

# Crafting the Dream

29TH ANNUAL AMERICAN ART CONFERENCE

THURSDAY – FRIDAY, MAY 8 – 9, 2025



Julius L. Stewart, *The Hunt Ball*, 1885, oil on canvas, 49 x 79 in. Private collection. Photo: courtesy of Hirschl & Adler Galleries, New York.



Joseph Cornell, *A Parrot for Juan Gris*, winter 1953 – 1954, box construction, 17 3/4 x 12 3/16 x 4 in. National Gallery of Art, Collection of Robert and Aimee Lehman, Washington, DC, in honor of Aimee Lehman, 2023, 124, 1.

Sargent Claude Johnson, *Head of a Boy*, c. 1928, glazed terracotta, 7 1/2 x 4 3/4 x 6 in. The Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens, purchased with funds from the Art Collectors' Council and the Virginia Steele Scott Foundation Acquisition Fund for American Art.



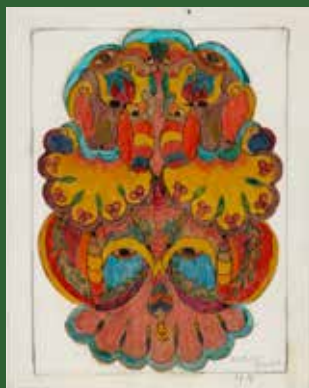
Seymour Fogel, *Wealth of the Nation* (WPA mural in the Cohen Building, Washington, DC), 1942, buon fresco with secco additions, 9 ft, 7 in x 14 ft, 6 in. U.S. General Services Administration Fine Arts Collection, commissioned through the Section of Fine Arts, 1934 – 1943. Photo: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, DC.



Hildreth Meiere, *Pelican*, 1928, glass mosaic sample produced by Pühl & Wagner, featured in the stringcourse of the apse at St. Bartholomew's Church, New York. Photo: courtesy of Hildreth Meiere Dunn.

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Minnie Evans, *Untitled* (composition with two yellow scalloped forms), 1944, crayon, ink, and graphite on paper. High Museum of Art, Atlanta, T. Marshall Hahn Collection.

*Crafting the Dream* is Initiatives in Art and Culture's 29th annual American Art Conference. Since 1996, the Conference has been the premier gathering of those with a keen interest in American Art. Drawing an impressive roster of scholars, curators, and artists, it is at the forefront of critical inquiry in the field.

All art, it can be argued, begins with a dream, whether of subject, stylistic approach, medium, or message (or of all of these). At the same time, there is no art without craft. *Crafting the Dream* will examine American Art through the twin lenses of "dream" and "craft," acknowledging an incontrovertible connection between the two. In so doing, we

will derive a deeper, more nuanced understanding of American Art in its many dimensions.

Attendees can expect a compelling and wide-ranging series of talks, panels, and conversations. They will also attend a private preview and reception for the American Art sale at Heritage Auctions and will receive an invitation to the Gala Opening of the American Art Fair at the landmarked Bohemian National Hall.



George E. Ohr, *Vase*, 1900, earthenware, 11<sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art; gift of Robert A. Ellison Jr.; 2017.357.

We gratefully acknowledge Leadership Funding for *Crafting the Dream* from O'Brien Art Foundation and Anchor Sponsorship from Heritage Auctions. We are grateful as well for funding from CollisArt LLC; D. Wigmore Fine Art; James Dicke II; Gill & Lagodich; Kenneth R. Woodcock; the Steven Alan Bennett Foundation; and anonymous donors (as of May 1, 2025). We are deeply grateful for the media sponsorship provided by *The Magazine ANTIQUES*, and *American Fine Art Magazine*.

This conference is dedicated to Harry L. Koenigsberg (1921 – 2002) and honors the life and work of David Anfam (1955 – 2024).

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EXHIBITION

ANTIQUES

Sponsors and program are correct as of May 1, 2025.

# Thursday, May 8

Formal sessions take place at Heritage Auctions, 445 Park Ave, New York, NY (between 56th and 57th Streets).

8:45 – 9:30 a.m.

## Registration and continental breakfast

9:30 – 9:45 a.m.

**Introduction.** Lisa Koenigsberg.

9:45 – 10:30 a.m.

## Julien Levy: Life, Legacy, and the Women Artists He Championed.

Marie Difilippantonio.

10:35 – 11:20 a.m.

## Meaning in Materiality: Joseph Cornell's Constructions.

Erika Doss.

11:25 a.m. – 12:25 p.m.

