New York City, November 7, 2016 — The Center for Curatorial Leadership (CCL) has announced its tenth class of curatorial fellows as the organization celebrates one decade of training prepared and inspired museum leaders. The 2017 class includes twelve esteemed curators from across North America and signals the participation of more than 100 Fellows in the CCL core program over the past ten years. A committee of museum directors and CCL alumni selected the participants from the most competitive and diverse applicant pool to date. The incoming class is comprised of pioneering curators whose professional backgrounds and curatorial vision demonstrate a commitment to collaboration, inclusivity, and scholarly excellence. The program begins on January 8, 2017 in New York City and continues through May with a range of training modules, leadership exercises, and organizational initiatives.

Since 2008, CCL has prepared an active network of alumni to assume greater leadership responsibilities and effect change in their institutions, communities, and beyond. This year, Fellows join the program from a variety of museum types and sizes, ranging from historic private collections to university art museums, spaces devoted to modern and contemporary art to encyclopedic institutions. As a whole, the 2017 Fellows are unprecedented in their keen eye towards engaged and canon-breaking exhibition practices. Last year, Amy S. Landau, Director of Curatorial Affairs at the Walters Art Museum, mounted the exhibition Pearls on a String: Artists, Patrons, and Poets at the Great Islamic Courts, which shifted perceptions of the Islamic world through a targeted use of biography and interpersonal networks. Sophie Hackett, Curator at the Art Gallery of Ontario, employs photography to investigate histories of queer culture and connect marginalized communities throughout Toronto. Naomi Beckwith, Marilyn and Larry Fields Curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, champions an array of emerging artists and has organized seminal exhibitions investigating black cultural identity, including the acclaimed 30 Seconds off an Inch and The Freedom Principle: Experiments in Art and Music, 1965 to Now. Thomas J. Lax, Associate Curator in the Department of Media and Performance Art at The Museum of Modern Art, has worked with and written on a diverse group of international artists whose practices push the boundaries of museum and medium. Across this tenth cohort, the paradigm for discursive and culturally responsive curatorial approaches promises to engage models of leadership that expand the possibilities and relevance of museums in the 21st-century.

Contact:
Joseph Shaikewitz
(646) 405 - 8067
joseph.shaikewitz@artcurators.org
The 2017 Fellows, listed alphabetically, are:

**NAOMI BECKWITH**  
Marilyn and Larry Fields Curator  
Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago  
Chicago, IL

**THOMAS J. LAX**  
Associate Curator, Department of Media and Performance Art  
The Museum of Modern Art  
New York, NY

**ALISON GASS**  
Chief Curator and Associate Director for Exhibitions and Collections  
Cantor Arts Center, Stanford University  
Stanford, CA

**SARAH MEISTER**  
Curator, Department of Photography  
The Museum of Modern Art  
New York, NY

**ELYSE A. GONZALES**  
Assistant Director / Curator of Exhibitions  
Art, Design & Architecture Museum, UC Santa Barbara  
Santa Barbara, CA

**JEN MERGEL**  
Beal Family Senior Curator of Contemporary Art  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston  
Boston, MA

**SOPHIE HACKETT**  
Curator, Photography  
Art Gallery of Ontario  
Toronto, Canada

**CHRISTINA NIELSEN**  
William and Lia Poorvu Curator of the Collection and Exhibition Program  
Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum  
Boston, MA

**EMILY G. HANNA**  
Senior Curator, Dept. Arts of Africa and the Americas  
Birmingham Museum of Art  
Birmingham, AL

**WILLIAM KEYSE RUDOLPH**  
Andrew W. Mellon Chief Curator and the Marie and Hugh Half Curator of American Art  
San Antonio Museum of Art  
San Antonio, TX

**AMY S. LANDAU**  
Director of Curatorial Affairs  
Walters Art Museum  
Baltimore, MD

**PIERRE TERJANIAN**  
Arthur Ochs Sulzberger Curator in Charge, Department of Arms and Armor  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art  
New York, NY
NAOMI BECKWITH
Marilyn and Larry Fields Curator
Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Chicago, IL

Naomi Beckwith is the Marilyn and Larry Fields Curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, where her exhibition and book projects focus on the impact of identity and multi-disciplinary practices for shaping contemporary art. Prior to the MCA, Beckwith held positions at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Philadelphia and the Studio Museum in Harlem. Her numerous exhibitions include The Freedom Principle: Experiments in Art and Music, 1965 to Now and 30 Seconds off an Inch, both considering the persistent resonance of black cultural practices across contemporary art internationally. She has been an early champion of such rising artists as Rashid Johnson, Jimmy Robert, Keren Cytter, The Propeller Group, and Lynette Yiadom-Boakye. Beckwith has contributed to numerous publications and served on the jury of the 56th Venice Biennale in 2015. She holds a BA in History from Northwestern University and an MA with Distinction from the Courtauld Institute in London.

