

Sacred Drama: Art, Devotion and Performance (St Andrews, 11–12 May 23)

St Andrews/online, May 11–12, 2023

Eelco Nagelsmit

Sacred Drama: Art, Devotion and Performance in the Age of Religious Reform (c. 1500–c. 1700).

This interdisciplinary conference will bring together scholars from nine countries, from fields including history, art history, architectural history, theatre history, music, theology/religious studies, and literature, with two main objectives:

- The first is to consider an inclusive definition of 'sacred drama' that refers not only to religious theatre, as traditionally understood, but includes rituals and various forms of devotional practice, as well as engagement with sacred images, objects and spaces. What are the elements of this drama, and how does it function on various levels, including affective, cognitive, corporeal, and phenomenological?

- Secondly, what happens to religious theatre as we enter the early modern period? We will seek to address the question of the medieval inheritance versus change or transformation, as well as differences between regions, in a period of cultural change, religious reform and confessionalization. What are the particular challenges presented by the religious debates and upheaval in Europe beginning in the early sixteenth century? Does the suppression of mystery plays across Europe in this period bring about an end to religious theatre, as traditionally understood? How do local practices compare with official policy?

School of Art History

University of St Andrews

11–12 May 2023

Organised by Andrew Horn and Eelco Nagelsmit

Old Union Diner

University of St Andrews

Programme:

Thursday 11 May

13:00–13:30

Welcome and opening remarks

13:30–15:00

Session: Theatricality and Representation

Chair: Andrew Horn (University of St Andrews)

Ralph Dekoninck

Université catholique de Louvain

'Sacer horror. The pathos of martyrdom on the Jesuit theatrical and pictorial stage at the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries'

Kamil Kopania

Aleksander Zelwerowicz National Academy of Dramatic Art, Warsaw

'What does religious puppetry mean in the early modern period?'

Laura Stefanescu

University of Sheffield

'Golden wings and peacock feathers: fifteenth-century Florentine angels in theatre and art'

15:30–17:00

Session: Dramatic Transformations

Chair: Carol Richardson (University of Edinburgh)

Steffen Zierholz

Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen

'Performing prayer. A Jesuit aesthetics of liminality'

Michael Carlson

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

'Travestimento spirituale in the circle of Cardinal Federico Borromeo: re-reading Guarini's *Il pastor fido* as sacred drama'

Laura Moretti

University of St Andrews

'Uses of space and temporary installations in the church of San Lazzaro dei Mendicanti in Venice during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries'

Friday 12th May

9:30–11:00

Session: Performative Bodies

Chair: Eelco Nagelsmit (Leiden University)

Andrew Horn

University of St Andrews

'"Outsiders" on the stage of the Passion: queer readings and the socially marginal in Lombard sculptural ensembles, c. 1480–1700'

Grace Harpster

Georgia State University

'Pious footprints: performative travel beyond Borromean Milan'

Ruth Sargent Noyes

National Museum of Denmark

'The sacred drama of corpisanti catacomb relic-sculptures in the long Counter-Reformation'

11:30–12:30

Session: Politics and Piety

Chair: Emily Michelson (University of St Andrews)

Andrew Spicer

Oxford Brookes University

'Revolt, renewal and Marian devotion in the Southern Netherlands, c. 1566–1621'

Bram van Leuven

Leiden University

'Negotiating religious difference: Jewish and Muslim participants in civic pageants of the early seventeenth-century Dutch Republic'

12:30–13:00

Concluding remarks

Made possible with support from the University of St Andrews School of Art History, the Leverhulme Trust and the Association for Art History

Please register to attend online or in person:

<https://events.st-andrews.ac.uk/events/sacred-drama/>

Reference:

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