



Article: The Words Beyond the Image: Hippolyte Bayard and His Letters (Abstract)

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The Words Beyond the Image: Hippolyte Bayard and His Letters

Tania Passafiume

Presented at the 2015 PMG Winter Meeting in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The 175th anniversary of the announcement of photography has just passed. Who was there? What were the discussions? What were their concerns? And who influenced who? One way to answer these questions is to read the letters written by those who were present at the time. One might think that Hippolyte Bayard was a man of few words, as there is very little written by him remaining. Luckily, he deposited four letter packets dated from 1839 to 1846 at the Academie de Science in Paris. Within these letters Bayard describes his three processes. His first process: a negative paper process; his second process: the famous direct positive process; and finally his third process: another negative paper process. For this presentation I will describe the four letter packets, the paper they were written on, the contents of the letters, where they were submitted, who opened them and finally some little treasures found within them. Bayard was there.

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