the nature and operation of things in the world, their materiality, their ability to act or inspire action, and their relation to speech, texts, and words.

October 15

### Circus and the City: New York, 1793–2010

This half-day symposium, held in conjunction with the BGC exhibition of the same name, focused on the animals and performers that made the circus into such a spectacular and iconic form of entertainment in the United States. Brett Mizelle (California State University, Long Beach) historicized debates over the legitimacy of the circus and charted the evolving relationship between the American public and animals over the course of the nineteenth century. Janet M. Davis (University of Texas at Austin) used the varied career of performer Tiny Kline to explore the world of popular amusements in the city during the early decades of the twentieth century.

November 16

### Playing with Modernism: Historical Perspectives on Children and Design

This symposium, organized in conjunction with the Museum of Modern Art's exhibition *Century of the Child: Growing by Design, 1900–2000*, explored how design produced for children in the name of creating a new vision of society existed across the world in the twentieth century. In their presentations, Juliet Kinchin (Architecture and Design, MoMA), Jeffrey Saletnik (History of Art, Amherst College), and Amy Ogata (BGC) examined these themes at two historical moments: the early twentieth century and the Cold War. The day ended with a screening of the documentary film *Toys (Zabawki)* by Andrej Wolski and a panel discussion led by Aidan O'Connor (Architecture and Design, MoMA).

April 18–19

### Hoentschel in Context

Organized in conjunction with the BGC exhibition *Salvaging the Past: Georges Hoentschel and French Decorative Arts from The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, this two-day symposium brought together scholars and conservators to examine the Hoentschel collection in the context of the history of collecting in France and America. The Hoentschel material constitutes one of the most significant collections from the early period of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The exhibition and symposium presented an unprecedented opportunity to explore its important role in disseminating the taste for eighteenth-century and medieval French art in the United States.

April 29

### Kitchen and Table in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America

The speakers at this symposium addressed a variety of themes, bringing together multiple sources for understanding the physical and intellectual worlds of the early modern kitchen and table. The cultural history of material goods has been largely incorporated into the categories of art or design history, but foodways, the ultimate in ephemera, are generally excluded from these studies. Food preparation and service were enmeshed within the same patronage and craft networks as much of the artwork that has been preserved in museums and collections, but their material traces remain on the margins, banished to the realm of re-enactors and hobbyists, or hiding in plain sight in more conventional display settings.

May 3

### Qualifying Paper Symposium

The second annual Qualifying Paper Symposium provided an opportunity for graduating MA students to give a short presentation on their capstone projects. After the presentations, which were attended by BGC students, faculty, staff, family, and friends, the students were treated to a celebratory reception in the penthouse at 38 West 86th Street.

## Seminar Series

October 10

**Joan-Pau Rubiés**

*Humanities, Institució Catalana de Recerca i Estudis Avançats, Universitat Pompeu Fabra*

Ethnographic Images in the Late Renaissance, East and West

October 17

**Christine Göttler**

*Art History, University of Bern, Switzerland*

Constructing a Global Interior: The Imagery of Collections and Collecting in Early Seventeenth-Century Antwerp

October 23

**Yves Porter**

*Islamic Art History, Université d'Aix-Marseille*

Potters of Kâshân (Late 12th–Early 14th c.)

November 7

**Michael Rowlands**

*Anthropology, University College London*

The New Chinese Museology: Shifting Geographies of Power, Development, and Heritage

November 14

**Steven Pincus**

*History, Yale University*

Spanish American Trade, Patriot Politics and the Shaping of the British Empire

November 27

**Laura Auricchio**

*Art History/Humanities, The New School*

Hero and Villain: Lafayette's Legacies

November 28

**Laura Wexler**

*American Studies/Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Yale University*

In Order to Form a More Perfect Likeness: Frederick Douglass,

Photography and the Image of the Nation

December 4

**Heather Ecker**

*Head of Curatorial Affairs, The Aga Khan Museum*

Tradition, Innovation, and Tradition Again in Hunting Practices in the Mediterranean Region, 10th–14th Centuries

December 5

**Aden Kumler**

*Art History, University of Chicago*

The Ordeals of Substance: Material Economies of Passion and Probation in the Middle Ages

December 12

**Jeffrey Quilter**

*William and Muriel Seabury Howells*

*Director, Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University*

Archaeology, Museums, and Tourism in Contemporary Peru

January 23

**Larry Silver**

*History of Art, University of Pennsylvania*

India Ink: Imagery of the Subcontinent in Sixteenth-Century Europe

January 29

**Daniel Harkett**

*History of Art and Visual Culture, Rhode Island School of Design*

The Studio and the Salon: Artists, Masculinity, and Sociability in the Early Nineteenth Century

January 30

**Daniel Smail**

*History, Harvard University*

An Anthropology of Goods in Mediterranean Europe, 1330–1450



Photo: Michael Nagle.

February 6

**Jessica Goldberg**

*History, University of Pennsylvania*  
Mining Medieval Sources: Documents as Texts, Documents as Objects in the Cairo Geniza

February 12

**Tobias Locker**

*Art History, Saint Louis University-Madrid*  
Paris—Potsdam—Paris: Gilt Bronzes ‘à la française’ in Prussia and the Circulation of Knowledge

February 13

**Christopher Brown**

*Director, Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, University of Oxford*  
The New Ashmolean

February 20

**Béla Kapossy**

*History, University of Lausanne, Switzerland*  
Rousseau’s and Other Relics: Material Memories in Later Eighteenth-Century Switzerland

February 27

**Karin Roffman**

*English, The United States Military Academy at West Point*  
The Double Dream of Things: John Ashbery as a Poet and Collector in his Hudson Home

March 6

**Matilda McQuaid**

*Deputy Curatorial Director/Head of Textiles, Copper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institute*  
Textile Variations

March 19

**Catherine Whalen**

*Bard Graduate Center*  
The Gift of Criticism: Paul Hollister’s Writings and the Ascendancy of Studio Glass

March 20

**Janet Berlo**

*Art History/Visual and Cultural Studies, University of Rochester*  
“Prime Objects” of the Gods? Replications and Transformations of Navajo Sandpainting Imagery

April 10

**Rebecca Zorach**

*Art History, University of Chicago*  
Friedman’s Pencil and Kant’s Tattoo: Graphic Arts, Global Utopias, and the Acheiropoietic Social

April 16

**Glenn Adamson**

*Head of Research, Victoria and Albert Museum*  
The Future: A History

April 17

**Alexandra Lange**

*Design Criticism, School of Visual Arts*  
Founding Mothers: Architecture Criticism from Mariana Van Rensselaer to Esther McCoy, Ada Louise Huxtable, and Jane Jacobs

April 30

**David Roxburgh**

*History of Art and Architecture, Harvard University*  
Baysunghur’s Garden Party and Other Tales: Conceptualizing Artistic and Cultural Production in Early Timurid Herat

