

Davis Internship Newsletter

Summer 2017



Dear Friends of the Davis,

As I wrap up my second summer at the Davis Museum and my final summer at Wellesley College, I am overwhelmed with gratitude for the internship program that changed how I view myself and my future. The Davis Museum internship program has provided intensive museum experience to accomplished Wellesley students for the past fourteen years. This summer's Davis interns represent a wide range of majors and life experiences that allow them to offer unique contributions to their positions as Curatorial, Education, Digital Marketing and Administration, and Collection Management interns. In addition to working on individual projects with their supervisors, all of the interns produced content for the "Wellesley Collects" tour on the Davis Museum app. The tour focuses on the history of collecting at the Davis and many interns highlighted the generous gifts of Wellesley alumnae.

Through weekly lunches with the Davis staff and Friday field trips to regional museums across New England, the internship provides opportunities for students to connect with and learn from museum professionals. The interns also traveled to New York City for a whirlwind three days of touring museums, galleries, and auction houses. They saw conservation labs and experienced behind-the-scenes tours as they met with individuals from every museum department imaginable and the New York Friends of Art.

This summer has been a beautiful learning experience for our cohort and we would like to thank everyone who helped make this rich journey possible!

Feliz Smith '17

2017 Summer Internship Coordinator





Remi Kobayashi '19

Digital Marketing and
Administration Intern

I took on the Digital Marketing & Administration position knowing I would be able to continue doing some of the work I had been doing as the Technology Assistant during the academic year, but I ended up delving so much further into all aspects of the art museum field than I had imagined.

At the outset, I began with four main projects: Davis website updates, Cuseum management, the Wellesley Collects tour object research, and making promotional material for summer and fall events at the Davis. Some of the tasks I was familiar with, such as the straightforward website and Cuseum updates, but projects like the object research were entirely new to me. I researched the *Soweï Mask* from the Mende tribe in Sierra Leone, and *Campo Sant' Agnese* by John Singer Sargent. It gave me an opportunity to dabble in the curatorial process, and I was fascinated to uncover the history of these two pieces and how they came to Wellesley. The flexibility of the internship also allowed me to develop my own projects as well, one of which was to build a document encompassing every aspect of managing the Davis website, which I hope will be of use to the interns and tech assistants in the years to come.

Without a doubt, one of the highlights of the internship were the weekly field trips, of which the most memorable for me was the jam-packed three-day trip to New York. Wherever we went, we had the chance to meet people from all corners of the field and beyond- curators, conservators, gallery owners, integrated media directors, artists, and many more. Even though, admittedly, I had previously never heard of some of the positions, I quickly found myself becoming more and more captivated by the field and the passionate people it is made up of. A particularly unforgettable visit was to Sotheby's to meet with the Mee-Seen Loong '72, Vice Chairman of Chinese Art. At a time when I am starting to explore possible career paths, hearing advice from a Wellesley alumna in the field was incredibly inspiring. The Sotheby's Training Programme, a competitive 12-month programme for recent graduates to rotate through art specialists and business departments, was definitely something I have my sights set on. She showed us around the current space exploration-themed auction space, where we got to see objects like the "Lunar Sample Return" decontamination bag that had flown to the moon and back on Apollo 11.

The past two months have absolutely flown by, and I am staggered by how much this internship has allowed me to grow professionally and given me the insight, connections and skills that will continue to guide me in my career path.

When people ask me about my internship experience at the Davis, I answer that I feel so grateful for having been able to participate in such a special program. As an education intern, I gained hands-on experience and learned how to organize events like film screenings, art activities, and yoga sessions within the galleries.

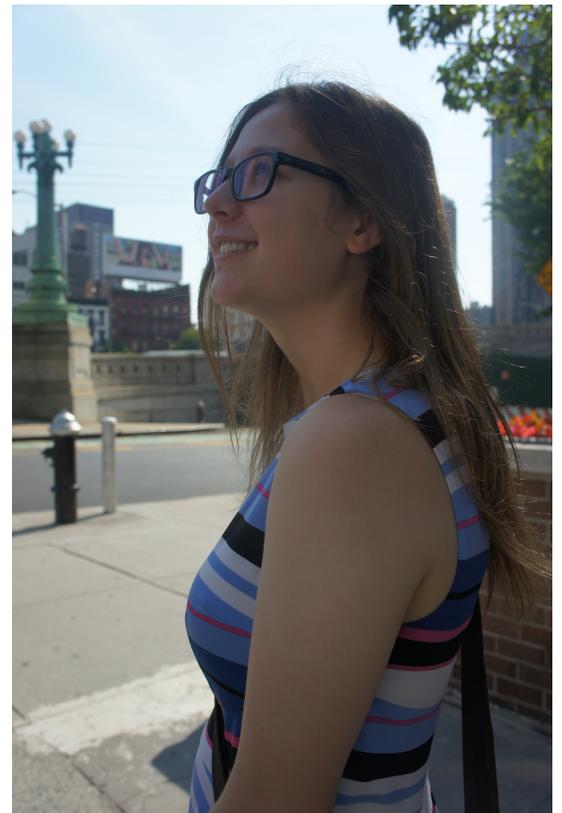
Most of the time, though, I worked on developing educational programs for different visitor populations. Every trip we went on informed the research I was doing and helped me think about the theoretical and practical implications of projects I hoped to bring to life.

