



Museums and Memory (Cultural Sitings)

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Museums today are more than familiar cultural institutions and showplaces of accumulated objects; they are the sites of interaction between personal and collective identities, between memory and history. The essays in this volume consider museums from personal experience and historical study, and from the memories of museum visitors, curators, and scholars.

Representing a variety of fields—history, anthropology, art history, and museum scholarship—the contributors discuss museums across disciplinary boundaries that have separated art museums from natural history museums or local history museums from national galleries. The essays range widely over time (from the Renaissance to the second half of the twentieth century), and place (China, Japan, the United States, and Germany), in exhibitions explored (photography, Native American history, and “Jurassic technology”), and institution (the Chinese Imperial Collection, Renaissance curiosity cabinets, and modern art museums).

Memory operates thematically among the essays in diverse and provocative ways. The papers are organized according to three suggestive themes: experimental ways of theorizing and designing contemporary museums with an explicit interest in history and memory; discussions of personal encounters with historical exhibits; and the professional risks at stake for collectors and curators who shape the institutional presentation of history and memory.

The contributors are Susan A. Crane, Wolfgang Ernst, Michael Fehr, Paula Findlen, Tamara Hamlish, Alexis Joachimides, Suzanne Marchand, Julia A. Thomas, and Diana Drake Wilson.

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