



Images Of Slavery And Plantations Topic Of UNH Lecture Oct. 18

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October 11, 2007

DURHAM, N.H. – The images of Southern plantations and slavery hold different meanings for different people. This fall, the University of New Hampshire will explore those images as part of its Historian and the Public series lecture, “The Landscape of Slavery.”

Maurie McInnis, director of American Studies and a professor of art history at the University of Virginia, will speak at UNH Thursday, Oct. 18, 2007. The lecture takes place at 12:40 p.m. in the Memorial Union Building, Theater II. It is free and open to the public. A question-and-answer period and reception will follow.

The Historian and the Public is a two-year-long series sponsored by the Museum Studies Program of the Department of History. The lecture series brings historians, museum professionals, filmmakers and others to campus to discuss ways to bring the best in historical scholarship to a public eager to know its past.

A genre predominantly tied to the Southern region of the United States, the plantation view has traditionally received marginal attention in the study of American landscape art. In recent years, art historians have worked to identify general shifts in plantation iconography that reflect specific historical events. Plantation views also have attracted the attention of social historians who have identified the genre as a rich source for exploring issues of wealth, power, race, memory and nostalgia.

McInnis has published extensively on the art and material culture of the American South, and she has contributed to several museum exhibits. Among her books is *In Pursuit of Refinement: Charlestonians Abroad, 1740 – 1860*, and *The Politics of Taste in Antebellum Charleston*. Author Edward Ball, author of *Slaves in the Family*, praised the latter book for McInnis’s ability to “glide from portrait painters to slave patrols, showing that each depended on the existence of the other.”

She has served as a curator or consultant on exhibits in Virginia and South Carolina. Her presentation on “The Landscape of Slavery” grows from her work as guest curator for a new exhibit, “Landscape of Slavery: The Plantation in American Art,” which will open in January 2008 at the University of Virginia Art Museum. The exhibit will cover the long history of depictions of plantations and related slave imagery, analyzing the images in the context of the American landscape tradition and addressing the impact of the works on the history of race in the United States.

The UNH Museum Studies Program trains graduate students to work with museums, historical

societies, and similar public history institutions. The program is designed to give students special training and experience in museum settings, while at the same time providing a solid academic grounding in the best historical scholarship.

