



# Summer Internship Program

**Davis Museum and Cultural Center, Wellesley College**

**Summer 2009**

*By Ally Brown '11, Development Intern*

Program offers experiences and connections with alumnae in the arts

The Summer Internship Program at the Davis provided ten Wellesley College students the opportunity to join museum staff for ten weeks of marketable experience. Students were selected to work in specific areas of the museum, which included involvement in the Curatorial, Collections Care, Technology, Development, Public Relations, and Education Departments, as well as the Print Room. In addition to the day-to-day exposure to museum operations, interns visited regional museums, a private collection, and an auction house. This year, off-campus activities focused on creating connections with alumnae who are involved with the arts. Ashley Boulden '09, this year's internship coordinator, arranged trips and activities that allowed us to begin utilizing the strong alumnae network that we will soon be a part of.

*"Just as an art history class will arm a student with knowledge for the next time they visit an art museum, this internship has given me new perspectives. For me, art museums are no longer simply art on wall, but rather the sum of all the work that goes into running an accessible cultural and educational institution." – Anna McCarthy '11  
Curatorial Intern. Education*



Sandra Cohen Bakalar '55, and her husband, David, gave the interns a tour of their collection in Brookline.

## Intern Podcast!

Technology Intern, Rachel Kaston '10, recorded a podcast about our experiences at the museum this summer. It gives great insight into both what we brought to the museum and what we were able to take from the experience. It can be accessed at:  
<http://www.davismuseum.wellesley.edu/whatsnew/podcast.html>

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## Finding Role Models In Young Alumnae

Though every off-campus trip was informative in its own way, two trips at the end of the summer were particularly inspiring. We visited the offices of the Constellation Center in Cambridge, MA. There we met Alex Lee '06, Development Officer, and Erin Doherty '07, Researcher. Alex is a member of the Friends of Art National Committee and Erin was a 2006 Summer Intern at the Davis Museum and currently serves on the Friends of Art Boston Committee. Both women offered us such helpful career advice. Seeing alums so close to us in age, that are already so successful, really sparked excitement in us.

At the Museum of Science in Boston, we met with Erika Reinfeld '02, who spoke to us about an exhibit she has been working on for several years, *Black Holes: Space Warps and Time Twists*. The differences between a science museum and an art museum were quite apparent at first. However, after talking to Erika about the process of creating the exhibition, similarities between the two institutions started to emerge.

*"My favorite part of the internship was talking to museum professionals, both here at the Davis and on our trips. Although I still don't know for sure what I want to do with my Art History degree, they've been extremely helpful in sharing the requirements of different museum careers, as well as the pros and cons of each of their jobs."*

*- Meg Garratt-Reed '11  
Curatorial Intern, Academic Programs*



## Visit to Skinner

On July 10<sup>th</sup>, interns visited Skinner Auction House accompanied by Interim Museum Director, Dennis McFadden. We were able to attend the preview for the European Furniture, Decorative Arts & Fine Ceramics Auction to be held the following day. We quickly realized how different the atmosphere of an auction house is from a museum's through a discussion with Stuart Whitehurst, Skinner Vice President and Director of Rare Books & Manuscripts, (also on the PBS Series *The Antiques Roadshow*). Coincidentally, we discovered that the highlights of the auction were from the collection of Elizabeth Chellis, who studied at Wellesley in the 1920s. She was founder of the Wedgwood International Seminar and president of the Wedgwood Society of Boston. We were left in awe of her ceramic collection, particularly a "Frog Service" platter that had belonged to the Queen of England in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.



## Weekly Lunches

Each week a different member of the museum staff sat down to lunch with the interns. It allowed us to learn about staff members' specific roles in the museum, their career paths, and other aspects of their lives. The staff has always been extremely welcoming, making the interns feel right at home. Shown at left is a lunch presentation on museum technology by Jim Olson, Coordinator of Information Services.

*"Working day to day filing prints this summer, I have gained a better understanding of craftsmanship--what printer makers have done to achieve the effects we see. As a studio art major, I have found this experience invaluable".*

*-Shirley Palomino '11  
Print Room Intern*



Ally Brown '11, Development Intern, and Rachel Kaston '10, Technology Intern, show their love for sculpture.

