



# ICMA NEWS

...AND MORE

August 2014, no. 2

Sherry C.M. Lindquist, Editor

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Fellow Members of the ICMA,

At the very midpoint of a long hot summer – which sadly never seems quite long enough – it is nice to be able to report that our news is good. The ICMA has again been awarded a generous grant by the Kress Foundation, so funds will be available for research and publication costs for another five years. Our record pretty well spoke for itself: of the 25 projects undertaken by the recipients of the awards from 2009 to 2013, 10 have resulted in books that have already appeared in print, and three more such books are slated for publication in 2015. One of the books whose publication was supported by a Kress grant in 2009, Elina Gertsman's *The Dance of Death in the Middle Ages. Image, Text, Performance* (Turnout: Brepols, 2010) was awarded the prestigious John Nicholas Brown prize this year by the Medieval Academy of America for the best first book on a medieval subject. Elina's book is volume 3 in the series, *Studies in the Visual Cultures of the Middle Ages*; this fine series is edited by another ICMA member, Kathryn Smith.

The opportunity to apply for one of these Kress grants (there are five awarded each year) is one of the many benefits of ICMA membership. The eligibility requirements have been somewhat altered. Grants for publication costs are available to scholars at all career levels (no longer is it necessary to have received a PhD in the last 10 years), but are now limited to the support of a first book. The recent PhD requirement is still in place for research grants. Note that the application deadline is coming up soon: August 31. More details are available on the website: <http://www.medievalart.org/kress-fellowships-available-research-publications>.

The ICMA sponsored four sessions this

past May, including one by the Student Committee, at the International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo. Details can be found in this Newsletter.

Other good news: The heroic efforts of Linda Safron and Adam Cohen, the co-editors of *Gesta*, have brought the publication of our journal back on schedule. The latest issue (vol. 53:1) came out in early May. The editors are being flooded with submissions, but have an efficient and speedy review process and crucial help from the expanded *Gesta* Editorial Board, which now includes scholars living outside of North America. The arrangement with the University of Chicago Press for the publication of the journal and for its distribution is working splendidly. The lengthy text of volume 3 of *The Census of Gothic Sculpture in America* edited by Joan Holladay and Susan Ward has been completed and is now being meticulously prepared for publication. And the Newsletter here before your eyes is expanding its scope with each issue, thanks to its energetic editor, Sherry Lindquist, and its designer, Danielle Oteri.

The Forsyth lectures, given every other year by a scholar chosen by the ICMA Programs and Lectures Committee, will be offered this fall by Anthony Cutler, professor emeritus of art history at Pennsylvania State University. He will be speaking this fall at

*Continued on page 2*



*Nancy Ševčenko, President of the ICMA, at the International Congress of Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, MI, 2014.*

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

(continued)

Holy Cross School of Theology in Brookline, Massachusetts, at the University of Michigan, at Kenyon College and at The Ohio State University, from September 29 through October 3, 2014. The Forsyth fund was established in memory of medievalists George H. Forsyth, Jr. (University of Michigan) and William H. Forsyth (The Metropolitan Museum of Art) to sponsor a lecture or lectures to be presented at different venues across the country.

This is but one of several separate funds administered by the ICMA. The others are the Parker Fund for the support of *Gesta*; the Scher fund for other potential ICMA publishing ventures; the Stokstad fund for a “presidential” lecture every three years; and the Stahl Memorial Fund for a lecture west of the Mississippi. These funds are an important part of the public face of the ICMA, and we encourage you to donate directly to any one of them. These donations can be made easily on the ICMA website at <http://www.medievalart.org/join/named-funds>, or at the time of membership renewal.

Our formerly problematic membership list has been cleared up almost single-handedly by Ryan Frisinger, our Operations Administrator. Every member should now have an ID number, and through it, access to *Gesta* online. We are currently designing new ways for members to share information relevant to the study of medieval art on the ICMA website; this project is swiftly moving forward thanks to the skills of our Programs Director, Danielle Oteri, and our technical wizard, Gregory Luce. The ICMA already has a Facebook page and there is now a Twitter feed on our home page. Soon you will never find

yourself without the very latest news of medieval events! Preliminary details about our “ICMA Community News” can be found in the Resources and Opportunities section of this Newsletter. Further guidelines will be sent around by email when the features are fully up and running.

There are other changes in the air, some of them structural. We are working to establish clearer and more efficient divisions of labor between various closely related ICMA Committees. The Membership Committee is looking for ways to attract new members and to encourage members who live near each other to get together more easily and more often. The Student Committee is actively preparing a greater web presence.

The happiest news of all is that we are now in a good position to explore new initiatives, thanks to the rising stock market of course, but above all, to our eagle-eyed and knowledgeable Treasurer, Becky Corrie, who has steered the finances of the ICMA so wisely over the last five years. The Publication Committee, for example, is looking at new kinds of publishing ventures for the digital age, and we have other ideas to present to the Board in the fall. Right now is a good time for you to let me know where you think the organization should be going – and what it should not be neglecting along the way.

Wishing all of you a pleasant and productive summer!

Nancy P. Ševčenko, President  
[Nsevcenko8@gmail.com](mailto:Nsevcenko8@gmail.com)

## ICMA DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Development and Membership committees are engaged in discussions about a possible merger. Jan Marquardt, Membership Committee chair, and member of the Board of Directors, presented a preliminary proposal that was well received by the Board at its May meeting. Marquardt and Doralynn Pines, Development Committee chair, will be meeting later in the summer with Nancy Ševčenko to continue discussions and work out the details of a plan which will then be presented to the Board at its next meeting in October.

Janet Marquardt  
Chair, Membership Committee

Doralynn Pines  
Chair, Development Committee



Gesta 2014

## REPORT OF THE ICMA DELEGATE TO THE ACLS ANNUAL MEETING OF 2014

The American Council of Learned Societies Annual Meeting took place in Philadelphia at the Sheraton Society Hill Hotel from May 8 to 10, 2014. The ACLS continues to lead in supporting scholars in the humanities and related social sciences. In 2012 and 2013, ACLS awarded over \$15 million to 320 fellows and grantees worldwide. In her report, President Pauline Yu argued for the profoundly public purpose of work in the humanities and its necessity in a democratic society. She urged collaboration between humanities and science research.

An information session on Thursday evening was devoted to “Money, Members, Mission: Learned Societies by the Numbers” where the results of a census completed by 56 ACLS member societies was shared. The ICMA is grouped with the small member societies. It was noted that most member organizations, particularly in the small and medium size categories, have seen an increase in attendance at their annual conferences in recent years while the largest conferences have seen a drop-off. The ACLS conference of Administrative Officers (CAO) will continue the census annually. For more detailed news about the content of this meeting, see <http://www.acls.org/am2014/>.

During lunch on Friday, Earl Lewis, President of the Andrew Mellon Foundation spoke eloquently about the

Mellon Foundation’s continuing commitment to the arts and humanities. He reiterated that the foundation created in 1969 by Paul Mellon has no sunset and will continue to invest in “able people from capable institutions.” The Mellon Foundation will continue to explore ways to balance continuity and change. A current topic for Mellon is the future of academic publishing.

The afternoon session was devoted to “The Public Face of the Humanities” with Kwame Appiah, Professor of Philosophy and Law at NYU chairing. The speakers were: Michael Bérubé, Professor of Literature at Penn State University, Jill Lepore, Professor of American History and chair of History and Literature at Harvard University, and Alexander Nemerov, Professor in the Arts and Humanities at Stanford University.

On Friday evening, The Charles Homer Haskins Prize Lecture was delivered by Bruno Nettl, Professor Emeritus of Music and Anthropology, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Born in Prague in 1930, Professor Nettl is credited with the flourishing of ethnomusicology in the U.S.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Peter Barnet*

*Senior Curator of the Metropolitan Museum's  
Department of Medieval Art and the Cloisters*

## ICMA RECEPTION AT KALAMAZOO



*Beth Williamson Samways, Jackie Jung, Maggie Williams, Nancy Ševčenko, and Rachel Dressler at the ICMA Reception at Kalamazoo.*



*Gerhard Lutz, Lynley Anne Herbert, Shirin Fozgi, William Diebold*



*Shannon Wearing, Susan L'Engle, Erik Gustafson, Joseph Ackley*



*Adelaide Bennett Hagens and Cathleen Fleck*



*Stephen Perkinson and Julie Harris.*



## ICMA AT KALAMAZOO

ICMA was well represented at the International Congress on Medieval Studies with three sessions sponsored by the ICMA and one by the ICMA Student Committee, as well as receptions by both (see also the Student Committee Pages).

### Other Animals and Humans in Medieval Art

Human society is not possible without other animals. This was true in the Middle Ages as well. In fact, human animals were more dependent on other animals during the Middle Ages than they are today. Famously, animals and monstrous hybrids abound in medieval art. How then did medieval art reflect and promote notions about relationships between humans and other animals?



Corine Schleif and Martha Easton, *Session Chairs of the ICMA-sponsored session, "Other Animals and Humans in Medieval Art."*

The miscellany found in J. Paul Getty Museum, MS Ludwig XV 4, is a carefully constructed thirteenth-century compilation conceptualized as an integrated whole that features seven pages devoted to the *Mirabilia mundi*, presented principally through images. Elizabeth Morrison explored how the unusual images in the manuscript along with the context in which they are introduced helped both to explore and exploit the tension inherent within the monstrous races, whether animal, human, or both. The paper is part of a larger project on the illuminations of bestiaries that Elizabeth is undertaking, concentrating on their role as a kind of visual "lingua franca" for medieval viewers.

