

## LEAH NIEDERSTADT

Wheaton College

26 East Main Street, Norton, MA 02766

niederstadt\_leah@wheatoncollege.edu / 508-286-3319

### MUSEUM EXPERIENCE

- 2007-Current *Wheaton College*  
Curator of the Permanent Collection
- 2010-2011 *Wheaton College, Beard & Weil Galleries*  
Interim Director
- 2006-2007 *Fowler Museum, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)*  
Graduate Intern
- 2006 *Museum of Art, University of Michigan*  
Intern, Asian Art Collections
- 2003-2005 *Fowler Museum, UCLA*  
Curatorial Assistant to Dr. Raymond Silverman for *Painting Ethiopia* project
- 2003-2005 *Society of Friends of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies (IES), Addis Ababa University*  
Member, Executive Committee

### TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- 2012-Current *Wheaton College, Art and Art History Department*  
Assistant Professor of Museum Studies/Art History  
*Exhibiting Africa*  
*Exhibition Design*  
*Gift or Loot: Who Owns Cultural Property?*  
*Introduction to Museum Studies*  
*Museum Controversies*  
*Visualizing Circus*  
*Arts of Africa, the Near East, and the Americas (team-taught)*  
*Independent Study Courses*
- 2007-2012 *Wheaton College, Art and Art History Department*  
Instructor of Museum Studies/Art History  
*Exhibiting Africa*  
*Exhibition Design*  
*Introduction to Museum Studies*  
*Museum Controversies*  
*Visualizing Circus*  
*The Art of Collecting: from Wunderkammern to MoMA (co-taught)*  
*Arts of Africa, Asia, and the Americas (team-taught)*  
*Independent Study Courses*
- 2005 *University of Michigan, Department of the History of Art*  
Teaching Assistant, *Introduction to African Art and Visual Culture*
- 2003-2004 *University of Oxford, Honours School of Archaeology & Anthropology*  
Instructor, *Fieldwork Practicum in Social Anthropology*
- 1996-1999 *Teach for America Program, Harriet Tubman School, Washington, DC*  
Volunteer Classroom Tutor
- 1992-1994 *21<sup>st</sup> Century Program, University of Michigan*  
Resident Director and Teaching Assistant

## EDUCATION

- 2012 *University of Oxford, England*  
DPhil, Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology. Thesis: *Creating Ethiopia: Performance, Identity, and Community in Ethiopian Children's Circuses*
- 2008 *University of Michigan*  
Graduate Certificate, Museum Studies Program
- 2000 *Amsterdam-Maastricht Summer University, Amsterdam, The Netherlands*  
Summer Course: *Mermaids, Hip-hop & Tattoo: Dynamics of Popular Culture*
- 1996 *University of Oxford, England*  
MPhil, Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology
- 1994 *University of Michigan*  
Bachelor of Arts, Afroamerican and African Studies and Political Science  
High Honors, High Distinction, Phi Beta Kappa

## OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2005 *Museum Studies Program, University of Michigan*  
Research Assistant
- 2002-2004 *A dugna Community Dance Theatre Company, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*  
Consulting Director
- 2001-2002 *Cirque du Monde, Cirque du Soleil, Montreal, Canada*  
Consultant
- 1997-1999 *Reading is Fundamental, Washington, DC*  
Executive Assistant to the President
- 1996-1997 *McKinsey & Company, Inc., Washington, DC*  
Associate

## PUBLICATIONS

- 2018 "Building A Legacy for the Liberal Arts: Deaccessioning the Newell Bequest at Wheaton College." In *Is It Okay to Sell the Monet: The Age of Deaccessioning in Museums*. Rowman & Littlefield: Lanham, MD
- 2018 "Visualizing Marriage in Northern Ethiopia: The Production and Consumption of *Gama*." *African Arts*. MIT Press: Cambridge, MA
- 2014 "Digital Projects and the First Year Seminar: Making Blended Learning Work at a Small Liberal Arts College." *Transformations*. National Institute for Technology in Liberal Education: Georgetown, TX. With Pete Coco
- 2011 "'I'm a rich man, how can I die?': Circus Performance as a Means of HIV/AIDS Education in Ethiopia." In *The Culture of AIDS in Africa: Hope and Healing in Music and the Arts*. Oxford University Press: Oxford, England
- 2011 "Ethiopia's Vibrant Sacred Art." *One*, Vol. 37 (2). Catholic Near East Welfare Association: New York, NY
- 2009 "Beyond Wide-Eyed Angels: Contemporary Expressive Culture in Ethiopia." *African Arts*. MIT Press: Cambridge, MA. With Peri M. Klemm
- 2009 "Fighting HIV with Juggling Clubs: An Introduction to Ethiopia's Circuses." *African Arts*. MIT Press: Cambridge, MA
- 2002 "Of Kings and Cohorts: Representations of *Genna* in Ethiopian Popular Painting." *The International Journal of the History of Sports*, Vol. 19, No. 1. Routledge: London, England