## Trip to Gropius House and DeCordova Sculpture Park

The schedule for July 23<sup>rd</sup> was packed as we interns visited the Walter Gropius House and the DeCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, both in Lincoln, Massachusetts. At the Gropius House, we had a glimpse into the lives of Walter and Ise Gropius, along with their daughter, Ati, as they came to establish a home in the United States. We also learned a great deal about the Bauhaus and some of us even fell in love with 'Bauhaus pink'. At DeCordova we were able to meet Karen Crane, Director of Member Services, and Lynn Thomson, Interim Head of Education. They facilitated an informal discussion about their positions at DeCordova, and museum careers in general. After the talk, we had a guided tour around the sculpture park.

## Discussions at RISD

Interns took a trip to Providence, RI in mid-July to visit the Rhode Island School of Design Museum. Both the Davis and RISD's new building were designed by Spanish architect, Rafael Moneo. We examined the architecture closely, and were able to locate design similarities between the two museums. While there, we met with Sarah Ganz Blythe '95, who is the Director of Education at the RISD Museum. Sarah spoke candidly about her background, path to RISD, decision to get her Ph.D., and the difficulty of balancing the roles of wife and mother while overseeing a department of a museum. After talking with Sarah we toured the new print study gallery. We viewed highlights from their print collection and proofs of publications for an upcoming print exhibition. Though similar to the Davis in its strong ties to an academic institution, we found it interesting that the RISD Museum diverges with its focus on design.



Andrew Stein Raftery, Associate Professor of Printmaking, shows interns prints and publication proofs at RISD. Davis will be adding one of Andrew's series, "Open House: Five Engraved Scenes" to the collection in the coming months.

*"I was surprised by how frequently I would be handling works of art. It's been really great to learn how to hold objects correctly, and it shows the amount of faith that our supervisors have in us! It's an experience and skill set that is definitely not possible to obtain in a classroom." - Emma Wright '11  
Collections Care Intern*

## Working together, we've learned from both the museum and each other

Throughout the summer, each intern was responsible for completing her own projects. Despite this independence, we came together as a group for Visual Teaching Strategies (VTS) discussions, museum database training, a library research workshop, informal lectures, and weekly meetings. The more time we spent together, the more we began to evolve as a group and discover our shared interests. In museums, we discovered our new, heightened awareness to the way collections are displayed, the presentation of text and educational materials, and the types of objects that institutions are collecting. We learned to ask questions like, "Who is the target audience?" and "How was this object acquired?"



Interns eating lunch together along the canal in Providence, RI, during a trip to RISD.

*"How you form relationships and bond is an interesting aspect of this experience. Our differences are obvious, but our similarities are stronger. It's an important lesson and one that will help you in all aspects of life." - Melinda Rios DS '10, PR & Marketing Intern*



Interns have an informal discussion with Dennis McFadden, Interim Director of the Davis Museum, while visiting the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts. Through numerous discussions similar to this one, it has become clear to the interns that at Wellesley, the students are the primary audience of the Davis Museum. If we take nothing else away from this experience, we all have a greater appreciation for the Davis Museum and Cultural Center for both its accessibility to us as students and alumnae and for the wealth of information and history it holds inside it.

*"I can't believe I waited three years to get involved in this amazing museum."  
- Jessica Planos '10  
Curatorial Intern, Prints and Drawings*

## A Day at the MFA Boston

A trip to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, was a favorite among interns. We met with three Wellesley alumnae, each at different stages in her career. Rebecca Tilles '03, Curatorial Research Associate, Art of Europe; Rita Freed '74, John F. Cogan Jr. and Mary L. Cornille Chair, Art of the Ancient World; and Erica Hirschler '79, Croll Senior Curator of Paintings, Art of the Americas, each gave us tours of their respective departments and encouraged us to ask questions. We gathered that there are many ways to enter a career in the museum field and that our Wellesley educations are a step in the right direction. The MFA is undergoing construction and reinstallation, and the alumnae offered us insight into that process. After spending time with the curators, we were lucky enough to have a private tour of the special exhibition *Titian, Tintoretto, and Veronese; Rivals in Renaissance Venice*, given by the exhibition curator, Frederick Ilchman. It was quite interesting to see a glimpse of how a museum much larger than the Davis operates. Every trip truly gave the interns a better sense of the museum field and where the Davis exists within it.