

Module 1: Introduction to the Hunt Museum



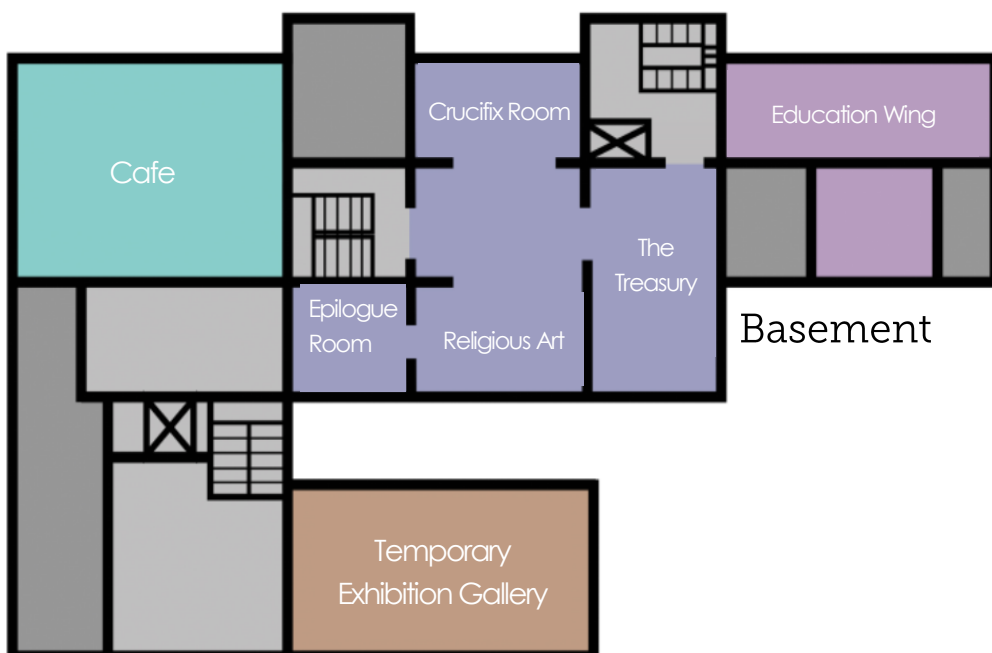
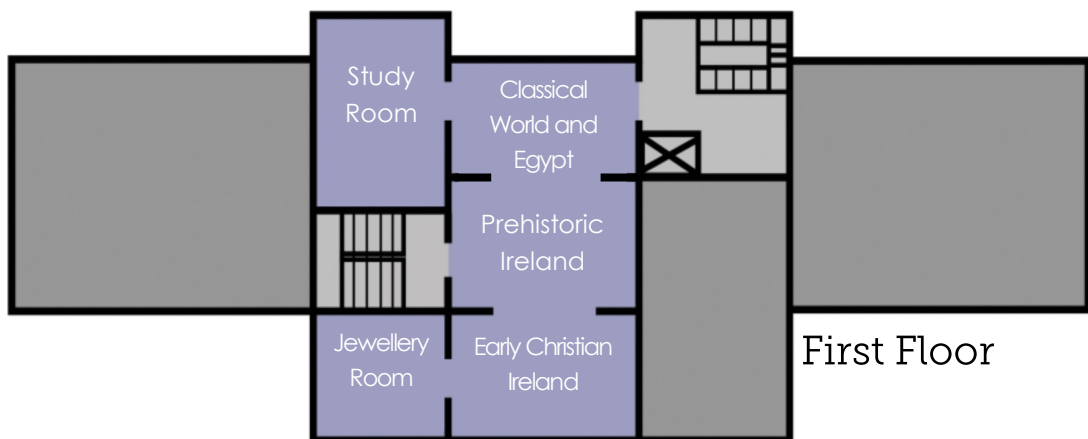
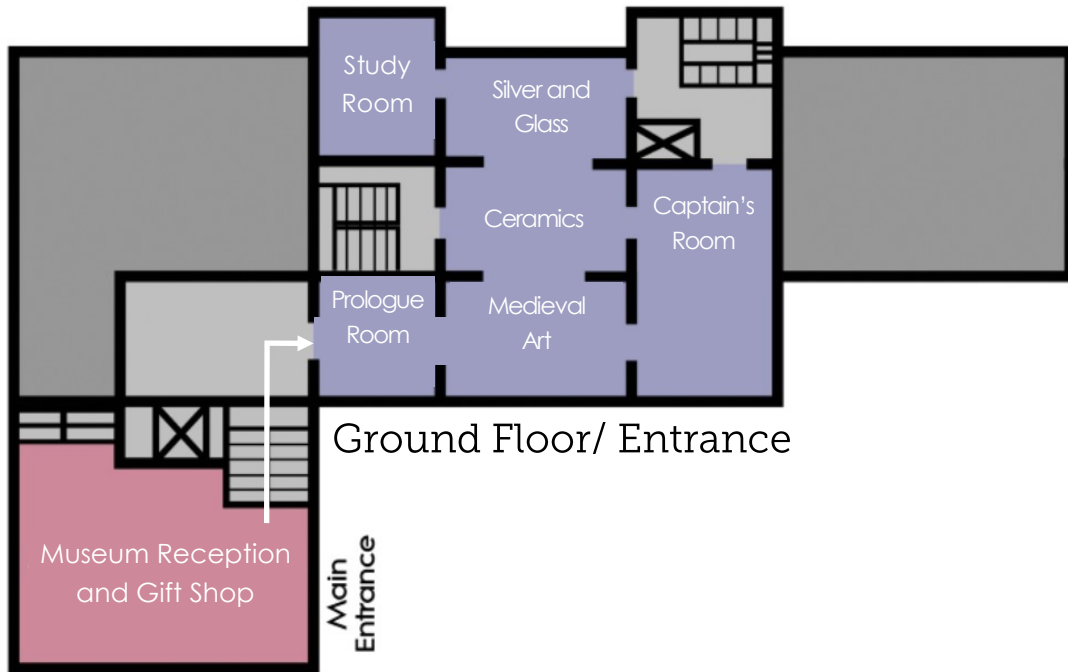
John Hunt was an archaeologist, antiquarian and collector. He and Gertrude married in 1933 and together ran a successful antique shop and dealership. Over more than 40 years they developed close relationships with museums and collectors worldwide. Both had a keen eye for craftsmanship and design and would travel across Europe to find antiquities and artworks to buy. They moved to Lough Gur, Co. Limerick in 1940 and later lived in Dublin.
Image: John and Gertrude Hunt with their children John Jr. and Trudy

