

Lower East Side Tenement Museum

City College of New York

Graduate Program in Art History and Museum Studies

New York University

Graduate Program in Museum Studies



“Visible Players in Civic Life”

On Civic Engagement in Museums

2nd Annual Graduate Student Symposium

**NYU Silver Center- Room 300
100 Washington Square East**

**December 11, 2004
10:30am – 4:45pm**

“Visible Players in Civic Life” On Civic Engagement in Museums

In *Mastering Civic Engagement: A Challenge to Museums*, the American Association of Museums argued that the museum of the future will not be a container of valuable collections, but “a visible player in civic life.”

In this symposium, we seek to define, critique and develop this idea through a series of case studies presented by up-and-coming museum scholars and professionals.

- Can museums use their exhibitions as vehicles for civic engagement?
 - How can museums use technology to engage civic discussion on social issues with its visitors?
 - How can a museum use its space to provide a meaningful place for public dialogue?
 - How can museums contribute to defining and inspiring new approaches to civic engagement today?
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Program

10:30-11:00 Welcome and Introductions

Liz Ševčenko
Vice President for Interpretation
Lower East Side Tenement Museum

Harriet F. Senie
Director of Museums Studies/ Professor of Art History
City College of New York

Paul Williams
Assistant Professor of Museum Studies
New York University

11:00-12:00 Cross Cultural Civic Engagement

Mimi Allin, CCNY

Within Borders: Museion- Collecting for a Civic Dialogue

Anna Cannon, CCNY

In the Name of Roerich: Two Museums, Two Cultures and Two Different Approaches to Civic Engagement - The Nicolas Roerich Museum in NYC and the Museum and Center of Roerich in Moscow, Russia

Adam Nilson, NYU

The Ellis Island Immigration Museum and the Norwegian Emigrant Museum: Representing Migration on Both Sides of the Atlantic

Marney Pelletier, CCNY

Museum of the Chinese in the Americas: How an Ethnically Based Museum Fosters Civic Engagement

Comments and Questions for Discussion

12:00-1:15

**Exhibitions as Vehicles for Civic
Engagement**

Jason Holton, CCNY

*Aztecs in the Guggenheim Museum: School Tours and Civic
Engagement*

Regina Richter, NYU

Cultured Savages: Modern Interpretations of Aztec Art

Liz Gwinn, NYU

*Public Art/Public Discourse: Civic Engagement in the
Museum without Walls*

Jennifer Parsons, NYU

*Art, Power and Responsibility: A Study of Canada's Voice of Fire
Controversy*

Sima Jalili, NYU

*What is Wrong with a Forgery: Audience Expectations of
Authenticity*

Comments and Questions for Discussion

LUNCH RECESS

2:15-3:30

**Museum Spaces and Civic
Engagement**

Lucia Carbajal, CCNY

*The Brooklyn Museum of Art's New Entrance: An
Opportunity for Civic Engagement?*

Alyssa Grasso, CCNY

*On the Surface of Museum Facades: A Look at the
Dahesh Museum's Strategy for Engagement*

Lindsay Martin, NYU

*Big Box Retailers and the Emergence of the Boutique
Museum*

Leigh Smead, NYU

Stonehenge and the Concept of Inheritance

Nicole Leist, NYU

*The Stonehenge They Desire: Relativism and the Iconic in
Museums*

Comments and Questions for Discussion

15 MINUTES INTERMISSION

3:45-4:25

Technology and Civic Engagement

Peter Fitzgerald, CCNY

*The Whitney Museum of American Art's Education Programs
Use of Internet Technology*

Breni Altschuler, CCNY

The New Museum's Use of Technology

Gonzalo Casals, CCNY

*Open Source Strategies: The Tenement Museum's Next Step in
Civic Engagement*

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

LOWER EAST SIDE TENEMENT MUSEUM

Chartered in 1988, the Lower East Side Tenement Museum's mission is "to promote tolerance and historical perspective through the presentation and interpretation of a variety of immigrant and migrant experiences on Manhattan's Lower East Side, a gateway to America". The heart of the Museum is its tenement building at 97 Orchard Street, home to an estimated 7,000 people, from over 20 nations, between 1863 and 1935.

The Museum is committed to offering the history of 97 Orchard Street and its families as a tool for addressing related contemporary issues. Through public dialogues on immigration, cultural identity, housing, labor, and social welfare; English programs for new immigrants; contemporary immigrant art programs; and other initiatives, the Museum serves as a center for citizen engagement with questions around immigration today.

The next immigrants to be interpreted at 97 Orchard are Joseph and Bridget Moore, an Irish bartender and his wife living here in 1869.



97 Orchard Street