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EMIT SOCIETY'S PANELS AT THE FIFTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE RSA MONTREAL, QUEBEC CANADA 24-26 MARCH, 2011

PANEL 1

Panel Title: Painting Flowers, Desire, and Tragedy
Chair: Juan Pablo Gil-Oslé (jgilosle@astate.edu)
Organizer: Juan Pablo Gil-Oslé (jgilosle@astate.edu)

Paper Title: Ekphrasis in Philip IV of Spain's Bed: Sexual Desire and Iconic Portraits of the Queen in Gonzalo Torrente Ballester's *Crónica del rey pasmado* (1989)
Presenter: Jorge Abril Sanchez
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In the preface to his 2005 collection of essays, devoted to the study of ekphrasis in the age of Cervantes, Frederick De Armas identified the Renaissance period as the historical moment when a movement from the visual to the verbal took place. This change of perspective gave rise to a number of literary works that—like *Don Quixote*—based the narrative structure of their episodes and the description of their characters on scenes and *topoi* belonging to paintings and sculptures of fellow artists. This literary technique survived the passing of time. In his 1989 best-selling historical novel, Torrente Ballester returned to this integrating concept of the sister arts. Set in the Spain of Philip IV, *Crónica del rey pasmado* tells the king's scandalous wish to see Isabel de Borbón naked after being struck one night by the beauty of the most desired prostitute at court. Despite the heated discussions caused by his fancy, the monarch does not relent, and gives detailed orders to recreate his mental image of Marfisa in his chamber and superpose it on the figure of the queen. In this essay, I will explore the relationship between the oral and the visual in the king's attempt to reproduce a pictorial ideal in the body of a woman who has never stood undressed in front of him. It will be particularly important to underscore the multiple connotations of this transformation, because, whereas verbally transferring the physical attributes of the courtesan to his wife will finally allow them to consolidate their marital union, it will also turn the sacred body of the consort into the flesh of a human, a possible source of lust and sin, which could threaten the sanctity of the Catholic marriage of the sovereign in a time of orthodox morality and religious persecutions.

Paper Title: Keys to Floral Symbolism in the Literary World of Juan van der Hamen
Presenter: John Slater
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A renowned painter of floral still lifes, Juan Van der Hamen (1596-1631) possessed a library replete with works of literature by Lope de Vega, Góngora, Cervantes, and others. Van der Hamen's books were frequently written by his friends; the library mirrored a social circle composed of the most notable literary figures of the early seventeenth century. Yet he worked in a genre generally considered to be anything but narrative; attempts to find symbolic coherence in the majority of Van der Hamen's works have come to naught. By examining the literary discussions of plant symbolism in Van der Hamen's library and the manuscripts to which he most probably had access—a project heretofore not undertaken—this talk will suggest how we might begin a process of interpreting the artist's floral canvasses symbolically. In short, we may find that a genre, long treated as mute, has a great deal to say.

Paper Title: Painting a Tragic Image: Phaëthon, Ganymede, and Ekphrasis in Lope de Vega's *Jerusalén conquistada*

Presenter: Jason McCloskey

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This paper illustrates how Lope de Vega's *Jerusalén conquistada* (1609) figuratively depicts certain key failures of the Third Crusade through implicit reference to a series of classical mythological frescos described in the epic. Two of these ekphrastic myths in particular, those of Phaëthon and Ganymede, provide narratives that serve as guides for portraying some of the most significant events in the epic. This paper shows that, by painting a tragic image of the Third Crusade based on these myths, *Jerusalén conquistada* poetically undoes the victorious ending of Torquato Tasso's renowned epic, *Gerusalemme liberata* (1581). In effect, Lope's epic symbolically sabotages Tasso's work, thereby setting itself up for a kind of ironic poetic victory of its own. Moreover, this literary rivalry between the Spanish and Italian epics also extends to encompass the visual arts by drawing Michelangelo's works into the artistic competition. Focusing on the construction of the poem's tragic image through classical myth, and how such an image contributes to its competition with visual and verbal works of Italian art provides a new perspective on the effusive artistic and nationalistic pride that pervades the text.

PANEL 2

Panel Title: Beyond Images: Ethics, Gender Theory, and Modernism

Chair: Kimberly C. Borchard (kcborchard@gmail.com)

Organizer: Juan Pablo Gil-Oslé (jgilosle@astate.edu)

Title: The Ethics of Images

Presenter: Daniel Lorca

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The aim is to explain the moral implications of images in texts, as those implications were understood during the Golden Age. According to us, images and literary text are not *necessarily* a

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moral problem, but according to them, they are. For them, the moral problem is this (very briefly): The basis of all versions of virtue-ethics is that there is a *telos* for all beings to reach perfection. This theorem creates problems when applied to images and texts: On the one hand, *they can lie*, and therefore it seems that their *telos* is not geared towards perfection, but on the other, images and text can also reveal truth. I will argue that literary texts and images are, therefore, *a moral problem with no possible solution if analyzed from the perspective of virtue ethics*. In a conference where images and texts are discussed, the moral dimension of the topic seems important.