## George Ohr: American Craftsman – Artist – Dreamer – Visionary.

Larry List and Eugene Hecht.



Jay Leyda, *Portrait of Julien Levy*, c. 1932, gelatin silver print.

12:25 – 1:25 p.m.

## Luncheon (on your own)

1:25 – 2:15 p.m.

## A Figure in a Dream: Surrealism, Women, and the Museum of Modern Art.

Sandra Zalman.

2:20 – 3:15 p.m.

## Mosaic as a Medium for Women and the Modern:

Hildreth Meière and Jeanne Reynal. Jennifer Samet and Kathleen Skolnik.

3:15 – 3:30 p.m.

## Break

3:30 – 4:15 p.m.

## Sargent Claude Johnson: Modern Representation of the Black Figure.

Jacqueline Francis.

4:20 – 5:15 p.m.

## Revisioning Through Installation: Exploring Multiple Approaches to the Display of American Art.

Stephanie Sparling Williams and Dakota Hoska.

Moderator: Robert Cozzolino.

5:15 – 6:30 p.m.

## Private reception and preview of the American Art Sale, Heritage Auctions

Remarks by Aviva Lehmann (Senior Vice President for American Art, Heritage Auctions).



Jeanne Reynal, *Mother and Children Between Sun and Moon*, 1966, smalti and Japanese shell on pigmented cement, 48 × 60¾ × 2¾/20 in. Photo: courtesy of Eric Firestone Gallery.





Stephen Hannock, *The Oxbow: After Church, After Cole, Flooded (Flooded River for the Matriarchs E. & A. Mongan), Green Light*, 2000, acrylic, alkyd and oil glazes with collage elements on canvas; 8 × 12 ft. The Metropolitan Museum of Art; purchase, Moore Capital Management Inc., gift, 2001; 2001.153. Photo: © Stephen Hannock.

## Friday, May 9

*Formal sessions take place at Heritage Auctions, 445 Park Ave, New York, NY (between 56th and 57th Streets).*

8:45 – 9:15 a.m.

**Registration and continental breakfast**

9:15 – 9:30 a.m.

**Introduction.** Lisa Koenigsberg.

9:30 – 10:10 a.m.

**“To Rekindle the Dream”: New Deal Art: Culture and Crisis in the Great Depression.** John P. Murphy.

10:15 – 11:10 a.m.

**“The Stuff That Dreams Are Made Of”: Julius LeBlanc Stewart and His Work – A Conversation.** Michael Crane, James F. Dicke II, Jacqueline Francis, and Valerie Ann Leeds.  
Moderator: James W. Tottis.

11:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

**The American Way: Displacement in the Work of George Nakashima and Isamu Noguchi.** Elisabeth Agro.

12:00 – 1:30 p.m.

**Luncheon (on your own)**

1:30 – 2:45 p.m.

**The Transformative Power of the Frame in American Art.** Tracy Gill, Stephanie Temma Hier, and Jennifer Thompson. Moderator: Suzanne Smeaton.

2:50 – 3:35 p.m.

**“I would now like to think of other worlds”: Ivan Albright and UFO Culture.**  
Robert Cozzolino.

3:35 – 3:55 p.m.

**Break**

3:55 – 4:40 p.m.

**Inspired by Dreams: The Drawing Practice of Minnie Evans.** Katie Jentleson.

4:45 – 5:30 p.m.

**Moving Water, Fleeting Light.**  
Stephen Hannock.

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

**Conference participants will be guests of The American Art Fair’s invitation-only Gala Preview.**

Bohemian National Hall  
321 East 73rd Street (between 1st and 2nd Avenues)  
New York, NY



Mary Stevenson Cassatt, *Woman in a Loge*, 1897, oil on canvas, 32<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> × 23<sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in. Philadelphia Museum of Art; bequest of Charlotte Dorrance Wright, 1978; 1978-1-5, shown in a French gilded “Louis” style traditional frame (top) and in a 2023 interpretation of its original, green-painted frame in a style favored by Edgar Degas.



# Presenters

**Elisabeth Agro**, Nancy M. McNeil Curator of Modern and Contemporary Craft and Decorative Arts, Philadelphia Museum of Art. Most recently, she served on the curatorial team for "Boom: Art and Design in the 1940's." Her curatorial practice examines cultural, socio-political, and economic contexts to foster a deeper understanding of contemporary art and the lived experience it captures. She is co-founder and advisor to Critical Craft Forum which fosters craft's inclusion in the global contemporary art landscape and explores the rethinking of nomenclature, classifications, marketplace, and presentation of collections. Previously, she served as Associate Curator and Interim Department Head, Decorative Arts, Carnegie Museum of Art.

