Symmetry in the Eighteenth Century (Los Angeles, 19–21 Mar 15))

Los Angeles, CA, Mar 19–21, 2015
Deadline: Sep 15, 2014

Charles Kang

CFP - A Sum of Its Parts: Symmetry in the Eighteenth Century
American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, Los Angeles, CA, March 19-21, 2015

The <<Encyclopédie>> defines symmetry as “le rapport, la proportion & la régularité des parties nécessaires pour composer un beau tout.” Although not extensively articulated outside architectural discourses, the notion of symmetry remained integral to a wide variety of eighteenth-century cultural productions. From interior decoration to literary construction, from the arrangement of artworks to the design of parterres, symmetry permeated aesthetics conceptually and practically—as essential to individual objects as to the composition of an overall environment, "un beau tout." The duality of symmetry as a principle to observe and as a value to contradict resulted in its persistence across media and contexts. This panel invites papers that explore affirmations or negations of symmetry throughout the long eighteenth century. Rather than considering symmetry and asymmetry as binaries, we posit that they are rhetorical byproducts of each other (consider, for example, the self-reflexivity of such decorative elements as the arabesque).

Possible topics may include—but are certainly not limited to:

- Axis and composition in painting theory and practice
- Gender binaries in portraiture
- Sets and series
- Architectural distribution; movement through the interior
- Symmetry and variation in poetry
- Asymmetry and rococo object/architectural design
- Arrangement of objects
- Display of collections
- Symmetry as mirrored reproduction/repetition

We welcome papers addressing the notions of symmetry and asymmetry in art historical, architectural, literary, decorative, design, and display contexts across the long eighteenth century. Please send abstracts by September 15th to Daniella Berman and Charles Kang via email: daniella.berman@nyu.edu and cdk2118@columbia.edu.

For more information, please visit: https://asecs.press.jhu.edu/general%20site/Posted%202015%20Call%20for%20Papers1.pdf

Reference:
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