

*Art as*  
**COMMODITIES**  
*as Art*

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE, 14 JUNE 2019

THE TREEHOUSE, HUMANITIES RESEARCH CENTRE  
BERRICK SAUL BUILDING, UNIVERSITY OF YORK

*Organised by Adam Sammut, Simon Spier and Apurba Chatterjee,  
with assistance from Dr Cordula van Wyhe.*

*Generously supported by WRoCAH, CREMS and ALCS.*

## PROGRAMME

- 9.30-10.00 am      REGISTRATION
- 10.00-10.15 am    OPENING REMARKS  
Adam Sammut, University of York
- 10.15-11.15 am    PANEL 1  
Chair: Danielle Gravon, University of Manchester  
Isabella Lores-Chavez, Columbia University  
To Have and Behold: Pieter Claesz and the Plaster  
Collectible.  
Rachel Masters Carlisle, Florida State University  
From Florence to Flanders: Michelangelo's Bruges  
Madonna as an Object of Conspicuous Consumption
- 11.15-11.30 am    COFFEE BREAK (provided)
- 11.30-12.30 am    PANEL 2  
Chair: Hannah Tomlin, University of York (t.b.c.)  
Dr Marianne Eekhout, Dordrechts Museum  
Priceless: the Power of Memory and the Art Market in  
the Low Countries  
Rory McInnes-Gibbons, Durham University  
The Ruins of Palmyra: A Harbinger of Taste and Value  
at the Origin of Neo-Classicism
- 12.30-1.30 pm     LUNCH (provided)

- 1.30-2.30 pm**      **PANEL 3**  
**Chair: T.b.c.**  
**Katharine Ault, The Open University**  
Private Ownership, Public Display and  
Commodification: Ugolino di Nerio's Santa Croce  
Polptych in Nineteenth-Century Britain.  
**Lucy West, Leeds/The National Gallery/The Bowes Museum**  
Priceless: Oettingen-Wallerstein and the Unsaleable  
Collection, 1847-1863.
- 2.30-3.30 pm**      **PANEL 4**  
**Chair: Apurba Chatterjee, University of Sheffield**  
**Mariko Hirabayashi, University of York**  
The Japonism Market in Later Nineteenth-Century  
London: The Japanese Gallery, Watanabe Seitei and  
John Varley Jr.  
**Maria Golovteeva, University of St Andrews/Christie's**  
Commodifying Congo in late-nineteenth-century  
Belgium: Ivory in Art and Writings of Fernand  
Khnopff.
- 3.30-3.45 pm**      **COFFEE BREAK (provided)**
- 3.45-4.45 pm**      **PANEL 5**  
**Chair: T.b.c.**  
**Dr Tom Wilkinson, Warburg Institute**  
Making Money: Artists' Banknotes of the German  
Inflation, 1914-1923  
**Inbal Strauss, University of Oxford**  
The "Products" of Artistic Production: Thinking  
about Art in Design Terms
- 4.45-5.00 pm**      **CLOSING REMARKS**  
**Simon Spier, University of Leeds/Bowes Museum**
- 5.00-6.00 pm**      **KEYNOTE**  
**Dr Leah R. Clark, The Open University**  
Between Commodity and Gift: Some Thoughts on Early  
Modern Objects
- 6.00-6.45 pm**      **WINE RECEPTION (Dept. History of Art, foyer)**

## ABSTRACTS

### **To Have and Behold: Pieter Claesz and the Plaster Collectible.** Isabella Lores-Chavez, Columbia University.

In 1628, Pieter Claesz painted into a view of an artist's studio the recognizable classical statue known as the Spinario – or, at least, a copy in plaster of the ancient bronze original. Amid an array of generic vanitas objects, the Spinario appears distinctive and saturated with references to classical antiquity and the erudition of its beholder. The plaster cast offers itself to the viewer as both a portrait of a famous sculpture and a copy of an original that cannot be possessed. The plaster Spinario also offers Claesz a way to refer to his own labor, both intellectual and manual. Paired with a sketchbook, the Spinario references the developing practice in the Dutch Republic of making drawings after ancient sculptures. This paper explores the layered meaning of Claesz's still life as a recognition of an early modern culture of collecting copies and as a demonstration of virtuosic artistic processes.

### **From Florence to Flanders:** **Michelangelo's Bruges Madonna as an Object of Conspicuous Consumption.** Rachel Masters Carlisle, Florida State University.

