
AHIS 501 – Problems in the History of Collecting and Display

Spring 2007
GRI, Tuesdays 3-6pm
Office hours by appointment

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Course description

This seminar provides an overview of central theoretical, methodological, and empirical topics in the history of collecting and display. In the Spring 2007 semester, the seminar will address collecting as a global and transcultural phenomenon from the fifteenth to the twentieth centuries (focusing on the early modern period). We will begin with a general introduction to the history of collecting and display, and then concentrate on the movement and interpretation of objects across cultures, whether it be European collections of New World objects in the early modern period, exchanges with Asia, etc. (Participating students' areas of interest and expertise will help us determine our exact case studies.) An interdisciplinary approach drawing from art history, history, literature, anthropology, and sociology will allow us to examine specific cross-cultural and cross-regional transactions, and to use them to investigate important questions in the history of collecting.

Topics examined may include:

- The formation and organization of collections: trajectories, networks, circulation, exchange
- The motivations and uses of collections: science, art, religion, curiosity, commerce, empire
- The interpretation, contextualization, and reinvention of collections
- The transference of techniques, artistic styles, ideas, and beliefs through the circulation of objects
- The role of geography in the production, circulation, and interpretation of collections
- The role of theories of center and periphery, diffusionism, transculturation, metissage, etc. in the understanding of collections
- Relationships between objects, texts, and images

Running throughout will be a concern with some central methodological questions: How might such a history engage with other histories or interpretative strategies that figure in current art historical practice? Is it useful or misleading to consider the collecting and display of works of art as distinct from the collecting and display of other categories of materials? If this whole activity assumes certain (shifting) epistemological frameworks, what other modes of enquiry and types of evidence do we need to draw on as we try to interpret various aspects of this phenomenon?

Course Requirements

The success of the seminar format depends on your attendance, dutiful completion of the reading assignments (which are challenging in both length and content), and active participation during our meetings.

Oral assignments (50% of final grade):

- Active participation in seminar discussion
- Leading discussion: Each student will act as discussion leader twice over the course of the semester, preparing a short (*ca.* 10-min.) introduction to the week's readings and setting up questions for discussion.
- Presenting on materials from special collections: In preparation for each meeting, students will examine items from special collections that relate to the week's readings. Then, during the seminar, each student will be responsible for briefly presenting on one item and leading the

discussion about it. This item may be selected from the week's primary materials (a list will be distributed each week) or be the student's own choice.

- Leading presentation of materials from special collections: Each student will act as discussion leader for the special collections visit twice over the course of the semester. This will involve examining all the items for discussion that week, and guiding the general discussion.

Written assignment (50% of final grade): The major requirement for the seminar is a final research paper (about 25-pages in length) on a topic of relevance to the course. Students will submit an abstract of their final paper and an annotated bibliography on Tuesday 04/17. Abstracts will be discussed at the final meeting of the seminar (Tuesday 04/24), when students will be asked to give a short presentation on their research paper.

Readings

Books will be placed on reserve at the GRI.

A course reader with all articles will be available for purchase from Magic Machine.

The following books will be available for purchase at the Campus Bookstore:

- John Elsner and Roger Cardinal, *The Cultures of Collecting* (London: Reaktion Books, 1994)
- Kaufmann, Thomas DaCosta, *Toward a Geography of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004)

The following books should be purchased directly by students:

- Jasanoff, Maya, *Edge of Empire. Lives, Culture, and Conquest in the East, 1750-1850* (New York: Vintage, 2006)
- Said, Edward, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2003 [1978])

Course Mechanics

For the first meeting on 01/09, we will gather at 2pm in the lobby of the Getty Research Institute. Students who do not already have a GRI Reader Card should give RESERVATION NUMBER 679627 at the parking booth in order to receive complimentary parking, and fill out the application for a Reader Card on this date.

All other meetings of the seminar will be held in the Seminar Room for the first half of the class, and reconvene after a short break in Special Collections on L2.

Associated activities and events

As part of the USC-Getty Program in the History of Collecting and Display, this course is linked with a number of other events, many of them involving leading international figures in the field. It is recommended that students enrolled in this course participate in these events, which will complement and expand our discussion. I will provide information about these events throughout the course of the seminar. They include:

- USC-Getty Forum on the History of Collecting (GRI, 08 February 2007). A discussion at the GRI to which academics and museum curators with a shared interest in this field will be invited to discuss particular themes and concerns. Details to be announced.
- "Collecting the Americas / American Collecting ca. 1500-1800" (USC, 02 March 2007), one-day conference organized by Megan O'Neil and Daniela Bleichmar, sponsored by the USC-Huntington Early Modern Studies Institute.

