

# PANEL DISCUSSION

## Earthquakes and Mounts

### Panelists:

Vincent Avalos, Asian Art Museum, San Francisco, California, USA; BJ Farrar, The Getty Center, Los Angeles, California, USA; Ted Gardeline, Anchorage Museum, Anchorage, Alaska, USA; Richard Hards, The Getty Villa, Los Angeles, California, USA; Jamie Hascall, Mountmaking Focus Studio, Seattle, Washington, USA; McKenzie Lowry, The Getty Villa, Los Angeles, California, USA; Mark Mitton, The Getty Center, Los Angeles, California, USA; Monica Shah, Anchorage Museum, Anchorage, Alaska, USA

# BIO



Trained as a sculptor, painter and lab technician, Vincent Avalos graduated from the Art Institute of Boston in 1984 with awards in excellence in sculpture. Vincent worked several years in the construction trades doing carpentry and masonry. In 1986 he worked for sculptor John Okulick as a technical assistant. In 1987 Vincent was hired by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art as a preparator. Vincent soon advanced to senior preparator, packer/courier and mountmaker, working on several traveling exhibitions and many permanent collection projects.

After the Loma Prieta earthquake, in 1990 Vincent was hired by the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco as museum mountmaker to facilitate the implementation of a comprehensive earthquake mitigation program. In 1992 Vincent was a member of the seismic advisory committee, which was the museum staff oversight group of the seismic upgrading study for the future sight of the Asian Art Museum. The study was conducted by the engineering firm of Rutherford & Chekene.

In the 1990s Vincent worked on the mounting and installation of the Chinese and southeast Asian galleries as well as all major temporary exhibitions including "The Golden Age of Chinese Archeology" and "Xian Warriors". From 2001 to 2003 he trained and led a team of mountmakers to remount and install the entire collection for the move to the new building in the Civic Center.

Since the opening of the new museum at the Civic Center, Vincent has worked on major temporary exhibitions such as "The Lost Cities of Siam," "Courtly Arts of China's Ming Dynasty," "Hidden Treasures of Afghanistan," "China's Terracotta warriors" and more recently "Roads of Arabia" where we mounted several colossal sculptures. Vincent has traveled to China, Japan and Thailand as well as to many cities in the U.S. to courier, mount art, and preplan mountmaking for the Museum's major exhibitions.

Vincent has just completed the process of redoing all the galleries of the Asian Art Museum with a team of preparators and mountmakers. This included seismic upgrades of many of the displays.

Vincent has also exhibited locally as a sculptor, painter, installation artist and videographer.



BJ Farrar is a member of the Decorative Arts and Sculpture Conservation department at the Getty Museum specializing in seismic mountmaking and more recently, the application of 3-D scanning for mountmaking and conservation.

He has presented on various mountmaking topics at numerous conferences- including the Advances in the Protection of Museum Collections from Earthquake Damage symposium series, Western Association of Art Conservators, ARCS, PACCIN and the International Mountmaking Forum (of which he is a co-founder).

BJ was a mountmaker in the Getty's Antiquities Conservation department from 2002–2015 and was a senior preparator in the Preparations Department from 1997–2002. Prior to the Getty, he worked at the Seattle Art Museum from 1989–1997 as a mountmaker/preparator.

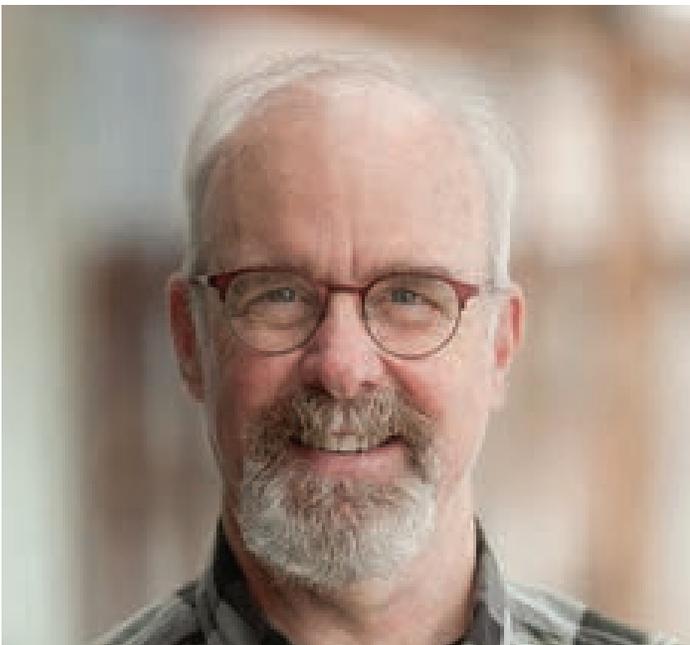


Since 1994, Ted Gardeline has worked at the Anchorage Museum in a myriad of capacities, but it wasn't until circa 1998 that he started to touch on mount making techniques. He respectfully attributes that beginning to Jamie Hascall. He has been making mounts ever since and after 22 years he still loves it.

His background in mount making is associated with being an artist to begin with. The presentation of the artwork is a criterion that he has adhered to for a long time now. While finishing a BFA in sculpture in 1989, the lessons he learned working with steel have carried over to his mount making experiences. He primarily uses brass for its forgiveness and cleanliness, but also uses other materials as well. It all depends on the object's form and presentation. How to softly capture an object in a protective manner that works with gravity and is presented in an elevated way is his initial question when working with the object and the conservator.