When we visited the Met on our New York trip, we were fortunate enough to meet with Rebecca McGinnis, the Senior Museum Educator of Access and Community Programs and a leader in the field of museum accessibility. I spoke with her about how she developed the Met's social narrative and visual checklist resources for visitors on the autism spectrum, resources which I used when developing similar documents for the Davis.

McGinnis also spoke in depth about tours for visitors with dementia and their care partners, providing small but important details. She noted the importance of distributing nametags for all participants, and offered advice about how to advertise our own program for visitors with dementia. Much can be gained from independent research, but there is nothing like talking with people who have conducted successful programs and can speak frankly about what works, what doesn't, and what should be done in the future.

I had a similar experience at the Currier Museum in New Hampshire, where the passionate and inspiring education team spoke about their Alzheimer's Cafe program. They put emphasis on meeting and speaking in the cafe before their tour of the galleries, a programming decision that makes visitors feel comfortable and welcome from the start. Our discussion completely changed the way I thought about the program the Davis was developing, and made me realize that a small modification in format can completely alter the tone of an event.

At these museums and others, I learned about the new and exciting ways in which educators collaborate with psychologists and mental health professionals to develop programs. As a psychology major and art lover, the experience opened my eyes to the ways in which I could combine my interests while making museums open and accessible places for all. Museums should never be treated as merely places that house expensive collections; they should be inclusive community centers that provide space to connect, learn, and heal in welcoming and supportive environments.



Lisa Jenkins '17

Education Intern

It's unbelievable to think my summer internship at the Davis just about to end. I can't imagine that I'll ever be able to have another experience like this. It makes me proudest when other museums' staff tells us they wish they had an internship like ours. I also don't think one has the opportunity to meet as many other people in the art world through an internship anywhere else, and the best part is how excited everyone is to talk to us about their field! My favorite visits have been to the Studio Museum in Harlem and Alexandria Smith's residency studio on Governors Island. Both of these happened during our New York, but I felt like they were some of the most memorable to me. The Studio Museum's small size reminded me of the Davis, and it was still able to boast a diverse collection of objects that focused mainly on black artists. I was sad to hear the museum building would be demolished, but I am also thrilled for the museum's expansion and their devotion to their own artist residency program, which will continue through construction. I liked visiting Alexandria Smith's studio on Governors Island because we were able to hear about her process as an artist and her first year as a Wellesley professor. I felt that both of these visits really tapped into my interests as a studio art and art history major.

My work at the Davis has also been fun and varied since we work across departments sometimes. However, as a curatorial intern, most of my work has been based on research and writing on objects in the collection. I was also able to write the wall vinyl text for a small, year-long show on Ria Brodell's "Butch Heroes" series. Seven of fourteen paintings will show in fall and rotate in the spring semester. My biggest independent project has been putting together a contemporary response in the form of a small tour on the Davis app to complement the Martin Luther show. Mainly, I've had to look at more recent examples of protest in prints from the Davis collection to compare to objects in the show. It will be digital, so I also have the opportunity to include multimedia content if necessary. I hope it allow visitors to get a different perspective on the show and prints' relevance today.



Melina
Mardueno '18
Curatorial Intern

Working at the Davis this summer gave me the opportunity to do two of the things I love most: working with technology and working with art. I have loved art museums since I was a child, but I never knew that someone with my skill set or interests could work there. This internship enriched my summer both inside and outside the office. I was inspired by the people that we met at other museums on field trips, and by the people I was working with every day. I tackled projects both big and small, from visitor surveys to email digests, assisting Alyssa Wolfe, Executive Assistant to the Director, and Sarina Khan-Reddy, Media Specialist.

