# THE BLOCK MUSEUM OF ART • ANNUAL REPORT

**September 1, 2019 – August 31, 2020**

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

There is a saying, “Never waste a crisis.” Over this past extraordinary year, regardless of the many challenges we faced, the Block team discovered approaches to connecting art, ideas, and audiences, to being a dynamic and responsive site of inquiry and experimentation, and to holding space where the experience of art could bring meaning to this difficult time.

2019-2020 was planned as a celebration of “Global Modernisms,” with a full calendar of exhibitions, programs, screenings, and conversations dedicated to broadening perspectives on mid-20th century art. Exhibitions and public programs were organized to present art in the context of the political, social, and broader cultural forces shaping its production. This focus continued the Block’s commitment to bringing to light and raising up art and histories that have been understudied.

The year also focused on building partnerships across the campus, across the region, and beyond. The exhibition Pop América, organized by Duke University’s Nasher Museum of Art, offered the opportunity for a new programmatic partnership with our colleagues at the National Museum of Mexican Art. Modernisms organized by the Grey Art Gallery, at New York University, enabled us to continue our ongoing relationships with the Grey and the Middle East & North African Studies Program at Northwestern. Funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, Morning Will Come: Modernity in Indian Cinema became the site of close partnership with the Consulate General of India. The eleven screenings in Ism Ism Ism became a city-wide event, offering a platform for partnerships between Block Cinema and independent film venues across Chicago. The final exhibition in our Global Modernism series: Taking Shape: Abstraction from the Arab World, 1950s – 1980, presented in collaboration with the Barjeel Art Foundation based in Sharjah, UAE was rescheduled for 2022 due to the pandemic, and will be the capstone of this global initiative. These partnerships each served as a reminder that works of art are bridge builders uniting us through a shared understanding of the experiences and histories of others.

This clarity around our role as a bridge-builder inspired the Block team when we closed our physical galleries in March 2020 and quickly became a museum without walls. My colleagues showed imagination and resilience, generosity and ingenuity. As spring turned to summer, the Block metamorphosed with the seasons. We launched a digital exhibition in support of our temporary installation crew; built a multilingual progressive web app; taught an online course with the Department of Art History; supported faculty using the collection remotely; organized Zoom workshops; reshaped our core student engagement programs with student input; and hosted digital film screenings with powerful live discussions featuring film critics and filmmakers. The lessons we learned are evergreen, not least what we have learned about our organizational culture: The Block is nimble, responsive, and strategic and its teaching, learning and research mission is the North Star that can guide us through the most unexpected, indeed, the most unimaginable experiences and to transform them without losing our way.

The global outcry for racial equity was a reminder that the Block has a responsibility to reflect on its complicity in perpetuating injustice. The Block team also used this year to reckon with all aspects of our work, our operations, our history, and that of Northwestern University. Museums are storytellers and meaning-makers with immense capacity to question and transform the dominant narratives of history by providing engagement with works of art. In so doing, museums literally and figuratively help us to see what has been overlooked and even suppressed. This year will be seen as a starting point, leading us closer to our ideal: to be a truly diverse, inclusive, and equitable museum and an instrument of change. We are grateful to all of you who support us in this work and look forward to what’s ahead when our galleries reopen in fall 2021.

– Lisa Graziose Corrin, Ellen Philips Katz Director, The Block Museum of Art
The Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art enriches teaching and learning on the campuses of Northwestern University and in the communities of their surrounding regions by:

• Presenting art across time, cultures, and media;
• Convening interdisciplinary discussions in which art is a springboard for exploring issues and ideas;
• Collecting art that supports the Northwestern University curriculum.

MISSION STATEMENT

To be a dynamic, imaginative, and innovative teaching and learning resource at Northwestern University through an artistic program that is a springboard for thought-provoking discussions relevant to the curriculum and to our lives today.

To inspire and develop a new generation of artists, scholars, and arts professionals by providing experiential learning opportunities bridging the classroom and the world beyond the campus.

To serve as a crossroad between campus and community, by creating an environment where all visitors feel welcome to participate.

VISION STATEMENT
THE BLOCK MUSEUM DEVOTED ITS 2019 - 2020 YEAR to a conversation on the diversity of global modernisms. Three exhibitions and two major cinema programs sought to present a mid-20th century view of art as it is entwined with culture and politics around the globe. These artworks exemplify a spirit of visual and political revolution that crossed beyond national borders and inspired a generation of artists. This is a crucial moment to revisit these histories and explore the fundamental connections between them.

Due to the COVID-19 closure the exhibition Taking Shape: Abstraction from the Arab World, 1950 – 1980, originally scheduled for spring 2020, was rescheduled for fall 2022. We thank our colleagues at NYU’s Grey Art Gallery and the Barjeel Art Foundation for their generous collaboration in shifting this significant exhibition to a later point in our schedule.
POP AMÉRICA, 1965–1975
September 21 – December 8, 2019
Main Gallery & Alsdorf Gallery

Visitors to Pop América view “Bang, Bang” by Emilio Hernández Saavedra
**POP AMÉRICA, 1965–1975**

Pop América, 1965–1975 challenged and reframed familiar notions of Pop Art by bringing together artists from North and South America, as well as the Caribbean. Pop América was the first exhibition to unify Latin American and Latinx expressions of Pop and explore how artists working across the hemisphere embraced its bold and colorful imagery, references to mass culture, and representations of everyday objects, signs, and symbols. The exhibition made a timely and critical contribution to a deeper understanding of this period and the impulses behind Pop Art from the mid-1960s through the mid-1970s.

Pop América featured nearly 100 artworks by artists working in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, Peru, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, and the United States, sparking an expansion and reconsideration of Pop as a U.S. and British phenomenon. The exhibition reshaped debates over Pop’s perceived political neutrality and aesthetic innovations. The artists in the exhibition create vital dialogues that cross national borders and include Antonio Dias, Rubens Gerchman, Roy Lichtenstein, Marisol, Cildo Meireles, Marta Minujín, Hugo Rivera-Scott, and Andy Warhol, among others. United by their use of Pop’s visual strategies, these artists have made bold contributions to conceptualism, performance, and new-media art, as well as social protest, justice movements, and debates about freedom.

Pop América, 1965–1975 was co-organized by the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, and the McNay Art Museum, San Antonio, Texas. The exhibition was guest curated by Esther Gabara, E. Blake Byrne Associate Professor of Romance Studies and associate professor of Art, Art History & Visual Studies at Duke University.

Pop América, 1965–1975 was a recipient of the inaugural Sotheby’s Prize and supported by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. Additional thanks to the Institute for Studies on Latin American Art (ISLAA) and to its President and Founder, Ariel Asiks.

This project was supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts. The Block Museum of Art’s presentation of the exhibition was supported in part by the Alumnae of Northwestern University.

Pop América opened in October 2018 at the McNay Art Museum in San Antonio, Texas, and was on view at the Nasher Museum at Duke University until July 2019 before traveling to the Block Museum at Northwestern University. At The Block exhibition programs were presented in partnership with the National Museum of Mexican Art.
OPENING CELEBRATION
POP AMÉRICA POP IN
SEPTEMBER 28, 2019

The Block hosted an all-ages, open house to celebrate the opening of Pop América, 1965–1975, an exhibition that brought together artists from North, Central, and South America to reframe our understanding of Pop Art. Pop América is the first exhibition to unify Latin American and Latinx expressions of Pop and explore how its bold, colorful imagery and political potential was embraced by artists working across the hemisphere.

Over 400 guests “popped by” for activities happening throughout the afternoon:

**Ink Up** – Audiences rolled up their sleeves alongside Instituto Gráfico de Chicago (IGC) and participated in printmaking activities for all ages. Budding printmakers were invited to run a print through IGC’s printing press or create their own original artwork using designs inspired by Pop América.

**Tune In** – Guests watched and tuned in to a live radio broadcast, recorded on-site at the museum by members of Pop-Up Youth Radio (PUYR), a project of Yolocalli Arts Reach, the youth initiative of the National Museum of Mexican Art.

**Get Down** – Audiences enjoyed live music sets by Chicago-based ensemble Trío Calavera, playing son jarocho—Mexican folk music that fuses African, Spanish-Arabic, and Indigenous music and poetry.

**Pop Around** – The day concluded with a tour of exhibition highlights with Block Museum curator Corinne Granof.
Mi casa es su casa. The popular Spanish saying regarding Mexican hospitality is as familiar to US tourists as it is in towns across Mexico. The saying implies the ideas of extended families and of home. Audiences joined Cesáreo Moreno, Visual Arts Director and Curator for the National Museum of Mexican Art, to examine select works in Pop América created by Mexicans on both sides of the border and uncover similarities among them. Like primos hermanos (first cousins), many of the works of art, and the artists who created them share a creative lineage, a culture without borders. Presented in partnership with the National Museum of Mexican Art.

FAMILY PROGRAMS
TALES OF ART AT THE BLOCK
OCTOBER 19, 2019 / NOVEMBER 9, 2019 / FEBRUARY 29, 2020
Museums are full of stories. On these three Saturdays museum-goers of all ages explored Pop América and took part in family friendly read-aloud stories and interactive activities designed to help you look closer and think deeper about the art on view at the museum. The Block Student docent team supported these family days designed to help young-people discover the stories hidden beneath the surface of the art at the museum.

EXHIBITION KEYNOTE
CONTESTING FREEDOM
CONVERSATION WITH CURATOR ESTHER GABARA
OCTOBER 2, 2019
The ground-breaking exhibition Pop América drew attention to Latin American and US Latinx artists who turned the “Pop” of Pop art into a verb by using familiar images of modern life—including mass media, fashion, food, and advertising—to make forceful interventions into art and society. Audience members heard directly from Esther Gabara, curator of Pop América, about the politics of Pop as well as the artists from across the hemisphere who shared dreams and struggles over the idea of a singular América.

Gabara is E. Blake Byrne Associate Professor of Romance Studies and Art, Art History & Visual Studies at Duke University. She was joined in conversation by Alejandra Uslenghi, Northwestern Associate Professor of Spanish & Portuguese and Comparative Literary Studies, and Daniel Quiles, Assistant Professor of Art History, Theory, and Criticism at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. This program was presented in partnership with the Northwestern University Department of Spanish and Portuguese.
The Block hosted an in-depth conversation with three Chicago artists facilitated by Sarita Hernández of the National Museum of Mexican Art. The panel discussed how their practices are rooted in issues of identity and community, and how ideas and approaches from Pop América remain relevant in our contemporary moment. The panel included:

- **Vicko Alvarez Vega** a comic artist, organizer, and educator whose work involves themes of growing up Latinx, queerness, and processing the fear of deportation.

- **Nicole Marroquin** a teacher, educator, and artist whose work explores belonging and spatial justice. She has been researching student uprisings in Chicago Public Schools that occurred from 1967 to 1974.

- **Diana Solís** a visual artist and art educator who has taught for over 30 years at organizations that include Urban Gateways, Jane Addams Hull-House Museum, Gallery 37, and ElevArte Community Studio.

Presented by The Block Museum in partnership with the National Museum of Mexican Art. Reception and marketing support courtesy of The Alumnae of Northwestern University. Presented in conjunction with One Book One Northwestern and Northwestern: 150 Years of Women.

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**GALLERY TALK**

**THE POLITICS OF SOUPS AND SODAS**

**JERÓNIMO DUARTE-RIASCOS & ALEJANDRA USLENghi**

**OCTOBER 23, 2019**

Jerónimo Duarte-Riascos and Alejandra Uslenghi, Northwestern Professors in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, led a gallery tour highlighting female artists’ involvement in the Pop movement, engaging artworks that bring the language of new media and conceptualism in dialogue with emancipatory movements. The talk considered the politics of “soups and sodas” and the ways in which artists used everyday consumer objects to present and embody critiques of the status quo in Latin America and the US. Presented by The Block Museum in partnership with the Northwestern University Department of Spanish and Portuguese.
LECTURE
THE POLITICS OF TASTE
NOVEMBER 20, 2019

In the '60s and '70s many Latin American artists seized opportunities to reinvigorate the arts through the aesthetics of urban popular culture, impoverished materials, recycling strategies, ephemeral interventions, movable graffiti, and practices of dematerialization. Colombian artist Beatriz González is one such artist who forged radical new aesthetics that call attention to urban consumerism as well as appropriation, recycling, and reproduction. Ana María Reyes, Assistant Professor in Latin American Art History, Boston University discussed The Politics of Taste: Beatriz González and Cold War Aesthetics (2019), her book which examines González’s essential legacy in Latin American art history. Presented by The Block Museum in partnership with the Northwestern University Department of Spanish and Portuguese and the Department of Art History.

WORKSHOP
THE POETRY OF POP AMÉRICA
DECEMBER 4, 2019

A poetry discussion and creative writing workshop in conversation with Pop América, 1965–1975. Together, participants read and discuss Pop poems from a wide range of North, Central, and South American poets. After engaging with the exhibition, the group composed original poems in dialogue with the works on view, including themes related to the concept of “America,” nationality, borders, and migration. Maggie Queeney of The Poetry Foundation lead the session. Presented by The Block Museum in partnership with The Poetry Foundation.

CINEMA SERIES
POP AMÉRICA
FALL 2019

Pop América, 1965–1975 presents Pop Art as a cultural dialogue transgressing the borders of nations, the boundaries of media, and the limits of “good taste.” The same can be said of these two films, made in Brazil and the United States, which speak to each other in languages borrowed equally from advertisements, news reports, soap operas, and the avant-garde.

THE RED LIGHT BANDIT (1968)
OCTOBER 24, 2019

This delirious “Third World western” offers a subversive, New Wave-inspired spin through the trash heap of Brazilian pop culture. With The Red Light Bandit, a farcical account of a real-life serial criminal made larger-than-life by the news media, 21-year-old director Rogério Sganzerla delivered the signature work of Brazil’s Cinema Marginal, a radical film movement dedicated to the rejection of good taste.

ANDY WARHOL’S THE LIFE OF JUANITA CASTRO (1965)
NOVEMBER 22, 2019

Camp, historical topicality, New York’s underground theater scene, and Warhol’s disarming and energizing anti-cinema approach to filmmaking all combine in this loosely-scripted, irreverent portrait of Fidel Castro and his family (some members of which are played by experimental filmmaker Marie Menken and Warhol superstar Ultra Violet). Bruce Jenkins, SAIC professor and co-author of the forthcoming The Andy Warhol Film Catalogue Raisonné, introduced the screening.
THE ECONOMIST: Sotheby’s launches a new prize for cutting-edge curators (September 28, 2017)
*The 2018 Sotheby’s Prize will be shared by the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago (MCA) and the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, two American institutions that are planning shows of under-represented areas of art history. “Many Tongues: Art, Language and Revolution in the Middle East and South Asia” curated by Rem Koolhaas, a Cairo-born scholar who is now at the MCA, will open in October 2019. “Pop America: 1965–1975” will open in October 2018 at the McNay Art Museum in San Antonio, Texas, before moving to the Nasher Museum and then on to the Block Museum at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois almost a year later.” F.B.

