The Fung House was also full on a daily basis. This year the Center welcomed the largest cohort of fellows in its history. We were fortunate to have in residence two dissertation fellows, three postdoctoral fellows, and seven Tufts faculty fellows from a wide range of disciplines spanning the humanities, the humanistic social sciences, and the arts. Through the generosity of the New England Humanities Consortium, we also welcomed two visiting scholars as part of the Mellon Faculty of Color Fellowship program. Several research affiliates also joined our community. Together this group of artists, filmmakers, and scholars drew on diverse perspectives from the fields of critical ethnic studies, visual arts, religious studies, anthropology, carceral studies, history, performance studies, and psychology, to consider various aspects of the Center’s annual theme, “Reframing Empire.” With this focus, fellows grappled in their own work and as a cohort with the long shadows and enduring realities of colonialism, imperialism, and racial-settler capitalism through a variety of geographic, temporal, and theoretical frames.

The Center hosted a wide range of public events related to the theme of critical empire studies, among other topics of pressing concern. In the fall, faculty fellow Sarah Fong (Department of Studies in Race, Colonialism, and Diaspora) organized a vibrant panel discussion on “Histories of Black and Native Schooling.” Our three postdoctoral fellows – Nicholas Andersen, Catie Peters, and Sasha Sabherwahl – partnered with CHAT research affiliate Hannah Waits of Harvard University to coordinate a spring symposium that brought to campus Sylvester Johnson and Tisa Wenger, editors of the recent book *Religion and US Empire: Critical New Histories*. In addition to collaborating with numerous departments and programs to support book talks, poetry readings, and discussion panels, CHAT played a major role in co-sponsoring two important lecture series: one focused on Asian American Studies and another, Vistas: A Latinx/Americas Speaker Series, coordinated by dissertation fellow Javier Hurtado and visiting scholar Jorge Cuellar (Dartmouth). The Center also celebrated the publication of several new books by current and past faculty fellows: Lorgia García Peña’s *Translating Blackness: Latinx Colonialities in Global Perspective*, Amahl Bishara’s *Crossing a Line: Laws, Violence, and Roadblocks to Palestinian Political Expression*, and Kerri Greenidge’s *The Grimkes: the Legacy of Slavery in an American Family*.
In April, Craig Stephen Wilder, Barton L. Weller Professor of History at MIT, delivered the Annual Coit-Phelps lecture in the humanities. His talk focused on the history of higher education and slavery and served as the inaugural event for the new Slavery, Colonialism, and Their Legacies at Tufts initiative: a multi-year, university-wide collaborative research project sponsored by CHAT, the Center for the Study of Race and Democracy (CSRD), the Tufts Archival Research Center (TARC), and the Office of the Provost. Building on previous efforts undertaken at CHAT and the CSRD, the initiative will provide systematic, sustained support for interdisciplinary scholarship and public programming focused on Tufts’ historical ties to the African American and Afro-Native communities of West Medford and Somerville; American empire and colonial dispossession; anti-slavery, Universalism, and social movements; and the long presence of African descended and indigenous people and communities on Tufts’ campus.

In addition to spearheading this major new project, the Center for the Humanities supported a variety of faculty and student-led initiatives in 2022-2023. CHAT affiliates Jennifer Burton and Julie Dubrow secured several grants to develop Half the History, a digital humanities project illuminating the understudied lives of local U.S. women, especially women of color. The Humanities Reading Group, organized by CHAT board member John Lurz (English) continued to meet virtually throughout the year. Jennifer Minnen (English) organized a new Educationist Reading Group to discuss philosophies of teaching and learning as crucial to scholarly practice and humanist inquiry. Graduate students from Arts & Sciences and the SMFA created the Graduate Humanities Circle to support artists and scholars in the humanities and liberal arts working with, on, and/or for minoritarian communities. Through the efforts of this group, CHAT has been able to garner additional resources for programming, pedagogical training, and professional development tailored specifically for graduate students in the arts and humanities. We are especially pleased to report that, in partnership with the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, the Center has been able to increase significantly the annual stipends for dissertation fellows.

