# Purity and Contamination in Ren. Art and Architecture (Cambridge, MA, 1 Oct 16)

Cambridge, MA, Oct 01, 2016
Registration deadline: Sep 20, 2016

Lauren Jacobi

PURITY AND CONTAMINATION IN RENAISSANCE ART AND ARCHITECTURE
October 1, 2016

MIT, Bartos Theatre (Cambridge, Mass., 9:30am-6:00pm)
Registration required (registration deadline Sept. 20th)

Purity and contamination have long figured in the accounts of the European Renaissance. Scholars, in the last few decades alone, have mapped the role these ideas have played in debates about godliness and sin, cleanliness, gender, and ethnicity, among other domains. Less thoroughly studied, though, is how these two intertwined categories informed European approaches to art and the built environment, both as it was created and experienced. It is precisely this lacuna that our conference aims to address. This one-day conference plots some of the myriad ways in which concerns for material purity—and contamination—shaped the artistic and architectural pursuits of early modern Europeans. The aim is not to treat these phenomena comprehensively, or to fit them within a coherent framework, but rather to recover historical instances in which they assumed particular salience: in the materials that practitioners adopted; in how they manipulated them; and in the responses (physiological, verbal, textual) that such activity provoked. To this end, participants will present case studies drawn from diverse periods and places in multiple practices, teasing out the contradictions and complexities inherent in early modern approaches to matter, but also the broader conceptual and ideological conditions that determined how matter was defined and understood. A concluding roundtable brings together a distinguished group of scholars and museum curators to debate the methodological strengths and limitations of the two categories, as well as their relevance beyond the domain of Renaissance studies.

Conference Schedule

9:00 am Check in

9:30 am Welcome and Introductory Remarks: Lauren Jacobi (MIT) and Daniel Zolli (The Getty)

9:50-11:10 am Session I: Liquidity and Materiality
moderator: Jodi Cranston (Boston University)
Joseph Ackley (Barnard) — Perceiving Gold in Fifteenth-century German Painting and Sculpture: The Hallwyl Reliquary in Appearance and Substance
Amy Bloch (SUNY, Albany) — The Practice of Goldsmithery and Fifteenth-Century Florentine Sculp-

ture
Michael Waters (Columbia) — Cannons, Columns, and Candelabra: Objects of Interchange in Late Fifteenth-Century Italy

11:20 am Keynote Address: Felipe Pereda (Harvard) — Carnal Blood, Spiritual Milk, and the Politics of Purity in Early Modern Spain

12:10-1:15 pm Lunch Recess

1:15-2:15 pm Session II: Place and Placelessness
moderator: Stephanie Leone (Boston College)
Niall Atkinson (University of Chicago) — Taking Architectural Theory on the Road: Renaissance Travelers and the Geographic Imagination
Cristelle Baskins (Tufts) — Who is a Habsburg Now? Transculturation and the Early Modern Maghreb

2:15-3:45 pm Session III: Hybridity and Hybrid Practices
moderator: Jessica Maier (Mount Holyoke)
Carolyn Yerkes (Princeton) — Inhabited Sculptures, Lethal Weapons
Lorenzo Buonanno (UMass, Boston) — Taming the Chimera: Jacopo Sansovino and the Rhetoric of the Hybrid
Christopher Nygren (University of Pittsburgh) — The Splendor of Impurity: Painted Stones and the Matter of Early Modern Art

3:45-4:15 pm Afternoon Intermission

4:15-5:15 pm Session IV: Finishing
moderator: David Karmon (Holy Cross)
Rachel Boyd (Columbia) — Pulitezza: The Shining Surfaces of Della Robbia Sculpture and Their Renaissance Connotations
Carolina Mangone (Princeton) — Displaying Michelangelo’s Non-finito: Erosion, Accretion, Excavation

5:15-6:00 pm Roundtable
Michael Cole (Columbia), Caroline Jones (MIT), Joseph Leo Koerner (Harvard), Pamela Smith (Columbia), Luke Syson (Metropolitan Museum of Art), Jane Tylus (New York University)

6:00-7:00 pm Reception

This event is the Fall 2016 New England Renaissance Conference. It is co-organized by Lauren Jacobi and Daniel Zolli.

To register and for more information, web search "MIT HTC Purity and Contamination"

Reference:
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