Stay Connected with Dumbarton Oaks

As a public health precaution, the museum and garden are closed through at least the end of August. In addition, for the remainder of the summer and the fall term, all public events are virtual. In the meantime, discover open-access and affordable books, virtual scholarly programming, and educational activities for children, as well as our many digital tools and online treasures.

Three Landmark Books in Byzantine Studies Newly Available

Released in affordable paperback format, plus a special discount
Discover classical texts that would otherwise be lost, an important source for the history of the ninth century, and a far-ranging study by Francis Dvornik in three new releases. *The Nature of the Bibliotheca of Photius* by Warren T. Treadgold presents the most important work of Byzantium’s most important scholar. This massive description of some four hundred books representing fourteen centuries of Greek literature preserves unique evidence about Byzantine learning. It also includes material from dozens of classical texts, including the histories of Ctesias and Theopompus, the novels of Iamblichus and Antonius Diogenes, the lexicon of Phrynichus, and the *Chrestomathia* of Proclus. Texts by Photius also bring to life the momentous middle of the ninth century in the Byzantine Empire via Cyril Mango’s translation of *The Homilies of Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople*, offering key insights into ninth-century intellectual, religious, and political history. Finally, scholars enthusiastically received 1946 lectures by Francis Dvornik on the idea of kingship in the ancient Near East and its influence on Jewish, Greek, and Hellenistic study. After intensive and broader research, Dvornik extended those lectures into the classic study *Early Christian and Byzantine Political Philosophy*. Now through the end of the month, use coupon code BYZ20 for a 20% discount on the three new releases.

**Legendary Opera Singer Renée Fleming Performs for Thousands from Dumbarton Oaks Music Room**

The beloved soprano sang in a live Metropolitan Opera broadcast.
A showstopping performance took place on August 1 in what the Metropolitan Opera calls “an intimate and iconic American venue: the music room of Dumbarton Oaks.” The great American soprano Renée Fleming put her vast repertoire on display with a program that included famed Puccini and Massenet arias, selections from Handel and Brahms, poems set to music, and the favorite “Over the Rainbow.” Over the years, the Music Room has hosted world premieres of Stravinsky and Copland compositions, performances by Francis Poulenc and Benjamin Britten, and early appearances by operatic luminaries including Leontyne Price and Joan Sutherland. Fleming’s landmark recital adds another chapter to that legacy. PBS intends to broadcast the concert at a later date. In the meantime, you can purchase access now through August 12 to hear the tour de force performance and experience the stunning Dumbarton Oaks tapestries, fine woodcarving, and Renaissance-inspired ceiling.

Launch of New Limited Podcast Series Bridging Byzantine Studies and Other Fields

First podcast explores citizenship, the rights of immigrants, and Roman imagination
Enjoy virtual encounters with scholars that inform, entertain, and challenge the Byzantine scholarly community and colleagues in the arts and humanities. In an effort to keep moving forward within the new parameters of COVID-19, the Byzantine Studies Program has released a limited summer podcast series, where a senior scholar discusses with a younger scholar of their choice an article or book chapter from a field other than Byzantine Studies that has had an impact on their work. The July podcast welcomes Anthony Kaldellis (The Ohio State University) and Jake Ransohoff (Harvard University) for a discussion of “The Roman Mind and the Power of Fiction” by John S. Richardson. How strong was the power of imagination for the Romans? How does legal fiction contribute to citizenship? How inclusive were the rights of immigrants in Roman society? [Listen to join the conversation.]

[Reflections on Learning Postclassical and]
The Byzantine Greek Summer School went virtual this summer, bringing together ten graduate students from all over the globe. Instructed by Professors Alexandros Alexakis (University of Ioannina) and Stratis Papaioannou (University of Crete), the Summer School supported the study of medieval Greek, paleography, and Byzantine book culture through online instruction and a rich collection of digital resources. While the program was unable to meet on the Dumbarton Oaks campus, the students still gained invaluable experience, devoting four weeks of their summer to the study of late antique and medieval Greek texts.

Call for Papers: "Identity and Status in Byzantine Material Culture"
In addition to written sources like letters, Byzantine material culture provides evidence for identity and status. Coins and seals, textiles and jewelry, and inscriptions and art objects—these objects provide a window on how individuals and groups at all levels understood and presented themselves and their place in society. Although focusing on objects from Byzantium, the Dumbarton Oaks "Identity and Status in Byzantine Material Culture" panel welcomes speakers working on materials from a comparative perspective. The panel occurs during the International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, Michigan, between May 13 and 15, 2021. Learn more about the Kalamazoo call for papers. By September 15, send paper proposals and inquiries to Managing Editor of the Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library Nicole Eddy at eddyn01@doaks.org.