May 7

**Gaye Blake-Roberts**

*Director, Wedgwood Museum*  
Wedgwood Majolica—A Response to Fashion

## Brown Bag Lunches

October 11

**Melissa Calaresu**

*History, University of Cambridge*  
Eating Ice Cream on the Streets of Naples: Materiality and Ephemerality in the History of Food

October 18

**Christine Göttler**

*Art History, University of Bern, Switzerland*  
The Interior: A New Swiss National Science Foundation Funded Research Project of the Institute of Art History at the University of Bern

November 6

**Natasha Korda**

*English, Wesleyan University*  
The Sign of the Last: Gender, Material Culture, and Artisanal Nostalgia on the Early Modern Stage

November 7

**Michael Rowlands**

*Anthropology, University College London*  
“UNESCO is Who?”: Ansar Dine’s Reaction to the Destruction of the Shrines in Timbuktu

November 12

**Sarah Lepinski**

*Visiting Fellow, Bard Graduate Center*  
Panoplies in Paint and Mortar: Wall Décor in Roman Corinth, Greece

January 30

**Pascal Bertrand and Stéphanie Trouvé**

*University of Bordeaux 3*  
The Arachne Research Project (Digital Solutions for Research and Teaching in the Humanities)

February 21

**Béla Kapossy**

*History, University of Lausanne, Switzerland*  
The Lausanne Project, ‘Lausanne.

Lumières’ (Digital Solutions for Research and Teaching in the Humanities)

February 25

**Julius Bryant**

*Keeper of Word and Image Department, Victoria and Albert Museum*  
Kipling: Exploring Art and Design from Bombay to the Punjab

February 27

**Gerhard Lang**

*Artist-in-Residence in New York City, Hessische Kulturstiftung*  
How Do Discoverers Discover

February 28

**Jeffrey T. Schnapp**

*Romance Languages and Literatures, metaLAB, and Berkman Center for Internet and Society, Harvard University*  
metaLAB: A Progress Report (Digital Solutions for Research and Teaching in the Humanities)

April 2

**Rikke Haller Baggesen**

*Visiting Fellow, Bard Graduate Center; PhD Fellow, Royal School of Library and Information Science, Copenhagen*  
Framing Fashion with Mobile Media—Exploring Potentials and Implications for Museums (Digital Solutions for Research and Teaching in the Humanities)

April 8

**James Delbourgo**

*History, Rutgers University*  
Building the British Museum: Hans Sloane and the Collection of the World

April 10

**Gül İrepoğlu**

*Art History, Istanbul University*  
Reading History Through Imperial Ottoman Jewelry



April 15

**Ulrich Raulff**

*Director, Deutsches Literaturarchiv  
Marbach*

The End of the Era of the Horse:  
Napoleon to Claude Simon

April 24

**Orestis Kourakis**

*Art History and Archaeology, Columbia  
University*

Creating Tomorrow's Technology to  
Record and Enhance the Relics of Our  
Past (Digital Solutions for Research and  
Teaching in the Humanities)

May 13

**Damian Skinner**

*Applied Art and Design, Auckland  
Museum*

Ten Ways to Write About a Māori  
Meeting House

## Faculty Works-in-Progress Seminars

November 20

**Abigail Balbale**

*Bard Graduate Center*

The Travels and Transformations of an  
Arabic Inscription in Medieval Spain

December 11

**Nicola Sharratt**

*Bard Graduate Center*

Reacting, Resettling, and Restructuring:  
A Community's Response to Political  
Turmoil in the Pre-Hispanic Andes

March 5

**Peter N. Miller**

*Dean and Professor, Bard Graduate  
Center*

Peiresc and the Mediterranean,  
1992–2014

May 2

**Susan Weber**

*Founder and Director, Bard Graduate  
Center*

The Furniture of William Kent

## Workshops and Meetings

October 12–13

The Distributed Text: An NEH Workshop  
on the Franz Boas Critical Digital Edition

January 25

Cultures of Conservation:  
An Andrew W. Mellon Foundation-  
Funded Initiative

April 5

Digital / Pedagogy / Material / Archives  
(Digital Solutions for Research and  
Teaching in the Humanities)

May 9–10

The Consortium for American Material  
Culture (CAMC)

## Telepresence Events

January 28

**Doris Oltrogge**

*Cologne Institute for Conservation  
Sciences, Cologne University of Applied  
Sciences*

Manuscripts and Prints: Exchange, Use  
and Reading of Recipe Texts in Early  
Modern Times

## Panel Discussions

April 11

Archaeology and Material Culture: Tim  
Murray (La Trobe University) and Alain  
Schnapp (Université Paris 1 Panthéon-  
Sorbonne)

## Doctoral Forum

*The Doctoral Forum was host once  
again this year to a number of very  
strong presentations showcasing the  
consistently interesting, original, and  
varied work being generated by doctoral  
students at the Bard Graduate Center.*

September 18

**Christian Larsen**

Divergent Modernisms and Decolonizing  
Brazilian Design in the Global  
Architectural Press

November 13

**Shax Riegler**

The Collector as Character

December 6

**Tom Tredway**

A Jewel in the Crown of the Merchant  
Prince: Walter Hoving Acquires Tiffany  
and Company

March 26

**Beth McMahon**

"Robes of Court and Palace": Dress and  
Queenship at the Court of Henry VIII,  
1509–1547

## Materials Days

April 5

Jerilyn Glenn Davis: Hand Bookbinding  
and Conservation

## Installation Workshops

September 12

Circus and the City:  
New York, 1793–2010

March 28

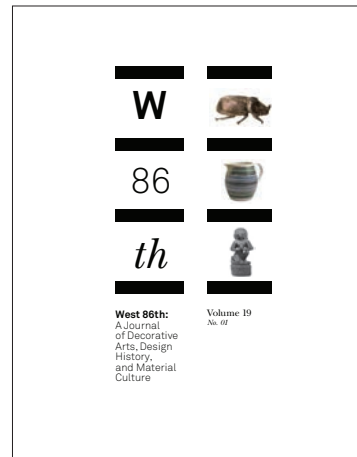
Salvaging the Past: Georges Hoentschel  
and French Decorative Arts from The  
Metropolitan Museum of Art



Photo:  
Laura Grey.

## Learned Publications

*West 86th: A Journal of Decorative Arts, Design History, and Material Culture*



In a November 2, 2012 *Times Literary Supplement* review, *West 86th* was called “a splendid addition to scholarship in all its facets.” Earlier in the year, the journal won first prize for the best-designed scholarly journal from the American Alliance of Museums.

Now in its third year and sixth issue, *West 86th* reaffirms the BGC’s commitment to expanding the conversation on the content, meaning, and significance of objects. *West 86th* continues to focus on the wider crossroads where scholarship in the decorative

arts meets design history and material culture studies. It aims to enlarge the traditional canon to embrace the material culture of all periods and regions while maintaining the highest standards of scholarship.

