

Histories of Perspectives
International Symposium
Thursday 17 and Friday 18 October, 2024



Installation view of Hito Steyerl's *Factory of the Sun* (2015). Courtesy of the artist and Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York. Photo: Sarah Wilmer

Few essays in art history have garnered the enduring reputation of Erwin Panofsky's *Perspective as Symbolic Form*, which continues to anchor and polarize studies on space and its representation. First published in 1927 in the *Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg*, the text originated as a lecture delivered for the 1924-1925 academic program of the Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek Warburg (KBW) in Hamburg. To mark the lecture's centenary, this international symposium seeks to expand our understanding of perspective—chronologically, geographically, methodologically, and technologically.

While Albertian and other single-focus perspectives have attracted most scholarly attention in art history, recent studies have increasingly explored debates on perspective in different media—including cinema and virtual reality—and forms of three-dimensional representation that project alternate worldviews. This comparative endeavor demonstrates that central-point perspective remains relatively marginal on a global scale. It also prompts a reassessment and expansion of the notion of “symbolic form,” as encouraged by Panofsky's methodology, in other words the exploration of histories of perspectives—both in the plural.

This symposium seeks to foster interdisciplinary approaches and uncover areas of friction or tension that may inspire new approaches in the field. Topics for discussion include: the Western artistic preference for single-point perspective since the fifteenth century and the role that this aesthetic criterion has played in the constitution of an artistic canon; the problematic association between perspective and the historiographical idea of progress; the fragility of perspectival devices (*dispositifs*) and the visual distortions they entail; the early modern notion of “project” and the architectural, economic, and political endeavors that perspective has shaped; debates surrounding the use or rejection of perspective in the moving image and generative artificial intelligence.

THURSDAY 17. oct 2024 – Centre allemand d’histoire de l’art Paris (auditorium Julius Meier-Graefe)

9:30-10:00

*Welcome and introduction**

Peter Geimer (Centre allemand d’histoire de l’art Paris) & Pierre Von-Ow (Académie de France à Rome – Villa Medici)

SESSION 1

10:05-12:15

*The Power of the Line in Albrecht Dürer’s “Vier Bücher von menschlicher Proportion” (1528)**
Nicola Suthor (Yale University)

*On the Pain of Being Seen**

Noam Andrews (Independent scholar)

La perspective comme projet : le cas de la place Louis XV à Paris (1748-1753)

Étienne Jollet (Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne)

SESSION 2

14:00-16:10

Partager un point de vue. Exercices pratiques avec Nicolas de Cuse
Emmanuel Alloa (Université de Fribourg)

Ambivalente perspective. Damisch et Steinberg à propos des Ménines
Jérémie Koering (Université de Fribourg)

*Folding as Symbolic Form? On Touch and Perspective in Eighteenth-Century Britain**
Pierre Von-Ow (Académie de France à Rome – Villa Medici)

KEYNOTE (in person and online)

16:30-18:00

*Perspective and the Genealogy of Generative Artificial Intelligence**

Antonio Somaini (Université Paris 3 Sorbonne Nouvelle/Institut universitaire de France/Harvard University, remote)

Registration link for online attendance:

https://yale.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_AhpYppcPRUK4rHdJbIn3GA.

Next page

FRIDAY 18 . oct 2024

SESSION 3 – Centre allemand d’histoire de l’art Paris (auditorium Julius Meier-Graefe)
9:30-12:00

Sur l’écran: la fiction perspective

Philippe-Alain Michaud (Centre Pompidou – Musée national d’art moderne)

To cast a glance. Miroir, anamorphose et relief au cinéma

Lydie Delahaye (Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne)

Perspectives contrariées et modernité cinématographique

Pierre Eugène (Université de Picardie Jules Verne)

General Q&A

SESSION 4 – Centre Pompidou (Cinéma 2)

14:00-18:00

Tableau, écran : Histoire de perspective

Program curated by Enrico Camporesi & Philippe-Alain Michaud (Centre Pompidou – Musée national d’art moderne). Includes films by Ernie Gehr, David Haxton, and Hans Richter, among others.

Organizers

Pierre Von-Ow (Académie de France à Rome – Villa Medici)

Étienne Jollet (Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne)

Nicola Suthor (Yale University)

Contact

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Sponsors

HiCSA (Centre de recherche universitaire en Histoire culturelle et sociale de l'art, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne)

History of Art Department at Yale University

Partners

Deutsches Forum für Kunstgeschichte/Centre allemande d'histoire de l'art Paris

Centre Pompidou – Musée national d'art moderne

Information

The event is free and open to the public. Booking is not required, except for online attendance of the keynote. Only the keynote will be available online. Talks are in French except for those indicated by an asterisk * after their title, which are in English.

Sessions 1-3 & keynote (Thursday 17 and morning Friday 18)

Centre allemand d'histoire de l'art Paris

Hôtel Lully


45 rue des Petits Champs – 75001 Paris

The auditorium Julius Meier-Graefe is located in the lower level 

Session 4 (afternoon Friday 18)

Centre Pompidou – Cinéma 2

Place Georges Pompidou – 75004 Paris

The cinema is located in the lower level 

www.hicsa.univ-paris1.fr/



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