Anna Russakoff's paper, "Kalila and Dimna (Paris BnF lat. 8504): Visual Lessons from Cross-Cultural Animals," focused on a unique fourteenth-century illuminated Latin translation of the animal fable collection *Kalila and Dimna*. Anna chose four fables centering on human-animal relationships – the Monkey and the Carpenter, the Lion and the Hare, Elephants and Hares, and the Mouse Transformed into a Girl. She compared them with their treatment in the earliest illustrated Arabic manuscript of

this text (Paris BnF arabe 3465) as well as with contemporaneous images of animals from northern European manuscripts including bestiaries. The paper marks the beginning of a larger project on illustrations of animal fables exploring the ways in which actual animals, their representations, and meanings associated with them interfaced between cultures.

Richard Leson discussed the fragmentary remains of a thirteenth-century tympanum that once marked an entrance at Coucy-le-château in Picardy. He discussed the archaeology of the tympanum and argued that its imagery showing a knight battling a lion generated later accounts of a struggle between a legendary lord of Coucy and a lion. Although the details of the narratives attached to the tympanum may not date to the thirteenth century, Richard argued that the original relief attested to Enguerrand III's encounter with an actual lion, an event equated with the experience of a marvel in contemporary romance. The baron's subjugation and assimilation of the lion's affect suggested the superhuman manipulation of nature requisite to the construction of Coucy-le-château, but the creature's unsettling affect lingered on, transmuted into the colossal donjon. Animal theory, particularly a consideration of animal affect, is shaping Richard's current book project on Jeanne de Flandre.



Anna Russakoff, Elizabeth Morrison, and Richard Leson, *panelists in the ICMA-sponsored session, "Other Animals and Humans in Medieval Art."*

Recent publications on animals by session participants include: Elizabeth Morrison, *Beasts: Factual and Fantastic*, Los Angeles, 2007; Anna Russakoff and Irène Fabry-Tehranchi, eds., *Human and Animal in Medieval France,*

*12th-15th Century*, Amsterdam, expected 2014; and Corine Schleif, "Who are the Animals in the Geese Book?" in: Pia Cuneo, ed., *Animals and Identity in Early Modern Europe*, Farnham, expected 2014.

Martha Easton  
Corine Schleif

## Astrology and its Objects in the Middle Ages



*Session organizer Ittai Weinryb facilitates an exchange between an audience member and Tania Lévy, who participated in the session from Paris via Skype.*

The objective of medieval astrology was to study the stars to determine optimum moments for human action. Proof of the effect of celestial bodies on the sublunary spheres was manifested everyday —

tides, vegetal growth, and the changing of the seasons. That these astral forces determined human passions and personalities was taken for granted by the most influential thinkers of the Middle Ages. With the increasing translation of Islamic astrological texts in the high Middle Ages, the treatises inherited from Antiquity were complicated and refined, and astrology/astronomy remained an integral part of the quadrivium, the mathematical portion of the liberal arts, in the cursus of the nascent medieval universities.

Images and objects were central to the practice of astrology, but this material world has suffered in modern historiography. Astrological items have been labeled as marginal, pagan, or just plain fake. The contemporary historian may experience marked discomfort in integrating a belief in astrology into a predominantly religious understanding of the Middle Ages, but this unease was clearly one not felt by medieval practitioners. Our session aimed to overturn these misunderstandings and to investigate the practice of astrology as a positive generator and a formidable conceptualizer of images and their making. Not just God, but also the celestial bodies were very much part of the way people thought about and reacted to crafted images. The session, therefore, sought to explore the material traces of charting and harnessing natural forces in the Middle Ages.

The three contributions to the panel at Kalamazoo highlighted these themes from various angles. Darrelyn Gunzburg's paper showed how the manipulation of astrological knowledge was increasingly in demand by the Italian communes, demonstrating their dominion over the powers of the skies. Such knowledge was important

for governance, for determining auspicious moments for decisive political action. Conceived by astrologer Pietro d'Abano and painted by Giotto di Bondone, the early fourteenth-century program in the Salone of the Palazzo della Ragione in Padua thus typified under Gunzburg's gaze the intersections between art, science, and power. Tania Lévy presented on the royal entries that the astrologer Simon de Phares planned for the city of Lyon, and her contribution put forward two interesting observations. The first was that the iconographic program devised for Charles VIII was grounded in the logic of the astrological houses, whereby the movement of the King emulated the alignment of the planets in their favored house; the Sun (the King) thus found its proper place in Leo (Lyon). Secondly, through an in-depth examination of Simon de Phares' extant library, Lévy was able to uncover the clever way Simon crafted his monumental installations. Moving from the political to the personal, astrology was equally an important component of medicinal practice, and Adrienne Albright brought this facet to the fore. Like bodies of water, organic and living bodies were highly attuned to the extraterrestrial forces circulating above. Drawing on her research into a medical almanac, Wellcome MS 40, dated to the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century, Albright illustrated the centrality of the study of the stars and their alignment in diagnosing a variety of corporal maladies and prescribing their attendant cures.



*Sarah Guérin, Adrienne Albright, Darrelyn Gunzburg, Tania Lévy (via Skype) and Ittai Weinryb.*

In sum, our session investigated how images and objects operated within a world governed by astrology, and called for a new understanding of the place and function of medieval astrology.

As a result of the session, we are inspired to pursue further the study of medieval astrological practice and its related objects, and hope to reconvene to pursue these exciting questions in future scholarly gatherings.

*Sarah Guérin  
Ittai Weinryb*

## ICMA AT KALAMAZOO

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### No/Thing: Medieval Art and Apophasis

This session, dedicated to investigating intersections between our very object-oriented discipline and the compelling medieval fascination with the inexpressible void, had a great turnout. As vernal breezes stirred the heavy blackout drapes of Bernhard 210, our four panelists kept the gathered listeners enthralled for the full hour and a half. The theme of no/thing did not, as one might expect, mean that the papers did not deal in things. Quite the opposite; drawings, illuminations, enamelwork, and indeed medieval shoes were among the visual and material delights we were invited to ponder.



Panelists Anne Harris, Jacqueline Jung, Evan Gatti, Elina Gertsman and session chair, Alexa Sand.

Elina Gertsman got things off to a lively start, exploring the “Empty Spaces” of her talk’s title. Nothingness cropped up in multiple forms and venues, ranging from illuminated initials that sought to represent God’s shaping of the cosmos

out of the nothing that preceded Creation, to miniatures

that evoke the cold and silent nothing of death through figural voids. The generative potential of nothing seems, in some ways, to balance its nihilistic power, a point that continually came to the surface in all four talks. Evan Gatti’s “The Vercelli Roll: The No-Thing That It Is and the Thing It Might Be” placed this mysterious object, so often not discussed as a thing in and of itself, but rather as an explanatory or contextual corollary to other things, at the center of an investigation of how its very structure, style, and form deflect description. Anne Harris’s “*Farai un vers de dreyt nien*: Guillaume IX, Troubadour Caskets, and the Apophasis of Courtly Love” brought together the eleventh-century troubadour poet’s meditation on negation and the riddling iconography of the twelfth-century enamel casket to propose an apophatic aesthetics of courtly love. Jacqueline Jung, in her “The ‘Fascinating Presence of Absences’ in the *Vita* of Hedwig of Silesia” gave an invigorating reading of Hedwig’s engagement with the material world, in which empty boots, cracks in the sole of the foot, and a bowl of dirty wash water all gesture toward the pregnant emptiness of signs.

Though the four topics ranged in space and time, what emerged from all of them was the need to attend to the paradox of knowing by unknowing so central to medieval thought and experience.

Alexa Sand  
Session Chair

## MEMBER NEWS

### Awards

If you are a member and your work has recently garnered a prize, please contact [newsletter@medievalart.org](mailto:newsletter@medievalart.org) by November 15, 2014 (in advance of the December Newsletter).

### ICMA Member Elina Gertsman (Case Western Reserve University) Awarded The John Nicholas Brown Prize

Congratulations to Elina Gertsman of Case Western Reserve for winning the John Nicholas Brown prize from the Medieval Academy for her book, *The Dance of Death in the Middle Ages. Image, Text, Performance* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010). [http://www.brepols.net/Pages/ShowProduct.aspx?prod\\_id=IS-9782503530635-1](http://www.brepols.net/Pages/ShowProduct.aspx?prod_id=IS-9782503530635-1).



Elina Gertsman.  
(Photo: Daniel Wolf Carroll)

### ICMA Member Jacqueline Jung (Yale University) Wins the PROSE Award for Art History and Criticism

Congratulations to ICMA Member Jacqueline Jung for winning the PROSE Award for best book in Art History and Criticism for *The Gothic Screen: Space, Sculpture, and Community in The Cathedrals Of France and Germany, ca. 1200-1400* (Cambridge, MA, Cambridge University Press, 2013), which was also a finalist for the Charles Rufus Morey Award from CAA. <http://www.cambridge.org/us/academic/subjects/history/european-history-1000-1450/gothic-screen-space-sculpture-and-community-cathedrals-france-and-germany-ca12001400>.



Jacqueline Jung (Photo: <https://webspace.yale.edu/jung/index.html>)



## MEMBER NEWS

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## Recently Published Books by ICMA Members

If you are a member who has published a book 12 months prior to December 2014, and which has not yet been announced in this Newsletter, please send your information by November 15, 2014 (in advance of the December 2014 Newsletter) to: [newsleter@medievalart.org](mailto:newsleter@medievalart.org).