**Robert Cozzolino**, independent curator, art historian, and critic based in Minneapolis. He curates collaboratively, in partnership with artists, colleagues, and broad communities. "Starting where you are" is critical to his practice. He is drawn to artists who aspire to visually express the intangible, states of consciousness, and the full range of emotions. Along with topics from the 19th and 20th centuries, he regularly engages with contemporary artists to examine history. He considers himself a curator of fluid time, not bound to conventional labels imposed on the field. His numerous publications include *Supernatural America: The Paranormal in American Art* (2021), *World War I and American Art* (2016), *Peter Blume: Nature and Metamorphosis* (2014), and *David Lynch: The Unified Field* (2014).

**Michael Crane**, Curator of Collections, Detroit Athletic Club and private art curator and consultant; he served previously as Assistant Curator of American Art, Detroit Institute of Arts. Among his publications are contributions to *Life's Pleasures: The Ashcan Artists' Brush with Leisure 1895 – 1925* (ed. JW Tottis, 2007) and *The Sweet Life, Julius LeBlanc Stewart and Painting the Belle Epoque* (ed. JW Tottis, 2024).

**James F. Dicke II** began painting at the age of 18 when he studied under Warner Williams, a bas-relief artist and amateur astronomer at the Culver Military Academy in Indiana. Five years later, he received a BS in business from Trinity University, Texas. He is an avid art collector, with a collection of over 2,500 paintings, drawings, and sculptures. As a painter, Dicke draws inspiration from nature and from contemporary emerging artists as well as from established artists in his collection such as John Currin and Philip Pearlstein. He is a contributor to *The Sweet Life, Julius LeBlanc Stewart and Painting the Belle Epoque* (ed. JW Tottis, 2024). Dicke is Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Crown Equipment Corporation.

**Marie Difilippantonio**, Director and Archivist, Jean and Julien Levy Foundation, and co-author (with BG Warren) of *Julien Levy: The Man, His Gallery, His Legacy* (4 vols; 2023). Difilippantonio facilitated the auctions of the Levy art collection, books, and ephemera held at Tajan in Paris in 2004 and 2006.

**Erika Doss**, Distinguished Chair in the Edith O'Donnell Institute of Art History, University of Texas at Dallas. Her multiple books include *Benton, Pollock, and the Politics of Modernism: From Regionalism to Abstract Expressionism* (1991), *Spirit Poles and Flying Pigs: Public Art and Cultural Democracy* (1995), *Looking at Life Magazine* (ed., 2001), *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America* (2010), *American Art of the 20th – 21st Centuries* (2017), and *Spiritual Moderns: Twentieth-Century American Artists and Religion* (2023).

**Jacqueline Francis**, Dean of Humanities and Sciences and professor, History of Art and Visual Culture, California College of the Arts. She curated the exhibition "Sargent Claude Johnson" and contributed to and edited the accompanying publication (2024). She is the author of *Making Race: Modernism and "Racial Art" in America* (2012) and co-editor of *Romare Bearden: American Modernists* (2011) and *Lorraine O'Grady: Is Now the Time for Joyous Rage?* (2023).

**Tracy Gill**, co-founder of Gill & Lagodich Fine Period Frames, New York City (established in 1991) which provides custom framing services and curatorial expertise to museums and private collectors. For over 35 years she has collected, studied, restored, sold, and curated period frames for exhibitions. A frame historian, she has also been the curator—and author of accompanying catalogues—for period frame exhibitions including "One Hundred Years on the Edge: The Frame in America 1820 to 1920" (1996), "Frames of Reference: From Object to Subject" (2000), "The American Frame: From Origin to Originality" (2003), and "Beaux Arts & Crafts: Masterpieces of American Frame Design 1890 –

1920" (2011). Among her other publications is "American Period Frame Connoisseurship in the Twenty-First Century" in *American Art: Collecting and Connoisseurship* (2020).

**Stephen Hannock**, American painter known for his large-scale, imaginary landscapes which often contain text and are characterized by his signature "luminosity" technique incorporating layer upon layer of sandpaper-polished, often-phosphorescent paint. His work is in the collections of the National Gallery of Art, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Museum of

Contemporary Art, San Diego, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. He has had solo shows at Smith College Museum of Art and the Fine Arts Center at the University of Massachusetts and is the subject of two monographs, *Luminosity* (2001) and *STEPHEN HANNOCK: Moving Water, Streaking Light*



Ivan Albright, *Still Life With Potatoes in Motion*, 1978 – 1980, oil on hardboard, 16 x 20 in. Private collection.