DUKE TODAY: Sotheby’s prize recognizes forthcoming Nasher Museum exhibit on Latin American influence on pop art (September 28, 2017)
*The exhibit also marks the 50th anniversary of social unrest throughout the Americas, a time when artists used Pop to resist dictatorships in Brazil and Argentina, to support the Cuban Revolution, to criticize aggressive state modernization and violence in Mexico and Colombia, and to battle for civil rights in the United States. Pop América will open in October 2018 in San Antonio, Texas, at the McNay Art Museum, which is partnering with the Nasher Museum to stage the exhibition. After visiting the Nasher, it will travel to the Block Museum at Northwestern University.*

*Pop América contains pieces that are a rare treat to see in North American museums, including works by avant-garde sculptor and illustrator Felipe Ehrenberg and a slide projection by experimental theater actor and conceptualist Juan José Gurrola. * Laura Jaramillo

HYPERALLERGIC: The Latin American History of Pop Art (April 12, 2019)
*From Third World Liberation movements and interracial intimacies to lived and aestheticized experiences of exile and diaspora, the exhibition showcases what remnants and resonances — improbably, imperceptibly, spectrally, or spectacularly — gets through.” Brenna M. Casey

ALL CITY CANVAS: POP AMÉRICA: EXPO SOBRE EL ARTE POP LATINOAMERICANO (April 22, 2019)
*Se trata de una exposición de casi cien obras de varios artistas pop de latinoamérica. Exponentes de Argentina, Brasil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, México, Perú, Puerto Rico y también de Estados Unidos. A partir de sus obras expuestas se introducen marcos históricos que nos habían repartido algunos datos sobre el pop. Sobre todo, en esta parte del continente* Karla Mariana Huerta
BE LATINA: Gone-Changing Art Exhibit Unpacks the Latino History of Pop Art (June 28, 2019)
“Latin pop is finally getting its due, after years of being boxed out of the mainstream,” Kat McCue

“Despite the wide appeal of Pop art’s engaging imagery, the broader public remains unaware of the participation and significant contribution of Latin America and Latino/Latina artists working at the same time and alongside their U.S. and European counterparts. The exhibition at the Nasher is the first exhibition with a hemispheric vision of Pop. The exhibition has made a timely and critical contribution to a more complete understanding of this artistic period.” Nancy Kranzburg

MICHIGAN AVENUE MAGAZINE: Feast Your Eyes: Top 5 Picks for Fall Arts Season (September 2019)
“It’s going to be bold, bright and interesting too, because it’s pop art that people just aren’t as familiar with,” says Corinne Granof, Block’s curator of academic programs. Kyle Macmillan

THE DAILY NORTHWESTERN: “Pop América” exhibition showcases the rich tradition of Latin American pop art (September 25, 2019)
“‘There’s a playful quality to a lot of the work in the exhibition,’ Granof said. ‘But there’s also a lot of work that has this stronger political edge and are responding to economic conditions, social conditions, political conditions. So it’s really this rich and nuanced look, a broad look at these artists who are working in the syntax of pop and then making it their own.’” Wilson Chapman

THE DAILY NORTHWESTERN: Esther Gabara discusses the politics of Latin American pop art at block event (October 3, 2019)
“Pointing to the title of “Pop América,” the exhibition’s curator Esther Gabara reveals a message behind the accent over the letter “e”: “it declares independence from the United States’ long presumption of ownership of the world, as well from the troubled history of the idea of Latin America,” said Gabara.” Aaron Wang

CHICAGO SUN TIMES: Art in Chicago this fall: An overdue overview of a neglected era, and 10 other highlights (September 13, 2019)
“Pop art was not just a phenomenon in the United States and Great Britain. This touring exhibition, co-organized by Duke University’s Nasher Museum of Art and the McNay Art Museum in San Antonio, offers the first unified look at permutations of the movement across Latin America and ties them into what was happening farther north.” Kyle MacMillan

REBELLIOUS MAGAZINE: Get Your Aesthetics in Gear: Expect 100 Years of Art in Two Seasons (October 8, 2019)
“As temperatures drop this fall and winter, Chicagoans can pop into warm and welcoming galleries to discover a variety of art forms generated from 1919 to 2019.” Janet Avila

WTW: CHICAGO TONIGHT: ‘Pop América’ Reframes Pop Art, Expands Notion of America (October 17, 2019)
“Pop Art gets reframed in a new museum show that looks closely at the visual culture of the 1960s and ’70s — and sheds light on an entire hemisphere of artwork that really pops.” Marc Vitali

F NEWS MAGAZINE: Agit Póp (November 7, 2019)
“That little accent above the “e” in “Pop América,” the title of the Block Museum of Art’s exhibition on view through December 8, does so much more than translate the title into Spanish and Portuguese. It makes a point to look south — all the way down to Tierra del Fuego — and therefore understand the region as a whole.... The work in “Pop América” is now half a century old — yet it maintains its relevance.” Luis Lopez Levi

CHICAGO TRIBUNE: Pop Art isn’t what you think, unless you figured on a dash of military dictatorship, a sprinkling of runaway inflation or a smidge of guerrilla factions (November 18, 2019)
“‘Pop América’ includes a disarmingly colorful selection of sculptures, prints, paintings and film from artists located across America. Keep the accent, as América here follows its Spanish usage, meaning North, Central and South America as a single unbroken continent, plus the Caribbean Islands. The geography can be dizzying, traveling from Brazil to Argentina to Colombia to Cuba to Peru, then up to Mexico and, yes, the United States, but that’s part of the excitement of a survey exhibition of art you may not have even known existed. It’s just the beginning!” Lori Waxman

ART AND OBJECT: When Latin America took on Pop Art (November 25, 2019)
“Now at the Block Museum at Northwestern University, Pop América examines the decade from 1965 to 1975, a period of political turmoil and social dissent in Latin America. This was a period exploding with visuals—a world of signs and icons of both abundance and catastrophe—and artists quickly seized the political potential of this new media, with all its anarchic sensibilities.” Claire Voon

INSIDE POP AMÉRICA: Corinne Granof on what makes the exhibition “pop” (October 4, 2019)


WATTZ UP! Yollocalli’s Pop Up Youth Radio broadcasts from The Block Museum (October 31, 2019)

“Constantly in Translation”: Artists Vicko Alvarez Vega, Nicole Marroquin, and Diana Solís on identity, activism, and Pop (Video) (November 20, 2019)

The Block receives gift of posters by Argentinean Pop Artist Edgardo Giménez (December 3, 2020)
CIUDAD MODERNA
TERENCE GOWER

January 26 – April 14, 2019
Alsdorf Gallery
CIUDAD MODERNA

Working in video, sculpture, drawing and photography, New York-based artist Terence Gower (b. British Colombia, 1965) investigates the material and intellectual histories of postwar positivism in art and architecture. The contemporary built environments of 1960s Mexico are the focus of his 2004 video, Ciudad Moderna. A kinetic, six-minute montage of clips drawn from the 1966 Mexican comedy film Despedida de Casada, Ciudad Moderna wittily transforms its source material to examine the film’s modernist architectural backdrop.

Throughout much of the 20th century, Mexico City was fertile ground for progressive architects and urban planners seeking development and social reform through design. Using freeze frames, projection drawings and clever digital composites, Gower analyzes some of the most celebrated monuments of this utopian moment in Latin American history, from Mexico City’s famed Museum of Anthropology to the Hotel Presidente in Acapulco. Pop culture and high modernism collide as Gower shifts from depersonalized interiors to swinging musical numbers, presenting architecture as a visual abstraction as well as a space of lived experience.

A limited-edition work, Ciudad Moderna is part of a gift of 68 works of contemporary art donated to the Block Museum in 2016 by art collector, philanthropist and software innovator Peter Norton. The Block gift is one of a series Norton has made to university art museums throughout the country. The gifts recognize and support institutions integrating art into teaching and learning across disciplines, fostering creative museum practices and engaging audiences with diverse forms of contemporary art.

The exhibition is curated by Michael Metzger, Pick-Laudati Curator of Media Arts. This exhibition is supported by the Bernstein Family Contemporary Art Fund, the Illinois Arts Council Agency, and the Mary and Leigh Block Endowment.

EXHIBITION PRESS

NEWCITY: Terence Gower’s “Ciudad Moderna” Sketches a Vision of Modern Life in Mexico (March 9, 2020)

An essayistic reflection on one film’s assembled iconography of modernness between architectural form and social habit, “Ciudad Moderna” ultimately scales up to broader questions of how culture at large has performed the modern city,” Marina Resende Santos.
MODERNISMS
IRANIAN, TURKISH, & INDIAN HIGHLIGHTS FROM NYU’S ABBY WEED GREY COLLECTION
January 21 – early close March 13, 2020
Main Gallery
MODERNISMS: IRANIAN, TURKISH, & INDIAN HIGHLIGHTS FROM NYU'S ABBY WEED GREY COLLECTION

Modernisms: Iranian, Turkish, and Indian Highlights from NYU’s Abby Weed Grey Collection surveyed art from three nations where artists created vibrant forms of modernism in the 1960s and 1970s. Challenging histories of artistic modernism that too often begin and end in the West, Modernisms explored an under-recognized flowering of innovation and risk-taking in art beyond Europe and North America.

Influenced by local traditions, cultural exchange and the sights and sounds of modern life, artists in Iran, Turkey and India forged distinctive new modes of expression. From Iranian and Turkish artists who explored calligraphy and ornamentation through avant-garde abstraction, to Indian painters whose expressive canvases drew upon Hindu iconography, the 114 works in Modernisms reflected the lively dialogue between East and West, past and present. These works testified to both the continuity of culture and the disruption of modernity.

Organized by New York University’s Grey Art Gallery, Modernisms drew from the collection of curator and patron Abby Weed Grey. Grey traveled widely in Asia and the Middle East, searching for art that brought the visual language of modernity into dialogue with non-Western heritages. With a robust collection of some 700 paintings, sculptures and works on paper, she founded the Grey Art Gallery in 1975, stimulating learning through cross-cultural exchange. Through her collection, this exhibition tells a story of “multiple modernities,” reflecting the diversity of formal and cultural responses to the changing world of the 1960s and 1970s.

The exhibition was on view at Grey Art Gallery at NYU from Sept. 10 to Dec. 7, 2019 before coming to The Block. The exhibition was curated for The Block by Kathleen Bickford Berzock, associate director of curatorial affairs, and Michael Metzger, Pick-Laudati Curator of Media Arts.

This exhibition was accompanied by a companion installation Regional Modernisms: Works from the Block’s Permanent Collection. This selection considered the ways American artists have added their voices to global dialogues of modern art while reflecting local contexts. The installation was generously supported by the Norton S. Walbridge Fund, the Illinois Arts Council Agency, and The Graduate School, Northwestern University. It has been curated by Cait DiMartino, Block Curatorial Graduate Fellow, 2019–20.

Modernisms: Iranian, Turkish, and Indian Highlights from NYU's Abby Weed Grey Collection was organized by the Grey Art Gallery, New York University, and made possible in part by the generous support of Dalinc and Mehves Ariburnu; Violet Jabara Charitable Trust; WLS Spencer Foundation; A. Alfred Taubman Foundation; Avid Modjtaba; Charina Endowment Fund; Persian Heritage Foundation; Vazifdar Builders Pvt. Ltd.; Ariel and Alaleh Ostad; the Grey’s Director’s Circle, Inter/National Council, and Friends; and the Abby Weed Grey Trust. In-kind support was provided by ArtCareNYC Inc. The Block’s presentation of the exhibition was supported in part by generous gifts from Anu and Arjun Aggarwal, Emine and Selim Gulcelik, and by the Illinois Arts Council Agency.
Audiences joined us to celebrate the opening of *Modernisms: Iranian, Turkish, and Indian Highlights from NYU’s Abby Weed Grey Collection*. *Modernisms* surveyed art from three nations where unique and vibrant forms of art-making flourished in the 1960s and 1970s. Challenging histories of artistic modernism that too often begin and end in the West, *Modernisms* explored an under-recognized flowering of innovation and risk-taking in art beyond Europe and North America.

The opening conversation spotlighted the work of four Northwestern University graduate students — Maryam Athari, Hamed Yousefi, Simran Bhalla, and Özge Karagöz — who are breaking new ground in the study of the “multiple modernities” at play in Iranian, Indian, and Turkish art. These scholars were joined in discussion by Block curators Kathleen Bickford Berzock and Michael Metzger.
SPOTLIGHT GALLERY TALKS
MODERNISMS
WITH VIDURA BAHADUR & HAMED YOUSEFI

VIDURA BAHADUR ON FEBRUARY 7, 2020
HAMED YOUSEFI ON FEBRUARY 27, 2020

Audiences were invited to take an in-depth look at select works in the Modernisms exhibition during these monthly spotlight gallery talks, led by Northwestern scholars advancing the study of Iranian, Indian, and Turkish art.

Vidura Jang Bahadur is a photographer based in Chicago and over the last two decades traveled extensively across India, China, Tibet and the United States. He is currently pursuing a PhD in Communication Studies in the program of Rhetoric and Public Culture at Northwestern University.

Hamed Yousefi’s research looks at the convergence of three categories: avant-garde art, the global south, and the Cold War. As a filmmaker, he has made numerous documentaries including a series of essay films about the aesthetic history of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Maryam Athari is a PhD student researching the dynamics of the global contemporary art world in relation to the region broadly called the Middle East. She is focused on visual arts in contemporary Tehran, Iran.

Özge Karagöz is a PhD student in the Department of Art History. Her research concentrates on transnational histories of art, specializing in the circulation of modern art and revolutionary politics on the Turkish–Soviet–French axis in the first half of the twentieth century.

Tours with Maryam Athari and Özge Karagöz were canceled due to COVID closure.

SCREENING AND CONVERSATION
THE FABULOUS LIFE AND THOUGHT OF AHMAD FARDID
HAMED YOUSEFI IN CONVERSATION WITH WJT MITCHELL
FEBRUARY 20, 2020

At the center of this engrossing 2015 documentary history is Ahmad Fardid, a 20th-century Iranian philosopher who rejected "Westoxification," or the pernicious effect of Western culture on Iranian society. Directors Hamed Yousefi and Ali Mirsepassi navigate his inescrutable, yet highly influential theories (which reflect the dual influence of Martin Heidegger and political Islam) using scholarly interviews and astonishing archival footage. Whether praised as an intellectual leader or condemned as a charlatan, Fardid’s peculiar example tests the limits of Modernism’s claims to universality. Presented in English and Farsi with English subtitles.

Hamed Yousefi (Co-director and Northwestern University doctoral candidate in Art History), Hannah Feldman (Northwestern Associate Professor of Art History), and W.J.T Mitchell (Professor of English and Art History at University of Chicago and editor of Critical Inquiry) took part in a post-screening discussion moderated by Danny Postel (Assistant Director of the Center for International and Area Studies.)

Co-presented by Block Cinema with the Iranian-American Fund for Cultural Programming, the Critical Theory Program, the Department of Philosophy, the Department of Art History, and the Middle East & North African Studies Program at Northwestern.
CONVERSATION

“THE PICTURE IS THE WINDOW”
LYNN GUMPERT AND LISA CORRIN
ON ABBY GREY & INTREPID ART COLLECTING

MARCH 4, 2020

Consisting of more than 700 artworks, the Abby Weed Grey Collection of Modern Asian and Middle Eastern Art at New York University comprises the largest institutional holdings of Iranian, Turkish and Indian modern art in any American university museum. This unparalleled historical resource was amassed by Abby Weed Grey (1902–1983), a self-described “dyed-in-the-wool Midwesterner” from St. Paul, Minnesota. In the 1960s and early ’70s, when few other American collectors were attuned to art being made in the Middle East and Asia, Grey traveled extensively in these regions, steadily acquiring works by contemporary local artists. Throughout her life, Grey’s collecting was guided by a belief in the power of art to stimulate intercultural dialogue.

Audiences joined Lynn Gumpert, Director of the Grey Art Gallery at NYU and Lisa Corrin, Director of the Block Museum of Art, for a conversation on this intrepid woman collector and her legacy.

CINEMA

SELECTIONS FROM THE GOLESTAN FILM WORKSHOP
WINTER 2020

The Golestan Film Workshop, founded by Ebrahim Golestan, was a collective of leftist Iranian artists that mostly produced commissioned films for the National Iranian Oil Company and other institutions in the 1950s and 60s. This series, programmed to complement the exhibition Modernisms: Iranian, Turkish, and Indian Highlights from NYU’s Abby Weed Grey Collection, included several recent restorations of these signature works of Iranian modernist cinema.

BRICK AND MIRROR (EBRAHIM GOLESTAN, 1965, IRAN, DCP, 125 MIN) FEBRUARY 6, 2020

Brick and Mirror was the Golestan Film Workshop’s only feature film, but it had an enormous impact on Iranian cinema, and garnered international acclaim. The film, directed by Golestan from his own unfinished script, is a precursor to Iran’s New Wave, bringing together social realism with poetic expressionism. Forough Farrokhzad appears briefly, in one of her few acting roles. Brick and Mirror also provides a rare view of the cosmopolitan Tehran of the 1960s, but takes care to expose the underlying tensions that were portents of political change in Iran. Shown in a recent digital restoration by the Cineteca di Bologna.

THREE FILMS BY FOROUGH FARROKHZAD AND EBRAHIM GOLESTAN FEBRUARY 12, 2020

These three films demonstrate the rich aesthetic possibilities of the sponsored film. The House is Black (1961), directed by Forugh Farrokhzad, is considered a masterpiece of Iranian cinema. The film, screening in a recent Cineteca di Bologna restoration, focuses on a leper colony, and Farrokhzad, a modernist poet, brings a lyrical and humanist but unsentimental grace to the subject. Wave, Coral, and Rock (1958–1961) is a poetic reflection on the processes of labor and industrialization under Iran’s new oil regime. A highly collaborative film, it betrays the uneven concerns of various transnational and nationalist interests. Finally, Golestan’s The Hills of Marlik (1963), also newly restored, focuses on an archaeological excavation, considering the land’s use in the past, present, and future. In Farsi with English subtitles.

New restorations of Farrokhzad’s The House is Black and Golestan’s The Hills of Marlik thanks to Cineteca di Bologna, Print of Wave, Coral, and Rock courtesy of the Film Studies Center at the University of Chicago.
THE NEW YORKER: Goings on About Town – Modernisms (October 2019)

"The many standouts here include the Indian artist Prabhakar Barwe’s fiery cosmograms, inspired by both Tantric painting and Paul Klee; the entrancing calligraphic abstractions of the Iranian modernist Charles Hosein Zenderoudi; and the prints of Mustafa Aslier, whose flat geometries incorporate Turkish folk motifs. The show is as edifying as it is eye-catching." Johanna Fateman

WALL STREET JOURNAL: ‘Modernisms: Iranian, Turkish, and Indian Highlights From NYU’s Abby Weed Grey Collection’ Review: Globe-Trotting to Build a Unique Collection (September 17, 2019)

"These works are the highlights of a collection unsurpassed in its depth and breadth by any other in the U.S. Whether visitors are interested in the politics of this time and region or the artistic achievements of individual artists, the exhibition offers unique opportunities to satisfy one’s curiosity." Michael FitzGerald

CHICAGO HOTELS MAGAZINE: 10 of the best winter exhibitions in Chicago (December 13, 2019)

"The exhibition’s works are all centered around the wellspring of art that emerged out of the modernist revolution of the mid-20th century – a time when these countries underwent significant political, social and cultural change." Paul Joseph

NEWS INDIA TIMES: Major Indian, Iranian and Turkish modern art exhibition at Northwestern University, Illinois (December 23, 2019)

"This is the first time that selections from its Iranian, Turkish and Indian modern art holdings have been presented together in a cross-cultural study. In doing so, Modernisms sheds new light on how artists of the period created works that drew on their specific heritages while also engaging in global discourses."