Click on the link for more detailed information about the publication:

Areford, David S. *The Art of Empathy: The Mother of Sorrows in Northern Renaissance Art and Devotion*. Jacksonville, FL: Cummer Museum of Art; and London, England: Giles, Ltd., 2013. <http://www.gilesltd.com/books/catalogue/art-decorative-arts/the-art-of-empathy>

Aufreiter, Johanna, Gunther Reisinger, Elisabeth Sobieczky, and Claudia Steinhardt-Hirsch, eds. *Festschrift für Johann Konrad Eberlein*. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag 2014. <http://www.reimer-mann-verlag.de/controler.php?cmd=detail&titelnummer=101482&verlag=4>

Benton, Janetta Rebold and Robert DiYanni. *Handbook for the Humanities*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2014. <http://www.pearsonhighered.com/educator/product/Handbook-for-the-Humanities/9780205161621.page>

Carr, Annemarie Weyl, and Andreas Nicolaïdès. *Asinou across Time: Studies in the Architecture and Murals of the Panagia Phorbiotissa, Cyprus*. Dumbarton Oaks Studies. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2012. <http://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780884023494>

Hillsdale, Cecily. *Byzantine Art and Diplomacy in an Age of Decline*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. <http://www.cambridge.org/us/academic/subjects/history/european-history-1000-1450/byzantine-art-and-diplomacy-age-decline>

Johnson, Danielle. *La Transition de la Sculpture Architecturale de l'art Roman à l'art Gothique en Ile-de-France/The Transition of Romanesque to Early Gothic Architectural Sculpture in the Ile-de-France*, 2014. <http://www.sculptures-1100-1175-iledefrance.fr/?lang=en>

Jones, Lynn. *Byzantine Images and their Afterlives: Essays in Honor of Annemarie Weyl Carr*. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate 2014. <http://www.ashgate.com/isbn/9781409442912>

Kim, Susan, and Asa Simon Mittman. *Inconceivable Beasts: The Wonders of the East in the Beowulf Manuscript*. Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, vol. 433. Tempe, Arizona: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2013. <https://acmrs.org/publications/catalog/inconceivable-beasts-wonders-east-beowulf-manuscript>

Olariu, Dominic. *La genèse de la représentation ressemblante de l'homme. Réconsiderations du portrait à partir du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*. Bern: Peter Lang, 2014. [http://www.peterlang.com/download/datasheet/54409/datasheet\\_430051.pdf](http://www.peterlang.com/download/datasheet/54409/datasheet_430051.pdf)

Ross, Leslie. *Language in the Visual Arts: The Interplay of Text and Imagery*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Co. Publishers, 2014. <http://www.mcfarlandbooks.com/book-2.php?id=978-0-7864-6795-2>

Rudolph, Conrad. *The Mystic Ark: Hugh of Saint Victor, Art, and Thought in the Twelfth Century*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014. <http://www.cambridge.org/hn/academic/subjects/history/history-ideas-and-intellectual-history/mystic-ark-hugh-saint-victor-art-and-thought-twelfth-century>

Safran, Linda. *The Medieval Salento: Art and Identity in Southern Italy*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014. <http://www.upenn.edu/pennpress/book/15215.html>

Sandron, Dany, and Andrew Tallon. *Notre-Dame de Paris: Neuf siècles d'histoire. Une reconstitution des différents âges de la cathédrale, de sa construction à nos jours*. Paris: Parigramme, 2013. <http://www.parigramme.com/livre-notre-dame-de-paris-neuf-siecles-dhistoire-324.htm>

Stones, Alison. *Gothic Manuscripts: c. 1260-1320 (A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in France)*, 2 vols. Turnhout: Brepols, 2013. [http://www.brepols.net/Pages/ShowProduct.aspx?prod\\_id=IS-9781872501956-1](http://www.brepols.net/Pages/ShowProduct.aspx?prod_id=IS-9781872501956-1)

Woodcock, Alex. *Of Sirens and Centaurs: Medieval Sculpture at Exeter Cathedral*. Exeter: Impress, 2013. <http://www.impress-books.co.uk/?p=1848>

Zchomelidse, Nino. *Art, Ritual, and Civic Identity in Medieval Southern Italy*. University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2014. <http://www.psupress.org/books/titles/978-0-271-05973-0.html>

## SPECIAL REPORTS

### Exhibition Review

#### Vikings: Life and Legend

*National Museum of Denmark (June 22 – November 17, 2013), the British Museum (March 6 – June 22, 2014), and the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (September 10, 2014 – January 4, 2015); reviewed at the British Museum*



Figure 1. Brooch shaped like a ship, 800-1500, Tjorneboj II, Fyn, Denmark. Copper alloy. (Photograph: ©The National Museum of Denmark)

The reach of the Viking world was vast. From the late eighth to the early eleventh century, Vikings sailed from their Scandinavian homelands as traders, raiders, and explorers, establishing settlements from Greenland to Kiev and creating a network spanning four continents.

This expansion and exchange is the focus of *Vikings: Life and Legend*, a massive exhibition of Viking Age objects at the British Museum (March 6 – June 22, 2014) that aims to balance the popular image of Vikings as bloodthirsty raiders with their rich and sophisticated material culture legacy. The exhibition draws on the research and archaeological discoveries of the last 40 years, and brings together objects from 24 collections in 12 countries.

An almost overwhelming array of portable objects—jewelry, dress accessories, coins, glass beads, gaming pieces, mounts from drinking horns and swords, silver cups and stone vessels—testifies to the geographic scope of Viking trade and settlement. The bulk of the artifacts comes from archaeological contexts, primarily burials and hoards, with find sites in Scandinavia, Northern Europe, Central Asia, and the British Isles. This material is exciting to look at, especially for art historians curious about style, assimilation, and variation. A number of Irish, Anglo-Saxon, and German brooches in the exhibition, for example, incorporate Urnes-style ornament, a late Viking animal interlace named for the finely carved example on the portal of the eleventh-century church at Urnes, Norway. Viking artisans were also themselves influenced by the forms with which they came into contact, and we get to see a good range of that, from the delicate, curvilinear Frankish gold strap ends to the bolder, geometric forms of Baltic copper-alloy jewelry.



Figure 2. The Vale of York hoard, buried c. 927, near Harrogate, North Yorkshire, England. (Photograph: Yorkshire Museum/The Trustees of the British Museum)

Particularly telling of the extent of the Viking network are those things that traveled and were transformed, and there are plenty: a piece of Norwegian schist used as a whetstone and found in Ireland; numerous Islamic silver dirhams pierced to hang as pendants and found in Viking graves; and the magnificent silver and gilt Hunterston brooch, made around 700 CE in Ireland or Western Scotland. The brooch is displayed (as it is in the National Museum of Scotland) with both sides visible to show off not only the exquisite filigree of the front, but also the tenth-century Old Norse runic inscription (“Melbrigda owns this brooch”) on the back. There is also a wealth of *material* here, especially in the section devoted to the international trade practices of the Vikings: iron, rock crystal, carnelian, amber, gold, and silver, sometimes piled up in spectacular ways, as in the display of the Vale of York hoard (Figure 2), which contains Islamic coins, a Russian neck ring, a Frankish silver cup, and fragments of precious metal from Afghanistan and Uzbekistan. These objects make clear the complex cultural, economic, and artistic exchanges underlying the whole transcontinental “Viking Age.”

The centerpiece of the show is the [reconstruction](#) of Roskilde 6 (Figure 3), the longest Viking ship ever found. It was discovered and excavated in 1997 in the harbor of Roskilde, Denmark during the expansion of the Viking Ship Museum, and has been painstakingly documented and conserved. *Vikings* marks the first public display of

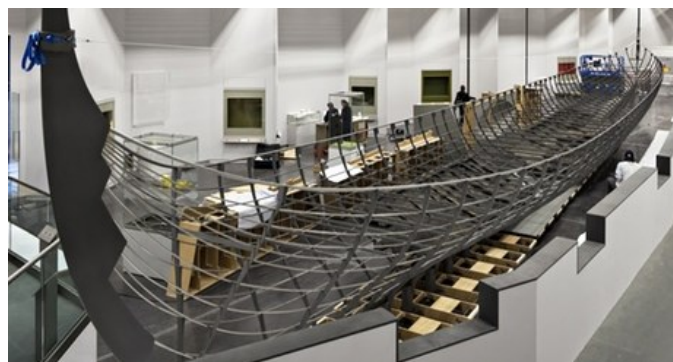


Figure 3. Reconstruction of Roskilde 6 during installation at the British Museum. The ship was built with oak felled c. 1025, near Oslo Fjord, Norway. (Photograph: Paul Raftery for the Guardian)



Roskilde 6, also known as “Sea Wolf,” and at 37 meters long, the ship fills nearly the whole length of the British Museum’s new 1,100-square-meter Sainsbury Exhibition Gallery, the last room of the exhibition. The ship is stunning; although only 20 percent of the original timbers survive (around 200 pieces), the massive steel framework that supports them recreates all the lines of the ship, from gunwales to floor, stem to stern. It is sleek and beautiful, a ghost of a ship that conjures both maritime expertise and martial brutality.

With the *Sea Wolf*, we also get warriors. Near the stern are cases displaying axes, helmets, swords, bows and arrows, and other accoutrements of the well-dressed Viking. A



Figure 4. Helmet, eyebrow ornament/eyepiece from a helmet, and skull fragment with jawbone on display at the British Museum. The skull and jawbone, which show decorative filing of teeth, come from a mass burial in Dorset, England, discovered 2009. (Photograph: Francesco Kangaris for the Guardian.)

number of the swords and spearheads are finely decorated, and along with a jawbone with filed and incised teeth, they suggest that the display of wealth, status, and even (to some degree) individuality was central to Viking identity (Figure 4). This particular Viking, however, was not victorious in his plunder: the jawbone comes from a mass grave of decapitated skeletons in Weymouth, Dorset on the south coast of England. The 50 bodies – probably the crew of a medium-sized Viking warship – were stripped of their weapons and adornments.

