

ARTH 394-001 The Museum

Fall 2011 Mondays/Wednesdays 3:00-4:15 P.M. Innovation Hall 206

Professor Ellen Wiley Todd

Robinson B336 (703) 993-4374 etodd@gmu.edu (BEST CONTACT)

Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:00-3:30 Wednesdays 12:30-2:00 and by appointment

Course prerequisites: Completion (or near) of general education requirements, especially ENGH 302 and two 300-level courses in ART HISTORY

**THIS COURSE FULFILLS THE FINE ARTS SYNTHESIS REQUIREMENT
IN GENERAL EDUCATION**

Synthesis goal: (Paraphrased, GMU Catalog) The purpose of the synthesis course is to provide students with the opportunity to bring together the knowledge, skills and values gained from the general education curriculum. Synthesis courses strive to expand students' ability to master new content, think critically, and develop learning skills across the disciplines. Upon completing a synthesis course, students will be able to:

1. Communicate effectively in both oral and written forms, applying appropriate rhetorical standards (e.g., audience adaptation, language, argument, organization, evidence, etc.)
2. Using perspectives from two or more disciplines, connect issues in a given field to wider intellectual, community or societal concerns
3. Apply critical thinking skills to:
 - a. Evaluate the quality, credibility and limitations of an argument or a solution using appropriate evidence or resources.

INTRODUCTION/COURSE STRUCTURE: This course examines selectively the history, purposes/functions, issues, critiques, and controversies surrounding the museum. Our lenses will be both practical and theoretical. We will work through lectures, videos, readings, extensive in-class discussions, site reports, and exhibition reviews of art, artifacts, and installations at a variety of Washington-area museums. Our goals are to understand how and why museums have come into being, how they work, what audiences they serve, and the controversies they generate. More broadly we ask how institutional demands and exhibition practices shape the public understanding of art, culture, and society. Because this is an art history course, many of our case studies emphasize art museums, but we also have readings on other museum types. Moreover, changing practices at museums over time have been part of the critique of exhibition display at art museums.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Knowledge: To develop a more historical/contextual understanding of the museum as a public institution. This field has grown enormously in the last decade and the bibliography provides ample opportunity for additional exploration.
2. Skills: The course will emphasize visual analysis and interpretation, critical reading skills, and descriptive and analytical writing. In addition you will work on group interaction in discussion--a "real-world" skill that you can take anywhere.
3. Museum-going: We live in one of the best areas in the country for taking this course. Museum visits are an essential requirement. You can expect to make at least three to four trips into Washington, and you may need more depending on your own schedule and projects. The more you can go, the more you will learn. I have given you two classes off as "comp time" for these visits (Tuesday October 11 and Monday Nov. 7).

4. This is a reading, thinking, writing, discussion kind of course--not a lecture/exam course. You need to be prepared to be involved and engaged at these levels (see course requirements below). Most of all, you need to do all the reading and be prepared to discuss it on the day for which it is assigned. If you cannot make these kinds of commitments, and the course is not a requirement, you should not be enrolled.

READING: (Required)

- *Carol Duncan. *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums* (Routledge: 1995)
- *Alan Wallach. *Exhibiting Contradiction: Essays on the Art Museum in the United States* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1998))
- *Danny Danziger. *Museum: Behind the Scenes at the Metropolitan Museum* (Penguin: 2008)
- *Janet Marstine. *New Museum Theory and Practice* (Blackwell: 2008)

**Additional readings will be available as indicated on Blackboard (BB)—and JSTOR/online A note on the reading. Some of the readings will be fairly extensive and for the most part we will be giving our reading close attention in class discussion with reading questions on the first quiz. At the risk of airing the obvious cliché, you'll get out of it what you put into it.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Exams: You will have a Quiz on Duncan/Wallach and Lectures. There are no other exams.

Written Work: This will consist four assignments: three museum-based papers (Due Sept. 19, Nov. 9 and Nov. 28). One final "design your own museum" project is due on Blackboard the Monday following the last day of classes (December 12). You will receive separate handouts for each of these assignments.