- "Collecting across Cultures in the Early Modern World" (Huntington Library, 10-12 May 2007). An international conference organized by Malcolm Baker and Daniela Bleichmar, sponsored by the USC-Huntington Early Modern Studies Institute.

Seminar schedule

WEEK 1 (01/09): Introduction to the seminar

Course overview, discussion of seminar mechanics. Students who need to get a GRI Reader Card can fill out the paperwork on this date.

WEEK 2 (01/16): Reception, Description, Display, and Exchange

Baudrillard, Jean, "The System of Collecting" in John Elsner and Roger Cardinal, *The Cultures of Collecting* (London: Reaktion Books, 1994), pp. 7-24

Bal, Mieke, "Telling Objects: A Narrative Perspective on Collecting", in John Elsner and Roger Cardinal, *The Cultures of Collecting* (London: Reaktion Books, 1994), pp. 87-116

Pomian, K., *Collectors and Curiosities* (Cambridge and London, 1990), ch. 1, "The Collection: Between the Visible and the Invisible," pp. 1-44

Warwick, Genevieve, *The arts of collecting: Padre Sebastiano Resta and the market for drawings in early modern Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), Introduction, "Towards an Historical Anthropology of Collecting," pp. 1-14

S. Stewart, *On Longing. Narratives of the Minature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*, (Durham and London, 1993), ch. 5, "Objects of Desire," pp. 132-168

M. Baxandall, "Exhibiting Intention: Some Preconditions of the Visual Display of Culturally Purposeful Objects", in Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine, *Exhibiting Cultures. The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display* (Washington and London, 1991), pp. 33-41

N. de Marchi, "Introduction", in N. De Marchi and C.D.W. Goodwin (eds.), *Economic Engagements with Art* (Durham and London 1999), pp. 7-30

JOURNAL REVIEW: Look through the *Journal of the History of Collections*, 1989-present (available at USC and GRI periodicals collection; online from 2002 to present). Come to class ready to discuss the historiography on collecting and display in general, and one representative article in particular.

WEEK 3 (01/23): Objects in Transit: Anthropology, Geography, and Collecting

3PM: PSCP OVERVIEW, with Mark Henderson (Getty Library). Meet directly at Special Collections.

Appadurai, Arjun, "Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value," in Arjun Appadurai (ed.), *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 3-63

Kopytoff, Igor, "The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process," in Arjun Appadurai (ed.), *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 64-94

Clifford, James, *The Predicament of Culture*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), ch. 10, "On Collecting Art and Culture," pp. 215-251

Kaufmann, Thomas DaCosta, *Toward a Geography of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), pp. 107-216

WEEK 4 (01/30): Reading, Viewing and Using the Wunderkammer, 1500-1700

Kenseth, Joy, "The Age of the Marvelous: An Introduction," in Joy Kenseth (ed.), *The Age of the Marvelous* (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College Art Museum, 1991), pp. 24-59

Kenseth, Joy, "A World of Wonders in One Closet Shut," in Joy Kenseth (ed.), *The Age of the Marvelous* (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College Art Museum, 1991), pp. 80-101

P. Findlen, *Possessing Nature*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1994), ch. 1, "A World of Wonders in One Closet Shut," pp. 17-47 and "Epilogue. The Old and the New," pp. 393-407

Kemp, Martin, "'Wrought by No Artist's Hand': The Natural, the Artificial, the Exotic, and the Scientific in Some Artifacts from the Renaissance," in Claire Farago (ed.), *Reframing the Renaissance: Visual Culture in Europe and Latin America 1450-1650* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), pp. 175-196

Kaufmann, Thomas DaCosta, *The mastery of nature: aspects of art, science, and humanism in the Renaissance* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993), ch. 7, "From Mastery of the World to Mastery of Nature: The *Kunstammer*, Politics, and Science," pp. 174-194

Bredenkamp, Horst, *The Lure of Antiquity and the Cult of the Machine* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1995), pp. 37-80

