

# NEWSGRAM

News in brief from the Conservation Center

Issue 48, July 2021



## The Class of 2024

IN MANY WAYS, THE PAST YEAR HAS BEEN UNPRECEDENTED: A GLOBAL PANDEMIC wreaked havoc across the country; a reckoning of America's systemic racial inequality and police brutality towards our brothers and sisters of color; a raucous presidential election; and to a lesser extent the need for everyone to hastily transition to a prolonged work-from-home situation where it seemed our lives were dominated by a Zoom meeting screen. (Anyone know what this Zoom thing is?!) Surprisingly, it was also the year we saw our highest number of applications in the program's history. And while our focus this past year has been on providing the same level of high-quality, hands-on instruction through a hybrid learning environment, we also welcomed our class of 2024. Before we turn the page on this crazy year, let's meet the seven students who waded through their own unprecedented start to graduate school.

### Laura Bergemann

Marica and Jan Vilcek Fellow in Conservation

Laura became interested in art conservation in her high school history class; later discovering an interest in the field of conservation science. She completed her Bachelor of Science in Chemistry (magna cum laude), with minors in Biology and Ancient & Medieval Studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. As an undergraduate, she completed additional coursework in art history and archeology. Prior to joining NYU, she was a pre-program intern at the MIT Libraries and the Rijksmuseum, as well as a provenance research assistant at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Laura also traveled to Italy and Cyprus to participate in archeological surveys, which spurred her interest in objects conservation.

### Emma Hartman

Antoinette King Fellow in Conservation

Emma received her double bachelor's degrees in Art & The History of Art and Chemistry (cum laude) from Amherst College in 2017. During college, she held summer internships in conservation at the Brooklyn Museum, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and in private practice. After college, she spent a year based in Delhi as a Fulbright-Nehru Fellow, studying histories of manuscript conservation in India, and then spent two years as a conservation technician at the New York Public Library, where she supported the Library's exhibition and loan programs. She's an active member of AIC's Emerging Conservation Professionals Network (ECPN) and was a Digital Platforms co-officer for ECPN from 2019-20. Outside of her specialization in library & archive conservation, she enjoys experimenting with fiber arts and baking new recipes.



Laura Bergemann

Photo credit: Jana Dambrogio (MIT Libraries)



Emma Hartman

Photo credit: Jessica Keister (Art Conservation, Etc.)

## James Hughes

Andrew W. Mellon Fellow in Time-Based Media Art Conservation

With a Bachelor of Science in Industrial Design from the University of the Arts, Philadelphia, and a background in studio art and science, James has worked for nearly eight years in New York City in the field of exhibition design and fabrication. He brings a wealth of technical and project management experience based on real-world problem solving. Prior to his admission to the program, James completed internships at The National September 11 Memorial and Museum and The American Museum of Natural History. The highlight of his pre-program experience was assisting in the year-long restoration of the Black Rhinoceros diorama at the American Museum of Natural History.



James Hughes  
Photo credit: James Hughes

## Josephine Jenks

Andrew W. Mellon Fellow in Time-Based Media Art Conservation

Growing up in Brooklyn, Josephine formed an early passion for art that endured through college at Wesleyan University. There, she earned a double bachelor's degree in English and Studio Art, while also taking courses in art history and coding. She first learned about art conservation from a printmaking professor during her senior year. After graduating, paper conservation internships at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History and the Frick Art Reference Library confirmed her captivation with the field. While taking chemistry courses at Hunter and Brooklyn College, she continued researching the profession, touring labs, and meeting with conservators. Through these conversations, she developed an interest in the emerging issue of preserving time-based art.



Josephine Jenks  
Photo credit: Nylah Byrd (WUDPAC '22)

## Alexa Machnik

Andrew W. Mellon Fellow in Library & Archive Conservation

Originally from St. Louis, Missouri, Alexa found her way into conservation when she spent a year as an undergraduate studying with the Kyoto Consortium for Japanese Studies. While abroad, she had the opportunity to apprentice in the paper conservation department of an archival center at Ritsumeikan University. Knowing how important archives were to her own research capability as a student, the chance to step into the archival world was one she could not pass up. Over the course of the year, Alexa immersed herself in a collection of traditional Japanese-bound books and prints. This experience ultimately confirmed her interest in a career that was not only closely tied to physical collections, but also placed at the intersection of archival material and intellectual content. Returning to the states, Alexa graduated summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts in Art History, from the University of Wisconsin at Madison, and completed conservation internships at the University of Washington Libraries and Yale University Library, which reaffirmed her desire to contribute to the preservation, research, and advocacy of the collections libraries treasure and nurture.



Alexa Machnik  
Photo credit: Justin Johnson (UW Libraries)

## Laura Richter

Conservation Center Fellow

Laura grew up in Portland, Oregon and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Art History (summa cum laude) and minor in Studio Art from the University of Notre Dame. There, she wrote her thesis on a fifteenth-century copper reliquary bust. For three years, she worked for the Notre Dame Nuclear Physics department, analyzing materials most frequently with Raman Spectroscopy, but also X-ray fluorescence, Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy, and X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy. Additionally, she enjoyed working for the preservation lab at Hesburgh Libraries, both for general and special collections during the school year and as a summer conservation fellow. Other pre-program internships include the Portland Art Museum and Art Conservation Northwest (paintings). She loves the outdoors and has worked both for Mount Rainier National Park on a historic preservation team, and for Mesa Verde National Park photographing their incredible cliff dwellings.



Laura Richter  
Photo credit: Alex Chipkin

## Ruth Waddington

Conservation Center Fellow

Ruth majored in Middle Eastern, South Asian & African Studies with a concentration in Art History at Columbia University, earning her a Bachelor of Arts. In her path to conservation, she worked in the Rubin Museum's education department and was a curatorial intern in the Met's Asian Art department, where she met Jennifer Perry '93 and discovered the field of art conservation. In the Columbia Library conservation lab, Ruth used False-Color InfraRed imaging, Raman spectroscopy and PLM to determine the pigments used in an illustrated Kashmiri manuscript. Since graduating, she completed internships at the American Museum of Natural History's Library, the Brooklyn Museum, and at home in Jersey, UK. Ruth has not decided on a specialty but is drawn to paper and paintings, with particular interest in South Asian and Islamic art on paper and, having grown up in Cyprus, Byzantine icon paintings. On Zoom, you'll probably see her cat, Alice, taking up the screen!



Ruth Waddington  
Photo credit: Neil Mahrer (Jersey Heritage)



And what better way to pay homage to the past year than through a class photo via Zoom?.