



Lamont Gallery Exhibition Archive

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Dust & Discovery: Works from the Lamont Gallery Collection **June 25 - July 31, 2013**

Imagine the scenario: You enter the storage room and find shelves full of paintings, prints, and assorted objects. You hold a crumbling piece of paper with barely legible print as your only guide. Your dust mask and flashlight are close at hand... what will you discover?



Paul Burlin, *Witness the Whatless*, c. 1945
Oil on canvas

Dust & Discovery: Works from the Lamont Gallery Collection, an exhibition inspired by “the cabinet of curiosities” (a forerunner to the modern museum). The exhibition will include close to 100 pieces, including works by John James Audubon, Alexander Calder, Amanda de Leon and Kiyoshi Saito. Works from the exhibition, which spans from the Han Dynasty (206 B.C. to A.D. 220) to the 1980s, will include paintings on canvas, silkscreens, wood carvings, poster, glass and skulls. Selections mounted on a designated wall will rotate new pieces each week.

The works are being shown as is, as they were found in storage—stains, tears and all—to raise such questions as: What defines a collection? How are collections built, maintained and shared with audiences? What is the function of a collection within an educational institution? How are objects preserved to pass along to the next generation?

Though not officially a collecting gallery, the Lamont Gallery maintains a noteworthy collection of art and other objects that were donated or purchased: gifts from alumni and friends of PEA, or items left behind by departing faculty or students. While the gallery has donation information on some of these pieces, other pieces remain a mystery; important details are missing, including the artist's name or type of material. Visitors will be invited to offer their own insights into the works displayed, and share their thoughts about what and why they collect.

Items from other individual collections, including those of PEA Art Instructors Carla Collins and Becky Barsi, as well as PEA alumnus Chris Woerner '63, will be on display, to explore questions such as: Why do people collect? Does the value of a collection rest in its financial worth or sentimental meaning to the owner?

Independent paintings conservator Elizabeth Leto Fulton will work on-site for several days during the exhibition, analyzing the works and offering her expertise on the condition and restoration needs.

The gallery will also host a lunchtime discussion with Fulton

on the field of art conservation, the common problems in painting conservation, and Fulton's assessment of selected items in the Lamont Gallery's collection.

Lauren O'Neal, director of the Lamont Gallery notes: "Collections take great care to manage and conserve, and there are ethical issues associated with taking objects into a collection initially, as well as with deciding when and why to remove objects from a collection. '*Dust & Discovery*' will kick off a longer-term project: to assess the gallery's collection, to put the holdings into a digital database and to make decisions about future additions to the collection so that the work can be used as a tool for students, faculty and researchers."



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