Participation: In-class discussion of key readings is central to the course. In addition, you will work on two group-based participation projects. The first will be on Danziger's Museum, the second on museum websites, both for in-class discussion. I will divide you into groups for each of these assignments.

Attendance: It is the stated policy of the university that "students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register." Because of the direct visual and intellectual engagement required by the material, attendance is essential to the learning process and the art history department feels strongly about adherence to this policy. I consider it mandatory except for illness, and a matter of courtesy to your fellow students. Those who fail to attend class regularly should not have unreasonable expectations about their final grade. By the same token, tuition payment and showing up does not automatically earn you a good grade.

Electronic Mail: Everyone must have a George Mason e-mail account that has been activated. I will only use these addresses, so if you want to use another email provider, activate your GMU account and have it forwarded. Use either the existing "MEMO" system or a new "MASONLIVE" account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See <http://masonlive.gmu.edu> for more information.

NOTE ONE: Some written work may be submitted in paper form. Other written work will be submitted electronically onto blackboard.

NOTE TWO: Please turn off all cell phones and put them entirely away before entering the classroom. This is to prevent the temptation of texting in class. If you need to complete a phone call or text before class begins, please do it in the hallway.

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| Grading: | Quiz | 10% | |
| | NGA/American Hall of Wonders Paper | 15% | |
| | African Art—Freer/Sackler Paper | 15% | |
| | Stein/Warhol Paper | 20% | |
| | Final Project | 25% | |
| | Participation: | <u>15%</u> | = 100% |
| | (Class Summary-- | | |
| | Presentations/attendance) | | |

We have pluses and minuses as indicated below (there is an A-, B+ and B-, and C+ and a C-). You will earn some form of numerical grade so you will always have a clear indication of where you stand. Good papers will include a thesis, and claims supported by examples, and evidence from relevant readings and images. All written work will be graded on grammar, style, content, organization, and clarity. Spellcheck, proofread, and paginate all papers before submitting them.

A 93-99%; A- 90-92% This is awarded for superior understanding of all concepts, an original or imaginative thesis, sophisticated interpretation and style and impressive presentation (no faults of organization, no errors of grammar, syntax, or spelling); imaginative projects that go beyond the assignment, and insightful class participation. For surprising me. I will not be using the A+ grade unless you write a publishable paper.

B+ 87-89%; B 83-86%; B- 80-82% This indicates above average mastery of the material, clear and well-produced and thoughtful written presentation and this range falls somewhere between leaning either toward A at the top, or C at the bottom.

C+ 77-79%; C 72-76% This is for average or merely adequate work, rudimentary understanding of factual material and just competent written presentation. Papers in this range usually exhibit errors in grammar and style, problems with logic, failure to correctly annotate quotations, unimaginative (pedestrian) arguments, careless errors. I recommend the writing center for C papers.

C- 70-71% D=60-69% This suggests less-than-satisfactory preparation of factual material and poor written work--minimum effort and writing problems that require follow-up from a writing center tutor. If C- is a final grade it counts the same as a D. Only 12 hours of this work can be included toward graduation

F=59 and below. Unacceptable as college level work, with serious writing problems requiring intensive help.

0= work not handed in on time (see me for problems)

In order to receive a grade for the course, all work must be completed. If you fail to turn in the papers or the final project or provide a legitimate excuse to arrange for a makeup you will not receive a passing grade, no matter what your other grades. I do this to be fair, so that everyone is submitting the same amount of work to get a grade for the course. Paper-form papers are due at the beginning of class on the due date, not in my mailbox, and not later in the day. Electronically submitted papers should be there by 6 PM on the due date.

Unexcused late papers will be downgraded 5 points a day. If there are problems or if you need a moderate extension because of illness, contact me before the assignment is due, we will make suitable arrangement. MAKE UP POLICY FOR paper submission: **In order to be

allowed to submit a late paper because of illness, you must notify me or the department office before the scheduled due time. Medical problems do occur. I will expect a physician's excuse. Call (703) 993-1250 and leave a message with the secretary or on voice mail, or call me at (703) 993-4374. **It is always easiest and best to reach me by email.** Absolutely no work except the final project will be accepted after the last day of class (Friday Dec. 9).