Michelangelo's Bruges Madonna is inherently linked with Flanders – the unsigned, white marble sculpture was commissioned as early as December 14, 1503 by the Flemish cloth merchants Alexander and Jean Mouscron and was donated to the Church of Our Lady in Bruges in 1514. Michelangelo's only sculpture to leave Italy during his lifetime, the Bruges Madonna has been branded by art historians as an example of the artist's "Madonna period" and pendant to the earlier Pietà. Unfortunately, this analysis has largely relegated the Bruges Madonna to narratives of Michelangelo's divine genius and the diffusion of Renaissance ideals from the superior Italian peninsula. I aim to resituate the Bruges Madonna within the matrix of exchange cultivated by the leading Renaissance artistic centers of Florence and Bruges, considering both archival documentation of the Bruges Madonna's commission, execution, and shipment and development of the sculpture's iconographic program.

I will demonstrate that Michelangelo's Bruges Madonna represents a synthesis of Northern and Italian artistic ideals, an amalgamation that I contend was developed by the artist in response to the increasingly significant network of cross-cultural exchange of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and more importantly, fulfilling the desire of his Flemish patron for a site-specific sculpture of marble – a high-status medium largely, if not entirely, alien to the region of Flanders at the time of its commission. Furthermore, by considering the sculpture within the broader decorative program of the Church of Our Lady in Bruges and the tradition of employing material culture to advance social status in the Low Countries, I will argue for a unique interpretation of the Bruges Madonna as a Mouscron familial symbol of wealth and material display of prestige through conspicuous consumption of foreign media.

**Priceless: the Power of Memory and the Art Market in the Low Countries.  
Dr Marianne Eekhout, Dordrechts Museum.**

What happens when art and memory meet? Where does the artwork stop and does its commemorative value begin? Can the two even be separated? The arts and antiques market in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Low Countries often dealt with objects that were just that: commemorative and artistic. During and after the Dutch Revolt in particular and several Anglo-Dutch wars, medals were struck, paintings were commissioned, and prints were published to commemorate the event in an artistic way. Soon after a successful siege or sea battle the art market was flushed with objects that sold well but also had a capricious life ahead of them. On the one hand the objects were cherished by the original owner while on the other hand its value would go hand in hand with the interest in the event itself. Collectors of particular objects, such as medals, would determine its price after it re-entered the art and/or antiques market.

This paper will explore the changing relationship between an object's commemorative and its cash value in the market place. Two case studies will be presented. The first one will focus on commemorative medals of the Dutch Revolt (1568-1648), the second on the memorabilia that occurred after the sea battle of Doggersbank (1781). Both cases have in common that the objects were considered art as well as commodities at the time of production. And both raise the question whether an object should be considered for its commemorative value and/or just for the cash value of its material.

**The Ruins of Palmyra:**

**A Harbinger of Taste and Value at the Origin of Neo-Classicism.  
Rory McInnes-Gibbons, Durham University.**

Art and commodity have always intersected around the ruins of Palmyra. Whether the picture postcards of the 'Queen of the Desert' or the early photographs sold to tourists across Syria, the image of the site has had prestige and value across the centuries of its western reception. In this presentation, I will draw attention to the role of Robert Wood and James Dawkins' The Ruins of Palmyra (1753) in distilling the ruins' visual reception and monetary value from an early stage of the interaction with the place.

Travelling to the site in 1751 as part of a large exploratory enterprise which also took in Greece, Asia Minor and Balbec, antiquarian Wood and the money behind the mission, Dawkins, were accompanied by the Piedmontese artist and architect, Giovanni Battista Borra. The drawings produced of the site over the five days in which the adventurers assessed the ruins were soon transformed into iconic staples of dilettante taste as neo-classicism became all the rage for the eighteenth-century aristocrat. From dining room ceilings to public displays, Palmyra went from desert isolation to the stardust of the eighteenth century, sprinkling style and substance upon the country estates of the elite.

This was achieved through its presence in over 50 engraved plates in The Ruins of Palmyra. Not only faithful renderings of the archaeological site, these were items of material beauty and value. Presenting the relationship between the original artwork produced first hand at the site, and the later engravings reproduced in the final piece, I will look at the process in which the artwork was turned into the commodity contained within the book. Having visited the Roman and Hellenic Society Library in London, with their kind permission, I

am able to showcase the previously unpublished original drawings of Borra.

