

His Artibus: An author, Her/His Environment and Artwork (online, 27–28 May 21)

online / Brno, Czech Republic, Masaryk University, Department of Art History, May 27–28, 2021

Deadline: Mar 15, 2021

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Call for Papers

His Artibus: An author, Her/His Environment and Artwork. Possibilities of Artists' Biographies in the Present Day

The Second Biennale of the Centre for Early Modern Studies, Masaryk University, Department of Art History, planned for May 6th –7th 2020, will take place in the new term May 27th –28th 2021.

The Biennale is currently planned as an online meeting. If the epidemiological situation allows (and we firmly believe, it will), we are ready to transfer the conference from the virtual into the real space of the Masaryk University in Brno. For the foreign colleagues and those who cannot arrive to Brno the video-conferencing will remain at the disposal.

Possibility, to participate in the conference via pc-applications, will be for foreign colleagues or other colleagues, who could not arrive at Brno, saved.

One of the founders of the art historical discipline, Carl Friedrich von Rumohr, stated that a piece of artwork needs to be critically explained outside of itself and not according to the intention of its author. His statement stands at the beginning of an important tradition of a scientific approach to art history. In a similar sense, the thoughts of Michael Baxandall have been resonating until the present day. He reflected upon model situations of "patterns of intention" in relation to artwork, commissioning and an author and her/his environment. The philosophical and historical contributions of Michel Foucault and Roger Chartier, as well as methodological initiative of Pierre Bourdieu and Niklas Luhmann from the sociological perspective, enter the art historical debate about artworks and their authors collaterally in this tradition.

In this situation, one can ask how perhaps the most popular genre of art historical writing, the "life and work" of an artist, reacts to this discussion. Nevertheless, the monography of an artist is considered too apparent and established as a genre whose borders do not need to be tested and rethought in the art history praxis that consists of a high frequency of publications and exhibitions.

The Second Biennale of the Centre for Early Modern Studies has an ambition to evolve the discussion that has been opened by Jindřich Vybíral and the topic of the Sixth Congress of Czech Art Historians oriented on art-historical biographies. We concentrate on the role of biographies in the ear-

ly modern research in Czech lands and Central Europe today. We rather focus on papers reflecting various possible approaches to this traditional art historical genre from a methodological, critical, or historiographical perspective than on presentations of individual research. We are interested in generally formulated questions and practically focused ones reflecting the changing (or on the contrary stagnating) form and function of the aforementioned genre within present-day studies into the Central European art of the 15th to 18th centuries.

Related questions:

- Does the critical research of the historiography of the genre “life and work” show that it concerns a constant basic model, or could we find more distinctive changes in the history or emphasis on different accents of biographical interpretation?
- Can the model “life and work” still evolve and apply even today, or does it represent a stereotypical and old-fashioned way of presentation focused only on traditional readers and visitors to museums?
- Can the biographical model still play a key role in presenting the personality of an artist and his work in a new and different way according to modern discussions about the role of various actors bound with the origin of artwork? What framework of art origin is formed by the discursivity in respect of its visual equivalent, “period eye”?
- Does the genre reflect some move of “theoretical priorities” within the art history in the 21st century despite critical “neglecting” from the side of newer theoretical and methodological approaches?
- What function should the biographical genre play in the contemporary methodological pluralism of the art historical discipline?

Organiser: Masaryk University, Department of Art History, Centre for Early Modern Studies

Prof. Katlijne Van der Stighelen, a Belgian art historian and the author of the important monography about a forgotten female-artist Michaelina Wautier, has accepted our invitation to Brno and will participate in the Biennale as a keynote speaker

For more information see:

<https://bcpce.hypotheses.org/1970#more-1970>

<https://cemsbrno.org/bienale/>

Be so kind as to send your abstracts in English, German or Czech until March 15th, 2021 to hisartibus@cemsbrno.org.

Reference:

CFP: His Artibus: An author, Her/His Environment and Artwork (online, 27-28 May 21). In: ArtHist.net, Jan 14, 2021 (accessed Jan 22, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/24244>>.