

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Refuge of Objects/ Objects of Refuge

An International Symposium organized by
University of Delaware—Center for Material Culture Studies and Universität
Mainz—Center for Social and Cultural Studies (SOCUM), Transnational
American Studies Institute

December 14-18, 2016.
Universität Mainz, Germany.

We invite proposals for papers or workshops to be given at the first collaborative symposium organized by the University of Delaware's Center for Material Culture Studies (CMCS) and the Center for Social and Cultural Studies (SOCUM) at the Johannes Gutenberg Universität Mainz, Germany. The symposium will take place December 14-18, 2016 and will be hosted by the Johannes Gutenberg Universität Mainz, the Center for Social and Cultural Studies, and the Transnational American Studies Institute.

The theme of the symposium is the material culture of "Refuge." In view of recent political events and natural catastrophes that have displaced millions and created international humanitarian crises, this term has acquired a new sense of urgency for students and teachers working in the fields related to material culture studies. Definitions dating back to the great trans-Atlantic migrations of the seventeenth- and eighteenth centuries have characterized "refuge" in mostly spatio-political terms as insular settings of escape or privilege, as colonial enclaves or postnational territories, or as secular or sacred retreats. Rather than rehearse the spatial premise of these terms, however, the aim of this symposium is to reflect historically, methodologically, and theoretically on the material dimensions of "refuge," that is, on the way in which objects generate or confound refuge, or accompany or encumber refugees, in short, the materiality conditioning both the refuge and refugees.

We invite papers that consider the materiality of refuge across the disciplines, periods, and geographies in all the diversity of material objects involved. In tandem with the conference theme of "The Refuge of Objects/ Objects of Refuge," the conference committee invites papers that showcase material culture scholarship in three different formats: conference papers, roundtable presentations, and hands-on workshops.

Possible topics include (but are not limited to):

- Fugitive Things
- Things of Im/Migration

- Sanctuary Objects, objects of respite
- Material Witness/Witness Matters
- Objects in Translation
- Objects as Transition
- Safe Things
- Survivor Objects
- In/direct objects
- Object Relations
- Sentimental Objects
- Remembered things, forgotten objects
- Traumatic Objects

A one-page proposal and a brief biography of the author (one that includes full name, professional designation) should be submitted to: scheidung@uni-mainz.de. Proposals will be vetted by an interdisciplinary committee.

Deadline: January 30, 2016