INDIA POST: Collection of modern art works from India to be on view in Chicago (December 13, 2019)

"The exhibition marks the first time that selections from its Iranian, Turkish and Indian modern art holdings that will be presented together in a cross-cultural study. In doing so, ‘Modernisms’ will shed new light on how artists of the period created works that drew on their specific heritages while also engaging in global discourses."
The Block continues its expansion of what we think we know about modern art with this selection of 114 paintings, prints and sculptures bought during the 1960s and 70s by Abby Weed Grey, a widowed Midwestern army-wife-turned-globetrotting art lover. In her ability to look beyond Eurocentric art discourses, Grey, like the artists she collected, proved herself to be ahead of her time.” - Lori Waxman

“Modernisms participates in ongoing discourse from around the globe.” - Mary Houlihan

When you look at Abby Weed Grey’s collection and her interests, you can’t separate it from her identity as an American,” Berzock said. “While this is a collection that comes from NYU and was created by a particular woman with a particular perspective, we are very interested in foregrounding the perspectives and experiences of the artists themselves.” - Yunkyo Kim

“Visitors to the galleries of most American museums could be forgiven for thinking that modernism happened in the United States and Western Europe and hardly anywhere else.” - Lori Waxman

“The new exhibit “Modernisms: Iranian, Turkish and Indian Highlights from NYU’s Abby Weed Grey Collection” is a survey of art from three nations where vibrant forms of modernism were created in the 1960s and 1970s.” - Kerry Cardoza

“Now is an exciting time for art lovers. Art history is being rewritten before our eyes. It is being rewritten in a broader, richer, more complete fashion which not only includes a greater diversity of creators, but a greater diversity of work.” - Chad Scott
Visitors to Modernisms
MORNING WILL COME
MODERNITY IN INDIAN CINEMA

Winter & Spring 2020
Pick-Laudati Auditorium & Online
India is home to the world’s most prolific and diverse film industries, and Bollywood movies in particular have found rapturous audiences from Russia to the Middle East. This series, presented as a complement to Modernisms: Iranian, Turkish, and Indian Highlights from NYU’s Abby Weed Grey Collection, featured seminal classics of Indian cinema that have rarely been projected in the United States. In addition to landmark films by Guru Dutt, Ritwik Ghatak, and Mrinal Sen, which consider postcolonial conflicts between tradition and modernity, the series featured a program dedicated to the Shabistan Film Archive. The series was presented with support from the Consulate General of India, Chicago, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

This curated series of five screenings, presented during the Winter 2020 season, exemplifies the Block Museum’s global approach to the arts by shining a light on a national cinema largely underrepresented in American film programming. Working with the Shabistan Film Archive, an organization dedicated to the preservation of Indian film, The Block has overseen the restoration of Indian films rarely seen in the United States, including a number of films such as 1971’s Badnam Basti that were presumed lost.

A NIGHT WITH THE SHABISTAN FILM ARCHIVE

The Shabistan Film Archive is a non-profit initiative, based in Bangalore, dedicated to preserving South Asian cinema. Thousands of Indian films have been lost to history as reels are sold, discarded, or neglected. Shabistan’s mission is to rescue as many original prints as possible, and has built an archive that spans everything from B-movies to documentaries, and includes important works of Hindi and regional cinemas. This special event featured a conversation with executive director David Farris, and Northwestern professor and Shabistan operations director David Boyk who presented rare reels from Shabistan’s singular film collection.

INTERVIEW (1971)

Bengali filmmaker Mrinal Sen pioneered a bracing blend of political modernism and popular appeal with Interview, the first film in his celebrated “Calcutta Trilogy.” In the film, labor strikes and political demonstrations prevent an ambitious young man from retrieving his Western-style suit from the laundry, putting an important job interview in jeopardy. Sen explodes the neo-realist trappings of this plot through daring shifts in style and perspective, challenging colonial and cinematic conventions alike. Interview was presented in a new digital restoration, with an introduction and discussion by Kunal Sen, the filmmaker’s son. Screened in a restored DCP courtesy of the National Film Archive of India.
In The Runaway, Bengali auteur Ritwik Ghatak brings his unique gift for stylistic play and trenchant social observation to this story of a runaway child lost in the big city. Fed up with his authoritarian father’s mistreatment, the enterprising eight-year-old Kanchan runs away from his small village to Calcutta, where he discovers the delights and hardships of life among the urban underclass. The Runaway is a precursor to Parallel Cinema, a film movement that served as a critical counter to Bollywood fantasies of the 1960s and 1970s. Presented in a new digital restoration by the National Film Archive of India.

Guru Dutt’s melancholy romantic drama is an icon of Hindi cinema’s golden age. Dutt, who counts among India’s greatest directors, also stars in the film as Vijay, a poor poet searching for recognition and respect. Set in Calcutta, the film considers the position of the creative underclass amidst postcolonial India’s uncompromising development agendas. Pyaasa, presented on Valentine’s Day, also features some of Bollywood’s most enduring love songs, composed by S.D. Burman and Sahir Ludhianvi.
While the original screening date was canceled due to the Spring 2020 closure, The Block Museum hosted a special livestream broadcast of Prem Kapoor’s Badnam Basti (Alley of Ill Repute) followed by an online discussion with Simran Bhalla (PhD candidate in Screen Cultures and interdisciplinary graduate fellow at the Block Museum of Art for 2019–2020) and Sudhir Mahadevan (Associate Professor of Cinema and Media Studies at the University of Washington, Seattle). The conversation was moderated by Michael Metzger (Pick-Laudati Curator of Media Arts)

Badnam Basti is considered one of the first Indian films to explore queer relationships. Based on a novel by Hindi writer Kamleshwar Prasad Saxena, it centers on a love triangle between two men and one woman on the margins of society. The film is noted for its adventurous editing, strong performances, neorealist style, and the music by Vijay Raghav Rao, one of postcolonial India’s most innovative composers. Although Badnam Basti was recut and rereleased in 1978, it has since faded into obscurity; until recently, the film was presumed lost.

Presenting a new digital transfer from the only known 35mm print, this event may mark the first time this film was screened for US audiences. The broadcast was watched by over 300 participants from around the world and covered by international press.

TIMES OF INDIA: “Almost 50 Years later, First Hindi film on Queer Love Makes waves” (May 27, 2020)

“Slowly, the seminal film fell off the map till experts located a print in Arsenal Institute for Film and Video Art’s collection. Berlin. The black and white film was streamed online earlier this month, courtesy Block Museum, Northwestern University.”

FIRSTPOST: “India’s first gay film Badnam Basti resurfaces after nearly half a century’s hibernation in Berlin archive (May 29, 2020)

“Badnam Basti’s fate is as chequered as its history. The 1971 Hindi film considered as India’s first movie depicting a homosexual relationship and thought to be lost, has emerged after 49 years of hiding in an archive in Berlin. It is one year short of celebrating half a century of obscurity.”

THE DAILY NORTHWESTERN: Block Museum screens “Badnam Basti,” considered first LGBTQ Indian film (May 8, 2020)

“I have been heartened to see people around the world sharing their views on the film, both on social media and in the press. The film’s discovery has been valuable to academics and film lovers, but the reaction from the queer South Asian community in particular has been inspirational”

–Simran Bhalla, PhD in Screen Cultures, Interdisciplinary Fellow 2019–2020
Representatives from the Consulate General of India Chicago with the Block Cinema team.
ISM, ISM, ISM
EXPERIMENTAL CINEMA IN LATIN AMERICA
Fall 2019
Pick-Laudati Auditorium
Presented in conjunction with The Block’s exhibition Pop América: 1965-1975, Block Cinema screened selected programs from Ism, Ism, Ism, a groundbreaking touring film series that offers the first comprehensive survey of Latin America’s vibrant experimental film history. Organized by filmmakers and curators/critics Jesse Lerner and Luciano Piazza these programs featured key works made between the 1930s and the 2000s across the Americas. The Block hosted five programs from the series, and co-presented another six programs at venues around Chicago.

Ism, Ism, Ism represents the first major survey of Latin America’s vibrant experimental film history to tour the United States. The series features key historical and contemporary works from Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela, Puerto Rico and the U.S. The series explores a wealth of materials culled from the forgotten corners of Latin American film archives as well as extraordinary recent productions from across the continent.

“Encompassing work from more than a dozen countries and surveying more than eight decades of filmmaking, this program promises to profoundly reshape the way we understand the history of artists’ cinema.”
—Michael Metzger, Pick-Laudati Curator of Media Art.

“Experimental Cinema in Latin America” was organized by Los Angeles Filmforum as part of The Getty Foundation’s “Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA” project, a large-scale initiative supporting Latin American-themed exhibitions across art institutions throughout Southern California. The project was a far-reaching and ambitious exploration of Latin American and Latino art in dialogue with the city of Los Angeles. After touring extensively in Los Angeles, New York, Mexico City and Medellín, Colombia, The Block presented the first showing of these rare films in Chicago.

**APPROPRIATIONS OF A REVOLUTIONARY FIGURE**

OCTOBER 3, 2019

Images of Ernesto “Che” Guevara are the most contested and reproduced in Latin America, and this program explored ways this iconic figure has been represented in experimental films. Dialogue with Che, by legendary queer Nuyorican artist José Rodríguez Soltero, parodies Hollywood portraiture of the revolutionary hero. Photographic representations of Che are the subject of both Pedro Chaskel’s A Photograph Travels the World, which analyzes an iconic still taken by Alberto Korda at a political rally in 1960, and Leandro Katz’s El día que me quieras, which retraces the story behind the last photographs of Che Guevara as he lay dead, surrounded by his captors, taken by Freddy Alborta in 1967.

**DREAMS OF SUITCASES AND A BLUE LOBSTER**

OCTOBER 11, 2019

This program of short films explored cinema’s onerous, disturbing, and irrational potential. Filmed in 1954 in a Colombian fishing town, The Blue Lobster anticipates Magical Realism with a tale of a foreign secret agent who is investigating radioactive lobsters. Lost for decades in Chilean archive, La maleta, the first film by celebrated auteur Raúl Ruiz, offers a surreal mix of suitcases and somnambulists. Mariana Bote’s El dedal de rosas, in collaboration with the actor-director-artist Juan José Gurrola, represents an intersection between two generations of Mexico’s avant-garde.

**COUNTERCULTURES AND UNDERGROUNDS**

OCTOBER 18, 2019

This program explores countercultural and underground practices across a range of local and global movements. Several films document performances, ephemeral actions, or public interventions, as in Narcisa Hirsch’s Marabunta, which documents her interaction with an audience coming out of a screening of Antonioni's Blow Up. Manuel Delanda’s Ismism captures the filmmaker’s own interventions on Manhattan billboards, rendered across the city with an X-Acto knife. Films by Sérgio Pêo and Rolando Peña disrupt urban spaces, while Alfredo Gurrola’s Segunda Primera Matriz uses poetry to in the service of radical, alternative culture.

**RECYCLED CINEMA & ESTRELLAS DE AYER: LATIN CAMP**

NOVEMBER 1, 2019

This evening offered two programs exploring alternative strategies of appropriation: found footage and camp. "Recycled Cinema" presented acts of decolonization and critique through collages of appropriated images and audio, challenging dominant modes of representation. The filmmakers in "Estrellas de Ayer" borrow an alternative reading of Hollywood stars, emphasizing queer nostalgia and excess. Films such as Teo Hernandez’s Estrellas de Ayer and José Rodríguez Soltero’s Lupe pay homage to Greta Garbo, Joan Crawford, Marlene Dietrich, and Lupe Vélez with performative extravagance.

“Encompassing work from more than a dozen countries and surveying more than eight decades of filmmaking, this program promises to profoundly reshape the way we understand the history of artists’ cinema.”
—Michael Metzger, Pick-Laudati Curator of Media Art.
The Block hosted five programs from the “Ism, Ism, Ism” series at its cinema at Northwestern University in Evanston, and co-presented another six programs at venues around Chicago.

**NIGHTINGALE CINEMA (1084 N MILWAUKEE AVE, CHICAGO, IL)**

**META: CINEMA CRITIQUES CINEMA OCTOBER 9, 2019**

In a reflexive mode, the filmmakers in this program contemplated their chosen medium, its history, defining characteristics and iconic movements.

**UMBRALES: EXPERIMENTAL WOMEN FILMMAKERS FROM LATIN AMERICA NOVEMBER 13, 2019**

This program showcases female filmmakers who sought to carve out a place within the male-dominated world of Latin American independent audiovisual production.

**FILMFRONT (1740 W 18TH ST, CHICAGO, IL)**

**DARK MATTER OCTOBER 12, 2019**

Military coups; civil wars; authoritarian regimes; U.S. led invasions; experimental cinema in Latin America has not escaped the impact of such ongoing forms of social upheaval. In many of these contexts, resistant social commentary can be a precarious, even dangerous, project. This program unfurled a roster of defiant expressions. With co-curator Jesse Lerner in person.

**BILINGUAL AESTHETICS OCTOBER 19, 2019**

A critical look at cinematic investigations around issues of languages, translation, and communication. This program explored the movement between languages as a manifestation of identity pluralities.

**COMFORT STATION (2579 N MILWAUKEE AVE, CHICAGO, IL)**

**PSYCHEDELIA AND ABSTRACTION NOVEMBER 6, 2019**

Abstraction has been a recurring strategy in Latin American visual cultures since long before the European Conquest.

**ACRE (1345 W 19TH ST, CHICAGO, IL)**

**URBAN HARMONIES/DISSONANT CITIES NOVEMBER 16, 2019**

This program offers a range of urban visions—some more celebratory, others more critical—of the architecture, daily life, public spaces, and transportation of cities such as Buenos Aires, Havana, Lima, Bogotá, Los Angeles, Santiago, and London.

“To achieve the transformative potential of programs like “Ism, Ism, Ism,” they need to be seen by diverse communities of viewers and makers—particularly in Chicago, where a network of galleries, museums and cinemas has emerged to meet the demand of audiences hungry for creative approaches to representation and inclusion. We are proud to be partnering with four of the city’s most exciting independent screening venues for this presentation. These venues share The Block’s dynamic and inclusive approach to programming, one which responds to the needs and interests of the communities they serve. By taking the mission of The Block beyond its walls, we seek to foster dialogue and inspiration throughout the city, and to play a leading role in shaping new, more expansive understandings of media history and culture.”

—Lisa Corrin
Block Museum Director

“These underseen works expand the conversation around the 20th century’s visual culture, which can be transformative for a new generation of artists, scholars and filmgoers.” Aaron Wang, The Daily Northwestern: Block Museum presents film series “Ism, Ism, Ism” (October 16, 2019)

• “Histories that we’ve missed”: Jesse Lerner on Ism, Ism, Ism [Audio] (Nov. 27, 2019)
• Block Museum brings rare Latin American films to Chicago (Sept. 23, 2019)
The Block is home to screenings and events that serve as sites of partnership, platforms for innovative scholarship, and springboards for discussion about contemporary life. These events provided rich discussion this year.
SISTERS IN CINEMA: AN EVENING WITH YVONNE WELBON
October 16, 2019
Block Cinema welcomed Chicago-based filmmaker (and Northwestern Film Studies PhD) Yvonne Welbon to present her 2003 documentary Sisters in Cinema. In the film, Welbon explores the history of African American women feature film directors from the 1920s onward, including Cheryl Dunye, Zeinabu irene Davis, Julie Dash, and others. An accomplished filmmaker herself, Welbon discussed her own experiences as a working artist, scholar, and advocate, including her current project, a brick-and-mortar cinema resource center on Chicago’s southside.

TWICE AS NICE (1989) WITH FILMMAKER JESSIE MAPLE
January 31, 2020
Competition, family, friendship, and community are explored through the lens of basketball in Jessie Maple’s Twice As Nice, which tells a story of twin college athletes competing to be the first female draft pick in the “MBA.” Rarely seen for decades after its debut, Twice as Nice was recently restored by the Black Film Center/Archive with support from the National Film Preservation Foundation, using long-missing elements discovered at a film lab. Director Jessie Maple is a true trailblazer: the first African-American woman to join the International Photographers of Motion Picture & Television union, she also established a long-running venue for independent Black filmmakers in her own home. Maple appeared in person to discuss the film, and her new memoir The Maple Crew, which reflects on these achievements.

COMPENSATION (1999)
February 27, 2020
Zeinabu irene Davis’ 1999 feature is one of the most formally audacious and emotionally resonant films ever made in Chicago. Telling two versions of a love story between a deaf woman and a hearing man—one set at the turn of the 20th century, the other in the 1990s—Compensation adopts a playful, fluid style, drawing on silent-film tropes and experimental montage techniques. 20 years after its debut, the film remains a revelation. The event featured an introduction by Gerald Butters (Professor, MA in Liberal Studies program at Northwestern University) and post-screening discussion with Butters, Golden Owens (PhD candidate in Screen Cultures at NU), and director Zeinabu irene Davis (via Skype). This film has subtitles in English. The post-screening conversation was sign language-interpreted.

ONE WAY OR ANOTHER (1974)
October 23, 2019
In more ways than one, Afro-Cuban filmmaker Sara Gómez (1942-1974) was a trailblazer—the first woman director at the Cuban Film Institute (ICAIC), she pioneered a hybrid documentary-narrative form with her only feature, De Cierta Manera (One Way or Another). The film uses a fictional love story between a man and woman from vastly different backgrounds to study the complexity of post-revolutionary Cuban society. Completed after Gómez’s sudden death at age 31, One Way or Another stands today as a major milestone in both Latin American and Black women’s cinema.