**Private Ownership, Public Display and Commodification:  
Ugolino di Nerio's Santa Croce Polyptych in Nineteenth-Century Britain.  
Katharine Ault, The Open University.**

This paper focuses on the nineteenth-century display and reception of a large multi-panelled altarpiece, made around 1325 in the Siense workshop of Ugolino di Nerio for the Florentine basilica of Santa Croce. It seeks to understand the factors that enabled this medieval Polyptych to challenge the canon of 'great' art that dominated art historical understanding from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. Building on anthropological approaches such as the biography of objects (Igor Kopytoff 1986) this paper examines the Polyptych's provenance and how commodification in the nineteenth century raised its status. By doing so, it demonstrates that the Polyptych's journey from rediscovery in the late eighteenth century through to 'sacralisation' at the end of the nineteenth was determined by a complex dynamic between changing art historical narratives and changing approaches to display. It focuses on the way this dynamic determined the Polyptych's trajectory through private collections, where it was 'singularised'; through salerooms and public exhibitions, where it was 'commodified'; and into permanent public collections where it was 'sacralised'.

The recent globalisation of Art History might suggest that questions about canonicity no longer need to be asked. Yet, art historical practise continues to be unified by a predominantly western canon, prompting some to argue that the process of canon formation requires further analysis to 'understand what art history is actually about' (Hubert Locher 2012). By attending to artworks themselves, this paper investigates the way the Polyptych was involved in the evolution of Art History as a consequence of its circulation in Britain in the nineteenth century, and in doing so seeks to shed light on the mechanisms that determine artists' inclusion in or exclusion from the canon.

**Priceless: Oettingen-Wallerstein and the Unsaleable Collection, 1847-1863.  
Lucy West, University of Leeds/The National Gallery/The Bowes Museum.**

What happens to a collection's commodity value when it fails to sell? This paper conceptualises the fate of the unsaleable Oettingen-Wallerstein collection, from its arrival in Britain in 1847, to the gift of a selection of its paintings by Queen Victoria to the nation in 1863.

A relative of Prince Albert (1819-1861), Prince Ludwig von Oettingen-Wallerstein's (1791-1870) collection of 'antique' pictures of the Byzantine, early Italian, German, and Netherlandish Schools was compared to that of the esteemed German Boisserée collection. By 1847, Oettingen-Wallerstein was experiencing financial hardship, leading to Prince Albert guaranteeing a loan and assuming the collection as surety; it was thus exhibited for sale at Kensington Palace 'to give the country an opportunity of obtaining it'. Predictably, when the loan could not be repaid, the pictures became Albert's property. However, despite the publishing of catalogues and the pictures' public display, no buyer came forward, and the collection was repeatedly declined by The National Gallery. It was not until after Albert's death, many of the pictures having by then been loaned to the 1857 Manchester Treasures exhibition, that twenty-five paintings were eventually selected by The National Gallery to be donated by the queen.

Beginning life in Britain as a bargaining chip; at times presented to the public consciousness via seemingly economically disinterested cultural institutions; and ending up – quite literally re-framed – as cultural capital on the national stage, the Oettingen-Wallerstein collection resisted a narrative of straightforward economic commodification. This paper will thus interrogate how the pictures both transcended and problematized notions of value, in a context of changing British tastes for so-called ‘primitive’, early-European painting, in the nineteenth century.

**The Japonism Market in Later Nineteenth-Century London:  
The Japanese Gallery, Watanabe Seitei and John Varley Jr.  
Mariko Hirabayashi, University of York.**

The Japanese Gallery was established in London in 1881 by Thomas Joseph Larkin, a dealer in Chinese and Japanese art. My paper will focus on the paintings for sale at the Japanese Gallery, to develop further our understanding of British Japonism at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1862, the International Exhibition was held in London, revealing a wealth of Japanese objects to many British people for the first time. After the exhibition, interest quickly grew until the 1880s, when possessing Japanese art became highly fashionable, partly as a result of the establishment of the Japanese Gallery. To date, our understanding of Japonism has been dominated by the image of Japanese prints (*ukiyo-e*), but the gallery dealt with a wide range of other materials, including numerous works by Japanese painter Watanabe Seitei, and works by British artist John Varley Jr., inspired by Japanese landscape, after a visit to Japan. Exploring the interaction of British and Japanese artefacts at the gallery, through an analysis of the gallery’s surviving catalogues, my paper will push our myopic understanding of the taste, the market and the collection around Japonism in late-Victorian Britain beyond the now clichéd account of *ukiyo-e*.

