

3 Sessions at RSA (Chicago, 21–23 Mar 24)

RSA Chicago 2024, Mar 21–23, 2024

ArtHist.net Redaktion

[1] Picturing Eremitism and Cenobitism in Early Modern Europe (c. 1300–1650)

[2] Towards the Hermeneutics and Rhetorics of Art, I: Re-thinking the role of visual and material cultures in early modern evangelization across the trans-Atlantic world

[3] Collecting and Knowledge Production through Travel

[1] Picturing Eremitism and Cenobitism in Early Modern Europe (c. 1300–1650)

From: Katharine Stahlbuhk; Maria Gabriella Matarazzo, katharine.stahlbuhk@gmail.com

Date: 18 July 2023

Deadline: 6 August 2023

Spanning from Trecento cycles depicting the Lives of the Desert Fathers and Quattrocento Thebaida to Salvator Rosa's 'Stoic' saints meditating in gloomy forests, eremitism and monastic asceticism constituted a ceaseless source of narrative and visual motives for early-modern European imagery. In continuity with medieval iconographies, desert saints and hermit monks provided models of sanctitude as much as lay ethics, as demonstrated by the different contexts (religious and civic, private and public) in which these artworks were displayed and experienced. Stimulated by the success of the *Vitae patrum*, such iconography flourished particularly in Tre- and Quattrocento Tuscany, and was later revived in the context of the Catholic Reformation, inextricably linked to the development of landscape painting (as demonstrated by Federico Borromeo's 'Christian Optimism' and his appreciation of Nature as God's creation, which informed his collecting activity of still-life and landscape painting). Despite much has been done to identify the hagiographic and literary sources informing this genre, much remains to be explored concerning the cultural, historical, and social phenomena underlying the representation of eremitism and cenobitism in the early-modern period. At the same time, little explored remain the specific artistic challenges that these iconographies posed in regard to materials, scale, coloristic values, and strategies of visual storytelling. The panel addresses these open questions. In particular, we welcome contributions with a wide chronological and geographical span and with a multimedia approach (painting, sculpture, drawing, printmaking, textiles, stained glass, etc.), in order to map out the evolution of these iconographies in the early modern period and the changing perception of notions of Nature, Community, Isolation, the "Contempt of the World," Wilderness and the bodily experience of it.

Proposed topics may include (but are not limited to):

- Social and historical conditions (*vita activa-vita contemplativa*; spiritual crisis; pauperism)
- Entanglements between visual arts and written sources/use of inscriptions
- Eremitic ideals as reflected in landscape painting; the ecology of asceticism
- Wilderness and the "beautiful monstrosity" (to borrow Carlo Cesare Malvasia's terms)

- Nature as the setting for the manifestation of the Supernatural (both Evil and Divine apparitions)
- Solitude vs Community
- Models of female eremitism (Mary Magdalene, Mary of Egypt, Marina of Alexandria, and so on)
- Constitution of norm, recognizability, enhancing performativity
- Monks and Hermits' habits and habitus, with an emphasis on material culture, the use of specific garments for clothing and their colors
- Closely connected to the former, nudity and the bodily experience of fasting, continence, and practices of self-restraint
- Patronage, collecting and display of hermitic imagery

Please submit proposals to Katharine Stahlbuhk (katharine.stahlbuhk@gmail.com) and Maria Gabriella Matarazzo (mariagabriella.matarazzo@sns.it) by August 6, 2023, including:

- full name, current affiliation, and email address
- paper title (15-word max.)
- abstract (150-word max.)
- cv/resume (2-page max.)
- Ph.D. completion date (past or expected)

Please note that presenters must be RSA members at the time of the conference.

