

Photographic Art Reproductions, from 1839 to the Present (online, 23 Jul 21)

online (University of St Andrews / Centre André Chastel), Jul 23, 2021

Sofya Dmitrieva

The photographic art reproduction came into being simultaneously with the invention of the medium: Joseph-Nicéphore Niépce captured engravings in his earliest heliographs, while William Henry Fox Talbot praised the reproductive capacities of the calotype in *The Pencil of Nature* (1844). As much as art has influenced photographic reproduction (for instance, Louis Daguerre who arranged sculptural pieces into elaborate still lives recalling those by Dutch Golden Age masters or, perhaps, Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin), the reproduction has influenced art. As Walter Benjamin has influentially argued, it put the 'aura' of the original into question. Together with Paul Valery and Erwin Panofsky, Benjamin sparked a century-long debate on the interrelationship between the original and the copy, which is still far from any decisive conclusion with Peter Walsh, Michelle Henning, Georges Didi-Huberman, and Bruno Latour readdressing the problem in the last decade.

What is more, the other aspects of the photographic reproduction have received much less scholarly attention. Despite the valuable efforts of Dominique de Font-Réaulx, Stephen Bann, and Patrizia Di Bello, there is still much to be discovered with regards to its materiality, function, and reception: What technical challenges has photographic reproduction faced since the appearance of the medium and how has it resolved them? How have new technologies changed the relationship between the original and the copy? What were the multiple uses of photographic reproductions? What do they tell us about the aesthetic taste of their day? What impact has the photographic reproduction had on the fine arts since the nineteenth century? Does it itself have any artistic value?

Conference Programme
(all times are BST)

10.00 Welcome and introduction by Sofya Dmitrieva and Lucy Szemetová

10.15 Keynote lecture. Stephen Bann (CBE), Aims and Effects of Early Art Reproduction by Photography

11.15 Break

11.25 Panel 1. The Reproduction, the Original, and the Museum (chair: Gabrielle Slack-Smith)
- Ann Compton, Reproducing Reproductions: Bedford Lemere's Photographs of the Royal Architectural Museum's Collection of Plaster Casts
- Griet Bonne, Panoramic Ambitions: Collecting Rubens' Oeuvre (1877-1927)

- Madeleine Page, Paintings and Their Visually Indistinguishable Copies

12.45 Lunch break

14.00 Panel 2. The Materiality of the Photographic Reproduction (chair: Meg Dolan)

- Anthony Hamber, Materiality and Photographic Art Publications, 1839-1880

- Muriel Heisch, Between Competition and Coexistence – Photographic Reproductions in Illustrated Art Journals of the 19th Century

- Rod Bantjes, Paintings for the Stereoscope

15.20 Break

15.30 Panel 3. The Photographic Reproduction as an Educational Tool (chair: Mi Zhou)

- Oriane Girard, The School for the Eye: Louis Courajod's Photography Collection, 1870-96

- Julie Codell, Multiple Formats, Multiple Spectators: The Berlin Photographic Company

- Dorota Łuczak and Aleksandra Paradowska, The Role of Artwork Reproductions in the Polish Identity Building Process after the Second World War

16.50 Break

17.00 Panel 4. The Photographic Reproduction and the Artist (chair: Francesca Butterfield)

- Kathryn Kremnitzer, Manet and Photography – Across Media and in the Archives

- Sara Vitacca, Framing the Old Masters: Renaissance Art Photographs in 19th-Century Artists' Collections

- Natasha Ruiz-Gómez, Noir et blond: Auguste Rodin's Photographic Scrapbooks

18.20 Break

18.30-19.30 Roundtable. Dominique de Font-Réaulx, Patrizia Di Bello, Michelle Henning, and Kim Timby

The conference is free of charge and does not require registration. To join the event on Microsoft Teams, simply click on the following link on the day of the conference (July 23) - <https://tinyurl.com/PhotoReproduction>

If you have any questions concerning the conference or face technical problems accessing the event, contact Sofya Dmitrieva via sofyak.dmitrieva@gmail.com

The organisers are infinitely grateful to Graeme Hyland for IT support.

Reference:

CONF: Photographic Art Reproductions, from 1839 to the Present (online, 23 Jul 21). In: ArtHist.net, Jul 3, 2021 (accessed Feb 23, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/34503>>.