

ORGANIZERS:

Ruth Ezra (I Tatti / University of St Andrews)
Ella Klik (Bar-Ilan University)
Anna-Maria Meister (KHI Florenz / KIT Karlsruhe)
Anna Luise Schubert (KHI Florenz)

Like the bellows of an accordion, many human-made objects are designed to compress: to respond to external conditions through a series of contractions and expansions. Though the term COMPRESSION is most often used today to theorize digital operations (e.g. formats, algorithms, codecs, bitrates), its historical, material, and aesthetic dimensions stretch far wider, encompassing cylinder seals, lithography stones, collection inventories, and elided narratives of architectural reliefs. This interdisciplinary conference aims to explore these and other precursors in dialogue with contemporary conceptions of summarization, abstracting, code, and storage.

IMAGES:

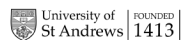
Design for a Stage Set: Interior of a Ballroom or Theater (detail), Francesco Galli Bibiena, 1676–1736. The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Stratified Rock Formation (Detail)



MODES OF COMPRESSION

AESTHETICS · OPERATIONS · FORMATS



May 12–13, 2026

I Tatti | KHI Florenz

10:30 *Coffee*

10:45 **RUTH EZRA** (I Tatti / University of St Andrews)
Introductory Remarks

SESSION 1: TWO-AND-A-HALF DIMENSIONS

Chair: Baptiste Tochon-Danguy (I Tatti)

11:00 **NICOLE PULICHENE** (Hood College)
Premodern Pyxides and the Dogged Pursuit of Ivory

11:30 **CHRISTOPHER S. WOOD** (NYU)
Epitome of a Journey

12:00 **ALINA PAYNE** (I Tatti / Harvard University)
Plane and Simple: Architecture and the Seduction of Relief

12:30 *Discussion*

13:00 *Buffet Lunch*

SESSION 2: SPOOLING

Chair: Steven Lauritano (I Tatti / Leiden University)

14:30 **KIRSTY SINCLAIR DOOTSON** (University College London)
The Film Print: Compression and Reversal

15:00 **MICHAEL FACIEJEW** (Dalhousie University)
Microfilm and Machine Learning in the Postcolonized World

15:30 *Discussion*

INTERLUDE: EXPANSION

16:00 **SAMIR BOUMEDIENE** (CNRS)
Expansion: A Thermodynamic Counterpoint

16:30 *Tea*

SESSION 3: THREADS

Chair: Paul Galvez (I Tatti)

16:45 **ANNA OLSZEWSKA** (AGH University of Krakow)
Laced Memory: Data Compression as Textile

17:15 **ELLA KLIK** (Bar-Ilan University)
DNA Bunnies: Volume | Density | Plenitude

17:45 *Discussion*

18:15 *Aperitivi*

May 12: I Tatti

09:30 *Coffee*

09:45 **ANNA-MARIA MEISTER** (KHI Florenz / KIT Karlsruhe)
Introduction - Coded Objects as Compression

SESSION 4: FLUIDITY AND FORCE

Chair: Bianca de Divitiis (KHI Florenz / Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II)

10:00 **FRANK FEHRENBACH** (Universität Hamburg)
Under Pressure: Bodies and Liquids, c. 1290-1650

10:30 **MARIKA KNOWLES** (University of St Andrews)
Water Pressure: Intaglio Printmaking and Painting on pietra paesina in Florence c. 1600

11:00 *Discussion*

11:30 *Coffee*

SESSION 5: CRITICISM AND CANON

Chair: Anna-Maria Meister (KHI Florenz / KIT Karlsruhe)

11:45 **JEREMY MELIUS** (University of York)
Erosion and Compression in Ruskin's Santa Croce

12:15 **MALIKA MASKARENIC** (Universität Bern)
Canon as Compression

12:45 *Discussion*

13:15 *Vegan Lunch at Casa Zuccari (Via Giuseppe Giusti, 49)*

SESSION 6: MODELS

Chair: Anna Luise Schubert (KHI Florenz)

14:30 **MARÍA MATILDE MORALES** (I Tatti / Harvard University)
Boccaccio's Summaries: Narratological Compression, Comprehension, and Comparison

15:00 **CARLOS SPOERHASE** (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität)
Compressing "Capital," Volume 1: Modes of Abridging Marxism

15:30 *Discussion*

16:00 **MAREK JANCOVIC** (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)
Response | AV1 TOOK EVERYTHING FROM ME

16:15 *Break*

IT'S A MATCH!

Jens Schröter and Rosa Menkman on Compression Artifacts

Introduced by Lise Meitner Group "Coded Objects" (KHI Florenz)

17:00 **JENS SCHRÖTER** (Universität Bonn)
Companion: History and Aesthetics

17:30 **ROSA MENKMAN** (Independent / Amsterdam)
Resolving Compression

18:00 *Discussion*

May 13: KHI