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CINEMA SERIES

PERSPECTIVES ON HORROR
EXPLORING THE GENRE’S HISTORY

In October 2019, Block Cinema explored the history of horror cinema through a variety of critical and creative lenses. Pairing new documentaries and classic films with in-depth introductions and discussions, including guest appearances by celebrated artists and scholars, this series to shed new light on film fright.

THE ELEPHANT MAN (1980)
October 10, 2019
Although noted for its evocative black and white cinematography and for John Hurt’s sensitive and powerful performance as Merrick, this classic film’s emotional landscape derives, as in all of Lynch’s works, from its rich, atmospheric use of sound. Introduction by seven time–Academy Award–winning sound designer Gary Rydstrom. Co-presented by Block Cinema with the MA in Sound Arts and Industries.

HORROR NOIRE: A HISTORY OF BLACK HORROR (2019)
October 25, 2019
Block Cinema welcomed scholar, author, and Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity at Texas A&M University, Robin R. Means Coleman to introduce and discuss the documentary Horror Noire, based on her field-changing 2011 book Horror Noire: Blacks in American Horror Films from the 1890s to the Present. Both the book and the film examine the alternately problematic and affirming history of Black Americans in the horror genre, in front of and behind the camera. Co-presented by Block Cinema with Humanities On the MAP, sponsored by the School of Communication.

I WALKED WITH A ZOMBIE (1943)
October 31, 2019
This collaboration between RKO producer Val Lewton and director Jacques Tourneur is one of the most celebrated in the history of horror, and I Walked with a Zombie may be the pair’s masterpiece. The film’s mesmerizing low-key cinematography conjures an atmosphere of exotic dread and uncertainty, but the darkest shadow cast in this Gothic melodrama is the one cast by the island’s ugly history of slavery and colonialism. This Halloween screening was introduced by Ashley R. Smith, doctoral candidate in Screen Cultures.

SERIES PRESS

NORTH BY NORTHWESTERN: Block Cinema examines horror films in new series (October 10, 2019)

“Of all film genres, horror is really the one that benefits the most from being seen in a group with other people, where it is a part of a collective experience.” Lami Zhang

“Something unexpected underneath the surface”: Sound Designer Gary Rydstrom on “The Elephant Man” [Audio]

November 25, 2019

BLOCK STORIES

The Elephant Man (1980)
SPECIAL EVENTS

CINEMA SELECTS

2019–2020

CHICAGOLAND SHORTS VOL. 5
SEPTEMBER 26, 2019
Organized by Full Spectrum Features, a nonprofit committed to producing, exhibiting, and supporting the work of women, LGBTQ, and minority filmmakers, this annual showcase of local work includes a dynamic selection of recent experimental, narrative, documentary, and performance-based short films. Curated by Raul Benitez (Full Spectrum Features/Comfort Film), Melika Bass (independent filmmaker/SAIC professor), and Emily Eddy (Nightingale Cinema/Onion City Film Festival/Video Data Bank), the program included work by graduates of NU’s MFA in Documentary Media program.

FÉLICITÉ (2017)
SEPTEMBER 27, 2019
The award-winning drama Félicité stars Congolese musician Véro Tshanda Beya Mputu as a nightclub singer who learns that her teenage son has been gravely injured in a motorcycle accident. As she races across Kinshasa to gather money for her son’s operation, director Alain Gomis juxtaposes Félicité’s dreamlike journey with her music, performed by Mputu with her ensemble, the Kasai Allstars. Gomis appeared in person for a discussion with a panel of Northwestern students and scholars. Co-sponsored by Block Cinema and the Northwestern Program in African Studies.

MY FIRST FILM (2019)
OCTOBER 4, 2019
Block Cinema presented My First Film a live multimedia performance in which filmmaker Zia Anger interacts with media on screen and with the audience, using real-time text, spontaneous Google searches, audience directives, and AirDrops. Through the performance, Anger probes and dissects her “abandoned” works to re-imagine the relationship between the audience, the filmmaker, the movie theater, and cinema. The event was a vital, singular, innovative performance that explored what it means to be a woman and an artist, showcasing Anger’s sensibilities and pushing the boundaries of cinematic experience.

CHICAGO READER: Zia Anger relies on herself with My First Film (October 3, 2019)
In My First Film, Anger critiques the flawed system that’s shaped her career. More importantly, she gives herself the space and agency to find out what it is she wants to say with her art when she doesn’t seek approval from the outside world. 

35 years after his landmark 1975 film The Battle of Chile vividly captured the chaos surrounding the overthrow of the Allende government, documentarian Patricio Guzmán returns to the painful memories of the Pinochet years in Nostalgia for the Light. This moving film explores Chile’s Atacama desert, home to one of the world’s most powerful observatories—and to the bones of hundreds of political prisoners abducted and murdered by the military regime. Guzmán artfully juxtaposes our universal search for answers with the quest for justice carried on by the nation’s survivors. Introduced by Lily Frusciante, doctoral candidate in Northwestern’s Department of Spanish & Portuguese.

NOSTALGIA FOR THE LIGHT (2010)
OCTOBER 17, 2019
2019 EYEWORKS FESTIVAL OF EXPERIMENTAL ANIMATION  NOVEMBER 2, 2019

Marking its tenth year (and its fifth year at Block), the Eyeworks Festival of Experimental Animation is a thoughtfully-curated showcase of abstract animation and unconventional character animation that features brand-new work, recent discoveries, and tantalizing retrospective selections. Founded and programmed by filmmakers and artists Alexander Stewart and Lilli Carré, this year’s presentation at Block included short works by Janie Geiser, Barbara Hammer, Allison Schulnik, Kevin Eskew, Sebastian Buerkner, and many more, in two different programs. In person: festival curators Alexander Stewart and Lilli Carré.

THE PRISON IN TWELVE LANDSCAPES (2016)  NOVEMBER 7, 2019

The Block welcomed Toronto-based filmmaker Brett Story for two nights of her acclaimed documentary films. The Prison in Twelve Landscapes explores the criminal justice system and mass incarceration in the U.S. from a number of oblique vantage points, rather than focusing on prisons themselves. Throughout, Story connects the ways that the prison-industrial complex reverberates through communities around the country, offering micro-portraits that illuminate the reach of the prison system beyond penitentiary walls. Co-presented by Block Cinema with the Kaplan Institute for the Humanities and the MFA in Documentary Media.

THE HOTTEST AUGUST (2019)  NOVEMBER 8, 2019

Brett Story’s newest film is billed as “a film about climate change, disguised as a portrait of collective anxiety.” The Hottest August offers snapshot of the state of the country in August 2017 as viewed by residents of New York City. What are people worried about and what do they see for the future? As the city swelters, Story weaves the people and places of NYC and its boroughs into a larger picture of a society buffeted from one crisis to the next, capped by the persistent threats brought on by climate change, Filmmaker Brett Story in person. Co-presented by Block Cinema with Humanities On the MAP, sponsored by the School of Communication and the MFA in Documentary Media.

WHOSE STREETS? (2017)  NOVEMBER 15, 2019

To commemorate the fifth anniversary of the Ferguson Uprising, Block Cinema partnered with Northwestern’s Black Arts Initiative and the Kaplan Institute for the Humanities to present Whose Streets?, a searing, up-close and personal document of the resistance movement that emerged in the wake of the killing of unarmed teenager Michael Brown by Missouri police. Filmmaker and activist Sabaah Folayan appeared in person to discuss the film, which offers both a chilling record of militarized police repression, and a stirring wake-up call to a new generation of civil rights activists.

After the film, Cinema hosted a discussion with Folayan, Emeka Ekwulum, PhD candidate in the Department of African American Studies, and Kristiana Rae Colón, playwright and co-founder of the #LetUsBreathe Collective, an alliance of artists and activists organizing through a creative lens to imagine a world without prisons and police. Co-presented with the Black Arts Initiative, the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, the Department of African American Studies, the Center for African American History, the Program in American History, the MFA Program in Documentary Media, and the Graduate School at Northwestern.
**AMAZEMENTS: VIDEOS BY EMILY VY DUKE AND COOPER BATTERSBY**  
**NOVEMBER 21, 2019**

For 25 years, Emily Vey Duke and Cooper Battersby have been producing one of the most singular and exciting bodies of work in experimental cinema. Their videos combine animation, wry humor, and custom-written songs into interwoven vignettes that explore the perplexities, heartaches, and fleeting wonders of the contemporary world. This program featured a selection of Duke and Battersby’s earlier work, as well as their most recent video, *You Were an Amazement on the Day You Were Born*. In person: artists Emily Vey Duke and Cooper Battersby. Presented by Block Cinema in partnership with the Northwestern Department of Art Theory and Practice.

**CHICAGO READER:** Emily Vey Duke and Cooper Battersby create bittersweet experimental videos exploring life’s big questions (November 21, 2019)

With “Amazements” Duke and Battersby provide a largely engrossing and refreshing view of some of the fundamental questions of human existence, and even manage to have a bit of a laugh while doing it. —Adam Mullins-Khatib

**WHEN THE EARTH TREMBLED, OR THE STRENGTH OF LOVE (1913)**  
**DECEMBER 6, 2019**

The first long film by the Lubin Manufacturing Company, an early cinema rival to Thomas Edison, *When the Earth Trembled* is both a family melodrama—about a father who interferes in his son’s marriage—and an early spectacle, with the 1906 San Francisco earthquake as a central focus. The film incorporates some of Lubin’s own newsreel footage of the quake’s aftermath, and features specially-built break-away sets. Many of Lubin’s films were destroyed in a vault fire a few years later; Trembled was accompanied by a selection of related films that survive purely by chance or only as fragments. Restored print courtesy of the San Francisco Silent Film Festival with live accompaniment by David Drazin.

**CARMEN JONES (1954)**  
**JANUARY 17, 2020**

Otto Preminger brought Georges Bizet’s beloved opera blazingly to the modern screen in Carmen Jones, famous for its daring, all-Black cast, its astonishing Cinemascope compositions, and above all for the bewitching star turn by Dorothy Dandridge. Playing the titular temptress, Dandridge established herself as a major talent, rewriting the possibilities of African American femininity on screen. Presented in an imported 35mm print from the British Film Institute.

**FAMILIES IN TRANSITION**  
**JANUARY 23, 2020**

This program brought together two documentary stories about families navigating the complexities of gender across generational and cultural lines. Oli Rodriguez’s autobiographical documentary, Lyndale, returns to footage shot over a decade ago, tracing his brother’s struggles with mental illness alongside his own transition experience. André Pérez’s web series “America in Transition” profiles the experiences of trans people of color; in the episode *A Family Matter*, Pérez explores the mother-son dynamics of transitioning. Pérez and Rodriguez appeared to discuss their films and their experiences as trans filmmakers in Chicago. Co-presented by Block Cinema with the Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, the NU Queer Pride Graduate Student Association, and the Northwestern Women’s Center. This event was also part of the Kaplan Institute for Humanities Dialogue 2019-2020: Memorializing.

**THE DAILY NORTHWESTERN:** The Block brings transgender stories to campus (January 23, 2020)

“The camera can be a way of seeing yourself from the outside or of getting some distance, either with yourself or between yourself and the people around you. It’s another way of creating intimacy or changing the terms of a relationship.” —Aaron Wang
GELİN (THE BRIDE) (1973)

FEBRUARY 21, 2020

Regularly cited as one of the best Turkish films of all time, Ömer Lütfi Akad’s The Bride narrates the struggles of a family who moves from rural Anatolia to modern Istanbul. With compassion and keen sociological insight, The Bride examines the effects of migration on traditional family structures. Known as the “masterless master” of Turkish film, Akad pioneered a realist style that transformed the nation’s cinema; The Bride, the first feature in his landmark trilogy on migration, is his masterpiece. Co-presented by Block Cinema with the Keyman Modern Turkish Studies program.

ELECTRO-PYTHAGORAS (A PORTRAIT OF MARTIN BARTLETT) (2017)

FEBRUARY 13, 2020

WITH SOUND DESIGNER ERNST KAREL

British film artist Luke Fowler lends his unmatched gift for portraiture to this sensitive, curious exploration of electronic music composer Martin Bartlett. Electro-Pythagoras turns the conventions of biographical documentary on their head, weaving personal photographs, letters, notes, rare performances, into a dense, evocative fugue. Sound artist Ernst Karel’s soundtrack is every bit as adventurous. Following the screening, Karel performed a quadrophonic sound composition, drawing on recordings from Bartlett’s archives. Co-presented by Block Cinema with the MFA in Documentary Media at Northwestern, the MA in Sound Arts and Industries, the Department of Performance Studies, and CHIRP Radio 107.1 FM.

PRESENT .PERFECT (2019)

FEBRUARY 28, 2020

Shengze Zhu’s award-winning experimental documentary Present.Perfect surveys contemporary China through the lives of live-streaming “anchors” broadcasting their everyday experiences to unseen audiences around the world. Chicago-based filmmaker Zhu crafts an absorbing, far-ranging cinematic essay on the construction and performance of identity, posing stark questions about community, labor, gender, disability, and the economic forces that shape our social realities In Person: filmmaker Shengze Zhu. Co-presented by Block Cinema with the MFA in Documentary Media at Northwestern.

A MOON FOR MY FATHER (2019) WITH FILMMAKER MANIA AKBARI

MARCH 5, 2020

At age 30, Iranian filmmaker Mania Akbari was diagnosed with breast cancer and underwent a double mastectomy. A Moon For My Father, an epistolary essay film made in collaboration with her partner, the British sculptor Douglas White, positions Akbari’s illness within layers of personal and national history. Rich in texture and astonishingly intimate, Akbari’s film presents memory as a poetic, embodied experience. Filmmaker Mania Akbari participated in a Q&A with Northwestern professor of Screen Cultures Hamid Naficy after the screening. Co-presented by Block Cinema with the Iranian American Fund for Cultural Programming and the Middle East and North African Studies program at Northwestern.
Filmmaker Oli Rodriguez (right) with Sekile Nzinga, Northwestern chief diversity officer (right)
Throughout her more than two-decade career, artist Sonya Clark has explored the meaning embedded in commonplace objects and materials such as textiles, hair, combs, and currency, to reflect on the complex issues of race, American history, and black cultural production. Her recent work presents challenging questions about nationhood and memorialization through the investigation, reconstruction, and dismantling of flags as symbols. Clark’s 2019 project Monumental Cloth, the Flag We Should Know, explores the symbolic legacy of the Confederate Battle Flag by invoking its lesser-known historical counterpart, the Confederate Flag of Truce. Clark discussed this work in the context of her larger oeuvre and was joined in conversation by Janet Dees, the Block’s Steven and Lisa Tananbaum Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art.

This discussion was presented in conjunction with the Kaplan Institute for Humanities Dialogue 2019-2020 Memorializing, a year-long conversation about commemorating, contesting, and claiming from humanistic perspectives. Co-presented by The Block Museum of Art, Department of Art Theory and Practice, and the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities.
February 18, 2020 marks posthumously the 86th birthday of Audre Lorde and the 89th birthday of Toni Morrison (the first since her death on August 15, 2019). M. Carmen Lane and Michael Rakowitz engaged in a public talk on ancestry, place, dispossession, and the steadfastness of survival. Using textual prompts from both Lorde and Morrison, the artists continued a dialogue that began half a decade ago and which has impacted both of their practices—which involves grief as both a material and a process that resists disconnection.

M. Carmen Lane was the February 2020 Artist in Residence of the Department of Art Theory and Practice and the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities. This talk was also part of the Kaplan Institute’s 2019-2020 Memorializing Dialogue. This event was co-presented by The Block Museum of Art, Department of Art Theory and Practice, Kaplan Humanities Institute and ATNSC Center for Healing & Creative Leadership.

Community members were invited to recognize and celebrate all those who help make Evanston a vibrant and creative community at the annual "A Bright Night for the Arts" celebration.

The event was hosted by Mayor Stephen Hagerty and the Evanston Arts Council, along with community partners, The Block Museum of Art at Northwestern University, the Evanston Chamber of Commerce, and Family Focus.

Mayor Hagerty presented the Mayor’s Awards for the Arts to honorees selected by the Evanston community and the Evanston Arts Council. "Bright Spots" on view for the event included a performance by Identity Dance. Evanston Made provided a slideshow highlighting work created by Evanston artists, and Evanston’s Terrain Biennial showcased the outdoor art installations for this year’s citywide exhibition.
Curatorial Associate Melanie Garcia Simpson works with Madeline Hultquist, Undergraduate Research Assistant.

DIGITAL TEACHING & LEARNING
Spring & Summer 2020
While operating remotely in Spring 2020, The Block Museum of Art embraced digital engagement and outreach as a core activity of its work in support of Northwestern's students and faculty, as well as the general Evanston community. A specially launched website TheBlockFromHome offered content selections for audiences to browse during the initial months of quarantine.

Throughout Spring 2020 The Block sought to:
- extend its commitment as a resource for interdisciplinary teaching, learning and research at Northwestern and beyond;
- showcase, cultivate, and catalyze thought-provoking discussions about art and its relevance to contemporary life;
- provide free, rich, and accessible arts and culture experiences for existing and new audiences.

“Collaboration with The Block enabled me to draw on the collection, as well as the expertise of staff, to expand the scope of my classes in ways that will leave a lasting impact both on the students' experience with the material we studied and also on my own pedagogy.”

- Topher Davis, Assistant Professor of French

Recognizing the importance of online research to students and faculty, The Block completed a major, multi-year digitization process to document all artworks in our collection with hi-res digital photography. In Spring 2020, The Block launched eMuseum, our new online collection database, making the over 7000 works in the collection available to all from anywhere at any time.
"We thought the work needed to be something that had a multi-dimensional engagement with history, meaning that it really kept up with The Block’s mission statement of presenting art across time, culture and media. We also need to diversify the current collection in terms of its medium and the identity of the artist. We wanted the work to reflect on multiple levels with social, historical, and personal history. We wanted to reframe perspectives and offer a new way of looking. We wanted it to surprise us and invite reflection and close looking and dialogue.”

