

CRITICAL ISSUES IN ART CONSERVATION: COURSE 389.340
SPRING 2019, FRIDAYS 1:30-4:00PM

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OFFICE HOURS: Fridays, 4-5pm, and by appointment

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

Our class meets on the ancestral homeland of the Piscataway. We acknowledge and ask permission of their ancestors and descendants for our course work here.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND LEARNING GOALS

The course examines recent controversies in the conservation of major global art works and sites, raising questions concerning the basic theoretical assumptions, practical methods and ethical implications of art conservation. We will engage with the following pressing critical issues: What is “art” and who is an “artist”? What do we preserve, and why? Whose values and participation are considered when conserving an artifact or site? Do objects live, die or need to be performed, and how does contemporary conservation practice cope with this? What role does conservation play in restoring memory, repairing human relationships, and maintaining our duty to our cultural and environmental landscapes?

Beyond simply engaging with writings on the theoretical, historical and technical aspects of art and sites, this course seeks to remind us that “art” was meant to move us. To that end, we will read several works of poetry alongside more traditional writings on conservation and cultural heritage. The use of poetry in this course owes a great debt to the work of Jennifer Clarvoe, poet and Professor Emerita of English at Kenyon College, and her 2016 course “Poetry and the Visual Arts.” (<https://www.kenyon.edu/directories/campus-directory/biography/jennifer-clarvoe/>)

Our readings attempt to force us to question our own assumptions and challenge our understanding of what art and cultural heritage are, and how we can (or should) preserve them, locally and globally. However, our readings are limited to works available in English, which also limits the scope of our conversation; thus we have to acknowledge that there are large parts of our world we cannot access due to this language restriction. Furthermore, much of the existing literature on art conservation has been primarily focused on European and (non-native) North American cultural heritage. A specific intention of this course is to broaden our perspective by reading and engaging with authors and artists who are outside these geographic regions and/or self-identify as women, people of color, indigenous and Native people, and LGBTQIA+ people.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This class is heavily discussion oriented and requires you to attend every meeting with all readings for that day completed. On average, there will be 60-70 pages of reading per week. All readings will be posted on Blackboard or will available on the internet, as listed. Absences for religious holidays, special observances, or other reasons should be discussed with the instructor in advance. Do not come to class if you are feeling unwell but do inform the instructor by email. You are expected to be in class for the entirety of the scheduled time, from 1:30 to 4pm, including the Friday before Spring Break and

Spring Fair.

The first part of class will involve discussing the readings with the guidance of a student discussion leader. After a break, there will be a lecture. Every class begins with a reading of the poems assigned for that day's class, sometimes with ancient archaeological objects from the Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum as objects for contemplation.

Your grade will be determined according to the following criteria:

Class participation	20%
Instagram posts (2 per class session)	10%
Leading Discussion	10%
Exercise	10%
Abstract/Bibliography (1 page)	5%
Paper Outline (1 page)	10%
Final presentation (10 minutes)	15%
Final paper (10 pages)	20%

An "A" is awarded for exceptional performance in class. Simply completing the assignments as required will result in a "B" grade. In order to be graded, all work must be turned in on time. Late work receives a "0."

Charter/Convention

International and national organizations have produced charters or conventions on what art/cultural heritage is, and how it should be preserved. Some of these have been ratified by political bodies and are likely familiar to you, such as the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. But these conventions are by nature rather placid because of the need to appeal to a broad audience. Our class will produce its own charter based on our readings and discussions in class. Each week, you will propose a new addition to our growing convention on our Instagram feed. Discussion leaders will then collate these proposed additions and help us discuss them in class, arriving at an agreed upon statement by the end of each class period. We will compile all of these statements into one convention by the end of the semester.

