



BLIND SPOT

**STEPHANIE
SYJUCO**

547 E Circle Drive
East Lansing MI 48824
broadmuseum.msu.edu

 **MSU BROAD
ART MUSEUM**

Always free + open to all.

On view at the MSU Broad Art Museum
Feb. 4–Jul. 23, 2023

CONTENTS

Introduction Steven L. Bridges	2
<i>Why Intervene?</i> Rachel Winter	4
Meet Your MSU Collections	16
Programs at the MSU Broad Art Museum	55
Acknowledgments.....	58

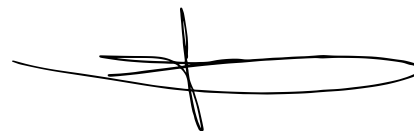
INTRODUCTION

One of the most important things we do here at the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum at Michigan State University (MSU Broad Art Museum) is learn from the artists we work with and share these learning opportunities with our many audiences. This is certainly true of our collaboration with Stephanie Syjuco (See-WHO-ko), whose work challenges us to look and see things differently. Within her work we find important (if not difficult) questions: What do we know, and how do we know it? What are we missing, and how do we begin to uncover and make visible our own blind spots?

In many ways this is the very subject of Syjuco's work, specifically as it relates to the construction of collections and archives in the United States. Behind many of these collections are histories of colonialism, displacement, and white supremacist beliefs, which are urgently being confronted by museums and other institutions—a long overdue reckoning. This topic has also been a recent focal point for us at the museum: What stories and narratives does our collection uphold? How are difficult histories written into our collections, and how do we begin to grapple with these histories in a meaningful way? Working with Syjuco and inviting her into our orbit to present a range of her recent projects offers us the important opportunity to learn from her processes and methodologies.

Research is key and artistic research is especially critical. There is no singular definition to artistic research or how it might be conducted; there are always dimensions that are specific to the artist-researcher, just as with any research project. But what is perhaps most unique about artistic research is the way in which it enters the world, often through creative pursuits that both reveal and metabolize the knowledge gained in order to produce new ways of knowing and engaging with the world around us. In Syjuco's work, the power dynamics of imperial collections and archives intertwine with the capacity of photography to create partial or always-fragmented "objective" perspectives, especially when it comes to portraying or "capturing" peoples and cultures of non-Western origins.

Visibility and camouflaging are specific strategies the artist utilizes, and through the gestures of her hands (which are also often documented in the work), Syjuco subverts the power dynamics to make photography's relationship to historical narratives the subject of the work itself. Who gets to casually consume images? Who is depicted, how, and to what end? Storytelling, the construction of narratives (quasi-fictional, quasi-historical), acts of erasure, and the accumulation of "stuff": These strategies are also the language of museums and archives now turned on their head through Syjuco's practice. But when you stand on your head, as uncomfortable as it may be, you are afforded the opportunity to see the world differently. As we continue to think through the role of our collections at the museum and on the campus of Michigan State University, I invite you to join us, and I hope you find inspiration in Syjuco's work as we have and continue to do.



STEVEN L. BRIDGES

Interim Director &

Senior Curator and Director of Curatorial Affairs

WHY INTERVENE?

A HISTORY OF ART MUSEUMS IN THE UNITED STATES

Several years ago, I went to London with my childhood friend. I avidly photographed my surroundings as if my memory would not retain the feeling of being enamored as I encountered a new city. Along the way, I gathered trinkets as reminders of my travels: A miniature gold Big Ben; a tiny London Eye with an aqua blue base representing the River Thames; and a series of postcards of infamous sites (which I promised to send but never did). My favorite of these was a coffee mug with London's monuments and landmarks decorating its ceramic surface. As I continued to travel, I began acquiring a coffee mug from each place. I collected to create a memory, and as a result, my collection told a story of where I had been, and where I wanted to go.

The way people and institutions collect objects brings us to the artistic practice of Stephanie Syjuco, whose work intervenes into and interrogates institutional collections and the stories they tell. Each person and each institution have different motivations for collecting, and these accumulations of objects are often assembled into careful groupings and presented to tell stories and narrate histories that can highlight or overlook different lived experiences. Syjuco intervenes into these object-based narratives through bodily gestures, artistic markings, processes of disassembling and reassembling, and other creative actions that remind us of who is present and absent from the conversation.



Stephanie Syjuco, installation shot of *Block Out the Sun*, 2021. Single-channel video with sound. Edition of 3+2AP. 5:09 minutes looped. Photo: John Janca. Courtesy of the artist; Catharine Clark Gallery, San Francisco; and RYAN LEE Gallery, New York.

For example, in the exhibition, *Blind Spot*, at the MSU Broad Art Museum, we see evidence of how Syjuco intervenes into archives and museums to comment on the way the United States colonized the Philippines in the early 20th century. In *Block Out the Sun*, we see Syjuco's hand as she interacts with original archival material found at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History and the National Museum of Anthropology in Washington, DC. There, Syjuco found ethnographic photographs, or photographs that were thought to represent people in a scientific, objective manner in an effort to document people in their cultural settings. Yet ethnographic photographs only show the point of view of the person taking the photograph; they do not allow those photographed to have a say in how they are represented. This perspective can imply that certain people or cultures should be perceived as inferior. Syjuco's gentle touch covers certain faces and scenes, prompting us to stop and think about what we see, and what we take to be objective, while also shielding those previously objectified and exploited from further harm.

Block Out the Sun brings us to larger questions about institutions and their collections:

- + **Why intervene?**
- + **What is the history of collections and exhibitions that prompts artists like Syjuco to intervene?**
- + **How does this history require us as audiences to be more mindful of what's on display and how it is displayed?**

To understand why Syjuco intervenes, we must unpack the ways that collections and their presentations emerge from colonial hierarchies and imperial social values that subjugated many populations. Syjuco's work alerts us to the relationship between the omissions of Filipinx populations in archives and museums, the ways of thinking that justified the American colonization of the Philippines in the early 20th century, and the beliefs that fuel anti-Asian and anti-Asian American sentiment today.

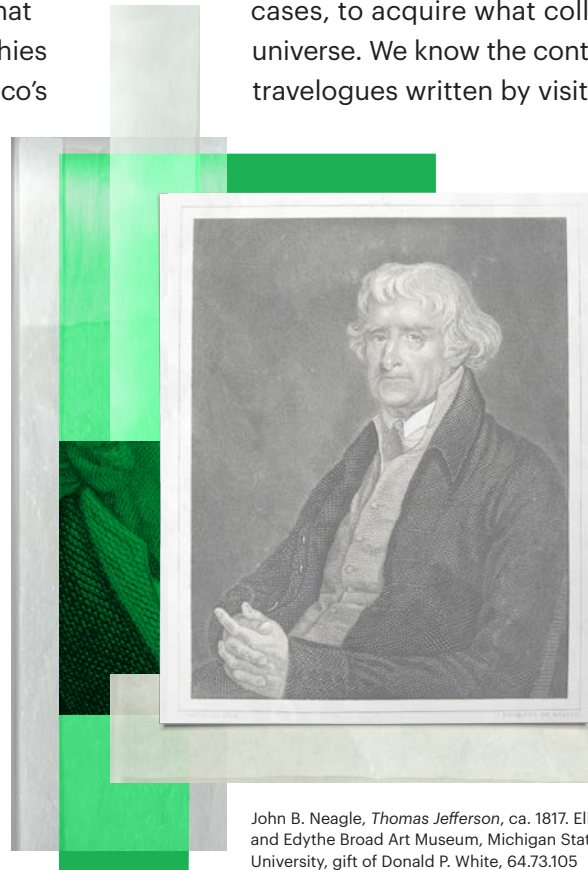
Collections, like those in museums, are not neutral, because they write narratives and describe histories from specific points of view that can leave out other voices or perspectives. The accumulation and presentation of objects privileges certain ways of thinking, knowing, and seeing that convey meanings that can be learned and passed on to future generations. The biased nature of displays necessitates interventions that can draw attention to whose voices are absent and whose histories are represented, and through what frameworks. To intervene is not simply to criticize but to thoughtfully engage with and reflect on what we see and know in order to arrive at a broader understanding of the world and other people's lived experiences. This is what Syjuco's practice does: Her photographs, videos, and installations make visible and upset a history in which collections and sites of display—such as historic houses, museums, world's fairs, and private venues—disproportionately assigned value and meaning to cultures and societies in ways that correspond to social divisions today.

While different cultures have engaged in many forms of collecting throughout history, the main form of institutionalized collecting that precedes art museums in the United States originated in Europe and spanned the 14th to 17th centuries; it is known as the *Kunstammer* (Cabinet of Art) or the *Wunderkammer* (Cabinet of Wonder)—combined as the *Kunstundwunderkammer*. Largely made by elite, white men, these cabinets were like small, in-home galleries that held collections of art, natural specimens, books, and more. Objects were gathered for the sake of learning to support their owners' worldviews, and in some cases, to acquire what collectors saw as an understanding of God's universe. We know the contents of these semi-private collections from travelogues written by visitors, catalogues penned by their owners,

and works of art that document collections like photographs. Collecting was not an arbitrary practice but a visual manifestation of the owner's intellectual breadth: More knowledge signaled a more virtuous person, but in hindsight, we understand that their collections also revealed their biases. The *Kunstundwunderkammer* reflected their owners and their values, and the ways collections were organized and presented indicated a view of the universe that generated systems of value related to Western social hierarchies.

There were versions of the European *Kunstundwunderkammer* in the United States, such as at Monticello:

Thomas Jefferson's home and plantation. A portrait of Jefferson in the MSU Broad Art Museum's collection tells us about his character. John B. Neagle portrayed Jefferson, who served as the third president of the United States from 1801 to 1809, as a serious man.



John B. Neagle, *Thomas Jefferson*, ca. 1817. Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, Michigan State University, gift of Donald P. White, 64.73.105

Showing his hand slightly raised and index finger lifted, as if preparing to lecture or proclaim something noteworthy, Neagle alludes to Jefferson's bookish tendencies: He was a scholarly fellow interested in philosophy, history, and literature, among other things.

