COMING OUT OF PANDEMIC lockdown, 2022 was a year of growth and development for the UCLA/Getty Conservation Program. Our third year MA students returned from a year in absentia to in-person classes and internship opportunities, and our PhD students were finally able to pursue their long-delayed field research. Faculty and staff were happy to be back on campus and in our laboratories in the Getty Villa, teaching and working with our students.

We are not only back, we are growing! I am pleased to announce new students, new hires, and exciting new research initiatives. We welcome two new faculty members: Thiago Sevilhano Pugliéri as assistant professor of art history and cultural heritage conservation, and Anya Dani as director of community engagement and inclusive practice as well as a lecturer in cultural heritage conservation.

Pugliéri comes to our program from the Department of Museology, Conservation, and Restoration at the Federal University of Pelotas in Brazil. He holds a PhD in physical chemistry from the University of São Paulo. Trained as a chemist, he has focused his research on the characterization of art and cultural materials. He has copublished a range of studies based on his research on pigments, ceramics, metal objects, and paintings, using a wide range of analytical tools. Most recently, at the Getty Conservation Institute, he investigated the potential of a relatively new analytical technique, shell-isolated nanoparticle-enhanced Raman spectroscopy, to detect and characterize chemical components leaching out of plastic objects. Pugliéri was professionally active in Brazil, serving as vice president of the Brazilian Association of Heritage Science and Technology. He also serves on the international advisory committee of a project titled An International Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science, coordinated by the Netherlands Institute for Conservation, Art, and Science. In 2019–2020 he was a visiting researcher at the Getty Conservation Institute. One of the most compelling aspects of his work in Brazil has been community engagement. He regularly worked with local high school teachers to introduce research methods that connect chemistry and the humanities to students in the hope of attracting them to study the intersection of art and science.

As a lecturer and as director of community engagement and inclusive practice, Anya Dani focuses on the preservation of African American cultural heritage and helping the program reach underserved communities. She is committed to a people-centered approach that not only diversifies the types of cultural items we conserve but also empowers communities and normalizes community engagement. In her first few months at UCLA, she investigated the needs of local Black communities, working to understand existing initiatives, meeting with potential collaborators, and developing plans for future projects. Dani is an objects conservator with a focus on anti-racism and social justice. She joins UCLA from Stanford University. She is a cofounder of the Black Art Conservators group, a member of the American Institute for Conservation’s Equity and Inclusion Committee, and a lecturer at San Francisco State University.

Five new MA students and two new PhD students arrived in September. The MA students, Taylor Brehm, Cheyenne Caraway, Rachel Moore, Kathryn Peneyra, and Makayla Rawlins, were introduced in the 2021 issue of Backdirt. Saiful Bakhri and Liu Chongwen joined our PhD program.

Our third-year MA students spent their final two quarters back in our laboratories at the Getty Villa, taking in-person courses after a year in absentia due to the pandemic. We all rejoiced at being together again. These students are now spread around the world on internships. Lauren Conway is doing hers at Kaman Kulebagi in Turkey, the Weltmuseum in Vienna, and the Arizona State Museum. Tamara Dissi is spending a full year at the National Museum of Asian Art (the Freer/Sackler Museum). Jennifer McGough is working.

1. Professor of art history and the conservation of material culture, and the Lore and Gerald Canard Chair of the UCLA/Getty Interdepartmental Program in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage.
in the Ancient Agora in Athens, the Angkor National Museum in Cambodia, and the Museum at the University of Pennsylvania. Isabel Schneider’s internships include work at the American Excavation Samothrace in Greece, the Arizona State Museum, and the Brooklyn Museum. Céline Wachsmuth is doing her internships at the Study Center for East Crete of the Institute for Aegean Prehistory, the Royal Museum for Central Africa in Brussels, and the Denver Art Museum.

Our first cohort of doctoral students are all making progress with their research. Maupi Mukhopadhyay continued her noninvasive technical data collection from wall paintings of Kerala, India, from five temples with varied histories, stakeholders, and physical conditions. This year she presented preliminary data to authorities in Kerala to request permission for further testing. She hopes to supplement her existing data with another field season of point analysis and minimally invasive sampling to better understand the materials and techniques of the murals and to inform their future conservation.

