

***Outside the Dog Museum* by Jonathan Carroll- New York: Doubleday, 1992. Robarts Library- PS3553 .A7646 O87 1992**

Jonathan Carroll employs elements of magical realism and urban fantasy in this tale centering on celebrated and troubled architect Harry Radcliffe. As he recovers from a mental breakdown and divorce, Radcliffe is contacted by the wealthy Sultan of Sara, a fictional Middle-Eastern country, who wants to commission him to design a billion-dollar dog museum. Further complicating the issue is that not only is Sara engaged in a bloody civil war, but the fact that in this nation dogs are despised and considered to be about the lowest form of life. Clearly, there are major risks involved in accepting this proposal. Throughout the novel, the reader is a witness to Radcliffe's ruminations on the nature of architecture- does architecture create new space and in the process create new life and experience for those who encounter it, or does it signify the death of space, resulting in a preserved, yet lifeless display akin to the mounting of an animal killed on a hunting trip? These thoughts on the role of space and design as it relates to the museum experience will be of particular relevance to the museology student.

***Russian Ark* (film). New York: Wellspring Media, 2003. Media Commons- VideoDVD 750556**

This film, directed by Aleksandr Sokurov, is set entirely in the Winter Palace, part of the Russian State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg. It features an unnamed narrator and a nineteenth century French aristocrat as they wander from room to room, with each room and the action contained within it serving to represent a specific period or event in Russian history. While the progression of the film is not chronological, over 200 years of Russian history is presented. At times they are simply observers, while at other times they have some interaction with the historical figures, real and fictional, in the different rooms. One particularly notable characteristic of *Russian Ark* is that the entire film is comprised of a single, 96-minute shot in a point of view style from the perspective of the narrator. In addition to the extensive and beautiful look at this exquisite museum, relevant themes, such as the role of architecture, space and design in museology and the representation of the past are dealt with in this film.

***Shooting the Past* (TV Series). New York: BBC Video, 2006. St. Michael's College (John M. Kelly Library)- PN1997 . S5636 2006 DVD SMC**

This BBC mini-series tells the story of the sale of an old London mansion that houses a massive library of ten million very old and rare photographs. The new owners are an American company that plans to renovate the building and turn it into a business school. The company informs the library staff that they will sell what they can of the collection, but whatever remains unsold by the time renovation begins will be destroyed. Insisting that the collection remain intact, and not divided amongst various buyers, it is up to the staff to prove the worth and value of the collection in order to find a buyer. Through researching the captivating stories behind the photographs, the staff is able to convince the company's president of the collection's importance, and he decides to help them locate a buyer who will keep the collection intact. Themes such as the representation of the past, collective memory, and the conflict between progress and preservation will be of particular interest to the museology student.

***The Smithsonian Institution* by Gore Vidal. New York: Random House, 1998. Robarts Library- PS3543 .J26 S65 1998X**

Gore Vidal's work of historical fiction (with a healthy dose of science-fiction), set in 1939, tells the story of a thirteen year-old genius who is called to work on a top-secret laboratory in the bowels of the Smithsonian Institution Building, headquarters of the largest museum complex in the world, in order to assist in the creation of the atomic bomb. What follows is a reimagining of key events and figures of American history, complete with wax-figures from exhibits coming to life, time travel, romance, comedy and high-stakes adventure (think a more cerebral *Night at the Museum*). While it is at times (intentionally) absurd, it is worthwhile leisure reading for students of museology and cultural heritage, thanks to its imaginative representations of historical figures and events such as Albert Einstein, Abraham Lincoln, and the Manhattan Project, and its behind-the-scenes portrayal of the Smithsonian Institute.



Reading, Viewing, and Listening to Museums & Cultural Heritage

An Integrated Advisory Guide for MSL 2370H



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***Austerlitz* by W.G. Sebald. New York: Random House, 2001. Robarts Library- PT2681 .E18 A9513 2001X**

Translated from its original German, this novel tells the story, in a fractured and non-linear narrative, of a young boy who flees Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia, and his subsequent path into adulthood as an architectural historian in London and Paris. As an adult he spends many hours in the National Library of France consulting the collections of records in hopes of finding information about his father. His own repressed past is mirrored by the European society's repression of its past as he attempts to uncover the truth about his family's history. This novel explores how institutions and individuals alike remember the past- invariably, certain memories and happenings will be preserved and enshrined while others are smothered or forgotten. Themes of collective memory, representation of the past, and the role of architecture in the preservation and interpretation of history will be of particular interest to the museology and cultural heritage student.