For all the fascinating objects, however, *Vikings* is not fully satisfying as an exhibition. It lacks a guiding narrative and a critical perspective. For me, this was evident in both the physical layout of the show and in the treatment of the objects. The show is organized around a number of themes, including The Viking Homeland, Cultures in Contact, International Trade, Communicating Power, The Way of the Warrior, and Belief and Ritual. The first four of these, and a few subthemes, correspond to six separate, walled spaces at the beginning of the exhibition; these rooms are dark and minimalist, with grey walls and low lighting. By contrast, The Way of Warrior, Ritual and Belief, and a small section on the Viking legacy in Britain are arranged in the large open gallery around

the reconstructed ship. On both of my visits, the smaller galleries were uncomfortably crowded, and visitors strained to read the brief labels, which provide a minimum of information – individual objects were often left unidentified, characterized only as, for example, “grave goods.”

The lack of context was at times confusing, as when an [ivory flask](#) from Southern Italy in the Viking World gallery is described only as “a fine example of Byzantine craftsmanship.” It seemed simply to typify a culture that the Vikings encountered, with no particular visual or historical relationship to any other object in the exhibition – or to the Vikings, for that matter. If part of the point of the galleries devoted to contact and exchange is to reveal the shared visual and material culture of the Viking world, we should be able to see objects in relationship to each other, and to make comparisons. (The Urnes-style brooches from Ireland, England, Germany, and Scandinavia that I mentioned above, for example, are spread throughout the exhibition rather than placed together.)

This is perhaps an art historian’s complaint, for a show that is much more archaeological than art historical. And the presentation of context is certainly made more challenging when the material objects range widely across not only centuries but also geographic space, as is particularly true for the first half of the exhibition. Still, very little of the literature concerning the Vikings – either the later (twelfth through fourteenth century) Norse sagas, or the contemporary reports in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle – is incorporated. There are a few short passages from Ibn Fadlān’s tenth-century account of Viking traders on the Volga River, but they are placed high up on dark walls in the second and third galleries, and are probably missed by most visitors. There are no tales, either medieval or modern, to provide a sense of the reception of either the Vikings or Viking goods. (The accompanying [book](#), *Vikings: Life and Legend*, by Gareth Williams, Peter Pentz and Matthias Wemhoff, provides a much richer interdisciplinary framework for the objects, and is both reasonably priced and fully illustrated.)

The swords, ship, and monumental stones of the second half are given a somewhat more historicized framework, including a timeline of the unification of kingdoms. A three-minute video graphically explains types of ships and their construction, as well as the labor and materials that would have been used in building Roskilde 6. Fragments of other Viking ships – a carved stern, a steering oar, nails – are displayed near the reconstruction, to help visu-

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Figure 5. *Valkyrie figure, c. 800, Hårby, Funen, Denmark. H 3.4 cm. Gilded silver with black niello inlay. This figure was found in December 2012 by members of a local metal detector club; it is the first valkyrie figure carved in-the-round ever discovered. (Photograph: ©The National Museum of Denmark)*

ment between different areas. The weapons, armor, amulets, skeletons, and stone crosses are also fleshed out a bit with the inclusion of things like the berserker figures from the Lewis Chessmen sets and tiny silver Valkyries from England, Denmark, and Poland (Figure 5).

Visitors emerge from the darker galleries, where seeing and understanding the objects requires close looking and lots of reading, to the bright, open room dominated by the steel hull of Roskilde 6. No doubt this is meant to be dramatic – and it is! – but the difference creates some disjunction, particularly between the images of *Vikings as sophisticated, international traders and settlers* and *Vikings as bloodthirsty warriors*. What interests me most about the Vikings, and what I would have liked the exhibition to grapple with, are the difficulties (both medieval and modern) in reconciling those two. There are some glimmers of that: in the set of slave manacles juxtaposed with a trader's scale and weights, in the Tyskegård Hoard, which – although it is displayed between other, looted hoards – was most likely a *geld* or tribute payment rather than stolen booty. Even Roskilde 6 offers the possibility for polyvalence. The ship was most likely built during the conflict between the Danish king Cnut and the Norwegian king Olaf for rule of the Norwegian kingdoms. Whoever commissioned it sent a powerful statement not only about military might, but also about control of the timber resources of southern Norway.

These more complicated histories are present in *Vikings*, but they are somewhat buried in the rich hoard of wonderful things. Digging them out, making them prominent case studies, could have given us more to think about – in terms of both *life* and *legend*.

Karen Overbey  
Tufts University

alize the original ship. (The contextualization is quite minimal, however, when compared to the installation in Copenhagen, the first location for the exhibition. See [here](#) and [here](#)). The ship itself visually and spatially anchors the other displays, and the openness of the hall allows move-

## Medieval Art in the News

Members are encouraged to bring brief news items regarding medieval art to the attention of the editor at [Newsletter@medievalart.org](mailto:Newsletter@medievalart.org). Only a small selection of highlights will be included in each Newsletter.

## Warburg Institute Awaits Crucial Court Decision

The Warburg Institute has been in a protracted legal battle with its host institution, the University of London, over how to manage its incomparable resources for humanities research. In particular, the University threatens to integrate the Institute's library in the University's larger system, which the Warburg Institute and many international supporters believe will compromise its unique character and utility. The library, organized according to principles established by its founder, the influential art historian Aby Warburg, was transferred from Hamburg to London in 1944. For more see, <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/news/warburg-institute-library-saved-from-nazis-awaits-its-fate/2014023.article#.U6MGCDW2i38.twitter>.

For a copy of the Trust Deed at the heart of the dispute, see: <http://warburg.sas.ac.uk/home/aboutthewarburginstitute/trust-deed/>.

The judgment is expected sometime in autumn, 2014.

## App For Digitized Medieval Manuscripts Adds 15 Libraries



Newly digitized manuscript of *Quaestiones super libros Sententiarum Petri Lombardi*, by Conradus de Soltan, from the University Library of Toruń, Poland.

Web resources for manuscript studies are expanding exponentially. The Digitized Medieval Manuscripts App (DMMapp) allows scholars easy access to over 300 libraries world-wide, including 15 recently updated sites. See,

<http://digitizedmedievalmanuscripts.org/15-new-libraries-dmmapp/>.



## Buried Treasures at the Detroit Institute of Arts



Figure 1. Participants in the DIA Study Day, 2014, Stairway in Kresge Court. (Photo: DIA staff)

On the Monday after the conclusion of the 2014 Medieval Congress at Kalamazoo, the Detroit Institute of Arts hosted a Study Day for traveling medievalists. Yao-Fen You, Assistant Curator of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, organized the event, at the suggestion of Gerhard Lutz (Dommuseum, Hildesheim). Some 25 people attended and, under optimal conditions, studied the spectacular collection of medieval objects on display and in storage.

The first stop was the gallery containing highlights of the DIA's famous collection of Gothic ivories, where ivory specialists Catherine Yvard (Gothic Ivories Project at the Courtauld Institute of Art) and Sarah Guérin (University of Montréal) moderated a very lively discussion.



Figure 2. Catherine Yvard and Elizabeth Sears in the gallery. (Photo: Gerhard Lutz)

Catherine called attention to the unusually wide array of objects on view, an indication of the depth of the DIA's holdings. In addition to devotional diptychs and a leaf from a writing tablet (originally part of a set of wax-filled leaves, with stylus, boxed in leather), the study group could examine a twelfth-century crozier showing the Annunciation, a statuette of the seated Virgin and Child, a late medieval pax, and a casket lid with scenes of courtly love. Catherine and Sarah touched on issues ranging from material, facture, function, and decoration to the economics of production, all the while sharing the results of most recent scholarship. Special attention was paid to the large *Diptych with Scenes of the Life of Christ and the Virgin* (Figure 3), closely related to a piece in the Louvre, because of its size and the density and complexity of its narrative structure. The unusual juxtaposition of the Miracle of Cana and the Last Supper in a single field was noted: two feast scenes at table, two miraculous transformations, visually linked and kept separate by visual recession and different drapings of the cloth covering the tables.



Figure 3. Ivory diptych with scenes from the life of Christ and the Virgin, Paris, 1320–30. (DIA 40.165). (Photo: DIA)

Some members of the group recalled the magnificent DIA exhibition, *Images in Ivory: Precious Objects of the Gothic Age*, curated by Peter Barnet in 1997; many of the objects on view, as well as certain of those in storage, had been made known through this show.

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## SPECIAL REPORTS

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Figure 4. Sarah Guérin, Adam Stead, and Heidi Gearhart examining ivories brought out from storage. (Photo: Benedetta Chiesi)

Yao-Fen You arranged that the ivory and bone objects not on view be made available for study in the conservation lab: diptychs, leaves, plaques, and statuettes, a pyx, and a falcon hood stand (French, c. 1400). During our time in the lab, John Steele, Conservator of Objects, gave a brief overview of the 3D cross-sectional imaging that the DIA has undertaken in the past months using an xCAT® CT-scanner

developed by Xoran® Technologies, now on loan to the museum. Both Neal Clinthorne, founder and Director of Research and Development, and Razi Jafri, Quality Manager, were on hand to answer questions. A statue of St. Francis (DIA T2014.10), a boxwood triptych (DIA 79.177), and the museum's famous Janus-faced *memento mori* pendant (DIA 1990.315) were among the objects scanned thus far. The technicians explained the technology, while the conservator demonstrated the results, rotating the images, showing multiple cross-sections, so as to reveal internal structure and more importantly, methods of construction.