**Fernand Khnopff: Commodifying Art through Photography.  
Maria Golovteeva, University of St Andrews/Christie’s.**

To justify his colonial politics and especially his interest in the benefiting from the resources of the only Belgian colony, the Congo Free State, the second Belgian monarch, King Leopold II (1835 – 1909), established high scientific and commercial motivations for the use of ivory, particularly in the sphere of art and design. He asked the director of his administration and the *secrétaire d’état* to the colony Edmond van Eetvelde to provide sculptors with materials of the highest quality brought from the Congo to encourage the production in Belgium. The shipping of ivory was conscripted to not only increase the consumption of the material, but also to ‘domesticate’ it and ‘familiarise’ the Belgian public with its appearance (or re-appearance to be precise).

For key figure of European Symbolism Fernand Khnopff (1858 – 1921), like to many Belgian artists and sculptors, his association with the colony and colonialism, African objects and cultural signifiers came through the medium of ivory and the colonial exhibitions. In 1894 he wrote for *The Studio* about two significant displays of Belgian ivory works, at the International Exhibition in Antwerp and then at the Brussels Art Club, analysing the curatorial approaches and contextualising the material from Africa with the Flemish tradition of ivory carving going back to the seventeenth-century southern Netherlands. In 1897 he again submitted a small review

of the Tervuren Colonial section at the Brussels International Exhibition. For the catalogue of the chryselephantine sculpture at Tervuren, Khnopff created a frontispiece based on a photograph of a Congolese woman by famous Belgian photographer Alexandre (Albert Edouard Drains), in which he explored the vision of the colony, its people and resources in Belgian art. The artist submitted his only ivory sculpture *Un masque* to the exhibition, as he was among the Belgian sculptors supplied with the African material. In his work, he explored the imagery common for his œuvre, which was quite different from some other ivory sculptures and objects of art at the exhibition that had underlying political and colonial connotations.

**Making Money: Artists' Banknotes of the German Inflation, 1914-1923.**  
**Dr Tom Wilkinson, Warburg Institute.**

After the First World War, German money went badly wrong. In an attempt to circumvent the inflation, local authorities issued emergency money or *Notgeld*. Whereas banknotes had hitherto been encrusted with national symbols and classical ornament, *Notgeld* was very different, featuring humorous tales, episodes from local history, and macabre depictions of witches and devils. There were also direct references to the crisis in the form of images of the dance around the golden calf, piles of burning money, graphs showing rising infant mortality, and anti-Semitic caricatures.

Another recurring motif was the labouring body, often coupled with exhortations that hard work would rescue Germany from its crisis. In this paper I consider these depicted workers as self-portraits of their makers, whose labour, in this instance – compared to that of so-called autonomous artists – created monetary value in a relatively unambiguous way. But this immediacy posed problems of its own, not least in terms of the debate around art and commerce in the context of late Expressionism. Critics deplored the use of Expressionist motifs in advertising as a betrayal of the ideals of the movement. Several *Notgeld* designers were also Expressionists, but although their labour in this context – on money, which Simmel had called the agent of calculative thought – could be understood as a betrayal of the Expressionist drive to re-enchantment, they were also working as alchemists, reinvesting money with the magical powers it had lost in the inflation. In order to achieve this, they employed aesthetic means, reworking the artwork as the universal equivalent, or at least a token thereof. This elision of aesthetic and monetary value opens a space in which to rethink these vexed categories, along with the artist's labouring body as a source of value.

**The “Products” of Artistic Production: Thinking about Art in Design Terms.  
Inbal Strauss, University of Oxford.**

Asking ‘how can we gain a better understanding of art and the process of art-making through a juxtaposition with commodities and the process of their design?’, the paper juxtaposes the production processes and resulting products of modern sculpture with those of product design (the two respective media and formal models of contemporary object-making). Arguing for a consideration of art in design terms, the paper postulates both practices as processes of designing a form that aims to solicit the agency of the interacting agent in order to fulfill its function, be it utilitarian or non-utilitarian. In referring to the addressee as an ‘interacting agent’, the paper conflates ‘viewer’ with ‘user’ (and accordingly ‘artist’ with ‘designer’), thus alluding to the idea that a sculpture is designed to be “completed” by the viewer in the same way that the function of a consumer product is designed to be executed by the user.