LOOK THROUGH: Joy Kenseth (ed.), *The Age of the Marvelous* (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College Art Museum, 1991), catalogue of the exhibition, pp. 219-458

Stafford, Barbara Maria and Frances Terpak, *Devices of wonder: from the world in a box to images on a screen* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2001)

Further reading:

Impey, Oliver and Arthur MacGregor, *The Origins of Museums* (Oxford, 1985)

WEEK 5 (02/06): Collecting and Colonialism, part 1: New World Encounters

Greenblatt, Stephen, *Marvelous Possessions. The Wonder of the New World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 52-85

Michael T. Ryan, "Assimilating New Worlds in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 23:4 (Oct. 1981), pp. 519-538

Elliott, John H. "Final Reflections: The Old World and the New Revisited," in Karen Ordahl Kupperman (ed.) *America in European Consciousness, 1493-1750* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), pp. 391-408

Anthony Pagden, *European Encounters with the New World. From Renaissance to Romanticism* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993), pp. 1-87

Cummins, Thomas C., "From Lies to Truth: Colonial Ekphrasis and the Act of Crosscultural Translation," in Claire Farago (ed.), *Reframing the Renaissance: Visual Culture in Europe and Latin America 1450-1650* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), pp. 152-174

Helms, Mary W., "Essay on Objects: Interpretations of Distance Made Tangible," in Stuart B. Schwartz (ed.), *Implicit Understandings. Observing, Reporting, and Reflecting on the Encounters between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era* (New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 355-377

Primary sources: selections of the writings of Christopher Columbus, Amerigo Vespucci, Hernán Cortés, Jacques Cartier, Francisco Vázquez de Coronado, Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, Pedro Cieza de León, Hans Stade, and Jean de Léry, in Peter C. Mancall (ed.), *Travel Narratives from the Age of Discovery: An Anthology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 207-280

LOOK THROUGH: Grafton, Anthony, with April Shelford and Nancy Siraisi, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts. The power of tradition and the shock of discovery* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992)

WEEK 6 (02/13): Collecting and Colonialism, part 2: The New World in Europe

Shelton, Anthony Alan, "Cabinets of Transgression: Renaissance Collections and the New World" in John Elsner and Roger Cardinal, *The Cultures of Collecting* (London, 1994), pp. 177-203

Feest, Christian, "The Collecting of American Indian Artifacts in Europe, 1493-1750", in Karen Ordahl Kupperman (ed.) *America in European Consciousness, 1493-1750* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), pp. 324-360

Heikamp, Detlef with contributions by Ferdinand Anders, *Mexico and the Medici* (Florence: Editrice Edam, 1972), pp. 5-107

Feest, Christian, "Vienna's Mexican Treasures. Aztec, Mixtec, and Tarascan Works from 16th Century Austrian Collections," *Archiv für Völkerkunde* 44 (Vienna: Museum für Völkerkunde, 1990), pp. 1-64

Feest, Christian, "Dürer et les Premières Evaluations Européennes de l'Art Mexicain," in *Destins croisés, cinq siècles de rencontres avec les Amérindiens*, 1992, pp. 107-119

Keber, Eloise Quiñones, "Collecting Cultures: A Mexican Manuscript in the Vatican Library" in Claire Farago(ed.), *Reframing the Renaissance: Visual Culture in Europe and Latin America 1450-1650* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), pp. 229-242

Oliver Impey and Arthur MacGregor (eds.), *The Origins of Museums: The Cabinet of Curiosities in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Europe* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985):

- Bassani, Ezio and Malcolm McLeod, "African Material in Early Collections," pp. 245-250
- Raby, Julian, "Exotica from Islam," pp. 251-258
- Ayers, John, "The Early China Trade," pp. 259-266
- Impey, Oliver, "Japan: Trade and Collecting in Seventeenth-Century Europe," pp. 267-273
- Skelton, Robert, "Indian Art and Artefacts in Early European Collecting," pp. 274-280

LOOK AT: Alden, John and Dennis C. Landis (eds.), *European Americana: a chronological guide to works printed in Europe relating to the Americas, 1493-1776*, 6 vols. (New York: Readex Books, 1980-)

GRI Level 2: E1882 .E87 1980

LOOK AT: Sabin, Joseph, *A dictionary of books relating to America: from its discovery to the present time*, 29 vols. (Amsterdam : N. Israel, 1961-1962)

