



**CENTER FOR
THE ARTS
AND HUMANITIES**

**2024-2025
FACULTY RESEARCH
IN THE ARTS & HUMANITIES**

Inner front cover from Broadway Boîte: A Cabaret of Broadway Hits, presented by the Departments of Music and Performance, Theater, and Dance, with photography by Melissa Blackall



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Dean Allbritton

Allbritton, Dean. 2024. "Growing ill: Spanish childhood, HIV and the echoes of a pandemic." *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies*, 25(2), 279–293. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14636204.2024.2347642>

This article focuses on the Spanish films *La niña de tus sueños* (Jesús R. Delgado, 1995), *Cachorro* (Miguel Albaladejo, 2004) and *Estiu 1993* (Carla Simon, 2017), which revolve around characters with HIV/AIDS. In these films, innocence and youth are often highlighted through children and adolescents who live with and next to HIV. Such a move serves to legitimize these cases of HIV and AIDS, which are marked as exceptional cases through their innocence and thus escape the feedback loop of disease and impending death that categorizes popular thinking on the illness. By highlighting these representations of children and HIV/AIDS, this article argues that the coupling of guilt, innocence and illness allows audiences and a larger public in Spain to inhabit a sanitized version of history and ignore the messy complexities of living through and with the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Ghada Gherwash

Gherwash, Ghada. 2024. "On Linguistic Justice in the Writing Center: A Genesis Story." *Writing Center Journal* 42(3), Article 7. <https://doi.org/10.7771/2832-9414.2067>.

This essay presents a reflective account of the origin story of a linguistics justice initiative within the writing center. It concludes by posing questions aimed at promoting dialogue among writing center practitioners as they consider similar initiatives within their own contexts.

Cheryl Townsend Gilkes

Gilkes, Cheryl Townsend. 2024. "Vanguard, Gift, and Intellectual Leadership: Black Women and W.E.B. Du Bois's Sociology of Gender." In *The Oxford Handbook of W.E.B. Du Bois*, edited by Aldon Morris and Michael Schwartz, 329–349. New York: Oxford University Press. <https://global.oup.com/academic/product/the-oxford-handbook-of-w-e-b-du-bois-9780190062767?cc=us&lang=en#>.

The Oxford Handbook of W.E.B. Du Bois is a work detailing the life and works of the twentieth century scholar and activist, W.E.B. Du Bois. It contains fifty chapters covering the multidimensional life and works of Du Bois. The contributing authors are experts on the topics about Du Bois which they authored. Because Du Bois was a prodigious twentieth century scholar and activist, these chapters delve into the numerous contributions he made in these domains.

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The Handbook is written in a clear accessible style enabling scholars, students, and the public to understand this complex and controversial historical figure. Du Bois is a fascinating figure because he lived for 95 years and often changed his ideas and activism as he grew over time. Du Bois's scholarship and activism addressed numerous historical developments and major social movements. *The Handbook* follows these tumultuous times where Du Bois struggled to make sense of the role that race, and racism, played in the development of the modern world. In so doing, this volume excavates the many lessons Du Bois's scholarship and activism hold for the contemporary world.

Aaron Hanlon

Hanlon, Aaron. 2024. "Abraham Cowley Against Bacon's 'Idols of the Mind.'" *Configurations* 32.1, 51-70. <https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/1/article/917008/pdf>

This essay examines the contributions of Abraham Cowley's poetry to the development of Royal Society scientific methods in the seventeenth century, particularly through Cowley's clarification of the forms of cognitive bias that Francis Bacon called "idols of the mind."

We should understand many of Cowley's poetic choices and stylistic recommendations as part of an effort to illustrate and shape the cognitive habits necessary for experimental science in the Baconian tradition. Beyond stylistic recommendations, Cowley was interested in understanding what makes for accurate perception and reasoned judgment, both of which were essential to poets and experimental scientists alike in this formative period. This essay places Cowley's poetry in the context of seventeenth-century conventions for style and perception among experimental scientists and concludes by examining how Thomas Sprat, Royal Society historian and Cowley's literary executor, understood the value of Cowley's poetry to Royal Society epistemological aims.

Hanlon, Aaron. 2024. "Explanation Beyond Interpretation." *Philosophy and Literature* 48.1, 165-184. <https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/1/article/930336/pdf>

This article questions the extent to which interpretation explains literature, arguing that interpretation and explanation are not the same thing. It first engages with recent critical discussions of method and explanation in literary studies, finding that they are not much about method at all. It then offers a methodological framework that goes beyond various "method wars" over "critique" and "postcritique," and toward ways of explaining literature that are not reducible to matters of interpretation.

ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS

Hanlon, Aaron. 2024. "LLM Outputs are Fictions." *Critical AI* 2.1. <https://doi.org/10.1215/2834703X-11205210>

The development of large language model (LLM) tools presents both benefits and challenges. One issue is the expectation of reliable information from users, particularly students. The tool's use conditions and expectations influence its effectiveness. The concept of fictional truth negotiates relations that hold between the real world and the world of fiction and is therefore useful for understanding LLM outputs that rely on and contain facts even as they also contain false or invented information.

