

Frühe Neuzeit Interdisziplinär Conference - Call for papers

March 29-31, 2012

Duke University, Durham, North Carolina

Visual Acuity and the Arts of Communication in Early Modern Germany

The sixth international conference sponsored by FNI will address visual culture in early modern Germany. Artists, writers, preachers, musicians, and performers, as well as those whom they may represent, need audiences. In a society saturated with images, visualization, whether literal or imaginative, becomes a dynamic tool for communication. In early print culture writers, artists, and publishers experimented with how to combine visual images with text in order to make their messages more effective. Authors, such as Hans Sachs, often engaged their audiences through verbal pictures, such as vivid descriptions of settings and people. During the Early Modern period religious propagandists, political writers, satirists, cartographers, the scientific community, and others experimented with new uses of visual images. Practitioners of many disciplines adopted visual criteria for testing truth claims, investigating pressing problems, and representing knowledge.

Papers are invited from scholars in all Early Modern fields focusing on any aspect of visual culture, including the following:

- **Art, visual literacy, and strategies of presentation.** What is known about the levels of visual literacy during this period? How and where did someone become visually literate? Were certain pictorial forms, styles, or aesthetic preferences particularly successful in conveying content? Multi-media solutions, such as broadsheets, were pioneered at this time.
- **Audience and the art of persuasion.** This includes literature and sermons; politics, propaganda and satire; issues of visual morality and the ethics of slander; gender, class, race, and religious characterizations; the art of commemoration; and art within popular culture.
- **The art of envisioning.** Consider verbal pictures, aural landscapes especially in music, and other modes of communication; ekphrasis; meditation, imageless images, and other methods for stimulating the imagination.
- **The ephemeral arts and theatricality.** What uses were made of texts, images, costumes, music, and human movement for entries, plays, carnivals, funerals, religious celebrations, rituals, operas, and other ceremonies?

- **The built environment and spatial settings.** What role did architecture play as the bearer of idea/ideology, form, and decoration? What functions were granted to specific architectural spaces? Consider fictive architecture and its uses.

- **The history of the visual.** Analyze the rise of historic awareness, which includes the rise of archeology, anthropology, and art collections; the role of new technologies and media, such as prints and publishing; iconoclasm and other arguments for negating the visual; and the significance to science and medicine of visual evidence.

Abstract submission

Please send your abstract and contact information to Jeffrey Chipps Smith (University of Texas at Austin), president of FNI, at chipps@mail.utexas.edu. Deadline for submissions: **June 15, 2011**.