Letter from the Director

Only a few months after reopening, our museum, along with the rest of Indiana University, closed in March in response to the COVID-19 crisis. Closing our doors again was a difficult decision, but ensuring the safety of our staff and guests was of utmost importance.

Fortunately, we were prepared to pivot our efforts toward engagement from a distance, thanks to the timely launch of Collections Online in February. This enabled us to keep students, educators, and our other audiences connected with the museum through a steady stream of informative and engaging online publications. In addition, four special exhibitions had to be postponed, but in the meantime we have found new ways to bring them to life through online tools that presented our curators’ scholarship. While we look forward to welcoming students back to campus in the fall, our Education Department will continue to develop more remote programming and learning opportunities that will extend our reach both more deeply into the IU community as well as more broadly throughout the state of Indiana and beyond.

In addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, our country is facing another crisis brought on by the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and countless others who preceded them and who represent the devastating consequences of systemic racism. My museum colleagues and I have been profoundly affected by these events, which are symptomatic of deeper social inequities and injustices, and we intend to address them at an institutional level with a renewed sense of urgency and commitment. As we plan to reopen the museum in August, we are redoubling our efforts to create an authentic culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion at the museum—one that lives up to the promise and responsibilities of a great American research university.

These are difficult times indeed, but we are ready to rise to whatever challenges the future may bring with a renewed sense of commitment to serving as a museum for all. Please accept our deepest thanks for your support and encouragement.

David A. Brenneman
Wilma E. Kelley Director
The Legacy of Henry Radford Hope

Prior to his arrival in Bloomington in 1941, it is doubtful that Henry Radford Hope had ever visited Indiana. Indiana University President Herman B. Wells had hired him not only to head IU’s art department but also to begin work on formulating a proper art museum for IU. Hope had been hired on the recommendation of Paul J. Sachs of Harvard University, where Hope was a graduate student enrolled in Sachs’s famous “museum course.” Through his numerous talented students, Sachs is credited with shaping the professionalized American art museum as we know it today. Although there had been previous efforts to create an art collection for the fine arts department, it was really Hope, with Wells’s encouragement and support, who brought the vision and expertise to conceive a teaching art museum for IU. Hope’s tireless efforts eventually resulted in what has become one of the finest university art museums in the country. And with the naming of the museum’s west wing—the Henry Radford Hope Wing—as well as generous donations of more than 350 works of art, including some of the museum’s most significant works from the Hope family, Henry Radford Hope’s legacy endures at the Eskenazi Museum of Art.

Born on December 12, 1905, in Chelsea, Massachusetts, Henry Radford Hope began his studies at Columbia University in 1925, but left in 1927 to work in a cosmetics firm in New York. That same year, he traveled to Europe and became interested in art and languages. In 1931, Hope settled in Paris where he studied at Ecole du Louvre and at the Université de Paris (Sorbonne), eventually earning a certificate in art history. He returned to the United States in 1939 to study art history at Harvard University with Paul Sachs. After earning both his MA and PhD in art history with a concentration in modern art, in 1941 Herman B. Wells hired Hope to be the chair of the visual arts program in IU’s fine arts department.

Henry Radford Hope leads students in a discussion of artwork from the university’s burgeoning collection, 1943. Photo courtesy of IU Archives.
A beloved teacher, in 1958 Hope received IU’s “Brown Derby” award, which is given annually to the most popular professor at the university. As head of the art department, he worked tirelessly to create an environment in which the efforts of art historians, visual artists, and museum staff were coordinated. He recruited brilliant artists and art historians to teach and work at IU, including the sculptors Robert Laurent, George Rickey, and David Smith and metalsmith Alma Eikerman. In 1947, Hope hired the innovative photographer Henry Holmes Smith, who created the second oldest fine arts photography teaching program in the country and whose archive now resides at the museum. He recruited first-rate art historians to advise the museum on acquisitions, including Roy Sieber for African, Oceanic, and indigenous art of the Americas, and Theodore Bowie for Asian art.

