

Artium Quaestiones 33: Reproduction of the work of art

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CFP: Reproduction of a work of art

History of art as an academic discipline does not exist without reproduction. Reproductions not only constitute a visual evidence in art-historical narratives but also noticeably influence paradigms of art history. Studies that have been intensively developing for about a decade demonstrate that this visual tool used by art historians (most frequently photography), until recently treated as a neutral document, requires critical study.

The history of reproductions is a history of their role in science, of how they circulate and popularize knowledge as well as a history of constructing catalogues of artworks which often were subject to a specified, ideologically and politically contingent vision of the world. Studying reproductions calls for an analysis of conventions that determine them, their visuality, techniques and forms of presentation (prints, diapositives, slides, albums, postcards, computer screen, etc.) as well as systems of classification, for instance based on geographical, national or disciplinary divisions. In consequence, such an approach facilitates studying reproductions as a specific way of seeing an artwork, embodying a clearly defined idea of art in universalist, materialist, cultural or political terms. It is related to the history of university photo libraries and archives, which collected catalogues of art monuments and whose premises may have been connected with colonialism or the shaping of national identity. A propaganda use of reproductions - a remarkable example of which can be materials created on the occasion of the Nazi exhibitions of „degenerate art“ - illustrates their agency and a broad sociocultural but also political and ideological meaning.

Any attempt to define a reproduction of a work of art as an autonomous object of art is questionable. The objective of representing a work while physically absent remains the common denominator of any definition. However, the diversity of photographic representations of works of art often complicates a clear-cut boundary between what is a reproduction and what, due to its outstanding qualities, becomes a self-sufficient photographic or filmic work - a medium-specific interpretation. Are the famous photographs of *Body to Performance* (1969-1973) by Dennis Oppenheim a document of his actions, a reproduction of an artistic activity or an element of the project? Does the reproduction of Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain* (1917) by Edward Steichen destroy the aura of the work or - to the contrary - reinforces it? What is the difference between reproduction in pho-

tography, film and one in the form of an immersive projection? The above-signaled issues concern the study of artistic practices and histories of art history as well as other academic disciplines which take advantage of reproductions (e.g. conservation of art monuments). An important aspect, common for all these fields, is a broader perspective of historically contingent, cultural, social, economic and political conditions.

In the planned issue of *Artium Quaestiones* (33, 2022) we are particularly interested in the following problems:

- the role and position of reproduction since the development of art history as an academic discipline, including other fields such as film history or history of printing; conventions of reproduction as models of seeing and interpreting works of art; exploring an artwork by the eye of a camera (e.g. opening it onto a haptic experience); the category of time in film reproduction
- reproduction as a material object; an analysis of specificity of a given medium and technology (prints, photography, film, immersive projection); the way different modes of representation (a folder, a postcard, slide projection, book, album etc.) affect both the perception of reproduction and the reproduced work of art.
- reproduction of a work of art in the service of propaganda
- digital reproduction in virtual museum, immersive reproductions, accessibility of reproductions in online collections and their impact on the cultural and social status of (a reproduction of) an artwork
- collections of reproductions (university collections, museum collections, national archives), their structure, organization and premises
- reproduction, documentation or photography as an element of artistic projects; definitions of reproduction

We accept abstracts (2,000-3,000 characters) accompanied by a short academic bio (max. 500 characters) until 30 November 2021. Proposals can be submitted in English, German or Polish. They should be sent to: aq.redakcja@amu.edu.pl. The authors of accepted proposals will be asked to send completed texts by 1 March 2022. Submissions should be no longer than 50,000 characters including footnotes and a bibliography and be formatted according to the guidelines available on our website (For Authors). We would also like to remind scholars interested in publishing in our journal that in each issue we accept a number of papers in the field of art history unrelated to its main topic.

Reference:

CFP: *Artium Quaestiones* 33: Reproduction of the work of art. In: *Arthist.net*, Oct 13, 2021 (accessed Sep 15, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/35065>>.