– Brianna Heath (WCAS ’21)

CO-TAUGHT COURSE
COLLECTING/CRIQUE
ART, MUSEUMS, AND THINKING ABOUT HISTORY

SPRING 2020

Throughout Spring 2020, The Block co-presented a course with the Department of Art History, Collecting/ Critique: Art, Museums, and Thinking About History, examining ongoing debates in the museum field around collecting and presenting museum collections. The culmination of the course was a student-led acquisition of artwork for The Block collection facilitated through meetings with scholars, artists, and gallerists participating remotely.

2020 STUDENT ACQUISITION:
Myra Greene (American, born 1975), Undertone #17, #23, #51, from the series Undertones, 2017-18. Three stained-glass ambrotypes and acrylic shelf, Undertone #17: 4 1/8 x 3 in. (10.5 × 7.6 cm) Undertone #23: 4 x 2 15/16 in. (10.2 × 7.5 cm) Undertone #51: 3 x 4 in. (7.6 × 10.2 cm). Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, purchase funds donated by Richard and Susan Rieser.
During the Spring 2020 quarter, The Block’s 18 student docents actively engaged in remote learning focused on the museum’s collection. Adopting a work of art for their in-depth research, they become its “ambassador,” building a digital file that will support future teaching, exhibition development, and docent training. The students also fostered community through a remote social space, “The Virtual Block Spot,” where they met each Friday.

“I bring so much from The Block into my everyday life! Right now, I am carrying the many facilitation skills that The Block has taught me into my work for a student group a part of. As we navigate virtual meetings, the patience, consideration, and compassion that I have learned from The Block have been vital in ensuring that our conversations are always both productive and thoughtful.”
– Erin Claeys (Comm ’21)

“Being willing to have your mind changed, even in a leadership or facilitator position, and adopting a willingness to notice something new and to be surprised is a profound gift that docent work at the Block has given me, and one I don’t take for granted.”
– Meghan Considine (WCAS ’20)

Select student workers continued to contribute to The Block during Spring 2020, supporting our teaching mission and learning from our staff. A blog series titled Checking In On... allowed us to share their work with the public and celebrate their contributions.

The Block has been a central part of my undergraduate experience, and over the last few years, I miss spending afternoons in the Block library and seeing my wonderful colleagues every day, but working on these projects reminds me of the importance of art in our everyday lives, especially during challenging times like these. Engaging with art—both online and offline—opens space for reflection, for dreaming, for building strength and community.
– Lois Biggs (WCAS ’20)
PROJECT SPOTLIGHT
THE BLOCK INSTALLATION “CREW” IN QUARANTINE – A DIGITAL PROJECT

SPRING 2020

When the Spring 2020 exhibitions could not go forward as planned due to COVID-19 closure, The Block Museum and its scheduled installation team found innovative new ways to make meaning together.

When the ripples of the current COVID-19 pandemic were starting to be felt in mid-March, it became clear that we would have to temporarily shutter the museum. Our spring exhibition could not be installed in a pandemic. How could we honor our commitments to our loyal Crew of temporary workers and enable them to also honor their commitments to us; commitments that had been made many months prior to the pandemic’s necessary shelter-in-place response? How might we engage The Crew with our galleries closed?

The Block knew that our Crew, as gig economy workers, would be especially impacted by the pandemic because they could not perform their work from home. We also recognized that these individuals, so important for what the public experiences in museums, are often invisible to visitors. How could the Block raise awareness of their contributions and also draw attention to the fact that so many preparators are artists who support their creative practices by working behind-the-scenes in museums?

As a response to these questions, The Block suggested The Crew create new work using their originally scheduled hours. The Block proposed documenting this new work on the museum’s website along with profiles and statements introducing The Crew to the public.

This project became a special opportunity to learn first-hand how working with objects in museums impacts the creative process. We could not have wished for better collaborators as we entered into this first-of-its-kind endeavor. Our colleagues on The Crew not only embraced the unknown, but used this project to create inspiring, thoughtful projects; meeting the challenge of this moment with a spirit of inquiry, innovation, and generosity. We conclude the project with a renewed gratitude for The Crew’s contributions to the mission of The Block and with deeper appreciation of their collective work in the museum and in their individual work as artists.

“Project Spotlights acknowledge the crew of artists who are often invisible to the public, but without whom, exhibitions would not exist. These profiles on the Block Museum’s page serve to support us as skilled artists and preparators, and we are grateful to be included in the Northwestern community in this manner.”

–Christina Warzecha, artist, Block Museum preparator

Clockwise from top left: Work by Harry Kutter, Dave Ford, Ty Wubbenhorst, Christine Wallers, and Steve Lalik
“Artists are provocateurs. They are people who expand your thinking, transform, reveal, provoke. In our work with Dario Robleto we wanted someone curious. As scientists, Dario is our Socrates, challenging us to go beyond and ask different questions.”

– Julio M. Ottino, dean of Northwestern Engineering

Malcolm MacIver, Professor of Biomedical Engineering and Mechanical Engineering continued his ongoing partnership with artist Dario Robleto. Robleto serves as the McCormick School of Engineering and Block Museum of Art Artist-at-Large. Robleto connected remotely with MacIver’s students to discuss his ongoing artistic work around the idea of empathy in scientific and medical narratives.

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Melissa Simon, Director of the Northwestern Center for Health Equity Transformation, and a Northwestern Medicine Obstetrician and Gynecologist, has been caring for pregnant patients infected with the Covid-19 virus. In spring 2020, The Block began working with her team to develop a series of summer discussions for student health equity fellows using works of art from the Block’s collection focused on art and healing.

“I believe in the power of coming together as a museum and a Center located in a medical school to heal our city through conversations stimulated by works of art and with artists”

– Melissa Simon, Director of the Northwestern Center for Health Equity Transformation

Throughout the 2020 closure, The Block Museum continued to reach out to Northwestern faculty to offer support for remote teaching using works of art from the museum’s collection. Services included selection and consultation of databases and images, Block staff joining classroom digital discussions, and online lectures or workshops. Faculty also made use of The Block From Home web portal offering expanded visibility for the museum’s rich archived content. Visitors were invited to explore highlights from The Block’s audio, video and publication program from home or from the digital classroom.

Some units supported in Spring 2020:

- Art History
- McCormick School of Engineering
- Center for Leadership
- Linguistics
- French
- Anthropology
- OLLI

“At the Center for Leadership, we often use images to help people explore and deepen what they know about leadership, teamwork and mentoring others. People expect to see and talk about Abraham Lincoln. But what about art that is co-created by an artist working through others? This can speak to the subtle nature of how leadership and followership is less of a position or title and more of shared action. What about an image that upends who we think of as a leader or that sparks dialogue about a leader’s worst impulses? These conversations are possible because of our relationship with The Block. They brought art to our voice, selecting images and stories from their collection that speaks to these and so many other ideas. It is a signature that makes our work more effective and certainly unique.”

– Adam Goodman, Director, Northwestern Center for Leadership
What crosses continents, can travel 13 centuries into the past, and takes up just 10 MB on a smartphone? A multilingual, minimal computing project brings exhibition to African partners and users worldwide.

In Spring 2020, The Block Museum released a free, mobile web app designed to share the groundbreaking touring exhibition Caravans of Gold, with international audiences. Developed by The Block and the Northwestern Libraries in partnership with a team of undergraduate students, the digital project capitalizes on current developments in mobile technology as well as the ethical philosophies of the minimal computing movement.

The app was created to ensure that global audiences with limited or intermittent access to network bandwidth and mobile data, including project partners in Mali, Morocco, and Nigeria, are able to engage with the exhibition. Presented in English, French, and Arabic, a fully multilingual format offers accessibility to those in the exhibition’s African partner countries and beyond.

“Access to knowledge for all is an equity issue,” says Lisa Corrin, The Block’s Ellen Philips Katz Director. “The development of this app exemplifies The Block’s commitment to a global perspective, and to equity, core values of our work. The project is designed to take collaborative scholarship, originally generated through international partnerships, and ensure it is accessible to international communities.

During this process we grappled with pressing questions: What impact does our position as North American students have on our interpretation of African material culture for African audiences? How can we prioritize ethical strategies of presentation and interpretation?”

— Nicholas Liou (WCAS ’20)
In late Spring 2020, The Block Museum joined partners at the Office of Global Marketing and Communication to support the launch of #NUArtsAtHome, a University platform showcasing selections to Watch, Listen, and Learn from across Northwestern’s Arts units.

“The Arts are central to the Northwestern experience and the identity of our University. This platform brought Northwestern creativity in the arts to the world when it was most needed.”
- Lisa Corrin, Director, Block Museum of Art

“While our [the Block] offices may look different, we are all still working on our projects and looking to the future of the museum! I am excited to contribute to this project as it will bolster the amount of information available to the public and fellow students through our online resources. This is especially important now.”
- Madeline Hultquist (WCAS ’21)

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“Access to our collections, exhibitions and engagement programs reflects a core Block value—knowledge equity. Sharing selections of past programs enables the museum to fulfill its mission for art to be a springboard for discussions of ideas and issues that are relevant now and to provide access to these discussions far beyond Northwestern.”
- Lisa Corrin, Director

Each week during Spring 2020, The Block offered new releases from its back archive including lectures, panel discussions and performances. These interviews with innovative contemporary artists and filmmakers had never before been seen by the public.

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- Lisa Corrin, Director
The 2020 MFA degree candidates in Documentary Media at Northwestern University presented their thesis films online in the annual showcase of "NU Docs" through the Block Museum of Art. The NU Doc Media Thesis Showcase: Doppler Effect took place in two parts on Thursday, June 11th and Friday, June 12, 2020.

**PART 1: DARK GLASS**
A documentary film can take on the staggering task of reflecting our realities back at us. It has the power to shift the scale of this reflection from the life of one person to the slow-moving eddies of human history, and all scales in between. Rhythms and rhymes abound when cinema captures experience: a documentary offers a view of ourselves "through a glass, darkly." These imperfect visions make space for a poetry and truth that is arrived at by meditation. These five films will be our cloudy mirrors: they will show us forms that appear familiar and may even seem to track our own movements. Within each of these films lies its own bubble universe—a road existing in a quantum state—and you are the stationary observer. The program interrogated the possibility of cinema to show us ourselves in the form of each other; using the specificity and focus afforded by cinema to construct a bridge between worlds and identities.

Sacred Brick Technology, 2020, 13 mins.  
Ian Bertorelli

Ted, 2020, 20 mins.  
Cindy Zhang

A Distant Surface, 2020, 18 mins.  
Abbigail Vandersnick

Decisiones, 2020, 19 mins.  
Emmely Aldave

Reality Show, 2020, 16 mins.  
Xinyan Wang

**PART 2: HUMAN LOOM**
A shared history is a fabric that binds people together: a fabric woven on a giant loom busy with all of our hands, collectively picking at the warp as the shuttle of time ceaselessly flies back and forth. Documentaries can set out to pluck at these threads and to highlight the relationships and memories that bind us together by granting us the time necessary to experience this collective product of our lives. These five films are the weaver’s hands, stringing together moments of certainty and uncertainty teased out from a world’s worth of personal stories. What does it mean for us when that fabric begins to fray? Who do we look to repair and re-stitch these memories and relationships? The program tested the limits of cinema’s ability to do just that with five stories that expound on our connections—fractured or intact—and appeal to the ancient and restorative effect of storytelling itself.

Otros Tiempos, 2020, 11min.  
Mireya Guzmán-Ortiz

Suspensus, 2020, 14 mins.  
Milton Guillén

Everything Becomes One Year Ago, 2020, 17 min.  
Elana Meyers

tres cuartos y un techo, 2020, 18 mins.  
Isabella Ostos Campos

2047, 2020, 18min.  
Ready Ni
THE BLOCK MUSEUM OF ART

JUNE 17, 2020

In partnership with the TREE lab in Northwestern's School of Education and Social Policy, the Block Museum presented a special online screening of three documentaries produced by students of the Young People’s Race, Power, and Technology (YPRPT) project. YPRPT is an afterschool program, developed in conjunction with community partners including Evanston Township High School, Family Matters, Endangered Peace, and the Lucy Parsons Labs, bringing together NU undergraduate students with youth and community members to jointly investigate the ethical and social dimensions of specific law enforcement technologies such as facial recognition and gang databases.

The screening was introduced by the Block's associate film programmer Malia Haines-Stewart and professor Sepehr Vakil (Northwestern University) and then followed by a live panel discussion between the YPRPT student filmmakers and mentors. The conversation was moderated by Jessica Marshall (PhD student in Learning Sciences at Northwestern University School of Education and Social Policy).

Targeted by David Lewis, Jessica Rodriguez, Izadorius Tortuga
Racial Recognition by Yuzuka Komiyama-Kasai, Gregory Voelkel
Melting Ice by Eliana Chandra, Jazminé Morrow

To say that these films are deeply and acutely relevant is to state the obvious. For me, the power of education is in the values, perspectives and identities that we make possible in learning environments. Learning is about knowledge and skills, but it is also about developing a sense of self, a sensibility of compassion and care, and an informed awareness of power and injustice.

– Sepehr Vakil, Assistant Professor of Learning Science, SESP & Co-Founder of Northwestern’s TREE Labs

DESKTOP CINEMA WORKING GROUP

NEW DIGITAL ECOLOGIES

MAY 28, 2020

The Desktop Cinema Working Group is a nascent collective of scholar-filmmaker-curators committed to the significance of computer screen capture in moving-image practices. As more of our lives become hypermediated by the computer desktop, what insights can we glean from the wide range of contemporary works that deploy (or destroy) the space of the computer screen? What predictions, explanations, or possibilities can we find in the prehistory of this genre, in the longstanding interactions between graphical user interfaces and “cinema”? How do working artists exploit the genre’s possibilities to interrogate critical social, political, and environmental issues beyond the computer screen?

AS IF SAND WERE STONE... & WHAT IS DEEP SEA MINING?

Ben Mendelsohn’s As If Sand Were Stone... (35 min, 2019), is an essay film examining the making and remaking of urban waterfronts in New York City. Narrated by landscape architect Gena Wirth, the film analyzes dredging and sand filling as key infrastructural processes in the production of urban space. The film combines observational footage of New York’s massive harbor deepening project with a series of self-reflexive research spirals about human earth moving in the region. Mendelsohn’s documentary will screen alongside two episodes of What Is Deep Sea Mining? (12 min, 2018-2019), a series of innovative web documentaries by the Portuguese media collective Inhabitants. Following the screening, Mendelsohn and Inhabitants collaborator Margarida Mendes were in conversation with Jacob Leveton, PhD candidate in Art History at Northwestern University, Co-sponsored by the Environmental Humanities Working Group, the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, and the Program in Critical Theory at Northwestern.

“T O SAY THAT THESE FILMS ARE DEEPLY AND ACUTELY RELEVANT IS TO STATE THE OBVIOUS. FOR ME, THE POWER OF EDUCATION IS IN THE VALUES, PERSPECTIVES AND IDENTITIES THAT WE MAKE POSSIBLE IN LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS. LEARNING IS ABOUT KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS, BUT IT IS ALSO ABOUT DEVELOPING A SENSE OF SELF, A SENSIBILITY OF COMPASSION AND CARE, AND AN INFORMED AWARENESS OF POWER AND INJUSTICE.”

