

**Leo Costello**  
**Associate Professor**  
**Department of Art History**  
**Rice University**  
**713.348.3472**  
**lcostell@rice.edu**

**Education:**

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**Ph.D. 2002**, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA.. Dissertation title: “The Center Cannot Hold: The History Painting of J.M.W. Turner in the Age of Revolution.”  
Advised by Dr. Christiane Hertel.

**MA, 1999**, History of Art, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA. Thesis: “The Critical Reception of Abstract Expressionism in Mass Media Art Magazines, 1944-1950.”

**MA, 1996**, History of Art, American University, Washington, DC. Theses on critical reception of Degas and Manet, and contemporary English artist Raymond Mason.

**BA, 1993**, History, Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY

**Publications:**

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Books:

*Early Turner: Seen and Unseen in London, 1795-1819*. Under contract with Routledge Press, Research in Art History Series, manuscript to be completed, August 2023.

Editor (with Sarah Wilson), *To Speak of Everything: The Art of Raymond Mason* (exhibition catalog), New York Studio School, 2023 (in press).

*J.M.W. Turner and the Subject of History*, Farnham, Surrey and Burlington, VT: Ashgate Press: June 2012.

Paperback edition: New York: Routledge, 2016.

Reviews:

*Victorian Studies*, 57, No. 1 (Autumn 2014), pp. 113-114

*Wordsworth Circle*, XLIV, No 4 (Autumn 2013): 220-1

*caareviews.org*: <http://www.caareviews.org/reviews/2055>.

*Kunstforum* 3 (2013): [https://](https://www.arthistoricum.net/en/kunstform/rezension/ausgabe/2013/3/22139/)

[www.arthistoricum.net/en/kunstform/rezension/ausgabe/2013/3/22139/](https://www.arthistoricum.net/en/kunstform/rezension/ausgabe/2013/3/22139/)

*Turner Society News* 120 (Autumn 2013): 22-4.

*The Burlington Magazine* 155, #1329 (December 2013): 836.

*Choice* 23, #5 (January 2013): <http://www.cro3.org/content/50/05/50-2473>

Peer reviewed articles/chapters:

“Series Paintings: Turner, Exhibition and the Thames Estuary 1808-10,” in *Colnaghi Studies* 5 (October 2019): pp. 111-25.

“Power, Destruction and Creativity in Turner’s Fires,” *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, December 2017,  
<https://19.bbk.ac.uk/articles/10.16995/ntn.791/>

“Air, Science and Nothing in Wright’s *Air Pump*,” *Studies in English Literature* 56, #3 (Summer 2016): 647-70.

“Portraiture and the Ethics of Alterity: Giacometti *vis-à-vis* Levinas,” *October* 151 (Winter 2015): 62-77.

“‘Gorgeous but altogether false’: Turner, Cole and Transatlantic Ideas of Empire,” for Alan Wallach and Andrew Hemingway, eds., *Trans-Atlantic Romanticism*, Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2015.

“This cross-fire of colours’: Turner and the Varnishing Days Reconsidered,” *British Art Journal*, v. 10, #3 (Spring 2010): 56-68.

“Turner’s *Slave-ship*: Towards a Dialectical History Painting,” in Brycchan Carey, Markman Ellis and Sarah Salih, eds., *Discourses of Slavery and Abolition: Britain and Its Colonies 1660-1838*, Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004: pp. 209-22.

Catalogue essays/entries:

“A Continual Metamorphosis: *St. Mark’s Place, NY*” in Costello and Wilson, eds, *To Speak of Everything the Art of Raymond Mason* (exhibition catalog), (New York: New York Studio School and William Louis-Dreyfus Foundation, 2023), in press.

“The Middle of the Road,” in *Duncan Ganley: Inventory of Empty Streets* (exhibition catalog) San Antonio: Niendorf Art Gallery, 2022, in press.

“Wyndham Lewis: War-Art-War,” in Gordon Hughes and Philipp Blom, eds., *Nothing but the Clouds Unchanged: Artists in World War I*, Los Angeles J. Paul Getty Trust, 2014: 70-9.

