



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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THIRD CLASS OF THE ANDREW W. MELLON UNDERGRADUATE CURATORIAL FELLOWS ANNOUNCED BY FIVE MAJOR AMERICAN MUSEUMS

(Los Angeles—November 29, 2016) The Art Institute of Chicago, the High Museum of Art, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH), and The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art are pleased to announce a third class of fellows designated for The Andrew W. Mellon Undergraduate Curatorial Fellowship Program awarded through a recent grant of \$465,000. The fellowship provides specialized training in the curatorial field to students across the United States who exemplify historically underrepresented minorities and other undergraduates who are committed to promoting inclusive, pluralistic museums. The students begin their fellowships this fall.

Fellows will participate in The Andrew W. Mellon Undergraduate Curatorial Fellowship Program during their undergraduate career, with the goal of continuing their education through graduate work. The two-year fellowship provides students with hands-on experience in a museum setting, assisting curators and staff on exhibitions, collections, and programs. Fellows are matched with a museum curatorial mentor who works to enrich the academic experience and to increase exposure to the museum context while broadening a fellow's understanding of art and art history. Fellowships include regular engagement during the academic school year followed by full-time engagement over the summer.

The Andrew W. Mellon Undergraduate Curatorial Fellowship Program is supported by a five-year pilot phase (2013–18) grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. More information about the need for a diverse educational pipeline into the curatorial field is available in the [Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey](#) published in July 2015.

Selected fellows for the 2016–2018 program are as follows (full bios start on page 2):

- Art Institute of Chicago: **Margarita Lizcano**, School of the Art Institute of Chicago; curatorial mentor, Michal Raz Russo, Assistant Curator of Photography. **Alejandra Vargas**, School of the Art Institute of Chicago; curatorial mentor, Leslie Fitzpatrick, Assistant Curator of European Decorative Arts.
- High Museum of Art: **Kéla Jackson**, Spelman College; curatorial mentor, Katherine Jentleson, Merrie and Dan Boone Curator of Folk and Self-taught Art. **Carson Keith**, Georgia State University; curatorial mentor, Sarah Schleuning, Curator of Decorative Arts and Design.
- Los Angeles County Museum of Art: **Lauren Churchwell**, Pitzer College; curatorial mentor, Megan O'Neil, Associate Curator in Art of the Ancient Americas. **Hope Flores**, East Los Angeles College; curatorial mentor, Carol S. Eliel, Curator of Modern Art.
- The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston: **Amarie Gipson**, St. Edward's University; curatorial mentor, Dena Woodall, Associate Curator of Prints and Drawings. **Celia Shaheen**, University of Texas at Austin; curatorial mentor, Malcolm Daniel, Gus and Lyndall Wortham Curator, Department of Photography.
- The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art: **Hayk Badalyan**, University of California, Los Angeles; curatorial mentor, Gaylord Torrence, Fred and Virginia Merrill Senior Curator of American Indian Art. **Kathryn Cua**, University of Missouri; curatorial mentor, Catherine Futter, Director, Curatorial Affairs, and Aimee Marcereau DeGalan, The Louis L. and Adelaide C. Ward Senior Curator of European Arts.

"Fostering diversity in the next curatorial generation is crucial to shaping a future for our museums, a future in which museums continue to be both inspirational and relevant," said James Rondeau, President and Eloise W. Martin Director at the Art Institute of Chicago. "Our bright and dynamic cadre of new and current Mellon Undergraduate Curatorial Fellows brings fresh perspectives, questions, and voices to the experience and interpretation of art for our global audiences."

"It is an immense pleasure to work with these talented, driven students" said Rand Suffolk, Nancy and Holcombe T. Green, Jr. Director of the High Museum of Art. "We're honored to continue this important program, which fosters a more diverse, inclusive foundation of leadership for the future of the field."

"LACMA is thrilled to welcome the third class of fellows to the program," said Michael Govan, LACMA CEO and Wallis Annenberg Director. "We are committed to telling stories that reflect all cultures and worldviews, and we are excited to train the next generation of curators who will inspire audiences of all backgrounds."

