

# DC Semester Program

## Spring 2020

### *Public Art and Public Policy*

*Taught by Professor Elizabeth Mead*

Washington DC is home to extraordinary public collections of art sited both indoors and outside. The numerous public monuments that create and organize the visual landscape of the city reach out to define the greater cultural terrain of our country at large. We will look at how the production of art organizes and defines the spaces we inhabit and how public policies promote or inhibit their production.

#### **Washington Program Internship**

- *6 credit hours: INTR 499*

Students will work at a wide variety of institutions that deal with public art and public policy. Each student will have the opportunity to tailor their internship with curators, administrators, policy makers, and critics depending on their individual interests. Examples of workplaces may include: **National Gallery of Art, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Freer and Sackler Galleries, Phillips Collection, Artist Galleries – Connersmith, Cross MacKensie – National Endowment for the Arts, Public Art Commission, and Sculpture Magazine.**

#### **The Predicament of the Object**

- *4 credit hours: ART 440 (Possible cross-listings with AMST and GSWS), COLL 300*

This course will consider the ways in which different cultures categorize and understand their objects. With an emphasis on western notions of objecthood, specifically those objects defined by the category of sculpture (art), we will compare the ways in which different cultures ascribe meaning and the way in which those meanings influence the way we read and experience objects across cultural barriers. We will use the two major outdoor sculpture gardens, the numerous public monuments, and the collections of sculpture (art)/objects at the Hirshhorn, the National Gallery, The Renwick Gallery, the Phillips Collection, Freer/Sackler, National Museum of Women in the Arts, National Museum of African Art, National Museum of the American Indian, National Museum of African American History and Culture, and a selection of embassies as our classroom.

In addition to establishing the vocabulary of form and the role of space, this course will examine the relationship of sculpture to its site inside and outside, and, in the public realm vs. private or domestic environments. We will look at the policies surrounding public art and the ways in which those policies dictate what we see and don't see in the public realm here and within the other cultures we will examine throughout the term.

#### **Objects Sculpture Things**

- *4 credit hours: ART 440 (Possible cross-listings with AMST and GSWS)*

Every culture has its own language and methodology for categorizing, understanding, and discussing the objects, sculptures, and things that reflect its intellectual achievements as well as its customs. We will examine objects, sculptures, and things from a range of cultures. Visits from distinguished Washington, DC museum curators, gallery directors, and writers will provide opinions and insight into the cultural differences that assign meaning to art and to objects.