

UC SANTA BARBARA  
History of Art & Architecture

**Letter from the Chair**  
**Summer 2024**

Dear HAA Community:

It is a joy to come together to celebrate the extraordinary culmination of the 2023-24 academic year, and I take this time to acknowledge **Professor Laurie Monahan**, who led for the last three plus years as chair. We wish her the best in her recent retirement, and the joys and rhythms of the calendar year beyond the strictures of the quarter system.

I am pleased and excited to welcome you to our summer edition newsletter, which showcases the many accomplishments of our students and faculty. Our department has been hard at work pursuing research and learning opportunities both near to home, such as an undergraduate field trip to LA MOCA, spearheaded by **Professor Carole Paul** and **Dr. Jeff O'Brien**, curator of our Image Resource Center and Center for Object-Based Research and Learning, and far, such as the many talks and presentations our faculty have given abroad, such as **Professor Richard Wittman**, who has given talks all over Europe this past year, promoting his new book, *Saint Paul's Outside the Walls* (Cambridge University Press, 2023). **Professor Swati Chattopadhyay** also published a new book, *Small Spaces: Recasting the Infrastructure of Empire* (Bloomsbury Academic Press, 2023). Further, our emeritus faculty are also very active: congratulations is in order to **Emeritus Professor Jeanette Favrot Peterson**, who is part of an international research team at the Getty Research Institute that has just launched a digital humanities project, the Digital Florentine Codex, offering access to a primary art historical source that documents the Nahua (Aztec) world.

Our doctoral students are nationally recognized, winning major grants and fellowships, such as **Elizabeth Driscoll Smith**, named the 2024-2026 Wyeth Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts (CASVA) at the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C., and **Sylvia Faichney**, who was awarded a grant from the Garden Club of America.

One of the highlights and strengths of our work here are the many curators that our department produces, with the ability to make meaningful public-facing exhibitions: so many of our recent Ph.D. alumni, including **Sarah Bane (Ph.D. 2022)** and **Diva Zumaya (Ph.D. 2018)**, and even Ph.D. candidates are working in museum roles as curators and educators, and we are so proud of them!

Further, collective leadership extends to the highest reaches of our national-level professional organizations. **Denise Amy Baxter (M.A., 1998, Ph.D. 2003)** has taken up the role of president of the College Art Association (CAA), and **Professor Swati Chattopadhyay** has been named Vice-Chair of Society of Architectural Historians (SAH). Such service and leadership roles are key in these difficult times of arts funding cuts, and we congratulate both on their appointments! Please take some time to read about the important work our current students, faculty, and alumni are producing.

Warm wishes,

**Professor Jenni Sorkin, Chair**