Academic Integrity/Honor Code: GMU is an honor code university. Please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. Cheating, plagiarism are expressly forbidden. For quick reference, plagiarism can be defined as: (1) presenting as one's own the words, work, or opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgement or (2) borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgement. Every single "direct" quote must be footnoted, even if you use the author's name in a sentence. Every sequence of ideas from elsewhere must be footnoted. Even information needs footnoting. All sources must be footnoted, no matter how ephemeral. This includes ALL websites, all museum brochures, all wall panels or label texts in museums along with books, articles, archival information, etc. **THIS MEANS YOU MUST FOOTNOTE NOT ONLY DIRECT QUOTES BUT ANY PARAPHRASES OF IDEAS, INFORMATION.**

HELPFUL HINTS:

*Keep up and do reading by the lecture/discussion date for which it is assigned. Know your syllabus. There are heavy readings for some days so don't leave it all until the night before. Take notes on your readings. Prepare questions for class or work with questions I assign. Look on class as a challenge and an opportunity. You take away as much as you invest.

*Keep up with the projects.. You will know about the projects well before they are due--see how you can incorporate ideas for them throughout the course.

*In class, take notes when I am presenting material and also during discussions--jot down the main facts and ideas we discuss. Ask questions of one another in discussion. If you don't understand something, say so. Others may have the same questions.

*If you are having a problem of any kind with the course, see me right away. There is always time to solve problems early on.

OTHER HELPFUL UNIVERSITY INFORMATION:

OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. <http://ods.gmu.edu>

WRITING CENTER: A114 Robinson Hall; (703) 993-1200; <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES "Ask a Librarian"

<http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS): (703) 993-2380;

<http://caps.gmu.edu>

OFFICE HOURS: My office is in Robinson B336 in the Department of History and Art History (Robinson B359). My phone is (703) 993-4374 and e-mail is etodd@gmu.edu. USE EMAIL. My office hours are Tuesdays 2:00-3:30, Wednesdays 12:30 to 2:00, and by appointment which means that I have flexibility in my schedule (for example, an occasional Monday or at other times on Tues. Please make an appointment even within office hours to assure yourself a time.

KEY DATES FOR THE COURSE:

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| Aug. 29 | Course Introduction: Getting Organized |
| Sept. 6 | Tuesday. Last day to drop with no tuition penalty. <u>Last Day to Add</u> |
| Sept. 19 | Monday. Last day to drop with 33% tuition liability <u>Paper #1 (National Gallery/Hall of Wonders) Due</u> |
| Sept. 28 | <u>Quiz on Duncan, Wallach, Readings, Lectures</u> |
| Sept. 30 | Friday. Last day to drop. 67% tuition liability |
| Oct. 3 | to Oct. 28. Selective withdrawal period (undergrads only) |
| Oct. 10 | Columbus Day holiday. Monday classes meet Tuesday this week but we Will have no class on the 11. We meet Wed. Oct. 12 |
| Nov. 7 | <u>Monday. Paper #2 African Art—Freer/Sackler due</u> |
| Nov. 23-27 | Thanksgiving Break, No Wednesday Classes this week (the 23 rd) |
| Nov. 28 | <u>Monday. Paper #3 Stein/Warhol due</u> |
| Dec. 7 | Wednesday. Last class meeting |
| Dec. 12 | Monday. <u>Final Project Due</u> NO LATER THAN 6:00 PM Submitted onto Blackboard |

SCHEDULE OF LECTURES AND READINGS: (Subject to Change)

BB stands for blackboard. There is JSTOR. And online means you can google and find. One article is on Project Muse. The articles in the book *Exhibiting Cultures* are now online. The nice thing about JSTOR is you will see the pictures, vs. just having xeroxes. You may also print out. For Blackboard <http://courses.gmu.edu>, A few things are accessible online and these will be noted.

