

# Mount Holyoke College Art Museum

## Overview

- Sequestered unceremoniously behind the brick façade of the College, this Museum, a small oasis of extraordinary art objects, is intimate, comfortable and a joy to explore. Visitors discover a variety of pieces among the extensive holding of over 15,000 art objects including Egyptian antiquities, Greek and Roman art, medieval sculpture, American and European paintings and sculpture, and much more. An ever-changing schedule of inventive and thought-provoking special exhibitions complements the permanent collection.

## Founding Date

- Founded in 1876, the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum was one of the first collegiate museums in the United States—and now is one of the liveliest! With relatively limited staff resources, the Museum has established itself as a cultural laboratory for the campus, actively used in teaching by faculty and students studying art, history, chemistry, French, anthropology, philosophy, religion, and numerous other disciplines.

## A Cultural Laboratory on Campus:

### Faculty

- To build upon this solid foundation laid by the Museum's Director and Curator, the Museum applied for and was awarded a grant from the Mellon Foundation for the purpose of working closely with faculty across the disciplines to use the Museum's collection in their teaching. Two new staff positions will be funded by the Mellon Foundation for a three-year period, beginning in the summer of 2009, in order to expand this venture. Museum staff expect to provide many more faculty and students with transformative teaching and learning experiences than would have been possible without these additional resources.

### Students

- Students have the opportunity to study exhibitions and collections through lecture courses and seminars. Some of these classes meet in the Museum's mediated teaching classroom, where original objects can be part of each class.
- Mount Holyoke students are also active in the life of the Museum through special programs including: an innovative educational program for local school children based on daily life in the ancient world, internships, work-study positions, and the Society of Art Goddesses, a student organization which arranges special field trips and informal talks with artists, art historians, curators, and others.

## Collection Overview

- The collection of over 15,000 objects—ranging from ancient Egypt, China, and Peru to contemporary America—is on view on a rotating basis, exposing students and other visitors to original works of art of the highest quality. Students may access any object in the collection not currently on view by contacting Museum staff. An illustrated online database also allows for review of the permanent collection, which is constantly growing through purchases and gifts. Nearly 700 objects have been added in just the last five years alone.
- Strengths of the collection include ancient art of Egypt, Greece and Rome; late medieval and early Renaissance Italian painting, American landscape painting; Chinese and Japanese art; Pre-Columbian art and works on paper, especially French and American 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century prints.

## Membership

- Join to support a visual arts cultural resource for the College community and beyond! Friends of Art membership fees provide core funding for special exhibitions, lectures, gallery talks and other activities.

### *All members receive*

- Invitations to exhibition openings, lectures, gallery talks and other events
- The Mount Holyoke College Art Museum newsletter
- 15% discount on items from the Museum's shop

### *In addition:*

- Members at the Patron level and above receive selected exhibition publications
- Members at the Director's Circle level receive an invitation to periodic art-filled weekends at destinations such as New York City and Chicago

## Programming:

- The Museum's exciting schedule of special exhibitions, lectures and gallery talks complements the intellectual and social life on campus.
- The Museum is part of a consortium of 10 museums located in the Pioneer Valley. Called Museums10, the collaborative has worked together on programming initiatives such as BookMarks, a series of exhibitions and events on the topic of books. The next project, slated for the fall of 2010 will offer a rich menu of food and wine themed exhibitions and events. Mount Holyoke's exhibition will examine the way wine has played a part in ritual and revelry from ancient times to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## Special Exhibitions

- A number of special exhibitions, ranging from contemporary art to thematic historical and artistic investigations supplement the permanent collection each year. Recent exhibitions have included realist paintings by noted American artist Janet Fish, Egyptian art from the Petrie Museum in London, photographs by Diane Arbus, and French landscapes from Neoclassicism to Romanticism.

## Education

- FOR THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY: The primary mission of the Museum is to serve as an academic resource to the College's faculty and students. Their academic collaboration includes classes in the Museum to investigate objects relating to courses such as *Neurobiology of Art and Music*; *International Relations: War and Propaganda*; *American Art since 1945*; *History of Photography*; *Black Mountain Blues* (a course about an experimental North Carolina college in the 1930s and '40s); *Introduction to Literature*; *Italian Conversation and Composition*; *Advanced Sculpture*; *Introduction to Philosophy*; *Italian Renaissance Art*; *Art and Cultural Politics*; *Psychology: Brain/Mind*; *Arts of China*; *Empire: The Art and Archaeology of the Roman Provinces*; *Western Civilization: The Great Books*; and *Making Things: 1<sup>st</sup>-year Seminar in Studio Art*.
- FOR THE WIDER COMMUNITY: The Museum also trains a corps of adult docents who offer tours of the permanent collection, and special exhibitions for adult and school groups. In addition to tours for adult groups, local schools are offered tours designed to support the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and to help students develop critical thinking skills and a lifelong connection to the museum experience.

- Using objects from the Museum's extensive collection of works from antiquity, the program, *Life in the Ancient World: Egypt, Greece, and Rome*, provides students in Grades 4 – 8 the opportunity to learn about history, world cultures, and archaeology through direct experience with artifacts and original works of art.
- A second program, *Say What You See* is a one-hour interactive tour designed for Grades 2-4. Our experienced docents serve as facilitators, encouraging students to translate the visual image into words.

## Adult Programs

- Call or email [link] the Museum's Education Coordinator to schedule an unforgettable tour for your adult group of 8 or more people. Please call at least 1 week in advance of the date wish to visit.

## Family Programs

- Families frequently visit the Museum with young children in tow. In order to facilitate the learning experience for children and their parents, the Museum has produced a booklet providing activities for families to use while learning about looking at art together. This booklet makes the Museum's collection accessible to young children. Annually, the Museum offers an event related to one of our special exhibitions or our permanent collection for families with children ages 2-10.

## Museum Store

- The Museum Store offers merchandise inspired by the Museum's collection, including a fine selection of exhibition catalogues, note cards, coffee mugs, tote bags, and other unique items.

## Museum Hours

Tuesday–Friday

11:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday: 1:00–5:00 p.m.

Closed Mondays, the last two weeks of December, and the first week of January. If in doubt, please call 413. 538.2245.

In case of inclement weather, the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum follows the policies of the College. If Mount Holyoke College is closed, the Museum is closed. Call (413) 538-2000 for information about weather-related closures.

**Offices:**

Monday–Friday

8:30 am–5:00 pm

## **Museum Admission**

**Free and open to the public year round.**

Telephone: 413 538 2245

Email: [artmuseum@mtholyoke.edu](mailto:artmuseum@mtholyoke.edu)