

International Symposium “The Refuge of Objects / Objects of Refuge”

A Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz / Obama
Institute for Transnational American Studies
(JGU/OI), University of Delaware (UD) / Center
for Material Culture Studies (CMCS), Winterthur
Museum/Library Collaboration

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 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.



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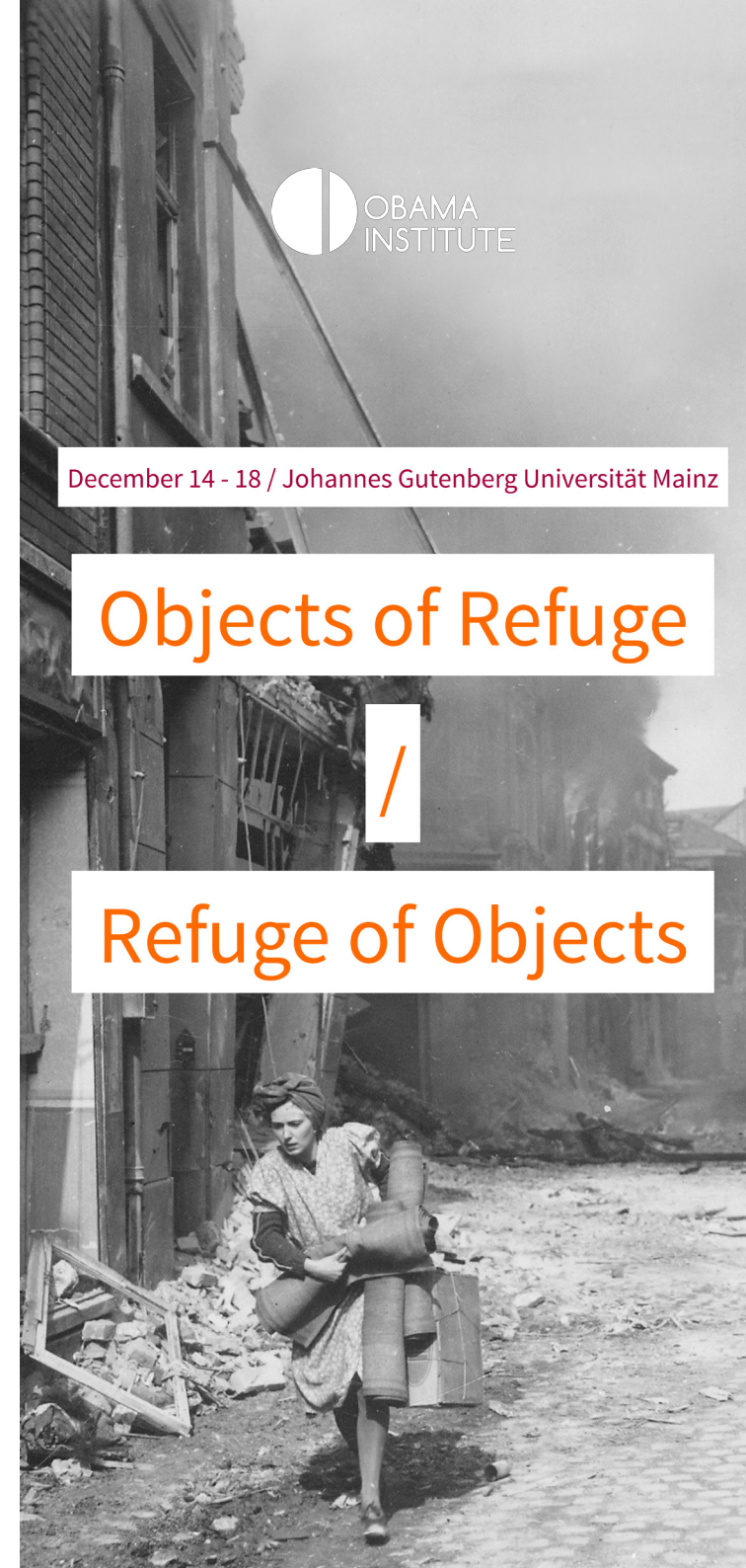


December 14 - 18 / Johannes Gutenberg Universität Mainz

Objects of Refuge

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Refuge of Objects



Thursday, December 15, 2016

8:30 Introduction

Martin Brückner (CMCS) / Oliver Scheiding (JGU)

