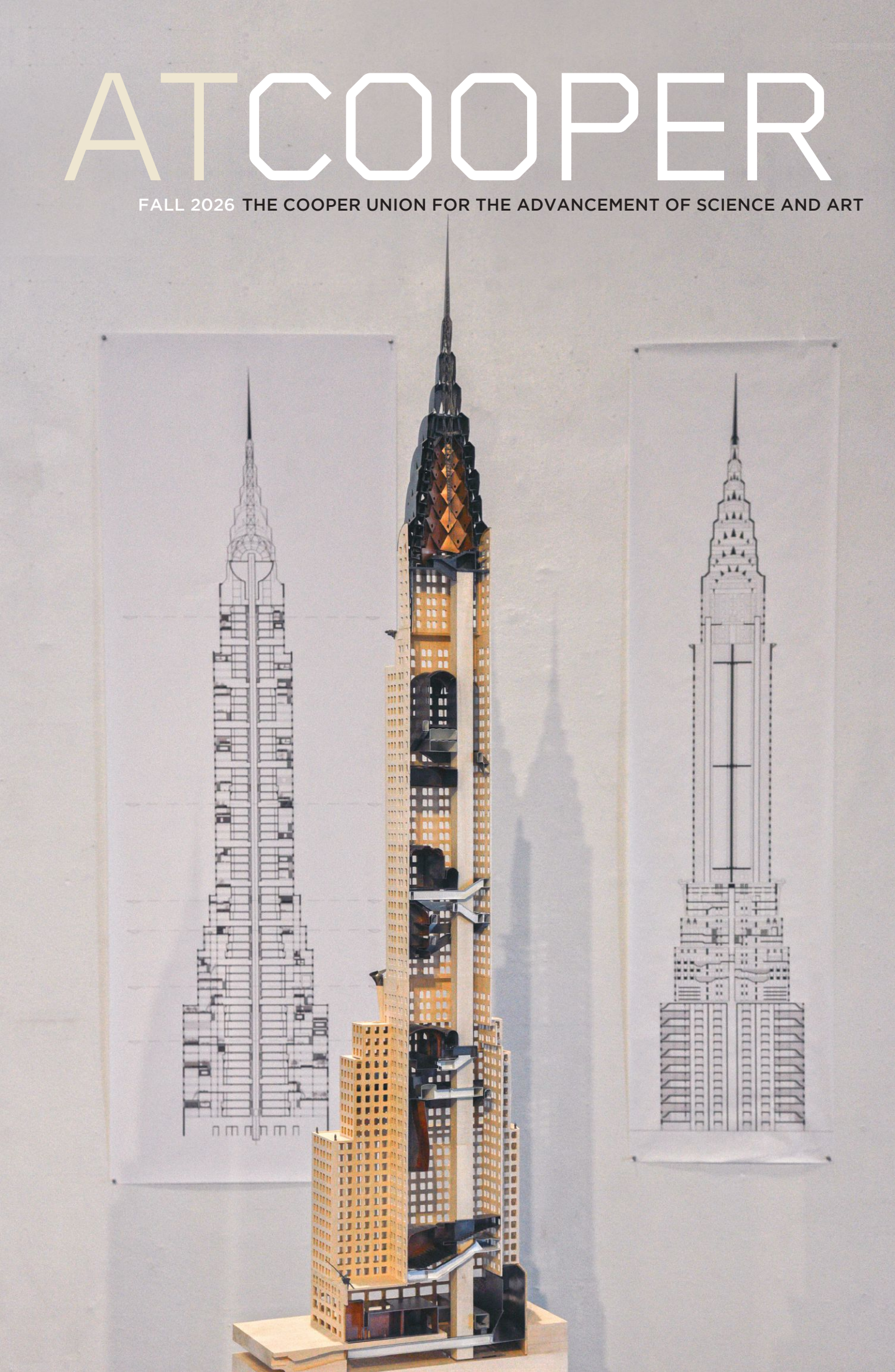
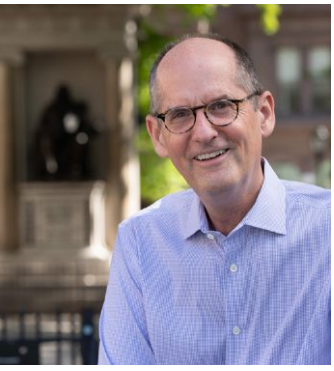
AT COOPER

FALL 2026 THE COOPER UNION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE AND ART





Leo Sorel

It never fails. In virtually every conversation I have about The Cooper Union, my takeaway usually centers on the power of this institution's mission. Whether I'm talking with students about their work, meeting alumni who remain connected to Cooper decades after graduation, or listening to faculty describe the ideas taking shape in their classrooms and studios, I hear a common conviction: What makes Cooper special is worth preserving, strengthening, and passing on to the next generation.

People care deeply about The Cooper Union because it stands for something larger than itself. Even those who are brand new to The Cooper Union story quickly resonate with it.

That kind of deeply meaningful position is extraordinary in the world of colleges and universities, and as stewards of all that Peter Cooper envisioned for his school, we have been busy this fall to continue the work of advancing and sustaining it for the future.

Chief among those highlights was the culmination of two years of work to finalize an agreement for the Chrysler Building ground lease. Our imperative was to identify a partner with a transformative plan for the iconic tower, a plan that would honor the building's history, reimagine its next chapter, and restore the ground lease as an enduring component of Cooper's overall financial picture and our plan to return to full-tuition scholarships for undergraduates. In October, we shared the news that we had achieved that kind of partnership. My thanks to the team of senior leaders, trustees, and legal and real estate advisors who got us across the finish line. Please read more on the next page and here.

Earlier this fall, I had the privilege of meeting with alumni, parents, and families as part of our inaugural All Cooper Weekend (page 6). I shared with them our commitment to work as "good ancestors." To me, that means ensuring that the Cooper community of the future will look back and say that we, all of us, prepared this place well for our students, that we restored free tuition and left behind an amazing college that was strong enough to stay that way.

Those are substantial ambitions, and we'll continue to need your support to achieve them. But as I've seen in my time here, the Cooper community prioritizes this place and our students again and again.

So, as we ready ourselves for the season of gratitude, I want to again say "thank you" for all that you do for The Cooper Union. You are helping us build a future worthy of Peter Cooper's legacy.

