

## Faculty Research Awards Spring 2018

### SMALL GRANT AWARDS

Small grants are for \$6,000 or less.

#### **Professor Rowland Abiodun**

Department of Art and Art History, and Black Studies

Title: *An interrogation of the Modernist Concept in African Art: A Close Study of the Ulli and Georgina Beier Collection of Contemporary Art in Nigeria*

#### **Professor Ute Brandes**

Department of German

Title: *Anna Seghers, Der Kopfohn*

Professor Ute Brandes will do the research and travel for her current project, *Anna Seghers, Der Kopfohn*. The book appeared in 1933 with the German exile publisher Querido in Amsterdam. Professor Brandes's volume will go into the *Anna Seghers Werkausgabe*, published by Aufbau-Verlag in Berlin. The book takes place in the fall of 1932. It traces the rise of the Nazi party with impoverished country folk, some of whom betray a young man who is hiding in the village. Seghers was a modernist writer and a leading voice among pre-war, exile, and post-war German intellectuals. Her novels became a key to the culture of memory and coming-to-terms with the Nazi past.

#### **Professor Nusrat Chowdhury**

Department of Anthropology and Sociology

Title: *Archival research for Moving Documents: Politics of the Passport and Participation in AAS-in-Asia Conference in New Delhi*

#### **Professor Nicola Courtright**

Department of Art and the History of Art

Title: *Art and Queenly Authority: The Creation of Spaces for Marie de' Medici*

Professor Courtright's book project, titled "Art and Queenly Authority: The Creation of Spaces for Marie de' Medici," suggests a new approach for interpreting the spaces that Marie de' Medici inhabited as queen, queen regent, and dowager queen in early seventeenth-century France. It investigates the art and architecture developed for the Medici consort of King Henry IV by analyzing the typology and functions of apartments, galleries, and gardens from the Louvre and royal chateau at Fontainebleau to the widow's Luxembourg Palace. Inaugurated under Henry IV and inflected by Florentine models, the early spaces intended to make a queen's place in the monarchic structure unusually visible. Later commissions continued to display a powerful picture of the queen's partnership and shared sovereignty with the king. The book's interpretation of these spaces and their functions disputes the familiar narrative that French politics and art were dedicated to shaping the image of the singular, absolute power of the king, and recasts the definition of gender in early modern ruling culture. This FRAP award will support consulting original sources in Paris that document the decoration of the spaces, many of which were destroyed over the past centuries.

#### **Professor Suzanne Dougan**

Department of Theater and Dance

Title: *I Capuletti e I Montecchi*

During Professor Dougan's sabbatical in the spring 2019, she will continue her collaboration with Idan Cohen on Bellini's *I Capuletti e I Montecchi*. The project is now being considered for full productions in both Oslo and Tel Aviv. This year Professor

Dougan has been working with a recent MFA set designer from Yale, Jungah Han. Under Professor Dougan's direction, Han has used Professor Dougan's research, thumbnail sketches and the preliminary drafting to produce computer aided draftings that have then been laser cut and assembled. This is 1/4" = 1'-0 scaled model that will be used for presentations and for the budget process. The architectural portion of the set design process is nearing completion. Last semester Professor Dougan began working on the video/projection part of the design. She has been working with another recent MFA Yale designer, Yana Birykova, a video artist based in NYC. Birykova has read the libretto, listened to the opera, read the set design description, and the scene-by-scene breakdown. By exchanging visual research, storyboards, and notes they have begun to develop a coherent approach to the use of video and projections.

**Professor Deborah Gewertz**

Department of Anthropology

Title: *Landscapes of Signification for Urban Papua New Guineans*

During the summer of 2018, Professor Gewertz will continue her long-term field research among the Chambri of Papua New Guinea, with a focus on people of a particular sort: those of middle age who, living in an ethnically diverse squatter settlement outside of the town of Madang, still claim strong Chambri identity; this, despite never having visited their home villages on Chambri Island. What would they make of Gewertz's early field notes documenting Chambri Island as a place of cosmological invigoration and sociological centering? More specifically, what would they make of her many (many!) accounts of walking a landscape of local signification with their grandfathers and, even, great grandfathers? Professor Gerwertz's project, in other words, is about the meanings of cultural identity for members of a diaspora within an increasingly urbanized and multicultural context.

**Professor Justin Kimball**

Department of Art and the History of Art

Title: *Large Format Printer*

**Professor Anna Martini**

Department of Geology and Environmental Studies

Title: *Identifying Fugitive Shale Gas Emissions via Shifts in the Isotopic Composition of CO<sub>2</sub>*

Quantifying the impact of gas unintentionally emitted by the production, distribution, and storage of shale gas is critical for assessing its global warming potential. Professor Martini will use her award to support field work and laboratory analysis of air sampled from areas within and surrounding the Antrim Shale gas field in Northern Michigan. The resultant study will further Martini's understanding of the extent of fugitive greenhouse gas emissions associated with natural gas development. Gas concentration and isotopic analyses of atmospheric samples from one hundred sites along north-south transects in Otsego County, Michigan will help constrain the degree and variability of carbon dioxide and methane emissions.

