

## 7 Sessions at RSA (Boston, 20–22 Mar 25)

Renaissance Society of America's Annual Meeting, Boston, Mar 20–22, 2025

Deadline: Aug 1, 2024

ArtHist.net Redaktion

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- [1] World/Globe: planetary-connecting objects and images in the Early Modern World.

From: Juan Carlos Mantilla

Date: Jul 12, 2024

Deadline: Aug 1, 2024

The study of planetary-reaching phenomena in early modern art historical studies invokes a complex set of debated conceptual terms: worldly, global, transregional, etc; and is molded through an extensive array of analytical units: images, ideas, objects, icons, etc, that are able in their own terms to traverse territories and boundaries, creating connections between distant times and spaces.

This panel studies how images and objects shape different possibilities of planetary connections by creating links between disparate locales. This process not only entailed objects and images' adaptability to diverse contexts but also their capacity to evoke temporal and geographical distances.

We are looking for papers focusing on images or objects that circulate transforming and changing their meaning or value across transcontinental geographies, with a specific interest in cases that include locales and materials from the Global South.

If interested, please send a 150-word abstract, and a one-page CV to [garzonmantilla@mail.fresnostate.edu](mailto:garzonmantilla@mail.fresnostate.edu) before Aug 1.

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- [2] Sensing the Elements in the Experience of the Sacred (14th-16th century).

From: Teresa Martínez Martínez

Date: Jul 10, 2024

Deadline: Jul 31, 2024

Recent scholarship on ecocritical theory is expanding towards an exploration of the agency of natural elements (Bennet 2010). This methodological framework has now been adapted to the study of the past, for example in the pioneering work of Harris (2014). Following this approach, in this series of sessions we will question the role played by the elements (water, fire, air, earth) in sacred spaces, as well as in the individual and collective experience of the sacred in the Mediterranean basin (broadly intended, from Western Europe to the Middle East and the Byzantine Empire).

Our definition of elements includes not only the four canonical ones described by Empedocle, Pitagora and Plato, but also other possible elements, such as the more abstract concept of aether or quintessence. We are interested in how these elements affected bodily sensations, behaviors, mindsets and/or were harnessed and incorporated into religious experiences as a whole. For example, it is acknowledged that water played a key role in monastic environments. But we also know that it was incorporated in processions (such as those in 15th-century Brittany following real and symbolic routes linked to the sea or around a fountain), and we can imagine how this shaped the encounter between the faithful and the divine. Similarly, the movement of air through liturgical fans, or big censers - as the one in the Cathedral of Santiago of Compostela in Spain - affected the individual experience of celebrating and attending mass, as did the feeling of warmth (intended as an effect of fire) produced by handwarmers. As for earth, it was brought back home by pilgrims as a token of their travel to the Holy Land.

To explore these topics, we encourage potential speakers to use a wide range of sources (textual, visual and material) and to consider the multisensorial dimension of the human experience triggered by the elements.

In the context of the ERC research project SenSArt – The Sensuous Appeal of the Holy. Sensory Agency of Sacred Art and Somatised Spiritual Experiences in Medieval Europe (12th-15th century), Grant Agreement nr. 950248, PI Zuleika Murat, Università degli Studi di Padova (<https://sensartproject.eu/>), we aim to organize four sessions, each dedicated to an element. With the aim of creating a fruitful conversation and a context for enriching debates, we accept proposals from scholars from various fields: art history, history, literature, etc. covering a wide range of geographical areas (Western Europe, the Middle East, and the Byzantine Empire) and considering different religious contexts (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) in the period 14th-16th century.

We welcome abstracts for 20-minute papers in English. Scholars may address the topic with a broad approach but always considering the sensorial experience of the natural elements in religious practices.

Please send a paper title (15-word maximum), a short abstract (200-word maximum), together with a short CV and personal data (max. 300 words), to the following emails: [zuleika.murat@unipd.it](mailto:zuleika.murat@unipd.it); [valentina.baradel@unipd.it](mailto:valentina.baradel@unipd.it), [teresa.martinez@unipd.it](mailto:teresa.martinez@unipd.it), [davide.tramarin@unipd.it](mailto:davide.tramarin@unipd.it), [micol.long@unipd.it](mailto:micol.long@unipd.it)

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[3] A view from the outside: influences on the creation and display of collections of Renaissance works of art.

From: Adriana Turpin

Date: Jul 10, 2024

Deadline: Aug 5, 2024

The Society for the History of Collecting.

