



Color in motion

TRANSFERS

TRANSFORMATIONS
TRANSLATIONS

DECEMBER 8–10, 2025

Conference Program
and Book of abstracts

Closing Conference
of the Visual Contagions Project
University of Geneva, Espace Colladon
Rue Jean-Daniel-Colladon 2, 1st floor
Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, GamMAH
Promenade du Pin 5, 3rd floor

visual
contagions
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Image Cover

Félix Vallotton (Lausanne, 1865–Neuilly, 1925),
Le retour de la mer, oil on canvas, 81 x 100 cm, 1924.
Musée d'art et d'histoire, Ville de Genève. Don de la Société
auxiliaire du Musée, 1929 (inv. 1929-0002).

With the generous support of the Swiss National Science Fund (SNSF); the Musée d'art et d'histoire de Genève (MAH); the Fonds général de l'Université de Genève; Caran d'Ache; the Commission administrative (COMAD) de l'Université de Genève; and the Faculté des Lettres, Université de Genève.

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Dominik Remondino, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Genève
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Conclusive Roundtable

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This conference seeks to explore what happens to color when objects, images, and what was once called “style” circulate across time and space, traversing cultural boundaries, traditions, media, and diverse conceptions of chromatic symbolism. It marks the conclusion of the Visual Contagions research project (Swiss National Science Foundation, 2021–2025), conducted at the University of Geneva in collaboration with the Artl@s project and dedicated to the global circulation of images.

In the global circulation of images, print has played a fundamental role. Yet until the mid-twentieth century, the vast majority of images were reproduced in black and white. This cannot but have had a significant impact on the dissemination of styles in particular, as well as of visual trends more broadly. It is this question that inspired the idea of a conference devoted to the effects of circulation on color.

While the history of color has traced the origins and trajectories of pigments—from Afghan lapis lazuli ultramarine to Mexican cochineal red, Prussian blue, or the ochres from West Africa—and analysed variations in taste and palettes across cultural contexts, relatively little attention has been given to color as a central component of image and style circulation. Similarly, decolonial approaches have demonstrated the extent to which color has shaped aesthetic hierarchies and critical judgments, particularly in postcolonial contexts, yet they have rarely examined how reproduction techniques—whether black-

and-white or color—have impacted the reception and dissemination of artworks.

Color is neither stable nor immutable: it is shaped by time, materials, reproduction technologies, and perceptual or cultural traditions. In the circulation of images, it acts as an agent of transmission, transformation, and sometimes erasure, revealing how spatial and temporal circulations are themselves inscribed within a history of color.

This conference therefore invites reflection on color as a phenomenon of translation, resistance, standardization, and metamorphosis, through research pathways ranging from cultural codes to activist uses, from reproduction techniques to transmedial circulations. By placing color at the very heart of circulation dynamics, it seeks to broaden the inquiry toward an epistemology of reproduced images and their historical effects.

The conference is organized by the Visual Contagions project team and the Digital Humanities Chair, in partnership with the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire (MAH), Geneva. We would like to thank our scientific committee—Dominik Remondino (MAH), Victor Lopes (MAH), Frédéric Elsig (University of Geneva), and Catherine Dossin (Purdue University)—for their commitment and invaluable contribution to the selection of proposals.

We are profoundly grateful to the museum for its generous hospitality, and we extend our thanks to the conservation-restoration teams for welcoming us for half a day. Our gratitude also goes to Caran d'Ache, Eric Vitus and Mélanie Miranda, whose support we warmly acknowledge and who will kindly host us for a visit to their manufacturing workshops. We gratefully acknowledge the support of the SNSF, the University of Geneva (COMAD), the chair in Digital Humanities, the Fonds Général, and the Faculté des Lettres.

Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel

Director of the Visual Contagions project,
chair of the Digital Humanities, Unige.

- 09:00 Welcome Coffee
- 09:30 Introduction / *Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel*
- 09:45 **Keynote 1** / *Monika Wagner*
Circulation and Reception. Grünewald's Isenheim
Altarpiece in Color and in Black-and-White
Reproductions
- 10:30 Coffee Break

SESSION 1: CULTURAL AND POLITICAL SYSTEMS / FRÉDÉRIC ELSIG

- 11:00 *Maite Alvarez*
Spanish Imperial Chromatic Charts: Watercolor,
Weather, and Governance at a Distance 1789–1816
- 11:30 *Hiromi Matsui*
Japanese Color Theory at the Age of Modernism:
Formation, Transformation, and Cultural Synthesis
- 12:00 *Stephanie S.E. Lee*
Making Yellow in the Twentieth century: Color Charts,
Shiseido, and Asiatic Femininity in East Asian Works-
on-Paper
- 12:30 *Witold Kanicki*
Cold War and the Politics of Color Photography
- 13:00 Lunch Break for Speakers (1h30)

SESSION 2: COLOR SEMANTICS / DOMINIK REMONDINO

- 14:30 *Maryam Akramifard & Mahsa Akramifard*
Semiotic Squares of Color: Greimasian Analysis of French Translations of Hafez's Chromatic Imagery
- 15:00 *Tatiana Smolyarova*
The "Travelling Eye": Osip Mandelstam's Theory of Color and Vision ("Journey to Armenia" (1931) and "Impressionism" (1932))
- 15:30 *Adriana Zdrzalek*
Color Circulation from Esthetics to Ontology. Or from Decorative Arts to Thomas Mann's *Buddenbrooks*
- 16:00 Coffee Break

SESSION 3: SHIFTING PERCEPTIONS / MILAN GARCIN

- 16:30 *Carla Mazzarelli*
Which "Authenticity" of Color? Michelangelo Reproduced Between Media Transformation and Migrations of Perception
- 17:00 *Stefanie De Winter*
Silent Color Transformations: Ageing, Reproduction, and the Epistemic Gap in Color Field Painting
- 17:30 *Emilia Cottiglioni*
Nordic Time: Color, Metamorphosis, and Landscape Imaginaries
- 18:00 *Marta Spanevello*
Perceiving the Imperceptible Color: American Monochromatic Art, 1980–2000
- 18:30 Cocktail for Speakers

