



UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE

# Charming Intentions: Occultism, Magic and the History of Art

*Graduate Conference,  
Department of History of Art, University of Cambridge  
3-4 December 2012*



This two-day graduate conference will investigate the intersections between visual culture and the occult tradition, ranging from the material culture of 'primitive' animism, through medieval and Renaissance depictions of witchcraft and demonology, to the contemporary fascination with the supernatural in popular culture.

The conference aims to provide a stimulating arena for the presentation of innovative research in this field as well as to offer a vibrant and thought-provoking forum for scholarly discussion and exchange.

Acceptable topics include, but are no means limited to, the following areas:

- The sacred and the profane;
- The material culture of magic, ritual and sacrifice;
- Objects of totemic, apotropaic or fetishistic character;
- Aspects of mysticism in Jewish, Christian and Islamic art and architecture;
- Satanism, witchcraft and demonology;
- Sacred geometry, numerology and cosmology;
- The arcane sciences (including astrology, alchemy, gnosticism, the Hermetic tradition, the Quabalah and the tarot game);
- Art-theoretical discussions of the spiritual, the sublime, the marvellous, the numinous and the uncanny;
- Artistic investigations of myth, fantasy and utopia;
- Visual aspects of occult movements such as Rosicrucionism, Freemasonry, Theosophy, Mesmerism, Spiritism and New Age Spirituality;
- The supernatural and the spiritual in modern and contemporary art;
- Occultism and magic in contemporary popular culture.

Presentations should not exceed a maximum of 20 minutes and will be followed by a 10-minute Q&A session. The sessions will be chaired by senior scholars within the University of Cambridge's History of Art Department. We also hope to publish selected conference papers in a book of proceedings.

Abstracts of no more than 300 words should be sent to [charming.intentions@gmail.com](mailto:charming.intentions@gmail.com) alongside a CV of 1-2 pages. Deadline for submission is the 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2012. All abstracts will be peer-reviewed and successful applicants will be notified about acceptance of their papers before the 15<sup>th</sup> of October 2012.

Early applications are strongly encouraged.

The Conference Committee

*Josefine Baark, PhD Candidate, Homerton College*

*Gabriel Byng, PhD Candidate, Clare College*

*Imma Ramos, PhD Candidate, Pembroke College*

*Daniel Zamani, PhD Candidate, Trinity College*