



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: Lecture: April 30, 2020, 6.15 – 7.30 pm in F013, Unitobler, Lerchenweg 36
Colloquium: Mai 1, 2020, 10.15 am – 5.00 pm in F001, Unitobler
ECTS: 1.5
Application: By March 31, 2020 to toggweiler@wbkolleg.unibe.ch and in KSL: <https://www.ksl.unibe.ch/> (Login with UniBe account, search with title)

Public Lecture

The Image of the Living and the Image of the Dead in Classical Athens

The sculpted funerary monuments of Classical Athens, produced between ca. 430-320 BCE, are generally considered apart from the history of the portrait (*eikon*) as a sculptural type. Subverting modern expectations that the portrait convey something of the sitter's appearance, funerary monuments are consistently generic in appearance, filled with the same faces, the same dress and hair, the same accessories, the same postures and gestures. And yet, they are labelled not with the names of deities or mythological heroes, but those of actual persons—an epigraphic practice afforded to no other sculptures in Classical Athens, with the exception of the few honorific and commemorative portraits which were erected during the same period. In this paper, I consider the funerary monument—a sculpture accorded the name of an actual person and placed in proximity to their corpse—in relation to the portrait. Beyond looking at surviving sculptures themselves, I attend to how inscriptions on both types of monuments presented the depicted individuals in distinct but related ways. Rather than assimilate these categories of sculpture, my goal is to show how they operated according to shared structures of beholding. For despite their differences, both funerary monument and portrait statue, I argue, shaped the encounter with a sculpted image according to the cognitive and psychological effects of encountering an actual person.

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:** t.b.a.



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>