09:00 Welcome Coffee

SESSION 4: BLACK AND WHITE FILTERS / ADÉLAÏDE QUENSON

- 09:30 *Léo Bohn*
Ghost Image (workshop)
- 10:00 *Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel*
The Colors of Distance: Peripheral Dalinism,
Reproduction, and Reinvention in the 1930s
- 10:30 *Milan Garcin*
Cooking Color with Black and White:
Francis Bacon's use of Reproductions of the Amarna
Masks from the Antikensammlung Berlin

11:00 Coffee Break

SESSION 5: COLOR TECHNIQUES OF REPRODUCTION / CATHERINE DOSSIN

- 11:30 *Maria Dolores Garcia-Aznar*
Color Intaglio Printmaking Techniques in the
Eighteenth Century and their Cultural Impact
- 12:00 *Fedora Parkmann*
Nude Photography in Ink: Cultural Meanings of Color
in the Magazine Reproductions of František Drtikol
- 12:30 *Maabeen Ahmed*
The Colors of Crisis: French Children's Magazines
during the Second World War
- 13:00 Lunch Break for Speakers(1h10)
- 14:15 Visit of the Conservation-Restoration Studios,
Musée d'Art et d'Histoire de Genève
(Registration Required)

- 09:00 Visit of the Caran d'Ache Color Manufacture
(Registration Required)
- 12:00 Lunch and Coffee Break for speakers at GamMAH
- 13:00 **Keynote 2** / *Peter Geimer*
Recoloring the Past? A Plea for Historical Distance
- 13:45 Comfort Break (10mn)

SESSION 6: COLOR AND TRANSMISSION / MARIE BARRAS

- 13:55 *Teresa Knapowska*
Moving Colors, Moving Meanings: How Does Color
Circulate Across Copies of the *Tournament Book*?
- 14:25 *Luca Piccoli*
The Colors of the Pio-Clementino Museum: Genesis,
Transmission and Legacy of a Museographic Model
- 14:55 *Catherine Dossin*
From Monochrome to Multicolor: The Circulation
of Color in American Art History Classrooms
- 15:25 Conclusive Roundtable / *Frédéric Elsig*
- 15:55 Closing Remarks / *Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel*
- 16:00 Closing Tea



Monika Wagner studies modern and contemporary art, with a focus on the semantics of materials, methods of production and media of reception. Previous to her studies in Art History she was trained as an artist at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kassel. After several years at Tübingen University she taught Art History at the University of Hamburg from 1987 to 2009. Her publications include *Das Material der Kunst. Eine andere Geschichte der Moderne* (2001); *William Turner* (2011); *Marmor und Asphalt. Soziale Oberflächen im Berlin des 20. Jahrhunderts* (2018); *Kunstgeschichte in Schwarz-Weiß. Reproduktionstechnik und Methode* (2022).

Matthias Grünewald's Isenheim Altarpiece was praised as an expressive color sensation after its rediscovery by Joris Huysmans at the end of the nineteenth century; during the First World War it became a German national icon. However, while color reproductions of Grünewald's Œuvre circulating in German-speaking countries enjoyed widespread popularity, large sections of academic Art History remained limited to black-and-white reproductions. This self-restraint was by no means simply due to technical difficulties or higher costs. Unlike Walter Benjamin's concern about the loss of aura as expressed in *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, the academic sector of Art History was primarily concerned with eliminating the affective qualities of colors. For this reason, many scholars considered working with black-and-white illustrations to be even more useful than working with the original. Not only connoisseur-like attributions but also modern academic methods, such as iconography, were developed on the basis of black-and-white reproductions. This becomes particularly apparent when Grünewald's Isenheim Altarpiece serves as a methodological model, as in the case of Panofsky's iconology.

Maite Álvarez earned her PhD with a dissertation on the Renaissance Spanish art market that analyzed artistic production, circulation, and transnational networks. She directed an international archival project on the patron Mencía de Mendoza (1508–1554) and holds a major grant for *Verdant Worlds: Art and Sustainability across the Cosmos*. Her recent research examines *vista de ojos* and chromatic charts as instruments of eyewitnessing, science, verification, and statecraft in the early modern Hispanosphere.

Long before Pantone, a system of chromatic standardization via portable color charts traveled with expeditionary and colonial artists and scientists to make distant depictions of ecologies legible to the metropole. By the eighteenth century, in an age newly shaped by the emerging sciences of meteorology and climate, portable chromatic charts became indispensable, allowing artists across the empire to standardize the depiction of ephemeral phenomena and lands monarchs sought to govern. Fleeting skies, soils, and atmospheres were transformed into calibrated visual proofs that circulated as stable knowledge and carried administrative weight in Madrid.

Artists, soldiers, surveyors, botanists, and engineers carried these portable charts to translate variable climates into seemingly fixed forms. By standardizing the depiction of ephemeral phenomena, watercolors homogenized representations of skies and soils across continents, producing visual records that were designed to evaluate resource potential, and strategic sustainability. Color thus became an agent of circulation: a system structuring how knowledge moved and how empire administered at scale. This paper examines how chromatic codification enabled global comparison while reinforcing imperial oversight, making watercolor-based charts central to the visual and administrative machinery of empire and revealing how color itself underwrote the governance of distance.

Hiromi Matsui is Associate Professor at the University of Tokyo's Graduate School of Arts and Sciences since 2022. She previously taught at Nagoya University (2015–2018) and Kobe University (2018–2021). Her research focuses on the intersection of anatomy, avant-garde art, and the relationship between art and science. She is currently engaged in a collaborative project rethinking classicism and realism in twentieth century art and literature.

