

Beyond Mimesis and Nominalism (London, 22–23 Jun 06)

Roman Frigg

Call for papers

Beyond Mimesis and Nominalism: Representation in Art and Science

Two-day conference to be held in London
on 22-23 June 2006.

Courtauld Institute of Art Research Forum
London School of Economics
Institute of Philosophy of the University of London

Deadline for Submissions: 1 March 2006

Representations play a critical role in both science and art. Perceived as different in kind, artistic and scientific representations have been studied as objects of distinct disciplinary and intellectual traditions. However, recent work in both the philosophy of science and studies of the visual arts suggests that these apparently different representational traditions may be related in challenging and provocative ways. "Beyond Mimesis and Nominalism," a conference co-sponsored by the Courtauld Institute of Art Research Forum, the London School of Economics, and the Institute of Philosophy of the University of London, seeks to open conversations between and beyond these compartmentalised traditions of thinking about representation.

According to dominant accounts, scientific representation is explained by appeal to mimetic relationships such as similarity or formal relations like isomorphism. As these views have been subjected to increasing criticisms, recent approaches to scientific representation have begun to draw upon analogies with artistic representation. Significantly, parts of this emergent literature have turned to a "nominalist" position, not unlike that advocated by Nelson Goodman in his writings on representation in art.

But, a similar turn is already apparent within studies of visual art, where scientific representations are increasingly integrated into the analysis of art. Like their colleagues in the philosophy of science, recent scholars in the visual arts have seen Goodman's work as an

important point of engagement. His pioneering work on the visual has informed recent efforts to expand semantic taxonomies and to analyse the increasing field of images that fall outside classification as “art.” As this work has received important contribution from scholars concerned with scientific imaging, the project of rethinking representation is one of growing general importance to art-historical studies, whose interpretative scope has expanded dramatically outward in recent decades.

In order to press this emergent interdisciplinary conversation, scholars from all disciplines are invited to submit papers to this two-day international conference. We particularly seek submissions that explore the “how” of representation—papers that can enrich our understanding of the techniques employed in scientific representation and/or address their semantic structures or historical convergences with artistic practices - and vice versa. Also especially encouraged are papers that critique, historicize or defend the conference’s central terms of mimesis and nominalism, or offer approaches to representations that navigate a middle course between them.

Keynote speakers:

Catherine Elgin (Harvard University)

James Elkins (School of the Art Institute of Chicago/University College Cork, Ireland)

Organisers:

Roman Frigg (London School of Economics)

Matthew Hunter (Courtauld Institute of Art/University of Chicago)

Please send extended abstracts of up to 1000 words to

ph-artandscience@lse.ac.uk

by 1 March 2006.

Decisions will be made by 1 April.

Website:

http://www.courtauld.ac.uk/research/research_forum/calls_papers/mimesis-nominalism.html

Reference:

CFP: Beyond Mimesis and Nominalism (London, 22-23 Jun 06). In: ArtHist.net, Dec 19, 2005 (accessed Jan 10, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/27790>>.