

The Lyon 16ci – A visually searchable database as instrument of knowledge for book illustrations printed in Lyon between 1480 and 1600

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Abstract

The Lyon16ci is an online database of illustrations printed in Lyon in the 16th century. It presents a collection of 10000 digitized illustrated pages along with several early modern woodblocks; it can be searched using an image as a search query as well as using text keyword for searching metadata assigned to the illustrations. Such visual and text search capability allows research scholars to track and investigate the production, use, circulation and copying of woodblocks, iconographic subjects, artistic styles within 16th-century printed illustrated editions. As this database combines visual and metadata search using VISE imagematching software, it becomes an intermedial instrument of knowledge which revisits the possibilities of searching through the book. The modalities of working with this digital tool for printed illustrations relate to the more theoretical questions of intermediality in digital art historical research: the digital object is embedded in a world of its own, in a system of relations to different entities which allow the user to see the relationships among similar or identical items (tracing the so-called trajectory of the image). How do we categorize and implement these visual capabilities? How do we develop the granularity of both visual and metadata search? Ultimately, which possibilities open up when working digitally with a complex artistic object such as the illustrated printed page, in terms of collecting, digitizing, indexing and sharing?

Keywords

Digital Art History, Digital Iconography, Renaissance Illustrations, Iconographic Databases, VGG, Imagematching Illustrated Books

Bio

Dr. **Barbara Tramelli** currently works as RTD at the Free University in Bozen. Since 2022 she was research grant holder in the Venice Centre for Digital and Public Humanities of Ca' Foscari University, Venice. She obtained her PhD in Art History at the Freie Universität in Berlin in 2015. From 2011 until 2015 she worked at the MPIWG in the project 'Art and Knowledge in Pre-Modern Europe, 1300-1650'. From 2016 until 2019 she has been chargée de

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