

4 Sessions at RSA (New Orleans, 22–24 Mar 18)

New Orleans, Mar 22–24, 2018

Deadline: May 28, 2017

Martha Dunkelman, Canisius College

[1] New Research in Italian Quattrocento Sculpture

[2] The Glory of Inscriptions: epigraphic writing, classical architecture and monumental art in the Renaissance (15th-17th century)

[3] Architect/Craftsman: Professional Identity and Skill in the Early Modern Era

[4] Materiality of Early Modern Alchemy: Objects, Materials, and Art Practices

[1] New Research in Italian Quattrocento Sculpture

From: Martha Dunkelman <dunkelmm@canisius.edu>

Date: May 10, 2017

Subject: CFP: "New Research in Italian Quattrocento Sculpture" RSA 2018 New Orleans

Deadline: 1 June 2017

Quattrocento sculpture in central Italy has been fundamental to the study and understanding of the Italian Renaissance. The glow of fifteenth century sculpture has faded somewhat in recent decades, however, because of an understandable desire to expand knowledge about and appreciation for works outside of such long privileged areas. A revival of interest seems to be underway, however, with the appearance of a few recent books such as Amy Bloch's *Lorenzo Ghiberti's Gates of Paradise* and some eye-opening exhibitions, such as "Fece di scoltura di legname e colori". *La scultura del Quattrocento in legno dipinto a Firenze*. We seek proposals that continue to consider sculpture in fifteenth century Italy, but from more up-to-date points of view. Research that encompasses new approaches to the material, such as digital and technical analysis or interdisciplinary studies, will be especially welcome.

Please email proposals to both Elizabeth Petersen (eap204@psu.edu) and Martha Dunkelman (dunkelmm@canisius.edu).

As required by RSA, proposals should include a paper title (15-word maximum), an abstract (150-word maximum), keywords, and a very brief curriculum vitae (300-word maximum).

[2] The Glory of Inscriptions: epigraphic writing, classical architecture and monumental art in the Renaissance (15th-17th century)

From: Emmanuel Lurin <emmanuelurin@yahoo.fr>

Date: 11 mai 2017

Subject: CFP: Call for Papers (Renaissance Society of America Congress, 2018)

Deadline: 28 May 2017

Two of the most remarkable aspects of the *Imitatio Antiquitatis* in the Renaissance are the taste for inscriptions among the humanists and the imitation of ancient epigraphy in the field of the arts. The desire to surpass the Ancients, especially in the art of inscription, is particularly noticeable in architecture and in the various forms of monumental art. Motto, titulature, praises and dedications, tituli of saints, consecrations of monuments, funeral epitaphs, poems or simple distiches, all'antica signatures, etc. – inscriptions are numerous on public monuments, churches facades, palaces portals and courtyards, but also in mural painting, on large-scale sculptures, in ephemeral decorations for feasts or royal processions, and even on engineered structures such as bridges. During the Renaissance, as in the Greco-Roman civilization, the writing of monumental inscriptions was praised as an art and epigraphic texts were generally considered a major element of composition: a written form, endowed with aesthetic qualities, which visually enriches the building or the work of art, but also in some cases reveals its meaning, origin or ambition.

Historians of art or architecture as well as philologists are invited to apply to this panel which will study the practice of Greek, Latin, hieroglyphic and Hebrew inscriptions in the field of monumental art between the fifteenth and the seventeenth centuries. Speakers may also consider the formal characteristics of the inscriptions as well as their literary sources, the identification of their authors, the methods of writing, the layout of texts and their conditions of reading in a monumental composition. We shall also endeavor to identify literary genres and interpret the inscriptions, as well as assessing, at each level of art historical analysis, the properties and mechanisms of the artistic devices. What kind of relationship can be drawn between the form, layout and content of inscriptions and the questions of style, composition or distribution in architecture? How did they affect the different categories of viewers, who were not always able to read and understand the texts? What is the place of inscriptions in the figurative arts, in artistic theory and in the practice of the great masters? If easel painting tends to banish the texts, mural painting, monumental sculpture and religious furnishings, on the contrary, place them in the forefront. The case of Michelangelo, who generally avoided inscriptions, is all the more interesting as he had a singular talent for writing. In the range of sacred art, it will also be possible to study how and to what extent the Tridentine injunctions (*docere, movere, delectare*) changed the practice of inscriptions in religious architecture, church decoration and liturgical furnishings from the second half of the 16th century onward.

Please send proposals to Anne Lepoittevin, Anne.Lepoittevin@u-bourgogne.fr and Emmanuel Lurin, Emmanuel.Lurin@paris-sorbonne.fr by Sunday, 28 May 2017.

