

Curriculum Vitae

Bret Rothstein
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Education

- Ph.D., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1998
- M.A., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1991
- B.A., Reed College, 1989

Academic Posts

- Associate Professor of the History of Art, Indiana University, Bloomington, 2007-
- Affiliate Faculty, Germanic Studies, Indiana University, Bloomington, 2012-
- Associate Professor of Art History, Rhode Island College, 2003-2007
- Assistant Professor of Art History, Rhode Island College, 1998-2003
- Participating Faculty, Film Studies Program, Rhode Island College, 1999-2007

Selected Awards

- Research Travel Grant, College Arts and Humanities Institute, Indiana University, 2017
- Collaborative Research and Creative Activity Fellowship, Indiana University, 2016-2017
- Research Award, Institute for Advanced Study, Indiana University, 2014
- Research Travel Grant, College Arts and Humanities Institute, Indiana University, Summer 2013
- Fellowship in Residence, College Arts and Humanities Institute, Indiana University, Spring 2013
- New Frontiers in the Arts and Humanities Grant, Indiana University, 2011-2012
- Member, Indiana University Remak Faculty Seminar, 2010-2011
- New Frontiers Exploration Travel Fellowship, Indiana University, 2010
- Summer Faculty Fellowship, Indiana University, 2008
- Fellowship, American Council of Learned Societies, 2006-2007
- Rhode Island College Faculty Research Grant, 1999-2000, 2001-2002, 2003-2004
- Rhode Island College Faculty Development Grant, 2001-2002
- University of California, Santa Barbara Dissertation Fellowship, 1997

- University of California, Santa Barbara GHRAP Dissertation Fellowship, 1996-1997
- Samuel H. Kress Foundation Travel Fellowship, 1996
- J. William Fulbright Fellowship, 1995-1996
- University of California, Santa Barbara Interdisciplinary Humanities Center Predoctoral Fellowship, 1995

Publications

Founding Editor, Ludic Cultures, 1100-1700 (Medieval Institute Publications)

Book-Length Work

Single Author:

- Sight and Spirituality in Early Netherlandish Painting (Cambridge University Press, 2005)
- The Shape of Difficulty: On the Character of Visual Challenges (The Pennsylvania State University Press, publication scheduled for spring 2019)

Edited:

- With Walter S. Melion and Michel Weemans, The Anthropomorphic Lens: Anthropomorphism, Microcosmism and Analogy during the Early Modern Period (Brill, 2014)

Articles, Essays (** = peer-reviewed)

- ** “What We Talk About When We Talk About Play,” solicited by Renaissance Quarterly (in press; publication scheduled for autumn of 2018)
- ** “Better Living Through Misinterpretation,” solicited for Debra Cashion, Henry Luttikhuisen, and Ashley West, eds. The Primacy of the Image: Essays in Honor of Larry Silver (Brill, 2017), 90-102
- ** With Karen Inouye (American Studies, Indiana University – Bloomington), “Visual Games and the Unseeing of Race in the Late Nineteenth Century,” American Quarterly 68:2 (June 2016), 287-313
- ** “Visual Difficulty as a Cultural System,” RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics 65/66 (2014/2015), 332-347
- “Jan van Hemessen’s Anatomy of Parody,” in Walter S. Melion, Bret Rothstein, and Michel Weemans, eds. The Anthropomorphic Lens. Anthropomorphism, Microcosmism and Analogy during the Early Modern Period (Brill, 2014), 457-479
- ** “On Empathy as a Type of Early Netherlandish Visual Wit,” in Walter S. Melion, James Clifton, and Michel Weemans, eds. Imago Exegetica: Visual Images as Exegetical Instruments, 1400-1600 (Brill, 2014), 189-209
- ** “Making Trouble: Strange Wooden Objects and the Pursuit of Difficulty ca. 1596,” The Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies 13:1 (2013), 96-129

- ** “Beer and Loafing in Antwerp,” Art History 35:5 (2012), 886-907
- “Pieter Bruegel Makes a Mess of Things,” in: Henry Luttikhuis, ed. The Humor and Wit of Pieter Bruegel the Elder (Grand Rapids: Calvin College, 2010), 29-43
- ** “Looking the Part: Ruminative Viewing and the Imagination of Community in the Early Modern Low Countries,” Art History 31:1 (2008), 1-32
- ** “Gender and the Configuration of Early Netherlandish Devotional Skill,” in: Andrea G. Pearson, ed. The Face of Gender: Portraiture and Constructions of Female Identity in Early Modern Europe (Ashgate, 2008), 15-34
- ** “Movable Feasts of Reason: Description, Intelligence, and the Excitation of Sight,” in Christine Göttler, ed. Spirits Unseen: The Representation of Subtle Bodies in Early Modern European Culture (Brill, 2008), 47-70
- “The Rule of Metaphor and the Play of the Viewer in the Hours of Mary of Burgundy,” in Reindert L. Falkenburg and Walter S. Melion, eds. Image and Imagination of the Religious Self in Medieval and Early Modern Europe (Brepols, 2007), 237-275
- ** “The Problem with Looking at Pieter Bruegel’s Elck,” Art History 26:2 (2003), 143-173
- ** “Vision, Cognition, and Self-Reflection in Rogier van der Weyden’s Bladelin Triptych,” Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte 64:1 (2001), 37-55
- ** “On Devotion as Social Ornament in Jan van Eyck’s Rolin Virgin and Child,” Dutch Crossing 24:1 (2000), 96-132
- “Seeing Things,” in Stephen Fisher: Chimeras (Seattle, WA: Frye Art Museum, 2000), 1-5
- ** “Vision and Devotion in Jan van Eyck’s Virgin and Child with Canon Joris van der Paele,” Word & Image 15:3 (1999), 262-276

Shorter Pieces and Book Reviews

caa.reviews, Cubism for Fun (Nederlandse Kubus Club), Dutch Crossing, Kunstform/Sehepunkte, Ons geestelijk erf, Oxford Bibliographies Online, Renaissance Quarterly, Seventeenth Century News, and Sixteenth Century Journal

Related Research

- Initiator and Principal Investigator, “The House of Tricky Things.” Begun in 2011, this project comprises a digital ethnographic study of contemporary enigmatology, or the subculture of puzzles, with a particular emphasis on mechanical objects. Building on interviews with leading puzzle designers, it is

meant to provide a multimedia counterpart to the objects and papers in the Jerry Slocum Puzzle Collection in the Lilly Library at Indiana University.