[2] Towards the Hermeneutics and Rhetorics of Art, I: Re-thinking the role of visual and material cultures in early modern evangelization across the trans-Atlantic world

From: Alysée Le Druillenec, alysee.communication@gmail.com

Date: 19 July 2023

Deadline: 3 August 2023

Type: Paper Panel

In the wake of the Counter-Reformation, numerous images and objects promoting the Catholic confession and faith were produced and disseminated by different apostolic missions beyond Rome or indeed the boundary of 17th-century Europe. This panel calls attention to the significance of images and objects in the global transmission of theological concepts attempted by various missionary orders. In comparison to texts and words, visual materials mobilized theological discourses through their own discursive means – e. g. the Mariological and Josephological innovations that emerged in the Virgen de la Soledad de la Victoria in the Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico (1782-1789), or the iconic painting La France apportant la foi aux Wendats de la Nouvelle-France (1666) in the Ursulines in Quebec both of which not only extended, but also reformulated ideas that were in embryonic form in seventeenth-century Europe.

Methodologically, this panel proposes to explore the poiesis of evangelical art across the early modern trans-Atlantic world, applying the tools of visual exegesis (Ralph Dekoninck, Walter Melion, Jeffrey F. Hamburger, Frédéric Cousinié, Michel Weemans, Éric Palazzo) and theological hermeneutics (St. Augustine, St. Thomas, but also Bekker, Wittich and Semler, or Schleiermacher, Jeanrond, Gadamer, Schillebeeckx and Ricœur).

We welcome proposals that are inter-, pluri-, transdisciplinary and take comparative and global approach-

es.

For each paper presenter:

- paper title
- paper abstract (c. 300 words)
- CV/resume
- PhD or other terminal degree completion year (past or expected)
- full name, current affiliation, and email address
- primary discipline

Please send your proposal to Alysee.Le-Druillenec@univ-paris1.fr and wenjies@princeton.edu

Primary field: religious art, material culture and spiritual literature

Additional fields: art history, theology, literature

Organizer: Alysée Le Druillenec (Université Panthéon-Sorbonne & UCLouvain)

Co-organizer: Wenjie Su (Princeton University)

Sponsor: GEMCA, Group for Early Modern Art Cultural Analysis

Proposal deadline: 3 August 2023

[3] Collecting and Knowledge Production through Travel

From: Adriana Turpin

Date: 19 July 2023

Deadline: 8 August 2023

The Society for the History of Collecting

The importance of travel in the circulation of ideas and goods in the early Modern period cannot be overemphasized. Travel, whether for commercial, private or public purposes was a source of information and experience and travellers collected at every level, bringing back new and rare objects as well as commercially important goods. Travellers might return with works of art, which they then organised and arranged into their collections, while traders negotiated and acquired rarities to be sold on the European markets. However, collectors created imaginary worlds in their collections as they gathered information, ideas, descriptions and literary texts from cultures other than their own, or employed ekphrasis to relate new narratives and new art works.

The proposed sessions at RSA 2024 aim to investigate the intellectual contexts in which objects were collected, the relationships between travel accounts, whether published or unpublished, and the creation of new understandings of worlds beyond the immediate world of the collector; to explore the dynamic relationships between trade and collectibles; the perceptions created by travelogues and travel manuscripts; the travel of the imagination, which could transcend the voyages made and recounted. We invite new research into any aspect of these topics as we aim to recover the intellectual environment created by travel in early modern Europe that influenced collectors. Equally important were the networks created by travellers who voyaged to different centres in Europe and beyond, possibly through previous contacts but equally creating new contacts and new networks in which collections were discussed and exchanged. We

are also interested in any papers that delve into the question of travel from a non-European perspective.

As an Associate Organization of RSA, the Society for the History of Collecting can sponsor up to four sessions. Proposals are invited for 20-minute papers. They must include a title, abstract of no more than 150 words, keywords, a one-page CV including PhD completion year or expected completion. Speakers will need to be members of RSA at the time of the conference and we strongly encourage them to be members of the Society for the History of Collecting.

Proposals should be sent to Sophia McCabe, Adriana Turpin and Lisa de Zoete, session convenors, at info@societyhistorycollecting.org with the heading "RSA 2024 Proposal" by 8 August 2023.

Reference:

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