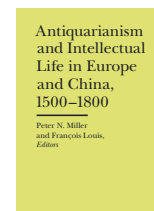
Last year articles included subjects that ranged from the working practices and guild structure of the decorative arts in Naples during the high baroque period to the influence of Persian art and aesthetics in the United States manifested in Doris Duke’s Shangri La in Hawaii. New translations of rare and important design texts included Le Corbusier on his ideas regarding the role of glass in modern architecture and the Brazilian architect-designer Bo Bardi—who is emerging now as one of the key figures of Latin American modernism—on her interests in the folk arts and indigenous culture. We have also seen the completion of Debora Silverman’s magisterial analysis of Belgian art nouveau and the colonial experience of the Congo.

Published biannually by the University of Chicago Press, *West 86th* is available in print and digitally through JSTOR. In addition, the BGC website ([west86th.bgc.bard.edu](http://west86th.bgc.bard.edu)) not only includes a range of digital projects, debates, and related material that expand upon the articles but also serves as a free-standing forum for new scholarship. The editorial team comprises Paul Stirton, editor-in-chief, and Daniel Lee, managing editor, who rely on the assistance from other members of BGC faculty and staff.

## Cultural Histories of the Material World

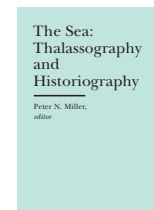
Peter N. Miller, General Editor  
Daniel Lee, Managing Editor

Academic Year 2012–13 saw the publication of *Antiquarianism and Intellectual Life in Europe and China, 1500–1800*, edited by Peter N. Miller and François Louis, and *The Sea: Thalassography and Historiography*, edited by Peter N. Miller, the first books launching the new series Cultural Histories of the Material World, published by the University of Michigan Press. CHMW is centered on the exploration of the material turn in the study of culture. It examines the ways human beings have shaped and interpreted the material world from a broad range of scholarly perspectives and shows how attention to materiality can contribute to a more precise historical understanding of specific times, places, ways, and means.



“This splendid collection of essays is at once a major addition to the literature on the history of scholarship in Western Europe, a burgeoning field in its own right, and a model effort at comparative cultural history. . . . The collection as a whole sheds light on areas little known even to erudite scholars.”

—Anthony Grafton, Princeton University,  
on *Antiquarianism and Intellectual Life in Europe and China, 1500–1800*



“No one has written such a book, and the book’s *raison d’être* is wholly warranted. The essays together are intriguing. They make important points—collectively a very important historiographical point—and they highlight for scholars the importance of such work and its potential for extension.”

—David Hancock, University of Michigan, on *The Sea: Thalassography and Historiography*

### Forthcoming titles include

*Cultural Histories of the Material World*

Peter N. Miller, Editor

*Ways of Making and Knowing: The Material Culture of Empirical Knowledge*

Pamela H. Smith, Amy R.W. Meyers, and Harold J. Cook, Editors

*The Technical Image: A History of Styles in Scientific Imagery*

Horst Bredekamp, Birgit Schneider, Vera Dünkel, Editors

*Reading Space in Time*

Karl Schlögel

## Digital Media Lab

The Bard Graduate Center is increasingly committed to fostering the integration of digital media throughout its academic programs, gallery exhibitions, and publishing endeavors. The Digital Media Lab (DML) plays a central role in these explorations by providing a well-equipped space for students and faculty to work on projects, a suite of online tools and resources, and collaborative relationships with institutions doing similar work throughout New York and across the country.

The lab continues to be home to a wide variety of projects in a number of courses. In the fall, students in Professor Keramidas's course "Media & Materiality" used the collection management system Omeka to tell the story of material changes in media technologies in the twentieth century through digital exhibitions, timelines, and visualizations. Professor Gaskell and his "Tangible Things" class also used Omeka as the platform for the digital catalogue made for their *Making a World with a Hundred Things* popup exhibition. In the spring, Professors Krohn and Leben had students create virtual exhibitions in three-dimensional reconstructions of the galleries at 18 West 86th Street for their "Exhibition Experience" class.

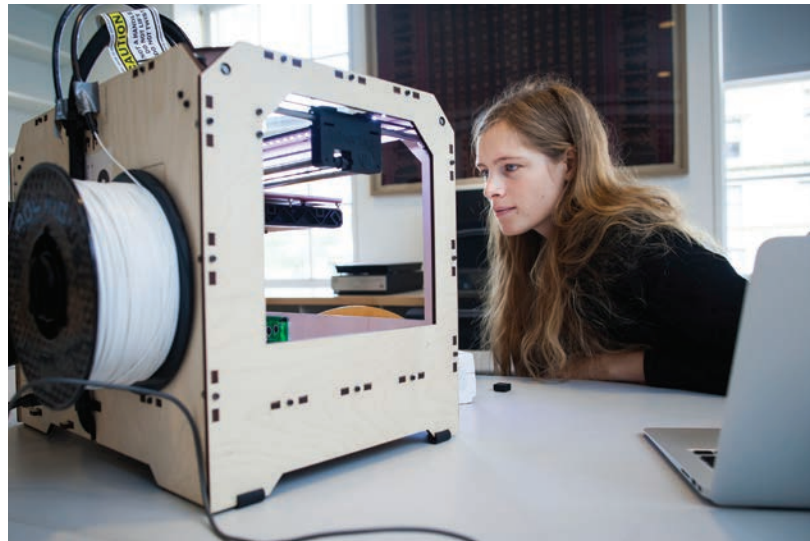


Photo:  
Michael Nagle.



Photo:  
Han Vu.

The Focus Gallery once again generated a flurry of activity in the lab. In April, *Confluences: An American Expedition to Northern Burma, 1935* opened with an interactive map and interactive notebook, both of which had been prototyped by students. The success of these has influenced the development of other gallery projects. In the spring Professors Sharratt and Keramidas both incorporated creative digital initiatives into their upcoming Focus Gallery projects which will concentrate on chuspas, coca leaf carrying bags, and interface design, respectively.

In addition to work done with the 3D printer and scanner, students experimented with a new three-dimensional technology: photogrammetry—a process which turns two-dimensional images into three-dimensional models. In March, students were invited to The Metropolitan Museum of Art to use photogrammetry to create a model of a mounted armored knight with lance. This was the first of a new series of digital materials days that will take students into the field to use digital technology to study material culture.

This year also marked the beginning of the "Digital Solutions for Research and Teaching in the Humanities" speaker series. As part of this series, a number of esteemed scholars discussed database design, mobile technology and fashion, digital imaging, and the design of labs similar to the DML. The BGC also hosted the conference "Digital/Pedagogy/Material/Archives" which addressed the challenge of capturing and archiving the wide array of digital work being done in the classroom and during research.

