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Today, the Museum crackles with vitality—an energy one can sense whether visiting in person or connecting online. The Mead has become integral to the curriculum and to building community at the College. It is recognized as one of the leading, most innovative college art museums in the country.

I have felt a strong connection to the Mead Art Museum since my first year at Amherst, when I lived a few steps away in Stearns Hall. Back then, I thought of the Museum as a quiet, underutilized and underappreciated place. As a student security guard there, I would never “click in” more than a handful of visitors over the course of an afternoon.

Today, the Museum crackles with vitality—an energy one can sense whether visiting in person or connecting online. The Mead has become integral to the curriculum and to building community at the College. It is recognized as one of the leading, most innovative college art museums in the country. The great part of this is due to the extraordinary vision and leadership of our Director, David Little, and contributions of the entire staff.

During the last year, the Mead has prevailed over the pandemic. David and the staff have reimagined the Museum, developing a powerful virtual presence and creative new programming. If anything, the Mead has expanded its outreach to the College and broader communities over the last year.

I hope you will use the Mead’s new online accessibility, as I have, to experience the joy, during these difficult days, in seeing and learning about a great work of art or exhibition in the Museum.

My thanks to the Museum team, the members of the Advisory Board, the many friends of the Mead, and the College for their continued hard work, support and engagement.

I look forward to a time when we can once again stand together in person in a Mead gallery enjoying a work of art.
INTRODUCTION
Nichole Bridges ’97

The Mead was my next-door neighbor. I lived in James my first year at Amherst. From the east window of the corner room that I shared with my roommate, I saw the Mead Art Museum and Stearns Steeple. For most residents of James and Stearns Halls, the Mead is a background to life as a first-year student. For me, however, the Mead emerged in the forefront of my first year and beyond.

I interacted with the Mead’s collection early that first fall term. William-Adolphe Bouguereau’s Le travail interrompu (Work Interrupted) was the subject of my first formal analysis paper in Professor Natasha Staller’s introduction to western art history. I quickly appreciated the value of examining the painting in person rather than its postcard version, and I returned to study it in the gallery several times for the assignment.

Senior year, I received a fellowship to assist the Mead’s registrar, Linda Best, with an inventory of mid-nineteenth- to early-twentieth-century African art collected by Barry D. Maurer ’59, which was later gifted to the Mead through the generous support of H. Axel Schupf (Class of 1957). The project was the serendipitous culmination of a growing interest I had developed through coursework in African art with Professor Rowland Abiodun and the late Professor John Pemberton III. I relished handling and measuring every object, noting each one’s specific cultural origins in southern Congo, northern Angola, or southwestern Nigeria, and documenting dimensions and materials. These direct experiences with art through close looking and careful handling formed a critical foundation to my work after graduation, first as a museum educator, then as a doctoral student in art history, and now, for over a decade, as a museum curator specializing in historical art from Africa.

These many years later it is an honor to serve the Mead in return as a member of the Mead Advisory Board. I am excited by recent innovations in programming that expand the Mead’s reach across Amherst’s community and curriculum. The Trinkett Clark Memorial Student Acquisitions program, the classroom built in 2017 that offers specific selections for close study by classes with a bonus panoramic view of art storage, dynamic engagement with contemporary art and artists, and new efforts toward increasing diversity and accessibility across all areas of the Mead’s work make this an exciting time to be a part of the Mead and support David E. Little’s leadership as director and chief curator.

I hope you enjoy reading this annual report, which looks back over two years of accomplishments at the Mead. Along with my fellow Advisory Board members, I look forward to supporting the Mead team as they continue to implement creative strategies for bringing the Mead to the forefront of even more students’ Amherst experience.

…new efforts toward increasing diversity and accessibility across all areas of the Mead’s work make this an exciting time to be a part of the Mead and support David E. Little’s leadership as director and chief curator.”

Nichole Bridges ’97 completed a double major in Fine Arts and French at Amherst. She is associate curator in charge, Arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas at the Saint Louis Art Museum.

This double issue of the Mead’s annual report, spanning two academic years, is our first ever all-digital presentation. In the new format, you will immediately see the benefits of going digital: we’ve included more great images highlighting the collection, especially recent acquisitions; you can view and share the report with ease; and we’ve offered links to interactive tours. In the future, we hope to expand the platform to enrich the possibilities even more.

This digital issue is also a sign of how life and culture changed dramatically in 2020, as we all maintained a healthy distance and for the most part viewed art and visited museums via a computer screen. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) a global pandemic on March 11, 2020, and by March 13, the Mead had closed its doors to the public (and remains closed at this time). Just over two months later, the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis reminded us of the urgent need to combat systemic racism and, as a museum, to increase our efforts to reach and welcome audiences in meaningful ways.

Amid everything, the last year underscored the incredible talent, resilience, and resourcefulness of the Mead staff. As you look through these pages, you will see the product of their work to offer the best education through art to Amherst students even under the most extraordinary circumstances.

David E. Little
John Wieland 1958 Director and Chief Curator
he/him/his
In the Chemistry Department, Professor Christopher Durr has coordinated a “lab” between the Mead and Beneski. He describes: “The idea is that students would go to a teaching space in the Mead where they would first look at minerals that have been used throughout art history as pigments. These minerals are made out of various elements across the periodic table which they can identify and discuss based on their semester of chemistry. Then we would turn to the art around the room which is actually made with the minerals they just studied. We will have art and artifacts spanning thousands of years that students can observe.”
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**K-12 GROUP VISIT**

- Hartsbrook High
Presented annually in the spring to a student in the college for distinction in the completion of an original work or works of art and the purchase thereof.

The 2019 Wise Award was awarded to Jonathan Jackson for his portfolio of photographs titled *The House Servant’s Directory*. In his artist’s statement Jackson wrote that “during my senior year at Amherst College, I developed this body of work that focuses on my fifth Great Grandfather Robert Roberts.” In 1827 Roberts published *The House Servant’s Directory* based on his years of employment in the home of Christopher Gore, a former governor of Massachusetts. Jackson said, “I was interested in addressing the broad conceptual questions surrounding Roberts’s life.” The photographs “summarize a movement from the internally driven self-portrait work of my undergraduate years to images that embody Robert Roberts and further engage with the history of New England life.”

The images were made in the Gore family house, now a National Historic Landmark and museum called Gore Place, in Waltham Massachusetts. Jackson said he used Gore Place “as a site to activate the history of Robert Roberts. I aimed to build images that circulate around multiple tiers of thought,” including “images that visualize Robert Roberts and the history of domestic service in the United States . . . [and] photographs that call attention to the efforts of peoples within the African diaspora to either retain or dismiss a cultural identity.”

LEADING THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

In August 2018 the Mead welcomed Emily Potter-Ndiaye from the Brooklyn Historical Society, where she had been the Director of Education. At the Mead, where she is the Dwight and Kirsten Poler & Andrew W. Mellon Head of Education and Curator of Academic Programs, Emily partners with faculty members to make the Mead and its collections a central part of Amherst College’s liberal arts education.

Emily is only the second person to head the Education Department at the Mead. In 2009 Amherst created the position of Andrew W. Mellon Curator of Academic Programs to promote integration of the Mead’s collections into the Amherst College curriculum. Pamela Russell was hired to fill the role. From 2009 until 2017, Pam laid the groundwork for the current strong collaborations between the Mead and faculty across disciplines. Working one-on-one with professors to help shape class content, the Head of Education encourages faculty to include art objects in their courses and helps students make connections and discoveries in the collection. Prior to Pam’s arrival, only thirty classes visited the Mead on average per year. She increased class visits by over 400 percent, before retiring in 2017 to pursue her own research.

Emily has added yet another dimension to the academic program by working closely with faculty on research projects that add content about art objects to the Mead database. She also co-taught Eat! An Exhibition Seminar in the fall of 2019, with Amy Cox Hall, visiting assistant professor in the Anthropology Department. The seminar resulted in the exhibition Embodied Taste, co-organized by students in the class.

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Drawn entirely from the Mead’s collection, this exhibition presented artworks and historical timepieces from different cultures that visualize concepts of time: linear and cyclical, absolute and relative. It questioned the role of time in memory and the many factors that have influenced human perception of the past, present, and future, including seasons, geography, and technology. Ideas of time told through historical and visual narratives have overlapping meanings and far-reaching significance for the sciences and humanities. *Timing Is Everything* juxtaposed some of the Mead’s masterworks, such as Thomas Cole’s *The Past* and *The Present*, with artworks by contemporary artists Lorna Simpson, Shuli Sadé, and Motoda Hisaharu. The works in the show presented a small fraction of the ways humans imagine and make tangible notions of temporality. Space within the exhibition was created for members of the community to share personal and cultural reflections regarding time.


