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Call for Papers
October 9-10, 2020

The Power of Images

As recorded in Pliny's *Historia Naturalis*, the Greek painter Zeuxis once painted grapes so realistically that birds would fly down to peck at them. Literature has been frequently said to "depict" or "imitate" reality, theater has been described as an *imago mundi*, and political writing for the instruction of rulers in Medieval and Renaissance literature was known as *specula principum* (mirrors of princes), where readers were encouraged to examine their own virtues and qualities, as one does in front of a mirror. We talk about "anamorphosis" and "ekphrasis" in literature. Fiction rests on imagination, or the cognitive capacity of creating images without any immediate input from the senses. At the end of 19th century, Louis and Auguste Lumière invented the *cinématographe*, making images even more accessible to an avid public eager to consume them. Moreover, the cinema industry has recently introduced us to 3D, holograms, and graphic effects that further blur the tenuous distinction between appearance and reality.

As the old adage asserts, "an image is worth a thousand words." However, how much can we actually trust what we see? What is the relationship between images constructed in literature/painting/cinema and reality? How can images be deceitful? Are images dangerous? In his dystopian vision of image-based reality, the so-called father of postmodernism Jean Baudrillard posits that "seductive" simulacra transmitted through a plethora of digital screens are on the verge of eclipsing the real entirely. Recent political controversies revolving around the incessant dissemination of "alternative facts" for immediate mass consumption have led some theorists to speculate that we have entered into a "post-truth" era in which all semblance of meaning has been effaced by the ubiquity of contrived images linked to a hyperreal spectacle that has lost all connection to reality. In the words of the Baudrillard scholar Douglas Kellner, this phenomenon is the "carnival of mirrors" to which the maverick philosopher refers in his radical reworking of symbolic exchange.

A few possible subtopics for this theme include: ekphrasis in literature, anamorphosis in literature and painting, perspective, film studies, visions and apparitions in literature, scientific observation, imagination and fiction, mirrors in literature / painting / film, literature / painting / film as mirror of reality, appearance and deception, blurring of the limits between image and reality, simulacrum, spectacle, the advent of hyperreality, the inception of the post-truth era, the evolution of pedagogical techniques in the ubiquitous realm of simulation.

Abstract Submission

All **Individual Proposals** must be submitted through the Submission link on this website: https://www.cmll.msstate.edu/symposium/

Deadline: June 1, 2020

- Paper title
- Name, institutional affiliation, position or title and contact information of the presenter including e-mail address and phone number.
- Abstract for an individual paper: up to 300 words for a single paper
- Brief (2-4 sentence) scholarly or professional biography of the presenter.
- Indication of any audiovisual needs or special accommodations.

To submit a Panel Proposal, each presenter must submit an Individual Proposal, and note the name of the Panel Chair on the appropriate box of the application.

Note: Presentations should be no longer than 20 minutes.

Publication of Peer-Reviewed Selected Proceedings

After the conference, all presenters will be eligible to submit their papers for publication consideration.

Registration

Early registration by June 22nd (11:59 PM – US Central Time):

- $125.00 U.S. academics (faculty)
- $100.00 foreign academics
- $75.00 U.S. graduate students

Late registration fee (after June 22nd):

- $150.00 U.S. academics (faculty)
- $125.00 foreign academics
- $100.00 U.S. graduate students

If you have any questions, please contact Keith Moser at kmoser@cmll.msstate.edu