European Painted Cloths C14th-C21st (London, 15-16 Jun 12)

The Courtauld Institute of Art, Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 0RN, Jun 15–16, 2012

Ingrid Guiot

European Painted Cloths C14th-C21st: Pageantry, Ceremony, Theatre and the Domestic Interior

10.00 – 17.45, Friday 15 June (with registration from 09.30)
10.25 – 17.30, Saturday 16 June (with registration from 10.00)

This two day conference will explore the use of painted cloths in religious ceremony, pageantry, domestic interiors and scenic art. It will focus on their change of context and significance from the fourteenth to the twenty-first century exploring their different function, materials, and method of creation.

The potential for large sizes, portability, and versatility for religious objects including banners, hangings, altarpieces, and palls was the impetus for the emergence of fabrics as a painting support in Western art in the Middle Ages. The demand for elaborate altarpieces, church furnishings, and liturgical objects increased in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries due to changes to liturgical practice and an upsurge of religious fervour. The functionality of the works explains the survival of relatively few examples. Were paintings on fabric envisaged as ephemeral objects? There is evidence to the contrary. One of the most common forms of interior decoration for centuries, painted cloths have received less attention from art historians and historians than they deserve in part due to their poor survival. Often regarded as cheap substitutes for those who could not afford tapestries, their function has been oversimplified and their importance in providing imagery as well as literary subjects has been underrated.

Scenic backcloths were once commissioned for court functions, part of an elaborate display of royal power and magnificence, such as the Field of the Cloth of Gold. The same methods and materials continued to be used for theatrical cloths. The nineteenth and twentieth century saw a resurgence in interest in the art form, as established artists, among them Burne-Jones, Rossetti, Picasso and later Piper, Hockney and Caulfield, took up commissions for the theatre and ballet.

The conference, to be held at The Courtauld Institute of Art, will be run in collaboration with the Victoria & Albert Museum. Presentations by four keynote speakers will reflect the aim of the conference to bring together and foster interdisciplinary research between art and interiors historians, paintings and textile conservators.

Keynote(s): Jo Kirby Atkinson (Scientific Department, National Gallery, London); Roland Krischel (Wallraf-Richartz-Museum & Fondation Corboud, Cologne, Germany); Nicholas Mander (Owlpen

Manor, UK); Hilary Vernon Smith (Royal National Theatre, UK)

Peer reviewed papers presented at the conference will be published by Archetype Books

Organised by Christina Young (The Courtauld Institute of Art) and Nicola Costaras (Victoria & Albert Museum)

To book a place: £65 (£25 students and concessions)
BOOK ONLINE: http://courtauld-institute.digitalmuseum.co.uk Or send a cheque made payable to 'Courtauld Institute of Art' to: Research Forum Events Co-ordinator, Research Forum, The Courtauld Institute of Art, Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 0RN, stating the event title 'European Painted Cloths' conference.
For further information, email ResearchForumEvents@courtauld.ac.uk

PROGRAMME

Friday 15 June (DAY 1)

09.30 – 10.00 Registration

10.00 – 10.15 Welcome and Introduction: Christina Young (The Courtauld Institute of Art)

SESSION 1: Religious and Secular – Chair: Maurice Howard (University of Sussex)

10.15 – 11.00 Keynote: Roland Krischel (Wallraf-Richartz-Museum & Fondation Corboud, Cologne, Germany): Cloths in and on Paintings - From Curtain to Shutter and Back Again

11.00 – 11.30 Jim Harris (The Courtauld Institute of Art): Building a House for Repentance: The Monochrome Passion Cloths of San Nicolò Del Boschetto in Genoa

11.30 – 12.00 COFFEE/TEA BREAK - Poster Session & Trade show

12.00 – 12.30 Nicola Coldstream (independent researcher): The Use of Painted Cloths in London Civic Pageantry of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries

12.30 – 13.00 Christina Young (The Courtauld Institute of Art): Scenic Painted Cloths: King's Painters to Celebrity Painters

13.00 – 13.30 Nicola Costaras (Victoria and Albert Museum): The Ownership of Painted Cloths in Sixteenth-Century England

13.30 – 14.45 BREAK FOR LUNCH

SESSION 2: Domestic Interiors – Chair: Nicola Costaras (Victoria and Albert Museum)

14.45 – 15.30 Keynote: Sir Nicholas Mander (Owlpen Manor, UK): The Painted Cloths at Owlpen Manor, Gloucestershire

15.30 – 16.00 Katherine French (University of Michigan): Painted Cloths in Late Medieval London Houses

16.00 – 16.30 Jorien Jas (Gelderland Trust): A Chinese Room in Decay: History and Conservation

16.30 – 17.00 Sylvia W. Houghteling (Yale University): From Foot-Cloth to Petticoat: the British Uses of Indian Chintz ca. 1700

17.00 – 17.30 Discussion

17.45 Close: Poster Session & Trade show closes

17.45 RECEPTION

Saturday 16 June (DAY 2)

10.00 – 10.25 Registration

10.25 – 10.30 Introduction: Nicola Costaras (Victoria and Albert Museum)

SESSION 3: Pageantry and Ceremony – Chair: Dinah Eastop (The National Archives)
10.30 – 11.15 Keynote: Jo Kirby Atkinson (Scientific Department, National Gallery, London): The Trade and Import of Painted Cloths in 15th/16th Century London
11.15 – 11.45 Jonathan Gration, Margriet van Eikema Hommes, Katrien Keune, Emma Boyce, Piet Bakke (Delft University of Technology): Weaving Tapestries with Paint

11.45 – 12.15 Katja von Baum (Walraaf Richartz Museum): The Legend of St. Bruno and the Painting Cycles on Canvas in Late Fifteenth-Century Cologne

12.15 – 12.45 Sing d'Arcy (The University of New South Wales): Painted Cloth and the Transformation of Seville Cathedral for the 1671 Festivities of the Canonisation of Saint Ferdinand III

12.45 – 13.45 BREAK FOR LUNCH

SESSION 4 Scenic Art – Chair: Christina Young (The Courtauld Institute of Art)

13.45 – 14.30 Keynote: Hilary Vernon Smith (Royal National Theatre, UK): The Changing Practice of Scenic Painters in England

14.30 – 15.00 Rebecca Olson (Oregon State University): 'Shall by a Painted Cloth Be Kept in Awe': Shakespeare's Narrative Textiles

15.00 – 15.30 COFFEE/TEA BREAK

15.30 – 16.00 Karen Thompson (independent researcher) and Frances Lennard (University of Glasgow): Painted Theatre Scenery – How Composition and Function Defined a Conservation Methodology

16.00 – 16.30 Nikki Frater (Plymouth University): Rex Whistler's Backcloth for 'The Rake's Progress' – 1935 and 1942

16.30 – 17.00 Jane Pritchard (Victoria and Albert Museum): Theatre backcloths at the Victoria & Albert Museum

17.00 – 17.30 Discussion and Concluding Remarks

17.30 END

Further information and programme:
http://www.courtauld.ac.uk/researchforum/events/2012/summer/EuropeanPaintedClothsC14th-C21st.shtml

Reference:

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