

Prodigious Presents (Lausanne, 12–13 Feb 26)

Université de Lausanne, Feb 12–13, 2026

Deadline: Sep 1, 2025

Cordélia Floc'hic

Call for papers for the conference “Prodigious Presents: Representations, Uses, and Knowledge of the Extraordinary through the Lens of Time (15th-17th centuries)” taking place at Lausanne, February 12-13, 2026.

Organizing committee:

Cordelia Floc'hic (University of Lausanne)

Alexandre Goderniaux (Universities of Neuchâtel and Lille)

Scientific committee:

Sophie Chiari-Lasserre (University of Clermont Auvergne)

Pierre-Olivier Dittmar (EHESS)

Cordelia Floc'hic (University of Lausanne)

Alexandre Goderniaux (Universities of Neuchâtel and Lille)

Florian Métral (CNRS, Centre André-Chastel)

This conference aims to renew the study of prodigies (15th-17th centuries) by placing them at the heart of a reflection on time – and, more specifically, on the present.

Extraordinary and often ambiguous events, prodigies offer a lens through which to explore how societies represent their own present, caught between practices of memory and projections toward the future.

The conference will be structured around three main themes:

1. The forms of representation of prodigies (through text, image, rhythm, emotion)
2. Their political, religious, and social functions
3. The dynamics of scholarly theorization and knowledge production that they generate

We particularly welcome contributions on learned and popular uses of prodigies, the interplay between text and image in their narrative construction, debates over their legibility, their circulation in printed media, and their interpretative or mobilizing effects.

The aim is to explore how prodigies – through their suddenness and their symbolic potency – contribute to the construction of a present saturated with meaning: a present that is at once unstable and fertile, charged with signs, emotions, and open possibilities.

Paper proposals (maximum 300 words + a one-page CV including a selected bibliography) should be sent to cordelia.flochic@unil.ch and alexandre.goderniaux@unine.ch by September 1, 2025.

Notifications of acceptance will be sent by 15 October.

The conference will take place at the University of Lausanne on February 12-13, 2026. Travel and accommodation expenses will be covered for participants who do not have access to institutional funding. The working languages of the conference will be French and English.

A publication of selected proceedings is planned.

You can find the full call for papers at the following links: <https://capt.hypotheses.org/7969> and https://capt.hypotheses.org/files/2025/06/CFP_ProdigiousPresents.pdf

Reference:

CFP: Prodigious Presents (Lausanne, 12-13 Feb 26). In: ArtHist.net, Jun 18, 2025 (accessed Apr 16, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/49536>>.