

New Approaches to RUSKIN ON ART AND ARCHITECTURE

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Friday & Saturday, 1–2 December 2017





DAY 1 – FRIDAY, 1 DECEMBER, 9AM–5.30 PM
UCL History of Art Department
20 Gordon Square
WCIH 0AH

9AM

REGISTRATION
G02, History of Art Department

SESSION 1: TRACES
Seminar Room 3 & 4

Gilles Monney (University of Basel)
The Eye on the Move: Ruskin's Travels in the Alps

9.30–10.30
AM

Ann Winners van der Kamp (Independent scholar)
John Ruskin's Visual Modes of Research on Venetian Architecture

Lawrence Gasquet (Université Jean Moulin – Lyon 3)
'The Golden Stain of Time': The Ethics of Dust from John Ruskin to Jorge Otero-Pailos
Q&A

10.30–11 AM

11 AM

Refreshments

SESSION 2: MEMORY AND LOSS
Seminar Room 3 & 4

Tino Mager (Delft Technical University)
The Old: John Ruskin and the Introduction of Age to the Heritage Discourse

11.30–12.30
PM

Ryan Roark (Kohn Pedersen Fox)
The Afterlife of Dying Buildings: Ruskin and Preservation in the Twenty-First Century

Samantha A. Dreyer (University College London)
Purifying the Past: Ruskinian Erasures in the Beaupré Antiphony?

12.30–1 PM

Q&A

1 PM

Lunch (Speakers will have lunch provided for them)

SESSION 3: GOTHIC EXPERIENCE

Seminar Room 3 & 4

Timothy Chandler (University of Pennsylvania/Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)
Feeling Gothic

2–3 PM

David Sorensen (Saint Joseph's University, Philadelphia)
'A Conflux of Two Eternities': Carlyle, Ruskin and the Prophetic Revelation of Art and Architecture

Hugues-Antoine Naik (Université Paris 1 – Panthéon Sorbonne)
Ruskin's Humanistic Theory of Architectural Expression
Q&A

3–3.30 PM

3.30 PM

Refreshments

SESSION 4: CONTRASTS, CONSERVATION, PRACTICE

Seminar Room 3 & 4

Bernard Richards (Brasenose College, University of Oxford)
Ruskin's Habit of Contrasts

4–5 PM

Frederick O'Dwyer (Conservation Architect and Architectural Historian, Dublin)
Prophet or Follower? Ruskin and Architectural Conservation

5–5.30 PM

Steve Pool and Kate Genever (Visual Artists)
The Poly-Technic
Q&A

5.30–7 PM

Drinks reception





DAY 2 – SATURDAY, 2 DECEMBER, 9.30 AM–5.30 PM
The Courtauld Institute of Art
Summerset House
Strand
WC2R 0RN

9.30 AM REGISTRATION
Foyer

SESSION 1: RUSKIN AND PAINTING
The Kenneth Clark Lecture Theatre

Giulia Weston (The Courtauld Institute of Art)
John Ruskin, Salvator Rosa and Seventeenth-Century Landscape Painting

10–11 AM Jeremy Melius (Villa I Tatti/ Tufts University)
Towards an Art of Relations

Moran Sheleg (University College London)
Pattern, Painting and . . . Ruskin?

11–11.30 AM Q&A

11.30 AM Refreshments

SESSION 2: GOTHIC CULTURES
The Kenneth Clark Lecture Theatre

12–12.40 PM Courtney Skipton Long (Postdoctoral Research Associate, Art Collections –Yale Center for British Art)
Visual History and the Mutability of Species: Evolution in John Ruskin's The Seven Lamps of Architecture

Anirudh Sridhar (University of Oxford)
'In the Sweat of Thy Face': Ruskin contra Marx on the Question of Automation

12.40–1 PM Q&A

1 PM Lunch (Day 2 speakers will have lunch provided for them)

SESSION 3: CLIMATE AND ECOLOGY
The Kenneth Clark Lecture Theatre

Caroline Ikin (Manchester Metropolitan University)
The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century:
Ruskin's Garden and the Anthropocene

2–3 PM

Nicholas Robbins (Yale University)
Lost Horizons: The Storm-Cloud of the
Nineteenth Century and the Climate of Art

Polly Gould (Newcastle University)
Ruskin's Storm-Cloud and Tyndall's Floating
Matter: New Materialist Refractions of
Nineteenth-Century Atmospheres

