SAR Travels to the Brazilian Amazon

In January of this year, fifteen SAR members accompanied by President Michael F. Brown and archaeologist Anna Carpentier Roosevelt traveled to the Brazilian cities of Manaus, Santarém, and Belém to explore the history and culture of the region. A particular focus of the trip was the region’s history prior to European contact. Also on the itinerary was exposure to the everyday life of contemporary Amazonia and to the river system that shapes the region’s economy and lifeways.

The work of SAR scholars regularly bears fruit in books of national note. In March, we featured a talk by former Lamont fellow David Treuer (Ojibwe), whose book The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee (2012) landed on the New York Times best-seller list for several weeks. Weatherhead fellow Jason De León’s book Caravan of Martyrs (2015) has won five national book awards and earned him a MacArthur Foundation “genius” fellowship. David B. Edwards, an NEH fellow at SAR in 1998, was recently awarded the biennial Senior Book Prize of the American Ethnological Society for Caso de Martyrs (2017), a work that built on his earlier research among Afghan jihadists. And Kelli Jo Ford (Cherokee), our Indigenous writer in residence in 2016, won the Paris Review’s Crooked Hallelujah note. In March, we featured a talk by former SAR resident scholar Diane Stanley Vennema said that Roosevelt has established that the reports of early Spanish explorers of the Amazon—such as the Dominican missionary Gaspar de Carvajal (1500–1548), whose detailed descriptions of complex and densely populated communities on the shores of the Amazon River were long dismissed as exaggerations—were in fact credible. Her work has also proven that early Amazonian peoples modified their landscapes in ways that enabled agricultural productivity capable of supporting large, socially stratified societies.

One highlight of the trip was a visit to the Monte Alegre Paleoindian site, of particular interest due to the fact that the work of Roosevelt and her colleagues dates the pictographs of Monte Alegre’s Caverna da Pedra Pintada to at least 10,000 BP (before present), which places them among the earliest dated rock art in the New World. There is also intriguing evidence that some of the images had a calendrical function correlating with solar cycles. Braving the tropical heat, the SAR group scrambled up several steep mountain passes to see the pictographs, which represent owls, assorted mammals, comets, handprints, and human figures.

The itinerary also included visits to colorful public markets, where the travelers saw an unexpected variety of Amazonian fish, fruits, and herbal remedies offered for sale. Excursions on the region’s major rivers—the Rio Negro, Solimões, and Tapajós, which merge to become the Amazon proper—introduced the group to the remarkable scale of the world’s largest river system. The trip concluded with a visit to the botanical Museum, where their curator of ethnology, Dr. Glenn Shepard, brought the group up to date on the status of Brazil’s Indigenous peoples and their efforts to protect their lands from encroachment by settlers.

In a post on SAR’s blog after the trip, board member Diane Stanley Vennema said that Roosevelt had received a valuable introduction to the “art and history of Native Americans, the ecology of a region with an unrivaled diversity of plant and animal species, and the unique culture of modern Brazilians still living on the shores of the world’s longest river.”

This is just the latest crop of prize-winning works that SAR has helped to foster over the decades. Whenever possible, we try to make the insights of these talented scholars and writers available to the public in our colloquia, classes, salon discussions, and lectures.

I hope you’ll join us at El Delirio in the coming months as we continue this tradition of supporting the best in creative thought.
Teri Greeves (Kiowa/Comanche) crawled behind cases of beaded moccasins as a child in the trading post run by her mother on Wyoming’s Wind River Reservation. Fascinated by the colors and materials, Greeves began beading before she was eight. Now the award-winning artist is known for her distinctive work that blends contemporary narratives with traditional methods.

Greeves was one of several artists who participated in April of Indian Arts Research Center (IARC) speaker series; each spring brings SAR members and the public together to discuss innovations in Native American arts and creativity and included:

- Teri Greeves (2003 Dobkin Native artist fellow) and jeweler Keri Ataumbi (Kiowa-Proud, Sisters in Action Power Couple) with multimedia artist Carinna Hakens and Ginger Awaposhp Dunnill.
- Kiowa-Proud, Sisters in Action with beadwork artist Teri Greeves (2003 Dobkin Native artist fellow) and jeweler Ken Ananumbi

View the series on SAR’s YouTube channel.

