

AIA LECTURE PROGRAM 2012/2013
Lecture Abstract

Lecturer: John Pollini

Lecture title: Christian Destruction and Desecration of Images of Classical Antiquity

Lecture summary:

In popular culture Christianity is remembered for the art, architecture, customs, rituals, and myths that it preserved from the classical past. It is rarely acknowledged, however, that Christianity also destroyed a great deal in its conversion of the Roman Empire. The material evidence for Christian destruction has often been overlooked or gone unrecognized even by archaeologists. This lecture examines various forms of Christian destruction and desecration of images of classical antiquity during the fourth to seventh centuries, as well as some of the attendant problems in detecting and making sense of this phenomenon. (This lecture is based on Professor Pollini's present book project, "Christian Destruction and Desecration of Images of Classical Antiquity: A Study in Religious Intolerance and Violence in the Ancient World," for which he received fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the American Council of Learned Societies.)

Short bibliography and/or website on lecture topic (for lay reader):

M. Gaddis, *There is No Crime for Those Who Have Christ: Religious Violence in the Christian Roman Empire* (Berkeley 2005).

J. Pollini, "Christian Destruction and Mutilation of the Parthenon," in *Athenische Mitteilungen* 122 (2007) 207-228.

E. Sauer, *The Archaeology of Religious Hatred in the Roman and Early Medieval World* (Gloucestershire 2003).