The ways in which a work of art is actively completed by the viewer have been outlined by art historian Wolfgang Kemp, and the paper draws on his theory of aesthetic reception, along with usability engineer Donald Norman’s theory of interaction design, to offer a lens comparison of a utilitarian artefact (a handsaw) and a non-utilitarian artefact (Jacques Carelman’s 1969 Coffeepot for Masochists). With the analysis of an everyday commodity enabling a “functional” reading of a work of art (reading Carlman’s work as one would an object of use), the comparison contributes to an understanding of art’s mechanism of operation. Subsequently, the paper demonstrates how the form of works of art follows an intentional (rather than incidental) function, thereby substantiating the postulate of the work of art as the result of a process of design, or rather as the “product” of artistic *production*.



## SPEAKER PROFILES

**ISABELLA LORES-CHAVEZ** is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Art History and Archaeology at Columbia University. Her dissertation focuses on collections and depictions of plaster sculpture in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic. Isabella received her B.A. in Art History from Yale. In 2013, she curated a small exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, entitled Dutch and French Genre Drawings from the Robert Lehman Collection. She has also worked at the J. Paul Getty Museum and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Born in Cali, Colombia, Isabella grew up in Los Angeles and currently resides in Amsterdam.

**RACHEL MASTERS CARLISLE** is a Ph.D. student and Patricia Rose Teaching Fellow at Florida State University and holds a Master of Arts degree from the Courtauld Institute of Art (2014). She specializes in northern European art (c. 1400-1600) with particular interests in early modern cosmopolitanism, emergence of the art market, and practices of collecting. Her dissertation examines the appropriation of Italianate motifs transmitted via printed and portable media as manifested in the oeuvre of German artist Jörg Breu and the extent to which stylistic choices made by artists and patrons in early modern Augsburg reflect both transnational exchange and competition.

**Dr MARIANNE EEKHOUT** received her PhD in history at Leiden University in 2014. Her thesis 'Material Memories of the Dutch Revolt. The Urban Memory Landscape in the Low Countries, 1566-1700' is published online. Since 2015 she is curator of history at the Dordrechts Museum in Dordrecht, the Netherlands. Her research focuses on material memory, especially in the 17th and 18th century. By studying a diverse range of objects new stories and connections reveal themselves, such as the involvement of the lower classes.

**RORY McINNES-GIBBONS** is a PhD candidate in the Department of Classics and Ancient History, Durham University. He studied Classics at BA level and took an MA in Greece, Rome and the Near East, also at Durham. He is interested in classical reception, in particular the constantly changing relationship between antiquity and its afterlife. Rory focusses on Palmyra in Roman Syria, a rich, but largely untapped, source of material for classical reception.

**KATHARINE AULT** is a PhD candidate at The Open University, supported by the Consortium for the Arts and Humanities in the South East (CHASE). Following completion of The Open University's Art History MA her dissertation on Ugolino di Nerio's Santa Croce Polyptych was shortlisted runner-up for the Association for Art History's Dissertation Prize 2017. Previous published research focuses on a predella panel from Cecco di Pietro's Agnano Altarpiece. She has worked for the Royal Collections Trust, Barbican Art Gallery and London Museum of Jewish Life. Katharine is a practising artist, and has exhibited at numerous venues in and around London.

**LUCY WEST** is an AHRC-funded Collaborative Doctoral Partnership PhD Researcher working with The National Gallery, The Bowes Museum, and Leeds University. This project explores the practices of art dealers and agents in the re-evaluation and reception of pre-1500 European painting in early Victorian Britain, with a focus on the collecting activities of John Bowes in the 1840-50s. Her MA specialised in the Arts of Florence and Central Italy, 1400-1500, at the Courtauld Institute. Previously, Lucy worked as Assistant Curator of Paintings at Royal Collection Trust, and as Curatorial Trainee at The National Gallery and the Ferens Art Gallery, Hull.

**MARIKO HIRABAYASHI** is a first year PhD student in History of Art at the University of York. From 2017 to 2018, she has worked as an assistant curator at the Menard Art Museum, Japan. She holds a BA in Japanese History from the Keio University, Tokyo, and an MA in British Art from the University of York. Her current research focuses on the art interaction and collection between Britain and Japan from the late 19th century to the early 20th century, specifically the relationship between Charles Ricketts and Japanese art.