For more information about the DML visit [dml.wikis.bgc.bard.edu](http://dml.wikis.bgc.bard.edu). The DML is administered by Kimon Keramidas, assistant director of the Digital Media Lab, and David Jaffee, professor and head of new media research.

Kimon Keramidas  
*Assistant Director*



## Library

The Library has seen its collections, both physical and digital, grow in interesting ways this year. In the digital realm, we have continued to enrich our first online periodicals database, new last year, which gives researchers access to more than 5,000 titles in both print and electronic full-text, and to explore further uses for the tool. The Library also participated in the BGC's institution-wide Digital Review Committee, considering with interest and care the ways in which we will steward and present digital information now and in the future.

On the physical side, we have begun to process a large acquisition of material collected by the eighteenth-century furniture researcher Ted Dell. In the Library's monograph collection, we continue our mission to support the curricular goals of the institution. The Collection Development Committee collaborated with the BGC's anthropology faculty this year to enhance our holdings in the subject's core areas and those taught by the faculty and postdoctoral fellows. We expect to catalogue about 2,300 monographs this fiscal year, increasing our collection by another 5 percent. The Library also devoted particular attention to items in our special collections room, improving access to and preservation of the pamphlet file, our rare books collection, and BGC ephemera related to the BGC's history.

Last year we began reviewing the Library's book conservation practices with the goal of implementing a comprehensive preservation plan over the next five years. To that end, one of our top initiatives this year has been to re-house the most fragile of our special collections books in custom-fit cases appropriate for their daily storage. To learn how to construct the cases, the Library staff paid two visits in the fall to the midtown studio of the noted book conservator Jerilyn Davis and then brought the skill back to the Library, where we have been constructing cases for fragile items all year, notably improving the collection's housing. We will continue the practice of identifying preservation needs, learning the necessary skills at the conservator's studio, and then adding the skills to the Library's repertoire.

Further activity in special collections this year included a complete organization and rehousing of the pamphlet collection and the BGC ephemera collection. We also created finding aids to make these small but valuable materials more easily accessible to researchers.



Special Collections material on display for the Library's first annual Ex Libris Day, October 10, 2013. Photo credit: Gisela Schmidt

Also in the interest of making materials more available to researchers, the Visual Media Resources (VMR) department announced as an outcome of the Digital Review Committee that our in-house image collection will be delivered in a new, dynamic and teaching-friendly platform in the next academic year: ARTstor's Shared Shelf. This is an exciting change that will allow students and faculty to search, present, and organize material from the vast collection of ARTstor's images alongside the BGC's own subject-specific images in one seamless interface. VMR has worked hard to prepare for the transition and continued to digitize images to add to our database, which now holds around 20,000 fully catalogued images.

The Library hosted two notable events this year for students, alumni, faculty, and staff. In October we celebrated the first annual Ex Libris Day, and in April we held the second-annual Edible Book Day. For Ex Libris Day, we planned a day-long series of workshops and displays to celebrate research and show off the Library's treasures. Events included special collections exhibitions and software and database trials, capped off with a pizza and movie lunch featuring selections from our video collection. For Edible Books Day, participants created "books" out of edible materials, which were displayed, judged, and subsequently eaten. Most contestants chose to represent books from the Library's collection. It was a pleasure to see the playful pride and affection our community feels for particular books in the collection.

Heather Topcik  
*Chief Librarian*





## Bard Graduate Center Gallery

Diversity of exhibition content was the underlining theme of the Gallery this year. We organized exhibitions about American history, the history of mathematics, and the history of museums and anthropology. *Circus and the City: New York, 1793–2010*; *The Islands of Benoît Mandelbrot: Fractals, Chaos, and the Materiality of Thinking*; *Salvaging the Past: Georges Hoentschel and French Decorative Arts from The Metropolitan Museum of Art*; and *Confluences: An American Expedition to Northern Burma, 1935* all involved extensive research projects that led to new scholarship in their respective fields. It is especially rewarding that each of these projects involved the BGC faculty and students, an indication of the close connections between the Gallery and Degree Programs.

Each of the four exhibitions we organized this year was accompanied by a book that was either published in collaboration with or distributed by Yale University Press. We also launched a new e-book project that will make backlist titles, including the long out-of-print *Women Designers in the USA, 1900–2000*, available on our website.

Visitors to the website will notice an increase in exhibition content, which includes more photographs of past exhibitions and new digital media projects, among them “Can We Hear the Sound?,” a film made by Han Vu, the BGC Media Producer, in collaboration with Dr. Sentienla Toy Threadgill, a Naga ethnomusicologist. Produced in conjunction with the Focus Gallery *Confluences* exhibition, this film, which incorporates a recording of the Khamniumgan dance in Nagaland, enables listeners to have a sense of what the Warrior Dance sounded like in Hahti in 1935. Dr. Threadgill also did a five-minute sound installation that raises questions about the perception of sound and how it changes over time.

Finally, I am pleased to announce that Marianne Lamonaca joined the Gallery as Associate Director and Chief Curator.

Nina Stritzler-Levine  
*Gallery Director*  
*Director, Gallery Publications*

Installation view,  
*Salvaging the Past*.  
Photo: Michael Nagle.



## 2012–13 Exhibitions

### Circus and the City: New York, 1793–2010

On view September 21, 2012–February 3, 2013

This exhibition used New York City as a lens through which to explore the extraordinary development and spectacular pageantry of the American circus. Through a variety of ephemera, images, and artifacts, the history of the circus in the city was documented—from the seminal equestrian displays of the late eighteenth century through the iconic late nineteenth-century American railroad circus to the Big Apple Circus of today. From humble beginnings, the circus grew into the most popular form of entertainment in the United States. By the turn of the twentieth century, New York City was its most important market and the place where cutting-edge circus performances and exhibitions were introduced to the nation.

Organized by Matthew Wittmann, a curatorial fellow at the BGC, the exhibition featured more than two hundred objects and images selected from both local and national collections, including the New-York Historical Society, the International Center of Photography, the Somers Historical Society, the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, the New York State Museum, the Circus World Museum, the Barnum Museum, the Library of Congress, the Witte Museum, and the Shelburne Museum.

*Circus and the City* began by looking at how the advent and growth of the American circus paralleled New York City's rise as a cultural capital during the nineteenth century. This story began in the fall of 1793, when John Bill Ricketts, a Scotsman, opened the first circus on Greenwich Street with performances that consisted primarily of displays of equestrian skill. In the decades that followed, a variety of transitory circuses and menageries sprang up to entertain the burgeoning population. By mid-century, more permanent circus venues featuring a mix of equestrian, animal, and acrobatic acts were established. Although a succession of influential impresarios, such as Dan Rice and Lewis B. Lent, were transforming the circus business in the United States, no figure was more important to the New York's emerging popular entertainment industry than Phineas Taylor Barnum (1810–1891). Loans from the Barnum Museum illustrated the breadth of his endeavors, from his early years with Barnum's American Museum to his triumphant entry into the circus business

in the early 1870s. Advertising and artifacts from this era demonstrated how the American circus evolved from modest beginnings into the celebrated and massive railroad circuses of the late nineteenth century and revealed the signature role that New York City played in this process.