*Timing Is Everything*  
Organized by Vanja Malloy and Mila Hruba  
September 13, 2018–March 3, 2019
This exhibition brought together a variety of artistic styles and materials to examine the ways in which women have been depicted, or have represented themselves, across media, centuries, and the globe. Images from the Mead’s holdings revealed prevalent themes of representation, in which womanhood appears fragmented into slivers of socially constructed roles: women as mothers, as objects of beauty and desire, as manual workers, and even as allegorical symbols. The artworks on view represented not just different time periods and cultures, but also an array of motives. These include portraits commissioned to impress and elevate the social position of a woman’s family, and self-reflective images that speak to the sitter’s private sense of identity. The exhibition drew critical attention to the way social and cultural constructs have shaped the depiction and self-representation of women through the ages, inspiring further conversation about how gendered social roles and expectations continue to evolve.

**Fragmented Identities:**
The Gendered Roles of Women in Art through the Ages
Organized by Mila Hruba and Vanja Malloy
August 4, 2018–February 17, 2019 (Second Installation)
This exhibition celebrated the recent growth of the Mead’s collection of abstract art through generous donations of paintings, sculptures, and works on paper to the museum’s collection. Richard and Brooke Kamin Rapaport ‘84, P’16 donated works by Caio Fonseca and Leon Polk Smith; the Leon Polk Smith Foundation donated four additional works by Smith on view. And Amherst College students selected Analia Saban’s print as part of the Trinkett Clark Memorial Student Acquisition Program. We are proud to welcome all of the artworks in this exhibition to the Mead so they may be studied and enjoyed for many years to come.

Shonibare (shown in his studio, far left) was born in London in 1962 and moved to Lagos, Nigeria, at the age of three. He returned to the UK to study Fine Art at Byam Shaw School of Art, London and Goldsmiths College, London, where he received his Master’s in Fine Art. He has become well known for his exploration of colonialism and postcolonialism within the contemporary context of globalization.

Rotherwas Room Project 4: Yinka Shonibare CBE, The American Library Collection (Activists)

Organized by David E. Little
October 30, 2018–January 6, 2019

This exhibition featured the Mead’s new acquisition The American Library Collection (Activists), a large-scale installation by the British-Nigerian artist Yinka Shonibare CBE. The first artwork by Shonibare to enter the Mead’s collection, The American Library Collection (Activists) was on view as the fourth iteration of the Rotherwas Project, which situates contemporary art in the museum’s seventeenth-century oak-paneled room. Bound in his signature brightly colored Dutch wax printed fabric, Shonibare’s selection of 233 books tells a specific story of how knowledge is organized and disseminated. The spines of the books are emblazoned in gold foil with the names of activists, including artists, musicians, academics, and writers. Many of them are immigrants or the children of immigrants, while others have spoken against immigration, diversity, and equality. Shelved together, they draw attention to the debates that emerge across time and cultures. In addition to the wrapped books, the collection comes with a bookshelf designed by the artist and a card catalog of names from the books. The work is an extension of the artist’s 2017 series The American Library Collection, which included other groupings, such as (Politicians), (Filmmakers), and (Scientists).
Views from the Eastern Front: Russian Modernism and the Great War
On view at the Amherst Center for Russian Culture
Organized by Galina Mardilovich
November 12, 2018–February 17, 2019

Views from the Eastern Front: Russian Modernism and the Great War considered the role of World War I in Russia through the arts one hundred years later. Presenting works by Russian avant-garde artists and symbolist poets, it explored the ways in which Russian modernists engaged with the themes of war, violence, and destruction during this fateful period.

Fleeting Nature: Selections from the Collection
Organized by Galina Mardilovich, Vanja Malloy, and Emily Potter-Ndiaye
March 5–September 10, 2019

Today people across the world collectively grapple with the impact of human activity on the Earth. As we struggle to imagine landscapes of the future, it is instructive to examine the past. This exhibition presented the ways in which artists across time and geography have turned to the genre of landscape to understand the relationship among people and societies and their environments. Rendered in different media, the views and scenes encompass the American South, Norwegian mountains, the French countryside, and beyond. The works offered viewers a chance to consider how nature continues to enthrall, challenge, and awe, despite the increasing threat from human action—or inaction. Fleeting Nature: Selections from the Collection featured works by Thomas Cole, Claude Monet, James McNeill Whistler, Winslow Homer, Nikolai Roerich, André Derain, and Barbara Bosworth, among others.
Dimensionism: Modern Art in the Age of Einstein
Organized by Vanja Malloy
Berkeley Art Museum, Berkeley, California, November 7, 2018–March 3, 2019
Mead Art Museum, March 28–July 28, 2019
Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers, New Brunswick, New Jersey, September 3, 2019–January 5, 2020
To represent the artists’ responses to an array of early twentieth-century scientific revolutions, Curator of American Art Vanja Malloy (pictured above) organized the exhibition into four groups: “Einstein’s Theory of Relativity (the new fourth dimension),” “Macrocosm (the suddenly endless cosmos),” “Microcosm (the surprise of tiny worlds),” and “Quantum Theory (the certainty of uncertainty).”

Dimensionism: Modern Art in the Age of Einstein traced the interactions of European and American artists who signed the 1936 “Dimensionist Manifesto” in Paris. Amid wartime dislocation, Alexander Calder, Joseph Cornell, Marcel Duchamp, Naum Gabo, Helen Lundeberg, Joan Miró, and others who signed the Manifesto were brought together by their shared interest in scientific revolutions. Together, they became an engine for avant-garde innovation.

Radical breakthroughs in physics and astronomy galvanized Calder and his international peers to become “pioneers of creative art,” who (in the words of the Manifesto) vowed to shun “older forms and exhausted essences as prey for less demanding artists!” Two-dimensional painters sought to add a third dimension, and three-dimensional sculptors sought to add a fourth dimension, the better to explore Einstein’s concept of relativity, in which space and time are no longer separate categories. “All the old borders and barriers of the arts suddenly disappear,” wrote the authors of the Manifesto, because “this new ideology has elicited a veritable earthquake, a landslide, in the old artistic system.”

Curator of American Art Vanja Malloy developed Dimensionism from her ten years of research on Calder and her in-depth knowledge of both the Manifesto and art-science relations. The exhibition, which included seventy works drawn from collections around the US and Europe, and from the Mead, offered fresh interpretations of individual master artworks, while challenging conventional perceptions of a schism between modern art and modern science. The catalogue was published by MIT Press.

Most people have heard of Einstein’s general theory of relativity. Far fewer are aware of the theory’s impact on twentieth-century art.
By most accounts, collage is the single most revolutionary formal innovation in artistic representation in our century.


The word collage comes from the French verb coller, which means "to paste, stick, glue." In practice, it is a technique that involves the physical layering of disparate elements. While examples of collage can be found throughout history, its development as an art form originated in the Cubist experiments with the surface of the picture plane in the early 1910s. The act of pasting pieces of newspaper or wallpaper onto a canvas inserted a new life component into a constructed composition, toppling the centuries-old tradition of illusionism in art. Collage challenged the supreme value of the artist's hand and, by bringing together materials from different contexts, also underlined the instability of meaning. Its capacity for layering, fragmenting, and combining has made it an inescapable medium.

This exhibition presents some of the many ways in which artists have employed collage. For some, it has been the ideal technique to express human imagination. For others, it has been an effective strategy to comment on cultural, social, and political developments. For still others, it has been a useful tool to extend the limits of artistic practice. The multiplicity and pluralism of collage, and the related techniques of film montages and photomontages, have rendered it emblematic of the fast-paced and ever-changing contemporary world.

