

Welcome to Civil Discourse. This podcast will use government documents to illuminate the workings of the American Government and offer contexts around the effects of government agencies in your everyday life. Now your hosts, Nia Rodgers, Public Affairs Librarian and Dr. John Aughenbaugh, Political Science Professor.

Nia Rodgers: Hey Aughe.

John Aughenbaugh: Morning, Nia. How are you?

Nia Rodgers: I'm excellent. How are you?

John Aughenbaugh: I'm good. The spring semester has concluded. I turned in final course grades, dealt with various and sundry complaints. I've had a couple of days off so I'm good. Yes.

Nia Rodgers: The summer school starts in a little bit.

John Aughenbaugh: Just a few days. But another reason why I'm very excited this morning is, listeners, we have another guest joining our August podcast. We have Dr. Kristine Artello from the Criminal Justice Program in the Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs. She's not going to be talking to us by and large about crime or criminal justice instead, again, she's-

Nia Rodgers: Are there spoiler alert?

John Aughenbaugh: There is a little bit of that.

Nia Rodgers: There is a little bit of crime at the end of this, which is fascinating, but we'll get to that at the end.

John Aughenbaugh: But Dr. Artello is going to share with us her vast knowledge of the National Gallery of Art. This is part of our series to take a look at, if you will, various US resources, the Smithsonian, the National Parks, and today it's the National Gallery of Art. Doctor Artello, do you prefer Dr. Artello, Kristine, Kristie, which do you prefer?

Nia Rodgers: The awesome K.

Dr Kristine Artello: No not the awesome K.

John Aughenbaugh: The awesome K.

Nia Rodgers: We'll call you what you like.

John Aughenbaugh: We do go by nicknames.

Dr Kristine Artello: Kristie is fine. Thank you.

John Aughenbaugh: Kristie, we've asked other guests, if you will, your fascination, your interest in the National Gallery of Art, where did they start or when did they start?

Dr Kristine Artello: I have always enjoyed art and I was very fortunate that I have a friend who lived in DC. I would go up and one of the things that we would do is we would go to the National Gallery of Art or we go to the Portrait Gallery. Anytime I visited, we would choose one of those places and we would just go. It was a great way to spend time and we'd see what was happening, what were new exhibits that we were interested in, and we would go and then have a great lunch and enjoy our time, so yes, but I love it.

Nia Rodgers: Exhibits meaning there are permanent collections and then there are changeably-outably I know there's a better word than that, collections, like traveling exhibit type collections that don't belong to the National Art Gallery

Dr Kristine Artello: Yes. They might switch things in and out because they don't display everything that they have. They might have six or seven hoppers. Then they'll get another person who has more hoppers or more of that art from the great depression through the mid-century. They'll do a great hopper exhibit that will come in. I saw a credible photography exhibit on urban cities and it focused primarily on the development of New York City from, I want to say the '40s through the '70s, and it was fascinating to see it develop. But they have traveling exhibits but then they have decorative arts that remains and so that's always there. They have sculpture. They have a huge indoor sculpture and an outdoor sculpture garden that will have pieces that go in and out, but there are stable pieces that are always there.

John Aughenbaugh: When we speak of the National Gallery of Art, it's more than just one museum, correct?

Dr Kristine Artello: There are two buildings to it. You have the West and East building. The West building was the original one that was built and that's the one that's open, and it's located between 3rd and 9th Streets along Constitution Avenue. The East building, it's not open yet. Now understand, we're recording in late May. The West building has just opened back up again. People are able to go there but they have to go for a time to visit. They have to go online and get a ticket and they're able to go there during that timed ticket because they're still spacing people out for social distancing.

Nia Rodgers: But the tickets are free?

Dr Kristine Artello: The tickets are free.

Nia Rodgers: Because it's going to cost you \$80 billion to park in Washington. It's going to cost you \$80 billion to get to Washington but once you get there, there's a bunch of cool free stuff. We were told similarly about the zoo, that it's doing time tickets, but they're free. But the timing is more about crowd control. It's more about making sure that 8,000 people are not in the museum at one time.

Dr Kristine Artello: Exactly. I know that there are sometimes where I go in and I'm going to the French impressionists or I'm going to see the Dutch masters and it's packed. It is packed and packed with people where we're shoulder, shoulder.

Nia Rodgers: When I went to see the very little tiny postage-stamp-sized painting that is the Mona Lisa in the Louvre, I couldn't see it because I'm five foot two and we were about six people deep and I was like, "Is there a painting over there?" Finally, as people shuffled to the side I shuffled to the front and I got to see it but we were packed in that gallery. If I recall correctly the Mona Lisa is in a gallery by herself because lots of people go to see it. But I'm assuming that in the age of pandemics, there will be less. Most museums probably going forward that this may be the new norm is to get a time ticket so that the museum will know roughly how many people are in the museum at any one time.

Dr Kristine Artello: I expect that this will continue at least until next spring. I don't see this going away before next spring.

Nia Rodgers: But you said there's the outside sculpture gallery.

Dr Kristine Artello: The Sculpture Garden.

Nia Rodgers: You don't have to have a ticket for that because it's outside.

Dr Kristine Artello: You don't have to have a ticket. It's outside. The Pavilion Cafe in the Sculpture Garden is open so you can get food. You can picnic in there. In past summers, they do jazz. One of my favorite things to do is I go there and I'm listening to jazz underneath the great big spider or near the Chagall. You get to lay your little blanket out and get to listen to great jazz in there. Now, it's not listed right now, but it may so people need to watch the calendar to see if they do end up having some jazz out there.