Even before the museum had its own building, Wells and Hope devised a broad roadmap for the growth of the university’s art collection. Although Hope’s earliest acquisitions for the university demonstrated his particular penchant for modern European and American art, he agreed with Wells that the museum should collect as widely as possible and gather works from around the world and from all periods in human history. Along with his wife, Sarahanne, “Sally,” Hope established a fund to start a teaching collection of prints, drawings, and watercolors for the university. He also helped to found the Society of the Friends of Art of Indiana University in 1965, and the university’s art collection continued to grow under his leadership. With the construction of the Fine Arts Building in 1962, there was finally dedicated, modern gallery space for displaying IU’s burgeoning art collection.

Hope and his wife, Sally, personally collected major works of art that would later enrich the museum’s collections, both during and after his directorship. In 1969, Henry and Sally gave IU one of its greatest artistic treasures, Pablo Picasso’s The Studio, a major painting from 1934 that would be the envy of any museum in the world. In 1950, he commissioned renowned German émigré painter Max Beckmann to paint a charming portrait of the Hope family (see front cover), which is now in the museum’s collection thanks to Hope’s children. With the strong support of Herman B. Wells, Hope was also instrumental in steering donors to the nascent university art collection, and throughout its history, most of the museum’s acquisitions have been the result of gifts of art or purchase funds from individual donors.

In addition to his work and teaching at IU, Hope was active as an internationally acclaimed art critic and curator. He curated important exhibitions on Braque (1949) and the sculptor Jacques Lipchitz (1954) for the Museum of Modern Art in New York City and wrote biographical catalogues for both exhibitions. Hope also served as editor of the College Art Journal for twenty-four years and as a consulting editor for six years. He was chairman of the editorial board of the Magazine of Art, president of the Midwestern College Art Conference, and president of the College Art Association. In 1951, he was appointed by the U.S. Department of State as a delegate on art activities to the U.S. Commission on the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and served the organization as adviser on cultural affairs from 1951 to 1963.

Henry Radford Hope was a “game changer” for the visual arts at Indiana University, and we are honored to be the stewards of his legacy. He made his mark on IU and the museum world while he and Sally were raising six children, and he is remembered by his family as a wonderful father and grandfather. We are honored that Hope’s children—Peter McClennen, James McClennen, Helen McClennen, Sarah Jane Hope, Roy Hope, and Ray Hope—and grandchildren have continued their support of this great American teaching museum. To them we express our sincere appreciation and gratitude.
In late February 2020, a few months after the museum had reopened following a $30 million renovation, we launched our Collections Online portal. Initially launched with 2,500 records, Collections Online gives visitors an opportunity to explore works from all six curatorial departments—European and American; Ancient; Asian and Islamic; Contemporary; Art of Africa, Oceania, and Indigenous Art of the Americas; and Prints, Drawings, and Photographs—reaching beyond what’s on display in the galleries. Three weeks later, the museum closed to the public in response to the COVID-19 crisis. With the temporary closure of the museum building and planned exhibitions postponed, we quickly pivoted to focus our research, outreach, and teaching efforts to Collections Online. As a result, when compared to numbers from immediately after the launch, visits to our new website have increased dramatically, with time spent on site pages multiplying fivefold in the two weeks after we closed.

Collections Online was built with all users, particularly those with little or no knowledge of art, in mind. As it was being developed, we considered how this audience’s needs would differ from someone more familiar with art museums. Blank search bars would be of very little use because these individuals might not know the names of artists, titles of works, or keywords to search. Thus, pre-built browse options by collection areas were prioritized, but we wanted to go further. We decided that our Collections Online needed to be closely tied to a rotating calendar of “feature essay” content. This would provide some orientation to newcomers while giving more experienced art enthusiasts deeper dives into content about the art in the collection. We launched with “Getting Started with Collections Online,” a straightforward primer on what visitors could find on the site that includes information such as, “What is an artwork’s tombstone?”—topics that we in the museum world often take for granted. Features for teaching with Collections Online and hidden treasures are also included. Since our temporary closure in March, we’ve established an editorial calendar for rotating features on a variety of topics, including Chinese calligraphy, Impressionism, contemporary art, and African artists.

