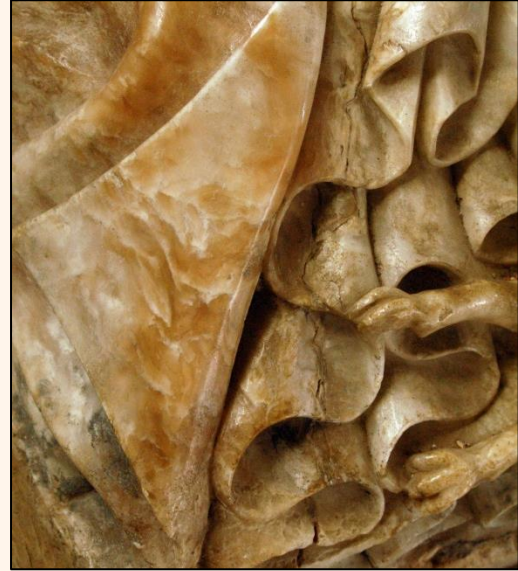
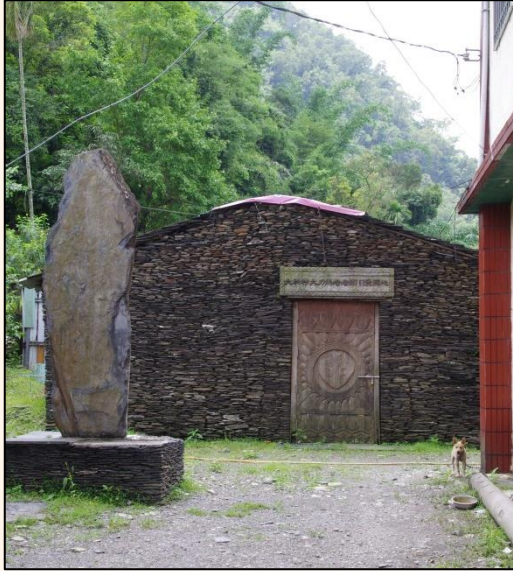


TECHNICAL ART HISTORY COLLOQUIUM:

MATERIALS & MATERIALITY IN ART HISTORY



L) Slate and concrete houses in a Paiwan mountain settlement (Taiwan) – photo by Geoffrey Gowlland
R) Detail of the tomb of Sir Edward Redman (d. 1510) and Elisabeth Huddleston (d.1529), Parish Church in Harewood – photo by Aleksandra Lipińska

The Technical Art History Colloquium is organised by Sven Dupré (Utrecht University and University of Amsterdam, PI ERC ARTECHNE), Arjan de Koomen (University of Amsterdam, Coordinator MA Technical Art History), and Abbie Vandivere (University of Amsterdam, Coordinator MA Technical Art History & Paintings Conservator, Mauritshuis, The Hague). Monthly meetings take place on Thursdays, usually in Utrecht and Amsterdam. In the eleventh edition of the Technical Art History Colloquium, Prof. dr. Aleksandra Lipińska (Institut für Kunstgeschichte, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München) and dr. Geoffrey Gowlland (Cultural History Museum, University of Oslo) will give presentations about materials and materiality in art history. The format of the colloquium is open, but there will always be substantial time for audience discussion.

Date and time: 13 April, 2017 - 15:00 – 17:00
Location: Drift 21, Utrecht - Sweelinckzaal 0.05
Admission free

How Does Material Transmit Meaning? The Case of Alabaster

Prof. dr. Aleksandra Lipińska, Institut für Kunstgeschichte, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München

Meaning of/in material is a complex and dynamic conglomerate. It is rooted in the tension between the inherent features of a material and the characteristics ascribed to it as result of cultural practices in which it is involved. In her talk, Lipińska will examine the various mechanisms and domains in which the meaning of material emerges, using the example of alabaster. Firstly, she will focus on the natural features of the material: its relative softness, permitting easy carving (but also predestining impermanence), its translucency and colour(s), its varying availability, etc. In this context, the relationship between alabaster and 'rival' materials (marble, ivory) will be discussed. Secondly, Lipińska will look at 'milieus' other than the artistic in which the material has featured over the ages to consider whether these had an impact on the reception of alabaster as an artistic material. To this end, she will trace currents of opinion surrounding the material as an object of study of natural historians, theologians and philologists, as well as a topic for poets and writers.

Chinese Concrete, Indigenous Slate: Histories of Materials and Histories of People in Taiwan

Dr. Geoffrey Gowlland, Postdoctoral Fellow at the Cultural History Museum, University of Oslo

Gowlland's talk will consider two materials that are part of the lives of the indigenous (Austronesian speaking) Paiwan people of Taiwan: concrete and slate. The first material is a 'modern' one, originating in the Taiwanese plains where the majority ethnic Chinese population resides. The second is a 'local' material, with particular significance for the Paiwan also in terms of heritage. Departing from the common anthropological approach of addressing building materials in economic terms, Gowlland considers them instead as both lived and living. He 'follows the materials' (Tim Ingold) to understand their transformations as they move between places, and adopts the approach of subjectivation in a material world (Jean-Pierre Warnier) to reflect on the ways the trajectories of materials are enmeshed with the (political) histories of people. Gowlland argues that we should understand the adoption and continued use of materials as processes of co-becoming, whereby the subjectivities of people are transformed at the same time as the materials that surround them shift, mutate and decay.

Next TAH colloquia: 18 May 2017, 'The Making of Glass' (Amsterdam)
29 June 2017, tba (Amsterdam)