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| Mon. Aug. 29 | Course Introduction and Brainstorming: Getting Acquainted READ: Duncan and Marstine Introductions |
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PART I: MUSEUM HISTORIES/TAXONOMIES

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| Wed. Aug. 31 | Cabinets of Curiosity—Then and Now I READ: Oliver Impey and Arthur MacGregor, “preface/intro” to <i>The Origins of Museums: Cabinets of Curiosities in Sixteenth-and Seventeenth-Century Europe</i> (Oxford 1985): 1-4; and Giuseppi Olmi “Science-Honor-Metaphor: Italian Cabinets of the 16 th and 17 th centuries” in same, 6-16. Both on BB (Origins as title) |
| Mon. Sept. 5 | LABOR DAY—NO CLASS MEETING |
| Wed. Sept. 7 | Cabinets of Curiosity to Princely Galleries READ: Lyndell King and Janice Marstine “The University Museum and |

Gallery” Ch. 11 in Marstine. Focus on section on Artist Interventions: pp. 271-282. And Duncan Ch. 1 (Art Museum as Ritual) and Chap. 2 (From the Princely Gallery) to p. 32.

- Mon. Sept. 12 National Galleries—Ritual Spaces I
READ: Finish Chap. 2 Duncan. Chap. 3 Duncan (Public Spaces/Private Interests) and Wallach, Chap. 1 (Long Term Visions, Short Term Failures).
- Wed. Sept. 14 National Galleries—Ritual Spaces II
READ: Wallach, Chap. 3, “The American Cast Museum”
If weather permits, some walking about to see some of our casts!
Preview website: <http://chnm.gmu.edu/courses/mattusch/casts/>
- Mon. Sept. 19 Paper #1 Due for In-Class Discussion. The National Gallery and “The Great American Hall of Wonders” at SAAM
- Wed. Sept. 21 Municipal Galleries to Donor Memorials
READ: Duncan, Chap. 4 (Something Eternal) and Wallach, Chap. 2 (Corcoran’s Failed National Gallery)
- Mon. Sept. 26 MoMA—A History and Two Critiques
READ: Duncan, Chap. 5 (The Modern Art Museum) and Wallach, Chap. 5 (The Museum of Modern Art)
- Wed. Sept. 28 EXAM: Duncan, Wallach, Other Readings, Lectures
Matching/Short Answer

PART II: MUSEUMS AT WORK: SPACE, PHILOSOPHY, WORKERS AND PUBLICS

- Mon. Oct. 3 Thinking Through Architecture: Philosophy/Case Studies
READ: Michaela Giebelhausen “The Architecture IS the Museum”
Marstine, Chap. 1. Steven Holl DVD discussion.
NOTE: START READING DANZIGER FOR THE 12TH
I WILL DISTRIBUTE HANDOUT FOR GROUPS
- Wed. Oct. 5 Purposes, Functions, Ethics
READ: Glazer Chap. 3 and the AAM Code of Ethics (BB)
- Mon. Oct. 10 NO CLASS—COLUMBUS DAY RECESS
- Tues. Oct. 11 MONDAY CLASSES MEET HERE—BUT WE WILL NOT MEET
Work on Museum Assignments
- Wed. Oct. 12 Meet the Workers I: In-class discussion Danziger
READ: Danziger. *Museum: Behind the Scenes at the Metropolitan Museum of Art*.
- Mon. Oct. 17 Meet the Workers II: In-class discussion Danziger (CONT’D)
- Wed. Oct. 19 Commercialism and the Museum

READ: online: Hinsley, "The World as Marketplace: Commodification of the Exotic at the world's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893," in Karp and Lavine, eds., *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, 344-365. Also Andrew McClellan. Chap. 5 "Commercialism," in *The Art Museum from Boulee to Bilbao*, 193-232. BB.

