

History of Museums

(School of Archaeology and Museology)

Teacher: Celine Lai

TA: TBC

Dates: Jun 30~Jul 11, 2025

Course description:

This course concerns the history of world museums from the 17th century, with the purpose of finding their implications for contemporary museum collections and development, especially for China. Museums have always been regarded as a product of modernity and have witnessed significant changes over the last three hundred years: they have evolved from a treasure cabinet of the European upper class into a museum owned by citizens; from a gathering spot for scholars into a fun place for visitors of all ages; and from a place of top-down learning into an urban landmark. These changes cause many museums today to ponder over their collecting aims, development approach, and expansion possibilities. The course begins with a background of museums being established in Europe in the early years, moves on to the America, Asia and other countries.

Course objectives:

1. Master first-hand literature on the history of museum development;
2. Understand the different development models of major museum of the world in their original socio-historical contexts;
3. Establish cross-disciplinary thinking in Archeology, Museum Studies, Art and Cultural Heritage;
4. Analyze contemporary Chinese museums in relation to their collections and development.

Evaluation:

Percentage	Assignment	Requirement	Date
20%	In-class presentation	To be announced.	To be decided on the first day of class.
80%	End of term essay	Pre-given essay topic. 7000~8000 words in English.	After the course ends

Topics and reading materials:

Date	Topic
6.30~7.1	Introduction: Museum Management Structure and Collecting Practices <ol style="list-style-type: none"> MacDonald, Sharon. 'Collecting Practices' in Sharon MacDonald ed. <i>The Companion to Museum Studies</i>, ed. by Sharon MacDonald Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006, pp. 81-97. Lewis, Geoffrey. 'The history of museum' in <i>Encyclopaedia Britannica</i>, first published in 1999 and last edited online in 2021 by the site's editors. Available online: https://www.britannica.com/topic/museum-cultural-institution. The Metropolitan Museum of Art. 'Collection Management Policy', approved document by the MET's Board of Trustees, 2021, published online.
Part I Museums in Europe and the States	
7.2~7.4	Early Museums: From the Cabinet of Curiosities to the Public Museums <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Abt, Jeffrey. 'The origins of public museum' in Sharon MacDonald ed. <i>The Companion to Museum Studies</i>, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006, pp. 115-134. 出口保夫、吕理州译《大英博物馆的故事》(台北：麦田) 2009 年，第 13—95 页。 David Cash. <i>Access to the Museum Culture: The British Museum from 1753 to 1836</i>. London: Trustees of the British Museum, 2002, pp. 9-31; pp. 165-196 and pp. 226-238. Duncan, Carol. 'From the princely gallery to the public art museum: the Louvre Museum and the National Gallery, London' in <i>Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums</i>. London and New York: Routledge, 1995, pp. 21-47. Alexander, E.P. (亚历山大), 陈双双译《美国博物馆: 创新者和先驱》(南京: 译林出版社) 2016 年，第 45-67 页。 Grunenburg, Christoph. 'The modern art museum' in Emma Barker (ed) <i>Contemporary Cultures of Displays</i>. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999, pp. 26—49. 马琳: 《西方艺术展览制度研究》，上海：上海大学出版社，2024 年，第 150-222 页。
Part II Museums from the 20 th Century to the Present	
7.7~7.9	Museum in Japan, China, and the Emirates

- a. P. F. Kornicki. 'Public display and changing values. Early Meiji exhibitions and their precursors', *Monumenta Nipponica*, 1994, vol. 49, no. 2, pp. 167-196.
- b. 黎婉欣：《近中国学术视野下的北疆博物院——兼论桑志华的博物馆经营理念》，《中国国家博物馆馆刊》2021年第8期
- c. Graebner, Seth. 'The Louvre Abu Dhabi: French Universalism, Exported', *L'esprit createur*, 2014, 54(2), pp. 186-199.
- d. Ritvala, Tiina, et al. 'The international expansion of an art museum: Guggenheim's global-local contexts', Kevin Ibeh eds, *Growth Frontiers in International Business*. London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2017, pp. 145-166.
- e. Walsh, Victoria. 'Tate Britain: Curating Britishness and Cultural Diversity', *Tate Encounter [E]dition 2*, 2008, pp. 1-18

Part III Chinese museum collections

7.10~11

Chinese major museums and their collection features

- a. Rawson, Jessica. *Chinese Jade from the Neolithic to the Qing*, London : British Museum Press, 1995
- b. Monika Kopplin (ed.), *Lacquerware in Asia: Today and Yesterday*, Paris: the UNESCO, 2002
- c. Sullivan, Michael. *The Arts of China*, 5th edition, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008.
- a. Wu Hung, *The Art of the Yellow Springs: Understanding Chinese Tombs*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010, pp. 17—47.