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Editors’ Reflections on the First Five Years of Panorama

Editors’ note: *In celebration of Panorama’s first five years—issue 1.1 appeared in February of 2015—the current Executive Editors invited founding and past Editors to share reflections. This conversation highlights the challenges faced in founding the journal and outlines a vision for the future that is dependent upon the support and contributions of our colleagues and readers.*

Contributors (in order of appearance)

Jennifer Marshall (JM)
Sarah Burns (SB)
Lauren Lessing (LL)
Austen Barron Bailly (ABB)
M. Elizabeth (Betsy) Boone (BB)
Jacqueline Francis (JF)
Jessica Skwire Routhier (JSR)
Naomi Slipp (NS)

JM: July 2012. January 2013. These dates are more than five years ago, and they illustrate how firmly I hold to my principle of “never delete an email.” July 2012: an invitation from the indefatigable Isabel Taube to join the editorial board of an unnamed AHAA “e-journal,” which would showcase “original research representing the full range of methodologies” in our field. January 2013: Ross Barrett and I begin an exchange that would lead to my role as one-third of the first editorial triumvirate, along with Sarah Burns, of what would eventually become *Panorama*.

SB: When I was invited to contribute my thoughts and recollections of my years as one of the original executive editors of *Panorama*, I fished a fat folder out of my files and paged through all the meeting and conference-call notes I scribbled from 2012 through 2017, when I stepped down, leaving the journal in the hands of younger, fresher, and much more energetic volunteers. After going through all the documents (not even trying to review everything in my digital files), I came up for air wondering how we *ever* managed to get *Panorama* off the ground and keep it going in the first couple of years. Seen in retrospect, it struck me as such a daunting task that it was tantamount to a miracle that we succeeded in realizing the goal. It’s satisfying to look back now and see how dynamically the journal has evolved and made an important place for itself in the field.

LL: I began my term as co-executive editor of *Panorama* at a transitional moment for both the journal and the field of American art, which was rapidly expanding to embrace more studies of transnational, multicultural, and intermedia art. After two successful years under the stewardship of founding editors Ross Barrett, Sarah Burns, and Jennifer Marshall, the journal had fully come into its own.

ABB: It’s striking to me how well I remember receiving a phone call from PJ Brownlee inviting me to join the editorial board of a newly-forming journal to be called “Panorama.” Under fluorescent lights at an avocado-yellow Steelcase desk, I was working in my office in the basement level of the former 5905 Wilshire Building at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. I can still hear PJ describing AHAA’s ambitious aim to create a free journal that would be published exclusively online. The name *Panorama* was a big part of the conversation—how it was inspired by early American painting traditions and visual culture, suggestive of motion and photography, and evocative of expanding ways of seeing.

SB: I volunteered to join the Executive Editorial team because, having recently retired from Indiana University, I wanted to undertake some meaningful professional service to the field. The nascent e-journal seemed like the ideal project. Planning was underway as early as 2012. The inaugural issue wasn’t launched until February 2015, which might seem like a very, very long gestation—even elephants do it faster—but we needed every minute.

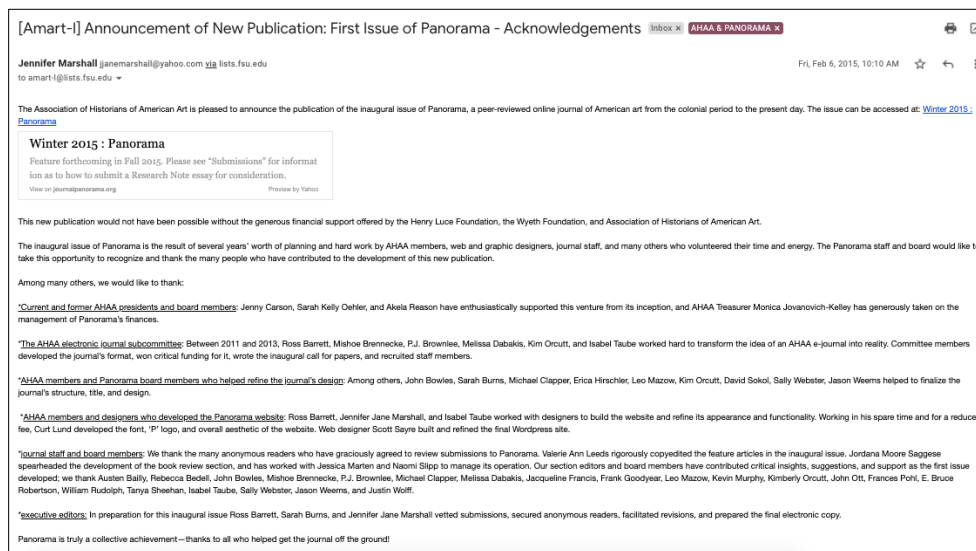


Fig. 1. “Announcement of New Publication: First Issue of Panorama,” Am-Art listserv, February 6, 2015