Jefferson's collection of books, art, and natural specimens at Monticello expressed his identity and beliefs and allowed him to educate people. He exhibited his collection as a cabinet of curiosities in his home's entrance hall (also known as Indian Hall). Because of its prominent location, visitors immediately encountered his collection. Here, for example, Jefferson displayed artifacts he perceived to be indicative of his friendship with Indigenous populations. On another wall, he showcased items that invoke wonder, like the double-faced clock he



Andy Warhol, *Indian Head Nickel*, from the portfolio *Cowboys and Indians*, 1986. Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, Michigan State University, gift of the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc., 2013.28. © 2023 Andy Warhol Foundation / ARS, NY.

invented, and a scale model of the ancient pyramids of Cheops. Visitors would turn to see animal specimens, like the head and horns of an elk, a deer, a buffalo, and other curiosities that Lewis and Clark delivered after returning from their 19th-century expedition to “discover” a northwest passage to the sea.

The way Jefferson displayed his collection reflected the hierarchical way he saw the world. Placing animal specimens and Indigenous artifacts near each other without clear explanation suggests Jefferson equated the two. Because he financially supported Lewis and Clark's efforts, the three were complicit in taking land from Indigenous peoples. Works of art, including those in our collection, reflect on this historical moment by reconsidering Jefferson's relationship with Indigenous communities. In *Indian Head Nickel*, Andy Warhol offers his representation of a Native American individual to remind people that the Buffalo or Indian Head nickels minted in the early 20th century were replaced by nickels with Jefferson's face on them. The way Warhol returns to and reinterprets historical imagery is an artistic intervention that highlights the parallels between the way Jefferson replaced Indigenous people on coins and the way he removed them from their land to further his own ideas for the nation.

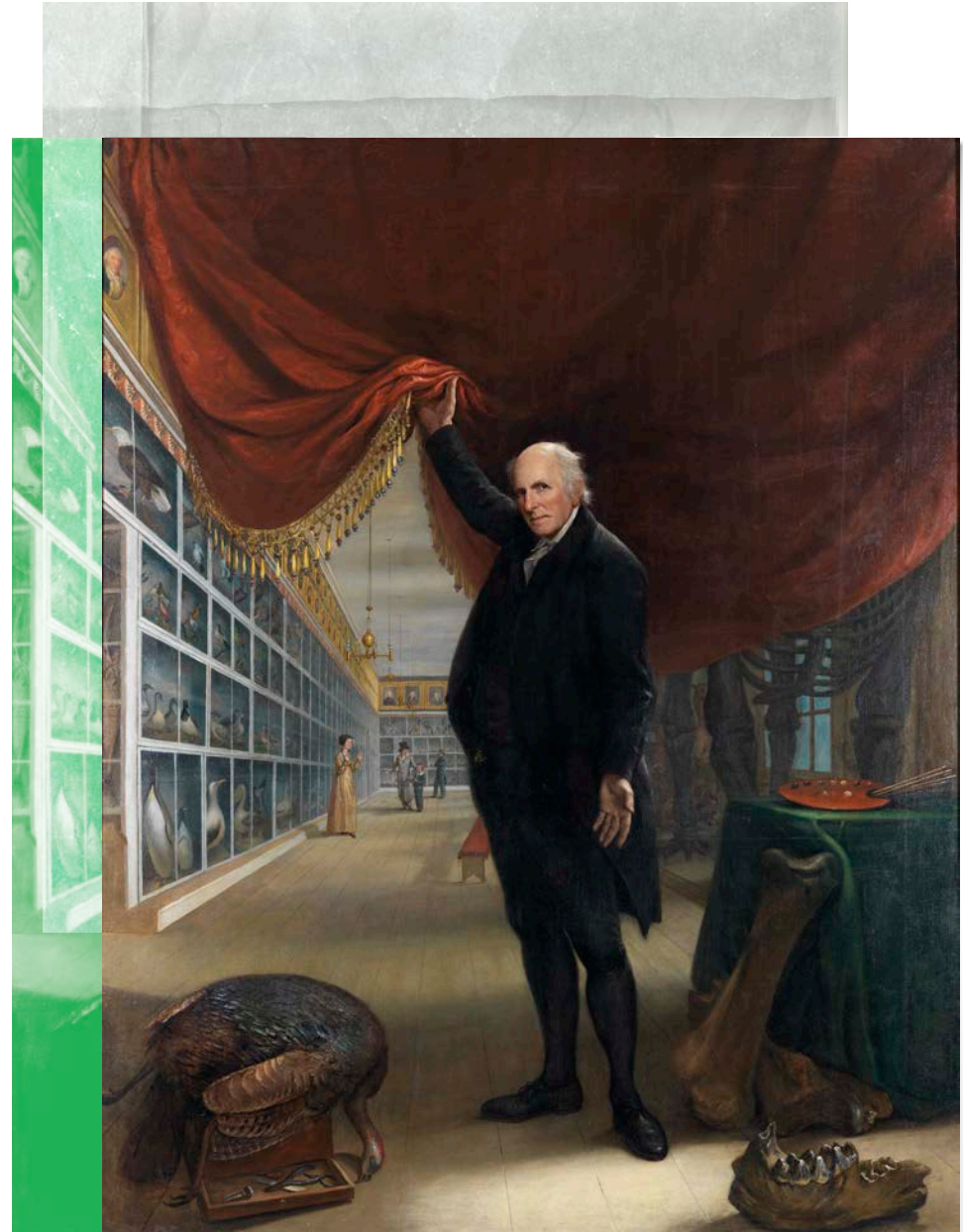
Scholars have also reexamined Jefferson's writings to interrogate Monticello as a site where he actively enslaved Black people. Perhaps the most well-known example is Sally Hemmings, a woman Jefferson enslaved and who bore several of his children. Jefferson wrote about his support for a hierarchical society that permitted slavery in his *Notes on the State of Virginia*, where he suggests that work produced by Black slaves generated little of aesthetic value. Monticello stands today not only as an example of a *Kunstundwunderkammer* (or a private individual's collection) but also as an early museum, and a representation of the systems that facilitated colonialism and white supremacy.

Private collections were also a conduit for public art museums and the formation of their biases in the United States, as in the case of Charles

Willson Peale. A friend of Jefferson's who founded the Philadelphia Museum, now part of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Peale was a soldier, an artist, and an amateur museum keeper, zoologist, archaeologist, taxidermist, and conservator.

Peale documented his knowledge and how he curated it in his museum to educate people about his way of thinking in his painting *The Artist in His Museum*. The collection and its presentation are encyclopedic and meticulously organized—a microcosm of the universe designed to educate audiences. Placing himself front and center of his self-portrait, Peale signals that we are entering his world; his museum reflects his knowledge. He believed that science revealed the hierarchy that made the universe function, where each entity contributed to a functioning ecosystem. Within this ecosystem, animals, like humans, had a place and a role, and Peale illustrated the similarities between the two by attributing human characteristics to each animal, like the faithful nature of dogs. Science was also a way to understand religion. Peale thought animals modeled God's order of the universe: His perceived animal hierarchy paralleled the way race, gender, and class stratified humans. American men were at the top of Peale's social hierarchy, as seen in their prominent placement at the top of the museum above the taxidermied animals.

Yet there is an unseen side to the social order exhibited at Peale's museum. His expeditions and excavations were partially made possible by the people he enslaved. Peale's social hierarchy held upper-class white individuals at the top while those whom Peale referred to as "Indian," among others, occupied lower rungs of society. Peale made derogatory and racist assumptions about Black people by suggesting they evolved from orangutans and equating them with animals to justify what he saw as their subordinate status. And when paintings like Peale's are hung in museums, it is often to present a compendium of knowledge, values, and beliefs across history. And this is why interventions are important—not because different points of view exist, but to draw attention to how the presence of certain people, places, and voices is often predicated on the omission or subjugation of others.

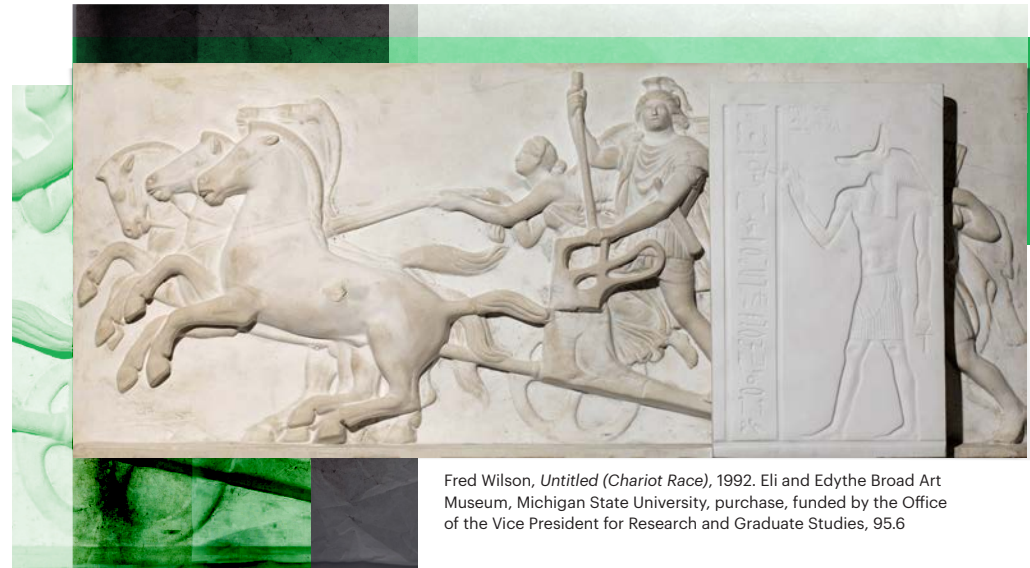


Charles Willson Peale, *The Artist in His Museum*, 1822. Oil on canvas, 103 3/4 x 79 7/8 in. (263.5 x 202.9 cm). Gift of Mrs. Sarah Harrison (The Joseph Harrison, Jr. Collection), 1878.1.2. Courtesy Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia.