3–3.30 PM

Q&A

3.30 PM

Refreshments

SESSION 4: AFTERLIVES
The Kenneth Clark Lecture Theatre

Myriam Pilutti Namer (Scuola Normale
Superiore)
Giacomo Boni and his Maestro Inglese:
'Ruskinian' Archaeology in Nineteenth-
Century Italy

4–5 PM

Marie Tavinor (Christie's Education)
'A Saint, a Reformer of Souls and Customs':
John Ruskin and the Saint Francis of Assisi
Paradigm

Adrian Tait (Independent scholar)
John Ruskin, Edwin Butler Bayliss, and the Art
of 'Smoke and Fire': an Ecocritical Re-
Evaluation

5–5.30 PM

Q&A

5.30–7 PM

Drinks reception





APPENDIX

List of speakers and abstracts

Gilles Monney

The eye on the move: Ruskin's travels in the Alps

In Ruskin's writings, a contrasting polarity emerges between the mountain and the city, respectively identified as the spaces of geological and human time, of natural and artistic beauty. Walking in mountains, facing incorruptness and slowness, provides the ideal conditions to question the place of men in the world and their interaction with nature. My paper illustrates how experiencing the mountain influenced Ruskin's reflexion, taking into consideration his travels along the Swiss Alps and his artistic production. Ruskin repeatedly travelled within Switzerland, sometimes walking in Turner's footsteps. During his journeys, he produced visual material, treating sometimes the same view with different techniques. He chose to engage with some of the mountain-views Turner had painted before him. In doing so, he appropriated with originality Turner's stylistic and aesthetical model. We will explore his artistic production through comparing how Ruskin and Turner painted the Gotthard-Pass views, and study the renderings of the same subject using different techniques. The scrutiny of the visual material Ruskin created when confronted with the mountain shows how this extreme form of environment modified his gaze on art and nature, and questioned the place of Man in nature and time. Furthermore, we will highlight how the act of drawing was enabling Ruskin to challenge his perceptions, allowing him to better understand the world and to refine his theories.

Ann Winners van der Kamp

John Ruskin's Visual Modes of Research on Venetian Architecture

The methods by which John Ruskin used visual observation to process his world encompassed traditional and new mediums and evolved into a fervent and comprehensive practise of studying architecture, resulting in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849), *The Stones of Venice* (1851–1853), *Examples of the Architecture of Venice* (1851) and *St. Mark's Rest* (1877–1884). Initially using drawing and watercolour as a way to understand buildings, Ruskin developed his processes to encompass daguerreotypes, casts, and measurements. This paper will explore the ways in which casts were a necessary aid in Ruskin's visual reproductions. Taking casts was a common practice of architectural study in the early 19th century, and the casts would appear in the illustrations and content of Ruskin's books. Consequently, Ruskin believed the casts, as three dimensional forms, were an essential teaching device for artists. In the present day, the casts form the most accurate reproduction of the original structures some of which have since suffered damage and restoration.

Lawrence Gasquet

'That Golden Stain of Time': The Ethics of the Dust from John Ruskin to Jorge Otero-Pailos

Architect, conservationist and artist Jorge Otero-Pailos recently perfected a cutting-edge method to restore stone buildings disfigured and threatened by pollution particles. Otero-Pailos's revolutionary technique was used in 2009 to preserve the Doge's Palazzo in Venice, and more recently on the surface of Trajan's Column (2015) and on the walls of Westminster Hall (2016). After the architectural gesture has been enacted, the act of exhibiting the trace of pollution in museums then turns into a political and anthropological act, leading mankind to acknowledge that pollution has become their palpable cultural heritage, echoing John Ruskin's recognition that architecture's demise occurs due to superficial damage, and rarely because of structural flaws. Otero-Pailos's artworks challenge the disciplines of architecture and art. The Ethics of Dust series thus annihilates the very distance between the represented object and its actual existence, both being present in this new latex medium which creates a perfect adherence of literal and figurative. Ruskin saw in dust an index of time in the Peircian sense, designating traces of pollution as "golden stains of time" in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*; I will here study how the work of Otero-Pailos furthers Ruskin's thoughts about surface decay and about the passing of time, enabling for the first time the capture of immaterial dust in a perfect plastic form.