**MARIA GOLOVTEEVA** is a Researcher at Christie's auction house and a PhD candidate in Art History at the University of St Andrews. Her research explores interactions between art and photography in the late nineteenth century, particularly in case of the Belgian artist Fernand Khnopff. She has recently given a lecture "L'art de Fernand Khnopff et la photographie au 19ème siècle" as a part of *Fernand Khnopff (1858-1921). Le maître de l'énigme* exhibition at the Petit Palais (Paris) and spoken at *The Camera, Colonialism and Social Networks* conference organised by the National Trust for Scotland and the Morton Photography Project. She holds several research scholarships, including Van Gogh Museum Research Grant and Fine Art Bursary of the Catherine and Alfred Forrest Trust. She received a grant from Belgian organisations to attend the Summer Course for the Study of the Arts in Flanders in 2018, a joint initiative of museums and universities around Belgium intended for researchers. Her next publication "Villa Khnopff: the Home of an Artist and the Palace of Art" in *Domestic Space in France and Belgium*, edited by Claire Moran, will be out with Bloomsbury Publishing in 2019.

**Dr TOM WILKINSON** is a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at the Warburg Institute, where he is working on a project on the relationship between images and economic forces in modern Germany. He received a PhD in the History of Art from UCL in 2016. He is History Editor of the *Architectural Review*.

**INBAL STRAUSS** is an AHRC-funded doctoral candidate at the Ruskin School of Art and Linacre College, University of Oxford, where her research revolves around questions of objecthood, instrumentality, and artefactual agency under advanced capitalism. Titled 'Form Unfollows Function: Subversions of Functionality in Avant-Garde Objects', her thesis asks: how may modern and contemporary art objects peak, twist or accentuate a notion of function that goes beyond the notion of utility? Consulting works by Dadaist, Surrealist, Minimalist, Pop and Excessivist artists, the thesis examines how the design decisions embodied in these works, as well as the critical concerns underlying these decisions, negotiate the binary opposition between utility and futility, thereby calling into question the modernist imperative that form follows function. Inbal holds an MFA from Goldsmiths, University of London (2012), and a B.Des from the Bezalel Academy of Art & Design in Jerusalem (2010).

# KEYNOTE

**Between Commodity and Gift: Some Thoughts on Early Modern Objects.**  
Dr Leah R. Clark, The Open University.

What was a commodity in the Renaissance? What was a work of art? This paper will consider the different forms of exchange through which objects circulated, arguing that late fifteenth-century consumption practices have to be studied on their own terms, functioning within a dual economy of gifts and commerce. In the fifteenth century, these two systems sometimes worked together, sometimes came up against each other in conflict, but undoubtedly influenced each other. This keynote will examine these systems from two different perspectives: through the practices of merchant bankers and from the objects themselves. Merchant bankers provided bills of exchange, pawns, loans, and 'commodities' to the princely elite, but they were also heavily involved in political negotiations and gift exchanges. Objects were used to solidify alliances, pay for wars, create ties of indebtedness and obligation, and operate as signs of virtue or magnificence, but they were also the sites of political tensions, instigators of financial ruin, and indicators of betrayal. The modern distinction between commodity and gift needs to be re-evaluated for this period within the context of transactions, to elucidate how value creation was a process, and that the labels 'commodity' and 'gift' are less about what a thing is and more about how it is exchanged or its potential for exchange. Identities of objects, and those who exchange them, are never fixed, but are often contested constructions. Thus the concept of obligation, which figures into gift exchange is also important as providing a crucial component in economic exchange. As this paper will show, possessions were often transient and status and reputation depended on one's ability to negotiate the circulation of one's goods, through the careful balance of pawning, credit, and gifting.

**Dr LEAH R. CLARK** studied Art History at the University of British Columbia and the Courtauld Institute, gaining her PhD from McGill University. Leah's research explores the roles objects play in creating networks in the fifteenth century through their exchange, collection, and replication. She joined the OU in 2013, having taught a wide range of courses in Canada and America including Art History courses on the Italian Renaissance, collecting, art in the Italian courts, and cross-cultural encounters in the early modern world, in addition to cross-disciplinary courses in the Humanities.

