Zoom Saturday Lecture, May 9, noon PDT
Nicholas Picardo:
Ancient Egyptian ‘Soul Houses’
in Life and in Death

ARCE National presents weekly virtual talks through June

This week, ARCE National unveils a series of weekly Egyptology lectures produced exclusively for chapter members via Zoom. The talks will be held Saturdays at noon Pacific time (except for Dr. Salima Ikram, who'll speak June 27 at 10 am our time). Advance registration is required 48 hours before each lecture to receive the Zoom link by email: go to arce.org/virtual-chapter-lectures to sign up. There'll be Q&A in the Zoom chat after each talk.
Many thanks to Nicholas Picardo and Dr. JJ Shirley for organizing this series, to ARCE staff for logistical and administrative support, and to the Chapter JJ Shirley for funding the speaker honoraria. ARCE National hopes that these virtual events will help offset the disappointment of having to cancel our own chapter events during shelter-in-place, and will encourage members to renew our ARCE memberships in anticipation of the day we can all meet in person again.

The rest of the speaker lineup, including Dr. Kara Cooney on June 16, is below.

**About Saturday’s lecture:**

Because the majority of ancient Egypt’s so-called “soul houses” have come from cemetery contexts, they are almost always classified as funerary equipment. Yet, this outlook offers little to explain their less frequent but still numerous find spots in settlements and houses. This presentation adopts concepts from the discipline of household archaeology to consider an extended range of functions and ideological importance for soul houses, ultimately positing a use lifespan that began prior to their deposition in cemeteries. Further, their use in both household and funerary practices is evaluated as a mechanism for reinforcing identities and relationships and preserving social ties between the living and the dead.

**About Nicholas Picardo:**

Nicholas Picardo is Associate Director of the Giza Project at Harvard University. He specializes in household archaeology and archaeological applications of digital humanities. He has served as Field Director of the South Abydos Settlement Excavation E Project and the Kom el-Hisn Provincialism Project, while also participating in other projects at Abydos, Giza, and Saqqara.

He has worked as a Curatorial Research Associate in the Art of the Ancient World Department of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, where he co-curated the exhibition *The Secrets of Tomb 10A: Egypt 2000 BC*, and as Visiting Instructor of Egyptology at Brown University. An ARCE member since 1998, Nicholas is the Chapter Representative to the ARCE Board of Governors and treasurer of the New England Chapter.

**Other Zoom lectures:**

All will be held at 12 noon PDT unless specified. Details of May 23 and later talks to follow.

May 16: Dr. Kara Cooney
May 23: Dr. Melinda Nelson-Hurst
May 30: Dr. Steve Harvey
June 6: Dr. Ines Torres
June 13: Dr. David Anderson
June 20: Dr. Leslie Anne Warden
June 27: Dr. Salima Ikram *This lecture only will be at 10 am PDT.*
About the lecture: Twenty-first Dynasty coffins are important social documents, but they are difficult to document, photograph, and analyze. Robust scholarship has advanced our understanding of these objects and their social contexts, including studies by Andrej Niwinski, John H. Taylor, Nicholas Reeves, and Karl Janssen-Winkel. For the past seven years, I have been systematically examining human reactions to social crises, specifically focusing on material adaptations evident within an ideological context, but also documenting the 21st Dynasty coffin corpus.

This research is the first systematic study of funerary arts reuse and theft within the field of Egyptology, but the work also allows the first thorough photographic documentation of these coffins. I am working through a massive and scattered dataset—more than 800 21st Dynasty coffins spread about dozens of institutions around the world. Thanks to a grant from the Antiquities Endowment Fund, I documented and analyzed the 21st Dynasty coffins found in the Deir el Bahari 320 royal cache on display in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo in December of 2016. Although the coffins from the royal cache were recorded by Daressy in the
Catalogue Général, none of these coffins have benefitted from a comprehensive photographic analysis. There are eleven 21st Dynasty coffin sets made up of 30 discrete coffin pieces from the royal cache. Anthropoid coffins are very complicated three-dimensional objects, and the 21st Dynasty coffins from the royal cache, in particular, include micro-scale painted decoration or purposeful destruction that demands close attention.

Dr. Kathlyn (Kara) Cooney is a professor of Egyptian Art and Architecture at UCLA. Specializing in craft production, coffin studies, and economies in the ancient world, Cooney received her PhD in Egyptology from Johns Hopkins University. In 2005, she was co-curator of “Tutankhamun and the Golden Age of the Pharaohs” at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Cooney produced a comparative archaeology television series, titled Out of Egypt, which aired in 2009 on the Discovery Channel and is available online via Netflix and Amazon.

The Woman Who Would Be King: Hatshepsut’s Rise to Power in Ancient Egypt, Cooney’s first trade book, was released in 2014 and benefits from her expert perspective on Egypt’s ancient history to craft an illuminating biography of its least well-known female king. As an archaeologist who spent years at various excavations in Egypt, Cooney draws from the latest field research to fill in the gaps in the historical record of Hatshepsut. Her next book, When Women Ruled the World, was published in 2018 by National Geographic Press and explores the reigns of six powerful ancient Egyptian queens and how they changed our perceptions of power.

Dr. Cooney’s current research in coffin reuse, primarily focusing on the 19th and 21st Dynasties, is ongoing. Her research investigates the socioeconomic and political turmoil that have plagued the period, ultimately affecting funerary and burial practices in ancient Egypt. This project has taken her around the world over the span of five to six years to study and document nearly 300 coffins in collections, including those in Cairo, London, Paris, Berlin, and Vatican City.
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October 11, 2020
Tattooing in Ancient Egypt
Dr. Anne Austin, Univ. of Missouri, St. Louis

November 15, 2020
Dr. Debbie Vischak, Princeton University/Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, North Abydos Expedition

December 13, 2020
The Power of Images in Ancient Egypt
Dr. Rune Nord, Emory University

CARTOUCHE is published monthly. Material for submission should be sent no later than the 25th of the month preceding publication to Barbara Wilcox at babspmalone@yahoo.com. The Chapter’s email address is ARCENorCal@gmail.com.

UPCOMING CHAPTER EVENTS

All lectures below are Sunday at 3 p.m. in Room 20 Barrows Hall, UC Berkeley, pending Alameda County’s lifting of COVID-related restrictions on public gatherings.

August 9, 2020
Dirty Pictures for a Dangerous Goddess
Dr. Ann Macy Roth, New York University

September 13, 2020
Ramesside Jaffa and the Decline of Egyptian Control in Canaan
Dr. Aaron Burke, UCLA