

Session at ACLA (online, 15–16 May 27)

ACLA Annual Conference - Virtual, May 15–16, 2027

Deadline: Sep 22, 2026

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2027 Annual Meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association.

Translation and Restoration.

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

The abstract must be max 1500 characters, and applicants must submit a speaker bio of max 500 characters. For questions, applicants can contact the organizer at julia.r.katz@rutgers.edu.

Please submit abstracts on the ACLA website at the link:
<https://www.acla.org/seminar/b56498ae-9ff6-4a28-86d2-1ea4bc4a38d1>.

Reference:

CFP: Session at ACLA (online, 15-16 May 27). In: ArtHist.net, Sep 8, 2026 (accessed Oct 4, 2026),
<<https://arthist.net/archive/53563>>.