

Session at MACAA (Lincoln, 4–6 Oct 18)

University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE, Oct 4–06, 2018

Deadline: May 1, 2018

Emily Elizabeth Goodman, Transylvania University

Session at the 2018 MID-AMERICA COLLEGE ART ASSOCIATION (MACAA) CONFERENCE
"Techne Expanding: Tensions, Terrains and Tools," hosted by University of Nebraska – Lincoln

"The Work of Art in the Age of Virality"

Chair: Emily Elizabeth Goodman (egoodman@transy.edu)

In his 1936 essay, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," Walter Benjamin questioned the way in which new technologies and media shape the understanding of a work of art. He argued that the means of technological reproduction imbued a work of art with an aura that extended beyond its object status. This aura, in turn, situated the interpretation of art within a larger cultural system, thereby changing the way the work is experienced and understood.

Given our contemporary means of digital reproduction, Benjamin's assertions surrounding the indexicality and the aura of a work of art are ripe for re-examination. Whereas the aura of the mass-produced image in Benjamin's analysis was largely linked to physical items (photographs, films, and consumer products), in our contemporary digital world, arts' reproducibility has transmuted into the ephemeral cloud of the internet. This intangible characteristic therefore allows for art spread virally and to take root and a variety of enclaves.

This panel seeks to expand upon Benjamin's theories of mechanical reproduction to address the role of digital reproduction and contemporary internet culture in understanding works of art. Papers are welcome from art historians, curators, critics and art practitioners, and may address topics including, but not limited to, the role of the internet in shaping art historical and curatorial dialogues, the intersection of art and popular culture in the forms of memes and viral videos, creating digitally native art content, and the use of social media in contemporary art and art spaces.

Please submit abstracts up to 250 words to Dr. Emily Elizabeth Goodman (egoodman@transy.edu) by May 1 2018. Accepted abstracts will be notified by June 1.

Reference:

CFP: Session at MACAA (Lincoln, 4–6 Oct 18). In: ArtHist.net, Mar 16, 2018 (accessed May 7, 2026),

<<https://arthist.net/archive/17624>>.