



Newsletter

2007/6 *H a m b u r g*

Containing

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July 7-11, 2008

|| **International Conference Paris 2008:**

Call for Papers: Deadline October 15, 2007

|| Prize for best article in word & image studies named
after Max Nännny. **Please send your article by
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Dear members,

The Board of IAWIS met early in June to discuss matters concerning the association in general and specifically the state of preparations for the conference in 2008. We are all looking forward to meeting again next year in Paris: the panels chosen from your suggestions already promise a fascinating programme, and the venue is splendid. Please consider our

**Call for Papers (posted on www.iawis.org) for the
8th International Conference in Paris *Efficacy / Efficacité*,
July 7-11, 2008**

We invite you to submit suggestions for papers. Please send your submission (300 words maximum) before 15 October 2007 to the session chairs and simultaneously to efficacite08@gmail.com.

Should you have any queries, please address them to
Béatrice Fraenkel: fraenkel@club-internet.fr or to
Véronique Plesch: vbplesch@colby.edu

Prize for the best article in word & image studies named after Max Nännny

We decided to name our new prize in memory of Max Nännny (1932 – 2006), a co-founder of the association and respected scholar in his field and word & image studies. Submissions are due by 31 December 2007. The prize for the best article in word & image studies will be awarded for the first time at our conference in Paris in 2008. See for details concerning submissions: www.iawis.org.

Reports from Conferences sponsored by IAWIS in 2007

Conference VOIR BARRE: La peinture dans le noir, 1-2 juin 2007 (info@braille.be) co-sponsored by IAWIS

This interdisciplinary meeting in the newly renovated Brussels Museum of Fine Arts was a real challenge for word and image studies. The contributions (for example by Marie José Mondzain about the power of images but also those by two blind professors (Bertrand Vérine of Toulouse and Daniëlle Montet of Montpellier) were of a high level and inclined to stimulate the most exciting theoretical debates: how to approach visuality when vision is obliterated by a handicap? Can words replace the lack or absence of vision? Are there other sensorial skills able to obviate to the deficiency? Does something equivalent to perspective, horizon or colours exist in a blind universe? Since blind people were present, these philosophical questions had immediately to cope with a concrete interface.

The conference was also an enormous success in terms of participation: 261 participants (of which about 30 blind), delegates from 20 European and Canadian universities, curators from 13 museums, some scholars of word and image studies (such as Ralph Dekoninck). A "buffet-spectacle" where texts about blindness were staged by a company of artists, and a blindfold visit of the permanent collection of the museum were two fascinating complements to the plenary sessions.

Further collaboration between the Museum and the Blind League is planned for the future. The suggestion has also been made to form an international research group coming from the sphere of the museums and from Word & Image studies to study theoretical issues of blindness and vision as well as to continue the investigation of the access of blind people to museums and the possibility of the exchange of competences between the seeing and the blind in general.

Nathalie Roelens
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IAWIS/AIERTI at CAA

IAWIS - College Art Association of America Affiliated Society Special Session
New York, February 14-17, 2007

Closing the Modern-Postmodern Divide – Toward a History of Visual Parody
Chair, Lauren S. Weingarden (Florida State University)

The topic of this session sought to locate, excavate, and substantiate another modernist genealogy. This project proposes a history that issues from nineteenth-century practices of irony, parody, paradox and defies an evolutionary, progressive development, a history that is impelled by a subversion of the status quo, whether that be a conventional means of representation or a dominant social norm or ideology. What is of concern here, is that irony, parody, and paradox have also been identified as the characteristic motives of the post-modern episteme. Critics and historians across the disciplines have rendered parody central, if not unique, to postmodernists' strategies for subverting modernist values and practices. This

(re)occurrence of parodic practices raises a fundamental question regarding the viability of modernism and postmodernism as distinct, if not oppositional, historical periods. Alternatively, by shifting our focus away from a purist modernism to a subversive modernism, a historical continuum between the nineteenth century and the late twentieth century comes into view.

The papers for this panel focused on late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century artists and covered a range of modernist subjects and sites. As these papers make clear, parodists can themselves be conservative and traditional, as often as radical and revolutionary. Richard Schiff (University of Texas at Austin), "Seurat's Gravity" discussed how Seurat's aesthetic persona as "serious/*grave*", compelled a parodic confusion of the form (his "scientific" technique) and content (caricatured social types) of his work by his contemporaries and historians. In his paper, Charles W. Haxthausen (Williams College), "Fictions of Facial Representation: Paul Klee's 'Portraits'," discussed how Klee's injection of a parodic dimension, by means of titles to his abstract (modernist) portrait paintings, alluded to the representational genres of past art and thereby established a sense of continuity between modernity and tradition. Oscar E. Vázquez's (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign) paper, "Parody, or the Quandary of Place: Conservative Reactions to Modernism in Late-19th Century Spain," focused on Segundo Cabello Izarra's *Fin de Siglo* (1899) to how parody was used by conservative reactionaries against pictorial modernism in turn-of-the-century Spain. Linda Hutcheon (University of Toronto) was the session respondent. She brought these historical, modernist uses of parody into play with post-modern practices to ask: whether there is a genre of "self-reflexive" painting; whether parodies are simply ironic adaptations of other work or works; and whether there is a particular kind of relationship in the modern and the postmodern between (aesthetic) parody and (social) satire?