JM: It’s fair to say that *Panorama* was born out of some prevailing sense that, because the reigning journals in the field had their missions firmly planted in fine arts and material culture perspectives, other topics and approaches were left out in the cold. Since many in our generation of art historians were personally invested in these other fields (business and financial history; critical theory; intellectual history; museum studies; visual studies; pop culture), there was real motivation for building a platform that could accommodate this diversity.

ABB: I palpably recall my excitement and pride in the invitation to become involved in this initiative and to be considered someone who could contribute to the larger Americanist community beyond my museum. It was also thrilling to realize that there was new and timely momentum happening in our small field—that it could now support two major journals. I anticipated that *Panorama* as an online venture would bring a more open and responsive forum for the advancement of American art history and its broadening.

SB: So, how did we go about creating an electronic journal from scratch? My meeting notes of February 15, 2013, include, among very many topics, the job of “Narrowing in on a title” so that AHAA members could vote to choose a winner. Suggestions for the main title included *Pluribus*, *Panorama*, *July*, *Perspectives*, *Horizons*, *Interventions*, and *Viewpoints*, plus the prosaic default, *Journal of the Association of Historians of American Art*. After the inevitable colon, there was to be a secondary clause along the lines of *Art and Visual Culture of the United States*. *Pluribus* and *Panorama* made it onto the ballot, and you know the rest.



Fig. 2. Mockup of landing page for issue 1.1 of *Panorama*, 2015

that had to be made early on, such as who would design and build the journal’s template, and how could we go about procuring an ISSN number? (On the latter, none of us had a clue, as far as I can recall.)

JM: Of course, the work that I knew to anticipate—reviewing manuscripts, soliciting and interfacing with peer readers, shepherding authors through revisions—was instantly rewarding, and I’m still gratified to see so much of our early content immortalized in pixel print. Louise Siddons’s essay “[The Language of Line](#),” on John Winkler in San Francisco’s Chinatown, really stands out for me. It appeared in our very first issue. It was the work I *didn’t* expect that quickly took me to school. We had to court authors and solicit manuscripts, for one thing. Then, and deeply connected to that, we had to build a journal that would measure up to the scholarship we sought: in rigor, in staying power, and in overall quality.

SB: The overarching question was: how do we produce a *digital* journal that wouldn’t end up being just like a paper journal, only on the computer?

JM: Once we had a title and an editorial staff, things got rolling. Scott Sayre at Sandbox Studios designed the initial WordPress site, which included graphic design elements—including our distinctive masthead and “P”—by Curt Lund. Finally, after months of long meetings, AHAA had a journal! All we had to do was hang out our shingle, greet the deluge of manuscripts that would surely pile up at the end of our mail chute, pick the best, make them better, et voila! After all, we knew there was a demand to represent methodological diversity and topic diversity, and a need for a bigger platform for younger scholars. This was our “if you build it, they will come” moment of aw-shucks naivete.

SB: Yes, as Jenn notes, choosing the title was just the window dressing. Then the *really* hard work began. Readers who want to dip into all the nuts and bolts of *Panorama’s* early history might want to review the “[Editors’ Welcome](#)” in [the Summer 2017](#) issue, where Jenn and I looked back and summarized all the decisions

JM: This was the tricky part, and it exposed, somewhat, the near-fatal flaw of *Panorama*’s founding mission. The earliest conversations about the journal happened among younger, recently-degreed scholars who wanted a publishing venue for new perspectives that didn’t fit the existing molds. But this meant that precisely the authors we wanted to support had the least amount of professional capital to spend. Scholars in precarious positions—pre-tenure or outside of the tenure stream entirely—simply couldn’t be sure that publishing in a brand new “e-journal” would count at all toward their academic security. Would placement in *Panorama* be akin to throwing years of work into a wishing well? Indeed, even Jules Prown had cause to worry. Upon the assembly of our first roundtable on pedagogy, convened around [Prown’s “Reflections on Teaching Art History” \(Summer 2016\)](#), Jules had some very good questions about what would happen to the essays if *Panorama* were to go away. And I wondered, too: if we were operating just on faith and WordPress wireframes, how would the scholar in 2036 access Jules’s reflection? Even more worryingly, how would someone *right now*, who was *already* researching John Winkler or Chinatown, say, ever find Louise’s article? To find out, I’d type her name into Google. Then Winkler’s. Then Winkler + Chinatown. The article would never show up. And it certainly wasn’t discoverable through a library search engine. As for back-up, all I could point to was our DropBox subscription. Thus began a long period of sleepless nights.