Title: A Gender Theory on the History of Friendship Images

Presenter: Juan Pablo Gil-Oslé

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I want to elaborate on the gender changes in a number of visual representations of friendship from the 15th through the 17th centuries. In early modern Western societies friendship was predominantly presented as a male phenomenon. In the male-dominated public sphere, the discourse of friendship was overwhelmingly gender biased, since the space occupied by the concept of friendship was rhetorically and ritualistically associated with men. Nevertheless, visual representations of friendship became increasingly associated with the feminine while the notion of friendship gradually became less public and increasingly restricted to the private sphere. Now, the question is if this increasingly “private,” feminine notion of friendship connoted a weakening of the traditionally male, political essence of the concept. The history of the images of friendship can shed light on this issue.

Title: Quixote through the Modernist Eye

Presenter: Ana María Laguna

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Critics have often noted the unusual iconic value of Don Quixote in the twentieth and twenty first centuries. Even for transnational audiences that might not have read the novel, the silhouette of Quixote astride Rocinante is easily identifiable. While this familiarity has been largely attributed to the fact that *Don Quixote* is considered the first modern novel—the first literary narrative that accurately describes the troubles and frictions of modern subjectivity—the knight’s popular status is also indebted to vanguard artists like Salvador Dalí, Pablo Picasso, and Joan Miró, whose illustrations reenergized it through the lens of abstract art. This presentation will explore the reasons for the modernist interest in Don Quixote, focusing on how Quixote’s ambitions and failures at the beginning of an emerging modernity mirrored these artists’ intents and disillusionments at the end of the same epoch.

PANEL 3

Title: Beyond Europe: Visions from Java to America

Chair: Juan Pablo Gil-Oslé (jgilosle@astate.edu)

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Title: The Traveling Illustrations of Sixteenth-Century Travel Narratives

Presenter: Lisa Voigt

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This presentation examines the use of the same illustrations, created by Jörg Breu, in German editions of three travel narratives: Ludovico de Varthema's account of his travels in the Middle East and India (1515), Hans Schiltberger's Reisebuch, on his captivity in the Ottoman Empire between 1396 and 1427 (1548), and Hans Staden's Warhaftige Historia, on his captivity among the Tupinambá in Brazil (1557). While the illustrations suggest the weight of Europe's prior contact with the Orient and Islam on the representation of the New World, the iconographic provenance of some of the images—those that use Tupinambá dress to depict the inhabitants of India and Sumatra—indicates that the direction of influence was not only from East to West. Do these traveling illustrations demonstrate the interchangeability of exotic "others," or do they suggest a growing interest in and awareness of ethnographic details of foreign cultures among mid-sixteenth-century European readers?

Title: From Perú to Appalachia: Amazons, El Dorado, and the Improbable Evolution of the Virginia State Seal

Presenter: Kimberly Borchard

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In May 2010, Virginia Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli drew national ridicule when he provided his office staff with lapel pins featuring a "more virtuous" version of the state flag, in which a blue breastplate concealed the (formerly) exposed left breast of the Amazon representing the Roman goddess Virtus. The modified image on the pins originated in the flag adopted by the state of Virginia on April 30, 1861, less than two weeks after it declared sovereignty and repealed its 1788 ratification of the U.S. Constitution. This paper will analyze the long and curious history of representations of Appalachian Amazons in Virginia, tracing the myth through the accounts of John Lederer, Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, Álvaro Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, and the French cartographer Jacques le Moyne de Morgues.

Title: Persian Dress and Letters of Credit: Robert Sherley's Last Visits to England

Presenter: Julia Schleck

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The Englishman Robert Sherley's visits to his homeland in 1611 and 1623 were marked by controversy. Robert arrived in England wearing Persian dress, bearing letters from Shah Abbas I naming Robert as his ambassador. However, these letters were "un-understood" for lack of a translator, and Robert's refusal to remove his turban when in the presence of the King caused a scandal at court. Matters were further complicated when the East India Company produced a rival ambassador from Persia who denied Robert's validity as the Shah's agent. In the midst of these conflicts over Robert's status as an "English-Persian," Robert was painted in full Persian dress by Sir Anthonie Van Dyck in full length portrait. This paper will consider the role van

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Dyck's portrait played in the controversy surrounding Robert's national and ambassadorial status, alongside verbal representations of Sherley's visit by Thomas Middleton, Samuel Purchas and others.

Title: Picturing the Persian: Representations of Safavid Iran in Early Modern European Travel Accounts

Presenter: Elio Brancaforte (Tulane University)

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During the Safavid Empire (1501-1722), European travelers made their way to Persia as missionaries, ambassadors, geographers, scholars and merchants. These visitors were particularly interested in Persia as a crossroad of civilizations and for its rich classical history (including the Persian Wars and the conquests of Alexander the Great) and new religion, Shi'i Islam. Upon returning to Europe, they compiled their findings in travel narratives; information from these accounts then made its way into costume books, scientific treatises, geographic compendia, and natural histories. How do these visitors depict Persia and the Persians? What strategies are employed to make the country intelligible for a European audience? How is new information integrated (or ignored)? My paper will examine the visual and discursive nexus in a number of these European travel accounts on Persia, considering the use of genres such as frontispieces, emblems, and maps.