Lesley Wright, Director

Faulconer Gallery

Lecturer in Art

email: [WrightL@grinnell.edu](mailto:WrightL@grinnell.edu)

**HUM 395.01**

**CAPTURED CREATURES**

**Fall 2012**

Class meets Tuesday and Thursday, 10:00-11:50 am in Bucksbaum 243.

I work every day 8:00 am to 5:00 pm in my capacity as Director of the Faulconer Gallery. Office hours: **by appointment.** I’m often available, and you are welcome to drop by, but call or email in advance if you want to be sure I’ll be there.

Office: 145 Bucksbaum

Phone: 269-4642

Mailbox: 162 Bucksbaum

COURSE DESCRIPTION: The oldest images created by humans are of animals. Our current image-saturated world continues to be filled with animal masks, animal symbols, avatars, salesmen (sales-creatures?), animal decorations, companions, storytellers, and animal specimens. Then and now, we find myriad ways to use images of animals. They can be representational, magical, descriptive, surreal, fantastic, or romanticized. The course will explore images of animals, interrogating them as artistic, cultural, anthropological, scientific, and narrative objects. The seminar will be interdisciplinary in approach, while focused on works of art. We will challenge images with other images. We will bring multiple approaches to bear on decoding an image. We will dig deeply into art and we will wander far afield to expand our understanding.

The major project for the semester will be the curation (by the class) of an exhibition to be presented in the Faulconer Gallery next April (2013). Material for the exhibition will be drawn from the Faulconer Gallery, Grinnell College Art Collection, as well as other campus collections. The collection of the University of Iowa Museum of Art may serve as an additional resource. The theme and contents of the exhibition will be developed by you, the student curators. As part of the process, you will shape the exhibition and program design, and write an essay for the printed and/or online catalogue. Work on the exhibition will take place in and out of class. The exhibition curated by the class will be presented in Faulconer Gallery from **April 5 to June 30, 2013.**

In addition, each student will have major responsibility to the class for contributing to the topics for discussion. Class members will be content experts, and each student will co-teach one class. Regular blog discussions after class will help integrate classroom learning with exhibition development.

COURSE FORMAT: This class will be taught as a discussion seminar. The class members will share responsibility for the exchange of information and development of the exhibition. We will discuss texts, and sometimes images, at each session. Since the readings will provide us with a common basis of knowledge from which to curate, it will be part of your responsibility to your peers to attend class, do the readings and contribute to the class blog posts as well as to discussions.

Assignments and other course materials will be posted on the **Captured Creatures** (Hum 395) course page on PioneerWeb. We will also use PWeb to communicate with one another. Be sure you know how to navigate the website.

**REQUIREMENTS:**

1. **Assignments**.

Small writing assignment/EOS 10%

Co-teaching a class. 25%

1. **Co-Curate and Exhibition**  Major project counts for **45%**

Participate in all class workshops = 5% of total grade

Do all assignments needed for workshop days =10% of total grade

Research and write a 7-page catalog essay and 300 word object label = 20%

Complete all other assigned tasks for the exhibition = 10%

1. **Reading and participation**. You must do the weekly reading and participate in and out of class (group meetings, blogging). I will grade you on your preparation and participation in class. Falling asleep in class will count against you. Attendance**:** 5%

Participation (overall): 5%

Contribute to the Blog: 10%

**NOTE:** After 3 absences, your attendance grade will drop half a grade, and another half with every subsequent absence. Your participation grade will drop as well. Talk to me as early as possible in the case of special circumstances or serious illness.

**LEARNING GOALS:**

* Be able to analyze a work of art
* Be able to “see” like an art historian, a biologist, an anthropologist, and others
* Think about animals through a number of disciplinary lenses
* Work together in groups
* Co-teach a class
* Create an exhibition about animals.
* Create a written piece of scholarship that can be published.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Aloi, Giovanni. *Art and Animals.* London and New York: I.B. Tauris & Co., Ltd., 2012.

Baker, Steve. *Picturing the Beast: Animals, Identity, and Representation.* Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993.

Klobe, Tom. *Exhibitions: Concepts, Planning, Design.* Washington, DC: The AAM Press.

Lippincott, Louise and Andreas Blühm. *Fierce Friends: Artists and Animals, 1750-1900.* London and New York: Merrell, 2005.

