

Pam Kosty
215.898.4045
pkosty@upenn.edu

Tom Stanley
215.898.4045
tstan@upenn.edu

Penn Museum Joins with Penn's Center for Ethics and Rule of Law to Host an International Conference on the Preservation of Cultural Heritage During Armed Conflict April 4 through 6, 2017

Keynote Panel Discussion at the Penn Museum is Open to the Public
Tuesday, April 4, 5:00 to 6:30 pm

PHILADELPHIA, PA, 2017— Cultural property and heritage has become a target in modern warfare. In 2001, the Taliban provoked international outrage when it destroyed two ancient statues of the Buddha carved into a hillside in the Bamiyan valley in Afghanistan. And, over the past several years, the Islamic State has destroyed a number of important ancient sites, museums, and cultural heritage sites in Syria and Iraq.

In light of these attacks, the Center for Ethics and the Rule of Law at the University of Pennsylvania Law School, the Middle East Center at the University of Pennsylvania, and the Penn Cultural Heritage Center at the Penn Museum (University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology) host an international, by-invitation-only conference, **The Preservation of Art and Culture in Times of War**, April 4 through 6, 2017. More than 40 international experts gather to share ideas and experiences, gain a better understanding of the damage inflicted by attacks on cultural property, and develop ideas on how to prevent such attacks from occurring in the future.

A Tuesday Evening Open Panel Discussion

The public has an opportunity to consider some of the conference issues on April 4, Tuesday night, 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm, when the Penn Museum hosts a Keynote panel discussion, **New Frontiers in the Protection of Cultural Property**. Taking into account diverse perspectives of art, archaeology, history, law, and the military, the panel is challenged to consider, how must preservation efforts change in response to armed conflict in the twenty-first century?

Dr. Richard Leventhal, Director of the Penn Museum's Penn Center for Cultural Heritage, moderates a wide-ranging discussion with panelists including **Irina Bokova**, Director-General, UNESCO; **Karima Bennoune**, Professor of International Law, University of California-Davis School of Law and United Nations Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights; and **Derek Gillman**, Distinguished Teaching Professor, Westphal College of Media Arts & Design, Drexel University, and Former Executive Director and President, Barnes Foundation. **Sir Richard Goldstone**, former judge, Appellate Division, Supreme Court of South Africa; and **Shamila Batohi**, Senior Legal Advisor to the Prosecutor at the International Criminal Court.

Following the discussion, guests are also invited to preview *Cultures in the Crossfire: Stories from Syria and Iraq*. Created in conjunction with the Museum's Penn Cultural Heritage Center, this new Penn Museum exhibition sheds light on the ongoing destruction of cultural heritage in the Middle East by showing what's at stake—the rich history of the region and the diversity of its people—and what's being done to prevent the loss of this history and cultural identity. *Cultures in the Crossfire* opens to the public Saturday April 8.

A cocktail reception follows the panel discussion. Admission: \$20 (free for PennCard holders and college students with current full-time college ID). Pre-registration required. Details are available on the Penn Museum's online [calendar](#).

Conference on the Preservation of Art and Culture in Times of War

After the public keynote address, the work of the conference continues April 5 and 6.

“This conference brings together an interdisciplinary group of experts to solidify the moral and legal basis for preserving art and culture against destruction,” said Professor Claire Finkelstein, founder and director of CERL. “In addition, it will also examine how art is used to fund terrorism and the methods and means of eliminating the black market in looted art.” The Algernon Biddle Professor of Law and Professor of Philosophy at the University of Pennsylvania, Dr. Finklestein's scholarship examines the intersection of moral and political philosophy and the law, particularly the law and the ethics of war.

“We hope that this conference can integrate new ideas and information about the destruction of heritage in conflict,” said Brian I. Daniels, Director of Research and Programs at the Penn Cultural Heritage Center. The PennCHC has recently completed the first part of a NSF-funded project about cultural heritage destruction, and along with the Smithsonian Institution, has established the Conflict Culture Research Network.

Conference participants include Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO; Karima Bennoune, UN Special Rapporteur in the Field of Cultural Rights;; Catherine Boura, Ambassador of Greece to the United Nations; Jeffrey N. Blair, Secretary and General Counsel for the Philadelphia Museum of Art; Dr. Julian Siggers, Williams Director of the Penn Museum; along with other experts on the legal and cultural issues of preservation in times of war.

The conference will feature panels on law of war responsibilities to protect cultural property, the repatriation of and compensation for stolen art and artifacts, prosecuting the destruction of cultural heritage, and the looting and control of archeological sites as a source of threat financing. A complete schedule of conference topics, and participants, is [online](#).

About the Center for Ethics and the Rule of Law at the University of Pennsylvania School of Law

CERL is a non-partisan interdisciplinary institute dedicated to the preservation and promotion of the rule of law in twenty-first century warfare and national security. The only center of its kind housed within a law school, CERL draws from the study of law, philosophy, and ethics to answer the difficult questions that arise in times of war and contemporary transnational conflicts. It represents the vision of its founder and director, Professor Claire Finkelstein, in uniting scholars and policymakers from various fields in a multi-disciplinary conversation on some of the most challenging issues of our time.

About the Penn Cultural Heritage Center, University of Pennsylvania Museum

Dedicated to supporting cultural heritage initiatives, the [Penn Cultural Heritage Center](#) (PennCHC) brings considerable experience in training, capacity building, and basic research about cultural heritage and cultural policy. It has led several projects in conjunction with the U.S. government, including a research partnership with the U.S. Department of State's Mission to UNESCO to increase the empirical information known about the World Heritage program as it exists in the United States and abroad. PennCHC's capabilities are enhanced by the world-class archaeological and anthropological faculty at the University of Pennsylvania and the curators of the Penn Museum. [Dr. Brian Daniels](#), Director of Research and Programs at the Penn Cultural Heritage Center, is the Center's principal coordinator for the Safeguarding the Heritage of Syria and Iraq Project (SHOSI)

About the Penn Museum

Founded in 1887, the **Penn Museum** (the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology), 3260 South Street in Philadelphia, is one of the world's great archaeology and anthropology research museums, and the largest university museum in the United States. With nearly one million objects in the collection, the Penn Museum encapsulates and illustrates the human story: who we are and where we came from. A dynamic research institution with many ongoing research projects, the Museum is an engaging place of discovery. The Museum's mandate of research, teaching, collections stewardship, and public engagement are the four "pillars" of the Museum's expansive mission: to transform understanding of the human experience.