Elena Monastireva-Ansdell

Monastireva-Ansdell, Elena. 2024. "Globalizing the Steppe: The Environment and Identity in Ermek Tursunov's Tengrist Parables." *Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema*, January, 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17503132.2023.2298050>

Once a part of the industrialized Soviet ecology and home to Soviet nuclear and space projects, sovereign Kazakhstan generates alternative models for human-nature relations, contributing important insights into the study of the Anthropocene. How has Kazakhstan's gradual integration into global systems and environmental discourses affected the ways in which Kazakhstani filmmakers depict the interrelationship between the local people and the environment, between the concerns of nation-building and local and global environmental challenges? This article takes as case study Ermek Tursunov's cinematic parables set in the Kazakh lands, with a special focus on *The Old Man* (2012). The films explore indigenous epistemologies of nature rooted in the pre-Islamic Turkic religion of Tengrism, which centers on humankind's relationship with nature mediated by the supreme deity Tengri, the Sky God. Drawing on the Tengrist worldview and his own experiences as a (post-) Soviet Kazakh eco-activist, athlete and filmmaker, Tursunov crafts a picture of Tengrism that is both ethnically particular and universal, as well as closely interrelated with other global phenomena, such as environmental concerns, soccer, and cinema. He thereby imagines a pan-human alternative to both old Soviet and new capitalist ecologies currently operating in Kazakhstan

Laura Nüffer

Nüffer, Laura. 2024. "The Old Woman and the Mountains." In *Premodern Monsters: A Varied Compilation of Pre-modern Judeo-Christian and Japanese Buddhist Monstrous Discourses*, edited by Allan Wright, 137-174. Wilmington, DE: Vernon Press. <https://vernonpress.com/book/1985>

Yamauba, or "mountain hags," rank among the most iconic monsters of Japanese folklore. Imagined as grotesque old women who lurk in wild places, yamauba pose a deadly threat to unwary humans, but they can also act as fairy godmother-like helpers, bestowing magical gifts on virtuous heroines.

ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS

Modern feminist scholars have sought to reclaim the yamauba by reframing her as a subversive figure who rejects the constraints of patriarchal society. However, as I argue in this essay, premodern sources do not support the interpretation of the yamauba as a liberatory archetype of female power. On the contrary, tales of yamauba reinscribe cultural norms, presenting female aging as a monsterizing force and teaching women that safety and happiness lie within the bounds of the household.

Sam Plasencia

Plasencia, Sam. 2024. "Theorizing Black Bodies." In *The Cambridge Companion to the Black Body in American Literature*, edited by Cherene Sherrard-Johnson, 17-31. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009204200.003>

I argue that early Black theorists built on the grounds of embodied experience, and on that basis interrogated the West's foundational mythologies of nation and selfhood. Western sites of knowledge production take the Black body as the starting point for distinction, and based on these perceived differences 'learned' students and practitioners of the natural and medical sciences, statesmen, and even abolitionists claimed that people of African-descent were inferior and less human in mind and body. This chapter tracks an alternative symbolic order that also takes as its starting point the Black body—not as a distinct biological entity but rather as a socially constructed embodied experience. I argue that Northern Black writers living in pre-civil war America produced a corpus of critical theory about gender, labor, race, citizenship, and theology that took as its intellectual starting point the overdetermination of the Black(ened) body.

Nicolás Ramos Flores

Ramos Flores, Nicolás. 2024. "Sites of contestation: kaleidoscopes of memory and the shrouding of Latinx lives in the Interim National Pulse Memorial". *Latino Studies*, 22, 254-276. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41276-024-00461-7>

Since the 2016 Pulse nightclub massacre, a plethora of artistic and commemorative efforts have been erected in Orlando, Florida. While the commemorative sites have brought attention to LGQTB + causes and visibility in the area, they have also obfuscated the presence of queer Latinx lives that were disproportionately affected by the massacre. With twenty-three of the forty-nine victims being Puerto Rican and 90% being Latinx, the presence of Latinx lives in this commemorative wall has brought attention to the simultaneous visibility and invisibility of Latinxs in the Central Florida region. This article examines the Pulse nightclub's physical and archived artistic productions to create a mosaic commemorative site that breaks spatial and temporal limitations. I develop the concept of kaleidoscopes of memory, or the continual structural and intersectional traumas that define memory for minoritized peoples, to better understand the representational incongruencies in the memorial wall. This article reveals the tensions and contradictions of Latinx belonging in Central Florida that experience continual shrouding in the broader US imagination.

ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS

Gwyneth Shanks

Shanks, Gwyneth and Aileen Kaye Robinson. 2024. "The Dying Museum; Or, How To Remake The Twenty-First-Century Museum?" *ASAP/Journal* 9(2), 173–188.

<https://doi.org/10.1353/asa.2024.a947142>

Remaking the Museum addresses the colonial policies, hierarchies, and disconnections circulating within museums and offers a hopeful perspective on remaking the traumas of the past, even as such work requires radical reinvention. This special issue centers the body and performance as loci of political and epistemic knowledge and is invested in forms of enactment, activist practices, and representational and political formations of the subject in contemporary art. We explore how dance, theatre, and performance, including analyses grounded in embodiment and corporeality, are instrumental to revealing the entangled racialized, gendered, colonial, and economic structures of contemporary art institutions. By linking the so-called performance turn within contemporary and modern art museums with museal critiques in dialogue with critical race studies, Black studies, and decolonial thought, this issue hopes to trouble the contours of contemporary art, the museum, and its histories of representation.