Articles on **library e-reserve** as assigned. Books on 2-hour reserve in the library as assigned. *Let me know if you need instructions on using e-reserve.*

***Optional:***

**Subscription, *New York Times,* $54/student.**The College Bookstore is selling discounted New York Times subscriptions. A fall subscription is $54.00. A year subscription is $109.50. Subscriptions are Monday – Friday, except during breaks and holidays. This year, we have extended delivery through final exam weeks so you get 10 more days to read the New York Times. You also receive free, unlimited, digital access with your subscription. Order forms are at the College Bookstore.

**Membership in American Association of Museums (AAM), $35.00/student.** Fill out form online at <http://www.aam-us.org/joinus/>. Requires payment.and a photocopy of your student ID to process. Benefits: access to AAM job site and all web resources, subscription to *Museum,* and the AAM card admits you free to museums across the country.

You will also want to consult the Faulconer Gallery website for information about exhibitions, events, and the permanent collection: [www.grinnell.edu/faulconergallery](http://www.grinnell.edu/faulconergallery). There is a link directly from the course page on PioneerWeb.

***To be arranged:* Field trip to Iowa City museums, and possibly to a local farm.**

August 30 INTRODUCTION and beginnings

How do animals figure in our culture? What are our cultural constructs for contending with the animal world? (Genesis, Noah, creation myths, zoos, mythology, children’s book, taxonomies, natural history museums and dioramas, farm animals, markets, pet shops, etc.)

Steve Baker, Ch. 1, “From Massacred Cats to Lucky Cows: History and *mentalités*”

Bring to class: *Name expressions using animals [frog in my throat, a bird in the hand…]*

*Assignment: On the syllabus, review various course topics. Consider which class (beginning September 18 and beyond) that you want to co-teach with me. You will be adding a reading for your classmates, making a class presentation (half-hour), and leading off the after-class blog. Select a topic in which you can bring your disciplinary perspective to bear.* Post on the Wiki listed on the Syllabus by 5 pm on September 3.

Sept 4 OBSERVATION: Animals and Art

Lyanda Lynn Haupt, “Seeing,” ch. 7 in *Crow Planet: Essential Wisdom from the Urban Wilderness.* (eReserve)

Barry Lopez, “Learning to See” from *About This Life* (eReserve)

Enhancing Observational Skills exercise, followed by a discussion with Tilly Woodard.

Sept 6 OBSERVATION FROM NATURE **Meet in front of JRC to get van.**

Alexander Calder, *Animal Sketching* (excerpts, emailed)

Bonnie J. Ploger, “Learning to describe and quantify animal behavior“ (emailed)

We will be going to Sugar Creek Reserve with Professor Jackie Brown to do the biological observation exercise. Dress accordingly!

Between Sept 7 and Sept 10

*Meet in assigned groups over the weekend with students in Jackie Brown’s “Envisioning Nature” tutorial and Vicki Bentley-Condit’s “Human Ethology” course. Complete the assignment as distributed in class.*

Sept 11 Thinking like a curator **Meet in Print and Drawing Study Room**

Philip Fisher, “Art and the Future’s Past” (eReserve)

Jules Prown, “Mind in Matter” (eReserve) = JStor

Carol Freeman, “Extinction, Representation, Agency: The Case of the Dodo,” from *Considering Animals: Contemporary Studies in Human-Animal Relations* (eReserve)

*We will begin with a 15-minute discussion of your meetings with students in Biology and Anthropology.*

Sept 13 Workshop Day #1: Curating an Exhibition – looking, exploring, making notes

Read: 6 selections from **Words of Wisdom: A Curator’s ‘Vade Mecum’ on Contemporary Art**. (eReserve)

Lawrence Rinder, “Curatorial Cook”

Charlotta Kotik, “A Few Droplets of Wisdom”

Mary Jane Macob, “A Recipe for Exhibitions”

Robert Hobbs, “if Works of Art are Considered Scores, Their Performances are Exhibitions”

Gary Garrels, “Thoughts on Exhibitions”

Dana Friis-Hansen, “Notes to a Young Curator”

“speed curating” exercise in class

Sept 18 REPRESENTING ANIMALS IN WESTERN ART **meet in Print and Drawing Study Room**

Marjolein E. Dijkstra, Ch. 2, “Utilitarian Substitution and the Roots of Image Making” (eReserve)

Aloi, Preface and Chapter 1, “Caught up in Representation”

Louise Lippincott and Andreas Blühm, “Looking at Animals: Vision and Evolution,” in *Fierce Friends.*

Sept 20 REPRESENTING ANIMALS IN NON-WESTERN ART

Student leader: Lydia

Allen F. Roberts, “Hitching up the Horse,” and “Bringing it all Back Home,” in *Animals in African Art* (eReserve)