When studying the formation of collections, and in particular the collections that made up the *kunstkammer*, the intersections between collectors from different courts and countries continue to be of interest to

researchers. New research has emphasised that the differences between northern and Italian collections are more nuanced than previously believed. Furthermore, these historic collections have served as inspiration for subsequent collectors, who in turn created displays of medieval and Renaissance collections modelled on earlier collectors. Thus Horace Walpole created his Tribuna at Strawberry Hill in imitation of what he understood as the Tribuna in Florence, while at Waddesdon, Ferdinand de Rothschild created his version of a kunstkammer. The proposed RSA sessions aim to investigate historical and contemporary perspectives on how collectors from different regions or eras viewed and organised their collections in relation to each other. We seek to explore the cross-cultural influences and the evolution of collection practices over time

We invite papers that consider any of the following aspects of these questions:

- Reports and accounts from Renaissance-era visitors to foreign collections and their interpretations and understandings of these collections
- The role of travel, cultural exchange and diplomacy in shaping the practices of collecting and display during the Renaissance
- The impact and influence of sixteenth-century collections on the development, content and composition of later collections of Renaissance works of art
- Eighteenth and nineteenth-century interpretations of sixteenth-century or earlier collections

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.

NB Please note that speakers are expected to cover their own costs.

Proposals should be sent to Adriana Turpin and Adriana Concin, session convenors, at [info@societyhistorycollecting.org](mailto:info@societyhistorycollecting.org) with the heading "RSA 2024 Proposal" 5 August 2024.

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[\[4\]](#) New Perspectives on the Renaissance Interior.

From: Danarenae Donato

Date: Jul 9, 2024

Deadline: Jul 26, 2024

We welcome submissions in the disciplines of art history, architecture, collecting history, literary studies, women and gender studies, history, and related fields.

Primary Organizer/Chair: Chriscinda Henry

Co-Organizers: Danarenae Donato, Kaylee Kelley, Rachel Kline

Session Abstract:

Interior spaces emerged in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as arenas for the curation of identities that aligned with the virtues of humanism, masculinity or femininity, and religious piety. These thoughtfully crafted spaces placed political power, civic pride, and diverse forms of connectivity on display through a variety of visual strategies. Acting as more than sites of self-fashioning, these spaces were intentionally

modified to engage the senses, showcase evolving modes of craftsmanship and materials, and manifest global and local networks. Throughout the early modern period, both secular and sacred spaces were continuously reimagined, refashioned, and renovated by individuals, families, communities, and institutions. We are seeking papers that offer new approaches to the modification and function of interior spaces in the early modern world during the period 1300-1600.

Possible subjects include, but are not limited to:

- The senses: sound/light/scent/tactility
- Space/spatiality
- Sacred and secular spaces
- Domestic material culture/domesticity
- Patronage, collecting, and display
- Identity/individuality
- Sociability of space and manifestation of networks
- Interiors connected to merchants, immigrants, laborers, and non-elite groups
- Gathering, communal, or community focused spaces
- The mobile interior: people and interiors on the move
- Interior architecture and design
- Refashioning/repurposing of interiors or collections
- Restoration of spaces, materials, and objects, including spolia and antiquities
- Exterior or transitional spaces in dialogue with interiors
- Global and colonial influences
- Redefining archetypes/models of interiors

Please submit a CV and abstract of 250 words to [dadonato@bu.edu](mailto:dadonato@bu.edu), [kfkelley@bu.edu](mailto:kfkelley@bu.edu), and [rtkline@bu.edu](mailto:rtkline@bu.edu) by July 26, 2024. Applicants will be notified by August 5, 2024.

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[5] Guasti: Preventive Destruction during the Italian Wars.

From: Chiara Capulli

Date: Jul 8, 2024

Deadline: Aug 1, 2024

The Lise Meitner Group "Decay, Loss, and Conservation in Art History" at the Bibliotheca Hertziana – Max Planck Institute for Art History is soliciting abstracts for a paper session to be held at the 2025 Renaissance Society of America (RSA) Annual Meeting in Boston, MA.

Much of today's urban fabric sits upon a hidden history of early modern building erasures, deeply intertwined with the evolving needs of military architecture. Entire neighborhoods fell victim to peacetime demolitions to create space for bastions and forts, while approaching armies further accelerated the flattening of extensive built areas surrounding city walls.

The destruction of property by order of public authority, usually identified as *guasto*, was one of the most frequently used military strategies during the Italian Wars (1494–1559), implemented throughout the peninsula. This strategy displaced residential and religious communities and subsequently induced the reinstatement of their artistic heritage in new contexts.

Unlike natural disasters and catastrophes, whose timing is unpredictable, these demolitions were planned: people had time to react to the authorities' mandates and decided what to save from destruction. Hence, guasti serve as privileged points of observation to understand what displaced people valued as well as their strategies for salvaging architectural and artistic heritage.

This session focuses on preventive destruction as a military strategy and investigates how affected communities addressed it, and how guasti fundamentally reshaped the social, religious, and physical landscape of Italian cities.

