

The 30th Annual Graduate Student Symposium on the History of Art

Co-organized by Temple University in collaboration with Bryn Mawr College and the University of Pennsylvania

Thursday, February 26, and Friday, February 27, 2026

THE BARNES FOUNDATION, 2025 BENJAMIN FRANKLIN PARKWAY, PHILADELPHIA 19130

Keynote Lecture

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 6:30–8 PM

“Why the Underground Railroad Matters”

Steven Nelson, Professor Emeritus of Art History and African American Studies at UCLA

In this talk, Nelson seeks to show how people use the Underground Railroad’s visual, textual, and spatial evidence to construct heritage and promote a vision of history that underscores their lives in the present day. “Why the Underground Railroad Matters” explores the complex network and its place at the intersection of material culture, art, architecture, history, travel, heritage, and human experience. This is not a history of the Underground Railroad but an analysis of its function in the stories we tell about ourselves and others.

Symposium

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 10 AM–4:35 PM

Now in its 30th year, this symposium brings together graduate students from nine mid-Atlantic colleges and universities to present current research in the field of art history. Each session includes presentations followed by a moderated discussion.

SESSION ONE: MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN ART, 10–11:40 AM

Moderated by Kaelin Jewell, senior instructor, Barnes Foundation

“Visualizing the Cosmic Center: Artists and the Transformation of Mount Sumeru in Medieval Dunhuang”

Yuzhu Wang, Bryn Mawr College

Adviser: Jie Shi, Associate Professor of History of Art and Co-Director of Undergraduate Studies

“Transatlantic Bodies: Representations of the ‘Moor’ in Sixteenth-Century Festivities”

Alexis Slater, Johns Hopkins University

Adviser: Mitchell Merback, William Arnell and Everett Land Professor and Chair, Department of the History of Art

“Under Pressure: Shiba Kōkan’s Megane-e and Their Cultural Environment”

Nick Purgett, University of Pennsylvania

Adviser: Julie Davis, Paul F. Miller, Jr. and E. Warren Shafer Miller Professor of History of Art

SESSION TWO: MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ART, 12:45–2:50 PM

Moderated by Steven Nelson, Professor Emeritus of Art History and African American Studies at UCLA

“Connective Memory and Colonial Cartographies in Emma Nishimura’s Japanese Canadian Internment Landscapes”

Emily Schollenberger, Temple University

Adviser: Erin Pauwels, Associate Professor of Art History

“From Site to Slash: Identity as Spatial Practice, Mo Bahc 1982–1994”

JooHee Kim, University of Maryland

Adviser: Jordana Moore Saggese, Professor, Modern and Contemporary American Art, Art History and Archaeology

“Superfluous Vitality: *The Ironworkers’ Noontime* and the Erotics of Extraction”

Thomas Price, University of Delaware

Adviser: Wendy Bellion, Sewell C. Biggs Chair in American Art History and Professor of Art History

“Flattening the Sarape: Mesoamerican Textile Techniques and Postwar Abstraction”

Angela Brown, Princeton University

Adviser: Irene Small, Professor, Contemporary Art and Criticism

SESSION THREE: POLITICS OF DISPLAY, 3:25–4:35 PM

Moderated by Alison Boyd, Director of Research and Interpretation, Barnes Foundation

“From Colonial Museum to Global Museology: Remaking Regional Heritage in Contemporary India”

Pritha Mukherjee, Rutgers University

Adviser: Tamara Sears, Associate Professor

“Networking the Global Market of Chinese Art: Transnational Dealership and China’s First Art Exhibition”

Han Chen, The Pennsylvania State University

Adviser: Chang Tan, Associate Professor of Art History and Asian Studies