"The contributions of the first two classes of Mellon fellows have already had an impact on programs and exhibitions here—conducting tours, translating texts in the permanent collection, and supporting the registrars and curators in the essential groundwork of exhibition planning," commented Gary Tinterow, director of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. "We look forward to welcoming these two new students as we continue to bolster opportunities in the museum field for these future professionals."

"We are honored to participate in The Andrew W. Mellon Undergraduate Curatorial Fellowship and grateful for the opportunity to provide students with meaningful experiences in a great institution like the Nelson-Atkins," said Julián Zugazagoitia, CEO and Director of The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. "These fellows and this program have been a breath of fresh air for the institutions. As much as we see the participants grow, our museum has also benefited from having a new vantage point to view the curatorial profession. This initiative is critical in educating, mentoring, and supporting a diverse group of young scholars who truly will become our future curatorial leaders."

ANDREW W. MELLON UNDERGRADUATE CURATORIAL FELLOWS

Art Institute Chicago



Margarita Lizcano is a third-year student in the Art History, Theory, and Criticism program at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Her focus is on Latin American Modern and Contemporary Art with an interest in Helio Oiticica, Lygia Clark and Guillermo Gomez-Peña. Having been born in Chihuahua, Chihuahua, Mexico, Margarita is also interested in the hybridity of both physical borders, such as the Mexico/US border, and metaphorical borders, dealing with issues of classism and colorism. This academic year Michal Raz Russo, Assistant Curator of Photography, will mentor Margarita.



Alejandra Vargas studies Art History, Theory, and Criticism at the School of the Art Institute. Before attending SAIC, Alejandra was a two-year intern/participant at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. During her time at the MCA, she and her peers, together called the Teen Creative Agency, challenged what the institution could be and do for minority youth. Alejandra is excited about exploring the ways our cultural institutions give back to underrepresented communities. She questions what the responsibility of a modern-day curator should be, and asks: how can an institution speak for its community, if parts of that community are not represented? This academic year Leslie Fitzpatrick, Assistant Curator of European Decorative Arts, will mentor Alejandra.

High Museum of Art



Kéla Jackson is an art history major and African diaspora studies minor at Spelman College. During her first year at Spelman College, she volunteered as a museum ambassador for the school's museum and was chosen to participate in the inaugural class of curatorial fellows. The summer after her freshman year was spent interning at the Harn Museum of Art at the University of Florida, where she was able to work on projects with the curators of African, Asian and contemporary art. As an aspiring curator, Jackson hopes to push for inclusivity in the art world by incorporating works that were once overlooked, in order to reach people outside of the art elite. Her curatorial mentor is Katherine Jentleson, the High's Merrie and Dan Boone curator of folk and self-taught art.



Carson Keith is a student of the Honors College and the Ernest G. Welch School of Art and Design at Georgia State University (GSU), where she is pursuing a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Textiles with a minor in Art History. She is an apprentice at Sea Island Indigo Farm and exhibits regularly in local Atlanta shows. Keith is the archivist and treasurer in the GSU Textiles Artisans Guild and is interested in facilitating communication between young women in fine arts via interdisciplinary shows. She hopes that her study in textile works and their histories will help to inform her study under Sarah Schleuning, the High's curator of decorative arts and design.

Los Angeles County Museum of Art



Lauren Churchwell is a rising junior pursuing a double major in art history and anthropology at Pitzer College. Born and raised in Nashville, Tennessee, her love of art began when she was a young child through her fascination with the Ancient World; this interest and her desire to promote accessibility and visibility in art museums form the basis for her work. During her time at Pitzer she has also been involved with the on-campus philanthropic club Tutors for A Cause where she serves as co-president. Megan O'Neil, associate curator in the Art of the Ancient Americas, will be her curatorial mentor.