Tanya Sheehan

Sheehan, Tanya. 2024. "A Different Kind of Struggle': Jacob Lawrence's *Hospital Series* and the Politics of Art as Therapy." *The Art Bulletin* 106(2), 39–64.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00043079.2024.2296279>

Jacob Lawrence created eleven paintings in 1949–50, when he was treated for anxiety and depression at Hillside Hospital in Queens. Critics at the time praised the artworks' similarities to the asylum art of Van Gogh and observed Lawrence's apparent lack of interest in depicting Black struggles. My reinterpretation of the series shows, however, that Lawrence had much to say about the social and psychological conditions of African Americans in picturing the hospital's predominantly white patients. Entering into conversation with Hillside's clinical practices, his paintings offer powerful statements about both the aesthetics and politics of art as therapy.

Nikky-Guninder Kaur Singh

Kaur Singh, Nikky-Guninder. 2024. "Sikh Iconotexts for Global Society". In *Bloomsbury Handbook of Religion, Gender and Sexuality*, edited by Hawthorne Sian et al., 49–68. London: Bloomsbury. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350257207>

ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS

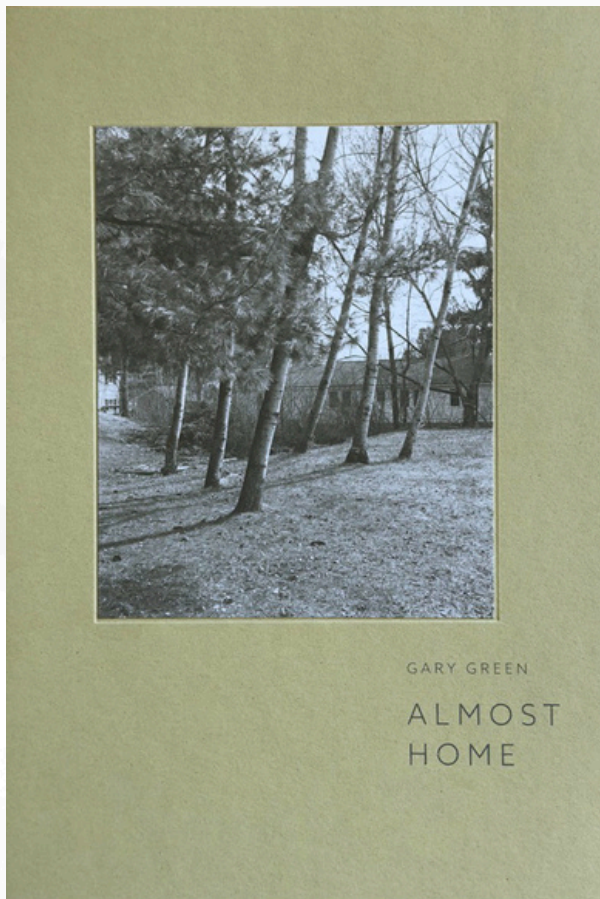
Applying feminist, intersectional, and reflexive approaches, the volume aims to loosen imperialist and exclusionary figurations that have underwritten and tethered religion, gender, and sexuality together. While holding onto the field of inquiry, the Handbook offers contributions that interrogate and untie it from the terms and conditions that have formed it.

Kaur Singh, Nikky-Guninder. 2025. "Selections from Poems from the Guru Granth Sahib by Guru Nanak." In *Ten Indian Classics*, foreword Ranjit Hoskote, 77-98. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/jj.19724059>

Romantic ghazals and devotional quatrains, medieval battles and separated lovers, Buddhist women on their journeys toward nirvana and Ram's battle against a demon army to rescue Sita—all this and more can be found in the *Murty Classical Library of India's Ten Indian Classics*. Beginning in the sixth century B.C.E. and coming up to the eighteenth century, spanning the Indian subcontinent, the selections in this anthology include some of the oldest women's writing in the world, exquisite Sanskrit court poems, verses from the Sikh sacred tradition recited by millions around the world, the renowned chronicle of the Mughal emperor Akbar, and Tulsidas's retelling of the epic *Ramayana* that is cherished in north India to this day. Here, too, are the poems of Surdas, Mir Taqi Mir, and Bullhe Shah, which continue to inspire artists today and live on in contemporary music.



Erin Rhodes, Archives Education Librarian, speaks to students of Associate Professor of American Studies Ben Lisle's course *Nature and the Built Environment* during their visit to Special Collections & Archives in Miller Library, photo by Ben Wheeler.



Gary Green

Professor of Art

Almost Home L'artiere (2024)

Wounded landscapes, crumbling buildings, old dusty wigs still displayed in deserted storefront windows. These plats and parcels represent the history of a built environment and its ongoing discourse with nature. There is a strong sense of passage and decline.

Yet along with the photographs of blighted and neglected landscapes is a glimmer of hope and the possibility of transformation. In one picture, a sliver of light scrapes across a backyard lawn casting tangled shadows that land on the clapboard siding of a neighborhood house. In another, the surfaces of the sun-soaked brick and concrete are rendered so precisely as to elevate their significance by pure photographic description. Of course, there are twists and turns all along the way and a multitude of signs that present our world as more complex than any single feeling or photograph.

