



Pollice Verso, Jean-Léon Gérôme, 1872. Oil on canvas. Collection of Phoenix Art Museum.

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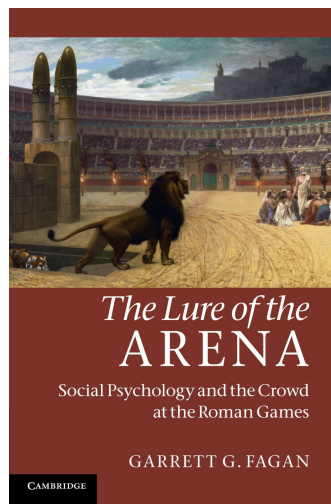
How to Stage a Bloodbath

Theatricality and Artificiality at the Roman Arena

This lecture examines an understudied aspect of Roman arena spectacles—evidence for stagecraft—and explores the reasons why the producers of games went to such lengths to theatricalize them.

Drawing on a wealth of iconographic, epigraphic, and literary evidence, **Dr. Garrett Fagan** surveys the scale and variety of stage sets, artificial scenery, and other apparatus used to enhance the spectacle. Not only were installations specifically built to accommodate sets (think of the Colosseum's famed hypogeum) but amphitheatral staff were specially dedicated to overseeing their proper deployment.

Beyond the raw wonder stagesets elicited from spectators, they more importantly played an important role in making the violence of the games palatable and acceptable: the sets—along with the overall constructed environment, the costumes of the performers, the musical accompaniment, the added attractions (acrobats, animal performers, mock fighters, prize distributions)—set the brutality into an artificial and theatrical context for the spectators, and as such played an analogous role for the way violence is similarly framed in modern entertainment.



A lecture by
Garrett Fagan

6pm
TUESDAY
May 19, 2015
SMSU 327/8/9

Smith Memorial Student Union

1825 SW Broadway
Portland, OR, 97201



Dr. Garrett Fagan is Professor of Ancient History at Penn State University. His main research interests, Roman history and archaeology, have led to the publication of two monographs: *Bathing in Public in the Roman World*, [University of Michigan Press, 1999] and *The Lure of the Arena: Social Psychology and the Crowd at the Roman Games* [Cambridge, 2011].

Dr. Fagan has edited or co-authored three other books, and has numerous scholarly articles and chapters in print. He has appeared on the History Channel and on the acclaimed PBS science series *NOVA*. He has also produced three courses with The Teaching Company on the “History of Ancient Rome,” “Emperors of Rome,” and “Great Battles of the Ancient World.”