Clifford, James, “Museums as Contact Zones,” in *Negotiations in the Contact Zone* (eReserve)



Start in the classroom, then go to Bucksbaum storage

Sept 25 MYTHOLOGIES and ANIMAL POWERS

Student Leader: Morgan

Baker, ch. 2, “Eagles, lions and bulldogs: an iconography of power”

Paul Shepard Ch. 7 “The Ecology of Narration” and/or Ch. 17 “Lying Down with Lambs and Lions in the Christian Zoo” in *The Others: How Animals Made Us Human* (eReserve)

*Fierce Friends* selections: 96-97, 104-105, 110-111, 116-117

Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, books six and ten.

<http://classics.mit.edu/Ovid/metam.6.sixth.html> (read “The Transformation of Arachne into a Spider” only)

<http://classics.mit.edu/Ovid/metam.10.tenth.html> (read “The Story of Venus and Adonis” only)

Sept 27 Workshop Day #2: creating a thesis, defining the concept

Robert Storr, “Show and Tell,” in Paula Marincola, ed. *What Makes a Great Exhibition? Questions of Practice* (eReserve)

Kolbe, ch. 4 “Concept”

Bring a proposed thesis/theme for our exhibition to class. What are the goals of your proposed exhibition? Do we have the works to support it? How is it interdisciplinary?

In class, present your idea to your partner. Critique each other’s idea. Present your partner’s idea to the class, with improvements that you developed together. Out of all the ideas presented, which are the most compelling? Can we begin to hone our thesis?

Oct 2 Visit from Susan Weller ’82, Director, Bell Museum of Natural History, University of Minnesota

Howard Ensign Evan, “The Universe as Seen from a Suburban Porch,” *Life on a Little-Known Planet: A biologist’s view of insects and their world,* Lyons & Burford 1993 (1966).

Systematics Agenda 2000. *Charting the Biosphere. Mission 1* ( 2 pgs)

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/krulwich/2012/02/24/147367644/six-legged-giant-finds-secret-hideaway-hides-for-80-years> Lord Howe Walking Insect

*Failure: Learn from it*. Harvard Business Journal  (April 2011)

*Museums and Society 2034*

2012 Bell Museum Info Sheet (with evolving vision)

***Optional* -** “The Campus Tsunami,” *NY Times.*

Oct 4 TAXIDERMY AND MUSEUM DISPLAY

Steven Conn, “Science Museums and the Culture Wars” in Macdonald, *A Companion to Museum Studies* (eReserve)

Stephen Asma, “Drama in the Diorama: The Confederation of Art and Science,“ in *Stuffed Animals and Pickled Heads: The Culture and Evolution of Natural History Museums.* (eReserve)

*Look at:* Frank Noelker’s work <http://www.franknoelker.com/work/zoo/>

Oct 9 TAXONOMIES, HIERARCHIES AND ECOLOGIES

Student Leader: Chris

*Fierce Friends:* pp. 32-33, 54-55, 60-61, 64-67, 82-83

Paul Shepard, “The Skills of Cognition: Pigeonholes, Dinosaurs and Hobbyhorses” in *The Others: How Animals Made us Human* (eReserve)

<http://slybird.blogspot.com/2008/07/winter-wren-is-multiple-species.html>

Oct 11 Workshop Day #3 – Start to shape the show and Set the checklist

John Falk, “The Museum Visitor Experience: Who Visits? Why and What Effect?” ch. 26 in *Reinventing the Museum: Evolving Conversation on the Paradigm Shift,* second edition, Gail Anderson, ed.

Using our preferred thesis (or theses), post your top 10 art choices for the exhibition on our class Wiki. [format for first mention of a work: artist last name, first name, artwork title, date, medium, accession number] If someone else has already listed the work, add the word “Vote” after the entry. (Several of you may add the word, “vote” – so we’ll know if a work gets lots of votes!)

Bring suggestions of objects from other collections that we can add to the exhibition. These can include biology exhibits, physics exhibits, anthropology exhibits, and works from the University of Iowa Museum of Art. Research your choices before October 11! Using these suggestions, continue to shape and refine the exhibition as it’s coming together. We may do this together, or in sub-groups.

Be thinking about a title for the show, and how we might think about a catalogue (printed or online)

Oct 16 TAXIDERMY AND THE MUSEUM DISPLAY – ARTISTS RESPOND

Student leader: Alexia

Colleen Sheehy, “A walrus head in the art museum” in Dion *Cabinets of Curiosity* (eReserve)

Aloi, *Art and Animals,* ch. 2 “Taxidermy, Subjugating Wildness”

Aloi, *Art and Animals,* ch. 7 “Conclusion: In Conversation with Mark Dion”

Oct 18 No class. Enjoy your Break!

