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## GETTY VILLA'S FALL LECTURE LINEUP

At the Getty Villa  
October 7 – November 6, 2017

LOS ANGELES — This fall the Getty Villa presents a diverse lineup of free public talks: an expert conservator of antiquities discusses ways to protect art from earthquake damage; a Roman archaeologist shares how technology is being used to better understand a famous mosaic from Pompeii; an ancient historian considers lessons learned from the Greek statesman and orator Pericles; and a best-selling author ponders the paradoxical role of mistakes in Homer's *Odyssey* and other works of great literature.

### **When the Inevitable Happens...Again: Protecting Museum Collections from Earthquake Damage**

***Saturday, October 7, 2017 at 2:00 p.m.***

How can stone sculpture, ancient ceramic vessels, and delicate glass objects survive when the earth shakes violently? While California leads the world in efforts to lessen earthquake damage to its critical infrastructure and buildings—and most importantly its residents—the region is also home to spectacular museums and collections that are at risk. **Jerry Podany**, former head of antiquities conservation at the J. Paul Getty Museum, discusses the Museum's three decades of investigation and preparation for such events and its championing of seismic damage mitigation for museum collections worldwide. He describes the Getty's multidisciplinary approach to protecting its cultural treasures, encompassing both small, common sense efforts and the development of high-tech base isolation systems to reduce the risk of damage and loss.



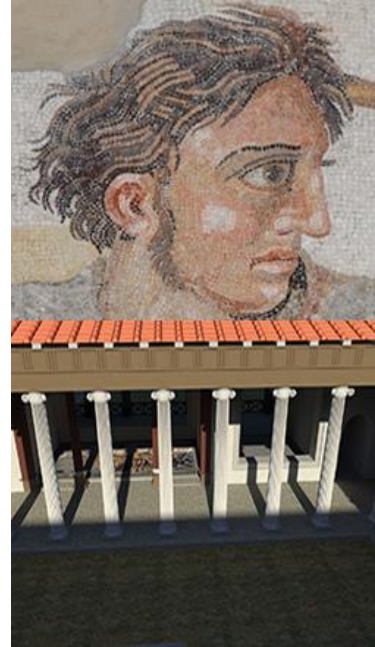
On view at the Getty Villa, this first-century Roman sculpture of a man wearing a toga is mounted to a base equipped with a seismic isolator that will stabilize the fragile work of art during an earthquake.

### **About Jerry Podany**

Jerry Podany served as senior conservator of antiquities at the J. Paul Getty Museum from 1984 to 2016, when he retired. He has published widely on topics such as the conservation of monumental sculpture and the history of restoration, and on seismic damage mitigation, including his recent book *When Galleries Shake: Earthquake Damage Mitigation for Museum Collections* (Getty Publications, 2017). Jerry served as president of the American Institute for Conservation (AIC) from 1999–2003 and president of the International Institute for Conservation (IIC) from 2007–2013. He now lectures and consults internationally on wide-ranging conservation projects and on seismic risk reduction for collections.

**Art, Archaeology, and Advanced Technology: The Alexander Mosaic at Pompeii**  
***Saturday, October 21, 2017 at 2:00 p.m.***

Archaeologist **John Dobbins** explains how advanced technology is helping art historians and architects better understand the most famous mosaic to survive from antiquity, The Alexander Mosaic at Pompeii. Found in the House of the Faun, a lavish home for a Roman elite family, this highly detailed mosaic pavement depicting a battle between King Darius III and Alexander the Great was meant to impress. Dobbins and his colleague Ethan Gruber use a 3-D model, including a lighting package set for the year 100 B.C., to illustrate the peculiar architectural features and ancient viewing conditions that existed at the House, and the ways visitors may have discovered and engaged with this spectacular piece. This program is co-presented with the Archaeological Institute of America and the Ahmanson Foundation.



Detail of the Alexander Mosaic showing Alexander the Great (circa 100 B.C., National Archaeology Museum, Naples) and a 3D digital model created by Ethan Gruber of the mosaic as viewed through the colonnade of the House of the Faun.

**About John Dobbins**

John Dobbins is the Richard A. & Sara Page Mayo NEH Distinguished Teaching Professor and Professor of Classical Art & Archaeology at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. He specializes in ancient Roman art, archaeology, architecture, and urbanism. He is the director of the Pompeii Forum Project, an interdisciplinary project that has been rewriting the history of the forum in Pompeii, and is a field archaeologist who has excavated in Spain, Italy, Greece, Syria, Massachusetts, and Virginia. Dobbins is also a student of the houses and mosaics of Antioch (now Antakya, Turkey), the capital of the Roman province of Syria.

