### AVANI SASTRY

### Austin, Texas | avanisastry@gmail.com

#### **EDUCATION**

Master of Arts in Art History, University of Texas, Austin

Anticipated Graduation: May 2024

Bachelor of Arts in Art History, Minor in History, Trinity University

Graduation: May 2021, summa cum laude

Honors Thesis: "Alternative Ethnographies: Negotiating Identity in the Photography of Mahtab Hussain"

Committee: Dr. Yinshi-Lerman Tan (chair), Dr. Jinli He

Visiting Student, University of Oxford, St. Catherine's College

October 2019 – June 2020

#### **PUBLICATIONS**

"The City in the Mist: Imagining Shanghai in Yang Yongliang's Phantom Landscapes," *The Journal of Art History and Museum Studies*, no. 1, Fall/Winter 2021, Polk Museum of Art.

#### **PRESENTATIONS**

"Out of the Struggle Will Come the Wave: Art of Anti-Caste and Black Liberation Movements in Conversation," Art Galleries at Black Studies seminar with Carrie Mae Weems, University of Texas, Austin, March 2023.

"To belong to a diaspora...': Crossing the *kala pani* and theorizing migrant's time with Suchitra Mattai's *Hermeneutics*," In/Out of Place, 19th Annual University of Oregon Graduate Symposium in the History of Art & Architecture, University of Oregon, Eugene, Forthcoming.

"Forgetting Ayodhya: Photography and Geographical Imagination in Vasantha Yogananthan's *Early Times*," Eleanor Greenhill Symposium, University of Texas, Austin, Forthcoming.

"Synthetic Anatomies: Highlights from the Permanent Collection Featuring Recent Gifts from Gabrielle Lurie," Mellon Undergraduate Curatorial Fellowship National Convening, Philadelphia Museum of Art, July 2020.

"Expanding India: Advocating for Diversity in the Arts of South and Southeast Asia," Mellon Undergraduate Curatorial Fellowship National Convening, High Museum of Art, July 2019.

"Imagining the Florentine Soldier: A Machiavellian Interpretation of Michelangelo's *Battle of Cascina*," Medieval and Renaissance Studies Colloquium, Trinity University, March 2019.

### WORK EXPERIENCE

#### Grader

August - December 2022

UT Austin, Austin, TX

- Graded writing exercises, exams, and essays for fifty-eight undergraduates enrolled in a mid-level Buddhist art survey
- Provided in-depth written feedback for students covering academic writing, religious studies, and South, East, and Southeast Asian art histories

Christie's, New York, NY

- Administratively supported multiple departments by corresponding with clients, facilitating specialist evaluations, assisting with condition reports, and maintaining client and object records in Christie's databases
- Wrote numerous lot essays for Indian, Himalayan & Southeast Asian Art, Contemporary Indian Art, and Modern and Impressionist auction catalogs
- Contributed provenance research, exhibition histories, bibliographies, and client research to auction catalogs
- Processed approximately five hundred newly acquired books for Christie's libraries by creating and maintaining digital records

## **Research and Interpretation Intern**

June - August 2021

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY

- Analyzed data and produced graphics for research report on docent programs (and their relationship to labor rights, diversity, and equity) at American museums
- Compiled research packets about ongoing American art exhibitions for tour guides
- Wrote stops for in-gallery audio guides used in upcoming exhibitions
- Proofread and provided feedback for curatorial and interpretive written materials

## **Mellon Undergraduate Curatorial Fellow**

August 2018 – August 2020

Museum of Fine Arts of Houston, Houston, TX

- Curated *Capturing the Subcontinent*, a two-year permanent gallery rotation juxtaposing selection from Huma Bhabha's *Reconstructions* portfolio with examples of historic and contemporary South Asian photography with accompanying online exhibition and audio guide
- Curated *Synthetic Anatomies*, a one-year permanent gallery rotation highlighting recent East Asian accessions, emphasizing artists who abstracted, distorted, or idealized the figure
- Developed and delivered two weekly public tours of the permanent Asian Art galleries to museum visitors, also developed an online exhibition to supplement one tour during lockdown
- Produced object labels, acquisition reports, and educational materials for the Asian Art department

### First Year Experience Peer Tutor

September – December 2019

Trinity University, San Antonio, TX

- Wrote and delivered lectures on film analysis, academic writing, and library research skills to first-year college students
- Provided feedback on all written assignments and tutored students who needed additional support with essay writing
- 100% of respondents to the peer tutor feedback survey agreed that "The peer tutor provided useful commentary on my classwork and assignments" and that "The peer tutor provided effective academic guidance and assistance."

#### HONORS AND AWARDS

### Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship

August 2022 - May 2023

- Full tuition scholarship and \$20,000 stipend awarded for one year of graduate study at University of Texas, Austin
- Supporting intensive online Kannada language study through the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS) and South Asian area studies coursework

## Andree F. Sjoberg Scholarship in Dravidian Languages and Studies

June - August 2021

• Full tuition scholarship to attend the South Asia Summer Language Institute (SASLI) for Kannada at University of Texas, Austin

## **Trinity University Tower Scholar**

September 2017 - May 2021

• Full tuition scholarship for four-year undergraduate degree

# **Coates Library Research Prize**

March 2021

• Received for "The City in the Mist: Imagining Shanghai in Yang Yongliang's Phantom Landscapes"

**Dean's List Scholar** 

Spring 2018, 2019, 2021

## First Year Experience Writing Award

April 2018

• Received for "A Legacy of Fear: The Fusion of Fascism, Futurism, and Cold War Mythologies in Nuclear and Spatialist Art"

## **Coates University Citation for Undergraduate Research**

April 2018

• Received for "A Legacy of Fear: The Fusion of Fascism, Futurism, and Cold War Mythologies in Nuclear and Spatialist Art"

# **Trinity University Scholar**

January 2018

• \$1,500 scholarship for academic achievement

#### LANGUAGES

Kannada: Proficient