This presentation examines the evolution of modern color theory in Japan during the early twentieth century through the works and writings of Beisaku Taguchi, Jutarō Kuroda, and Noboru Kitawaki. While Japan had long cultivated its own coloring techniques rooted in Chinese traditions, the country's opening to the West in the late nineteenth century prompted a reconfiguration of its approach to color.

Taguchi's *New Theory of Color* (1910) stands as one of the most original contributions to this discourse, blending empirical knowledge of traditional Japanese coloring with modern scientific insights and offering a culturally sensitive perspective. In the 1930s, Jutarō Kuroda, who studied under André Lhote in France, published *Studies in Drawing and Color* (1932), merging avant-garde aesthetics with classical Western color theory. During the wartime years of 1940–41, Noboru Kitawaki, a leading Surrealist, developed a unique visual language that fused Chinese divination systems with modern color theory. His paintings evoke a microcosmic utopia, intertwining spiritual and scientific dimensions. By analyzing these artists' writings and visual practices, this presentation highlights how Japanese color theory evolved through a dynamic process of modernization and cultural negotiation. Rather than passively receiving Western ideas, Japanese artists actively reinterpreted them, embedding local identity within a global framework.

Stephanie S. E. Lee writes about modern and contemporary art and is a PhD candidate at Northwestern University. Her doctoral dissertation investigates how reprographic technologies, gendered labor, and industrial color are co-constitutive in the making of race. Her writing can be found in numerous exhibition catalogs and are forthcoming in *Archives of Asian Art* and the *Rijksmuseum Bulletin*. She's based in New York, where she serves as the Belle da Costa Greene Curatorial Fellow at the Morgan Library and Museum.

During the first decades of the twentieth century, how did Yellow—as a colorant, as a racial signifier, and as an aesthetic marker, serve as a site of intercultural translation between France and Japan? This paper aims to address questions of international arts education and racemaking during the Japanese Empire. An examination of the color yellow—especially how it was conceptualized ideologically, how it was printed mechanically, and how it was discussed by artists and politicians alike—allows art historians to better understand the embattled conceptualization of race and ethnicity beyond the Euro-American, black and white binary. Scholars Rey Chow and Ann Cheng have theorized the objecthood of the Asian-American woman in contemporary art and film, thereby setting my methodological infrastructure. For instance, an examination of Japanese color theorist and artist Wada Sanzō's (1883–1967) French color chart collection and eventual publication of *A Dictionary of Color Combinations* (1933–1934) with the pharmaceutical and cosmetic conglomerate Shiseido's Beauty Chart (1936) suggests a “yellow” in flux. By tracing the omnipresent yet fugitive Yellow in the early Twenties reveals entwined concerns of East Asian femininity and capital progress. This paper—an excerpt from my doctoral dissertation—charts the varied perceptions of the colorant and makes a case for understanding comparative imperial politics through art across a variety of scales.

Witold Kanicki is an art historian. He works as an assistant professor at the Magdalena Abakanowicz University of the Arts in Poznań. Until 2020 he worked as a visiting lecturer at the ZHDK in Switzerland. He published books and articles on Polish and world history of photography (e.g. *Ujemny biegun fotografii*, Gdańsk 2017; *Wacław Nowak. Polaroid – fotografia z importu*, Poznań – Lusowo 2021). Since 2015, he has led a team of researchers working on an anthology of Polish-language texts on photography, published in 2023 (*Polscy fotografowie, krytycy i teoretycy o fotografii 1839-1989 – Antologia*).

The political contrasts of the Cold War era were followed by radical differences in various fields of culture. One of the areas that clearly distinguished the capitalist and communist blocs was the issue of colors, which were used and understood differently on both sides of the Iron Curtain. While countries such as Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the USSR were characterized by ubiquitous grayness, a limited color palette, and subdued colors in public spaces, consumer products, and rare advertisements, the rich world of the West was associated with saturated colors that permeated almost every sphere of life.

In the East, the prevalence of muted colors, monochrome photographs, and black and white television, as well as the imposed grayness of public spaces, were factors that contributed to a peculiar hunger for colors associated with another world.

This paper will focus on the history of color photography, which marks an interesting space of contrasts and tensions during the Cold War era. One of the topics of the presentation will be the difference between family photography practiced in contrasting blocs of countries. Despite the low quality and store shortages typical of the communist market, slides and home methods of developing color materials, rare elsewhere, enjoyed immense popularity. At the same time, valuable artistic projects were created using color photography, which, associated with the West, sometimes had a critical tone.

Maryam Akramifard, PhD candidate in Linguistics and Translation Studies at Université Laval, researches the translation of neologisms in fantasy literature through semiotics and cultural studies, also exploring translation and digital tools. She authored *The Thousand Most Frequent Words in Computing and the Internet* and translated Stendhal's *Armance*.

Mahsa Akramifard, graphic/UI designer and MA candidate in Art Research at Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, studies color, form, and cultural symbolism, merging Iranian traditions with modern design. Together, they link semiotics, translation, and visual arts to examine color as a cultural mediator.

Color has long been central to Persian art, architecture, and poetry, where it encodes spiritual, political, and philosophical insights. Among classical poets, Hafez (fourteenth century) stands out for his symbolic use of color, which often served as veiled critique of tyranny and injustice while avoiding censorship. His chromatic imagery has inspired centuries of interpretation across cultures, yet in translation—particularly into French—the semiotic and cultural resonance of colors is frequently transformed. This paper examines how color symbolism in Hafez's *ghazals* is reshaped in French versions through the lens of Greimas' semiotic square. By focusing on oppositions such as light/dark, purity/impurity, and life/death, the study explores how relational structures of meaning are reconfigured in translation and what interpretative pathways they open for readers. The aim is both to test the applicability of Greimas's model in literary translation and to deepen understanding of how color, as a symbolic mediator, traverses cultural and linguistic boundaries.