Historically, the hierarchies informing museums also shaped ways of thinking about specific types of art. Modern art, for example, has generally privileged artists from the United States and Europe while assuming that places like the Middle East, Southeast Asia, or Africa could not create modern art, a mindset that emerged from the same ideologies informing what nations should be colonized. One person who famously defined a limited notion of modern art hailed from Detroit: Alfred H. Barr Jr.—the founding director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Barr traveled around Europe to see art, and then studied art history with an emphasis on modern art at Harvard University. A prominent teacher and curator, Barr set the standard for what modern art was for many generations by outlining the development of abstract art in the 20th century. Art historians have commented on, or intervened into, this genealogy to analyze the ways Barr's thinking privileged white male artists and excluded anyone outside the West.

The perceived social hierarchies that underpin modern art can also be seen in the layout of many universal survey museums. If you've ever visited the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the British Museum in London, or the Detroit Institute of Arts, you've been to a universal survey museum. Because the MSU Broad Art Museum has a semi-encyclopedia collection, we are also a type of universal survey museum, even if the collection is not always on display. Such museums offer an overview of the breadth of art history across the world. They order and arrange their displays according to broad categories, such as "Native American art," "African art," and "Egyptian art," which can overlook the complex and diverse nature of many societies. For example, not all art made on the African continent is similar, and the range of sculptures made by the Ashanti, Bamana, Bateke, Baule, Dogon, Makonde, Nakwabi, and Yoruba peoples held in our collection exemplifies this cultural diversity. Visual and material culture from outside of the United States and Europe is frequently displayed across fewer galleries, and the way museums make these spatial decisions reflect their values and what they feel is worthy of an audience's attention.

Because objects and displays suggest hierarchies of value and systems of meaning, some contemporary artists intervene in order to object to the status quo. Artists reveal the power structures embedded in museum displays that also reflect contemporary social problems, and argue that the system must change.



Fred Wilson, *Untitled (Chariot Race)*, 1992. Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, Michigan State University, purchase, funded by the Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies, 95.6

One well-known example of an artist who intervenes into collections is Fred Wilson, whose *Untitled (Chariot Race)* is in our museum's collection. Wilson carved scenes of a chariot race, a type of imagery frequently seen in Greek and Roman art, on cast plaster. The men move triumphantly as victors over their terrain, parallel to the way Greco-Roman society has been understood as the peak of human culture. Yet Wilson interrupts these standard scenes by overlaying a relief with an Egyptian man in profile and text in hieroglyphics. Wilson's sculpture reminds us that, while we often laud the democratic efforts of Greco-Roman society, other societies existed contemporaneously and were integral to the development of the world we live in today. In a subtle way, Wilson reminds us that the racism that ignores the contributions of certain people and cultures is embedded in Western society, and that museums can be marshals of these ideologies through their displays.

To return to Syjuco's work, *Dodge and Burn (Visible Storage)* reminds us that historical issues documented in archives and museums are still relevant today. Here, Syjuco constructs a scene composed of objects referencing the US colonization of the Philippines that she found while conducting archival research along with symbols of contemporary racial politics. This unique juxtaposition is framed by a chroma key green background, the supposedly neutral color used in film production—known as green screen—that allows backgrounds to be manipulated during post-production. Taken together, the installation suggests that the 20th-century racial politics that saw Filipinx people, and Southeast Asian populations more broadly, as inferior are also partially fueling Asian and Asian American discrimination today.

As we contemplate the MSU Broad Art Museum's collection in relation to the questions Syjuco prompts, we are thinking about how we want to intervene into and exhibit our collection in a new space that we are currently designing that will be dedicated to displaying works from the collection. Our collection is the result of nearly 80 years of acquisitions, and its broad scope speaks to the museum's values: That we hold and display objects representative of history and those of contemporary artists engaged with the issues of our time. This space in the museum's lower level will provide an exciting opportunity to bring these elements into conversation and to think about the stories we tell. What would happen if we brought together historical and contemporary art? How does the way we distribute space convey meaning? How can we share multiple histories while highlighting what is missing from the collection?

**And what do people, like you—the visitor—
want to see from the collection?**

Turning our attention to the histories of collections and museums is a reminder that the accumulation of objects is not neutral or accidental but purposeful; it carries meaning. Establishing museums and archives to preserve and present historical material to the public also defines what deserves to be in collections and what stories should be told.



Stephanie Syjuco, *Dodge and Burn (Visible Storage)*, 2019. Wooden platform, digital photos and printed vinyl on lasercut wood, chroma key fabric, printed backdrops, seamless paper, artificial plants, mixed media. Overall 20 x 17 x 8 feet. Photo: Dusty Kessler. Courtesy of the artist; Catharine Clark Gallery, San Francisco; and RYAN LEE Gallery, New York.

The white walls of museums are not as neutral as they seem.

And to return to where this conversation started, in this light, my coffee mugs do not just tell a story about where I've been. Rather, these small ceramic objects are the key to unlocking several histories: Of societies molding clay to fashion objects that fulfill daily needs; of the systems of production and consumption that make coffee mugs and other objects available; of marketing and branding that entices us to buy; of coffee, a hot commodity tied to colonialism; to sugar, a product with roots in slavery that is now found in everything we consume; and of privilege, to have clean water, fresh coffee beans, cream, sugar, and time to enjoy a beverage at our leisure. One object and one collection tell us many stories, and open our eyes to histories yet to be considered.

So, what's in your collection, and what stories does it tell?

RACHEL WINTER
Assistant Curator

MEET YOUR MSU COLLECTIONS

WHAT'S IN YOUR COLLECTION, AND WHAT STORIES DOES IT TELL?

W.J. Beal Botanical Garden	17
Kresge Visual Resources and Print Lab	20
MSU Broad Art Museum	23
Southeast Asian Studies at the MSU Libraries	25
Matrix: The Center for Digital Humanities & Social Sciences	28
MSU Herbarium	31
MSU Museum	34
A.J. Cook Arthropod Research Collection	38
University Archives and Historical Collections	40
Art Library at the MSU Libraries	42
MSU Bug House	45
Talbert and Leota Abrams Planetarium	48
Stephen O. Murray and Keelung Hong Special Collections at the MSU Libraries	51



Courtesy University Communications.



W.J. BEAL BOTANICAL GARDEN
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
330 W. CIRCLE DR
EAST LANSING MI 48824
bealbotanicalgarden.msu.edu

W.J. BEAL BOTANICAL GARDEN

DR. ALAN PRATHER

Interim Director

The MSU Broad Art Museum exhibition *Blind Spot: Stephanie Syjuco* creates an invitation to explore representation and to see the unseen in collections of all kinds. At the W.J. Beal Botanical Garden, our collection creates a complex, layered tapestry appreciated for its beauty and yet filled with the unseen for you to explore.

One layer of the unseen is comprised of our plant collection. Visitors are enraptured by the frogs and turtles, the hawks and ducks, the bees and butterflies. But the plants themselves remain unseen, a phenomenon that botanists call “plant blindness.” Plant blindness manifests in many ways: Botany is underfunded; endangered plants receive a tiny fraction of the resources dedicated to animals; and plant-based academic departments sometimes struggle for support. Most importantly, people generally have a lack of appreciation of plants, connecting instead with our furred and feathered friends. We want to change this.

Our beautiful garden is situated at the heart of our busy, bustling campus between the Main Library and IM Circle along the banks of our beloved Red Cedar River. For many, the garden is an escape, a lunch spot, or a place to hang out with friends. But our collection has a purpose: To shed light on how plants contribute to our lives, our environment, and our planet.

We have over 2,000 species of plants that illustrate the myriad ways we interact and co-exist with these quiet, complex, but often invisible sentinels of our everyday journey. You can find out which plants are medicinal, and how others can be used to flavor your food. Have you ever wanted to know how brussels sprouts grow? Come and see. If you've wondered what poison ivy looks like, stop by.

But Stephanie Syjuco's work connects to another layer of invisibility in our collection—one that our team is struggling with. One of the plants we grow in our food plants section is maize, a.k.a. corn. Maize production dwarfs other crops in the US by land use and economic impact and together with two other grasses—wheat and rice—makes up over half the world's food energy.

Maize is also an important part of the garden's history. W.J. Beal was inspired by the work of Charles Darwin to hybridize different cultivars to see if hybrids were more vigorous than the parental cultivars—what Darwin and others have called “hybrid vigor.” The two scientists famously corresponded about it. Beal's successful hybrids revolutionized the corn industry. To memorialize his contribution, there is a plaque in the garden that says, in part, that Beal “for the first time of record near this spot in 1879 crossed varieties of corn” and that “from his researches has come the twentieth century miracle of crop production hybrid corn.”

Missing from this plaque is any mention of the fact that Native Americans living in present-day Mexico developed maize over millennia from a spindly, low-production, small-grained wild relative called “teosinte,” and those efforts are truly the miracle when it comes

to this agricultural behemoth. We've been struggling with how to deal with the commemorative plaque and also with other representational issues relating to our occupation of Anishinaabe lands.

On the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the founding of the W.J. Beal Botanical Garden in 1873, it's time to look again at our past and our present. We want to fully represent the contributions of everyone, especially those who have been ignored. As we look toward our next 150 years, we invite you to explore the garden and share your thoughts with us about what the garden can and should be. Help us grapple with issues surrounding representation by telling us what you see, and what you don't see.



Stephanie Syjuco, *Dodge and Burn (Visible Storage)*, 2019. Wooden platform, digital photos and printed vinyl on lasercut wood, chroma key fabric, printed backdrops, seamless paper, artificial plants, mixed media. Overall 20 x 17 x 8 feet. Photo: Dusty Kessler. Courtesy of the artist; Catharine Clark Gallery, San Francisco; and RYAN LEE Gallery, New York.



KRESGE VISUAL RESOURCES AND PRINT LAB

ALEX NICHOLS

Academic Technology Coordinator

The Visual Resources and Print Lab includes a variety of collections in support of teaching, learning, and research in the Department of Art, Art History, and Design (AAHD). Historically, the core collection focused on visual reproductions of art historical images (e.g. paintings, sculptures, architecture, etc.). These originally took the form of magic lantern slides (4 x 3.25 inch positive transparencies mounted in glass intended for projection) and printed plates (paper reproductions mounted on matboard). The collection reached its analog maturity in the latter half of the 20th century in the form of 35mm slides (36 x 24mm positive transparencies intended for projection). At peak, there were more than 200,000 of these 35mm slides, including examples of works from the entire history of art from prehistoric cave paintings to contemporary works from across the globe.

