Transformative Bodies in the Premodern World (London, 27 Jun 22)

London, The Courtauld Institute, Vernon Square, Jun 27, 2022

Zuzanna Sarnecka

Transformative Bodies in the Premodern World: Experiences and Materials

The theme of this workshop is the transformation of bodies through, with or in relation to experiences and materials. Eight speakers will be exploring the ways, in which past peoples engaged with objects and materials from a variety of disciplinary and geographical backgrounds. The presentations will engage with practices (e.g. ritual, artistic, medicinal) that affected an actual or perceived change (in/of the body of the practitioner or the materials used). The goal of the workshop is to combine the ritualistic, the religious, the magical and the medicinal understanding of bodies in order to expand our understanding of the premodern way(s) of experiencing and engaging with the sensorial and material realities. While the temporal framework is what in Western historical writing is referred to as the medieval and early modern periods, the geographical framework stretches beyond the Eurocentric scope in order to widen our perspectives and further enrich the debate. The scope of the workshop is highly interdisciplinary and speakers have backgrounds in fields as diverse as the history of science, musicology, archaeology, art history, material culture, history, and religious studies.

Organised by Mads Heilskov (The Courtauld) and Zuzanna Sarnecka (University of Warsaw).

PROGRAMME

13.00: Welcome (Lecture Theatre 2, Vernon Square)

13.10: Session 1: Gender and Thing-power

Montserrat Cabré, Universidad de Cantabria: Adorning the female body: divergence and accord in 15th century women’s thinking

Don C. Skemer, Princeton University: Solomon and Faust: Magic Encircling the Body

Luciana Carvalho, University of Oxford: Red for Rebirth! The use of cinnabar by the Sicans

Zuzanna Sarnecka, University of Warsaw: Moisture and dryness: Fictive materiality of glazed terracotta sculptures in Renaissance Italy

15.10: Break

15.30: Session 2: Devotion and the Body

Jessica Maratsos, University of Cambridge: The Saintly body: Art, Anatomy, and Reanimation

Antonio Chemotti, KU Leuven (Alamire Foundation) / KBR: Hearing heavenly music during exequies in post-Tridentine Italy

Louisa McKenzie, The Warburg Institute: Making yourself in wax: the metamorphic potential of the wax ex-voto

Mads Heilskov, The Courtauld Institute of Art: Life-Lines: Stylus, Pen, Chisel, Paintbrush

17.30: Closing Remarks

17.45: Wine reception (Research Forum Seminar Room)

Free event, booking through the Research Forum website is essential.

https://courtauld.ac.uk/whats-on/transformative-bodies-in-the-premodern-world-experiences-and-materials/

Reference:
CONF: Transformative Bodies in the Premodern World (London, 27 Jun 22). In: ArtHist.net, Jun 12, 2022 (accessed Sep 15, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/36927>.