

Shifting Tides: Art in the 18th c. Caribbean (online/Winterthur, 20–21 Apr 23)

online/Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library, Apr 20–21, 2023

Registration deadline: Apr 13, 2023

Marie-Stéphanie Delamaire

Conference and Study Day: Shifting Tides: Art in the 18th-Century Caribbean.

Shifting Tides: Art in the 18th-century Caribbean centers the Caribbean region to explore new pathways in the history of eighteenth-century art. Histories of colonial and viceregal American art tend to privilege art produced in continental spaces as they came to be organized as nation states, overlooking the interrelatedness of early Caribbean and continental colonies, and the significance of the Caribbean region. The Caribbean basin, spanning the coastal areas as well as the islands which lie in the Caribbean Sea, was a central space for the making and circulation of European wealth. It was a space of competition between empires; a space of resistance against imperial exploitation; a space of porous boundaries that facilitated inter-imperial crossings and exchanges between creators and their patrons. This interconnectedness had a profound impact on artistic creation in the early Americas. Artists like José Campeche, Peter Bentzon, John Greenwood, Josef Francisco Xavier de Salazar y Mendoza, Antonio José and Juan José Landaeta, and Agostino Brunias, worked outside and across borders; between social classes and races; and beyond sovereignties which historical narratives have organized for the eighteenth century. Abundant evidence also shows that John Singleton Copley, Luis Paret y Alcázar, and Benjamin West's careers were profoundly impacted by their patrons' connections to the Caribbean.

Shifting Tides brings together scholars, conservators, community partners, artists, and curators to discuss cutting edge scholarship and initiatives that explore the significance of the art created in and in relation to the Caribbean. We will explore new understandings of art making between American spaces, and reflect on their impact on how institutions frame colonial art in the Americas.

Register at

<https://www.winterthur.org/calendar/shifting-tides-art-in-the-18th-century-caribbean/2023-04-20/>.

The conference will take place at Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library. The event is free, with a box lunch available for purchase.

All lectures take place in Copeland Lecture Hall, located in the Visitor Center.

Program:

April 20

8:40 to 10:40: Sources and Perspectives: Rethinking the 18th-century Caribbean

The speakers will discuss new sources used by scholars and conservators working with 18th-century art and material culture in the Americas and the Caribbean. From artworks, to fortifications, raw materials, and archives, the speakers will consider how these sources have shed light on the nature and role of artmaking, focusing on and the importance of forced labor, creators' mobility, and materials and knowledge transfers for artmaking in the 18th century.

José Luis Lazarte Luna (Metropolitan Museum of Art)
Christelle Lozère (Université des Antilles)
Pedro Luengo (Universidad de Sevilla)
Eveline Sint Nicolaas (Rijksmuseum)

11 am to 12:30 pm: Centering the Caribbean

The panelists will discuss the growing significance of the Caribbean in their scholarship, and the way the region contributes to renewing their perspective on the arts and cultures of the Americas in the 18th century. Scholars will also reflect on the ways that US American and Latin American art history and material culture have engaged with this historiography.

Emily Casey (University of Kansas)
Janeth Rodríguez Nóbrega (Universidad Central de Venezuela)
Sophie White (University of Notre Dame)

1:30 to 3:30: Beyond Boundaries: Artists and Creators

This panel will present insights from projects centered on individual artists and the people they represented in their diverse social, ethnic, gender, and racial backgrounds. Focusing on their own current research projects and creative practices, the speakers in this panel will discuss new opportunities that individual-centered narratives present for re-imagining an 18th-century art history that center American and Caribbean colonies.

Alexis Callender (Smith College)
Iraida Rodríguez-Negrón (Museo de Arte de Ponce)
Marc Vermeulen (National Archives, UK)
Michael Wilson (Temple University)

3:45 to 5:15 pm: Color & Artistic Creation

The panel will focus on questions of race and colorism as they relate to current conservation and art historical practice at museums and research institutions working closely with museum collections. The speakers will discuss the field of 18th-century art history and its long misrepresentation of the diversity of artistic production in the American colonies, and the interconnectedness of West Indian and continental settlements. They will present recent research and projects that address the various roles that enslaved people and free people of African and Indigenous descent played in artmaking in the Caribbean, as well as their relationships with institutional practices in their respective fields.

Mark Aronson (Yale University)
Jorge Rivas Pérez (Denver Art Museum)

Lucia Noor Melita (Victoria and Albert Museum)

April 21

9 am to 12 pm: Study Day--Paintings in the Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library collection

The Study Day will be filmed and available online only. Registrants will receive instructions with a link to the recording.

Physical examination and discussion of colonial paintings in the Winterthur collection, highlighting their Caribbean connections. Selections include examples by John Greenwood, Benjamin West, William Williams, John Smibert, John Wollaston, and Robert Feke.

Marie-Stéphanie Delamaire (Carnegie Museum of Art)

Matt Cushman (Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library)

Mina Porell (The Barnes Foundation)

2 pm to 4 pm: Roundtable discussion

Art in the 18th-century Caribbean: Institutional Initiatives, Research Methodologies, and Sustained Engagement

A discussion among scholars, curators, and administrators whose work has contributed to initiatives that create spaces for Caribbean art in their institutions and communities. The speakers will consider comparative or entangled histories of colonialism in the Americas, highlighting connections between the Caribbean, the Atlantic world, and British, Dutch, French, and Spanish imperial spaces. They will reflect on the ways the fields of United States-American and Latin American history and art history have made space for Caribbean history and creative practices. They will discuss new trends and opportunities for an expanded view of the significance of eighteenth-century Caribbean art in various regional and national institutions including universities, museums, historic sites, and community-based cultural organizations.

Rocío Aranda-Alvarado (Ford Foundation)

Rafael Damast (Taller Puertorriqueño)

Wim Klooster (Clark University)

Louis Nelson (University of Virginia)

Reference:

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