



The Beltway and Beyond: Neoclassical Furniture of
Washington, D.C., Baltimore, and the Coastal Mid-Atlantic

A VIRTUAL WINTERTHUR CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 8–9, 2020

Tune in for an exciting series of lectures, conversations, and demonstrations without leaving your living room.

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Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library

The Beltway and Beyond: Neoclassical Furniture of Washington, D.C., Baltimore, and the Coastal Mid-Atlantic

LECTURES ON DEMAND

Furniture curators, scholars, craftsmen, and collectors share research from this early 19th-century hotbed of stylistic innovation. Available through the month of October to watch as many times as you wish. *Downloading or recording of presentations is prohibited.*

A New Furniture Discovery: The Mackall Family Secretary—Georgetown/ Washington, D.C.

Josh W. Lane, Lois F. and Henry S. McNeil Curator of Furniture, Winterthur

An unusual gentleman's secretary with a colorful history of ownership in Georgetown, Maryland, was donated to Winterthur in 2019. Could this neoclassical case furniture be the product of Washington, D.C., cabinetmakers? Investigate what might be the product of one of the capitol city's early 19th-century shops. Explore the family lore that opens a window onto a fascinating facet of social life in antebellum Washington.

The Robert Francis Fileti Endowed Lecture: Baltimore Inlay: Fancy Banding and Stringing... Made to Any Pattern

Stephen P. Latta, Professor, Wood and Cabinetmaking Technology, Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology, Lancaster, PA

At the dawn of the 19th century, Baltimore produced the best of American inlaid furniture. In this age of the specialist, inlayers and ébénistes found ample opportunities to ply their unique trade while enjoying the patronage of the city's elite. This lecture will explore the work of several known masters such as Thomas Barrett and George Dewhurst as well as those of lesser fame.

The Wendy A. Cooper Furniture Forum Lecture: From Glasgow to Annapolis and Washington, D.C.: Early Scots Neoclassicism in the Upper Chesapeake, 1772–1800

Sumpter Priddy, Principal, Sumpter Priddy III, Inc., Alexandria, VA

Americans have a long tradition of viewing colonial Chesapeake society as consisting principally of aristocratic English families for whom slaves and indentured servants performed the majority of work and to whom material goods came primarily from Britain. This lecture introduces a key group of Scots artisans who arrived in Annapolis beginning in the 1770s, and then surveys early apprentices from their shop who settled in Washington, D.C., during the 1790s. Ultimately, it explores the exceptional objects they made and the symbolism they employed to inspire America's first leaders, who then carried the ideals home to inspire adoption of America's first national style.

Looking Closely at a Masterpiece of Neoclassical Design: Winterthur's Lady's Cabinet and Writing Table

Brock W. Jobe, Professor of American Decorative Arts Emeritus, Winterthur

Eye-catching, flamboyant, colorful, and exceedingly elegant—this extraordinary object has it all. Join Brock Jobe as he explores the origin of the cabinet's design, its ties to pieces based on the same pattern, and the exceptional skill of the man who made this particular example. Our journey begins in Paris, moves to London, and ends across the Atlantic in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Richmond. Buckle up!

'Celebrated in their Profession': The Furniture of John and Hugh Finlay of Baltimore

Gregory Weidman, Curator, Hampton National Historic Site, Towson, MD

At the beginning of the 19th century, the fashion for painted or "fancy" furniture took hold in Baltimore. This taste would last for nearly four decades. The leading manufacturers were the highly successful brothers John and Hugh Finlay, who derived their designs from the latest publications from Paris and London. Their elegant furniture graced homes throughout the Chesapeake region, including President James and Dolley Madison's White House.

The Furniture of John Needles

Michelle Fitzgerald, Assistant Curator of Johns Hopkins University Museums, Baltimore, MD

Among collections of 19th-century Baltimore furniture, the cabinetmaker John Needles remains one of the most prolific artisans, with a high amount of surviving work. To Needles, however, his furniture was only a part of his life—a life that was otherwise filled with Quaker community networks and strong support for abolitionism. Through a review of his life and furniture, a greater understanding of the national, religious, and social significance of 19th-century Baltimore furniture will come to light.

