

Spaces of Initiation (Brno, 11–13 Mar 2019)

Brno, Hans Belting Library, Mar 11–13, 2019

Deadline: Oct 20, 2018

Vladimir Ivanovici

Spaces of Initiations

Objects, Images, and Rituals in the Middle Ages

Brno (Czech Republic), Hans Belting Library, 11–13 March 2019

Organisers:

Klára L. Doležalová, Masaryk University, Brno

Ivan Foletti, Masaryk University, Brno / Ca' Foscari University, Venice

Vladimir Ivanovici, Masaryk University, Brno / Accademia di Architettura di Mendrisio

Since Late Antiquity, 'initiation' has played an important role in the creation of artistic and cultural environments. In Christian context, baptisteries, as well as pre- and post-baptismal zones were lavishly decorated in order to emphasise the role of 'life changing' rituals. Significant financial investment shows the importance and value given to these rituals in society. It could even be argued that the artistic and

architectural emphasis of the monuments may have played a crucial role in the Christianisation of Europe. Conversion would've been facilitated through material culture. In addition to that, it seems clear that it is impossible to distinguish between the different senses and the media involved in these processes. Sound, smell, touch, light and other polysensorial inputs completed the visual and architectural setting. Rituals were the gathering force uniting all these elements. These aspects were finally activated by the movement of bodies of both clerical "professionals" and neophytes.

During the Middle Ages, other rituals dealing with inclusion into diverse communities were conceived or transformed. With the spread of child baptism in Christian Europe, society needed other rituals dedicated to adults, such as consecration to monastic life, priesthood, or the bishopric. Once more, they

stood in deep dialogue with the world of art. The interaction between visual culture, architectural space and ritual together enabled the process of 'initiation'. This conference therefore intends to explore precisely these interactions and dialogues, with a special focus on baptism.

Proposals from diverse cultures are welcomed, as well as comparative studies of initiation rituals. The main topic of the conference will be the dialogue between material/artistic culture, rituals, and the world of ideas. Papers examining just one of these aspects are also welcome.

The organization will provide accommodation and catering for all participants; additionally, partial

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or complete funding is available to support travel expenses.

Paper proposals of no more than one page, accompanied by a short CV, can be submitted until 20 October 2018 to dolezalova.klara@gmail.com and ivan.foletti@gmail.com

Reference:

CFP: Spaces of Initiation (Brno, 11-13 Mar 2019). In: ArtHist.net, Oct 2, 2018 (accessed Apr 11, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/19094>>.