The session was well attended and the panel discussion that followed the presentations posed a range of new possibilities for linking and/or separating modern/post-modern parodic practices.

Lauren S. Weingarden
Florida State University,
Tallahassee, Florida

IAWIS/AIERTI at Kalamazoo

Last May IAWIS sponsored for the second time a session at the International Congress on Medieval Studies. For 42 years the Medieval Institute at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo has organized this annual gathering of medievalists—the largest in the world: this year's program counted no less than 620 sessions! The focus, Dante's *Divine Comedy* offered an ideal forum for discussing the intersection and symbiosis of words and images. This encyclopedic text that draws together an endless number of medieval *topoi*, motifs, archetypes, etc, the *Comedy* is crucial for understanding the culture of the period, while as a visionary poem, it is supremely visual in its articulations. The session, entitled "Word and Image in Dante's *Divine Comedy*," was chaired by Kathleen Ashley (University of Southern Maine). It consisted in two papers: "Condescending to Our Faculties: Beatrice and the Beatific Vision" by Olivia Holmes (Dartmouth College) and Véronique Plesch (Colby College) and "Giovanni di Paolo's Visual Commentary on Ovidian's Figures in Dante's *Paradiso*" by Benjamin David (Lewis and Clark College) and of a respondent, Christopher Kleinhenz (University of Wisconsin, Madison). Both papers and the respondent's commentary dealt not only with visual representations of Dante's text, but also how the pictorial culture of the time informs the poem and helps us to interpret it.

Next year's session will be "Words against Images, Images against Words." This session's topic can be understood widely: iconoclasm, of course, but also discussions

about the superiority of the visual over the verbal, works where visual and verbal discourses compete and might even contradict each other. The call for papers is now available: <http://www.wmich.edu/medieval/congress/sessions.html> (go under "Listing of Sponsored Sessions").

The deadline for submitting abstracts is 25 September 2007.

Future sessions: Anyone interested in proposing (and chairing) a session topic at the International Congress on Medieval Studies should contact Véronique Plesch (vbplesch@colby.edu).

Véronique Plesch
Colby College, Waterville, ME

An event not sponsored by IAWIS but dedicated to our member of the Advisory Board Claus Clüver took place at the

**Eighteenth Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association:
Claus Clüver Honored**

In July the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro hosted the Eighteenth Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association. At the congress, some of Claus Clüver's friends and colleagues participated in a workshop organized in Claus's honor. This workshop, entitled *Intermediality in the Arts*, covered several intermedial topics.

In a panel on word and image André Melo Mendes (Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Brazil) discussed the work of Brazilian author Angela Lago, Monika Schmitz-Emans (Ruhr-Universität, Bochum, Germany) presented the non-connection between word and image in Ror Wolf's *Ratschlägerbücher*, and Lauren Weingarden (Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida) spoke about Baudelaire and Benjamin. A panel dealing with cinema and new media included talks on film adaptation by Lúcia Sá (University of Manchester, United Kingdom), on Robert Lepage's *Busker's Opera* by Thaïs Flores Nogueira (Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Brazil), and on Brazilian art installations by Solange Ribeiro de Oliveira (Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Brazil). Papers on Mallarmé by Aiko Okamoto-Macphail (Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana) and on Brazilian visual poetry by Magnolia Rejane Andrade dos Santos (Universidade Federal de Alagoas, Brazil) were also read. The workshop was rounded off with a panel considering the connections between intermediality and memory. Nils Holger Petersen (University of Copenhagen, Denmark) spoke about Benjamin Britten's setting of Wilfred Owen's war poems in the 1962 *War Requiem*, Helena Buescu (Universidade de Lisboa, Portugal) showed how the themes of memory, history, and violence interweave in the work *Das Áfricas*, Véronique Plesch (Colby College, Waterville, Maine) discussed a series of portraits by the American painter Margaret Libby, and Stephanie Glaser (University of Copenhagen, Denmark) discussed verbal and visual transpositions of the cathedral façade.

The workshop was kicked off the evening before with a festive dinner in honor of Claus. Scholars from three continents gathered to celebrate Claus and to witness the presentation of a Festschrift dedicated to him: *Media inter Media: Intermediality in the Arts* discusses the processes and dynamics of intermedial creation, and a number of essays deal specifically with word and image topics such as illustration and visual poetry. Members of IAWIS will be notified as soon as the book is published.

The dinner concluded with speeches paying homage to Claus as a scholar, teacher, and friend. Together the dinner and the workshop were a tribute to the life achievement of a man whose career spans half a century and whose scholarship has made a decisive mark in South and North America and in Europe from Portugal to Scandinavia. Indeed, the events celebrated Claus's outstanding contribution as a

teacher and as a creative thinker who has influenced the academy especially in comparative literature, word and image studies, interarts studies, and concrete poetry and who has deeply inspired his students and colleagues.

Stephanie Glaser
University of Copenhagen, Denmark

On behalf of the Board of IAWIS, I wish you all a good start of the new academic year,

Charlotte Schoell-Glass