

## Microarchitecture of Buildings (Paris, 8–10 Dec 15)

Paris, Institut national d'histoire de l'art, Dec 8–10, 2014

Deadline: May 1, 2014

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Call for papers

Symposium – 2014, December 8th-10th

### MICROARCHITECTURE AND MINIATURIZED REPRESENTATIONS OF BUILDINGS: DIFFERENT SCALES FOR DIFFERENT MATERIALS?

For more than forty years, since the publication of François Bucher's work, historians and art historians have taken an interest in miniaturized representations of architecture. These microarchitectures, staged in actual buildings and incorporated into metalwork, have been at the center of numerous noteworthy studies, which have resulted in the creation of reliable typologies and an accepted chronology for the architectural syntax of these miniature buildings. For example, Peter Kurmann highlighted the 1240s as a turning point in the Île-de-France, noting the importance of the façades of Notre-Dame's transept for a contemporary architectural syntax that began to spread in microarchitecture constructions. For her part, Marie-Thérèse Gousset demonstrated how the miniaturized architectural decoration of Romanesque censers referred to heavenly Jerusalem, thus bearing symbolic value and religious significance. Following the work of Richard Krautheimer, several studies of more recent periods have begun to draw the outlines of what can be called an architectural iconology. This diversity of issues and interests were not only raised during a major symposium in Nuremberg in 2005, but also addressed by recent and current PhD dissertations and several established researchers, such as Achim Timmermann and Ethan Matt Kavalier.

Most recently, Paul Binski has begun to criticize Bucher's definition of microarchitecture, instead focusing on associations with monumental architecture (whether ancient, contemporary, or imagined). This symposium aims to engage with this shifting of the field, focusing on the examination of new corpuses of material and, therefore, new issues. For example, the production of seals will be highlighted, since they constitute a considerable body of objects that art historians have generally disregarded, ignoring their visual language that often includes architecture and sheltered figures. The shifting of scale involved in production of microarchitectural artifacts in metal, glass, stone, wood or ivory also constitutes an important point of investigation, these technical challenges belonging to Alfred Gell's notion of "technologies of enchantment." To understand these virtuoso pieces of microarchitecture, one should not only consider their relationship to monumental syntax, but also realize the part they played as a *captatio benevolentiae* meant to

capture and bewitch the spectator with their minifiscence.

The symposium, co-organized by the Institut national d'histoire de l'art, the Université de Nantes, the Institut Universitaire de France, and the Archives nationales, aims to deal with issues related to the representation of miniaturized architecture through new approaches and perspectives. Art historians have already underlined the phenomenon of "architecturation," wherein architectural vocabulary spread and proliferated during the Middle Ages in different artistic media. This phenomenon, however, can only be fully understood if we take into account the transformations that changes in scale forced on production and reception of these artifacts.

Proposals should deal directly with the questions raised by the representation of architecture. While they need to interrogate the relevance of the concept of microarchitecture, equally important is a focus on the practical consequences of miniaturization, and how the choice of materials could affect this process. Papers should take this opportunity to raise questions about the spatiality of small-scale objects and the status of figures in these spaces. By expanding the field beyond the types of artistic production the discipline usually deals with, we hope to ameliorate our understanding of how medieval craftsmen and artists succeeded in building spatial coherence for these miniature buildings. It is our hope that these observations could lead to a reevaluation of how forms and significations were transferred from actual monumental buildings to small-scale constructions, a series of transmissions that could have consequences for spiritual and symbolic meaning. By considering microarchitecturized artifacts, this symposium aims to understand the miniaturization process itself, its constraints and its consequences.

Papers proposals must not exceed 3 000 characters and should be sent by May 1st, 2014 with a short CV (less than 2 pages) to:

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Reference:

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