(forthcoming, 2025). He received an Academy Award for Special Visual Effects for the film, *What Dreams May Come* (1999), an Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from Bowdoin College (2009), and the Olana Partnership Frederic E. Church Award (2013).

**Eugene Hecht**, leading collector and noted scholar of the pottery of George Ohr; his publications include the definitive monograph of the potter's work, *George Ohr: The Greatest Art Potter on Earth* (2013) for which he was the lead author.

**Stephanie Temma Hier**, Canadian artist, based in New York, whose figurative work merges oil painting and ceramic sculpture through the use of unconventional, often elaborate framing. Her paintings—often employing found ephemeral imagery online—interact with their sculptural pairings to create new narratives. Born in 1992 in Toronto, Ontario, Hier lives and works in Brooklyn, holds a BFA from the Ontario College of Art and Design University (Toronto), and studied at the Academy of Art Canada (Toronto). Notable solo exhibitions have been mounted at Bradley Ertaskiran (Montreal), Gallery Vacancy (Shanghai), Massimo de Carlo Pièce Unique (Paris), Nino Mier (Los Angeles & Brussels), David Dale (Glasgow), Downs and Ross (New York), and Neochrome Gallery (Turin). Her work is found in the permanent collections of the X Museum (Beijing), The Contemporary Art Foundation (Tokyo), the Longlati Foundation (Shanghai), ICA Miami (Miami), and the Mint Museum (Charlotte).

**Dakota Hoska**, Curator of Native American Art, National Gallery of Art. Previously, she was Associate Curator, Denver Art Museum. She worked as a curatorial research assistant in the Arts of Africa and the Americas department at the Minneapolis Institute of Art (MIA) where she co-curated two Native arts-focused exhibitions, "Brilliant" and "Horse Nation." She received her BFA in Drawing and Painting from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design and her MA in Art History with a focus on Native American Art History from the University of St. Thomas. She is a citizen of the Oglála Lak óta Nation from Pine Ridge, Wounded Knee.

**Katie Jentleson**, Senior Curator of American Art and Merrie and Dan Boone Curator of Folk and Self-Taught Art, High Museum of Art, Atlanta, and curator of an upcoming exhibition about Minnie Evans. Since joining the High in 2015, she has curated 10 exhibitions including "Patterns in Abstraction: Black Quilts from the High's Collection," "George Voronovsky: Memoryscapes" (2023), and "Really Free: The Radical Art of Nellie Mae Rowe." She has grown the High's renowned folk and self-taught art collection by more than 600 objects, acquiring work by Voronovsky, Thornton Dial, Lonnie Holley, the Gee's Bend quilters, and Henry Church, among others. She is co-executive editor of *Panorama: Journal of the Association of Historians of American Art*. Prior to becoming a curator, Jentleson worked as an arts journalist in New York where she discovered her passion for self-taught artists and their historical legacy in the US. After receiving a PhD in art history from Duke University, she adapted her dissertation into

the book *Gatecrashers: The Rise of the Self-Taught Artist in America* (University of California Press, 2020) and a 2021 exhibition of the same name.

**Valerie Ann Leeds**, independent scholar and curator specializing in the work of Robert Henri and his circle and who has published and lectured widely on a broad array of subjects in American art. She previously held curatorial positions at the Boca Raton Museum of Art, Flint Institute of Arts, Orlando Museum of Art, Tampa Museum of Art, and Whitney Museum of American Art. She has organized more than 40 exhibitions and served as guest curator for museums and galleries around the country. Most recently, she contributed to *The Sweet Life: Julius LeBlanc Stewart and Painting the Belle Epoque* (2024, ed. JW Tottis).

**Larry List**, New York-based writer and independent curator. He has organized exhibitions and written about Dada, Surrealism, Modern and contemporary art for The Noguchi Museum, The Menil Collection, The Tate Modern, The Andy Warhol Museum, Reykjavik Art Museum, and DOX Center for Art, Prague, among others. His exhibitions include "The Imagery of Chess Revisited," "The Art of Chess; Man Ray & Sherrie Levine," "John Cage and Glenn Kaino: Pieces and Performances," and "SKINTRADE." List is completing the forthcoming *Permanent Attraction: Man Ray & Chess*, the first book to comprehensively survey the artist's chess-related work in all media and to be published by Hirmer Verlag.