*The “Travelling Eye”: Osip Mandelstam’s Theory of Color and Vision
 (“Journey to Armenia” (1931) and “Impressionism” (1932))*

UNIVERSITY OF GENEVA

Tatiana Smolyarova is a Professor of Russian Literature at the University of Geneva. Her main areas of interest are the Age of Enlightenment and its legacies in Russia and Europe. She also specializes in the history of Russian and European poetry and poetics, as well as Visual Studies. Her published books include *Paris 1928: Ode Returns to Theater* (1999, in Russian), *Lyrics Made Visible: Derzhavin* (2011, in Russian), and *Three Metaphors for Life: Derzhavin’s Late Poetry* (2018).

“The lilac shadow’s growing lush, / A whistle or a whip is quenching. / You’d say the cooks in dinner rush / Are dressing pigeons in the kitchen”—with this synesthetic imagery, Osip Mandelstam (1891–1938) captured Claude Monet’s color palette in his poem “Impressionism” (1932). From 1928, Mandelstam lived in Moscow, spending hours at the State Museum of Modern Western Art, a unique institution (1923–1948) housing two major collections of French Impressionist and Post-Impressionist works assembled in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by Moscow merchants and art connoisseurs Sergei Shchukin and Ivan Morozov. This sustained dialogue with French painting enhanced and deepened Mandelstam’s engagement with the problem of color: its perception, its verbal rendering, and the very nature of human vision, a sophisticated theory of which he develops in his essay “Journey to Armenia” (1931). Where the 1910s, the first decade of Mandelstam’s poetic career, were characterized by the stark graphism of his lyrics (what we might call “the period of *dessin*”), and the 1920s were mainly “logocentric,” the 1930s—years of hardship and suffering—became the years of passion for *coloris*. By exploring his often counter-intuitive use of color terms and examining English and French translations of his poetry and prose, this paper will reveal the distinctive character of Mandelstam’s “verbal palette.”

Adriana Zdrzalek studied German language and literature, French language and literature, and science of education at the University of Cologne, University Paris-Sorbonne IV and the University of Bologna. She is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Palermo in the Visual Culture Studies programme. Her doctoral project deals with the cultural transfer of knowledge regarding the phenomenon of color in the nineteenth century and its influence on the literature of Thomas Mann.

With the development of the decorative arts in the nineteenth century, the topic of color not only gained relevance in the field of interior design, but also gained interest in the discourse of society as a whole. This “color revolution,” which progressed from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, certainly did not go unnoticed by the intellectuals and writers of the time. The reflections on color resulting from the decorative arts concern both the criticism of its absence and the incorrect choice of colors. This discourse of the decorative arts found particular resonance in realistic and decadent literature, making use of these reflections in its descriptions of reality. These medial translation of color from the decorative arts into the medium of literature can be particularly highlighted by the example of Thomas Mann’s first novel *Buddenbrooks*. While the presence of saturated colors serves as an indicator of the functioning vital forces, their absence and misuse in the form of faded or darkened colors implies precisely the decline or absence of vital forces. Practical advice on furnishing and designing homes is thus charged beyond its superficial aesthetic character and translated into a complex reticulation of symbols that are treated as agents of human existence and as key indicators of ontological status, shaping a truly visual imagination that not only describes a family and its home interiors but also represents an entire bourgeois class and ultimately its very existence.

Carla Mazzarelli is Adjunct Professor at the Academy of Architecture in Mendrisio (Università della Svizzera italiana). She currently directs the SNSF research project *Visibility Reclaimed. Experiencing Rome’s First Public Museums (1733-1870). An Analysis of Public Audiences in a Transnational Perspective*. She was Invited Researcher of FMSH (Paris) in the 2025 DEA Programme. Among her publications: *Dipingere in copia. Da Roma all’Europa (1750-1870)*. I. *Teorie e pratiche* (2018); *Leonardo nel Novecento. Arti, lettere e scienze in dialogo* (2023); *Pubblici dei primi musei pubblici. I. Le fonti istituzionali* (with G. Capitelli, C. Piva, 2025).

In 1837, the copyist Xavier Sigalon completed his oil-on-canvas copy of Michelangelo’s fresco of the *Last Judgement*, which was placed in the Chapelle des Petits-Augustin at the École des Beaux-Arts. The first full-scale pictorial reproduction of Michelangelo’s masterpiece, Sigalon’s copy sparked a wide-ranging discussion in France regarding its faithfulness or otherwise to the Sistine Chapel *Last Judgement*. This discussion involved critics, artists, and scholars, and extended to questioning the very reliability of pictorial copies in academic context. Starting from this case study, the paper aims to focus on the assumptions and outcomes of the debate that arose around Sigalon’s copy. It opened a long-term reflection on the notion of authenticity and temporality of the work of art: Is it possible to rediscover an “authentic” color? Where does the authenticity of color lie: In restoring Michelangelo’s “era” or in the one resulting from the patina of time and the palimpsest of perspectives that constructed the image of the Florentine artist? How can we rediscover that “supposed” originality through the reproduction of color in other media?

By cross-referencing the sources that allow us to reconstruct the contemporary debate with the accounts of visitors to the Sistine Chapel during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the paper aims to offer new perspectives on a theme that has contributed to the construction of Michelangelo’s canon and that digital technology is now deconstructing with new migrations of meaning.

Stefanie De Winter is a postdoctoral researcher at KU Leuven (Belgium), supported by FWO. Trained as art historian and painting conservator, she develops empirically informed art history integrating technical analysis, new technologies, perception studies, and historiographic critique. Her work focuses on unstable industrial paints in Postwar art, especially Frank Stella and Morris Louis. Her IRECONA project uses AR/VR reconstructions to study chromatic change. She is a member of the Young Academy of Belgium.