Hope Flores is an art history and studio art major at East Los Angeles College. In 2015, Hope was selected for the Getty Multicultural Undergraduate Internship (MUI) program, and interned at Self Help Graphics and Art. She went on to work at LA Plaza de Cultura y Artes and the Vincent Price Art Museum while attending school and was a curatorial intern at the Museum of Latin American Art. Hope recently co-organized *Crossed Pollinations: Investigating Nature and Culture in China*, an event featuring an exhibition at the Alhambra Civic Center Library. In conjunction with the exhibition, Hope facilitated an artists' panel discussion which investigated the affinity many artists feel with floral life, a theme Hope explores in her own studio practice. She hopes to bring attention to social and environmental issues through her curatorial practice, and is interested in exploring visual similarities in art across cultures. Hope's curatorial mentor is Carol Eliel, curator of Modern Art.

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston



Amarie Gipson attends St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas and is majoring in Liberal Studies with a concentration in art, art history, and philosophy. She is an independent curator and interns at Pump Project Art Complex, a nonprofit art space in East Austin that provides studios and gallery facilities to emerging and established artists. There, she recently curated *Femme National(e)*, a multimedia group exhibition of contemporary women artists. She served as a research assistant for Dr. Amy Nathan Wright's American Dilemma's course, investigating issues such as race, gender, and class. As a Mellon Fellow, Amarie seeks to continue pursuing her passion for African American contemporary art while further developing her practice as a curator and scholar. Amarie's curatorial mentor will be Dena Woodall, associate curator of prints and drawings.



Celia Shaheen attends the University of Texas at Austin and is double majoring in art history and studio art with an interdisciplinary concentration in museum studies. As a fellow, Celia is excited to continue pursuing her interests in museum collections, archives, and curatorial practice, with emphasis on exhibiting the work of a more diversified body of artists in museums. Celia has contributed to the work and mission of collections and art galleries on campus at the University of Texas at Austin: she served as a junior curatorial officer for the Center Space Project, a student run organization at the Visual Art Center; she was a preservation guild intern for the Landmarks' public art program on campus; and she is a senior student assistant at the Harry Ransom Center for the Gabriel García Márquez online archive. Celia's practice as a studio art student focuses on photography and printmaking, and she is interested in bridging her studio practice and curatorial research as a fellow at the MFAH. Celia's curatorial mentor is Malcolm Daniel, Gus and Lyndall Wortham Curator, Department of Photography.

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art



Hayk Badalyan is a Regents Scholar at the University of California, Los Angeles and is pursuing a double major in Art History and Business Economics. His interest in art developed at a young age from his travels to museums across the world and has since grown from a hobby to a passion. Hayk works as a Student Educator at the Hammer Museum in Santa Monica, California where his interaction with artists, curators, and visitors of all backgrounds has fueled his love for museum work. Hayk Badalyan is mentored by Gaylord Torrence, Fred and Virginia Merrill Senior Curator of American Indian Art.



Kathryn Cua is a student at the University of Missouri who studies art history and journalism. Kat has always loved art, but her interest in art history came serendipitously during her senior year of high school. Needing one more humanities class to fulfill graduation requirements, she took AP art history at the recommendation of a friend. She's been in love with it ever since. Her interest in curating came in a similar way—Kat looked up careers in art history to find a reason to take it on as another major. This has led her to incomparable opportunities such as participating as a research assistant in the I-70 Sign Show in Columbia, Missouri, and participating in the 2016 Andrew W. Mellon Summer Academy at the Nelson-Atkins. Kathryn will be mentored by Catherine Futter, Director, Curatorial Affairs and Aimee Marcereau DeGalan, The Louis L. and Adelaide C. Ward Senior Curator of European Arts.