**John P. Murphy**, Philip and Lynn Straus Curator of Prints and Drawings, The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Vassar College. He is the author of *New Deal Art: Culture and Crisis in the Great Depression* (forthcoming, 2025). He was co-curator of the exhibition "The Left Front: Radical Art in the 'Red Decade', 1929 – 1940" at the Mary and Leigh Block Museum, Northwestern University. He is a leading scholar on African American artist Charles White.

**Jennifer Samet**, New York City-based art historian, curator, and writer. She is a faculty member at The New York Studio School and Senior Director, Eric Firestone Gallery.

**Kathleen Skolnik**, adjunct faculty, Department of Art, Roosevelt University and co-author of *The Art Deco Murals of Hildreth Meière* (2014). She was a contributor to *Art Deco Chicago: The Making of Modern American Culture* (2017) and is a member of the advisory board of the Art Deco Society of New York and of the board of the International Hildreth Meière Association.

**Suzanne Smeaton**, pioneer in the study and scholarship of American period frames and advisor to public and private clients. She has conducted frame surveys of public, private, and corporate art collections, lectured to museum groups throughout the United States, and curated and co-curated frame exhibitions at museums including The Metropolitan Museum of Art and The Columbus Museum of Art. Among the publications in which her work has appeared are *Life's Pleasures: The Ashcan Artists' Brush with Leisure*

*1895 – 1925* (ed. JW Tottis, 2007) and *Auspicious Vision: Edwin Wales Root and American Modernism* (with L Koenigsberg). For some 27 years she was employed at Eli Wilner & Company, the noted frame gallery in New York City. She is a member of the Board of Directors, Appraisers Association of America.

**Jennifer Thompson**, The Gloria and Jack Drosdick Curator of European Painting and Sculpture

and Curator of the John G. Johnson Collection, Philadelphia Museum of Art. A key member of the curatorial team that organized "Discovering the Impressionists: Paul Durand-Ruel and the New Painting," she has curated exhibitions on subjects such as Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Vincent van Gogh, and Mary Cassatt. She provided curatorial oversight for the 2012 renovation of the Rodin Museum in Philadelphia and the reinterpretation of its collection. Thompson received her PhD in Art History in 2001 from the University of St. Andrews, Scotland.

**James W. Tottis**, museum consultant and former Curator of American Art, Detroit Institute of Arts where he curated "Life's Pleasures: The Ashcan Artists' Brush with Leisure, 1895 – 1925" and edited and contributed to the accompanying publication (2008). He was contributor to and editor of *The Sweet Life: Julius LeBlanc Stewart and Painting the Belle Epoque* (2024).

**Stephanie Sparling Williams**, Andrew W. Mellon Curator of American Art, Brooklyn Museum. Previously, she was Associate Curator, Mount Holyoke College Art Museum and Assistant Curator, Addison Gallery of American Art. Her MA and PhD are both in American Studies and Ethnicity from University of Southern California. She takes an interdisciplinary approach to her curatorial practice and foregrounds Black Feminist space-making. Her scholarly work is invested in the space of the museum, with a focus on African American art and culture and the work of US-based artists of color. Related interests include material histories, cross cultural exchange, strategies of address, and contemporary art that engages with the history of the United States.

**Sandra Zelman**, Associate Dean for Research and Faculty | Associate Professor of Art History, Kathrine G. McGovern College of the Arts, University of Houston. She is the author of *Modern in the Making: MoMA and the Modern Experiment and Consuming Surrealism in American Culture: Dissident Modernism*.



Hannelore Baron, *Untitled* (B82028), 1982, painted metal box assemblage of metal, ink, and monotype, 4½ × 5 × 1¾ in. Photo: courtesy of Michael Rosenfeld Gallery.

## Registration

**To register on-line, scan the QR code:**

**By phone:** Using American Express®, Visa® Card, Discover®, or MasterCard®, call (646) 485-1952.

**Fee:** The conference fee is \$350 with single-day registration options available.

Educators and museum professionals rate \$160 (with ID). Student \$100 (with ID). To receive a discounted rate you must provide proof of status. Please send inquiries to: [info@artininitatives.com](mailto:info@artininitatives.com) or call (646) 485-1952.

**Withdrawal and refunds:** Notice of withdrawal must be made in writing to: Initiatives in Art and Culture, 333 East 57th Street, Suite 13B, New York, NY 10022 or to the Program Office via e-mail at [info@artininitatives.com](mailto:info@artininitatives.com), or call (646) 485-1952. No refunds will be made after April 8, 2025.

**Conference location:** Formal sessions take place at Heritage Auctions, 445 Park. Ave, New York, NY (between 56th and 57th Streets).

