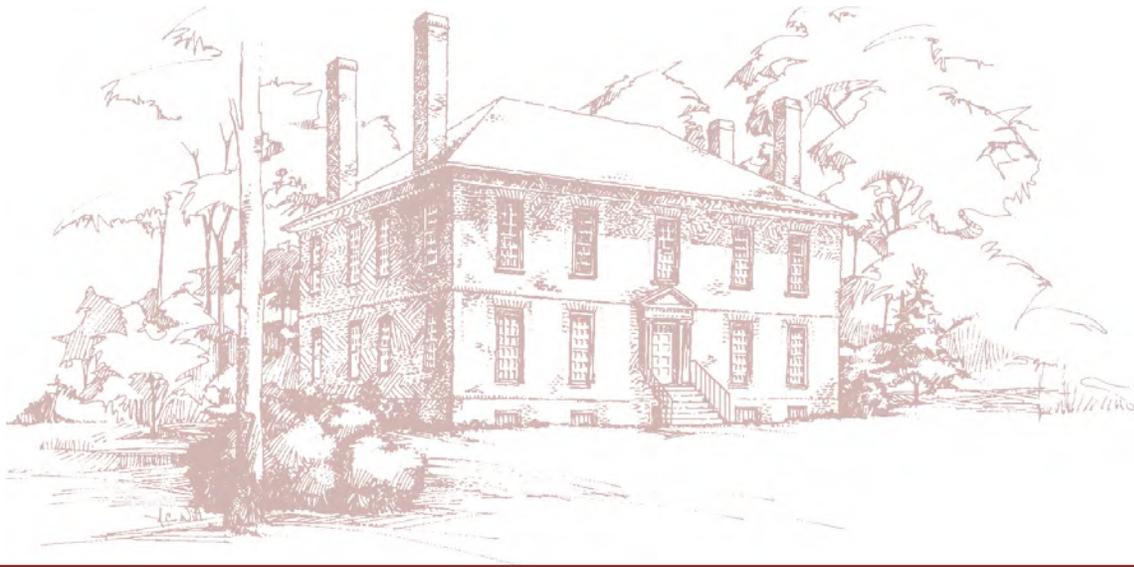


Wilton News



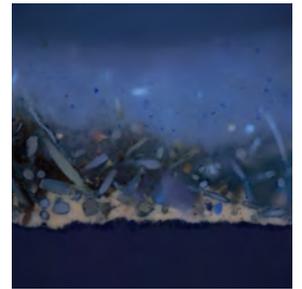
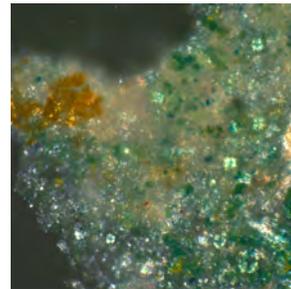
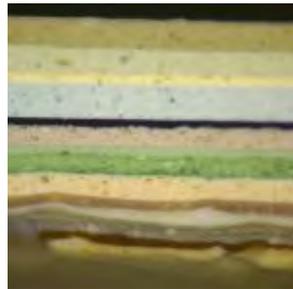
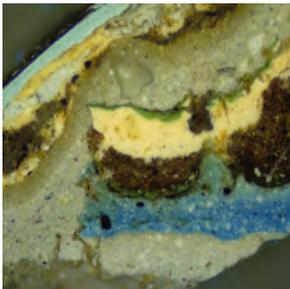
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Winter 2017

VIVID VIEW: The Art and Science of Paint Analysis

Opening March 31, 2017, Wilton House Museum is proud to partner with paint conservator Dr. Susan Buck for the exhibition, *VIVID VIEW*. A specialist in the analysis and conservation of painted surfaces and architectural materials, Dr. Buck has assessed early wallpapers, furnishings, and the architecture of significant historic sites as far ranging as Mount Vernon to the Forbidden City in Beijing. Dr. Buck conducted extensive paint analysis investigations at Wilton in 2013 uncovering sixteen layers of paint on the historic paneling.

Exhibiting photographed paint samples from historic houses throughout Virginia—including Wilton— *VIVID VIEW* dramatically intersects the poles of art and science, revealing paint as an influential element in how we decorate and who we are. Intersecting historical style with modern science, Dr. Buck's microscopic views into cross-sections of historical paint layers reveal trends in taste and technology. As an influential element of interior design, paint's application to particular rooms dictated how historical actors lived in, readapted, and reflected fashionable taste at some of our best known cultural sites. Through these investigations, Dr. Buck captures elaborate and colorful images of history with practical, present-day implications for interpretation, dating, and insight into the eighteenth-century and beyond.



VIVID VIEW is presented in part through the generous support of James D. and Pamela J. Penny, as well as the many thoughtful contributors to the 2012-2013 Paint Detectives Campaign.

PORTRAIT MINIATURES: TOKENS OF AFFECTION

“Striking resemblances that will never fail to perpetuate the tenderness of friendship, to divert the cares of absence, and to aid affection in dwelling on those features which death has forever wrested from us”

Charles Fraser, American Miniaturist.

At the height of their popularity from 1760 – 1840 Americans commissioned small scale portraits of loved ones. Whether finely depicted on ivory or cleverly cut into paper, miniatures and silhouetted portraits were commissioned and exchanged as a token of friendship or remembrance of a distant or deceased loved one. These in turn became heirlooms and keepsakes for subsequent generations.

The popularity of miniature portraits reflects the time’s shifting attitudes toward family, marriage, love, and friendship. It also became more common to instill greater value and sentiment in the celebration of affectionate relationships. The intimate size of miniatures allowed them to be held in one’s hand for contemplation. Set within a glass cased locket, miniatures were frequently worn as a public display of affection. A lock of the portrait sitter’s hair was often included with the miniature, further emphasizing the relationship between the person depicted and the portrait’s owner.