FALL BREAK FALL BREAK FALL BREAK FALL BREAK FALL BREAK FALL BREAK

Oct 30 NATURE AND ARTIFICE

Student Leader: Lee

Annabelle Sabloff, “Nature as a Cultural System” in *Reordering the Natural World: Humans and Animals in the City* (eReserve)

Jennifer Price, “Roadrunners Can’t Read” in *Flight Maps* (eReserve)

David L. Thompson, “Concepts of Nature: Are Environmentalists Confused?” 1991 <http://www.ucs.mun.ca/~davidt/index.html>

Nov 1 Workshop Day #4: Exhibition design

Readings: Klobe, Chapter 1 (Elements of Design), Chapter 2 (Principles of Design), and look carefully at his case studies for ideas.

Working in teams, take all our selections and develop a way to present the exhibition visually. Think about: lead images, shape of the space, main themes and sub-themes, what works go together. Bring sketches to class if you have ideas to share.

We will be joined by Milton Severe, Faulconer’s exhibition designer.

Nov. 6 PETS, LIVESTOCK, AND OTHER CREATURES IN DAILY LIFE **Meet in PDSR**

Student Leader: Anna

Yoon, “So Much Life on a Little Patch of Earth,” *NY Times* ( eReserve)

Shepard, Ch. 11 “The Pet World” in *The Others: How Animals Made us Human* (eReserve)

*Fierce Friends,* pp. 38-39, 46-47, 52-53, 88-89, 102-103, 116-118, 140-141

Re: Kochik the Elephant: <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/06/science/surrounded-by-humans-korean-elephant-learns-to-speak.html?_r=0>

<http://www.cnn.com/2012/11/02/world/asia/south-korea-talking-elephant/index.html>

 Nov. 8 ANIMALS AND OUR BETTER (AND WORSE) NATURES **Meet in PDSR**

Student Leader: Vadim

Loren Eisley, “The Bird and the Machine” (photocopy distributed in class or emailed)

Baker, ch. 3, “Mad dogs and half-human beasts: the rhetoric of animality”

*Fierce Friends,* pp. 44-45, 78-79, 92-93, 120-121, 134-135, 140-141

Kelly Oliver, “What’s Wrong with (Animal) Rights?” *Journal of Speculative Philosophy,* 22:3 (2008) 214-224.

Nov. 13 DARWIN (Animals and Emotion) and Art

Student Leader: Kelly

Diana Donald, “’A Mind and Conscience Akin to Our Own’: Darwin’s Theory of Expression and the Depiction of Animals in Nineteenth-century Britain,” in *Endless Forms: Charles Darwin, Natural Science and the Visual Arts* (chapter 8).

*Fierce Friends,* pp. 122-123, 136-137, 142-143, 146-147

Ursula Hess and Pascal Thibault, “Darwin and Emotion Expression,” *American Psychologist,*  64:2 (Feb-Mar 2009) 120-128.

Photographs by Tim Flach, <http://www.timflach.com/>  “More than Human”

Nov 20 Continued exhibition planning…

Nov. 15 Workshop Day #5 – What kind of didactics do we want?

Klobe, Chapter 5 (Interpretation)

Ingrid Schaffner, “Wall Text,” in Marincola *What Makes a Great Exhibition?*

Review the Falk piece we read for Workshop Day #3.

Be prepared to discuss how we want to deliver information to the public. Think about wall texts, website, catalogue, and other vehicles for delivery. How will the written material complement the exhibition? How might it function beyond the life of the exhibition?

Nov. 22 Happy Thanksgiving (with or without animals on the menu)

Nov. 27 HYBRIDITY

Student Leader:

Aloi, Ch. 4, “An Uncomfortable Closeness”

Thompson, Nato. “Monstrous Empathy,” in *Becoming Animal…* (eReserve and look at book on reserve)

Look especially at Jane Alexander, Michael Oatman, Motohiko Odani, Patricia Piccinini.

Critique the catalogue—is it a well-curated exhibition? Why or why not?

Nov 29 Workshop Day #6 – Programming, Events and Publicity

Klobe, chapter 8 (Public Relations and Publicity)

How do you want the public to experience the exhibition beyond the objects? Bring ideas for events, speakers, panels, tours. Keep in mind that the exhibition opens in April—the most crowded month for events on the College calendar. Dream big. Be realistic.

