

Colloquium: "Landscape and Sacred Architecture in Pre-modern South Asia"

Dumbarton Oaks, Garden and Landscape Studies

November 14, 2014

Speaker biographies

Kurt Behrendt is Associate Curator at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. His exhibitions and research focus on the Buddhist, Hindu and Jain art of South Asia and the Himalayas. His 1997 Ph.D. at UCLA provided the foundation for his first book: *The Buddhist Architecture of Gandhara* (Brill, 2004). Since then he has published extensively on Gandharan art and related topics, including an edited book *Gandhāran Buddhism: Archaeology, Art, Texts* (UBC Press, 2006), co-edited with Pia Brancaccio, and a collection volume entitled *The Art of Gandhara in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (MMA; Yale, 2007). In 2006, Dr. Behrendt left academia to work as a curator at The Metropolitan Museum of Art where he has had the opportunity to reinstall several of the permanent galleries and curate a series of exhibitions, most recently *Buddhism along the Silk Road* in 2012 and *Tibet and India: Buddhist Traditions and Transformations* in 2014. All of these interests have led him to travel extensively in India, Pakistan, Nepal, Tibet, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Indonesia, Korea and Japan.

Pia Brancaccio earned her Ph.D. in Indian Art History and Archaeology at the Università degli Studi di Napoli 'L'Orientale' (Italy) and collaborated for several years with the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan. Prior to joining Drexel University she held research positions at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Getty Research Institute and at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. She has done extensive work on Buddhist art in ancient South Asia with a special focus on the Gandharan region and the Deccan plateau. Dr. Brancaccio's publications include a monograph on *The Buddhist Caves at Aurangabad: Transformations in Art and Religion* (Brill Publishers, 2010), two edited volumes entitled *Living Rock: Buddhist, Hindu and Jain Cave Temples in Western Deccan* (Marg, 2013), and *Gandharan Buddhism: Archaeology, Art and Text* with Kurt Behrendt (UBC Press, 2006) as well as several articles in conference proceedings and academic journals (*Ars Orientalis*, *Archives of Asian Art*, *East and West*, and *South Asian Studies*).

Crispin Branfoot is currently Senior Lecturer in South Asian art and archaeology at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. His books include *Gods on the Move: architecture and ritual in the south Indian temple* (London 2007); with Roger Taylor, *Captain Linnaeus Tripe: Photographer of India and Burma, 1854-1860* (Washington

DC 2014); and as editor with Ruth Barnes, *Pilgrimage: The Sacred Journey* (Oxford 2006). His book chapters and scholarly articles in the *Art Bulletin*, *Artibus Asiae*, *Ars Orientalis*, the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* and other journals have focussed on the religious architecture, sculpture and painting of southern India in the period of the Vijayanagara Empire and its Nayaka successor states. Forthcoming books include, with Archana Venkatesan, *In Antal's Garden: Art, Ornament and Devotion in Srivilliputtur* (Mumbai 2015) and (as editor), *Portraiture in South Asia since the Mughals: Art, History, Representation* (London 2016).

Nachiket Chanchani (PhD, University of Pennsylvania, 2012) is Assistant Professor of South Asian Art and Visual Culture in the Departments of the History of Art and Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. His writings have appeared/are in-press in such journals as *Artibus Asiae*, *Archives of Asian Art*, *History of Photography*, *Arts Asiatiques* and *Art in Translation*. He is currently writing a monograph on the construction of sacrality in the Central Himalayas and jointly guest editing a volume of *Ars Orientalis*.

Robert DeCaroli received his Ph.D. in the field of South and Southeast Asian art history from UCLA. He is a specialist in the early history of Buddhism and has conducted fieldwork in India, Sri Lanka, and Southeast Asia. He is the author of *Haunting the Buddha: Indian Popular Religions and the Formation of Buddhism* (Oxford UP 2004) as well as of several journal articles and book chapters. He has been the recipient of the George Mason University Teaching Excellence Award and has received research grants from the Asian Cultural Council and the Getty Research Institute. His second book *Image Problems: The Origin and Development of the Buddha's Image In early South Asia* will be available early in 2015.

Padma Kaimal trained in the History of Indian Art under Joanna Williams at UC Berkeley. She has taught at Colgate University since 1988. Her book, *Scattered Goddesses: Travels with the Yoginis* (Ann Arbor: Association of Asian Studies, 2012), and her essays question assumptions about art from India's Tamil region. Are museums the problem, the solution, or both to debates on cultural property? Is collecting art the opposite of scattering it? Are fierce goddesses demonic? Did kings build all the temples we care about now? Did men? Did sculptures tell only one story at a time? Did buildings? Support from the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the J. Paul Getty Foundation, the American Institute for Indian Studies, the Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient, the American Association of University Women, Colgate University, and the Center for South Asian Studies at U. C. Berkeley have sustained this research.

Subhashini Kaligotla is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Art History and Archaeology at Columbia University. Her dissertation, "Shiva's Waterfront Temples: Reimagining the Sacred Architecture of India's Deccan Region," questions the canonical

binary conception of Indian temple architecture and the fragmentary view it engenders of the Deccan's early medieval architecture. Adopting the temple cluster as an analytical category, her work argues for the constitutive role played by water bodies such as rivers, natural springs, and masonry tanks in shaping the Deccan's built environment. She has received fellowships from Fulbright, the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, and Dumbarton Oaks, and has taught courses on South Asian art and architecture at Barnard College, New York University, and for Columbia's Core Curriculum. She is finishing her dissertation as a fellow of the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles.

Lisa N. Owen received her Ph.D. in Art History from the University of Texas at Austin and is currently an Associate Professor at the University of North Texas. Her research focuses on ancient and medieval rock-cut monuments in India and how carved imagery and space shape devotional practices. Her current book project, *Rocks, Caves, and Divinity: Creating Places of Worship in Medieval Southern India*, questions the saliency of employing traditional art historical categories such as "architecture" and "sculpture" to India's rock-cut monuments that clearly express a power of place through more complex visual systems. Her recent fieldwork in India has been supported by an American Institute of Indian Studies Senior Research Fellowship, a Fulbright-Nehru Research Scholar Award, and a Howard Foundation Fellowship. Her publications include *Carving Devotion in the Jain Caves at Ellora* (Brill, 2012), and essays in *Marg, Artibus Asiae*, and the *International Journal of Jaina Studies*.

Tamara Sears, Assistant Professor of Art History at Yale University, is a specialist in the art and architectural history of the Indian subcontinent. Her first book, *Worldly Gurus and Spiritual Kings: Architecture and Asceticism in Medieval India* (Yale University Press, 2014), examines the connections between the emergence of the Hindu monastery as a new architectural type, the regionalization and localization of royal power, and the institutionalization of new forms of ritual practice. She is currently working on a second book, tentatively entitled *Wilderness Urbanisms: Architecture, Landscape and Travel in Central India*, that looks at architecture and landscape as sites for mapping social mobility, economic expansion, and the transmission of cultural knowledge. Her research has been supported by numerous grants and fellowships, including a J. Paul Getty Postdoctoral Research Fellowship, a Scott Opler Emerging Scholar Fellowship from the Society of Architectural Historians, and a Fulbright-Nehru Senior Research Fellowship.