—STEVE MCLAUGHLIN, president

At Cooper | **Vol. LVI, No. 3, Fall 2026** | **Published by the Office of Communications** | **Cooper Square, New York, NY 10003**
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On the cover: Work by architecture students in Michael Young's Spring 2025 fourth-year Design IV option studio, Speculations on the Terminal Tower. Model: Miao (Miles) Xue AR'26 and Hao An (Nd) Yang AR'26. Photo: Laura Song AR'25.

A SHARED FUTURE FOR TWO NYC ICONS



The Cooper Union has finalized a ground lease agreement with Tishman Speyer for the Chrysler Building, supporting the institution's long-term financial planning, including the work to restore full-tuition scholarships for all undergraduates. Announced in October, the agreement includes the establishment of ground lease payments to The Cooper Union and ushers the landmark 77-story office tower into a new era of revitalization.

"The significance of this agreement is ultimately about what it makes possible for generations of Cooper Union students," said President Steven W. McLaughlin. "For more than a century, the Chrysler Building has helped sustain Peter Cooper's vision of opening access to education by removing financial barriers. We have a responsibility to be caretakers of that promise, to build upon it, and to leave Cooper stronger for those who come after us."

Cooper has owned the land on which the Chrysler Building was built since it was granted to the institution by Peter Cooper's children in 1902, providing a permanent source of financial support for the school's mission. The long-term ground lease to Tishman Speyer, which includes multiple global institutional investors with the Public Sector Pension Investment Board, forms part of an integrated financial plan to sustain that mission for future generations.

Cooper's leadership team and Board of Trustees selected Tishman Speyer following a rigorous process to consider the various opportunities that existed with the property to ensure that the college's long-term interests would be protected and the Chrysler Building would be responsibly stewarded for the future, with guidance from leading real estate and legal advisors. Plans for the building include restoration of its façade and distinctive crown, modernization of mechanical and electrical systems, and improvements to energy efficiency. Tishman Speyer will also work with Cooper to implement educational and curricular opportunities for faculty and students. ■

Read the full story here.

MEDIUMS OF REMEMBRANCE



Twenty-five years after the September 11 attacks, Cooper alumni continue to shape the ways we remember those who were lost.

A stunning re-creation of the Twin Towers soared above New York City this past September as 2,977 illuminated drones took to the sky, with one light for each person killed in the 9/11 attacks a quarter century ago. After dusk on September 9, the drones spiraled upward in a double helix before assembling into an image of the towers at full architectural scale. For Cooper alumni Shigeru Ban AR'84 and Dean Maltz AR'84, who served as artistic advisors on the anniversary tribute in partnership with Studio Drift, the display also brought to life a reimagining of the site of the World Trade Center.

Titled *2,977 Lights Over New York Harbor,* this year's installation drew upon an unbuilt proposal developed in 2002 by THINK, a collaborative team of architects whose vision for a World Cultural Center placed civic life rather than office space at the center of redevelopment. Its open latticework towers would have



risen around and above the original tower footprints without touching them, supporting cultural centers and public memorial spaces on its upper floors. The drones' ascent recalled those structures, briefly tracing the THINK team's civic proposition.

"Shigeru and I were part of this [THINK] team," says Maltz, managing partner of Shigeru Ban Architects. "After the drones rose in a spiral, they formed an image of Minoru Yamasaki's fallen Twin Towers before disappearing from the sky." The installation was illuminated twice as part of the commemoration.

Maltz also connects the movement and ephemerality of the lights to a Japanese tradition of remembrance. "The act recalls tōrō nagashi, the Japanese ritual that honors the departed with rice-paper lanterns lit with candles and floated downriver or out to sea, symbolizing the guiding of spirits to heaven," he explains.

The commemorative installation, which was scored with recorded music by Philip Glass, John Adams, and Max Richter, was created through a collaboration between artists, producers, and 9/11 families, survivors, and responders. "Like



Suffolk County 9/11 Memorial, also known as Gardens of Remembrance.



Barry Silberstang AR'67

the landscape of New York City, memory and understanding of history are also shaped by and reflect constant change. But art can help convey information, feelings, and understanding of past events from one generation to the next," says Brenda Berkman, an artist who worked on the project and served as a responder with the New York City Fire Department in 2001.

2,977 Lights was conceived in dialogue with another significant memorial that bears a Cooper Union connection: *Tribute in Light*. Julian LaVerdiere, a 1993 School of Art graduate, and fellow artist Paul Myoda worked with architects and arts organizations to create the tribute, first presented six months after the attack. Its paired columns of light, produced using 48-foot squares of high-powered xenon lamps, have since become an annual presence to mark September 11.

In February 2003, Memory Foundations, designed by 1970 Cooper architecture graduate Daniel Libeskind, was selected as the master plan for the World Trade Center site. Libeskind's proposal reserved half the site for public space, making room for remembrance within a rebuilt district of offices, shops, and transit connections. T. J. Gottesdiener AR'79, a managing partner at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, subsequently played a leading role in the architectural planning and design of One World Trade Center and 7 World Trade Center.

Cooper Union alumni have shaped sites of remembrance beyond Lower Manhattan as well. Architect Barry Silberstang, a 1967 graduate, designed the Suffolk County 9/11 Memorial on Long Island in dedication to 178 victims from the local community. Also known as Gardens of Remembrance, the memorial was dedicated in 2009 in Hauppauge's Armed Forces Park. Reports of victims whose remains had not been recovered prompted him to design a site where families and friends could mourn. Transparent panels carry the victims' names,

ages, and occupations, making up a chamfered square reminiscent of the Twin Towers' footprints and enclosing a garden that visitors can see but cannot enter.

"This space belongs only to the victims," Silberstang says. Planted with species native to Long Island, the interior of the memorial was intended to grow over time, registering the years left unlived by the victims and standing in contrast to the manicured lawns surrounding it. Seasonal changes alter the relationship between the planting and the inscribed walls, while uplighting makes the panels' edges and lettering visible at night. Families leave flowers and notes along the panels, which function in lieu of a headstone.

Silberstang studied with John Hejduk during his time at Cooper, and his student work appeared in the Museum of Modern Art's 1971 landmark exhibition *Education of an Architect: A Point of View*. "Cooper Union brought me here," Silberstang says of his career and practice.