What ideas do you have to publicize the exhibition on and off campus? What will be our lead image? How do you want PR materials to look?

We will be joined, again, by Tilly Woodward and possibly by someone from the Office of Communication.

Dec. 4 EATING ANIMALS

Guest: Prof. Kim Smith, Carleton College via Skype

J.M. Coetzee, *The Lives of Animals.* Read the entire novella (on reserve)

Aloi, Ch. 3, “Levels of Proximity”

Melena Ryzik, “Heads Yes Tails No” *NY Times* 7/27/12

Dec. 6 ANTHROPOMORPHISM – Where does the human animal fit in?

Student Leader: Edith

Baker, ch. 4, “Of *Maus* and more: narrative, pleasure and talking animals”

Aloi, Ch. 5, “The Animal that Therefore I am Not”

Nicholas Epley, Adam Waytz, and John T. Cacioppo, “On Seeing Human: A Three-Factor Theory of Anthropomorphism,” *Psychology Review* (2007), 114:4, pp. 864-886. [http://psychology.uchicago.edu/people/faculty/cacioppo/jtcreprints/onseeinghuman.pdf](https://mail.grinnell.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=aBGuUtdVYkqmEsaYtagQ1jpJOnqHos8IP5ur-jojrStevYr2kBDAXHuahNX2Cu4o2QJ2yNpNqQg.&URL=http%3a%2f%2fpsychology.uchicago.edu%2fpeople%2ffaculty%2fcacioppo%2fjtcreprints%2fonseeinghuman.pdf" \t "_blank)

Dec. 11 DO WE EXPLOIT ANIMALS (FOR ART)?

Aloi, Ch. 6, “The Death of the Animal”

Baker, Ch. 6, “Escaping the Ratking: Strategic Images for Animal Rights”

Yvette Watts, “Making Animals Matter: Why the Art World Needs to Rethink the Representation of Animals” in *Considering Animals: Contemporary Studies in Human-Animal Relations* (eReserve)

Look again at *Becoming Animal* catalog on reserve.

Dec 13 Last Class! Wrap up and Final Details

Finals Your final draft of your catalog essay and object label are due

**5:00 pm Wednesday, December 19**. Please send these to me ELECTRONICALLY.

**On Reserve in the Library:**

All textbooks for this course are on 2-hour reserve in the library. Also:

\*Aloi, Giovanni. *Art and Animals.* London and New York: I.B. Tauris & Co., Ltd., 2012.

\*Asma, Stephen T. *Stuffed Animals and Pickled Heads: The Culture and Evolution of Natural History Museums.* Oxford and New York: Oxford UP, 2001.

\*Baker, Steve. *Picturing the Beast: Animals, Identity, and Representation.* Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993.

\*Broglio, Ron. *Surface Encounters: Thinking with Animals and Art (Posthumanities).* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011.

\*Coetzee, J.M. *The Lives of Animals.* Amy Gutmann, ed. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1999.

\*Dijkstra, Marjolein Efting. *The Animal Substitute: An Ethnological Perspective on the Origin of Image-Making and Art.* Delft, The Netherlands, 2010.

\*Donald, Diane. *Endless Forms: Charles Darwin, Natural Science and the Visual Arts.* Cambridge, UK: Fitzwilliam Museum and New Haven, CT: Yale Center for British Art and Yale UP, 2009.

\*Freeman, Carol, Elizabeth Leane, and Yvette Watt, eds. *Considering Animals: Contemporary Studies in Human-Animal Relations.* Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Co., 2011.

\*Klobe, Tom. *Exhibitions: Concepts, Planning, Design.* Washington, DC: The AAM Press.

\*Lippincott, Louise and Andreas Blühm. *Fierce Friends: Artists and Animals, 1750-1900.* London and New York: Merrell, 2005.

\*Marincola, Paula. *What Makes a Great Exhibition? Questions of Practice.* Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative, Philadelphia Center for Arts and Heritage, 2006.

\*Price, Jennifer. *Flight Maps: Adventures in Nature in Modern America.* New York: Basic Books, 1999.

\*Roberts, Allen F. *Animals in African art: from the familiar to the marvelous*. New York: The Museum for African Art, c1995.

\*Shepard, Paul. *The Others: How Animals Made Us Human.* Covelo, CA: Shearwater Books, 1996.

\*Thompson, Nato. *Becoming Animal: Contemporary Art in the Animal Kingdom.* North Adams, MA: MASS MoCA Publications, 2006.