## **PUBLICATIONS (continued)**

### *Conference Proceedings*

- 2009 "Collecting Art, Creating A Legacy: A History of the Wheaton College Permanent Collection." *The Problem of Sources in Women's Memory*. Women's Library and Information Centre: Istanbul, Turkey. With Kayla Malouin
- 2003 "Framing Images: The Evolution of a Narrative Format in Ethiopian Popular Painting." Proceedings. 6<sup>th</sup> International Conference on the History of Ethiopian Art. IES, AAU: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- 2002 "The Lion, the Letter and the Umbrella: Iconic Images of Ethiopia in Painted Representations of the Sheba-Solomon Story." Proceedings. 14<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Ethiopian Studies. IES, AAU: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

### *Audio Guides/Encyclopedia Entries/Exhibition Catalogues*

- 2014 "Introduction" and "Modern and Contemporary Art." *Encyclopaedia Aethiopia*, Volume 5. Harrassowitz Verlag: Wiesbaden, Germany
- 2008 "Audio Guide for *Lucy's Legacy: The Hidden Treasures of Ethiopia*." Pacific Science Center, Seattle, WA
- 2007 "*Menor kebad new: Life and Work as a Young Ethiopian Artist*." *Continuity and Change: Three Generations of Ethiopian Artists*. Harn Museum of Art, University of Florida: Gainesville, FL
- 2005 "Exhibition Catalogue." *Painting Ethiopia: The Life and Work of Qes Adamu Tesfaw*. Fowler Museum, UCLA: Los Angeles, CA. With Raymond A. Silverman and Neal Sobania
- 2002 "An Ethiopian Painting of the Sheba-Solomon Narrative." *Queen of Sheba: Treasures from Ancient Yemen*. The British Museum: London, England

### *Reviews*

- 2010 "The Art of Small Things." *Journal of Museum Ethnography*. Museum Ethnographers Group: Oxford, England. (Book Review)
- 2010 "A Kingly Craft." *African Arts*. The James S. Coleman African Studies Center, University of California: Los Angeles, CA. (Book Review)
- 2007 "Art of Ethiopia." *Museum Anthropology*. Folklore and Ethnomusicology Department, Indiana University: Bloomington, IN. (Book Review)

## **INVITED PARTICIPATION**

- 2018 "Ethiopian Art and Culture," East Coast Ethiopian Culture Camp, University of New England, Biddeford, ME
- 2016 "Provenance Research at Wheaton College," Academic Museums Professional Affinity Group (PAG) Workshop, New England Museum Association (NEMA), Wheaton College, Norton, MA (with Samantha Barnett, Class of 2016, and Emma Wynne, Class of 2018)
- 2016 Invited lecturer, Master of Fine Arts Program, Alle School of Fine Arts and Design, Addis Ababa University (AAU), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- 2015 Invited lecturer, Master of Arts in Museum Studies Program (MA in MSP), Department of Archaeology & Heritage Management, AAU, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- 2015 "The Rewards of Collaborating with Independent Museum Professionals," Independent Museum Professionals PAG, NEMA, Worcester Museum of Art, Worcester, MA
- 2013 Invited participant, "Best & Brightest: Cultivating the Next Generation of Museum Leaders," NEMA, Harvard Museums of Science and Culture (HMSC), Cambridge, MA
- 2012 Invited speaker, "The Theory and Practice of Museum Work: A Roundtable Discussion with Elaine Heumann Gurian," MSP@10 Museum Studies Symposium, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
- 2011 Invited lecturer, MA in MSP, IES, AAU, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