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**Paste, Stick, Glue: Constructing Collage in Russia**
Organized by Galina Mardilovich
On view at the Amherst Center for Russian Culture
March 4–June 3, 2019

**Constructing Collage Part 2**
Organized by Galina Mardilovich
June 11–October 6, 2019
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20 Gallery Talk with Vanja Malloy
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24 Black Arts Matter Festival
28 Symmetry in Art and Science

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7 Linefork Screening and Q&A
8 Art of Concentration Meditation
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28 Dimensionism Talk
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3 Innovation and Invention: Recital by Ellen Mutter
10 Seeing the Moon in Islamic Traditions
12 Red-Eye, Black-Tie Spring Formal
15 Admissions Open House Tour
23 South Asian Student Association Chai Time
23 Cross-Cultural Exchange Workshop
24 Team Mead: Yoga Club
25 Clothing Swap
25 Dimensions Fashion Show (pictured)
29 Dimensionism Scholars’ Day
30 Advancement Department Tour with David E. Little
A Conversation with Charmel Maynard ’07

As the chair of the Mead Advisory Board’s Budget Committee—and associate vice president, chief investment officer, and university treasurer at the University of Miami—Charmel Maynard ’07 knows a bit about finance. His work and expertise on the Budget Committee helps the Mead’s staff and Advisory Board understand the Mead’s budgets and financial situation more clearly. A political science major during his time at Amherst, Charmel didn’t visit the Mead very much, but he “was always into art in some form or fashion.”

The Mead’s financial and administrative assistant, Eileen Smith, asked him some questions about art, finance, and the importance of pursuing a liberal arts education.

Why do you think students should get involved in the arts, even if they are pursuing other degrees? What benefits do you think it brings?

I believe having a healthy balance between the “left side” and “right side” of the brain is key to a student’s pursuit of a liberal arts education. I think art helps students take abstract thoughts and feelings and convert them into words, a skill that I believe is important in life.

What would you say to a student to convince them to visit an art museum?

I would tell them not to be intimidated by the word “art” or “museum.” I would tell them that the Mead does a great job of making the space as welcoming as possible for new art lovers or experienced art aficionados.

What drew you to working in a university?

Higher education is a place where eager and hungry students, of all levels, come to fulfill their dreams, to begin or continue crafting their own story. Being a part of something much bigger than each of us is inspiring and motivating. I fundamentally believe that if I can just do my part—through stability of our balance sheet and growth in our endowment—I make a difference. It’s the reason we are all here.

How do you think your liberal arts education benefits your work in the finance industry?

I believe it gives me a unique perspective. Political science taught me how to evaluate, read, and write critically. As simple as that sounds, it is sometimes taken for granted. It taught me how to synthesize large amounts of dense information and distill it down to a clear and concise message. This is applicable to any field of work and is especially useful in the finance field where you are required to look at large sets of data, make decisions, and explain results to various groups of people.

Who is your favorite artist currently?

Kehinde Wiley continues to be my favorite artist. His mixture of contemporary figures mixed with historic settings and bright colors makes his work very appealing to me.

What are you excited about the Mead doing in the future?

Besides continuing to collect exceptional pieces of art, I am excited for the Mead to continue using the museum as a site for learning for students at Amherst College.

What artist would you like to see have an exhibition at the Mead?

I think it would be cool to see an alum such as Jared French (Class of 1925) or Terry Rodgers (Class of 1969) have an exhibition at the Mead.


**STUDENT MUSEUM EDUCATORS & INTERNS 2018–2019**

Jane Bragdon ’20  
Emilie Flamme ’20  
Troy Gelobter ’21  
Julia Gill ’20  
DeLyna Hadgu ’21  
Julia Molin ’21  
(Syeda) Zahra Shah ’22  
Julia Shea ’21  
Yosen Wang ’22  
Maggie Wu ’22
GROWING AN ART COLLECTION

Over the last five years the Mead has focused on collecting art made from the 1980s to today, a strategy designed to emphasize the relevance of contemporary art to current Amherst students. The art we acquire is diverse and many of the artists are still actively making art. Amherst writer Katharine Whittemore wrote about the relevance of contemporary art to present-day students in her article The Mead Generation.

Growth and evolution are critical to a museum collection, especially a college museum like the Mead that educates a new cohort of talented students every year. We want to make sure that when you come to Amherst College, you can study art across ages and cultures—whether ancient art with Professor Frederick T. Griffiths or South Asian art with Professor Yael Rice—as well as art and culture of your own time. For students, it’s exciting to go to the museum and see artwork that was made in 2020, and to meet and learn from a living artist—all as part of your college education. It reinforces a vital message: your generation is creating important art.

As you can see in the following list of recent acquisitions, in 2018–20 the Mead added many important artworks to the collection, dating from the sixteenth century to 2020.

In 2018–20 the Mead added many important artworks to the collection, dating from the sixteenth century to 2020.

Seventy percent of our recent purchases are by artists of color.

In 2019 we benefited from a gift of over 180 contemporary artworks from an anonymous donor.
As always, each new work came to the Mead as a gift or as an acquisition purchased with endowed funds. Thomas Cole’s oil paintings *Past and Present* (1838), for example, were museum purchases in 1950. Examples of purchases made by the Mead in 2018–20 are the suite of photographs by Heather Agyepong titled *Too Many Blackamoors*, and Helen Lundeberg’s painting *Biological Fantasy*.

Generous gifts of art are frequently made by Amherst alums. Foundational gifts in the past were made by brothers Herbert L. Pratt, Class of 1895, and George D. Pratt, Class of 1893, who donated many American works; Thomas P. Whitney, Class of 1937, who gave generously from his Russian collection; and Edward C. Crossett, Class of 1905, and Frank Austen, Class of 1950, whose gifts are vital to the Mead’s print collection. The tradition of generous gifts of art from Amherst graduates continues: in the list below, look for names followed by Amherst class years.

You might be surprised to hear that some of the Mead’s most treasured artworks came to us thanks to non-Amherst graduates, such as our magnificent Claude Monet painting, *Morning on the Seine, Giverny* (1897), gifted by Miss Susan Dwight Bliss. In 2019 we benefited from a gift of over 180 contemporary artworks from an anonymous donor.


Agyepong re-created poses inspired by nineteenth-century cartes-de-visite of Lady Sarah Forbes Bonetta, the adopted West African goddaughter of Queen Victoria. The title is drawn from Queen Elizabeth I’s racist edict from 1596: “Her Majesty understanding that several blackamoors have lately been brought into this realm, of which kind of people there are already too many here . . . her Majesty’s pleasure therefore is that those kind of people should be expelled from the land.”


For her performance piece *Unraveling*, Sonya Clark invited viewers to gently unravel a Confederate flag thread by thread with her and talk about the experience while doing it. Above, Amherst College President Biddy Martin and Clark were documented unraveling on the *Mead’s Instagram*.

Professor Clark teaches in the Art and History of Art Department and is a graduate of the College. A major survey of her twenty-five year career opens at the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, DC, on March 3, 2021.

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**SONYA CLARK**

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Hatoum cast intestinal coils in silicone rubber to create this domestic mat. Take a close look as the coil pattern beneath the clear rubber surface may be a rhythmic design or a grotesque internal organ.

Mona Hatoum

Hatoum cast intestinal coils in silicone rubber to create this domestic mat. Take a close look as the coil pattern beneath the clear rubber surface may be a rhythmic design or a grotesque internal organ.

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Wassily Kandinsky (Russian, active in France, 1866–1944); printed by Mourlot Frères (French, ca. 1930); published by Tériade (French, established 1937). *The Stars (Les étoiles)*, 1938. Color lithograph on Velin paper. Purchase with Wise Fund for Fine Arts, 2019.46

Wassily Kandinsky (Russian, active in France, 1866–1944); printed by Mourlot Frères (French, ca. 1930); published by Tériade (French, established 1937). *Comets (Comètes)*, 1938. Color lithograph on Velin paper. Purchase with Wise Fund for Fine Arts, 2019.47


Walt Kuhn (American, 1877–1949). *Pears*, 1931. Oil on canvas. Bequest of Dr. Sanford B. Sternlieb (Class of 1946), 2019.17


Professor Kimball’s photographs from his award-winning book *Elegy* (2017) capture economic decline and inequalities in streets, residences, and landscapes of small towns in Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. “In *Elegy,*” he said, “my photographs of people, their homes, neighborhoods, and streets document moments where we can see the weight of our time on our bodies and surroundings, while also marveling at the resilience and hope we can maintain under that weight. These pictures are about struggle, loss, hope, and what it is to be human; they point to a ubiquitous, yet invisible part of the American landscape.”
“I’ve tried with whatever power I had to make this picture of imprisonment as distressing as it is in reality. The few times I doubted the wisdom of my attitude, I had only to visit someone in his cell to straighten out my mind. . . .

“If back in 1968 I thought I could bring down the mighty walls of the Texas prison system by publishing Conversations of the Dead and the works of [prisoner] Billy McCune then those years of work are among the greatest failures of my life. In Texas I photographed a world of over 12,500 men and women. Within a generation that number exploded to over 200,000.”

