

## Perspective, no 2022/1: Transport

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### TRANSPORT

The journal *Perspective* will devote its 2022 - 1 issue to the transport of objects and artworks. While the study of the transport of cultural heritage assets has given rise to considerable specialized literature and remains a key issue for the institutions responsible for their conservation, the historiography of the development and standardization of its practices remains to be established. And conversely, within the history of art, where the phenomena of artistic circulation and transfers constitute a well-established research field, the most pragmatic aspects of the physical transport of the objects tend to be ignored. This issue of *Perspective* will therefore study the objects themselves and their "thingness" at the very moment of their displacement, which is often an indicator of the importance societies accord them.

In addition to its grounding in the material life of things, the theme of transport also leads us to an alternative history of artistic production, as Jennifer L. Roberts suggests in *Transporting Visions. The Movement of Images in Early America* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2014). Citing the case of artists who are fully conscious of the future mobility of their works at the time they create them, the art historian develops the concept of "long-distance pictures", in the sense of images whose very content appears to question their position in space and time. While we find crated artworks and staged displacements in many older representations, recent art often engages with issues of the transport itself, playing on the container as content or developing a metadiscourse on the status of the work of art within the economic, political or aesthetic system conditioning it.

By bringing together such professional, technical, scientific and methodological questions, this issue of *Perspective* is intended to shed light on the ways archeologists, art historians, curators and other researchers in the humanities deal with the transport of objects and artworks and reveal the richness of its many implications. The time frame is open ended, extending from the earliest societies producing artifacts to the latest debates on digital culture, with no limits on geography or media. Proposed investigations should be situated within a history in perpetual motion, from artistic migrations to cultural exchanges, grasped in all their diversity (be it social, transnational or other), not to mention, obviously, museum practices and exhibitions.

The journal will consider all articles dealing with the history of the transport of objects and artworks, heritage assets and archives, its representations, practices, implications, motivations, and consequences. Proposals should correspond to the journal's editorial policy, which is aimed at going beyond simple case studies in order to bring out specific historiographical issues and, in this instance, analyze the ways art history, cultural heritage history and archeology make use of

the concept of transport in order to rethink their methods and scholarly frameworks. To this end, proposals should offer a critical look at the contributions and debates renewing the fields of art history and archeology today, through a reflexive approach that will ground them within the debates of the discipline, related fields, and our time in general.

The issue is also open to review essays addressing several recent publications (within the past ten years) which are relevant to the discussions raised by the question of transport in the different disciplines under consideration.

Among the possible (but non-exhaustive) themes to be explored:

The moment of transport in the production of value and meaning

- The transport of artworks and the creation of value (uses, fetichizing, hierarchies, costs, insurance, estimating the value of the invaluable, etc.).
- The transport of objects and artworks within the life of societies (processions, victories, demonstrations, etc.).
- Population migrations involving the transport of objects and artworks.
- The transport of objects and artworks as an issue and tool of cultural diplomacy.

Transport under duress

- Transporting art in times of danger, conflict, or violence (protective measures, evacuation, transfer, spoliation, return, etc.).
- Cultural heritage anxieties: the history of deteriorations, destructions, losses as a consequence of the transport of objects; the history of artwork thefts; absences and presences of objects; anticipating or reacting to the dangers of unwanted displacements (floods, fires, exceptional risks).

Organized transport: forms and accessibility

- The transport of art and its material traces in the life of cultural heritage institutions: displacements, movement of works, storage areas (closed or open for visits), material traces of artwork transport (reports, labels, markings).
- The history of exhibitions (loan-based exhibits, traveling exhibits, diplomatic exhibits, etc.).
- Non-transportable artworks (or almost): stationary or unmovable works, architectural ensembles.
- The ecology and sustainability of art transport: history, implications, new practices.
- Transport as a medium of accessibility (issues of cultural democratization, institutional power); traveling exhibitions, mobile museums, regional or international satellite branches.
- Displacement as method: art historians in transit; the migration of archives and documentation.
- Transporting art in the digital age: virtual displacements, extended accessibility.

Transport and its representations

- The transport of art and its representations in the visual arts, movies, literature, video games, comics, etc.
- Transport at work: artistic practices and artworks dealing specifically with the issue of transport; objects as "image vehicles" (Aby Warburg).

Perspective

Published by the Institut national d'histoire de l'art (INHA) since 2006, Perspective is a biannual journal which aims to bring out the diversity of current research in art history through a constantly evolving approach that is explicitly aware of itself and its own historicity and articulations. It bears

witness to the historiographical debates within the field, while remaining in continuous relation with the images and works of art themselves, updating their interpretations, and thus fostering global, intra- and interdisciplinary reflection. The journal publishes scholarly texts which offer innovative perspectives on a given theme. These may be situated within a wide range, yet without ever losing sight of their larger objective: going beyond any given case study in order to interrogate the discipline, its methods, history and limitations, while relating these questions to topical issues from art history and neighboring disciplines that speak to each of us as citizens.

Perspective invites contributors to update their historiographical material and the theoretical questionings from which they draw their work, to think from and around the starting point of a precise question, an assessment that will be considered an epistemological tool rather than a goal in itself. Each article thus calls for a new approach creating links with the great societal and intellectual debates of our time.

Perspective is conceived as a disciplinary crossroads aiming to encourage dialogue between art history and other fields of research, the humanities in particular, and put into action the "law of the good neighbor" developed by Aby Warburg.

All geographical areas, periods, and media are welcome.

Please send your submissions (an abstract of 2,000 to 3,000 characters / 350 to 500 words, a provisional title, a short bibliography on the subject, and a biography of a few lines) to the editorial office ([revue-perspective@inha.fr](mailto:revue-perspective@inha.fr)) before May 12th, 2021.

Proposals will be examined by the issue's editorial committee regardless of language (articles accepted for publication will be translated by Perspective). The authors of the pre-selected proposals will be informed of the committee's decision in June 2021. The complete articles (25,000 or 45,000 characters/ 4,500 or 7,500 words depending on the project) must be submitted by October 1st, 2021. These will be definitively accepted after the journal's anonymous peer-review process.

[translated from French by Miriam Rosen]

<https://journals.openedition.org/perspective/>

Reference:

CFP: Perspective, no 2022/1: Transport. In: ArtHist.net, May 4, 2021 (accessed Jul 12, 2025),

<<https://arthist.net/archive/34033>>.