I truly enjoyed exploring the Harvard Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology and the Harvard Semitic Museum this summer. These two institutions have changed and changed again over the years. Their anthropological focus means that these two museums have displayed their objects in very different ways over the years, shifting from “visible storage” to interpretive labels to taking advantage of multimedia innovations to create digital open collections. The Semitic Museum’s collections date back to early archeological investigations sponsored by the museum. At the Peabody Museum, which houses one of the oldest and largest collections of Native American art, we learned about how their registrars are working with NAGPRA (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) compliance to be responsible stewards for their objects, returning objects when it is appropriate and working with communities to do conservation and educational programming with other works. Seeing how museums care for their objects is a unique window into the character of a museum.

I spent a lot of time this summer thinking about Rafael Moneo’s quote concerning his idea for the Davis museum: he described it as a “treasury,” a treasury of the memories of alumnae, and a treasury of objects to be used for future study. As a student, a work-study employee of the museum, and now an intern, the impact of having this repository of artworks within walking distance of my dorm room is not lost on me. Working with visitor engagement and communications, I spent a lot of time this summer thinking about what it means to feel like you belong in a museum. I am grateful to feel like I belong in the Davis; I want everyone on campus and beyond to feel that way as well.



Grace Owen '19

Digital Marketing and Administration Intern



Cataloging recent additions to the Davis Museum's collection from the bequest of Ann Kirk Warren (Ann Haggarty, Class of 1950) was the highlight of my summer. I measured the works, determined their titles and makers when it was possible, and recorded any inscriptions I found. Handling the prints was an exhilarating experience, and working on the inscriptions allowed me to stretch and test my language skills, since inscriptions in French, German, Latin, and Italian cropped up on a daily basis. I was always happy in the collections, but I still looked forward eagerly to our weekly field trips.

Our visit to the Currier Museum of Art in Manchester, New Hampshire was exciting because we were able to tour the storage areas and galleries of a museum of similar size to the Davis and learn about its programs, exhibits, values, and history. After our tour of the museum, we met with Bruce McColl, Director of Art Education, who told us about the Currier's outreach programming and the ways he balances his work as an artist with his career as an educator. He showed us around the Currier's Art Center, where 1500 young students take classes and attend summer camps.

The Eustis Estate Museum in Milton, MA, has only been open to the public since May 2017. Our visit to the 1878 house was a quiet prelude to our afternoon of visiting galleries in Boston. We visited on a chilly, rainy day, and the house welcomed us with its cavernous entrance hall

and cozy library full of books with titles like *The Impecunious House Restorer*. Unobtrusive information kiosks around the house tell the story of the restoration process Historic New England undertook from 2014 to 2017. The Eustis Estate's original dark, rich paintwork unified the house and did not clash with the dark wood paneling, but later generations of the Eustis family covered the original dark colors with light latex paint. Historic New England repainted the walls in their original colors, and restored many other architectural and design elements.

The Davis internship program broadened my horizons and gave me a new sense of purpose. Exploring different sides of collections work and assisting the registrars with their projects taught me that I have a passion for information and collections care, and having lunch with museum staff members every week opened my eyes to the diversity of careers in museums and other cultural institutions.

Isabelle Raposo '19

Collections Management Intern

As an Art History major, I came to this internship with a hazy idea of what Museum work was. I had worked as a tour guide, but what went on behind the doors to the office was a mystery to me. This summer, I learned about the day-to-day life of a curator, saw how individual museums differ, was allowed to ask professionals a plethora of questions, and researched an entire bequest largely on my own.

As a Curatorial Intern for Claire Whitner (Assistant Director of Curatorial Affairs/Senior Curator of Collections), my individual projects included researching a gift of prints from Ann Kirk Warren. I researched each print to find basic information for our online database, Mimsy, and after many trips to the library, almost all the prints were identified. In the future, these prints will be used in a rotation for the works-on-paper table in the Dutch and Flemish Baroque Gallery. It was such a real way to see how I was able to help the Davis- this information will be used by curators for the table. I was so lucky to work on this project.

The internship, however, also encouraged me to look beyond curation, as we met with conservators, managers, registrars, educators and research assistants, both from the Davis and not. I quickly realized there are many non-curators who interact with the collections. When we visited the Yale Institute for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage, Chief Conservator Ian McClure actually let us watch and talk with conservators as they worked.

One woman was working on Baroque painting, and she explained how it was once a painted wood panel. However, at some point in its life, the panel painting was transferred to canvas. Then it was glued onto canvas to be a 'painting'. This, in addition with normal dirt and grime, made the painting in a difficult project. Listening to the conservator talk about the object and seeing her excitement, I realized I was just as excited as



she was. Her love for her job was infectious, and I was thankful to be exposed to other equally exciting fields.

This internship has taught me a good deal, both about what it means to be a curator and how Museums are run. The program developed me as a professional, and exposed me to a wide breadth of professions. I will always be eternally grateful that this was the internship that introduced me to the Museum field.

Kate Davies '19

Curatorial Intern