As I reflect back on my first year as director of the Center for the Humanities, I am especially grateful for the support of the Deans of Arts & Sciences, the Office of the Provost, and CHAT’s faculty advisory board. I would particularly like to recognize the service of board member Alessandra Campana (Music) who finished her term in 2022. I am also pleased to welcome John Lurz (English) and Kendra Field (History/CSRD) who joined the board this spring. Above all, my deepest thanks go to Courtney McDermott, whose expertise and professionalism has kept the Center running smoothly throughout her tenure as Program Administrator. We will miss Courtney immensely and wish her all the best as she transitions to a new role as Associate Director of the Ex-College.

In the coming year, I look forward to ongoing partnership with colleagues from across the university as we advocate for the humanities at this critical juncture. I welcome ideas from faculty and students for ways the Center can continue to serve as a vibrant and supportive space for innovative, interdisciplinary, collaborative scholarly engagement, and advance the profile of creative and humanistic scholarship at Tufts.

All best,
Heather Curtis
Director, Center for the Humanities at Tufts
Warren S. Woodbridge Professor of Religion
Affiliate faculty: Dept. of Studies in Race, Colonialism, and Diaspora; Dept. of History; Tufts University Prison Initiative of Tisch College

2022-2023 Annual Report
FELLOWS

FACULTY FELLOWS

Sarah Fong  
Assistant Professor  
Studies in Race, Colonialism and Diaspora

Lorgia Garcia Pena  
Mellon Associate Professor  
Studies in Race, Colonialism and Diaspora

Brian Hatcher  
Packard Professor of Theology  
Religion

Khary Jones  
Professor of the Practice  
Drama and Film Studies

Patte Loper  
Professor of the Practice  
SMFA

Aniruddh Patel  
Professor  
Psychology

Courtney Sato  
Assistant Professor  
Studies in Race, Colonialism and Diaspora

2022-2023 Annual Report
POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS

Nicholas Andersen
PhD in Religious Studies
Brown

Catherine Peters
PhD in American Studies
Harvard

Sasha Sabherwal
PhD in American Studies
Yale

GRADUATE FELLOWS

Tathagata Dutta
PhD candidate, History

Javier Hurtado
PhD candidate, Theatre, Dance and Performance Studies

VISITING SCHOLARS

Nathan Acebo
Mellon Faculty of Color Fellow, Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Indigenous and Native American Studies, University of Connecticut

Owen Cornwall
Visiting Scholar, Tufts

Jorge Cuellar
Mellon Faculty of Color Fellow, Assistant Professor, Latin American, Latino & Caribbean Studies; Dartmouth

RESEARCH AFFILIATE

Hannah Waits
Lecturer, Harvard
Sept 22 | book talk | "Translating Blackness: Latinx Colonialities in Global Perspective"
Lorgia García Peña, Faculty Fellow
in conversation with Robin Kelley, UCLA

Sept 28 | fellow seminar | "Musical Minds: Beyond Nature vs. Nurture"
Aniruddh Patel, Faculty Fellow

Hannah Waits, Research Affiliate (Harvard)

Oct 19 | panel | "Histories of Black and Native Schooling"
Sarah E.K. Fong, Faculty Fellow
Khalil Anthony Johnson, Wesleyan
Bayley J. Marquez, University of Maryland, College Park

Nov 2 | fellow seminar | "Death and Monastic life: an eccentric tour through a Hindu landscape"
Brian Hatcher, Faculty Fellow
Nov 9 | fellow seminar | "Dimensions of Autonomy in Los Angeles Indigenous Homelands Beyond the Missions: Transmotion"
Nathan Acebo, Mellon Faculty of Color Fellow (University of Connecticut)

Nov 16 | fellow seminar | "The Crisis Quotidian: On the Politics of Life in Contemporary El Salvador"
Jorge E. Cuéllar, Mellon Faculty of Color Fellow (Dartmouth)