## INVITED PARTICIPATION (continued)

- 2010 "Museum Management," UNESCO International Capacity Building for Curators, Ada Gar Museum, Harar, Ethiopia
- 2009 Invited participant, International Conference on Urban Heritage Agenda for Addis Ababa, GTZ/Addis Ababa Cultural and Tourism Bureau, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- 2009 "Ethiopia's Contemporary Art Scene," Northeast Africa Seminar Series, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London, England
- 2008 "Young Artists in the Ethiopian American Diaspora," Cultural Creativity in the Ethiopian American Diaspora, Advanced Seminar and Conference, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA
- 2006 Invited lecturer, "Museum Practices and the Display of Non-Western Art," Department of Art, California State University-Northridge, Northridge, CA
- 2006 "Abduction, Land Mines and HIV: Circus Performance and Social Education in Ethiopia," Department of Anthropology, University of Regina, Regina, Canada
- 2003 "'What's Up' Art: Making a Living and Maintaining Integrity in Addis Ababa's Contemporary Art Market," Anglo-Ethiopian Society, SOAS, London, England
- 2002 "Epic Art: The Queen of Sheba in Ethiopia," British Museum, London, England
- 2002 "Contortionists and Acrobats: Gendered Performance in Ethiopian Circuses." Center for Cross-Cultural Research on Women, Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford, Oxford, England

## AWARDS, GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

### *Postdoctoral*

#### *Other*

- 2015 Full Scholarship, Legal Issues in Museum Administration (LIMA) Program, American Law Institute CLE, Philadelphia, PA
- 2015 LIMA Travel Grant, Association of Academic Museums & Galleries (AAMG) supported by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation

#### *Wheaton College*

- 2018 Faculty Interest Group (FIG) Award for *Digital Humanities and Public Audiences* from the Mellon Foundation-funded project *Integrative Learning in the Humanities*
- 2018 Faculty-Student Special Interest Group (SIG) Award for the IMAGINE Network: INT 299: *3D Modeling to Virtual Viewing*
- 2018 Course Transformation Grant (CTG) for the IMAGINE Network: ARTH 334: *Exhibiting Africa*
- 2017 Mars Grant for Faculty-Student Summer Research
- 2016 Faculty-Student SIG Award for the IMAGINE Network: INT 299: *Maps and Mapping as Art, History, and Narrative*
- 2016 Supplemental Research Funding Award
- 2015 CTG for the IMAGINE Network: ARTH 230: *Introduction to Museum Studies*
- 2013 CTG for Blended and Online Learning: FSEM 101: *Gift or Loot: Who Owns Cultural Property?*
- 2013 Connections Conversations Award
- 2013 Hood Grant for Faculty-Student Summer Research
- 2013 Infusion Award: ARTH 398: *Museum Controversies*
- 2008-2018 Wheaton Research Partnership Grant

### *Predoctoral*

#### *University of Michigan*

- 2005-2006 Museum Studies Fellowship, Rackham School of Graduate Studies
- 1994 Rhodes Scholarship. First woman elected from the University of Michigan

## ***Predoctoral (continued)***

### *University of Oxford*

- 2001 ORISHA Grant, Inter-faculty Committee for African Studies
- 1999 Godfrey Lienhardt Memorial Fund Grant, Wolfson College
- 1995 & 2000 Fieldwork Travel Grant, Rhodes Trust

### *Other*

- 2000 International Summer Course Grant, Amsterdam-Maastricht University, The Netherlands
- 1999 Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI
- 1999 Outstanding Community Volunteer, District of Columbia Public Schools, Washington, DC

## **CURATORIAL PROJECTS**

- 2018 *The Provenance Project*, Attleboro Arts Museum, Attleboro, MA  
Co-Curator
- 2016 *It's Elemental: Water*, Beard Gallery, Wheaton College  
Course Instructor, ARTH 335: *Exhibition Design*
- 2014 *Tracing the Thread*, Beard Gallery, Wheaton College  
Course Instructor, ARTH 335: *Exhibition Design*
- 2012 *100 Years, 100 Objects*, Beard & Weil Galleries, Wheaton College  
Course Instructor, ARTH 335: *Exhibition Design*
- 2010 *Turning the Page: The Evolution of Artists' Books*, Beard & Weil Galleries, Wheaton College  
Course Instructor, ARTH 335: *Exhibition Design*
- 2009 *Making It Modern: Wheaton College and The International Style*, Beard & Weil Galleries,  
Wheaton College  
Course Instructor, ARTH 398: *Exhibition Design*
- 2005 *Painting Ethiopia: The Life and Work of Qes Adamu Tesfaw*, Fowler Museum, UCLA  
Curatorial Assistant
- 2000 *Collectomania!*, Balfour Galleries, Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford  
Member, Curatorial Team