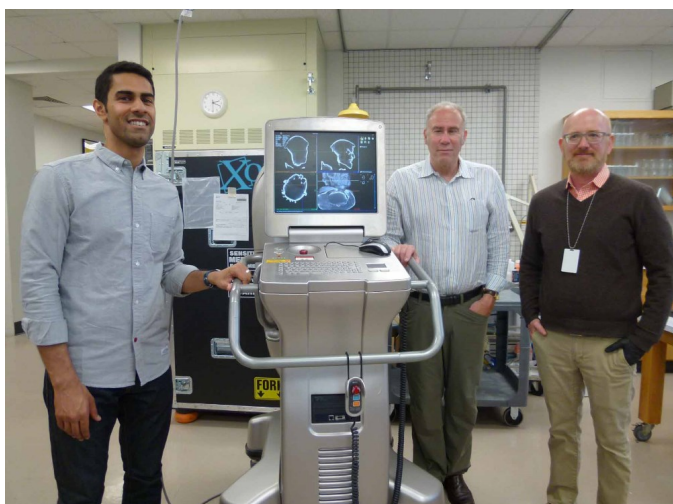


Figure 5. Razi Jafri, Neal Clinthorne, John Steele and the CT-scanner showing cross sections of the head of the statue of St. Francis. (Photo: Elizabeth Sears)

Fabrication techniques are key not only to establishing a work of art's age, but also to give insight into workshop practice and to help localize production. For example, the construction of *St. Francis*, which comprises multiple sections, is entirely consistent with what we know about the production of Spanish polychrome sculpture in the second half of the seventeenth century. Two members of the study group had come down from the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto (AGO): Lisa Ellis, Conservator of Sculpture, and Sasha Suda, Associate Curator of European Art in charge of the Thomson Collection. They contributed significantly to the technical discussion as they are using micro-CT scanning technology to study their extensive collection of miniature boxwood carving in preparation for a major exhibition of the medium that is planned for the fall of 2016 at the AGO, the Cloisters / Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Rijksmuseum (working title: "Miraculous Miniatures: Netherlandish Boxwood Carving [1500–1540]").



Figure 6. *Ascension*, Psalter Leaf, German, c. 1200 (DIA 24.75.B). (Photo: DIA)

In the Print Study Room, a selection of little known manuscript cuttings and codices, dating between the twelfth and the sixteenth century, was brought out for study and examination. Of particular interest were the illuminated leaves that belonged to the prefatory cycle of a psalter localized to Germany and dated to the late twelfth/early thirteenth century (Figure 6). Some leaves were rubbed because of later use in binding a codex, but this was no obstacle to the appreciation of the manuscript's vibrant colors, fine drawing, and unusual compositions and iconographies. The presence of underdrawing facilitated discussion of the design process and confirmed several of the more unusual details, such as Christ's blunted staff in the *Ascension* and *Descent into Hell*.

Other highlights of the collection include cuttings from the thirteenth-century Burckhardt-Wildt Apocalypse



(1983.20.A-B), the thirteenth-century English “Scripps Bible” (DIA 1983.14), a tiny and exquisite late fifteenth-century Flemish Book of Hours (DIA 27.365); four leaves from an early sixteenth-century French Book of Hours attributed to the Master of Morgan 85 (DIA 28.153.A–156.B); and five leaves in grisaille attributed to Simon Marmion, showing the Acts of Mercy (DIA 1993.50.1–5).



Figure 7. Attributed to Matteo Torelli, Initial *S* from a choral book, Florence, Santa Maria Nuova, before 1405, Gift of William R. Valentiner (DIA 37.133.A). (Photo: DIA)

Of the numerous cuttings from Italian choral books, one in particular stood out: an exquisite initial from a Florentine manuscript, formerly assigned to the workshop of Lorenzo Monaco and now attributed to Matteo Torelli (Figure 7). It is notable for its vivid color, jewel-like decoration, and clever composition. The DIA was pleased to report that the entire collection of the museum’s manuscripts and cuttings has recently been digitally photographed for inclusion in the Index of Christian Art.

At the end of the day, the group reconvened in storage to study the *Winged Altarpiece with Madonna and Child and Twelve Saints*, dated 1510–20 and most likely Lower Saxon in origin (Figures 8 and 9). A large-scale Virgin appearing as the Woman of the Apocalypse occupies the central shrine, accompanied by four small-scale saints arranged in two registers. Additional saints continue the two-tiered arrangement into the wings. The altarpiece is not on view



Figure 8. Curator Alan Darr and Megan Holmes study the Saxon altarpiece (DIA 23.158). (Photo: Beatrice Kitzinger)

for reasons of conservation, but, as Yao-Fen You observed, few American museums can claim to have an altarpiece of this age that retains its original shrine, carved components (sculpture and fretwork), and painted surfaces. In addition to the gilding and silvering, fragile prefabricated decorative elements

survive, including small stars cut from gilt paper and tracery made from parchment paper.



Figure 9. Detail of the Saxon altarpiece (DIA 23.158). (Photo: Helmut Puff)

Warm thanks are owed to the DIA staff. It is hoped that further such study days in other museums will be arranged in the future.

Beatrice Kitzinger  
Elizabeth Sears  
Yao-Fen You

## SPECIAL REPORTS

(continued)

### Teaching Medieval Art

#### Across the Board: Gaming Pedagogy and the Crusades



Students in "The Crusades: Fact, Fiction, and Film," taught by Anne Harris, DePauw University, 2014.

In January of 2014, my students battled for Acre. Hunched over long tables, the snow of a brutal winter still melting off their boots, they debated the strategic advantages of the port city over the symbolic importance of Jerusalem. And of Zangi up in Aleppo. And of Reynald down in Kerak. They did so as part of a Winter Term course I was teaching entitled "The Crusades: Fact, Fiction, and Film,"

which engaged the medieval and modern visual cultures of the Crusades. Taught in a block of three to four hours a day, the course allowed for exploration within long expanses of time, but the experience and benefits of "game board pedagogy" in engaging students with the politics and geography of medieval art can happen within the standard classroom schedule as well with a few adjustments.

The key for me in January was to explore the possibilities of learning through gaming. I was encouraged to do so by new scholarship on the pedagogical issue of video games, and my own curiosity in different models of active engagement for students. Though I was not ready (technologically or financially) to use video games, I was eager and equipped to try out a strategic board game with multiple levels of play. An important caveat: I am skeptical both of the fear that play is oppositional to work, and of the promise that play will make work effortless. The distinction between play and work becomes negotiable, even negligible, when there is challenging engagement, a state of study achieved, I believe, by three elements shared between apt games and good teaching: a narrative trajectory, something at stake, and the opportunity for



Crusader Rex game.

discussion and collaboration. The game that I chose, *Crusader Rex*,<sup>1</sup> had all three, and has convinced me of the place of gaming in teaching.

I have been hearing a good deal about "gaming pedagogy," and the value of simulation over the past few years. My colleague Harry J. Brown (DePauw University, English) had published *Videogames and Education* (M.E. Sharpe, 2008)<sup>2</sup> and I was encouraged by his book to read works by Ian Bogost (Georgia Tech, School of Literature, Media and Communication, as well as game designer at <http://bogost.com/>), especially *How to Do Things with Videogames* (University of Minnesota Press, 2011).<sup>3</sup> These interests converged with things medieval in the publication of the anthology *Digital Gaming Re-imagines the Middle Ages*, edited by Daniel T. Kline (Routledge, 2013),<sup>4</sup> which addresses a range of pertinent issues from mapping to imperialism, gender to technophobia, and pedagogy to Templars – the last two especially in the essays "The Middle Ages in the Depths of Hell: Pedagogical Possibility and the Past in *Dante's Inferno*" by Angela Jane Weisl and Kevin J. Stevens, and "The Consolation of Paranoia: Conspiracy, Epistemology, and the Templars in *Assassin's Creed*, *Deus Ex*, and *Dragon Age*," by Harry J. Brown.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.mesharpe.com/mall/resultsa.asp?Title=Videogames+and+Education>.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.upress.umn.edu/book-division/books/how-to-do-things-with-videogames>. Of interest to medievalists is *Simony* (<http://bogost.com/games/simony/>), which addresses "the role of belief and religion in a technological, secular world," and was also featured as an exhibit in the Museum of Contemporary Art, Jacksonville, the patron of the game.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415630917/>

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.columbiagames.com/cgi-bin/query/cfg/zoom.cfg?product\\_id=3151](http://www.columbiagames.com/cgi-bin/query/cfg/zoom.cfg?product_id=3151)



I had researched several Crusade games and settled on *Crusader Rex* because of the specificity of its historical content (the Third Crusade), the clarity of its instructions (an eight-page pamphlet is on the short side for most strategy board games and this one is well-researched and presented with historical information in the sidebars), and the quality of its graphic design (its large map-board provides a good sense of the challenging terrain and political variety of the region).<sup>5</sup> These three qualities merged well with my pedagogical priorities for the course: an in-depth study of the Third Crusade within a course that had students reading original sources, studying works of art, and screening films and documentaries about eight crusades from 1099 to 1270; a means of engagement with the strategic elements of the Crusades; and a knowledge of the geography, cultural origins, and topographical trials of the Crusader and Muslim armies.

A few preconditions to playing the game encouraged its success. I provided students with a PDF of the instructions the night before we were to begin play. More important than learning the rules of the game, the descriptions of historical scenarios and characters would grid atop what the students had already learned about the Third Crusade through original sources.<sup>6</sup> The game was thus not the only or even primary teaching tool, but rather the means of engagement with the complex geopolitics of the Third Crusade. The instruction made the precariousness of the Crusader states after the Battle of Hattin in July of 1187 and the surrender of Jerusalem in October of the same year immediately apparent. On the first day of play, I had the students prepare the board and the blocks. Through the mundane task of affixing stickers of “Frankish Christian” and “Muslim Saracen” heraldry to wooden blocks and placing them upon the board, students quickly had a sense of the much greater number of Muslim armies, and the dispersal of Christian armies. The

use of the problematic term “Saracen” allowed us to discuss the politics of pejorative naming in original sources, scholarship, and popular culture (specifically games and films).

