

Buildings and objects: Baroque, Rococo and beyond (SAH, Detroit 2012)

Detroit, Apr 18–22, 2012

Deadline: Jun 1, 2011

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Call for papers

Annual Meeting of the Society of Architectural Historians

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BUILDINGS AND OBJECTS: BAROQUE, ROCOCO AND BEYOND

17th- and 18th-century architecture and decorative arts shared a common materiality, a basis in natural matter transformed through human ingenuity into self-conscious artifice. Immobile and spatial, that artifice could be architectural. Or, as portable and discrete, it could take the form of an object. Modern disciplinary divisions have tended to separate environmental and material cultures into distinct spheres of inquiry. The perils in this approach for modern architecture are well understood; the pitfalls in uncoupling objects and spaces in studies of 17th- and 18th-century buildings remain less well explored. Art historians have demonstrated that painting, sculpture, and interiors of the period were often informed by the production of ornamental objects. How, in turn, might attention to object design impact our understandings of architecture? Some 18th-century artists familiar today as creators of decorative objects, such as Juste-Aurèle Meissonnier, considered themselves architects and drew no strong boundary between designing things and designing buildings. Similarly, the crafting of ornament and furniture was integral to the practice of architects from Gianlorenzo Bernini to Filippo Juvarra or Robert Adam.

This panel seeks to reunite the study of 17th- and 18th-century European architecture and objects. How did architecture structure or negotiate human interactions with things? Were the period's many newly formulated categories of luxury goods understood in specific relationships with spaces? What were the terms by which spatiality and materiality came to be understood as discrete? Topics might include the design of commercial spaces and the commodities for sale within them; practices of display in the noble salon or in purpose-built galleries and collectors' cabinets; liturgical objects and devotional spaces; and the decoration of domestic or ceremonial interiors. Cross-disciplinary approaches to these arenas are encouraged, and papers that draw from or challenge the methodologies of architectural history, art history, and material culture studies are particularly welcome.

Abstracts of no more than 300 words should be submitted online, by June 1, 2011, via the SAH website:

<http://asoft130.securesites.net/secure/sah/index.php?src=gendocs&ref=call%20for%20papers%202012&category=Annual%20Meeting%20Detroit%202012>

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(accessed May 2, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/1352>>.