In 1976, John and Gertrude donated their collection to the people of Ireland. It is comprised of 2,000 objects and the timeline below illustrates how diverse it is. The objects come from many different time-periods, cultures and countries. Explore the Collection online using our online catalogue.

Go to <https://www.huntmuseum.com/the-collection/>



On the next page is a map of the Hunt Museum. Examine it closely and try to identify where different objects are located.



Module 2: The Architecture of the Custom House

Georgian Period	The era of history from 1714 to c. 1830–37 named after the Kings George I, George II, George III and George IV.
Georgian Architecture	Describes a style of architecture which was popular between 1714 and 1830. This style was influenced by classical Greek and Roman architecture and characterised by symmetry and proportion.
Palladian Style	A form of Georgian architecture inspired by Venetian architect Andrea Palladio (1508–1580).
Neo-classical	A cultural movement that was inspired by the style and decoration of Greek and Roman art and architecture.

FACT CARD

Name: The Custom House

Address: Rutland Street, Limerick City, Ireland

Purpose: Duty or tax collecting from visiting ships importing goods.

Designed by: Davis Ducart

Built: Between 1765 - 1769

Material: Limestone

Architectural style: Palladian

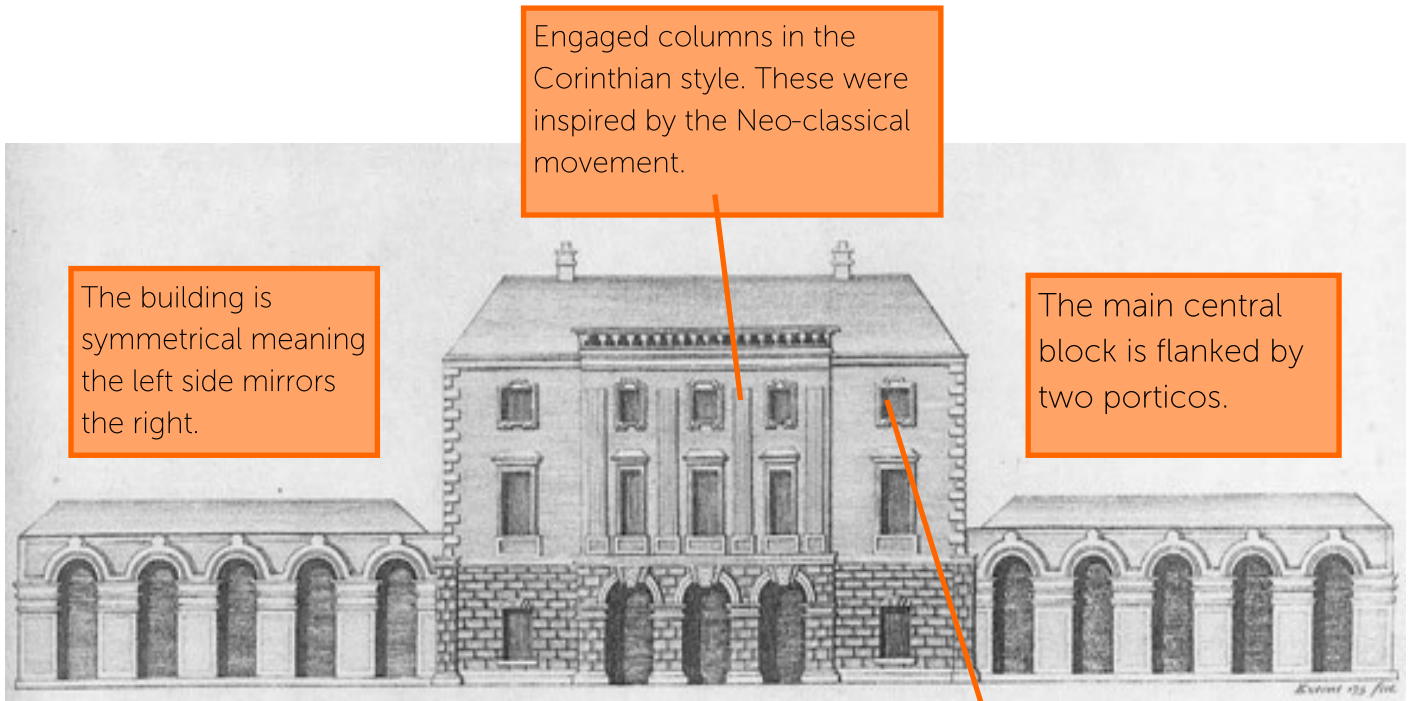
Key features: Symmetry, Proportion, Neo-classical features (inspired by Ancient Greece and Rome)

Did you know?

The Custom House was renovated in 1996 to house the Hunt Permanent Collection.

The reception, offices, temporary gallery and bathrooms were built as new additions at this time. The museum opened to the public in 1997.

Why not explore the Hunt Museum's architecture on Google Maps?



The building is symmetrical meaning the left side mirrors the right.

Engaged columns in the Corinthian style. These were inspired by the Neo-classical movement.

The main central block is flanked by two porticos.