Twentieth century painting was reshaped by industrial and commercial products generating unprecedented chromatic experiences. Grounded in materials like alkyd or Magna binders, fluorescent and metallic pigments not designed for permanence produced unstable effects. Their fading, darkening, and shifting transformed visual states across generations, often unnoticed in criticism or historiography. Such silent changes altered how color could be perceived, described, and transmitted. The paintings of Morris Louis and Frank Stella exemplify this problem. Postwar critics framed Louis as “purely optical” (Greenberg 1960) and Stella as “abstract-illusionistic” (Rose 1967), yet today their canvases diverge from these accounts: radiant effects muted, metallics dulled, canvas oxidised. Reproductions in black-and-white photos, color slides, and digital databases fail to convey original states, while descriptions were general, omitting specificity. Viewers and scholars thus depend on inadequate records. Against this background, the Interdisciplinary Reconstruction of Art (IRECONA) project develops AR/VR reconstructions enabling navigation between speculative origins and futures of degradation. These are not technical simulations but new media through which color circulates, exposing the gap between past discourse, present appearances, and imagined futures.

Emilia Cottignoli researches perception and experience in medieval and contemporary art, architecture, and installation. Her forthcoming articles include topics like Byzantine bejeweled columns as spatial bodies, an ecocritical reading of a sixth century church to the sea, reflection and the materiality of water in miracle making, and light as crystalline structure in a twentieth century tombstone. Her dissertation will focus on the twenty-first century skyspaces of American artist James Turrell and their relationship to ground, environment, and landscape imaginaries.

James Turrell's skyspace installations feature changing LED lights activated at dawn and dusk, temporalized by their precise location and its relationship to light. This paper will explore the nature of color and its relationship to time in the far north, as concretized within works like *Outside Insight* (2011, Ytterjärna, Sweden) *The Color Beneath* (2013, Oslo, Norway), *Hardanger Fjord Skyspace* (2022, Øystese, Norway), and *Nordic Pixel Forest*, (2024, Oslo, Norway) to propose how these installations embody what I will call "Nordic time." I will argue that "Nordic time" does not just manifest itself within the natural rhythms of the far north, but is materialized within these works that center the metamorphosis of color—an ever evolving spectrum of color change that rejects linear progression and easily quantifiable division. The nature of inquiry in this paper hinges on the idea that the relationship between site, environment, and installation is unique, despite the fact that there are over eighty skyspaces around the world. The precise intersection between these factors indexes a unique kind of spatial aesthetics that emerges only with these installations, rooted in their given environments. With this combination of color, time, and light, they activate unique Arctic imaginaries, mutually constituting their relationship to place.

Marta Spanevello is an art historian, curator and researcher, currently PhD candidate at the Accademia di Architettura, Università della Svizzera Italiana, Mendrisio (CH). Her research focuses on contemporary American art from the 1980s, on Europe-US exchanges and on the collectors' role in shaping artistic canons and exhibition practices. Since 2017, as curator at Villa e Collezione Panza, Varese, she has studied the permanent collection, curated exhibitions and site-specific projects. She has published essays in exhibition catalogues and edited volumes. She regularly gives lectures and contributes to conferences and teaching programmes.

This paper investigates the role of color in American Monochromatic Art (1980-2000), as a complex device capable of revealing the perceptual instability in the mutable tonalities of surfaces. Since the early 1900 from Malevich to Rodchenko till Brice Marden, the monochrome has been perceived as the ultimate limit of abstraction, an *a priori* and absolute gesture often associated with the “death of painting”. In the 1980s and 1990s American artists like W. Roeth, D. Simpson, A. R. Freedenthal and P. Sims reinterpreted the monochrome as a field of imperceptible modulations of painting, unfolding through light, surface texture, atmospheric conditions and spatial arrangement, the chromatic complexity of color. American monochrome between 1980 and 2000 thus appears not as the absence of color, but as its reactivation, interpreted as a medium of mediation capable of restoring color to a central role in redefining artistic practices and their meanings within a global context. This paper intends to address three dimensions of this practice: the perceptual variability of color, its symbolic function and its historical-iconographic resonance evoked in references to Renaissance and Mannerist models. Special attention is also devoted to the difficulties of the circulation and critical reception of the monochrome, since photographic and digital reproductions risk muting the work's chromatic complexity.

Leo Bohn is an artist based in Brest. After studies in literature and philosophy in La Sorbonne in Paris, they started studying art at EESAB (European Academy of Art in Brittany) in Brest. As a result of their previous university career, their work associates philosophical, poetical or literary references with images that they produce. For the moment their work is mainly visible in collective exhibitions or micro editions inspired by DIY culture.

In printmaking, a *ghost image* is a residual trace that reappears despite having been erased, revealing the material memory of the printing process. It questions serendipity, seriality, and the relation between original and copy.

These reflections intersect with those developed by Hito Steyerl about the ontology and the circulation of images (see in particular “In Defense of the Poor Images”, 2009): the low-resolution and compressed images that proliferate across digital networks exemplify a new visual economy in which poor image quality becomes symptomatic of informational capitalism. They function as agents within a networked ecology of visibility, carrying informational and affective value that exceeds their representational function.

My work applies these reflections through the use of black-and-white office printers. Their accessibility and ubiquity reveal the artistic potential of everyday technologies. While color anchors perception in immediacy, grayscale redirects attention toward framing, composition, and the materiality of reproduction. The copier’s tonal variations generate elusive, shifting images that introduce temporal and spatial uncertainties; that produces a renewed visibility regime, inviting an analytical gaze and a renewed sensibility to the image as both process and trace.

Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel is Professor at the University of Geneva, Digital Humanities chair. From 2006-2019 she was Assistant Professor in contemporary art history at École normale supérieure in Paris. Since 2008 she has led digital art history projects (Artl@ds, Postdigital, Visual Contagions) while contributing to global art history. Among her publications, *Les avant-gardes artistiques. Une histoire transnationale* (1: 1848–1918; 2: 1918–1945, Gallimard; 3: 1945–1970, CNRS Ed.; English transl. forthcoming). And recently *L'art contemporain. Une infographie* (CNRS Ed.). In preparation, with designer Fabian Lang: *Images in Globalization*.

