

ANDREW W. MELLON CHICAGO OBJECTS STUDY INITIATIVE

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The Andrew W. Mellon Chicago Objects Study Initiative (COSI), a collaboration between the Art Institute of Chicago and the doctoral programs in art history at Northwestern University and the University of Chicago, is pleased to announce the academic year 2017–18 fellowship placements for advanced graduate students.



Antawan I. Byrd is a sixth-year PhD candidate in art history at Northwestern University. His research focuses on modern and contemporary art of Africa and the African diaspora (advisor: Krista Thompson). His dissertation, *Interferences: Sound, Technology, and the Politics of Listening in Afro-Atlantic Art*, examines how artists in Bamako, Port of Spain, and New York combine sound and visual technologies to engage profound moments of political change beginning in the second half of the 20th century. Byrd was co-curator of *Kader Attia: Reflecting Memory* (2017) at Northwestern's Block Museum, associate curator for *Telling Time*, the 10th Bamako Encounters Biennale (2015), and curatorial assistant for *J. D. 'Okhai Ojeikere: Moments of Beauty* at the Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki (2011). In 2009–11, Byrd worked at the Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos, as a curatorial assistant. His research has been supported by a Mellon-CLIR fellowship and a U.S. Fulbright award. For 2017–18, Byrd will be a COSI Research Fellow in the Department of Photography with chair and curator Matt Witkovsky.



Laurel Garber begins her third year in the art history PhD program at Northwestern University in fall 2017. There, she works with Professor Rebecca Zorach and studies histories of printmaking and print culture in early modern and 19th-century France. She received her BA from Cornell and her MA from the Courtauld Institute of Art. Garber has held assistantships and internships at the Getty Museum, Clark Art Institute, and Courtauld Gallery and will hold the COSI Graduate Internship in the Art Institute's Department of Prints and Drawings under the mentorship of curator Victoria Sancho Lobis and chair and curator Kevin Salatino.



Meekyung MacMurdie is a sixth-year PhD student at the University of Chicago studying pre-modern Islamic art (advisor: Persis Berlekamp). Her dissertation, *Geometric Medicine: Aniconism and Arab Painting*, examines the use of pattern, proportion, and ornament in medieval Arabic diagrams and tables. More broadly she is interested in the transmission and adaptation of design across artistic media, in both Islamic and European contexts. This summer, MacMurdie is excited to participate in the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation-funded Summer Institute for Technical Studies in Art at the Harvard Art Museums. MacMurdie will be the Rhoades Curatorial Intern in the Art Institute's Department of Textiles and will be mentored by conservator Kathleen Kiefer and assistant curator Erica Warren.



Solveig Nelson is a seventh-year PhD candidate in art history at the University of Chicago, where she is completing a dissertation, *'The Whole World is Still Watching': Early Video Art, the Televisual, Civil Rights* (advisor: Tom Gunning). Currently, Nelson is the 2016–17 Chester Dale Research Fellow in the Department of Photographs at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and a member of the Met's Time-Based Media Working Group. In 2015–16, Nelson held a LUCE/ACLS Dissertation Fellowship in American Art. She has worked as an art critic for *Artforum* since 2012. At the University of Chicago, Nelson developed and taught the courses History of Video Art, 20th-Century Art, and New Queer Cinema/Culture Wars, 1980s–1990s. Nelson collaborated with artist Sadie Benning on the video installation *Play Pause* in 2006 and recently curated a program for the Video Data Bank

about the stakes of the 1960s in the video art of the 1990s. Nelson will be a COSI Research Fellow in the Art Institute's Department of Modern and Contemporary Art and will be mentored by deputy director and chair and curator of modern and contemporary art Ann Goldstein.



Xi Zhang is a sixth-year PhD candidate in art history at the University of Chicago, specializing in China's artistic and material interactions with Japan and the West from the 18th to 20th centuries (advisor: Wu Hung). Focusing on a series of entertainment complexes constructed in 19th- and early 20th-century Shanghai, her dissertation, tentatively titled *Mapping Entertainment Spaces in Changing Shanghai, 1850s–1920s*, explores the role of entertainment spaces in the construction of distinct cultural identities in imperial-republican transitional Shanghai. She is currently assisting the Art Institute's Department of Asian Art with the upcoming exhibition *Mirroring China's Past: Emperors and Their Bronzes*, scheduled to open in February 2018. Zhang will be a COSI Research Fellow jointly between two departments, mentored by assistant curator Lu Zhang in the Department of Asian Art and assistant curator Leslie Fitzpatrick in the Department of European Decorative Arts.