Challenging Empire (Tuscaloosa, 1-2 Mar 24)

The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL, and the Birmingham Museum of Art, Birmingham, AL, Mar 1–02, 2024
Deadline: Sep 1, 2023

Doris Sung

The symposium “Challenging Empire: Women, Art, and the Global Early Modern World”, part of the project Global Makers: Women Artists in the Early Modern Courts of Europe and Asia (www.global-makers.ua.edu), is intended to extend and expand knowledge of cultural production by and for early modern women – particularly those associated with the courts – on a global scale. While numerous conferences, symposia, and resulting publications in the past several decades have addressed women as producers, consumers, and subjects of European art during the early modern period (c. 1400-1750), less consideration has been given to women’s roles in the courts – particularly as informed by the steadily increasing cross-cultural interactions (i.e. between Europe and Asia, the Americas, Africa, etc.) that characterized the period. This symposium aims to address this lacuna whilst simultaneously de-centering the traditional Euro-centric model of study in the analysis of women’s cultural production, presentation, and consumption surrounding courts and empires (institutions associated with ruling power). The goal is to encourage a more equitable view of early modern women’s experiences of and with art globally, across traditionally held national and continental boundaries.

We invite paper submissions from scholars (including advanced graduate students) whose work addresses topics including, but not limited to:

- early modern (court) women’s roles in:
-- transcultural artistic production, movement, and/or collecting across geographic and/or temporal spaces (across or between Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Americas);
-- moments of cultural exchange, intersection, and/or reciprocity.

- those that, in relation to early modern women’s roles in artistic production:
-- problematize and/or challenge long-held notions surrounding early modern gender, “court”, and “empire” as hegemonic and culturally conditioned concepts; encourage consideration of cultural differences in the definition, production, or reception of visual and material culture;
-- address issues of colonialism, imperialism, and/or patriarchy;
-- approach concepts of the body, exoticism, and/or gender performance across cultures;
-- address the movement of people, ideas, and/or objects;

- incorporate emerging methods in the study of early modern (esp. court) women and art on a global scale (including digital humanities tools such as mapping and/or social network analysis).

While identifying the “early modern” as the period from c.1400 to 1750, we recognize this datation

as a Euro-centric, historiographic concept; therefore, we encourage papers addressing the central themes of the symposium, but with dates that may deviate slightly, especially those problematizing epochal differences in varied geographical and cultural contexts in Asia, Europe, Africa, the Americas and beyond.

Following the conference, a selection of papers will be chosen by the organizers for inclusion in a proposed edited volume. A limited number of travel subsidies will also be available for advanced graduate student presenters. This symposium is made possible by the generous support of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, the Birmingham Museum of Art, the College of Arts and Sciences at The University of Alabama, and the Alabama Digital Humanities Center.

To submit a proposal, please send the following by email to the symposium organizers by Friday, September 1, 2023:

In one PDF:
- Paper title
- Paper abstract (250-word maximum)
- CV with your full name, institutional affiliation (if applicable), title, and email address

Dr. Tanja L. Jones, The University of Alabama, tljones10@ua.edu
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Deadline for submissions: September 1, 2023
Acceptance notification: September 15, 2023

Reference:
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