BB: Sustainability was a big issue for me. I was the first to follow the three founding editors, and I wanted to set up a sustainable roster of editors and a stable financial base for the journal. Putting out the journal is a lot of work, and I was worried about burnout. I also believe that different people have different strengths, and that organizations can benefit from those strengths when new leaders take the reins. We therefore decided to model our executive editor positions on AHAA’s system of chair, co-chair, and chair-emeritus. Each co-Executive Editor serves for a total of three years, with one person rotating off and a new one rotating on at the end of each year. We set up a similar system for the various section editors, giving them the option to renew at the end of their term. So far, it seems to be going well!

SB: One steep step at a time, we clambered slowly up the learning curve, and somehow the journal became what it is now—a brilliant showcase for cutting-edge research, diverse voices, novel features, and lively conversations.

JM: We attacked the problem of journal dependability on two fronts. The first was intellectual. We found ways to build respectability through the wisdom and wattage of marquee scholars. “Bully Pulpit” evolved as a forum that could maximize the comparative nimbleness of our electronic medium (allowing the journal to respond to timely concerns).¹ It was also a relatively easy ask for mid-career and senior scholars, who could lend their support to *Panorama* in the form of five hundred words or fewer. The second front was less glitzy but more practical. It comprised headaches like bibliographic indexing, digital archiving, copyright policies for open-access scholarship, and style guides that not only upheld the letter of the *Chicago Manual of Style* law but also

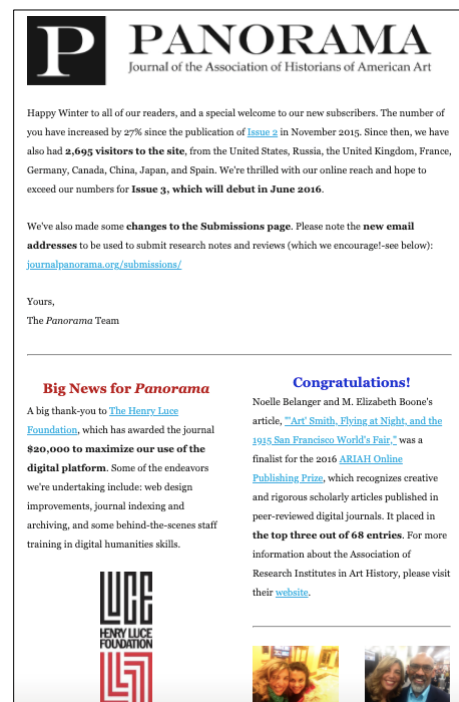


Fig. 3. “New Developments at *Panorama*,” subscriber email, February 24, 2016


reflected our editorial ethics. (For a taste of that last item of business, consider recent moves among newspapers to standardize the capitalization of “Black.”) This zone of work reminded us that the “if you build it, they will come” maxim really demands a whole lot of nuts-and-bolts building.

LL: By 2017, peer-reviewed journals published entirely online had ceased to be outliers. Both authors and readers recognized that *Panorama*’s digital format offered many advantages over print publications, including ease of access, searchability, and the capacity to include illustrative materials beyond still images. However, the problem of longevity remained. Unlike paper journals preserved in multiple copies on library shelves, *Panorama* lacked a permanent archive. The migration to servers at the University of Minnesota Libraries solved this problem, ensuring that the journal’s contents will remain viable in perpetuity.

JM: That happened thanks to a question I had about getting our content indexed through academic databases. I was connected to a digital content specialist in the University of Minnesota (UMN) Libraries, Kate McCready. We met for coffee, and she answered my questions and agreed to help out. But she also slipped me some paperwork about the UMN Libraries Publishing Services: an initiative designed to serve open-access academic scholarship. You had to submit a proposal and pass through an approval process, but publishing through the UMN Libraries would come with baked-in counsel for all our many practical questions, as well as ongoing support for platform design and updates, and indexing, discoverability, and archiving. This was the seed of what would become the journal’s emerging longevity. That’s not really my story to tell. While I was involved with the transition work that went into migrating *Panorama* from an independent WordPress platform to a UMN Libraries site (so. many. meetings.), at that point we had successfully recruited a new triumvirate of editors in Lauren Lessing, John Bowles, and the godsend named Betsy Boone. It was their show to run from there . . . and we’ve all seen the gangbusters results that have thus ensued.