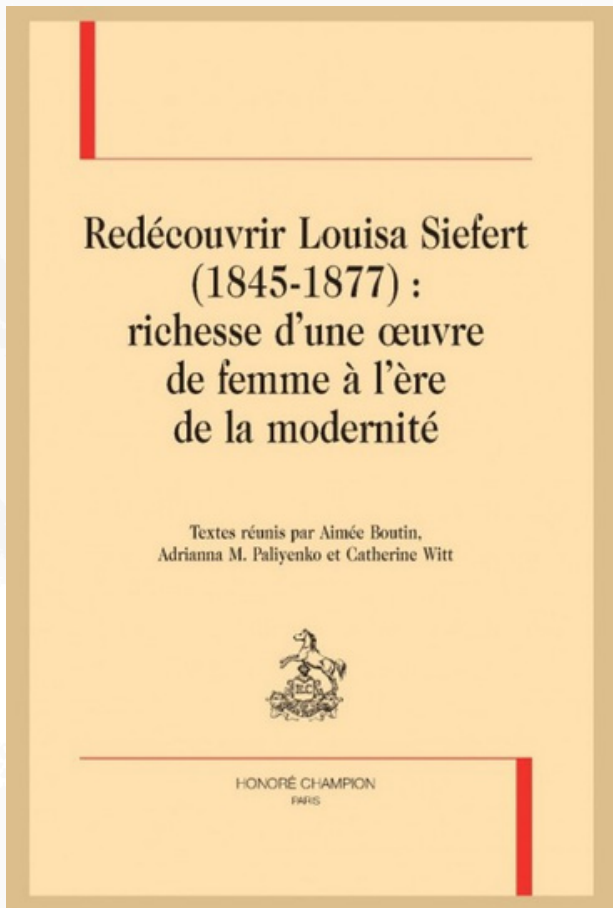


Annie Kloppenber

Associate Professor of
Performance, Theater, and
Dance; Director, Lyons Arts
Lab

Portland Ballet Collaborations: Alex Katz *Pas De Deux* Project (2024)

This was a multi-faceted project inspired by the 1983 large scale painting, *Pas De Deux* by Alex Katz, which is in the permanent collection of the Colby Museum of Art. Colby students participated in choreographic research for the work in the first year dance piece *Here, for Now*. Working with a group of first year students in the fall, I developed the structure and process for five duets inspired by the painting's five pairs. In January, I began my residency with the Portland Ballet with these five duets, but expanded the work for the stage, *The Art of Holding and Beholding* beyond that vocabulary. The five duets served as source material for a dance film, *Opting to Be Pulled*. The first piece with the students took deeper aesthetic inspiration from the painting, with costuming that tried to replicate the 80s fashion from the painting. For the Portland Ballet, I simplified the aesthetic, but adhered to the logic of the formal suit jackets for both. The film, however, diverged significantly from that aesthetic in terms of costuming, lighting, and setting. Our location scouting turned up the attic of Portland's Mechanics Hall, an 1859 building now used for the arts. The attic we shot in was the mess hall for the Civil war soldiers passing through Maine. The site transformed the work fundamentally. *Opting to be Pulled* premiered at the Guggenheim Museum in a symposium in conjunction with the exhibition Alex Katz: Gathering. Thanks to a generous fund from Colby, we were able to bring most of the student dancers who had helped developed the piece to the premiere, allowing them to see their work come to fruition as a professional film in a renowned home for art.

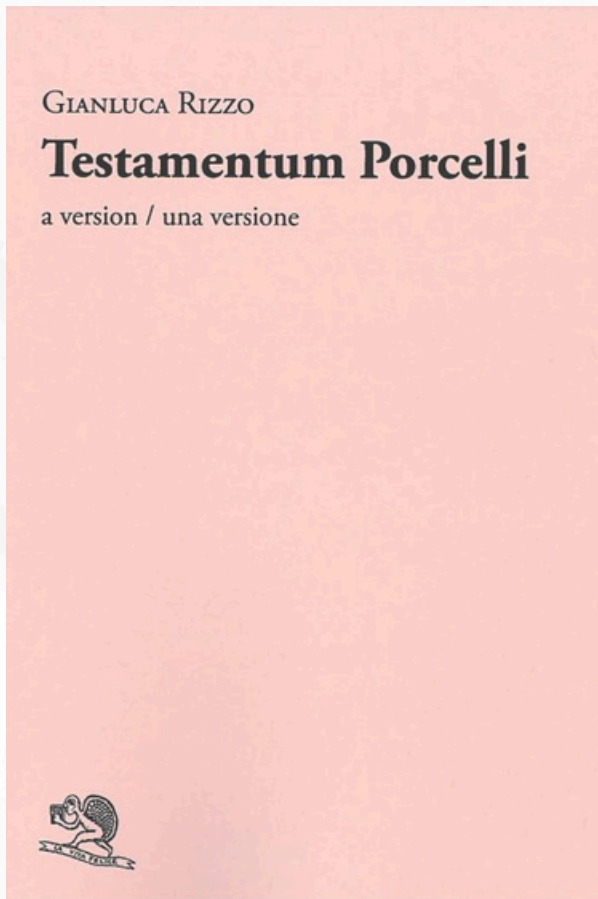


Adrianna M. Paliyenko

The Arnold Bernhard
Professor of Arts and
Humanities

Redécouvrir Louisa Siefert: richesse d'une œuvre de femme à l'ère de la modernité (Co-editor) Honoré Champion (March 2024)

