



“Making Sense of Ancient Graffiti”

A lecture by

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In the year AD 79, Mount Vesuvius erupted with devastating force, burying the nearby town of Pompeii under more than thirty feet of volcanic debris. Pompeii was effectively wiped off the map, but buried below the surface the material remains of the town were preserved in remarkable detail. While best known for its art and architecture, Pompeii also offers a colorful glimpse into the world of ancient graffiti via thousands of messages written on the walls of the city.

This talk explores this particularly widespread phenomenon occurring in the first century. Including both public advertisements and handwritten messages, these graffiti reveal an active populace, from city magistrate to humble slave, engaging in this mode of communication. What further emerges is a sense of the strong presence of writing in the ancient city, as well as clues into the social and cultural trends that inspired it.

Thursday, July 5 at 12:00 PM

Room LJ 119, Thomas Jefferson Building, Library of Congress
10 First St. S.E., Washington DC

For more information, contact the Kluge Center at (202) 707-3302. Request ASL and ADA accommodations five days in advance at 202-707-6362 or ADA@loc.gov.