Nia Rodgers: You make a good point there. You need to bring something to sit on.

Dr Kristine Artello: Yes.

Nia Rodgers: It's not like a stadium where they're seating or anything like that because that would ruin the appearance that I assume of a Sculpture Garden. There's a sculpture and here's a bunch of benches unless the benches were sculptures and then you wouldn't be able to sit on them. You don't need to bring a blanket or some other thing to sit on. I'm assuming that there are a few benches there for ADA compliance and for old folk to sit down or people like me who like to just sit every [inaudible]

Dr Kristine Artello: Well, there were but they took them out because of COVID. I don't know if they've been put back in yet and maybe the same thing in the museum is they've taken out the benches in the museum. They are encouraging individuals who need assistance to take first-come, first-serve wheelchairs are available. I don't recall them having motorized scooters available in the museum. Now, I will tell you the Sculpture Garden, there is uneven ground and it is not paved. You will want to be aware

of that. If you have some balance issues, that's going to be a little more difficult, but they use its wide paths and so hopefully with some walking sticks, you'd be okay to transverse that.

Nia Rodgers: Okay.

Nia: That's interesting. If you have those issues, you would probably need to call ahead or email ahead and see what arrangements can be made.

Kristine: First serve. So if you need a wheelchair, you're going to go with one of the earlier ticketed times and that is what I can do because I don't think you can reserve them. I couldn't find where you could reserve them now, maybe that changes now that we are more open there. But we'll see. The West Building is open from 11 to four and the Sculpture Garden is also open 11 to four. The West Building did have Internet. You had free Wi-Fi in the West Building when I was there last. I don't know if it's still there because the vast majority of all the places in the museum where you would eat and sit and work are now gone.

Kristine: But they maybe coming back. Well, as mask requirements are lowering, as other requirements are lowering, we're sort of in a cusp period right now of what you should really do is live on the website and see what changes because I'm assuming they announced daily changes or weekly changes or what have you.

Kristine: Yes.

Nia: As things. open up.

Kristine: Yeah, like the Garden Cafe is supposed to be reopened, and they're going to be re-envisioning how the Garden Cafe is doing business, I guess. I don't know what that means. I don't know what that will look like. That's kind of where things are at the moment. But yes, at this point, outside in the Sculpture Garden, I can't remember whether I've ever been able to get Wi-Fi and get good self-service people will use your cell phone as a hotspot, you're in shape.

Nia: So is there a mask requirements?

Kristine: Well, there used to be. Again, this may have changed with the new CDC guidelines on outdoor mask wearing?

Nia: No, I meant indoor.

Kristine: Indoor, yes. There's still a mask required indoors. We're going to have lots of mingling of different households. So you're going to want to wear a mask in there, and the National Gallery of Art brings a lot of international travelers. If we're allowing people in for travel, which I would expect that we are soon, if not already. Yeah. You're going to want to wear a mask inside.

Nia: Okay.

John: Yeah. I mean, increasingly, having a mask on your person, no matter where you go it's going to become the new norm right? Do I have my keys? Do I have my wallet? Okay, do I have my cellphone? Where's my mask?

Nia: Right. Tuck it to the pocket so that you can rip it out and put it on if you need, because they're leaving that up, I think to the businesses and institutions about what they will and won't allow. And I'm assuming that some of the institutions to lose mask requirements, the latest will be things like museums, where you stand shoulder to shoulder with strangers while you're staring at a, in my case, John Biermann at the North Carolina Museum of Fine Art. I love that painting. I love it and so do several other people. So you find yourself standing. But I noticed I was there not too long ago and there were no benches in that part of the museum because they were encouraging people to keep moving.

Kristine: Yes,.

Nia: Right there. Because a lot of people don't need benches. They sit down to contemplate the art.

Kristine: Yes.

Nia: That's nice but right now, museums are kinda of like Yes, Take a nice standing along, look at it in and move on because we've got other people you need to get in here and see the art.

Kristine: You see people sketching.

Nia: Yeah.

Kristine: The arts, you'll see individuals who are looking at it and trying to reproduce it, which I find very interesting.

Nia: I find it interesting if they were making forgeries because that would be awesome.

John: Yeah. I wanted to follow up with that. So Kristine you said you find that interesting. Why do you find that interesting?

Kristine: Because if you look at art, his history, as well as how we change, how we end up perceiving reality, how we end up perceiving history. For example, if you are looking at the art of the Middle Ages and they're depicting Mary. Mary's usually depicted as a Caucasian woman.

Nia: Wearing Italian renaissance dresses, which.

Kristine: Exactly.

John: And looking very chaste.

Nia: Its possible, but it's unlikely that she was wearing Italian Renaissance clothing in the middle ages in the Nazareth. I'm just saying, it's unlikely.

Kristine: In Jerusalem and in Galilee where she was living.

Nia: She would looked like a freak and people would've probably burned her at the stake as a witch.

Kristine: Exactly. You also get this change in dimension if you're looking at how art develops and in the Renaissance where you get more depth than you get.

Nia: Perspective.

Kristine: Perspective, all of that. So that's wonderful. Color development.

John: Yeah,

Kristine: Over time, which I always find fascinating. My favorite ERA is usually the impressionists. I love the impressionists and the fringe school. I loved architecture. So I love the decorative arts, all of those sculpture.

Nia: Well, and it is funny that you mentioned architecture because I think people miss that in paintings a lot. That people are often in front of buildings, right? There in front of buildings that are generally speaking known to the painter?

Kristine: Yes.