Other Cooper alumni contributions began amid the recovery effort itself. Working at Ground Zero, structural engineer Jiri Boudnik AR'97 recognized that a scale model of the damaged World Trade Center basement could help engineers plan the excavation of debris. He and Elizabeth O'Donnell AR'83, now distinguished professor adjunct, oversaw more than 40 architecture students as they constructed a model of the complex's "bathtub" substructure from plexiglass, wood, and Styrofoam.

Through image-making as well, the Cooper community has remained inextricable from the collective memory of the city. Photographer Brian Rose, a 1979 School of Art graduate, documented the many changes in Lower Manhattan both before the attacks and in the years of construction that followed. His 2016 book *WTC* brings together four decades of photographs chronicling everyday life in relation to the site.

"*WTC* is a book about the Twin Towers, their presence and absence, and the rebuilding of the city after September 11," he writes. "It is also a tribute to New Yorkers and all who carry a piece of this great city with them." ■



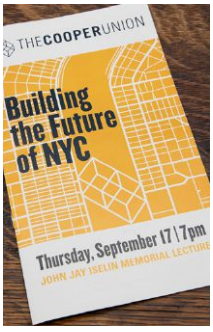
Elisabeth van der Heijden

World Trade Center "bathtub" model built by Cooper architecture students in 2001.

A NEW CAMPUS TRADITION

This year's inaugural All Cooper Weekend, held from September 17 to 19, brought alumni and friends together with students and their families for a memorable celebration of the full Cooper community. Combining reunion activities with Parents & Families Weekend, the celebration welcomed all generations of students and graduates, with special recognition given to the Class of 2024 and to reunion classes whose graduation years ended in 1 and 6. For many attendees, it was an opportunity to establish or rekindle a relationship with the institution.

"I was really pleased to be invited as a parent to the campus," said Marlene Dooley. "I thought the event, which included sitting in on classes and hearing professor-student discussions, seeing exhibitions, and attending receptions and a larger evening discussion in the Great Hall, was great and had a natural feel." Another Cooper parent, John Orrock, noted that, as a result of the weekend, "My wife and I feel more closely attached to and part of the school."



The weekend's kickoff event, Building the Future of New York City, welcomed three alumni speakers—representing each of Cooper's schools—in conversation around the complex factors of city planning, from affordability and policy to aesthetics and public space. New York City Council Member Shekar Krishnan BSE'06, artist David Brooks A'00, and architect Savina Romanos AR'10 each gave presentations and then sat down to speak with Liam Quigley of WNYC and *Gothamist*. The free public event was part of the John Jay Iselin Memorial Lecture series.







I to r: Shekar Krishnan BSE'06, Savina Romanos AR'10, and David Brooks A'00.
Below: Reporter Liam Quigley moderates the discussion.



Margret Long



All Cooper Weekend also featured President Steve McLaughlin's State of The Cooper Union address, providing an update on the institution's Plan to Return to Full-Tuition Scholarships, which was adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2018. "We are now upon a very important inflection point, an opportunity to truly galvanize as a community and fulfill Peter Cooper's promise for the next generation," said President McLaughlin.

He shared that progress remains on track in meeting the goals of the plan, with every Cooper student receiving a scholarship covering at least 50 percent of tuition—89 percent of tuition is covered on average—and more than half, including every senior through 2028, attending tuition-free. Along with increasing scholarships, Cooper's leadership team has prioritized strengthening the academic experience for students and creating opportunities to "move across disciplines and translate Cooper ideas into impact."

The president stressed that only with continued fundraising, which must increase by 10 percent each year, can Cooper restore free education while investing in long-term financial sustainability and operational resilience. "Cooper has a remarkable mission, a clear strategy, a committed leadership team, an amazing array of students, faculty, and staff, and a community capable of accomplishing what comes next," he told the audience. "Our responsibility is to make sure the next generation can say that we strengthened The Cooper Union, protected what mattered, and had the courage to do what was needed. That is the work ahead." *continued*



Michelle Biagi

President McLaughlin in conversation with students (l to r) Emma Janoff A'27, Angie Zuo AR'29, and Yali Afek ChE'29

Right: The State of The Cooper Union address.





As part of the lineup of events, guests had the opportunity to sit in on classes and lectures given by professors and librarians. Alumni and parents visited two Cooper exhibitions: *What Else Could It Mean?* about the work of architect James Wines, and *Guild & Greyshkul,* which included work by more than two dozen Cooper alumni (see page 16). Friday evening was set aside for informal gatherings organized by alumni according to class year, major, or shared interests.

All Cooper Weekend offered an especially warm homecoming for members of the Golden Legion, including the Class of 1976, celebrating its 50th reunion. From the Golden Legion Brunch to a dedicated hospitality lounge in the library, these distinguished alumni enjoyed opportunities to reconnect with classmates, revisit cherished memories, and celebrate a lifelong connection to Cooper.

The weekend culminated in a Saturday evening celebration at the National Arts Club. Attendees expressed appreciation for the welcoming atmosphere and opportunities to gather with fellow alumni throughout the weekend, reinforcing the spirit of Forever Cooper. ■



"Being able to hear the new president speak on current affairs, reconnect with the school, and build new connections all made for a very meaningful weekend." —Jaeyoung Byun, AR'14





Mia PressHan

Installation views of What Else Could It Mean? Drawings and Writings by James Wines & SITE





Opposite page, l to r: Lisa Norberg, director of the library, gives a tour; alumni gather in the Benjamin Menschel Civic Projects Lab

This page, clockwise from top left: Michael Young, dean of architecture, and Sue Ferguson Gussow A'56, professor emerita; Mason Webb A'24 and Yuri Masnyj A'98, associate dean of art; Ed Dineen ChE'76; Charles Scawthorn CE'66 and Nini Jensen; Kay and Ed Dineen ChE'76, Joann Darcy-Siegel ChE'81, and Arnold Siegel EE'81









Left: Golden Legion Brunch

Below: l to r: Vu, NgocAnh, and Thuy Nguyen, family members of a first-year student.