GRI Level 2: E18 .S11 1868 repr. 1961

WEEK 7 (02/20): Religious Transactions: Jesuits in Europe and Abroad

Kaufmann, Thomas DaCosta, *Toward a Geography of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), pp. 219-340

- Findlen, Paula, *Athanasius Kircher: The Last Man Who Knew Everything* (New York: Routledge, 2004)
- Michael John Gorman, "The Angel and the Compass: Athanasius Kircher's Geographical Project"
 - Carlos Ziller Camenietzki, "Baroque Science between the Old World and the New: Father Kircher and His Fellow Jesuit, Valentin Stansel (1621-1705)"
 - Paula Findlen, "A Jesuit's Books in the New World: Athanasius Kircher and His American Readers"
 - Michelle Molina, "True Lies: Kircher's China Illustrata and the Life Story of a Mexican Mystic"
 - Florence Hsia "Athanasius Kircher's China Illustrata (1667): An apologia pro sua vita"

Stolzenberg, Daniel (ed.), *The Great Art of Knowing: The Baroque Encyclopedia of Athanasius Kircher* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001)

- Findlen, Paula, "Science, History, and Erudition: Athanasius Kircher's Museum at the Collegio Romano," pp. 17-26
- Saussy, Haun, "*China Illustrata*: The Universe in a Cup of Tea," pp. 105-114
- Stolzenberg, Daniel, "Kircher's Egypt," pp. 115-126

Available electronically on Ebrary through a USC network computer; follow the link on Homer, below:
<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/uscisd/Top?id=10078367&layout=document>

Look at: <http://www.kirchersociety.org/>
<http://kircher.stanford.edu/>
<http://www.mjt.org/exhibits/Knots.html>

WEEK 8 (02/27): Commercial Transactions

Findlen, Paula and Pamela H. Smith (eds.), *Merchants and Marvels: Commerce and the Representation of Nature in Early Modern Europe* (London, 2002)

- Paula Findlen, "Inventing Nature. Commerce, Art, and Science in the Early Modern Cabinet of Curiosities," pp. 297-323
- Anne Goldgar, "Nature as Art. The Case of the Tulip," pp. 324-346
- Benjamin Schmidt, "Inventing Exoticism: The Project of Dutch Geography and the Marketing of the World, circa 1700," pp. 347-369
- Mark A. Meadow, "Merchants and Marvels. Hans Jacob Fugger and the Origins of the *Wunderkammer*," pp. 182-200

Schiebinger, Londa and Claudia Swan (eds.), *Colonial Botany: Science, Commerce, and Politics* (Pennsylvania University Press, 2005)

- Cook, Harold J., "Global Economies and Local Knowledge in The East Indies. Jacobo Bontius Learns the Facts of Nature," pp. 100-118
- Berger Hochstrasser, Julie, "The Conquest of Spice and the Dutch Colonial Imaginary. Seen and Unseen in the Visual Culture of Trade," pp. 169-186

- Swan, Claudia, "Collecting *Naturalia* in the Shadow of Early Modern Dutch Trade," pp. 223-236

Emerson, Julie, Jennifer Chen, and Mimi Gardner Gates (eds.), *Porcelain stories: from China to Europe* (Seattle, WA: Seattle Art Museum and University of Washington Press, 2000), pp. 11-13, 24-33, 71-81, 100-111, 134-151, 194-207, 252-261, 281-282

WEEK 9 (03/06): Enlightenment Exchange, Accumulation, and System

Burke, Peter, "The Philosopher as Traveller: Bernier's Orient," in Jaś Elsner and Joan-Pau Rubiés (eds.), *Voyages and visions: towards a cultural history of travel* (London: Reaktion Books, 1999), pp. 124-137

Kriz, Kay Dian, "Curiosities, Commodities and Transplanted Bodies in Hans Sloane's *Voyage to ... Jamaica*," in Geoff Quilley and Kay Dian Kriz (eds.), *An Economy of Colour. Visual Culture and the Atlantic World, 1660-1830* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), pp. 85-105

Elsner, John, "A Collector's Model of Desire: The House and Museum of Sir John Soane," in John Elsner and Roger Cardinal, *The Cultures of Collecting* (London: Reaktion Books, 1994), pp. 155-176