***Dinosaurs in the Attic: An Excursion into the American Museum of Natural History* by Douglas Preston. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986. Inforum- 508.074741 P937D**

Douglas Preston's work of narrative non-fiction is a fantastic read for those interested in the history and behind-the-scenes stories of one of the most popular museums in the world. As a former AMNH employee and accomplished author of fiction novels, Preston has a unique perspective and level of access, which allows for some great storytelling. Divided into two main parts, it begins with a history of the museum, including key figures in its development and insight into how the management and mission of the museum has evolved over time. The second part deals with lesser-known stories of the building itself as well as the fascinating and often exciting stories behind the acquisition of many specific artifacts and exhibitions. While this book will appeal to museum enthusiasts and anybody with a taste for adventure, it is of particular relevance to museology students and professionals.

***England, England* by Julian Barnes. London: Jonathan Cape, 1998. Robarts Library- PR6052 .A6657 E54 1998**

This satirical science-fiction novel set in the near future deals with the demise of England (which will come to be known as Anglia, or "old England") as a nation and the subsequent creation and success of England, England- a privately owned theme park-like enterprise built on the Isle of Wight. It is designed to be a tidily packaged, "authentic" replica of everything quintessentially English, including cultural and political institutions, figures, attractions and national history. To fit with the desired image and narrative, cultural works are recreated, history is re-written, and key figures are cloned. As the real England is deteriorating, its corporate counterpart thrives and becomes a sovereign state in the European Union. The lines between the "real" England and its replica become increasingly vague and blurry. This novel deals with many themes pertaining to cultural heritage that are central to MSL 2370, including the role of historic sites, representation and authenticity, sustainability and tourism.

***From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* by E.L. Konigsburg. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1967. OISE Library- JUV FIC K82fr**

Claudia, an eleven-year-old girl, runs away with her younger brother because she feels her parents do not appreciate her. Her destination is the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. They hide in the bathroom at closing time while guards check to make sure everyone has left, and blend in with school groups during the day to avoid unwanted attention. During the course of their stay, Claudia becomes infatuated with a new exhibit featuring a sculpture by an unknown artist (perhaps Michelangelo?), and is determined to solve the mystery of its origins. This eventually leads them to meet Mrs. Frankweiler, an eccentric and rich old lady who holds the answers to this mystery. While this is a children's novel, it has achieved classic status and remained popular for over 40 years, thanks to its charming characters and enchanting setting inside the iconic Met Museum. As such, it contains themes relevant to MSL 2370 and would be a quick and rewarding read for students in this class.

***The Kinks are the Village Green Preservation Society* by Andy Miller. New York: Continuum, 2007. Music Library- XX(7407918.1)**

This book serves as an accompanying piece to the 1968 album of the same name by the British rock group, The Kinks. Although the album is (inexplicably!) not currently held in the University of Toronto library system, it is available through TPL and able to be easily streamed online on websites such as YouTube. While this album was largely ignored or dismissed as uncool at the time of its release, it is now widely considered a classic. It is a nostalgia-drenched concept album that mourns the loss of a simpler, romanticized, rural England. Positioning themselves as the defenders of a traditional, distinct British culture, while also condemning the homogenizing effects of modernity and progress, The Kinks simultaneously display a critical and positive view of nostalgia in general, and towards their presented version of England. It both celebrates and parodies this version of the past, while bringing into question whether it ever really existed as it is remembered. These central themes- collective memory, representation of the past, and the conflict between tradition and progress, are discussed in Miller's book, as well as a detailed account of the recording process and analysis of each song on the album.

***The Murder Room* by P.D. James- London: Faber and Faber, 2003. Robarts Library: PR6060 .A56 M87 2003**

Written by renowned crime and mystery author P.D. James, *The Murder Room* is the twelfth installment of her Adam Dalgliesh series. Commander Dalgliesh is summoned to investigate a murder that occurred in a small museum dedicated to preserving English memorabilia and collectibles from the interwar era. It turns out that the exact location of the murder was the Murder Room, which celebrates and contains objects related to high profile murders from that time period. It is apparent to Dalgliesh that this exhibit has provided the blueprint for the murder. The victim is one of the museum trustees, and it is discovered that he had made plans to close down the museum. Subsequently, everybody connected to the museum with an interest in keeping it open turns into a suspect. Issues such as the representation of the past and the way that architecture and exhibit design and space contribute to people's understanding will be of interest to the museology and cultural heritage student.