—Danny Lyon


Jerome Myers (American, 1867–1940). Children in Playground, ca. 1925. Oil on canvas. Bequest of Dr. Sanford B. Sternlieb (Class of 1946), 2019.20


Aleksandr Orłowski (Russian, born in Poland, 1777–1832). Une femme du roi, à cheval conduite par un eunuque (A King’s Wife on Horseback Led by a Eunuch), 1819. Chalk lithograph on laid paper. Purchase with Amherst Whitney Collection of Russian Art Fund, 2019.04


By reproducing a text from John Rechy’s landmark gay novel, City of Night (1963), Adam Pendleton used painting to shape images and express ideas.


John Sloan (American, 1871–1951). Dolly Reading, ca. 1914. Oil on canvas. Bequest of Dr. Sanford B. Sternlieb (Class of 1946), 2019.22


Kamila Stanclova (Slovak, born 1945). Changing or Undressing the Skin, 1990. Etching on paper. Purchase with William W. Collins (Class of 1953) Print Fund, 2019.02


Francisco Tamagno (Italian, active in France, 1851–1933); published by Camis & Cie (French, late 18th–early 19th century). Terminus absinthe bienfaisante, ca. 1900. Lithograph. Bequest of Dr. Sanford B. Sternlieb (Class of 1946), 2019.37


Everett Shinn (American, 1876–1953). Startled Nude, 1911. Red and white chalk on paper. Bequest of Dr. Sanford B. Sternlieb (Class of 1946), 2019.21


Unknown (German?). Armorial Panel (Circular), 17th century(?). Glass. Gift of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 2018, 2018.223


Unknown (German?). Armorial Panel, 17th century(?). Glass. Gift of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 2018, 2018.225


Claude Venard (French, 1913–1999). Le pot blanc, n.d. Oil on canvas. Bequest of Dr. Sanford B. Sternlieb (Class of 1946), 2019.26
GIFT OF STAINED GLASS FROM THE MET

WHAT:
Twenty-nine panels of stained glass gifted to the Mead in 2018 by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. They are decorated with warships, heraldic imagery (think coats of arms, rampant lions, fleurs-de-lys), biblical scenes, and saints.

WHO MADE THEM:
Attributed to unknown Dutch and German artists, most of whom lived in the sixteenth or seventeenth century.

DÉJÀ VU:
If you’ve been to the Mead, chances are good you’re already familiar with these “new” acquisitions: the stained glass panels have graced the windows of the Mead’s historic English Rotherwas Room for decades.

BACKSTORY:
The glass panels were once owned by Amherst College graduate George Dupont Pratt (Class of 1893), a philanthropist and art collector. On his death, in 1935, his stained glass collection was bequeathed to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The entire group, over seventy panels in total, then came to Amherst College on indefinite loan from the Met in 1941. It is unclear why. There is no record of what the College did with the glass upon its arrival. The Mead building was not constructed until 1949.

Younger brother Herbert Lee Pratt (Class of 1895) died in 1944, leaving the Rotherwas Room, among other works of art, to Amherst College. The Rotherwas Room was installed in the museum, and some of the panels of stained glass were permanently installed with it. They had never been together before (brothers George and Herbert lived in separate mansions in Glen Cove, New York).

In 1980, everything that wasn’t cemented into the walls of Rotherwas was returned to the Met. The twenty-nine pieces of glass remained. Every year, the Met extended the loan for an additional year. Finally, in 2018 the Met decided to permanently deaccession the panels in Rotherwas and gift them to the Mead.


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Mixing art and science, Helen Lundeberg created abstract forms based on life forms observed under a microscope. About Lundeberg’s painting *Biological Fantasy*, Mead intern Hannah Goldberg ’22 wrote, “As a biology major, I think that sometimes I get too bogged down by details of my coursework or experiments to recognize why I really love science: to discover something that is unknown and mysterious, like the subject of this work. It makes me question what the subjects are, and, if they are not based on the more realistically depicted trees in the artist’s early works, what could these figures be and represent?”

**HELEN LUNDEBERG**

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Unknown (Burkina Faso); Mossi peoples. *Doll (paog’ biga)*, mid-20th century. Wood. Gift from the Ernie and Diane Wolfe Collection, 2020.01

Unknown (Burkina Faso); Mossi peoples. *Doll (paog’ biga)*, mid-20th century. Wood. Gift from the Ernie and Diane Wolfe Collection, 2020.02


Over five days in January, during Amherst’s interterm period, the Mead offers a class in how museums acquire artwork. Students study collection criteria, acquisitions policies, and the path of an artwork from the artist’s studio to the loading dock to gallery wall. After a quick overview of museum practices, with a focus on contemporary American prints, they venture into the art world, meet professionals in the field, and select one or more prints to purchase for the Mead.

ALSO KNOWN AS:
Collecting 101: Acquiring Art for the Mead

DO THE MATH:
The class has been in existence for just over a decade, a milestone the Mead celebrated in 2019–20 with the exhibition Ten Years of Trinkett Clark Memorial Student Acquisitions. So far over ninety students have participated and thirty-nine works have been added to the Mead’s collection.

WHAT’S THE IDEA?
The class starts with two days of workshops at the Mead. On day three, they set out to visit galleries and studios, almost always ending up in New York City, especially the gallery district in Chelsea from 14th Street to Hudson Yards. Students meet with artists, gallery directors, and art dealers, while examining particular prints they think will fulfill the Mead’s collecting criteria, from content to care and preservation. They also are on the lookout for prints that will inspire research and engagement among students and professors for years to come.

REQUIRED READING:
SO IT’S A REAL CLASS?
While students don’t receive academic credit for the class, they do gain valuable insights into museums, fine arts careers, and the creation, buying, and selling of art.

IF IT’S TUESDAY, THIS MUST BE—WARHOL?
In 2019 the class visited C.G. Boerner Gallery in Chelsea and the studio of Rico Gatson in Brooklyn (left), and explored two exhibitions: Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power at the Brooklyn Museum and Andy Warhol: From A to B and Back Again at the Whitney Museum of American Art. In 2020 the first stop was the Zea Mays Printmaking Studio in Florence, Mass., followed by trips to Powerhouse Arts Printshop in Brooklyn, and Lehmann Maupin Gallery and the International Print Center (IPCNY) in Chelsea.

The Trinkett Clark Memorial Student Acquisition Fund was established by H. Nichols “Nick” Clark, the husband of Trinkett Clark, who was the Mead’s curator of American art from 2001 to 2006. Co-instructors of the class in 2018–20 were Mila Hruba, Emily Potter-Ndiaye, Jocelyn Edens, and Zoe Sasson. Guest speakers included Susan Daniels (associate for public speaking, Amherst College Writing Center), David E. Little, and Galina Mardilovich.
FINAL SELECTIONS:
The class ends with a dramatic flourish as teams of students make competing presentations for the acquisitions they prefer and attendees vote for the winner. Through the project, the Mead acquired two prints in 2019 and three in 2020:

2019


2020

(Left) Dyani White Hawk (Lakota/Sičangu Oyáte, born 1976); published by Highpoint Center for Printmaking (American, founded 2001). *Nakíčižiŋ / Protect (far left) and Wačháŋtognaka / Nurture*, 2019. Screenprint with metal foil. Purchases, Trinkett Clark Memorial Student Acquisition Fund
In late August 2019, a group of first-year students took part in LEAP (Learn, Explore, Activate, and Participate) orientation at the Mead, and soon classes were meeting in the Mead’s classrooms and galleries at a hectic pace. Students gathered shoulder to shoulder in the lobby, before moving as a group to one of the classrooms in the building. In the galleries they clustered around works of art for close looking and conversation with a curator, professor, or their classmates.

Mead openings and events routinely draw large numbers of students, faculty, staff, and local audiences from the Five College region. Families and friends come for Homecoming tours in the fall, and alumni return to the Mead throughout the year, especially during the spring reunions. The Mead exists for the whole Amherst community to use: to learn from and engage with art and one another in real time.

All that changed in the middle of March 2020 when COVID-19 made social distancing a necessity. For the safety of all, Amherst College closed the campus, and with rare exceptions the Amherst community began working and attending classes remotely. The question became: How could Mead staff continue to carry out our mission of making the collection and other resources available for the education and enjoyment of the community? #Adaptability

The Mead’s collection, of which over 95% is digitized, became an essential resource for student research and classes. And the Mead’s talented staff began the process of developing additional digital resources, from programs via Zoom to virtual exhibitions, which connected the community with the Mead.