ALISON GASS
Chief Curator and Associate Director for Exhibitions and Collections
Cantor Arts Center, Stanford University, Stanford, CA

Alison Gass is the Chief Curator and Associate Director for Exhibitions and Collections at the Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University. She holds degrees in Art History from Columbia University and the Institute of Fine Arts at NYU. Gass began her curatorial career at the Jewish Museum in New York City, then became an Assistant Curator at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. At SFMOMA Gass curated the SECA art award exhibitions, the New Work series and assisted in the organization of the Luc Tuymans retrospective. Most recently, she served as Deputy Director and Chief Curator at the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum at Michigan State University, where she helped launch the new building and established a global contemporary program featuring Imran Qureshi, Jessica Jackson Hutchins, Hope Gangloff, Teresita Fernandez, Sharon Hayes and others. At Stanford, Gass is leading the development of an academically engaged exhibitions program, overseeing a major re-installation of the museum’s permanent collection. Additionally, she is organizing a major public commission and exhibition project with Trevor Paglen for 2017.
ELYSE GONZALES
Assistant Director / Curator of Exhibitions
Art, Design & Architecture Museum, UC Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA

Elyse A. Gonzales is Assistant Director and Curator of Exhibitions at the Art, Design & Architecture Museum, UC Santa Barbara where she has worked since 2008. While at the Museum she has curated numerous collection exhibitions and organized several group shows including The Stumbling Present: Ruins in Contemporary Art (2012); Starting Here: A Selection of Distinguished Artists from UCSB (2014); Peake/Picasso (2013); and Shana Lutker, Anna Sew Hoy, and Brenna Youngblood: CB08, the California Biennial (2008). She is currently working on Suzanne Lacy & Pablo Helguera an exhibition scheduled to open in Fall 2017. She also initiated an Artist-in-Residence exhibition program, and has commissioned artists Eric Beltz, Ann Diener, Fran Siegel, Zoe Strauss, Stephen Westfall, and Bari Ziperstein to create new works in the Museum’s galleries. In February 2015 she was named a Santa Barbara County Arts Commissioner for District 1. Prior to working at the AD&A Museum, Gonzales was Assistant Curator at the Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania (2001-2008) and Special Projects Assistant at the Williams College Museum of Art, Williamstown, MA (2000-2001). Gonzales received an MA from Williams College in 2000 and a BA from the University of New Mexico in 1996.

SOPHIE HACKETT
Curator, Photography
Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Canada

Sophie Hackett is the Curator, Photography, at the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) and adjunct faculty in Ryerson University’s master’s program in Film and Photography Preservation and Collections Management. Her recent publications include “Queer Looking: Joan E. Biren’s Slide Shows” in Aperture (spring 2015) and “Encounters in the Museum: The Experience of Photographic Objects” in the edited volume The “Public” Life of Photographs (Ryerson Image Centre and MIT Press, Fall 2016).

Hackett’s curatorial projects during her tenure at the AGO include Barbara Kruger: Untitled (It) (2010); Songs of the Future: Canadian Industrial Photographs, 1858 to Today (2011); Max Dean: Album, A Public Project (2012); Light My Fire: Propositions about Portraits and Photography (2013-2014); What It Means To be Seen: Photography and Queer Visibility and Fan the Flames: Queer Positions in Photography (2014); and Introducing Suzy Lake (2014). Most recently, she curated Thomas Ruff: Object Relations and co-curated Outsiders: American Photography and Film, 1950s–1980s, both of which opened at the AGO in spring 2016. Hackett is the lead juror for the 2017 AIMIA | AGO Photography Prize, a role she also held in 2010, 2012 and 2014.

