

## Travel and Art Appreciation Lectures

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Travel talks and slide shows featuring the speaker's photography:

### **All Over England**

The speaker will introduce her 48 minute slide show highlighting her exhausting 4 week romp around England. Set to foot-tapping music that runs the gamut from "Rule Britannia" to Elton John, you'll enjoy amazing gardens, moody British landscapes, Roman and Medieval ruins and castles, stately homes, university towns, charming villages, and just about everything else.

### **Antarctica: One Traveler's Reminiscence and Photography**

What is it like to go to Antarctica? What's there? Amy will share her experience cruising through the Antarctic Peninsula in February, 2009. Her remarks will be followed by an 18 minute DVD slide show of her photography set to music.

### **Cuba: Cars & Culture**

Cuban society has been changing since Fidel stepped down. Religion is practiced. Hints of private business and home ownership are emerging in this socialist yet stratified land "haves and have nots." Art, music dance have always been central to Cuban life, and now there are changes in these fields too. Learn about Cuba today and enjoy the "time warp" of the street scene filled with spruced up cars from days of old sporting fins and shiny chrome.

### **Cyprus & Malta: Coveted Islands, Complicated Histories**

Mediterranean islands big and small, both have been inhabited, attacked and occupied over centuries. Trade, resources, strategic position, war and religion have shaped what they were and who they are today. Visit some ancient tombs and temples, Byzantine and Baroque churches, today's streets, scenic views and natural wonders. Draw your own conclusions as to what the future may bring to these islands.

### **India: From Bengal to the Malabar Coast**

Travelers either love India or refuse to go there. Amy has visited this vast country five times and will certainly go back again. Discover the magic of the sights, sounds and (virtual) smells that make this country "Incredible India," slogan of the Indian tourist board. This is a power point presentation followed by a 15 minute DVD slide show with Bollywood tunes.

### **Madagascar: The "biodiversity hotspot"**

Madagascar is the fourth largest island in the world. Having existed in isolation for some 80 million years, it is a "biodiversity hotspot" (*Wikipedia*), home to plants and animals found nowhere else on earth. This presentation will touch on some history, customs and traditions, current issues, flora and fauna, and last but not least, lemurs of this fascinating country. A 10 minute DVD slide show follows the talk.

### **Mexico City and Surrounds: Art and Culture, Past and Present, Traditional and Modern**

Mexico City is a mecca for the performing and visual arts, from ballet to Mariachi music and ancient artifacts to monumental contemporary sculpture. From the fast paced beat of the city we will spoke out to sample different flavors in the canals, markets and street scenes of some of the surrounding cities, towns and archeological sites. Religion is a key player in the lives of many. Our talk will finish with a 10 minute video clip featuring the very traditional *Dia de los Muertos* (Day of the Dead) celebration in the city of Patzcuaro.

### **Myanmar (Burma): The Golden Land**

Find out why Myanmar is dubbed “The Golden Land.” Visit Buddhist monuments including the Shwedagon Pagoda, Bagan and Golden Rock. Explore the capitol city of Yangon, the rural countryside, lakes and beaches. Meet these friendly people and learn about some of the different ethnic tribes who populate this delightful country. A 14 minute DVD slide show is set to local music.

### **Norway: More than Vikings and Fjords**

Norway: Land of trolls, Vikings, treasures and some of the most breathtaking scenery on earth. Experience history from medieval raiders and traders to occupation and defiance during WWII. Explore art by Edvard Munch and an outdoor sculpture park showcasing the entire career of Gustav Vigeland. The presentation will conclude with a slide show is set to music ranging from Edvard Grieg to modern pop.

### **Papua New Guinea: The Last Frontier**

“PNG” is indeed a land of mystery. More than 1,000 cultures have been identified and over 800 languages are spoken. Witness the rituals and traditions of the tribal villages along the Sepik River; the *Sing-Sings* of the Highlands; and the tropical jungles of the remote Trobriand Islands, barely visited by tourists.

### **Portugal: “Where land ends and the sea begins”**

Portugal is the country of faith, *Fado* music, and great cuisine accompanied by port wine from the Douro Valley. Great wealth was amassed by seafaring traders and explorers during the Age of Exploration, leaving the country with a rich heritage of treasure and architectural marvels. Life is lived on streets bathed in sunshine and hand-paved with black and white mosaic. Look up and admire buildings sided with brightly colored tile designs. From medieval to modern, bustling cities, charming towns and rolling vineyards, Portugal has it all.

### **Realm of the Polar Bear: The Norwegian Arctic**

Take a virtual cruise around the island of Spitzbergen – or as much can be navigated given ice conditions. Walk through the landscape, encounter the wildlife and be on the lookout for the colorful flora that populates the tundra. Visit some of the few and far-between settlements whose inhabitants brave this cold and often bleak part of the world and learn about the strong-willed pioneers who jockeyed for first place and even paid with their lives to reach their destination.

