Thème

Recently, the conditions under which works of art circulate have been subject to greater and renewed reflection – not only in museums and the realm of research, but also within the art market – due to the emergence of a fundamental notion: that of the provenance of works of art. This subject is at the heart of the Rapport de mission: améliorer la sécurité des acquisitions des musées nationaux (C. Giacomotto, M.-C. Labourdette, A. Oseredzuk) report published in 2022.

At a time when the French and international communities are multiplying the number of tools available for tracing the owners of looted property (databases, networks, social platforms, applications for identifying works of art, etc.), the question arises of whether these methods of provenance research, or "collecting histories," can be adapted to the specific nature of archaeological objects.

What, if anything, can the history of archaeological excavations tell us about the difficulty of establishing an object’s provenance? Must one differentiate between French national archaeological practices and between non-European archaeological practices? How does provenance research help renew current practices, and what difficulties do archaeological researchers encounter? How do the art market and museum institutions implement the demands of due diligence when dealing with antiquities? And finally, how can provenance research be made visible and accessible to the public?

These and other questions surrounding provenance have emerged as a new and unavoidable challenge for the world of archaeology; it is even more so for young researchers in the field.

At the initiative of five doctoral students, and to mark the opening of the new Master 2 program "Biens sensibles, provenances et enjeux internationaux", the Centre de recherches de l'École du Louvre is organizing a study day on the theme Archaeologies and provenances: developments, research, and perspectives.

This event was created for young researchers from different disciplines with the aim of establishing a dialogue between art historians, archaeologists, museum professionals and legal professionals. The study day will be organized in the format of four workshops during which speakers debate and explore the questions and notions raised by the session's theme in greater depth and in relation to their own research projects. For each workshop, moderators (members of the organizing committee) will be present to lead the discussion that includes the audience.

The aim of the study day's workshops is to offer a wide-ranging overview of provenance research tools, from those developed by the international community and the museum world, to those developed by the art market, punctuated by specific, concrete case studies. By focusing on methodology, participants should seek to highlight why and how practices have developed in the past, and how they can be adapted to present and future investigations. They will also question and develop their own understandings of the notions of provenance in the scientific, historical and legal sense, in particular those that seem secondary but are in reality inseparable from the others: those related to the concept of due diligence.
Workshop themes

Workshop 1. The notion of provenance from a legal angle (differences in national and international practices, obligations (including that of due diligence), questions regarding the burden of proof and dating objects, money laundering, etc.).

Workshop 2. Provenance research and how to work in the field: in France and internationally (feedback, examples of research projects, etc.).

Workshop 3. The provenance researcher’s "toolkit" (case studies of existing models, creating resources, processes and frameworks, ...)

Workshop 4. Communicating provenance research to the public (methods and resources, the role of museums, other actors and initiatives, ...)

Application

The themes presented above for each workshop are intended to be guidelines to structure reflection. This call for contributions is open to young researchers in all disciplines that are related to the subject of the study day, and candidates are invited to develop and submit proposals that are related to the lines of research.

Applicants are asked to present the theme of their prospective presentation, and its link with one or more of the workshops, in a text of 3,000 characters (including spaces). They will also be asked to send a bio-bibliography and to indicate how they intend to present their contribution (in-person or remotely).

Applications must be sent by August 7, 2023 at the latest, via this form: https://shorturl.at/xMPV5

For questions or comments, please contact the organizing committee: archeoprovenance.edl@gmail.com

Timeline

Launch of the call for contributions: June 9, 2023.
Deadline for submission of contributions: August 7, 2023.
Advisory board feedback, participant decision announced: September 20, 2023.
Powerpoint submission deadline: November 25, 2023.
Colloquium: November 28, 2023 at the École du Louvre.

Members of the Advisory Board

Isabelle Anatole-Gabriel (chief curator of heritage, associate researcher at UMR 9022 Heritage.s, CUY Cergy Paris University/ CNRS/ Ministry of Culture)
Claire Chastanier (second in command to the deputy director of collections, Service des musées de France, direction générale des patrimoines, Ministry of Culture)
Cécilia Hurley Griener (PhD in art history (Oxford/Neuchâtel), HDR, lecturer at the University of Neuchâtel, teacher at the École du Louvre)
Vincent Michel (professor of art history and ancient archaeology HDR, University of Poitiers)
Vincent Négri (HDR researcher, CNRS, ENS, University Paris-Saclay)
Ariane Thomas (director of the Department of Oriental Antiquities, Louvre Museum)

Members of the Organizing Committee

Isabella Archer (Doctoral student University of Poitiers/École du Louvre)
Odile Boubakeur (Doctoral student University Paris-Saclay/École du Louvre)
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