

Introduction

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The word *render* embodies a multiplicity of meanings. Originally an alteration of the Latin term, *reddere*, meaning ‘to give back’, today it can be applied to a variety of actions. In the literary sense one can render a phrase by simply expressing it vocally or by translating it from one language into another. Similarly in music, one can render a verse through the act of performance. A jury can render a verdict after deliberation and a soldier can render a salute as a gesture of courtesy and respect.

In visual culture, the word has been most commonly applied to the production of perspective through drawn or painted images. Such was the case when Dürer rendered Renaissance subjects in his prints from the 15th and 16th centuries. In recent years, however, the word has been applied to a vastly different medium. In our digital age, a rendered image most commonly implies visual manifestations created using computer software. Graphic designers can render three dimensional objects and architects can provide us with renderings of proposed architectural designs. The six contributors to this volume have each offered their own perspective for our consideration. Like the term *render*, the articles

cover a variety of contexts. They range from the Victorian era to the present and encompass the genres of film, architecture, installation art and photography.

In “Reclaiming Time: The Past, Present and Future in Ruins,” Charles Christopher Moorhouse explores the fetishistic treatment of dilapidated buildings and abandoned spaces. He argues that the documentation of ruins through photography has become so popularized today that it is difficult to distinguish between artistically motivated images and tokens of tourist pilgrimages. The end results are often overwrought with melodrama and devoid of context. They stand as examples of sensationalism and have become over-saturated in today’s visual culture. Devon OpdenDries and Gordon Matta-Clark are two artists that Moorhouse believes escape this proliferated trend. He concludes the article by examining their work, arguing that their artistic interventions are far more powerful than conventional representations of ruins.

Emma Hamilton-Hobb’s article also explores photographic documentation but long before the over-saturation of images during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

Instead she looks to the laborious process of composite photography during the early years of the medium. In particular she focuses on a composite created by William James Topley to commemorate a fancy dress ball, hosted by Lord & Lady Dufferin on February the 23rd, 1876. During an era of strict decorum, events such as this provided a venue for people to transgress Victorian morals and assume an alter ego by dressing in costume. The effect temporarily destabilized gender roles and allowed people to assume a Romanticized version of such figures as the 'Noble Savage' and the 'Oriental Other'. Deeply rooted in Imperial and Colonial sentiments, Hamilton-Hobbs discusses the social implications of these actions. Furthermore, she explains how the compositional arrangement of the figures reinforced an ideological framework that served its aristocratic patron.

In a similar manner, Diane Pellicone looks to the ideological choices behind France's adopted aesthetic directly following the First World War. She argues that Art Deco became the appropriate style to export an image of France that would reinforce its position as a leading nation in modern art and culture. Pellicone looks to world exhibitions, ocean liners and the French Embassy in Ottawa as examples of this politicization of style. By consistently turning to Art Deco—which was perceived as modern but not modernist—France in effect branded its national identity and presented it as a consumable product. As much as the Embassy in Ottawa speaks to France's post-war identity, it also reveals something about its host country. Located along Sussex Drive, overlooking Quebec, it recalls France's former colonial conquest of the region and the lingering Imperialism that

remains.

Embassy architecture is often a hybrid expression of the two countries involved. This was certainly the case during the construction of the French Embassy, and it is also true of the Russian Embassy in Ottawa—the subject of Ellen Pyear's article, "Cold War Architecture: the Russian Embassy in Ottawa." Built in the late 1950s, after a fire destroyed its predecessor, the Soviets constructed a purpose-built structure that stands today as a symbol of Cold-War architecture. Representative of modern design through the use of symmetry, it is also barricaded by obvious signs of security. The culmination of these elements serve the ideological narrative that the Soviets wanted to elicit. During an era of tension and espionage between the two countries, the Soviet's presented a powerful façade.

On a final note, Pamela Morrow presents an intriguing perspective on the musical score behind the chilling film, *The Exorcist* (1973). The role of music in movies is widely recognized to elicit emotional responses amongst its spectators. In the horror genre, however, there often exists a disconnect between the images on the screen with the sound effects. Morrow investigates this sever and explains how it is used to manipulate the audience's psyche in a subversive manner. Rather than using sound bits that allow the spectator to anticipate what's coming, films like *The Exorcist* leave us unprepared. For the most part, previous scholars have tended to analyze the music and the images as separate entities. Despite their aesthetic disconnect, this article attempts to break away from the artificial divide in scholarship between image and sound.