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Nicola Courtright

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Articles

"Their Cortés and Our Cortés": Spanish Colonialism and Aztec Representation MICHAEL SCHREFFLER

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In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Spaniards attempted to describe the practice of Aztec painting through the lens of European art theory. Their rhetoric and iconography, which constructed a distorted view of painting in Aztec Mexico, potentially tell us less about that practice than it does about the anxieties and expectations of those who produced those texts and images. As scholars have suggested, the art of painting may have provided a site for contact and compatibility between Aztecs and Spaniards. However, it was also a topos that gave apt form to early modern conceptualizations of historiographic practice and cultural difference.

Imaging Childhood in Eighteenth-Century France: Greuze's Little Girl with a Dog EMMA BARKER

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During the artist's lifetime, A Child Playing with a Dog was one of Jean-Baptiste Greuze's most admired and best-known works. The painting represents the physical, instinctual nature of the child in a manner unprecedented in French art. The image of childhood that it offers has close parallels in the scientific and medical discourse of the later eighteenth century. Like many contemporary commentators, Greuze evokes not simply the innocence of children but also their vulnerability, above all, that of little girls. He thereby implicates the viewer in the child's fate, both for good and ill.

Art History and the Politics of Empire: Rethinking the Vienna School MATTHEW RAMPLEY

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The standard narrative of the Vienna school of art history has cast its authors as cosmopolitan, progressive, and aesthetically liberal. Few have focused on the interrelation of the Vienna school and the cultural politics of Austria-Hungary. An exploration of the school's engagement with the Hapsburg Empire's cosmopolitan ideology of "unity in diversity" reveals that Vienna school writings reproduce long-standing hierarchies in which Slav and Romanian art and culture were either dismissed or regarded as backward. Contrary to commonly held views of the Vienna school as progressive, its cosmopolitanism frequently propounded an imperialist outlook comparable to colonial attitudes elsewhere in Europe.

Selling the Artist: Advertising, Art, and Audience in Nineteenth-Century Shanghai ROBERTA WUE

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Art advertisements found in the classifieds section of the Shanghai newspaper Shenbao offer rich documentation of the nineteenth-century Shanghai art world's producers, products, and prices; they are also highly revealing of the changing relationship between artist and audience in the late Qing era. The examination of a selection of advertisements promoting works by artists ranging from the celebrated, such as Ren Bonian (1840-1895), to the completely obscure reveals how Shanghai artists positioned themselves in the marketplace, cultivated a public image, pitched their works, and negotiated their relationship with a large and anonymous urban audience.

The Sound of Light: Reflections on Art History in the Visual Culture of Hip-Hop KRISTA THOMPSON

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Contemporary visual expressions of hip-hop have popularized approaches to visibility among black youth. These practices emphasize the effect of being seen and being represented, especially the optical effects of light and shiny reflection. Studio artists Kehinde Wiley and Luis Gispert draw on these representational strategies of hip-hop to refashion art history, bringing the painterly techniques that created optical illusion in late Renaissance and Baroque painting especially to the surface in their work. They also use hip-hop's visual language to highlight the surface aesthetics of race, the hypervisibility of blackness in contemporary consumer culture, and the blinding limits of visuality.

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