“‘Tearing and Desolating’: Dissolution and Decomposition in *The Wreck of a Transport Ship*,” in Richard Johns and Christine Riding, eds, *Turner and the Sea* (exhibition catalog), London: National Maritime Museum, 2013: 196-201.

“Turner, West and the End of Contemporary History Painting,” in Emily Neff and Kaylin Weber, eds., *West, Copley, Trumbull: Revolutionary Paintings in a Transatlantic World*, (exhibition catalog), New Haven and London: Yale University Press for the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston), 2013: 236-43.

“Confronting the Sublime,” (introductory section essay and object entries), in Ian Warrell, ed., *J.M.W. Turner*, (exhibition catalog), London: Tate Publishing, 2007: 39-55.

Object essays on William Baziotes, Adolph Gottlieb, Alfred Jensen, Jules Olitski, Vito Acconci and Ellen Gallagher, in Annette DiMeo Carozzi and Kelly Baum, eds., *American Art Since 1900*, Austin, TX: Jack S. Blanton Museum of Art, 2006.

*Vija Celmins: Works from the Edward R. Broida Collection*, Houston: Museum of Fine Arts, 2002

With Gridley McKim-Smith, “Crafting the Intangible: The Art of John Clemmer,” in David Clemmer, Leo Costello and Gridley McKim-Smith, *John Clemmer: Exploring the Medium, 1940-1999*, (exhibition catalog), New Orleans: New Orleans Museum of Art, 1999.

“The WPA/FAP Poster Project,” in Therese Thau Heyman, *Posters American Style*, (exhibition catalog), Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1998.

#### Reviews:

Book review, David Solkin, *Art in Britain 1660-1815*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, *The Scriblerian* LIII, no. 2 (Spring 2021).

Book review, Adrienne Childs and Susan Libby, eds, *Blacks and Blackness in European Art of the Long Nineteenth Century*, caareviews.org., January 28, 2016  
<http://www.caareviews.org/reviews/2649#.VquuGRgrJ1M>

Book review, Geoff Quilley, *Empire to Nation: Art, History and the Visualization of Maritime Britain, 1768-1829*, *The Burlington Magazine* CLV, #1321 (April 2013): 263-4.

Book review, Sam Smiles, *J.M.W. Turner: The Making of a Modern Artist*, *Victorian Studies*, v. 51, #3 (Spring 2009): 530-2.

Book review, Nicholas Tracy: *Britannia's Palette: The Arts of Naval Victory*, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007, in *University of Toronto Quarterly*, v. 78, #1 (Winter 2009): 262-3.

Exhibition review, “Bruce Nauman: A Rose has no Teeth,” Menil Collection , October 25, 2007 – January 13, 2008, [caareviews.org](http://www.caareviews.org):  
<http://www.caareviews.org/reviews/1089>

Book review, Andrew Wilton, *Turner as Draughtsman*, London: Ashgate, 2006, *Victorian Studies* 49, #3 (Spring 2007): 527-9.

Exhibition review, “Laura Lark: From All of Us with Love,” *ArtLes* (Houston), v. 45 (Fall 2005): p. 105.

Exhibition review, "Margo Sawyer: Contemplative Spaces," (review), *ArtLles* (Houston), v. 43 (Summer 2004): p. 84.

Exhibition review, "Kelli Connell: Double Life," (review), *ArtLles*, v. 42 (Spring 2004): p. 86.

Exhibition review, "David Hutchinson," *ArtLles* (Houston), v. 41 (Winter 2003-4): p. 83.