Rigorous academic composition, softly graded skies, photographic realism, unsettling erotic motifs, tortured mineral forms, fragmented bodies, and distorted objects—Salvador Dalí's imagery first drew attention through scandal in Paris in 1929. By 1934, it had become a global phenomenon.

"Dalinism" offered artists means to affiliate with Surrealism while reviving academic practices that had fallen into disuse. In Paris, however, it was rejected: its distinctiveness meant that imitation led only to dismissal. Dalinism should thus be seen as a phenomenon of the peripheries in the global history of the avant-gardes. But was this mere imitation? In fact, artists farthest from Paris often produced the most innovative interpretations of Dalinism. This paper contends that black-and-white mediation was central to that process. By tracing these reinterpretations through exhibitions, catalogues, periodicals, and the work of so-called peripheral artists from Japan to the Americas, it argues that distance and reproduction acted as a transformative prism: limiting fidelity while enabling greater freedom to reinvent and reposition Dalinism than close contact with the originals would have allowed.

Cooking Color with Black and White: Francis Bacon's Use of Reproductions of the Amarna Masks from the Antikensammlung Berlin

MUSÉE D'ART ET D'HISTOIRE DE GENÈVE (MAH)

Milan Garcin is curator and head of fine arts collections at the Geneva Musée d'Art et d'Histoire (MAH). He holds a PhD in Art History and is a specialist in the work of British painter Francis Bacon. He has curated several exhibitions focusing on collective imagination, popular music, mythology and trans-chronological approaches to art, including *Ulysse: Voyage dans une Méditerranée de légendes* (2021, HDE Var) and *Metal, Diabolus in Musica* (2024, Musée de la Musique–Philharmonie de Paris). He also teaches art history and participates in various research projects (La beauté du vulnérable, Chaire de Philosophie à l'hôpital, CNAM / GHU Paris).

Francis Bacon (1909–1992) is well known for his extensive use of reproductions of artworks and press images in his work. The chaos of his studio, photographed on numerous occasions, not only highlighted this practice but also served as reference images for the artist, like a re-ingestion of his own production and consumption of images. In 1955, as Bacon accepted several portrait commissions, he decides to paint Lisa Sainsbury by associating her face with Tell-el-Amarna masks, conserved in Berlin. Various iconographic elements attest to this, such as specific characteristics of the headgear featured Sainsbury's various portraits. However, by using images from an album published by Kurt Lange in 1951 on Akhenaten, Bacon also found a way to create a hitherto unprecedented contrast in his work, notably by folding scrapped book pages, surrounding the plaster figure to give it depth and texture. This practice of using black–or dark blue–backgrounds for his portraits formed a large part of Bacon's production from the 1950s until the early 1960s. The aim of this presentation will be to explore the impact of various publications about Egyptian art on Bacon's paintings of the 1950s, and investigate this distinctive use of reproduction, combining the shape of a model, probably itself based on a photograph, its association with works from the past, and the compositional process specific to photography, which Bacon brings into the third dimension.

María Dolores García-Aznar holds an MA in Art History (University of Córdoba), a MAS in Museology (University of Geneva) and a certificate in Cultural Project Management (Open University of Catalonia). She pursues continuing education courses at Institut National du Patrimoine in Paris. Since 2011, she has been working as cataloguer and collection manager at the Prints and Drawings collection of the MAH. She also contributes to the scientific and exhibition projects of the Prints and Drawings collection. In 2025, she co-curates the exhibition *El Lissitzky and the Russian Avant-Garde* at the MAH and publishes in the *Cahiers d'Édouard Vallet*.

This paper explores the innovations in color *intaglio* printmaking techniques in eighteenth century Europe. Focusing, among others, on selected works from the Prints and Drawings collection of the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire in Geneva, it examines how the status of works on paper evolved during this period. Particular attention is given to prints by Jacob Le Blon (1667–1741), Gilles Demarteau (1722–1776), Louis-Marin Bonnet (1736–1793), and Jean-François Janinet (1752–1814).

The eighteenth century witnessed significant advances in color printmaking, driven by growing public interest in both science and art. Color prints became coveted objects among collectors, connoisseurs, and “Grand Tour” travelers, helping to democratize access to art and contributing to the spread of Enlightenment ideals. In response to this demand, printmakers developed and refined a variety of color reproduction techniques—*à la poupée* printing, color mezzotint, crayon manner, stipple engraving, and aquatint—that could imitate drawing media such as chalk, ink, pastel, and watercolor. Drawings and prints collecting became a significant cultural phenomenon, valued not only for aesthetic qualities but also for the ability to reproduce and diffuse famous artworks.

Ultimately, eighteenth century color printmaking bridged the gap between fine art and mass production, playing a key role in laying the groundwork for modern illustrated publishing and graphic art.

The background is a dark, textured surface covered in a fine grid of small, light-colored dots. A thick, dark, flowing ribbon or liquid-like shape curves across the upper portion of the image, creating a sense of movement and depth.

SESSION 5: COLOR TECHNIQUES OF REPRODUCTION

Fedora Parkmann is a researcher at the Institute of Art History of the Czech Academy of Sciences, and principal investigator of the project *The Matrix of Photomechanical Reproductions: Histories of Remote Access to Art (PhotoMatrix)*. Her research focuses on artistic circulations in the history of photography, with particular attention to the role of exhibitions and photomechanical reproduction. Her book *Modernités en réseau: la photographie tchèque et l'Europe entre les deux guerres* is forthcoming with Mare & Martin and Artefactum.

One of the most popular yet controversial genres of art photography, the nude, has been studied primarily through feminist theory and histories of darkroom prints. This paper approaches the photographic nude through the lens of periodical studies, examining how editorial context, reproduction techniques, and color treatment shaped the sexual economy of looking at the nude beyond the photographer's intent. Focusing on the work of the Czech photographer František Drtikol, whose nudes circulated widely in interwar European magazines, the paper analyzes how photomechanical processes, ink colors, image scale, sequencing, and captions framed his work as art, entertainment, eroticism, or nudist culture. Bright ink colors in lifestyle magazines cast his nudes as light entertainment, while refined black-and-white processes, such as photogravure, common in camera magazines, elevated them as art. Drtikol's case demonstrates that the cultural meanings of the nude were defined by color, surface treatment, and reproduction techniques as much as by the images' content, making these parameters central to the historical shift that transformed the female nude into a mass-culture commodity.