Right, clockwise, from top left: Deanna Kovalcin ME'16 and Peter Wang CE'16; Varsha Venugopal ChE'11, Paige Holland-Thielen ME'11, and Anitha Reddy CE'12; Ioanis Roumeliotis ME'01 and John Rossiello BSE'01; Ronald Frei CE'66, William McCutcheon CE'66, and Roger C. Tucker III A'74







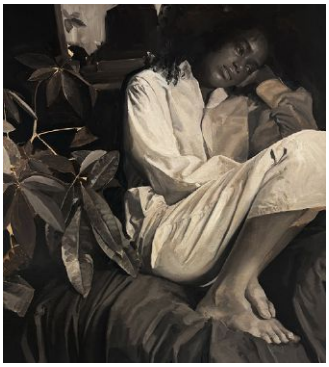


ONCOOPER



REMEMBERING JAY MAISEL A'52

PHOTOGRAPHER JAY MAISEL CREATED ICONIC IMAGES OF AMERICAN CULTURE AND MENTORED COUNTLESS ARTISTS



LUCY PAN A'26 HONORED AS EMERGING ARTIST

ONE OF 40 NAMED TO THE 2026 AXA ART PRIZE U.S. SHORTLIST



SUMMER EXPLORATION RESIDENCY

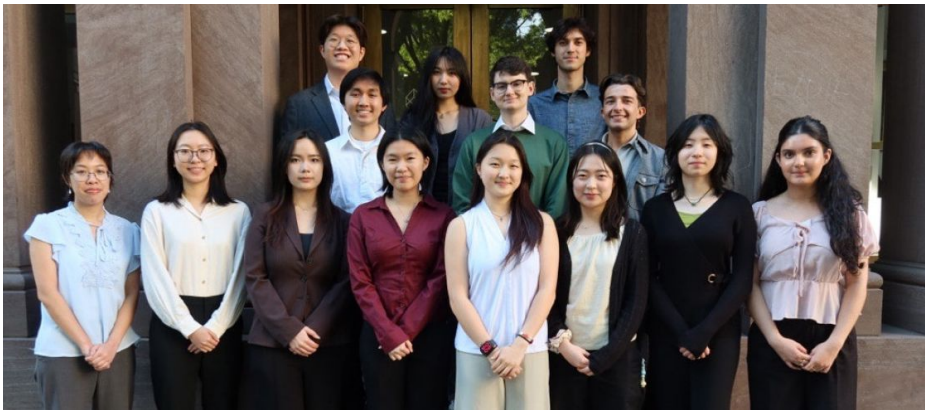
NINETEEN STUDENTS AND GRADS PARTICIPATED IN A NEW INITIATIVE TO FOSTER CREATIVE EXPLORATION



MEET COOPER'S NEW STUDENTS

INCOMING 2026

MEMBERS OF THIS YEAR'S INCOMING CLASS SHARE THEIR STORIES AND DISCUSS WHAT BROUGHT THEM TO COOPER

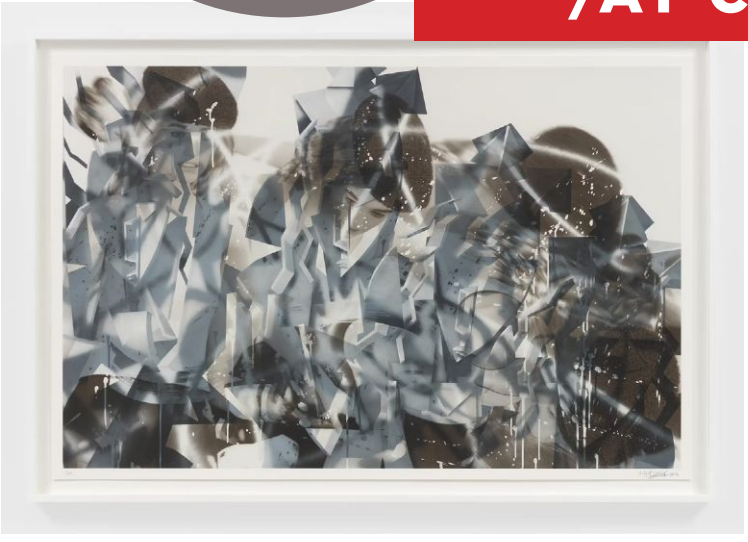


A WINNING DEBUT

COOPER STUDENTS SCORED PERFECT MARKS IN TWO CATEGORIES WITH THEIR FIRST-EVER ENTRY IN THE SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS COMPETITION