As IARC acting director Elisia Poon notes, “Traditions evolve out of an unrepealable spirit of innovation. Artists pull the past into the present and drive the present into the future.” This year’s discussions highlighted SAR’s commitment to furthering Native American arts and creativity and included

Creating New Futures from the Past with metalsmith Nanibaa Beck (2012 Dubin Native artist fellow) and potter Jared Tso-

Power Couple with multimedia artists Carinna Hakens and Ginger Awaposhp Dunnill.

Kiowa-Proud, Sisters in Action with beadwork artist Teri Greeves (2003 Dobkin Native artist fellow) and jeweler Ken Ananumbi.


View the series on SAR’s YouTube channel.

Looking Back, Looking Forward: A Conversation with SAR’s Librarian and VP of Finance and Administration

After more than four decades between them serving the SAR community, Laura Holt, librarian at the Catherine McElvain Library, and Sharon Tison, vice president of finance and administration, are retiring. Each has been integral to the institution, although much of their work has been done behind the scenes.

Surprising, Elizabeth White, John Gaw Meem, and Agnes Vallejos left extensive materials, but lesser-known individuals are represented as well. Holt says, “We have the White sisters’ correspondence with Francis Wilson,” a prominent Santa Fe lawyer, Native American rights advocate, and partner in the White sisters’ De Vargas Development Company. “His name isn’t at the top of the list of figures you might think of as part of the Santa Fe scene in the early twentieth century, but he was there,” and influencing everything, including how much it would take to buy a piece of property or take a windmill down.” The White sisters did not like windmills,” Holt adds.

Holt’s support of Scholar Programs has been integral to its ongoing success. She notes, “The thing that all the scholars have in common when they come to write, regardless of their subject area, is their developed focus. So we need a good strong collection that supports cutting-edge and theoretical work in their particular discipline.” When scholars go on to publish, she says, “Knowing that we’ve been a part of that and have supported that work is really to develop the collection, to organize it . . . and then to make it available. I think it is the best job in the world.”

Sharon Tison started at SAR in 1994 and since then has supported the staff, scholars, artists, and community by overseeing the funds that come in, directing them throughout the organization, and watching their sources expand and evolve. According to Tison, “Today, grantors want metrics. This can be difficult because what we do is so hard to measure. Sometimes it is twenty years before whatever a scholar was studying here becomes influential in the field. But I do think the funding curve is changing; there are foundations and grantors that see how you have to experiment to see if something works, and they are willing to gamble on that.”

Tison’s tracking of the institution’s complex financials has given her a unique view of the individuals and organizations that make SAR function. “One of the biggest changes has been how we think of our Indian Arts Research Center collection. We are now thinking about what the collection means and what our responsibility is to the communities it represents. That is exciting to see.” She credits the Annie Ray Foundation for supporting this change. “The foundation changed many things about what we do. Having that support, not just financial support, has been so important.”

After working for six SAR presidents and witnessing changes in the staff, board, and world of funding, Tison believes the future is bright for SAR. In 2012 she was instrumental in the purchase of an adjoining undeveloped property that expanded SAR’s footprint from eight acres to fifteen. “I hope SAR goes on to make creative use of the new property. I was really involved in the purchase; I believe it was a good move for SAR . . . I would like to think that if I’m around twenty years from now, I could come here and see . . . this old campus in a new way.”
The Art of the Handmade: Reimagining the World of Chilkat Weaving

Meghann O’Brien, this year’s Eric and Barbara Dobkin Native Artist fellow at SAR’s Indian Arts Research Center (IARC), grew up near Alert Bay on the northwest coast of Vancouver Island and is of Haida, Kwakwaka’wakw, and Irish descent.

Making textiles and basketry has its challenges, says O’Brien. These art forms, she notes, are often dismissed as “women’s work” by the Western art world. Weaving, as an artistic medium, struggles for recognition and is not seen by many as equal to male-dominated traditions of totem-pole and mask carving.

O’Brien hopes that her IARC project will “make quantum leaps toward an appropriately reworked form, so that those born outside these distinctive cultures can connect with the transformative power carried in weaving.”

O’Brien celebrates the art of the handmade and aims to reconcile the divide between the Western art world and Native traditions that honor work in textiles.