Instagram Posts. You will be contributing to an Instagram account "Thinkingconservator" for this course. This follows on an existing Tumblr site (<http://thinkingconservator.tumblr.com>) that was created in 2015 by curatorial graduate students at the Center for Curating the Archive at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. At the end of that course, the students elected to have their Tumblr open as a "conversation" between their class and future classes, and was continued by JHU students in 2016. Given that the blog format does not feel as vital as it once did, we are going to experiment with Instagram as a visual space where we can curate images and text about the work and readings we are encountering throughout the course. You are required to post two Instagram posts per week (feel free to post more if you'd like). One post should specifically respond to the "charter/convention" we are trying to produce over the duration of this course. The other post should be a critical response to the readings we encounter that week and should have some written content. Post by midnight before each class meeting so as to give our discussion leaders a little time to examine your responses. Discussion leaders do not need to post on their discussion week.

Please do not sign your name to the posting—we will use these anonymous postings as ways to start discussion in class. The login for the Instagram account is:

<https://www.instagram.com/thinkingconservator/>

Email:

Password:

This is our collective account, so you are free to follow, share, change or add to it as you see fit (providing it has something to do with our course materials). The hope is that we can begin a conversation outside our classroom, perhaps with other conservation professionals and institutions, and the general public. This account is specifically for class materials, and I will trust you to post material that makes sense within the context of our class.

Lead discussion. Each class meeting will have a student facilitator whose job it is to lead the conversation about the Instagram posts and the day's readings, and help us come to a consensus about what phrase we will add to our class convention.

Presentation/Paper. A significant part of your grade depends on a presentation (10 minutes in length) and paper (15 pages max) related to a topic of your own choosing. We will prepare for this project over the course of the semester, as noted in the syllabus.

COURSE ETHICS AND POLICIES

Our classroom is a space for rigorous and thoughtful discussion and debate. You are expected to respect and support the class community and its members as we delve into contentious and emotionally charged issues around the conservation of cultural heritage. As a community, we agree to communicate our ideas and our dissent respectfully and constructively.

The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Ethical violations include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments, improper use of the Internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery and falsification, lying, facilitating academic dishonesty, and unfair competition. Report any violations you witness to the instructor. You may consult the associate dean of student affairs and/or the chairman of the Ethics Board beforehand. See the guide on "Academic Ethics for Undergraduates" and the Ethics Board Web site (<http://ethics.jhu.edu>) for more information.

As this class is being held in the Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum, you are expected abide by all museum protocols. Food, drink and gum are not allowed in the museum and should be disposed of as far from the museum space as possible. There are no digital devices allowed in the seminar room except during discussion of the readings; this includes laptops, Ipads, tablets, cell phones, etc. Any improper use of devices during discussion time will result in them being entirely banned from class. You are expected to take notes with pencil only, and on paper. All other materials including coats and bags should be stored in the cubbies outside the seminar room. For more information on museum procedures, see: <http://archaeologicalmuseum.jhu.edu/visit/museum-visitor-guidelines/>

Any student with a disability who may need accommodations in this class should speak to the instructor as well as obtain an accommodation letter and additional assistance from Student Disability Services, 385 Garland, (410) 516-4720, studentdisabilityservices@jhu.edu.

You are welcome to bring a family member to class on occasional days when your responsibilities require it such as when emergency childcare is available, or if a relative has health needs. My own children may be in class if their schools are suddenly closed. I ask that we all remain aware of the classroom environment and ensure that we are all comfortable and still working and learning together even as we respond to others' needs.

COURSE SCHEDULE

2/1: Introduction

- Gwendolyn Brooks, "Chicago's Picasso" (1967)
- ICOMOS International charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites, Venice Charter (1964); The UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972); Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (1979/2013); The Nara Document on Authenticity, ICOMOS (2003); Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, UNESCO (2003); Recommendation Concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, Their Diversity and Their Role in Society, UNESCO (2015).

2/7 [TH] Poet Claudia Rankine Reads at JHU, 6pm.

2/8: What Value(s) Do We Preserve in Art?

