

Winterthur Program in American Material Culture

Class of 2025



Steven Baltas
(he/him)

Raised on the Hudson River, **Steven Baltas**'s childhood included encounters with the region's architecture, landscapes, and ruins. As a double major at SUNY New Paltz studying art history and English, he discovered the profession of architectural historian and offered research services as an undergraduate. Projects ranged from a country house-turned-visitors center to a Gothic Revival stable in Newburgh, New York. For senior fieldwork, he created a 106-entry survey of the city's historic ironwork. His devotion to examining Victorian life led to internships with the Calvert Vaux Preservation Alliance and Newburgh Community Photo Project, where he documented a 19th century Black neighborhood through its built environment and funerary monuments. While helping The Fullerton in Newburgh, he won a Barnabas McHenry Award from the Open Space Institute to create walking tours of four streets, later developed digitally on Urban Archive, a public history platform. He served from 2021–2023 as Vice President of the Newburgh Historical Society, assisting in management and interpretation of the society's 1830s house museum and library. With access to Winterthur's collection, Steven hopes to broaden his comprehension of design and further develop his understanding of American identities through the study of materials and use.

Lauren Bradshaw earned her BA in studio art at the University of North Georgia in 2019 and her MFA in ceramics at Clemson University in 2021. During graduate school, her gravitation towards materiality and process led her thesis research to become embedded within the context of craft theory, with a specific interest in the relationship between craft objects and the body. She received grants to complete thesis research at the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, and was awarded scholarships to attend workshops at the Peters Valley School of Craft, the Penland School of Craft, and the Pocosin Arts School of Fine Craft. She maintains an active studio practice and exhibition record spanning across the Southeast, California, and New York. Since graduating from Clemson University, she has taught art appreciation and studio arts courses at multiple colleges and universities in the Southeast and co-founded an artist collective with her MFA program cohort. At Winterthur, she plans to deepen her understanding of the historical contexts surrounding the materials and labor of craft-based objects and build skills to inform her studio and curatorial practices.



Lauren Bradshaw
(she/her)



Jamie Clifford
(he/him)

Jamie Clifford grew up in Maryland, where he took advantage of his proximity to the Smithsonian museums in nearby Washington, D.C. His childhood visits to the Museum of Natural History and his experiences working as a certified nursing assistant brought him to Drexel University, where he planned to study biology. Before long, however, he discovered that his interests better aligned with the history of science and technology. His undergraduate thesis examined the role of travel narratives in constructing the Canadian Arctic in the nineteenth-century American imagination. He graduated from Drexel in 2022 with degrees in history and art history. An internship at the Fox Historic Costume Collection in Philadelphia taught him the value of hands-on object research and introduced him to the world of material culture. In 2022, he presented at the Undergraduate Symposium in Material Culture Studies on the unspoken cultural assumptions underlying the display of a "hybrid" object — an English table knife transformed into an Inuit snow knife — at the National Maritime Museum. At Winterthur, he hopes to continue combining the methodologies of science and technology studies and material culture studies to interpret objects with colonial histories.

Born and raised outside of Washington D.C in Great Falls, Virginia, **Katie Cynkar** grew up surrounded by museums and historic sites that fostered a love of history from a young age. As a history major and economics minor at Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee, they were drawn to the history of disability, BIPOC, and LGBTQ+ communities primarily within the United States, developing a strong conviction that society must confront the past in order to become more inclusive and better advocates for underrepresented communities today. This passion was further realized as they participated in the Rhodes Student Associates Program (RSAP) as an archaeological student researcher, of which their duties included co-teaching the Rhodes' Archaeological Field School and presenting a poster at the 2018 Conference for the Society for American Archaeology on preserved floral remains found on a site in British Columbia. Post-graduation, they worked as a lab technician in the Archaeology Lab at Colonial Williamsburg identifying, analyzing, and conserving artifacts recovered from sites like Custis Square as well as exhibiting artifacts from other sites like the First Baptist Church at various regional events. At Winterthur, Katie looks forward to further advocating for marginalized communities by studying their history and combatting archival silences.



