

Intermediality and Synagonism in Early Modern Period (Toronto, 28–29 Mar 25)

Centre for Renaissance and Reformation Studies, Victoria College, University of Toronto, Mar 28–29, 2025

Yannis Hadjinicolaou, Kunsthistorisches Institut Universität Bonn

Intermediality and Synagonism in Early Modern Northern Europe.

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.

//Programme

FRIDAY MARCH 28

9:00 – 9:15: Introduction

Chair: Walter Melion, Emory University

9:15 – 9:55: Horst Bredekamp, Humbolt University Berlin

The old and the new colors: contrast and interplay

9:55 – 10:35: Elizabeth Mattison, Dartmouth College

Painting Gold and Prestige in the late Fifteenth-Century Low Countries

10:35 – 11:05: Coffee

11:05 – 11:45: Matt Kavaler, University of Toronto

Tapestry and the Workshops of the Netherlands

11:45 – 12:25: Carolyn Yerkes, Princeton University

The Moveable Siege: Tapestry, Print, and Warfare

12:25 – 1:40: Lunch

Chair: Carolyn Yerkes, Princeton University

1:40 – 2:20: Laura Weigert, Rutgers University

Painting, Illustration, and the Intermediality of Fifteenth-Century Visual Culture

2:20 – 3:00: Stefaniia Demchuk, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

Intermediality of Temperance in Late Gothic (Antwerp) Mannerism

3:00 – 3:40: Ralph Dekoninck, Catholic University of Louvain

Sacred Spectacle as Transgression of the Borders between Media

3:40 – 4:10: Coffee

4:10 - 5:30: Anne-Laure Van Bruaene, Ghent University

Intermedial Strategies and Artistic Resilience: The Case of Lucas d'Heere

—

SATURDAY MARCH 29

Chair: Elizabeth Rice Mattison, Dartmouth College

9:00 – 9:40: Walter Melion, Emory University

Intermediality and Synagogism in Three Hybrid Alba amicorum

9:40 – 10:20: Yannis Hadjinicolaou, University of Bonn

Synagonistic Intermediality in Cologne. A painting-sculpture from 1425

10:20 – 10:50: Coffee

10:50 – 11:30: Eyal Pundik, University of Toronto

Intermedial Interloper: Netherlandish Allegory Between Theater and Tapestry

11:30 – 12:10: Oliver Kik, Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage, Brussels

Architecture, painting, and everything in between: the intermediality of Lancelot Blondeel

12:10 – 1:30: Lunch

CHAIR: Ralph Dekoninck, Catholic University of Louvain

1:30 – 2:10: Andrew Morrall, Bard Graduate Center

Intermedialities of Nature and Art in the Grottos of Bernard Palissy

2:10 – 2:50: Markus Rath, University of Trier

Fontainebleau's Synagonism

2:50–3:20: Coffee

3:20 – 4:00: Robert Felfe, University of Graz

“Antithetical Sensibility” and a “Will to Travesty”. Sculptural Fantasies, Ornamental Design and 16th Century Printmaking

4:00 – 4:40: Georges Farhat, University of Toronto

Vredeman de Vries's Material Practice of Perspective Across Disciplines and Mediums

5:00: Final Remarks

5:30: Closing Reception

Reference:

CONF: Intermediality and Synagonism in Early Modern Period (Toronto, 28-29 Mar 25). In: ArtHist.net, Mar 6, 2025 (accessed Apr 7, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/44120>>.