The Intelligent Hand, 1500-1800 (London, 8 Nov 2014)

London, The Courtauld Institute of Art, Nov 08, 2014
Deadline: Jun 30, 2014

Austeja Mackelaite

The Intelligent Hand,1500-1800

Sixth Early Modern Symposium
Saturday 8 November 2014
The Courtauld Institute of Art, Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 0RN
CALL FOR PAPERS
The hand - the “instrument of instruments” - has fascinated artists, scientists and philosophers from Aristotle onwards. Its remarkable dexterity, anatomical complexity, and the ability to manipulate were seen as defining features distinguishing humanity from animality, as well as indicators of the superiority of the former.
Taking as its starting point the sixteenth-century humanist Dominicus Lampsonius’ claim that ‘the Netherlander / Has intelligence in his hand’, this one-day Symposium will investigate the hand both as the means and the subject of representation in Early Modern art and visual culture. Participants are invited to explore the hand as the locus where the relations between manual labour and ingenium, workshop and academy, the ‘low’ and the ‘high’ are defined and negotiated in the production of artistic value and new knowledge. Traditionally held to be subordinate to the creative drive of the mind, the artist's hand may also be considered as an autonomous agent, manifesting itself on the surface of artworks through individual style, the manipulation of media or as an iconographic motif.
We welcome proposals for papers that explore the theme of the intelligent hand from the early modern period (c.1500-1800) including painting, sculpture, architecture, decorative arts, graphic arts, and the intersections between them. Papers can explore artistic exchanges across nations and cover non-European subjects. Contributions from other disciplines, such as anthropology and the history of science, are also welcome. Topics for discussion may include, but are not limited to:
· Formal and informal training of the artist’s hand;
· The hand of the master and the ‘hands’ of his workshop;
· The relationship between an artist's hand and his individual style;
· The sense of touch in relation to sight and other senses;
· Gesturing as the language of the hand in visual representations;
· The hand in anatomical and scientific treatises;
· The hand as a mnemonic device;
· Historiography of the hand.

Please send proposals of no more than 300 words along with a 150 word biography by 30 June

2014 to austeja.mackelaite@courtauld.ac.uk and camilla.pietrabissa@courtauld.ac.uk
Organised by Austeja Mackelaite and Camilla Pietrabissa (The Courtauld Institute of Art).

Reference:

CFP: The Intelligent Hand, 1500-1800 (London, 8 Nov 2014). In: ArtHist.net, Jun 25, 2014 (accessed Nov 5, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/8081>.