

Journal18 #16 Cold

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16 COLD

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Issue editor: Michael Yonan, University of California, Davis

Feeling cool is increasingly a great privilege in our warming world. Cold weather arrives later each winter and departs sooner, lengthening warm seasons across the globe and reducing the cooler periods necessary to the planet's healthy functioning. One need not be terribly old to have recollections of cooler times. Accompanying changes to global mean temperatures are erratic and often dangerous weather patterns, melting icecaps, rising seas, stronger storms, droughts, and other environmental transformations that, in sum, represent an existential problem for humankind.

The cause of these changes is the consumption of fossil fuels, which transformed human life profoundly in the pursuit of modernity. The origin of this transformation falls squarely in the eighteenth century; indeed the terminus post quem for measuring human effects on global temperatures is the year 1800. Recognizing this draws attention to a truth little noticed in art-historical scholarship: eighteenth-century art was made for a colder world than the one we now inhabit.

This special issue of Journal18 invites contributions that address the relationship between temperature and the art of the long eighteenth century. It seeks to insert eighteenth-century visual and material culture into the growing literature on historical climatology. The 1700s are the final century of the Little Ice Age, a climatological phenomenon characterized by lower global mean temperatures that took place between the late sixteenth and early nineteenth centuries. What are the implications of this climatological context for the narratives we tell about eighteenth-century art? How did an Enlightenment understanding of temperature inflect the period's art? And do the conditions of eighteenth-century life, as filtered through the period's artistic production, help us understand why the world became warmer?

Potential topics include the relationship between architecture and temperature, including the technologies used to keep buildings warm or cool; the material culture of gauging temperature (thermometers, barometers, hygrometers, etc.); pictorial representations of extreme climates, e.g., the tropics or the Arctic; the relationship between theories of climate and the representation of peoples; clothing and body temperature; the sub-Arctic north as a cultural space; and the visualization of industrialization. Particularly welcome are essays from a technical art history perspective that address challenges to conserving eighteenth-century things in a warming world.

To submit a proposal: send an abstract (250 words) and brief biography by 15 September 2022 to the following two addresses: editor@journal18.org and meyonan@ucdavis.edu. Articles should

not exceed 6000 words (including footnotes) and will be due by 31 March 2023 for publication later that year.

Reference:

CFP: Journal18 #16 Cold. In: Arthist.net, Jun 8, 2022 (accessed Jul 2, 2025),
<<https://arthist.net/archive/36894>>.