Elizabeth Salmon’s doctoral research focuses on traditional preservation methods developed in India, particularly the use of local plants for pest management. This fall she began fieldwork in India to document the role of traditional methods of care in museum collections and to learn more about pending questions related to the reliable use of botanicals for museum pest management. This research will be followed by laboratory evaluation using entomological and conservation methods.

Chrisde Bier was able to begin his delayed fieldwork in Mexico. He traveled to Tepic, Nayarit, and Guadalajara, Jalisco, to interview scholars and regional museum staff and begin documenting and analyzing ceramic funerary vessels from the Late Formative/Preclassic period. He plans to return in 2023 to conduct additional non invasive analysis, comparing data to vessels from museums in Southern California, including the Fowler Museum, where he serves as head of conservation.

Important work was also undertaken by our faculty. This past year Ioanna Kakoulli launched a new undergraduate course titled Materials Structure and Technology in Archaeology and Architecture. It introduces science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics to students across campus. Offered through the Department of Materials Science and Engineering (MSE), the course combines lectures, discussions, laboratory work, and writing. It not only develops skills and critical thinking but also brings together students from different backgrounds and fosters a sense of community for a more inclusive classroom. Through her position as diversity officer of MSE, Kakoulli has recently created a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee consisting of voting members from faculty, staff, and student bodies. The committee is tasked to make recommendations to the department to build an inclusive community through improvements in teaching, research, mentorship, professional development, activities, and events.

Kakoulli’s research group consists of 12 members: six PhD students (three from MSE and three from the Conservation Program), four MA students (three from MSE and one from the Conservation Program), and two undergraduate students from MSE. Research projects developed in her group focus on reconstructing ancient technology to draw inferences on materials selection and manufacturing processes and the design of novel materials inspired by the properties of ancient materials. Current projects range from the study of ancient pigments and painting technologies from the eastern Mediterranean to India to the development of sustainable porous building materials and anti-fouling coatings for cultural and natural heritage preservation as well as novel radiative cooling paints. Kakoulli continues to serve as a member of faculty advisory committees of the Cotsen Institute, the Conservation Program, and the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Center for the Study of Hellenic Culture and on the board of trustees of the Cyprus American Archaeological Institute. She also serves as an expert witness for the Department of Homeland Security on issues pertaining to looted antiquities and as a scientific consultant for UNESCO.

Ellen Pearlstein’s research, teaching, and service continue to reinforce each other in a push to promote more socially inclusive conservation. As a result of her 2022 fellowship at the American Academy in Rome, she has taken on the work of exploring barriers to collaborative conservation internationally, focusing on how ethnological museums in Vatican City and Italy engage with the Native American communities whose collections they hold. She is further examining socio-economic, political, and legal factors informing the development of museum attitudes toward collaboration and the implications for conservation education. Surveys and site visits in German, French, and Austrian museums have expanded her research on the European continent. This work builds upon her Conservation and Stewardship of Indigenous Collections: Changes and Transformations in the Readings in Conservation series of the Getty Conservation Institute, which is currently completing peer review. Pearlstein has been invited to return to the American Academy in late 2022 and to the Musée du Quai Branly–Jacques
Chirac in Paris in 2023 to continue her research and writing. She continues to collaborate with the Getty Conservation Institute on a project to develop tunable LEDs to recolor faded, and therefore unexhibitable, featherwork, including Indigenous regalia, in a way that preserves original and intrinsic properties. Additionally, her grant-funded research this year includes examining how best to embed sustainability into conservation graduate education and continuing to develop methods for improving skills and experiences for collaborative and inclusive conservation practices.

Pearlstein continues to direct the Mellon Opportunity for Diversity in Conservation, a pipeline program for introducing underrepresented students to the field of cultural heritage conservation. Out of almost 70 participants to date, 28 have been awarded fully funded internships; five are engaged in graduate conservation studies, with three more preparing applications; three have been awarded Getty Foundation Post-Baccalaureate Conservation Internships; two are doing graduate studies in art history (one is a PhD student at UCLA); and three are engaged in collections and archival work.