Le présent recueil ouvre des perspectives nouvelles sur l'œuvre et la personne de Louisa Siefert (1845-1877) à partir d'une approche intersectionnelle qui met en rapport les différents engagements littéraires, politiques et religieux ainsi que les expériences singulières d'une écrivaine remarquable, célèbre en son temps, puis injustement tombée dans l'oubli. Les contributions réunies dans ce livre reviennent non seulement sur la vie de la jeune femme - ses origines sociales, bourgeoises et provinciales, son éducation, sa foi protestante, son stoïcisme, son républicanisme et les luttes qu'elle mène pour surmonter plusieurs handicaps physiques, mais elles révèlent aussi et surtout la richesse de son œuvre littéraire, la pluralité des voix qui l'anime et l'attention que Siefert n'a jamais cessé de porter à la forme et aux genres de ses écrits. Ces pages sont l'occasion d'aborder plusieurs questions fondamentales : les conditions de possibilité d'une œuvre de femme au XIXe siècle, les modalités d'inscription complexes du biographique dans l'écriture, la transgénéricité de l'œuvre et le fonctionnement de l'intertextualité dans les œuvres poétiques, théâtrales et romanesques. Si l'idée de ce livre est venue du désir de penser l'apport des archives à l'étude d'une œuvre littéraire de femme, celui-ci se tourne en définitive vers l'avenir en proposant une appréciation inédite du legs que Louisa Siefert laisse à la postérité.



Gianluca Rizzo

Paul D. and Marilyn
Paganucci Associate
Professor of Italian
Language and Literature

Testamentum Porcelli. A version / Una versione

Milano: La Vita Felice (September 2024)

With this version of the *Testamentum Porcelli* (*The Piglet's Last Will and Testament*), a satirical text from late Roman antiquity, Gianluca Rizzo delivers an equi-lingual (in English and Italian) textual machine, driven by the exacting mechanics of subversion. He deploys a vast religious and esoteric corpus to serve the cause of materialism, and couples it with a wild-eyed animalism, leading to results that are both bewildering and demystifying. Through a subtle, erudite game of variations on a theme, the poet cites, parodies, and rewrites many of the founding topoi of the Western lyrical tradition, while the various misfortunes that normally befall animals raised for slaughter are used to retrace its history. A sharp criticism of violence and its gratuitousness emanates from this text, revealing its core political dimension: far from being a polite philological divertissement, this *Testamentum* serves a serious indictment of that hunger for massacre that saturates our civilization.

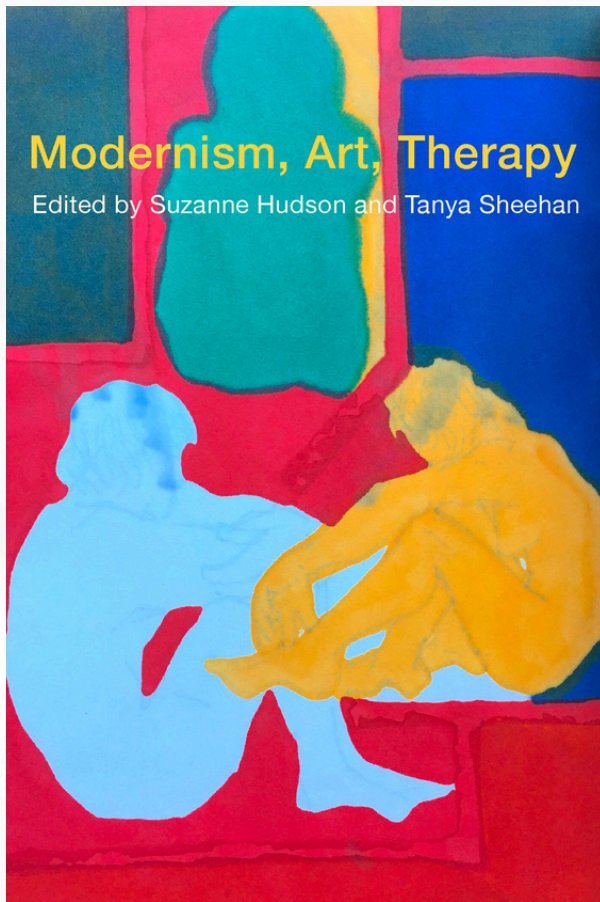


Gwyneth Shanks

Assistant Professor of
Performance, Theater and
Dance

Remaking the Museum (Co-Editor) *ASAP/Journal* (Special issue, May 2024)

Remaking the Museum addresses the colonial policies, hierarchies, and disconnections circulating within museums and offers a hopeful perspective on remaking the traumas of the past, even as such work requires radical reinvention. This special issue centers the body and performance as loci of political and epistemic knowledge and is invested in forms of enactment, activist practices, and representational and political formations of the subject in contemporary art. We explore how dance, theatre, and performance, including analyses grounded in embodiment and corporeality, are instrumental to revealing the entangled racialized, gendered, colonial, and economic structures of contemporary art institutions. By linking the so-called performance turn within contemporary and modern art museums with museal critiques in dialogue with critical race studies, Black studies, and decolonial thought, this issue hopes to trouble the contours of contemporary art, the museum, and its histories of representation.

