



## EDITORIAL: The medium and the message

The launch of any new venture generates great excitement and anticipation for those involved in the project. Our first issue of *Art on the line* is certainly no different. For the first time the product of countless months of labour is released into the public domain, hopefully to attract the attention, and possibly the approbation and disputation, of a wide community of peers. However, the level of excitement and anticipation is perhaps further raised when not just the message, but also the medium is relatively new.

### The medium

*Art on the line* is a professional, peer-reviewed online journal that seeks to provide an international forum for original and innovative research in the field of visual culture. Whilst online journals have played a significant role within the scientific community for many years, it is only in recent times that they have begun to attract wide attention within the humanities. Some traditional paper journals have started to put their content online whilst other, more specialist, ones have gone down the online only road. Whilst it is online, *Art on the line* also recognises the fact that reading from a computer screen rather than the conventionally printed page is neither to everyone's taste, nor always entirely practicable. Although on-screen reading is of course an option, the papers presented in this journal have been designed specifically for ease of printing as PDF files. In this way they can operate much like any other paper journal article but with the additional benefits that electronic technology offers. And these can be many. For example, the online presentation of material allows us to reduce significantly the time from submission to publication. We aim to maintain a prompt turnaround so that all our material reflects contemporary, up-to-date research.

We are also able to publish in differing volumes from issue to issue. Unlike paper journals, we are not restricted to a set volume of content and, should there be a significant accumulation of high-quality material during a given period, we will not be forced to backlog this for later publication. Electronic publishing also facilitates the increased use of images by reducing printing costs, a particularly valuable benefit for image-based disciplines. This is particularly true in the case of colour printing. Colour printing is expensive and paper publications often insist that a majority of images reproduced are in monochrome. No such strictures will apply to *Art on the line*.

### The message

The title, *Art on the line*, can have many layers of meaning. At one level it is intended to reflect the journal's means of delivery. However, the title also highlights the intention of the journal to explore the margins of art history as a discipline. It is hoped that *Art on the line* will take advantage of the ever-growing call for inter-disciplinarity in research and publications and will increasingly explore visual and material culture within a broader context than has conventionally been

associated with art historical studies. The journal aims to draw together both the breadth and depth of research currently undertaken in art history and cultural studies departments, museums and art schools. We want to encourage dialogue and debate amongst a wide community and to extend the understanding of visual culture within a broad chronological and geographical context. *Art on the line* will present research articles varied in both scope and focus. It will also offer reviews of exhibitions and books. One particular feature of the reviews section will be the inclusion of those addressing other electronic resources such as databases and web pages. As electronically delivered research materials become more and more a part of our lives we plan to offer some guidance over, and critical analysis of, these ever-expanding electronic research resources. In addition, *Art on the line* will periodically include shorter articles reflecting the personal views of artists, curators, educators and collectors. Relevant contemporary news items will also be included where and when appropriate.

### In this issue

#### *Articles*

Issue one of *Art on the line* includes four articles covering a wide range of topics from seventeenth-century Italian analyses of Roman tomb decoration to paintings produced in Scotland during the Second World War. Ben Thomas' article considers both visual and textual responses to the discovery of a specific antique tomb in seventeenth-century Rome. His analysis of the prints made after the tomb by Pietro Santi Bartoli and the accompanying text written by Giovanni Pietro Bellori casts light upon then contemporary attitudes towards both the antique past and the more recent engagements of the works of Raphael, Annibale Carracci and Nicolas Poussin. Claire O'Mahony's contribution examines the problematic attempts to represent artistic inspiration, traditionally envisioned as a muse, in late nineteenth-century France. A recurrent, though contested, solution was to portray the life model in the artist's studio, as in Seurat's *Les Poseuses*, numerous Salon paintings and popular book illustrations. Jonathan Kear offers a reassessment of Cézanne's paintings of L'Estaque produced during the 1880s. He argues that these works represent a brief engagement with modern motifs in marked contrast to the artist's later, more nostalgic, images of Provence. Finally, Jonathan Blackwood explores the work of the Scottish artist Edward Baird. In particular he focuses on the work Baird completed in Montrose during the Second World War, analysing these works in terms of their potential engagement with notions of a specifically Scottish identity.

#### *Reviews*

The review section includes analyses of two recent exhibitions: Antony Gormley's *Domain Field*, displayed as part of a major retrospective of the sculptor's work at Baltic in Gateshead, England, and the *Thomas Jones* exhibition at the National Museum and Gallery of Wales in Cardiff. Also included is a review of the recently launched *Greene and Greene Virtual Archive*, a major joint project run under the auspices of four institutions: the Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library at Columbia University, New York; the Environmental Design Archives at the University of California, Berkeley; The Gamble House, University of Southern California, Pasadena, California; and the Greene and Greene Archives, USC at The Huntington Library in San Marino, California. The archive presents electronically more than 4000 images of drawings, sketches, photographs, correspondence and other historical documents related to the southern Californian design firm Greene & Greene (active 1894–1922).

A full programme of book reviews will be phased in from issue two onwards.



### *News and Art Extra*

In this first issue we have invited the ceramics collector John Bedding to offer an overview of his experiences as a collector of studio pottery based in St Ives, Cornwall. And finally, Leon Suddaby recalls the life and work of the major British painter Terry Frost, who died this summer.

### **In future issues**

The editor welcomes submissions on any aspect of visual culture for future issues. Submissions for articles will be peer-reviewed by two academic referees. From time to time *Art on the Line* will present special issues focusing on a single theme or subject. This might draw upon special research undertaken in collaboration with a current exhibition or conference or provide a compilation of the most recent research on a given topic. Other submissions for reviews and news items will be considered by the editor.

We hope that *Art on the line* will provide a lively and stimulating arena for ideas and work of the highest quality. As the journal aims to serve a wide community interested in visual culture we welcome your input, whether in the form of submissions or suggestions for further features and coverage. Finally, we hope that both the medium and the message of *Art on the line* will make a valuable contribution within an ever expanding and ever developing research discourse addressing visual culture in its widest context.

The Editor