



## Pre-Columbian Studies Symposium

### Sacred Matter: Animism and Authority in the Pre-Columbian Americas

This symposium, held on October 7 and 8, 2016, will examine animism in the Pre-Columbian Andes, Amazon, and Mesoamerica. Scholars from many disciplines will shed light on how social authority was claimed and sanctified in practices that birthed, converted, or destroyed certain objects and places, as well as the social and natural order from which these things were said to emerge. Please note that due to the renovation of the Dumbarton Oaks Museum, this event will be held off-site at the Naval Heritage Center. Visit our [website](#) for more information and to register.



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## Behind the Scenes

### The Renovation of the Dumbarton Oaks Museum

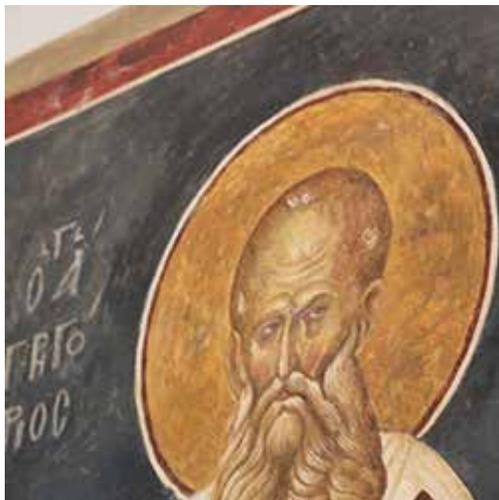
The Dumbarton Oaks Museum is currently closed for renovation through the end of 2016—but that doesn't mean there's nothing going on. In this month's [video feature](#), take a look behind the scenes to see what the museum looks like during the deinstallation process, and learn about why the renovation is happening and what to expect when the museum reopens next year. You can also watch more of our videos online on our [YouTube channel](#).



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## Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library

A Conversation with Translator Suzanne Abrams Rebillard



The Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library (DOML) was launched in 2011 with the goal of providing high-quality facing-page texts and translations of major medieval literary works to both general and specialist readers. Since 2014, DOML has offered short-term residencies for translators of volumes to visit Dumbarton Oaks and use its resources. Suzanne Abrams Rebillard, an independent scholar who is translating Gregory of Nazianzus's fourth-century *Poemata de Seipso* for a forthcoming volume, sat down with us at the conclusion of her residency for a wide-ranging interview about her work, career, and Gregory of Nazianzus. Read more on our [website](#).

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## New from Dumbarton Oaks Publications

*Sign and Design: Script as Image in Cross-Cultural Perspective*

In 2012, an international conference held at Dumbarton Oaks considered cases where image



and script were fused into a hybrid sign. Tackling a range of examples from an assortment of cultures, the ideas planted have flowered into a publication, which is being released this month. Editors Brigitte Miriam Bedos-Rezak and Jeffrey Hamburger explain that this volume “marks a shift away from an interest in text and image to a concern for the dialogic role of image in writing.” The book suggests three directions for examining the systems of representation that give script-images meaning: the iconicity of script, text as “imaging the ineffable,” and performativity. Find out more and purchase this title on the Harvard University Press [website](#).

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## Helping Save Syriac for the Future

### Dumbarton Oaks Welcomes Syriac Summer School



The ten students who comprise the inaugural session of the Syriac Summer School descended on Dumbarton Oaks from July 21 to 24 for a long weekend exploring the scholarly resources of the institution as well as the city of Washington, D.C. The program, sponsored and funded by Dumbarton Oaks, is hosted at the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library, located on the campus of Saint John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota. Students spent four weeks with faculty members Scott Johnson and Adam McCollum studying the Syriac language and working with manuscripts.

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## Mapping the History of Cultural Philanthropy in Washington, D.C.

### News from the Summer Internship Program

This summer, a team of four interns from Harvard University is working on the initial phase of a long-term research project at Dumbarton Oaks that will aim to map the landscape and history of cultural institutions in the nation's capital. In a half-dozen case studies, the group is exploring the ways in which the collecting philosophies and aesthetic preoccupations of private collectors influenced and continue to shape the educational missions of the museums and galleries that they created. Read more about this project in the words of intern Joy



Wang and find out about other summer interns' projects on our internship blog.

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## How Mosaics Were Made and Made Known

### Classical Art Historian Will Wootton Speaks at Dumbarton Oaks



On July 19, Dr. Will Wootton, lecturer on Roman art in the classics department of King's College London, delivered an informal talk about mosaics in antiquity. Wootton offered an engaging overview of the medium and its history, approaching the topic from two angles: the aesthetic experience of an ancient observer and the technical procedures employed by the original artisans. He concluded his talk with an in-person examination of the Apolausis mosaic in the vestibule of the museum, pointing out that water would have run over the surface into the sunken room that held it: "The point was showing that the water was so clear and pure that you could see the mosaic perfectly beneath it."

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## From the Archives

### Friends and Family: The Bliss Photograph Collection

Robert and Mildred Bliss were avid collectors of photographs of friends, family, and acquaintances, many of which had been taken by notable photographers. Bit by bit, Dumbarton Oaks is scanning the photo collection and posting it online. In this month's [post](#), archivist James Carder writes about some of the highlights of the collection, and tells the story of one of the individuals depicted in it.



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## Call for Papers: "The Individual in Material Culture"

## A Dumbarton Oaks Panel at the 52nd International Congress on Medieval Studies

Dumbarton Oaks will be sponsoring two panels on “The Individual in Material Culture” at next year’s International Congress on Medieval Studies, to be held May 11–14, 2017, at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan. One panel will cover the years 400–1000 and the other will address 1000–1400. Both invite papers that use surviving elements of material culture—for example, coins, seals, textiles, and jewelry—to discuss questions relating to the individual in the medieval European, Byzantine, and Islamic worlds. Topics can include self-presentation and the creation of one’s own identity, the imposition of an identity on an individual by others, social and familial relationships, and religious and ethnic identities. Authors are encouraged to take approaches that will allow discussion of such themes across the entire medieval period and a broad geographical range. Please submit proposals to [seals@doaks.org](mailto:seals@doaks.org) for consideration.

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### Good Ink

The Dumbarton Oaks Fellowship House at 1700 Wisconsin Avenue Northwest has received an American Institute of Architects Northern Virginia Chapter Design Award. The project received an Award of Merit in Institutional Architecture—one of only eight institutional projects recognized, and one of only three to receive the Merit distinction.



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