

Session at ACLA (Montréal, 26 Feb–1 Mar 26)

Montréal, Feb 26–Mar 1, 2026

Deadline: Oct 2, 2025

Julia Rose Katz, Rutgers University & American Academy in Rome

Translation and Restoration. Session at the 2026 Annual Meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association.

In “The Task of the Translator,” Walter Benjamin introduces the famous image of multiple languages as shards of a broken vase, shards that he believes it is translation’s mission to glue back together. Benjamin’s metaphor raises a question few of his readers have addressed: what is the relationship between literary translation (*translatio*) and artistic restoration (*restauratio*)? If these twin concepts of reconstructing the textual and visual fragments of the past have been linked since the Renaissance, their relationship today seems less obvious. In what ways can we think of this long practice of translation as one of restoration and the practice of restoration—sculptural, architectural, cinematic, even political and psychological—as one of translation? By bringing the disciplines of translation studies and art history into dialogue, we aim to explore the limits and contradictions of the fantasy of restoration, bringing to light the interventions of the restorer. We seek papers that explore the poetics of the fragment and of interpolation as they emerge at the intersection of translation and restoration, understood both literally and metaphorically.

This panel invites submissions that reflect on topics including but not limited to:

Redefining translation and restoration
Translation as reparation
Appropriation of texts versus images
Found texts, found objects, found footage
Cinematic restoration
Imagination and gap-filling in broken or ruined art and missing texts
Interpolation by medieval scribes in ancient texts
Ruins and fragments
Inventive reuses of the past

Please send your submissions to julia.r.katz@rutgers.edu by 2 October 2025.

Reference:

CFP: Session at ACLA (Montréal, 26 Feb-1 Mar 26). In: ArtHist.net, Sep 21, 2025 (accessed Sep 22, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/50650>>.