Icon/Sign/Image

Call for Participation

Key Concepts of the Humanities and Social Sciences | GSAH | Interdisciplinary Cultural Studies

Guest:	**Prof. Dr. Seth Estrin, Art History/Archaeology, University of Chicago**
Moderation:	**Prof. Dr. Beate Fricke,** Art History, Universität Bern
Date/Room:	Public Lecture: **Mai 7, 2021, 2.15 pm – 3.45 pm** online via Zoom
	Colloquium: **Mai 7, 2021, 4.15 pm – 8.00 pm** online via Zoom
Zoom:	Meeting-ID: 629 2136 7895 / Kenncode: 660246
ECTS:	1.5
Application:	By April 12 (extension), 2021 to toggweiler@wbkolleg.unibe.ch and in KSL: https://www.ksl.unibe.ch/ (Login with UniBe account, search with title)

Public Lecture

Sculpture, Likeness, and Recognition in Classical Athens

How do we recognize a person – a specific, named individual – in a work of art? In some instances, we do so because of visual resemblance between picture and person – because, that is to say, the work of art looks like them. Yet art objects can prompt recognition by other means. They might index an individual through ownership or facture. They might be taken as accurate depictions through the authority of the artist or patron. Or they might convince us to recognize a specific person by appealing to our own perspective as a viewer or even our own subjectivity – our knowledge, our memories, our emotions. Sculptures produced in Classical Athens (ca. 470-300 BCE) have long been celebrated for their lifelike appearance and anatomical realism. Yet portrait statues and funerary monuments – the only genres of sculpture to which the names of historical personages, rather than figures from myth, were attached – rarely if ever attempted to reproduce a particular individual's actual physiognomic appearance. Rather than rely on resemblance, sculptors drew on a limited range of stock figural types that viewers were invited to imaginatively recognize as named persons. In this talk, I turn away from the questions of artistic naturalism that have dominated the study of Classical art to these corresponding practices of recognition. Working through a set of key terms that were regularly attached to statues – especially likeness (*eikon*), sign (*sema*), and remembrance (*mnema*) – as well as the ancient Greek concept of recognition (*anagnorisis*), I argue that similar-looking monuments, depending how they were framed, could invite different practices of recognition, ones that varied according to a viewer's emotional subjectivity as much as according to the appearance of the work of art itself.

Colloquium

For PhD students and advanced Master students of the University of Bern

Part 1 of the colloquium is dedicated to the discussion of the lecture and the texts suggested by the guest. In Part 2, a core group present their PhD thesis, speaking for about 20 minutes (English) on how concepts like "Icon/Sign/Image" and related concepts connect to their research questions and which aspects of the texts are of particular relevance to their own work. The presenters raise questions for the discussion with their peers, which should contribute to the development of their thesis. Finally, in Part 3, the conversation will open up again so that the other PhD or advanced MA-students have an opportunity to address issues related to their projects.

Required reading:

Camille, Michael 2003: Simulacrum. In: Critical Terms for Art History (2nd ed.), R. S. Nelson and R. Shiff (eds.), pp. 35-48.
Platt, Verity 2014: Likeness and Likelihood in Classical Greek Art. In: Probabilities, Hypotheticals, and Counterfactuals in Ancient Greek Thought, V. Wohl (ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 185-207.
Podro, Michael 1998: Depiction. New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 5-28 (chapter 1: Sustaining Recognition).

Seth Estrin is Assistant Professor of Art History at the University of Chicago, where he specializes in the art, archaeology, and visual cultures of ancient Greece. With research interests ranging from Minoan wall painting to inscribed epigram, his work crosses traditional boundaries between art historical and classical scholarship, and engages closely with ancient as well as contemporary theoretical discourses of representation and visual experience. His primary specialization is in Greek sculpture, and much of his work is focused on recovering the kinds of experiences — sensorial, cognitive, emotional — generated through interactions with sculpture in antiquity. He is currently working on a book on Classical Attic funerary monuments entitled *Bodies Made Marble: Death, Grief, and Sculpture in Classical Athens.* https://arthistory.uchicago.edu/faculty/profiles/estrin

u^b

UNIVERSITÄT
BERN