

Undergraduate Research Symposium May 17, 2013 Mary Gates Hall

Online Proceedings

SESSION 1F

FROM PAPYRUS TO THE INTERNET: TEXTS IN TIME

Session Moderator: James Clauss, Classics
238 MGH

1:15 PM to 2:45 PM

* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

Seeing the Unseeable: Attis, His Peculiar Garment, and Representing Gender Nonconformity in the Heart of Imperial Rome

Dillon Gisch, Senior, Art History, Classical Studies
Mary Gates Scholar

Mentor: Kathryn Topper, Classics

Despite the growing interest in studies of gender and sexuality, little has been published about the figure of Attis since the initial monographs almost three decades ago. Not only does this figure, who was imported into Rome from Asia Minor during the Republican period, represent an important instance of gender ambiguity and nonconformity living in the heart of Roman society, but these issues play out in an incredibly vivid way on the body of Attis. Because of a fit of madness and grief induced by his lover in retaliation for his perceived infidelity, Attis commits suicide by castrating himself. Therefore, the choice made by artisans working in central Italy (Latium and Campania) to obscure Attis' genitals through his characteristic and unique garment gives insight into distinctly Roman concerns with the integrity of the male body and how to construct the masculine gender. By analyzing one class of the sculptural representations of Attis that combine aspects of both masculine and feminine iconographies of dress and selectively obscure Attis' genitals, I will demonstrate that these representations were produced under specific social conditions that differed from those in the Hellenistic world and in the periphery of the Roman Empire. In so doing, I hope to rescue Attis from what I feel are oversimplified and typologically driven analyses that obscure the active dialogue between these figures and Roman notions and representations of masculinity. In the process, I also wish to raise questions about other less valorized male bodies that place their owners into liminal gender categories: the hermaphrodite, the androgyne and the eunuch, with the hope of engendering future discussion about alternative masculinities in Rome.

SESSION 2K

REPRESENTING REALITIES AND IDEALS, RENEGADE AND REMEMBERED

Session Moderator: Julia Sapin, Art History, Western Washington University

258 MGH

3:45 PM to 5:15 PM

* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

Kinetic Sculpture and Open System Art

Soledade Soleil (Juliana) Meira Do Valle, Senior, Digital Arts & Experimental Media, Art History

Mary Gates Scholar

Mentor: James Coupe, DXARTS

The field of kinetic and interactive sculpture has been the focus of my research. Capturing the subtleties of movement in structures, experimenting with materials, and creating a slow, organic shifting of materials that functions as an open system in a modular kinetic sculpture which coexists with other elements in a space as an installation is the focus for my investigation of movement, fluidity, and flux as it relates to memory, shared experience and secrets. The central sculptural element in this installation uses modularity as a metaphor for this. Incorporating bones on the floor of the gallery along with a sound element tie together this experience as I explore the creation process of a whole and integrated installation. The next part of my research will incorporate the movement mechanisms more seamlessly as I will replace visible motors with nitinol muscle wire.

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Iconography in the Work of Ai WeiWei

Lillian (Lilly) Wasserman, Fifth Year, Art History, English, Western Washington University

Mentor: Barbara Miller, Art, Western Washington University

Mentor: Julia Sapin, Art and Art History, Western Washington University

Ai WeiWei, a contemporary Chinese artist and self-described "dissident," is the first to admit that political activism forms the basis of his aesthetic. In an artist's statement, from a recent exhibition at the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, DC, Ai plainly stated: "I've always believed it is essential for contemporary artists to question established assumptions and challenge beliefs." The majority of Ai's installations at the Hirshhorn function as a platform for his renegade agenda, and his piece He Xie is no exception. The striking collection of ceramic river crabs, in various shades of red and brown, is invested with manifest symbolism. However, a deeper investigation of the work reveals a latent significance, not readily gleaned from a limited investigation of its formal elements. In order to adequately engage with Ai's work, one must look beyond the surface and trace the installation back to its historical origins and cultural conditions. To draw out his strategic use of symbolism, I analyze Ai's installation according to German art historian Erwin Panofsky's iconographical approach. Panofsky begins with the simplest translation of visual forms and works his way toward a more nuanced historical and culturally relevant perspective. In short, Panofsky's three-pronged methodological approach allows me to demonstrate the complexity of Ai's He Xie. In this presentation, I discuss the conceptual stimulus behind Ai's sprawling display of porcelain delicacies, exploring its political significance and identifying a larger metaphysical trend in the artist's career.

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Photoshop: Idealism in our Modern World?

