

Grand Narratives, Posthumanism, and Aesthetics (Aarhus, 22–24 Mar 17)

Aarhus University, Denmark, Mar 22–24, 2017

Deadline: Nov 1, 2016

Jakob Gaardbo Nielsen

The research project “Posthuman Aesthetics” invites proposals for its second conference: “Grand Narratives, Posthumanism, and Aesthetics”, March 22-24, 2017, at Aarhus University, Denmark.

Please submit 400 word abstracts (incl. short bio) to: posthuman@cc.au.dk. Deadline: November 1st, 2016

Posthumanism sits uneasily with historicity. While transhumanist visions for an upgraded humanity fit almost too well with different sorts of teleological narratives – technological ones of accelerated progress, Darwinian ones of inevitable species transformation, socio-philosophical ones of needed human enhancement (from Nietzsche to totalitarianism) – critical posthumanism, on the other hand, questions historicity so thoroughly that it remains indeterminate whether we became posthuman yesterday or always were.

In this conference we wish to confront head-on the hesitance toward large-scale posthumanist historiography, making an aesthetic point of view the catalyst for an invigorated exploration of possible posthuman grand narratives. In what ways may the interpretation of art and aesthetics be helped by large-scale narratives including and reflecting upon posthumanism? And how might artistic expositions of the posthuman facilitate new understandings of our position in or outside historical grand narratives?

The conference thus invites contributions that address the ways in which grand narratives relate to the historiography of the posthuman. Although the conference has an aesthetic core, we invite contributions from other research fields such as the histories of science, technology and media, philosophy of science, biological sciences and Big History, extending the histories of aesthetic domains proper (art, literature, music, performance, aesthetic theory, etc.).

A non-exhaustive series of topics include:

The chronology of the posthuman condition (biocybernetic, Anthropocene, or universally ‘human’?)

Negentropic/entropic evolution and their treatment in art (cp. eg. Robert Smithson and the question of the inorganic)

The relation in and outside art between cultural and natural histories; between grand and small

narratives; and between evolutionism and anachronism, including the question of anachronism as a result of a new hyper-exchange of memes

Emergence as a form of grand narrative

The relation between art, literature and technology in exposing posthuman grand narratives

A posthuman grand narrative as a philosophy of the human condition

Anthropocene/Posthuman: compatible or competing grand narratives?

Darwinist evolution as the 'good' grand narrative

The status of the dualism perfection/imperfection in relation to posthuman enhancement

See more about the Posthuman Aesthetics project, its research group, project outline and individual projects at <http://posthuman.au.dk>

Reference:

CFP: Grand Narratives, Posthumanism, and Aesthetics (Aarhus, 22-24 Mar 17). In: ArtHist.net, Jun 17, 2016 (accessed Apr 5, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/13293>>.