Nia: Right? Because the building's not the important part, the person in the painting is the important part. So you just paint what's behind them. Well, that kind of gives you an idea of what the popular artwork was like. Then just to wax poetic for a moment, I don't know if there are any Holbein in the National Art Galleries. But when you look at the lace in a Holbein painting, you can see how it's made. Like it's detailed enough. That a Tatter can look at that and say, Oh, I could reproduce that pattern because I can see how it's made. That to me is amazing and that's a really cool thing about art that is sort of those little pieces that I agree with you bring history to life. But see, I struggled with art because I struggle with the concept of I'm going to take a big white piece of canvas and then I'm going to paint a yellow square on it, and I'm gonna call it art. I'm like yes but I could do that. Is that really art if I can do that. That's one of the things I like about art is that it's so subjective in that sense of what people like and what they don't like.

John: Yeah I see your point there. Nia because one of my favorite paintings and Kristine earlier mentioned. Hopper, right? In one of my favorite paintings, Night Hawks by Hopper,.

Nia: Which is the diner, right? That's the one with the diner?

John: Yes. Okay. You have the counter person, you have the couple and then you have this lone figure sitting by himself. Now the original, for most years is in the Chicago Institute. I've been there a number of times. I've drawn people with me. Usually when we go to the Midwest Political Science Annual Meetings and they will look at it and like what that's depressing, right? Okay. That's just utterly depressing. Okay.

Nia: When I first saw this, is that guy a serial killer? Is he going to kill that couple? Is he going to kill the guy behind the counter. Like I make up a whole different story.

Kristine: I love Hopper for that with his realism of it in when you are contrasting that with what came right before, which were the impressionists. The impressionists were trying to escape realism because of everything horrible going around them at the time World War one was happening. All of that and if you think about that.

Nia: Hopper was like no, no, this is what world really looks like.

John: When impressionists, we're using these bright vibrant colors, right? Look how beautiful this is and Hopper is like, okay, this is modern world, okay. Late at night, lowly people, dark color.

Nia: How many shades of brown can I make for this painting?

Kristine: But he's also showing the disconnectedness.

John: Of modern world.

Kristine: Yes urban world, and all of that happening. I find that yes fascinating.

Nia: I love that you too love it, and I'm like, I'm pretty sure that guy is a serial killer and I'm pretty sure everybody in that cafe is going to die, right? Like that's the beauty of art because I stood in front of a Humongous Pollock one time with a person who loves Pollock and she was like, see the movement of the power in the venture I'm like, I see splotches on a canvas. I'm pretty sure that this is what's left over when you make a painting. She totally thought I was a haven and I am a haven, right? Because I'm a Pollock haven in the sense that I don't really get it. But other people who love Pollock, loved Pollock.

John: Yeah, a couple of months ago I went ahead and compared what happens in the bathroom sink when my daughter brushes her teeth to a Pollock painting. Okay.

Speaker 1: I just got absolutely roasted on social media and then all of these Pollock lovers were just like, "How dare you make such a comparison?"

Speaker 2: I was in Paris in 2018 and I went to [inaudible]. I didn't go to the Louvre because it was too crowded. [inaudible] is not as crowded, but it also had Monet's work, and it was designed for Monet's paintings around the room so it's an infinity symbol, anyways it was beautiful. But in part of that exhibit that they did was they showed the development and the influence of the impressionists through time

downstairs and at the end was a Pollock and I'm like, "I now get it. I now get where he was coming from," which I was a much deeper appreciation that I didn't have before and how he developed and how he was influenced with that, which is another thing that's fascinating with art. Art also influences policy. Thomas Moran's paintings of the West, which if you've never seen his full room paintings, you really should because it is an experience. But those influenced the passages of the national park legislation.

Nia: We should save this because it's beautiful and majestic.

Speaker 2: It needs to be seen by every American.

Nia: I put to you that for listeners who don't regularly go to art museums, you're going to find something that you fall in love with. You're going to walk through five or six rooms of stuff you don't care about, which is fine because that moment is different for every person. You're going to turn a corner, you're going to see something, painting, sculpture, something and you're going to go and it's going to speak to you in a way that nothing else has and you're going to say, "That is amazing, that thing is amazing that I'm looking at."

Speaker 1: To your point Nia, the first time I saw Bosch's The Garden of Earthly Delights, at that point, all of my Catholic religious education made sense.

Speaker 2: Yes.

Nia: This is what the nuns were talking about for 12 years.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Nia: I get you.

Speaker 1: But until I wandered into that room, I had never heard of Hieronymus Bosch. But when I saw the painting, I was just like, "Now that makes sense." Twelve plus years of Catholic education, all of a sudden, wow.

Speaker 2: That light bulb moment and sometimes who does that? [inaudible] light bulb moment.

Speaker 1: On the other hand, I can stare at an Andy Warhol until I'm blue in the face and it doesn't make any sense to me whatsoever. I was just like, "A whole bunch of Campbell Soup cans? I got post-traumatic stress from all of those lunches where my mom went ahead and opened up Campbell Soup cans and I was just like, "Really Campbell Soup again? Really? This is "Art." Seriously?"

Nia: That's the thing, which brings me to what I was hoping you would touch on next, which is curation. This idea of retaining art and protecting it and curating it into collections so that future generations can see it. What made me think of it was, so when I was in the Louvre and we had passed by finally the Mona Lisa, which is I think the reason most people go to the Louvre. We were on our way to a different

gallery to see, there's a painting of Napoleon crowning himself Emperor, which is pretty awesome. You're like, "I'll take that." Well, I guess if you're Napoleon, you will take that. Which is kind of [inaudible].

Speaker 1: Just as an aside, as long-term listeners well know, Nia would like to have that moment in her life.