Work Experience: \_\_\_\_\_

**Chair, Department of Art History, Rice University, Houston, TX, 2019-2022**

**Director of Graduate Studies, Department of Art History, Rice University, Houston, TX, 2010-13**

**Faculty Athletic Representative, Rice University, 2019-Present**

**Co-Director, Museums and Cultural Heritage Minor, Rice University**

**Associate Professor, Department of Art History, Rice University, Houston, TX, 2013-present.** Responsible for teaching courses in eighteenth through twentieth-century European Art. Courses have a particular focus on issues of social history. I stress a dual focus in careful critical reading of primary secondary sources, with an emphasis on recent methodology, combined with an object-based approach to close visual analysis. Courses taught include "Liberty and Terror: The French Revolution," "Impressionism and Post-Impressionism," "Art and Architecture in the Age of Revolutions, 1735-1875," "Twentieth-Century European Art," "Turner and Constable," "Manet," "The Age of Romanticism in Europe," "Art in the Vanguard: Visual Culture and Radical Politics, 1800-2000," "Thinking Through the Image: The Art of Methodology." Service: 3 search committees, Rice University Athletics Committee; Faculty coordinator for HUMA courses; Faculty Advisory Panel, Humanities Research Center, 2012- Present.

**Assistant Professor:** Department of Art History, Rice University, Houston, TX, 2005-2013.

**Affiliate Professor:** Department of Art, University of Houston, Spring 2004. Taught two sections of Art History Survey, Renaissance to Present, approximately 230 students, in total. Lectures emphasized key monuments, artists and movements in history of art. Supplementary readings also provided introduction to the discipline of art history, and to methodologies such as feminism, Marxism and psychoanalysis. Written work focused on learning to look careful at original works of art, and developing language to discuss them.

**Curatorial Assistant,** Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Department of Prints, Drawings and Twentieth-Century Art, April 2002-August 2004.

Duties include organization and installation of exhibitions of works from permanent collection of Prints and Drawings Also responsible for installing works from the permanent collection in different public areas of the museum on a rotating schedule.

Select Exhibitions organized:

*Famous/Infamous: Images of Celebrity* (photography): August-October 2002  
*The Form of the City: Urban Imagery in Works on Paper*: September 2002-March 2003  
*Word and Image: Text and Symbol in Modern Works on Paper*: March-May 2003  
*Process and Possibility: Contemporary Drawings at the MFAH*. August-December 2003  
*States of Mind: Modern Art and the Exploration of the Psyche*. December 2003-March 2004  
*Images of the Landscape in Works on Paper*, May-September 2004

Also prepared all written material for these shows, as well as for temporary exhibitions, research on permanent collection, preparation of agendas for accessions committee meetings, and assistance in the coordination and maintenance of collections. Worked extensively on *The Heroic Century*, an exhibition of 200 works from the Museum of Modern Art, assisting in the planning and installing of the art, and coordinating the written materials to accompany the art in the galleries. Coordinated staff education series for that exhibition, and delivered lectures as part of that series and numerous tours of exhibitions to various groups including donors and collectors' groups. Created and maintained object files for Prints and Drawings department, worked with Registrar's office to integrate that material into museum database.

**Research Assistant:** Departments of Art History and Growth and Structure of Cities, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA, 1996-9

**Selected Papers and Conference Participation:**

“ ‘We have no knowledge of Mr. Turner’: Secrecy and Visibility in Turner’s *Self-portrait*, c. 1800,” Interdisciplinary Nineteenth Century Studies Conference, Salt Lake City, UT, March 23-26, 2022

“Series Paintings?: Turner's Paintings of the Thames Estuary, 1807-9” Interdisciplinary Nineteenth Century Studies Conference, San Francisco, CA March 1-4, 2018

“In a time of much professional jealousy?: Rivalry and Competition at the Royal Academy,” 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Ruth K. Shartle Symposium, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, October 5, 2013 (Invited speaker).

“To Tremble even at an Air-Pump?: Wright of Derby’s Picture of Nothing,” Rice University, November 11, 2011.

“Delacroix’s *Women of Algiers* and the Absence of Subject,” Nineteenth-Century French Studies Conference, Philadelphia, October 27-29, 2011.

Paper title: “Nothing.” Conference, The Long Nineteenth Century, organized by the Victorian Studies Seminar, Rice University and University of Houston, October 22-23, 2010.

Member, National Programming Committee, American Association of Museums annual conference, 2011. Part of a team peer-reviewing over 200 conference session proposals for 2011 conference.

Paper title: ‘Empire’s Dust’?: Disintegration and Formation in Turner’s *Waterloo*,” College Art Association, February 2010, Chicago. Session title: Myths of the Nation in Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture, Chair: Professor Neil McWilliam.

