

## EDITORIAL

Welcome to volume twelve of *Inferno*, an issue dedicated to two student conferences held at the School of Art History at the University of St Andrews in 2007. This volume consists of a series of articles which illustrate the broad range of subjects discussed in the Association of Art Historians' Student Summer Symposium themed "Art and Power" and the post-graduate conference "Painting the Stage: Examining the interrelationship of painting and the performing arts. Theatricality and European Art c.1700 – c.2000".

The conference "Art and Power" aimed to provide an explorative framework of the various responses artists gave to the innumerable constructs of power dispersed throughout the social system in history. This interaction has in many ways determined the patterns of development within the arts, particularly with regard to the formulations of style and subject.

A selected number of papers from the conference were selected to commemorate the work and enthusiasm with which the conference topic was received by postgraduate students. The articles selected for this volume include the representation of the colonised Algerian by French artist Horace Vernet, a contemporary ethnographic discourse produced by Maori artist George Nuku in the British Museum, the problematics of history in the presentation of Michael Sandel's Malta War Memorial and the installation photography of Santiago Sierra as constructs of power become a source for exploring the political and economic systems in the West.

The "Painting the Stage" conference held on the 6-7 September (generously supported by the AHRC), was intended to explore the often neglected relationship between painting and the performing arts. A remarkably varied programme was compiled, one which looked at such diverse topics as depictions of performances and performers; artists as actors in theatre and their own paintings; painters as designers for the stage and screen and the role of performance as inspiration and influence for art.

The articles illustrate the intelligence, scope of subject and quality of research in this particularly fascinating area of art and social history. They cover an examination of an eighteenth-century painter's interest in performance as depicted through their self-portraits ("*Liotard's Self-Portrait Laughing*"), a re-interpretation of Shakespeare through the eyes of nineteenth-century British painters ("*Theatrical Portrayals of Hamlet's Ophelia*"), a discussion of mid-twentieth century artists' roles as designers for Greek Theatre ("*Painters as Designers*") and finally a twenty-first century artist's exploration of performance art in connection with the Berlin State Opera ("*Jonathan Meese's project for Wagner's Parsifal*").

*Inferno* is a small journal and our print run is limited. In an effort to bring our articles to the attention of more people we have established on-line publication, alongside our current form. For more information about this and for the contents of previous issues please see our website: <http://www-ah.st-andrews.ac.uk/inferno/index.html>. To contact the editors or contributors please e-mail [inferno@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:inferno@st-andrews.ac.uk)

Maria Halkias, Billy Rough

St Andrews, May 2008