# Artistic Subversions: Setting the Conditions of Display (Amsterdam, 2-4 Feb 17)

Amsterdam, Feb 2–04, 2017
Deadline: Aug 30, 2016

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Preceding the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam's 'Lose Yourself! – A Symposium on Labyrinthine Exhibitions as Curatorial Model'(03.-04.02.2017) this young researchers' colloquium (02.02.2017) at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam will consider the strategies and methods by which artists take control over the space of installation.

Without the artist's permission Triple Candie, an exhibition space in New York, featured a retrospective of Maurizio Cattelan. Entitled Maurizio Cattelan is Dead: Life & Work, 1960-2009 (2009), the show did not include a single work by the artist. Instead, it brought together a selection of photocopied images from previous exhibitions with (vaguely recognizable) replicas of works by the artist. Cattelan, still very much alive, urged the Deste Foundation – established by Dakis Joannou, a prodigious collector of Cattelan's work – to acquire the entirety of the show. In the foundation in Athens it was later installed in a room expressly selected by the artist. By repositioning the show in a new space of his own devise, Cattelan altered the conditions of its setting thereby incorporating the complete exhibition into his oeuvre.
This anecdote demonstrates a blurring of authorship between the artist and the curator, but it is also indicative of the significance of the setting of art, or its context, to its interpretation. This shift in emphasis to the conditions of display can be traced at least as far back as the Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme (1938). In this exhibition Marcel Duchamp's 1200 Bags of Coal covered the ceiling of one of the galleries, and brought attention to it as both a physical constraint and as a surface for presentation. In Inside the White Cube (1976), Brian O'Doherty argues that from this point forward art could no longer be seen without noting what he calls "the effect of the container on the contained". It is precisely this observation that, in 1972, led Daniel Buren to remark, "the exhibition is clearly the 'enhancing receptacle' where art not only plays out its part but is also engulfed." Artists have long sought to control the conditions of this receptacle and the space of installation can be seen as a battleground in a fight for the sovereignty of art.

We invite paper proposals from MA, PhD, and post-doctoral researchers that consider general trends, or focus on specific artworks or exhibitions in which the setting has been subverted in order to alter the experience of the viewer. For the Stedelijk Museum's Dylaby (1962) and Hon – en katedral (1966) at the Moderna Museet, Stockholm galleries were transformed into environments to immerse visitors in an evocative experience. A concern with shaping the environment of the exhibition space can likewise be seen in contemporary practices. Artist-designed itineraries, 'scenarios', or sets in which scripted, or unscripted events occur can be seen in this line. Consider, for example, the transformation installations of Guillaume Bijl, the interventions of Carsten Höller,

Liam Gillick, and Pierre Huyghe, the speculative designs of Jerszy Seymour, or the ‘monuments’ of Thomas Hirschhorn. Papers that focus on cases, past or present, are welcome. How have historic or cultural circumstances influenced this impulse and impacted its realization? How does this aim extend beyond the traditional setting of the white cube gallery? And how have new media innovations played a role in setting the conditions of display?

Please send paper proposals (400 words or less), along with your CV to Angela Bartholomew (a.m.bartholomew@vu.nl) and Katja Kwastek (k.kwastek@vu.nl) by August 30th. Those selected will be notified in the first week of October. The colloquium will be held at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and those giving presentations at the young researchers colloquium will be invited, free of charge, to attend the symposium hosted at the Stedelijk over the two days to follow. Following the symposium, papers will be selected for inclusion in a peer-reviewed publication.

Reference:

CFP: Artistic Subversions: Setting the Conditions of Display (Amsterdam, 2-4 Feb 17). In: ArtHist.net, Jul 12, 2016 (accessed Nov 20, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/13467>.