

Humor, globalization, and culture-specificity (Haarlem, 16 Jun 17)

Haarlem, Jun 16, 2017

Deadline: Mar 1, 2017

Mette Gieskes, Radboud Universiteit

CFP: Humor, globalization, and culture-specificity in modern and contemporary art (Haarlem, the Netherlands, June 16, 2017)

Frans Hals Museum, De Hallen Haarlem; Radboud University Nijmegen, Open University, the Netherlands, June 16, 2017

Deadline for abstract submission: March 1, 2017

Date of notification: March 15, 2017

Humor, globalization, and culture-specificity in modern and contemporary art

In these times of globalization, we are increasingly confronted with art from other cultures and countries, a significant portion of which has humorous elements. Humor is known to subvert expectations and conventions; it pushes boundaries and is, consequently and paradoxically, culturally specific, operating both within and beyond borders. This symposium, which will take place at the Frans Hals Museum in Haarlem while the exhibition *Now that's something! Humour in 100 years of Dutch art* is on view, explores the tensions that arise when humorous artworks that are made in a specific socio-cultural context, in some cases intentionally made for a global art world, are viewed in another cultural environment.

Questions that might be addressed: What types of humor in art might be understandable to a global public? Which subjects in humorous art might be considered transcultural and inclusive in that they transcend borders of all kinds: humor that engages family relations, the body, collective memory (world news, film or rock stars); humor that builds on stereotypes; humor that undermines hierarchies or the global art world? Does humorous art created within a specific cultural context but adjusted to be successful in a global art world become homogeneous and take away the opportunity of viewers to acquaint themselves with truly other modes of thinking and viewing? Is the type of humor that ridicules an ethnic, racial, or sexual other dying out in a globalized art world where postcolonial discourse and political correctness reign? Are there instances of artworks that have triggered cultural sensitivities in a negative way through humor, either advertently or inadvertently? How do migrated artists use humor as a tool to examine their homeland and/or country of residence, and is their humor adapted for wider accessibility? How might culturally- or spatially-specific humor in artistic practices be related to historically- or temporally-specific humor? Does culturally-specific humor or humor that mocks local issues require textual elucidation (wall texts, exhibition catalogues) in a global art world, or do explanations level and ruin the effect of

humorous artworks? Is visual humor more readily and widely understood than textual humor? How does verbal humor integrated in visual art operate on a global level? Contemporary art is often perceived as difficult, accessible only to a limited number of people with a particular background. Does humor in art in a globalized world exacerbate this problem, especially when it is culturally-specific, or can humor lower the threshold and invite those that are normally put off by contemporary art?

We invite proposals that address topics from all parts of the world, such as humorous artistic practices in areas that are currently understudied, including Central and Eastern Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and Central America. Artist proposals for papers or performances will be considered for selection as well.

After the symposium, all contributions will be considered for publication in an anthology or international journal.

Please send abstracts of no more than 300 words and a short curriculum vitae to m.gieskes@let.ru.nl (Mette Gieskes, Radboud University) and anneke.schulenberg@ou.nl (Anneke Schulenberg, Open University) no later than March 1, 2017.

Reference:

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