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Museum

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Museum Studies Fieldwork Seminar

Tanya Chen '25

## Exploring the Museum in Practice

Woodmere Art Museum, located in Philadelphia's Chestnut Hill, is dedicated to telling the story of Philadelphia's art and artists through exhibitions, education, and community engagement. Its mission centers on creativity, learning, and inclusion, with a strong commitment to representing diverse voices in American art. Interning at Woodmere offered me the chance to contribute to a museum deeply rooted in its local context while gaining insight into curatorial practices, education, and community outreach. The experience helped me see how museums can serve as spaces of connection and dialogue—values that align closely with my academic and professional goals.



## Projects, Challenges, and Contributions

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My internship at Woodmere focuses on writing object labels for the museum's upcoming new building. This work presented several challenges. As an archaeology major with little experience beyond ancient art, I initially found it difficult to engage with Woodmere's primarily contemporary collection. Balancing this internship with three other jobs during my final semester also made time management a real struggle. However, there were moments of genuine excitement. On the left, I have included a photo of a Chinese bronze money tree I identified in the jewelry collection—an unexpected connection to my archaeological training.



## Reflections and Future Directions

This internship has deepened my understanding of how museums communicate with the public and challenged me to bridge my background in archaeology with contemporary art interpretation.

As for Woodmere, it is in the midst of an exciting transformation, with the upcoming opening of its new building expanding both its physical footprint and curatorial vision. This growth reflects the museum's commitment to deepening its engagement with the Philadelphia community and diversifying the stories it tells. By creating new spaces for exhibitions, education, and dialogue, Woodmere is positioning itself as a more accessible, inclusive, and forward-looking institution.

www.woodmereartmuseum.com