While in residence at the IARC, O’Brien fashioned an intricate necklace with a pendant depicting Dogfish Mother of the Haida. The dogfish, a shark native to Canada’s Haida Gwaii (Hecate Strait), is also known within Haida culture as a form taken by a female ancestor. O’Brien spun natural materials like bark into a “cotweb-weight” wool and worked the material into the pendant. O’Brien likes the appearance of a weaver’s “balanced state of mind” to the support provided by the IARC. She sees within the IARC collections a place where history can be “translated into a contemporary context.” O’Brien hopes that her IARC project will “make quantum leaps toward an appropriately reworked form, so that those born outside these distinctive cultures can connect with the transformative power carried in weaving.” And, she adds, “I would love to see Chilkat weaving as a new status symbol in Western culture.”

Minds in the Net // continued from page 1

internal, personal activity. Carr uses this example and others to illustrate how individuals and communities seek and utilize knowledge over time. The last several decades, he suggests, have ushered in a new phase of this technological evolution. “The Internet is almost precisely the opposite of the book; it has the opposite effect as an intellectual technology. If the great thing about the book is that it shields you from distraction … the Internet, by contrast, inundates us with stimulation, inundates us with distractions.”

Carr argues that these constant distractions and calls for our attention are short-circuiting a brain function that transforms short-term working memory into long-term memory, leading to impaired creative and critical thinking. And when the smartphone or other technology is a mailbox, photo album, shopping mall, television, radio, newspaper; and “a party where everyone we know is attending and talking about things all the time,” our desire to engage with it is almost irresistible. “We need to understand the world around them.”

For event registration visit sarweb.org, or contact archuleta@sarsf.org / 505-954-7231

Artists Talk, Reception, and Open Studio with Dobkin Native Artist Fellow Meghann O’Brien

Date: May 16, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Location: Eric S. Dobkin Boardroom, SAR
Cost: Free

Anne Bay Intern Presentations with Samantha Tracy and Felicia Garcia

Date: May 22, Noon – 1:00 p.m.
Location: Eric S. Dobkin Boardroom, SAR
Cost: Free

Creative Thought Forum Annual President's Lecture / Minds in the Net: The Journey from Page to Screen with Author Nicholas Carr

Date: May 23, 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Location: James A. Little Theater
Cost: $10 SAR members; $20 not-yet-members

Speaker Salon with Author Nicholas Carr

Date: May 24, 10:00 a.m. – Noon
Location: Eric S. Dobkin Boardroom, SAR
Cost: SAR members: Free; space limited

President’s Circle Field Trip / Hearts of Our People, Native Arts of Minnesota

May 30 – June 2
Location: Minneapolis
Cost: $2,150 per person double accommodation, $2,445 single accommodation

Summer Salon / Aging in Place: Challenges and Prospects

Date: June 6, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. (Lunch provided)
Location: Eric S. Dobkin Boardroom, SAR
Cost: SAR members: Free; space limited; priority registration given to Chaco members and above

Special Event // “The Hounds of El Delirio,” Celebrating 80 Years of the Santa Fe Animal Shelter (SFAS) at SAR

Date: June 14, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Private reception for SFAS donors, SAR Board and Legacy members

Date: June 15, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Open house and self-guided walking tours
2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. “The Hounds of El Delirio and Dogs for Defense: Recruiting Pets during WWII” with Nancy Owen Lewis

Location: SAR Campus
Cost: Reception: By invitation
Open House: Free / Lecture: $20

SAR Upcoming Events

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Artist Talk, Reception, and Open Studio with Dobkin Native Artist Fellow Meghann O’Brien

Date: May 16, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Eric S. Dobkin Boardroom, SAR

Saints of Migration

William Calvo-Quirós, 2018–2019 Mellon Fellow

What can a bandito/saint among narcotraffickers (Jesús Malverde) or a personalization of death associated with drugs and human trafficking who is popular among LGBTQ immigrants (La Santa Muerte) tell us about the connections between faith, migration, the Catholic Church, and contemporary politics?

Dr. Calvo-Quirós, assistant professor, Departments of American Culture and Latinx Studies, University of Michigan, suggests that the emergence and evolution of these two folk saints, along with three others, can address these questions and illustrate the struggles of Latino communities over the last one hundred years. “Issues of faith are not about questions and illustrate the struggles of Latino communities over the last one hundred years,” he notes, “but really about what motivates a person to move and to understand the world around them.”