*Collecting Art in the Italian Renaissance Court: Objects and Exchanges* (Cambridge University Press) examines the courts of Italy (particularly Ferrara and Naples) through the myriad of objects—statues, paintings, jewellery, furniture, and heraldry—that were valued for their particular iconographies, material forms, histories, and social functions. The constant circulation of precious objects in the late fifteenth century reveals a system of value which placed importance not only on ownership, but also on the replication, copying, and translation of those objects in an array of media. The objects of analysis are thus considered not only as components of court life, but also as agents that activated the symbolic practices that became integral to relations within and between courts, operating as points of contact between individuals, giving rise to new associations and new interests.

Her next book project investigates how objects and materials functioned as diplomatic agents in cross-cultural relations. It explores the transformative processes of their translation and transfer, which allowed for materials and motifs to become incorporated into local visual culture and production in fifteenth-century Italy. She has received a British Academy/Leverhulme Small Research Grant for research connected to this project ('The Peregrinations of Porcelain: Touch, Transfer, and Translation in Cross Cultural Exchange (1450-1500)').

As part of this interest in cross-cultural encounters, she co-edited (with Nancy Um) a special issue of the *Journal of Early Modern History*, *The Art of Embassy: Objects and Images of Early Modern Diplomacy* (2016). She is also co-investigator (with Dr Katherine Wilson, Chester) of an interdisciplinary research network examining the mobility of objects across and beyond European boundaries during the period (1000-1700) funded by the AHRC. She has presented at numerous international conferences including the Renaissance Society of America, the Association of Art Historians, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Courtauld Institute of Art, the College Art Association, and the Congress of the International Committee of the History of Art (CIHA).

She is the recipient of various awards and fellowships from the British Academy, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), the Italian government, and she received the McGill Arts Insights Dissertation Award for her PhD thesis, 'Value and Symbolic Practices: Objects, Exchanges, and Associations in the Italian Courts (1450-1500).' At the OU, she is co-chair of the Medieval and Early Modern Research Group.

## ORGANISER AND CHAIR PROFILES

**ADAM SAMMUT** is a PhD candidate in History of Art at the University of York. Funded by WROCAH, his thesis is about Rubens and the Dominican Church in Antwerp. Adam read a first in History of Art at University College London, followed by an MA in the Dutch Golden Age also at UCL. Prior to starting his PhD, Adam worked in the Paintings Dept. of The Royal Collection, then as archivist for Sir Cameron Mackintosh and the architect Lord Norman Foster. He has published articles in the *Review of Scottish Culture* and *Dutch Crossing*, and is contributing to the exhibition catalogue *Rubens and his Century* (Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest). Adam has delivered papers at Recasting Reproduction, The Seventh Early Modern Symposium at the Courtauld Institute (2017) and the Renaissance Society of America's annual meeting in New Orleans, LA (2018). In summer 2018, Adam was Kluge Fellow at the Library of Congress, Washington DC. He sits on the ALCS executive board.

**SIMON SPIER** is in receipt of an AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Partnership studentship between the University of Leeds and The Bowes Museum, County Durham, working on a project entitled 'Creating the Bowes Museum: Private collecting, public philanthropy and the art market in the public art museum in Britain and France, 1830-1900'. He received his BA(Hons) in History of Art from the University of Manchester, and an MA in History of Art (British Art) from the University of York. His general research interests are within the history of collecting and display, the history of public museums and galleries, European decorative arts (particularly 19th-century), and the interrelationship between private collectors, the public museum and the art market.

**APURBA CHATTERJEE** is a PhD researcher based at The University of Sheffield, and she is currently completing her thesis on the relationship between visual arts and politics in early British Indian empire. In 2018, she was a visiting research fellow at Yale Center for British Art, New Haven. Her research interests are the conjunctures of history, art history, and conceptual history. Her written work, both published and forthcoming, focus on art, British empire, and the cultural legacies of British imperialism.

**Dr CORDULA VAN WYHE** is a Senior Lecturer in the History of Art. Before joining the History of Art Department at York in 2005, she was the Speelman-Newton Fellow in Netherlandish Art at Wolfson College Cambridge (2000-2005). Her research interests lie in early modern cultural history with particular reference to the seventeenth-century Low Countries. Major interests include religious and political imagery, royal patronage, and early modern court culture. She is Director of Research Programmes.

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