In 2020 the world confronted illness, death, economic struggle, racial injustice, disinformation, and misunderstanding. At the Mead, we look forward to a future when we are all closer and can welcome students, staff, faculty, alumni, and the community back to the museum.
In 2020 the question became: How could Mead staff continue to carry out our mission of making the collection and other resources available for the education and enjoyment of the community?
992 College Students in Class Sessions
39 Amherst College Courses
18 Amherst College Departments
6 First-Year Seminars
695 Art Objects viewed by Classes in Study Rooms
6 Other College and University Courses
The Wise Award is presented every spring to a student in the College for distinction in the completion of an original work or works of art. Jiajia Zhang ’22 received the award after submitting three mixed media works. One work in the series will join the Mead’s permanent collection. The final selection was postponed because of constraints related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Zhang said that her series was inspired by “the recent anti-Asian and Sinophobic hate crimes against Chinese British individuals.” Responding to her desire to “tell Chinese British and Chinese diaspora history, as well as revolt against government and societal negligence of Chinese immigrant issues,” the works zero in on a story of Sinophobic violence.

“This piece was inspired by installation artist Cai Guo-Qiang, who recalled in an interview of his that gunpowder was originally invented in China by an alchemist in search of a medicine for immortality: gunpowder in Chinese, I realized, is in fact not called “gun powder” but “fire medicine.” This piece places us in one of the first times gunpowder was used against the Chinese people on a large scale: The First Opium War. Each individual is depicted, in silhouette form, being shot and killed but rather than simply dying, the explosion seems to rise above him and evolve into an animal. These are the five animals, also called ‘five symbols,’ or ‘five forms’ in Chinese mythology: each represents a different stage in one’s life, different parts of one’s body, and different emotions in one’s mind. Therefore, these pieces reflect the duality of gunpowder in Eastern/Western narratives: as a force of destruction, or an elixir for immortality?”
AMHERST COLLEGE CLASSES
MAKING A VISIT TO THE MEAD 2019–20

American Studies (AMST)
111   Global Valley
224   The Neo-Western

Anthropology (ANTH)
304   The Photograph

Art and the History of Art (ARHA)
154   Art and Architecture of South Asia (ARCH-154, ASLC-154)
159   Modernity and the Avant-Garde
187   Native American Art (LLAS-187)
213   Printmaking I: The Hand-Printed Image
319   Working in Series: The Interdisciplinary Connection between Drawing and the Hand-Printed Image

Asian Languages and Civilizations (ASLC)
123   Arts of Japan (ARHA-123)
152   Introduction to Buddhist Traditions (RELI-152)
220   Reinventing Tokyo: The Art, Literature, and Politics of Japan’s Modern Capital

Black Studies (BLST)
294   Black Europe

Chemistry (CHEM)
371   Inorganic Chemistry

English
226   Fiction Writing I
343   British Romantic Poetry: Nature and the Imagination
448   Body in Peril: An Exploration of Tragedy through Poetic Form

European Studies (EUST)
127   Early Modern Europe in a Global Context (HIST-127)

Film and Media Studies (FAMS)
221   Foundations in Video Production (ARHA-221)

First-Year Seminars (FYSE)
102   What Is Mainstream Music?
112   Beginnings
115   Space and Place
118   Food and Culture
120   Manifestos
123   Keywords in American Culture
MAKING EMBODIED TASTE: FOOD STORIES IN THE ART MUSEUM

By Emily Potter-Ndiaye
Dwight and Kirsten Poler & Andrew W. Mellon Head of Education and Curator of Academic Programs

In fall of 2019 I teamed up with Visiting Assistant Professor of Anthropology Amy Cox Hall to lead Eat! An Exhibition Seminar, a 300-level anthropology course. The class of sixteen met at the Mead, and the course culminated in the exhibition Embodied Taste, organized by the students.

CHALLENGE:
Use museum and food studies methods to unpack important topics around food, eating, culture, and power from an anthropological perspective, while also investigating food as a recurring theme and subject of art across cultures and times.

CONSTRAINTS:
We had a modest budget for design and installation in the two-room Collins Gallery. Everything in the exhibition had to come from the Mead’s collection or, given their proximity and accommodating spirit, from the College’s Archives and Special Collections.

SELECTION OF WORKS:
Before the semester, I created a long list of Mead artworks relating to food and sorted it into possible thematic threads to establish proof of concept. Amy and I whittled down the full sort to about a hundred objects, which the students would view, do secondary research on, and finally boil down to an exhibition checklist of thirty-five objects.

FIELDWORK:
As a break from course readings, discussion, and research, we traveled to New York City to encounter food narratives in public contexts. We went on a food-truck tour of Midtown Manhattan led by Turnstile Tours to see how a tourism company creates narratives around food, culture, and local history. Students studied the exhibition design of Chow: Making the Chinese American Restaurant at the Museum of Food and Drink in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. We stopped for shaved ice in the park and chatted with the purveyor, before wrapping up the trip with an after-dark stroll through the Met.
STUCK IN THE MIDDLE:
The hardest part of the project was the middle. Drawing from practical museum texts by Elaine Gurian (Civilizing the Museum) and Beverly Serrell (Exhibit Labels), Amy and I led collective brainstorming to home in on a “big idea” and title for the exhibition, as well as a general gallery layout and exhibition script. For most students, all of these steps revealed just how subjective a museum exhibition can be.

HUNGRY YET?
To support the mood of the project, the students chose to paint the gallery walls in Sherwin-Williams colors White Flour and Cherries Jubilee.

Take a virtual tour of the exhibition on the Mead’s website.
The course provided a lens into what we as curators, or viewers, can and should do with art, focusing on the modalities of our exhibition, as much as on the content."

-Emily Potter-Ndiaye

Dwight and Kirsten Poler & Andrew W. Mellon Head of Education and Curator of Academic Programs

PRIDE OF PLACE:
The student curators were clear that although they did plan to include the Mead’s impressively large seventeenth-century painting Larder with a Servant, by Flemish artist Frans Snyders, they didn’t want that canvas to occupy the key “hook” position. Such prominent placement, they felt, would not express the main ideas of the exhibition, which involved shifting from expected, traditional, and Eurocentric canons. Instead, they selected a more contemporary, relatable painting by Serge Hollerbach that depicts two young women in a café or diner, sharing drinks and company.

SPEAK, MEMORY:
To encourage visitors to bring their memories and a sensory approach to looking at the exhibition, some students chose to incorporate audio of people eating together and alone, as well as poetry. Another group took on the class’s widespread interest in interactive components, and made a recipe/memory station.

A student pauses to take notes near Frans Snyders (Flemish, 1579–1657). Larder with a Servant, about 1635–40. Oil on panel. Museum purchase

REPRESENTATION:
Another group, concerned that women of color, including those outside of the US, were underrepresented in the show, created a montage of videos from pop culture and YouTube that presented women as agents in their cooking. Finally, a group represented the labor of harvest and cultivation that is often invisible to consumers but foundational to the lives of those laborers and their families. They aimed their language not at the unaware consumer but at the person who may have some experience harvesting food.

FEEDBACK:
Students described the Eat! class as challenging and stressful, but said it offered unique opportunities to work in modalities they were unfamiliar with but eager for, and in collaboration. Some said it was the best class they had taken.

AFTERLIFE:
While the pandemic has slowed down in-person projects for the short term, this one lives on through a virtual tour, and has seeded a partnership with Amherst Regional Public Schools for their fourth-grade curriculum connecting family recipes, seeds, oral history, and portraiture. It is fitting that an exhibition about art and food that nourishes and defines us would continue to bear fruit.

Embodied Taste was on view at the Mead from December 11, 2019 through January 3, 2021.

EXHIBITIONS
Drawn from museum purchases and an extraordinary recent gift of 184 contemporary artworks from an anonymous donor, this exhibition builds on the Mead’s first and most comprehensive contemporary art exhibition, presented in fall 2019. Spanning four decades, from the 1980s to 2019, the exhibition highlights how artists experiment with media and use historical events, ideas, and images to address politics and the nature of art. Featured artists include Heather Agyepong, Moira Dryer, Mark Fox, Al Hansen, Sarah Morris, Thomas Ruff, Analia Saban, and Paul Mpagi Sepuya.