BB: When I joined the journal, I was very concerned with the issue of long-term archiving, indexing, and technical support, which we accomplished by transitioning—which came to us along with a beautiful new website redesign thanks to a grant from the Wyeth Foundation for American Art—to UMN Libraries Publishing. We are now preserved using state-of-the-art library standards, indexed in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), and supported by excellent staff at the University of Minnesota.

JF: It’s significant *Panorama* is accessible and free. The traffic in online text is fierce, so we have to compete with all kinds of publications. This year, on Mauritius’s Feast Day (September 22), a non-academic reader emailed me to say that he searched the saint’s name and discovered an [“In the Round” essay \(2018\)](#) about Romare Bearden’s paean to the Black Egyptian. OK, it was my piece. More important than that fact is that *Panorama* is a resource for people we may never encounter at the AHAA symposium or the College Art Association’s annual conference. *Panorama* is a scholarly journal; it’s also gratifying that other kinds of readers make use of it. With the publication of our June 2020 issue, we had more than 2,500 organic search referrals (when a user types keywords into a search field and selects us in the result list) within the first four weeks. And social media posts are moves in productive directions that will continue to raise our visibility.



PANORAMA


Journal of the Association of Historians of American Art

It's here! Please [click through](#) for the fall issue of *Panorama*, the journal of the Association of Historians of American Art—our sixth issue and our fullest one yet.

We're sharing just a few highlights with you in this email, but there's so much more to see on our site: journalpanorama.org. Bookmark it and set aside some time, because you will want to come back to this issue over and over again.


We hope you'll read, enjoy, and share this issue on Facebook ([Association of Historians of American Art](#)) or Twitter ([@AHAamericanart](#)), using our hashtags #JournalPanorama and #AmericanArt

Thanks for reading!
the *Panorama* team




Wayne Thiebaud, *City, River, Mountain*, 1969–76. Oil on canvas, 60 1/8 x 72 1/4 in. (152.78 x 183.25 cm). Collection of Paul LeFavre, Thiebaud Trust, Art © Wayne Thiebaud / Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY.

City, River, Mountain: Wayne Thiebaud's California
by Margareta Lovall (UC Berkeley)
"This essay touches on continuities between Thiebaud's food paintings and his landscape paintings, and on the ways his landscapes broach the seemingly irreconcilable differences between abstraction and representation. Centrally, it engages the ways in which his landscape paintings, focusing on the ecologies of California, engage major human concerns about place, space, and habitation."




We Wanted a Revolution: Black Radical Women, 1965–85 at the Brooklyn Museum, 2007. Photograph by Jonathan Dorado.

We Wanted a Revolution: Black Radical Women, 1965–85
Brooklyn Museum; reviewed by Kim Bobier, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
"This exhibition stands out for the ways it counters the curatorial tendency to elide or abstract the complex and pragmatic inter- and intra-community dealings behind the art it mounts. Steering clear of a simplistic or grand narrative, *We Wanted a Revolution* accentuates how its artists harnessed these dealings to bolster the revolutionary content of their work. As a result, visitors have the opportunity to explore an array of prescient tactics for collective struggle and conscientious art-making and to examine the inevitable perils of these activities."



The Estimote Hall, Monticello, as it appeared in 2007. © Thomas Jefferson Foundation at Monticello.

"Kicked About": Native Culture at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello
by Kristine Roman (Independent Scholar)
"Two of the most prominent Native-made objects in Jefferson's original hall were a pair of male and female figures that Jefferson had received several years prior to Lewis and Clark's shipments. Curiously, the figures had disappeared from the historical record with Jefferson's death in 1826. It came as quite a surprise, then, that during my internship I reidentified two stone heads that today sit in the hall display cases and are what remain of Jefferson's original statues."