Tino Mager

The Old: John Ruskin and the Introduction of Age into the Heritage Discourse

In 'The Lamp of Memory' Ruskin impressively emphasised the documentary value and historical depth of historical buildings. Moreover, he succeeded in highlighting these qualities by giving architecture a new dimension: age. Or to put it more precisely, he recognised the value of the old and introduced it into the discourse on dealing with the built past. With the apothecic conclusion: 'the greatest glory of a building is not in its stones, nor in its gold. Its glory is in its Age', he accentuated the impossibility of restoring historical architecture to its original greatness and beauty. The old has a distant, irretrievable origin and contributes to the genesis of the present. This quality, which consists of unique traces and is an integral part of the world, cannot be produced. The old thus eludes the productive abilities of man, it offers a poetic as well as an intellectual antagonism to the wealthy present and to societies that believe they can produce anything. My paper outlines Ruskin's influence on the implementation of age and historical depth in architecture. This aspect, which has not yet been sufficiently considered, is the starting point for an important paradigm shift that has a major influence on our current understanding of material heritage.

Ryan Roark

The Afterlife of Dying Buildings: Ruskin and Preservation in the Twenty-First Century

Ruskin was famously opposed to restoration, despite his great reverence for original buildings, so long as they remained 'living architecture'. For him, entirely non-experimental (that is, perfected) architecture is never alive in the first place, while vital architecture, like cities, begins the process of slow death as soon as it is completed (or, perhaps, begun). Notably, in the case of vital architecture, there is no harsh boundary between 'living' and 'dead', in sharp contrast to most Western scientific definitions of life. Instead, life ebbs away and remains a flicker for a long time before yielding entirely to 'dead' architecture, which according to Ruskin should be destroyed. However, this leaves a long stage in the building's later life when its material retains unique properties (the vital registrations of workmanship), representing a form of 'life', which still has value and could convey that value to a new building, provided the new builders treat the original material honestly. Today the term 'historic preservation' seems to be ever more expanding, with numerous creative and experimental alternatives to restoration or demolition, although the latter two are still the most common treatments for buildings of a certain age. In light of this expanded field of practices and the possibilities afforded by new technologies, this paper will examine Ruskin's ideas on life and death in order to imagine a 21st-century Ruskinian approach (or, indeed, alternative) to preservation, to be deployed while the building still has characteristics of life.

Samantha A. Dreyer

Purifying the Past: Ruskinian Erasures in the Beaufré Antiphonary?

The Beaufré Antiphonary (Walters MS. 759-761) has erasures of its marginalia in three of the four volumes housed at the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, Maryland. Although this thirteenth-century manuscript remained in the Cistercian nunnery where it was created (1280–1290) until the start of the nineteenth-century, the erasures are believed to be at the hand of Victorian social and art critic John Ruskin. Ruskin had the book from about 1850 until 1900 (his death). Ruskin used the book as a teaching tool and wrote about it in some of his most famous works including *Modern Painters*. Ruskin's annotations, additions, and cuttings of his illuminated manuscripts are well documented. However, little to no research has been done on these erasures until now. While these erasures can be written off as Victorian prudishness or iconoclasm, closer examination reveals there is more at stake in these smudged margins. Ruskin deeply cared for his illuminated books and the art of the illumination. Illumination and architectural ornament were closely linked for Ruskin; he taught about illumination at the Working Men's College and Architectural Museum. He often used leaves from the Beaufré as didactic tools. Through Analyses of individual erasures (with the help of Walter's Senior Conservator) and an examination of the marginalia's meanings in both the Victorian era and the Middle Ages, I explore if and why Ruskin erased select marginalia. I illustrate how these erasures create and shape the historical narratives surrounding the Beaufré Antiphonary that link the Middle Ages to the Victorian era to modern day.

Timothy Chandler

Feeling Gothic

One of the most remarkable features of Ruskin's 'The Nature of Gothic', as readers have long recognised, is that it theorises not only an architectural object—the Gothic cathedral—but the kind of subject that creates it: a savage lover of variety and nature, with a wild imagination, independent and generous. While we know that Ruskin's medieval craftsman is an ahistorical fantasy based on racialised environmental determinism, his focus on the 'moral elements' of the Gothic rather than its material form has animated practical critiques of aesthetics from William Morris to Lars Spuybroek. The affective dimension of this theory, however, remains relatively understudied. This paper reads Ruskin's theory of the Gothic as an affective account of aesthetic experience: Ruskin tells us not only what Gothic looks like, but what it feels like. Focusing on the deferred discussion of the Grotesque in volume three of *The Stones of Venice*, I show how Ruskin's text theorises and produces "Gothicness" as an intense, emotionally fluctuating experience of obscurity. To really feel Gothic requires playing enthusiastically with one's horror at the dreadfulness of the world. Notwithstanding Ruskin's own strong convictions about the direction art should take, my reading of *The Stones of Venice* emphasises the uncertainty at the heart of Gothic. In this light, some of the key terms of Ruskin criticism—imperfection, failure, inconsistency, savageness—resonate with that most contemporary of Gothic conditions: precarity.