- Marianne Moore, "When I Buy Pictures" (1924)
- Martha Collins, "Ota Benga, Part One" (2016)
- Brandi, C. 2005. "The Concept of Restoration." In *Theory of Restoration*. ICR: Rome: 47-50.
- De La Torre, M. 2013. "Values and Heritage Conservation." *Heritage and Society*, 6, 2: 155-166.
- Eastop, D. with M. Brooks. 2016. "Interactions of meaning and matter." In *Refashioning and Redress. Conserving and Displaying Dress*: 1-18.
- Parsons, S. et al. 2008. "Myth and Medium—I'm Going to Tell You Another Story." *Preserving Aboriginal heritage: Technology and tradition*. Minister of Public Works and Government Services: Ottawa: 41-46.
- Balachandran, S. 2016. "Race, Diversity and Politics in Conservation: Our 21st Century Crisis." *Conservators Converse, The American Institute for Conservation*: <http://www.conservators-converse.org/2016/05/race-diversity-and-politics-in-conservation-our-21st-century-crisis-sanchita-balachandran/>

2/15: SB AWAY AT CONFERENCE: EXERCISE (DETAILS FORTHCOMING)

- Robin Coste Lewis, "The Wilde Women of Aiken" (2015)
- Hurston, Z.N. 1950. "What white publishers won't print." *Negro Digest*, 950-955.
- Interview from *Confessions of the Guerrilla Girls*, 1995: https://www.guerrillagirls.com/confessions_interview
- Catlin-Legutko, C. "We must decolonize our museums." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jyZAgG8--Xg>
- Lennon, R. 2017. "For ever, for everyone?" *Prejudice and Pride. LGBTQ Heritage and its contemporary implications*. 10-17. <https://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/museumstudies/rcmg/publications/prejudice-and-pride>

- Send your work to the instructor by email, and post images on Instagram by 5pm

2/22 **What Does a Conservator Do?**

- John Keats, "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (1820)
- Jennifer Clarvoe, "Failure" (2018) <http://memorious.org/?id=743>
- Dooijes, R. and O. P. Nieuwenhuys. 2007. "Ancient Repairs: Techniques and social meaning." In *Konservieren oder Restaurieren: die Restaurierung griechischer Vasen von der Antike bis heute*: 15-20.
- Abend, K. et al. 2010. "Conserving fragments of icons: Clay votive plaques From Hirbemerdon Tepe, Turkey." In *Conservation and the Eastern Mediterranean: Contributions to the 2010 IIC Congress, Istanbul*, 2010: 157-164.
- Clark, K. 1938. "The Aesthetics of Restoration," *Proceedings of the Royal Institution of Great Britain*, 30, 141: 382-401.
- Leonard, M. 2003. "The Artist's Voice." In *Personal Viewpoints. Thoughts About Paintings Conservation*. Getty Conservation Institute: Los Angeles: 41-58.
- Otero-Pailos, J.. 2017. "The Ethics of Dust: Westminster Hall," London, 12m running time <http://www.oteropailos.com/the-ethics-of-dust-series/#/the-ethics-of-dust-westminster-hall/>

3/1: **Ask the Artist**

Email ideas about possible paper topics to SB by class time today.

- Agha Shahid Ali, "At the Museum" (1997)
- Linh Dinh, "Confession" (2005)
- Hill Stoner, J. 1997. "Whistler's view on the restoration and display of his paintings." *Studies in Conservation* 42, 2: 107-114.
- Excerpts from Wilcox, C. 2018. *Frida Kahlo: Making Herself Up*.
- Davenport, K. 1995. "Impossible liberties: contemporary artists on the life of their work over time." *Art Journal* 54, 2, Conservation and Art History: 40-52.
- Viola, B. 1999. "Permanent impermanence." In *Mortality Immortality? The Legacy of 20th Century Art*. Corzo, M. A., ed. The Getty Conservation Institute: Los Angeles: 85-94.
- The Getty Conservation Institute, Artist dialogues, Art in L.A.:
 - Helen Pashgian: Transcending the Material, 10m running time <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SHj2vEPuelw>