The exhibition also featured a series of thematic displays about parades, music, toys, elephants, posters, and other aspects of the circus business. On view were wonderful prints and photographs of circuses parading through the city in different eras, as well as impressive wooden carvings by Samuel A. Robb, New York's preeminent manufacturer of show and shop figures. *Circus and the City* explored the particular appeal that the circus held for children, as the large number of toys and books produced by the McLoughlin Bros. and other companies attested. The star of the elephant section was Jumbo, the African elephant that arrived in New York Harbor in 1882 and touched off a craze known as "Jumbomania," which was a boon to the circus business and generated a deluge of ephemera and memorabilia. Perhaps the most noted legacy of the American circus is the plethora of brightly colored posters that were put up all over the city whenever a circus was in town. Indeed, this exhibition delineated the history of show printing in New York and featured many fine examples of this industrial art.

Finally, the exhibition told the story of the circus and the city through the twentieth century by focusing on the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, which has visited Madison Square Garden every spring. This section consisted of displays about the first visit of the Ringling Brothers to New York City in 1909; the WPA Circus during the Great Depression; Arthur Feelig (aka Weegee) and his circus photography; and works of art by Walt Kuhn, Milton Avery, and other New York City artists who were inspired by the circus. A final section of the exhibition was devoted to performers who thrilled New York audiences, featuring the animal trainer Clyde Beatty, the high-wire aerialist Karl Wallenda, the equestrienne May Wirth, and the clown Felix Adler. *Circus and the City* was one of the grandest exhibitions about the American circus ever mounted, offering a compelling look at how New York City influenced and inspired this iconic form of American popular entertainment.

An illustrated catalogue with an extended essay by Matthew Wittmann accompanied the exhibition. Wittmann traces the history of the circus in New York City and highlights its evolving role in the city's cultural land-





scape. This catalogue also features entries on noteworthy objects, including spectacular color letterpress and chromolithograph posters specially conserved for the exhibition, and gives the history of a few of the more unusual items, such as Leonard Volk's marble bust of Dan Rice and a riding jacket fitted for a monkey equestrian act. An illustrated checklist documents the range of objects included in the exhibition.

In addition, the Gallery published *The American Circus*, a collection of essays about the history of the circus in the United States. This interdisciplinary volume includes contributions by renowned experts from various disciplines that reveal the historical and intellectual complexity of the circus. Edited by Susan Weber, Kenneth L. Ames, and Matthew Wittmann, this publication ranges widely from thematic explorations of circus music and elephants to more narrowly focused studies of such objects as circus toys, tents, and costumes. With contributions from Leon Botstein, Janet Davis, Fred Dahlinger, and other leading scholars from universities and museums around the country, this publication also examines the transnational history of the American circus in Victorian Britain, the Americanization of the circus clown, and the government-sponsored WPA Circus of the 1930s.

Together these two volumes mark an important advance in understanding the complex and culturally significant history of the American circus.

*Circus and the City* garnered extensive media attention including a full-page feature by Glenn Collins in the *New York Times* and a review by Sebastian Smee in the *Boston Globe*, who called it "one of the loveliest and most surprising shows on the East Coast this fall." The *New Yorker*, the *Huffington Post*, the *Journal News*, *Time Out New York*, the *Magazine Antiques*, *Architect*, *Interior Design*, *New York* magazine, and the *Paris Review* were among only a few of the newspapers, magazines, and blogs to feature it. Internationally, it was covered by the *Times Literary Supplement*, *Die Welt*, and the *Financial Times*. On television, it was featured in Channel Thirteen's *NYC-Arts* and Stephanie Simon's NY1 weekly segment "Your Weekend Starts Now." Full links to these can be found on the BGC website.

Installation view,  
*Circus and the City*.  
Photo: Michael Nagle.

## The Islands of Benoît Mandelbrot: Fractals, Chaos, and the Materiality of Thinking

On view September 21, 2012–January 27, 2013

Focusing primarily on the work of Benoît Mandelbrot (1924–2010), one of the most notable mathematicians of the twentieth century, this exhibition explored the role of images in scientific thinking. With their capacity to generate and shape knowledge, images are at the very core of scientific investigation: charts, graphs, notebooks, instrument readings, technological representations, even mental abstractions—all are part of the essential stuff of which scientific investigation is made.

For thousands of years, Western thinkers assumed that the fundamental geometry of the world consisted of regular, ideal forms (cubes, spheres, cones, etc.) with straight or evenly curved faces and edges. Benoît Mandelbrot, however, decided to explore the mathematics of the world, not in its idealized form but as it actually appears, in all its untidiness and irregularity. He devoted himself, for example, to the study of the forms of the coastlines of real islands, with all their unpredictable inlets, creeks, and furrows.

In other words, Mandelbrot *looked* at the world. In so doing, he flouted what was in effect a prohibition in much of mathematics against the use of visual representation in the discipline. To reintroduce the visual, Mandelbrot took the step of harnessing the potential of computers and transforming mathematics into an experimental science. The result was his invention of fractal geometry, a geometry of actuality rather than of abstractions.

At his death in 2010, Mandelbrot left a mass of idiosyncratically organized drawings, computer print-outs, films, manuscript scribbles, objects, and photographs in his office in Cambridge, Massachusetts, an extraordinary trove to which Mandelbrot's wife, Alette, generously allowed BGC Visiting Assistant Professor Nina Samuel access. "Exploring those documents was like wandering through the mathematician's brain," said Samuel. "It was like witnessing the ephemeral traces of his very thought processes." Selections from these materials formed the core of the exhibition.

Islands are central to Mandelbrot's work, associated in his thinking with both the inspiring and the seductive role of images. They challenge



Installation view,  
*The Islands of Benoît Mandelbrot*  
Photo: Michael Nagle.



his own dictum that “seeing is believing” and point to the interaction between the hand and computer visualizations to generate new ideas. Frequently, the computer alone is unable to give an insight, and hand drawing becomes necessary for transforming a confusing computer image into a new idea or theory. Along with this rare look into Mandelbrot’s working process, the curator included never-before exhibited sketches from Mandelbrot’s contemporaries the French mathematician Adrien Douady and the German biochemist Otto E. Rössler, to investigate the specific role of the scientist’s hand. Additionally, the work of the MIT meteorologist Edward N. Lorenz, a pioneer of chaos theory, was represented by loans from the Library of Congress.

