

# THE DEPARTMENT OF ART HISTORY AT INDIANA UNIVERSITY SPRING 2018 NEWSLETTER

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## \$1.5 MILLION GIFT ENDOWS FACULTY CHAIR TO SUPPORT THE STUDY OF AFRICAN ART

The College of Arts and Sciences at Indiana University Bloomington has announced a \$1.5 million gift from an anonymous donor to establish the Tanner-Opperman Chair of African Art in Honor of Roy Sieber, within the Department of Art History.

Roy Sieber, former university professor and distinguished scholar, was a pioneer in the field of African art, earning the first PhD awarded in its study. During his more than 30-year tenure at Indiana University, he supervised more than 30 PhD students studying African art history, served

as curator of African art for the university's museum, and ultimately held the title of Rudy Professor. He also served as associate director for collections and research at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African Art, authored multiple publications, and lectured prolifically around the world.

"We are so grateful to the donor of the chair, who had a real vision of how to sustain the study of African art and architecture into the future at Indiana University," said Diane Reilly, associate professor and chair of the Department of Art History. "We have some of the

best resources in the country for the study of African art, including the African Studies program with its expert language instruction, IU Press's longstanding tradition of publishing in the field, and world-class museum collections at the Eskenazi Museum of Art and the Mathers Museum. With the Tanner-Opperman Chair, the College and Indiana University will take the lead in scholarship in this pivotal field, training curators and future faculty."

The Department is currently conducting a search for the inaugural holder of the chair.

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## FACULTY NEWS: BRET ROTHSTEIN

Professor Bret Rothstein has been working on a number of projects pertaining both to visual culture in general and to cultures of play specifically. For instance, he has been asked to run a course in Spring 2019 on the intellectual labor of building and solving puzzles. An offshoot of his course, "Toys and the Visual Culture of Play," it will focus on designs with a strongly mathematical character, most notably combinatorial puzzles, such as the famous Rubik's Cube and its offspring. This course will form part of the College's new initiative emphasizing points of contact between the humanities and STEM disciplines.

Professor Rothstein also recently submitted the final copy of a review essay, solicited by the journal *Renaissance Quarterly*, on the methodological problems of studying the history of play. This essay is due to appear in print next fall. In addition, he has just finished the final revisions on his next book, *The Shape of Difficulty: A Fan Letter to Unruly Objects*, which the Pennsylvania State University Press will be publishing in 2019.



# GRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: CHARLOTTE FORSTALL

I recently completed a six-week trip to Croatia, France, and Italy for my dissertation research on monumental arches from the Roman period across Western Europe. During this trip, I visited ten arches, archaeological sites, museums, and archives. My dissertation considers Roman-era arch monuments in terms of their local impact. Typically these monuments are known as “triumphal arches,” which recalls many narrow connotations, most of which are specific to the city of Rome. Traveling from the Champagne region of France; to Provence; to the northern coast of Croatia; to several regions of Italy demonstrated how varied these monuments and their local contexts were.

During my research trip I was documenting the local character of not only the arch monuments but also of the ancient cities and regions to



which they belonged. Particularly of interest was the material record from antiquity: Were there particular styles or trends popular in a region that made it unique? How did the local populace engage with Roman culture? As expected, they all had their own character, styles, and consumption of and interaction with Roman culture. By considering the local character of these intracontinental

monuments, we can better understand how they functioned in antiquity, instead of just those located in Rome.

This dissertation is supported by the College of Arts and Sciences Dissertation Research Year Fellowship, the E.A. Schrader Endowment in Classical Archaeology, the Friends of Art, and the Diether Thimme Memorial Scholarship in Art History.

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## ALUMNI NEWS

**Maria Domene-Danés** co-wrote a text for an edited volume on the two Michelin stars Catalan restaurant “Les Cols.” The restaurant was built by RCR Arquitectes, winners of The Pritzker Architecture Prize. She is expected to defend her dissertation on contemporary Lebanese art in April.

**Kirstin L. Ellsworth** published the book chapter “The Realisms of Elizabeth Catlett” in *Bury My Heart in a Free Land* (Praeger, 2017), edited by Hettie V. Williams. She is Assistant Professor of Art History at California State Dominguez Hills.

**Angela Fritz**, the Visual Arts Department Chair at Hamilton Southeastern High School, was named the 2017 Secondary Art Educator of the Year for the state of Indiana.

**Heather (Sale) Holian’s** new book, tentatively titled *Art and Filmmaking at Pixar: Collaboration, Inspiration, and Collective Imagination*, is under contract with Disney Editions and planned for publication in 2011. She has additional chapters on the artists and films of Pixar forthcoming in two 2018 academic volumes.

**Candace M. Keller** marked the launch of the Archive of Malian Photography with an exhibition at the Musée National in Bamako, Mali in May 2017. The archival project, which she has been directing since 2011, provides access to preserved and digitized collections of five important West African photographers. It is funded in part by the British Library and the National Endowment for the Humanities, and includes over

100,000 catalogued film negatives.

**Donna Sadler’s** third book, *Touching the Passion: Seeing Late Medieval Altarpieces through the Eyes of Faith*, is due out this February from Brill.

Since leaving Bloomington in 1986, **Diane Vatne** has worked as the Executive Director of the Bangor Historical Society in Maine, at the University of Washington’s Communities That Care youth drug abuse prevention program, and as the Proposal and Communications Manager at James W. Sewall Company in Old Town, Maine. She has curated an exchange exhibit with Maine’s sister state, Aomori, Japan, and exhibits around two 19<sup>th</sup> century Bangor, Maine artists.

**Andrew Wang** is the 2017-18 Kress Fellow in Art Librarianship at Yale.