Maaheen Ahmed is an associate professor of comparative literature at Ghent University, Belgium, specializing in comics, periodicals and children's culture. She is author of *Openness of Comics and Monstrous Imaginaries: The Legacy of Romanticism in Comics* (UP of Mississippi). In addition to (co-)editing several volumes on comics, including *The Cambridge Companion to Comics*, she recently edited a special issue on comics and children's magazines with Giorgio Busi Rizzi (*Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics*, vol. 16, no. 4) and the catalog, *The Visionary Art of Franco-Belgian Comics, 1930s to 1960s* (Leuven UP), with Hugo Frey.

This paper examines the crises of displacement and ongoing imperialism through the prism of color in two WWII children's magazines. It focuses on the fading—but also changing and fluctuating—colors of wartime periodicals as both constraints and sites of experimentation: reacting to the ongoing shortages which resulted in limited palettes and a dependence on new, homegrown comics, such colors incarnate resilience, an attempt to maintain a fragile sheen of normality that would not exist for a consequent segment of the young magazine readers' lives. The *Journal de Mickey's* subdued colors reflect the magazine's displaced status and reworked identity, which had been anchored in the American comics it could no longer print. Displacement seeps through the materiality of the colors, through the matrices of stippling, spreading beyond the outlines they were supposed to stay within due to poor or quick printing. Already anchored in displacement—and in displacing through the colonialist endeavor—*Tourbillon's* humble, but bright, two-color palette also sheds light, through the reliance on contrasts, on the selective coloring of skins or complexions (see Dootson 2023). Striving to animate and to attract readers, printed color offers a new membrane to approach the affective scope of magazines and its material specificities. In moments of crisis, the slippages and changes in colors can offer a new way to rethink notions of circulation and, even, disrupted circulation.

Peter Geimer is director of the German Center for Art History in Paris. His monographs include: *Die Farben der Vergangenheit. Wie Geschichte zu Bildern wird*, Munich 2022 (French translation: Macula 2023); *Bilder aus Versehen*, Hambourg 2010 (English translation: University of Chicago Press 2018; French translation: Les Presses du Réel 2018), *Fliegen. Ein Porträt* (French translation: Macula, to be published at the end of 2025) and *Theorien der Fotografie. Zur Einführung*, Hamburg: Junius 2009 (6th edition 2021).

The past is unobservable. We hear or read about it, remember it, look at its remains or retrospectively imagine what it was like. But none of these forms of remembrance restore the past: what we know or imagine about it, we only learn about indirectly from stories, documents or material remains. In this process of reconstructing the past, images play a crucial role. My talk focuses on a media practice that has increasingly shaped the way historical archives have been handled in recent decades: the digital re-coloring of historical photographs and films in order to make history “more lively”, “more authentic”, “more tangible”. So are the historically preserved black and white photographs outdated? And do their colored substitutes really bring us closer to the past? The lecture will refer to some of the theses in my book *Les couleurs du passé* (Paris: Macula 2023), but will primarily present some new case studies on the topic.

Teresa Knapowska is a second-year PhD candidate in Art History at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań (AMU). Her research investigates techniques and materials in fifteenth century French miniature workshops, with a particular focus on manuscript copies of *Le Livre des Tournois* by King René of Anjou and the materiality of color in these works. She holds an MA in Art History from AMU and studied Digital Humanities at the École nationale des chartes in Paris.

This study examines color as both a visual component and a vehicle of knowledge, crucial for understanding the copies of *The Tournament Book* and their wider cultural framework.

The manuscript's artistic and social significance lies partly in the fact that, soon after the creation of its first known copy (BnF ms. fr. 2695), it was repeatedly and faithfully reproduced together with a rich cycle of twenty-six miniatures illustrating the ideal tournament conceived and described by King René d'Anjou. Barthélemy d'Éyck, the author of the original cycle, masterfully conveyed his patron's ideological message through pictorial means. Fifteenth century copies exhibit intentional alterations—beyond variations in technique, drawing, support, scale, and iconography that include deliberate color changes and diverse tonal variations. I focus on the symbolic interpretation of colors while outlining research methods for upcoming physico-chemical analyses. Particular attention is given to the material aspects of color transmission, since pigment substitutes and palette differences provide insights into economic, workshop, technological, stylistic, and material-circulation contexts, as well as the copying process. Taken together, these factors shape a multi-layered narrative of the miniatures' origin and reception, which will be further developed.

Luca Piccoli graduated from the Academy of Architecture, Università della Svizzera italiana (USI). He is currently a doctoral assistant at the Institute of History and Theory of Art and Architecture, where he is a member of the research project *Visibility Reclaimed. Experiencing Rome's First Public Museums (1733–1870). An Analysis of Public Audiences in a Transnational Perspective* (SNSF 100016_212922), directed by Professor Carla Mazzarelli (USI) in co-supervision with Professor Chiara Piva (Sapienza Università di Roma). His research explores the origins of Rome's first public museums in the eighteenth century through the experiences of their visitors

The contribution investigates the resonance of color in the Pio-Clementino Museum as a precedent for other institutions. The color of spaces is in fact a central theme in museum historiography: it produces specific effects on the perception of works of art, contributing to the dissemination and transmission of precise cultural meanings. In this sense, the Pio-Clementino Museum constitutes a significant case study: although entirely repainted in red in the nineteenth century to conform to an “international” trend, its original appearance has a remarkable variety of shades and colors, highly appreciated by the audiences of the time. Such polychromy was not only the product of local traditions, but also of a complex and articulated museographic project, destined to be imitated in many other countries: this study aims to assess in detail the means and significance of this transmission. The intention is to reconstruct the original colors of the Pio-Clementino Museum, to understand how the cost of colors influenced the production, likeness and dissemination of images of its interior views and, finally, to re-examine the visual and material experiences of architects who reinterpreted this model in different contexts in the following decades. By adopting a comparative and diachronic perspective, the objective is therefore to further investigate a transnational history of museums, as well as the importance of color in the dissemination of specific museological models.