Erin Arnold, Junior, Art History, Western Washington University

Mentor: Barbara Miller, Art, Western Washington University

Most people think of idealism as an old and forgotten notion

from antiquity. However, today, this concept seems to have taken on an afterlife. This essay looks at how Photoshop goes beyond stylistic preferences of the past and investigates how photo editing informs our current notion of ideal forms. Instead of a sculptor such as Praxiteles carving his vision of Aphrodite of Knidos, a designer using Photoshop idealizes the figure with key commands. These altered types permeate dominant media, producing a widespread prescription for the female body. Through creating a case study of edited photos seen in magazines and advertising I will provide evidence that a widespread ideal is in fact being created, an ideal which would not be able to be created without the help of Photoshop. Ralph Lauren Co. took Photoshop too far when they morphed Filippa Hamilton, a beautiful model, into an unnatural creation. In this Photoshopped image of Hamilton in which her head is larger than her hips, many have noted that she looks painfully emaciated and almost cartoonish. It is unrealistic to think that any woman could naturally be that thin. This is an example of how Photoshop is being used to create an unattainable ideal beauty, one which cannot even be obtained with the help of plastic surgery. This widespread ideal has led many women to go so far as to use plastic surgeries in the hopes of obtaining the current, electronically enhanced, ideal form of feminine beauty. I will also be examining how these examples of excessive photo editing and the unnatural ideal they create have become a problem within our society. This research helps to examine how current technologies are exacerbating the societal problem of low self-esteem seen in females who do not fit into this ideal.

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Francisco Goya's Transformation from Light to Dark

Elizabeth (Beth) Schultz, Senior, Art History, Western Washington University

Mentor: Julia Sapin, Art and Art History, Western Washington University

When looked at in chronological order, it is impossible to deny that the work of Francisco Goya (1746-1828) underwent a major shift in style, palette, medium and content in the middle of his life. Past scholars have pointed out that there are multiple reasons for this shift, including Goya's increased

involvement in the turbulent politics of eighteenth century Spain and his fascination with the aging process that only increased with his own age. Another frequently cited cause is the onset of deafness that the artist suffered after a near fatal illness in 1792 at the age of forty six. The relationship between his deafness and his new found forms of expression has been explored by scholars in a variety of fields. In my research on the topic, I have gathered information from otology and neuroscience periodicals and placed them alongside art history and biographical information, blurring the line between the art and science of Goya. Along with these unusual sources, I will be taking a different approach in terms of my visual analysis of Goya's work. Most scholars resort to analyzing his most famous paintings to point out the differences between his early and late style, such as his royal portraits and "Saturn Devouring his Children" (1819-1823). I have decided to use three of his seven known self-portraits instead: "Self Portrait 1" (1773), the frontispiece for "Los Caprichos" (1798), and "Self-Portrait with Dr. Arrietta" (1820). I chose to examine these self-portraits because Goya created them at three pivotal points in his life and they reflect the artist's self-image at the time. Goya was very self-aware of his position in the universe and his extraordinary knack for creating truthful depictions allow his self-portraits to freeze him in time for us to dissect hundreds of years later.

SESSION 2Q

INTERSECTIONS: ART, CULTURE, TECHNOLOGY, PHYSICALITY

Session Moderator: Jennifer Salk, Dance

389 MGH

3:45 PM to 5:15 PM

* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

All The World's a Stage: The History of *Kanadehon Chushingura*

Rebecca White, Senior, Art History, Western Washington University

Mentor: Julia Sapin, Art and Art History, Western Washington University

Among the library of plays known as "classics" within Japanese theatre, few compare in longevity, versatility, and uniqueness to *Kanadehon Chushingura*. This work weaves the tale of 47 loyal retainers enacting revenge on behalf of their deceased leader by murdering the man responsible for his death. The play draws on themes of loyalty, trust, and righteousness. First debuted in 1748, this story has been adapted hundreds of times into multiple artistic mediums, including kabuki and bunraku theater, woodblock prints, and film. However, unlike most literary classics of the Western World, *Chushingura*'s compelling plot was drawn di-

rectly from current events. Through the examination of primary and secondary sources, as well as through close reading of *Kanadehon Chushingura*, I have traced the transition of *Chushingura* from fact to folktale. This research begins with the actual bloody events that inspired the story. I later explore the event's changes and adaptations for the purpose of both suiting its consumption by the merchant class in Edo period Japan, and to evade censorship by the shogunate government. My research concludes by following *Chushingura* into its role within contemporary entertainment. I hope to accurately chronicle the metamorphosis from historical event to contemporary folktale and thus invite others to examine the origins of what they may consider familiar. Doing so will result in a more accurate catalog of our cultural origins for both current and future generations.