9:00-10:30 PANEL 1: Fugitive Things/Refuge in Fugitivity

Chair: Sandy Isenstadt

- Michelle Everidge Anderson (History, UD), “Housing is More Than Shelter”: The Material Culture of Migration in the United States”
- Laura Helton (English and History, UD; Visiting Fellow, Center for Humanities & Information, Pennsylvania State University), “The Materiality of Absence: Slavery, Fugitivity, and the Making of African American Archives”
- Rebecca Sheppard and Catherine Morrissey (Center for Historic Architecture & Design, UD), “Landscapes of Refuge: Recovering the Materiality of Underground Railroad Landscapes in Delaware”

10:30-11:00 Coffee Break

11:00-12:30 PANEL 2: Things of Refuge

Chair: Axel Schäfer

- Natalie Wright (Center for Material Culture Studies, UD), “4,000 Miles Overseas: Interpreting Displaced Japanese Tsunami Debris in North America, 2011-2016”
- Siobhan Carroll (English, UD), “Objects of Play, Objects of Refuge”
- Jesse Kraft (History, UD), “The Money of Refuge: How It Survived the Transit”

12:30-13:30 Lunch

13:30-15:00 PANEL 3: Things and Transition

Chair: Christopher Breu

- Suncica Klaas (American Studies, Potsdam), “The Rule of the Ruler: Cartography, Autobiography, and (Post-) Humanitarianism”
- Kaila Schedeen (Art History, UD), “Seeking Hózhó: The Material Landscapes of Will Wilson’s AIR Weaves”
- Christian Berger / Clara Wörsdörfer (History of Art, Mainz), “Negotiating Materiality Through the Use of Elusive Materials in 1960s Art Practice”

15:00-15:30 Coffee Break

15:30 Keynote Lecture

Introduction/Chair: Martin Brückner

Catharine Dann Roeber (Winterthur Program in American Material Culture), “Material Culture Studies, Connoisseurship, Close Looking and More: An Historical Overview of Studying Stuff”

19:00 Dinner

Friday, December 16, 2016

8:30 Coffee

9:00-10:30 PANEL 4: Religion and Moving Things

Chair: Anja-Maria Bassimir

- Michael Emmons (Preservation Studies, UD), “Inscribing Sanctuary: The Protection of Early American Buildings Through Apotropaic Symbols, Concealed Blessings, and Ritual Signatures, 1690-1920”
- Sarah Wasserman (English, UD), “Refuse, Refuge, Relic”
- Torsten Cress (Sociology, Mainz), “Witnessing Miracles, Organizing Experience: Things in Catholic Pilgrimage and the Role of Touch”

10:30-11:00 Coffee Break

11:00-12:30 PANEL 5: Migratory Letters and Prints

Chair: Babette B. Tischleder

- Alex Ames (History, UD), “‘The Quill is My Plow’: Religious Refuge, Reading, and Writing in German-Protestant Pennsylvania, ca. 1750-1850”
- Jana Hatakova, Johanna Seibert, Frank Newton (American Studies, Mainz), “(Re-)Reading Typographies: Generated Sentimental Spaces Through Nineteenth-Century Print”
- Allison M. Stagg (History of Art, FU Berlin), “A Foreigner and an Alien’: Caricature Prints in America and England, 1800-1900”

12:30-13:30 Lunch

13:30-15:00 PANEL 6: The Refuges of Print Culture

Chair: Damien Schlarb

- Alexandra Ward (Winterthur Program in American Material Culture), “Decoupage: A Refuge for Prints”
- Jessica Conrad (English, UD), “Bottling Death and Brewing Sanctuary in Temperance Literature and Reform”

15:00-15:30 Coffee Break

15:30-17:00 WORKSHOP

Julian Yates “Notes from a Material Culture Underground: Actor Network Theory and Early Modern Studies”

19:00 Dinner

Saturday, December 17, 2016

8:30 Coffee

9:30-11:00 PANEL 7: Inanimate Objects as Life’s Refuge

Chair: Oliver Scheiding

- Kiersten Mounce (Art History, UD), “The Chaise San-dow, René Herbst, and Psychological Repose”
- Rosalie Hooper (Winterthur Program in American Material Culture), “The Complicated Lives of Inanimate Objects: A Case (Furniture) Study”
- Martin Brückner (English and Center for Material Culture Studies, UD). “Cartographic Transfers: American Mappery and the Refuge of Transitional Objects”

11:00-11:30 Coffee Break

11:30-13:30 ROUNDTABLE: The Refuge of Objects / Objects of Refuge

Participants: Christopher Breu (Illinois State University); Martin Brückner (CMCS/UD); Ryan Cordell (Boston); Sandy Isenstadt CMCS/ UD); Herbert Kalthoff (Soziologie, Mainz); Mark Noble (Atlanta), Oliver Scheiding (JGU/OI); Babette B. Tischleder (Göttingen)