Richard Hards is a Senior Mountmaker in the Antiquities Conservation Department at the J Paul Getty Museum specializing in the design and fabrication of seismic mounts. He earned his MFA in Painting and Printmaking from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and his BFA from Utah State University. Richard joined the Antiquities Conservation Department in 2015, bringing with him over 30 years of experience in Mountmaking and Art Handling. He has been instrumental in the Department's use of 3D scanning technology for developing new approaches to Mountmaking.



Jamie Hascall is a mountmaker/trainer in private practice in Seattle Washington, USA. His nearly 30 year career includes work with both institutional and private collections with a strong emphasis on mounting cultural artifacts. He has worked on numerous new-museum and major renovation projects including the Seattle Art Museum, Burke Museum, Washington State History Museum, and the Alaska State Museum. He spent seven years as Chief Preparator for the Museums of New Mexico in Santa Fe.

Jamie's strong interest in the field of Conservation has helped him integrate appropriate materials and conservation measures into his mountmaking and exhibit work. His initial work with Seattle Art Museum made seismic safety an essential part of all his mount design and served well to help protect a collection of Pre-Columbian artifacts he installed shortly before the 2001 Nisqually earthquake.

Jamie earned an MS in Museology from the University of Washington after previous careers building musical instruments, furniture and cabinets, and in ornamental horticulture. In recent years, he has trained museum professionals in mountmaking through classes at Mountmaking Focus Studio in Seattle, and on site at institutions. Jamie is currently seeking ways to continue this training and mentorship in today's COVID world.



McKenzie Lowry received a Bachelor of Arts in Art Studio at the University of California Davis in 1985, and a Master of Fine Arts in Painting and Drawing from Washington State University in 1987.

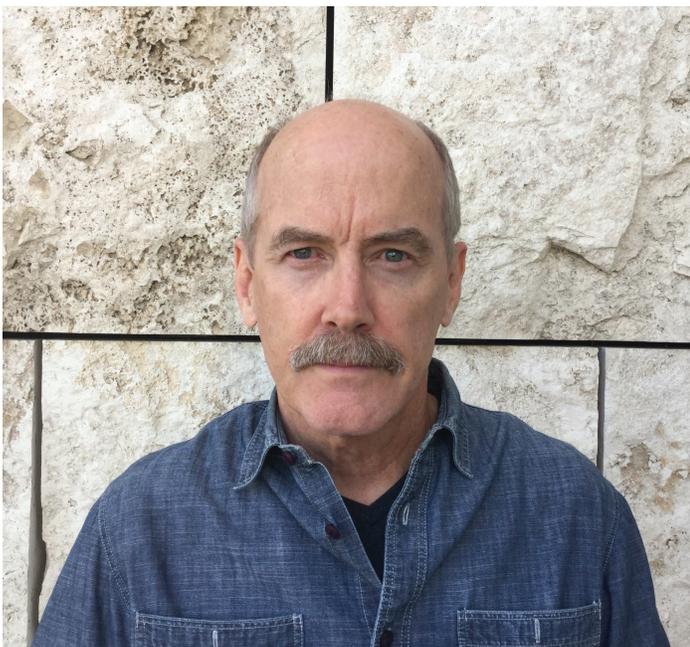
McKenzie taught drawing at the California Institute of the Arts from 1991-1994, and mixed media sculpture at the Heart Foundation from 1994-95.

In 1997 he joined the Antiquities Conservation staff at the J. Paul Getty museum, and presently holds the title of Senior Mountmaker for the department.

In 2007, McKenzie and his colleagues developed the Mountmaker's Forum to address the modern concerns of mountmaking for art objects. The Forum has continued to hold meetings since then every two years, and will hold its first meeting outside of the United States this year in London.

He has presented numerous papers outlining the Getty's broad approach to mountmaking for art and artifacts, including:

- The Getty Villa, Los Angeles 2006, 2008
- The Pera museum, Istanbul 2007
- The Museum of Western Art, Tokyo 2009
- The Smithsonian Museum, Washington DC 2010
- The Palazzo Steri, Palermo, Italy 2010
- Scripps College, Claremont Ca. 2011
- The Field museum, Chicago 2012
- The New Mexico History Museum, Santa Fe 2014
- The Natural History Museum, London 2015
- The American Archaeological Society, Vancouver 2016
- Yunnan Provincial Museum, Kunming China 2018



Mark Mitton gave a presentation at the first Mountmaking Forum at the Getty Villa in 2008, and at the Mountmaking Forum at the Field Museum in 2012. The 2008 presentation was later published in the AIC Journal 51 in 2012. He received a BFA from Otis Art Institute with an emphasis on sculpture. Upon graduation Mark went to work at the Southwest Museum in Los Angeles and did contract work for the Heard Museum in Phoenix, AZ and the Huntington Art Collection in San Marino, CA. Having worked for these institutions as a preparator and mountmaker Mark joined the Getty as a mountmaker in 1986. The scope of the work since then has involved the installation of the permanent collection at the Getty Center in 1997 and ongoing work on three-dimensional objects for exhibitions at the Center and Getty Villa. Mark is currently a Senior Mountmaker in the Decorative Arts and Sculpture Conservation Department at the J. Paul Getty Museum.



Monica Shah is the Director of Collections and Chief Conservator at the Anchorage Museum (2007-present). Previously, she operated a private conservation practice, working with a variety of museums and native corporations, including UA Museum of the North and Ukpeagvik Inupiat Corporation. She completed conservation internships at the Museum Conservation Institute, National Museum of the American Indian, UPenn Museum, and Vitenskapsmuseet (Trondheim, Norway). Monica is a graduate of the Winterthur-University of Delaware program in art conservation.