

ARTH 594. The Museum. Spring 2013. Prof.: Carol Mattusch
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 Office hours Thurs 2-4 or by appointment

THE MUSEUM is a study of the history of public and private museums. We will concentrate on classical influences in the formation of modern museums, on classical architecture for museums, national galleries, museums as treasuries of culture and of cultures, collections of classical art, and on issues of repatriation. We will explore controversies relating to museum acquisitions and to the looting of cultural property. We'll also consider cabinets of curiosity, university museums and collections, and curatorial issues. Visits to museums in the Washington, D.C., area are required. Classes will consist of lectures, reports, and discussion.

Assigned readings are to be completed before the class for which they are listed on the syllabus.

Books:

- Carol Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums*.
- Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny, *Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture 1500-1900*.
- Susan Woodford, *The Art of Greece and Rome*.
- Lawrence Weschler, *Mr. Wilson's Cabinet of Wonder*.

You are expected to read all the assignments before the date for which they are assigned and to participate in the discussion of every one of them. You are responsible for all material discussed and presented in class. Read carefully and think about how best to start the discussion when I ask you to do so.

Participation in class discussion is a primary aspect of the work for this course.

Please do not talk privately or use any electronics at all during class unless requested to do so. Be sure that your cell-phone is turned off throughout each class.

Each of you will present an illustrated 20-minute **report with discussion** (10 min.) on the topic for which you have signed up (20 points). In your report, focus on a specific problem, considering the facts of the case and the bias of your sources; take a critical stand. Be sure to cite specific evidence/material in support of your argument. Each of you will also lead the discussion of your topic. Dates for your short presentations will be decided once you have chosen your topics.

Individual Report Topics: Choose one on the hand-out and write your name beside the topic. In each case, identify the person/museum/dealer, outline the **one problem** that you've chosen (in many cases it should have to do with antiquities, but if you have a question about this, ask me), and then analyze the larger issue/s involved. Plan to spend about 20 minutes on the report; lead class discussion for 10 minutes; hand out an outline and brief bibliography on the topic (not just websites). Many of you may find the following books to be of use: Jason Felch and Ralph Frammolino, *Chasing Aphrodite: The Hunt for Looted Antiquities at the World's Richest Museum* (2011); and Sharon Waxman, *Loot: The Battle over the Stolen Treasures of the Ancient World* (2009).

Collectors' problems – all topics related to antiquities:

Michael Steinhardt
 Barbara Fleischman
 Shelby White
 Andrew Mellon
 Elie Borowski
 Arnold-Peter Weiss
 J. Paul Getty

Museums' problems:

National Museum of the American Indian
 Albright-Knox Museum
 American Numismatic Society
 Cleveland Museum of Art
 Virginia Museum of Fine Arts
 NRA Museum
 Ancient Corinth
 Metropolitan Museum of Art
 Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts

Dealers' problems – antiquities:

Christie's
 Sotheby's
 Merrin Gallery
 Robert Haber
 Jerome Eisenberg
 Robin Symes
 Giacomo Medici

House-museum problems:

Monticello
 Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum
 Barnes Foundation

Two Short Papers:

You will need to make at least 2 individual field trips to museums in Washington (Hirshhorn and National Gallery) and in Baltimore (Walters Art Museum) and write short analytical papers (5 pages maximum, 10 points each) on each topic.

Due Feb. 28. Politics in D.C. museums: Ai Wei Wei exhibition at the Hirshhorn (through Feb. 24); Michelangelo's David/Apollo at the National Gallery of Art (through March 3).

Due April 18. Baltimore: Cabinet of Wonder at the Walters Art Museum vs. Lawrence Weschler on David Wilson's Cabinet of Wonder

A midterm writing assignment (20 points – max. 5 pages) may include summaries and critiques of readings, questions about class lectures/discussions.

Group report: Choose a museum from the list for a group report and discussion, 5 or 6 of you signing up for each one (I will pass out a list) and collaborating on the project and the report: National Museum of the American Indian; Baltimore Museum of Art; Museum of the Shenandoah, Winchester; Arlington Arts Center; National Capitol.

In your group report, consider the organization that you've chosen in each of the following categories (as relevant or appropriate): facility; collection; education; conservation; exhibition; interpretation; staff; outreach; development. Analyze and discuss, soliciting participation by the whole class.

Class **participation** will count approximately 30 points.