Critical Editions of Byzantine Greek Texts Available at a Discount

Order any Dumbarton Oaks Texts paperback volume, receive a second at half price
Build your library of texts and translations this August with affordable paperbacks. The Dumbarton Oaks Texts series, a subset of the international series Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae (CFHB), presents critical editions of Byzantine Greek works of historiography or narratives of historical value. Volumes include modern critical editions with facing English translation, together with introduction and notes or commentary. **Now through the end of the month**, when you purchase one of these books, receive a second at a 50% discount using coupon code TEXTS50. Titles include the *Synodicon Vetus*, a short account of local synods and ecumenical councils that has long raised eyebrows among scholars, and *The Correspondence of Ignatios the Deacon*, offering a unique glimpse of a ninth-century Byzantine intellectual struggling to survive in a time of bitter doctrinal strife. Meanwhile, *The Correspondence of Athanasius I, Patriarch of Constantinople* reveals much of interest in the political, social, and religious spheres of the Byzantine Empire around the turn of the thirteenth century. **Explore all the Dumbarton Oaks Texts.**

**Making the Magic of Composing Music Relatable**

**Viet Cuong reflects on his spring 2020 Early-Career Musician Residency**
At the beginning of March, marimbas, metal pipes, drums, sandpaper, and a 24-inch wooden cube were juxtaposed with the tapestries, sculptures, and paintings of the Music Room. The first all-percussion concert at Dumbarton Oaks included the premiere of *Sandbox*, a work commissioned from spring 2020 Early-Career Musician Resident Viet Cuong. Called “alluring” and “wildly inventive” by the *New York Times*, Cuong is a groundbreaking composer whose music has been performed on six continents. Read his reflection to learn how he spent his days at Dumbarton Oaks and how the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has shifted his composition focus. Cuong also reflects on teaching virtual music lessons to DC public elementary school students. “People often assume composing music is this enigmatic, magical ability,” says Cuong, but he enjoyed empowering young musicians to try composition for themselves.

**Essential Books in Pre-Columbian and Byzantine Studies Made Open-Access**

Experts recommend favorites from our downloadable titles
Keep key reference works close at hand with our free searchable PDFs of classic texts and translations. Managing Editor of Art and Archaeology Sara Taylor recommends *Gold and Power in*
Ancient Costa Rica, Panama, and Colombia (ed. Jeffrey Quilter and John W. Hoopes), which explores the important lands between Mesoamerica and the Central Andes, rich in diverse ancient cultures and a tradition of goldworking. Gender in Pre-Hispanic America (ed. Cecelia F. Klein) considers genders as socially constructed categories that have shaped our present understanding of the past and informed how past peoples understood their present. Look at indigenous responses, cultural adjustments to, and negotiations with Spanish intrusion in Native Traditions in the Postconquest World (ed. Elizabeth H. Boone and Tom Cummins), which aims to better understand the resilience of native societies.


New Educational Materials Support Families, Teachers, and Students

Share Pre-Columbian art, ecology, and evolution with K-12 students
Engage elementary, middle, and high school students with entertaining educational activities away from screens. **Explore new materials on Pre-Columbian art:** discover elements of jewelry.
(such as jade, gold, mythology, and animals) in a word search, then investigate the felines and festivalgoers of a Wari textile in our bilingual exercise. **Download and print ecology activities** ranging from paper crafts to building an ecosystem web. Coloring pages of plants offer a welcome diversion and information about artists from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. A flower pencil topper tutorial teaches grade 4–12 students about the *Heliconia* plant, pollination, and coevolution. A complementary tutorial helps students craft a paper hummingbird mobile while learning more about the plant-bird relationship. Teachers planning curricula for next year can examine a detailed lesson plan (with downloadable materials) exploring the Amazon rainforest ecosystem and the effects of deforestation. A sample AP World History Document-Based Question (DBQ), with grading rubric and tips, looks at South American history through the lens of scientists, artists, and other experts. Finally, bring art and nature into the home with our **Zoom and Webex backgrounds**. Check the website for future additions to educational materials.

**Plant Spotting Around DC**

**Summer growing tips from our gardeners**

As summer heat sets in, many gardeners overlook watering needs, but this is a crucial time. Thunderstorms may provide temporary cooling relief, but much of the water fails to penetrate the soil. Stress throughout the summer can weaken plants and make them more susceptible to pests and diseases. Learn how we ensure the garden thrives through heat and drought, from the **South Lawn** to the **Beech Terrace** to the **Herbaceous Borders**. (Explore the entire garden virtually in our
video tour). For typical mid-Atlantic lawns, aim for about one inch of water per week, whether from rain or irrigation. Water less frequently but more deeply, and as early in the day as possible to minimize evaporation. Try setting out a straight-sided bowl or rain gauge to determine how much water your sprinkler provides. Did you know mature trees can pull hundreds of gallons of water from the soil each day? Trees with too-dry soil can become stressed and hurt nearby plants, but waterlogging is also a danger. DC-based nonprofit Casey Trees offers advice. For shrubs, herbaceous plants, and woody beds, our gardeners water by hand, taking care to check soil conditions and prevent waterlogging. If some of your plants in a mixed bed are more sensitive to dry soils, hand-watering each plant as needed may be preferable to sprinklers that blanket the entire area.

