We are pleased to welcome you to Wonders of Nature and Artifice, a Renaissance-inspired "Chamber of Wonders" curated by students from the First Year Seminar, "Exploration of the Marvelous: Art and Science in the Renaissance" and the Art History and Interdisciplinary Studies Course "Wonders of Nature and Artifice: The Renaissance Quest for Knowledge." In the courses and exhibition, students have learned about the interdisciplinary nature of knowledge and the powerful dynamics behind scientific discovery and societal forces.

The students took as their starting point the Curiosity Cabinets and Chambers of Wonders from the days of the Renaissance. Such collections featured an astounding variety of works of nature and artifice, juxtaposed in ways we no longer see today. The bounty of famed collections like that of Ferrante Imperato or Archduke Albert of Flanders included crocodiles, marble statuettes, corals and shells, globes, exquisite paintings, monkeys, marvelous flowers, unusual clocks, birds, precious gems, skeletons and books. The Renaissance, known as a rebirth of Classical Antiquity, was also an age of global exploration, and collectors were driven by curiosity and a sense of wonder about what seemed to be an ever-expanding world.

In this same spirit, our students have brought together Gettysburg College’s own wonders of nature and artifice, some specially loaned by faculty, alumni, trustees and even the students themselves. Here, you will see an equally dynamic range of scientific specimens, odd artifacts and works of artistic ingenuity, including elaborate fossils from millions of years past, a 16th-century musical manuscript, beautifully mounted butterflies, a 17th-century Ming plate, the fearsome skull of an alligator, and an Ethiopian magical scroll with hand-painted images on goat vellum.

Bridging the gap between the Renaissance and our own time was quite a challenge, but the students rose to the occasion marvelously. Each student carried out research on an object or set of objects of their choice and took charge of displaying them in this marvelous and diverse installation. More information on their work can be found on http://wonder-cabinet.sites.gettysburg.edu/2017.

We hope you will enjoy the "wonders" of our own quest for knowledge and consider the richness of bringing together the different branches of human knowledge in the context of a liberal arts education.

This endeavor was made possible by the generosity and support of many people across campus and beyond. We would like to give special thanks to Shannon Egan, Carolyn Sauter, Mary Wootten, Sydney Gush, Molly Reynolds, Eric Ramy, Carrie Izarco, St. John Smith, B.C. Mussen, Rachel Lesser, and William O’Hara. Items were generously loaned to the exhibition from Ron Fuchs, Director of the Reeves Collection at Washington and Lee University, Bruce Stefany, Michael Hober, Charlie Emmons, Kazuo Hiratazumi, Jack Ryan, the Biology Department, the Environmental Studies Program with particular thanks to Sarah Principato, Special Collections & College Archives, Musselman Library, and the Schmucker Art Gallery, Gettysburg College. We would like to gratefully acknowledge funding from Steve Mahinka, the Johnson Center for Creative Teaching and Learning, EPACC, the Office of the Provost, the Schmucker Art Gallery, and the Art and Art History Department, Gettysburg College.

Wonders of Nature and Artifice
Curated by students under the direction of Prof. Felicia Else, Department of Art and Art History, and Prof. Kay Etheridge, Department of Biology
November 10 - December 8, 2017
RECEPTION: November 10, 4:30 - 6:30 pm
LUNCHTIME GALLERY TALKS: November 15, November 29, December 6, noon - 1 pm

Wonders of Nature and Artifice

Felicia Else, Associate Professor, Department of Art and Art History
Kay Etheridge, Professor, Biology Department

Schmucker Art Gallery
303 North Washington Street
Gettysburg, PA 17325-1885

IMAGE: Ferrante Imperato, DELL’HISTORIA NATURALE, Naples, 1599, engraving
1. Ethiopian Magic Healing Scroll (detail)
   ink on vellum
   eighteenth century
   4.875 x 78.5 in.
   On loan from Michael “Mike” Hobor ’69

2. Polished Ammonite Fossil Half
   Desmoconoceratium
   Tohub, Madagas
   Middle Cretaceous, Alian Stage, approximately 112 million years ago
   6 x 5 in.
   On loan from Professor Kazuo Hiraizumi

3. Antiphon
   ink on vellum
   sixteenth century
   14.5 x 19.75 in.
   On loan from Bruce R. Stefany ’71 and Betsy A. Stefany

4. Alligator Skull
   9 x 17 in.
   Collection of the Biology Department, Gettysburg College

5. Fish Fossil Plate
   Lycoptera davidi
   Yixian Formation, Liaoning Province, China
   Late Cretaceous, approximately 100.5 to 66 million years ago
   20.5 x 13 in.
   On loan from Professor Kazuo Hiraizumi

6. Prehnite mineral
   4 x 6.5 in.
   John J. Shank ’21 Collection, Environmental Studies, Gettysburg College

7. Chinese carved Ivory Puzzle Ball
   1800-1911
   5 in. diameter
   Special Collections and College Archives
   Munsellman Library, Gettysburg College

8. Copy of Guido Reni’s Aurora (detail)
   oil on canvas
   55 x 97 cm
   Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Jeremiah Zimmerman, Special Collections and College Archives
   Munsellman Library, Gettysburg College

9. Ming Dynasty Plate (detail)
   hard-paste porcelain
   1575-1620
   7.75 in. diameter
   Gift of Joyce P. Bishop in honor of her daughter Kimberly Bishop Connors ’92
   On loan from Reeves Collection Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Virginia

10. Quartz Crystal
    9 x 9 in.
    John J. Shank ’21 Collection, Environmental Studies, Gettysburg College