

**Thursday, April 3, 2008**

**Speaking Ruins: Piranesi and the Legacy of Ancient Rome**

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Abstract: In this talk, Ms. Stark, curator of a 2005 Piranesi exhibition at the Portland Art Museum, will explore Piranesi and his set of prints known as the Views of Rome within the context of the so-called Greco-Roman controversy. Piranesi became steeped in this heated debate over which classical culture provided the fundamental paradigm for contemporary art and architecture. With predominately French and German scholars, led by Johann Winckelmann, dismissing early Roman design as derivative of the superior Greek, Piranesi mounted a defense of Roman artistic and engineering genius with an arsenal of images of such visionary power and poetic truth that he would revolutionize the art of printmaking. Etchings in his Views of Rome suite reflect this defense.