

On behalf of my colleagues on the National Committee for the History of Art, I want to start by thanking all of our speakers for whetting our appetites to participate in the 35<sup>th</sup> CIHA World Congress. The overall themes of “Motion: Transformation” and “Motion: Migrations” for the Congress follow recent CIHA explorations of time, terms, and the elusive notion of a global art history. I think it’s fair to say that all of these themes emerge from an expanded interest in the geography of art. And, without a doubt, the geography of Art History will be in play during the upcoming World Congress.

Our colleagues in Florence and São Paulo are clearly onto something important with regard to the state of art historical research today. Like many of you in the audience, no doubt, I have come across numerous scholarly endeavors in recent months—from conference proposals to calls for papers in journals—that have taken notions of movement, travel, and the migration of things as well as people as their inspiration. At this very gathering of CAA in New York, we have the opportunity to attend panels such as “Migration in Colonial Modernities” tomorrow, or “Art and Materiality in the Age of Global Encounters” on Friday.

In the CIHA call for papers issued from Florence, Italian organizers proposed subthemes within the general concept of “Motion: Transformation,” as explained just recently by Marzia Faietti. Among the many interesting ideas in her presentation, Faietti’s conception of a “third Florence” is especially striking. Having served as a rich center for artistic inspiration and a breeding ground for connoisseurship as well as scholarship, Florence has indeed become something new in recent times. It is a mass tourist destination *and* a place of globalized commercialism. One might even call it a static work of art experiencing the evolving pressures of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. Faietti draws our attention to *the city* of Florence as both setting for the Congress and a primary site of inquiry.

The ninth session to be held at the Florence Congress dealing with exchange between Italy and Brazil under the subtheme “Voyage” deserves special note. It allows us to consider modes of exchange that have been underway for 500 years and to rethink the dynamics of this process. As a specialist of the early modern Spanish world who came of age as a scholar in the early 1990s, I was not satisfied with a general thesis held then that the impact of the New World on Europe was anything less than transformational. The consequences of contact might have been varied and moderated, but we understand today that they were significant. We also know with greater specificity that they came about largely because of the movement of people and the things that migrated with them.

The final Florence session, thus, serves as an important bridge for the CIHA Congress as it, itself, migrates to another continent. The call for session proposals issued by the São Paulo organizers encouraged complete openness. They asked for proposals “embracing any art historical topic related to the general theme of ‘migrations’” —Notably, they used the word “migrations” in the plural. Additionally, the call included a provocative list of thematic poster sessions, including some touched upon by Claudia Mattos Avolesse today. Claudia spoke of a desire to “decentralize CIHA” that lies at the heart of the 2019-20 Congress. She highlights a process of *flux* that might emerge from the experience. It bears thinking about what we stand to learn from exploring our discipline—one we understand to be undergoing transformation—via the act of hosting an international conference in two distinct locations. We are in good hands with our Brazilian hosts who have shown an openness to respond to, and also to lead, this scholarly exchange.

In his presentation, Marco Musillo described a panel for Florence that will explore connections between drawing and writing. Interestingly, the panel seeks to search for

commonalities if not in form, then perhaps in intention. As presented, the framework for the panel maintains a Ptolemaic conception of the globe and it will be exciting to see how this might be put into *flux* by considering also traditions from the Americas—whether that happens in Florence or perhaps in São Paulo. It is interesting that assessing the full impact of the World Congress will require our patience given its temporal span over two calendar years.

In her presentation regarding a Florence panel titled, “Artist, Power, Public,” Christina Strunck explained a desire to see “the dynamics of images and spaces in the service of power in transitive terms.” Here, place—as in the Faietti’s “third Florence”—once again matters. Florence remains a central locus in the history of European Renaissance art as well as the discipline of Art History. Its monuments speak to a historical moment, just as those of São Paulo narrate a different story. Perhaps it is my own predilection as an architectural historian, but I very much look forward to experiencing the ways in which the city—or, better put, *two cities*—enter into the discussion of Art History as CIHA assembles in September 2019 and 2020 [Jésus Escobar].