

## Volume: Imagining the Volk

South Africa

Deadline: May 31, 2017

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### Imagining the Volk: Visual Constructions of Afrikaner Nationalism

The legacy of Afrikaner Nationalist rule is still keenly felt in South Africa today, and resurgent Afrikaner nationalist sentiments remind us that its force has not yet been spent. Emerging in the late nineteenth century and gaining currency in the 1930s and 1940s, Afrikaner nationalist fervour underpinned the establishment of white Afrikaner political and cultural hegemony during the apartheid years. But while historians have done extensive work understanding its impetuses and effects, there has been comparatively less research into its visual strategies – that is, on how art and visual culture helped to secure hegemonic claims to the nation-state via the construction of a unified Afrikaner imaginary.

This is a call for chapters in a volume that will offer a critical account of the relationship between Afrikaner nationalist art and visual culture, and Afrikaner political and cultural domination in South Africa. The intention of the volume is to explore how the conception of the Afrikaner Volk developed and changed as it responded to, or was shaped by, historical events, and to reveal how this mutable imaginary can be traced in Afrikaner nationalist visual culture of the twentieth century. Examining the implications of tropes and styles deployed in visual culture, contributors to this volume are invited to consider how the design, production, collecting and commissioning of objects, images and architecture were informed by Afrikaner nationalist imperatives and ideals. The volume will also include engagements which look at how this visual culture is understood and negotiated in contemporary South Africa, particularly at the management of its material effects in archives, the commemorative landscape and the built environment. This research, we believe, is particularly relevant in the current context of globalism and diaspora, the concurrent rise of resurgent nationalisms and calls for decolonisation, all of which raise debates about the histories and ideological underpinnings of nationalism.

The volume of essays is intended to coincide with exhibitions of examples of Afrikaner nationalist art and other imagery which we will hold on the campuses of Stellenbosch University and the University of Johannesburg.

Interested academics are invited to consider manifestations of Afrikaner nationalism in not only 'high art' collections and objects but also visual culture in a broad sense – press images, cartoons and magazines, for example – or the built environment at universities. They may also consider articulations of dissent and criticism and how these were suppressed or negotiated. Some broad potential themes include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Visual identity / National identity: visualising the relationship between the state and the Volk
- National identity and alterity; or, explorations of the Afrikaner's 'Other'
- Visual culture and the gendering of an idealist Afrikaner nationalism
- Counter-cultural aesthetics and censorship
- Monuments, statuary, and other remnants of Afrikaner nationalism
- Colouring Afrikaner ethnic identity : cartoons and the twentieth-century press
- High-brow aesthetics, and the rise of the Afrikaner sophisticate
- The University as (visual) archive
- Afrikaner national architecture
- Visibility / invisibility: tracing absence / presence in Afrikaner nationalist art

Essays should be of previously unpublished work, between 6000 and 8000 words in length, and accompanied by up to six reproductions. Those whose proposals are accepted will be asked to submit their completed chapters by 15 January 2018.

If you are interested in contributing a chapter to this volume, please send an abstract of 300-400 words to all three editors (listed below) by no later than 31 May 2017.

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Please include "Imagining the Volk" in the subject line.

Reference:

CFP: Volume: Imagining the Volk. In: ArtHist.net, Apr 20, 2017 (accessed Jul 6, 2025),

<<https://arthist.net/archive/15281>>.