Beyond the Renaissance Palace: The Material World of Sixteenth-Century Artisans and Shopkeepers

Speaker/Event
Paula Hohti
Assistant Professor of the History of Art and Culture, Aalto University, Helsinki; Visiting Fellow, Bard Graduate Center

Beyond the Renaissance Palace: The Material World of Sixteenth-Century Artisans and Shopkeepers

Date
Thursday, November 10, 2016

Time
12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

Place
38 West 86th Street, Seminar Room

RSVP: 212.501.3019, academicevents@bgc.bard.edu

Description
Paula Hohti will be giving a Brown Bag Lunch presentation on Thursday, November 10 from 12 to 1:30 pm. Her talk is entitled “Beyond the Renaissance Palace: The Material World of Sixteenth-Century Artisans and Shopkeepers.”

Paula Hohti is Assistant Professor of the History of Art and Culture at Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture in Helsinki and a Visiting Fellow at Bard Graduate Center. She received her PhD in Art History from the University of Sussex. Her research focuses on Italian Renaissance dress, material culture, and decorative arts, with a special focus on their role and function within the classes of artisans and shopkeepers. Her forthcoming monograph on the topic, with the working title Beyond the Palace: Artisans and Material Culture in Renaissance Italy, explores how lower artisanal groups such as bakers, barbers, and shoemakers, understood and experienced Renaissance culture. Hohti has held research positions at the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies, the European University Institute in Florence, and the University of Copenhagen, and she has been a Principal Investigator in two major UK-based international research projects: “Material Renaissance: Costs and Consumption in Italy 1350–1600” and “Fashioning the Early Modern: Creativity and Innovation in Europe, 1500–1850,” led by Professor Evelyn Welch. Her publications include the forthcoming “Cheap Magnificence?: Imitations and Low-Cost Luxuries in Renaissance Italy,” in Luxury and the Ethics of Greed in Early Modern Italy (ed. Katherine Kovesi; Brepols); “Dress, Dissemination and Innovation: Artisan Fashions in Sixteenth- and Early Seventeenth-Century Italy,” in Fashioning the Early Modern: Dress, Textiles, and Innovation in Europe, 1500–1850 (ed. E. Welch; Oxford UP, 2016); and “Conspicuous Consumption and Popular Consumers: Material Culture and Social Status in Sixteenth-Century Siena,” in Renaissance Studies (Vol. 24.4, 2010).

The sixteenth century has been identified as an important period of change in European material culture. Spurred by growing trade and economic prosperity, there was a growing demand for a wide range of decorative objects and luxuries that ranged from portrait paintings, small gilded antique statues, and maiolica services to fine linens, personal dress accessories, and fashionable clothing. Yet, Renaissance material culture studies have been mainly confined to developments among wealthy Italian elites, making it difficult to evaluate how ordinary Italians related to Renaissance culture. Did the Italian Renaissance, as we understand it today, make any difference in the lives of ordinary Italians, such as bakers, barbers and shoemakers? In this talk, Hohti considers how the lower classes experienced Renaissance culture, by examining how local artists, artisans, and small-scale prosperous traders lived and dressed in sixteenth-century Italy.

Coffee and tea will be served; attendees are welcome to bring their own lunch.

RSVP is required. Please click on the registration link at the bottom of this page, email academicevents@bgc.bard.edu, or call 212.501.3019.

Academic Programs, Seminar Series / Brown Bag Lunch