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The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

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About the Art Institute of Chicago

The Art Institute of Chicago is a world-renowned art museum housing one of the largest permanent collections in the United States. An encyclopedic museum, the Art Institute collects, preserves, and displays works in every medium from all cultures and historical periods as well as hosts special exhibitions. With a collection of more than 260,000 art works and artifacts, the museum has particularly strong holdings in Impressionist and Post Impressionist painting, early 20th-century European painting and sculpture, contemporary art, Japanese prints, and photography. The museum's 2009 addition, the Modern Wing, features the latest in green museum technology and 264,000 square feet dedicated to modern and contemporary art, photography, architecture and design, and new museum education facilities. In addition to displaying its permanent collection, the Art Institute mounts approximately 40 special exhibitions per year and features lectures, gallery tours, and special performances on a daily basis. Location and Contact: 111 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60603 | (312) 443-3600 | artic.edu

About the High Museum of Art

The High is the leading art museum in the southeastern United States. With more than 15,000 works of art in its permanent collection, the High Museum of Art has an extensive anthology of 19th- and 20th-century American art; a substantial collection of historical and contemporary decorative arts and design; significant holdings of European paintings; a growing collection of African American art; and burgeoning collections of modern and contemporary art, photography, folk and self-taught art, and African art. The High is also dedicated to supporting and collecting works by Southern artists. Through its education department, the High offers programs and experiences that engage visitors with the world of art, the lives of artists and the creative process. For more information about the High, visit high.org.

About the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA)

Since its inception in 1965, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) has been devoted to collecting works of art that span both history and geography, in addition to representing Los Angeles's uniquely diverse population. Today LACMA is the largest art museum in the western United States, with a collection that includes more than 130,000 objects dating from antiquity to the present, encompassing the geographic world and nearly the entire history of art. Among the museum's strengths are its holdings of Asian art; Latin American art, ranging from masterpieces from the Ancient Americas to works by leading modern and contemporary artists; and Islamic art, of which LACMA hosts one of the most significant collections in the world. A museum of international stature as well as a vital part of Southern California, LACMA shares its vast collections through exhibitions, public programs, and research facilities that attract over one million visitors annually, in addition to serving millions through digital initiatives such as online collections, scholarly catalogues, and interactive engagement. LACMA is located in Hancock Park, 30 acres situated at the center of Los Angeles, which also contains the La Brea Tar Pits and Museum and the forthcoming Academy Museum of Motion Pictures. Situated halfway between the ocean and downtown, LACMA is at the heart of Los Angeles. Location and Contact: 5905 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90036 | (323) 857-6000 | lacma.org

About the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH)

Founded in 1900, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, is among the 10 largest art museums in the United States. Located in the heart of Houston's Museum District, the MFAH comprises two gallery buildings, a sculpture garden, theater, two art schools, and two libraries, with two house museums, for American and European decorative arts, nearby. The encyclopedic collection of the MFAH numbers some 65,000 works and spans the art of antiquity to the present. Location and Contact: 1001 Bissonnet, Houston, TX 77005 | (713) 639-7300 | mfa.org

About The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

The Nelson-Atkins in Kansas City is recognized nationally and internationally as one of America's finest art museums. The Nelson-Atkins serves the community by providing access and insight into its renowned collection of more than 33,500 art objects and is best known for its Asian art, European and American paintings, photography, modern sculpture, and new American Indian and Egyptian galleries. Housing a major art research library and the Ford Learning Center, the Museum is a key educational resource for the region. The institution-wide transformation of the Nelson-Atkins has included the 165,000-square-foot Bloch Building expansion and renovation of the original 1933 Nelson-Atkins Building. The Nelson-Atkins is committed to connecting people of all ages with meaningful art experiences. Through its partnerships with Kansas City community, civic, and cultural organizations and the national and international arts community, The Nelson-Atkins welcomes and engages the diverse population of Kansas City and the surrounding region with enriching exhibitions, cultural programs, and educational activities. Location and Contact: 4525 Oak Street, Kansas City, MO 64111 | (816) 751-1278 | nelson-atkins.org

About the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

Founded in 1969, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation endeavors to strengthen, promote, and, where necessary, defend the contributions of the humanities and the arts to human flourishing and to the well-being of diverse and democratic societies by supporting exemplary institutions of higher education and culture as they renew and provide access to an invaluable heritage of ambitious, path-breaking work. Additional information is available at mellon.org.