Design and Displacement (New York, 7-8 Apr 17)

New York, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, Apr 7–08, 2017
Deadline: Jan 23, 2017

Natalia Dare

Design and Displacement
The Twenty-Sixth Annual Parsons/Cooper Hewitt Graduate Student Symposium on the History of Design

The challenges faced by vast numbers of migrants and refugees worldwide—uprooted by war, persecution, or ecological crises or relocating in search of economic opportunity—are giving rise to innovative design solutions. Although often urgent, these crises are unfortunately rarely new. This symposium attempts to take a broader historical view of the relationship of design and decorative arts to the displacement and movement of people and populations since the Renaissance. From French Huguenot artisans emigrating to England in the early 18th century to artisans exiled in the wake of the 1848 revolutions to the Bauhaus' re-establishment after its dissolution by the fascists to designers' migrations all over the world, the movement of populations has spurred great change in the cultural landscape, including the creation of opportunities for new cross-cultural synthesis. Migrations also inspire architectural solutions, such as temporary housing for displaced persons during wartime or natural disasters or more substantial interventions into the landscape, such as buildings erected to accommodate the exponential growth of cities like Lagos or Rio de Janeiro. Papers might consider historical or contemporary designers or whole populations. The symposium also seeks to address issues of national and transnational identity as well as anti-immigrant sentiment.

Proposals are welcome from graduate students at any level in fields such as art history, history of design, design studies, fashion studies, history of the decorative arts, urban studies, cultural anthropology, history of architecture, consumer studies, design and technology, media studies, museum studies, food studies.

The symposium's Catherine Hoover Voorsanger Keynote speaker will be Jeremy Aynsley, professor of design history at the University of Brighton (UK) and chair of the Design History Society. Professor Aynsley's research interests concern late-19th- and 20th-century design in Europe and the United States, with a particular focus on design in modern Germany, which he has explored in major exhibitions and academic publications including Nationalism and Internationalism in Design in the 20th Century (1994), Graphic Design in Germany 1890–1945 (2000), and Designing Modern Germany (2009). He is especially interested in the phenomenon of the migration of Modernism and is currently working on a project about German graphic designers in the United States on the eve of World War II.

The keynote address will be given on Friday evening, April 7, 2017, and the symposium sessions will be held in the morning and afternoon of Saturday, April 8.

To submit a proposal, send a two-page abstract, one-page bibliography, and a c.v. to:

Ethan Robey
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Deadline for proposals: January 23, 2017

The symposium is sponsored by the MA History of Design and Curatorial Studies program, offered jointly by Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum and Parsons School of Design.

Reference:
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