Reception of the Fantastic in Visual Art (27 Apr 21)

Online (University of Haifa), Oct 18, 2020–Jan 15, 2021
Deadline: Jan 15, 2021

Sharon Khalifa-Gueta, University of Haifa

Reception of the Fantastic in Modern and Contemporary Visual Art

This conference aims to examine the reception of fantastic ideas in Modern and Contemporary visual culture. It will discuss themes such as: mythological elements manifested in the art of later periods, fantastic creatures, human figures with hybrid elements or fantastic attributes, fantastic geographies and architecture, as well as other elements that testify to the endurance of these visual concepts and their reception in diverse cultures.

The Renaissance era revived artistic concepts from the Greco-Roman period, among them imaginary images. But although there is room for more comprehensive scholarly study of reception from Antiquity up until Baroque art, the main interest of this conference is the transformation of fantastic images in later eras, particularly in Modern and Contemporary art, and in a broad geographic scope. This will be a significant contribution to the scholarly debate.

Manifestations of fantastic ideas appeared in diverse eras and cultures, and ancient fantasy is usually classified today as mythology and as connotated to religious and apocrypha. However, one must wonder about content and meaning of this classification. Moreover, in the contemporary world, fantasy is classified as a literary genre, in which a rich academic debate exists, and has also been integrated into new-media studies (cinema, television, gaming and more). It is therefore necessary to develop research into the meaning of the fantastic in visual art in the modern and contemporary era, also inspired by reception researchers of fantasy throughout different eras and in different cultures and places, aiming to understand the implementation and changes in the reception of this principle over time. The identification of fantastic images that have survived or vanished has the potential to expose social aspects of our culture. Fantasy is hard to define, particularly in a historical perspective, thus this conference aims to develop a theoretical scheme for the concept of the fantastic as an essential aspect of human psychology and as an aesthetic theoretical issue that needs further illumination.

Suggested topics may include, but are not limited to:
- The cyclical nature of myths in art
- Images of fantastic creatures
- Fantastic geography in art
- Hybridity
- Magical architecture and its sources
- Fantasy as a distorted mirror of historical reality

- Gender issues in fantastic images
- Fantastic images in religious context

Scholars interested in participating in this virtual conference are invited to submit an abstract of no more than 250 words, no later than January 15, 2021, to Dr. Sharon Khalifa-Gueta: skhali18@campus.haifa.ac.il

The virtual conference will be held on April 27, 2021 and papers will be delivered via Zoom. The conference is hosted by the Art History Department and the School of History, in the UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA and with the participation of the Department of Classical Studies in Bar-Ilan University.

Reference:

CFP: Reception of the Fantastic in Visual Art (27 Apr 21). In: ArtHist.net, Oct 18, 2020 (accessed Nov 24, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/23744>.