

The UH Department of History  
presents

**Dr. Laura Mitchell**  
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## **“Indian Ocean *Recueil*: Placing Stories in the Early Modern World”**



*Vue de la baie de la table du Cap de Bonne Espérance*, 1786. Detail. Louis François Grégoire Lafite de Brassier. 18.9 cm x 1.93 m, watercolor on paper. Bibliothèque nationale de France, cartes et plans, SH PF114 Div 1 p 7-1

The life of Louis François Grégoire Lafite de Brassier, an Engineer of the Colonies of the Indies from 1781 to 1786, was not remarkable. If not for the survival of an atlas he painted, Lafite’s experiences would likely have escaped historians’ attention. His watercolor depictions of Indian Ocean ports are visually compelling. In their detail, they reveal both the personal cost of imperial life and the larger strategies of empire in action. Louis Lafite’s life story, illustrated by his own watercolor maps, offers a useful example of macro historical process at work in a micro scale, and makes a case for the continuing importance of narrative in world history.

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**Thursday February 28, 3:00 pm**  
**Roy G. Cullen Building, room 105**

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