

**Please join us for a noon presentation!**

**Speaker:** Estrella Salgado (Class of 2021, BA History, Museum Studies Minor)

**When:** 12:00 pm on Monday, April 19

**Where:** Online via [Zoom](#) (Meeting ID: 939 6236 5716 / Passcode: 584236)

**“Centrally Located, Easily Reached”:  
An Evolving Museum and Department Store in the Progressive Era**

In a 1913 essay, museum reformer John Cotton Dana boldly suggested, “A great city department store of the first class is perhaps more like a good museum of art than are any of the museums we have yet established.” In the Progressive Era, museums were elite institutions with little context for the uninitiated. Dana saw a more democratic possibility and observed the department store as a model for bringing in many people from



different classes. He also believed that forming connections with local businesses was valuable, and fortunately, Louis Bamberger of Bamberger’s department store agreed. The businessman funded the creation of Dana’s Newark Museum, and he had a keen appreciation about how aligning with arts and culture increased Bamberger’s revenue and reputation. The interactions between these organizations provide a compelling lens through which to view the increased accessibility and commercialization of museums, as well as the cultural capital sought after by corporations.

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Estrella’s presentation is the culminating feature of a year-long independent research project mentored by Prof. Thomas Willette (Department of the History of Art and the Residential College’s Arts and Ideas Program) and sponsored by the Museum Studies Minor.