

Press Release - *Secrets of Craft and Nature*

The Making and Knowing Project (www.makingandknowing.org) celebrates the publication of *Secrets of Craft and Nature in Renaissance France. A Digital Critical Edition and English Translation of BnF Ms. Fr. 640*, a remarkable sixteenth-century manuscript held by the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF). The manuscript contains over 900 recipes for making art objects, medical remedies, and materials for the household and workshop. Its observations on craft workshop practices record extensive first-hand experimentation with natural materials. It provides unique insights into the material, technical, and intellectual world of the late sixteenth century and brings a better understanding of how and why nature was investigated, collected, and used in art in early modern Europe. It sheds light on the origins of the natural sciences in the creative labors of Renaissance artists and artisans' workshops. The digital critical edition is openly accessible at <http://edition640.makingandknowing.org>.

Secrets of Craft and Nature in Renaissance France presents the text of the manuscript in French transcription and English translation for the first time. Over 100 essays written by students and scholars explore the manuscript's material and historical context and discuss the hands-on reconstruction of its processes in the Making and Knowing Laboratory. Since the Making and Knowing Project was founded in 2014 by Pamela H. Smith (History, Columbia University), an intensive series of workshops, courses, and conferences have brought together students, craft practitioners, artists, scholars of the humanities and social sciences, natural and computer scientists, and practitioner-scholars from the digital humanities to transcribe, translate, research, and reconstruct the contents of the manuscript.

The Making and Knowing Project is an experiment in intensive collaboration, grad- and crowd-sourcing, the integration of pedagogy and original research, the intertwining of matter and texts, and hands-on work in laboratories, kitchens, and classrooms. The Making and Knowing Project is dedicated to exploring the intersections between historical craft making and scientific knowing. As a research and pedagogical initiative in the Center for Science and Society (www.scienceandsociety.columbia.edu) at Columbia University, it seeks to reimagine the 21st-century university through interdisciplinary collaborations, hands-on techniques in the humanities, and new questions about the past and present.

Read the manuscript and research essays at <http://edition640.makingandknowing.org>

Making and Knowing Project, Pamela H. Smith, Naomi Rosenkranz, Tianna Helena Uchacz, Tillmann Taape, Clément Godbarge, Sophie Pitman, Jenny Boulboulle, Joel Klein, Donna Bilak, Marc Smith, and Terry Catapano, eds., *Secrets of Craft and Nature in Renaissance France. A Digital Critical Edition and English Translation of BnF Ms. Fr. 640* (New York: Making and Knowing Project, 2020), <http://edition640.makingandknowing.org>.