

# SPENCER MUSEUM of ART

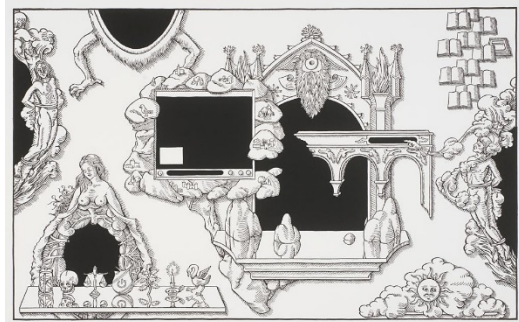
## Graduate Curator's Insights into New Exhibition



Ph.D. candidate in History of Art and current Andrew W. Mellon Foundation/Loo Family Intern in European & American Art, Sara Stepp, curated the newly-opened special exhibition, *Past Presence*. Sara shares insights about the exhibition and what this opportunity means to her:

As a historian of art since 1960, I've been particularly drawn to the Spencer Museum's contemporary works since beginning my internship here. In thinking through some of the strengths of this collection, I noticed that many of the works engage with the past in poignant ways. I felt that putting them in conversation with one another could yield interesting insights into the ways that artists process memories and historical events. This thought process eventually led to *Past Presence*, now on view in the Kemper Family Foundations Balcony at the Spencer Museum.

This exhibition has been an incredible opportunity for me to strengthen my curating, research, and writing skills. I'm hoping to begin a career as a curator after I graduate. In working on this exhibition, I've learned how to work as a team, develop complementary programs, and how to create meaningful experiences through art for many different communities.





How does memory operate? Does it tell the truth about our lives? Our histories? *Past Presence* brings together works of art from around the world that interrogate the stories we tell about the past and the ways these narratives may shape our present realities. Join us for upcoming programs related to the exhibition and its themes. “Past Forward Recording Session” at the Lawrence Public Library to record your own stories as they related to artworks from the collection on Saturday, February 29. Meet at the Spencer Museum of Art for a gallery talk by Sara on Thursday, March 12.

Sara is one of 20 student employees and graduate interns who work across the Museum. Student employees and interns care for the collection, enliven programs, welcome visitors, lead tours, expand teaching across the university, curate exhibitions and so much more. To support Sara’s work and other professional opportunities at the Spencer Museum of Art, considering giving to the Spencer’s *One Day. One KU.* campaign on Thursday, February 20.

Images, top to bottom:

Sara Stepp, Andrew W. Mellon/Loo Family Intern, European & American Art

Mario Martinez, *Scottsdale Yaquis: Generations*, 2001, Museum Purchase: Peter T. Bohan Art Acquisition Fund, [2001.0204.05](#)

Saul Chernick, *Book of Windows*, 2011, Museum purchase: Elmer F. Pierson Fund, [2011.0073](#).



#### Gallery Hours

Tuesday, Friday, Saturday: 10am-4pm

Wednesday & Thursday: 10am-8pm

Sunday: Noon-4pm

Closed Monday

Spencer Museum of Art | 1301 Mississippi Street, Lawrence, KS 66045

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