

# University of Virginia | Art Museum

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## U.Va. Art Museum Launches Blog About Building Jefferson's Academical Village

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The University of Virginia Art Museum is launching a new blog, *Building a Living Legacy: Jefferson's Academical Village*, (see [http://www.virginia.edu/artmuseum/things\\_to\\_do/blogs.html](http://www.virginia.edu/artmuseum/things_to_do/blogs.html)) in support of the special exhibition *Thomas Jefferson's Academical Village: The Creation of an Architectural Masterpiece, 1817-1824* which will open at the Art Museum Sept. 4 and continue through Jan. 4.

The exhibition is one of two that celebrate the building program at the University, and is presented in conjunction with events that mark the 150th anniversary of Carr's Hill, the president's residence. The exhibition at the Harrison/Small Special Collections Library will concern itself with the University's architectural program after Jefferson.

When it first was presented in 1993, the *Academical Village* exhibition highlighted new research about the development of the plan for the Lawn and its buildings. This 2009 iteration builds upon the breakthroughs of the former exhibition, including a more complete list of the workers who helped to construct the Pavilions on the Lawn and adjacent hotels.

Like the exhibition, *Building a Living Legacy: Jefferson's Academical Village* hopes to expand our understanding of the Academical Village. The blog's features include "The Detectives," in which Richard Guy Wilson, Commonwealth Professor of Architectural History and the exhibition's curator, describes his impressions of the Lawn. Brian CoFrancesco, a second-year curatorial intern, tells of his experiences in working as Wilson's research assistant, and curatorial assistant Elizabeth Hicks relates her search for information about the Academical Village model created for the 1926 Philadelphia World's Fair.

In the section titled "The Builders," more than 300 names uncovered by Wilson are presented. Some are listed with the tasks they performed; others are identified as indentured servants, while still others are identified as enslaved. Beyond these designations little more is known about them, said Museum curator Andrea Douglas.

"It's our hope that readers will be encouraged to share their information so that more can be learned about these people," she said. "This area of the site allows readers to upload their images or documents."

To facilitate this sharing of information the full list of workers is downloadable.

The final section of the blog, "The Legacy," highlights locations that have adopted the Academical Village's unique architecture into their own designs. Again, there is an interactive component to this section as readers can load their own images of Academical Village clones.

The blog launches on Feb. 27, and we will continue to add posts to the blog preceding and throughout the run of the exhibition written by those closely involved in the making of the exhibition and by scholars intimately acquainted with Jefferson and his architecture.

The blog can be found at [www.virginia.edu/artmuseum/things\\_to\\_do/blogs.html](http://www.virginia.edu/artmuseum/things_to_do/blogs.html).

This is the third blog published by the curators and educators at the U.Va. Art Museum, who began blogging as a way of extending conversations begun in exhibitions and linking the Museum with its various constituents.

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