FRESHMAN SEMINAR: TECHNICAL RESEARCH ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBJECTS IN THE JOHNS HOPKINS ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM
As.389.107 (01), Johns Hopkins University, Fall 2015
Mondays, 1:30-4:00, 3 credits
Archaeological Museum Seminar Room, Gilman 150

INSTRUCTOR:
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Gilman 137, Office Hours: By appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
How do we investigate the material remnants of the ancient past? What kinds of questions should we be asking about ancient objects? What kinds of evidence should we consider, and how to we uncover this evidence? Which specialists do we consult? And how can our research contribute to a larger body of literature and research on a specific topic? We will explore these questions by conducting technical research on two Roman Egyptian mummy portraits currently on loan from the Eton College Myers Collection in Windsor, England, to the Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum.

The focus of this seminar is to engage in an interdisciplinary study of two mummy portraits dated to the 2nd century CE, and to explore numerous technical approaches by which we might learn more about the ancient contexts and people who produced these works. Throughout the course, we will consider different technologies that help us analyze the material aspects of these paintings, but we will continually contextualize these technical findings against the archaeological, historical and socio-cultural evidence for Egypt in this time period. We will be contributing our technical findings to the “Ancient Panel Paintings: Examination, Analysis and Research” (APPEAR) Project, an international database comprising numerous museum institutions and scholars that is currently managed by the J. Paul Getty Museum. We will also be making our findings accessible to a broad public through the Archaeological Museum’s website and our class Tumblr page.

While there is a rich literature on Roman Egypt and its material culture, we will only have time during this short semester to consult some of the more accessible and brief readings. We are fortunate to have many specialists offering their broad expertise over next several weeks, and we will consult with them on different aspects of the paintings and their ancient contexts. However, additional readings are suggested throughout the syllabus, and a bibliography (which we will continue to add to over the semester) will be provided for further research.

CLASS EXPECTATIONS:
Come to class on time, with the readings and assignments completed, ready to participate. Lack of preparedness for class will hamper your and your fellow classmates’ progress and will not be tolerated. You should do the readings in the order specified by your instructor. Most readings will be available on Blackboard or online as indicated on the syllabus. Notify the instructor immediately if you cannot locate a reading. Some of the key reference books for this class are also available in the museum library.

Inform the instructor in advance if you will miss classes for the observance of religious holidays. Do not attend class if you are unwell so as to ensure the health of your colleagues and instructors. Reasons for missing class such as medical excuses or other emergencies may require official documentation.
The class will meet both at the Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum, and occasionally, at other sites. On the days that we meet in the museum, laptops, iPads, tablets, cell phones and any other digital devices are not allowed during class time as ancient objects will be in use. Food, drink, and large coats and bags are not permitted in the Museum Seminar Room. See our visitor guidelines at: http://archaeologicalmuseum.jhu.edu/visit/museum-visitor-guidelines/

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

Our class meetings will typically include a lecture and discussion, followed by a session working hands on with museum objects. Several sessions feature guest speakers who will either visit the classroom or talk with us via Skype. In cases when we are working with museum objects, you are expected to follow all museum procedures. You are expected to leave all spaces cleaner than how you found them. Your work is not completed until spaces have been cleaned as needed, and all equipment put away.

**CLASS ORGANIZATION AND GRADING:**

Your grade will be determined based on the following criteria:

- Class participation: 20%
- Blog post and online profile: 15%
- Tumblr posts (2 per week): 20%
- Mid-term status report (3 pages): 15%
- Final team presentation: 15%
- Final team report (10-12 pages): 15%

**You will receive no credit for late work.** Plan your time so that assignments are completed before the set deadlines.

Blog posts

Our entire course will be documented through a blog on the museum’s website: [http://archaeologicalmuseum.jhu.edu/the-collection/object-stories/roman-egyptian-mummy-portraits/](http://archaeologicalmuseum.jhu.edu/the-collection/object-stories/roman-egyptian-mummy-portraits/)

Each student will sign up to post a brief 400-600 word blog entry on a specific class session. The purpose of the blog posts is to keep a record of the information we gather from week to week, and to identify in “real time” the kinds of questions and discoveries that come to light as we work on the two portraits. This record will also help keep our external collaborators and our general audience aware of our progress. Each post should include at least two images (taken by the student or provided by the instructor). For examples of previous blog entries written by JHU students in the Spring 2015 course “Recreating Ancient Greek Ceramics”, go here: [http://archaeologicalmuseum.jhu.edu/the-collection/object-stories/recreating-ancient-greek-ceramics/](http://archaeologicalmuseum.jhu.edu/the-collection/object-stories/recreating-ancient-greek-ceramics/)

Email your blog post as a word document and images to the instructor by midnight on the Thursday after class. So, if you are assigned to write about the class meeting on 9/28 (Mon.), your blog post is due by 10/1 (Thurs.) at midnight. **Late work will not receive any credit.** Entries will be posted online by the following Sunday by midnight and reviewed in class the next day.

Online profiles

Each of you should prepare a short online profile of three sentences. Mention your possible major, year of graduation, skills/experiences you bring to the course and your expectations/hopes for the course. Take a photograph of yourself. These should be emailed to the instructor by midnight on 9/3 (Thurs.). This profile will be used to tag you on the website blog posts.
Tumblr Posts
So as to develop an interactive and more informal archive of this course, you will all be contributing to a Tumblr blog:
http://ancientegyptianfaces.tumblr.com
You must post two Tumblr posts per week. One must be a scholarly resource of some kind on the study of Roman Egyptian mummy portraits, or related material. This can include links to articles, videos, museum objects or websites, etc., but should be something of scholarly value. The second post can include your impressions, musings, questions you have about the project, basically anything that you’d like to share. At the beginning of every week, we will review our colleagues’ postings on Tumblr to see what new information has been uncovered. At these reviews, you will identify which posts are yours so that you can receive credit for them.

