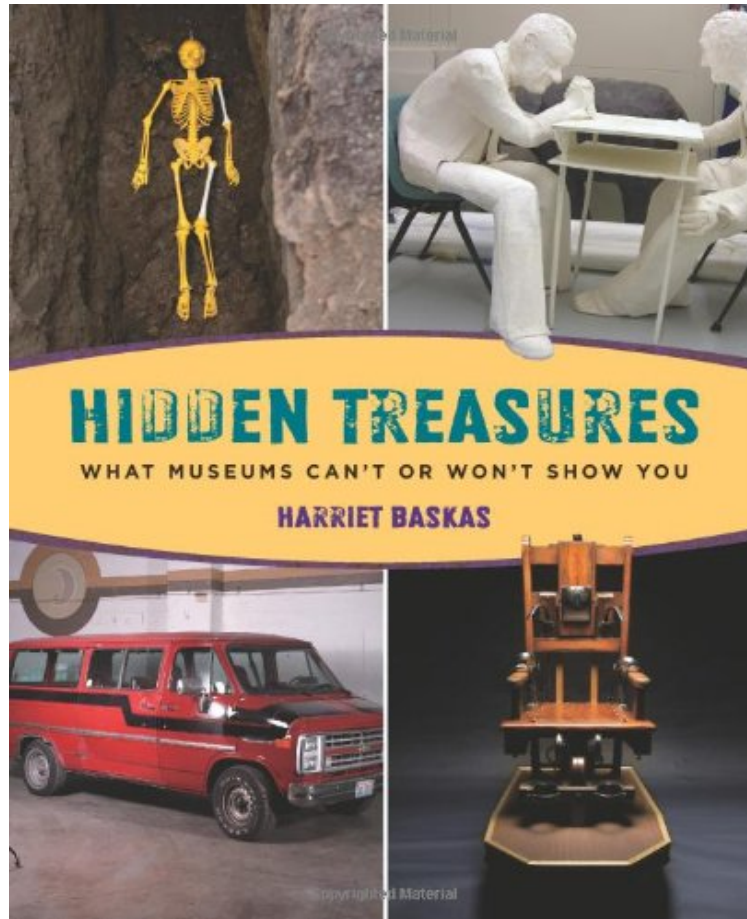


Hidden Treasures: What Museums Can't Or Won't Show You

Harriet Baskas

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Harriet Baskas : Hidden Treasures: What Museums Can't Or Won't Show You before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hidden Treasures: What Museums Can't Or Won't Show You:

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While there are more than 15,000 museums in our country, visitors get to see only about five percent of any institution's collections. Most museums simply don't have room to display everything they've got. However, there are

a wide variety of surprising and intriguing reasons that, for example, the Smithsonian Institution doesn't display its collection of condoms, Florida's Lightner Museum locks up all but one of its shrunken heads, and a world-class stash of Japanese erotica (shunga) art was kept in the Honolulu Museum of Art's storage until only recently. Each item or collection included in this volume is described and placed in context with stories and interviews that explore the historical, social, cultural, political, environmental, or other circumstances that led to keeping that object or group of objects out of public view--the ultimate museum buff's voyeuristic experience. Color photographs of the artifacts are included.

"One of the great myths of the museum world is that we should perpetually strive to put as much of our collections on show for as long as we can. My sense instead is that one of the most important roles of the museum is precisely the opposite: namely to keep safe material that is off display and at rest, so that it can then be rediscovered and reinterpreted afresh when it has had a chance, if you like, to recharge its batteries." Ken Arnold, Head of Public Programs at the Wellcome Collection in London