

As an intern at the Boston Public Library (BPL), I worked with the Visitor Experience department to develop new interpretive material about the Central Library's 1895 McKim Building. In addition, I was involved with day-to-day preservation of the historic space and had the opportunity to learn from professionals working elsewhere in the library, including in digital services, conservation, and archives. I produced new audio, visual, and written content for the Library's digital tour page on Bloomberg Connects, a platform utilized by over 1000 cultural institutions around the world. By performing archival research and marrying it with visual analysis, I highlighted two overlooked areas in the BPL, the Venetian and Pompeiian Lobbies, and incorporated them into a new 'Art Lovers Tour' of the building. My interpretation focused on the artists, their historical allusions, and the meanings these paintings carried at their creation in the 1890s and have gained through the interceding century.

This opportunity has also allowed me not only to hone my skills in assessing and processing archival material but also in writing concise interpretation for general audiences. Using the Library's Special Collections, which includes letters, documents, and works of art, I learned to synthesize information from these primary sources to better construct relevant and meaningful narratives. My existing skills and familiarity with this kind of research I have built as a PhD student greatly contributed to the ease with which I was able to navigate archival repositories and to physically handle delicate material. More broadly, this work has also given me the chance to reflect on reception and historiography as it relates to my own field, the Early Modern period, as I move towards the dissertation. The architects and artists of the BPL utilized iconography from antiquity and the Renaissance to signal ideals of the pursuit of knowledge and culture to nineteenth-century Bostonians. Much in the same way, artists of the early Dutch Republic looked to antiquity to construct their own idealized understandings of history and their place within it. Being attuned to the evolving web of meanings invested in familiar iconography at different points in time is incredibly important to fully understand any given historical moment.

This internship has greatly expanded my professional network and introduced me to the practical demands of working with a historic space and for the needs of the general public. As both a functioning library and an architecturally significant site serving residents of Massachusetts and tourists, the BPL is committed to being "Free to All," centering widespread accessibility to both visiting audiences in its operations. While this motto served as an impetus

for my work at the BPL, my professional goals, whether in academia or in a museum setting, will also necessitate careful consideration of accessibility to all. I anticipate the skills I have gained using digital tools like Bloomberg Connects to remain relevant as I'm now better equipped to make my research more accessible to all who desire to engage through measures like inclusive alt-text, translatable content, and digital public availability.