Doing Connoisseurship (Bielefeld, 11 Jan 19)

Bielefeld, Jan 11, 2019

Joris Corin Heyder, Berlin

Doing Connoisseurship. Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow
Workshop

It has become a historiographical commonplace to describe connoisseurship as the natural forerunner of the academic history of art and the visual cultures. However, connoisseurship did not just end at a certain point, but it is still part of scientific practices today, and in all likelihood, it will continue to do so in the future. Therefore, this workshop is dedicated to the impact - past, present, and future - which connoisseurship has on our understanding of artistic artifacts.
In order to analyze the preconditions, merits, and problems of connoisseurship, it is worth looking at how working routines, interest in particular questions, the way of perception, and its verbalization might result from an early 18th-century understanding of categorizing and comparing. Therefore, it appears necessary to discuss some aspects of connoisseurship in greater detail: its actors, its discourses, its modes of visual experience, and its objects.
It is remarkable that connoisseurship, from its beginnings, particularly benefited from an interdisciplinary orientation. The biographies of early connoisseurs span a wide range from individuals with a background in the natural sciences to artists or scholars of philosophy. In light of different interests, it is not trite to examine the different preconditions of working methods applied in these fields. How did a certain technical and empirical know-how form a certain epistemological interest? What kinds of questions and requirements arose from a culture where collectors, art dealers, philosophers, artists, or natural scientists were entangled in a complex discourse on the judgment of art? While it is common practice to start with a historiographical contextualization of the 18th--century discourse visible in a great number of treatises and early histories on art, it might also be enlightening to look at practices prior to those written works. Distinctive modes of visual and practical experiences, the negotiation of norms, and the learning of a “language” of resemblance and difference, thus the argument, shaped a professional way of viewing up to the present day. The workshop aims to critically trace its formation and develop a future perspective on connoisseurship.

PROGRAM

9:00–9:30 Introduction by Joris C. Heyder

CHAIR: Britta Hochkirchen

9:30–10:30 Fabienne BRUGÈRE: Inventing the Audience in the 18th Century. Taste in the Arts

11:00–12:00 Pascal GRIENER: For a New History of Connoisseurship in the Nineteenth Century:

Analysis of Some Connoisseurs's Greatest Blunders in Context

CHAIR: Robert Eberhardt

12:00–13:00 Valérie KOBI: On Spectacles And Lorgnettes: The Connoisseur's Vision Aids

14:15–15:15 Ingrid VERMEULEN: The Connoisseurship of Forging Relations Between School and Nation, 1650–1750

CHAIR: Joris C. Heyder

15:15–16:15 Stephan KEMPERDICK: Connoisseurship: Looking for Masters or Looking for Connections?

16:15–16:30 Closing Remarks

Reference:
CONF: Doing Connoisseurship (Bielefeld, 11 Jan 19). In: ArtHist.net, Jan 9, 2019 (accessed Nov 15, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/19823>.