

Before the White Box (New York, 9-11 Feb 11)

Petra T Chu

York, February 9-11, 2011)

Call for proposals, CAA Annual Conference Session 2011:

Session: Before the White Box: Museum Murals in the Nineteenth Century

Chaired by Petra ten-Doesschate Chu, Seton Hall University

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For more information and instructions, see:

<http://www.collegeart.org/pdf/2011callforparticipation.pdf>

Session description: Even as today's museum architects are beginning to defy the tyranny of the white box, it is difficult to understand the impulse that led museum designers of the past to create interior spaces in which walls and ceilings were covered with painted murals. To our eyes, conditioned by the modernist museum experience, this sets up an undesirable visual competition between the artifacts and their physical surroundings. In the nineteenth century, however, decorative murals and ceiling paintings were an important part of many museum buildings. In some cases, they were intended to broadly summarize the mission of the museum within the context of national goals and aspirations. In others, they addressed or expanded on the specific educational role of the museum--whether it be focused on art, history, anthropology, or natural history. This session invites papers that deal with nineteenth- or early twentieth-century murals that decorate(d) the walls and/or ceilings of exhibition rooms as well as entrance halls, lobbies, and stairwells of museums. A variety of approaches is encouraged.

Reference:

CFP: Before the White Box (New York, 9-11 Feb 11). In: ArtHist.net, Mar 31, 2010 (accessed Feb 17, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/32398>.