3/8: **Authenticity, Replicas and Fakes**

- Anna Rabinowitz. "From A Treatise on Painting" (2006)
- Rae Armantraut. "Exit Row" (2015)
- Talbot, M. "The myth of whiteness in classical sculpture." *The New Yorker*. 29 Oct 2018.
- Isaac, G. 2009. "Responsibilities towards knowledge." In *Contesting knowledge. Museum and indigenous perspectives*: 316-334.
- McHugh, K. and A. Gunnison. 2016. "Finding common ground and inherent differences: Artist and community engagement in cultural material and contemporary art conservation. *Studies in Conservation* 61, 2: 126-129.
- Lerner, B. 2016 January 11. "The Custodians." *The New Yorker*. <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/01/11/the-custodians-onward-and-upward-with-the-arts-ben-lerner>

- Papers from “Inherent Vice: The Replica and its Implications in Modern Sculpture Workshop,” Tate Modern, 2007:
 - Mancusi-Ungaro, C. “Authority and Ethics.” Tate Papers, 8, 2007: <https://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/08/authority-and-ethics>

3/15: The Living and the Dead
Email abstract and brief bibliography to SB

- Elizabeth Alexander, “The Venus Hottentot” (1990)
- Tanaya Winder, “Love Lessons in a Time of Settler Colonialism” (2018)
- Jenkins, T. 2008. “Dead bodies: The changing treatment of human remains in British museum collections and the challenge to the traditional model of the museum.” *Mortality*, 13:2, 105-118.
- Te Kanawa, R., A. Tamarapa, and A. Peranteau. 2016. “Kahu Ora. Living Cloaks, Living Culture.” In *Refashioning and Redress. Conserving and Displaying Dress*: 65-78.
- Oey, M. 2006. “Some Problems in Musical Instrument Conservation in Museum Collections.” Papers Presented at the Association of North American Graduate Programs In Conservation Conference, 2006: 1-13. http://cool.conservation-us.org/anagpic/2006pdf/2006ANAGPIC_Oey.pdf
- Tromp, M. and M. Hogenboom “Installation Art. Who Cares?” (2011), 25m running time <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9M1MQNrgXpw>
- Laurenson, P., and van Saaze, V. E. J. P. 2014. “Collecting Performance-based Art: New Challenges and Shifting Perspectives.” *Performativity in the Gallery: Staging Interactive Encounters*. Remes, O., ed. Peter Lang: 27-41

3/22: No Class Meeting. Spring Break.

3/29: Other Knowledge Systems

- Simon J. Ortiz, “Culture and the Universe” (2002)
- Heid E. Erdrich, “Guidelines for the Treatment of Sacred Objects” (2017)
- O’Hern et al. 2016. “Beyond the surface: Where cultural contexts and scientific analyses meet in museum conservation of West African Power Association Helmet Masks.” *Museum Anthropology*, 39, 1: 70-86.
- Nunes, C. Z. 2018. “Remembering the Howard University Librarian Who Decolonized the Way Books Were Catalogued.” <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/remembering-howard-university-librarian-who-decolonized-way-books-were-catalogued-180970890/#tmQ6QIOmamiS3str.99>
- Gilchrist, S. et al. 2016. *Everywhen: The Eternal Present in Indigenous Art from Australia*. Yale University Press: New Haven.
 - Gilchrist, S. “Everywhen: The Eternal Present in Indigenous Art from Australia.” 18-31.
 - Khandekar, N. et al. “Pigments and Binders in Traditional Aboriginal Bark Paintings.” 68-85.
- Keeler, J. 2017. “Creating a Road map of reverence. Interview with Faith Spotted Eagle.” *Edge of Morning. Native Voices Speak for the Bears Ears*: 124-139.

