

Session at RSA (San Juan, 9–11 Mar 23)

San Juan, Mar 9–11, 2023

Deadline: Jul 15, 2022

ArtHist.net Redaktion

The Renaissance Society of America Conference 2023

[\[1\]](#) Images of Exile and Migration in the Early Modern Low Countries and Beyond

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Date: May 20, 2022

Deadline: July 7, 2022

In her 2007 novel *Flights*, the Polish writer, activist, and Nobel Prize Winner Olga Tokarczuk advises her readers: “Move. Get going. Blessed is he who leaves.” The constant movement of people, voluntary and forced, is a ubiquitous feature of our world, one that we experience not only vicariously through media but also first-hand in our neighborhoods and classrooms, increasingly populated by first-generation citizens and first-generation students. Our attitudes to migrants, and our own experiences of migration, are shaped by centuries-old archetypes, expectations, and fears. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Netherlands, with its unprecedented internal and external movement of people, provides an excellent opportunity to examine sociocultural tropes and different facets of contemporary migrations. First Antwerp, and then Amsterdam became powerful centers of commercial, cultural, and scholarly activity that attracted newcomers from across Europe. At the same time, dramatic religious and political events forced many native and immigrant citizens to seek refuge beyond the borders of the Low Countries. While this is a well-known phenomenon that has been examined by demographic and economic historians, art historians have so far paid little attention to artistic responses it stimulated. This session seeks to explore how migration, refuge, and exile were addressed in broadly understood early modern imagery in the Netherlands and produced by Netherlandish emigrants and refugees.

Topics may include, but are not limited to: religious and mythological iconography of exile and its role in negotiating approaches to migrants and refugees; images as instruments of addressing the trauma of displacement; approaches to economic migrants and religious exiles; migrations of Sephardic Jews to and beyond the Netherlands; ekphrastic images of exile in the early modern Dutch literature; inventories and egodocuments as a synecdoche of exile; global movement of Netherlandish merchants and artists and their visual representation, global movement of enslaved or coerced persons; teaching migration and exile as part of art historical curriculum.

Please send your full name, current affiliation, paper title (15-word maximum), abstract (150-word maximum), PhD completion date (past or expected), and a one-page CV to Elizabeth Sutton (elizabeth.sutton@uni.edu) and Barbara Kaminska (bak018@shsu.edu) by July 15. Presenters must be RSA members at

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the time of the conference.

www.rsa.org

Reference:

CFP: Session at RSA (San Juan, 9-11 Mar 23). In: ArtHist.net, May 22, 2022 (accessed Apr 7, 2026),

<<https://arthist.net/archive/36753>>.