**Making Athens Great (Again?): Modern Lessons from the Age of Pericles**  
***Wednesday, October 25, 2017 at 7:30 p.m.***

Can an examination of ancient Greece and the career of Athens' greatest statesman, Pericles son of Xanthippos, tell us anything about current American politics? In 431 B.C., Pericles convinced the Athenians to enter a war with the Spartans, the greatest military power in mainland Greece. He also convinced them to adopt a novel strategy—to abandon their homes and farms and move into the city of Athens, allowing the invading Spartans to ravage their ancestral lands. How did this statesman come to wield unprecedented power? Historian **Loren Samons** of Boston University argues that Pericles, like many modern democratic leaders, exploited Athenian history and psychology to achieve his personal and public goals, and that he did so in ways that are both instructive and disturbing.



Portrait bust of Pericles (detail), 2nd century, Roman copy of an earlier Greek original with the name inscribed in Greek. Marble. British Museum 1805,0703.91, © The Trustees of the British Museum 2017, Creative Commons [Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) license

### **About Loren Samons**

Loren J. Samons II is professor of classical studies and director of undergraduate studies at Boston University. He specializes in the history of Greece in the fifth and sixth centuries B.C., with particular interests in Athenian politics and imperialism and in the relationship between ancient and modern democracy. His most recent book, *Pericles and the Conquest of History* (Cambridge University Press, 2016), presents a darker view of the Athenian statesman than has been typical in modern scholarship and emphasizes the dangers of democratic government.

### **Too Clever By Half: What We Learn from the Mistakes of Great Literary Characters**

***Monday, November 6, 2017 at 7:30 p.m.***

Noted writer and critic **Daniel Mendelsohn** considers the paradoxical role of mistakes in works of great literature. Paying special attention to Homer's *Odyssey* and its hero Odysseus, Mendelsohn investigates the ethical and structural value of screwing up. He explores the ways that missteps and gaffes lead to satisfying stories, and how characters gain insight as they arc from stubborn self-confidence to humbling realizations of error. Like many of literature's intellectually overconfident players, even Odysseus has to blunder badly before he can truly be called "brilliant." Copies of Mendelsohn's latest book, *An Odyssey: A Father, a Son, and an Epic*, will be available for sale in the Museum Store, and a book signing follows his talk.



David Mendelsohn. Photographed by Matt Mendelsohn.

### **About Daniel Mendelsohn**

Daniel Mendelsohn is an internationally bestselling author, award-winning critic and essayist, and columnist for *Harper's*. He began his career in journalism in 1991, contributing to such publications as *The Village Voice* and *The Nation* while completing his Ph.D. in classics at Princeton University. His translations, reviews, and essays have appeared regularly in numerous national publications, most frequently *The New Yorker*, *The New York Review of Books*, and *The New York Times*. He is the author of seven books, including a scholarly study of Greek tragedy; two collections of essays, *How Beautiful It Is* and *How Easily It Can Be Broken*, and *Waiting for the Barbarians: Essays from the Classics to Pop Culture*; and his latest, *An Odyssey: A Father, a Son, and an Epic*, which recounts his travels around the Mediterranean with his late father, a scientist, while reading the *Odyssey*.

All lectures are free and take place in the Auditorium at the Getty Villa. A free advanced ticket is required and can be reserved at [www.getty.edu](http://www.getty.edu) or 310-440-7300. Seating is open and on a first-come, first served basis. Parking is \$15 per car, reduced to \$10 after 3 p.m.

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**The J. Paul Getty Museum** collects Greek and Roman antiquities, European paintings, drawings, manuscripts, sculpture and decorative arts to 1900, as well as photographs from around the world to the present day. The Museum's mission is to display and interpret its collections, and present important loan exhibitions and publications for the enjoyment and education of visitors locally and internationally. This is supported by an active program of research, conservation, and public programs that seek to deepen our knowledge of and connection to works of art.

**Visiting the Getty Villa** The Getty Villa is open Wednesday through Monday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. It is closed Tuesdays, Thanksgiving, December 25 (Christmas Day), and January 1.

Admission to the Getty Villa is always free, but a ticket is required for admission. Tickets can be ordered in advance, or on the day of your visit, at [www.getty.edu/visit](http://www.getty.edu/visit) or at (310) 440-7300. Parking is \$15 per car, but reduced to \$10 after 3 p.m. Groups of 15 or more must make reservations by phone. For more information, call (310) 440-7300 (English or Spanish); (310) 440-7305 (TTY line for the deaf or hearing impaired). The Getty Villa is at 17985 Pacific Coast Highway, Pacific Palisades, California. Same-day parking at both Museum locations (Getty Center and Getty Villa) is available for \$15 through the Getty's Pay Once, Park Twice program.

Additional information is available at [www.getty.edu](http://www.getty.edu). Sign up for e-Getty at [www.getty.edu/subscribe](http://www.getty.edu/subscribe) to receive free monthly highlights of events at the Getty Center and the Getty Villa via e-mail, or visit [www.getty.edu](http://www.getty.edu) for a complete calendar of public programs.