Nia: I make myself president, I make myself the director of the Space Force, I am Napoleon. Because with the height, I would grab that thing and put it on my head and be like, "That's it, I'm it. It's me."

Speaker 1: Nia, please forgive the interruption. So you're wandering in.

Nia: I'm wandering past that. Actually, there's a copy of that painting. The artist did two copies, he did one that's in the Louvre and he did one that's out at, the Palace, Versailles. The difference is the colors of the ladies in waiting's dresses. Because he was sleeping with one of the ladies in waiting and she didn't like the original color, which was blue, and she wanted to see herself in pink so he repainted it and the one that's out where she saw it all the time in Versailles is in pink. He totally did it to bag a chick. I love that, but I also love that they kept both of those paintings. France knew that it was important to curate and keep both copies of that painting because they also have slightly different figures in them. In one of the figures, Napoleon's mother is in it and one she is not. She was dead at the time, she was not at the coronation but she gets painted in because Napoleon's like, "You know what? I'd really like my mom to be there." When you're a crazy Emperor Napoleon, your mom gets to come back from the dead and be at your coronation because that's how that works. That's how that patronage thing works with, "Paint me a thing and make it this, and make this color and do this." Paintings were done that way because in history, people didn't just make art, they made art for money. They were paid to make art and so we curate these collections. Is this collection wide-ranging in the sense of it's got a little bit of everything, or is it?

Speaker 2: The gallery covers from about the 12th to the 20th Century and I assume it's going to be 21st century as well. Also, it's very extensive for European and American paintings, sculpture, decorative arts, graphic works and there's a wonderful program for the renaissance painters, the Dutch masters from the late 1600s through the 1700s, which is fabulous. They have a Vermeer that's just beautiful, the girl with the red hat, it's gorgeous to go there and see it. Yes, they also have some Rocha CO as well, so it's wonderful. But then their American collection from the 17th through the 20th century is also top-notch.

Nia: So it's got a big variety?

Nia Rodgers: The other thing as a side note, by the way, when I was in the Louvre. I just want to say this because I'm bitter and I want France to hear me say it. France, if you're listening, there was a Roman mosaic, it was on the floor, it had been picked up from wherever France stole it from. Because frankly, a huge amount of the art in western museums that is Egyptian, and Greek, and Roman was either taken or sold and put into museums. That's why the British Museum, there's almost nothing in it that's actually British. It's all stuff that came from other places. But anyway, I was there and I saw a mosaic and I went. This is back when I had long hair, I laid down on the floor so I could draw a fish in a corner of the mosaic,

and my hair fell onto the mosaic. You would have thought that I had taken a pickaxe and started chopping it up. The guard had a cow, started yelling at me in French about pulling my hair, getting my hair off it, getting my hair off the floor. I was like, millions of Romans walked across this floor, dragged their carts, dragged their animals, and you're worried about the oil from my hair, except no, really they are.

Kristine Artella: They are. Yes.

Nia Rodgers: That's why you don't touch stuff in a museum. That's why you don't touch sculpture and mosaics and all that stuff because they really do get destroyed.

Kristine Artella: They lose their details. You might have a ceramic that is three-dimensional, but if everyone's touching it, that three-dimension's going to go down to two really quick and you're going to lose that. If you're in Egypt, I went to Egypt in 2019, and you're going to the pyramids, well, the paint's underneath there, but it's underneath all the sand and that. But if everyone is touching and doing that, you're going to destroy those wonderful apices that have stood for a few thousand eons, years.

Nia Rodgers: Well, then there won't be anything left for future generations.

Kristine Artella: We won't know where we came from.

Nia Rodgers: I want to ask you what might end up being a controversial question, which is, let us get to a little bit of the crime involved in the funding of the National Art Gallery. Now, if I'm correct.

John Aughenbaugh: You can actually ask a rather innocent question here, right Nia? You can basically go ahead and say.

Nia Rodgers: I think that it was really generous of Mr. Mellon to decide.

John Aughenbaugh: It doesn't even have to be loaded. All you have to go ahead and say is, "So Kristy, how did we end up with the National Gallery of Art?"

Nia Rodgers: Aughe lays better traps than I do. Clearly, when we go hunting, I need to take Aughe because I'm like, "Here, deer, deer, deer, deer" and Aughe is like, "I'm laying a trap."

Kristine Artella: Yes. Well, couple parts to it. First, we need to understand that the National Gallery of Art is actually a private-public partnership. The public partnership is the government pays for the maintenance of the building and staff salaries. The private part comes from the art and the exhibits that come around. People might donate the art or they might loan it to a museum. The reason a person might loan it to a museum is if I loan my beautiful.

John Aughenbaugh: Renoir.

Kristine Artella: Luncheon at the boating is because it will go up in value if it's at the National Gallery of Art, and then I can sell it for more.

Nia Rodgers: Wait, can I ask a question? If I am wealthy enough to loan a piece of art, which will by the way never happen. But if I were, does the museum insure it while it's in their collection, or do both people carry insurance on it? How do we know?

Kristine Artella: I would have both people carry it.

John Aughenbaugh: Both typically do. If you are the rich person who is loaning the piece of art, as Kristy pointed out, if you loan it to a really reputable gallery, its value will go up. But the other thing is, for tax purposes, you get to go ahead and write off. For the number of years you have loaned it, you get to write off the value of it as a percentage on your taxes.

Nia Rodgers: It's not hanging over your.

John Aughenbaugh: Your fireplace, instead somebody else is accruing, if you will, benefits. According to our tax code, and there is a formula, the IRS has set up a formula. Of course, the IRS has set up a formula.