This conscious design toward non-expert visitors extended to the way we added records and planned for them to be searched. Rather than using a “warehouse model,” in which all 45,000 object records would be available immediately, we decided to take a phased approach that would allow time for additional research and editing. Each curator prepared 500 records for the initial launch, with a plan to add additional records on a rolling basis.

Collections Online was also developed with accessibility as a guiding principle. Although most museums have yet to provide alternative text for each object, we made it a priority to do so. This means that visitors with low vision have descriptions of each work of art in addition to the expanded discussions and basic tombstone information.

Considering that only 35 percent of art museums have their collections online, our launch in February was both noteworthy and fortuitous. As we address the uncertainty that accompanies the current moment, we’ve seen our assumptions about Collections Online put to the test, with the university and area schools adjusting to online teaching and our community looking for ways to stay engaged with the arts. With the goal of continuous improvement and finding new, innovative ways to use this valuable tool, we’re listening to our audience’s feedback, monitoring our analytics to see how people engage with the site, and continuing to expand the site’s scope to provide our visitors with engaging content.

**Guro Mask, 19th–20th century**
Wood and pigment, 16 x 5 ½ x 5 in.
Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Henry R. Hope,
Eskenazi Museum of Art, Indiana University, 63.14
Education:

An Emphasis on Remote Learning

During a global pandemic, the nature of education gets reexplored and, in many ways, reinvented. Times of crisis are often moments in which we question the status quo and create substantial changes to better meet educational needs going forward. For example, shortly after the 1918 pandemic, the Progressive Education Association was founded with the goal of reforming American education. In our current challenging times, there has been a creative swell of ideas for reaching populations of learners who have had to stay home due to mandated closures across the world. Obviously, new expectations for education will emerge as a result of this global emergency.

Everywhere, museum educators have been retooling existing programs and exploring new ways of remote learning with their collections. Similar to others, the Eskenazi Museum of Art has been employing at-home options for learning and connection, including video tours of galleries, online exhibitions and publications, art activity prompts using materials available at home, visual storytelling with images, educator/caregiver lesson plans, therapy groups, and enhanced accessibility with Collections Online. These represent a growing list of new approaches that will be part of our remote learning experiments this year.

Our museum’s approach to remote learning includes delivering programs online and questioning inequities regarding who has access to online learning. For example, in the United States, there has been an increase in the number of massively open online courses (MOOC) aimed at high schoolers. A large number of parents faced with quarantine-schooling utilize MOOCs to supplement their children’s learning. However, for students without access to a reliable computer and internet—up to 60 percent in rural Indiana areas—those kinds of opportunities are not options. This contributes to a digital divide in education in which many do not have equal access to learning in remote situations.

We are working to challenge and change digital learning inequities.

As one example, our rural outreach program has a new remote learning component called Look Club, which offers students who may not have internet connections at home, or who may share a computer among many members in one household, the opportunity for guided experiences with art that are part of a museum-created art kit. The kit includes audio recordings on a mini mp3 player, art supplies, and high-quality reproductions of art in the collection, as well as frequent delivery of personalized postcards with art prompts throughout the school year.

Taken together, the museum’s high-tech and low-tech remote learning methods offer outreach in ways that will be part of the museum’s portfolio of approaches to reach audiences in the new education of our near future. If you are interested in learning more or would like to help support our education programming, please contact Heidi Davis-Soylu, Patricia and Joel Meier Chair of Education, at hdavis2@iu.edu.
Meet Our Registrar

Museum registration encompasses several different disciplines that incorporate a variety of skill sets, and this often leads professional registrars into very different career paths. At its root, the word "registrar" is defined as a person who creates and maintains official records and documents. In a museum setting, there are collections registrars, loans registrars, exhibitions registrars, and digital assets/database management registrars.