Wilton House Museum’s collection of miniatures reveals the fine talent of the miniaturist. In the collection are two gentlemen of the Randolph family: a watercolor on ivory of Peyton Randolph of Wilton c. 1775 and an oil on ivory of Thomas Mann Randolph II of Tuckahoe c. 1810. Peyton Randolph had his portrait painted while studying at William and Mary, and may have been a gift either to his mother Anne Harrison Randolph or to his future wife Lucy Harrison. Thomas Mann Randolph II is the much younger half-brother of Thomas Mann Randolph, Jr., the 21st Governor of Virginia. Depicted in his naval uniform, the miniature may have comforted a loved one while away at sea. Each descended in the family until their donation to Wilton House Museum.

Hollow-cut portraits served a similar purpose. In a hollow-cut portrait, the image is cut away from a light colored paper leaving a negative of the sitter’s profile. This paper is then mounted upon a darker background to reveal the image. Whereas, a silhouette reverses this artistic process, mounting a shape cut from dark paper onto a white background. Less costly than a miniature and requiring less skill, both hollow-cuts and silhouettes proliferated. We do not know the maker of this collection of hollow-cut portraits of the extended Randolph and Harrison families c. 1799 on display here. These image keepsakes were cherished for generations as they descended through the families until recently given to Wilton House Museum. At some point an owner of the portraits helpfully identified the sitters and their relationship to one another. The group of Holloway family hollow-cuts are notable for their creator, James Peale (1749 – 1831), who cut the portraits at the Peale Museum in Philadelphia in 1829.



The profile engravings by Charles de Saint Mémin (1770 – 1852) reflect a more costly taste for small scale portraits. One’s portrait would be drawn life-size with chalk and crayon on paper as with the two c. 1800 portraits of Edward Carrington Mayo and Maria de Hart Mayo on the east wall. Upon completion the patron could order small scale etchings of the portrait for distribution to friends and family, such as the St. Memin’s engraving of Peyton Randolph II of Wilton c. 1807. The work was created in Richmond where the artist spent more than a year depicting the city’s elite.

Today the desire to hold in one’s hand or to carry around on one’s person the image of a friend or relative is met by our iPhone or other electronic devices. Such digital images do indeed “perpetuate the tenderness of friendship and divert the cares of absence” just as works on ivory or paper once did historically. Take a selfie in our selfie-station with colonial era props or try your hand at making a silhouette!

UPCOMING MUSEUM PROGRAMS

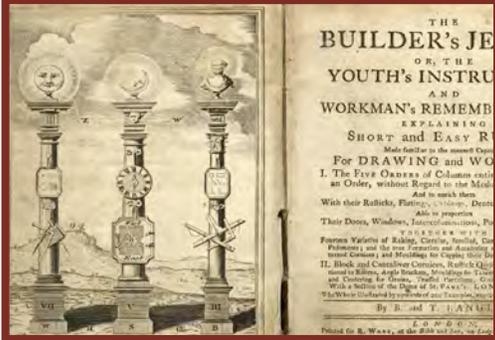


Spaces of Slavery at the University of Virginia

Thursday, February 9; 6:00 PM

Speaker: Dr. Louis Nelson, Professor of Architectural History and Associate Dean, School of Architecture, University of Virginia
Dr. Louis Nelson looks past the magnificent facades to the behind the scenes areas inhabited by the enslaved men and women who lived and worked at the university.

\$10 admission. Free to Members. Purchase tickets in advance through the Wilton website.



Looking at the Books:

The Embellishment of Virginia's Colonial Architecture

Thursday, March 9; 6:00 PM

Speaker: Calder Loth, former senior Architectural Historian, Virginia Department of Historic Resources

An illustrated exploration of the numerous architectural pattern books that influenced the design Virginia's 18th-century architecture.

\$10 admission. Free to Members. Purchase tickets in advance through the Wilton website.



Eighteenth-Century Men's Waistcoats

Thursday, April 27; 6:00 PM

Speaker: Mary Doering, Smithsonian Masters Program in the History of the Decorative Arts (with George Mason University)

A visually stunning exploration on these elegant garments by Mary Doering. Ms. Doering has specialized in costume history for forty years as a collector, lecturer and guest curator.

\$10 admission. Free to Members. Purchase tickets in advance through the Wilton website.



Madeira Tasting

Friday, April 28; 5:30 PM

Tour the historic house and take a tasting of various Madeiras led by Broadbent Selections, Inc.

\$40 admission. Purchase tickets in advance through the Wilton website.



Pocahontas: Her Life and Legend

Thursday, May 11; 6:00 PM

Speaker: William Rasmussen, Lead Curator and Lora M. Robins Curator, Virginia Historical Society

This talk will review the historical evidence about Pocahontas and compare it to the mythology created by artists and writers long after her death. It will attempt to answer the question, why has Pocahontas been so revered for four centuries?

\$10 admission. Free to Members. Purchase tickets in advance through the Wilton website.

KEEP UP WITH ALL OF WILTON'S PROGRAMS AND EVENTS AT

WWW.WILTONHOUSEMUSEUM.ORG/EVENTS

The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America in the Commonwealth of Virginia celebrates its 125th anniversary with a scarf depicting John Smith's rendering of the birthplace of the Virginia Colony, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the United States of America.

The Virginia Society scarf is based on an amended version of Smith's map published in 1627 by Mattheus Merian in Frankfurt, Germany.

This scarf measures 42 inches square and is digitally printed on 100% silk with hand rolled edges.

The cost, including tax and shipping, is \$131.45

You may visit our website to purchase online or to download an order form:

nscdava.org

thevirginiascarf.org



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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