The Announcement (Florenz, 2 - 4 May 13)

Florence, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz - Max-Planck-Institut, May 2–04, 2013
Deadline: Nov 30, 2012

Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz - Max-Planck-Institut

The Announcement: Annunciations and beyond

Interdisciplinary Conference at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz - Max-Planck-Institut
2 - 4 May 2013
Deadline: 30. November 2012

The Annunciation is, first of all, a long tradition of representations of 'the' Annunciation, the one narrated in the Gospel of Lucas: a 'caesura' in which everything changed, but also the fragment of time in which this change was made known. An announcement of a birth to come, of course, but also of death, resurrection and redemption. Daniel Arasse established the essential link between the evolution of this tradition in Renaissance Italy - its most famous homeland - and the parallel conceptualization and practice of linear perspective. And indeed, Annunciations, thanks to their ubiquity in Early Modern art and their narrative simplicity (two protagonists, a message, a single domestic space) were, and still are, a formidable laboratory of formal and visual thinking.

This long series of representations is also the nodal point of several important philosophical issues that can be extended thematically, chronologically and geographically well beyond the literal, Christian theme of the Annunciation. Tracing the development of the Annunciation and the announcement is thus a useful way to narrate the changing views on numerous questions: the issue of 'time', first and foremost; the hardly conceivable simultaneity of the announcement, the acceptance, and its coming into effect; the fragment of time that is not anymore the 'before', but not yet the 'after'; and the relation between a personal story and general History, with their different temporalities, here suddenly converging.

Then, there is the question of the Word, of its transformation into material fact; the relation between announcer - the long-standing figure of the messenger - and recipient of the message, their inevitable epistemological difference here complicated by their ontological alterity, not to mention the gender aspect; and the various degrees of expectation and readiness that condition the reception of the message and its subsequent comprehension.

Annunciations and announcements are therefore a conceptual archipelago worth discussion for art history, philosophy and politics in the early twenty-first century. Announcements - these sudden, often unexpected fulgurations that appear, in the midst of life, in our inboxes, at our doorsteps, even in our dreams - are a persistent phenomenon and an incessant challenge to the visual arts. It is thus the whole range of announcements - from the depictions of the angel's speech to Mary to wholly secular artistic references to staggering political announcements, with

any other visual treatment of the act of announcing in between, that the conference at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz - Max-Planck-Institut will be dedicated.

The goal of the conference is to unite contributions addressing some of the above mentioned aspects by art historians, philosophers and scholars of neighbouring disciplines. The lectures should not exceed twenty-five minutes. Please send your proposals (in English, German, French or Italian; max. 500 words) along with a brief CV to the following e-mail addresses by 30 November 2012.

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