Florine Stettheimer, *Spring Sale at Bend's*, 1921. Oil on canvas, 50 x 40 in. Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Florine Stettheimer, the Department Store, and the Spaces of Display, New York 1916–1926
by Heather Hole, Simmons College
"Tracing the movement of Stettheimer's works brings into view a variety of previously unexamined venues in which art and commerce converged. . . . This essay reveals the previously overlooked diversity of Stettheimer's exhibition practices and argues that the period's lack of rigid boundaries between art and commercial culture resulted in nuanced class and gender-based mingling and sorting, not democratic equivalence, within the spaces of early twentieth-century American modernism."

Panorama is the first peer-reviewed electronic publication dedicated to American art and visual culture (broadly defined) from the colonial period to the present day.
Find out more at journalpanorama.org.

Fig. 4. Subscriber email for launch of issue 3.2 of *Panorama* (Fall 2017)

JM: Another major development in these years which bears mention was the recognition of the dire need for a managing editor, and the understanding that those duties were challenging and continual enough to require compensation. Our first managing editors were Andrea Truitt (who designed the earliest workflow protocols for the journal and cleared a path toward its professionalization . . . another godsend!) and Erika Prater. Both were advanced graduate students in the Art History department at the University of Minnesota, which had matched funds from the dean's office to provide *Panorama* dedicated research support. Then, because of my rotation off the journal and an acknowledged responsibility for *Panorama* to fund its own staff, Jessica Skwire Routhier came on board in summer 2017. She has steered the ship calmly and expertly ever since.

BB: Indeed, it became clear during the early years of the journal that we needed a professional managing editor, an individual who could handle the journal's significant day-to-day administrative responsibilities in a timely manner . . . and so much more! Paying for this person was a challenge, and one of the best moments of my *Panorama* life came during a meeting with the Luce Foundation, when Terry Carbone—she really is our fairy godmother—offered us multi-year support for this position. The stability of this funding has been absolutely instrumental in our success!

JSR: I started working with *Panorama* in the summer of 2017, leading up to the publication of the journal's sixth issue. We're now at our twelfth issue, so it turns out that was sort of a midway point. I was a museum person for a long time before I went out on my own as an editor, and one of the things I appreciated about the journal—well before the managing editor position was on my radar screen—was how it invited contributions from curators and other non-academic art historians. I remember putting that first issue together and being pretty starstruck at some of the people who appeared in the table of contents. Right after that issue came out, we started working toward finalizing our publishing agreement with UMN Libraries and redesigning our website, so I was in a great position of being able to speak to how things had worked in the past and how they might work better moving forward.

ABB: Because of my sense that *Panorama* was and will continue to be an inclusive and expansive undertaking,

I was also able to aid in advancing *Panorama*’s successful grant awards from the Luce and Wyeth Foundations. In addition, when I served as chair of AHAA (before I became one of the journal’s co-executive editors), I worked with the board to align AHAA’s mission with its ability to fund priorities, namely *Panorama*, its flagship e-journal, along with the association’s biannual symposium. I requested that the AHAA treasurer conduct the first strategic evaluation of the Association’s finances. The analysis confirmed AHAA’s financial wellbeing but uncovered a need to spend more funds for better 501(c)(3) alignment. With an eye toward adequate future operating margins, I led the AHAA board to increase its support annually over the next five years to both *Panorama* and the symposium. The AHAA board’s decision signaled to both funders and members the organization’s commitment to its core activities by appropriately rewarding excellent work in the field and furthering momentum.

JF: I know that we are making an impact. In passing, an acquaintance recently offered praise for *Panorama*, noting how a friend of hers mentioned her increased use of the journal for teaching and in her research in the last three years.

BB: We publish a much more diverse range of materials now! The first issue of *Panorama* included feature essays, the Bully Pulpit, and book reviews. Exhibition reviews began to appear shortly after, and we have since added Research Notes and In the Round. One of our challenges has been to keep up with—and copy edit—so much excellent content. Open access makes our research freely available around the world; but it costs money to make that happen. We therefore need to continue working to stabilize our finances, perhaps through the creation of a system by which individuals and institutions can sponsor the journal. Maybe we should create an endowment fund?

NS: Yes—great idea Betsy! In my first year as an Executive Editor—and thanks to conversations with Betsy early on, I have been keenly aware of the journal’s precarious financial situation: we rely almost entirely on external limited-term grants. We are really lucky to have this support—I don’t mean to downplay how important such grants are to our operations (they keep us afloat!)—but we need to focus on achieving financial sustainability. We are free and open access—and we don’t charge author fees, like some open-access models. That is central to the journal’s mission. However, we carry many annual operating expenses (it costs money to produce a journal!) and are lucky to balance our budget each year. To that end, we are thrilled to launch a [sponsorship campaign](#) with the publication of issue 6.2. Our 2021 fundraising goal is set at \$25,000, with an initial aim of building a \$100,000 reserve fund. We are approaching this on the PBS model: we will gladly accept donations of any amount, and sustainers who pledge \$500 or more will be acknowledged on our website. Such donations will be essential for maintaining the ongoing operations of our open-access digital journal and ensuring its financial sustainability. This will give us the freedom to envision the journal’s future—knowing that we will survive!

