

## Happiness or Its Absence in Art (Beerscheba, 10 Mar 11)

Ronit

### Happiness or Its Absence in Art

A symposium at the Department of the Arts, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel, March 10th, 2011

The theme of happiness goes hand in hand with art. During the evolution of Western civilization the concept of happiness was tied to visual representations in different ways and carried various meanings. Ancient Egyptian burial structures and their contents relate to happiness and wealth acquired in the afterlife, while victory arches, for example, convey a sense of elation drawn from joy and happiness associated with a crowd united by its feelings of nationalism. Medieval works of art were often designed in order to inspire the viewer with happiness resulting from religious fulfillment. However, religious piety and the severity arising from some of the religious works in the Baroque era, for instance, may form the basis for a discourse about the absence, or rejection, of happiness at that time.

For this symposium we invite papers relating to various aspects of the theme of happiness in art and visual culture, including concepts which generate or shape happiness (or its absence) such as: love, innocence, religious exaltation, spiritual uplift, physical pleasure and enjoyment, entertainment, food, life and death, along with misery, despair, unrequited love. We welcome papers dealing with a work of art or type of iconography, as well as studies from the field of art theory. We are interested in discourses about the perception of happiness by the artist or within the creative process itself; the status of the beholder and the artistic attempt to create a transcendental experience. New research methods and approaches within the discipline as well as papers which adopt an original perspective will receive special attention.

We cordially invite you to propose papers by sending a title and an abstract (up to 300 words) in English, in MS Word format to [happiness.arts@gmail.com](mailto:happiness.arts@gmail.com) by December 31st, 2010. Please remember to attach your contact details.

For further inquiries please contact Ms. Ronit Milano at:  
[ronitmilano@gmail.com](mailto:ronitmilano@gmail.com)

Reference:

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