This exhibition and its accompanying publication raised questions about the merits of the idea that the illustration of a work must always be secondary to the work itself. On the contrary, substantive images often play generative roles in the scientific process, constituting a kind of material thinking conducted by producing and interpreting visual traces, such as computer-generated images. These images are often aesthetically compelling even if they are initially scientifically impenetrable. This concept constituted another revelation of the exhibition: the beauty of material thinking that can be found in the visual detritus of scientific investigation.

Featuring works on paper, photographs, objects, and films, the exhibition gave viewers a unique chance to take an inside look at aspects of the making of the new world of ideas that became popularly known as fractal geometry and chaos theory, as exemplified by one of the classics of twentieth-century science, Benoît Mandelbrot’s *Fractal Geometry of Nature* (1982).

The exhibition’s extensively illustrated catalogue includes an essay by curator Nina Samuel on the relationship between visual and scientific reasoning in fractal geometry and chaos theory, and contributions by members of the German research group Das Technische Bild—Matthias Bruhn and Margarete Pratschke—and scholars Wladimir Velminski, Jan von Brevern, and Juliet Koss. This groundbreaking book investigates the role of scientific imagery in visual thinking across diverse disciplines and establishes new connections between the material world and that of mathematical ideas, offering a rare glimpse at the artifactual terrain and graphic methodologies of Benoît Mandelbrot and his contemporaries.

*Scientific American*, *Ars Technica*, *Wired*, *Popular Science*, and *Issues in Arts and Sciences* were among the magazines and blogs covering *Mandelbrot*. It was featured in *ArtInfo*, *Time Out New York*, and the Swiss newspaper, *Corriere del Ticino*. Ken Johnson reviewed it in the *New York Times* and named the book as one of his top picks in the 2012 *New York Times* Holiday Gift Guide. Full links to these can be found on the BGC website.

## Salvaging the Past: Georges Hoentschel and French Decorative Arts from The Metropolitan Museum of Art

On view April 4–August 11, 2013

Focusing on a remarkable but little-known collection that entered the Metropolitan Museum as a gift of J. Pierpont Morgan in the early twentieth century, this exhibition featured more than two hundred objects of primarily medieval art and French eighteenth-century paneling, furniture, metalwork, textiles, paintings, and sculpture, as well as late nineteenth-century art pottery, most of which have rarely been viewed since the 1950s. The fourth in a series of collaborations between The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the BGC, the exhibition provided the first comprehensive examination of Georges Hoentschel—a significant figure in the history of collecting—and illuminated an understudied and critical chapter of the Metropolitan’s history. Daniëlle Kisluk-Grosheide, curator of European decorative arts at the Metropolitan Museum; Deborah L. Krohn, BGC associate professor; and Ulrich Leben, BGC special exhibitions curator and visiting professor, were the organizers.

Drawn primarily from the Metropolitan Museum’s holdings, with loans from other public and private collections in the United States and France, the exhibition told the story of this unique collection in four sections. The first introduced Georges Hoentschel, who was an enterprising and successful decorator during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when France witnessed a great scientific, industrial, and social transformation and the newly moneyed bourgeoisie adopted a lifestyle based on an aristocratic model. As director of the Parisian decorating firm Maison Leys, Hoentschel catered to these affluent clients and created for them interiors in historic French styles. In this section of the exhibition, ephemera, family papers, photographs, and a film presentation outlined his story within the context of Belle Époque Paris.

The second and largest section presented selections from the eighteenth-century holdings of the collection in installations inspired by historic photographs of Hoentschel’s densely arranged showroom-museum in Paris, where the objects served as models for his interior-decorating business. Delicately carved woodwork, decorative paintings, and exquisitely chased gilt-bronze mounts were featured here. Highlights included a chair made for Louise-Élisabeth of Parma, daughter of Louis XV; an armchair made for Louis XVI; and a panel from shutters originally installed in a room outside the chapel at Versailles.





The third section displayed medieval artworks, including sculpture, ivories, and metalwork, and included one of the finest surviving examples of French Limoges enamelwork—a twelfth-century reliquary container, or chasse. Also shown was Jean Barbet’s *Ange du Lude*, on loan from The Frick Collection, a rare bronze angel dated 1475 and one of the most remarkable works from Hoentschel’s collection.

The final section presented examples of Hoentschel’s stoneware and those of his friend the sculptor and potter Jean-Joseph Carriès (1855–1894). Some of these ceramics were originally exhibited in the Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs’ pavilion at the 1900 Exposition Universelle in Paris, for which Hoentschel created interiors in art nouveau style, unique in his oeuvre. A chair from this pavilion, loaned by the Musée des Arts décoratifs, Paris, was displayed along with a selection of furnishing textiles used by Hoentschel in interior design commissions.

The extensive amount of new research the curators did for this project resulted in a fully illustrated catalogue with scholarly essays, early documentary photographs, and images of newly conserved works. The book considers various aspects of Hoentschel’s life in Parisian social and artistic circles of the time and his career as a successful businessman, ceramist, and designer who was instrumental in exporting French taste abroad. New research documents many of Hoentschel’s clients and commissions, placing him and his collection in a larger social and historical context. Extensive conservation treatments for this exhibition were outlined in entries about the individual objects.

By the exhibition’s midpoint, press coverage ranged from the *Magazine Antiques* and the *Newtown Bee’s Arts & Antiques Weekly* to *InNewYork* magazine. It was also featured in the *New York Times*, both in Eve Kahn’s “Antiques” column and Roberta Smith’s glowing review. Full links can be found on the BGC website.

Installation view,  
*Salvaging the Past*.  
Photo: Michael Nagle.



## Confluences: An American Expedition to Northern Burma, 1935

On view April 4–August 3, 2013

This Focus Gallery exhibition was curated by Erin L. Hasinoff, 2010–12 BGC–American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) postdoctoral fellow in museum anthropology, in collaboration with BGC graduate students.

In January 1935, the Vernay-Hopwood Chindwin Expedition set out from Rangoon to explore the upper reaches of the “mighty Chindwin River” on behalf of the AMNH. The three-month expedition gathered the museum’s founding biological and anthropological collections from an under-researched area to the east of Burma’s border with Assam and to the south of Tibet. *Confluences* explored the complex social life of this extraordinary enterprise through an assortment of objects that were both carried to the field and collected en route.

Expeditions have long been the subject of natural history and anthropology exhibitions. Most have emphasized the biographies and activities of organizers, sponsors, and field scientists, but *Confluences* was unusual because it focused on the working methods of the expedition rather than on the biographies of the explorers. At the heart of *Confluences* was the idea that expeditions were cosmopolitan adventures that relied on the adroitness and cooperation of numerous local indigenous agents, as well as professionals, in order to make scientific discoveries.