Over the next two days, students would engage in six rounds of play, each comprised of six game turns with four phases each. Each round is a battle year, from 1187 to 1192, with each year ending with a winter turn that redistributes resources and establishes the possibility of reinforcements to come. A series of strategic moves (from Sea Moves to Musters) leading to attacks and sieges, in combination with rolls of the dice, different strengths of army blocks, and play of event cards moved the action. Students found champions (Saladin’s four armies in Damascus were wielded with confidence compared to Balian of Ibelin’s one in Nablus), villains (having come to know Reynald de Châtillon through the reports of original sources), and rubes (the Pilgrims whose value was in their sheer [and expendable] numbers), and tailored their tactics to what they knew of the protagonists. A particularly gratifying moment occurred in the midst of a group’s disagreement when I heard a student exclaim: “Saladin would never do that kind of military strategy!” *Crusader Rex* was also able to smartly accommodate some historical specificities: because of their use of more agile mares, Muslim armies had different military tactics available to them (such as Harrying), while the favoring of stallions by Christian armies enabled moves such as charging.

The game was flexible enough for the one major adjustment that I made to it: instead of playing with two players per game, students played in teams of two to three – this change allowed me both to save on the cost (buying four games instead ten) and to have students collaborate with each other. Since students were learning as they went, over-hearing each other’s conversations was helpful, and I was able to work with students in groups in my perambulations around the classroom as they played. Gameplay took about half of our class time, the rest being devoted to study of sources and works of art. Since one of my pedagogical goals was that the students thoroughly understand both the geography and the protagonists’ movements within it, students played the game twice, once as the Frankish Christians another as the Saracen Muslims or vice versa. In between, we screened the 2005 film *Kingdom of Heaven* (Brendan Gleeson’s portrayal of Reynald de Châtillon had a notable impact on the military strategy ascribed to him by students playing after screening the film).

<sup>5</sup> Board Game Geek provides a list of 25 Crusader games with information furnished both by manufacturers and player comments: <http://boardgamegeek.com/geeklist/16699/armed-pilgrimage-crusades>. Of the many options listed here, the only other game that had the historical precision and detail that I sought was *Kingdom of Heaven: The Crusader States, 1097-1291*, but its nine scenarios for six Crusades and their associated military campaigns were more than I had time (or aptitude) for. I can envision integrating *Kingdom of Heaven* throughout a Crusades course, as I improve my ability to move in and out of gaming pedagogy. Its expansiveness in covering both the Mongol invasions and the nascent Mamluk Empire is very promising.

<sup>6</sup> Original sources in translation were pulled from the *Crusade Texts in Translation* series by Ashgate ([https://www.ashgate.com/default.aspx?page=5097&series\\_id=209&calcTitle=1](https://www.ashgate.com/default.aspx?page=5097&series_id=209&calcTitle=1)) as well as the *Internet Medieval Sourcebook* Crusade Resources (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1k.asp>).

## SPECIAL REPORTS

(continued)

What I can absolutely vouch for at the end of this experience is my students' greater knowledge of the geography of the Crusader States and surrounding territories. This may sound like a small gain and one that could be met with simple memorization exercises, but the benefits to learning geographies through a tabletop strategy game is that they are then *active* as political and cultural geographies: human and resource networks were all-important to preserve, cities and their inhabitants were hard to reach, and ports were crucial to armies and pilgrims waiting at sea. Works of art, especially emerging from the vigorous patronage of the 1140s and 1150s by key figures such as Queen Melisende of Jerusalem, became part of what is at stake in understanding the geographies of the Crusades. Knowledge of the active geographies of the Crusades made the study of their visual culture (whether of medieval art or modern film) more accessible, vivid, and pertinent to students. Participants also gained a more immediate (and aggrieved) understanding of the current war in Syria and, specifically, the losses in Aleppo. The roll of die in attack and siege scenarios prompted some existential discussions about the role of fate and luck in war (and connected interestingly in a discussion of the rhetoric of divine favor used in both Muslim and Christian original sources).

The next challenge will be to integrate a complex game into a regularly scheduled 60- or 100-minute class. At a residential campus like mine, an evening or week-end session might be easier to arrange, but I think that with very precise goals and a distillation of the rules of play, 20 minutes of a strategic game like *Crusader Rex*, in which students take on specific historical roles, is time very well spent in class. Other pedagogical models are emerging that are giving more and more class time over to role playing, notably "Reacting to the Past," which provides students with materials to role play various historical scenarios over a period of weeks.<sup>7</sup> Its current offering of scenarios does not include events from the Middle Ages (the only event before 1500 features the rise of Athenian democracy),<sup>8</sup> but as further games develop through pedagogical initiatives and commercial enterprise, medievalists will be in a very interesting position to consider new ways to engage their students in the visual and political cultures of the Middle Ages.

Anne Harris  
DePaul University

<sup>7</sup> <https://reacting.barnard.edu/about> Headquartered at Barnard College, "Reacting to the Past" is supported by a Consortium of colleges.

<sup>8</sup> <https://reacting.barnard.edu/curriculum/published-games>

## Reflections



*Monstrous Races from John Mandeville's Travels, East Anglia, 2nd quarter of the 15th century. London, British Library, Harley 3954, fol. 42.*

## Does Monster Studies Exist?

Like actual monsters, monster studies does not exist, except in so far as we believe it to. It cannot be found on any university flow chart, in any dedicated scholarly book series, or, as far as I know, printed on any business card—if not on mine, then on whose? And yet, in practice, monster studies is now a reality, vibrant and vital in the academy, and particularly so within medieval studies.

When I began my dissertation on monsters and marginal-



ity about 15 years ago, there were many wonderful studies on the subject of monsters in the Middle Ages, but there was little that might be called “monster studies,” since there were few opportunities for scholars interested in the subject to come together, to coalesce a field out of individual projects and interests. When I mentioned to non-specialists that I was working on a PhD in medieval art history, I was often met with interest or its lack, but when I’d clarify that I was researching monsters, I invariably received laughs and snorts of gentle derision. This was *surely* not a serious topic. I also, though, encountered this reaction when I’d describe my project to other medievalists. And then I started to find fellow travelers, as it were, students and professors working on wonders and



*Battle with Horse-headed men, Romance of Alexander, France, Central (Paris); c. 1420, Royal 20B XX, fol. 72.*

marvels, giants and dragons, ghosts, revenants, shape-shifters, lycanthropes, witches, and all other manner of monstrous beings. At the Peninsula bar in Kalamazoo, we founded MEARCSTAPA, a self-consciously absurdly acronymic organization (it stands for Monsters: the Experimental Association for the Research of Cryptozoology through Scholarly Theory And Practical Application).

It was a joke, sort of, or at least in part; our proposed journal was *Monstrous Organizing on Theoretical, Hermeneutical Research, Annual*, AKA MOTHRA. For a bit, we were like a support group, swapping stories of dismissive encounters, rejections from “serious” journals, and unsuccessful grant applications. Some had unsupportive dissertation advisors and had to bury their real subjects within more traditional theses, though I was deeply fortunate to work with Suzanne Lewis, who was open and encouraging from the start. But collectively, over the last decade or so, we have gained traction. We have sponsored dozens of sessions at Kalamazoo, Leeds, SEMA, MAP, and else-

where, and our members have given, under our (leathery? scaly?) umbrella and independently, hundreds of papers. We have also all observed the dramatic growth of interest in our peculiar little nook of the field, with conferences, seminars and publications appearing with great frequency.

Monster studies is an area field, not a discipline or a theoretical approach, which means that it is defined by the subject of the monstrous, rather than by an approach thereto. Art history has been prominent, since so many of the monsters we study are non-textual, and do not even have names by which to index them. Literatures, history, religious studies, the histories of cartography and science, anthropology, archaeology, and folklore studies are also all common. Practitioners have thus far favored postcolonial, gender and transgender theories, cultural contextualization, and close readings; disability studies is of increasing interest, currently. Materiality and agency are now of greater concern, as well. Where the larger field of medieval studies goes, so go its monsters.

Last year, on the way to Kalamazoo, I had an experience that suggested to me that monster studies has actually hatched. I was waiting to board the small plane from Minneapolis-St. Paul, the one that is invariably full of medievalists. The person behind me in line asked me what I worked on. I said, without the old hesitation, “monsters.” She huffed and rolled her eyes and responded with exasperation, “Monsters! Monsters! That’s all *anyone* works on, these days.” I smiled, turned, and walked onto the plane. Of course, her comment was certainly not true, not quite, but it made my day, nonetheless. I used to have to scrounge and scramble to find writing about medieval monsters. Now, there is so much I can’t come close to keeping up.

In the introduction to the *Research Companion to Monsters and the Monstrous*, I argued that monsters exist in so far as they have an impact on the people creating and living with their representations. If individuals and cultures change their behavior on account of the believed presence of a monster, then the monster might be said to exist. It *does* something, and to do something, it must, in a sense, be there, in the first place. The same might now be said about the clearly made-up and utterly wondrous field of monster studies: each time we host a session or conference, write an essay or a book, edit a special issue or collection, teach a course, or mount an exhibition, we call monster studies into being, we evoke it out of the Aether.

*Asa Simon Mittman*



## RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Calls for papers, fellowship opportunities, exhibition, and conference announcements are now posted to the website and social media, where they are available to members in a format that is timelier than the triannual *Newsletter* (see: <http://www.medievalart.org/tag/call-for-papers/>). For more, visit our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/InternationalCenterofMedievalArt>), and follow ICMA on Twitter. To post a call for papers on the ICMA website, please go to: <http://goo.gl/xPxLzW> or contact [icma@medievalart.org](mailto:icma@medievalart.org).