Photo: Luis Mora
EMILY G. HANNA
Senior Curator, Dept. Arts of Africa and the Americas
Birmingham Museum of Art, Birmingham, AL

Emily G. Hanna, Ph.D., is Senior Curator and Department Head of Africa and the Americas at the Birmingham Museum of Art. She received her M.A. and Ph.D. in African Art History from the University of Iowa, where she was a Stanley Fellow. She held a Whitney Doctoral Fellowship at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in between periods of graduate fieldwork in West Africa. Prior to joining the Birmingham Museum of Art staff, she taught art history at Spelman College and Georgia State University, and continues to teach as an adjunct at several universities in Birmingham. She has organized over two dozen exhibitions on African, Native American, Caribbean, African-American, and Folk Art, and is currently preparing an exhibition and catalog of the Cargo Collection of Folk Art, which will open in the Summer of 2018. She is the co-organizer of the Bunting Biennial Ceramics Symposium – an international forum on ceramics held every other February at the BMA.

AMY LANDAU
Director of Curatorial Affairs
Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, MD

Amy Landau is Director of Curatorial Affairs and Curator of Islamic and South/Southeast Asian Art at the Walters Art Museum. She received her Ph.D. from the Department of Islamic Art and Archaeology, University of Oxford, in 2007. As curator for Islamic and South/Southeast Asian arts, Landau aims to create narratives that interweave histories of people, places, and objects. She has curated a series of exhibitions to highlight cross-collection themes and has recently completed an international loan exhibition on Islamic Art dedicated to stories about people and the significance of biography in Muslim traditions. This exhibition, “Pearls on a String: Artists, Patrons, and Poets at the Great Islamic Courts,” was generously funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Landau is especially interested in presenting the full variety of religious, ethnic, and linguistic groups that compose Islamic societies, and she is committed to exploring the role of the museum in fostering empathy and supporting civic engagement.
2017 CCL Fellows

THOMAS J. LAX
Associate Curator, Department of Media and Performance Art
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY

Thomas J. Lax is Associate Curator of Media and Performance Art at MoMA, a position he’s held since 2014. At the Museum, he has organized or co-organized projects including Steffani Jemison: Promise Machine, Greater New York 2015, Maria Hassabi: PLASTIC, Projects: Neïl Beloufa, and Modern Dance: Ralph Lemon, among others. Previously, we worked at the Studio Museum in Harlem for seven years where he worked on exhibitions such as Kalup Linzy: If it Don’t Fit, VideoStudio, Fore, and When the Stars Begin to Fall: Imagination and the American South. Thomas writes regularly for a variety of publications and is a faculty member at the Institute for Curatorial Practice in Performance at Wesleyan University’s Center for the Arts. He is also on the advisory committees of Contemporary And, The Laundromat Project, Recess, Vera List Center for Arts and Politics, among others. Thomas holds degrees from Brown University and Columbia University and in 2015 was awarded the Walter Hopps Award for Curatorial Achievement.

Photo: Paul Mpagi Sepuya

SARAH MEISTER
Curator, Department of Photography
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY

Sarah Meister became a Curator at The Museum of Modern Art in 2009, having joined the Department of Photography in 1997. She is the lead instructor for the online course Seeing Through Photographs on Coursera, and co-director of the August Sander Project (with Noam Elcott). Forthcoming books include One and One Is Four: The Bauhaus Photocollages of Josef Albers (November 2016) and Arbus Friedlander Winogrand: New Documents, 1967 (February 2017). Recent projects at MoMA have examined the work of Horacio Coppola (2015), the Thomas Walther Collection (2014-15), Nicholas Nixon (2014); Walker Evans (2013-14), Bill Brandt (2013) and Eugène Atget (2012). Meister contributes to and edits a variety of Museum and external publications including (in 2016) Photography at MoMA: 1920 to 1960, an essay for The Shape of Things: Photographs from Robert B. Menschel, a third collaboration with Maira Kalman and Daniel Handler, an article about Jan Groover for Osmos magazine and an interview with Nicholas Nixon for ZUM magazine. She is a member of MoMA’s C-MAP Latin America group, and a Digital Sponsor at the Museum.
2017 CCL Fellows

JEN MERGEL
Robert L. Beal, Enid L. Beal and Bruce A. Beal Senior Curator of Contemporary Art and Interim Chair of the Linde Family Wing for Contemporary Art
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA

Jen Mergel joined the MFA Boston in 2010 as the Beal Family Senior Curator to build the collections and exhibition programs that inaugurated the Museum’s Linde Family Wing for Contemporary Art. As Interim Chair of the Wing, she has overseen collaborative initiatives to newly activate collections, academic and community partnerships, and audience engagement. Previously at Boston’s Institute of Contemporary Art (2005-10), her notable exhibitions include: Tara Donovan (2008), Charles LeDray: workworkworkworkworkwork (2010), Permission to be Global/Prácticas (2013), Lee Mingwei: Sonic Blossom (2015), and Political Intent (2016).