Back view: This faces the River Shannon. The original entrance to the building was located here.

The square was considered the key to architectural beauty because of its perfect proportions.



This block was added in 1996 and includes this dramatic double door entrance.

Front view: This faces Rutland Street. It was originally the back of the building and is now the visitor entrance.

Module 3: Physical Exhibitions

Curator	Someone who devises and implements plans for exhibitions.
Exhibition	The organisation and display of a museum's collection.
Collection	The body of objects and artworks belonging to a museum or on loan to the museum that are either on display or in storage.
Collection Policy	Helps a museum decide what objects can be acquired, presented, conserved, stored and loaned.
Invigilator	An invigilator is someone who supervises an exhibition. They watch over the exhibition to ensure the objects are safe and secure and may also provide a welcome and information for visitors.

What does a curator have to think about when creating an exhibition?

Concept

The main idea or theme of the exhibition.
This is what ties the exhibition together.

Display mechanisms

Methods of displaying objects.
Examples include display cases or vitrines, hung on the wall, on plinths.

The relationship between the objects

Can help the curator decide how they are organised.
In the Hunt Museum different rooms are organised by material or chronology.

How the visitor interacts with the objects

An example from the Hunt Museum is the drawers.
Visitors can open drawers and discover objects and artworks for themselves.
Object handling is sometimes used to support learning in relation to them.

Information and labelling

Directional signage guides visitors around the exhibition and building.
Gives objects context or meaning.
Tells the visitor what they're looking at.
Important for intellectual accessibility.

Lighting

Good lighting guides a visitor around an exhibition.
It can draw the eye to a display or create atmosphere.
Can be natural or artificial

Practical considerations

Examples include the amount of space in the gallery, how much funding is available.

Safety and security

Make sure visitors and objects are kept safe from harm.

Visitors

Making sure there are no tripping hazards.
Keeping fire exits free and unblocked.

Objects

Putting alarms in display cases.
Having invigilators in rooms keeping an eye on exhibits.



On the next page are three examples of rooms from the Permanent Collection and information about the temporary gallery space. Can you compare the different displays to each other using the above points?

The Study Room

Drawers protect light sensitive objects and encourage visitor interaction with exhibits.



The Treasury

The room is designed to resemble a church or cathedral.

Atmospheric lighting means the room is dimly lit while spotlights make the gold and silver shine.

A central display case gives visitors a 360 degree view of the exhibit.



The Captains' Room

Windows are partially covered to protect artworks. These are hung on the wall away from direct light.



The Temporary Exhibition Gallery

Example of a White Cube Gallery; plain white walls were designed to minimise distractions but can also be painted any colour.

Walls and platforms of different heights can be constructed depending on the exhibition.

This is a very flexible space suitable for all kinds of exhibitions.

Module 4: Care of Collections

Conservation	The maintenance and protection of collections. It is a process that includes documentation, restoration, preventative conservation and storage.
Conservator	A specialist hired by a museum or gallery to restore an artefact or artwork as closely as possible to its original condition and protect it from future damage.
Preventative Conservation	A form of conservation that works by eliminating environmental concerns that can cause objects to deteriorate. This is completed by the Hunt Museum Collections staff. No chemicals are used.

There are many ways in which collections can become damaged. Conservators sometimes use a framework called the '[Agents of Deterioration](#).'