Stewart, Susan, "Death and Life, in that Order, in the Works of Charles Willson Peale," in John Elsner and Roger Cardinal, *The Cultures of Collecting* (London: Reaktion Books, 1994), pp. 204-223

Stafford, Barbara Maria, *Artful science: enlightenment, entertainment, and the eclipse of visual education* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1994), pp. 217-279

Jacobson, Dawn, *Chinoiserie* (London: Phaidon Press, 1993), pp. 30-149

WEEK 10 (03/13): No class (Spring Break)

WEEK 11 (03/20): Pacific Encounters

Porter, Roy, "The Exotic as Erotic: Captain Cook at Tahiti," in G. S. Rousseau and R. Porter (eds.), *Exoticism in the Enlightenment* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1990), pp. 117-144

Thomas, Nicholas, "Licensed Curiosity: Cook's Pacific Voyages," in John Elsner and Roger Cardinal, *The Cultures of Collecting* (London: Reaktion Books, 1994), pp. 116-136, 281-282

Thomas, Nicholas, *Entangled Objects: Exchange, Material Culture and Colonialism in the Pacific* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), pp. 1-34, 83-184

Dening, Greg, "The Theatricality of Observing and Being Observed: Eighteenth-Century Europe 'Discovers' the ? Century 'Pacific'," in Stuart B. Schwartz (ed.), *Implicit Understandings. Observing, Reporting, and Reflecting on the Encounters between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era* (New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 451-483

Geertz, Clifford, "Culture War," *The New York Review of Books* 42: 19 (November 30, 1995)
A review of Gananath Obeyesekere, *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook: European Mythmaking in the Pacific* (Princeton University Press, 1994) and Marshall Sahlins, *How 'Natives' Think, About Captain Cook, for Example* (University of Chicago Press, 1995)

WEEK 12 (03/27): Collecting in the British Empire

Jasanoff, Maya, *Edge of Empire. Lives, Culture, and Conquest in the East, 1750-1850* (New York: Vintage, 2006), pp. 1-207

WEEK 13 (04/03): Orientalism

Said, Edward, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2003 [1978]), pp. xv-xxx, 1-197, 329-352

Clifford, James, *The Predicament of Culture*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), ch. 11, "On Orientalism," pp. 255-276

WEEK 14 (04/10): World's Fairs

Rydell, Robert, *All the World's A Fair: Visions of Empire at the American International Expositions, 1876-1916* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), pp. 1-125 and 154-183

Breckenridge, Carol, 'The Aesthetics and Politics of Colonial Collecting: India at the World Fairs,' *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol 31, no. 2 (1989): 195-215

Celik, Zeynep, *Displaying the Orient. Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth Century World's Fairs* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 139-151

WEEK 15 (04/17): Museums in the 20th and 21st Centuries: Culture as Ritual

Clifford, James, *The Predicament of Culture*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), pp. 1-54, 189-214

Marcus, George and Fred Myers, "The Traffic in Art and Culture: An Introduction," in George E. Marcus and Fred R. Myers (eds.) *The Traffic in Culture: Refiguring Art and Anthropology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 1-54

Steiner, Christopher B., *African Art in Transit* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 100-156

Articles covering the opening of the Musée du Quai Branly, Paris:

- Brothers, Caroline, "Immigrants Flock Proudly To New Museum in Paris," *The New York Times*, August 21, 2006
- Kimmelman, Michael, "A Heart Of Darkness In the City Of Light," *The New York Times*, July 2, 2006
- Ouroussoff, Nicolai, "Paris Museum Discards Rules to Make Its Own," *The New York Times*, June 27, 2006
- Riding, Alan, "Imperialist? Moi? Not This French Museum," *The New York Times*, June 22, 2006

FILM SHOWING in class (in lieu of visit to Special Collections): Lucien Taylor and Ilisa Barbash, *In and Out of Africa* (1993)

WEEK 16 (04/24): Seminar overview and student presentations

STUDENT SIGN-UP SHEET

Week	Discussion leader	Special collections
2 (01/16)		
3 (01/23)		
4 (01/30)		
5 (02/06)		
6 (02/13)		
7 (02/20)		
8 (02/27)		
09 (03/06)		
11 (03/20)		
12 (03/27)		
13 (04/03)		
14 (04/10)		
15 (04/17)		