David R Sorensen

'A Conflux of Two Eternities': Carlyle, Ruskin and the Prophetic Revelation of Art and Architecture

In March 1851 John Ruskin sent the first volume of *The Stones of Venice* to Thomas Carlyle, who responded with cordiality and enthusiasm to this 'strange, unexpected, and . . . most true and excellent Sermon in Stones'. Thanking Ruskin for his copy, Carlyle declared that these 'Critical Studies' were 'a singular sign of the times . . . and a very gratifying one' (9 March; CL 26:43–44). What his disciple had realised in architecture replicated what Carlyle had achieved in his histories: the fusion of religion and aesthetics in a unique vision of the dynamic interaction between past and present. For Ruskin, architecture was another version of his mentor's 'Prophetic Manuscript of the Past', in which 'some letters, some words may be deciphered; and if no complete Philosophy, here and there an intelligible precept'. The imperfect nature of this knowledge did not disqualify it from being 'practically valuable'. On the contrary, Ruskin's discoveries in *Stones of Venice* were as 'unexpected' as Carlyle's in *The French Revolution*, *Heroes and Hero-Worship*, and *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*. Both men stressed primacy in historical reconstruction of an emotional intelligence that was forged in the act of empathetic understanding. Probing the exterior of his Gothic cathedrals in the same manner as Carlyle had explored his historical sources, Ruskin experienced within himself the transformative power of authentic divination. This process of revelation marked a 'conflux of two eternities', when the historian progressed from sensory perception of the surface to an intuitive grasp of what Matthew Arnold later called 'the thing in itself'. Insight was grasped through a 'conversation' between the artist and his inanimate material, during which temporally distinct narratives found mutual convergence in an act of 'natural supernatural' unity. 'Mechanical' barriers were successively overthrown, yielding a miraculous living presence concealed in the surface textures of the historical object.

Hugues-Antoine Naïk

Ruskin's Humanistic Theory of Architectural Expression

In 'The Sympathy of Things', architect Lars Spuybroek tries to understand Ruskin's conception of the gothic as an unconscious premonition of the expressive power of digital, i.e. computer-based and non-human, design. I'll try to show that this interpretation of Ruskin's works is not valid because it is grounded on the occultation of a concept central to his theory: that of subject and subjectivity. As Ernst Gombrich already noticed, Ruskin indeed thinks of architecture as an expressive form, but this expressivity always comes from the expressive act of an aesthetic subject and not from the form itself (whether it be drawn, built, or computer-designed). The whole question consists then in defining the nature of this subjectivity, how it is expressed in form, and the way it might be inferred from what we actually see. As I'll try to show, Ruskin's defense of the imperfections of the gothic style must actually be understood from this anti-

formalist standpoint: gothic is not a pure form, but a trace, and valuable only as such. Our appreciation of architectural abstraction is therefore defined as a process of 'moral' inference Ruskin calls 'sympathy', which is to be carefully distinguished from German *Einfühlung*. In doing so, the recognition of human form and activity as embodied in the figure of the gothic builders is made the condition of all architectural enjoyment, a humanistic claim that is certainly as relevant today as it was for his contemporaries.

Bernard Richards

Ruskin's Habit of Contrasts

My illustrated paper is called 'Ruskin's habit of contrasts'. It concerns one of Ruskin's principal approaches to art and architecture: of employing contrasts to make his points. His most famous artistic contrast is between the artistic up-bringsings of Giorgione and Turner ('The Two Boyhoods') in *Modern Painters V*, but there are countless others. His most famous architectural contrast is between Southern Gothic (represented by St Mark's in Venice) and Northern Gothic (represented by an English cathedral close) in *The Stones of Venice II*. Again, there are countless others. I shall also cover contrasts in sculpture and paintings. In these contrasts there is a tendency for items from the past to appear superior to those in the present. I shall also attempt to assess whether Ruskin owed much to Pugin's *Contrasts*.

Frederick O'Dwyer

Prophet or Follower? Ruskin and Architectural Conservation

My proposed paper relates to the research I undertook for a thesis submitted to the Dublin Institute of Technology for the degree of MSc in Spatial Planning in 2010, *The Conservation of Upstanding Monuments in Britain and Ireland since 1845*, for which I was awarded 1st class honours. Since my retirement, I have returned to the subjects of some of my unpublished work including this thesis, and the proposed paper draws on its findings as well on my familiarity with Ruskin's engagement with architecture, and the adversarial relationship with that developed with the Deane family, following Woodward's death in 1861, when the memoir proposed by his friends, with Ruskin's support, was blocked by them.