Digging deeper into "official documents and records" opens an astonishing world into a museum’s history, its collecting habits, its collectors, what the art objects teach us, and how the institution has influenced and interacted with the world at large. Without those documents, the art objects lose much contextual information, and the institutional history is less than a blur, as are the people who created a great institution. The loss of this priceless information and understanding could threaten the fate of the collections, which we are here to preserve. Thus, it is not uncommon to find museum registrars comfortably ensconced in one institution, living out their careers tending and caring for a specific collection and its records.

Collections registrars are often the first of the museum staff to thoroughly examine a work of art when it comes into the collection as a gift or purchase. In the case of an estate gift, collections registrars may find themselves at the owner’s home or possibly a warehouse and very often without an accurate checklist, or even no list at all, at which time a comprehensive list is made on the fly.

Examining and cataloging a new object to the collection presents multiple meanings as one unravels each layer of the object’s physical characteristics. What kinds of materials, tools, and skills went into the making? What were the ideas, traditions, biases, and cultural lenses of the maker? What kind of condition is the object in now, how have the materials weathered over time, and is the maker’s intent still visible? Are there parts missing, as in the case of prints, where the paper could be cut down to the plate’s edge; a painting for which a canvas was shortened to fit a frame; or an ancient piece of pottery that was rebuilt to save what precious pictorial scenes remain?

Is there a signature, foundry mark, collector’s mark or stamp, inscriptions, or annotations yet to be deciphered? Exhibition labels, framers labels, invoice numbers, or exquisite watermarks embedded into the paper begin to map the story of the whereabouts of the art. Some of these elements are only visible at this intimate level of examination, but all of them become part of the object’s record and history.

Then, of course, there is the donor. What perceptive eye and connoisseurship attracted the owner to this work? Where does this artwork fall within the donor’s collecting history? Several recent gifts come to my mind, where the donors collected non-Western art, with a deep perceptual and aesthetic...
knowledge of their material: the recent gift of 43 Japanese baskets from Ann Shilling Harrison in memory of Wade C. “Rusty” Wade Harrison II; the 130 African ceramics from William M. Itter; and 11 Japanese paintings and calligraphy from the Collection of Dr. Thomas Kuebler.

These three donors, who collected artworks from other continents and cultures, share with us the human spirit of art making, which collapses all prejudices and offers new dialogues of understanding.

The registrarial department is also responsible for all incoming and outbound loans of works of art. This requires a familiarity with insurance and exemption clauses, import/export laws, and cargo regulations, all of which vary per country. Having accurate object record information, including provenance history and proof of ownership, are necessary for each object; however, a Pre-forma invoice and bill of lading are crucial, where complete and accurate weights and measures, descriptions of the object and its materials, and values of the contents of the cargo cannot be wrong, misleading, or missing. One can be sure that customs will identify and halt any indiscretions in such information.

Most outbound loans, generally for exhibition purposes, transport smoothly. Many objects from our collection have been requested for loan on nearly every continent. It is an honor and privilege to represent the museum and the university on these loan trips. The most awe-inspiring of these trips was the delivery of Swing Landscape by Stuart Davis (the subject of a recent publication [see p. 25] and future exhibition at the museum) to the Pompidou Center in Paris. The Pompidou is practically a three-dimensional version of Davis’s composition—its colorful HVAC system pipes forming the exoskeleton of the building and ribboning playfully around the architecture. On the morning of the unpacking, a seventeen-foot-long crate was resting on the floor of the gallery. The gallery windows presented a sunrise view of Sacre Coeur presiding over the hilltop of Montmartre. Meanwhile, seven preparators dismantled the crate, then the protective covering was removed to reveal our amazing painting. The French staff and I all stood around the painting in complete silence. Then I looked at the curator, who had a glint of tears in his eyes. He smiled, then said, “It’s perfect.” The view out the window, the ribbons of colorful pipes from the gallery salon—I think Stuart Davis would have been pleased.