– Sepehr Vakil, Assistant Professor of Learning Science, SESP & Co-Founder of Northwestern’s TREE Labs
ACQUISITIONS & LOANS
THE BLOCK COLLECTION IN 2019-2020
John Cage (American, 1912–1992)
Score Without Parts (48 Drawings by Thoreau): Twelve Haiku
1978
Hardground etching, softground etching, photo etching, drypoint, sugarlift aquatint, and engraving on paper
22 ¼ x 29 7/8 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of George Austin Conkey, M.D.
2019.23.1

John Cage (American, 1912–1992)
Changes and Disappearances No. 16
1979–82
Color etching with photostitching, engraving and drypoint on paper
11⅛ x 22⅛ inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of George Austin Conkey, M.D.
2019.23.2

John Cage (American, 1912–1992)
17 Drawings by Thoreau
1978
Photoetching on paper
24 ½ x 36 ½ inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of George Austin Conkey, M.D.
2019.23.3

John Cage (American, 1912–1992)
On the Surface
1980–82
Accidental marks printed in color from shaped plates on handmade paper
18 5/8 x 24 ¾ inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of George Austin Conkey, M.D.
2019.23.4

John Cage (American, 1912–1992)
HV 18
1983
Color monotype collograph on paper
18 ½ x 11 ¾ inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of George Austin Conkey, M.D.
2019.23.5

John Cage (American, 1912–1992)
Dereau No. 6
1982
Color etching with aquatint, engraving, photostitching and drypoint on paper
18 ¼ x 24⅛ inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of George Austin Conkey, M.D.
2019.23.6

John Cage (American, 1912–1992)
EninKa No. 45
1986
Smoked paper monotype with branding on gampi paper chin cloth
24 ¾ x 18 ¾ inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of George Austin Conkey, M.D.
2019.23.7

John Cage (American, 1912–1992)
Without Horizon No. 2
1992
Drypoint, aquatint, and hard and soft ground etching on smoked paper
7 3/8 x 8 5/8 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of George Austin Conkey, M.D.
2019.23.8

John Cage (American, 1912–1992)
Dramatic Fire
1989
Aquatint and embossing on smoked paper
18 x 22 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of George Austin Conkey, M.D.
2019.23.9

Andrea Carlson (Grand Portage Ojibwe, b. 1979)
Anti-Retro
2018
Color screenprint on paper
34 x 48 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, purchase funds donated by Julie and Lawrence Bernstein Family Art Acquisition Fund, Press Collection Endowment Fund, and Block Museum Special Projects Fund
2019.3

Bethany Collins (American, born 1984)
April 9, 1963
2016
Embossed paper
26 ¾ x 18 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, purchase funds donated by Julie and Lawrence Bernstein Family Art Acquisition Fund, Press Collection Endowment Fund, and Block Museum Special Projects Fund
2019.3

Richard Diebenkorn (American, 1922–1993)
X
1986
Drypoint with hand ground etching and aquatint on paper
19 ½ x 13 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of James and Marjorie Krebs
2019.19.1
Rosalie Favell (Canadian, born 1958)
Facing the Camera: Nicholas Galarrwuy, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 2012
2012
Inkjet print
17 × 22 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, Black Friends of Art
Fund purchase
2019.26.6
Rosalie Favell (Canadian, born 1958)
Facing the Camera: Nicholas Galarrwuy, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 2012
2012
Inkjet print
17 × 22 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, Black Friends of Art
Fund purchase
2019.26.7
Rosalie Favell (Canadian, born 1958)
Facing the Camera: Shan Goshorn, Santa Fe, NM, 2012
2012
Inkjet print
17 × 22 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, Black Friends of Art
Fund purchase
2019.26.8
Rosalie Favell (Canadian, born 1958)
Facing the Camera: Marie Watt, New York, 2010
2010
Inkjet print
17 × 22 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, Black Friends of Art
Fund purchase
2019.26.9
Rosalie Favell (Canadian, born 1958)
Facing the Camera: Charlene Teters, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 2011
2011
Inkjet print
17 × 22 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, Black Friends of Art
Fund purchase
2019.26.10
Rosalie Favell (Canadian, born 1958)
Facing the Camera: James Luna, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 2011
2011
Inkjet print
17 × 22 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, Black Friends of Art
Fund purchase
2019.26.11
Rosalie Favell (Canadian, born 1958)
Facing the Camera: Peter Bence, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 2012
2012
Inkjet print
17 × 22 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, Black Friends of Art
Fund purchase
Rosalie Favell (Canadian, born 1958)
Facing the Camera: Marie Watt, New York, 2010
2010
Inkjet print
17 × 22 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, Black Friends of Art
Fund purchase
2019.26.13
Leonard Havens (American, 1914–1973)
Nature’s Revenge
1940
Linoleum cut on paper
18 ½ × 16 ½ inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Raye and Shelly Isenberg
2020.1.1
Leonard Havens (American, 1914–1973)
Total War
1943
Linoleum cut on paper
11 ¼ × 8 3/8 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Raye and Shelly Isenberg
2020.1.2
Leonard Havens (American, 1914–1973)
Memories of Japan
Undated
Linoleum cut on paper
8 ½ × 11 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Raye and Shelly Isenberg
2020.1.3
Leonard Havens (American, 1914–1973)
Standing Nude
Undated
Linoleum cut on paper
8 ½ × 6 ½ inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Raye and Shelly Isenberg
2020.1.4
Leonard Havens (American, 1914–1973)
Nature’s Revenge
1940
Linoleum cut on paper
18 ½ × 16 ½ inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Raye and Shelly Isenberg
2020.1.5
Leonard Havens (American, 1914–1973)
Factory
1938
Color woodcut on paper
12 3/8 × 8 1/2 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Raye and Shelly Isenberg
2020.1.6
The series I call Facing the Camera is the start of a large document of Indigenous artists. Between the years of 2008 and 2018 and in various locations in Canada, the United States, and Australia, 500 portraits were made. The impetus for the series derived from my realization that a document had not been made of individuals who make up the Indigenous arts community...I use the portrait convention to acknowledge the agency of the individual in bringing together in a conscious and unconscious way, the numerous cultural and personal factors through which the sense of self is expressed.”
– Rosalie Favell, artist
Showing a city underpass at the late hour, Martin Lewis’s Arch, Midnight conveys a fraught moment in city night life with contrasts of shadows and light. A master of intaglio printmaking, Lewis often depicted city life at moments of activity, exploring themes of loneliness and companionship. Lewis was a friend of the artist Edward Hopper, whose Cat Boat he shows a leisure activity on the Hudson River. Although Hopper became a painter primarily, the artist sought Lewis’s advice during the period early in his career when he made etchings.”

—Caroline Granof, Academic Curator

Leonard Havens (American, 1914–1973)
Jazz Musicians
Undated
Lithograph on paper
12 ¾ × 17 ¼ inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, gift of Raye and Shelly Isenberg
2020.1.7

Martin Lewis (American, 1881–1962)
Bleak in the Thunderstorm
1930
Drypoint on paper
15 1/2 × 13 1/2 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Belverd E. Needles, Jr. and Marian Powers
2019.33.1

Peggy Lipschutz (American, 1918–1981)
Untitled, from a storyboard series depicting the Haymarket Affair
ca. 1970s
Pen and ink on paper
28 × 30 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Ruth Lipschutz
2019.31.3

Peggy Lipschutz (American, 1918–1981)
Untitled, from a storyboard series depicting the Haymarket Affair
ca. 1970s
Pen and ink on paper
28 × 30 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Ruth Lipschutz
2019.31.6

Peggy Lipschutz (American, 1918–1981)
Untitled, from a storyboard series depicting the Haymarket Affair
ca. 1970s
Pen and ink on paper
28 × 30 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Ruth Lipschutz
2019.31.7

Peggy Lipschutz (American, 1918–1981)
Untitled, from a storyboard series depicting the Haymarket Affair
ca. 1970s
Pen and ink on paper
28 × 30 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Ruth Lipschutz
2019.31.8

Peggy Lipschutz (American, 1918–1981)
Untitled, from a storyboard series depicting the Haymarket Affair
ca. 1970s
Pen and ink on paper
28 × 30 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Ruth Lipschutz
2019.31.9

Peggy Lipschutz (American, 1918–1981)
Sketchbook
ca. 1970s
Sketchbook with drawings in chalk and pastel on newsprint
5 1/10 × 12 1/2 × 18 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Ruth Lipschutz
2019.31.10
Elizabeth Murray (American, 1948–2007)

Dotty
2000

Color woodcut and linocut on paper
29 1/2 x 16 1/2 x 15 1/4 inches

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art,
Northwestern University, gift of James and Margie Krebs
2019.19.8

Stan Natchez (Shoshone/Paiute, born 1954)

Untitled
Date unknown

Monotype on paper
31 x 25 1/4 inches

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art,
Northwestern University, gift of James and Margie Krebs
2019.19.5


London Site 5
1984

Color monotype on paper
19 x 18 inches

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art,
Northwestern University, gift of James and Margie Krebs
2019.19.9

Nam June Paik (American, born Seoul, South Korea, 1932–2006)

Cage-Cunningham
1985

Color lithograph on paper
22 3/4 x 26 1/2 inches

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art,
Northwestern University, gift of George Austin Conkey, M.D.
2019.23.10


FlamencO
Undated

Screenprint on paper
38 x 26 inches

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art,
Northwestern University, gift of Marc and Sharon Paschke
2019.20.1


FlamencO
1991

Color screenprint on paper
26 3/16 x 27 1/4 inches

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art,
Northwestern University, gift of Marc and Sharon Paschke
2019.20.2

Peggy Lipschutz (American, 1918–2019)

Sketchbook
ca. 1970s

Sketchbook with drawings in chalk and pastel on newsprint
5/8 x 18 x 24 inches

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art,
Northwestern University, gift of Ruth Lipschutz
2019.31.11

Peggy Lipschutz (American, 1918–2019)

Sketchbook
ca. 1970s

Sketchbook with drawings in chalk and pastel on newsprint
5/8 x 24 x 18 inches

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art,
Northwestern University, gift of Ruth Lipschutz
2019.31.12

Peggy Lipschutz (American, 1918–2019)

Sketchbook
ca. 1970s

Sketchbook with drawings in chalk and pastel on newsprint
3/8 x 18 x 24 inches

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art,
Northwestern University, gift of Ruth Lipschutz
2019.31.13

Peggy Lipschutz (American, 1918–2019)

Sketchbook
ca. 1970s

Sketchbook with drawings in chalk and pastel on newsprint
3/8 x 18 x 24 inches

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art,
Northwestern University, gift of Ruth Lipschutz
2019.31.14

Peggy Lipschutz (American, 1918–2019)

Sketchbook
ca. 1970s

Sketchbook with drawings in chalk and pastel on newsprint
3/8 x 18 x 24 inches

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art,
Northwestern University, gift of Ruth Lipschutz
2019.31.15

Peggy Lipschutz (American, 1918–2019)

Sketchbook
ca. 1970s

Sketchbook with drawings in chalk and pastel on newsprint
5/16 x 12 x 18 inches

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art,
Northwestern University, gift of Ruth Lipschutz
2019.31.16

Brice Marden (American, born 1938)

Suzhou II
1998

Etching and sugarlift aquatint, drypoint, and scraping printed in colors on paper
26 x 18 1/2 inches

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art,
Northwestern University, gift of James and Margie Krebs
2019.19.4

Peggy Lipschutz (American, 1918–2019)

Sketchbook
ca. 1970s

Sketchbook with drawings in chalk and pastel on newsprint
5/16 x 12 x 18 inches

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art,
Northwestern University, gift of Ruth Lipschutz
2019.31.17

Peggy Lipschutz (American, 1918–2019)

Sketchbook
ca. 1970s

Sketchbook with drawings in chalk and pastel on newsprint
5/16 x 12 x 18 inches

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art,
Northwestern University, gift of Ruth Lipschutz
2019.31.18

Peggy Lipschutz (American, 1918–2019)

Sketchbook
ca. 1970s

Sketchbook with drawings in chalk and pastel on newsprint
5/16 x 12 x 18 inches

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art,
Northwestern University, gift of Ruth Lipschutz
2019.31.19

Peggy Lipschutz (American, 1918–2019)

Sketchbook
ca. 1970s

Sketchbook with drawings in chalk and pastel on newsprint
5/16 x 12 x 18 inches

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art,
Northwestern University, gift of Ruth Lipschutz
2019.31.20

Peggy Lipschutz (American, 1918–2019)

Sketchbook
ca. 1970s

Sketchbook with drawings in chalk and pastel on newsprint
5/16 x 12 x 18 inches

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art,
Northwestern University, gift of Ruth Lipschutz
2019.31.21


1965, printed 1996

Gelatin silver print
14 x 11 inches

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art,
Northwestern University, gift of Barbara Moore/ Bound & Unbound
2019.24.2


Yoko Ono’s “Morning Piece,” September 12, 1965
1993

Gelatin silver print
14 x 11 inches

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art,
Northwestern University, gift of George Austin Conkey, M.D.
2019.23.10


Diabolical Machine
1947

Woodcut on paper
18 x 12 inches

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art,
Northwestern University, gift of Laura Chrisman
2019.22
The artist Kameelah Janan Rasheed uses a visual language familiar to many—rows of circles from a multiple-choice exam—to encourage us to question the logic of systems whose authority might be taken for granted. The print looks like a warped negative of a machine-readable answer sheet, with the circles contorted in a way that undermines the perceived order of the whole exercise. She also plays on the dual valence of the word “inequality,” innocuous in the context of math, but highly charged in the context of social justice.

– Melanie Garcia Sympson, Curatorial Associate
Edward Steichen (American, born Luxembourg, 1879–1973)

Lady in the Doorway
1897
Gelatin silver print mounted on board
7 ¼ x 9 5/16 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee Hollander
2019.29.5

Interloper, Voulangis, France
1928, printed 1950s
Gelatin silver print
13 7/8 x 18 15/16 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee Hollander
2019.29.6

Time-Space Continuum
ca. 1926, printed 1950s
Gelatin silver print
1 1/4 x 2 11/16 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee Hollander
2019.29.7

Out of the Night
ca. 1927
Gelatin silver print
11 15/16 x 8 7/8 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee Hollander
2019.29.8

Diagram of Doom # 1
1922
Gelatin silver print
9 5/8 x 7 11/16 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee Hollander
2019.29.13

Diagram of Doom # 2
1922
Gelatin silver print
9 5/8 x 7 11/16 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee Hollander
2019.29.14

Diagram of Doom # 3
1922
Gelatin silver print
9 5/8 x 7 11/16 inches
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee Hollander
2019.29.15
ACQUISITIONS

2019-2020

Edward Steichen (American, born Luxembourg, 1879–1973)

- Carl Sandburg
  1923
  Gelatin silver print, toned
  18 × 8 inches
  Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee
  Hollander 2019.29.16

Edward Steichen (American, born Luxembourg, 1879–1973)

- Carl Sandburg, Elmhurst, Illinois
  1923
  Gelatin silver print
  18 × 8 inches
  Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee
  Hollander 2019.29.17

Edward Steichen (American, born Luxembourg, 1879–1973)

- Vase with White Leafy Flower #5
  ca. 1926
  Platinum print
  9 15/16 × 7 15/16 inches
  Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee
  Hollander 2019.29.18

Edward Steichen (American, born Luxembourg, 1879–1973)

- Model Peggy Fish, for Vogue
  1928
  Gelatin silver print
  18 × 8 inches
  Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee
  Hollander 2019.29.19

Edward Steichen (American, born Luxembourg, 1879–1973)

- Flowers
  1879–1973
  Gelatin silver print
  18 × 8 1/8 inches
  Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee
  Hollander 2019.29.20

Edward Steichen (American, born Luxembourg, 1879–1973)

- Foxgloves, France
  1879–1973
  Gelatin silver print
  18 × 8 inches
  Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee
  Hollander 2019.29.21

Edward Steichen (American, born Luxembourg, 1879–1973)

- Greta Garbo, Hollywood
  1928
  Gelatin silver print mounted on board
  9 15/16 × 8 inches
  Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee
  Hollander 2019.29.22

Edward Steichen (American, born Luxembourg, 1879–1973)

- Advertisement for Jergens Lotion
  1928
  Gelatin silver print
  9 15/16 × 7 15/16 inches
  Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee
  Hollander 2019.29.23

Edward Steichen (American, born Luxembourg, 1879–1973)

- Advertisement for Jergen’s Lotion
  1929
  Gelatin silver print
  18 × 8 inches
  Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee
  Hollander 2019.29.24

Edward Steichen (American, born Luxembourg, 1879–1973)

- Advertisement for Kodak
  ca. 1930
  Gelatin silver print
  18 × 8 inches
  Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee
  Hollander 2019.29.25

Edward Steichen (American, born Luxembourg, 1879–1973)

- Amelia Earhart, for Vanity Fair
  1931
  Gelatin silver print
  18 × 8 inches
  Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee
  Hollander 2019.29.26

Edward Steichen (American, born Luxembourg, 1879–1973)

- Advertisement for Coty Lipstick, for Vogue
  1934
  Gelatin silver print
  18 × 8 inches
  Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee
  Hollander 2019.29.27

Edward Steichen (American, born Luxembourg, 1879–1973)

- Nudo Tono, for Vogue Beauty Primer
  1934, printed 1950s
  Gelatin silver print
  13 15/16 × 18 15/16 inches
  Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee
  Hollander 2019.29.28

Edward Steichen (American, born Luxembourg, 1879–1973)

- Models in Gowns by Madeleine Vionnet, for Vogue
  1926, printed 1960s
  Gelatin silver print
  18 × 8 inches
  Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee
  Hollander 2019.29.29

Edward Steichen (American, born Luxembourg, 1879–1973)

- Amelie Earhart, for Vanity Fair
  1931
  Gelatin silver print
  18 × 8 inches
  Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee
  Hollander 2019.29.30

“...The Hollanders’ generous gifts have become the foundation of our modern photography collection here at The Block. These vibrant works continue to live and breathe through study here at the museum. These works will be placed within the context of a collection that is not only deepening its foundational strengths but actively expanding outward, growing in the diversity of represented artists and global perspectives it represents. New generations of scholars will be able to find ways in which Steichen’s work takes on unexpected meanings when placed within these global dialogues and new resonances with contemporary issues and ideas.”

- Lisa Corrin, The Block’s Ellen Philips Katz Director
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object ID</th>
<th>Acquisition Information</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019.29.40</td>
<td>Northwestern University, gift of Richard and Jackie Hollander in memory of Ellyn Lee</td>
<td>8 1/16 × 5 13/16 inches</td>
<td>Platinum print</td>
<td>Edward Steichen (American, born Luxembourg, 1879–1973)</td>
<td>Otto Neurath’s Seating Arrangement for Congress</td>
<td>ca. 1905</td>
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**Unidentified photographers**

**Snapshots**

**Late 19th–20th century**

Selection of 223 photographs from the Peter Cohen J. Cohen Collection Various dimensions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acquisition Information</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northwestern University, gift of Peter J. Cohen</td>
<td>Various dimensions</td>
<td>Selection of 223 photographs from the Peter Cohen J. Cohen Collection</td>
<td>James A. McNeill Whistler (American, 1834–1903)</td>
<td>Little Venice</td>
<td>1890</td>
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<td>2019.33.4</td>
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Peter J. Cohen is a New York–based collector of snapshots and vernacular photographs. From a modest start at a local flea market over two decades ago, Cohen’s stunning collection has since swelled to more than 60,000 photographs organized into 130 categories. Peter J. Cohen is a New York–based collector of snapshots and vernacular photographs. From a modest start at a local flea market over two decades ago, Cohen’s stunning collection has since swelled to more than 60,000 photographs organized into 130 categories. Block Museum acquisitions were made in conjunction with faculty advisors.