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LECTURES ON DEMAND *CONTINUED*

John Shaw, Annapolis Cabinetmaker

Bethany McGlyn, Sewell C. Biggs Curatorial Fellow, Winterthur

Once Annapolis's most famous cabinetmaker, Glasgow native John Shaw has captivated furniture scholars, collectors, and enthusiasts for decades. Shaw's career in Annapolis was prolific—but how did his work influence cabinetmakers outside of Maryland's capital? Bethany McGlyn traces the lives and careers of John Shaw's family members, apprentices, journeymen, and enslaved and indentured servants, untangling a network of people, places, and things that kept Shaw's legacy alive in Baltimore, Washington, D.C., and beyond.

New Discoveries and Revised Ideas about Klismos Chairs

Robert F. Trent, Independent Furniture Historian, Wilmington, DE

Four recently recognized examples of pre-1820 American klismos chairs alter the interpretive framework established by the 2016 exhibition and catalog about the Waln furniture at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. A review of design sources suggests that French influences were of greater importance than the English influences usually cited. The structure of the klismos design is also due for renewed consideration. This presentation is coordinated with that by Alexandra Kirtley, which examines other sets of klismos chairs.

Collecting Maryland Furniture: A 50-Year Odyssey and Passion

Stiles Colwill, Collector and President of Stiles T. Colwill Interiors, Lutherville, MD

Mr. Colwill's talk features his personal collection of Baltimore and Maryland furniture. It is the recollections of a former curator and museum trustee who did not set out to be a collector but a "furnisher"! However, he has in fact become the quintessential collector and has amassed a large collection of local furniture. Some pieces are purely documents, some are fascinating artifacts, and some just historically interesting, but others are important examples of neoclassical furnishings. The talk will be presented as would be a behind-the-scenes private tour of his homes.

Connections: Painted Furniture in Philadelphia, Baltimore, and The Upper South

Alexandra A. Kirtley, the Montgomery-Garvan Curator of American Decorative Arts, Philadelphia Museum of Art, PA

Beginning in the early 18th century, painted decoration—"Colours and Ornaments of all Kinds" and "the art of ornamenting, in the newest stile and taste"—was a central element of furniture design in North America. By the 1790s, artisans in the mid-Atlantic had produced a particularly dynamic brand of painted ornament for the furniture they made. Alexandra Kirtley will share new research into the genesis of these extraordinary painted furniture styles and designs that originated in ancient Greece—where Homer described Hera and Athena seated on their painted Klismos thrones—and were reimagined in early 19th-century Philadelphia, Baltimore, Georgetown, and the Upper South.

COCKTAILS & DOVETAILS*

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, AND FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9 | 5:00–5:45 PM

Grab your beverage of choice and join conference presenters for an informal discussion about their research methods and discoveries, their personal and professional interests in furniture, and possible future directions for work in the field.

Thursday Round-table Participants

Bethany McGlyn, Winterthur Program in American Material Culture, Class of 2020

Michelle Fitzgerald, Assistant Curator of Johns Hopkins University Museums, Baltimore, MD

Gregory Weidman, Curator, Hampton National Historic Site, Towson, MD

Sumpter Priddy, Principal, Sumpter Priddy III, Inc., Alexandria, VA

Stiles Colwill, Collector and President of Stiles T. Colwill Interiors, Lutherville, MD

Friday Round-table Participants

Alexandra A. Kirtley, the Montgomery-Garvan Curator of American Decorative Arts, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA

Stephen P. Latta, Professor, Wood and Cabinetmaking Technology, Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology, Lancaster, PA

Robert F. Trent, Independent Furniture Historian, Wilmington, DE

Brock W. Jobe, Professor of American Decorative Arts Emeritus, Winterthur

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LIVE DEMONSTRATIONS*

Join us live for interactive demonstrations with talented craftsmen and art conservators. If you can't participate live, a recording of each demonstration will be available during the month of October. *Downloading or recording of demonstrations is prohibited.*