Collections database systems and technology are invaluable tools that we use to manage the movement of the 45,000 objects in our collection, track their locations, and inventory their return. Each object has a record in our collections management system, which is administered by the registrar’s office. The records contain a wide variety of information, including basic details such as artist, title, medium, and date as well as object descriptions, provenance details, and instances of publication. It has been a museum wide effort to upload records to our Collections Online portal (see p. 9), and registrarial staff ensure that any data inconsistencies are resolved and all records meet established standards before upload to the site.

In addition to a renewed focus on Collections Online, the shift to remote work as a result of the COVID-19 crisis has allowed me to delve into the documents and records of the museum’s long exhibition history, which dates from 1940. This research, which is added to the collections database, has identified a wide range of exhibition topics, including Thai paintings; Medieval manuscripts; Renaissance painters; contemporary craft; sculptures by Harry Bertoia; paintings by Pablo Picasso, Leon Golub, and Nancy Spero; and photographs by Ilse Bing and Eugene Atget, to name just a few.

This small slice of data reveals the ever broadening connections that the museum has made within the larger art world. In our first twenty years of existence, we were already emerging as a serious contender for bringing art to the classroom and the community. During that time, no less than a dozen exhibitions were mounted yearly, without a permanent exhibition space and with a fledgling art collection of a few hundred works. These documents reveal the industry, energy, and enthusiasm of early museum planners, like Herman B Wells and Henry Radford Hope (see pp. 4–7). In our present circumstance, it is cathartic to look back over our history. It reconstitutes a belief that our museum will emerge from the current crisis utilizing the strengths of our collections, our history, and our industrious and energetic staff.

The Greek, Attributed to the Painter of Berlin Hydria. Red-figure Mixing Bowl (Volute Krater) with Battle Scene (Achilles Killing Penthesilea) and a Departure Scene, ca. 450 BCE. Terracotta, 21 ½ x 16 in. Gift of Thomas T. Solley, Eskenazi Museum of Art, Indiana University, 85.35.
Donor Spotlight:
Patricia & Joel Meier

Patricia and Joel Meier have revealed their deep understanding of the power of philanthropy by forever shaping the future of the Eskenazi Museum of Art. In the many years that the couple has been friends of the museum, they have established three significant endowments in support of education, and they are the inspiration behind the museum’s annual docent award.

In 1994, the Meiers moved from Montana to Bloomington when Dr. Joel Meier accepted the position as Professor and Chair of IU’s Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Studies. The couple had planned to stay in Bloomington for four years but ultimately stayed for seventeen as their love for IU flourished. Joel has held the title of Professor Emeritus at IU since his retirement in 2007, and he received the Legend Award bestowed on individuals who have brought distinction to the IU Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Studies in the development of the recreation, park, and tourism profession.

Patricia also left an indelible impression on Bloomington through her exemplary volunteerism and leadership as a museum docent. Her contributions to the docent program were so monumental that after her retirement the museum established the Patti and Joel Meier Docent Award, which is given each year to the most outstanding docent at the art museum.

After Joel retired from teaching, the couple moved back west and continued their adventures by traveling to all seven continents either by foot, kayak, or motorcycle. Despite their constant global exploration, the Meiers have maintained a connection to the museum as members of the National Advisory Board.

The couple has endowed $2 million through a planned gift that established the Patricia and Joel Meier Chair of Education. This endowment will have an enormous impact on the museum’s educational programming, helping to ensure its future, and increase its impact on students and the public throughout the state of Indiana. The Meiers’ shared that the education department “is one of the most progressive and dynamic art education departments in the country; it is an educational resource that sparks creative thinking and expression through transformative experiences with art.”