Catherine Dossin is Associate Professor of Art History at Purdue University and serves as Editor of the *Artl@rs Bulletin*. She is the author of *The Rise and Fall of American Art, 1940s-1980s: A Geopolitics of Western Art Worlds* (Routledge, 2015), the co-editor with Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann and Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel of *Circulations in the Global History of Art* (Routledge, 2015), the co-author with Lynn Boland of *Louise Blair Daura: A Virginian in Paris* (University of Georgia, 2017), and the editor of *France and the Visual Arts since 1945* (Bloomsbury, 2018).

In the United States, in the early twentieth century, art history was taught mainly in black and white—via lantern slides in the classroom and monochrome illustrations in textbooks. This began to change in the 1940s with the introduction of Kodachrome slides and, later, color plates in textbooks. By the early 2000s, color had become the standard medium for teaching the history of art. How did this transition from monochrome to color transform the classroom experience and art history education? Did it enhance or distort the material understanding of works of art? And how did these shifts affect which artworks were most often seen or taught? Drawing on Monika Wagner’s work on the anxieties surrounding color in early art history and the later material turn in the discipline, this paper explores two moments in particular: first, the adoption of color slides from the 1940s to 1970s and the resistance they met, especially around issues of accuracy, cost, and selectivity; and second, the progressive integration of color into textbooks.

By tracing the transition from monochrome to color in both classrooms and textbooks, this study ultimately asks how color—as a mediated technology—has helped shape the knowledge, biases, and limits of the discipline in the United States.

*Victor Lopes**Conservator, Head of the Conservation-Restoration Department, Musée d'art et d'histoire de Genève*

Victor Lopes holds a Master's degree in conservation-restoration of easel paintings from the École nationale supérieure des Arts visuels de La Cambre (Brussels), the Istituto Superiore per la Conservazione ed il Restauro (Rome), and the Institut royal du patrimoine artistique (Brussels). Since 2010, he has been directing the Conservation-Restoration Department of the MAH. His applied research focuses on collections of paintings: from techniques of creation to their material conservation.

*Dominik Remondino**Senior Curator, Head of the Collection Management Unit, Musée d'art et d'histoire de Genève*

Dominik Remondino studied in Zurich and later in Geneva, where he obtained a degree in Art History in 1994, specializing in Medieval Art (with Prof. Yves Christe). He joined the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire in the 1990s, where he has headed the inventory and scientific documentation activities since 2010. In 2018, he became head of the Collection Management Department, which in 2022 welcomed a Documentation and Research Center specializing in Digital Humanities, associated with the University of Geneva through a collaboration agreement.

*Frédéric Elsig**Full Professor, Head of the Department of Art History, University of Geneva*

Frédéric Elsig is Full Professor of Art History and Museology at the University of Geneva. He is the author of several publications, including the essay *Connoisseurship et Histoire de l'art* (Geneva, Droz, 2019). He has also directed or co-directed several collection catalogues, among them those devoted to Old Master paintings at the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire de Genève: Flemish and Dutch paintings from the 15th to the 18th century (2005 and 2009), Italian and Spanish paintings from the 14th to the 18th century (2015), and French paintings from the nineteenth century (2024).



*Marie Barras**PhD Candidate, University of Geneva*

Marie Barras is a PhD candidate in Art History, in the SNSF research project Visual Contagions (dir. by Prof. Joyeux-Prunel), where she works on the intersections between the art and the fashion worlds at the end of the nineteenth century. She holds a Master's degree in Art History and History of Religions from the University of Lausanne. She then completed a MAS in Cultural Heritage and Museology and a Certificate of Specialization in Digital Humanities at the University of Geneva. Between 2022 and 2024, in addition to her PhD, she worked as a digital projects and data manager at the Documentation and Research Center in the Musée d'art et d'histoire de Genève.

*Adélaïde Quenson**PhD Candidate, University of Geneva*

Adélaïde Quenson is a PhD candidate under the supervision of Prof. Joyeux-Prunel and Prof. Fourmentraux. She works on the intersection of digital creation and urban art: «Art urbain et numérique, en Europe, des années 1990 à nos jours». She holds two Master's Degrees, one from Paris Nanterre on digital art, «L'art numérique comme nouveau médium (privilégié) de l'artivisme, Benjamin Gaulon, 2002–2019» and one from Geneva University on urban art, «Art urbain et institutions culturelles en France aujourd'hui». In addition to her PhD, she works as a Historical Heritage Conservation Coordinator for the perfume manufacturer Givaudan in Geneva.

*Angela Allemand**Research and Teaching assistant, University of Geneva*

Angela Allemand is a Master's student in Art History at the University of Geneva, where she joined the FNS Visual Contagions project in December 2024 as a research and teaching assistant. Before her studies in art history, she worked for more than twenty years as a graphic designer, notably for clients such as Nespresso, Audemars Piguet, and Rolex. She specialized in editorial and event-related visual communication, designing materials for cultural and corporate events including the 32nd America's Cup in Valencia, Spain.

*Alexandra Fabry-Tochilina, Administrator,**Chair of Digital Humanities, University of Geneva*

Alexandra Fabry-Tochilina joined the Chair in 2023. She manages budget administration, academic coordination, the organisation of scientific events, project oversight, and collaboration with internal and external partners. She holds Master's degrees in International History from the Geneva Graduate Institute and in History and Geopolitics of Central and Eastern Europe at UNIGE. She is currently pursuing an Executive Master in Business Administration (MBA) at SWISS UMEF.

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