### **Uganda: The Pearl of Africa**

Wildlife game safaris by truck and boat; bird watching; tracking chimpanzees in Kibale and mountain gorillas in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest all make for fascinating photography in a stunning landscape. On the cultural side, visit the Batwa Pygmies, forest dwellers who delight in sharing their way of life. Take a virtual walk through the towns and countryside of Uganda as

you meet the attractive and friendly people of this poor yet proud nation. Comments will be followed by a 31 minute slide show set to traditional and upbeat contemporary African music.

### **West Africa: Voodoo & Villages**

Visit 4 West African Countries - Ghana, Togo, Benin and Ivory Coast – to learn about some African indigenous beliefs. This world is dynamic, emotionally charged and colorful, from funerary rites and rituals to ceremonies and festivals performed to honor the spirits. Video clips Highlight drummers, singers, whirling masks and villagers living a life so different from our own.

### **Whirlwind through the Heart of Italy**

Enjoy Mendelssohn, Maria Callas, Michelangelo – and gelato – as you travel vicariously from Florence, through the hill towns of central Italy and on to Bologna. The presentation will be followed by a 34 minute slide show of the speaker’s photography highlighting scenery, art, architecture and gastronomic delights.

## **ART APPRECIATION LECTURES:**

### **The power and the Glory: Ancient Egypt**

Explore the tombs, monuments and artifacts that reveal the preoccupations and secrets of this great ancient civilization. Understand the art forms and symbolism that represented Egyptian gods, pharaohs, kings and queens to the commonplace objects used by ordinary people in their daily work and worship. The power point presentation will be followed by a 20 minute slide show set to Egyptian music of photography taken by the speaker on her second trip to Egypt.

### **Two Gems of Athens: The Parthenon & Acropolis Museum**

Crowning the Athenian Acropolis, the Parthenon is an icon symbolizing the dawn of democracy in Western Civilization. Why did the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. Athenians build such an expensive and exceptional temple? What communal significance did it have for them? After exploring the architectural elements and sculptural decoration, we will time travel over 2500 years to another engineering feat, the Acropolis Museum, which opened its doors in 2009. A virtual tour of the collection will showcase the ancient artifacts in their 21<sup>st</sup> century home.

### **Stones & Bones: The Art of Death in Ancient Greece**

What was important to the ancient Greeks when it came to dying, burial and immortality? Some answers can be found by taking close look at the choice of scenes depicted on objects and monuments from the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE.

### **French Art in Springfield (MA) and Paris**

What did French art look like before the Impressionists hit the scene? Discover 150 years of French treasures from Springfield’s Michele & Donald D’Amour Museum of Fine Arts. Comparisons will be between holdings in this fine collection and examples in Parisian museums before we “hit the streets” and enter museums in the *City of Lights* via a slide show set to catchy French tunes.

### **French Polynesia: Retracing the Journey of Artist Paul Gauguin While Making My Own**

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Paul Gauguin left France for the South Pacific in pursuit of his passion: to live and paint among “savages” in a primitive paradise, free from Western governmental and religious strictures. Who was this enigmatic artist? What did he find there? The speaker will share her search for the artist as well as her own experience visiting these magical islands.

**Your Speaker:**

**Amy S. Dane**, a native of Longmeadow, MA, suffers from a lifelong travel addiction that has brought her to over 100 countries so far. She enjoys sharing her experiences and love for art and culture by giving informative presentations about her travels and exhibiting her photography at libraries, hospitals and galleries.

Please visit her website at [www.amydaneadventures.com](http://www.amydaneadventures.com). The extensive photo gallery (items available for purchase) provides a drop box of over 50 countries to choose from. Browsers may also view photographs tagged by theme. The website also includes a wide selection of slide shows, newspaper articles, cable television shows and both past and upcoming exhibitions.

The photographer's awards include First Prize in 2015 and "Best in Show," April, 2014 at the Robert Floyd Photo Gallery, Southampton, MA in the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual "Women in History Month" juried contest/exhibition; Awards at the Friends of the Agawam Public Library Open Juried Photography Shows in 2012 (Best in Show), 2014 (2 awards) and 2016 (3 awards); second place in photography at the Monson Arts Council's 2013 art show. She was honored in June, 2013 as one of "13 Extraordinary Women" by the Women's Philanthropy of the Jewish Federation of Western Massachusetts.

Dane is a travel agent for Great Dane Travel, a Travel Companion affiliate. She is a contributing photographer to the *Longmeadow News*; a docent for the Michele and Donald D'Amour Museum of Fine Arts, Springfield, MA.; and a member of the Agawam Community Artists & Artisans, the Valley Photo Club, Springfield, MA, and the Springfield Photographic Society. She received her B.A. (Smith College) and M.A. (Williams College) in Art History. She served as Education Coordinator at the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum for 11 years.