Upcoming Events

**Film Screening: Containment (2015)**
Directed and Produced by Peter Galison and Robb Moss

Wednesday, March 23, 2016, 5:30–8:30 p.m.
Oak Room, Dumbarton Oaks Fellowship House
4th Floor, 1700 Wisconsin Avenue NW

Part wake-up call, part observational documentary, part sci-fi graphic novel, *Containment*, a new film from Harvard professors and filmmakers Peter Galison and Robb Moss (*Secrecy*, 2008), tracks our most imaginative attempts to plan for our radioactive future and reveals the startling failure to manage waste in the present, as epitomized by the Fukushima disaster. Galison will be present and will take questions after the screening. This film is presented as part of the Environmental Film Festival in the Nation’s Capital. Find out more about *Containment* and its creators on our website; book tickets here.

**Private Collecting and Public Display**
Art Museums in the Nation’s Capital in the Early Twentieth Century

April 8–9, 2016
Music Room, Dumbarton Oaks
1703 32nd Street NW
Register at this link.

The conference will explore the aesthetic, philosophical, and ideological sources that shaped...
art collecting in early twentieth-century America, focusing on collections in Washington, D.C., especially the Phillips Collection, Freer Gallery, Textile Museum, Dumbarton Oaks, National Gallery of Art, and Hillwood Estate, Museum and Gardens. The founders of these collections advanced distinct notions of cultural identity by collecting and displaying art outside the general canon of early twentieth-century art collecting. Papers will contextualize the individual foundations within the broader history of related American institutions, focusing on the modernist notion of art collecting as a form of self-expression, a visual rendition of a collector’s worldview, and a specific understanding of the course of history. For more information, visit our website.

**Olympic Landscapes: Green and Greenest**
The 2016 Garden and Landscape Studies Spring Public Lecture

Thursday, April 14, 2016, 5:30 p.m.
Music Room, Dumbarton Oaks
1703 32nd Street NW
Register at this link.

The spring lecture in Garden and Landscape Studies will be delivered by Mary Margaret Jones, president and senior principal of Hargreaves Associates in San Francisco and Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Hargreaves Jones Landscape Architecture in New York. Jones has led a number of the firm’s award-winning projects around the globe, including the master concept design for the 2000 Sydney Olympics and the parklands for the 2012 London Olympics. Her talk at Dumbarton Oaks will explore the synergies and differences between these projects and what she and the firm learned about such “spectacle landscapes” from one project to the next. The lecture is free and open to the public, but reservations are required. For more information, please visit our website.

Right: Aerial view looking south during the London Olympic games, July 2012. Image courtesy Olympic Delivery Authority

**Worlds of Byzantium**
The 2016 Byzantine Studies Symposium

April 22–23, 2016
Music Room, Dumbarton Oaks
1703 32nd Street NW
Register by email (byzantine@doaks.org) or phone (202-339-6940)

What was Byzantium? Where was it? What
religions did its people practice, and which languages did they speak? The 2016 Symposium will
examine the very foundations of what we think “Byzantium” was—Greek-speaking, Orthodox
Christian, Constantinopolitan—and attempt to reset scholars’ expectations about what counts as
Byzantine. The symposiasts will posit that Byzantium can play a more central role on the world-
historical stage if Byzantinists are willing to let it be decentered and reconstituted for the next
generation. See the program and abstracts online.

Left: Prophet Daniel holding a scroll, photograph: E. Bolman, © American Research Center in Egypt

The Completion of the Online Bliss-Tyler Correspondence Project

What was life like for American expatriates in the early twentieth century? How did the Forty Martyrs
micromosaic come to Dumbarton Oaks? Scholars, art enthusiasts, and readers across the world have
a new online resource to help them answer these questions: in December, Dumbarton Oaks
published the final chapter of the Bliss-Tyler Correspondence, the institution’s first large-scale
online publication.

The Bliss-Tyler Correspondence comprises over one thousand letters and telegrams shared
between Dumbarton Oaks’ founders, Mildred Barnes Bliss and Robert Woods Bliss, with Royall Tyler, the close friend and connoisseur who advised their art purchases, and his wife, Elisina Tyler. The
collection reflects the frequency of their correspondence over a lifelong friendship: the
earliest letters date to 1902, before the Blisses’ marriage, and end in 1953, the year of Royall Tyler’s death.

Publishing the many letters in print might have been “unwieldy,” as Carder suggested, but the
online project provided the unique opportunity to experiment with new publication methods.
Presenting the letters online also showcased the interconnectedness of the people and objects
that appeared across the fifty years of correspondence. Building the ideal platform was a
significant institutional project: from 2010 until 2012, the Publications department worked to devise
a host of online tools to aid the reader experience, including a full-text search feature; a database
of people, places, and objects linked to each letter; an interactive timeline of artwork purchases;
and detailed annotations for each piece of correspondence. “The idea was to move beyond a
static book presentation to create something that’s more dynamic,” said Lain Wilson, who began
This year marked the sixth annual Post-Doctoral Teaching Fellows’ Day, an event showcasing Dumbarton Oaks’ research to the local university community. This year’s topic, “Discovering Byzantine Lives,” looked to material, visual, textual, and archaeological evidence to understand lived realities. In the morning, Teaching Fellow Elizabeth Dospel Williams opened the discussion with a talk on dress and jewelry from early Byzantine Egypt, followed by Teaching Fellow Jonathan Shea, who spoke about the evidence Byzantine seals provide about those who commissioned them. Sigillography consultant Eric McGeer looked at ideals of military leadership as a window into the lives of the Byzantine military. After lunch, students handled coins with Shea and visited the Museum galleries with Williams and Assistant Curator John Hanson. Finally, Director of Byzantine Studies Michael Maas led a student panel discussion about the value of comparing different kinds of evidence to understand Byzantine experiences. The event drew more than ninety students and faculty from four universities, a record attendance.

