



CALL FOR PAPERS

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Ceiling Painting in the History of Art

THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 2019
THE FRICK COLLECTION

The Frick Collection is pleased to invite submissions for “Above and Beyond: Ceiling Painting in the History of Art,” a public symposium organized in conjunction with the special exhibition *Tiepolo in Milan: The Lost Frescoes of Palazzo Archinto* (April 16 to July 14, 2019). Tragically destroyed during World War II, Giambattista Tiepolo’s ceiling paintings for Palazzo Archinto (1730–31) represented allegorical and mythological scenes in magnificent, light-filled skies. The *in situ* effects of these grand frescoes may forever be lost, but the related oil sketches and drawings assembled for the exhibition provide insight into the absent originals—and into the particular challenges the ceiling poses as a site for painting.

Ceiling paintings tested early modern artists’ abilities to realize complex projects, demanding collaboration among painters, architects, carpenters, and legions of assistants on some of the largest paintings ever created. Seen from below, subjects such as triumphs and apotheoses required artists to resolve tensions between naturalism and abstraction in picturing the firmament, and to engage space in ways wholly foreign to easel painting.

An heir to the illusionistic tradition of Correggio, Charles Le Brun, and Baciccio, Tiepolo has long been recognized for his “pictorial intelligence.” Yet the practice of ceiling painting has an even longer history—from the miniaturist figuration of the Alhambra’s Sala de los Reyes to the historiated ceiling of the ex-monastery at Tecamachalco in Puebla to Yoko Ono’s *Ceiling Painting, Yes Painting*. Inspired by this expansive history, we welcome proposals for twenty-minute papers on the making and reception of ceiling paintings across time and place. Please send a CV and 250-word abstract by Thursday, May 2, 2019, to academic@frick.org. Submissions from emerging scholars, including early-career university and museum professionals and advanced doctoral students, are encouraged.

Possible topics and lines of inquiry include, but are not limited to:

- Issues of site and execution, from technologies of transfer to the collaborations and workshop models that facilitated projects of such a large scale and long duration
- Often-vexed connections between ceiling painting and theatricality, *trompe l’oeil* and architecture
- Modes of spectatorship; the impact of light and movement and liturgical or court activities on the viewer’s perception and circulation
- The sky as subject in both ecclesiastic and secular contexts
- Ceiling sculpture, particularly the role of stucco and coffering
- Ceiling painting’s place in art-critical discourse and treatises (Bosse, Lomazzo, de Piles); its status vs. that of easel painting
- Perspectival theories and techniques
- Ceiling paintings as vehicles for glorification of absolute rule, familial pride, the divine
- Challenges to the critical fortune of ceiling paintings, such as the difficulty of reproduction

*Symposia at The Frick Collection bring new research in art history and related fields to the general public.
Please direct inquiries to academic@frick.org.*