The Evolving House Museum (online, 18-19 Jun 21)

Online, Jun 18–19, 2021
Registration deadline: Jun 18, 2021

Adriana Turpin

The Evolving House Museum: Art Collectors and Their Residences, Then and Now
Online Symposium

Organized and chaired by Margaret Iacono, Independent Scholar, Norwalk, Connecticut, and Esmée Quodbach, Independent Scholar, Princeton, New Jersey

House museums are founded for a variety of reasons, from preserving architecturally significant structures to safeguarding the former homes of historically or culturally noteworthy men and women and their legacies. In other cases esteemed art collectors, such as Henry Clay Frick or Albert C. Barnes, established museums in their former residences to house their collections in perpetuity rather than donating them to preexisting institutions. While many successful examples like the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum continue to thrive, other lesser-known house museums do not attract enough support to remain operational. House museums, it seems, must evolve in order to remain relevant and to continue to attract visitors.
This conference explores a variety of themes relating to art collectors as founders of house museums in the United States and elsewhere. Among these are discussions about the motivates that encouraged collectors to establish private house museums instead of donating their collections to preexisting institutions; how collectors' original intention have manifested themselves in their museums; how house museums' collections or buildings have evolved over time, and how museums have reinterpreted their collections to remain relevant to contemporary and diverse audiences. Other issues concern how major historic events like the 2008 financial crisis or the recent COVID-19 pandemic have impacted house museums.

To attend the event please register at: events@societyhistorycollecting.org

PROGRAM

FRIDAY, JUNE 18, 2021, 11 A.M.–2 P.M. (EDT) / 4 P.M.–7 P.M. (BST)
All times below are given in Eastern Daylight Time (EDT)

11:00 Welcome and Introductory Remarks

11:15 Keynote Address
Whose House Is It Anyway?
Inge Reist, Director Emerita of the Center for the History of Collecting, The Frick Collection, New

York

Part I: Early Beginnings, the Gilded Age, and Beyond

11:45 Cleveland House as Art Museum: 'The Louvre of London' (1806)
Anne Nellis Richter, Independent Scholar and Adjunct Faculty, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts

12:05 The Mesdag Collection in The Hague: The Lasting Legacy of Hendrik Willem Mesdag and Sientje van Houten
Evelien de Visser, Curator of Fine Arts from 1750 and Information Specialist Van Gogh Worldwide, RKD—Netherlands Institute for Art History, The Hague

12:25 Q & A, followed by break

12:45 A Tale of Two Museums: The Legacies of the Parisian Collectors Isaac and Moïse de Camondo
Mia Laufer, Associate Curator, Minnesota Museum of American Art, St. Paul

1:05 The Evolution of Charles and Anna Taft's Art Museum: Display, Space, Audience, and Acquisitions
Lynne D. Ambrosini, Deputy Director/Chief Curator Emerita, Taft Museum of Art, Cincinnati, Ohio

1:25 Medievalism, Museums, and Modern Audiences: The Case of the Hammond Castle Museum in Gloucester, Massachusetts
Martha Easton, Assistant Professor of Art History, St. Joseph's University, Philadelphia

1:45 Q & A

SATURDAY, JUNE 19, 2021, 11 A.M.–2 P.M. (EDT) / 4 P.M.–7 P.M. (BST)
All times below are given in Eastern Daylight Time (EDT)

Part II: Looking Back, Looking Forward: The Evolving House Museum over the Past Century

11:00 Welcome and Introductory Remarks

11:15 The Ringling Museum's Ca' d'Zan: Its Evolution from Winter Residence to Historic House Museum
Marissa Hershon, Curator of Ca' d'Zan and Decorative Arts, The John & Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, Florida

11:35 The Fortunes of War: The Brief Life of the Jules S. Bache House Museum in New York, 1937–1943
Anne Hilker, Independent Scholar, New York

11:55 Marjorie Merriweather Post's Hillwood and the Vision from a Private Collection to Public Museum
Rebecca Tilles, Associate Curator of 18th-Century French & Western European Fine and Decora-

tive Arts, Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens, Washington, D.C.

12:15 Q & A, followed by break

12:35 Hung's Art Gallery: Shaping the History of Collecting in Taiwan in the New Millennium
Chih-En Chen, Ph.D. Candidate, History of Art and Archaeology, SOAS, University of London

12:55 A New Type of House Museum: Lyon Housemuseum, Melbourne (2009)
Georgina S. Walker, Honorary Research Fellow, University of Melbourne

1:15 Ecologies of House Museums: Some Final Thoughts
Julie Codell, Professor, Art History, Arizona State University, Tempe

1:40 Q & A

Reference:
CONF: The Evolving House Museum (online, 18-19 Jun 21). In: ArtHist.net, Jun 5, 2021 (accessed Nov 25, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/34281>.