Starting Something New, Again: Recent Contemporary Art Acquisitions and Gifts (Part 2)
Organized by David E. Little
September 10, 2019–July 18, 2021

Drawn from museum purchases and an extraordinary recent gift of 184 contemporary artworks from an anonymous donor, this exhibition builds on the Mead’s first and most comprehensive contemporary art exhibition, presented in fall 2019. Spanning four decades, from the 1980s to 2019, the exhibition highlights how artists experiment with media and use historical events, ideas, and images to address politics and the nature of art. Featured artists include Heather Agyepong, Moira Dryer, Mark Fox, Al Hansen, Sarah Morris, Thomas Ruff, Analia Saban, and Paul Mpagi Sepuya.
Ten Years of Trinkett Clark Memorial Student Acquisitions (Part 1)

Organized by Galina Mardilovich
September 10, 2019–July 26, 2020

This exhibition celebrated ten years of the Trinkett Clark Memorial Fund. Established in honor of Trinkett Clark (1951–2006), curator of American art at the Mead from 2001 until her untimely death, her family’s gift helped create an innovative annual program in which curators and educators work with Amherst College students to help select a contemporary print for the museum to purchase. Thanks to the Trinkett Clark Memorial Student Acquisition Fund, students have helped choose nearly forty works for the Mead thus far, and this exhibition showcased some of those diverse acquisitions.
The year 1611 gave birth to the Mead’s wood-paneled Rotherwas Room and William Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*. Inspired by this historical convergence, Myers presented an installation of contemporary sculptures, textiles, and boats that question why the figure of the “wildman” appears again and again in literature and arts from the twelfth century to the present day.

Bottom far left: Christopher Myers visited the Mead in February 2020 for an artist talk and workshops.

**Rotherwas Room Project 5: Christopher Myers, The Red Plague Rid You for Learning Me Your Language**

*Organized by David E. Little*

*September 10, 2019–May 31, 2020*

The year 1611 gave birth to the Mead’s wood-paneled Rotherwas Room and William Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*. Inspired by this historical convergence, Myers presented an installation of contemporary sculptures, textiles, and boats that question why the figure of the “wildman” appears again and again in literature and arts from the twelfth century to the present day.

Bottom far left: Christopher Myers visited the Mead in February 2020 for an artist talk and workshops.
Plumbing the Mead’s collection, this three-part exhibition presented some of the ways in which artists have employed collage, and the related forms of photomontage and film montage, throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. As a technique, collage involves the physical layering of disparate elements often borrowed from other contexts. This capacity for fragmenting and combining has rendered collage both an inexhaustible medium and emblematic of the ever-changing modern world.

Drawn from the museum’s collection as well as loans from Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, the exhibition featured works by Joseph Cornell, Romare Bearden, Olga Rozanova, and Robert Rauschenberg, among others.

“Pursuing a Ghost”: Illustrating the Russian Classics
On view at the Amherst Center for Russian Culture
Organized by Galina Mardilovich
September 30, 2019–January 3, 2020

This exhibition took as its starting point Oleg Vassiliev’s portfolio of lithographs The House with a Mezzanine (1991), which centers around the artist’s conversation across time with Anton Chekhov’s short story. The show examined the complex relationship in Russian culture between art and literature, the dynamic between image and text, and illustration and artistic freedom.

Constructing Collage
On view at the Amherst Center for Russian Culture
Organized by Galina Mardilovich
March 5, 2019–January 5, 2020

Plumbing the Mead’s collection, this three-part exhibition presented some of the ways in which artists have employed collage, and the related forms of photomontage and film montage, throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. As a technique, collage involves the physical layering of disparate elements often borrowed from other contexts. This capacity for fragmenting and combining has rendered collage both an inexhaustible medium and emblematic of the ever-changing modern world.

Drawn from the museum’s collection as well as loans from Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, the exhibition featured works by Joseph Cornell, Romare Bearden, Olga Rozanova, and Robert Rauschenberg, among others.
Embodied Taste offered visitors an immersive exploration of food and how it moves—through our bodies and our world. From seed to harvest, food is vibrant matter that incorporates labor, memory, and community. This exhibition asked audiences to explore the collaborations, connections, and stories that are consumed every time you take a bite. Works on view included paintings, photographs, drawings, posters, food-related ephemera, porcelain dinnerware, and sounds that challenge our ideas and feelings about food.

Embodied Taste
Organized by Emily Potter-Ndiaye, Amy Cox Hall, and students in Eat! An Exhibition Seminar at the Mead: Abner Aldarondo, Violet Bain, Charissa Doerr, Anaid Garcia, Michael Gibson, Mollie Hartenstein, Charity Hillman, Sabrina Lin, Sara Near, Sydney Nelson, Jhoo Park, Parker Richardson, Ingrid Shu, Estevan Velez, Kalley Wasson, DJ Williams
December 11, 2019–January 3, 2021
Ten Years of Trinkett Clark Memorial Student Acquisitions (Part 2)

Organized by Galina Mardilovich
February 11–July 26, 2020

This exhibition celebrated ten years of the Trinkett Clark Memorial Fund. Established in honor of Trinkett Clark (1951–2006), curator of American art at the Mead from 2001 until her untimely death, her family's gift helped create an innovative annual program in which curators and educators work with Amherst College students to help select a contemporary print for the museum to purchase. Thanks to the Trinkett Clark Memorial Student Acquisition Fund, students have helped choose nearly forty works for the Mead thus far, and this exhibition showcased some of those diverse acquisitions.
This exhibition was designed around the art of close looking. Every month, a different artwork—indeed, one masterpiece—from the Whitney Collection of Russian Art would serve as the focus. Visitors were invited to contemplate the artwork in the Gallery of the Amherst Center for Russian Culture (ACRC) on the second floor of Webster Hall. For each rotation, a renowned art historian would visit Amherst to discuss the work with us.

**One Scholar, One Work**
Organized by Michael Kunichika and David E. Little
On view at the Amherst Center for Russian Culture
February 12–June 12, 2020
First rotation: January 13–February 28, 2020: Wendy Salmond, Chapman University, on Kuz’ma Petrov-Vodkin’s *Mother of God with Child* (1922)

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Lisa Crossman
The Mead’s inaugural curator of American art and art of the Americas. She holds a PhD in art history and Latin American studies from Tulane University and has extensive experience in exhibitions, teaching, and research. One of her mandates at the Mead is to help develop the collection in Latin American art and offer new cultural resources for Amherst’s diverse student body to study.

Niko Vicario

ON STARTING AT THE MEAD
Lisa: “It’s been a pleasure to begin work with the Mead’s amazing collection, team, and student interns. While the pandemic has presented challenges, we’ve been finding new ways to engage with our communities virtually and to share our collection online.”

UNPACKING “ART OF THE AMERICAS”
Niko: “The category ‘art of the Americas’ suggests that the art produced in the US has something in common with art from other parts of the hemisphere. A question becomes how and to what degree do curators and professors want to emphasize commonality and to what degree [do] they want to emphasize difference and particularity?”
Lisa: “There’s not uniformity across museums as to what constitutes arts of the ‘Americas,’ and at times, ‘American’ art is included in this category. I think of the United States as part of the Americas, but also recognize both the utility and problems associated with categories like ‘American’ art or ‘Latin American’ art, for example.”

CHALLENGES UNIQUE TO TEACHING, RESEARCHING, AND CURATING ART OF THE AMERICAS
Niko: One challenge is how teachers, curators, and audiences “acknowledge that we are in the US and that art from other parts of the Americas, when exhibited or looked at here, may be mobilized and instrumentalized in a variety of ways, as has been the case historically. Who and what and where is marginalized when we think hemispherically—and why?”
Lisa: When I began graduate studies, I decided to focus on art since the twentieth century in the Southern Cone. There simply wasn’t enough scholarship on art from the region. Since then, the field has expanded and there are more museums and universities focusing on not only the ancient arts of the Americas, but also the rich, diverse artistic practices through contemporary. Still, there’s more work to do... There remains a continued need to focus on the diversity of art production... while considering the complicated nature of group identities as presented in art museums.”

The Mead has a well-established collection of art of the Americas, anchored by ancient Indigenous works from Mesoamerica and Peru and by popular Mexican art in the Morrow Collection. This area of the collection contains a variety of other artworks, including Mexican prints from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Art tends toward paradox over singular readings, which makes art museums particularly well suited spaces for dialogue.

**PLANS FOR THE FUTURE**

Lisa: “I am enjoying research on upcoming exhibitions and making connections with faculty members, such as Niko, to plan future collaborations like one with the artist Liliana Porter. He and I are planning to offer students an opportunity to participate in the creation of an online exhibition of Porter’s work, which will include direct communication with the artist, as part of a course on contemporary art and the history and practice of organizing exhibitions. Porter’s practice, which ranges from drawing and printmaking to video and installation, explores issues of representation and the human condition through inanimate objects like toys.”

