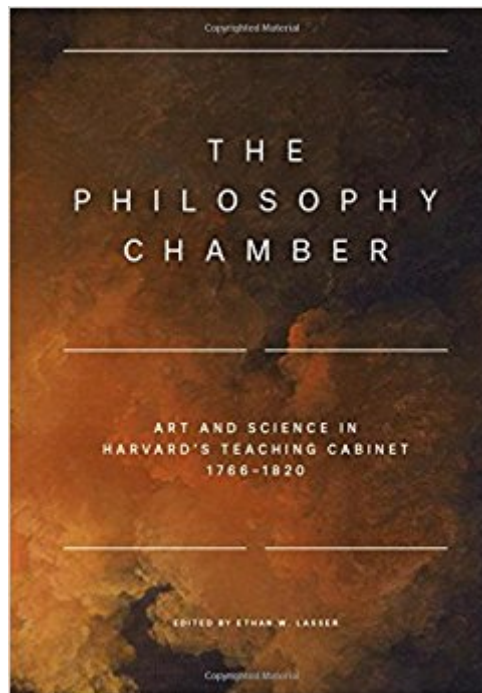




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The Philosophy Chamber: Art And Science In Harvard's Teaching Cabinet, 1766–1820



Synopsis

Harvard College's 18th-century Philosophy Chamber consisted of paintings, prints, sculptures, scientific instruments, natural specimens, and various indigenous artifacts—it was a rich and varied representation of not only artistic and cultural achievement but also contemporary understandings of the natural world. Dispersed and hidden away for nearly 200 years, this unrivaled collection has been reunited for the first time since it was originally assembled, providing an invaluable window into the art and culture of early America. It attests to the wide-ranging spirit of inquiry that characterized the late 18th and early 19th centuries. With an insightful look at conservation efforts and detailed examination of specific objects, including works by artists such as John Singleton Copley and John Trumbull, this publication explores the social and political stakes that underpinned one of the most remarkable assemblages of artifacts, images, and objects in the Atlantic World, and introduces readers to many long-forgotten icons of American culture.

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The artifacts, images, and objects that formed Harvard's 18th-century Philosophy Chamber are reunited for the first time in nearly 200 years in this fascinating, beautifully illustrated book.

Ethan W. Lasser is the Theodore E. Stebbins Jr. Curator of American Art and head of the Division of European and American Art at the Harvard Art Museums.

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