

## The Aesthetics of Marble (27–29 May 10)

Astrid

International conference, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz -  
Max-Planck-Institut

May 27-29, 2010

Deadline for applications: June 20, 2009

Although numerous studies, conferences, exhibitions and publications have explored the origin, the extraction, the transportation, and the use of marble and other veined stones, relatively little has been done on the resulting compositions, on their meanings, their effect and reception, in short on the aesthetics of marble. Yet the recourse to the natural patterns of stone in architecture and painting is of great interest for the history and theory of the visual arts, as it mediates between nature and artifice, iconicity and aniconism, as well as between material, structure, ornament, and iconography.

The two-day conference 'The Aesthetics of Marble' will take place at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz from 27 to 29 May 2010 and aims at mapping this emerging field of research. It intends to take a culturally and chronologically ample view of the phenomenon and wishes to bring together a broad array of approaches from the history of art, architectural history, archaeology, material and conservation studies, anthropology, psychology, etc. Case studies are especially welcome and should help to test the heuristic efficacy of close observation and formal analysis, image theory, typology, reception aesthetics and history, or other methods.

Areas and subjects of research could include marble facing in architecture (from Hagia Sophia to Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona Pavilion and beyond) or in the applied arts; the conservation, restoration, reconstruction and interpretation of marble surfaces (e.g. the Getty Villa); the perception and use of stones as pictures (e.g. pietra paesina) and the painting or writing on stone; the poietics, autopoietics and acheiropoietics of marble and other veined stones; the relationship between their use or display and the issue of iconicity v. aniconism within and across religions or quasi-religions (including Modernism); cultural transfer and the transformation of practices (e.g. in post-Conquest America); the history and phenomenology of the perception of coloured stone and its impact upon the uses of specific materials for specific functions; the transmateriality of stones and the metamorphic nature attributed to them; ekphraseis, stone theories and

marble fictions.

Scholars interested in participating in the conference are invited to send a 250-words proposal, a CV and a list of publications to the following addresses by 20 June 2009.

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