SB: It strikes me now that while I enjoyed the luxury of liberation from the classroom in retirement (though I was still advising a number of graduate students), planning and producing *Panorama* was and still is a *lot* of work. In my fat *Panorama* folder, I unearthed one of the documents—a draft of the AHAA e-journal proposal—in which we broke down all the roles for all the editorial and managerial jobs. Merely skimming the list of chores specified for each one was exhausting—and then to think that we had to actually do them! Reflecting back on all that work we gave ourselves prompts me to stand in awe of my co-editors, Ross Barret, Jenn Marshall, and, after Ross’s term, Betsy Boone, who were still very

much in their respective university trenches, juggling research, teaching, and service, not to mention family obligations. The fact that they accomplished so very much, when they all had so very much to do already, bears witness to the zeal and dedication they brought to the job. I feel that I only played a supporting role; my colleagues were the real stars.

ABB: Regrettably I was not able to serve out my full term as Executive Editor—due to the demands of my new role as chief curator at the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art—and I want to express my immense gratitude to Jacqueline Francis for generously stepping forward. During my tenure, I loved promoting the journal, advancing contributions, and reviewing and editing the submissions.

BB: Yes—becoming familiar with the scholarly interest of the next generation is absolutely the best! I especially enjoyed shepherding the work of new scholars into publication. For some, this was their first publication experience, and I tried really hard to make it a good one. I also enjoyed working closely with the many other people who contribute to the journal. Jenn Marshall and Sarah Burns were my mentors; I worked especially closely with John Bowles; and I had the privilege of mentoring Naomi Slipp as she moved in to take my place. And then there’s our managing editor, Jessica Routhier . . . we were in contact almost every day! It’s now my honor to call these people my friends.

LL: Absolutely! It was tremendously exciting to be able to share the reins at this moment, and to work with Betsy Boone and John Bowles—two scholars whose work I greatly admire—and also Jessica Routhier and the entire editorial board. I learned from all of them!

JM: I too am very proud; not of myself, but of the huge roster of established and emerging scholars, across many fields, who have made *Panorama* live up to the breadth of its name. I am also feeling old and wise upon this chance to reflect on the way-back-when. Doing so makes me think that we learned some lessons in the early days that are going to be instructive to how all of us approach the work of broadening horizons now. We’re now in another moment of radical diversification in the field: throwing out a lot of what we thought were the “natural” questions, politics, territories, or case studies of American art history. In some ways, broad-minded capaciousness is in the DNA of *Panorama*, making it well-equipped to face this moment. What’s astonishing to me is just how fully it has honored that mission already in its five years.

ABB: Bruce Robertson addressed the then-elephant-in-the-room question: [“Is American Art History Conservative?” in an important 2016 Bully Pulpit](#). Part of [his response](#) was [this](#):

The dominant art form in American culture is American politics. One’s work should always be considered in light of the reasons for doing it, and the most important reason is that it should make a difference in the leading questions of our day: the issues dominating any presidential campaign provide a handy summary.

That our work as art historians, as curators, as professors can have meaningful agency and relevance—and should—feels like a point of view that *Panorama* has internalized in critical ways. The journal has grown to give greater voice and space for analysis of and dialogue about the most pressing issues of our time and therefore of our field.

BB: My favorite [Bully Pulpit is on Ecocriticism \(issue 5.1\)](#), probably because it ties in with my interest in sustainability. I had made a point of going to Princeton in order to catch the *Nature’s Nation: American Art and Environment* exhibition before it closed there and was really pleased that co-curator Karl Kusserow was able to make time during my visit to meet me in the galleries and chat about the show. It had occurred to me that this topic would be perfect—and so timely—for the Bully Pulpit, and I was so happy when Karl agreed!