An example of the museum’s progressive approach is the newly established art therapy program, the first of its kind in any university museum. The program has partnered with local organizations to serve individuals with disabilities, as well as children who have experienced trauma. Despite art therapy being a new program to the museum, Patricia and Joel Meier have helped to ensure that its success and impact will continue by establishing an additional endowment in support of art therapy.

Of the art therapy open studio experience, an IU student said, “I think I found my safe space at IU! It’s my first official time in here and I regret not coming for the last seven or so Thursdays. Thank you so much for creating this opportunity for us. That last one hour felt like a minute, a minute I thoroughly enjoyed. Thank you.”

The Meiers’ third endowment through a planned gift supports the museum’s youth art education programs or pre-K–12 experiences. This endowment will help provide docents with specialized instruction and training. It will also support summer camps.
The Meiers recognize the importance of being exposed to the arts at a young age, and ensuring that many children in the future have that opportunity.

When asked about their motivation to serve the museum in such a big way, Joel and Patricia shared, “We love the museum, so it is a privilege for us to make a lasting contribution that will enrich the lives of present and future generations.”

In honor of the Meiers’ philanthropy, the museum is renaming the Director of Education position the “Patricia and Joel Meier Chair of Education.” David Brenneman, the Wilma E. Kelley Director of the museum said, “The Meiers’ leadership and support is extraordinary, and we are grateful for their years of service and philanthropy. They are an inspiration to us all. Their gifts will one day have a transformative impact on our ability to reach more students with learning opportunities and via outreach through our Rural Teachers Engaging Art Program in addition to art therapy.”

“With the incredible support from the Meiers, our commitment to students of all ages is strengthened and our innovative spirit is bolstered. With their support, we are taking a leading role in the practice and study of museum-based art therapy, which greatly expands our techniques for providing academic experiences and wellbeing for our community through the arts. We are thrilled for the outstanding possibilities made possible by this gift,” said Heidi Davis-Soylu, Patricia and Joel Meier Chair of Education.

If you would like to ensure the museum’s future success and to learn about available planned giving options, please contact Patricia Winterton, Director of Development, at pwintert@indiana.edu or 812-855-1031.
Facing the Revolution: Portraits of Women in France and the United States

Facing the Revolution: Portraits of Women in France and the United States focuses on the transformative period of political revolution that shaped the modern era on both sides of the Atlantic. As the former subjects of monarchical rule became citizens of new republics, artists began to consider how portraiture could better reflect new ways of thinking about individual identity. Facing the Revolution explores the intersection of these political and artistic revolutions by foregrounding portraits of the prominent female personalities who helped shape this historical period (1770–1830).

The exhibition is curated by Galina Olmsted, Assistant Curator of European and American Art. It is made possible in part by the Jane Fortune Endowment for Women Artists.

Renowned goldsmith Robert Baines is recognized as a “Living Treasure” in his native Australia and his work has been exhibited and collected internationally throughout his long career. In this intriguing exhibition, he tells three “jewelry stories”—groupings that explore the ways in which artistic styles and forms change over time. Baines is also a specialist in the study of archaeometallurgy (ancient jewelry production) and he incorporates ancient techniques into his art and the presented narratives.

In celebration of the connections between ancient and modern art that are highlighted in Baines’s work, a selection from the Eskenazi Museum’s ancient jewelry collection will be on display in an area adjacent to the exhibition.

The exhibition is curated by Juliet Graver Istrabadi, Curator of Ancient Art. It is made possible in part by the generosity of Rita Grunwald.

Living Treasure and Fabulous Follies

Renowned goldsmith Robert Baines is recognized as a “Living Treasure” in his native Australia and his work has been exhibited and collected internationally throughout his long career. In this intriguing exhibition, he tells three “jewelry stories”—groupings that explore the ways in which artistic styles and forms change over time. Baines is also a specialist in the study of archaeometallurgy (ancient jewelry production) and he incorporates ancient techniques into his art and the presented narratives.