Nia Rodgers: Of, course they have. There's a formula for that. There's an app for that.

John Aughenbaugh: That's why rich people are like, "Fine, in two years, or this spring, I will let the National Gallery of Art show my."

Nia Rodgers: Faberge eggs. If I ever steal art, that's the art it will be. If Faberge eggs ever go missing.

Kristine Artella: We need to look underneath your mattress.

Nia Rodgers: You should come to me first because it might have been me, and if not me, then I'm going to do my best to try to get the person who has them to sell them to me because I love Faberge eggs.

John Aughenbaugh: Local police.

Nia Rodgers: Take note.

John Aughenbaugh: Take note. We will put on the resource guide Nia's apartment address. It's a public-private partnership.

Nia Rodgers: The government pays for the upkeep basically, but not the art. They're not buying the art?

Kristine Artella: That's right. They're not buying the art. Then they also take private donations for special exhibits and to bring special exhibits in.

Nia Rodgers: Money as well as art. They'll take, "We'd like you to bring in this traveling exhibit and it's going to cost \$500,000. Here's a check because I'm a rich guy and I want to sponsor it."

Kristine Artella: Yes. But there are levels of membership that you can become a member of the National Gallery of Art. That membership comes with your ability to download images so it could be your new background. I could have my background be a Renoir or a Baiga.

Nia Rodgers: Because they own the image.

Kristine Artella: Because they own the image.

Nia Rodgers: They own the copyright to the image, so you're paying to get the copyright.

Kristine Artella: You also get 10 percent off in the gift shop, which I'll tell you, I love gift shops. There is no museum gift shop that I do not love.

Nia Rodgers: I'm with you on that.

John Aughenbaugh: Kristy, you're preaching to the choir of Nia right now. On previous podcast episodes, Nia has waxed on about how much she appreciates gift shops.

Nia Rodgers: Hey, the gift shop allows you to buy a postcard. I can never take as good a picture of something as the guy who took the picture for the postcard because he's a professional, he has the best lighting, there's not a schmuck standing in front of him or walking between him and the painting at the moment that you get a picture. There's none of that, so you get really good crisp images on their postcards and then mail to yourself and now you have a lovely memory.

John Aughenbaugh: Even better.

Nia Rodgers: I'm just saying, I've never passed a pair of earrings that I couldn't stop and look at because very pretty.

John Aughenbaugh: Kristy.

John Aughenbaugh: How long have we had this National Gallery of Art?

Kristine Artello: I believe construction started in 1937. I think it was completed 1940, 1941.

John Aughenbaugh: Oh yeah, okay.

Kristine Artello: Forty one.

John Aughenbaugh: Yeah.

Kristine Artello: Yes, and it came about because Andrew Mellon thought it was a good idea for us to also have a National Gallery of Art like the British Museum overseas. Many of the overseas are going to be run by the government. We're one of the few that has these private, public partnerships. Like most of the fine art museums across the country, are private and public partnerships to help them be viable, and which is why we have some really wonderful local museums around.

Nia Rodgers: Is that because the number of visitors is just not high enough to run it.

Kristine Artello: As a purely private?

Nia Rodgers: Right? Or as a purely public?

Kristine Artello: Yes.

Nia Rodgers: It probably wouldn't sustain itself or you'd have to charge people?

Kristine Artello: Right now, the British Museum is having a real problem because they don't have enough visitors. They depend on the visitors and having that volume. They buy in the gift shop, they're buying in the cafes. They're having all of that foot track and they don't have any of it right now.

Nia Rodgers: Okay.

Kristine Artello: They are really hurting. Our museum seemed to be weathering it a little bit better.

John Aughenbaugh: This goes back to the age old question of to what extent should government be involved in the development of art? Here in the United States, at least historically, we have a decidedly more, if you will, private or commercial emphasis, than you see in other western democracies. I'll just go ahead and give you an example because I have visited the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, Russia. The Russians view their Hermitage as a national treasure. The idea that the private sector would be responsible for running it or owning it would be heresy. It's like the Louvre in France.

Nia Rodgers: It's a French institution.

John Aughenbaugh: Yeah. But here in the United States, our relationship with art is somewhat different than what you see in other democracies.

Nia Rodgers: It's a little bit fraud isn't it? Because in the 30 's we did try to keep artists alive through the WPA and let's pay people to paint, to sculpt or whatever, because it's important to have that.

Kristine Artello: You had beautiful public buildings going up.

Nia Rodgers: Usually they get neglected as well where they're like yes, the arts take care of themselves, but they don't, and so we should.

Kristine Artello: When it comes to this, they'd have a special art fund, like Richmond has a public art fund for this.

Nia Rodgers: All right.

John Aughenbaugh: Those are controversial.

Kristine Artello: They are very controversial.

John Aughenbaugh: Because when you are in a recession or depression, many people in those cities will go in and argue, why are we funding the arts, when we have people who are poor, don't have housing, don't have food to eat, clothes on their back, et cetera. Again, that's where the public policy element comes into play.

Nia Rodgers: Well, and thinking beyond the moment, thinking beyond what's happening now to what's going to be happening in 40 years, and wanting to preserve the art of your time.

John Aughenbaugh: Andrew Mellon who had the where with all to go ahead and say, "Okay, a prominent country of the world should have a National Gallery of Art."

Kristine Artello: Yes.

John Aughenbaugh: But it wasn't that simple, was it Kristine?

Kristine Artello: No. It was not that simple or that altruistic. Now, Andrew Mellon interesting.

Nia Rodgers: Andrew Mellon of Carnegie Mellon?

Kristine Artello: Yes.