ABB: David Sperber’s “[Mikva Dreams: Judaism, Feminism, and Maintenance in the Art of Mierle Laderman Ukeles](#)” prompted my favorite “Panorama moment” when in August 2019, Ukeles came to Crystal Bridges to give an artist’s talk in conjunction with programming for the *Nature’s Nation*, which I had coordinated with Karen Kramer while at the Peabody Essex Museum in collaboration with the co-curators Karl Kusserow and Alan Braddock.² The exhibition included Ukeles’s landmark work *Touch Sanitation Performance* (1979–84). And the ecocritical impetus for the exhibition had inspired Karl’s own Bully Pulpit for *Panorama* on [Ecocriticism](#). Ukeles is still the first and only official artist-in-residence of the New York City Department of Sanitation, a position she has held since 1977, through which she has been instrumental to the transformation of Freshkills Landfill into a park. Today, at eighty-one, she is at work for Freshkills on an overlook and two earthworks she is calling [Landing](#). In this sustained moment of crisis, when we don’t know where or how we will land, I look to the transformative power of artists like Ukeles, whose work I had never been taught and had never encountered before *Nature’s Nation*, David Sperber, and *Panorama*.

LL: Unique features like the Bully Pulpit and In the Round sections brought the immediacy of scholarly dialogue and debate to readers, while critically engaging with issues of pressing concern. The equal weight given to exhibition and book reviews also distinguishes the journal and signals *Panorama*’s commitment to both academic and museum-based scholarship. Finally, *Panorama*’s dedication to fostering new voices in the field was already evident in the range of young and established authors represented in its feature articles.

BB: I especially love the two feature essays in issue 4.2 (fall 2018). Both were written by soon-to-be or recent PhDs, and both were written by scholars who have a beautiful way with words. [Nicole Williams](#) introduced us to the history of gossip and scandal in the press by taking us deep inside a genre painting by Edward Lamson Henry, while Tara Kohn brought out the complexities of race and gender in early-twentieth century photographs by Alfred Stieglitz and Anne Brigman at 291. Seeing how powerful the close examination of individual works can (still) be was really inspiring. The National Portrait Gallery apparently concurred, as the jury for the inaugural Director’s Essay Prize awarded Honorable Mention to Tara’s essay, “[Elevated: Along the Fringes of 291 Fifth Avenue](#).”

JSR: Tara Kohn’s essay is one of my favorites as well. I usually defer reading things until right before publication, so that I can be a last, fresh set of eyes on each piece—and I remember proofreading that article and being struck by how special it was. I think as art historians a lot of times we are guilty of being overly clinical or dispassionate in our writing, maybe because there is a sense that it will make our scholarship seem more serious or legitimate. So it’s a great moment when strong scholarship and elegant writing come together—particularly in this article that was at least partly *about* writing about art. All of us at *Panorama* were really proud of publishing that piece. Another favorite article, or rather collection of articles, was Adrienne Childs and Jackie Francis’s guest-edited suite entitled “[Riff: African American Artists and the European Canon](#).” That just really stressed for me what a valuable thing *Panorama* does by offering a venue for contributions that are not

necessarily the traditional 10,000-word scholarly article. It seems to me that in doing so we remove some barriers to publication and make space for scholars and subjects that are overdue for recognition.

JM: While working on the journal, we learned some labor lessons that remained hard to put in play. Editorships at other academic journals are often full-time, salaried positions; or at least they are compensated in other ways. Indeed, *Panorama* has long survived thanks to the institutional placement of its editorial staff members: matching funds from departments, grants from deans’ offices, course releases for staff members, serendipitous coffee dates with well-placed librarians. And, of course, for those of us in the tenure stream, service to *Panorama* is compensated in the roundabout way of merit pay increases and promotions. As long as academic labor is paid indirectly or not paid at all (except by the vague promise of meritocratic beneficence), it will remain the privilege of those in the R1 tenure stream, overburdening or leaving out our colleagues in museums and smaller colleges, and those in adjunct, freelance, or “independent” positions.

NS: Indeed. This is a really important point, Jenn. Having started at *Panorama* as a section editor in Book Reviews while still a graduate student—I do think it is important to acknowledge the significant volunteer labor that our Section Editors put into content production for their individual sections. This would include not only our roster of nine current section editors—three each in Research Notes, Book Reviews, and Exhibition Reviews—but also the many, many colleagues who have contributed to the journal in these positions from its inception. In many ways, these Editors support the broad community impact of the journal, especially through book reviews and exhibition reviews. Through their service, *Panorama* is able to shine a light on the current, important work of Americanists in museums and academia at the junior and senior level, and to support those who are tied to institutions and non-affiliated.

