

## 2 Sessions at RSA 2027 (Philadelphia, 11-13 Mar 27)

Philadelphia Marriott Downtown, Mar 11–13, 2027

[www.rsa.org/page/RSAPhilly2027](http://www.rsa.org/page/RSAPhilly2027)

ArtHist.net Redaktion

The Renaissance Society of America (RSA) annual meeting in 2027.

[1] Musicians as Collectors: Objects, Knowledge, and Court Culture in the Early Modern World

[2] Precarious Equilibrium: Balance and Collapse in Early Modern Nature and Society

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[1] Musicians as Collectors: Objects, Knowledge, and Court Culture in the Early Modern World

From: Francesca S. Croce

Date: 31 May 26

Musicians as Collectors: Objects, Knowledge, and Court Culture in the Early Modern World.

During the early modern period, musicians occupied a complex and often ambivalent social position.

Active within courts, ecclesiastical institutions, academies, urban networks, and aristocratic households, they participated not only in musical production but also in broader forms of intellectual, artistic, and material exchange. Far from being solely performers or composers, many musicians emerged as collectors, antiquarians, connoisseurs, intermediaries, and cultural agents deeply embedded in the collecting practices of their time.

This panel, sponsored by The Society for the History of Collecting for the Renaissance Society of America Annual Meeting in Philadelphia (March 11–13, 2027), seeks to explore the relationships between musicians, collecting practices, and court culture during the early modern period. We welcome contributions examining how musicians assembled, displayed, exchanged, commissioned, studied, or mediated collections of objects, and how these activities shaped their social identities and cultural authority.

The panel encourages interdisciplinary approaches at the intersection of music history, art history, history of collecting, material culture studies, court studies, and intellectual history. Open to different geographical regions and methodological approaches, this panel aims to reassess the place of musicians within the broader history of collecting and court culture in the early modern world

Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- Musicians as collectors of artworks, books, antiquities, coins, instruments, naturalia, or curiosities
- Musical networks and the circulation of objects
- Court musicians and aristocratic collecting practices
- Music, sociability, and courtly self-fashioning
- Musicians as intermediaries, advisors, dealers, or connoisseurs
- Inventories, sale catalogues, correspondence, and archival sources documenting 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. Please see the RSA website for possible funding support

Proposals should be sent to the session convenors Ludovic Juvet and Francesca S. Croce, [vienna.shc@gmail.com](mailto:vienna.shc@gmail.com) and Adriana Turpin, [president.sochistcoll@gmail.com](mailto:president.sochistcoll@gmail.com), with the subject "RSA 2027 Proposal" by 15 July 2026.

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[2] Precarious Equilibrium: Balance and Collapse in Early Modern Nature and Society

From: Javier Patino Loira

Date: 2 Jun 26

It angered the seventeenth-century Jesuit historian Daniello Bartoli to watch his contemporaries gape at metaphors so subtle that their coherence hung by a thread. He likened them to vessels of murrhine glass, prized for a fragility so exquisite that the slightest pressure would shatter them. Bartoli's diagnosis acknowledged a deeper truth about the world: balance is always precarious, and never more keenly appreciated than when it is about to break. Early modern physicians claimed that what is temperate is more liable to rot than what is unbalanced, hence humans' extreme susceptibility to illness. Brokers and diplomats knew that the best deal extracts the most without demanding so much that the table collapses. Courtiers learned that the favorite at the height of his power stood closest to his fall. In 1590, Domenico Fontana gave the principle its motto while documenting the relocation of the ancient Egyptian obelisk that now stands before Saint Peter's: the feat was achieved through a multiplicity of forces held in *concordia discors*, "a discordant concord." Early modern scholars, practitioners, and creators knew the paradox intimately: the brilliance of perfection is inseparable from its proximity to collapse and the impossibility of its survival.

This interdisciplinary panel explores the early modern concern with balance as a site of both attraction and peril. We welcome proposals from art history, history, literature, and the history of science (among other disciplines) that explore the manifestation of precarious equilibrium in understandings of nature, humanity, and society.

Please send paper proposals to Javier Patiño Loira, UCLA ([jpatinoloira@ucla.edu](mailto:jpatinoloira@ucla.edu)) by July 25. Notifications will be sent by July 28. Your submission must include: title (15-word maximum), abstract (200-word maximum), brief CV or bio, PhD completion year (past or expected), name, affiliation, and email address.

Reference:

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