Evoking the Incommensurable - Painting the Sublime (Jena, 26-28 Jul 23)

Jena, Jul 26–28, 2023
Registration deadline: Jul 25, 2023

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Organised by Johannes Grave, Sonja Scherbaum, Arno Schubbach.

In the 18th century, the concept of the sublime constitutes a genuine novelty and a driving force for advancements in the theoretical reflection on the arts throughout Europe. Edmund Burke and Immanuel Kant distinguished the sublime sharply from the beautiful, i.e., the traditional organizing subject of treatises on painting and literature, and emphasized its excessive strain on the senses, its incommensurability with any measure, and its irreducibility to any bounded shape. It thus constituted a harsh contrast to the beautiful and challenged the aesthetic values of pictorial or literary representation.

Moreover, the sublime was also a challenge to artistic practice. Theoretical discourse concerning the sublime often referred much more directly to our experience of nature than to our experience of artistic works. Particularly in the case of Kant, it was not evident that the arts are at all able to evoke anything sublime. Nevertheless, various attempts to paint the sublime can be seen in the genre of landscape painting. The sublime stimulated painters to push the limits of painting and to explore its capabilities anew.

The international conference “Evoking the Incommensurable – Painting the Sublime” will discuss the question of how artists purposefully explored and exploited the limits and capabilities of painting in order to evoke the incommensurable and paint the sublime.

Participation in the conference is possible both on-site or via Zoom. Please register at paintingthesublime@uni-jena.de by 24 July 2022. The conference will be held in a hybrid format. Please let us know if you would like to attend in person or via Zoom.

Wednesday, 26 July

13:00 Arrival and Registration
13:30 Welcome and Introduction

PANEL 1
Chair: Johannes Grave

14:00 Aris Sarafianos (Ioannina), Hard Imitation and the Sublime Real: Art, Exhibitions, Panoramas, Casts and Displays at the Far Ends of Visibility, c. 1800

15:00 Coffee Break

15:30 Elisabeth Ansel (Jena), “Most magnificent and sublime”: Ossian, Blindness, and the Sublime in the Visual Arts

16:30 Hélène Ibata (Strasbourg), Temporal Vertigo and the Historical Sublime in Turner’s Venice Paintings
17:30 Coffee Break

18:00 Keynote Lecture
Robert Doran (Rochester), “Moving us to Pity”: Visual Art and Sublimity in Burke, Du Bos, and Kant

20:00 Conference Dinner

Thursday, 27 July

9:15 Welcome

PANEL 2
Chair: Mira Claire Zadrozny

9:30 Yvon Le Scanff (Paris), Victor Hugo, “Bringing out the sublime”

10:30 Coffee Break

11:00 Caroline van Eck (Cambridge), The Animal Sublime circa 1800
12:00 Sarah Gould (Paris), Mary Somerville’s Scientific Sublime: Picturing the Immaterial
13:00 Lunch Break

PANEL 3
Chair: Britta Hochkirchen

14:30 Laure Cahen-Maurel (Bonn), Viewing Beyond the Visible: The Power of the Imagination from the Kantian to the Romantic Sublime
15:30 Coffee Break

16:00 Mark Cheetham (Toronto), The Incommensurability of Arctic Sublimity: Environmental Stereotypes and the Specificity of the Sublime

17:00 Craig Hanson (Grand Rapids), Before & After: Temporal Strategies for Effecting the Sublime

19:30 Reception at “Schillers Gartenhaus”

Friday, 28 July

9:15 Welcome

PANEL 4

Chair: Arno Schubbach

9:30 Marie-Louise Monrad Møller (Leipzig), Pauelsen, Dahl, Lundbye – Aspects of the Sublime in Scandinavian Landscape Painting

10:30 Adèle Akamatsu (Paris), Fjords, Waterfalls and High Mountains: Painting the “rough” and “grand” Landscapes of Norway from Germany (1820s – 1860s)
11:30 Coffee Break

12:00 Nikita Mathias (Oslo), Painting the Sublime Beyond Painting. From the Easel to the Cinema
13:00 Concluding Discussion
14:00 End of Conference

Location: Friedrich Schiller University Jena, Rosensäle, Kleiner Sitzungssaal, Fürstengraben 27, 07743 Jena

The latest version of the programme can be found at https://www.kuk.uni-jena.de/forschungsstelle-europaeische-romantik.

Reference:

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