

Art History at 50 (Brighton, 25 Nov 17)

Brighton, Nov 25, 2017

Joanna Pawlik, University of Sussex

Art History at 50

Attenborough Centre for the Creative Arts, University of Sussex

This symposium investigates the history of Art History over the past 50 years, taking as its cue the founding of many leading UK Art History departments in the new wave of university building in the 1960s, including Sussex. This was part of the seismic shift in post-war higher education that saw the building of new universities: the so-called 'plateglass' or 'Shakespeare' universities, the first of which was Sussex. Six of the seven major institutions newly founded between 1961 and 1965 have leading Art History departments, mostly dating from the 1960s and 70s; and other departments of Art History were set up around the same time at longer established institutions, such as UCL. The consequent democratization of the teaching of Art History in 1960s Britain had enormous impact both on the politics of the discipline and also on its place within an overall higher education 'framework'. Using the occasion of this 50th anniversary decade, this symposium will revisit that 'new vision' for Art History, by investigating and reflecting on the history of Art History over the past 50 years, both at Sussex and beyond.

This cluster of anniversaries also provides a moment for reflection on the place of Art History in Britain in the 21st century. The symposium aims to provide a platform to pick up on this public awareness, to reflect on the current and historical importance of the discipline to wider intellectual debates; beyond academia, it also aims to understand its wider public value and perception. Through examining the history of the discipline and its pedagogy, this project, bringing together leading professionals from across the educational, museum and cultural sectors, will review the map of British Art History, in order better to understand its status in the 21st century and consider potential future directions.

Schedule

10.30 – 10.45: welcome and introduction

Session 1: 50 Years of Art History at Sussex

10.45 – 11.15: Tim Barringer, *Dangerous Liaisons: British Art and Critical Theory*

11.15 – 11.45: Marcia Pointon, *Disciplinary Dramas and Contextual Clashes*

11.45 – 12.15: Briony Fer, *Modern European Mind*

12.15 – 12.45: discussion

12.45 – 14.00: lunch

Session 2: Disciplinary and Cross-Disciplinary Frameworks

14.00 – 14.30: Robin Cormack, Ancient and Byzantine art history: fringes or mainstream?

14.30 – 15.00: Jules Lubbock, The Visual

15.00 – 15.30: Carol Tulloch, The Way I See It

15.30 – 16.30: round-table discussion with Evelyn Welch and Craig Clunas

Reference:

CONF: Art History at 50 (Brighton, 25 Nov 17). In: Arthist.net, Oct 28, 2017 (accessed Dec 22, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/16600>>.