John Aughenbaugh: Yes.

Nia Rodgers: Carnegie University. He is the other, because there's Carnegie and then there is Mellon.

Kristine Artello: Mellon Bank, he also I believe there was still Alcoa. Also is part of his dynasty.

John Aughenbaugh: Yeah, listeners, Andrew Mellon is what we refer to in the history of the United States as a robber baron. Andrew Mellon was part of a family, as Kristine just pointed out, who made huge amounts of money in banking, steel, et cetera. His "Empire" was rooted for the most part, in Western Pennsylvania. As a Pennsylvania native, like myself, we learned of Andrew Mellon early and often in our schooling. As Nia just pointed out, if you spend anytime in Western Pennsylvania, it's pretty hard not to even today, come into contact with institutions that were not created by, bequeath by the huge fortune that the Mellon family, if you will.

Kristine Artello: Over generation.

John Aughenbaugh: Yeah.

Nia Rodgers: Even though Jefferson was not a robber baron, lots of things in Virginia have similar ties in the sense that they were funded by Jefferson or they were started by Jefferson. That in and of itself is not necessarily a bad thing. Jefferson founded a university because he was like, "Virginia needs a university," so he went and founded one. That by itself is not a bad thing, but the robber baron part that you get into his the questionable tactics that are used to make money.

Kristine Artello: He cornered an entire industry from top to bottom. That's what we call them. It's why we had the anti-trust develop.

Nia Rodgers: Okay.

John Aughenbaugh: Yeah. Long-standing listeners when Nia and I spoke of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, this was a federal law passed in the late 1800s that was designed to target individuals like Andrew Mellon, John Rockefeller at all. Andrew Mellon is fascinating in regards to the creation of the National Gallery of Art, because this was something that he wanted, but how it came about.

Kristine Artello: That's a little bit of shade on it.

John Aughenbaugh: I love the understatement of the podcast.

Kristine Artello: That'd be diplomatic.

John Aughenbaugh: Just a little bit of shade.

Nia Rodgers: Okay, Kristie, so what was his shade?

Kristine Artello: First, just Andrew Mellon ended up serving in three different TOP presidents cabinets in some way. In fact, he was the Secretary of Treasury during the 1920s. There are many who say that his policies coming out of the treasury really ended up increasing exponentially the scope of the Great Depression.

Nia Rodgers: Also he's part of how, it was a free for all with the stock market. Sure, it's only going to go up and you're only going to make money. His promises drove some of that.

Kristine Artello: Drove some of that. He also, some say, used his power to target individuals for prosecution and investigation. In particular, these individuals who were his competitors while he was Secretary of Treasury.

Nia Rodgers: Well, what's the use of having power if you can't abuse it to ruin your enemies.

Kristine Artello: Well, exactly when you still have a stake in the company that they're competing against. Why in the world, wouldn't you abuse this while you're still invested so that you can get the full benefit.

Nia Rodgers: Oh, okay. He didn't do that thing that you're supposed to do where you put your stuff in a trust and you can do that.

Kristine Artello: No, at that mine, many people, didn't do that.

Nia Rodgers: Okay.

Kristine Artello: Understand that really really was something that I believe developed with Roosevelt and Roosevelt coming in. We're going No, no, no, we're putting all our stuff in the trust because you had several big corruption scandals through from Harding and Hoover in particular.

John Aughenbaugh: Yeah.

Nia Rodgers: The temptation, I admit would be there even for one as virtuous as I'm, which by the way, we know right from Christie's cackle is not true. I would use power terribly, which is why nobody should ever put me in a position of it. He uses the Secretary of Treasury just to trash his enemies. That cannot have gone well. What people forget is you're not going to be in power forever unless you're Vladimir Putin. At some point your enemies are going to get a shot at you.

John Aughenbaugh: Well, it's a combination here. As Christie pointed out, not only did he target many of his enemies as Secretary of Treasury, but, by the time we get to the Hoover administration and the stock market crashes, Hoover was not the only person within his administration that basically argued that the government should not intervene in the economy. That's the market would correct itself. Andrew Mellon in particular, was vehemently opposed to the federal governments spending money to, if you will, generate economic activity, because that would go against the primary tenet of laissez faire economics, which conservatives believed in in the late 1800s through the early part of the 1900s.

Nia Rodgers: He was wrong with a big capital roar.

John Aughenbaugh: Then you get the election of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Kristine Artello: Yes.

John Aughenbaugh: Roosevelt comes into office, correct me if I'm wrong, Christie, almost immediately Roosevelt was this like, not only were the policies bad, but the way he used his office and the way he's conducted his own personal private financial dealings were criminal.

Kristine Artello: Yes.

John Aughenbaugh: This is where it gets really controversial. Again, things in American politics up today, in many situations are not brand new. Yeah, We had an incoming presidential administration, the

Roosevelt administration, that went ahead and said, we're going to target people from the outgoing Republican presidential administration for criminal wrongdoing. In their big target was Andrew Mellon.

Kristine Artello: Well, they had other targets as well.

John Aughenbaugh: For sure.

Kristine Artello: Not just him, but Andrew Mellon was a particular one that they went after and they went after using the DOJ and using for tax fraud.

Nia Rodgers: How did that get him to us to giving us the National Art Gallery.

Kristine Artello: The criminal case against him, I believe was him dodging his tax liability using his art collection.

John Aughenbaugh: Yeah.

Nia Rodgers: Okay. I don't have to pay as much tax, all I've got is this art and art is subjective.

Kristine Artello: Art works so much.

Nia Rodgers: Okay.

