

## Image of Maps – Maps of Imagination (Oxford, 13 May 06)

Steven Stowell

Call For Papers

The Image of Maps - Maps of the Imagination

A One Day Conference

13 May 2006

At the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford University

Hosted by the Department of the History of Art at Oxford University

In recent years, in the fields of historical cultural studies, there has been growing interest in the multi-faceted concept of mapping. Specifically, the evidence of maps gives researchers valuable information on a wide range of questions that are pertinent to those studying the history of science, art and visual culture, intellectual history, and so on. This one-day symposium aims to address the concept of mapping in two distinct but related ways. The first is concerned for the physical product of the map and its histories. Historically, the creation of maps has been at the intersection of a broad spectrum of issues that include the relationship between art and science, the philosophy of space, cultural and political geographies, among many others. In this way, maps are cultural products which express the beliefs of those who created them, and as such are an index to ideas that are not expressed in other extant texts. Second, this symposium aims to address the concept of mappings as a means of creating structures that are not limited to the organization of space, but which rather use the metaphor of mapping as a means to organize the world. The process of creating mental maps is one example of this, and it can also be argued that, historically, people have used the metaphor of mapping as a means of organizing encyclopaedic knowledge, aiding memory, meditation, and other forms of invention. Therefore, we may ask 'historically, what has been the relationship between these imaginary maps, those which organize concepts and ideas into an imagined space, and those 'actual' maps which seek to make the physical space of the world into a single image?'

This symposium is being co-ordinated by doctoral students in Art History,

Steven Stowell and Tania Woloshyn, at the University of Oxford and the University of Nottingham, respectively, and as such, seeks to bring together graduate students and young academics who are using either the concept or the evidence of maps to enlighten their historical research. We intend for this event to be a way of sharing our methodology, research, and addressing some of the problems of using maps as historical evidence.

Some possible topics include, but are not restricted to:

- Maps as evidence of intellectual history
- The relationship between reading maps and reading texts
- The relationship between maps and art: painted map cycles, can paintings be read as maps?
- Mapping the mind and body: the relationship between medicine and maps
- Tourism and travel: Maps as an index to cultural consumption
- Conflicting world views and the creation of maps (ie: Renaissance vs. Classical geography)

Please submit proposals for 30 minute papers by 12 January 2006 to: [image.of.maps@gmail.com](mailto:image.of.maps@gmail.com)

The conference organizers are attempting to obtain travel subsidies for graduate students accepted to speak at the conference, and will also do all within their power to obtain affordable accommodations for speakers. Details will be announced in the future.

Reference:

CFP: Image of Maps - Maps of Imagination (Oxford, 13 May 06). In: ArtHist.net, Nov 14, 2005 (accessed Jan 9, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/27659>>.