Above: Post-Doctoral Teaching Fellow Jonathan Shea leads a seminar on seals at the 2016 Teaching Fellows’ Day
Afterlives of Alexander
Dumbarton Oaks Panel at the National Gallery

On February 11, Ioli Kalavrezou, the Dumbarton Oaks Professor of Byzantine Art at Harvard; Dimitris Kastritsis, a 2013–14 Byzantine Fellow and Lecturer at the University of St Andrews; and Jonathan Shea, Post-Doctoral Teaching Fellow in Byzantine History, presented perspectives on the “Afterlives of Alexander in the Byzantine World” at the National Gallery of Art. Dumbarton Oaks cohosted the panel in conjunction with “Power and Pathos,” the special exhibition of Hellenistic bronze sculpture currently on display at the NGA. Kalavrezou highlighted the Byzantine use of images of Alexander as imperial symbols that could be appreciated by both Christian and non-Christian audiences. Kastritsis analyzed Ottoman annotations to the image captions of a manuscript of the Alexander romance to explore how non-Greek speakers may have reinterpreted the story of Alexander for their own purposes. Finally, Shea discussed the appropriation of Byzantine-style iconography on coins made by emirs of the Artuqid dynasty, who ruled in Eastern Anatolia, Northern Syria, and Northern Iraq during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Following the panel, Director of Byzantine Studies Michael Maas led a question and answer session.

Above: Michael Maas, left, and Ioli Kalavrezou, right, during the “Afterlives of Alexander in the Byzantine World” panel on February 11

Students Receive Grants to Attend “Frontiers in Urban
The Mellon Initiative in Urban Landscape Studies and Dumbarton Oaks’ program in Garden and Landscape Studies jointly held a daylong graduate workshop on November 20, 2015, titled “Frontiers in Urban Landscape Research.” Four students from Harvard University and the University of Virginia were able to attend through support by Dumbarton Oaks’ Bliss Symposium Awards and Mellon Travel Awards. Read three of their dispatches on the day’s proceedings and what they learned there online.

Above: Angie Jo and Sonja Vangjeli, recipients of Bliss Symposium Awards

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**From the Archives**

**75 Years Ago this Month: The Big Snow**

Dumbarton Oaks’ first major blizzard happened relatively late in its first academic year, in early March of 1941. A guest lecture was nearly derailed, but Dumbarton Oaks soldiered on, and even the gardens survived with little harm done. The staff sent a newsletter to Robert Woods and Mildred Barnes Bliss—who were warmly ensconced in sunny California at the time—with a beautifully evocative description of the grounds in the snow. Read their notes on the snowstorm along with a letter from librarian Barbara Sessions and see pictures of the storm on our website.

Right: North Vista at Dumbarton Oaks under snowfall
Beatrix Farrand was born into the lofty world of her aunt Edith Wharton’s late nineteenth-century New York City and fashioned herself into one of the founders of landscape architecture. The Dumbarton Oaks Gardens were her crowning jewel, more than two decades in the making. This lifelong friend of Mildred Barnes Bliss transformed the grounds of Dumbarton Oaks from a space that was still largely agricultural into the beloved gardens as they still more or less exist today. Read about this remarkable artist and architect’s life—and the contributions without which the place would be unimaginable—in this highlight from our 75th Anniversary Blog.

Left: Beatrix Jones Farrand (1872–1959), ca. 1895

**Good Ink**

- Joel Kalvesmaki, editor in Byzantine Studies, has coedited (with Robin Darling Young) *Evagrius and His Legacy*, now available from University of Notre Dame Press. The book grew out of a 2011 round table hosted by Dumbarton Oaks. David Brakke writes, “Joel Kalvesmaki, Robin Darling Young, and their colleagues have been leading a renaissance in the study of Evagrius of Pontus. . . . A collection that ranges as widely as its subject’s fertile mind.”

- The Online Seals Catalogue has been named in Oxford Bibliographies Online’s entry on “Seals,” which remarks:

  *The Dumbarton Oaks website pools together and offers easy access to vast resources essential to the study of Byzantine seals, including the Online Catalog of the seal collection . . .; a regularly updated bibliography; and two instructive expositions, one devoted to imperial seals, the other to a rare motif in Byzantine seal iconography: narrative scenes from the New Testament. . . . The permanent exhibit devoted to “Leadens Gospels” superbly explores seals as expressions of faith and of the ways that the Byzantines related to the New Testament.*
Orchids spring to life, sheltered from the elements in our greenhouse; taken by Gardener Luis Mármol on February 5. For more pictures, visit our garden blog, What’s Blooming at D.O.
New Publications
Ex Horto Dumbarton Oaks Texts in Garden and Landscape Studies

Now on View
Find more information about the exhibits and rotations on our website.

75 Years/75 Objects: Pondering
March 3–27, 2016, in the Special Exhibition Gallery
Curator’s Tour on March 4 and 18 at 3 p.m.

Coming Soon: Questioning
March 31–April 24, 2016. Curator’s Tours on April 1 and 15 at 3 p.m.

Clothing for the Afterlife: Textiles from the Pre-Columbian Collection
October 9, 2015–April 3, 2016, in the Textile Gallery

Stephens & Catherwood Revisited: Maya Ruins
and the Passage of Time

From September 2015 in the Orientation and Rare Book Galleries and online