1. Physical forces	Sudden shocks (such as being dropped) or long term pressure (such as incorrect storage). Everyone who handles objects is trained.
2. People	This includes vandals and thieves. Therefore, cases are locked and alarmed.
3. Fire	There are fire alarms, fire exits and plans in place in case of an emergency.
4. Water	The Hunt Museum is beside the river so we always keep an eye on potential flooding risks.
5. Pollutants	Includes dust and grease. As part of preventative conservation 'housekeeping' is carried out regularly to clean objects.
6. Light	Windows have special UV filters and there are monitors in rooms and cases to measure the intensity of visible light
7. Incorrect temperature	These two often go hand-in-hand. Humidity is the moisture in the air. For example, too much moisture can cause some materials to rot and others to rust, while too high temperatures can cause paint to crack. There are checked with special monitors inside cases and rooms.
8. Incorrect relative humidity	
9. Pests	Bugs or pests such as clothes moths can cause serious damage. Organic materials like wood and paper are especially vulnerable. There are traps set around the museum that allow staff to monitor pest levels.
10. Dissociation	Dissociation occurs when not enough care is taken to record and preserve the objects and their information. Put simply: it's when we don't know what's going on with the objects anymore and can no longer connect them or tell their stories.

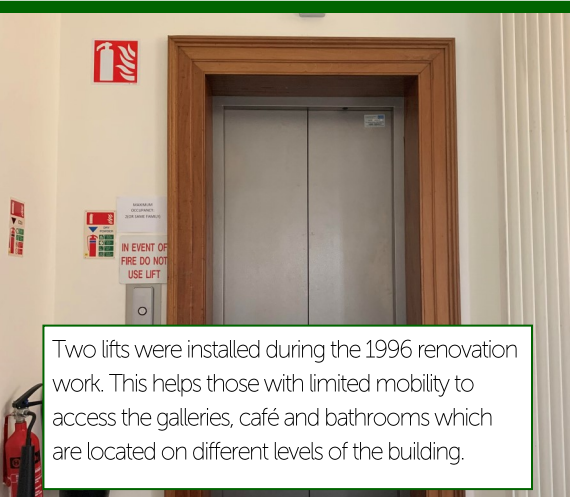
Module 5: Accessibility in the Hunt Museum

Access	The means through which visitors can enter, connect with, understand, learn about, enjoy and participate in a museum's collections and related programming. Museums constantly work to reduce social, economic and physical barriers that prevent access.
Physical Accessibility	The provision of facilities so those with limited mobility can gain entry to a museum's collections, exhibitions and events. Examples include the installation of lifts and ramps.
Intellectual Accessibility	The ease with which various groups can view/understand exhibits and the information displayed to explain or describe collections, rooms or displays. Wall signage is used to direct all visitors around the Museum. Age appropriate activity sheets are provided to help children interpret objects.

Historic buildings like the Custom House were not built with accessibility in mind. The renovations carried out in 1996 helped to make the building more physically accessible. There are also facilities in place across the exhibition to aid with intellectual accessibility.



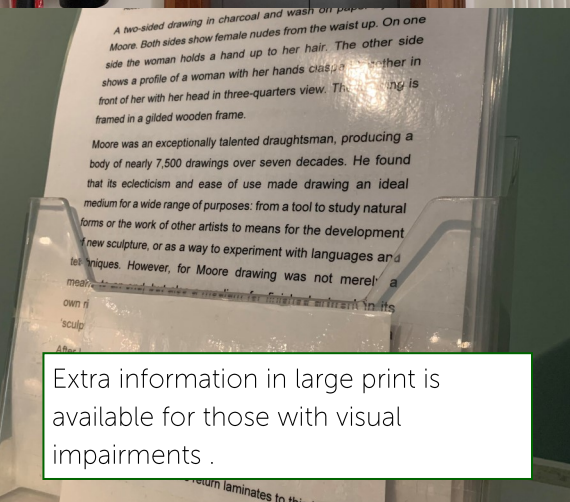
The double doors into the Captains' Room ensure the room is accessible to those in wheelchairs. However, they were originally made this way to accommodate the wide dresses ladies wore in the 18th Century!



Two lifts were installed during the 1996 renovation work. This helps those with limited mobility to access the galleries, café and bathrooms which are located on different levels of the building.



Six objects have Irish Sign Language (ISL) tours that you can access by scanning a QR code. The videos are subtitled and have a voice-over making them accessible to a wide variety of audiences both within and outside the deaf community.



Extra information in large print is available for those with visual impairments.