“Purvis Young (1943–2010) produced a sizable body of work that includes paintings, murals, books, and drawings. Across these media, he explored themes reflecting his responses to the tumultuous events and social changes that took place in Overtown, Florida, where he spent his entire life. He would return to these themes—the destruction of predominantly African American urban neighborhoods like Overtown caused by systemic racism and disenfranchisement, the transhistorical struggles of immigrants and people of color, and the hopes of these communities—throughout his career, using materials scavenged from the neighborhood. “What you find on the street is yours. You don’t have to pay man for it. It was there for you.”
Exploring Aspects of War In and Through the Visual Arts
Northern Illinois University
August 27 through November 13, 2019

Exploring Aspects of War tackles the complex relationship of art in the depiction of war. The visual arts have served in all cultures and periods to document, motivate, memorialize, facilitate healing, critique and protest military action. Exploring Aspects of War In and Through the Visual Arts considers views on war and military conflict from the perspective of the homefront, the battlefield and back home again.

Works on view in the exhibition range from contemporary installation sculptures, documentary photographs, to historic seventeenth century prints and cover a wide scope of perspectives including veteran self-expression, art therapy, patriotism, protest, and shifting social and political views.

Guided by input from the Exhibition Advisory Committee, Art Museum staff curated this exhibition from artwork offered in a public call for entry, invited artists, works borrowed from other institutions and private collections, as well as the NIU Art Museum collection.

Jacques Callot, French, 1592 – 1635
Burning at the Stake, plate 13 from the series Les misères et les malheurs de la guerre (The Miseries and Misfortunes of the War), 1633
Etching
3 ¾ in x 7 3/8 in
gift of Vivian S. Kaplan, 2011.17.11

Jacques Callot, French, 1592 – 1635
The Wheel, plate 14 from the series Les misères et les malheurs de la guerre (The Miseries and Misfortunes of the War), 1633
Etching
3 ¾ in x 7 5/16 in
gift of Vivian S. Kaplan, 2011.17.12

Siri Magerin
I'm a Sharpshooter, Chantelle Batesman, from the portfolio War is Trauma, 2011
Offset color lithograph
16 in x 12 in
gift of the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, Northwestern University, 2011.7.4.3

Jeremy Begson
Hanging Tree, from the portfolio War is Trauma, 2011
Silkscreen
16 in x 12 1/8 in
gift of the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, Northwestern University, 2011.7.4.4

Drew Cameron
You Are Not My Enemy, from the portfolio War is Trauma, 2011
Silkscreen
16 in x 12 in
gift of the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, Northwestern University, 2011.7.4.5

Eric Ruin
War is Trauma (Soldier and Woman in Iraq), from the portfolio War is Trauma, 2011
Silkscreen
16 in x 12 in
gift of the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, Northwestern University, 2011.7.4.6

Ash Hyric
Lamiamh Ali, from the portfolio War is Trauma, 2011
Silkscreen
12 in x 16 in
gift of the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, Northwestern University, 2011.7.4.14

Josh MacPhee
Captain America, from the portfolio War is Trauma, 2011
Silkscreen
16 in x 12 in
gift of the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, Northwestern University, 2011.7.4.18

Roger Peet
War is Trauma for Humans and Otherwise, from the portfolio War is Trauma, 2011
Silkscreen
16 in x 12 1/2 in
gift of the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, Northwestern University, 2011.7.4.21

Jane Puroi
War is Trauma, Grenada, from the portfolio War is Trauma, 2011
Silkscreen
16 in x 12 in
gift of the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, Northwestern University, 2011.7.4.22

Lamiamh Ali
You Are Not My Enemy, from the portfolio War is Trauma, 2011
Silkscreen
16 in x 12 in
gift of the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, Northwestern University, 2011.7.4.24

Rodney Watson
War is Trauma, Grenade, from the portfolio War is Trauma, 2011
Silkscreen
16 in x 12 in
gift of the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, Northwestern University, 2011.7.4.25

Mary Tremont
Extreme Art Resistances, from the portfolio War is Trauma, 2011
Silkscreen
16 in x 12 in
gift of the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, Northwestern University, 2011.7.4.29

Pete Yahnke
Redsoy Watson, from the portfolio War is Trauma, 2011
Silkscreen
16 in x 12 in
gift of the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, Northwestern University, 2011.7.4.33
DARIO ROBLETO’s exhibition for the Radcliffe Institute examines the 19th-century origins of the pulse wave as a graphic expression of internal life. Robleto explores the history of the 18th- and 19th-century romantic poets who imagined the subject’s vulnerability to the senses, the emotional experience, and the invisible essence of the body. Robleto’s multimedia installation, based on extensive archival research, reawakens the intimacy, beauty, and ineffable emotional and sensory experiences first became visible as data. These waveforms eventually led to the discovery of the pulse wave, transforming the way doctors and scientists were able to diagnose and treat illness, leading to the development of modern medical technology and screening for disease.

**Exhibition re-opened on July 24 through Sept 27, 2020**

**Nigerian-born British designer DURO OLOWU is internationally recognized for his women’swear label launched in 2004. Characterized by unique fabrics, evocative patterns, and impeccable construction, the London-based designer’s garments are informed by his international background and curator’s eye. Olowu’smnatidional and multicultural viewpoint has translated into widely popular platforms and projects from his dynamic Instagram audience to his revelatory curatorial projects in London and New York.**

Now Olowu turns his cosmopolitan eye to Chicago. Drawing from the city’s public and private art collections including works in the MCA’s collection, Olowu curates a show that reimagines relationships between artists and objects across time, media, and geography. Moving away from traditional exhibition formats, Olowu combines photographs, paintings, sculptures, and films in dense and textural scenes that express a cosmopolitan point of view that has translated into widely popular platforms and projects from his dynamic Instagram audience to his revelatory curatorial projects in London and New York.

**DURO OLOWU: Seeing Chicago**

**Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago**

**February 28, 2020 – May 10, 2020**

**Exhibition closed on March 17, 2020 due to COVID-19**

**Exhibition re-opened on July 24 through Sept 27, 2020**

**Yves Klein, French, 1928 – 1962**

**Monochrome and Fleur (Triptych)**

**Color silkscreens and gold leaf on cardboard**

18 in x 35 in

gift of Bill and Sheila Lambert, 2014.4.73

**Sam Gilliam, American, born 1933**

**Ona, 1970**

**Acrylic on unstretched canvas**

92 x 67 in. (233.7 x 170.2 cm)

gift of the Collection of Walter A. Netsch and Dawn Clark Netsch, 2016.5

**Heman Brathwaite, American, born 1938**

**Untitled (Noma Brath with earnings designed by Caroline Prince), 1966, printed 2017**

**Inkjet print**

38 x 36 in. (96.2 x 76.2 cm)

Guests arrive to the Block.

2019 - 2020 OPERATIONS
BLOCK STAFF

Ellen Philips Katz Director
Associate Director of Curatorial Affairs
Interdisciplinary Graduate Fellow
Senior Manager of Marketing & Communications
Assistant Director of Collections and Exhibition Management, Senior Registrar
Development Program Assistant
Manager of Visitors Services
Steven & Lisa Munster Tananbaum Curator of Modern And Contemporary Art
Art History Graduate Fellow
Academic Curator
Associate Film Programmer
Director of Development
Lead Preparator
Head Projectionist

LISA GRAZIOSE CORRIN
KATHLEEN BICKFORD BERZOCK
SIMRAN BHALLA
LINDSAY BOSCH
KRISTINA BOTTOMLEY
THERESA BUSCH-REED
AARON CHATMAN
JANET DEES
CAIT DIMARTINO
CORINNE GRANOF
MALIA HAINES-STEWART
ELISA QUINLAN
MARK LEONHART
REBECCA LYON

Pick-Laudati Curator of Media Arts
Susan & Stephen Wilson Associate Director, Campus and Community Education and Engagement
Visitors Services Officer
Media & Communications Coordinator
Assistant to the Director
Associate Curator of Collections
Engagement Coordinator & Educator
Collections and Exhibitions Coordinator
Business Administrator
Associate Director of Collections & Exhibitions Management
Senior Business Administrator
Visitors Services Office
Curatorial Research Associate
Curatorial Associate
Visitors Services Associate
Senior Advancement Manager

MICHAEL METZGER
ERIN NORTHINGTON
ROCIO OLASIMBO
EMMANUEL RAMOS-BARAJAS
JENNA ROBERTSON
ESSI RÖNKKÖ
AMÉRICA SALOMÓN
JOE SCOTT
RITA SHORTS
DAN SILVERSTEIN
JEFF SMITH
JAMES STAUBER
ALISA SWINDELL
MELANIE GARCIA SYMPSON
VINCENT TAYLOR
KATE HADLEY TOFTNESS

Visitor Services during the Pop América Opening Celebration.
In the 2019 - 2020 year we said goodbye to Engagement Manager Lauren Cochard Watkins and Associate Registrar, Veronica Robinson. We welcomed Malia Haines-Stewart into the role of Associate Film Programmer, Emmanuel Ramos-Barajas into the role of Media and Communications Coordinator, Alisa Swindell into the role of Curatorial Research Associate, and Theresa Busch-Reed into the role of Development Program Assistant.

The Block Museum of Art also welcomed Erin Northington into a senior position as the Susan and Stephen Wilson Associate Director of Campus and Community Education and Engagement.

Northington comes to The Block from Harvard University where she served as the Assistant Director of Student Programs and Campus Initiatives at the Harvard Art Museums and has held roles of progressive leadership since 2011.

At the Harvard Art Museums, Northington directed student engagement and campus outreach initiatives, including co-curricular programming for students of all backgrounds and levels of museum experience, collaborations with campus offices, and long-term partnerships with groups who have been historically underrepresented in the museum field. During her tenure, she established the Harvard Art Museums Student Board, a multidisciplinary undergraduate advisory and ambassadorial group that works alongside museum staff and leadership to better integrate the museum into student life and respond to contemporary concerns.
Winnetka, IL, Appointed 2011, Chair, Board of Advisors, President and CEO, Artists’ Concepts, Inc. (WCAS’66) (SP WCAS’66) (Parent ’93)

Chicago, IL, Appointed 2015, Art Collector (SP KSM’97)

New York, NY, Appointed 2017, Vice Chancellor, Marketing and Communications, Rutgers University (MDL’81)

New York, NY, Appointed 2018, Director of Exhibitions, Guggenheim Museum (Parent ’22)

Los Angeles, CA, Appointed 2015, President/Founder, Vitameatavegamin (WCAS’85)

Chicago, IL, Appointed 2019, Medical Director, Northstar Healthcare, Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine, UIC Pacific Polisades, CA, Appointed 2016, Artist (Parent ’23)

New York, NY, Appointed 2019, Art Collector and principal and founder of the interior and floral design firm Cambridge Bell Flowers (Parent ’24)

New York, NY, Appointed 2016, President, FORT LP (WCAS ’89) (Parent ’25)

Brooklyn, NY, Appointed 2016, Curator and Advisor, PVC Fine Arts, LLC (WCAS’85)

Glencoe, IL, Appointed 2014, Former Public Defender; Community Volunteer (WCAS’90) (Parent ’20)

Chicago, IL, Appointed 2013, Galleryist, Corbett vs. Dempsey Gallery, and professor (Comm PhD ’94)

Evaston, IL, Ex-officio, The Ellen Philips Katz Director of The Black Museum

Evaston, IL, Appointed 2013, Grant Writer (WCAS’92) (SP WCAS’93)

Darien, CT, Appointed 2013, Former Art Dealer; Community Volunteer (WCAS’92)

New Haven, CT, Retired, Yale University Art Gallery (TGS PhD ’93)

Chicago, IL, Appointed 2013, Founder/President, SIS International

Chicago, IL, Appointed 2012, Retired Ophthalmologist (FSM’77) (Parent ’78)

Chicago, IL, Appointed 2012, Retired Ophthalmologist (FSM’77) (Parent ’78)
While in the first half of the academic year our curatorial program was presented largely within the walls of the museum, COVID-19 forced us to identify and distill the essential elements of the program that could be transferred to the virtual realm. Since mid-March we have continued our curatorial program remotely, and while we look forward with anticipation to the day when we can again carry out our mission by facilitating direct experiences with works of art, we remain committed to identifying and sharing many facets of our work through virtual platforms.

Designated a year of global modernisms, we presented three major loan exhibitions that revealed the artistic, political, and social movements of the mid-20th century from multiple vantage points. The exhibitions Pop América: 1965-1975 and Modernisms: Iranian, Turkish, and Indian Highlights from NYU’s Abby Weed Grey Collection featured many artworks never before seen in Chicago. Modernisms was presented alongside Terence Gower: Ciudad Moderna, the Block debut of this important work which was a 2016 gift to the museum. Our focus on global modernisms was also amplified by multiple Block Cinema screenings, including the series Ism, Ism, Ism: Experimental Cinema in Latin America, and Morning will Come: Modernity in Indian Cinema.

The continued acquisition of artworks selected to broaden The Block’s collection and strengthen its relevance to teaching and learning across campus was among the areas of strategic focus for the year. 2020 notable acquisitions included works by Andrea Carlson, Rosalie Favell, Sky Hopinka, and Kameelah Janan Rasheed. Major gifts included Federico Solmi’s nine-channel video installation The Great Farce (2017-19); Dawoud Bey’s monumental silver gelatin photograph Untitled #17 (Forest) from the series Night Coming Tenderly, Black; and a third gift from Richard and Jackie Hollander of 41 photographs by the renowned twentieth century photographer Edward Steichen, making The Block among the most important repositories for the artist’s work.

In Spring 2020 the museum undertook its first student-led acquisition. Students in the Spring Quarter Art History course Collecting/Critique, which was taught remotely by Professor Hannah Feldman and Block staff members Essi Rönkkö and Kate Hadley-Toftness, selected Undertone #17, #23, #51 (2017-2018), from the series Undertones by Maya Greene, to be added to the museum’s collection.

In June the museum released a free mobile web app for The Block’s groundbreaking touring exhibition Caravans of Gold, Fragments in Time: Art, Culture, and Exchange across Medieval Saharan Africa, which can be viewed in English, Arabic, and French. The exhibition’s April 2020 opening at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African Art was postponed until the Fall, with the exhibition extended there through July 2021.

– Kathleen Bickford Berzock, Associate Director of Curatorial Affairs
Our year began in the Fall with an experiment: to complement the Block’s presentation of Pop América: 1965–1975, Block Cinema hosted Ism Ism Ism, a touring retrospective of Latin American experimental cinema. For the first time, we organized these screenings of rare and astonishing films not only in the Block auditorium, but at community screening spaces throughout Chicago. Across the city and here in Evanston, we consistently brought in diverse and engaged audiences, positioning the Block as a driver of cultural dialogue and connection within and beyond our walls.

With this series, we inaugurated a year-long focus on global modernisms in cinema, an approach designed to complement the themes of the museum’s exhibitions. Working closely with the museum’s interdisciplinary graduate fellow, Simran Bhalla, we presented an ambitious series, Morning Will Come: Modernity in Indian Cinema, in the winter. This series, too, was the occasion for a number of firsts: supported Block Cinema’s first NEA grant, we hosted Chicagoland premieres of restorations of some of India, Iran, and Turkey’s greatest films to our screen; we were also fortunate to host the debut public program by the Shabistan Film Archive, an independent organization dedicated to preserving India’s endangered film history.

Although the series was cut short by the pandemic, but we were able to present the final film, Badnam Basti, as our inaugural virtual screening. Considered India’s first film to explore gay themes, Badnam Basti had not been seen in decades until we discovered the film in a German archive. By sharing Badnam Basti online, we brought new visibility to a film once thought irretrievably lost; thanks to our work, the work is now the subject of a restoration effort by the Film Heritage Foundation.

Throughout the year, we demonstrated Block Cinema’s sustained commitment to students. Our successful move to remote programming allowed student filmmakers from the Young People’s Race, Power, and Technology project and the MFA in Documentary Media to share their work with the world. This year also saw Block Cinema demonstrate its greatest commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion to date. Of the 61 programs we organized for AY2019–2020 (including programs canceled due to COVID-19), fully half featured work by femme, trans, or non-binary filmmakers; 42 of these programs represented works by filmmakers of color. This investment in diversity also informed our choices regarding introductions, Q&A participants, resource development, student workers, and beyond. These values continue to shape our curation and our practices, as we strive to create a program that is responsive to and reflective of our community, both at Northwestern—and, increasingly, globally.

—fromhostinglivecinemaeventsintheauditorium to taking screenings online, 2019–2020 has been a year of experiment and growth for Block Cinema, both before and during the pandemic.

— Michael Metzger, Pick-Laudati Curator of Media Arts
CURATORIAL INTERNS & FELLOWS

Through internships and fellowships, the Block Museum provides undergraduate and graduate students with vital curatorial and museum experiences—from planning, researching, organizing or supporting exhibitions with curators, to shorter-term projects that contribute to museum content.

Students conduct object research, work on justifications for donation proposals, and write “collection spotlights” for the museum’s blog post. In addition to curatorial, students also have opportunities to work with staff members from departments across the museum, including exhibitions and collections, engagement and education, communications, visitors’ services, and business.

