

Picturing the Sensorium in Art – Antiquity to 1800 (Glasgow, 15–17 Apr 10)

Rachel King

AAH (Association of Art Historians) Annual Conference, University of
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15–17 April 2010

Deadline for applications: 9 November 2009

PICTURING THE SENSORIUM IN ART FROM ANTIQUITY TO 1800

In recent years, scholarship has become increasingly sensitised to the fact that historical human interaction with the material world, as it still does today, engaged not only the visual, but also the spectrum of the sensory and affective. The result has been a raft of histories of tasting, smelling, touching and hearing – all of which, directly or indirectly, work with and extend Baxandall's concept of the 'period eye'. Then, as now, these oral, aural, visual, olfactory and haptic practices were not only culturally determined but also often communicated without written explanation or in transitory form. We welcome papers that explore the performance of the senses in art from Antiquity to 1800 (for example hearing music, touching sculpture, smelling flowers, stroking animals, tasting food) as well as affective responses, such as pleasure or disgust. Papers might discuss sensorial engagement with art and/or its materials in contexts such as the artist's studio, domestic interior or gallery/ museum. They could also consider how art reflects the contingent medical and social contexts of the senses or how artistic media, for example tapestries or objects to be handled, were viewed in times when contagion was feared. Equally, contributions could relate to the inhibition or loss of the senses, such as the depiction of blindness or the deterioration of an artist's own faculties of sight and/or colour as revealed in his/her writings or work. This panel welcomes contributions that provide fresh interpretations of existing knowledge, or presentations of new material emerging from research, conservation, or archival discoveries. Contributions will be limited to ca 25 minutes in length.

To submit a paper, please send a 250 word abstract to the two session convenors (e-mail addresses as below) before 9 November 2009. Your name, your institutional affiliation and full contact details should also be

included in the abstract.

Rachel King
Art History and Visual Studies
The University of Manchester, U.K.
r.king@cantab.net

Christopher Plumb
Centre for Museology and CHSTM (Centre for the History of Science,
Technology and Medicine)
The University of Manchester, U.K.
christopherplumb@gmail.com

Reference:

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