HANDOUT FOR NEXT WEDNESDAY DISCUSSION ON WEBSITES

Mon. Oct. 24 The Museum and its Publics I
READ: Margaret Lindauer. "The Critical Museum Visitor" Chap. 8 in Marstine and Lianne McTavish. "Visiting the Virtual Museum: Art and Experience Online," Chap. 9 in Marstine

Wed. Oct. 26 The Museum and its Publics II: In-class discussion of Museum Websites

PART III: MUSEUMS AND IDENTITY POLITICS: EXHIBITIONS AND OBJECT DISPLAY

Mon. Oct. 31 Politics of Femininity and Race: Case Studies
READ: Katy Deepwell: "Feminist Curatorial Strategies and Practices since the 1970s," Chap. 2 Marstine and Eric Gable, "How we Study History Museums or Cultural Studies at Monticello," chap. 4 Marstine.

Wed. Nov. 2 Objects of Ethnography and Curatorial Practices
READ: online: Susan Vogel. "Always True to the Object in Our Fashion," in Karp and Lavine, *Exhibiting Cultures*, 191-205; and Moira G. Simpson, "Revealing and Concealing: Museums, Objects, and the Transmission of Knowledge in Aboriginal Australia," Marstine Chap. 6; and Julie L. McGee. "Restructuring South African Museums: Reality and Rhetoric within Cape Town," Chap. 7 Marstine.

Mon. Nov. 7 NO CLASS: WORK ON PROJECTS

Wed. Nov. 9 African Art—Freer/Sackler Papers Due
In-Class Discussion
Sharing Final Project Topics

MUSEUM CONTROVERSY, CULTURAL PROPERTY, AND POLITICS: CASE STUDIES

Mon. Nov. 14 Trouble in History: The Enola Gay and the Sweatshop
READ: Steven Dubin, "Battle Royal: The Final Mission of the Enola Gay," Chap. 6 in *Displays of Power: Memory and Amnesia in the American Museum* (NYU Press, 1999): 186-226 BB; online via Project Muse Database. Ellen Wiley Todd, "Visual Design and Exhibition Politics in the Smithsonian's Between a Rock and a Hard Place," *Radical History Review* 88 (Winter 2004): 139-162; Wallach, Chap. 7 (Battle over the West as America).

Wed. Nov. 16 Race Matters: Fred Wilson's "Mining the Museum"

READ: Ivan Karp and Fred Wilson, "Constructing the Spectacle of Culture in Museums," in Greenberg and Ferguson, *Thinking about Exhibitions*, 251-268. BB

- Mon. Nov. 21 Gays, the Museum, and Censorship: Controversies over Robert Mapplethorpe and the Hide/Seek Exhibition at SAAM.
VIEW: Go to the NPG website and past exhibitions to view Hide/Seek Under multimedia be sure to watch the introductions to the show by Jonathan Katz and David Ward who were its curators. Then
READ: http://www.outhistory.org/wiki/Hide/Seek_Timeline:_Part_2
Read a couple of the posts including Katz's. Also
<http://www.collegeart.org/features/museumsethicspress>
Also read: James F. Fitzpatrick's Graduation Speech at the Corcoran For Robert Mapplethorpe
<http://www.law.indiana.edu/fclj/pubs/v47/no2/fitzpat.html>
- Wed. Nov. 23 NO CLASS—THANKSGIVING BREAK
- Mon. Nov. 28 Papers due on Andy Warhol/Gertrude Stein Exhibits
In-Class Discussion
- Wed. Nov. 30 Cultural Property and Museums I: Overview
READ: Andrew McClellan. "Restitution and Repatriation,"
Chap. 5 in *The Art Museum from Boullee to Bilbao*, 233-268. BB
- Mon. Dec. 5 Cultural Property and Museums II
READ: James Cuno, preface (ix-xxxvii) and Introduction (The Crux of the Matter): 1-20 in *Who Owns Antiquity? Museums and the Battle Over our Ancient Heritage* (Princeton: 2008); and Kwame Anthony Appiah, "Whose Culture is It?" in *Whose Culture? The Promise of Museums and the Debate over Antiquities*, edited by Cuno (Princeton, 2009): 71-86. All on BB
- Wed. Dec. 7 Cultural Property and Museums III
Course Wrap
- Mon. Dec. 12 Final Projects Due on Blackboard no later than 6:00 PM