

Department of English presents

Archaeology as Installation: Jerusalem's Temple Mount and the Davidson Center for Exhibition and Virtual Reconstruction

At the heart of archaeology is interpretation, and one of the greatest challenges for an archaeologist is communicating the results of their excavations with both the general public and other researchers. In 1999, the Israel Antiquities Authority turned to the Urban Simulation Team at UCLA to address this challenge through a landmark installation for the Davidson Center in Jerusalem. Since the Center opened in 2001, visitors to the site have had the opportunity to take a virtual tour of the reconstruction model with an archaeologist guide in an interactive classroom before exploring the adjacent IAA excavations. The result is that visitors are better able to understand both the excavations and the archaeological process.

Lisa M. Snyder will discuss the installation, her work with archaeologists Ronny Reich and Yuval Baruch, the reconstruction process, and showcase both the first-century Herodian and eighth-century Islamic phases of the interactive model. She will also demonstrate prototype software supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities designed to facilitate educational use of three-dimensional computer models for teaching and learning about the built environment, and discuss the unprecedented opportunities the technology provides for research and pedagogy.

Dr. Lisa M. Snyder (UCLA)
Tuesday 24 November 2015
10:50-12:05
Room L1170a

Lisa M. Snyder (Ph.D. UCLA) is an architectural historian and research scholar with UCLA's Institute for Digital Research and Education (IDRE). Her primary research is on educational applications for three-dimensional computer models of historic urban environments and she teaches VR and 3D modeling in UCLA's Digital Humanities program. As a senior member of the Urban Simulation Team at UCLA, she developed the reconstruction model of the Herodian Temple Mount installed in 2001 at the Davidson Center in Jerusalem. This was followed in 2007 with an expanded version that included a reconstruction of the early Islamic structures on and around the Temple Mount. She is currently working on a reconstruction of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition that is shown regularly at Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry. In 2010 she received an NEH-Digital Humanities Start-Up grant (HD-50958-10) for the development of a software interface (VSim) that provides users with the ability to craft narratives in three-dimensional space and to embed annotations and links to primary and secondary resources and web content from within the environments.