



Ancient Muses: Archaeology and the Arts

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Known widely in Europe as "interpretive narrative archaeology," the practice of using creative methods to interpret and present current knowledge of the past is gaining popularity in North America. This book is the first compilation of international case studies of the various artistic methods used in this new form of education—one that makes archaeology "come alive" for the nonprofessional. Plays, opera, visual art, stories, poetry, performance dance, music, sculpture, digital imagery—all can effectively communicate archaeological processes and cultural values to public audiences.

The 23 contributors to this volume are a diverse group of archaeologists, educators, and artisans who have direct experience in schools, museums, and at archaeological sites. Citing specific examples, such as the film *The English Patient*, science fiction mysteries, and hypertext environments, they explain how creative imagination and the power of visual and audio media can personalize, contextualize, and demystify the research process. A 16-page color section illuminates their examples, and an accompanying CD includes relevant videos, music, web sites, and additional color images.

In their Introduction, the editors invoke the ancient muses to inspire the modern presenters and interpreters of archaeological research. They aptly quote George Santayana, from his poem "The Power of Art":

". . . may our hands immortalize the day

When life was sweet, and save from utter death

The sacred past that should not pass away."

John H. Jameson Jr. is an archaeologist and **John E. Ehrenhard** is Director at the National Park Service's Southeast Archeological Center in Tallahassee, Florida. **Christine A. Finn** is research associate at the Institute of Archaeology at the University of Oxford in England.

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