

Swedenborg & the Arts

International Conference

Final Call for Papers

June 6-9, 2017

Bryn Athyn, PA

Swedenborg and the Arts International Conference

Bryn Athyn College, Pennsylvania (USA)

Tuesday through Friday, June 6-9th, 2017

<https://tinyurl.com/swedarts>

This international conference explores Emanuel Swedenborg's (1688-1772) substantial impact on the arts. A Scandinavian scientist, mystic, and theologian, Swedenborg's ideas subsequently affected the aesthetics of a broad variety of artists and writers, from Charles Baudelaire, Jorge Luis Borges, and William Blake, to the painters George Inness and Arthur B. Davies (to name but a representative few). This conference is the first of its kind to explicitly focus on Swedenborg's relation to aesthetics and artistic production. We are seeking paper proposals that do more than simply trace the historical dimensions of such influence, but also examine the dynamics of exchange, the movement between the religious and the aesthetic. Some of our concerns include:

- What can the case of Swedenborg in the arts tell us about broader constitutive relationships between esotericism, spirituality, and culture?
- How do Swedenborg's ideas configure within larger projects of nineteenth and twentieth century (re)enchantment, and trouble the academy's assumptions about modernity and the secular?
- What might the recent attention to religion, sensation, and materiality within literary studies and art history have to say about Swedenborg's concepts of spiritual-and-material correspondence—ideas that turned the world "into a living poem," in Emerson's phrasing?
- Where have Swedenborg's ideas fruitfully encountered other forms of esotericism with strong artistic analogues, such as Theosophy or Mazdaznan?

KEYNOTES: **Wouter Hanegraaff** (Amsterdam), **Linda Dalrymple Henderson** (UT Austin), **Massimo Introvigne** (CESNUR / Turin). Confirmed speakers: Adrienne Baxter Bell (Marymount), Cordula Grewe (U-Penn), Anders Hallengren (Stockholm), Marco Pasi (Amsterdam), William Rowlandson (Kent), and Robert Rix (Aalborg).

Sponsoring Institutions include: CESNUR (Center for Studies of New Religions); Bryn Athyn College; Glencairn Museum; the Center for Swedenborgian Studies at the Graduate Theological Union (GTU) in Berkeley; the Swedenborg Foundation; and the Swedenborg Society of London.

Deadline for submissions:

Friday, September 30, 2016

SUBMISSION FORMAT

We invite abstracts that explore any artist(s) or writer(s) who have engaged with Swedenborgian ideas in light of some of the issues outlined in this call. Interested participants should read the longer description on the conference website to further understand the kinds of questions we are keen to investigate.

To be considered as a speaker at the conference, please submit the following items to:
swedenborgconference@gmail.com

1. Paper title
2. Abstract of your proposed paper (no more than 400 words)
3. Short paragraph detailing your professional C.V.

For more information:

<https://tinyurl.com/swedarts>

Painting by
Swedenborgian artist George Inness
(Harvest Scene in the Delaware Valley, 1867)