As per RSA guidelines, proposals must include the following: paper title (15-word maximum), abstract (150-word maximum), keywords, and a brief curriculum vitae (300-word maximum). See

<http://www.rsa.org/general/custom.asp?page=2018NOLA>

[3] Architect/Craftsman: Professional Identity and Skill in the Early Modern Era

From: Sarah Lynch <swlynch@princeton.edu>

Date: May 12, 2017

Subject: CFP: Session at RSA, New Orleans 2018

Deadline: Jun 1, 2017

What makes an architect an architect? What skills, knowledge or achievements separate an architect from a stonemason, engineer, craftsman, or simple builder? Plato divided each field of knowledge into practical and theoretical branches, valuing the theoretical (knowledge of truths) over manual skill. Architectural literature of antiquity and the early modern period generally observed this divide and asserted that “theoretical” knowledge separated the craftsman from the architect. Vitruvius stated that an architect possessed almost universal knowledge and that a carpenter was only a tool in his hands, thus establishing a clear hierarchy in the design and construction of a building. Alberti, Serlio and other fifteenth and sixteenth-century authors prioritized design over manual execution. Walther Ryff stated that a Baumeister could only become an Architekt by reading Vitruvius, thus suggesting that the distinction between the two categories lay in learned discourse. Yet other authors including Francesco di Giorgio emphasized the importance of training on a building site and manual skill for the architect-designer.

How do these discourses influence our interpretation of early modern architectural work today, and how much did they reflect the reality of architectural practice? Builders often made unauthorized changes to a design in the process of construction and architects who trained as painters and sculptors ran into conflicts with the skilled builders on their projects. These issues suggest that the responsibilities of architects and building professionals were not clearly defined and frequently overlapped. Further, modern concepts of authorship, in which a single designer is considered primarily responsible for the outcome of a building, may not apply in this environment.

This panel seeks to address the questions of the professional identity and responsibilities of architects and builders in the early modern era. Papers addressing all geographic areas and periods 1300-1700 are welcome. Possible topics include (but are not limited to):

What distinction was made in the early modern era between design and building?

How can we assess the meanings of different professional titles (architect, engineer, stonemason, Baumeister, provveditore, proto, etc.) and what distinguishes them?

Can economic factors such as pay scale be used to distinguish a clear hierarchy in the design and construction process? Are salaries related to professional titles?

To what extent do early modern texts about architecture reflect the lived experience of designing and building a structure? Do the ideal architects described by Vitruvius and others exist anywhere other than on the page?

In regions where masons’ guilds controlled building trades, what role did they play in determining titles and qualification for specialized roles and skills? Was it possible to work outside of these guild structures?

How did architects who trained as painters or sculptors interact with the builders on their projects?

How did architects, patrons, and viewers discuss authorship with regard to building projects?

Who was ultimately responsible for the outcome of a building project and how were the results evaluated?

Is it possible to assess when or where builders made changes to the design in the process of construction?

Please send paper proposals to Sarah Lynch at swlynch@princeton.edu before June 1. Proposals should be formatted according to RSA guidelines including title, an abstract of no more than 150 words, keywords, and a 300 word CV including your current affiliation (prose form not accepted).

[4] Materiality of Early Modern Alchemy: Objects, Materials, and Art Practices

Date: May 13, 2017

Subject: CFP: RSA 2018 CFP: Materiality of Early Modern Alchemy: Objects, Materials, and Art Practices

Deadline: Jun 1, 2017

Alchemy has recently become an important concept through which to consider various interconnected early modern practices—ranging from magical to medical, philosophical to Christological, artistic to technological—that prominently feature processes of transformation, conversion, and renovation. An entangled concept that relates to different social, political, and religious aspects of early modern knowledge making, alchemy has as some scholars have suggested come to mean too many things. Rather than reversing the productive conceptualization of alchemy as a symbolic, ideological, and theoretical concept, this panel seeks to utilize the extended understanding of its complex traditions and interdisciplinary approaches to probe its association with materials, technologies, and objects. As a physical and technological process that brings into being purified materials and objects, alchemy offered its practitioners a new understanding of creation, and the act of making. We are thus particularly interested in considering the materiality of early modern alchemy.

Probing into the materiality of alchemy, we invite papers that consider specific modes in which alchemy intersected with art practices. These might for example reflect on the following questions: What did alchemy as practice and concept offer to early modern artists and theorists? Which materials and objects connected to alchemy found their ways into artworks, artists' workshops, and collections? Were these derived alchemically or simply appropriated to become part of art making? Did patronage and collecting of objects considered to have been derived from alchemical technologies prescribe or influence artistic, aesthetic, or epistemological value?

Please send 150-word abstracts, with a title page and keywords, and a 300-word CV to Ivana Vranic (ivana7vranic@gmail.com) and Ivana Horacek (ivhoracek@gmail.com) by June 1, 2017.

Reference:

CFP: 4 Sessions at RSA (New Orleans, 22-24 Mar 18). In: ArtHist.net, May 13, 2017 (accessed Jul 15, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/15509>>.