**Professor Jonathan Obert**

Department of Political Science

Title: *Selling Guns in America and Related Research*

Professor Obert will hire a recent summa cum laude graduate of the college to do research and data collection for a major new book project he is undertaking on the political economy of gun manufacturing in the U.S. Professor Obert's research assistant will be coding and collecting original archival data as well as producing several memos on a variety of issues related to the making, selling, and marketing of small arms in American

history. Professor Obert will also attend two major international conferences (Policy History Conference and International Studies Conference) during the spring of 2018.

**Professor Kerry Ratigan**

Department of Political Science

Title: *Book Manuscript Workshop*

Professor Ratigan hosted a book manuscript workshop in September 2017. Three scholars in her field traveled to Amherst for a one-day workshop in which they provided invaluable feedback on her book manuscript.

**Professor Raphael Sigal**

Department of French

Title: *Generation n+2: Co-Authoring Memory in the Silence of Archives*

Professor Sigal will travel to Seoul, Korea, and Bochum, Germany, to conduct research for a book he is writing in collaboration with Professor Youna Kwak of Pomona College. In their book, they aim to establish the conditions for a generational discourse about memory in the absence of a tangible, coherent, or accessible body of traces. Throughout many years of talking and working together, they have often been struck at how their family histories—more precisely, the silences and secrets that enshroud their family histories—resonate with one another, despite the fact that no significant historical or cultural connections exist between her Korean and his German Jewish ancestors. Their shared research and writing examines what it means to be part of a generation of grandchildren who are so disassociated from the histories of their grandparents.

**Professor Adam Sitze**

Department of Law, Jurisprudence and Social Thought

Title: *Rethinking Academic Freedom*

**Professor Natasha Staller**

Department of Art and the History of Art

Title: *Goya's Theater of the Damned*

**LARGE GRANT AWARDS**

Large grants are for more than \$6,000 and up to \$30,000.

**Professor Caroline Goutte**

Department of Biology

Title: *Challenging the Canonical Model of Gamma Secretase Function*

Professor Goutte's research group aims to elucidate how a common cellular signaling mechanism can be adapted to different biological outcomes. By using the *C. elegans* nematode model system in which cell identities and behavior are known with unparalleled precision, the detailed workings of molecular regulation can be discovered. The proposed projects investigate the gamma secretase enzyme and its critical role in the Notch signal transduction pathway. Recent findings from the Goutte lab challenge the existing models of gamma secretase function, and the work proposed here will elaborate on these results, bringing them to completion and to preparation for publication.

**Professor Leah Schmalzbauer**

Department of Anthropology and Sociology and American Studies

Title: *The Meanings of Mobility: Family, Immigration and the Rise of the New Latino Elite*

Professor Schmalzbauer's project draws on three years of ethnographic observation, seventy life history interviews, and ten family case studies to explore the meanings of

exceptional educational mobility in the lives of low-income Latino youth. Specifically, the project centers the voices of Latino youths and family members to explore the following questions: How do youths experience being the only ones in their family or community networks to attend an elite school? What is it like for these youths, when seizing educational opportunities requires social and geographic distance from family and community? How does mobility affect families in which opportunities diverge across and within generations, especially among siblings? How does being undocumented or having undocumented family members shape the ways in which a student experiences an elite education and constructs future aspirations? Answers to these questions will help policy makers and educators replicate and expand the success of the students who make it to elite colleges and who take advantage of debt-free education. It also promises to help colleges do a better job in understanding the complex ramifications of exceptional social mobility for the students, their families and communities.

**Professor Ilan Stavans**

Department of Spanish

Title: *FIVE BOOKS: Fists of Solidarity, Heaven of Invention, A History of the Jewish People in 101 Objects, This Is a Classic, Hamlet*

Professor Stavans's project entails the completion of five books on Jewish and Latin American cultures, an exploration of Double Edge Theater, reflections on translating literary classics, and a stage production of a Spanglish version of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. In various stages of advanced development, these endeavors target a general audience and involve collaborations with other scholars, translators, actors, and theater directors. They will all be completed in two years.

**Professor Wendy Woodson**

Department of Theater and Dance

Title: *Sourcing the Stream (South Africa)*

*Sourcing the Stream* is a multi-media immersive performance installation that includes projected video, original text and music, and live performance inspired by different associations with and images of streams. The project is designed as a flexible structure that can be adapted for different locations and can include vital contributions from communities where the project is developed. Based on previous exhibitions of the project in Northampton and Amherst, Professor Woodson has been invited to create a new version of *Sourcing the Stream* for performances at The University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) in Johannesburg, South Africa, as part of Watershed, a two-week program of international and interdisciplinary events, lectures, and symposia centered on water, in September 2018. Professor Woodson will work with faculty and students from the School of Art at WITS to develop this version of the project. In addition, she has been invited to Rhodes University to meet fellow artists and colleagues and to participate in an interdisciplinary seminar titled, "Across Oceans." The central focus of these residencies is to learn more about artistic practices in South Africa through collaborations and exchange