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The exhibition is curated by Juliet Graver Istrabadi, Curator of Ancient Art. It is made possible in part by the generosity of Rita Grunwald.
Leonardo Drew’s prints, at once powerfully large yet fragile, test the versatility of the medium, transforming cotton paper pulp and pigment into what suggests densely populated cities, a forest, or an urban wasteland. They sometimes look like maps of geographical landscapes viewed from above, while others are reminiscent of the night sky and distant galaxies. Evocative of fire, soil, sky, and water, there are strong perceptions in both microcosmic and macrocosmic scale.

Organic forms within the composition undulate with various textures and luminosities, pushing the boundaries of its materiality. Much like his sculptural installations in wood, Drew starts with a raw material, transforming and reconstructing its essence until it resembles debris. Through this process, the artist articulates diverse histories of chaos, and cycles of birth and death.

The exhibition is curated by Loretta Yarlow, Director of the University Museum of Contemporary Art, UMass, Amherst, and organized by the Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation.

Jawshing Arthur Liou’s ambitious new artwork, House of the Singing Winds, is a multi-channel video installation inspired by the historical Indiana home and studio of painter Theodore Clement (T. C.) Steele. An internationally exhibited video artist who teaches in the Eskenazi School of Art, Architecture + Design, Liou’s House of the Singing Winds captures the historic Steele home in stunning, high-definition video throughout the seasons. A voiceover inspired by the writings of Selma Neubacher Steele, T. C. Steele’s wife, tell the unsung story of the woman who preserved the house and grounds as a memorial site after her husband’s passing.

The exhibition is curated by Elliot Reichert, Curator of Contemporary Art at the Sidney and Lois Eskenazi Museum of Art. The Time-based Media Gallery is made possible in part by support from the Office of the IU Provost and Executive Vice President, Patrick and Jane Martin, and the Michael J. Shubin Estate.
An insightful study of the progressive politics animating a great work of modernist mural painting

In 1936 the Works Progress Administration’s Federal Art Project commissioned Stuart Davis (1892–1964) to paint a mural for the Williamsburg Houses, a New York City housing project. Though the mural, Swing Landscape, was never installed in its intended location, it survives as an impressive testament to Davis’s energetic, colorful brand of abstraction and the progressive politics that animated it. This study explores the painting, one of the greatest of twentieth-century America and arguably Davis’s most ambitious work.

The book challenges the prevailing tendency to separate Davis’s leftist activism from his art and contextualizes Swing Landscape within 1930s abstract mural painting in New York, emphasizing the politics of abstraction. It also offers the first comprehensive look at the Williamsburg mural commission, including works by Willem de Kooning, Ilya Bolotowsky, and others. The result is an indispensable resource on interwar modernism, mural painting, and urban development.

About the Authors

Jennifer McComas is Curator of European and American Art at the Sidney and Lois Eskenazi Museum of Art, Indiana University.

Jody Patterson is Associate Professor and Roy Lichtenstein Foundation Chair of Art History at Ohio State University.

Published to accompany the exhibition Swing Landscape: Stuart Davis and the Modernist Mural. Planned for fall 2020, the exhibition was postponed until spring 2022 for public health reasons related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Generous support for the exhibition has been provided by Indiana University’s New Frontiers in the Arts and Humanities Program, the Art Dealers Association of America Foundation, Susan Thrasher, David Jacobs, Ann Sanderson, and Paula Sunderman. Support for the catalogue was provided by the Wyeth Foundation for American Art. Research for this exhibition was supported by the Terra Foundation for American Art.

This book is dedicated to Susan Thrasher, IU alumna and member of the museum’s National Advisory Board.
Marcel Duchamp: The Art of the Possible

Directed by Matthew Taylor, 2019 | Not Rated | English | 86 min.

Virtual Screening
Friday, October 9, 2020, 7 p.m.