Katie Cynkar
(she/they)



Estrella Salgado
(she/her)

Estrella Salgado's interest in free-choice learning was nurtured at the University of Michigan, where she graduated Phi Beta Kappa with a BA in history and a minor in museum studies. An essay on Roman cosmetic spoons, awarded the Jackier Prize in Archaeology, and work on an online exhibit about mental health encouraged Estrella to focus on overlooked microhistories. She received the Tappan Award for Excellence in Museum Studies after serving as a Docent Representative for the U-M Museum of Natural History, as well as the Governance Chair for the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology's Student Advisory Group. Estrella then completed an MA in the U-M School of Education, along with a graduate certificate in museum studies. Working as an art handler at the U-M Museum of Art and hearing the cannons go off during an internship at Fort Ticonderoga cemented the importance of researching, recreating, and, when possible, using historical objects. Estrella is also on the board of the Clements Library, and recently presented on Catholic symbolism in the works of Joseph Stella at the Brandywine Museum of Art. She is looking forward to expanding her knowledge of early American Catholicism and exploring Winterthur's collection of objects related to and made from animals.

Anastatia Spicer is a writer and weaver interested in approaches to material culture that center the agency of objects. She graduated from Hampshire College in 2017 with a BA from the School of Critical Social Inquiry, concentrating in radical movements of the 1960s and 70s, including a semester at Universität der Künste Berlin and Freie Universität Berlin. Anastatia has studied and taught weaving at the Penland School of Craft and the Marshfield School of Weaving. She has been an invited roundtable speaker at the Society of Arts and Crafts, Boston (2017) and has participated in residencies at the Penland School of Craft (2018), the Canterbury Shaker Village (2021), and the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (2020, 2023). Her written work in criticism and literary translation has been published by the Barnard College Journal of Art Criticism (2017), the Poetry Foundation (2020), and the Academy of American Poets (2021). Prior to Winterthur, Anastatia was an upholsterer's apprentice and managed a spinning mill in Vermont. After researching and weaving from historic drafts, her current interest is in the diffusion of handweaving technology in early America. She was born and raised in Cambridge, MA and lived for three years in Bath, England.



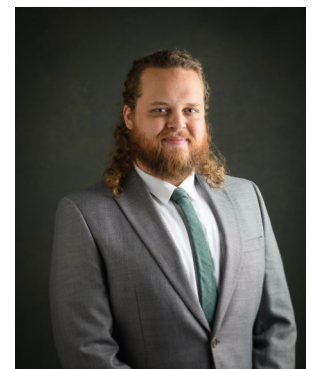
Anastatia Spicer
(she/her)



Lanah Swindle
(she/her)

Lanah Swindle grew up in Hartford, Connecticut, where her interest in the preservation of historical artifacts was cultivated by regular trips to historical sites and museums. Lanah carried that interest to Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts, where she grounded her concentration in art history in library and museum collections through a variety of internships and independent research projects. After graduating in 2019, Lanah worked as an editor in the book program at Aperture, a non-profit publisher in New York, where she shaped a diverse list of illustrated titles, spanning from children's books to anthologies with hundreds of contributors. Alongside her editorial work, Lanah found opportunities to volunteer in local archives and special collections. At Winterthur, Lanah hopes to hone her skills at object analysis and bring those methodologies into broader conversations around the interpretation and preservation of the material past.

Raised in Durham, NC, **Graham Titus** graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill with a degree in history and journalism and a minor in French language. Throughout his life, his family, including former craftspeople who worked at the Homer Laughlin China Company, collected the glass and ceramics of the Ohio River Valley and West Virginia, giving him an early appreciation for their use and production. At UNC, his undergraduate studies took him in multiple directions, including work in public information, grant writing, and a project exploring identity creation, political discourse, and racism in late 20th-century France. During an internship at the North Carolina Museum of History, he explored an interest in the study of historical craft in Appalachia and the mid-Atlantic. He continued exploring production and craft through work as a fine-dining cook, a functional potter, and a glassblower. Most recently, he worked as the Curatorial Director for an art consulting company specializing in placing contemporary art in hotels, restaurants, and corporate offices. This time spent creating and curating led to a renewed interest in the study of American glass and ceramics. At Winterthur, he plans to explore the roles of geography, race, and class in these materials, rural centers of production, and Southern food systems.



Graham Titus
(he/him)