

April 25, 2014

## Professor Robert A. Maxwell joins the faculty of the Institute of Fine Arts

Professor Robert A. Maxwell will be joining the faculty of the Institute of Fine Arts on the first of September 2014. Professor Maxwell is a distinguished scholar of the art of the Middle Ages, with special interest in problems of interpretation, visual poetics, and critical theory, as well as medieval art's historiography.

Professor Maxwell comes to the Institute of Fine Arts from the University of Pennsylvania, where he is currently Associate Professor. He received his degrees from Princeton (BA, Medieval Studies) and Yale (MA, MPhil, PhD, History of Art) before holding posts at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor (1999-2001) and Penn (2001-2014).

In his teaching and research Professor Maxwell investigates the status of images and their modes of meaning with an interdisciplinary perspective that brings art, archaeology, anthropology, and history into dialogue. He seeks, however, to adapt traditional lines of inquiry to modern and poststructuralist perspectives in order to sharpen our critical perceptions of art's capacity to communicate a range of meanings.

Professor Maxwell has published widely on Romanesque sculpture and architecture, medieval urbanism and pilgrimage, manuscript illumination, and historiography. His first book, *The Art of Medieval Urbanism: Parthenay in Romanesque Aquitaine* (Penn State Press) considered the role of monumental sculpture and architecture in defining the Romanesque cityscape. His edited volumes include an interdisciplinary collaboration entitled *Representing History 900-1300: Art, Music, History* (Penn State Press) and a volume on new trends in sculptural interpretation (co-edited with Kirk Ambrose) entitled *Current Directions in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century Sculpture Studies* (Brepols). Published articles have concerned word & image relations (*Art Bulletin*), the eighteenth-century reception of medieval art (*Art History*), the "workshop" model of Romanesque construction (*Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*), and the problem of "programs" in sculptural ensembles (*Le programme*). He is currently finishing a book on "documentary culture" and legal manuscripts in the High Middle Ages. That book assesses how the rise of images of writerly culture reciprocally influenced notions of the place of writing in visual communication and inflected notions of historical writing.

Recipient of numerous grants and awards, Professor Maxwell's research has been recognized by the Getty Grant Foundation, National Endowment for the Humanities, Institut national d'histoire de l'art (Paris), Society of Architectural Historians, and Kress Foundation, among others. Professor Maxwell has worked to encourage international dialogue and collaboration and has co-organized with the Institut national d'histoire de l'art (Paris) and the Philadelphia Museum of Art a three-part international colloquium on

the interpretation of medieval sculpture (2012), with plans to continue this “Working Group in Medieval Sculpture” in the future. Further collaborations are underway with the Museu nacional d’art de Catalunya (Barcelona), and he serves on the editorial board of several international journals. He has held visiting professorships in Paris (Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales) and Baltimore (Johns Hopkins University).