For the Association of Art Museum Curators, she is Vice President, Programming, and Diversity Task Force Co-Head. Mergel graduated summa cum laude from Harvard University, received her M.A. from Bard’s Center for Curatorial Studies, and now sits on the School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts University’s Board of Advisors. She is a proud native of Boston.

CHRISTINA NIELSEN
William and Lia Poorvu Curator of the Collection and Exhibition Program
Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, MA

Dr. Christina Nielsen is the William and Lia Poorvu Curator of the Collection and Exhibition Program at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. Most recently, she curated Off The Wall: Gardner and her Masterpieces, an exhibition that showcased twenty-five of the museum’s most renowned paintings in a new light. Before joining the Gardner in 2014, Christina was at the Art Institute of Chicago, where she curated a number of exhibitions and served a two-year term as the president of the Art Institute’s Curatorial Forum.

Christina received her Ph.D. in art history from the University of Chicago, and has published widely on ancient and medieval art, and on the history of collecting medieval art in 19th-20th century America. In addition to serving as a Fulbright Scholar to Germany, Christina has held research appointments and fellowships at the J. Paul Getty Museum, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and The British Museum. She has taught art history courses at the University of Chicago, the University of California, Los Angeles, and the University of California, Santa Barbara. Additionally, she has served on the board of the International Center for Medieval Art and on several committees for the Association of Art Museum Curators.
WILLIAM KEYSE RUDOLPH
Andrew W. Mellon Chief Curator and the Marie and Hugh Halff Curator of American Art
San Antonio Museum of Art, San Antonio, TX

William Keyse Rudolph is the Andrew W. Mellon Chief Curator and Marie and Hugh Halff Curator of American Art at the San Antonio Museum of Art. He leads the Curatorial, Collections, and Exhibits teams, who execute 11–12 special exhibitions each year and care for nearly 30,000 objects. He previously served as a curator at the Dallas Museum of Art, the Worcester Art Museum, and the Milwaukee Art Museum. His exhibitions as organizing curator/co-curator include *Highest Heaven: Spanish and Portuguese Colonial Art from the Roberta and Richard Huber Collection*; *Thomas Sully: Painted Performance*; *In Search of Julien Hudson: Free Artist of Color in Pre-Civil War New Orleans*; and *Bluebonnets and Beyond: Julian Onderdonk, American Impressionist*.

Rudolph earned a B.A. from the University of Nebraska, a post-graduate diploma from the Courtauld Institute of Art, an M.A. from the University of Virginia, and a Ph.D. from Bryn Mawr College. He was a trustee of the Association of Art Museum Curators from 2010–2016.

PIERRE TERJANIAN
Arthur Ochs Sulzberger Curator in Charge, Department of Arms and Armor
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY

Pierre Terjanian is the Arthur Ochs Sulzberger Curator in Charge of The Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Department of Arms and Armor. The collection in his care consists of over 14,000 outstanding works from Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and America, which in date range from the Bronze Age to the twentieth century. A specialist in medieval and Renaissance European armor, Pierre is now expanding his interests into new areas, including the ancient world, and is keen to uphold the encyclopedic vocation of his Department, which since its establishment in 1912 has been to collect and present significant works of art across all times and cultures.

A native of Strasbourg, France, Pierre was educated in law, management, and history before working at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, where he oversaw the museum’s Kretzschmar von Kienbusch Collection of arms and armor (1997–2012) and the Department of European Decorative Arts before 1700 (2005–2012). He joined The Metropolitan Museum of Art as Curator in the Department of Arms and Armor in 2012 and was appointed to Curator in Charge the following year. His latest publications include two articles on rediscovered albums of drawings in the *Jahrbuch des Kunsthistorischen Museums Wien*. 