

2 Sessions at RSA 2021 (Dublin, 7–10 Apr 21)

Renaissance Society of America 67th Annual Meeting, Dublin, Apr 7–10, 2021
www.rsa.org/page/RSADublin2021

ArtHist.net Redaktion, University of Toronto

[1] Mining for the Earth-Based Sciences

[2] Lost Works of Art in Print

[1] Mining for the Earth-Based Sciences

From: katie.jakobiec@utoronto.ca

Date: 1 Jun 20

Deadline: 15 Jul 20

Organizers: Stefano Gulizia (PAN, Warsaw); Katie Jakobiec (University of Toronto)

This panel is sponsored by the Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies (CRRS), University of Toronto, for the 67th Annual Meeting of the Renaissance Society of America, to be held in Dublin, Ireland, on 7-10 April 2021. We warmly invite submissions and hope to select 3-4 papers for presentation according to the following outline.

Between 1450 and 1650, in the aftermath of a great technological change in metallurgy, a vast Central European space including centres such as Trento, Chemnitz, and Goslar specialized and clustered into new industrial hubs. In our historiography of the period, as well, mining has emerged as a nexus for studying the interface between natural history, physiology, and the processing of materials. Thanks to Anna Marie Roos's *The Salt of the Earth* (Brill 2007) and *Laboratories of Art*, edited by Sven Dupré (Springer 2014), to name only a few contributions, we have a refined understanding of how this artisanal knowledge related to alchemy and philosophy. More recently, a special issue of *Renaissance Studies* (34.1: 2019) edited by Tina Asmussen and Pamela O. Long undertook the ambitious and impressive task of accounting for *Berggeschrey*, or 'mountain uproar' in all its technological, legal, textual, and symbolic features, including the core ambivalence of ethnographic collections up to the new histories of labor in a reunited Germany.

By design, our session assigns a premium on epistemic practices over the two major viewpoints adopted by historians, namely folklore and socio-economic development. Overall, we would like to see the Renaissance mine and its paperwork as a concrete example of Hans-Jörg Rheinberger's laboratory, and how objects appear and disappear, or perhaps, move from being merely ordinary to epistemic. Another larger outlook of this project is environmental. Paracelsus already endowed subterranean things with an enduring, palingenetic power which was then developed within an experimental framework; both James Delbourgo and Philippa Hellawell argued for a substantial yet persuasive extension of the domain of mining to

include seascapes and submarine knowledge.

Given all this, and without pretenses to limit the analysis only to these points, we propose that:

- The morphing of sites of extraction into sites of connectivity is potentially problematic; likewise, it is difficult to constraint the sheer variety of actors and agencies at a mine into the concept of a “trading zone” in which not everyone was “trading” (e.g. some were ‘accounting for’, others ‘enslaved to’, and so on). Could we improve on our metaphorical usage? In this regard, Renée Raphael’s 2019 essay in RS offers a valuable model of how the current ‘practical’ view of the trading zone hides a heavy reliance on textual learning.
- There is a relation between cartographic curiosity and mining that still awaits to be fully explored, and this means dealing with maps, sections, landscapes, and representations of specimens. For example, we couldn’t find any reference in English-speaking scholarship to the *Delineatio Wielicensis* of 1645, that is, the map of the massive salt mine of Wieliczka, outside Cracow, in the context of the Polish scientific book of the seventeenth-century. How do we assess mining with regard to visual representation in earth sciences histories? Could we profitably turn to the tradition of geodesy and its instruments? And does the cartographic imagination link mining to topography, territoriality, and the military arts?
- As a corollary to the last point, and because of our typical reliance on tacit or vernacular learning within an interdisciplinary-oriented history of knowledge, issues of mobility and redeployment have completely overwhelmed the traditional framework of geology, seen as the birth of a “new” science. Yet, there is still a lot to be gained from the *longue durée* of fifteenth-century artisanal humanism, as Ivano Dal Prete has stressed. We simply suggest that we need better studies of how mining relates to epistemic images of “deep time,” and to remind ourselves that even rocks and fossils were aligned to anatomical exercises.
- So far, almost the entirety of our case studies came from the German-speaking world, which, in point of fact, has become synonymous with research on Renaissance mining. There is, however, an untapped wealth of materials pertaining to Italy, the Czech Republic, Poland-Lithuania, and the colonial Iberian experience. How would the ensuing picture differ? And how did the historical actors consider these lesser-studied mining towns as a built environment? Did an enviro-technical site function more like a networked object?

The deadline is July 15, 2020; notification of acceptance will come within 15 days after that date. To apply please: 1) submit an abstract of no more than 250 words, describing your proposal, and a 150-word narrative CV, which would serve as a basis for introducing you; 2) explicitly confirm proof of, or plan to obtain, a RSA membership; and 3) send all this as a single attachment to both organizers, at sgulizia@gmail.com and katie.jakobiec@utoronto.ca.

[2] Lost Works of Art in Print

From: annebloemacher@uni-muenster.de

Date: 4 Jun 20

Deadline: 24 Jul 20

Panel sponsored by the Association of Print Scholars.

Organizers: Claudia Echinger-Maurach/Anne Bloemacher, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster

Considering the comprehensive literature on works of art lost during World War II, the absence of scholarship on lost paintings, sculptures and architecture from the Renaissance with special regard to their

"preservation" in print is astounding. Prints play a significant role for our knowledge of lost art, yet all too often prints have been used as mere "documents" of such objects. As works of art in their own right, they show us the "contemporary eye" and very often, they offer divergent facts. The analysis of lost works of art in print opens a great variety of questions: How close comes the print to the original, how much did the draughtsman, who prepared the drawing for the print, or the engraver himself alter, leave out or add to the original? Are there different approaches to the task of "reproducing" in the North or the South? Can one observe different attitudes to render paintings, sculptures or architecture in print in the long run of the Renaissance? This session aims to clarify these aspects, especially to show the double face of preserving the work of art and to produce a new one through line, light and shade, but also (at times) through observing nature in a more intense way and in creating a convincing ensemble, fusing the style of the depicted work of art with the style of the engraver.

Scholars of art history are kindly invited to send their proposal to the organizers Anne Bloemacher (anne-bloemacher@uni-muenster.de) and Claudia Echinger-Maurach (echinger@uni-muenster.de) before Friday, July 24th.

Your email should include the following:

- Full name, current affiliation; if applicable, preferred email address, and PhD completion date (past or expected)
- Paper title (15-word maximum)
- Abstract (150-word maximum) with 3-5 keywords listed below
- A short CV (300 word maximum)
- Any audio/visual requirements

Please note: Speakers must become RSA members by November 1st to speak at the conference.

Reference:

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