JSR: This is really important to me, too, particularly since as a freelancer and an art historian without a doctorate I occupy the kind of in-between space that Jenn and Naomi are talking about. I love that *Panorama* has provided a publication forum for people whose professional backgrounds are analogous to mine; this has in fact encouraged me to pursue my own publication projects. I am grateful, too, that *Panorama* recognizes the value of professional editing expertise, and that it has made it a priority to compensate me and the journal’s copy editor at competitive rates. It has been very valuable to me to identify myself professionally with the journal; I know for a fact that it has opened some doors.

BB: There are also areas of research that are still underrepresented in our field. We have made some progress in the areas of African American and Native American art, but more needs to be done to support research on art by our Spanish-speaking, Hispanic, and Latinx populations. I was delighted to see a recent call for papers on Asian American art, another area that has not received as much attention as it merits.

JM: Yes! However, when seeking to amplify diverse perspectives, especially as these might represent new paths broken by emerging scholars, it is also crucial to acknowledge the precarity of their labor and professional status—and to do everything in our power to absorb and diffuse that risk. The so-called “old guard” can really rise to the occasion of guardianship in this case, lending their prestige as a way to make a stage for new voices. Then, unglamorous as it is, the behind-the-scenes work of platform building is equally crucial. While we might want the discipline to change and evolve away from everything

that’s wrong with academia, it’s unethical to ignore the current hierarchical scaffoldings when inviting the most precarious among us to lead that transformation. Someone needs to keep an eye on the interests of hiring committees, tenure referees . . . even the highly selective processes of memory and preservation.

ABB: In light of this, I am very proud of the journal’s momentum—and the strength of the partnership between AHAA and *Panorama*. Its support for the field is unwavering, even in the face of a global pandemic. The accessibility of the journal, from stable DOIs to pdf versions of the articles, and its archival preservation through a partnership secured with the University of Minnesota libraries, underscores the strong digital foundations on which the journal can continue to build—and is actively constructing through its new digital initiatives and the addition of a digital art history editor to its editorial team.

BB: It is wonderful that the current editors are working to extend the reach of technology with “Toward a More Inclusive Digital Art History,” thanks to the Terra Foundation for American Art. But we still have work to do!

NS: Yes! This was the brainchild of John Bowles, who conceived of the project on three fronts. First, as a way to encourage Americanists—especially those who may have limited resources or institutional support—to engage with emerging digital art history (DAH) methods that are low-cost and accessible. This is being done through a series of CFPs, closed workshops, and public DAH lectures. In this way, *Panorama* is bringing DAH tools and peer review to these scholars and to our community. We are making an investment in the field without the direct expectation of publication; instead, the journal is using our position to help seed new research and invest in these research projects and individuals. Second, the project aims to promote innovative and dynamic scholarship on underrepresented groups and areas, focusing on contributions by artists and constituencies that have historically been marginalized and/or under-researched. And third, this initiative cultivates a series of original DAH articles that will be published—along with data sets and project summaries—in *Panorama* starting in 2021. We are really lucky to have Diana Greenwald, currently Assistant Curator of the Collection at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, as our inaugural DAH Editor, and Johnathan Hardy, a PhD Candidate at UMN, as our Project Manager. The two of them have been hard at work guiding potential authors, advising workshop participants, and planning our first workshop. It is very exciting—but as Betsy also points out, we can’t rest on our laurels!

ABB: Indeed! As the current executive editors have stated so powerfully in the [recent Editors’ Welcome](#), “what remains to be seen is what we, as Americanists, continue to teach, research, write, curate, and archive.” I believe *Panorama* is going to influence—in powerful and positive ways—the choices Americanists must make.

JM: If diversity and capaciousness have long been *Panorama*’s goal, this has always been furthered by its continual search for new ways to honor and protect the considerable human and intellectual resources gathered under its masthead. As the field continues to diversify—in questions, politics, territories, or case studies—it will be crucial to acknowledge, too, the diversity of labor forms and precarities that increasingly subtend scholarship in the humanities. How to court, and then amplify and protect, that diversity may yet be work that *Panorama* is well positioned to model for us all.

BB: It will also depend on our contributors and readers. Our organization is committed to the democratic process, so what the journal becomes is entirely up to us. This is the beauty of *Panorama*!

Notes

¹ The Bully Pulpit section was renamed Colloquium for issue 6.2 (Fall 2020) of the journal.

² *Nature's Nation* opened at the Princeton University Museum of Art and then traveled to the Peabody Essex Museum (Salem, MA) and the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art (Bentonville, AK).