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Sanctifying Senegal: A Study of the Muridiyya and the Visual Transformation of Space

John Lovejoy, Senior, Art History, Western Washington University

Mentor: Julia Sapin, Art and Art History, Western Washington University

In the urban centers of Senegal, graffiti artists work to deconstruct the memories of the former French colonial apparatus by refurbishing public spaces with new and sacred meaning. These artists belong to the Muridiyya Sufi *tariqa*, an order of Islamic mystics, and the basis of their art is reimagining the only known photograph of the order's enigmatic founder, Cheikh Bamba. This photograph, taken by French authorities while Bamba was under house arrest in 1913, has been used as the matrix image for subsequent representations of the Cheikh. This paper will explore the efforts of those contemporary Murid artists who adorn the city walls of Senegal with Bamba's likeness, relating their endeavors to the writings of social critic Walter Benjamin and cultural theorist Stuart Hall. For the Muridiyya, images of Bamba function as transmitters of his *baraka*, his divine blessings. As a receptacle of this *baraka*, public space is transformed in a process that I will compare to the Muridiyya's appropriation of land controlled by the French during the *tariqa*'s formative years: members of the order, the Murids, had initially emigrated into certain areas based upon the proximity to Bamba, and his presence invested the space with new meaning. The

settled land became part of the larger *Daar-al-Murid*, or the House of the Muridiyya, considered sacred and conceptually separate from other spaces in which Bamba's *baraka* could not be felt. Around this space, a communal identity for the Muridiyya was formed, an identity culturally and religiously autonomic. Drawing on the theoretical bases of Benjamin and Hall, concerning respectively the dissemination of images and the circulation of culture, this research will examine the development of a distinct visual culture, highlighting how imagery can reshape and invest public space with new meaning.

POSTER SESSION 3

Balcony, Easel 86

2:30 PM to 4:00 PM

Spanish Baroque Fusion Paintings

*Halley Heintz, Senior, Art History, Montana State University
McNair Scholar*

Mentor: Dede Taylor, Art, Montana State University

The emphasis of my research is the treatment of the Holy Family created by the artists Francisco de Zurbarán and Bartolomé Esteban Murillo. The subject of the Holy Family in a genre setting is a response to the efforts of the Church during the Counter-Reformation to appeal to common people, thereby encouraging their loyalty to the Papacy. However, different areas portrayed the Virgin Mary, Christ, and Joseph in regional styles. I observed how Spanish Baroque artists created a "fusion" of both genre and religious artworks by comparing Zurbarán's "Christ and Mary in the House of Nazareth" and Murillo's "Holy Family with the Little Bird" with other artworks from Netherlandish and Italian artists. To help prove the fusion style, I answered three questions. First, how would a viewer recognize the figures as the Iconic Family? We know this through symbolic objects found in both paintings. In Zurbarán's work, the white cloth lying on Mary is referring to Michelangelo's "Pieta." The boy is pricking his figure on the crown of thorns is symbolic for Christ. Murillo uses a carpenter's bench right behind Joseph and the basket of garments as symbol for the Virgin Mary. Secondly, how does each work portray everyday moments like genre paintings? We see this in Zurbarán's work by Mary glancing over towards her son with a single tear running down her face. Murillo has caught a moment where Mary is glancing over her shoulders with a "semi-smile." My last question is how these paintings showed religious and family values? The morals are seen in both paintings by the body language of the figures and their interaction with one another. These Spanish Baroque artists created a hybrid style that is visually proven through the mixed elements of both religious and genre artwork.

POSTER SESSION 4

Commons West, Easel 43

4:15 PM to 5:45 PM

Provenance Analysis of South African Middle Stone Age Ochre through Elemental and Magnetic Characterization

Amor Marisol (Amor) Silva, Senior, Anthropology

Mariya Shinbolatovna (Masha) Jenskibayeva, Senior, Art History

Mentor: Ben Marwick, Anthropology

Knowing the sources of archaeological materials is helpful in understanding how they were acquired, that is, by trade or travel, and how these methods change over time. We analyzed magnetic susceptibility and elemental concentrations in ochre samples from four South African Middle Stone Age sites spanning 60-20 ky BP. We measured elemental concentrations on 13 geological ochre samples and 60 archaeological ochre samples using portable x-ray fluorescence spectroscopy (pXRF). Magnetic susceptibility, a sample's ability to be magnetized, was also measured on these samples using the Bartington MS2. These analyses will help distinguish between each sample and identify different types of ochre. Analysis of these data will determine provenance of the archaeological samples of ochre, an important step towards understanding the process by which they were procured. We show how procurement strategies varied between the four sites and over time.