

Music and Visual Culture in Renaissance Italy

13-15 June 2019

Humanities Research Institute, University of Sheffield, UK

Keynotes: Flora Dennis (Sussex), Nicoletta Guidobaldi (Bologna), and Francois Quiviger (Warburg)

Visual representations of music were ubiquitous in Renaissance Italy. Church interiors were enlivened by altarpieces representing biblical and heavenly musicians, placed in conjunction with the ritual song of the liturgy. The interior spaces of palaces and private houses, in which musical recreations were routine, were adorned with paintings depicting musical characters and myths of the ancient world, and with scenes of contemporary festivity in which music played a central role. Musical luminaries and dilettantes commissioned portraits symbolising their personal and social investment in musical expertise and skill.

Such images both reflected and sustained a musical culture. The strategies adopted by visual artists when depicting music in any guise betray period understandings of music shared by artists and their clients. At the same time, Renaissance Italians experienced music within a visual environment that prompted them to think about music in particular ways.

This conference invites 20-min contributions addressing any visual media relevant in any way to music, or written discourse revealing interactions between visual and musical practices, from the late 14th to the early 17th century in Italy.

Abstracts of 200 words should be sent to t.shephard@sheffield.ac.uk by 30 Sept 2018.