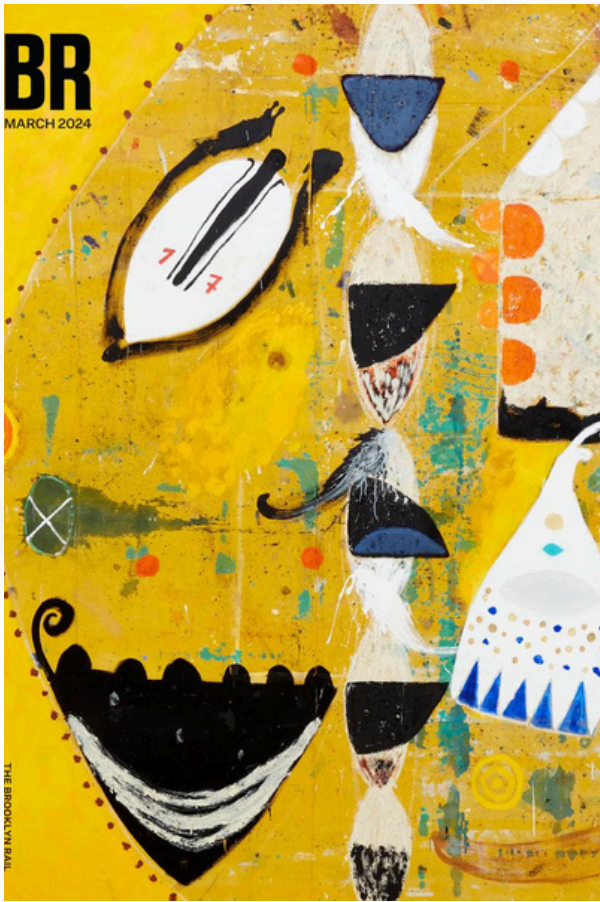


Tanya Sheehan

Ellerton M. and Edith K.
Jetté Professor of Art

***Modernism, Art, Therapy* (Co-Editor)** Yale University Press (2024)

In an innovative collection of essays by established and emerging scholars, *Modernism, Art, Therapy* explores relationships between clinically derived art therapies and the modernisms that developed transnationally in visual arts across the twentieth century. Through sites of practice such as hospitals, clinics, and prisons—but also schools, art museums, and galleries—the book puts art history into conversation with critical medical and health humanities, disability studies, critical race studies, and gender and sexuality studies. Committed to exploring questions of agency and social justice, contributors to the book attend to traditionally marginalized subjects and makers, from children and the incarcerated to women artists, therapists, and care workers. The volume thus aims not only to expand the category of masterworks that art historians deem meaningful but also to expose the limitations of dominant narratives about modernism.

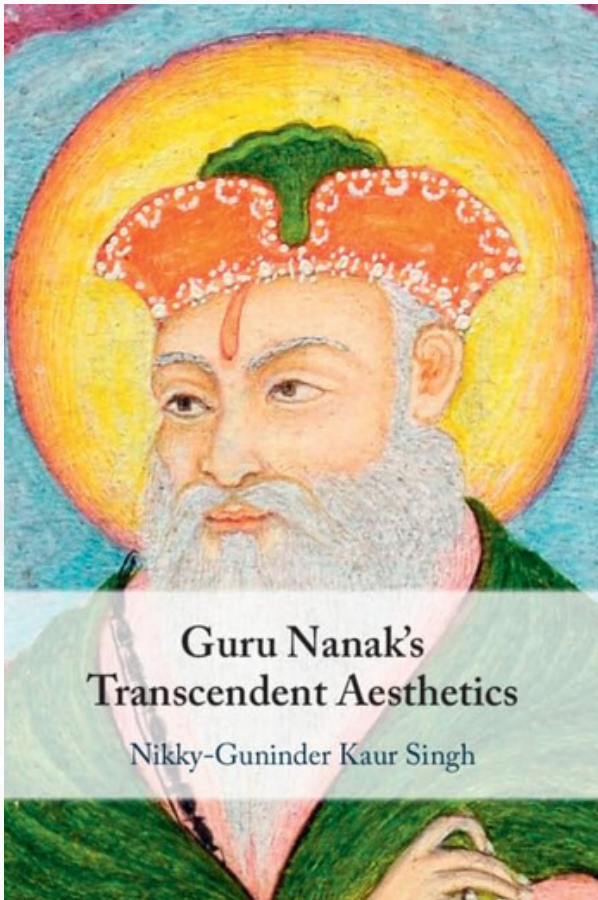


Tanya Sheehan

Ellerton M. and Edith K.
Jetté Professor of Art

Looking After: On Art and Healing (Co-Editor) Critics Page for *The Brooklyn Rail* (March 2024)

In May 2023, the United Nations World Health Organization declared an end to COVID-19 as a global health emergency. They broadcast this decree without diminishing the possibility that the virus, now endemic, might remain a persistent danger, much less suggesting the cessation of its circulation. Since then we have witnessed the increasing normalization of the threat posed by COVID-19—even as the *New York Times* reports, at the moment we are writing, that related deaths are rising in the United States to 1,500 people a week. Building on work with psychologist Benjamin D. Rosenberg, epidemiologist Katelyn Jetelina has argued for a revisionist phase of habituation to trauma, a mode of pandemic forgetting made possible by the introduction of vaccines, antiviral medications, and scaled immunity. Infographics crossed by blood-red lines of viral curves serve as part of a visual culture of a disease rendered preemptively historical, more unsavory reminder than omen. Further lockdown is not imminent; that is the condition for a return to order rather than its consequence.