Steve Pool and Kate Genever

The Poly-Technic

We are companions of the Guild of St George, we plunder Ruskin taking from his thinking what works for us, we pay him respect through our actions. Ruskin's life-long support of artists was not cosy or nurturing, it was angry, caustic and challenging. We propose in response a sharing of examples from the *You, Me, We* archive in the form of an exhibition or projection alongside a presentation to discuss what Ruskin means to us as practising artists now. Blasting through fixed ideas and research that situates Ruskin within his time, we will explain how his ghost walks with us, continuing to ask us difficult questions, challenging us to do better and not accept our future as something solely located in our present.

Giulia Martina Weston

John Ruskin, Salvator Rosa and Seventeenth-Century Landscape Painting

The Neapolitan painter Salvator Rosa (1615–73) gained an immense critical fortune in British literature, paralleled by the display of his paintings in major collections such as Robert Walpole's at Houghton Hall and Bouchier Cleeve's at Fooks Cray Place. Rosa's landscapes influenced Lancelot Brown's creations and informed Uvedale Price and Richard Payne Knight's erudite debates on the 'picturesque'. John Ruskin's sharp criticism towards Rosa's pastoral and proto-sublime canvases led to a dramatic turning point. In his *Lectures* (1853), Ruskin dismisses Salvator's works as 'full of nonentities and abortions', drawing a significant distinction between 17th-century pastoral (or 'guarda e passa') landscape painting and Turner's authentically 'modern' art. Ruskin further explores this dichotomy in his *Modern Painters*, possibly attacking Rosa's art to undermine the perceived 'paganism' of the British academic tradition, established by Reynolds and firmly rooted in the culture of the picturesque. By means of exploring this meaningful, yet little-explored case study, this paper especially questions the issue of nature 'truly

rendered' in Ruskin's art theories, unveiling a set of ethical and aesthetical connections between surface phenomena and epistemological approaches. This new research aims to cast brighter light on Ruskin's indefatigable, nuanced search for a renewed bond between Nature and Truth, which marked both the beginning of a new era in the history of taste and the condemnation of Salvator Rosa's once-acclaimed wild and picturesque landscapes.

Jeremy Melius

Towards an Art of Relations

When Ruskin published the fifth and final volume of *Modern Painters* in 1860, he offered a conclusion of sorts, but also broke new ground. *Modern Painters V* offers some of Ruskin's most searching treatments of individual paintings as well as his most sustained theorisations of pictorial composition, gathered together under the rubric 'Of Ideas of Relation'. This paper seeks to re-evaluate the volume's account of relation along two paths. On the one hand, it investigates the extended allegory of composition offered in Ruskin's analysis of plant growth – the relational system of leaf acting upon leaf, branch upon branch, tree upon tree – pursued with almost hallucinatory slowness in 'Of Leaf Beauty', the volume's first section. On the other, the paper examines the relational structures Ruskin educes in high Renaissance Venetian art as complementary to this 'moral history' of trees, focusing especially on his description of the enmeshed composition of Veronese's *Cocchina Family* (1571) in Dresden. For this and other paintings, Ruskin attempts to forge a descriptive language that could trace the distribution of compositional links in all their promiscuity, extending from the Virgin down to the family dog along one great 'chain of lowering feeling'. The notion bears intriguing comparison to Hegel's account of the relational character of the Romantic artwork undoing the closed self-sufficiency of the Classical ideal. But it also allows us to bring into focus the radical nature of Ruskin's own pursuit of an ecology of pictorial structure, one staged in his descriptive prose less as a system of fixed bonds than an atmosphere of potential affinities—an elastic relationality, if you like, 'natural' as well as social, to which pictures might give provisional form.

Moran Sheleg

Pattern, Painting and . . . Ruskin?