The expedition was financed by Arthur S. Vernay, an established New York City–based dealer in English antiques, an intrepid field associate in the AMNH’s Department of Mammalogy, and a museum trustee. He assembled a diverse party of natural scientists and *shikari* (big-game hunters). Henry C. Raven, a comparative anatomist at the museum, joined as the lead scientist, principal filmmaker, and photographer. The caravan was a confluence of Yunnanese muleteers, Burmese guides, and Goan skimmers, who, along with British party members, were assembled from throughout the Raj. The exploratory journey brought the caravan in touch with various residents of northern Burma—Burmese, Kachin, Shan, and Naga peoples—who provisioned the enterprise and procured specimens for the museum.

Installation view,  
*Confluences*  
Photo: Michael Nagle.



The Vernay-Hopwood Chindwin Expedition made news not primarily for its collections and its scientific findings, but for what newspapers sensationalized as the most significant episode of the journey: the first contact with the “head-hunting” Nagas of Burma. At the time, such exoticizing accounts of contact were an important justification for expeditions, attracting nation-wide publicity and the support of museum patrons.

Structured as an itinerary, the exhibition revealed working relationships between participants of every kind, whose encounters shaped the collections that were to enter the museum. It comprised a compelling selection of the expedition’s ethnological objects and specimens, documentation, photographs, and film footage, drawn together from across various departments of the AMNH and exhibited for the first time. The exhibition also included alternative, contemporary readings of the three-day sojourn among the Nagas as it was depicted in photographs and on film. A “sound collage” by Dr. Sentienla Toy Threadgill, a New York-based Ao Naga ethnomusicologist, made up of interviews and music, accompanied a brief segment of the silent 110-minute expedition film, *The Vernay-Hopwood Chindwin Expedition to Northern Burma, 1935*. Dr. Threadgill’s piece brought the expedition to the present, moving the film beyond its archival life to address some of the sonic sensibilities and cultural interactions of the Burma–India borderland. Overall, *Confluences* set in motion a dialogue about the fieldwork of the various participants who were active in producing a natural history of northern Burma, and, by extension, the world.

The accompanying book, written by Erin Hasinoff, uses primary source materials to provide a sketch of the Vernay-Hopwood Chindwin Expedition. Among the issues discussed are the planning of the expedition and the activities of its participants in relation to AMNH expeditionary history and to the natural history of northern Burma. Because this Focus Gallery exhibition was the outcome of graduate seminars offered at the BGC, the second section of the book highlights student contributions and the teaching potential of archived expedition materials and collections.

## Forthcoming Exhibitions

### William Kent: Designing Georgian Britain

September 20, 2013–February 9, 2014

Organized in collaboration with the Victoria & Albert Museum (V&A).  
Curated by Susan Weber, Director and Founder, BGC and Julius Bryant, Keeper of Word and Image Department, V&A

### An American Style: Global Sources for New York Textile and Fashion Design, 1915–1928

September 27, 2013–February 9, 2014

Curated by Ann Marguerite Tartsinis, Associate Curator, BGC

William Kent.  
Console table,  
ca. 1727





## Education

During 2012–2013, the BGC’s Education Department served more than 7,000 visitors who attended a broad range of exhibition-related programs including lectures, conversations, study days, concerts, family days and guided tours as well as outreach visits beyond the Gallery. We encourage public engagement with Gallery exhibitions by connecting visitors with scholars, curators, artists, designers, and other specialists in the decorative arts and design history. In addition to programs for adult, senior, student and family audiences, we took our popular Outreach Suitcase Program to new venues both within and beyond New York City. A new telephone lecture series, offered in collaboration with Dorot (an organization that provides services to the elderly), offered homebound seniors an opportunity to learn about our exhibitions and engage in dialogue with a BGC educator.

BGC educators and graduate student docents lead exhibition tours for adult and school groups by appointment as well as complimentary tours every Friday at noon. BGC students are actively involved in Gallery teaching and receive on-going mentoring from Education staff while gaining first-hand experience in a variety of settings. They learn to teach from objects and to create connections between exhibition content and curriculum standards in history, language arts, visual and performing arts, and science.

This year we added two new suitcases to our Outreach Suitcase Program. *Circus in New York City* allows students to discover the history of the circus in the Big Apple through vintage costumes and images of aerialists and fire-eaters while *Marvelous Materials: Learn How Things are Made* offers the opportunity to investigate the fascinating materials and techniques of the objects that adorned the rooms and residences of art nouveau Paris. I am happy to report that educators continue to request Suitcase programs from previous exhibitions. These support their curriculum goals and enrich their teaching in history, language arts, science and visual and performing arts.

Rebecca Allan  
*Head of Education*

Tracy Gosner, Gallery  
Outreach Educator  
with students



## Gallery Programs

October 4

Evening for Educators

October 11

**Circus Amazons: The Culture of Female Equestrianism in New York City, 1865–1930**

Kim Marra, Professor of Theatre Arts and American Studies, University of Iowa

November 8

**Glass Plates and High-Diving Horses: Photography and the American Circus**

Peter Kayafas, Photographer, and Director, Eakins Press Foundation  
Luc Sante, Writer, Critic, and Visiting Professor of Writing and Photography, Bard College

November 18

**Circus Posters: From Wood Type to “The Greatest Show on Earth”**

Paul Stirton, Associate Professor, BGC

November 18

**Songs from the High Wire**

Introduced by Leon Botstein, President and Leon Levy Professor in the Arts and

Humanities, Bard College  
Richard Gordon, Pianist, Robert Osborne, Bass-Baritone, and Mary Testa, Mezzo-Soprano

November 29

**Drawing from My Mind’s Eye: Dorothea Rockburne in Conversation with David Cohen and Nina Samuel**

Dorothea Rockburne, Artist  
David Cohen, Editor and Publisher of Artcritical.com  
Nina Samuel, Curator, The Islands of Benoît Mandelbrot: Fractals, Chaos, and the Materiality of Thinking

December 6

**P. T. Barnum and Ralph Waldo Emerson: A Confluence of Influence**

Gregory Volk, Art Critic, Curator, and Associate Professor, Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts

December 13

**Practical Fractals: Chaos Theory in Architecture and Design with Paola Antonelli and Jimena Canales**

Ivan Gaskell, Professor and Head of the Focus Gallery, BGC; Paola Antonelli, Senior Curator, Museum of Modern Art;



Paola Antonelli  
with Jimena  
Canales



Joan Simon with Jed Pearl

Jimena Canales, Associate Professor, Harvard University

December 18

**Modern Magician: Calder’s Circus and the Invention of the Mobile**

Jed Perl, Art Critic, *The New Republic*;  
Joan Simon, Independent Curator, Writer, and Arts Administrator

January 10

**Herman Ootics, the Clown: History, Culture, and Clowning**

David Carlyon, Historian and Former Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus Clown