The collection tells a story in several layers: The world history of art; a history of local pedagogical and research interests; a history of instructional technology; and the history of the people and activities comprising AAHD.

Each time a new faculty member was hired or a new course was developed, there would be an influx of new images (at one time it was common for newly hired art faculty to negotiate funds for additional slides in the collection). For example, the collection once contained little or no African photography until an art historian was hired whose main research interest was in that area. Similarly, when AAHD absorbed the Apparel and Textile Design program, we began collecting images from the history of fashion. Additionally, we have collected images of student and faculty artwork, guest speakers, and events going back more than 60 years.

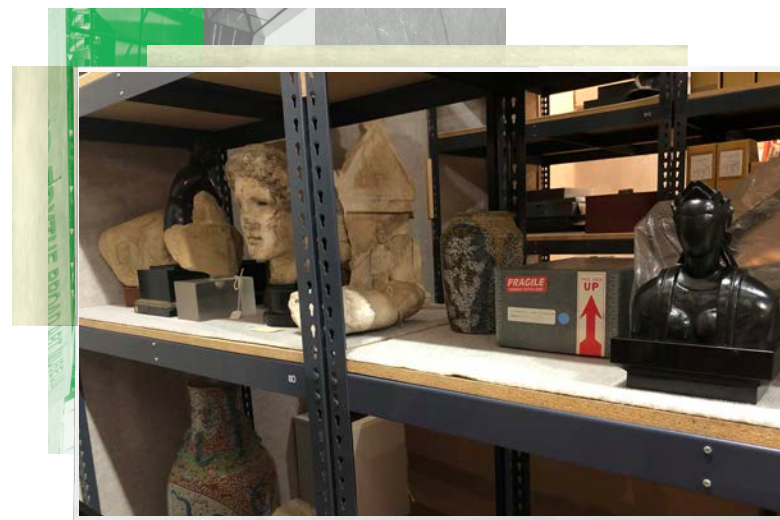
I started working with the collection during a period of major technological transition, moving from a collection of primarily analog materials organized in drawers and cabinets to primarily digital materials organized in databases. The change started slowly at first, with a little slide scanning and some study websites, but there was a period of a few years where things turned over rapidly, from Kodak slide carousels to Microsoft PowerPoint.

The change brought new types of opportunities, particularly more collaborations with artists, scholars, libraries, and collections at other institutions who were all going through the same transition. We joined a collective of 20 schools to use and develop a common database platform for cataloging art images. When the artist Fred Wilson (whose career was built on the re-presentation of museum collection objects) visited to give a lecture, we agreed to digitize the 80 slides he brought with him in exchange for keeping copies of the images for our collection. We undertook a memorable project with a Film Studies professor to organize and digitize thousands of unlabeled slides, which had apparently been abandoned in an office closet for more than a decade.

In more recent years, the digital transition long ago complete, we have branched out to other types of items and services. We started collecting VHS tapes in the 1980s (later DVDs, and now largely streamed MP4s), but only in the last few years has video content seriously challenged still images as the most requested and consumed format in the collection. Additionally, we now check out a wide variety of audiovisual equipment in support of courses in graphic design, photography, and electronic art/intermedia. Extensive printing services (including 3D printing) have also become central to our daily operations (and thus in 2016, the name of the collection was changed from “Visual Resources Library” to “Visual Resources and Print Lab”). Still, no matter how the content or technologies have changed over time, the same basic mission remains to support the department’s education and research activities with visual materials.



Stephanie Syjuco, *Crumpled Calibration 2*, 2021. Archival pigment inkjet print. Courtesy of the artist; Catharine Clark Gallery, San Francisco; and RYAN LEE Gallery, New York.



MSU Broad Art Museum Storage.
Courtesy Rachel Vargas.



MSU BROAD ART MUSEUM
547 E CIRCLE DR
EAST LANSING MI 48824
broadmuseum.msu.edu

MSU BROAD ART MUSEUM

RACHEL VARGAS

Registrar

As a registrar at an art museum, my most important job is to care for the collection. I ensure works are acquired legally and ethically, and then document the new acquisitions. I assign the work an accession number in the museum’s historic ledger, create an object file, and enter the information gathered by our curatorial team into the collections database. I make sure we have an image of the work and an insurance value. I check to see if the work needs to be attended to by our preparation crew: If it needs to be hung on a screen; if it needs hanging hardware attached; if it is a work on paper and framed, should we unframe it and remove the work from a mat that might be acidic? Does the object need to be cleaned to remove any dust?

The object is then marked and tagged with its accession number and a storage space must be found. Is it safest hung on a screen, or if it is smaller and framed, can it be stored in one of our wooden frame bins? If the object is small, it is best to put it into a box and store it

in a cabinet or drawer. An unframed work on paper must either be mounted into a new mat or put into an archival folder for storage in a drawer so it is protected from light exposure.

Then there are the large works—Is this sculpture safest inside a crate? Is this painting too large to fit on one of our screens? If so, I work with the preparation team to remove the painting from its stretcher and roll it onto a tube. During these steps, I take pictures of the process for our files so what is done now is apparent to the registrars who will come after me.

Luckily, we only have a few orphans in our collection, but every time I look at the stone, almost life-size top half of a female figure that resides on one of our shelves—unidentified—I think of someone in the 1960s forgetting to number the work, thinking they will put a tag on the work when they have more time as, without a doubt, everyone will recognize what that work is! At the end of this process, a location is given to the work: A screen, a shelf, a drawer, a cabinet shelf; this is entered into the collections database.

Then, the work will wait for a curator to pull it for an exhibition, a professor to request it for viewing by a class, another museum to request to borrow it, or a scholar to contact us for more information—like when they are tracking down pages from a disassembled 14th-century *Book of Hours* manuscript and they believe our page is from this book.

Each day as I come into work, I wonder if today I will solve a mystery, or watch a student smile, look up at me and say, “Is this really a painting by Dalí?”—or perhaps it’s a day to do some filing.



Courtesy Zoë McLaughlin.



SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES AT THE MSU LIBRARIES
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
366 W. CIRCLE DR.
EAST LANSING MI 48824
libguides.lib.msu.edu/seasia/ssspot

SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES AT THE MSU LIBRARIES

ZOË MCLAUGHLIN

SOUTH & SOUTHEAST ASIA LIBRARIAN

Area studies as a discipline grew out of colonialism, and area studies library collections are part of that legacy. Our historical collections are a testament to the colonial views of the past that are visible in the items collected, the topics deemed worthy of research, and the descriptions of people and places far from American and European centers of power.

Part of my work as an area studies librarian contextualizes these historical collections. I provide new descriptions for contemporary library users, I learn about the conditions under which materials were acquired, and I purchase new items to add overlooked voices to the library. MSU’s collection houses works from academic presses alongside publications by diasporic authors and language learning books alongside novels from Southeast Asia.

Access to library collections remains a challenge. Anyone can walk into MSU's library, but what about those at a distance? What about those in Southeast Asia?

Digitization can provide access to certain collections. The Southeast Asia Digital Library, a collaborative effort between multiple institutions, including MSU, strives to make a variety of Southeast Asian materials available online. MSU's Vietnam Group Archive, a collection of five different digitized collections, brings together documents surrounding the university's involvement in the Republic of Vietnam and the Vietnam War.

But digitization does not solve all access problems. Not everything can be digitized, whether because of copyright restrictions, ethical questions regarding wider access, or simply a lack of time and resources. Beyond digitization, many items are sent between libraries via interlibrary loan. With limited budgets, an individual library can specialize in a certain area and share these materials with other libraries' users.

But what about people who lack easy access to a library? Is doing our best good enough?

Individual librarians shape their collections. Areas within the library bear the fingerprints of colonialism, but also bear the fingerprints of librarians more adept at working in one language or another, librarians with specific academic interests, and librarians who worked with individuals positioned to shape the collection in their own ways—through gifts, through research needs, through connections to governments or institutions in Asia.

I collect for faculty with niche research interests. I collect for students just beginning to learn about Southeast Asian countries or ready to explore contemporary concerns such as climate change, migration and labor, or social justice through a global perspective. I collect for Southeast Asian Americans looking to explore their heritage or to see

themselves represented. I collect to create a more complete image of the complications of Southeast Asia within our library.

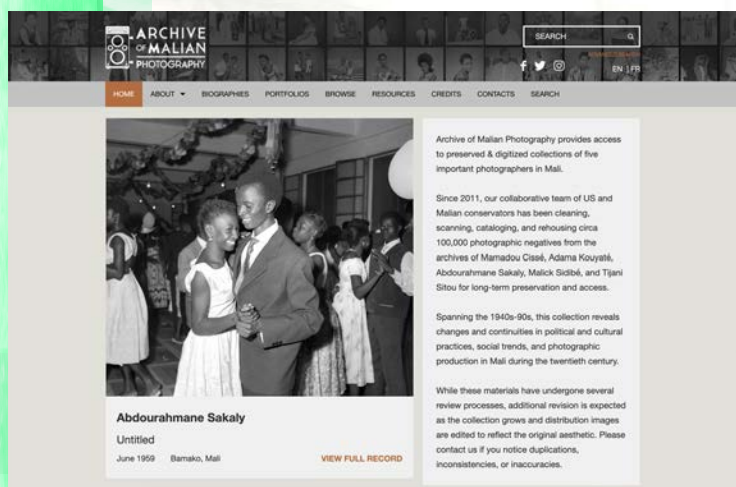
I have my own biases. I am quick to purchase books from Malaysia, my mother's home country, and I am apt to spend time seeking out books from Indonesian small presses because I can search most efficiently in Indonesian.

This in mind, I try to turn my attention elsewhere. After a gift from Roger and Mary Bresnahan that filled out the library's Southeast Asian—and especially Filipinx—literature collection, I saw an opportunity to begin collecting contemporary Filipinx literature. A rich collection on any topic begins with the choice to purchase more deeply in that area.