### ***Calls for ICMA-Sponsored Session Proposals***

**International Medieval Congress  
at Leeds, 2015  
Deadline: September 15, 2014**



The ICMA seeks proposals for sessions to be held under the organization's sponsorship in 2015 at Leeds. Session organizers and speakers must be ICMA members. Proposals for ICMA sponsorship should consist of a title, an abstract, a CV of the organizer, as well as the names of three speakers. Thanks to a generous grant from the Kress Foundation, funds may be available to defray travel costs of sponsored session participants. Please direct all session proposals and inquiries by **September 15, 2014** to the Chair of the Programs Committee: Elina Gertsman, Department of Art History and Art, Case Western Reserve University, email: [elina.gertsman@case.edu](mailto:elina.gertsman@case.edu).

**International Medieval Congress  
at Kalamazoo, 2016  
Deadline: May 1, 2015**

The ICMA seeks proposals for sessions to be held under the organization's sponsorship in 2016 at the International Medieval Congress at Kalamazoo. Session organizers and speakers must be ICMA members. Proposals must include a session abstract and a CV of the organizer(s). Thanks to a generous grant from the Kress Foundation, funds may be available to defray travel costs of sponsored session speakers. Please direct all session proposals and inquiries by **May 1, 2015** to the Chair of the Programs Committee: Elina Gertsman, Department of Art History and Art, Case Western Reserve University; email: [elina.gertsman@case.edu](mailto:elina.gertsman@case.edu).

### ***Call for Papers in ICMA-sponsored sessions***



***at the International Congress on Medieval  
Studies in Kalamazoo, Michigan  
May 14-17, 2015  
Deadline: September 15, 2014***

### ***Session I: Moving Women, Moving Objects (300-1500)***

*Chairs: Tracy Chapman Hamilton, Sweet Briar College and Mariab Proctor-Tiffany, California State University, Long Beach*

As we examine medieval works of art like manuscripts, reliquaries, and jewels, today anchored and spotlighted in their museum vitrines, it is easy to imagine these sumptuous objects at rest in the hands of their original owners. But, in truth, they were in constant motion, and women were especially responsible for the movement of these works of art.

This panel seeks to enrich the discussion of women and their relationships with their objects that, in the area of non-book arts, remains relatively unexplored. Luscious

objects were gifts that traveled lesser and greater distances, some imported in brides' nuptial coffers and many more commissioned and used to unite women separated by their politically advantageous marriages. Sisters and mothers, grandmothers and aunts, daughters and cousins, as well as friends and allies, all exchanged works of art with shared stories and iconographies. These pieces were the tokens that served as tribute, the centerpieces of rituals and ceremonies, the precious keepsakes enjoyed in intimate places, and the markers of architectural spaces often also founded or endowed by these women.

Theories of feminism, anthropology, sociology, and geography, among others, can all aid in the interpretation of the movement of works of art by women. New technologies such as GIS mapping and digital modeling enable us to visualize the international trajectories of works of art, as well as the movement and placement of them within architectural space. Proposals for this panel could include papers concerning women living between 300-1500.

While proposals discussing European examples are anticipated, those analyzing any culture are encouraged. Papers might discuss women moving their objects in ritual space; the international, cross-cultural fertilization of the arts resulting from women's gifts; the mapping of women's identity through placement of objects; or class and women's movement of their objects.

Please email Tracy Chapman Hamilton, Sweet Briar College [thamilton@sbcc.edu](mailto:thamilton@sbcc.edu); and Mariah Proctor-Tiffany, California State University, Long Beach, [mariah.proctor@csulb.edu](mailto:mariah.proctor@csulb.edu) a one-page abstract of your paper with images of the works of art you will discuss, and the Participant Information Form (available at <http://www.wmich.edu/medieval/congress/submissions/#PIF>), a CV with home and office mailing addresses, e-mail address, and phone number, and a statement of ICMA membership status (note: all participants in ICMA sponsored sessions are required to be members of the ICMA). Funds may be available to defray travel costs of sponsored session participants.

## Session II: The Cross in Medieval Art

*Chair: Beth Williamson, University of Bristol*

Recent art-historical research has brought us new understandings of the central symbol of Christianity, the Cross, in different places, at different times, in different media, and with different theoretical and conceptual foci. The Cross, its representations and significations, and the ap-

pearance and materiality of those representations, features in many areas of current research, but not often as a central subject to be dealt with thematically and comparatively. This session invites considerations of images depicting, representing or referring to the Cross, in any media, and across the Middle Ages, from early to late. The aim of the session is to consider what can be gained at this particular moment in scholarship from a common concentration on the theme of the Cross. Therefore, proposers are invited especially to consider their subject matter in light of theoretical perspectives that have been prominent in recent art-historical scholarship, such as (but not limited to) affect, emotion, movement, medium and materiality.

Please email Beth Williamson, University of Bristol, [beth.williamson@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:beth.williamson@bristol.ac.uk), an abstract of the proposed paper (300 words maximum), a completed Participant Information Form (available at <http://www.wmich.edu/medieval/congress/submissions/#PIF>), a CV with home and office mailing addresses, e-mail address, and phone number, and a statement of ICMA membership status (note: all participants in ICMA sponsored sessions are required to be members of the ICMA).

Funds may be available to defray travel costs of sponsored session participants.

## Call for ICMA Community News

We are currently building a page on the ICMA website for community news. This page will share up-to-date information about conferences, calls-for-papers, and other timely opportunities in the medieval art community. ICMA members will be invited to share news on this site. Ryan and I will approve news before it becomes live on the site in order to ensure that only news for and by our ICMA membership is shared. Look for an email in the coming weeks about this new feature.

*Danielle Oteri  
Program Director*

## CONTRIBUTORS

Peter Barnet, Stephanie Chapman, Elina Gertsman, Sarah Guérin, Jennifer Grayburn, Anne Harris, Lehti Mairike Keelmann, Beatrice Kitzinger, Sherry Lindquist, Janet Marquardt, Asa Mittman, Karen Overbey, Doralynn Pines, Elizabeth Sears, Nancy Ševčenko, Ittai Weinryb, Matthew Westerby, Beth Williamson, and Yao-Fen You

## STUDENT COMMITTEE PAGES

The ICMA is fortunate in our contingent of energetic and talented student members—testimony to the vitality of medieval art history as a field. This issue inaugurates the Student Committee Pages, intended to provide a forum for early career medievalists to voice their interests and concerns, to serve as a vehicle to introduce themselves both to other student members and to the larger membership of the ICMA.

### ICMA Student Committee Update



*Jennifer Grayburn, ICMA  
Student Committee Chair*

Welcome to the newly expanded Student Section of the ICMA Newsletter! This development is the result of the ICMA Student Committee's new emphasis on increasing communication and enhancing student participation within the ICMA community. With the help of the ICMA Newsletter Editor, Sherry Lindquist,

the Student Committee has devised this section as a new forum in which ICMA student members can participate and communicate on issues relevant to their own experiences. Each issue will include a Student Committee update, as well as a selection of writing by ICMA student members. The content and success of this fledgling section is dependent upon you, the students, so please consider contributing in future issues! If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact the Student Committee Newsletter Liaison, Lehti Keelmann at [lehtik@umich.edu](mailto:lehtik@umich.edu).

We have more anticipated changes and opportunities coming up this fall. In addition to our rolling request for newsletter submissions, we are also calling for self-nominations for new Student Committee members and abstract submissions for our sponsored 2015 Kalamazoo and Leeds sessions. Our session themes next year will be "Super Medieval: Visual Representations of Medieval Superheroes" at Kalamazoo and "The Scandalous and the Marvelous in Medieval Art" at Leeds. Both submissions will be due on September 1, 2014. Questions regarding self-nominations and conference abstracts should be directed to Jennifer Grayburn at [jng3au@virginia.edu](mailto:jng3au@virginia.edu). The Student Committee considers both the sponsored sessions and newsletter to be informal development opportunities for students to practice professional presentation and writing skills with the support of the ICMA community. We hope that these

changes will encourage a broader dialogue between student members and the ICMA community.

In other news, the ICMA Student Committee was busy this past spring preparing for the International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo and the International Medieval Congress in Leeds. We kicked off our events in Kalamazoo on Thursday afternoon with our sponsored session, "Facing the Abyss: Visualizing Submarine Worlds, Aquatic Life, and Hybrids in Medieval Art," which featured three excellent papers and generated a fantastic discussion on images of maritime transgressions. On Friday evening, the Student Committee also held its annual Student Reception, where we met many amazing and motivated students. Then, we hosted a session in Leeds entitled "Maritime Connections and Medieval Art." This session included two excellent papers on cross-sea cultural exchange and was similarly well received by its largely international audience.

Finally, the Student Committee is committed to increasing our online presence both on the ICMA website and Facebook. While we intend to publish our ICMA website in the upcoming months, our Facebook page is already up and running! Please consider liking us on Facebook to stay up to date on our latest news: <https://www.facebook.com/ICMAStudentCommittee>.

*Jennifer Grayburn  
ICMA Student Committee Chair  
PhD Candidate, University of Virginia*

### Student Committee Session, Kalamazoo, 2014

"Facing the Abyss: Visualizing Submarine Worlds, Aquatic Life, and Hybrids in Medieval Art," a session organized by the ICMA Student Committee at the 49<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, was well attended and met with warm responses. Our session gathered papers that addressed medieval imaginations of the fabulous and often fearsome submarine world.

Peter Bovenmyer (University of Wisconsin–Madison) explored the story of Alexander the Great and the Diving Bell through a group of manuscript illuminations of the Alexander romance. Peter compared the story of Jonah and the Harrowing of Hell to Alexander's dive, focusing on two human figures in an illustration from the *L'ystoire du bon roi Alexandre* at the Berlin Kupferstichkabinett to interrogate the resonant meanings of Alexander's journey.