R DOT EDU

/AT-COOPER/FALL-26



LIMITED-EDITION PRINT TO SUPPORT COOPER

AVERY SINGER A'10 CREATED *ART STUDENT* (2026) IN GENEROUS SUPPORT OF COOPER SCHOLARSHIPS



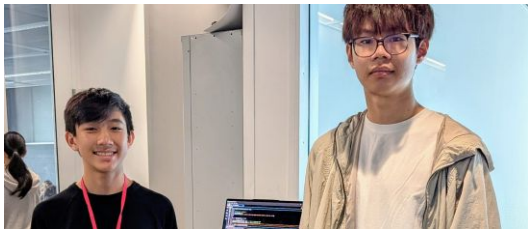
PRINTING BLACK AMERICA

WORK BY PROFESSOR WILLIAM VILLALONGO AND URBAN PLANNER SHRADDHA RAMANI ADDED TO MoMA'S PERMANENT COLLECTION



NORA AKAWI NAMED MANUCK DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR

THE TWO-YEAR APPOINTMENT ROTATES AMONG COOPER'S SCHOOLS



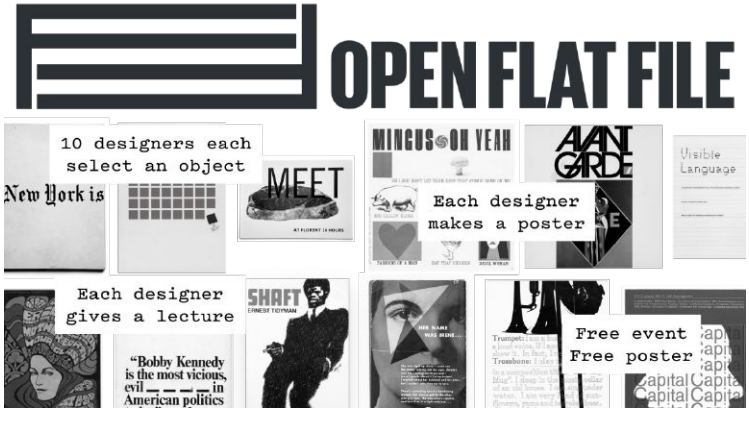
BILL MORRISON A'89 NEW FILM PREMIERES

SAWYER AVENUE, SUNDAY AFTERNOON SCREENED IN THE GREAT HALL



SUMMER STEM CONNECTIONS

HIGH SCHOOLERS WENT BEYOND BASIC CODING TO BUILD WIRELESSLY CONNECTED SYSTEMS





PRESERVING DESIGN HISTORY

THE HERB LUBALIN STUDY CENTER 40TH ANNIVERSARY LECTURE SERIES CONTINUES

COOPER TAKES TOP SPOTS AT 2026 EXO GAMES

STUDENTS PLACED FIRST FOR PRESENTATION AND SECOND OVERALL

Photos: Michelle Biagi A'24; Fernando Badillo A'26; Sarah Muehlbauer; Stephen Wilkes. Artwork: Lucy Pan, *Kia*, 2023, oil on wood, 40 x 30 inches

UNLOCKING PETER COOPER'S NEW YORK

A newly digitized collection of Peter Cooper's correspondence offers a unique view of the founder's life through his business dealings, political interests, and personal relationships. To make these handwritten documents easier to search and read, archivists from The Cooper Union Archives & Special Collections tested the capabilities of an AI-assisted transcription process.

The project began with a 2025 grant from the Metropolitan New York Library Council (METRO) to digitize and transcribe approximately three linear feet of the Erskine Hewitt collection of Cooper-Hewitt papers. Spanning from 1830 to 1880, the collection includes letters, speeches, and notes that document everything from Cooper's role in fighting corruption in Tammany Hall and overseeing construction of the Croton Aqueduct to giving heartfelt advice to his niece and scheduling his preferred "beach day" with friends.

Despite the significance of these materials for both The Cooper Union and New York City, the variable quality of handwriting in the letters has long presented a challenge for researchers. Cooper's archivists saw the grant as an opportunity to enhance the accessibility of the collection, especially at a time when cursive literacy is on the wane. But discussions with Backstage Library Works, the library's vendor, revealed that manual transcription would be time consuming and costly, limiting the work to a small fraction of the collection. As an alternative, Backstage proposed a pilot to evaluate transcription performed by Large Language Models (LLMs).

"We were interested in seeing the limitations of what AI could do," says Calista Donohoe, the digital collections and services librarian at Cooper who helped lead the project. She, along with college archivist Mary Mann, carefully weighed the practical and ethical implications of automation. "While we're very protective of privacy with alumni work and copyrighted materials contained in the archives, piloting new tools on this collection was an easier choice because Peter Cooper is such a public figure, and he was a public figure when he wrote these letters," says Mann.

Still, the archivists were cautious about the unforeseen implications of these materials being used to train proprietary models. Backstage developed a custom application programming interface for sharing data with external parties, with access to files restricted by account authorization. Roughly 5,000 digitized document scans were sent alongside a prompt to two different LLMs, with a third model evaluating the results.

"One dilemma we faced was balancing usability and accuracy," says Donohoe. "The letters are filled with spelling mistakes and oddities of 19th-century writing that the LLMs kept trying to correct." While the process yielded good results at

"At that period in life when men enter reluctantly upon untried schemes, and when they cling most tenaciously to their possessions, you generously consecrated the bulk of the fortune you had been patiently accumulating for half a century, to found the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art. An Institution that, in the present and in all after time, shall stand as a workingman's legacy to his countrymen, at once regal in magnitude and beneficent in design."

—A letter from graduates and students to Peter Cooper on his 80th birthday, February 12, 1871

a fraction of the time it would take to transcribe documents manually, it still required iteration and refinement guided by the archivists. They ultimately decided to represent irregularities, including crossed-out text and marginalia, with bracketed notation beside the text.

A related concern was that transcribed content could be stripped of its historical context. "The principle of provenance is the most important aspect of managing archival materials," says Mann. "We wanted to be sure that we were capturing accurate metadata." The archivists requested additional human review of information such as dates, names, addresses, and organizations captured from each page. That process of ensuring accurate metadata was perhaps most important for making the collection more discoverable.

"Digitization in itself is not enough of a goal," says Donohoe. "Our goal is always to use the resources we have to balance the enhancement of accessibility, use, and sustainability, each of which could have different requirements depending on the collection."

"We aim for thoughtful accessibility, and digitization made sense in meeting our criteria for these materials," adds Mann. "I'm extremely cautious about how AI is being used and what it means for archives, but I'm happy that we went through this experience because it was so educational, and it's important for us as archivists to understand these tools."

Last spring, the Cooper Union Library hosted an exhibition, titled *Unlocking Peter Cooper's New York,* that featured selected letters to and from Peter Cooper alongside transcribed text, inviting visitors to "glimpse the arc of New York City history through the lens of his long, eventful life." ■

Explore Peter Cooper's correspondence online at cooper.hykucommons.org

to the respect and admiration of your fellow citizens. How eminently, think, are these qualities enhanced by your munificence as a Philanthropist.

Keenly appreciating the great importance of practical scientific knowledge to the Industrial Masses, you determined to place such advantages within their reach, through a project conceived in youth, cherished through thrifty manhood, and consummated in the mellowness of age. At that period in life when men enter reluctantly upon untried schemes, and when they cling most tenaciously to their possessions, you generously consecrated the bulk of the fortune you had been patiently accumulating for half a century, to found The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art. An Institution that, in the present and in all after time, shall stand as a workingman's legacy to his countrymen, at once "royal in magnitude and beneficent in design".

The grand and solid success which has attended it in the past will be vastly strengthened and extended in the future by the crowning act of your life — your noble Birthday offering of One Hundred and Fifty Dollars to establish, in connection with the Institution, a valuable Reference and Lending Library.