**STUDYING LATIN AMERICAN ART AT AMHERST**

Niko: “Students in these courses are primarily not art history or art majors, so we can think about how these courses fit in the broader open curriculum of the college. For instance, with the Latin American art course, some students come to it with an interest in Latin America, others with an interest in the relationship between art and politics, others curious to think about art for the first time.”

**ON CURATING AT A COLLEGE MUSEUM**

Lisa: “Art museums on college campuses have the resources to explore art from different disciplinary perspectives, consider multiple subjectivities, and to consider ways that national and regional categories have functioned in giving or denying visibility to artists and art practices.

It’s been a pleasure to see Dario Escobar’s *Turbulence II* on view at the Mead. Escobar thinks critically about local, regional, and international contexts, which we in turn are invited to assess and reassess. This artwork is compelling as it questions the values and meanings associated with mass-produced objects like baseball bats, and the cultural and economic significance of sports, through the unlikely display of a band of thirty bats, painted to depict flames—a decorative motif that suggests the side of a race car.”

—Lisa Crossman


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Mead Art Museum Annual Report 2019–20

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ENGAGEMENT
PUBLIC PROGRAMS 2019

SEPTEMBER
10 Curating the Contemporary Panel
10 Curating the Contemporary Opening Reception
11 Grab & Don’t Go with Tiffany Bradley
14 Community Makers Day
18 Gallery Talk with Galina Mardilovich
25 Gallery Talk with David E. Little
27 Five College Faculty Teaching Workshop

OCTOBER
10 CHI Reception
16 Office of Diversity & Inclusion Reception
17 CISE Scholars Reception
18 Board of Trustees Reception
22 Craftivism with Survivors Art Collective
24 Yoga at the Mead
25 Back to Class at the Mead
25 Behind the Scenes Tour with David E. Little
26 Close Looks Tour
30 Dining in the Dark

NOVEMBER
2 Advancement Tea and Tour
12 Live Performance and Lecture by Justin Alexander
13 The Sounds of Stonewall
14 Artist Talk with Tourmaline
15 Artist Lunch with Tourmaline
21 A New Thanksgiving

DECEMBER
3 Understanding the Cultural & Political Impact of HIV/AIDS
10–11 Massages at the Mead
11 EAT! Opening & Reception
PUBLIC PROGRAMS 2020

JANUARY
17 Collecting 101: Acquiring Art for the Mead Presentations & Public Vote

FEBRUARY
11 Spring Opening Reception
13 Galentine's Day: A Celebration of Friendship
20 Grab and Don’t Go with Christopher Myers
20 The Red Plague Rid You for Learning Me Your Language: Artist Talk with Christopher Myers
21 Art and Reading with Christopher Myers
28 Black Art Matters Festival

MARCH
5 Winter Warmers: Foods and Beverages to Warm You Up from the Inside Out
ATTENDANCE

July 2018–June 2019: 17,570
July 2019–March 2020: 11,151 (closed due to Covid-19 starting in mid-March)

EVENTS

2018-19: 54
2019-20: 34

PURCHASES

2018–19: 34
2019–20: 20

GIFTS

2018–19: 307
2019–20: 17

PURCHASES BY STUDENTS

2018–2019: 2
2019–2020: 3

NUMBERS
In March 2020 Amherst College closed the campus in response to the rising number of COVID-19 cases around the world. Very quickly all students, staff, and faculty transitioned to remote learning. At the Mead, the question was how to keep students employed as lobby attendants, museum educators, and interns. These students count on their work at the Mead to provide vital income and experience. And we count on them for their valuable contributions. No pandemic was going to stop us.

Three Mead staff members went into action to create meaningful, project-based work for students: Danielle Amodeo, public programs and marketing specialist; Emily Potter-Ndiaye, Dwight and Kirsten Poler & Andrew W. Mellon Head of Education and Curator of Academic Programs; and Nicholas Taupier, museum security supervisor who oversees students employed at the Mead’s front desk. First they surveyed the lobby attendants and student museum educators to get a sense of their research interests, skills, and majors so students could be placed with a Mead staff supervisor and a project that would relate to their personal and academic interests. The projects students were assigned to included doing research for upcoming exhibitions, developing acquisition requests, creating a coloring book focused on the Mead collection, keywording untitled works for the museum database, and documenting the Mead’s exhibition history.

In addition to their core projects, the education team asked students to dedicate one hour a week to writing a reflection as a cohort, giving them the opportunity to share surprises, discoveries, challenges, and accomplishments from their work or life in quarantine. These reflections were a way for students and staff to stay connected, and folx were encouraged to comment on each others’ posts.

Thanks to the hard work of the Mead staff, sixteen lobby attendants, five student museum educators, and three interns were provided paid work during this tumultuous time.
# MEADFROMHOME

In spring 2020, after the Amherst College campus shut down and classes moved online, the Mead reached out across social media to encourage engagement with artwork in the collection. Followers were invited to reimagine a work of art from the collection, take a photo, and upload it with the hashtag #MeadFromHome.

Here are some of the creative results, side by side with the artwork that inspired it.

Student museum educator Charissa Doerr ’20 captured the spirit and style of this retro figure, updating the look with a messy bun and a cozy fleece. Sean Mellyn (American, born 1965). Crème Brûlée, 2000. Oil on canvas mounted over stretcher and board. Gift of Steven M. Jacobson (Class of 1963)


In 2019 Jocelyn Edens, assistant museum educator at the Mead, left Amherst to take a position in the Department of Interpretation and Digital Learning at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, Missouri.

Lisa Crossman’s essay “To Summon and Witness the Apparitions of Our Pasts” was published in the catalogue Visionary New England, edited by Sarah J. Montross (MIT Press, June 2020), accompanying the exhibition at the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum in Lincoln, Massachusetts. In June 2020 Lisa was awarded a grant by the New England Humanities Consortium (NEHC) for her proposal “Curating at a Distance,” which will research and pilot new ways to present artwork and exhibitions on digital platforms in collaboration with curatorial colleagues at Colby College and Tufts University.

Since May 2019 Danielle Amodeo has served on the Steering Committee of the Arts at Amherst Initiative (AAI) and is the acting supervisor to the Arts Coordinator for AAI. In June 2019 she joined the Board of the Northampton Arts Council and founded the Board’s Equity and Inclusion Committee as well as the Outreach Committee. As a member of the Grants Committee she helped secure 129 emergency relief grants for artists affected by COVID-19 in spring of 2020. In January 2020 Danielle was nominated to the Massachusetts State House Art Commission; the appointment is pending due to COVID-19.

Writer-editor Eric Danton bid farewell to the Mead in 2019 to pursue his freelance career—from Madrid, where his wife, Amherst professor of Spanish Sara Brenneis, was on sabbatical conducting research during the 2019–20 academic year. You can hear Danton, the former rock critic of the Hartford Courant, every Wednesday with Joan Holliday on the Best New Song of the Week segment on WRSI-FM (93.9) in Northampton, Mass.
In the past two years, Tim Gilfillan made several trips with Mead paintings on loan to exhibitions in the US and Europe. He traveled with Monet’s *Morning on the Seine, Giverny* twice: to the Thyssen-Bornemisza National Museum in Madrid (October 2018), and the Museum Barberini in Potsdam (February 2020). In spring of 2019 he flew with paintings by Thomas Cole and Eastman Johnson to the Walraff-Richartz Museum in Cologne for the show *Once Upon a Time in America*. And in early March 2020, right before everything shut down due to COVID-19, he went to the Denver Art Museum with Winslow Homer’s *Fisher Girl*.

“That was an anxiety-ridden trip,” Tim said. “Masks were just starting to show up at the airport.” The journey was also tinged with nostalgia.

“One of the first courier trips of my career was to DAM, thirty-five or so years ago, and this one will more than likely be among the last, things being what they are these days.”

**Business class or economy?** When you’re traveling with the art in cargo you fly business class, which is cool.

**All work and no play?** The trips are pretty packed, but there’s usually at least one free day in between the travel and the work part.

**Most interesting sites?** The cathedral in Cologne, actually. That was unbelievable.

**Best beer?** Kolsch in Cologne. Was never a big fan of the style, but it originated there, so it’s the real deal.

Stephen Fisher said that “organizing and traveling with *Dimensionism: Art in the Age of Einstein* was one of the greatest experiences in my thirty-year career in museums.” In total he spent nearly four weeks at the Berkeley Art Museum, the show’s first venue, leading and assisting their team as they installed and later deinstalled the exhibition. “I am always excited to see how museums plan exhibition spaces, and what tools and technologies are utilized in the process.” After *Dimensionism* closed at the Mead, the final venue was the Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers University in New Jersey. “I had wonderful hosts at the museum,” Stephen said, “and the exhibition couldn’t have gone smoother.”

