Cabinet: Digitally Enhancing Teaching with Objects

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The Cabinet Team

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Need

How could students gain more sustained access to objects selected for teaching?

How could students revise objects that they have handled?

Could a large number of objects be effectively assembled and displayed to students taking a special subject?

Could we enable them to examine and review objects (alongside texts) each week throughout the term?

Could we build greater confidence with and knowledge of museum collections, to increase student engagement?

If we build a platform to respond to these needs, could we use it to better understand student engagement?

Could we use what we know about informal learning through crowdsourcing to add specific features to increase opportunities for reflective learning?
Class 2: Medicine, Anatomy, and Botany

- Introduction
- William Harvey (1578-1657)
- William Harvey, De motu cordis (1628)
- Fabricius ab Aquapendente (1537-1619)
- Andreas Vesalius (1515-1564)
- Anatomical Theatre Padua
- Botanical Garden
- Danby Gate, Botanical Garden
- Jacob Bobart the Elder
- Catalogus Plantarum (1648)
- Jacob Bobart the Younger
- The Bobarts' Herbaria
Astronomical Device (Closed)

1. Volvelle to calculate the hours of daylight
2. Floral decoration
3. Hook
4. Clasps

Much like contemporary manuscripts and printed books, the device is closed with two metal clasps.

External links
- Horizontal dial, Hans Koch (Museum of the History of Science, Oxford)
- Astronomical clock, Hans Koch (British Museum)
- Table clock, Hans Koch (Frick Collection)

Object data
ID number: WA1947.191.7
Collection: Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, University of Oxford
Source categories: Astronomical Device (3D)

Accession No: WA1947.191.7
Date/Period: c. 1580
Materials: gilt brass
Dimensions: length 100.6 mm (incl. pendant loop), width 68.2mm, thickness 27.4mm,
Movement: length 83.5 mm, width 32.4 mm, pillar height: 8.4 mm
Provenance: Munich, workshop of Hans Koch

Description: Gilt-brass cased clock-watch with alarm, sundials and lunar volvelle in the form of a book. The striking movement is punched with the maker's mark HK conjoined and with a right-facing monk's head (the town mark of Munich).
Collection: Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, University of Oxford
Credits: 3D photogrammetry by Jamie Cameron, 2016
Building the Bodleian

Description: At the centre of seventeenth-century Oxford was the Bodleian Library and the Schools Quadrangle. Together, they represent the concrete manifestation of a whole series of attitudes and assumptions underlying the academic approach to learning in the first years of the century. So a virtual tour of these buildings provides a valuable introduction to many of the often unstated presuppositions structuring the pursuit of knowledge around 1600 and the Bodleian Library.

But the Bodleian was not built in a day: the building of this complex began in the 1420s and only reached its final form in 1637. Indeed, to contextualise it still further, we must move backward to the construction of the first university library in St Mary’s Church around 1320 and forward to the building of the Sheldonian and the Old Ashmolean as late as 1683. So an introduction to the building of the Bodleian can also serve as a chronological survey of most of the seventeenth century.

The Plan of the Bodleian Library reproduced here provides the best guide to the stages in which the Bodleian itself was constructed. To aid study, the sequence (indicated in the legend at the lower left) has been reproduced in the annotations, which are hyperlinked to the documents which follow.

At the outset, however, we must return to the period before the first of these buildings were constructed, to consider the origins of these buildings in the University Church and the state of central Oxford before Bodley’s intervention.

Source: An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the City of Oxford, published by His
Photogrammetry
Student Feedback

What they did:
- Used Cabinet as preparation for class, to revisit ideas raised in classes and lectures, for writing extended essays and for exam revision
- Asked for revision classes that included museum visits and walking tours of the built environment
- Asked for more Cabinet courses
- Appreciated the logical arrangement, and intellectual clarity of Cabinet

What they said:
- One of the most helpful things about [Cabinet] is in orientating your mind, because there’s so much out there…
- I always find that I want to go back to Cabinet after I’ve had the classes and the discussion, I find that really useful
- Just having the organisation of Cabinet makes your life a bit easier and makes you feel more secure that you know what you’re doing
- It’s a really good way of helping us avoid blatant anachronisms as well, because it definitely helps you to get into the period more
- Sometimes with text, because there’s so much commentary on it, you feel a bit spoon-fed… [with objects] you feel a bit more original
Next Steps

Courses uploaded MT 2016

- **History**  *The Scientific Movement in the Seventeenth Century*
- **English**  *Objects as Subjects in Eighteenth Century Literature*
- **History of Art**  *Early Renaissance Italy*
- **Archaeology**  *Archaeology of Ancient Egypt and Sudan*
- **Archaeology**  *Ancient Near Eastern Archaeology*

New collaborations

- **History**  General Paper III (core undergraduate paper), Further Subject: ‘Authority of Nature – Race, Heredity and Crime’
- **Said Business School**  ‘The English Country House: Archives, Architecture and Economic History’ (with Dr Pegram Harrison and Dr Oliver Cox)
- **Clinical Medicine**  Dr Tess McPherson and Dr Rubeta Matin, Dermatology
- **Anthropology**  MSc/MPhil ‘Powerful Things’ and MSc in Visual, Material and Museum Anthropology
- **Continuing Education**  Various courses in Archaeology, Classics, Plant Sciences, and more!

- **Museum and College Collaborations:**  Pitt Rivers, Museum of Natural History, Ashmolean, Museum of the History of Science, Magdalen College and Great War Archive
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