From clouds to column capitals and paper crowns, the world pictured through John Ruskin's watercolour studies is populated by patterns and their imagined propensity for shaping perception. Although only given passing mention in *Modern Painters* (as when Ruskin considers the visual effects of the various distortions of scale on architectural details rendered in paintings by Turner, Canaletto and Poussin respectively), the legibility of pattern is repeatedly upheld as a measure of, or correlate for, artistic veracity. While Ruskin's standing as a proto-Modernist has been widely discussed, the afterlives of this concept have yet to receive close critical attention, particularly in relation to its shifting purchase within consequent art and its criticism. Various cast as a foil for the structural analysis of formal abstraction; an engine for a fashionable but pernicious form of optical art; and a mode of looking capable of erupting dominant viewing habits, the presence of pattern in painting has had a considerable history since the publication of the first volume of *The Stones of Venice* in 1851. Surveying painting's own chequered past – wrought through charges of its complicity with, or else embodiment as, man's crisis in the face of industrialisation – my paper maps a course through the persistence of pattern's place in this ongoing drama and asks if taking Ruskin as a historical linchpin might shed new light on the consistent, if consistently ambivalent, appearance of arabesques, traceries and 'foliations' punctuating the practice and discourse of painting since the mid-twentieth century.

Courtney Skipton Long

Visual History and the Mutability of Species: Evolution in John Ruskin's *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*
In 1837, only a month into his Classical Studies program at Oxford, John Ruskin enrolled in William Buckland's mineralogy and geology lectures. This course, and the friendship that ensued between student and teacher, would prove fundamental to Ruskin's thinking about Nature and the Gothic. Deeply affected by the contemporary religious and scientific debates regarding organic progress and the history of the earth, Ruskin's investigation of change over time in his 1849 treatise *The Seven Lamps of*

Architecture clarifies his stance on the debates about architectural and biological evolution. Examining Ruskin's Plate III from the 'Lamp of Truth', this paper offers a new way to contextualise Ruskin's conception of the idea of development in architectural history. On the one hand, his visualisation of architectural succession in Plate III communicates a desire to show the continuous nature of architectural change. Yet on the other, Plate III also suggests that architectural construction matures through phases as pointed forms are repeated over and over across time. These two concepts of the continuous and the phased nature of architectural change also relate to two important influences on Ruskin's life at Oxford: John Henry Newman's study of Christian Doctrine and William Buckland's study of Natural History. Seen against the backdrop of earlier British architectural histories by writers such as John Britton, Thomas Rickman, Robert Willis, and Edmund Sharpe, this paper will espouse a new reading of Ruskin's Plate III and offer an alternative way to think about systems of architectural categorisation and chronology in mid-nineteenth-century Britain.

Anirudh Sridhar

'In the Sweat of Thy Face': Ruskin contra Marx on the Question of Automation

There are currently many political responses to the automation of labour and the upheaval of civic space in modern economies. These issues are fundamentally related, and are together creating strange bedfellows among thinkers on the hard economic left and right. An important voice that seems to have been drowned out from this debate is that of John Ruskin, whose opinions on modern automation I try to predict in this paper by analyzing his philosophy of labour, and comparing it with that of Karl Marx. In the historiographies of socialism, the Ruskinian notion of labour is often presented as a pre-figuration of the Marxist one, and hence, in the academy, is treated more as foreshadow than penetrating substance. I argue in this paper that Ruskin and Marx had completely opposing philosophical beliefs about labour, and by extension, architecture, understood in its entirety as the utilization—whether utilitarian or not—of space in a culture. By tracing their respective beliefs to the rabbinical disagreements on the nature of paradise, utopia, and the Fortunate Fall, I aim to show that Ruskin believed labour to be essentially ennobling to the condition of mankind, while Marx believed the essence of any labour—not under capitalism necessarily—to be alienation. From this fundamental difference, I will try to show why Marx, in *The German Ideology*, and Ruskin, in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, come to have diametrically opposed perspectives of the medieval town. Drawing from their respective philosophical understandings of labour, I show that automation, and the resulting spatial and material culture of modernity would be viewed very differently by both. While Marx and Ruskin agreed that the machine, as it was, was becoming harmful to the physical and spiritual conditions of workers in capitalist societies, I will try to show, through my reading of the 1844 Manuscripts, that automation, nevertheless, was essential to Marx's philosophy. I will say, by reading select passages from *Unto This Last*, *Munera Pulveris*, and *The Harbours of England*, why Ruskin would have been alarmed by the usurpation of labour and the detrition of body that the automation of daily life seems to make total. From the discussion on automation, I will try to explain how the heavy reliance of avant-garde architecture on technology can be traced back to this philosophical difference, and why Marxism may not be the only important socialist critique for modern times.

