



Please join us for a **Museums at Noon** presentation!

**Speaker:** Zachary Kopin (PhD, History)

**When:** 12:00 pm on Friday, November 3

**Where:** UM Museum of Art auditorium (lower level)

### **What Happens When a Museum Is Something Other than a Museum?**

Constitution Hill was once a notorious prison in colonial and apartheid South Africa. Churchill, Ghandi, Nelson and Winnie Mandela, and Fatima Meer were imprisoned there. It was not uncommon for 75 prisoners to find themselves confined to a cell the size of a classroom. At the turn of the millennium, in an effort to reclaim the space, the newly democratic South Africa decided to place its Constitutional Court on the site, while the city, provincial, and national governments created an entity to manage the site and tell its history. Many know Constitution Hill as a museum. Its formal name, however, is the Constitution Hill Development Company.

What happens to a museum when its primary function is not to put its collections on display? This talk will discuss how the mandate to develop a precinct changes how a museum operates — the opportunities and risks that mandate creates. And how, in a country struggling to recover from the damage of its past, one balances reclamation against the demands of heritage preservation.