Where should you begin in the MSU Libraries' collection? Begin where your current interests lie. We have a historical cookbook collection that is slowly expanding with more contemporary, international cookbooks. We have a comic collection drawn from around the world—choose which language you'd like to read. We have translated fiction and fiction in Southeast Asian languages. We have books on climate change and the impact of development on livelihoods along the Mekong, and we are adding readily accessible field data produced by those directly impacted. We have zines by Asian Americans and zines by Southeast Asians. Start with your current interest and if you can't find what you're looking for, ask a librarian—once you walk into the library, you too can shape the collection.



MATRIX: THE CENTER FOR DIGITAL
HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
matrix.msu.edu



Courtesy Matrix.

MATRIX: THE CENTER FOR DIGITAL HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEAN REHBERGER
DIRECTOR

Matrix: The Center for Digital Humanities & Social Sciences is an internationally recognized and respected research center at Michigan State University. We work with museums, libraries, archives, and world heritage sites to digitize, preserve, and provide access to collections of cultural and historical materials. We collaborate with scholars, practitioners, educators, institutions, and local community members to create tools and digital experiences that engage researchers, students, and the public in critical questions about our collective past, culture, and heritage. While we have a long history of working with a diverse array of partners, we have a deep commitment to working with African scholars and institutions on projects relating to African history and culture.

One example of such projects is the Archive of Malian Photography (AMP) (amp.matrix.msu.edu). It provides long-term, open access to preserved and digitized collections of five important photographers in Mali to raise global awareness and address issues of theft and exploitation in the international art market. Since 2011, AMP has cleaned, scanned, cataloged, and rehoused over 100,000 negatives from the archives of Mamadou Cissé, Adama Kouyaté, Abdourahmane Saaly, Malick Sidibé, and Tijani Sitou. Spanning the 1940s–90s, this collection challenges Eurocentric views of Africa and Africans while revealing changes and continuities in political and cultural practices, social trends, and photographic production in Mali during the 20th century.

Other projects of interest show the range of our collections.

What America Ate (whatamericaate.org) collects the scattered material of the Depression-era WPA (Works Progress Administration) America Eats project. It also contains 200 rare community cookbooks; a large collection of rare advertisements, pamphlets, recipe leaflets, and food packaging materials; and describes all sorts of food customs—often purposefully emphasizing the rarest and most rustic food habits. Users can browse historical recipes, search materials by state and region, and perhaps most importantly, explore content through historical essays about the history of food in America.

The Quilt Index (quiltindex.org), launched in 2003, is an open access, digital repository of thousands of images, stories, and information about quilts and their makers drawn from hundreds of public and private collections around the world. It represents the work of thousands of community-based and independent scholars, digital humanists, and professionals in libraries, archives, and museums who are dedicated to preserving and making accessible quilt history. The Quilt Index is continually adding new collections. This past year Matrix was awarded an NEH (National Endowment for the Humanities) grant to develop an African American, African, and African Diaspora Quilt Studies Digital Resource. As with our Archive of Malian Photography and What America Ate, the focus is not only on making

the collection accessible to scholars and the general public, but to give visitors context and supporting materials to make for a richer, informal learning environment.

Enslaved (enslaved.org) serves the needs of scholars, genealogists, students, and members of the public interested in the people of the historical slave trade. Enslaved is a discovery hub that helps users to search and find information from a large and growing number of datasets and digital projects. Researchers can learn from linking data, visualizing larger relations and movements, and connecting the traces of people from one dataset to the next. More importantly, users can discover and explore the original sources of the information. This site uses cutting-edge knowledge graph technologies that use Linked Open Data and can search over billions of bits of data.

The above are only a few of the dozens of digital collections that Matrix has created and curated online since 1997. One can find the earliest sound recordings, the voices of the 1937 Flint Sit-Down Strike, the oral histories behind the books of Studs Terkel, and the archive of the researcher John Snow, who discovered the cause of cholera, among many others. The online collections attract millions of unique visitors each year as well as provide materials for scholarly research and the classroom. To see more, visit the comprehensive list of projects page at Matrix.



Courtesy Becca Albert.



MSU HERBARIUM
PLANT BIOLOGY LAB
612 WILSON RD
EAST LANSING MI 48824
herbarium.natsci.msu.edu

MSU HERBARIUM

MATT CHANSLER, M.S.

Collections Assistant

DR. ALAN PRATHER

Interim Director

DR. CHRISTOPHER WARNEKE

Research Scientist, University of Wisconsin, Madison

Did you make a plant collection in grade school? Pick some plants, dry and press them, glue them into a notebook, and write down where and when they're from? At a small scale, it's simple, fun, and it represents the basics of what we do here at the Michigan State University Herbarium. Our collection holds a vast library of mounted plants and fungi that serves as core documentation of our natural heritage and unlocks hidden patterns of biodiversity. We have over half a million specimens, many from the 1800s, and handle batches of hundreds or even thousands of new ones. Our plant collections

from Michigan and Indonesia are especially rich, and both have been used to create regional species inventories. Our lichen collection is among the five largest in the country and is world famous because of how many are from remote, rarely sampled locations in the Southern Hemisphere like the Falkland Islands and Motu Ihupuku/Campbell Island.

How many species there are, what they look like, and where they grow are all examples of biodiversity topics that can be addressed with herbarium data. We've even studied how biodiversity changes over time right here on MSU's campus: MSU is blessed with special natural areas that you've perhaps visited yourself. Baker Woodlot, in particular, was never clear-cut, so it has lots of plant species that you don't see every day. In the 1960s and 1970s, MSU Herbarium researchers identified and collected all the plant species they could in Baker Woodlot. Then, in the 2010s we repeated the survey, comparing our specimens to theirs after 40 years to see which species persisted, vanished, or arrived. We discovered that while the number of species stayed the same, native plants were lost and non-native plants were gained. Hidden biodiversity patterns of change over time are impossible to unlock without the detailed baseline data that specimens provide.

From this specimen [pictured] that was collected in 1970, we know that yellow lady's slipper used to grow in Baker Woodlot. However, due to the destruction of habitat by the creation of agricultural fields and the urbanization of the Lansing area, this species is now practically extinct from Ingham County. Conservationists need to know what species used to occur here to better plan actions that protect and maintain our native natural areas, and specimen collection is one way in which we can support that legacy, with the hope that future generations will experience the same, or better, natural heritage that we do.

This herbarium was founded in 1863: To contextualize, that's in the middle of the Civil War! Collectors from that time never could have imagined how their specimens would be used over 135 years later.

From conservation to plant identification, to genetics, art, and history, the Herbarium is a place to learn about plants and fungi. MSU undergraduate students and volunteers serve in the Herbarium by creating new specimens, unlocking their data through computer digitization, and supporting classes and visitors on their learning journey. This place is a resource that's meant to be used, and if you're interested in learning more or even volunteering, please get in touch.



Stephanie Syjuco,
installation shot of
Block Out the Sun,
2021. Single-channel
video with sound.
Edition of 3+2AP.
5:09 minutes looped.
Photo: John Janca.
Courtesy of the artist;
Catharine Clark Gallery,
San Francisco; and
RYAN LEE Gallery,
New York.



MSU MUSEUM
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
409 W. CIRCLE DR
EAST LANSING MI 48824
museum.msu.edu

Courtesy Dr. Barbara Lundrigan, MSU Museum
Curator of Mammalogy and Ornithology.

MSU MUSEUM

DR. MARSHA MACDOWELL

Curator, Folk Arts & Quilt Studies

LYNNE SWANSON

Collections Manager, Cultural Collections

The MSU Museum is an innovative and experimental collaboratory that exists to catalyze creativity—a space where people can openly explore, express, and experiment with ideas across disciplines and interests, and indulge their natural curiosity about the world. It is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) and is Michigan's first Smithsonian Affiliate. The MSU Museum is a registered scientific institution with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and a member of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience.

Since 1857, the museum has been collecting objects and specimens and creating exhibitions that reflect our shared histories and experiences. Collections and exhibitions are used as a catalyst in teaching, learning, and research to create a vital collaboratory for student and faculty success. Administratively at Michigan State

University, the MSU Museum operates under the University Arts and Collections unit within the Office of the Provost.

An essential resource for teaching, learning, and research, the MSU Museum's collections support the university's mission by providing a foundation for research, scholarship, and learning: They empower researchers seeking to answer questions and create solutions; they facilitate outstanding undergraduate, graduate, and professional education; and they advance outreach and engagement activities that are innovative and lead to a better understanding of our world.

A variety of methodologies have been used over time and by different curators, collections managers, campus faculty and students, and researchers to acquire, describe, prepare, preserve, classify, analyze, interpret, and make these objects and specimens accessible for research and teaching by others. Increasingly, these activities are done in collaboration with members of the communities that created and/or use them.

The museum is a dynamic repository of nationally and internationally significant collections in natural sciences, archaeology, culture, and history, including cultural collections that serve as primary source materials for multi-, cross-, and interdisciplinary studies. Major collections include advertising and packaging, agricultural and rural life, Michigan State University history, domestic technology, and South African and Ethiopian art and craft of the late 20th century.

The Michigan Traditional Arts Research Collections include the documentation of the vernacular expression of aesthetics and meaning in everyday life in Michigan, as well as the records of the community-engaged documentation records from the ongoing Michigan Quilt Project, Michigan Stained Glass Census, and Michigan Barn and Farmstead Survey. These collections are affiliated with the National Folklife Archives Initiative and the statewide Michigan Traditional Arts Program.

Apparel and Textile Collections consist of thousands of items representing a wide range of cultures around the world, with an emphasis on 19th and 20th century items from the Great Lakes region. Significant discrete collections include Hmong and Hmong American textiles, Finnish American rag rugs, and 19th and 20th century apparel.

We have one of the most important quilt collections in the world, which has a special emphasis on African and African American quilt history, Indigenous quilt history, Chinese quilt history, and quilts affiliated with human rights, health, and well-being. These collections are affiliated with the international Quilt Index.

Our Archaeology Collections have a strong focus on Michigan archaeology. The collection includes significant assemblages from Native American sites dating to the earliest inhabitants through early encounters with Europeans and historical fort site collections that represent Michigan's early colonial history. The collection is closely affiliated with the Michigan State University Department of Anthropology and Consortium for Archaeological Research and is the repository for the Campus Archaeology Program.

Extensive holdings of Native American materials include historical and contemporary Native American baskets. Collaborative research, exhibition, and publication projects with the Institute of American Indian Arts, Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa, Saginaw Chippewa Tribe of Indians, and the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian have facilitated opportunities to build Indigenous collections.

Our Natural Science Collections are a critical resource for biodiversity and climate change research. While emphasizing Michigan and the Great Lakes Region, the collections are worldwide in scope and provide a record of biodiversity that ranges from 1844 to today. Research areas include geology and the fossil record, biodiversity and conservation, systematics and evolutionary ecology, molecular and morphological evolution, environmental studies, law enforcement, and medicine and health.

Within the Natural Science Collections, each preserved specimen is unique and has the potential for being the only specimen that could serve to address a particular question.

The Red Cedar River System Fish Collection provides a record of the species composition and distribution of local fish fauna.

The Silent Spring robins are birds that were found dead or dying on or near campus and were discovered to have high DDT loads in their tissues. They provide a foundation for research on the hazards of DDT and the subsequent book *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson, which is credited with catalyzing the environmental movement of the 1960s. Reanalysis of some specimens 50 years later found that DDT persists in their tissues.

We also have spotted hyena skulls. More than 50 hyenas died naturally and were part of a long-term behavioral ecology study in the Masai Mara of Kenya. The accompanying observational data facilitate unique research opportunities for faculty and students.

The Late Pleistocene Great Lakes "Megafauna" most notably includes mammoth and mastodon skeletons; many were discovered and donated by area landowners.

The Natural Science Teaching Collections consist of 2,700 vertebrate specimens in three separately cataloged teaching collections that are used weekly for campus classes.





Emerald Ash Borer (*Agrilus planipennis*) specimens in the A.J. Cook Arthropod Research Collection. Courtesy Dr. Sarah M. Smith.

A.J. COOK ARTHROPOD RESEARCH COLLECTION
NATURAL SCIENCE BUILDING
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
288 FARM LN
EAST LANSING MI 48823
cam.msu.edu/ent/research/arthropod_collection/index

A.J. COOK ARTHROPOD RESEARCH COLLECTION

DR. ANTHONY I. COGNATO

Director

DR. SARAH M. SMITH

Collection Manager

The A.J. Cook Arthropod Research Collection had its beginnings long before the Department of Entomology was established. In 1867 Professor Albert J. Cook began curating a collection of beneficial and pestiferous insects in order to educate students in their identification. This collection of 1,200 insects grew beyond its original purpose of education with the donation of the Tepper moth and butterfly collection of 12,000 specimens that represent 8,000 different species. This donation was soon followed by a donation of 42,000 beetles and bugs. The Cook collection gained recognition as a professional research collection and drew national and international attention.

Through decades of contributions by scientists, students, and amateurs, the collection has grown to over 1.5 million arthropod specimens. This includes the traditional curation of pinned insects, alcohol-preserved soft-bodied arthropods, and slide-mounted microscopic specimens. The specimens best represent the biota of Michigan and the Great Lakes Region but are also strong in national and international holdings of moths, butterflies, and beetles. The Cook collection continues to grow. For example, it has recently expanded to accommodate a research collection of native bees. In addition, the collection has expanded its electronic delivery of specimen data. It serves more than 200,000 records that have been used over 35,000 times by world-wide scientists.

The specimens in the collection tell many stories. Each specimen and its associated label data tell where, when, by whom, and how the specimen was encountered. These curated specimens are snapshots of a specific place and time and can sketch a picture of a perhaps long-lost habitat. Each specimen is a data point providing insights into evolutionary patterns and processes that shape biodiversity. Most of all, the collection is a resource to solve the identity of the unknown. Case in point, the specimens in the Cook collection were used to help identify an unknown beautiful beetle found in Michigan in the early 2000s. This beetle was identified as the deadly emerald ash borer, which has destroyed millions of ash trees and altered the ecology of Michigan forests. This rapid identification allowed foresters to take quick action to combat this invasive forest pest. Many other Cook collection specimens have contributed to increasing our knowledge of insects. Although it is unknown how else the Cook collection will be used in the future, it is certain that the specimens will make positive impacts on science and society.



Leonard Jungwirth carving the Sparty statue on a set of stairs, circa 1944. Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, A001440



UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES AND HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
943 CONRAD RD
EAST LANSING MI 48824
lib.msu.edu/branches/ua

UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES AND HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS

Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections (UAHC) is proud to be the home of over 165 years of Michigan State University's history. Founded in 1969, the mission of UAHC is to collect the official records of Michigan State University and preserve the extraordinary legacy of the nation's premier land-grant university. UAHC is in Conrad Hall on the east side of campus. Inventories and descriptions of our collections can be found on our website. UAHC is open to the public and all are welcome to make an appointment to view materials in the University Archives Reading Room.

Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections documents all aspects of MSU history and the surrounding central Michigan region. These collections are accessible to the public for research. UAHC preserves the majority of MSU publications, including yearbooks, campus newspapers, and sports programs as well as the papers of university presidents, campus departments, and student

organizations. In addition to traditional paper records, UAHC collects and preserves materials in a variety of formats, including photographs, audio and film recordings, video, maps, drawings, oral histories, photo albums, scrapbooks, and websites. Overall, we hold over 30,000 cubic feet of historical records.

The Historical Collections represent materials that are not related to MSU but serve as valuable research materials for people interested in Michigan history, agriculture, and other topics relevant to land-grant institutions. These non-MSU collections number nearly 1,000 manuscript and photograph collections that document many aspects of life in Michigan and the Great Lakes region. Notable historical collections include letters from Michigan soldiers fighting in the Civil War, the records of automobile manufacturer R.E. Olds, and the family and business records of lumber barons Charles H. Hackley and Thomas Hume.

During the last decade, the University Archives has digitized thousands of historical documents, expanding access to anyone in the world with an internet connection. The On the Banks of the Red Cedar website is home to hundreds of images, documents, interviews, and audio-visual materials related to the history of the university. Many of the Civil War collections housed in the University Archives are scanned, transcribed, and available online.

As the stewards of Michigan State University's history, staff love to share MSU's unique history and stories with visitors and researchers from the local area, across the United States, and all over the world. Staff facilitate these connections with people during their research, and through communications, social media postings, educational events, exhibits, and more. New online content is constantly being added for easier access.



Courtesy MSU Libraries Communications.



ART LIBRARY AT THE MSU LIBRARIES
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
366 W CIRCLE DR
EAST LANSING MI 48824
lib.msu.edu/art

ART LIBRARY AT THE MSU LIBRARIES

TERRIE L. WILSON

Humanities Coordinator & Head

Located on the third floor of Michigan State University's Main Library, the Art Library is a welcoming and inclusive space for all to visit, whether they are conducting research, looking for a relaxed place to study, or simply wanting to enjoy the wide-ranging collection of books and current art publications.

The Art Library opened in the summer of 2019. Previously, the library's art collection was housed in a combined Fine Arts Library along with the music collection. What is in the Art Library's collection? It houses thousands of books with content that spans the history of art from the prehistoric to contemporary, representing a wide range of styles,

countries of origin, and subject matter. Our collection tells the story of the history of art across the globe and represents all genres of art, focusing on painting, drawing, sculpture, printmaking, graphic design, architectural history, decorative arts, photography, fashion and costuming, and interior design. The collection serves many audiences, from students majoring in art history or studio art, apparel and textile design, and interior design, to students whose coursework includes an emphasis on art and design topics. Students use our collection to find information for assignments but also inspiration for their own creative practice.

The collection strives to represent an inclusive and diverse array of artists and techniques; it is our hope to tell the story of art, its history, and techniques, from as many voices and vantage points as possible. The Art Library's collection is all-encompassing in terms of representation, allowing our users to experience the history of art from all over the world with a particular emphasis on contemporary art history, methodology, and practice. Books reflect current scholarship, and exhibition catalogs represent a broad array of exhibitions from major museums and galleries. As scholarship and curatorial practices change, this is reflected in the Art Library's holdings, resulting in a dynamic and vibrant collection, and one that is not limited by our physical space. Numerous online resources, including e-books and online journals, article resources, and more are accessible with the click of a button through our website.

The Art Library, through an expansive collection, strives to tell the story of artistic practice from both a primary and secondary point of view—that is, through the words of the artists and designers themselves as well as the observations of scholars. Some of the most important items in our collection are catalog raisonnés, or the comprehensive listings of an artist's work. Traditionally published as large, multi-volume print sets, many are now available in digital format, typically representing the work of more contemporary artists. Other noteworthy publications in our collection include artists'

autobiographies, manifestos, letters, and diaries. First-hand accounts offer invaluable insight into artists' practice.

Our collection and resources are available to both the MSU community and the community at large. We welcome anyone with an interest in the visual arts to visit and immerse themselves in our attractive space and unique collection!



Stephanie Syjuco,
Chromakey Aftermath,
2017. Archival pigment
print framed. Courtesy of
the artist; Catharine Clark
Gallery, San Francisco;
and RYAN LEE Gallery,
New York.



The Bug House Display Room.
Courtesy Dr. Amanda Lorenz.



MSU BUG HOUSE
NATURAL SCIENCE BUILDING
288 FARM LN
EAST LANSING MI 48824
canr.msu.edu/bughouse

MSU BUG HOUSE

DR. AMANDA LORENZ

Director

The MSU Bug House is an outreach facility within the Department of Entomology. Located on MSU's main campus, the Bug House provides the university and its surrounding communities with opportunities to learn about the beneficial aspects of "bugs." Insects and other arthropods fulfill important ecological roles that are vital for healthy ecosystem functioning, including pollination, decomposition, and food web support. Insects and other arthropods also represent a huge proportion of Earth's biodiversity and are disappearing at an astounding rate worldwide due to climate change, habitat loss, and other factors.

The Bug House is comprised of two connecting rooms on the ground floor of the Natural Science Building. The main entrance to the Bug House is through room 147, which is known as the Display Room. This room is filled to the brim with preserved arthropod specimens

carefully pinned inside glass cases. Nearly 1,000 real specimens are artfully arranged in displays that highlight their diversity, ecological importance, and unique beauty. The specimens in the Display Room hail from around the globe, with special displays devoted to the insects found in Michigan. Many of the specimens in the Display Room were collected by MSU entomologists. The walls are a cheerful sky blue, with hand-painted arthropods peeking out from a border of bright-green grass. At the far side of the Display Room near the window sits our observation hive. The observation hive is a real, living hive of European honeybees—*Apis mellifera*. Visitors can observe the busy workers as they complete their tasks and can even try to spot the queen bee!

The second room of the Bug House—the Live Room—contains our collection of live arthropods. The live residents of the Bug House are chosen depending on how they contribute to our visitors' experiences here, which include handleability, unique appearance, and whether we have the capacity to care for them properly. We currently have eight species of insects, including Madagascar hissing cockroaches (*Gromphadorhina portentosa*), blue death-feigning beetles (*Asbolus verrucosus*), and two-spot assassin bugs (*Platymeris biguttatus*). Additionally, the Bug House is home to ten tarantulas (eight species), two of which are estimated to be over 20 years in age! The Live Room also houses scorpions, a tailless whipscorpion, a vinegaroon, "dairy cow" isopods, hermit crabs, and millipedes. Most of our live insects are safe to handle, and we encourage our visitors to do so as much as they are comfortable.

In addition to the collection of specimens, both the Display and the Live Rooms also contain our collection of "arthropod art"—models and representations of arthropods in the form of prints, sculptures, drawings, and paper crafts. We also have a sizeable collection of arthropod toys available for playing, including stuffed animals, puppets, and plastic bugs. Not all the creations we display are the work of humans, however. We also showcase objects created by arthropods, including wasp nests, moth cocoons, tarantula exoskeletons, and

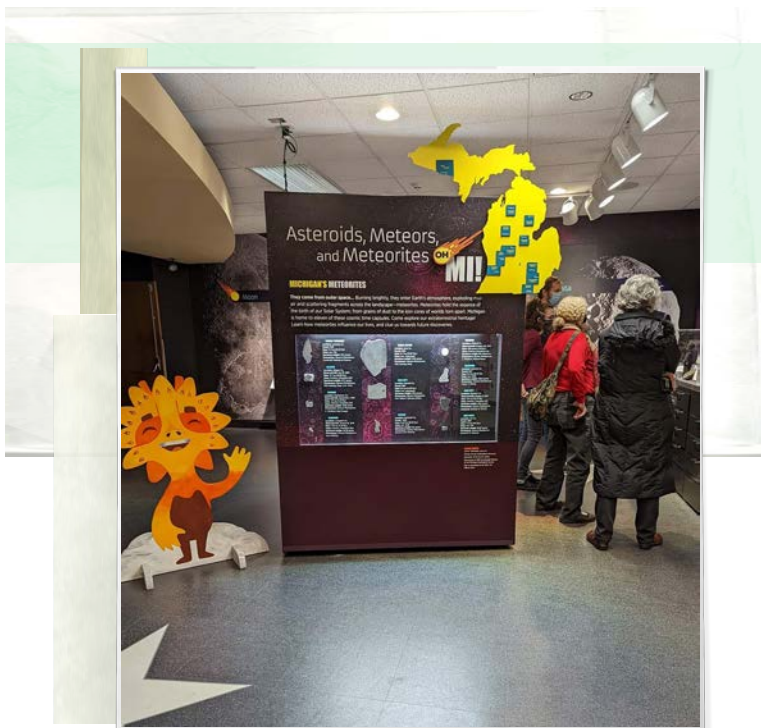
mantid egg-cases. Together, the Bug House collections contain a piece of the story of humanity's relationship with arthropods—particularly insects.

Each of us interacts with insects every day in some way, whether we realize it or not. The Bug House collections invite visitors to purposefully engage with insects and other arthropods and to share how they have experienced them in their lives. We strive to change the perception of all insects as "pests" and bring awareness to their positive roles in our environment along with their fascinating biology and otherworldly appearance.

To learn more about the MSU Bug House, and/or to schedule an event with us, please visit our website. The Bug House is open by appointment only, though we also offer a variety of free open house events throughout the year, including the second Monday of each month from 5:30–7:30pm.



Stephanie Syjuco, *Crumpled Calibration 1*, 2021. Archival pigment inkjet print. Courtesy of the artist; Catharine Clark Gallery, San Francisco; and RYAN LEE Gallery, New York.



TALBERT AND LEOTA ABRAMS PLANETARIUM
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
755 SCIENCE RD
EAST LANSING, MI, 48824
abramsplanetarium.org

Photograph of Michigan meteorite display and our collection with people viewing other objects. The alien on the left is our mascot, FeNi, named for the iron and nickel found in most meteorites. Those pieces together show the meteorites that were found or observed in Michigan and the personal connection Michiganders have to space. Courtesy Abrams Planetarium.

TALBERT AND LEOTA ABRAMS PLANETARIUM

DR. SHANNON SCHMOLL

Director

Astronomy is a topic that can ignite imaginations and get people excited about science. It inspires fiction and drives innovation in the real world. For how amazing astronomy is, it is also distant. Much of what we have to share are images or recreations of the sky. There are few physical, natural objects we can share like other museums. However, we do have meteorites.

Abrams Planetarium has a fantastic collection of meteorites that connect people to space. From this collection we recently opened

a new exhibit featuring those meteorites. We have examples of many types that have been found all over the world. Some are made entirely of iron and nickel, called iron meteorites. Others are almost entirely rock, which we call stony. And some are a mix with space gems inside, which are called stony iron! They are stunning and fascinating and draw people in.

Most of the meteorites in our collection are over 4 billion years old. They are as old as the entire solar system. The way people's eyes light up when you tell them that this thing in front of them here in the heart of Michigan is incomprehensibly old helps bring astronomy to life.

But that bit about being in the heart of Michigan is an important point. We are in Michigan and most of our visitors are people who live here. We can recognize the stars in our sky. But rockets are in Florida and Texas. NASA headquarters are in DC and the Jet Propulsion Lab is in California. The best places for telescopes are far from cloudy Michigan. But even we have direct connections to space through our meteorites. They are harder to find here, but we have them. There are 11 named meteorites found in Michigan. We are the only place that has a sample from each. The whole family is on display.

In addition to that we have some very special pieces. Most of the meteorites we can simply trace back to the asteroid belt. But some we know exactly where they came from. We have Lunar, Martian, and Vestan meteorites. These are familiar objects to people. Everyone thinks of Martians and knows the red planet, and everyone has seen the moon in the sky. But we set up part of our exhibit for people to be able to touch these objects. You don't get to actually touch the moon every day.

Each one of our meteorites tells a story. Our Michigan meteorites tell the story of those who found them when tilling a farm and found a hunk of iron in the ground, or the stories people have when they saw the meteor falling through our sky and went out to find a piece the next day. The three types of meteorites made of different materials—

the stony, the iron, and the stony iron—come from different parts of a large asteroid that broke up. The stony meteorites from the crust, the stony iron from the mantle, and the iron from the core. We have so-called hammers that have hit cars, cows, mailboxes, and people. We have the earth rock transformed by impacts of meteorites. The stories we can tell with them range from the scientific to the personal and all matter in getting people excited about science.

Objects in collections are another form for storytelling. They help make things come to life. At the planetarium we do this with software in our theater most of the time, but we cherish our collection that helps us connect with the sky in a more personal way.



Stephanie Syjuco, *Crumpled Calibration 4*, 2021. Archival pigment inkjet print. Courtesy of the artist; Catharine Clark Gallery, San Francisco; and RYAN LEE Gallery, New York.



Samaritan Pentateuch, 15th century. Stephen O. Murray and Keelung Hong Special Collections, Michigan State University Libraries. MSS 287 (CW 2478a). Courtesy Tad Boehmer.

STEPHEN O. MURRAY AND KEELUNG HONG SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AT THE MSU LIBRARIES

TAD BOEHMER

Curator of Rare Books & Special Collections Catalog Librarian

When the Chamberlain-Warren Samaritan Collection arrived at Michigan State College (MSC; now MSU) in 1952, it marked just one more chapter in the history of an already fabled assemblage of archival documents, books, and artifacts that tied together threads spanning many centuries and across the globe. Edward Kirk Warren (1847-1919), a retailer, clothing manufacturer, banker, and philanthropist based in Three Oaks, Michigan, a small town in the



STEPHEN O. MURRAY AND KEELUNG HONG SPECIAL COLLECTIONS
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
366 W CIRCLE DR
EAST LANSING MI 48824
libmsu.edu/MurrayHongSPO

southwestern corner of the state, had developed a process for turning turkey feathers into stays for women's corsets—an economical replacement for whalebone. He founded the Warren Featherbone Company in 1883 and later expanded his business into materials such as ribbon and elastic.

Warren and his family travelled widely, collecting a wide range of materials during his travels. In 1916 he founded the Chamberlain Memorial Museum—named for his father-in-law, Henry Chamberlain—for displaying these artifacts and works of art. Upon Warren's death in 1919, the Warren Featherbone Foundation (still in existence in Georgia, where the company later moved) continued his philanthropic work, including donating properties to the state that ultimately became Warren Dunes State Park and Warren Woods. A dozen years later the museum moved to the Warren Featherbone Company offices in downtown Three Oaks (a grand building now occupied by the town's public library).

Though E.K. Warren himself had no connection to MSC, the foundation saw the college as an ideal venue for bringing his collection to a wider academic audience. Materials in the 1952 donation made their way to the library, but also to the college's archives (now the University Archives and Historical Collections at MSU) and the museum (MSU Museum). These included family papers, diaries, and artifacts like Japanese netsuke (ivory carvings), a wrist purse made by Michigan native basket weavers (among the 3,500 Native American objects once owned by the Chamberlain Memorial Museum), and woven corn husk shoes made at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama.

In 1952, the MSC Library was housed in the building where the MSU Museum is now located, though special collections (now the Stephen O. Murray and Keelung Hong Special Collections) was not formally established until 1962. Among the numerous books donated to the MSU Libraries were a large 16th-century choir book, a first edition of *The Book of Mormon* (1830), and an extraordinary collection of materials related to the Samaritans, one of the smallest religious and

ethnic groups in the Middle East today (numbering only about 840). The Samaritans, alongside the Jews, have shared roots in the ancient Israelites, but are culturally, ritually, and in some ways theologically separated from them—for instance, their central holy text is the Samaritan Pentateuch (the text of the Torah written in the Samaritan script), which they believe to be the original and unaltered version of that text. Many Samaritans live in the ancient West Bank city of Nablus in Palestine, adjacent to Mount Gerizim, which they consider to be the holiest place on Earth.

E.K. Warren first traveled to Palestine in 1901, returning in 1904 with 800 delegates to attend the World Sunday School Association convention in Jerusalem. There he heard the Samaritan High Priest, Yaacob I ben Aaharon ben Shalma, address the convention and he began to develop dreams for supporting the community, eventually seeking to make the group more self-sufficient through the establishment of the American Samaritan Committee in 1913. The committee employed agents in Palestine to purchase manuscripts to prevent them from leaving the country, the idea being to set up a museum in Palestine, and that one day the Samaritans would buy back the artifacts. Upon Warren's death, most of the items were sent to Three Oaks as part of his estate, and the dream of a museum in Palestine crumbled.

Five general classes of items make up the Chamberlain-Warren Collection—a fragment of a marble inscription (circa 3rd century CE); around a dozen copies of the Samaritan Pentateuch dating from the 15th to the early 20th centuries; a brass scroll case with inlaid silver crafted in Damascus by Abu'l Fath in 1524; six liturgical texts covering Samaritan festivals and rituals—largely hymns, prayers, and poems (1724–1904); and a manuscript, copied before 1835, of a series of sermons on Samaritan theology and philosophy entitled *Memar Marqah*.

Following a 2003 meeting between Benyamim Tsedaka, a Samaritan Elder, and the University Board of Trustees, interest grew in digitizing these materials and making them available not only to scholars and

students but also to the Samaritan community. As an MSU graduate student, Dr. Jim Ridolfo of the University of Kentucky worked to renew interest in the collection in the digital age and to expand its reach, and with others set up a project to digitize and make the manuscripts available online, an ongoing project. Dr. Ridolfo coined the term “textual diaspora” to “account for the strategic ways that Samaritan Elders talk about the potential of diaspora manuscripts to communicate their existence and cultural identity,” and it is this very potential that the Murray and Hong Special Collections seeks to tap into by continuing to make these materials available to MSU and global communities. The history of this collection—one that may be the largest of its kind in the Western Hemisphere—has not yet been fully told. Indeed, it is still being written.

For more information, please see: Jim Ridolfo, “Delivering Textual Diaspora: Building Digital Cultural Repositories as Rhetoric Research,” *College English* 76, no. 2 (November 2013): 136–51.

PROGRAMS

ENGAGE FURTHER WITH THIS EXHIBITION THROUGH THESE FREE PUBLIC PROGRAMS.

FRIDAY, FEB. 3, 7–9PM

BLIND SPOT: STEPHANIE SYJUCO OPENING RECEPTION

MSU Broad Art Museum // Opening

Colorful gels, stagecraft, green screens, and the subversion of the Western gaze—you’re invited to the opening reception of *Blind Spot: Stephanie Syjuco*! *Blind Spot* explores Syjuco’s interventions into archives and museum collections, and considers the way collections are constructed to convey specific historical narratives, reflecting the hand (and values) of their makers.

SATURDAY, FEB. 4 + MAY 6, 11AM–3PM

FAMILY DAY

MSU Broad Art Museum // Make

First Saturday means Family Day at the MSU Broad Art Museum! Make creative connections with our exhibitions through free hands-on and interactive family fun throughout the museum. All ages are welcome.

SUNDAY, FEB. 12, MAR. 12, APR. 9, 2–4PM

COLLECTION REFRAME: A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

MSU Broad Art Museum // Talk + Listen

Have you ever wondered how museums make decisions about what’s on display? Join the MSU Broad Art Museum staff for a series of interactive brainstorming and listening sessions about our museum’s collection, and how we can present it in a new, collection-focused space that’s coming soon.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 22, 7-9PM
BROAD UNDERGROUND FILM SERIES
MSU Broad Art Museum // Screening

The Broad Underground Film Series presents experimental and avant-garde film and video screenings programmed in response to exhibitions at the MSU Broad Art Museum. This event is presented alongside the exhibition *Blind Spot: Stephanie Syjuco*.

WEDNESDAY, MAR. 15, 7-9PM
STUDENT NIGHT: GREEN SCREEN
MSU Broad Art Museum // Make

Student Nights are designed just for MSU students, by MSU students. You're sure to see and create something unexpected. Sound exciting? Keep an eye out for our Student Ambassador application and help plan art events for your campus community. Students must show their MSU ID upon entry.

THURSDAY, MAR. 23, 1-4PM
HOMESCHOOL DAY: ART FIELD TRIP!
MSU Broad Art Museum // Make

Connect with other homeschoolers at this day of making, looking, and learning designed just for you and your family! Discover the many ways art can help us make connections and encourage us to learn something new. Families are invited to explore the galleries and create art together in response.

THURSDAY, MAR. 30, 6-7:30PM
ARTIST TALK: STEPHANIE SYJUCO
MSU Broad Art Museum // Listen

Curious about how and why artists conduct research? And how their research provides important new ways of thinking about the past and present? Join artist Stephanie Syjuco as she discusses her recent work investigating archives and museum collections with her major exhibition *Blind Spot*.

FRIDAY, APR. 14, 6-8PM
NIGHT AT THE MUSEUMS
MSU Broad Art Museum + MSU Museum // Make

Enjoy an all-ages evening of science + art-inspired activities offered in celebration of the MSU Science Festival. Jointly hosted by the MSU Museum and the MSU Broad Art Museum, activities range from behind-the-scenes tours to art-making!

SUNDAY, APR. 16, 2-4PM
SPARTAN WELLNESS: CYANOTYPES
MSU Broad Art Museum // Make

Stress less at the MSU Broad Art Museum with this monthly making series. Now that spring is here, we're looking forward to sunny days ahead. This month we'll be making nature-inspired art with the power of the sun!

SUNDAY, APR. 30, 1-2PM
MUSEUM TOUR: BLIND SPOT
MSU Broad Art Museum // Tour

Why is everything chroma key green? And why are there parts of pictures missing? Join Assistant Curator Rachel Winter for a special walkthrough of the exhibition *Blind Spot: Stephanie Syjuco*, which explores recent photographs, videos, and installations by American artist Stephanie Syjuco.

Register for these free events at
broadmuseum.msu.edu/events



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This important celebration of *Blind Spot: Stephanie Syjuco* would not be possible without the generosity and support of the many communities and collaborators who help the museum achieve its goals and vision.

This exhibition is made possible through support from the Terra Foundation for American Art and the Eli and Edythe Broad Endowed Exhibition Fund. We would like to thank Stephanie Syjuco; Anton Stuebner and the team at Catharine Clark Gallery (San Francisco); Jeff Bergman and the staff at RYAN LEE Gallery (New York); Heather Everhart at the Law Warschaw Gallery, part of the Janet Wallace Fine Arts Center at Macalester College; Jehra Patrick at the Highpoint Center for Printmaking; Andy and Deborah Rappaport; and Janet Mohle-Boetani, MD, for helping us to realize this important survey of Syjuco's work.

Our gratitude also extends to the many collaborators on campus who kindly shared their important work and collections with us for this brochure, and who helped us realize the exhibition: Dr. Shannon Schmoll at the Talbert and Leota Abrams Planetarium; Dr. Anthony I. Cognato and Dr. Sarah M. Smith at the A.J. Cook Arthropod Research Collection; Rachel Vargas at the MSU Broad Art Museum; Dr. Alan Prather at the W.J. Beal Botanical Garden; Matt Chansler, M.S., Dr. Alan Prather, and Dr. Christopher Warneke at the MSU Herbarium; Alex Nichols at the Kresge Visual Resources and Print Lab; Dean Rehberger at Matrix: The Center for Digital Humanities & Social Sciences; Zoë McLaughlin and Terrie L. Wilson at the MSU Libraries; Dr. Marsha MacDowell and Lynne Swanson at the MSU Museum; Dr. Amanda Lorenz at the MSU Bug House; Tad Boehmer at the Stephen O. Murray and Keelung Hong Special Collections at the MSU Libraries;

the librarians and archivists at University Archives & Historical Collections; and the Department of Art, Art History, and Design within the College of Arts and Letters. We are also indebted to the campus leadership whose vision and investment in the arts continues to propel the museum forward, specifically Interim President Teresa K. Woodruff and Associate Provost Judith Stoddart.

Finally, our utmost gratitude extends to the museum's many members and audiences, whose ongoing support makes our work possible.



Stephanie Syjuco, *Overlay*, 2021. Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, Michigan State University, purchase, funded by the Emma Grace Holmes Endowment, 2022.32. Courtesy of the artist; Catharine Clark Gallery, San Francisco; and RYAN LEE Gallery, New York.

Cover: Stephanie Syjuco, *Dodge and Burn (Visible Storage)*, 2019. Wooden platform, digital photos and printed vinyl on lasercut wood, chroma key fabric, printed backdrops, seamless paper, artificial plants, mixed media. Overall 20 x 17 x 8 feet. Photo: Dusty Kessler. Courtesy of the artist; Catharine Clark Gallery, San Francisco; and RYAN LEE Gallery, New York.

Blind Spot: Stephanie Syjuco is organized by the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum at Michigan State University. This exhibition is made possible through support from the Terra Foundation for American Art and the Eli and Edythe Broad Endowed Exhibition Fund. The exhibition is co-curated by Assistant Curator Rachel Winter and Senior Curator and Director of Curatorial Affairs Steven L. Bridges, with special thanks to Stephanie Syjuco, RYAN LEE Gallery (New York), and Catharine Clark Gallery (San Francisco).

TERRA
FOUNDATION FOR AMERICAN ART

The Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum at Michigan State University (MSU Broad Art Museum) connects people with art through experiences that inspire curiosity and inquiry. Presenting exhibitions and programs that engage diverse communities around issues of local relevance and global significance, the MSU Broad Art Museum advances the university values of quality, inclusion, and connectivity. Opened on November 10, 2012, the museum was designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Zaha Hadid and named in honor of Eli and Edythe Broad, longtime supporters of the university who provided the lead gift.