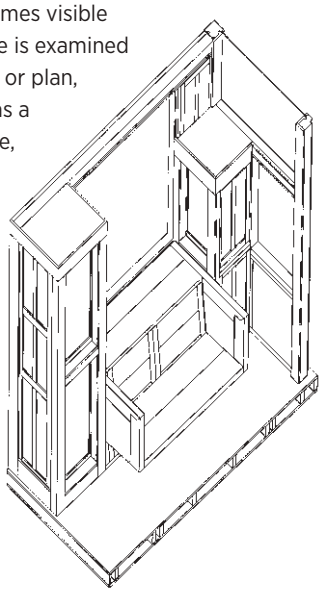
ON VIEW IN THE LIBRARY
ANATOMY OF A CORNER

The Cooper Union Library's fall 2026 exhibition, *Anatomy of a Corner*, features work created as part of Building Technology, taught by Samuel Anderson AR'82. The exhibition is curated by third-year architecture students Sara Carothers, Zekaiya Whittington, Vasily Chumakov, and Helena Uceda.



Central to the exhibition is a window and bench detail from the Fisher House, a project designed by architect Louis Kahn and built for Norman and Doris Fisher in 1967 in Hatboro, Pennsylvania. Documenting the reconstruction of a corner window fragment of the house at three-quarter scale, the exhibition highlights the students' architectural research, digital modeling, and eventual translation of Kahn's design into physical components for assembling a mockup while exploring interpretations of scale, construction logic, material, tolerance, and the craft of joinery.

The curatorial statement explains how the process of reconstruction furnished deeper understanding of the original design: "By moving between archive, digital model, shop drawing, and physical assembly, the project asks what becomes visible when a canonical work of architecture is examined not from the scale of the photograph or plan, but when its iconic corner is viewed as a standalone object. In the Fisher House, that shift in scale reveals something fundamental about Kahn's work: tectonics are generated through the ordering, joining, and making of the building itself. In doing so, it brings attention to the construction knowledge embedded within Kahn's architecture, including the decisions and labor of the craftsmen responsible for translating the drawings into a built work."



REVISITING AN INFLUENTIAL GALLERY



This fall, The Cooper Union hosted a group exhibition celebrating the New York City artist-run gallery Guild & Greyshkul. The influential downtown space, which operated from 2003 to 2009, was founded by School of Art alumni Anya Kielar A'02, Johannes VanDerBeek A'04, and Sara VanDerBeek A'98.

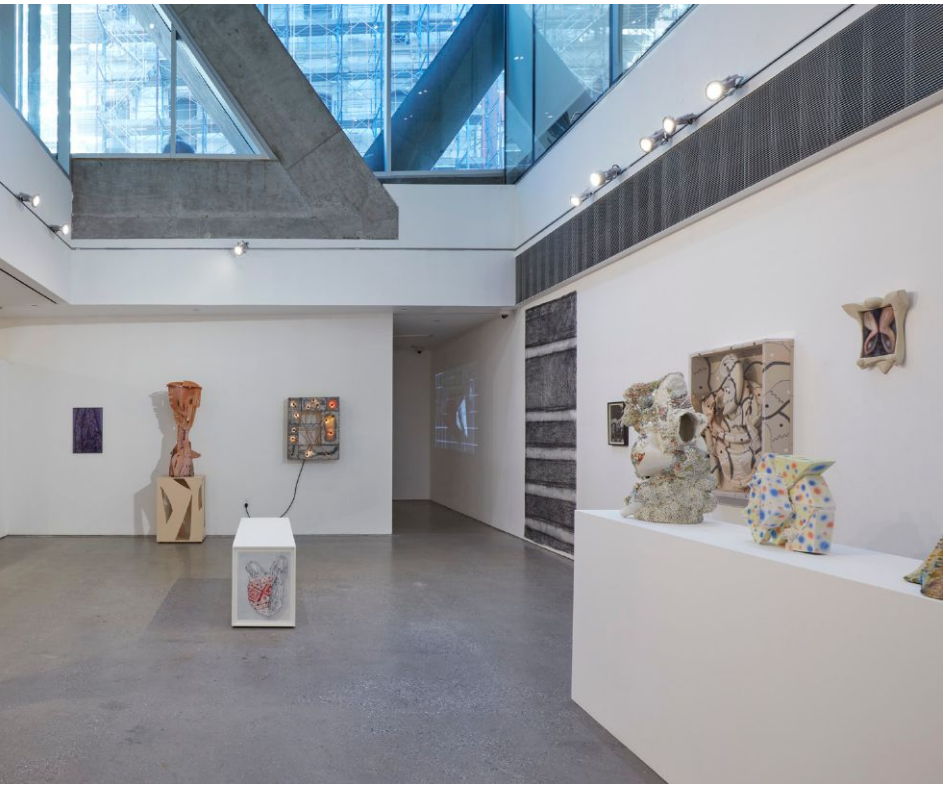
Located in the 41 Cooper Square Gallery, the exhibition included the work of more than 70 artists across visual arts, pedagogy, and digital media. It was organized by Kielar and the VanDerBeeks in cooperation with Adriana Farmiga A'96, dean of the School of Art, and Yuri Masnyj A'98, associate dean.

Guild & Greyshkul was run by artists who set out to create shows that emphasized the dialogue between exhibiting artists and the larger arts community. The venue acted as a shared studio space and a commercial gallery. In many cases, Guild & Greyshkul offered a space for emerging artists to have their first solo exhibition.

In a recent interview, Sara VanDerBeek described the philosophy behind Guild & Greyshkul: "This space should not just be a private studio space but should be one that supports our peers and engages with the public and these legacies of artists occupying spaces in these areas in Manhattan that were in transition." ■







