

(Signification)

CONFERENCE MARCH 8-10, 2018

# ART HISTORY BEFORE ENGLISH

Negotiating a European  
*Lingua Franca* from Vasari  
to the Present



## VENUE

**Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz  
Max-Planck-Institut**  
Palazzo Grifoni Budini Gattai  
Via dei Servi 51  
50122 Florence

## CONTACT

**Pavla Langer**  
Department Alessandro Nova  
sekr\_nova@khi.fi.it



Image: Joseph Kosuth, 'Ten Locations of Meaning', 2009, Warm white neon mounted directly on the wall  
Palazzo Fabroni, Pistoia, Italy, 'ARTE/NATURA – NATURA/ARTE. Paesaggio e arte contemporanea in Toscana'

## ( Art History Before English: Negotiating a European *Lingua Franca* from Vasari to the Present )

International Conference

organized by Alessandro Nova in collaboration with Robert Brennan, Marco Mascolo, and Oliver O'Donnell within the framework of the research project "Languages of Art History"

The expansion of art historical scholarship across cultural and linguistic boundaries reveals problems with the inherited vocabularies of the discipline. Today, for better or worse, English has become an ever more prominent common language of academic discourse, art history being no exception, and yet the problems this development poses are not without historical precedent within the European tradition of art writing. Alongside the task of adapting classical concepts to modern usage, scholars have long had to contend with what was arguably the *lingua franca* of art historical discourse in their own time: Italian in the 16th and 17th centuries, French in the 17th and 18th, and German in the 19th and 20th. This conference seeks to leverage this succession of dominant languages in order to shed light on the present assumption of English as a *lingua franca* of art history. In so doing, the conference seeks to evaluate how Italian, French, and German have decisively shaped the discipline, assembling a cache of certain terms, concepts, and modes of thought – often to the exclusion of others – that remain central across a wide variety of languages in the field today.

( THURSDAY **MARCH 8** )

14:30 **Introduction**  
Alessandro Nova, C. Oliver O'Donnell, Robert Brennan

PANEL 1 **INVENTIONS OF ACADEMIC LANGUAGES**

*Chair: Alessandro Nova*

15:00 **Di lotta e di governo. Lessico, codici e categorie critiche degli scritti accademici sull'arte dagli Umidi alla Crusca**  
Massimiliano Rossi | Università del Salento, Lecce

15:40 **Terms of Art**  
Robert Williams | University of California, Santa Barbara

16:20 *Coffee Break*

*Chair: Marco Mascolo*

16:50 **The Conferences of the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture: A New Discourse on the Arts**  
Jacqueline Lichtenstein | Université Paris-Sorbonne

17:30 **La lingua francese e la scrittura della storia dell'arte 1660-1700**  
Olivier Bonfait | Université de Bourgogne

18:10 *Coffee Break*

*Chair: Robert Brennan*

18:30 **Language Ideologies and the Inventions of Art History**  
John Leavitt | Université de Montréal

20:00 **Dinner** (*for speakers only*)

21:00 **Site visit – Casa Zuccari** (*for speakers only*)

( FRIDAY **MARCH 9** )

PANEL 2 **ASSIMILATION AND TRANSFORMATION OF ACADEMIC MODELS**  
*Chair: C. Oliver O'Donnell*

09:30 **Antiguidade and Pintura. Concepts Redefined by a Novel Artistic Universality**  
Alessandra Russo | Columbia University, New York

10:10 **In the Manner of Vasari: Italian Loanwords and Calques in Karel van Mander's *Schilder-Boeck* (1604)**  
Francesca Terrenato | Università degli Studi di Roma La Sapienza

10:50 *Coffee Break*

PANEL 3 **IN THE SHADOW OF THE ACADEMY**

*Chair: Alexander Nagel*

11:20 **Reading Diderot in America**  
Michael Fried | Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore

12:00 **Historical Genre: Negotiating a Hybrid Concept in and outside of 19th-century France**  
Stephen Bann | University of Bristol

12:40 *Lunch Break*

PANEL 4 **TRANSLATING AND UNTRANSLATING ART WRITING**

*Chair: Brigitte Sölch*

14:00 **Winckelmanns Sprachen. Kunsttheorie als Übersetzung**  
Elisabeth Décultot | Universität Halle

14:40 **Art Historical Untranslatables**  
Andreas Beyer | Universität Basel

15:20 **Why did the 'Renaissance' Resist Translation?**  
Christopher S. Wood | New York University

16:00 *Coffee Break*

16:30 **Site visit – Chapel of Saint Luke, Basilica della Santissima Annunziata**  
led by Fabian Jonietz | Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz (*for speakers only*)

( SATURDAY **MARCH 10** )

PANEL 5 **EKPHRASIS IN THE 20TH CENTURY**  
*Chair: Andreas Beyer*

09:30 **Roberto Longhi e la sua ricezione, tra ekphrasis e connoisseurship**  
Marco Mascolo | Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz

10:10 **Nello specchio della traduzione: l'ecfrasi longhiana alla prova della lingua francese**  
Émilie Passignat | Università Ca' Foscari, Venezia

10:50 *Coffee Break*

PANEL 6 **ART HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE**

*Chair: Hana Gründler*

11:20 **Schapiro and Lévi-Strauss: Structuralist Arguments among Color Field Paintings**  
C. Oliver O'Donnell | Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz

12:00 **Reading-In: Franz Boas and the Languages of the Anthropology of Art**  
Whitney Davis | University of California, Berkeley

12:45 **Concluding Discussion**