**Your “three-truck” what now?** Traveling with *Dimensionism* was my first cross-country road trip. From Berkeley, California, to Amherst, Mass., our three-truck caravan rode just ahead of a major snowstorm. I was able to view from the passenger’s seat so much of the American landscape that I had never seen before.

**Any restaurant recommendations?** If you ever find yourself in New Brunswick, NJ, you have to go to Ramen Nagomi. There is always a line, but the ramen is out of this world!

Below: The final venue for *Dimensionism* at the Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers University in New Jersey.
Since attending a symposium on Rembrandt at the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art at Cornell University, Mila Hruba has participated in their WIRE project (Watermark Identification in Rembrandt’s Etchings), a national database of Rembrandt’s watermarks. In the process she confirmed her earlier identification of two watermarks in the Mead’s collection of fourteen Rembrandt prints (shown above) and (shown above). Mila also spent the summer of 2019 researching developments in printmaking in three eastern European countries (Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, and Slovenia) from circa 1960s to the present with an emphasis on women artists and their innovative processes under the constraints of communist rule and cultural expectations.

In the fall of 2019, David E. Little traveled to the University of East Anglia and the Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures in Norwich, England, to deliver his paper “Shomei Tomatsu’s Okinawa: A Foreigner’s Interpretation,” as part of the international symposium, Okinawan Art in Its Regional Context: Historical Overview and Contemporary Practice.

Working across the Amherst campus, Emily Potter-Ndiaye joined the Advisory Board for the Center for Humanistic Inquiry (CHI) in 2019. CHI hosts residents at the Center each year and presents conferences, performances, exhibitions, and more in support of humanistic endeavors. Emily also continues to serve as president of the Museum Education Roundtable (MER), an international organization that promotes innovative thinking and practice in the field through content published in MER’s Journal of Museum Education.

“...seeing Norman Foster and Wendy Cheesman’s magnificent Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts.”

Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606–1669). Christ Preaching (La petite tombe), ca. 1652. Etching, drypoint, and burin on laid paper with watermark. Gift of Edward C. Crossett (Class of 1905)

After five years as curator of American art at the Mead organizing exciting shows and publications such as Intersecting Colors: Josef Albers and His Contemporaries (2015) and Dimensionism: Modern Art and the Age of Einstein (2018), Vanja Malloy left Amherst College in July 2019 to become director and chief curator of the Syracuse University Art Galleries in New York.

Galina Mardilovich, the Mead’s curator of Russian and European art, left Amherst at the end of 2019 to pursue research and writing in New York. She has co-edited New Narratives of Russian and East European Art between Traditions and Revolutions (2019) and is currently at work on a book about prints and modernism in Russian art of the late Imperial period.
## Financial Report

### 2018–19 (FY19)

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**Total Revenue** $ 1,680,858

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<td>Administrative Costs &amp; Salary</td>
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**Total Expenses** $ 1,680,858

### 2019–20 (FY20)

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**Total Revenue** $ 1,370,140

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<td>Administrative Costs &amp; Salary</td>
<td>$ 1,075,384</td>
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**Total Expenses** $ 1,370,140
THE MEAD ADVISORY BOARD

Ariel Aisiks P’17, ’19
Candace Barasch ’89, P’19
Nichole Bridges ’97
Linda Daitz P’88
Ronald Daitz ’61, P’88
Catherine Epstein, Amherst College Provost and Dean of the Faculty
Suzannah Fabing
Loretta Howard ’83
Rev. Phil Jackson ’85
Younghee Kim-Wait ’82
Arthur Koenig ’66
Tara Kole ’98
Adrienne Lei ’05
David E. Little, John Wieland 1958 Director and Chief Curator
Biddy Martin, Amherst College President
Charmel Maynard ’07
Scott Nagle ’85
Scott Niichel ’06
Sam Orlofsky ’98
Brooke Kamin Rapaport ’84, P’16
Joanne Schnell P’11
Paul Schnell ’76, P’11, Chair

Members of the Mead Advisory Board visited the studio of Sa-rah Morris in New York City in January 2020. Morris, an Ameri-can born in England in 1967, did a series of one-word paintings in the 1990s based on headlines from New York newspapers. Please, 1997 was recently gifted to the Mead and is included in the exhibition Starting Something New: Recent Contemporary Acquisitions and Gifts. The series includes works called Guilty, Liar, Nothing, Girls, Never, Hell, and Sorry.
Ariel Aisiks P'17, '19
Deborah Amodeo P'13
K. Frank Austen '50
Michele Barale
Candace Barasch '89, P'19
Kit Smyth Basquin
Mike & Tina Berins 
Robert Bernstein '70, P'01
Alan S. Bernstein '63, P'94
Linda Best 
Jeffrey Birnbaum '79
Nichole Bridges '97
Peter O. Brown '86
Dr. Rebecca S. and Dr. Andrew N. Carpenter '89, '88
Catherine Connor W'45 
George C. Corson Jr. '56, P'85 
Ronald & Linda Daitz '61, P'88
Alex Davis-Lawrence '10
Katherine Chia & Arjun Desai '88, P'22
Maggie Dethloff
Juliana & Carl Dupre 
Andrew S. Durbin '93 
Peter G. Dustin '64
Whitney Morsman Ebmeyer '96
Lindsey Echelbarger '74
Catherine Epstein
Claude Erbsen '59, P'86
Suzannah Fabing 
Kent Faerber '63
Thomas Fels '67
Jay Fields '17
Stephen Foster '70
Jonathan Frey '64
Debby Goan '07 
James H. Goodwin '70
Marjorie Greene 
Frederick Griffiths
Coleman Harwell
Harvey Hecht '58
George & Fran Hertzberg P'97
Joy Peterson Heyrman '82
Warren & Marilyn Hollinshead '57, P'81 
Richard & Ann Holt P'04
Thomas F. Horan '70
Loretta Howard '83
Bruce S. Johnson '70
Virginia Kamin P'79, '84
Peter & Jamie Kaplan P'21
Charles Kelly '53
Paul Koulouris '72, P'06
Nico & Peter Krenskey '11
Richard Landfield '62, P'90, '93
Adrienne Lei '05
Jennifer Lesar '96
Donna & Maurice Levin
Ronald Levy '69
Richard Linenthal '78
David E. Little
Catherine Lowdon '17
William & Fidele Malloy
Vincent & Lucy Marsanico G'13
David Martula '66
Charmel Maynard '07
John D. McKenzie Jr. '66
George McNeil
Surinder Mehta
Samuel D. Miller III '64
Richard Minutillo '67
Lucy Mitchell 
Paul S. Monroe '71
Cullen Murphy '74
Aimee Newell '92
Scott Nichel '06
Paul & Debbie Ouyang '78, P'10, '14
Robert Osborne & Margot Parrot
Carolyn Pastel '01
Spencer E. Pearce
Stephen C. Pollock '77
Brooke Kamin Rapaport '84
V. Ross Reid III '73, P'09, '11
Ronald C. Rosbottom
Kenneth Rosenthal '60
Lila Rountree
Janice Schell P'06, '09
Barrett T. Schleicher '53
James & Burt Schlessinger
Paul and Joanne Schnell '76, P'11
H. Axel Schupf '57
Siyu Shen '15
Andrew & Kirsten Shilling '89, P'21
Catharine Alexander Shirley '80, P'19
Michael S. Simon '86, P'22
Betsy Cannon Smith '84
Dr. Amy Snyder '00
Bryan Southergill '98
Cynthia Stanton
Mary Strunk
Thomas & Bette Sturges '66, P'05
Thomas W. Thaler '75
David & Arlene Thrope P'10
Keith Tobin '81
Christine Tuttle
Margaret Vándryes
Renate Wasserman P'81, '89
George & Carlyjane Watson '54
William A. Weary '64
Jacqueline Werner W'54
John & Sue Wieland '58
Sandy & Helen Wilkes '71, P'08
Charles Sims & Nancy Wolf '71, P'05, '07
Steven Yashon '87
Our last day...
The Mead staff gathered for a distanced toast in the Rotherwas Room on March 16, 2020—not knowing it would be our last day working together for over ten months. In 2020 the world confronted illness, death, economic struggle, racial injustice, disinformation, and misunderstanding. At the Mead, we look forward to a future when we are all closer and can welcome students, staff, faculty, alumni, and the community back to the museum.
On the Cover: