

Department of Photograph Conservation
Sherman Fairchild Center for Works on Paper
and Photograph Conservation

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1 ♦ Introducing Jonathan Farbowitz — The Department of Photograph Conservation is delighted to announce the recent appointment of Jonathan Farbowitz as Associate Conservator of Time-Based Media (TBM). This new position has been created in recognition of both the importance of TBM's growing place both in the history of art and within The Met's encyclopedic collections. This historic moment has been eagerly awaited and actively supported by many colleagues throughout the Museum and enables us to care for our vulnerable time-based media art collections, which include video, film, audio, slide and software-based artworks.

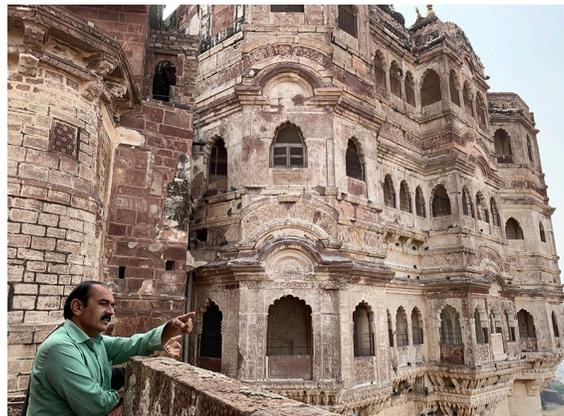
Jonathan officially joins the staff of the Department of Photograph Conservation in December 2019, and will hit the ground running preparing artworks for three upcoming exhibitions. Beyond exhibitions, he will equip the Museum's brand new TBM conservation lab, a space generously provided by the Imaging Department. Jonathan plans to work together with colleagues in Digital and IS&T to establish a much needed trusted digital repository for our TBM artworks.

Jonathan comes to The Met from the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, where he has been a Fellow since 2016 in the Conserving Computer-Based Art initiative, a collaborative

research and treatment endeavor between the Guggenheim and New York University's Department of Computer Science. Jonathan earned his B.A. from Vassar College, majoring in film, with a minor in philosophy, focusing on production and film history. He then earned his M.A. from New York University's Moving Image Archiving and Preservation Program in 2016, with a thesis entitled "Preserving Malware in Archives, Museums, and Libraries".

Photograph Conservation extends our sincere thanks to the many colleagues throughout the Museum who have been so supportive of the decades-long efforts to introduce time-based media conservation to The Met. This collaboration with individuals across departments has built the essential framework necessary to arrive at this important moment in our history. We all owe particular gratitude to the Digital Department and its William and Genevieve Tobin Keighley Memorial Fund for so generously supporting the first year of Jonathan's tenure and equipping the Museum's first time-based media conservation lab.

Please join us in welcoming Jonathan to the Department of Photograph Conservation at The Met.



2 ♦ Gathering in Delhi — Fellows from the Indian Conservation Fellowship Program (ICFP) gathered in Delhi in early November for an annual meeting to hear recent Fellows tell of their fellowship experiences at The Met, the Freer Gallery, and Stichtung Restauratie Atelier Limburg (SRAL), and to reunite with prior Fellows who provided a perspective on how their experience with ICFP has shaped their working lives and careers. For example, former Met Mellon Fellow Vandana Singh spoke eloquently about the empowerment the ICFP offers with its embracing of different approaches to conservation, the focus on experimental learning, and the culture of transparency. She noted how science informs history, and urged a more robust and consistent dialog between science and the humanities.

After the meeting, Nora Kennedy travelled to Udaipur to visit with Pradip Madhumita Vasundhara (ICFP 2019) at the [City Palace Museum](#) and was shown the state-of-the-art conservation lab there, and the wonderful storage rooms that house the extraordinary photographic treasures from their collection. Vasundhara works with noted Photograph and Paper Conservators S. Girikumar and Saloni Ghuwalewala. It was a welcome reunion. Nora then travelled to Jodhpur to meet with Vikram Rathore (ICFP 2014) and to see the [Mehranghar Fort and Museum](#) collection he is responsible for—a magnificent venue.

The ICFP is generously funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Ministry of Culture, India.

3 ♦ Welcoming Aleya Lehmann — We are very pleased to announce that Aleya Lehmann joined the Department of Photograph Conservation in October as our new Assistant Administrator.

Ms. Lehmann comes to The Met with an impressive background and a strong connection to photography. Trained as an artist, Aleya earned her BFA from Boston University and her MFA from The American University, and has worked for years in the arts, both administratively and as an independent artist. She began her career in arts administration at The New Museum from 1986 to 1994, followed by six years as Executive Director of Art Table. Between 2000 and 2004 she worked for the Jersey City Museum, and from 2004–2013 Aleya served as the Executive Director of the Appraisers Association of America.

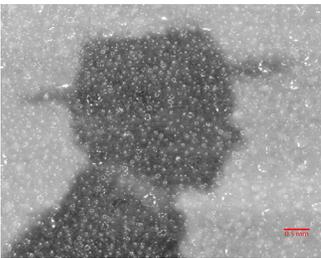
In 2013, she founded Aleya Lehmann Bench Photography in order to devote herself exclusively to her own photography, and continues to maintain her studio in Sunset Park, Brooklyn.

Along with her professional accomplishments, Aleya also serves as Founder and President of the Friends of Verdi Square, a nonprofit organization working in collaboration with NYC Parks to restore this public park on the Upper West Side. We are excited that Aleya has brought her substantial energy to our Department in the critical role of Assistant Administrator.

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Images: **Left:** Outside the City Palace Museum Conservation lab in Udaipur, India, Nora and Vasundhara (center) are flanked at left by colleagues Bhasha and Girikumar and on the right by Saloni and Anuja. Photo: Peter Mustardo **Center:** Former Met Fellow Vikram Singh Rathore showing one of the magnificent views from Mehranghar Fort and Museum. Photo: Nora Kennedy **Right:** Aleya Lehmann. Photo: Carol Dronsfield



4 ♦ A Pristine Daguerreotype Revealed — In celebration of The Met's 150th anniversary in 2020, the Department of Photographs will highlight the important role of gifts in developing its collection. Opening this month is *2020 Vision: Photographs, 1840s–1860s*, the first of three exhibitions celebrating photographs in the year 2020, featuring recent and new gifts, many offered in honor of the sesquicentennial celebration and exhibited at The Met for the first time.

Associate Conservator Katie Sanderson completed the conservation examinations and treatments on all photographs for the exhibition. Pictured here is a dramatic “recovery” of a daguerreotype image achieved by removing and replacing the severely deteriorating glazing. As silver-mercury based images, daguerreotypes are almost always housed behind glass to keep them from tarnishing. In this dramatic example, the glass deterioration has taken the form of tiny droplets on the glass interior that threatened to drop down onto the plate causing damage to its delicate surface. When the older glazing is removed (and always retained for future research), the pristine daguerreotype image is revealed.

These details show the man standing second from left in this magnificent 1850s view of Niagara Falls by Platt D. Babbitt.

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Images: Top: Platt D. Babbitt (American). *Niagara Falls*, 1850s. Daguerreotype. William L. Schaeffer Collection, Promised Gift of Jennifer and Philip Maritz, in celebration of the Museum's 150th Anniversary. (L.2019.57.85) **Left, top:** Detail, micrograph, before treatment. **Left, bottom:** Detail, micrograph, after treatment. Photos: Katie Sanderson



5 ♦ A Conservator's Discovery — Conservation treatment of [*Carte-de-visite Album of Central Park Views*] in preparation for *2020 Vision: Photographs, 1840s–1860s* revealed new information about the practitioners responsible for a number of the artworks held in its windowed leaves. Conservators not only perform the treatments that permit the Museum's artworks to be safely exhibited, they often undertake research that adds to the art historical reading of the objects themselves.

The *carte-de-visite* (CDV) photograph format was patented by photographer André Adolphe Eugène Disdéri in 1854. Albumen photographs were printed on very thin paper and tended to curl if left unrestrained. To counter this, photographers mounted their images on supports to keep them flat. In this format, the mounted photographs were of a standard size, allowing the mass production of albums to house them. Soon these albums flourished, serving as both housing and display methods for photograph collectors.

Carte-de-visite albums could be purchased from a stationer, ready to be filled and organized by its owner, making each album unique. Once the *cartes* are inserted into the leaves, they are framed by the window mats, completely covering the edges and verso, as the albums were designed to have two CDVs fit back-to-back into the pre-prepared recess in each stiff, paper-faced album leaf.

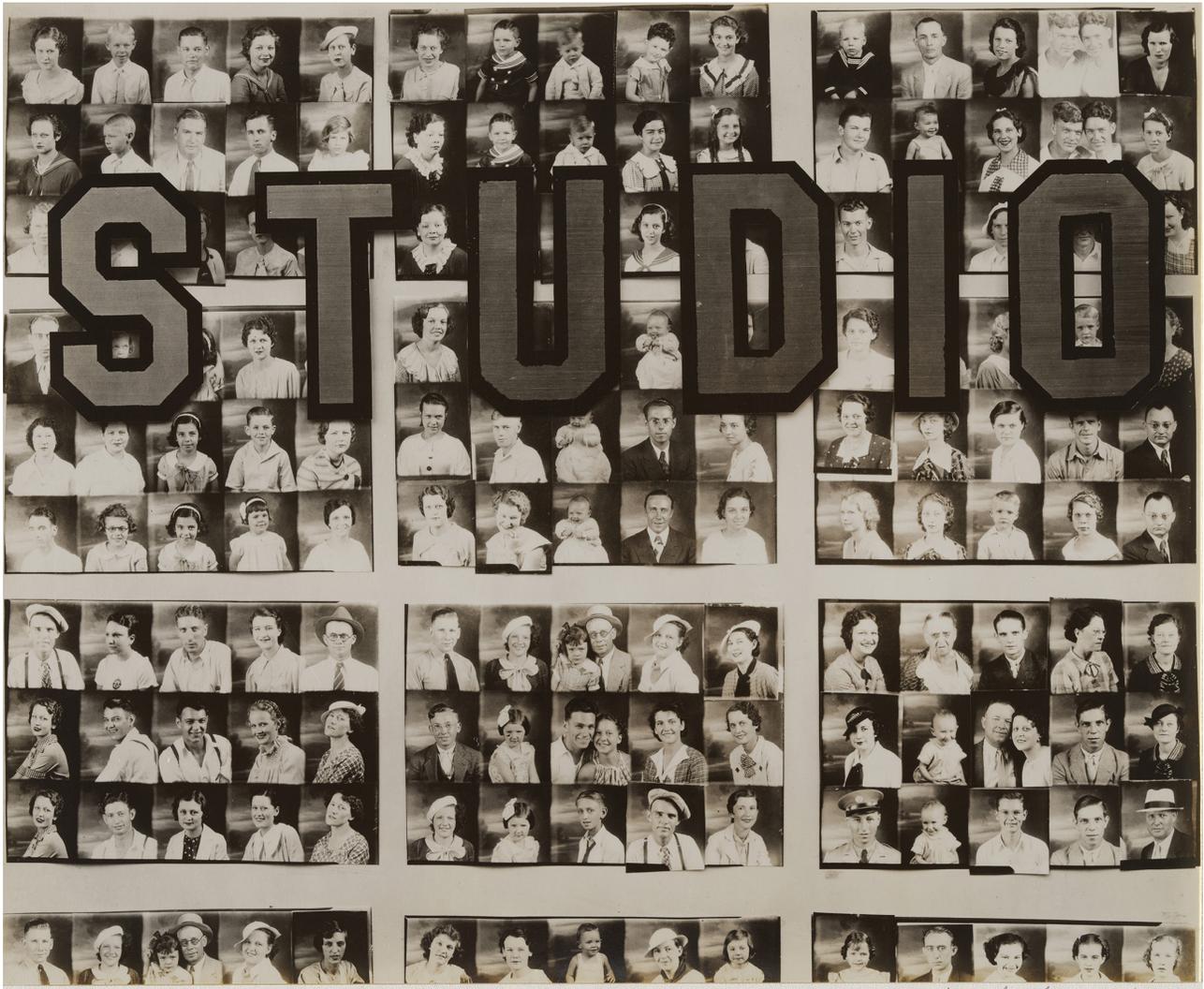
The album pictured here houses 16 hand-colored CDVs and 14 paintings of the same size. During treatment, book conservator Georgia Southworth removed the artworks to glean as much information about the album's history as possible. The CDVs were stamped with "Stacy's Photographic Carte de Visite", the studio in which they were produced, which was in business at 691 Broadway in New York City from 1861–1865. And, revealed on the versos of the little gouache and shellac paintings was the name of the artist. Ambrose Jackson did not include a date with his signature, but research shows that he was a successful 19th-century painter, active in New York City, who passed away in 1909.

Conservation treatment of this piece of early photographic history has revealed evidence that the painted and photographic artworks nestled together in this small album offer very early views of Central Park, which was constructed between 1857 and 1876. Further research into Stacy's photographic studio and Ambrose Jackson will illuminate the ways Central Park was seen and appreciated in the decades prior to the founding of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the photography from these decades being the focus of *2020 Vision: Photographs, 1840s–1860s*.

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Images: **Left:** Unknown (American). [*Carte-de-visite Album of Central Park Views*], 1860s. Albumen silver prints and paintings. Bequest of Herbert Mitchell, 2008. (2015.400.199) **Photo:** Georgia Southworth **Right:** Ambrose Jackson (American), painted card verso, detail, showing artist's signature. **Photo:** Aleya Lehmann



Related Programs

**Home Is a Foreign Place:
Recent Acquisitions in Context
Gallery Talk**

January 14, 2020
12:30–1:30pm

**2020 Vision: Photographs,
1840s–1860s**

Gallery Talk
February 14, 2020
10:30–11:30am

Current

Rayyane Tabet / Alien Property

October 30, 2019 through January 18, 2021
The Met Fifth Avenue

2020 Vision: Photographs, 1840s–1860s

December 3, 2019 through May 10, 2020
The Met Fifth Avenue

**Home Is a Foreign Place:
Recent Acquisitions in Context**

April 9, 2019 through June 21, 2020
The Met Breuer

Upcoming

Gerhard Richter: Painting After All

March 4 through July 5, 2020
The Met Breuer

**Photography's Last Century: The Ann
Tenenbaum and Thomas H. Lee Collection**

March 10 through June 28, 2020
The Met Fifth Avenue

Making The Met, 1870–2020

March 30 through August 2, 2020
The Met Fifth Avenue

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Image: Walker Evans (American). *Photographer's Window, Savannah*, 1936. Gelatin silver print. Promised Gift of Ann Tenenbaum and Thomas H. Lee in celebration of the Museum's 150th Anniversary. (LT1995.10)



Support the Department of Photograph Conservation

With steadfast commitment and support from our friends, The Met's Department of Photograph Conservation continues to thrive and be a crucial resource for the preservation of works of art, as well as a vibrant center for research.

We extend heartfelt thanks to the following recent donors to the Department of Photograph Conservation:

Harriet Gruber ♦ Jay and Ali Klein ♦ Joyce F. Menschel ♦
David Neill and Susan Griffith ♦ Debra Hess Norris ♦
Angelica and Neil Rudenstine ♦ Charles and Patricia Selden

Support

To learn more about how you can become involved and support this critical area at The Met, please contact:

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To learn more about our Department, visit metmuseum.org/about-the-met

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Editors: Nora W. Kennedy and Georgia Southworth
Managing Editor: Aleya Lehmann

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2020 Vision: Photographs, 1840s–1860s is made possible by the Alfred Stieglitz Society. ♦ This will be the first of a two-part presentation that features recent and new gifts, many offered in honor of The Met's sesquicentennial celebration.

Home Is a Foreign Place: Recent Acquisitions in Context features recent acquisitions of modern and contemporary art from Latin America, the Middle East, North Africa, and South and Southeast Asia, alongside works by iconic modern American artists from The Met collection.

Gerhard Richter: Painting After All is made possible by the Barrie A. and Deedee Wigmore Foundation. Major support is provided by David S. Winter

and the Modern and Contemporary Art Visiting Committee. Additional funding is provided by Angela A. Chao and Jim Breyer, Jane C. Carroll, the Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, Kenneth and Rosalind Landis, and Stuart and Gina Peterson. ♦ The catalogue is made possible by the Mary C. and James W. Fosburgh Publications Fund.

Photography's Last Century: The Ann Tenenbaum and Thomas H. Lee Collection is made possible by Joyce Frank Menschel and the Alfred Stieglitz Society. ♦ The catalogue is made possible in part by the Samuel I. Newhouse Foundation, Inc.

Making The Met, 1870–2020 is made possible by the Iris & B. Gerald Cantor Foundation. Lead corporate sponsorship is provided by Bank of America. ♦ The catalogue is made possible by the Diane W. and James E. Burke Fund, The Peter Jay Sharp Foundation, and the Doris Duke Fund for Publications.

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Image: Unknown (American). *Photographer with Camera* (detail), 1860s. Tintype. William L. Schaeffer Collection, Promised Gift of Jennifer and Philip Maritz, in celebration of the Museum's 150th Anniversary. (L.2019.57.248)