Each year, The Block hosts two graduate fellows, one student from the Department of Art History and one from another department across campus. In 2019–20, graduate fellows Cait DiMartino and Simran Bhalla contributed to The Block’s year of exploring global modernisms. Curatorial Graduate Fellow Cait DiMartino organized a collections-based installation, Regional Modernisms, as a complement to the exhibition Modernisms: Iranian, Turkish, and Indian Highlights from NYU’s Abby Weed Grey Collection. Cait also worked with Academic Curator Corinne Granof on initial planning for the anniversary exhibition For One and All: Prints from the Block’s Collection. Cait wrote a collection spotlight on Hector Duarte’s Como te ven te tratan (How they see you, they treat you) (Gift of Molly Day and John Himmelfarb, 2007.15.3) and worked on object research for several new acquisitions.

Interdisciplinary Graduate Fellow, Simran Bhalla, from the Department of Radio, Television, and Film, worked with Block Cinema curator, Michael Metzger, organizing screenings and programs in connection with exhibitions. She co-curated Morning Will Come: Modernity in Indian Cinema (winter 2020) and also played a central role in the development and realization of the series Liberating History: Arab Feminisms and Mediated Posts, which was postponed until fall 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Simran also produced an insightful blog post on Barbara Helpworth’s Two Forms (Divided Circle) (Gift of Leigh B. Block, 1988.3.3) and researched Gillian Wearing’s Homage to the woman with the bandaged face who I saw yesterday down Walworth Road 1995 (Gift of Peter Norton, 2016.4.59; 2016.4.60).

In the fall, Madeline Hultquist (Anthropology, Weinberg, 2021) joined the Block team as the first Undergraduate Research Assistant, funded through the Office of Undergraduate Research. Among Madeline’s responsibilities were research for the donation proposal and justification for three photographs by Mark Ruwedel (Gift of Gary B. Sokol, 2020.4.1–3), along with support on the collections database.

By hosting undergraduate interns and graduate fellows, Block staff aspires to provide rich and layered real work experiences and enable students to gain stronger skill sets, including writing for museum audiences and the broader public, working in a collection database. As fully engaged members of the staff, students come away with a deeper understanding of the curatorial profession and the roles of academic museums within it.

– Essi Rönkkö, Associate Curator of Collections

– Corinne Granof, Academic Curator
2019-20 was a transformative year for The Block Museum, in ways both planned and unexpected.

The Block’s very talented exhibitions and collections department helped the museum navigate this uniquely challenging year. Sticking to the goals that we had long set out, as well as pivoting in new directions, allowed our team to accomplish many things – along with some unexpected results.

The Block’s exhibitions and collections team has always been about building strong collaborations and partnerships but this past year was remarkable for both sweep and scope. This included wonderful partner organizations that we had the chance to work with through our global exhibition program. Caravans of Gold, our traveling exhibition that originated at The Block, crossed international borders to the amazing Aga Khan Museum in Toronto, Canada. Returning stateside, the exhibition was slated to open at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African Art in Washington, D.C. when, half-way through the installation, the global pandemic necessitated a temporary shutdown of the install. Working from home and with our Smithsonian partners, we found a way to keep the exhibition viable after a moderate delay, and several of us acted as “virtual” couriers, overseeing every aspect of the exhibition’s completion. This truly marked a new way of doing our traditional work–activities for which we would normally need to be physically present.

Other partners this past year included the Nasher at Duke University, from where we borrowed Pop América, as well as the Grey Art Gallery, from where we borrowed Modernisms: Iranian, Turkish, and Indian Highlights. Delivering on our promise of increased access to our Collections, our team continued to work in close partnership with The Block’s curatorial department toward the culmination of a four year project to fully convert our collection database, photograph each object in our collection and digitize their records, as well as launch the exciting, highly interactive and external-facing eMuseum platform. eMuseum is an invitation to the public that holds the promise of making our collections open and searchable in a whole new way. In order for this program to be meaningful and robust, an incredible amount of data entry, cataloging, and object review had to take place.

As our team helped race to the finish line for a Fall 2020 launch, it became clear that this “all hands on deck” moment was only possible because of the flexibility and dedication that our team members demonstrated especially in the work-from-home environment. Staff members trained in the handling of physical objects were able to pivot, seamlessly, to the digital world of databases and files. This would be an impressive feat, in any circumstances, let alone when coupled with the other challenges we all faced this past year.

While there may be no true silver linings during a global pandemic—the toll and upheaval is just too great—the museum has found that there can, and must, be new ways of approaching our work.

— Dan Silverstein, Associate Director of Collections and Exhibition Management
In 2019–2020, the Engagement Department continued creating and strengthening connections across Northwestern's campus, Evanston, the North Shore, and Chicagoland at large.

In Fall 2019, through the presentation of Pop América, 1965–1975, Engagement built and sustained relationships with both existing and new partners. Previous partners included colleagues from Northwestern’s Department of Spanish and Portuguese and The Poetry Foundation, while budding partnerships included collaborators from the Medill School of Journalism and the National Museum of Mexican Art (NMMA), with whom we co-programmed throughout the quarter in events like our Opening Day Celebration, gallery talks, and the contemporary artists’ program América Now: Chicago Artists in Dialogue, facilitated by NMMA’s Sarita Hernández.

In Winter 2020, through alignment with Modernisms: Iranian, Turkish, and Indian Highlights from NYU’s Abby Weed Grey Collection, Engagement was able to foreground campus relationships and feature graduate students Maryam Athari, Vidura Bahadur, Simran Bhalla, Özge Karagöz, and Hamed Yousefi in programs like the exhibition’s opening lectures and, gallery talks. Additionally, throughout Fall-Winter 2019-2020, Engagement actively continued training and leveraging its cohort of 23 Student Docents to grow relationships with the Block’s many audiences through tours of the museum’s exhibitions and student-led Tales of Art at the Block public programs.

In Spring 2020, as Northwestern pivoted to remote learning and work, the Engagement Department adapted to the online environment by centering its focus on the museum’s permanent collection and its Student Docents. Docent’s digital work researching the collection and continued online training offered the department key insights to begin modeling best practices for building community virtually and designing a fully remote Student Docent pilot program for the upcoming academic year.

In Summer 2020, as Engagement welcomed a new Associate Director of Campus and Community Education and Engagement at its helm, the department continued its focus on the permanent collection and growing interdisciplinary relationships through teaching and learning on campus, and in the community.

With live, online programs exploring objects in the collection with inquiry-based discussion, we collaborated with new partners at the Feinberg School of Medicine’s Center for Health Equity Transformation and deepened existing relationships with Evanston and Y.O.U.’s High School Leadership Project to explore critical issues of health equity, race, gender, policing, and the experience of young people today. As the new academic year approached, we sought advice from our senior Docents to launch an expanded Docent program that builds on existing strengths, and empowers our Student Docent team in new ways as ambassadors on campus, and as in-house student advisors to ensure we can continue to center student voices and perspectives at The Block.

As we look ahead to the coming year, and as is reflected by the department’s work throughout 2019-2020, the Block’s Engagement Department remains committed to building and strengthening partnerships, highlighting diverse perspectives, elevating student voices, and creating critical dialogue about the world today through works from The Block’s collection.

– América Salomón, Engagement Coordinator and Educator

– Erin Northington, Susan and Stephen Wilson Associate Director, Campus and Community Education and Engagement
THE WORK OF STUDENT DOCENTS

Docents develop and lead tours for the Block’s many publics, offering object-based learning experiences for everyone from their own Northwestern peers, faculty, and staff to the greater Evanston, North Shore, and Chicagoland communities, including K-12 students, intergenerational and family audiences, and adult visitors. Docents develop and lead tours that center personal meaning-making and encourage our audiences to use artworks as a springboard for conversations relevant to contemporary issues and what’s at stake in our lives today.

As part of their ongoing training, Docents engage in professional development throughout the academic year, including exhibition-specific training with museum curators and learning sessions with other museum colleagues, as well as regularly building their core skills in pedagogy, facilitation, and object-based teaching and learning with the Block’s Engagement team.

From Fall 2019-Winter 2020, 23 Student Docents offered over 60 tours of Block exhibitions Pop América, 1965-1975 and Modernisms: Iranian, Turkish, and Indian Highlights from NYU’s Abby Weed Grey Collection. Additionally, between Fall-Winter, Student Docents designed and facilitated 3 Tales of Art at the Block public programs serving intergenerational and family audiences.

In Spring 2020, as Northwestern pivoted to remote learning and work, Docents adapted their roles to the online environment by researching objects from The Block’s permanent collection, offering insights into their work through a Docent Diaries series shared via the museum’s blog and social channels—and, in turn, helping the Block to begin modeling best practices for building community virtually.

STUDENT DOCENTS 2019–2020

Emily Andrey  
Art History major; Russian and East European Studies minor; Chemistry minor; Premed

Fiona Asokacitta  
Art History, History, 2021

Lois Biggs  
(Tour Coordinator)  
Comparative Literature, Art History, 2020

Alexis Bullock  
Art, Theory and Practice; Psychology, 2020

Erin Claey  
Theatre, 2021

Meghan Considine  
Performance Studies, Art History, 2020

Max Han  
Theatre, Neuroscience, 2021

Chayda Harding  
History, 2022

Brianna Heath  
Art History, German, 2021

Sandra Kibet  
Art, Theory and Practice, 2020

Hyoohee Kim  
Learning Sciences, 2022

Isabella Ko  
Art History, French, 2020

Janet Woojeong Lee  
Journalism and International Studies - Culture and Society Concentration, 2020

Kristine Liao  
Journalism and International Studies, 2020

Nicholas Liou  
Art History, 2020

Brooke Lummis  
Creative Writing Major, Minor in Environmental Policy and Culture, 2020

Sean McCarthy  
Theatre, Psychology, 2020

Lennart Nielsen  
Theatre, International Studies, 2021

Giboom (Joyce) Park  
Neuroscience, Art, Theory and Practice, 2022

Jeremy Pesigan  
Theatre, 2020

Ella Rubenstein  
Anthropology; Integrated Marketing Communication Certificate; Segal Design Certificate, 2020

Abigail Sutter  
Journalism, 2022

Rory Kahiya Tsapayi  
Journalism; (declaring Art History), 2021

Maria Valencia  
Radio/TV/Film, Anthropology, 2020
ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM PARTNERS

AFFILIATES
- Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities
- The Alumnae of Northwestern University
- Black Arts Initiative Graduate Working Group
- New Student & Family Programs
- Northwestern Alumni Association
- Northwestern Community Development Corps (For participation in Project Pumpkin)
- Northwestern MLK Day Planning Committee (For participation in Dream Week Eva Jefferson Day)
- Office of Residential Academic Initiatives
- One Book One Northwestern

DEPARTMENTS AND ACADEMIC UNITS
- Art History
- Art Theory and Practice
- Spanish and Portuguese
- Feinberg School of Medicine Center for Health Equity Transformation

CULTURAL PARTNERS
- The Art Institute of Chicago (For participation in Northwestern Night at the Art Institute and JAM – Jobs at Art Museums)
- ATNSC Center for Healing & Creative Leadership
- City of Evanston
- Evanston Arts Council
- Evanston Township Public High School (For participation in Dream Week Eva Jefferson Day)
- Family Focus (For participation in Dream Week Eva Jefferson Day)
- National Museum of Mexican Art
- The Poetry Foundation

NU PROGRAMS
- AHEAD@Northwestern
- Alumni Relations and Development (Marketing + Communications)
- Helicon Literary and Arts Magazine
- Kellogg Design Club
- Northwestern IT Research Computing Services
- NU Libraries Conference Attendees
- NU University Circle
- Office of International Student and Scholar Services
- Office of Residential Academic Initiatives
- Reunion Open House Program Attendees
- University Housing (McManus)

NU RECEPTIONS
- Homecoming Food Truck Festival
- Northwestern Martin Luther King, Jr. Dream Week (Eva Jefferson Day)
- Northwestern Project Pumpkin
- Northwestern University Reunion and Homecoming Open House Reception
- Wildcat Welcome

DEPARTMENTS AND ACADEMIC UNITS
- Art History
- Art Theory and Practice
- Journalism (Medill)
- Middle East and North African Studies (MENA)
- Radio, Television, and Film
- Spanish and Portuguese

K-12/YOUTH
- After School Matters
- Evanston Township High School
- Evanston Township High School Latinx Heritage Week Attendees
- Highland Park High School
- Roycemore School
- Wilmette Park District Early Childhood Center (Youth and Opportunity United (YOU) - (Staff, Dawes Elementary, Edison Elementary, Oakton Elementary, Walker Elementary, Washington Elementary)

CULTURAL GROUPS
- 20th Century Club of Park Ridge
- Milwaukee Art Museum Members + Docents
- National Museum of Mexican Art Auxiliary Board
- Northern Trust
- Noyes Cultural Arts Center
- School of the Art Institute of Chicago
FINANCIAL REPORT

FY 2020 REVENUE $4,172,360
- Endowment 15%
- Individual Gifts, Inc., membership and fundraiser 12%
- Grants 5%
- Earned income 0.1%
- NU Support 70%

FY 2020 EXPENSES $3,083,837
- Payroll 72%
- Exhibitions 14%
- General operations 8%
- Curatorial 4%
- Development 0.25%
- Engagement 0.5%
- Collections Management 2%
- Communications 1%

Cait Dimartino, Art History Graduate Fellow offers docent training on her exhibition Regional Modernisms.
This was an ambitious year for The Block’s grants program. We set our sights high with major national funders and applied for more grants than in any previous year.

The results of these efforts included an unprecedented $355,000 grant from the Terra Foundation for American Art. This grant will be foundational to our exhibition A Site of Struggle: Making Meaning of Anti-Black Violence in American Art and Visual Culture, as well as the companion publication and related programs. The grant includes critical support for the exhibition’s travel to the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts in Montgomery, AL, where the impact of the exhibition will be amplified by engagement with Montgomery’s cultural organizations dedicated to education about the legacy of slavery and the struggle for civil rights in the United States.

The Terra Foundation’s investment in A Site of Struggle is all the more significant now that the funding landscape has changed in the wake of COVID-19. The Block has received several unrestricted grants from organizations responding to the needs of museums during this challenging time. The Terra Foundation and the David C. and Sarajeann Ruttenberg Arts Foundation provided significant grants in addition to existing grants already awarded to The Block during the 2020 fiscal year. Along with a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency, these general operating funds will support crucial areas, including staff salaries. The Myers Foundations also responded with flexibility in supporting the extended presentation of The Block’s Caravans of Gold exhibition which will be on view into 2021 at the National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institution, in Washington, D.C.

The Ruttenberg Arts Foundation also supported the upcoming exhibition Who Says, Who Shows, What Counts: Thinking about History with The Block’s Collection. This collection-based project further received generous grants from The Alumnae of Northwestern University and the Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation.

Block Cinema received a notable grant from the Media Arts program of the National Endowment for the Arts, supporting Morning Will Come. This series, presented as a complement to Modernisms: Iranian, Turkish, and Indian Highlights from NYU’s Abby Weed Grey Collection, featured important Indian films rarely (if ever) shown in the United States.

Northwestern’s Undergraduate Research Assistant Program deserves special mention for a grant underwriting an internship for Madeline Hultquist ’22. Hultquist assisted the curatorial department with research on artworks entering the collection as part of our 40th anniversary “Thinking about History” initiative. The Block is grateful to our many supporters who have bolstered this initiative and we look forward to celebrating together in 2021.

During our 2019-2020 year, we made significant progress towards The Block’s $26 million fundraising goal of part of Northwestern’s We Will campaign.

Generous donors, alumni and friends of The Block came together to contribute towards our 40th Birthday “Thinking About History” art acquisition campaign which has brought over 550 new works of art to the Block collection to be used for our teaching and learning mission.

Members of our Block Board of Advisors remained actively engaged with our work as we rapidly pivoted to the online environment in the face of the pandemic and worked to address the growing racial justice movement through ongoing dialogues with our advisory board and our loyal donors and friends. We hosted more than 250 guests for a virtual “Museums at this Moment” program focused on how museums leaders are addressing the challenges of 2020 in partnership with Alumni Relations and Development New York office and the Northwestern Alumni Association.

Highlights from our development work included the third significant gift of Edward Steichen photographs for the Block collection from donors and Northwestern parents Richard and Jackie Hollander. This gift of 41 silver gelatin and platinum prints significantly bolsters the Block’s growing contemporary photography collection.

Other notable gifts included a bequest from local alumnaus and Evanston resident Harvey Leva in honor of his passion and commitment to the visual arts in his community. Our Board of Advisors member and Northwestern Trustee Ellen Phillips Katz made a significant unrestricted gift to The Block in honor of her 50th Northwestern reunion in 2020. And Board of Advisors member Julie Bernstein and her husband Lawrence Bernstein established the Julie and Lawrence Bernstein Family Contemporary Art fund to support global contemporary art acquisitions at The Block.

We welcomed a new Board of Advisors member, Cheryl Johnson-Odim, PhD, provost emerita at Dominican University and a Northwestern alumna as well as a former faculty and staff member. We also welcomed a new staff member Theresa Busch-Reed as our development program associate.
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2019-2020 GIFTS OF ART

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Norman Kleeblatt
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Barbara Moore
Marian Powers and Belverd Needles, Jr.
Marc Paschke
Angela Himsel and Selig Sacks
John Silberman
Federico Solmi

*Deceased

Frank Stella (American, born 1936)
Newstead Abbey
1970
Lithograph on paper
16 x 22 in.
Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, bequest of Philip M. Migdal.
2019.21.1