Nov 30 | fellow seminar | "Racialized Contagion: Japanese American Tuberculosis Patients during WWII"
Courtney Sato, Faculty Fellow

Dec 7 | fellow seminar | "Laboratory for Other Worlds: Scientific Data, Environmental Humanities, and the Public Imagination"
Patte Loper, Faculty Fellow

Feb 8 | fellow seminar | "Collective Fictions of Caste: Unsettling Caste, Gender, and Religion in the Sikh Diaspora of the Transnational Pacific Northwest"
Sasha Sabherwal, Postdoctoral Fellow
Feb 15 | fellow seminar | "The Power of Prophecy: Obeah, Spiritual Baptism, and Robert Alexander Young’s Ethiopian Manifesto"
*Nicholas Andersen, Postdoctoral Fellow*

Mar 1 | fellow seminar | "Kan Gao, Chinois de Cayenne: Strategic Disaffection in Early Nineteenth-Century Archives of Indenture"
*Catherine Peters, Postdoctoral Fellow*

Mar 8 | fellow seminar | "A Work in 'Process': Film Screening"
*Khary Jones, Faculty Fellow*

Mar 29 | fellow seminar | "An Advil for Your Sorrows: Humor, Care, and Critical Inquiry in the Teatro Alebrijes Pastorelas"
*Javier Hurtado, Dissertation Fellow*

Apr 5 | fellow seminar | "Strategic Reserves of the Modern State: Frontier Governance in South Asia and the British Empire, c. 1760s-c. 1950s"
*Tathagata Dutta, Dissertation Fellow*
Apr 12 | "Knickerbocker Renaissance: Slavery & Education"
Craig Wilder, Barton L. Weller Professor of History, MIT

This lecture was the inaugural event for the Slavery, Colonialism, and Their Legacies at and beyond Tufts University project.

Beginning in 2023, the Center for the Humanities, in partnership with the Center for the Study of Race and Democracy (CSRD), the Tufts Archival Research Center (TARC) and the Office of Provost, will take a leading role in a university-wide collaborative research initiative to examine the history of slavery, colonialism, and their legacies at and beyond Tufts University. The project will provide systematic, sustained support for interdisciplinary scholarship and public programming focused on Tufts’ historical ties to the African American and Afro-Native communities of West Medford and Somerville; American empire and colonial dispossession; anti-slavery, Universalism, and social movements; and the long presence of African descended and indigenous people and communities on Tufts’ campus.
October 20 | panel | "Tell Her Story: The Problems and Promise of Telling Women's Stories"
Virginia Drachman, Tufts
Megan Marshall, Emerson
Monica White Ndounou, Dartmouth
(co-sponsored with Tisch College of Civic Life, Bridging Differences Seed Grant)

October 26 | book talk | "Crossing a Line: Laws, Violence, and Roadblocks to Palenstinian Political Expression"
Amahl Bishara, Tufts
(co-sponsored with Dept. of Anthropology)

November 8 | reading | with poet Anna Badken (co-sponsored with Depts. of English, and Studies in Race, Colonialism and Diaspora)
CO-SPONSORED EVENTS

Feb 23 | book talk | "The Grimkes: The Legacy of Slavery in an American Family"
Kerri Greenidge, Tufts
(co-sponsored with Dept. of Studies in Race, Colonialism and Diaspora; Center for the Study of Race and Democracy, and the Dean of the School of Arts & Sciences)

Mar 15 | panel | "Religion & US Empire"
Sylvester A. Johnson, Virginia Tech; Tisa Wenger, Yale
Moderators: Nicholas Andersen; Sasha Sabherwal, Hannah Waits
(co-sponsored with Dept. of Religion; Dept. of History, International Relations Program, Civic Studies Programs, NEMAAR, and a Global Tufts Month Grant)

Mar 31 | lecture | "Feasting Scripts: The Haptics of Debt and Fantasy on Sri Lanka's Plantations"
Mythri Jegathesan, Santa Clara University
(co-sponsored with the Dept. of Anthropology and the Environmental Studies Program)

