

Call for Workshop Participants, Historians of Netherlandish Art 2027

Workshop: New Approaches to Landscape Drawings – Towards a Unified Discourse

Deadline: August 31, 2026

Co-chairs: Alec Aldrich, Stanley H. Durwood Foundation Curatorial Fellow, Harvard Art Museums, 2026–28, and Susan Anderson, Curatorial Research Associate for Dutch and Flemish Drawings, Harvard Art Museums

This workshop intends to address the flourishing of landscape studies in recent years and draw together the resulting mosaic of approaches into a unified landscape discourse. In addition to a concerted shift toward eco-critical, anti-colonial, and material approaches to landscape, new vocabularies have emerged in the context of exhibitions, special journal issues, ongoing working groups, and new dissertations—including, but by no means limited to, the “resource landscape,” the “project,” and “makeability”—to historicize a pragmatic outlook on the environment characterized by the intentional transformation and instrumentalization of nature. These scholarly trends have thus greatly complicated well-established methods of engaging the landscape genre, such as the literary categories of the Pastoral and the Georgic, the stridently visual principle of representation “*naer het leven*,” and the entanglement of landscape and cartography described by Svetlana Alpers as the “mapping impulse.” The present workshop will consider how these new approaches can productively intersect with object-based study and curation through the significant holdings of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish landscape drawings at the Harvard Art Museums. The workshop will be held on-site in the Art Study Center of the Harvard Art Museums.

We seek participants who aim to unite careful study of landscape drawings as objects with these emerging critical frameworks, to both reframe and challenge our understanding of landscape draftsmanship in the institutional space of the museum and its predominant methods of interpretation based in connoisseurship and histories of style. Participants will be asked to each select one or two drawings from this area of the collection, which will be on view and on hand in the Harvard Art Museums’ Art Study Center, and come prepared to present their selection with the goal of integrating their work into a wider landscape discourse, or to otherwise use landscape drawings to think through ongoing problems of interpretation. Discussion and the opportunity for direct study of the selected drawings will be a crucial component of the session.

Objects available for use may be found at the website for the Museums

(<https://harvardartmuseums.org/publications/special-collections/drawings-from-the-age-of-bruegel-rubens-and-rembrandt-the-complete-collection-online>), the printed publications by William W. Robinson, *Seventeenth-Century Dutch Drawings: A Selection from the Maida and George Abrams Collection* (1991) and *From Bruegel to Rembrandt: Dutch and Flemish Drawings from the Maida and George Abrams Collection* (2002), and *Crossroads: Drawing the Dutch Landscape*, edited by Joanna Sheers Seidenstein and Susan Anderson (2022).

Participation limited to 10. Potential participants shall submit a one-page CV and 250-word statement of interest and intent that describes relevant past and current projects, methodological interests, and potential contribution to the workshop. Applicants should likewise indicate a

maximum of two Harvard drawings that relate to their existing work or present unresolved sticking points in ongoing research. We encourage approaches that address the topics and intersections outlined above, but also welcome other possibilities broadly connected to the study of landscape drawing in the Low Countries. Please send applications—ideally with your name and “New Approaches to Landscape Drawings” in the subject line—to Susan Anderson and Alec Aldrich at susan_anderson@harvard.edu and aldrichalec@gmail.com by August 31, 2026. Applicants will be notified by September 30, 2026.