During his time at SAR Calvo-Quirós has further developed his Saints of Migration project, which, he says, “investigates the
In the summer of 2016, Kelli Jo Ford (Cherokee) arrived in Santa Fe with a three-year-old daughter and a husband in tow. The family settled into the King Residence on SAR’s historic campus, and Ford began work as the summer’s Indigenous writer in residence. Over the three-month fellowship, Ford crafted and revised a series of short stories that became Crooked Hallelujah. “If you are a writer and a parent,” Ford says, “it can be a real challenge to find the time and space to write. Having the office, the library, and the other resources, I felt like we had everything we needed and that our time was respected and honored. I felt like the space and time were sacred.”

The first person in her family to graduate from college, Ford sees the support provided by the women in her family as crucial to her personal success and influential in her current writing: “As a girl in a family of matriarchs, I spent a lot of time at the feet of strong women, listening past my bedtime. As I find my own voice, I think of the stories as a kind of homage to the women who have shaped me and lifted me up. The mothers, grandmothers, factory workers, waitresses, and artists who drive my work probably border on some kind of obsession for me. . . . Perhaps it’s just that I can’t stop singing the song of my own mothers and grandmothers until I feel I’ve done the melody justice.”

This melody is now reaching the right ears. Ford’s book will be published by Grove Atlantic in 2020, and one of its stories just won the 2019 Plimpton Prize for Fiction from the Paris Review. The book also recently earned the University of Oklahoma’s 2019 Everett Family Southwest Literary Award.

From 2011 to 2018, SAR’s Indigenous writer in residence program was funded by Lannan Foundation. In addition to Ford, the fellowship supported seven other emerging Native American writers. When asked about the importance of supporting Native artists and authors, Ford adds, “I think it’s an important time. In some ways, the past few years might have been viewed as a vacuum for Native writing. But there are, and have been, so many great Native writers who are worthy of more attention—writers like Susan Power, Ernestine Sarrkalaxt’ Hayes, and David Treuer. And there are so many up-and-coming writers doing amazing work, like Tommy Orange, Brandon Hobson, Enrika T. Wurth, and Casandra Lopez. Who knows how many gifted writers there are out there who just haven’t had the right opportunity or access to something like a writer’s fellowship? That role of cultivating new Native voices is so valuable. I wouldn’t have been able to get the work finished without the time at SAR.”

As her work finished without the time at SAR, Ford grew up near the Red River, a natural barrier that separates Oklahoma from Texas and the region central to Crooked Hallelujah. Set during the oil bust of the 1980s, it follows Justine and her daughter, Reney, as they move from eastern Oklahoma to Texas.

**Contributors:** Lindsay Archuleta, Michael F. Brown, Meredith Davidson, Jennifer Day, Laura Hall, Elvia Pon, Sarah Saltz, Maria Sprig, Laura Sullivan, Shaman Tison. PHOTOS: page 1, from left to right, Garret P. Weekland; Brazil photos courtesy of Michael F. Brown, Rvaboq; page 2, top left, Addision Daisy; page 2, top, Pahoche, bottom left & right, Garret P. Weekland; page 3, top left, Garret P. Weekland, top right, David Kajpe, courtesy of Douglas Reynolds Gallery; for right, Scott Keneally, bottom left, courtesy of William Calvo-Quirós; page 4, top left, Garret P. Weekland, top right, courtesy of Kelli Jo Ford; book covers provided by respective publishers.

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### New from SAR Press

The newest Advanced Seminar titles from SAR Press may not appear to have much in common, but Negotiating Structural Vulnerability in Cancer Control (Armim, Burke, and Eicheleberger) and Governing Gifts (James) both use cross-cultural case studies to delve into networks made up of family members, neighbors, churchgoers, caregivers, and bureaucrats. Negotiating Structural Vulnerability in Cancer Control asks what vulnerable people’s access to cancer care tells us about social inequalities and anthropologists’ ability to address these inequalities. Governing Gifts describes how faith, charity, and security interact to shape flows of money and people around the world. Each volume attends to the details of lived experiences and the cumulative effects of these experiences on us within an evolving world.

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