

SEDERI 34

Cabinets of Curiosities: Collecting, Displaying, Consuming

Universidad de Salamanca, 24-26 April, 2024

We are pleased to announce the 34th SEDERI INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE.

There is perhaps no better illustration of the appetite for knowledge and understanding of the known and unknown world in Renaissance Europe than the cabinet of curiosity: sometimes an individual furniture-piece, but more commonly a room, or a series of rooms (precursor of the modern museum) displaying objects arranged, juxtaposed, categorised – the whole (or *parts*) designed to convey a visual, material theatre of wonder: the *Wunderkammer*. This pan-European practice emblemizes – literally, associatively, metaphorically, allegorically – the Humanist making of meaning through acquisition, enquiry, presentation, consumption, and transmission. In these ‘epochs of space’ (Foucault) the viewer is captivated by ‘marvellous objects’ (Greenblatt), reframed, newly (de)contextualised, and fetishized.

As we are all too well aware, this phenomenon was far from benign: like modern museum collections, many of the objects acquired tell (if they could) a dark story of power and exploitation – traces, indeed, of Europe’s colonial past, with which we have yet to fully reckon; more broadly, the Cabinet of Curiosity cannot be detached from the socio-political milieu in which it flourished and signified. That said, the aim of this conference is to explore how we might apply the concept, as well as detect and analyse the practice: how, that is, the social activities underpinning the acquisition, display, and experience of these objects might be uncovered in a range of related cultural practices and material forms. Since the ‘Cabinet of Curiosity’ is not a label devised by modern scholars to account for a historical practice but an established concept in the Renaissance, it is possible to regard it as a transmutable and adaptable idea as much as delineating a precise phenomenon, such as the *Wunderkammer* we find celebrated in print illustrations. To that end, this conference is interested in how, alongside established examples of the form evoked in surviving images, or forerunners of the modern museum accompanying guide, such as *A CATALOGUE Of all the Cheifest RARETIES In the Publick THEATER and ANATOMIE-HALL Of the University of LEYDEN* (1695), the practice of collecting, displaying, consuming *as process* might be explored across the Renaissance landscape.

Proposals are invited that might address (but are not limited to) any of the following:

Agents, Anatomy halls, Animals, Antiquities, Archaeology, Architecture, Arcana, Archaisms, Archives, Art, Artefacts, Assemblage, Astrology, Automata

Baroque, Biography, Body parts, Books, Botany, Buildings

Cabinets, Categories, Catalogues, Ceremony, Churches, Classification, Codices, Collage, Collecting, Colonialism, Commodities, Commonplace books, Consumption and consumerism, Corpus, Correspondence, Cosmetics, Cultural identity, Curatorship and curating, Curios

Designs, Devotional objects, Dialects, Diaries, Digital Humanities, Diorama, Dictionaries, Diplomacy, Displaying, Documents, Dolls' Houses, Drama

Ecocriticism, Effects, Engravings, Exhibitions, Exotica

Fairs, Festivals, Fiction, Fishing, Flora and fauna

Galleries, Gardens, Gift-giving

Houses, Household decor, Hunting

Illuminations, Illustrations, Images, Instruments, Inventories

Kunstkammern

Landscapes, Libraries, Lighting, Lists, Literature

Manuals, Manuscripts, Maps, Medical treatises, Memento Mori, Menageries, Miniatures, Monsters, Money, Monuments, Museums

Narrative, Natural Science, Networks, Notebooks

Objects, Orientalism

Patronage, Performance, Perpetual motion machines, Philosophy, Plants, Portraits, Poetry, Public sphere, Publishing

Recipes, Relics, Ruins

Scenes, Science, Skeletons, Souvenirs, Still life, Stories, Stuff

Taxidermy, Technology, Theatres, Things, Trade, Trompe l'oeil paintings, Travel

Uncanny

Vanitas

Wills, *Wunderkammern*

Contributions should take the following formats:

(a) Papers: 20-min.

(b) Panels: 90-min (consisting of three or four papers, chaired by the panel organizer).

(c) Posters: (90cm x 120cm) Posters should be devoted to research-in-progress. Posters will be on display during a special session (date: TBC) when authors will be able to discuss their work and receive feedback.

(d) Project Presentations: 20-min (Regional, National, International projects in receipt of funding within the last two years).

(e) Book Presentations: 10-15 min. Please include title, author(s), publisher, date of publication, and ISBN.

Participants are permitted to give only one paper (whether single- or co-authored). The language of the conference is English, and papers should engage with one or more of the areas that historically have been the focus of SEDERI's work: English language, literature, and culture, in the early modern world.

Submissions should consist of:

1. Full Name
2. Title of the paper
3. Abstract (200-300 words)
4. Your institutional affiliation
5. Status: Prof. / Dr. / Ph. D. candidate / M. A. candidate / Other
6. Your SEDERI membership status (member, non-member, application submitted)

This should be sent to sederi24@usal.es. The **deadline** for submitting proposals is **31/01/2024**.

Any queries? Contact us at sederi24@usal.es.

Conference Fees

There is no Early Bird Registration but the fees this year have been kept to SEDERI 33 (Valencia, 2023) Early Bird rates:

SEDERI Member	110€
Non-SEDERI Member	140€
SEDERI Member (postgraduate)	60€
Non-SEDERI Member (postgraduate)	70€
USAL Student	30€

The Organizing Committee

Paula Barba Guerrero

Mark Hutchings

Nora Rodríguez Loro

Javier Ruano García



Spanish and Portuguese Society for English Renaissance Studies