Jason Wyche

PAT APATOWSKY
FIA BACKSTRÖM
EVER BALDWIN
SARAH BRAMAN
JOHN BIANCHI
CAMILLE BILLOPS
DAVID BROOKS A'00
ERNESTO CAIVANO A'99
SARAH CHARLESWORTH
SUSAN CIANCIOLO
ANNA CONWAY A'97
DEVON COSTELLO
SARA CWYNAR
BEN DEGEN A'98
LIZ DESCHENES
FRANCESCA DIMATTIO A'03
CHRIS DORLAND
TRENTON DUERKSEN A'02
AUSTIN EDDY
JOY EPISALLA
ADRIANA FARMIGA A'96
MAX GALYON
HOPE GANGLOFF A'97
SAM GORDON
SARA GREENBERGER RAFFERTY
TAMAR HALPERN
VALERIE HEGARTY
LENA IMAMURA A'08
BUTT JOHNSON
RYAN JOHNSON
MATT KEEGAN
ANYA KIELAR A'02
AARON KING A'05
FAWN KRIEGER
KITE & ALISHA B WORMSLEY
PREM KRISHNAMURTHY
SHIGEKO KUBOTA
ANDREW LAMPERT
BLAZE LAMPER A'05
MARGARET LEE
PAMELA LINS
MEG LIPKE
CASSANDRA MACLEOD
YURI MASNYJ A'98
OHAD MEROMI
AARON MORSE
SASHA NOE
KEN OKIISHI A'01 & NICK MAUSS A'03
MIRIAM PARKER
KAMAU AMU PATTON
FIERCE PUSSY
STEPHEN G. RHODES
KEITH RILEY
MARIAH ROBERTSON
HALSEY RODMAN
CARISSA RODRIGUEZ
AMANDA ROSS-HO
ANDREW ROSS A'11
JONATHAN ROTH
ROBIN SCHAVOIR
REBECCA SCHIFFMAN A'04
DANA SCHUTZ
MIKE SHEA
AVERY SINGER A'10
ANITA STECKEL A'51*
KIANJA STROBERT
CLÉO S NG MAI RICHEZ
KENNETH TAM A'04
MATEO TANNATT A'01
GWENN THOMAS A'68
ANTHONY TITUS AR'98
JOHANNES VANDERBEEK A'04
SARA VANDERBEEK A'98
STAN VANDERBEEK A'56
RYAN WALLACE
MAX WARSH
GARTH WEISER A'03
ALISHA B WORMSLEY
RYAN MULLER / B. WURTZ
CARRIE YAMAOKA
DUSTIN YELLIN
YELENA YEMCHUK
JINGGE ZHANG

DESIGN LED BY COMMUNITY

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY DESIGN COURSE CONNECTS COOPER STUDENTS WITH HOUSING ADVOCATES IN THE EAST VILLAGE



Last year, a group of 21 engineering and architecture students collaborated on a speculative proposal for a real-world design challenge issued by New York City: to convert an underused NYPD parking lot into affordable housing for the East Village. The Cooper students consulted with industry experts, government representatives, and community leaders. Among them was Valerio Orselli, a housing advocate and project director for This Land Is Ours Community Land Trust, the organization ultimately selected by Mayor Zohran Mamdani's administration as a development partner for the site.

The opportunity to learn from local professionals is a key part of the Building Design Collaborative, a new Vertically Integrated Project (VIP) course offered jointly by Cooper's schools of architecture and engineering. The course revives aspects of a previous VIP course organized around the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon—now defunct due to federal funding cuts—by allowing students at different stages of their education to pursue a shared project across multiple semesters and focus on a local site or design problem.

MEET THE FACULTY

The Cooper Union welcomed six new full-time faculty members at the start of the 2026–27 academic year, bringing a varied range of expertise to support curricula in the Albert Nerken School of Engineering and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Click on each of the faculty names to the right to learn more about their research and approaches to teaching.



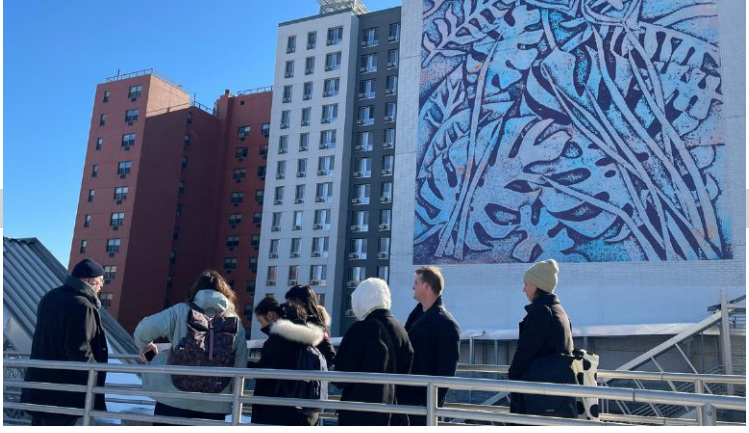
LALI DEVADAS
Assistant Professor
Computer Science

"I'm very happy to be teaching classes in the fall where I can get to know my students. … Based on everything I've heard and seen about Cooper students, they are endlessly curious."



LUKE EVANS
Assistant Professor
Computer Science

"I feel that science is an inherently creative process and that Cooper Union really exemplifies this. It's a unique opportunity to help start a new department, and I'm happy to take part in that adventure with the students in and around computer science."

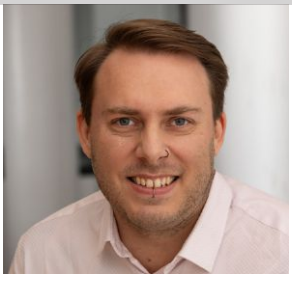




For the 2025–2026 academic year, students in the Building Design Collaborative worked from an actual request for proposals to bring affordable housing to 324 East 5th Street, just a few blocks from Cooper. They were tasked with navigating a range of socio-ecological factors and challenges related to design and construction in New York City, from zoning and regulation to meeting community needs, conducting a climate analysis, and incorporating passive design principles.

Faculty advisors Melody Baglione, David Wootton, and Cosmas Tzavelis from engineering, with Tommy Schaperkotter, Katie Lau, and Pamela Cabrera AR'12 from architecture, guided the students' work, while external reviewers, including Orselli and several Cooper alumni and guest faculty, provided feedback on midterm and final design presentations in each of the two semesters. As part of their research, the class toured two other affordable housing sites: Melrose North, a project in the Bronx being led by alumnus Sean Flynn A'81, and Freedom Village, which was the focus of Cooper's 2022 Solar Decathlon entry. Students also shared their work at the 2026 Loisaida Festival.

In July, Mayor Zohran Mamdani announced This Land Is Ours would be part of the team transforming the East 5th Street parking lot into The Aurea, a mixed-use development that will provide the neighborhood with 131 affordable units, a senior center, and community spaces. ■



PHILLIP HAGEN
Assistant Professor
Electrical Engineering

"I am most excited to work directly with Cooper students and to learn how they approach difficult engineering problems. In my courses, I emphasize understanding why a circuit or system behaves as it does, rather than treating equations as procedures to memorize."



