

## Art's Insiders: New Histories of Europe's Academies (Milton Keynes, 29–31 Mar 12)

Milton Keynes, UK, Mar 29–31, 2012

Deadline: Nov 7, 2011

Hannah Williams, Oxford

Association of Art Historians 38th Annual Conference  
The Open University, Milton Keynes, UK  
29-31 March 2012

We invite proposals for the session:

'Art's Insiders: New Histories of Europe's Academies'

Convenors:

Keren Hammerschlag (King's College London): [keren.hammerschlag@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:keren.hammerschlag@kcl.ac.uk)

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For centuries, institutions like the Royal Academy in London, the Académie Royale (later the Académie des Beaux Arts) in Paris, and the Accademia di San Luca in Rome were the epicentres of European art practice, theory and education. For artists, having the letters 'RA' after their name, or the opportunity to show works at the Salons or the Summer Exhibitions promised elevated social standing and commercial success. As institutions, Academies developed principles and ideals that dominated artistic production throughout the period. In art history, however, the 'Academy' has been variously recast as staid, kitsch and archaic. According to critics, 'academic' art represents the inert centre against which avant-garde innovation and originality was pitted. But in their time, Europe's Academies were anything but static or homogenous. Established by groups of artists resisting under-developed or conservative attitudes to art, these communities often began as innovative alternatives; they were home to radical new approaches, and became sites of heated debate in response to political, theoretical and social shifts.

This session seeks a re-evaluation of art's insiders. What did it mean to be at the centre of these powerful institutions? And how can we effectively revisit the Academy without falling into the trap of reviving dead, white, male, bourgeois artists? We invite proposals for papers that take a new look at the 'Academy' and academicians in the period 1600 to 1900. Papers might address issues of gender, social networks, individual and collective identity, educational practices, centre and periphery (eg. regional academies), in-groups and rivalries, competition and emulation, successes and failures. In particular we invite papers informed by sociological, anthropological and cultural theory approaches, which take art objects as their focus.

To propose a paper, please email [keren.hammerschlag@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:keren.hammerschlag@kcl.ac.uk) and

hannah.williams@sjc.ox.ac.uk by 7 November 2011. You will need to submit an abstract of your proposed paper in no more than 250 words, your name and institutional affiliation (if you have one).

For further information about the conference including submission guidelines visit the AAH website: [www.aah.org.uk/page/3327](http://www.aah.org.uk/page/3327)

Reference:

CFP: Art's Insiders: New Histories of Europe's Academies (Milton Keynes, 29-31 Mar 12). In: ArtHist.net, Jul 4, 2011 (accessed Apr 26, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/1618>>.