Presentation on Turner and de Louthembourg, Research event, Turner and the Masters, Tate Britain, January 11-12, 2010, invited participant.

Paper title: “‘Gorgeous but altogether false’: Turner, Cole and Trans-Atlantic ideas of Decline,” Conference: Transatlantic Romanticism, Terra Foundation, Royal Academy of Art, and the Paul Mellon Centre for the Study of British Art, 16-18 October, 2009, invited speaker.

Paper title: “History in Decline? J. M. W. Turner and ‘The conception of a swamp'd world’”, Conference: 1789, 1989, 2009: New Perspectives on Post-revolutionary Art," Courtauld Institute of Art, London, 12-13 June 2009.

Invited panelist, MA in Art History Roundtable, September 2008, University of North Texas, with Marc Gorlieb, Charmaine Nelson and Pamela Patton.

“In the Face of Skepticism: Giacometti, Portraiture and Alterity,” College Art Association, February 2007, New York. Session: Skepticism and the Arts.

“‘He has been here and fired a gun’: Turner and the Royal Academy Varnishing Days,” North American Conference on British Studies, October 2005, Denver, CO.

“ ‘The Finest Sea-pieces ever Painted’: J.M.W. Turner’s *Sheerness as Seen from the Nore* and the Artist in 1808,” (invited lecture) Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, May 2005.

“ ‘Now is come a darker day’: Turner, Venice and the Fate of Britain,” (invited lecture) at “Turner and Venice,” Symposium, Kimbell Art Museum, Ft. Worth, TX, February 14, 2004.

“Turner’s *Battle of Trafalgar*, 1806,” Southeastern College Art Conference, Mobile, AL, October 2002.

“Turner’s *Battle of Trafalgar* and the End of Contemporary History Painting, ” VizCult, Harpur College Dean’s Workshop in Visual Culture, Department of Art History, Binghamton, NY, February, 2002.

“Turner’s *Teignmouth*, 1812: History and the Politics of Form in the Picturesque,” Eighteenth-Century Interdisciplinary Group, Department of English, City University of New York, November, 2001.

“Towards a Dialectical History Painting: Turner’s *Slave-ship* and the Dynamics of the Sublime,” at “Discourses of Slavery and Abolition, Writing in Britain and Its Colonies, 1660-1838, Institute of English Studies, University of London, April 2001.

30<sup>th</sup> Annual Middle Atlantic Symposium in the History of Art, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery Washington DC, April 2000. Paper title: “A Difficult History and an Uncertain Future: Turner’s *Slave-ship* and the Dynamics of the Sublime.”

Session Moderator and Respondent, “Decline: All Good Things Must Come to an End?” 2<sup>nd</sup> Graduate Student Symposium, Department of Archaeology, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr PA, October 1999.

### **Awards and Honors:**

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Graduate Teaching and Mentorship Award, Rice University, Graduate Student Association, 2012

Long list for William Berger Prize for British Art History, for *JM.W. Turner and the Subject of History*

Publication Grant for *J.M.W. Turner and the Subject of History*, Ashgate 2012, from The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, London.

Individual Faculty Fellowship, 2008-9, Humanities Research Center, Rice University

Finalist, Phi Beta Kappa liberal arts teaching award, based on teaching evaluations, 2007-8, 2008-9, 2010-11, 2012-13

Mrs. Giles Whiting Fellowship in the Humanities, Bryn Mawr College, June 2001-May 2002

Workman Travelling Fellowship, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Bryn Mawr College, 2000-2001

Graduate Scholarship, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Bryn Mawr College, 1996 to 1999

Graduate Assistantship, Department of History of Art, American University, 1994-1996

Member, Phi Alpha Theta, National History Honor Society, 1993

**Languages:**

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French: proficient reading knowledge and conversational speaking knowledge.  
German: proficient reading knowledge and conversational speaking knowledge.  
Italian: basic reading and basic conversational knowledge.  
Turkish: conversational knowledge.

**Professional Affiliations:**

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College Art Association  
Radical Art Caucus  
Historians of British Art