This new documentary about one of the twentieth century’s most influential artists and theorists moves beyond Marcel Duchamp’s biography to explore how his revolutionary ideas changed public consciousness and altered our basic understanding of aesthetics, art, and culture. The film endeavors to bring Duchamp’s ideas to a broader audience and present him as a guiding light in our increasingly technological world. It features commentary by some of the world’s leading contemporary artists, including Jeff Koons, Marina Abramović, and Ed Ruscha. In a taped introduction, Jenny McComas, the Eskenazi Museum of Art’s Curator of European and American Art, will discuss the museum’s rare complete set of Duchamp’s thirteen Readymades, which are featured in the film.

Special Feature: Q & A with Director
Immediately following the screening: IU art history professor Jeffrey Saletnik will lead a virtual discussion with the film’s New York City–based writer and director, Matthew Taylor.

More details, including how to access the event, will be provided closer to the screening date on IU Cinema’s Virtual Screening Room page: cinema.indiana.edu/upcoming-films/series/iu-cinema-virtual-screening-room.

Above: The Eskenazi Museum’s rare complete set of Duchamp’s Readymades are on view in the Sidney and Lois Eskenazi Gallery.
The Painter and the Thief

Directed by Benjamin Ree, 2020  |  Not Rated
English and Norwegian (with subtitles)  |  102 min.

Winner of the Special Jury Prize for Creative Storytelling at the 2020 Sundance Film Festival, this compelling documentary reveals how the creative process of art brings together a victim of a theft and the person who had taken the irreplaceable possessions. In 2015, two large oil paintings by the Czech artist Barbora Kysilkova were stolen from the Galleri Nobel in Oslo, Norway. The culprits were found within days, but not the paintings. Despondent over their loss, Kysilkova asks one of the criminals, Karl Bertil-Nordland, to sit as the subject of a new painting. In a fascinating tale of restorative justice, their sessions upend the tropes of artist and muse as both reveal much of themselves and ways that they can use this experience to make changes in their lives. Contains graphic language and a discussion of drug use.

Virtual Screening

Tuesday, November 10, 2020, 7 p.m.

Winner of the Special Jury Prize for Creative Storytelling at the 2020 Sundance Film Festival, this compelling documentary reveals how the creative process of art brings together a victim of a theft and the person who had taken the irreplaceable possessions. In 2015, two large oil paintings by the Czech artist Barbora Kysilkova were stolen from the Galleri Nobel in Oslo, Norway. The culprits were found within days, but not the paintings. Despondent over their loss, Kysilkova asks one of the criminals, Karl Bertil-Nordland, to sit as the subject of a new painting. In a fascinating tale of restorative justice, their sessions upend the tropes of artist and muse as both reveal much of themselves and ways that they can use this experience to make changes in their lives. Contains graphic language and a discussion of drug use.

Special Feature:

Q & A with Film Curator

Immediately following the screening, Nan Brewer, organizer of the Art and a Movie series, will lead a virtual discussion with Dean Otto, Curator of Film, Speed Art Museum, Louisville, who recommended the documentary.

More details, including how to access the event, will be provided closer to the screening date on IU Cinema’s Virtual Screening Room page: cinema.indiana.edu/upcoming-films/series/iu-cinema-virtual-screening-room.
Front cover: Max Beckmann (German, also active in the Netherlands and the United States, 1884–1950). *Hope Family Portrait*, 1950.
Oil on canvas, 80 ¼ x 35 in. Gift of the Hope Family, Eskenazi Museum of Art, Indiana University, 2002.73


Rising from poverty and segregation, self-taught photographer, author, and filmmaker Gordon Parks became the first Black American photographer to win the prestigious Julius Rosenwald Fellowship (1942) and work for several New Deal agencies. This later photograph—commissioned by Standard Oil Company—chronicles Pittsburgh grease plant workers, epitomizing Parks’s mastery of composition, documentary storytelling, and commitment to examining the impact of socio-economic and racial inequalities.