Grades:	A+ rare	A	99-95	A-	94-90
	B+ 89-87	B	86-83	B-	82-80
	C+ 79-77	C	76-73	C-	72-70

Individual report – 20 points

Due March 7: Midterm writing – 20 points

Due Feb. 28 and April 18: 2 Museum papers – 20 points each

May 2: Group reports: 10 points

Preparation and class participation – 30 points

TENTATIVE SYLLABUS: all changes and additions will be announced in class.

Thurs. Jan. 24. Introduction: The Museum World: What is it?

Jan. 31. Background: The Classical World.

Read: Woodford, *The Art of Greece and Rome*.

Feb. 7. Ancient collections; modern exhibitions.

Suggested readings: *Pompeii and the Roman Villa* or some other exhibition catalogue on an ancient subject; and D. E. Strong, "Roman Museums," in *Archaeological Theory and Practice*, ed. D. E. Strong, London and NY: 1973, 247-264.

Feb. 14. Introduction to the Art Museum; Vatican and Capitoline museums.

Read: Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals*, Introduction and chapter 1, pp. 1-20; Haskell and Penny, *Taste and the Antique*, Introduction and chapters 1 – 4, pp. xiii-xvi and 1-30.

Feb. 21. Florence and Naples.

Read: Haskell and Penny, chapters 6-10, pp. 38-78

Feb. 28. The Louvre.

Read Duncan chapter 2, pp. 21-47.

Paper on politics in 2 D.C. museums due in class.

Midterm writing question to be distributed in class.

March 7. The Ashmolean and the British Museum.

Reading to be assigned

Midterm writing due at class (max. 5 pages).

March 14. Spring Break.

March 21. Plaster casts and copies: the Smithsonian, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, GMU.

Read Haskell and Penny, chapter 5, pp. 31-37, and chs. 11-15 pp. 79-124.

March. 28. Art in America: the Metropolitan Museum of Art; the Corcoran.

Read Duncan ch. 3, pp. 48-71; read on-line news accounts of the problems with the Corcoran.

April 4. The Smithsonian vs. the National Gallery of Art

Reading: find and read a selection of books (such as biographies of Smithson and Mellon), articles, and promotional pieces by each of these museums and be prepared to compare and contrast their histories, collections, sizes, goals, research, outreach, politics, scandals, and opinions of themselves.

April 11. Private museums: Naples, California, Sarasota and beyond.

Read Duncan ch. 4, "Something Eternal: The Donor Memorial" pp. 72-101; Umberto Eco, "Travels in Hyperreality".

April 18. Cabinets of Wonder.

Read Lawrence Weschler, *Mr. Wilson's Cabinet of Wonder*.

By now you will have visited the "Chamber of Wonders" at the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore.

Written assignment for today: Compare and contrast the WAM's "Chamber of Wonders" with Weschler on Mr. Wilson's Cabinet of Wonder.

April 25. The Getty Museum and collections.

Read: Hugh Eakin, "Treasure Hunt: The downfall of the Getty curator Marion True," *The New Yorker* Dec. 17, 2007.

May 2. Last class. What is a museum? Group reports and discussion of the following, 30 minutes each:

National Museum of the American Indian;

Baltimore Museum of Art;

Museum of the Shenandoah, Winchester;

National Sporting Library and Museum, Middleburg

National Capitol

May 9: Save this time slot in case we need it for reports.

Group discussions/reports on last day of class: 5 sign up for each one.

National Museum of the American Indian

Baltimore Museum of Art

Museum of the Shenandoah, Winchester

National Sporting Library and Museum, Middleburg

National Capitol

Individual report topics: sign up for *only one*. Dates will be decided by next week.

Collectors' problems – on topics related to antiquities:

Michael Steinhardt
Barbara Fleischman
Shelby White
Andrew Mellon
Elie Borowski
Arnold-Peter Weiss
J. Paul Getty

Museums' problems – not necessarily related to antiquities:

National Museum of the American Indian
Albright-Knox Museum
American Numismatic Society
Cleveland Museum of Art
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts
NRA Museum
Ancient Corinth
Metropolitan Museum of Art
Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts

Dealers' problems – antiquities:

Christie's
Merrin Gallery
Robert Haber
Jerome Eisenberg
Robin Symes
Giacomo Medici

House-museum problems:

Monticello
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Barnes Foundation