JANE'A JOHNSON
Visiting Assistant Professor
History and Theory of Art

"We're very fortunate at Cooper to be near some of the most expansive museum collections in the entire world, and also some smaller cultural gems that are collecting in totally different ways. I intend to make good use of that proximity."



AARON W. LANGHAM
Assistant Professor
Electrical Engineering

"I'm excited to connect students' grasp of theory and engineering intuition with the physical world. … Data-driven engineering techniques are more relevant than ever, but I believe that understanding how the physical systems in our world generate that data helps make well-rounded engineers."



AMNA LIAQAT
Assistant Professor
Computer Science

"Whether I'm designing educational technologies for children, creating systems that help immigrant families share stories across generations, or developing tools that support teaching, I'm motivated by the same question: How can we design technology that brings people together and enriches the human experience?"

SUPPORT COOPER

TAX-WISE GIVING | WHAT'S NEW

Stay on top of changes in tax rules to help your money go further. Consider giving through a Donor-Advised Fund, IRA, or appreciated stock to save on out-of-pocket costs.

FOR NON-ITEMIZERS: Beginning for tax year 2026, non-itemizers may deduct $1,000 in charitable giving to eligible organizations ($2,000 if married and filing jointly).

IRA CHARITABLE ROLLOVER: For tax year 2026, donors 70 or older may transfer up to $111,000 directly from an IRA to The Cooper Union, tax-free. If you're subject to Required Minimum Distributions, it counts towards your RMD. Married couples may each donate up to the individual limit.

DONOR ADVISED FUND: Recommend a grant to The Cooper Union through your family's Donor Advised Fund. Cooper's EIN is 13-5562985.

For instructions and account details, visit cooper.edu/other-ways-to-give or email us at development@cooper.edu.

Be sure to consult your financial advisor to determine what's best for your household's situation.

CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS: EXPLORE WHAT COOPER CAN OFFER

Partnerships with companies and organizations are one way The Cooper Union generates meaningful impact for our students. Our Corporate Partnerships team can help you develop customized, mutually beneficial opportunities that connect industry with Cooper's exceptional talent, rigorous professional education, and culture of innovation.

Whether you're looking to establish a new partnership or develop an existing relationship, we invite you to connect with us and explore what we can accomplish together in one of the following areas:

- Recruitment
- Event Sponsorship
- Matching Gifts
- Applied Research
- Student Competitions
- Employee Engagement and Volunteerism
- Equipment and In-Kind Donations



For more information about these and other opportunities related to partnerships, career development, and employer resources, contact Richard Baidal, senior director of corporate partnerships and strategic events, at richard.baidal@cooper.edu.

#COOPERMADE

GRADUATES OF THE LAST DECADE (G.O.L.D.)

The latest installment of #COOPERMADE features the accomplishments of three Graduates of the Last Decade, exploring the impact of their work and the lessons from Cooper that continue to inspire them five or ten years after they walked across the Great Hall stage.

Click on the three G.O.L.D. profiles below to read more.

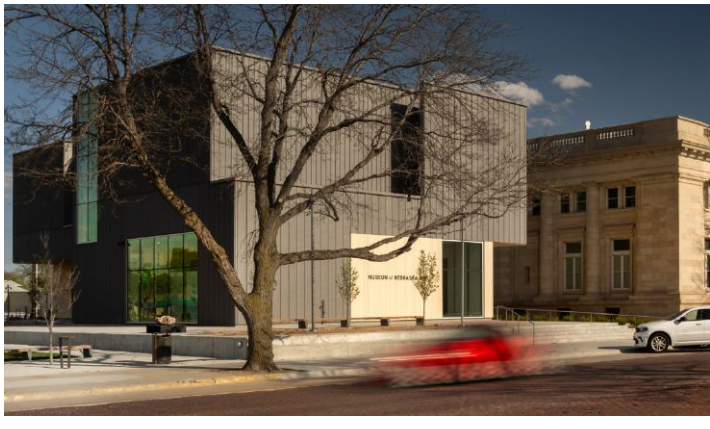
SEDRICK CHISOM A'16

Chisom's complex, often unsettling paintings inhabit narrative worlds that seem to precede and exceed the canvas: worlds populated by figures whose histories are only partially available, and situations in which the viewer must determine what has happened, who is implicated, and where they themselves stand.



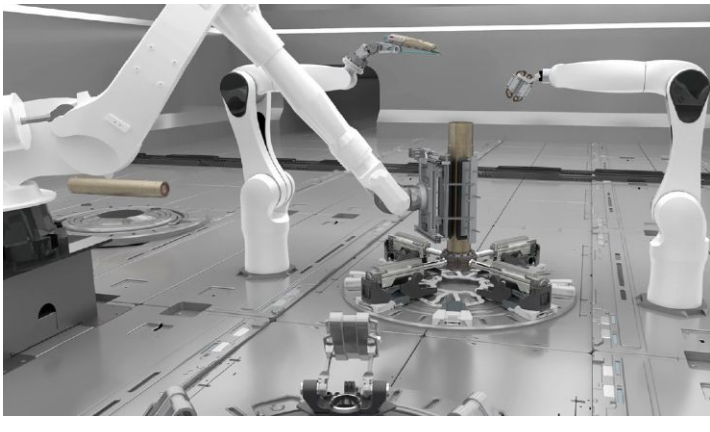
ZHENIA DEMENTYEVA AR'21

Dementyeva has degrees in architecture and engineering, but the best word to describe her work might simply be "translator." As a client representative at MAASS, an architectural consulting firm founded by Cooper alumnus Jon Maass AR'97, she works with architects, builders, clients, engineers, and other consultants to make sure everyone's objective is clearly communicated.



CHRIS MIGNANO ME'21

What if the next place to get a heart isn't a hospital, but outer space? It sounds like science fiction, but Chris Mignano is already thinking about what it would take to make that kind of future possible. Imagine a patient in need of a heart with only days to live. In the future, she could be saved by a heart 3-D printed in zero gravity.



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When you support the annual fund, your gift directly strengthens Cooper scholarships, access, and the student experience. Multiply the impact of your giving by participating in this special opportunity. Cooper's "Early Give" window runs through November 30—help us drive momentum!

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