Mid-term Status Report
This individual 3 page paper summarizes what you know to date about the portraits, and discusses what questions still remain to be answered, and how we might approach them. More details to be provided in class.

Final Team Presentations and Reports
Your work this semester culminates in a final group presentation on the portraits. At an early stage in the class, you will be divided into teams, and within these teams, you will be responsible for different aspects of the technical research on the portraits. The final presentations will bring together all of the insights that were gained over the course of the semester, combining all of the analytical research along with the contextual and archaeological research completed to date. You will produce group reports about your research that will then serve as the main documentation of all we have uncovered about the portraits over the course of the semester.

COURSE POLICIES:
Johns Hopkins University has laid out strict policies on ethical academic conduct. 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. For more information, see the website: web.jhu.edu/studentlife/policies/judicial.html

CLASS SCHEDULE

AUG. 31 (Wk 1): INTRODUCTION/INTRODUCTION TO OBJECT HANDLING


http://www.nicholasreeves.com/item.aspx?category=Archaeology&id=244
See entries in Case 33, #191 (ECM 2149) and Case 39, #254 (ECM 2150)

SEPT. 3 (THURS): ONLINE PROFILE INFORMATION DUE BY MIDNIGHT BY EMAIL

SEPT. 7: LABOR DAY, NO CLASS

SEPT. 14 (WK 2): INTRODUCTION TO THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT


Guest Speaker:
Dr. Betsy Bryan, Alexander Badawy Chair of Egyptian Art and Archaeology, Department of Near Eastern Studies, Johns Hopkins University

SEPT. 21 (WK 3): INTRODUCTION TO TECHNICAL STUDY
• Spurr, S. “Major W. J. Myers, O.E.: Soldier and Collector.” 1-3
• Reeves, N. “Ancient Egypt in the Myers Museum.” 4-6.


http://www.britishmuseum.org/pdf/BMTRB_5_Cartwright_Spaabæk_and_Svoboda.pdf

Guest Speaker:
Marie Svoboda, Associate Conservator, Department of Antiquities Conservation, the J. Paul Getty Museum

SEPT. 28 (WK 4): THE PEOPLE


**OCT. 5 (WK 5):**

**ENCAUSTIC AND TEMPERA WORKSHOP**

**CLASS GOES FROM 2PM TO 5PM TODAY**


Look at the Conservation & Art Materials Encyclopedia Online (Cameo) database: [http://cameo.mfa.org/wiki/Main_Page](http://cameo.mfa.org/wiki/Main_Page)

Explore the following materials by typing each into the “search” box:

Lead white; gypsum; ocher; Egyptian blue; red lead; madder; carbon black.

Guest Speaker:

Brian Baade, Assistant Professor, Department of Art Conservation, University of Delaware; and Kristin DeGhetaldi, Paintings Conservator, University of Delaware

**OCT. 12 (WK 6):**

**MULTISPECTRAL IMAGING**

**MID-TERM REPORT DUE IN CLASS**

Serotta, A. et al. 2015. TBA.

**Guest Speaker:**
Anna Serotta and Dawn Kriss, Conservators, The Brooklyn Museum of Art

**OCT. 15 THURS, (Wk 7):** **PAINTED SURFACES: DETERIORATION AND CONSERVATION**


**OCT. 19 (Wk 8):** **X-RADIOGRAPHY, CT SCANNING AND FORENSICS**


Appenzeller, O., et al. “Neurology in Ancient Faces.” *Journal of Neurology, Neurosurgery and Psychiatry* 2001; 70: 524-529. DOI:10.1136/jnnp.70.4.524


**Guest Speaker:**
TBA

**OCT. 26 (Wk 9):** **REFLECTANCE TRANSFORMATION IMAGING**
There is a lecture this morning by the guest speakers that begins at 9:30 and lasts until 12:45. You are all encouraged to attend for as much of the session as possible. Location TBA. We will have a few additional visitors to class today for the demonstration of RTI.


**Guest Speaker:**
Carla Schoer, Founder and Director, and Marlin Lum, Imaging Director, Cultural Heritage Imaging
**Nov. 2 (Wk 10): Mummy Portraits from the Hearst Museum of Anthropology**


Explore the online exhibit “Ethnic Identity in Graeco-Roman Egypt”:
http://tebtunis.berkeley.edu/exhibit/wclarysse

Look through the sections: “Introduction” and “Sources of the papyri”

Introduction to x-ray fluorescence:
http://www.artcons.udel.edu/about/kress/examination-techniques-and-scientific-terms/x-ray-fluorescence

**Guest Speakers:**
Jane Williams, Conservator, the Phoebe A. Heart Museum, and Dr. Marc Walton, Senior Scientist, Northwestern University / Art Institute of Chicago. Center for Scientific Studies in the Arts

**Nov. 9 (Wk 11): Examining Portraits at the Walters Art Museum**


**Guest Speaker:**
Dr. Glenn Alan Gates, Conservation Scientist, The Walters Art Museum

**Nov. 16 (Wk 12):**


Recreating the ancient Roman hairstyle of empress Julia Domna:  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y4P2ZO6YEKs

**Guest Speakers:**
Janet Stephens, Hairdresser and Hairdressing Archaeologist

**Nov. 23:** Thanksgiving Week, No class

**Nov. 30 (Wk 13):** Student Presentations

**Dec. 18:** Final papers due by noon  
Send papers to instructor by email