## **CONFERENCE PAPERS & PRESENTATIONS**

- 2018 "Dust & Discovery in the Digital Age: Mining the Archives for Collection History," AAMG and International Council of Museums (ICOM) Committee for University Museums and Collections Annual Meeting, University of Miami, Miami, FL (Panel Co-organizer: *Engaging and Empowering Students: Strategies for Successful Docent Programs and for Collection Development and Research.*)
- 2018 "Scenarios of Successful Interventions" Panelist, American Alliance of Museums (AAM) Workshop *Don't Raid the Cookie Jar: Creating Early Interventions for Deaccessioning Crises*, HMSC, Cambridge, MA
- 2017 "Provenance, Pedagogy, and the Liberal Arts: The Kilham Collection at Wheaton College," International Council of Museum Ethnography-ICOM Annual Conference, National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC
- 2017 "Doing More with Less: Finding and Stretching Resources in Lean Times" Panelist, AAMG Annual Meeting, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR
- 2016 "Mapping Provenance/Teaching Exhibition Design: Some Best Practices from Wheaton College," AAMG Annual Meeting, Washington, DC (Panel Co-organizer: *Engaging Students, Strengthening Collections: Some Best Practices for Collaborating with Students in and out of the Classroom.*)

## CONFERENCE PAPERS (continued)

- 2016 "Mapping Objects & Owners: Making Digital Maps to Teach & Track Provenance," Blended Learning in the Liberal Arts Conference, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA (Panel Co-organizer: *Mapping in the Humanities Classroom: An Assessment of Tools and Strategies.*)
- 2015 "From Monsters to Mothers and Multiculturalism: Educational Billboards and Murals in Ethiopia." 19<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Warsaw, Poland
- 2015 "'Objects, Omeka, and the 'Oops!' Factor: Two Case Studies of Collection-Based Projects at Wheaton College." Blended Learning in the Liberal Arts Conference, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA (Co-presented with Professor Claire Buck)
- 2014 "Smartphones, Scanners, and Student Labor: Digitizing Wheaton's Permanent Collection." AAM Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA
- 2013 "'Why do we have all this stuff?' Student Engagement with Collections at a Liberal Arts College." NEMA Annual Conference, Newport, RI (Panel Co-organizer)
- 2011 "From Collaboration to 'Kidnapped' Art: Artists, Gallery Owners, and Patrons in Addis Ababa." Arts Council of the African Studies Association Triennial Meeting, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA
- 2009 "Visualizing Marriage: *Gama* Paintings in Aksum." 8<sup>th</sup> International Conference on the History of Ethiopian Art, Goethe Institute, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- 2008 "Collecting & the Peace Corps: Case Studies from Africa." American Anthropological Association (AAA) Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA. (Panel Organizer)
- 2008 "*Bemenged lie nain*: Creating Networks and Producing Art in the Ethiopian Diaspora." Advanced Seminar - Beyond Creative Incorporation: Cultural Innovation in the Ethiopian Diaspora, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA
- 2007 "'The Aksum Obelisk is an African Heritage!': The Repatriation of Ethiopian Cultural Property." AAA Annual Meeting, Washington, DC (Panel Organizer)
- 2007 "Souvenir Works, Touristic Paintings, and Two Women Art: An Exploration of the Tourist Art Market in Ethiopia." African Studies Association (ASA) Annual Meeting, New York, NY (Panel Organizer)
- 2007 "Making Music, Making Money: The Economics of Ethiopian Circus Bands." 16<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Trondheim, Norway
- 2006 "The 'Ark of Diversity': An Analysis of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies Museum at Addis Ababa University." ASA Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA
- 2006 "'I'm a rich man. How can I die?' The Aesthetics of Moral Performance in Ethiopian Circuses." Mbili: East African Visual Traditions, 2<sup>nd</sup> Colloquium, The British Museum, London, England
- 2005 "'I think the walls are too dark': Foreign Involvement in the Management of an Ethiopian Museum." Michigan Museums Association Annual Conference, Bloomfield Hills, MI
- 2005 "'To their mind, modern is not Ethiopia': Ethiopian Art and the Marketplace." Orbis Aethiopicus Conference, Leipzig, Germany
- 2005 "*Zemenawi* is not Ethiopian': The Creation of an Ethiopian Circus." AEGIS European Conference of African Studies, SOAS, London, England
- 2003 "From Imperial Patronage to the *Ferengi* Art Market: Ethiopia's Fine Arts School and the Training of Art Teachers, Propagandists and Full-Time Studio Artists." ASA Annual Meeting, Boston, MA (Panel Chair)
- 2003 "'Traditional' Circuses and 'Contemporary' Art: Concerns with Imitation, Cultural Representation and Modernity in Ethiopia." East African Visual Traditions, 1<sup>st</sup> Colloquium, Horniman Museum, London, England
- 2002 "Framing Images: The Evolution of a Narrative Format in Ethiopian Popular Painting." 6<sup>th</sup> International Conference on the History of Ethiopian Art, IES, AAU, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

## SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL INVOLVEMENT

### *University of Connecticut*

*Illuminating the Canon: The Development of Ethiopian Christian Art History*, P. Kathryn Powell, MA  
Thesis, Art and Art History Department, 2011. External examiner

### *Wheaton College*

2018-2019: Kappa of Massachusetts (Phi Beta Kappa), secretary; Gallery Director Search Committee;  
Library, Technology, and Learning Committee; First-Year Seminar Steering Committee

2017-2018: Kappa of Massachusetts (Phi Beta Kappa), secretary; Advisory Committee; First-Year  
Seminar Steering Committee, co-chair; Director of Digital Initiatives & Archives Search  
Committee; Archivist & Records Manager Search Committee; Executive Dean of Student  
Success Search Committee; Digital Humanities Minor Working Group

2016-2017: Kappa of Massachusetts (Phi Beta Kappa), secretary; Advisory Committee; First-Year  
Seminar Steering Committee; Faculty-Led Working Group on Student Retention; Wheaton  
Summer Fellows Committee; Honors Thesis Reader (Paige Brnger, Department of History)

2015-2016: Kappa of Massachusetts (Phi Beta Kappa), secretary; Retention Committee

2014-2015: Kappa of Massachusetts (Phi Beta Kappa), secretary

2013-2014: Kappa of Massachusetts (Phi Beta Kappa), secretary; First Year Dean Search Committee;  
Second Year Dean Search Committee

2012-2013: African, African American, Diaspora Studies (AAADS) Advisory Committee

2011-2012: AAADS Advisory Committee; Assistant Archivist Search Committee

2010-2011: AAADS Advisory Committee

2009-2010: AAADS Advisory Committee; Preservation & Stewardship Team (PaST); Wheaton Summer  
Fellows Committee

2008-2011: Faculty-in-Residence, Beard Hall

2008-2009: Untenured Faculty Organization, Arts & Humanities representative; PaST; American  
Association of University Professors, secretary/treasurer

### *Exhibition Juror*

2016: *From the Pastoral to the Political*, Hera Gallery, Wakefield, RI

2015: *Naturally*, Next Door Gallery, Mansfield, MA

2014: *Members' Exhibition*, Attleboro Arts Museum, Attleboro, MA

2012: *City Views*, Next Door Gallery, Mansfield, MA

## AFFILIATIONS

American Alliance of Museums (AAM)

Anglo-Ethiopian Society

Arts Council of the African Studies Association (ACASA)

Association of Academic Museums & Galleries (AAMG)

New England Museum Association (NEMA)

2003-2005 Member, Executive Committee, Society of Friends of the IES. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

2003-2005 Member, Executive Committee, United World Colleges-Ethiopia. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

2001-2007 Visiting Scholar, Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

## LANGUAGES

Amharic Advanced speaking, elementary reading and writing

French Elementary reading, speaking, and writing

Norwegian Elementary reading, speaking and writing