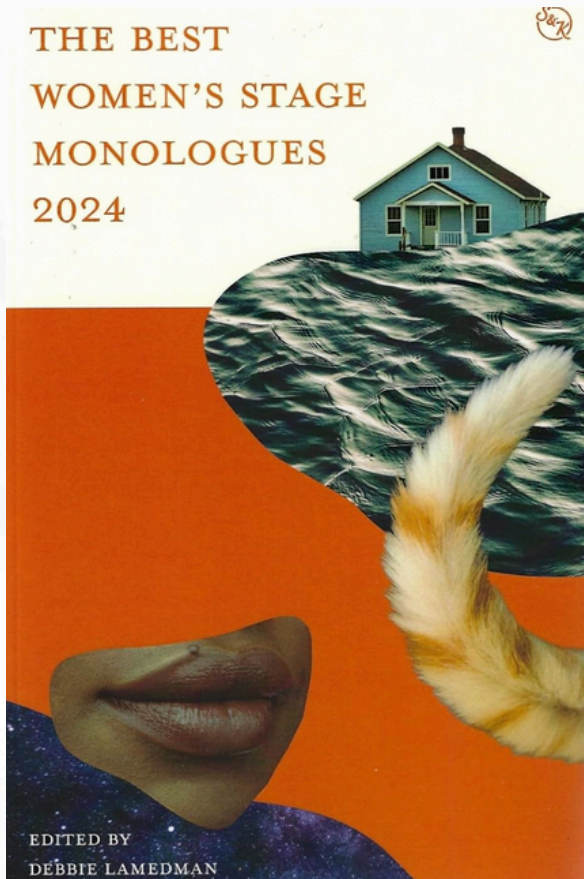
Nikky-Guninder Kaur Singh

Crawford Family Professor
of Religion; Chair of
Religious Studies

Guru Nanak's Transcendent Aesthetics

Cambridge University Press (November 2024)

One of the foremost exponents of the Sikh religion and of related Punjabi literature offers here a sustained exploration of the aesthetics of Sikhism's founder, understood as 'a symbiosis of his prophetic revelation, his poetic genius, and his pragmatic philosophy - embedded in his visceral expression of the transcendent One.' Drawing on a wide range of sources, Nikky-Guninder Kaur Singh examines in full all the beauty, intimacy, and inclusive richness of Guru Nanak's remarkable literary art. Her subject's verses - written in simple vernacular Punjabi - are seen creatively to subvert conventional linguistic models while also inspiring social, psychological, environmental, and political change. These radical lyrics are now brought into fascinating conversation with contemporary artists, poets, and philosophers. Moving beyond conventional religious discourses and spaces of worship in its attempt to sketch a multisensory, publicly oriented reception of Sikh sacred verse, this expansive book opens up striking new imaginaries for 21st-century global society.



