

The Art of Travel in the Middle Ages

Date/Time	Thursday 25/Friday 26 March 2021 2–4pm	Price	£38
Venue	Online	Lecturer	Jessica Barker

Medieval people were deeply engaged in travel and exploration. Often these travels were imaginative rather than literal, performed within the pages of a manuscript or the space of a local church. This course explores the role of art in guiding, remembering and imagining travel in the Middle Ages. Through a constellation of artworks we will examine the relationship between travel represented and imagined, between the spaces we experience.

Lecture 1 Portal

We examine the extraordinary sculptures that adorned portals and gatehouses. How did these programmes prepare the viewer for moving from the exterior public space to the interior of the church? We will focus in particular on the portal of the wise and foolish Virgins in Magdeburg Cathedral.

Lecture 2 Cloister

This lecture considers the cloister as a space for circumambulation and stillness. We will look in particular at the role of vault bosses as a way of transforming a journey through space into one that moves forwards and backwards in time, focusing on the remarkable series of cloister bosses in Norwich.

Lecture 3 Procession

We emerge from the enclosed space of the cloister into the public space of the city to consider the relationship between public sculpture, ritual and imagination. Transforming the topography of the city into an imagined landscape, these monuments bound communities together, while also acting as a backdrop for the execution of judicial violence.

Lecture 4 Book

We consider the idea of imagined or virtual pilgrimage. Following in the footsteps of Christ and his apostles was a devotional ideal in the Middle Ages but not everybody could undertake such journeys. In particular cloistered monks and nuns invented devotional exercises, often based on real pilgrims' accounts, enabling them to visit sites virtually.

Lecturer

Dr **Jessica Barker** is a specialist in medieval art, with a particular emphasis on sculpture. She studied at the University of Oxford and The Courtauld Institute of Art, where she was subsequently Henry Moore Postdoctoral Fellow. She joined The Courtauld in 2018, after two years teaching at the University of East Anglia.