

PhD position in Digital Art History (1.0 FTE), Utrecht University

Sep 1, 2023–Sep 1, 2027

Application deadline: Jun 15, 2023

Sanne Frequin

Do you want to work at the crossroads of digital humanities, technical art history and heritage studies? The Department of History and Art History of Utrecht University invites applications for the four year PhD-project “The (R)evolution of Reconstruction: an analysis of digital facsimiles.” This project analyses the value of digital facsimiles for researchers, heritage institutions, and museum visitors, in the past, present and future.

The successful candidate will focus on digitally reconstructing the medieval altarpiece for St. John's Cathedral in Den Bosch, created by the Utrecht sculptor Adriaen van Wesel. Although partially preserved, this object is considered the finest example of a fifteenth-century altarpiece in the Northern Netherlands. Firstly, this case study will analyze how the development and application of analytical techniques in the history of art have shaped the form of facsimiles and the ongoing debate surrounding their value in the last century. Secondly, the candidate will explore how technical data, such as that obtained through x-ray fluorescence spectroscopy, can be integrated in a virtual model and how researchers can utilize the facsimile within the metaverse as an art historical research tool. Lastly, this project will investigate how digital facsimiles can act as substitutes for original works of art, thus contributing to a sustainable heritage sector. This project will be conducted in collaboration with Museum Catharijneconvent in Utrecht.

As our PhD candidate, you will:

- conduct in-depth art historical research on the Altarpiece for St. John's Cathedral, analysing existing fragments using technical art history methods and archival sources;
- utilise digital reconstruction techniques to recreate the altarpiece in its original form, with a particular focus on accurately representing the original topography and the polychromy of the remaining fragments;
- collaborate with technical art historians, experts in digital humanities and heritage studies to develop and validate the methodology of digital reconstruction.

Qualifications

We are looking for a candidate with a demonstrable interest in medieval or early modern history or art history and with a strong record of undergraduate and Master's degree work.

Furthermore, our ideal candidate has:

- a demonstrable interest in digital humanities;
- excellent analytical, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills, coupled with a creative approach

to finding innovative solutions;

- strong communication and collaboration abilities, with the capacity to work effectively in an interdisciplinary team;
- an interest in academic research and a strong aspiration for personal development in this field.

Offer

You will be offered a temporary position (1.0 FTE), initially for 18 months with an extension to a total of four years upon a successful assessment in the first year. The gross salary ranges between €2,541 in the first year and €3,247 in the fourth year of employment (scale P according to the Collective Labour Agreement Dutch Universities) per month for a full-time employment. Salaries are supplemented with a holiday bonus of 8% and a year-end bonus of 8.3% per year.

In addition, Utrecht University offers excellent secondary conditions including an attractive retirement scheme, professional development external link, (partly paid) parental leave, sports and flexible employment conditions (multiple choice model). For more information, please visit [working at Utrecht University](#).

About the organisation

Sharing science, shaping tomorrow. A better future for everyone. This ambition motivates our scientists in executing their leading research and inspiring teaching. At Utrecht University, the various disciplines collaborate intensively towards major strategic themes. Our focus is on Dynamics of Youth, Institutions for Open Societies, Life Sciences and Pathways to Sustainability. You can watch the Utrecht University Campus Tour on the website to get an impression of our university.

The Faculty of Humanities [external link](#) has around 7,000 students and 1,100 staff members. It comprises four knowledge domains: Philosophy and Religious Studies, History and Art History, Media and Culture Studies, and Languages, Literature and Communication. With its research and education in these fields, the Faculty aims to contribute to a better understanding of the Netherlands and Europe in a rapidly changing social and cultural context. The enthusiastic and committed colleagues and the excellent amenities in the historical city centre of Utrecht, where the faculty is located, contribute to an inspiring working environment.

The faculty strives for diversity among its employees and students and is committed to creating a safe and inclusive environment for everyone, as can be read in Utrecht University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy.

The core values of the faculty for Humanities are professionalism, transparency, responsibility, connectedness and safety. The core values apply to everyone and we uphold these values in our work and in our communication with each other and with others.

Additional information

For more information about this position, please contact Dr. Sanne Frequin (Assistant Professor of Art History) at s.frequin@uu.nl.

Apply

Everyone deserves to feel at home at our university. We welcome employees with a wide variety of backgrounds and perspectives.

Are you interested in applying? Please include the following in your application:

- a cover letter, in which you indicate what makes you a strong candidate for this research project (e.g., your ability to combine skills in art history and digital humanities);
- your curriculum vitae;
- a sample of writing (e.g., Master's thesis chapter, final paper written for a Master's course, or published article);
- the names and contact information of two persons who can provide references.

Candidates who make the shortlist will be interviewed in person in Utrecht on 26 or 28 June.

The application deadline is 15 June 2023.

Please visit our website for more information and to hand in your application:

<https://www.uu.nl/en/organisation/working-at-utrecht-university/jobs/phd-position-in-digital-art-history-10-fte>

Reference:

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