New Sculptors, Old Masters (Leeds, 8 Mar 19)

Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, Mar 08, 2019
Registration deadline: Mar 8, 2019

Kirstie Gregory

New Sculptors, Old Masters: The Victorian Renaissance of Italian Sculpture
Friday 8 March 2019, 10.00–17.30
Henry Moore Lecture Theatre, Leeds Art Gallery

In his 1862 catalogue of the Italian Sculpture collection at the South Kensington Museum, curator John Charles Robinson (1824-1913) claimed:

'It never occurred to the artist of the revival to think architectural ornamentation beneath his dignity; on the contrary, the greatest sculptors have left us specimens of their genius in this branch... surely, where these great artists have so gladly trod no modern craftsman need disdain to follow.'

The collection of Italian Renaissance sculpture at South Kensington presented the Victorian viewer with a wide range of objects in diverse materials and vital colours, often with decorative functions: glazed terracottas, painted plasters, and sculptures in wood, wax and black slate in sizes ranging from the colossal to the miniature. South Kensington's broad presentation of the sculpture category promoted the Museum's focus on the applied arts and the great Italian Renaissance sculptors represented were described as artists, architects and artisans who turned their talents to decorative sculpture in multiple materials.

Responding to a current exhibition in San Francisco, Truth and Beauty: The Pre-Raphaelites and the Old Masters (Legion of Honor, San Francisco, 30 June - 30 September 2018) and the recent publication of Elizabeth Prettejohn's Modern Painters, Old Masters (New Haven: Yale UP, 2017), which concentrated on Victorian painters and the reception of early Italian Renaissance painting at institutions such as the National Gallery, New Sculptors, Old Masters will highlight the productive sculptural response in the Victorian period to Italian Renaissance works in British collections.

The conference will explore how nineteenth-century sculptors and critics directly encountered Italian Renaissance sculpture, in its broadest sense, through public and private collecting in Britain as well as travel on the Continent. How did encounters with a diverse range of Italian sculptural objects contribute to the developing mythologies of Italian sculptors in the nineteenth century? How did these encounters inspire Italian Renaissance receptions more broadly, both artistic and scholarly? How did they affect the perceived understanding of the term 'Renaissance' and its geographical, cultural and chronological boundaries? What impact did this have on modern sculpture practice?

Programme

10.00–10.15 Welcome and Opening Remarks: Dr Charlotte Drew (University of Bristol)

10.15–12.15 Site and Seeing: Encountering Italian Sculpture in the Nineteenth Century

Chair: Dr Charlotte Drew (University of Bristol)

10.15–10.35 Prof. Martha Dunkelman (Canisius College, Buffalo)
'Augustus Saint-Gaudens and Donatello'

10.35–10.55 Thomas Couldridge (Durham University)
'South Kensington's Cupid and Modern Receptions: A New Chapter'

10.55–11.15 Discussion

Chair: Dr Melissa Gustin (Henry Moore Institute)

11.15–11.35 Dr Deborah Stein (Boston College)
'Charles Callahan Perkins' Outline Illustrations of his Art Historical Scholarship on Early Italian Renaissance Sculpture'

11.35–11.55 Dr Lynn Catterson (Columbia University, New York)
'New Sculptors, New Old Masters: The Manufacture of Italian Renaissance Art in the Late Nineteenth-century Art Market'

11.55–12.15 Discussion

12.15–13.30 Lunch

13.30–15.00 Italian Sculpture and the Decorative

Chair: TBC

13.30–13.50 Dr Juliet Carroll (Liverpool John Moores University)
'Encountering the Unique: The Della Robbia Pottery of Birkenhead and the Architectural Bas-reliefs of Luca della Robbia'

13.50–14.10 Samantha Scott (University of York)
'Lithophanes and the Italian Renaissance: Translation between Two and Three Dimensions'

14.10–14.30 Dr Ciarán Rua O'Neill (University of York)
'More Versatile than Most: Alfred Gilbert and Benvenuto Cellini'
14.30–15.00 Discussion

15.00–15.30 Tea Break

15.30–17.00 Old Masters, New Mistresses

Chair: Prof. Hilary Fraser (Birkbeck, University of London)

15.30–15.50 Dr Katie Faulkner (Courtauld Institute of Art)
'Like a Virgin: Juliet Margaret Cameron and Clementina Hawarden's photographic reinterpreta-

tions of Renaissance Sculptors'

15.50–16.10 Dr Francesco Ventrella (University of Sussex)
'Feeling Sculptural about Writing: Sexuality and the Modernity of Renaissance Statues'

16.10–16.30 Dr Melissa Gustin (Henry Moore Institute)
'Beatrice Cecilia: Stefano Maderno, Harriet Hosmer and the Two-Body Problem'

16.30–17.00 Discussion

17.00–17.30 Roundtable Discussion and Closing Remarks

Prof. Elizabeth Prettejohn (University of York)

Tickets: £10 standard/£5 concessions

Reference:
CONF: New Sculptors, Old Masters (Leeds, 8 Mar 19). In: ArtHist.net, Jan 22, 2019 (accessed Nov 17, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/20006>.