We invite papers that employ literary, archaeological, art historical, social, and architectural methodologies to shed light on this under-examined aspect of urban history. Potential areas of inquiry include:

- the rhetorical framing used to justify or oppose guasti;
- displaced communities' responses to the demolitions and their attempts at salvaging artistic and architectural heritage;
- how artistic heritage was relocated, redisplayed, or even lost in the wake of destruction;
- the reconstruction efforts undertaken and how they reflect the loss and displacement experienced;
- the long-term impact of guasti on urban planning and social dynamics.

Please submit the following materials to Chiara Capulli ([chiara.capulli@biblhertz.it](mailto:chiara.capulli@biblhertz.it)) by August 1, 2024:

- Paper title (15-word maximum)
- Paper abstract (200-word maximum)
- CV (.pdf or .doc upload)
- PhD or other terminal degree completion year (past or expected)
- Full name, current affiliation, and email address.

Proposal deadline: August 1 2024

Notification Date: August 6 2024

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[6] Imagination at Work: Inventive Iconography in the Arts of the Early Modern Netherlands.

From: Stephanie Dickey

Date: Jul 7, 2024

Deadline: Jul 15, 2024

16th- and 17th-century Dutch and Flemish artists navigated patronage, function, and socio-religious context in fulfilling commissions, and while the open market afforded more opportunities to develop personal preferences, much iconography remained tied to formula and convention. This may be especially true in classical and religious imagery, but genre painting also developed a repertoire of familiar themes. This session seeks papers that explore how an artist engaged with a well-established subject or motif in order to craft a novel way of rendering a recognizable theme, or even to create a hitherto unexplored genre. For example, the enduring fascination with Hieronymus Bosch stimulated an international vogue for scenes of hell and witchcraft. How did artists make their own marks on infernal motifs? As shown in the exhibition Vermeer and the Masters of Genre Painting, genre artists kept tabs on each other's inventions. In this competitive environment, what innovations stand out as distinctive? How did portraitists elevate their specialty, with its inevitable focus on likeness, through creative content? Contributions on any medium are welcome, as are those that address iconographic innovations across media. For instance, print series depicting subjects such as allegory, Biblical history, or landscape provided iconographic sources for painters,

sculptors, textile artists, and more. How did factors such as materiality and scale affect the content of these encounters?

To propose a paper, send abstract (title max. 15 words, text max. 200 words) and CV or resumé including full name, affiliation, email, and year of terminal degree to both co-chairs: Amy Golahny (golahny@lycoming.edu) and Stephanie Dickey (dickey.ss@gmail.com) no later than July 15.

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[7] National Communities and their Artistic Expression in 'Spanish' Italy.

From: Nadia Rizzo

Date: Jul 6, 2024

Deadline: Aug 3, 2024

"Since the early modern age, groups of foreigners have congregated in communities that shared the same geographical origin, language and customs.

These national groups utilized art and architecture to create community cohesion and to represent themselves within the host cities, sometimes conflicting with the prerogatives of local religious orders and engaging in competitive dynamics among themselves.

In the city of Palermo, a notable example unfolds where foreign communities, starting from the sixteenth century and increasingly so from the seventeenth century, established their own national churches. They were discontent with the chapels they or their predecessors had previously founded within other churches. Beyond places of worship, they also gathered in 'secular' spaces like merchant lodges, engaging in their primary activities, or in charitable institutions such as hospitals. This movement of founding new churches in Palermo aligned with the rapid urban development promoted by the Viceroy of Sicily.

On an urban scale, public processions and rituals served as significant means of cultural and political expression: foreign communities utilized these events to maintain visibility and actively participate in public displays of joy and sorrow. This dynamic facilitated lively interactions within the urban fabric and among different foreign groups.

This panel aims to investigate the use of art in fostering national aggregations, focusing on the Spanish dominions in Italy during the Hapsburg regency (1556-1714), such as Naples or Milan.

What were the interferences, if any, between Spanish rulers and foreigners in the Italian cities of the Viceroyalty?

Some topics the panel aims to explore are (but are not limited to):

- Privileged relationships between artists and foreign communities.
- Exportation of new cults, saints, iconographies with strong identity values.
- Import-export networks: artistic objects traveling between homeland and host cities.
- Settlement dynamics of the nationes, and their coexistence with religious orders and local churches.
- Festivals and public appearance of national groups through ephemera."

Please submit your proposal (maximum 200 words) by August 3, 2024, to Nadia Rizzo at [nadia.rizzo@sns.it](mailto:nadia.rizzo@sns.it), attaching the title of your abstract and a brief curriculum vitae.

Reference:

CFP: 7 Sessions at RSA (Boston, 20-22 Mar 25). In: ArtHist.net, Jul 14, 2024 (accessed Jun 27, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/42337>>.