Apr 14 | screening | "Archive Fevers: Did the Fire Read the Stories it Burnt?"
Chrystel Oloukoi, artist, filmmaker, and curator
(co-sponsored with Tisch Library, SMFA, Dept. of Studies in Race, Colonialism and Diaspora, and the Africana Studies Program)

Apr 19 | lecture | "Tisch College Solomont Speaker Series 2023"
Lupe Fiasco and Dee-1, hip-hop artists & activists
(co-sponsored with Tisch College)
Jan 30 | lecture | "Towards a More Radical (Asian American) Literary Critique"
Dorothy Wang, Williams

Feb 6 | lecture | “Neither Head nor Tail: An Asian American Meditation on the Middle”
Nancy Kang, University of Manitoba

Feb 13 | lecture | “Seeing Asian America: Photography, Race, and Representation”
Bakirathi Mani, Swarthmore

Feb 22 | lecture | “The Promise of Beauty”
Mimi Thi Nguyen, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Mar 6 | lecture | “Beauty Regimes: A History of Power and Modern Empire in the Philippines, 1898-1941”
Genevieve Clutario, Wellesley

Mar 31 | lecture | "reFUSE/REfuse: Towards a Sucialogy of Culture"
Deborah R. Vargas, Yale

Apr 14 | lecture | "Statues Made of Sugar: Jose Marti, Monuments, and Ventriloquism"
Juliet Hooker, Brown

Apr 21 | lecture | "Anticolonial Marxism or Decolonial Theory? Reflections on Imperialism, Fascism and Ideology"
Jennifer Ponce de Leon, University of Pennsylvania
SLAVERY, COLONIALISM & THEIR LEGACIES AT AND BEYOND TUFTS UNIVERSITY

Beginning in 2023, the Center for the Humanities, in partnership with the Center for the Study of Race and Democracy (CSRD), the Tufts Archival Research Center (TARC) and the Office of Provost, will take a leading role in a university-wide collaborative research initiative to examine the history of slavery, colonialism, and their legacies at and beyond Tufts University. The project will provide systematic, sustained support for interdisciplinary scholarship and public programming focused on Tufts’ historical ties to the African American and Afro-Native communities of West Medford and Somerville; American empire and colonial dispossession; anti-slavery, Universalism, and social movements; and the long presence of African descended and indigenous people and communities on Tufts’ campus.

HUMANITIES READING GROUP

The Humanities Reading Group, involving faculty from across the arts and humanities departments, meets several times a semester to discuss readings on the role of the humanities in public life. The group is organized by Professor John Lurz (English).

HALF THE HISTORY

Half the History Research and Action Project is a digital humanities project consisting of an interactive digital space with new and curated film, written, and audio materials exploring under-told stories of diverse women in history. The project also consists of public events, educational elements, and opportunities for community engagement. Half the History focuses on short-form content, including original and curated short films, short biographies that illuminate the lives of women, and interviews with biographers, historians and filmmakers whose work has similarly focused on shining light on women. This project is led by Jennifer Burton (Theatre, Dance and Performance Studies; Film Studies) and Julie Dobrow (Child Studies and Human Development).

THE EDUCATIONIST READING GROUP

The Educationist Reading Group welcomes faculty from across the arts and humanities departments. We meet two to three times a semester to discuss philosophies of teaching and learning as crucial to scholarly practice and humanist inquiry. We are interested in these writings within their historical and intellectual frameworks as well as how they shape our approaches in the classroom. Readings are determined by group interest. The group is organized by Jennifer Minnen (English).
FACULTY BOARD

Kendra Field, History; Studies in Race, Colonialism and Diaspora
Eulogio Guzmán, Visual and Material Studies, SMFA
Peter Levine, Philosophy
John Lurz, English
Pedro Ángel Palou, Romance Languages
Alisha Rankin, History

STAFF

Heather Curtis, Director; Religion
Courtney McDermott, Program Administrator
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