Caroline Ikin

The Storm Cloud of the Nineteenth Century: Ruskin's Garden and the Anthropocene

In the midst of mental breakdown, Ruskin stated, 'I feel I should get better if only I could lie down in Coniston Water'. The landscape that drew Ruskin to Brantwood was one shaped by centuries of rural industry: coppicing, pannage, charcoal-burning, grazing and mining – traditions ceased by Ruskin as he harnessed the landscape into a garden. Coppiced trees were left to grow, water was manipulated into pools and waterfalls, heather was no longer managed by burning, and walls were constructed to define boundaries. Ruskin's gardening was an idiosyncratic rewilding that reflected his pre-Darwinian reverence for nature. This paper will address the paradox of Ruskin terminating rural industry on his land while simultaneously promoting ideals of sufficiency and productive labour. As he observed darkening clouds over the fells, breathed smog from Barrow-in-Furness, and watched as railways carved through the

landscape, his garden began to reflect the malignancy of the environment. Seeds mouldered, trees ceased to bear fruit, the ice house leaked and the cascade flowed fitfully, exposing the doomed kinship of man and the environment. To Ruskin this was more than just bad weather and factory smoke: the plague wind was responding to our moral failure. Drawing on *The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century*, Fors Clavigera and Ruskin's diaries, this paper will assert that Ruskin's garden was not the sanctuary he was looking for; rather it became a nightmarish exemplar of the venal spoliation of nature by mankind.

Nicholas Robbins

Lost Horizons: Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century and the Climate of Art

John Ruskin's lifelong project of aesthetic thought was animated by the belief that climate and geography shape the development both of individual artists and of culture at large. The fixity of this geographic and aesthetic worldview was thrown into crisis by the advent of what he called a 'plague-wind', whose 'trembling' force was 'unconnected with any one quarter of the compass'. In order to construct a history of this phenomenon in his 1884 lectures *The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century*, Ruskin had to return to and revise his interpretation of the textual and visual meteorological records (sketches, diary entries, letters) that he had been amassing for decades. Despite these acts of imaginative revision, Ruskin struggled to construct climate as a coherent scientific object, or as a subject of textual or visual representation. Where he had previously imagined meteorology as a 'vast machine', an imperial system that could subject the world to order, in *Storm-Cloud*, Ruskin instead found himself subject to climatic flux, and his technologies of inscription unable to contend with the shifting formlessness of his perceptual experience. In turn, Ruskin began to speculate upon the effects of this changing environment upon the development of English art, fearing that artists whose perceptual faculties had developed under such 'blanched' skies would be condemned to absorb and reproduce the diminished climate of industrial modernity. The work of James Abbott McNeill Whistler lurked (though now unnamed) behind his critique of artists who appeared to celebrate the aesthetics of indistinctness attendant upon this 'plague-wind'. Yet, in his own (failed) attempt to provide a sufficiently precise visual or textual account of the changing weather in *Storm-Cloud*, Ruskin models the difficulty of representing what we now call 'climate change' and the challenges it poses to traditional humanist understandings of temporal and spatial experience.

Polly Gould

Ruskin's *Storm-Cloud* and Tyndall's *Floating Matter*: New Materialist Refractions of Nineteenth Century Atmospheres

John Ruskin (1819–1900), the dominant British force in nineteenth century thinking on art and aesthetics, and John Tyndall (1820–1893), one of that century's greatest scientists, both had things to say about air pollution that can be interpreted today in the light of fossil fuel induced climate change and the Anthropocene. Ruskin and Tyndall shared an enthusiasm for sky gazing, though sometimes at cross-purposes. Tyndall gave his name to the effect that caused the sky to appear blue and devised a glass apparatus to demonstrate this during public talks. The topic of Ruskin's 1884 lecture 'The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century' was the foggy gloom caused by coal-burning pollution. Ruskin reflected that his earlier writings in *Modern Painters* would not have been possible under the contemporary conditions, and that his works were products of their associated atmospheres. Ruskin criticised Tyndall's scientific materialism, asserting that neither God nor blue skies could be found in a bottle. Tyndall was keen to identify the uses of the imagination in science but was against vagueness. Both men shared practices that involved close observation of the natural world and made contributions to what might now be recognised as ecological thinking. Atmosphere crosses the border between bodies and their environment and potentially decentres the human. This paper refracts these two Victorian thinkers through readings of Karen Barad (2007) and Jane Bennett (2010) to offer an entangled material-discursive interpretation for thinking ecologically about the blue sky above us.

