

## 2 Sessions at HNA 2021 (Amsterdam/Den Haag, 2–5 Jun 21)

Historians of Netherlandish Art Conference 2021, Amsterdam/Den Haag, Jun 2–05, 2021

ArtHist Redaktion

[\[1\]](#) Art and knowledge: cognitive categories in visual compositions

[\[2\]](#) Netherlandish Mobility in Times of Crisis (1500–1700)

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[\[1\]](#) Art and knowledge: cognitive categories in visual compositions

From: Sophie Suykens

Date: Jun 23, 2020

Deadline: Jul 30, 2020

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries mark a period of gradual but profound transformation of the way in which phenomena of the natural world were studied. This session aims to explore the interaction between the visual arts and early modern theories of knowledge and nature. Medieval and early modern knowledge theories are characterized by their high reliance on the so-called ‘categories’ (dialectics). Knowledge and reasoning were embedded into a complex web of interconnected categories, which correspond to underlying structuring principles. One example illustrating the ubiquity of categorical thinking was the division of the natural world into four elements. These were not only associated to the primary qualities derived from the theory of humourism, but also to motive qualities and other classifications of nature such as the four seasons and the four temperaments. Such categories were shared by various cultural and social spheres at the time. However, only little attention has been paid to parallels between early modern cognitive categories and the way they relate – or not – to early modern artworks. Apart from scientific illustrations, the visual structure of other artworks and genres has seldom been confronted explicitly with contemporary theories of knowledge.

We welcome proposals that address diverse art forms and artistic genres, studied from a wide range of disciplines in the empirical and theoretical sciences, which discuss the (shifting) connection between cognitive categories on the one hand and visual strategies of composition on the other. Approaching early modern artworks from this perspective can give new insights into the ways in which complex images were constructed and perceived. In doing so, the session also touches upon (1) the debates on the descriptive versus the symbolical interpretation of nature and material culture as represented in Dutch genre painting; (2) the fruitful line of research addressing the multidimensional intersection of art with science and episteme; (3) the relationship between science and (a) artistic styles (e.g. naturalism, optics, mathematical perspective), (b) artistic genres (e.g. scientific illustrations, Dutch still life paintings), (c) materialities (e.g. arti-

sanal knowledge and technology) and even (d) collecting practices.

Session organizers: Sophie Suykens (Ghent University) [sophie.suykens@ugent.be](mailto:sophie.suykens@ugent.be), Elizabeth Vandeweghe (Ghent University), [elizabeth.vandeweghe@ugent.be](mailto:elizabeth.vandeweghe@ugent.be)

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[\[2\]](#) Netherlandish Mobility in Times of Crisis (1500–1700)

(ANKK Sponsored Session)

From: Madeline Delbé / Sabrina Lind

Date: Jun 29, 2020

Deadline: Sep 1, 2020

Session Organizers:

Madeline Delbé, University of Bonn/University of Florence/Université Paris-Sorbonne (Paris IV), [madeline.delbe@gmx.de](mailto:madeline.delbe@gmx.de)

Sabrina Lind, Ghent University/University of Verona, [sabrina.lind@ugent.be](mailto:sabrina.lind@ugent.be)

Pandemics, wars, economic declines, religious or political persecution, natural catastrophes, famine – crises such as these are, unfortunately, not limited to our present days but have always had an impact on the life and work of different social groups, amongst them artists. This session aims to provide a forum for inquiries into the life and work of artists from the Northern and Southern Netherlands in the period from 1500 until 1700 whose mobility was directly affected by different kinds of crises. It will focus on both the ways in which crises did – or at times did not – affect artists' private, social, and professional lives, taking into account artists who faced a crisis in their place of residence, their newly adopted home or along their travel route.

Political and religious persecution may have been the most prevalent factors for (changes of) migration and travel intentions, but in the first half of the 17th century, Europe was also threatened by the Black Death. Artists such as Anthony van Dyck experienced its consequences while staying in Italy, where he was forced into a year of lockdown in Palermo in 1624.

In line with the increasing number of debates and research projects on artists' mobility in (art) historical research, this session will consider an aspect of artists' mobility that has not yet been comprehensively investigated. As is often the case, the particularities of our own historical moment encourage us to renew our attention to related circumstances in the past.

We welcome qualitative and quantitative (case) studies of artists (or groups of artists) from or traveling to and within the Northern and Southern Netherlands whose trajectories intersected with various kinds of crisis.

Possible questions of interest include:

- What kinds of crises did artists face within the Northern and Southern Netherlands in the Early Modern period?
- How did crises affect artists' plans to emigrate, immigrate, and travel?
- What effect (positive and negative) did the forced changes of plan have on their work?
- How did crises hinder and alter "international" collaboration and cultural as well as artistic exchange?
- How did crises complicate artistic and architectural projects that depended on materials or craftsman-

ship coming from abroad?

- What impact did crises have on the number and quality of foreign commissions?
- Which methods and methodologies can be used to study artists' mobility in relation to historical crises (e.g. the Social History of the Artist)?
- Which written (archival and literary) and visual sources attest to artists' mobility in times of crisis and in what ways?
- What role did the city authorities and guilds play in times of crisis (e.g. in promoting or impeding travel abroad)?

We invite 300-word abstracts of the proposed papers to be sent along with a short academic CV to [madeline.delbe@gmx.de](mailto:madeline.delbe@gmx.de) and [sabrina.lind@ugent.be](mailto:sabrina.lind@ugent.be) before 1st September 2020. Successful candidates will be informed by 1st October 2020.

Reference:

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