I am editing a book titled *Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Contemporary Art*. This too will be part of the Readings in Conservation Series of the Getty Conservation Institute. In addition, I am working on two articles and a book chapter related to the Artist Archives Initiative, which was launched at New York University prior to my arrival at UCLA. I was invited to present three public lectures this year, allowing me to bring together my current thinking and future writing, about the future of cultural heritage conservation. The first, at Bern University of Applied Sciences, was titled “Sustainability, Collaboration, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Conservation Education.” The second, the annual Patricia McCarron McGinn Lecture in the Art History Department at UCLA, was titled “Why Conserve Cultural Heritage? Reframing a Discipline.” The third, presented in conjunction with a workshop on art and nature conservation at the Naturalis Biodiversity Center in Leiden, the Netherlands, was titled “Art Conservation as Change Agent: Towards a Sustainable Future.” I am now working on an article with my colleagues in the Netherlands on what cultural heritage conservators can learn from nature conservation. In addition, I serve on a number of boards and committees, including the steering committee for Held in Trust, together with Ellen Pearlstein. This initiative is funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, through the Foundation for the American Institute for Conservation, to evaluate the state of preservation and conservation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage in the United States. Findings from the research will influence the direction of future conservation funding from the federal government.

Pearlstein and I served as principal investigators in the first phase of the Sustainability in Conservation Education Initiative, again funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. We are working with Justine Woebold, research associate, and William Shelley, laboratory manager, to gather information, publish an article, and make two professional presentations on the integration of sustainability in conservation education. We also serve as principal investigators on Community, Collaboration, and Cultural Heritage Conservation, a third initiative funded by the same endowment. This initiative supports three of our MA students in working with tribal museums and other underserved collections and sites. The research includes collaboration with Indigenous scholars, tribal representatives, and students. The model developed for tribal collections will be extended to African American, Latinx American, and Asian American collections.

Figure 1. Jennifer McGough works on a basket on loan from Beth Glasco and her family to the Barona Cultural Center of the Barona Band of Mission Indians. (Photograph by Jennifer McGough.)
The staff of the UCLA/Getty Conservation Program continue their work helping our students and managing the program. Student affairs officer Shahrrokh Chism works closely with the Archaeology Program and the UCLA Graduate Division to manage admissions, student finances, and course scheduling. Laboratory manager William Shelley helped oversee the complete renovation of our laboratory at the Cotsen Institute, which included new flooring, lighting, paint, and MA student workspaces. He also renovated the photography suite in our laboratory at the Getty Villa, which included installation of a new photography table, a custom-built backdrop, and other new equipment.

The Conservation Program continued two remote lecture series we launched during the 2020 lockdown, given their success in attracting large audiences. We invite leaders in allied fields in the Distinguished Speaker Series to reflect on aspects of cultural heritage conservation from their own disciplinary viewpoints. In February, Sarah Sutton, CEO of Environment and Culture Partners, gave the first lecture of the year. She discussed the caretaking of cultural heritage and its potential role in broader efforts to address climate change. In April, artist and UCLA emeritus professor of Chicana and Chicano and Central American studies Judith F. Baca spoke about the conservation of her iconic mural painting *The Great Wall of Los Angeles*. As artistic director of the Social and Public Art Resource Center, Baca worked with young people from the surrounding neighborhood on the original design and execution, and later conservation, of the mural. Our fall lecture was given in October by Roger Michel, executive director of the Institute of Digital Archaeology at the University of Oxford. He described his work creating three-dimensional machined replicas of the Parthenon marbles, arguing for their British Museum acquisition and repatriation of the originals to Greece.

In our second lecture series, Conservation Collaborations, we aim to respond to student requests for lectures on a range of conservation topics. We organized presentations on Indigenous, diaspora, and in-country participation, including cultural positioning by practitioners in conservation, understanding Euro-Asian lacquer, traditional knowledge applied to textiles, and Indigenous influences on conservation research and policy.