Myriam Pilutti Namer

Giacomo Boni and his Maestro Inglese: 'Ruskinian' Archaeology in Nineteenth-Century Italy

Ruskin's influence on Italian culture is a much explored area of academic research. Indeed, the development of the disciplines of History of Art, Art Criticism and the History of Architecture in Italy are deeply indebted to John Ruskin, to his concept of education, his peculiar way of teaching, the importance he gave to drawing. What has received limited attention in recent scholarship and which I propose to discuss in this paper, is his influence on the development of the discipline and practice of Archaeology in the late 19th century. One of Ruskin's most notable Italian pupils was archaeologist Giacomo Boni, who entertained a long correspondence with Ruskin but only met him once in Pisa in 1882. Trained in Venice as an architect in the Eighties, his worldwide fame for the excavations of the Roman Forum was recognized even by the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, where he received honorary degrees in 1906 and 1913 respectively. Boni was influenced by Ruskin in his persuasion that the maintenance and preservation of the gardens and parks surrounding archaeological excavations was not less important than the upkeep of the sites themselves. In addition, Ruskin inspired Boni to respect and cherish archaeological findings from all ages and cultures, not just the Roman ones, in the same way as the English scholar believed that equal treatment was to be accorded to all construction phases surviving in any building or architectural structure. Finally and fundamentally, Boni shared with his Maestro Inglese the moral approach to the arts and humanities, which I will discuss starting from a verse taken from Pope's *Essay on Man* which, it seems, was at the heart of their only face to face conversation in Pisa. My paper will present a discussion of Boni's knowledge of Ruskin's works and of the latter's opinion of his Venetian protégée even with the aid of unpublished archival sources including items of correspondence between the two men.

Marie Tavinor

'A Saint, a Reformer of Souls and Customs': John Ruskin and the Saint Francis of Assisi Paradigm

Drawing from the findings of a forthcoming journal article, I would like to study a comparison made by intellectuals in France and in Italy between John Ruskin and Francesco di Bernardone better known as Saint Francis of Assisi (1181/2–1226) during the last decade of the 19th century and the early years of the 20th century. I will attempt to answer the question of how this comparison came about and what its meaning in the historical and cultural context of that time was. Building up on Ruskin's own identification with St Francis after the epiphany he experienced in front of Cimabue's *Maestà* in 1874, and the weight given to his event by his various biographers both in England (William Gershom Collingwood) and on the Continent (Robert de la Sizeranne), I would like to explore how Ruskin's historiography shifted from factual to legendary thereby raising his status from art critic to prophet. I would then investigate what prompted the Decadent circle gravitating around Italian poet Gabriele d'Annunzio to propose this comparison, and how it evolved between the 1890s and the early 20th century, at a time when Romantic intellectuals were fighting the rising importance of science and technology as markers of modernity. Indeed the 'Saint Francis of Assisi paradigm' proved a powerful source of inspiration for d'Annunzio, who later also identified with the Saint. However, my conclusion would show why the comparison between Ruskin and St Francis died out in the early years of the 20th century whilst the identification between d'Annunzio and the Saint carried on well into the 1920s.

Adrian Tait

John Ruskin, Edwin Butler Bayliss, and the Art of 'Smoke and Fire': an Ecocritical Re-Evaluation

Ecocriticism has come late to art history, but as Lawrence Buell remarks, visual art has always been 'deeply invested in environmentality'. There is, moreover, a strong (but also distinctively British) tradition of innovative, proto-ecological thinking, and it has its origins in John Ruskin's radical critique of industrial modernity. The difficulty is, however, that Ruskin's belief in the pursuit of a 'moral as well as material truth' inspired very few artists to confront the social and environmental impacts of the 'great transformation'. The work of Edwin Butler Bayliss (1874 – 1950) is a curious exception to the rule. The eldest son of an iron foundry owner, Butler Bayliss chose to dedicate his long life to an obsessive depiction of the 'Black Country', then 'a region of smoke and fire'. Unlike Lowry, the only artist with

whom he can really be compared, Butler Bayliss focused not on industrial life, but on industrial landscapes, within which his (occasional) human subjects move and by which they are invariably dwarfed. His art is, therefore, exceptional, and until recently, neglected. Drawing on my own research into Butler Bayliss's life and work, the aim of this paper is to make explicit the links between Ruskin's proto-ecological belief in the 'three Material things, not only useful, but essential to Life [...] Pure Air, Water, and Earth', and Butler Bayliss's depiction of environmental despoliation and degradation.

This conference was organised by Kelly Freeman, UCL (k.freeman.11@ucl.ac.uk) and Thomas Hughes, The Courtauld Institute of Art (thomas.hughes@courtauld.ac.uk).



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