3 Sessions at AAH (York, 9-11 Apr 25)

Association for Art History Annual Conference, York St John University, UK, Apr 9–11, 2025
Deadline: Nov 1, 2024

ArtHist.net Redaktion

[1] Paper Futures: Materialities, Mobilities, Ecologies
[2] The “Misunderstood Artist”: Artistic Explorations of a not yet Obsolete Trope
[3] The Art of a Nation – British Culture on the Continent, 1625-1900

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[1]

Subject: Paper Futures: Materialities, Mobilities, Ecologies
From: Emilia Betty Terracciano

Organizers: Aparna Kumar (University College London) and Emilia Terracciano (The University of Manchester)

The art of papermaking in South Asia has a long and peculiar history dating back to the twelfth century CE. Today, however, the medium of paper has reached a critical historical juncture. As humans grapple with multiple and urgent anthropogenic crises, entering an age increasingly shaped by the pursuit of digital systems and technocratic governance, the seeming near-ubiquity of paper in South Asia as social, political, and economic infrastructure is at stake more than ever. This panel addresses the political ecology of paper at the vanishing point of the analogue world. We ask: why do artists use this material? Is there a future for paper or is the archival impulse to make and use it a hopelessly nostalgic one? Could the materiality of paper awaken new sensorial modes of relating to the peculiar crises of the human body, of time, and of the environment? And finally, how might art historians respond to or, even, restore the vitality of this material through the act of writing? Taking the lead from South Asian artists such as Somnath Hore, Zainul Abedin, Zarina, Simryn Gill, and Dayanita Singh, we welcome contributions from scholars who understand paper as a living ecosystem that is both fragile and sturdy, fleeting and durable, mobile, and yet inescapably tied to the contingencies of place. Can paper assist the art historian in reconsidering the past, present, and future ecological challenges that condition the art histories of South Asia?

Papers should be 20 minutes in length.
Please send proposals of no more than 250 words along with a brief CV to the session convenors:
emilia.terracciano@manchester.ac.uk
a.m.kumar@ucl.ac.uk

Deadline: 1 November 2024

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[2]

Subject: The “Misunderstood Artist”: Artistic Explorations of a not yet Obsolete Trope
From: Anna-Maria Kanta

As a product of modernity, the figure of the “misunderstood artist” arguably belongs to the past. The utopian impulse behind its appearance, namely the longing for an unattainable, universal subject of aesthetic address, was dismantled by poststructuralist thought. The irresponsive “vanguard” artist, knowingly working in the absence of an addressee, came to stand for a postmodern ethos inimical to “the jeremiads of the misunderstood artist” (Lyotard, 1979). At the turn of the twenty-first century, with the proliferation of participatory practices geared to tangible –real, rather than ideal– communities, the figure had been finally laid to rest.

Contrary to mainstream art historical narratives, this session seeks to explore the ways in which the figure of the “misunderstood artist”, as mobilized by artists themselves, has remained an enduring theme of artistic production from the nineteenth century to the present. It calls for papers that examine how artistic engagements with this trope may challenge dominant accounts of the evolving relation between art, its institutions, and the public. How have artists parodically enacted their position as “misunderstood” to question the authority of art criticism, foreground the alienating conditions of their time, or amplify the gap between art and life? How have they conceptually deployed this figure or returned to their underrated predecessors to meditate on art’s social efficacy, complicate the reception of their work, or address the racial and gendered dimensions of artistic identity? And, considering contemporary critiques of consensual participatory practices (Bishop, 2012), can misunderstanding be reclaimed as a radical artistic strategy?

To offer a paper:
You need to provide a title and abstract (250 words maximum) for a 20-minute paper, your name and institutional affiliation (if any).
Please make sure the title is concise and reflects the contents of the paper because the title is what appears online, in social media and in the digital programme.
You should receive an acknowledgement of receipt of your submission within two weeks.

Please email your paper proposals directly to the session convenor:
Anna-Maria Kanta, Independent, amkanta@gmail.com

Deadline for submissions: 1 November 2024

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[3]
Subject: The Art of a Nation – British Culture on the Continent, 1625-1900
From: Daniela Roberts

For decades, the state of self-reflection about English or British identity and cultural values had not reached such heights as it did during the Brexit referendum, reinforcing a feeling of national belonging in an entire nation. This provides the occasion to reappraise how Englishness or Britishness in terms of artistic innovations has been understood and defined in the past and has contributed to European culture. There is generally no doubt that the English landscape garden, Gothic Revival or the Arts and Crafts Movement have had a great impact on the artistic evolution and on aesthetic ideas in Europe. However, we know far less about the recognition of British art, the extent of its influence, the mechanisms of contribution, the processes of appropriation and the intentions or motivations behind them.

This session aims to explore continental engagement with British art and architecture through their pro-

cesses of transfer, adaptation, and interaction with local art production. To this end, we seek to examine how British art was conceived and understood as foreign innovation, and for which qualities and cultural attribution it was selected. How did contemporary reviews judge on the significance and status of British Art? What role did aristocratic networks, politics, economic ties, the art market, and Grand Tour tourism play as decisive factors in activating the transfer process. To discuss these topics, we welcome case studies on understudied examples of artistic transfers including interior design, furniture, and ceramics as well as studies on collecting British art and art historiography.

Papers should be 20 minutes in length. Please send proposals of no more than 250 words along with a brief CV to the session convenors
daniela.roberts@uni-wuerzburg.de (Institute of Art History, University of Würzburg) and
gerry.alabone@nationaltrust.org.uk (National Trust / City & Guilds of London Art School)
by 1 November 2024.

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