Thursday, October 8, 7:00–8:30 pm

Inlay demonstration

Stephen P. Latta, Professor, Cabinetmaking and Wood Technology, Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology, Lancaster, PA

Steve Latta has made both contemporary and traditional furniture for the past 35 years. He is a contributing editor to *Fine Woodworking* magazine and has released several videos on inlay and furniture construction. He has lectured at Yale University, Colonial Williamsburg, The Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, and Winterthur Museum as well as numerous schools and guilds. Working in conjunction with Lie-Nielsen Toolworks, he helped develop and market a set of contemporary inlay tools. For more than twenty years, Steve has taught woodworking full time at Thaddeus Stevens College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. In this demonstration he will employ both his extensive knowledge of woodworking and his finely honed teaching skills to demystify the often misunderstood practice of inlay characteristic of the Federal period. The signature elements of stringing, banding, bellflowers, and paterae will be covered along with the related tooling and materials. Hopefully, many “aha” moments will lead to a greater appreciation of the ingenuity of our early artisans.

Friday, October 9, 7:00–8:30 pm

Shipped inside the Beltway: The 1819 Thomas Constantine United States Senate Chairs

Mark Anderson, Elizabeth Terry Seaks Senior Furniture Conservator Emeritus, Winterthur

Kathy Gills, Senior Conservator of Furniture, Winterthur

Join Mark Anderson and Kathy Gills for a virtual bird's eye view of two related but quite different chairs from the early 19th-century New York workshop of Thomas Constantine. One of the chairs, dating from 1819, has a history of use in the United States Senate before moving into private hands. The other, which surfaced in California and was acquired by Winterthur, appears to be from the same patterns but has distinct differences in execution. Winterthur's chair is, to the best of our knowledge a, unique example.

We will discuss the fascinating history of the Senate contract highlighting Constantine's ability to execute the large contract in a short time span. Knowing that “unique” or “one of a kind” examples merit extra scrutiny, our virtual audience will have a chance to engage in discussions and directed examination by our on-site team.

Wednesday, October 7, 7:00–8:30 pm

Trivia Night: Neoclassical Furniture

Adam, Phyfe, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton. If these names ring a bell, you are ready for Neoclassical Furniture Trivia. If not, join us anyway! Our host, Brock Jobe, Winterthur's professor of American decorative arts emeritus, promises a good time for all and plenty of fascinating facts about the world of furniture from 1775 to 1825. *The winning team receives half off their registration fee for the forthcoming 2021 Furniture Forum. Register as an individual or as a team of up to 5 people. E-mail continuingeducation@winterthur.org with the name of your team and the email address for each team member. Information regarding logistics will be shared upon registration.*



*Please note: all conversation and program times are Eastern Daylight Time.

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REGISTRATION

Your registration fee enables us to enlist a world-renowned roster of presenters and supports educational programming at Winterthur.

\$125; \$100 per Member; \$115 per SAPFM and NJWAA member

Includes 10 pre-recorded lectures available on-demand during the month of October, 2 live conversations with internationally known teachers and scholars, 2 live workshops with expert craftsmen, and 1 optional trivia experience.



Cover: Secretary (detail), possibly Georgetown, Md., or Alexandria, Va., 1805–15. Gift of Elizabeth C. Weld and Elizabeth B. Weld, in memory of Louis Mackall Weld, Jr. 2019.0014.001. **Inside: card table (detail)**, Baltimore, Md., 1800–1810. Museum purchase with funds provided by the Edward C. Johnson Fund, an anonymous donor, and Mr. and Mrs. John R. Donnell 1999.0009. Photo by Gavin Ashworth. **Registration page: armchair (detail)**, John Barnhart and Thomas S. Renshaw, Baltimore, Md., 1805–15. Bequest of Henry Francis du Pont 1959.0571

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