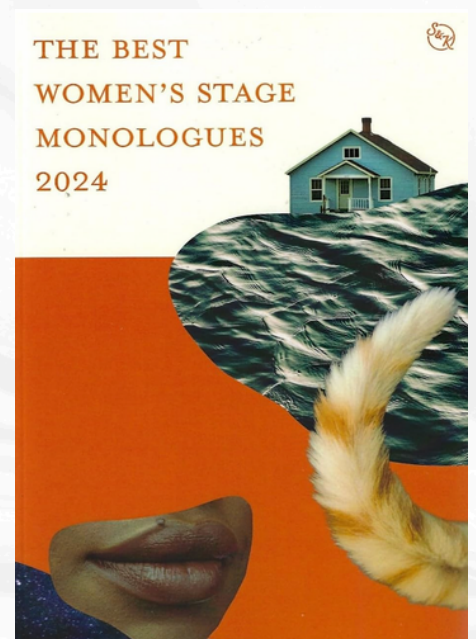
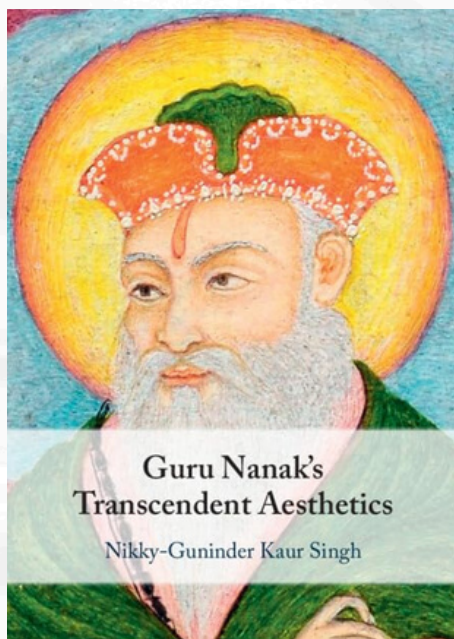
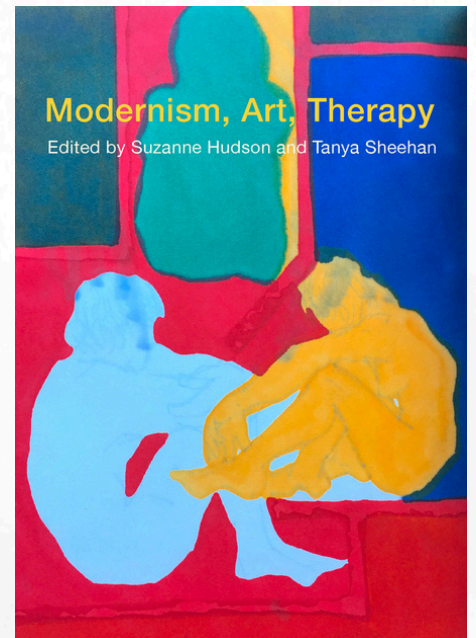
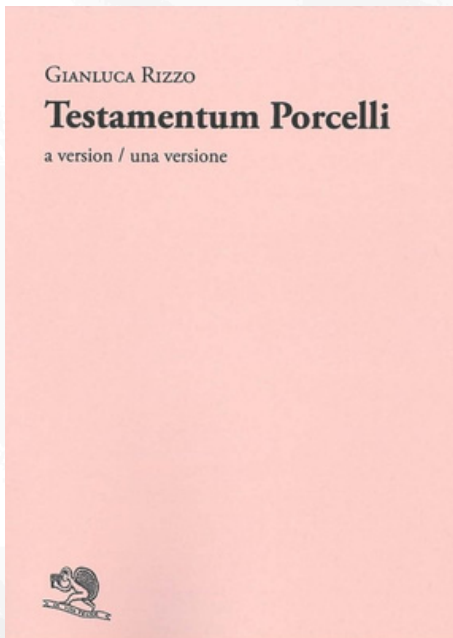
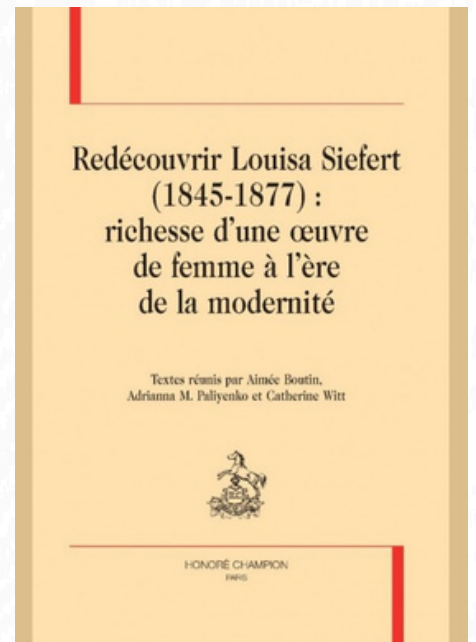
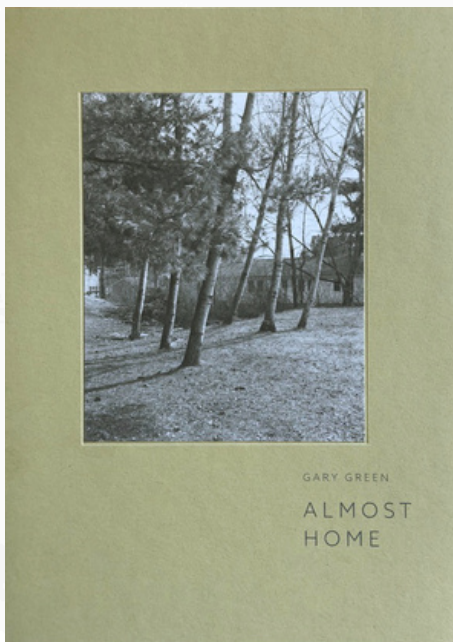
Bess Welden

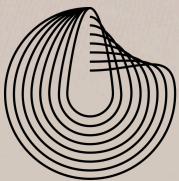
Lecturer of Performance,
Theater and Dance

Jennifer's Monologue from *Madeleines* Smith & Kraus (January 2025)

The Best Women's Stage Monologues 2024 includes 60 diverse speeches from new plays. The anthology includes a monologue from Bess Welden's award-winning play, *Madeleines*.

Debra, a struggling food writer, has returned to her childhood home in Ohio's rust belt to care for her declining mother Rose, an exacting cookie baker. When Jennifer, Debra's very successful older sister, arrives for Rose's funeral, shared memories and old sibling grievances boil to the surface. As the sisters confront their loss, a startling secret about their mother's most-treasured Passover recipe emerges, which changes everything they thought they knew about their family. Three years later Debra returns triumphant to New York promoting her newly published cookbook-memoir to find Jennifer in a treacherous downward spiral. Spiced with poetry and smatterings of Yiddish and Spanish, *Madeleines* tells the story of a family of Jewish women grappling with how to love each other through haunted pasts, shared grief, and the solace of baking together.





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