Selected Lectures and Sessions

- “Puzzles, Pedagogy, and the Limits of Description in Luca Pacioli’s De viribus quantitatis,” to be presented at the 2018 annual meeting of the College Art Association
- “Luca Pacioli’s Acceptable, Delightful, and Necessary Materialist Heterodoxy,” annual meeting of the Renaissance Society of America, 2017
- “The Best Way to Misinterpret Pieter Bruegel the Elder,” Newberry Library Center for Renaissance Studies, Seminar in European Art, 2016
- “Toys for Grownups in the Early Modern Low Countries,” Julius Fund Lecture in Renaissance Art, Case Western Reserve University, 2016
- “L’anatomie parodique de Jan van Hemessen,” invited presentation; part of the lecture series “L’image piège. Paradoxes et jeux visuels dans l’art néerlandais de Bosch à Bruegel,” Musée du Louvre, 2015
- “A Flemish Hedgehog Paints for Burgundian Foxes,” invited presentation; part of the colloquium “Unfolding Evidence,” Kolleg-Forschergruppe “BildEvidenz. Geschichte und Ästhetik,” Kunsthistorisches Institute, Freie Universität Berlin, 2014.
- “Picturing Thought in the Early Modern Low Countries,” annual meeting of the Renaissance Society of America, 2014
- “Jan van Eyck’s Difficult Terrain,” invited presentation; part of the colloquium “The World from Above. New Studies and Approaches to the ‘World Landscape’,” Brussels and Lille, 2013
- “Measures of Ease in Visual Piety of the Early Modern Low Countries,” annual meeting of the Sixteenth Century Society, 2012
- “The Joy of Looking, or Playing with Objects in Early Sixteenth-Century Antwerp,” presented at the colloquium “Netherlandish Culture of the Sixteenth Century,” University of Toronto, 2012
- “Getting to Know the Burr before It Was a Puzzle, or, Watawatsitoncewas,” invited presentation at the 32nd annual International Puzzle Party, 2012
- “On Empathy as a Type of Early Netherlandish Visual Wit,” invited presentation; part of the Lovis Corinth Research Symposium, “Ab historia proprie figurativa: Visual Images as Exegetical Instruments, 1400-1600,” Emory University, 2012
- “How to Make a Mess of Things in the Sixteenth-Century Low Countries,” invited presentation at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI, 2010

- “On Naturalism as a Constraint in Early Netherlandish Painting,” presented in the workshop “Dutch Art and the ‘Reality Effect’: Where Are We Now?,” semi-annual meeting of the Historians of Netherlandish Art, 2010
- “Fusion, Confusion, Vision, Cognition,” annual meeting of the College Art Association, 2010
- “Ouwehoeren: Distraction, Attention, and Visual Processing in the Early Modern Low Countries,” invited presentation; part of the colloquium “Vision and Visibilities in Early Modern Dutch Art” at the Vancouver Art Gallery (BC), 2009
- “Gender and the Configuration of Early Netherlandish Devotional Skill,” annual meeting of the College Art Association, 2005
- “The Contours of Burgundian Visual Wit ca. 1475,” annual meeting of the Sixteenth Century Society, 2004
- “The Rule of Metaphor and the Play of the Viewer in Early Netherlandish Devotional Painting,” invited presentation; part of the Lovis Corinth Research Symposium, “Image and Imagination of the Religious Self in Medieval and Early Modern Europe,” Emory University, 2003
- “The Problem with Looking at Pieter Bruegel’s Elck,” annual meeting of the College Art Association, 2001
- “On Physical Brutality as the Constitution of Society in Gerard David’s Justice of Cambyses,” invited presentation; part of the colloquium “The Ideology of Burgundy: Fashioning National Identity in the Literary, Political, and Historical Vernacular,” Groningen, 2000
- Session Co-chair (with Andrea Pearson), “New Directions in the Study of Devotional Art in Northern Europe, 1300-1600,” annual meeting of the College Art Association, 2000
- “Navigating the Ebb and Flow of Visual Culture,” invited faculty presentation at annual division meeting, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Rhode Island College, 1999
- “Vision and Devotion in Jan van Eyck’s Bruges Virgin and Child,” annual meeting of the South-Central Renaissance Conference, 1999
- “The Image of Devotion in Early Flemish Painting,” annual meeting of the College Art Association, 1998
- “Complexity and Contradiction as Aesthetic Criteria in Early Flemish Painting,” annual meeting of the International Congress on Medieval Studies, 1997
- “Reading patrons, reading books in early Flemish painting,” annual meeting of the International Congress on Medieval Studies, 1994
- “Mnemotechnics and the Search for a Fifteenth-Century Painting Theory,” presented in the workshop “Re-Creating a Fifteenth-Century Painting Theory for Northern Europe: Who Needs It?” Historians of Netherlandish Art, 1993