John Aughenbaugh: Again, remember what I described a few moments ago. Mellon, like many patrons of the art. Would collect artwork and then loan it to galleries.

Nia Rodgers: Okay.

John Aughenbaugh: Because of the way the tax code is written, would be able to significantly reduce their federal tax liability, because of the value of the art that they would loan.

Nia Rodgers: What do you mean you're a cause a billionaire and you only owe \$36 in taxes, how is that possible? Because everything I own is loaned out for.

John Aughenbaugh: Part of the criminal indictment was Andrew Mellon actually went years without paying any income tax.

Nia Rodgers: Hey, if you write the tax system in a way that allows me a giant loophole, you should expect me to walk through it. That's why the tax code should be everybody pays 12 percent. End of story.

John Aughenbaugh: By the way.

Nia Rodgers: One line, one sentence. There's no drama. I know it's not progressive, I know it's terrible, I know it would be an awful.

John Aughenbaugh: But the listeners also remember he was the Secretary of the Treasury.

Kristine Artello: Yes, exactly. If someone has a hand in how tax policy ends up being implemented by the IRS, let me think, who might that be?

Nia Rodgers: I put to you people what is the use of power if you cannot abuse it? Hello. I'm kidding. We would hope that public servants would not do this. He basically manipulated his position in multiple ways to benefit himself, both financially and in the sense of being able to stomp upon his enemies with great joy and fun. Then the Roosevelt was like, "You know what? I'm feeling like you need to be punished for that.

John Aughenbaugh: But Christie, correct me if I'm wrong. The Roosevelt administration was never able to bring a criminal indictment against him.

Kristine Artello: No, the grand jury voted against it. They tried to indict him but indictment did not go through, so it was a no bill from the grand jury.

John Aughenbaugh: Okay. But there ended up being a civil case, correct?

Kristine Artello: Fourteen months civil trial against him in Pittsburgh, 14 months. God, I would hate to have gotten that legal bill.

Nia Rodgers: I would hate to be a majority for that?

John Aughenbaugh: Yeah, that's what I was thinking.

Kristine Artello: No this is a stifle case. They're probably just in front of the tax board.

Nia Rodgers: Oh, okay.

Kristine Artello: Not.

Nia Rodgers: Okay. But you have to feel some sympathy for those people. Really. We got to go through another page of this. Because I guess what they were doing was coming through the records to see what was legitimate and what was not legitimate.

Kristine Artello: I would imagine, I didn't quit lift this up but you're going to have testimony about the value of the art. Where was it hung, how much did he pay for it, how much was the cost?

Nia Rodgers: Did he give the, sorry.

John Aughenbaugh: The reason why I became familiar with the civil case is that the civil case was brought by the Tax Division of the Department of Justice, and it was brought by a little known attorney in that department of that division of the Justice Department, Robert Jackson. Because I've done a whole bunch of reading and research about an individual who ended up serving on the Supreme Court. Yeah, because Robert Jackson before he began to work for the Department of Justice, he was a little known attorney in upstate New York. He was known to Roosevelt because they were both democrats in the state of New York and Robert Jackson was unusual. He was a Democrat in upstate New York, right?

Kristine Artello: Yeah.

John Aughenbaugh: Which at that time, and even today is somewhat unusual. FDR reaches out to Jackson to reward him for all these years of support, ie, patronage. Jackson, instead of taking a prominent position in the Roosevelt administration, says, "I want to go work in the Tax Division." He goes to work in the Tax Division and the Roosevelt administration tries to get a criminal indictment against Mellon. But the grand jury no bills, Andrew Mellon and Robert Jackson said, "But we can bring a civil case."

Nia Rodgers: Taxes will get you every time. Ask Al Capone. The tax mess, if they just paid their taxes.

John Aughenbaugh: You can talk about this in regards to Donald Trump. Of all the stuff that he's been accused of doing.

Nia Rodgers: The fate going to bring him down.

John Aughenbaugh: Bring him down more than likely is going to be.

Nia Rodgers: Tax fraud.

John Aughenbaugh: Taxes.

Kristine Artello: It's going to hurt him the most because there's going to be money out of his pocket or out of somewhere.

Nia Rodgers: Right, but I mean, Capone murdered how many people and what they got him on his tax fraud. You can literally get away with murder if you just did your taxes properly. I'm just saying spend the money, go to H&R Block, do it right, and then you can pretty much do whatever you want.

John Aughenbaugh: Let's be very clear listeners.

Nia Rodgers: Yeah, no, I'm not encouraging

John Aughenbaugh: Okay, Nia, myself, Kristie are not advocating murder.

Nia Rodgers: Right.

John Aughenbaugh: Nevertheless, historically, some of our biggest criminals have been brought down simply because they wanted to avoid paying their freaking taxes.

Nia Rodgers: Dude, what are you doing? It sounds to me like with Mellon, did he just say, "Hey, turns out I've got this art collection. Turns out you want my money. How about we make us a trade here? I'll give you my art collection, you leave me alone." Is that how that worked?

John Aughenbaugh: Basically, that was the deal that was brokered by Robert Jackson and Mellon's attorneys. Andrew Mellon agreed to pay a whole bunch in back taxes. Andrew Mellon also agreed to pay for the construction of the National Art Gallery and made permanent donations of a significant part of his art collection. By the way, it was a significant art collection. Andrew Mellon had spent a whole bunch of his personal money buying art from the Russians, from the Hermitage.

Kristine Artello: Following the Revolution because the Bolsheviks needed money. The Soviets needed money.

Nia Rodgers: Hey, revolutions are expensive. When I throw mine, I'm going to need a lot of money. I'm just saying. I'm going to have like a donation drive beforehand.