4/5: Co-stewardship
Email outline to SB

- W.H. Auden, “Musee des Beaux Arts” (1938)
- Rickey Laurentiis, “Vanitas with Negro Boy” (2015)

- Ishii, M. 2016. "Conserving an Ainu robe within the framework of Japan's Cultural Property Preservation Policy." In *Refashioning and Redress. Conserving and Displaying Dress*: 33-48.
- Srinivasan et. al. 2010. "Diverse Knowledges and Contact Zones within the Digital Museum." *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, Vol. 35, No. 5: 735-768.
- Krmpotich, C. and L. Peers. 2014. "Museums as they are. Museums as they might be." In *This is Our Life: Haida Material Heritage and Changing Museum Practice*: 233-256.

4/12: Monuments and Un-monuments

- William E. Stafford, "At the Un-National Monument Along the Canadian Border" (1998)
- Kevin Young, "For the Confederate Dead" (2007)
- Diebold, W.J. 1995. "The Politics of Derestoration: The Aegina Pediments and the German Confrontation with the Past." *Art Journal*, 54, 2: 60-66.
- National Public Radio. 2012. Stumbling Upon Mini Memorials To Holocaust Victims, 5m running time <https://www.npr.org/2012/05/31/153943491/stumbling-upon-miniature-memorials-to-nazi-victims>
- Selections from Wilson, F., 1994, *Mining the Museum: An Installation*.
- Chirikure, S. et al. 2016. "Post- colonial Heritage Conservation in Africa: Perspectives From Drystone Wall Restorations at Khami World Heritage Site, Zimbabwe." *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 22, 2: 165-178.
- Duhe, B.J. 2018. "Decentering Whiteness and Refocusing on the Local: Reframing Debates on Confederate Monument Removal in New Orleans." *Museum Anthropology* 41, 2: 120-125.
- Bryan Stevenson on the Legacy Museum. 2018, running time 9:42. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vlJhvlNlkr4>

4/16 [Tu]: Poet Rickey Laurentiis reads at JHU. Location TBA.

4/19: War and Conflict

- Corey Van Landingham, "Love Letter to Nike Alighting on a Warship" (2015)
- Yusef Komunyakaa, "Facing it" (1988)
- Donadio, R. 2015 Apr 15. "Preserving the Ghastly Inventory of Auschwitz". *The New York Times*. <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/16/arts/international/at-auschwitz-birkenau-preserving-a-site-and-a-ghastly-inventory.html? r=0>
- Peters, R. and D. Sully. 2006. "Finding the Fallen: Conservation and the First World War". *The Object in Context: Contributions to the 2006 IIC Congress*, Munich: 12-16.
- Connor, A. 2016. "Heritage in an Expanded Field: Reconstructing Bridge-ness in Mostar." *A Companion to Heritage Studies*: 253-267.
- Bahrani, Z. 2017. "Destruction and Preservation as Aspects of Just War." *Future Anterior*. Volume XIV, Number 1: 106-119.
- De Nardi, S. 2018. "Everyday Heritage Activism in Swat Valley: Ethnographic Reflections on a Politics of Hope." *Heritage & Society*: 1-22.

4/26: Cultural Landscapes

- Emma Lazarus, "The New Colossus" (1863)
- Sonia Guinansaca, "Calling Cards" (2017)
- De Leon, J. 2013. "Undocumented migration, use wear, and the material of habitual suffering in the

Sonoran Desert." *Journal of Material Culture* 18, 4: pp. 321-345.

- Jethro, D. 2019. "Liberated waste: heritage and materiality at Robben Island and Constitution Hill, South Africa." *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 25:3, 259-276.
- Williams, P. 2008. "Going Critical: On the Historic Preservation of the World's First Nuclear Reactor." *Future Anterior*, 5, 2: vii-18.
- Balenquah, L. 2017. "Spirit of place: Preserving the Cultural Landscape of the Bears Ears." *Edge of Morning. Native Voices Speak for the Bears Ears*: 74-80.

5/3: Final presentations

5/15 [WED]: Final paper due (Feel free to send it in before this date)