Shana Thompson, Melissa Herman, Peter Bovenmyer, Matthew Westerby

Melissa Herman (University of York, UK) charted the role and evolution of fish and dragons in early Anglo-Saxon metalwork. Her paper discussed the apotropaic

and talismanic power of dragons and hybrid creatures in shields and enamel work, including the Sutton Hoo belt buckle, noting that their significance often originated from their hidden nature and from the position of the viewer.

Shana Thompson (University of North Texas) examined Coudrette's *Mélusine*, or *Le Roman de Parthenay*, and illuminations from BnF MS français 12575 and 24383 to question Mélusine's associations with cultural geography and the dynastic identity of the Lusignan family. Shana showed that Mélusine personified both the possessors of the land and the protective power of the marshland itself, raising new questions about fourteenth-century notions of topography and changing landscapes.

Matthew Westerby  
PhD Candidate, University of Wisconsin, Madison

## Learning about Art History through Archaeology

My academic work has been in both art history and archaeology, and so I am greatly interested in what material culture can tell us about past civilizations and communities. It had always been a dream of mine to participate in an archaeological excavation, and I felt that gaining excavation experience would assist me in understanding and interpreting excavation reports, as well as give me a better understanding of the medieval world. This led me to first attend the Bamburgh Research Project's field school at Bamburgh Castle in Northumberland, England, as a student during the summer of 2011, and I have returned each year since as a member of staff (Figure 1).

For anyone unfamiliar with Northumbria in the Middle Ages, the following is a bit of background: According to Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (731), in



Figure 1. Trench 3 with the Bamburgh Castle in the background. (Photo: Stephanie Chapman)

634, King and Saint Oswald united Bernicia and Deira into the kingdom of Northumbria and set up his royal residence in the city of Bamburgh. Oswald's reign

traditionally marks the beginning the "Golden Age of Northumbria" in terms of art and culture. In order to Christianize the people of Northumbria, Oswald brought Saint Aidan from Iona to Bamburgh. With Oswald's permission, Saint Aidan formed the Monastery on the Holy Island of Lindisfarne, which is located just off the coast of Bamburgh. Lindisfarne is most well-known by art historians as the location where the Lindisfarne Gospels was created in the early eighth century. During the ninth and tenth centuries, Northumbria declined after continued Viking raids. Bamburgh became a Norman property in 1066, and the keep of Bamburgh castle was built in 1164. Located on the border of England and Scotland, Bamburgh was an important strategic site. Medieval occupation of the castle ended in 1464 when the castle was largely destroyed by gunfire during the War of the Roses. Needless to say, I was excited to visit and excavate in a region steeped with such exciting early medieval history!

My experience excavating in Bamburgh has influenced my study of medieval art history and my understanding of medieval culture in many ways. Most generally, the opportunity to excavate and handle medieval artifacts first hand, especially everyday objects, such as coins, bone combs, dice, pins, brooches, and other personal adornment items, has given me a sense of connection to their medieval owners and craftsmen (Figure 2). Whether these objects are plain or finely ornamented, they would have been treasured and enjoyed. The types of objects found at the site, the materials from which they are constructed, the artistic/cultural style of the objects, and where the objects are found all give important clues about the people who lived and worked at Bamburgh.

Additionally, my dissertation project was inspired by one of our excavation finds, the upper part of a small jet crucifix found in a thirteenth to fifteenth century midden

*Continued on page 22*

## STUDENT COMMITTEE PAGES

(continued)



Figure 2. Everyday objects: various finds. (Photo: Stephanie Chapman)

jects. By examining the materiality of these objects, their social and archaeological contexts, and historical and literary texts, my dissertation explores the role these objects played in devotional practices.



Figure 3. Jet Crucifix (Photo: Stephanie Chapman)

giving me a better understanding of the region's rich and important history, as well as an appreciation of the ways in which geography has influenced medieval art, architecture, and settlements.

Lastly, archaeology has been useful for constructing a larger picture of the history and culture of Northumbria during the Anglo-Saxon and later medieval periods. The excavated artifacts and architectural remains continue to help me to bridge the gap between high-end luxury goods and buildings and lower-end utilitarian goods and buildings. I feel that the knowledge and experience that I have gained from my months excavating at Bamburgh have made me a more informed and well-rounded scholar and educator.

*Stephanie Chapman, PhD Candidate  
University of Missouri-Columbia  
Supervisor, Bamburgh Research Project*

(Figure 3). Upon further research, I found that other jet crucifixes and crosses had been excavated from other medieval sites, and I quickly became captivated by these small personal ob-

Excavating at Bamburgh has also given me the opportunity to visit other Roman and medieval sites in the area,

## Exhibiting Altarpieces: Technical Art Examination in Focus

During a recent research trip to Estonia, I had the opportunity to visit and engage with the current exhibition entitled, "Rode Altarpiece in Close Up – History, Technical Investigation and Conservation of the Retable of the High Altar of Tallinn's St. Nicholas Church, 2013-2015" at the Niguliste Museum in Tallinn, home to the medieval collection of the Art Museum of Estonia (K.U.M.U.). The altarpiece in focus, the *Saint Nicholas Altarpiece* (1478-81, oil on panel and polychrome oak sculpture) by Lübeck artist Hermen Rode, has stepped into the limelight with its own, dedicated multi-year (2013-2015), multi-national research and conservation project, aimed at cleaning the polychrome sculptures, and shedding light on the processes and materials of conservation and the history of the altarpiece.

In my conversations with Director Tarmo Saaret, project leader Hilkka Hiiop, and conservator Hedi Kard, I was able to gain insight into the exhibition's creation, and its technologically oriented approach and goals. Technological developments have changed the nature of exhibitions in art galleries and museums. Interactive computer screens, audio recordings, and even technical art examinations, are often layered into the fabric of exhibitions. I have chosen to focus on the Niguliste exhibition as a way to map different ways in which museums are incorporating technology into their exhibitions - for greater transparency, and for the benefit of both art historical and broader audiences.

Nip around the corner of Tallinn's old town square, to where the upper and lower old town meet, and one still finds the *Saint Nicholas Altarpiece* in its original home, the once medieval Baltic German parish church of Saint Nicholas, now Niguliste Museum. The *Saint Nicholas Al-*



Figure 1. Project leader Hilkka Hiiop navigating the interactive screen next to the altarpiece. (Photo credit: Niguliste Museum)

*tarpiece*, partially restored, resides approximately in its intended location, in the polygonal choir of the church-turned-museum, where the



high altar would have been located (Figure 1). Standing in the apse, it still captures one's attention as the gem of the medieval collection and thus fittingly, once superstructure of the church's locus of the high altar. One of the difficulties in displaying the *Saint Nicholas Altarpiece* to the public is its pentaptych format, which features a double set of wings and three positions. The third position of the altarpiece, featuring polychrome oak sculptures is only opened a few times a year, during the altarpiece's namesake, Saint Nicholas' feast days (Figure 2). The challenge has been how to allow the museum visitor to experience the altarpiece's complete visual program, without having to constantly open and close its wings. With the new exhibition, the solution has been to include an accompanying, large digital screen, adjacent to the altarpiece, where visitors can open and close its wings, in virtual form, thus able to see all of the three positions, and read about the altarpiece's visual program and patronage. From this introduction screen, which acts as a primer, one can move towards the actual altarpiece and view its second position, displayed on a daily basis to the public. But, the engagement with the altarpiece does not end here.



Figure 2. Museum director Tarmo Saaret opening the altarpiece to reveal its third position with polychrome sculpture. (Photo credit: Niguliste Museum)

Directly behind the altarpiece, conservators, led by Hilkka Hiiop, work with segments of the altarpiece in “real time,” cleaning them in the open for interested audiences (Figure 3). Visitors to the museum are thus able to experience, firsthand, the processes of conservation and restoration taking place. Film reels about the altarpiece's x-radiography and reflection imaging are shown to supplement the “live action.” There are also informative films and audio recordings with interviews from conservators and past museum curators, highlighting some of the history behind the altarpiece's display and provenance. Cu-



Figure 3. Conservators working with wooden polychrome fragments directly behind the altarpiece. (Photo credit: Niguliste Museum)

rators, scientists, and art historians are currently in the midst of mapping the altarpiece's condition through 3-dimensional imaging, which can be layered with infrared and x-ray results. Results yielded include confirming pigment composition, illuminating underdrawings and other layers, and also revealing if there have been any cleanings or retouchings. R.T.I. (reflectance transformation imaging) has also been taken of all of the polychrome sculptures, which aids in close analysis of the surfaces.

Complementing the exhibition is the museum's website on a dedicated page with links: [www.nigulistemuuseum.ee/en/niguliste-exhibitions/on-view/rode-altarpiece-in-close-up](http://www.nigulistemuuseum.ee/en/niguliste-exhibitions/on-view/rode-altarpiece-in-close-up). The website allows the visitor to engage with the exhibition before and/or after their visit. The exhibition has an afterlife, a digital imprint that can be accessed even when the museum itself is closed. On the Niguliste Museum's website, one finds brief overviews of the technical art examinations described in the paragraph above, updates on the project's progress, as well as blog entries that touch upon various issues through different perspectives. Technologically oriented and transparent (very literally, in having the conservation take place in the public sphere of the museum), these characteristics of the current exhibition echo the *Saint Nicholas Altarpiece's* original context of religious prominence on the church-turned-museum's high altar, and its own complex, innovative design and construction as a regionally sought-after format from an esteemed workshop. If one finds oneself in Estonia in the next few years, consider visiting the Niguliste Museum's “Rode Altarpiece in Close Up” and engaging with the *Saint Nicholas Altarpiece's* three positions.

Lehti Mairike Keelmann  
PhD Candidate, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor  
ICMA Student Committee Newsletter Liaison