

Intermediality and Synagonism in Northern Europe (Toronto, 28–29 Mar 25)

University of Toronto, Can, Mar 28–29, 2025

Deadline: May 20, 2024

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Intermediality and Synagonism in Northern Europe 1400-1700.

Organized by Ethan Matt Kavaler (University of Toronto) and Yannis Hadjinicolaou (University of Bonn)

When the owner of Hieronymus Bosch's *Garden of Earthly Delights* wished to celebrate his acquisition, he had it reconceived as a tapestry. What was gained and what was lost in this transformation? Such questions lead to the concepts of intermediality and synagonism. Intermediality has become newly fashionable in the humanities. Definitions of the term vary as widely as the media to which they refer. Intermediality takes its place alongside related concepts of transmediality, affordance, intertextuality, skeumorphism, interdiscourse and the *Gesamtkunstwerk*. We mean by intermediality the relations between visual media but also their relation to texts, rituals, and performances. As Eric Méchoulan has written, intermediality has the potential to redefine the purpose of art or of a specific medium. Synagonism (Greek: συναγωνισμός), on the other hand, has received little or only inadequate attention in art historical research.

For the area of research encompassed by the term 'synagonism', the focus is less on competition than on the complementary interplay between divergent art forms. It refers to the interactive, reciprocally beneficial cooperation between various forces, media, and modes of artistic presentation and representation, but also to collaborations that transgress boundaries between domains, for example in the form of artist's networks or workshop practices involving multiple media or practitioners.

Whereas most investigations of intermediality have addressed cinema, photography, and literature, we wish to focus on the visual, literary, and musical arts along with ritual performances in Northern Europe between 1400 and 1700—a period in which several different media rose to prominence: not only the famous panel painting, manuscript illumination and prints of the era but also tapestry, stained glass, sculpture, metalwork, and architecture. Equally diverse is the panoply of literary genres and ritual performances. The role of drawing has been identified as key to these processes, but drawing was not one thing in this period—it comprised several distinct genres and was directed toward disparate functions.

We presume that the conference will cover the costs of air fare and hotel stay for 3 nights in Toronto.

We invite proposals for lectures of 20 minutes. Please submit an abstract of 300-400 words and a

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current curriculum vitae by May 20, 2024 to matt.kavaler@utoronto.ca and ghadjini@uni-bonn.de

Reference:

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