Fellows in the Spotlight

Catch up on the research of fellows and visiting scholars

Stephanie Caruso reveals how a group of gold pendants created a sense of wonder in late antique viewers. Caruso is postdoctoral fellow in Byzantine art and archaeology at Dumbarton Oaks.

Katherine Coty turns to volcanic stone and Renaissance fun houses to reimagine Italian villa gardens as experiments with the local landscape. Coty is a PhD candidate in art history at the University of Washington.
**Sarah Kennedy** looks at globalization in guinea pig bones, establishing why food is key to understanding power, identity, status, and the lives of Indigenous laborers in colonial Peru. Kennedy is a PhD candidate in anthropology at the University of Pittsburgh.

**Mikael Muehlbauer** identifies revolutionary churches hewn from rock—the only three medieval Ethiopian churches built with an aisled cruciform plan, suggesting ties to Fatimid Egypt and evoking a lost Byzantium. Muehlbauer earned his PhD in art history and archaeology from Columbia University in May.

**Stephanie Strauss** conducts the first art historical assessment of Epi-Olmec elite visual culture, examining monuments, hieroglyphs, and native fauna. Strauss was most recently professor of art history at the Savannah College of Art and Design.

**Victor Castillo** explores conquest as revival and finds evidence that sixteenth-century Maya nobles revived ancient religious architecture while claiming Christian identities.

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**On View Online**

Discover the collection of Dumbarton Oaks from anywhere.

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**Ancient Art at Dumbarton Oaks**
Art from the ancient Mediterranean represents a small but significant part of the Dumbarton Oaks collection. When viewed alongside Byzantine art, these works offer an opportunity to consider the continuities and changes in artistic production from the classical to the medieval period. The new online exhibit *Ancient Art at Dumbarton Oaks* comprises a selection of ancient and late antique art in the Byzantine Collection, the majority acquired from prominent antique dealers such as Joseph Brummer. The documentation of the collection's provenance provides a look into the world of early twentieth-century collecting. The online collection features many pieces of distinction, such as the Romano-Arabian bronze statue of a rearing horse, the purple porphyry head of a Roman emperor, Greek bronze statuettes that date back as far as the fifth century BCE, and stunning Byzantine jewelry in gold, sapphire, pearls, and rock crystal. The exhibit was coordinated by Elizabeth Dospĕl Williams, associate curator of the Byzantine collection, and Tyler fellow Kelsey Eldridge.

**Margaret Mee: Portraits of Plants**
Discover stunning paintings of Amazonian flora by artist, explorer, and environmentalist Margaret Mee (1909–1988) and explore the longstanding tradition of women botanical artists and illustrators in online exhibit Margaret Mee: Portraits of Plants. Browse zoomable images and descriptions of stunning Mee plant portraits, highlights from the Rare Book Collection, loaned works, and more. New digital tools build connections between the geographies and histories of featured artists and illustrators, such as Mee, contemporary photographer Amy Lamb, scientific illustrator Alice Tangerini, botanical artist Nirupa Rao, and close to a dozen other women from the seventeenth century onward. Explore how women artists were visualizing knowledge for several centuries with an interactive timeline, and discover mixed media that challenge the boundaries between art and illustration into the present day. Finally, consider Amazonian entanglements linking conservation and art via an interactive map of Mee’s expeditions in the Amazon. Learn more from additional resources such as a series of essays, interviews, a glossary, a timeline of Mee’s life, and further reading.

The Ancient Future: Mesoamerican and Andean Timekeeping
The Aztec, Maya, and Inca civilizations used complex and multiple timekeeping systems for purposes of agriculture, worship, and political authority. Online exhibit The Ancient Future: Mesoamerican and Andean Timekeeping shares information on the calendars of each of these cultures. Explore the three calendar cycles of the Maya (the tzolk’in, the haab, and one we call the Long Count), ages or “Suns” marked by the Aztecs in accordance with ritual and solar calendars, and Inca solar time measured in relation to sacred spaces and pilgrimage sites. Browse more than two dozen vivid digitized images from the Rare Book Collection, including drawings of calendar stones, transcriptions of Maya calendar wheels, and photographic plates of Andean archaeological sites.
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