

The Harvard Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments and the Harvard Museums of Science & Culture Present a New Online Exhibit on Sigmund Freud’s Research & Artwork

The Interpretation of Drawings: Freud & the Visual Origins of Psychoanalysis and a Free Virtual Panel Discussion Launches on Wednesday, February 17th at 12:00pm ET

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., February 17, 2021—Sigmund Freud is the influential and enigmatic founder of the psychological clinical method known as psychoanalysis. The new online exhibition *The Interpretation of Drawings: Freud & the Visual Origins of Psychoanalysis* opens a unique window into Freud’s thought processes using his rarely seen drawings and collected artwork.

The virtual visitor uses the floor plan for a country house Freud dreamed of one day inhabiting as a tool to navigate stages in Freud’s life, explore the evolution of his ideas, and watch as he develops novel approaches to understanding both mind and self. We learn about Freud “the Scientist,” the “Origins of Psychoanalysis,” the inspiration behind his major text “The Interpretation of Dreams,” and how, as “the Analyst,” Freud put his ideas into practice.

Using guided interactive tours, visitors may engage with selected images of Freud’s earliest medical drawings, scientific papers, letters, and collected works of art, to uncover fascinating details, including iterations of ideas that would be worked and reworked throughout his career.

Thoughtfully layered to create an illusion that you are in the presence of Freud’s deepest analytical thoughts, *The Interpretation of Drawings* offers new, sometimes surprising, insights into the man and mind behind some of the most debated therapeutic techniques ever developed.

This [online exhibition](#) will be presented in a [special virtual panel discussion](#) on Wednesday, February 17 at 12:00 pm ET (advance registration required) featuring noted Freud scholars, and moderated by staff from the Harvard Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments and the Department of the History of Science, Harvard University.

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About the Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments

Since its inception in 1948, various Harvard departments and private benefactors have added material to the original nucleus of the Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments, which now comprises over 20,000 objects dating from about 1400 to the present. A broad range of scientific disciplines are represented, including astronomy, navigation, horology, surveying, geology, calculating, physics, biology, medicine, psychology, electricity, and communication. Significant instruments, made obsolete by new technologies, continue to be incorporated. Many of the documents detailing the purchase and use of the instruments have been preserved and are available for research in the Collection's adjunct library.

The Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments, one of the four [Harvard Museums of Science & Culture](#), is located in the Harvard Science Center, a six-minute walk across the historic campus from Harvard Square. We are currently closed to the public. Check [here](#) for updates.

In an effort to provide greater access to these important objects and records, the Department of the History of Science has instituted the use of a new, state-of-the-art data management system, including an exciting online component called [Waywiser](#). Using Waywiser, online visitors can simply browse and discover the collection, quickly search for information about particular items, or enjoy groups of instruments pre-selected by collection curators in conjunction with special themes or exhibitions.