January 17

**The Circus In America**

Susan Weber, Founder and Director, Bard Graduate Center

January 24

**Drawing on Mandelbrot: A Conversation with Artists James Siena and Joan Waltemath**

Moderated by Brett Littman, Executive Director, The Drawing Center; James Siena, Visual Artist; Joan Waltemath, Painter and Director, Hoffberger School of Painting at Maryland Institute College of Art

January 31

**Suspended in Thin Air:**

**The Future of the Circus in America**  
Ernest Albrecht, Publisher, *Spectacle*

*Magazine*; Amy Cohen, Director, American Youth Circus Organization; Dominique Jando, Director, San Francisco School of Circus Arts; Keith Nelson, Director, Bindlestiff Family Cirkus; Matthew Wittmann, Curator, *Circus and the City: New York, 1793–2010*

April 11

**Evening for Educators with Burmese Dinner**

April 26

**Revelations in Conservation:**

**The Georges Hoentschel Collection**

Deborah L. Krohn, Associate Professor and Coordinator for History and Theory of Museums, BGC; Daniëlle Kisluk-Grosheide, Curator of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Ulrich Leben, Research Scholar, BGC; Nancy Britton, Linda Borsch, Beth Edelstein, Pascale Patris, and Christina Hagelskamp, Conservators; The Metropolitan Museum of Art

May 2

**Illuminating Hoentschel: A French Tastemaker and His World**

Ulrich Leben, Co-Curator of *Salvaging the Past: Georges Hoentschel and French Decorative Arts from The Metropolitan Museum of Art*; Stephanie McDade, Sommelier



Christopher Herbert  
with the Nouveau  
Classical Project



May 16

**Dressing for the Faubourg St. Germain: Fin de Siècle Fashion in Proust**  
Michele Majer, Assistant Professor, BGC

May 19

**Paris, circa 1900: A Musical Still Life**  
The Nouveau Classical Project with Christopher Dylan Herbert, Baritone

May 23

**A Botanical Treasury: Plant Fibers, Forest Resources, and the Culture of Tea in Northern Burma**  
Erin L. Hasinoff, Curator of *Confluences: An American Expedition to Northern Burma, 1935*; Charles Peters, Ethnobotanist and Kate E. Tode Curator of Botany at the New York Botanical Garden; Sebastian Beckwith, Owner of In Pursuit of Tea

June 6

**Listening as Knowing: The Significance of Sound Among the Nagas**  
Sentienla Toy Threadgill, Ethnomusicologist, Songwriter, and Vocalist

June 13

**Georges Hoentschel's Ceramics: Mysteries of Origin and Style**  
Martin Eidelberg, Professor Emeritus of Art History, Rutgers University; Jason Jacques, Director, Jason Jacques Gallery



Shadow puppets from Carnival of the Elephants Family Day



Families making shadow puppets

## Senior and Family Programs

October 1

Open House for Seniors

October 20

**Family Day: Cirkus in Wonderland!**  
Bindlestiff Family Cirkus and Cavalcade of Youth All-Stars

January 14

Open House for Seniors

January 26

Family Day: Carnival of the Elephants

May 4

Family Day: A Journey through Burma

May 13

Open House for Seniors

June 24

Open House for Seniors

## Outreach Suitcase

### Manhattan

The Atria Residence  
The Children's Aid Society at the Frederick Douglass Center  
Educational Alliance @ PS 140  
Lincoln Square Community Center  
New Explorations into Science, Technology, and Math (NEST+M School) P.S. 87  
P.S. 9  
Stanley Isaacs Neighborhood House  
Chinatown YMCA

### Brooklyn

Police Athletic League at P.S. 140  
P.S. 149  
P.S. 21  
P.S. 306  
P.S. 371K

### Bronx

Kingsbridge Heights Community Center  
New York Public Library (Bronx Library Center Branch)  
New York Public Library (Spuyten Duyvil Branch)  
P.S. 59

### Queens

Police Athletic League at The Goldie Maple Academy  
Southern Queens Park Association at Roy Wilkins Park Summer Camp

### Beyond New York City

Port Washington Public Library



Tracy Grosner, Gallery Outreach Educator with a student



# Gifts and Grants

## Endowed Funds

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American Members of CINOA Award  
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Eugenie Prendergast Fund  
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Peter Jay Sharp Scholarship  
Marilyn M. Simpson Scholarship  
Trehan Lectures in Islamic Art and Material Culture

## Annual Giving

We deeply appreciate the generosity of those whose contributions have supported the BGC's activities in the past year. These gifts and grants provide important funds for financial aid to our MA and PhD students, exhibitions, publications, and a wide range of programs for the academic and general public.

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## Special Events

Step Right Up! held on September 19, celebrated the opening of *Circus and the City: New York, 1793–2010*. Guests wore circus-inspired attire and enjoyed a sneak preview of the exhibition. The evening's proceeds benefitted the scholarship fund, which gives BGC students the financial help they need to pursue their graduate degrees.

On April 2, the BGC partnered with French Heritage Society's New York Chapter to host an elegant benefit dinner and exclusive viewing of *Salvaging the Past: Georges Hoentschel and French Decorative Arts from The Metropolitan Museum of Art*. Before dinner, guests were treated to a private tour by exhibition curators Daniëlle Kisluk-Grosheide, Deborah L. Krohn, and Ulrich Leben, who shed light on this remarkable and newly restored collection.

The 17th Annual Iris Foundation Awards Luncheon to benefit the scholarship fund honored four individuals who have made outstanding contributions to patronage and scholarship in the decorative arts. Held at the Colony Club on April 17, over 150 guests celebrated Richard Jenrette, Morrison H. Heckscher, Glenn Adamson, and Adrian Sassoon.



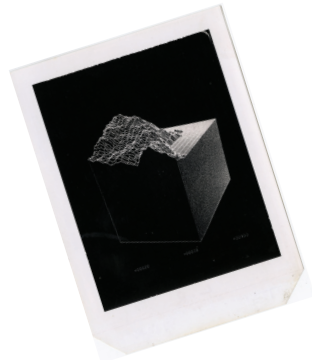
Opposite: Circus performers. Top left: Henry Neville and circus performer. Top right: Michele Majer, Sophie Pitman, Christine Griffiths, Amy Ogata, and Earl Martin. Center: Dr. Susan Weber and Micky Wolfson. Bottom left: Deborah L. Krohn, Ulrich Leben, Irene Aitken, and Nina Stritzler-Levine. Bottom right: Guy Robinson and Elizabeth Stribling.





Clockwise, from top: Glenn Adamson, Adrian Sassoon, Dr. Susan Weber, Richard Jenrette, and Morrison H. Heckscher. Morrison H. Heckscher and Kenneth Ames. Dr. Leon Botstein. Iris Awards Luncheon. Jan Adelson and Steven Halliwell. Glenn Adamson and Nicola Probert.





18 West 86th Street  
New York, NY 10024  
T 212 501 3000  
F 212 501 3079  
W [bgc.bard.edu](http://bgc.bard.edu)