John Aughenbaugh: Another political lesson from today's podcast episode.

Nia Rodgers: You need a GoFundMe for your revolution because they are not inexpensive and clearly they will cost you your art collection.

John Aughenbaugh: But, Kristine, correct me if I'm wrong, according to President Roosevelt, until he died.

Kristine Artello: That the public voice was, "Yeah, you can donate this, but we're still going to prosecute you." That was the public voice. Yeah, we'll take your art, and we're going to take your money, and you're going to build this for us, yeah, but we're still going to prosecute you or we're still continue the civil case.

Nia Rodgers: They found him guilty.

John Aughenbaugh: There was never a verdict or an outcome.

Nia Rodgers: How is that possible?

John Aughenbaugh: Well, they never went to a judge and said, "We have an agreement, please issue a consent decree."

Nia Rodgers: They just after 14 months were like, "All right, see you all." and they all went home?

John Aughenbaugh: Well, as far as Mellon was concerned, the federal government never conclusively demonstrated that he violated the tax code.

Nia Rodgers: This is one of those fine line things where when you have to check the box that says, "Have you ever been convicted of a crime?" you can check "No."

Kristine Artello: Well, it wasn't a crime. This is a civil case.

Nia Rodgers: Sorry.

Kristine Artello: This is a simple case, so he didn't do that, but also he ended up dying in 1937. That also I think ended up allowing Roosevelt to say, I've got this victory, everything. They still built. I think he died the day that they started construction on the National Gallery, if that's not sad. To give Mellon credit, he didn't want it named after him, which God knows, he could have considering he paid for its construction and donated the first permanent collection. He didn't want his name on it. He wanted it to be the National Gallery of Art. It isn't like the Phillips Collection that they donated, which if you want to see that Renoir, the Luncheon of the Boat Party, it's actually in DC at the Phillips Collection, which you can enter for free and see this beautiful painting which I highly recommend. But it's a private collection and is named for him.

Nia Rodgers: Like many people, Mellon was layered.

John Aughenbaugh: Yeah, because in his will, he obligated his heirs to fully fund the construction of the gallery and to turn over the pieces of his collection that he agreed to. They could not renege.

Nia Rodgers: In the end he did the honorable thing.

Kristine Artello: Paul, his son, really continued on and played a key role in the development of the National Gallery of Art and getting a lot of art donated and bringing some incredible collections to that museum.

Nia Rodgers: It's a story that ends well. It ends well for us as a nation because we get the National Art Gallery.

Kristine Artello: [inaudible] republic corruption, how well it ends.

Nia Rodgers: It's a little murkier on that side. I agree with you that's a little murkier.

John Aughenbaugh: Yeah. If you want wrongdoers put into prison, yeah, that didn't happen in this story. On the other hand, you actually had the federal government, bring a robber baron to its heel. That hardly ever happened in the history of the United States. Hardly ever happened.

Nia Rodgers: Well, it hardly ever happens now that the super rich are brought to some sort of justice. There is justice and the American people got something really cool out of it because it's right, it's an awesome thing to visit and we should strongly urge people to do that.

Kristine Artello: The architecture of it is incredible. The tall ceiling, it's beautiful. It really is a beautiful edifice to go in. Once you're able to go back and work in it, I highly recommend go and take your computer or whatever and you can sit and work and it's a wonderful place.

Nia Rodgers: That's a good place to write your 14-page paper for your either criminal justice or political science professor. Is what you're telling me. Nice plug for your papers there. I want to end with one last thing. You said something about a spider in the garden. Is that your favorite sculpture piece?

Kristine Artello: No.

Nia Rodgers: What's your favorite sculpture piece?

Kristine Artello: There's a perspective piece that depending on where you are at, the house, the house changes its perspective and that's amazing. Now, another piece that's new is the big typewriter eraser, which I have not seen yet, which looks awesome. I want to go see that. That might be new, but they do occasionally change outside. I love big sculpture gardens, they're wonderful. You really get up close to the art in the sculpture gardens.

Nia Rodgers: Well, thank you so much, Kristine for coming to talking to us about the National Art Gallery.

Kristine Artello: Can I say one thing? I recommend everyone look around you about what's available and out there. For example, the Prairie Village Museum in North Dakota is open. You can go there and you can see they have an entire village that you can walk through. It has a wonderful little museum there as well that shows you early life in North Dakota. It's only \$8 and it's a great way to spend the day. They don't seem to have any requirements for timed with things either. Might be a great way to spend a Saturday.

Nia Rodgers: A plug for your local museum of coolness.

Kristine Artello: Yes.

Nia Rodgers: Awesome.

John Aughenbaugh: Again, if you're planning trips, I always tell folks almost every major city in the United States has some art gallery. If you get a chance, particularly many of your smaller cities, the smaller galleries, tend to emphasize local artists or local history. If you really want to learn about a place that you may not live, but you're just visiting, you could do a heck of a lot worse in visiting the local art gallery.

Kristine Artello: Let's be honest, many of us need to sometimes be visitors in our own hometown to find some really great information that we may not have been aware of.

John Aughenbaugh: Yeah. Kristine, thank you very much. This has been highly educational and also very entertaining because if nothing else, our listeners are, once again, reminded of how Nia wants to go ahead and take over the world.

Nia Rodgers: Yeah. I want all the power. Now I have a new way to go about it. I just need to steal an art collection.

John Aughenbaugh: And not pay your taxes.

Nia Rodgers: And not pay my taxes. That's right. You all have a good one.

Kristine Artello: Bye.

John Aughenbaugh: Bye.

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