

## (Re-)Forming Sculpture (Leeds, 26–27 Jun 18)

University of Leeds and The Hepworth Wakefield, Jun 26–27, 2018

Deadline: Mar 16, 2018

Caroline McCaffrey-Howarth

Call for Papers for the Association for Art History's 2-day Summer Symposium organised by the Doctoral and Early Career Research Network.

Keynote Speakers:

Martina Droth, Deputy Director of Research, Exhibitions, and Publications | Curator of Sculpture, Yale Center for British Art

Dr Rebecca Wade, Assistant Curator (Sculpture), Leeds Museums and Galleries, based at the Henry Moore Institute

Paper proposal deadline: 16 March 2018

This Association for Art History Summer Symposium is a two-day annual conference which will highlight current doctoral and early career research in the field of sculpture, within its widest art historical remit. Held between the School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies at the University of Leeds, and The Hepworth Wakefield, this conference hopes to unite the academic and curatorial disciplines of sculptural studies. As a socio-cultural space Leeds is celebrated for the study, production and display of sculpture. Artists such as Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth shared a gratitude to Leeds as a place of noteworthy influence on their work, and succeeded in leaving behind a significant legacy. A sustained interest in sculptural studies has continued, demonstrated by the formation of the Henry Moore Institute as the Henry Moore Centre for the Study of Sculpture within Leeds City Art Gallery in 1982, alongside associated initiatives including the Henry Moore Sculpture Studio, Dean Clough (1989), and the MA in Sculpture Studies at University of Leeds in 1990. In more recent times, 2011 witnessed the opening of the The Hepworth Wakefield, and in 2013 a partnership of the Sculpture Triangle was established between the Henry Moore Institute, Leeds Art Gallery, The Hepworth Wakefield and Yorkshire Sculpture Park.

Looking to the future, how can we best reconcile sculptural, scholarly, and curatorial practices, within Britain and further afield? This conference aims to continue to re-form previous narratives that have focused on monumental, figurative and free-standing sculpture, created in traditional 'higher' materials of plaster, marble, or bronze. Increased and expanded research around sculpture is embracing a re-thinking of materiality, aesthetics, the role played by gender and identity, and its nature as a critical form of representation. Since a shift towards more conceptual art practices in the 1960s onwards, and the associated opening up of medium categories and critique of the high modernist art object, scholarship has reassessed previous assumptions of what consti-

tutes sculpture, influenced by Rosalind Krauss' seminal work 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field' (1979). Moreover, scholars have concentrated on the rethinking of the sculptural object, its siting and context, with Alex Potts' phenomenological study of sculpture from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist* (2000), and more recently in Penelope Curtis' exhibition *Sculpture in Painting* (2009) at the Henry Moore Institute. Additionally, scholarship has taken into account the intersections between sculpture and the decorative arts, as demonstrated by the exhibition organized by Martina Droth between the Henry Moore Institute and the J. Paul Getty Museum entitled *Taking Shape: Finding Sculpture in the Decorative Arts* (2008-09). Considering the sculptural aspects inherent within painting, architecture, decorative arts, photography, and film, how might we think differently about sculpture as an art historical category in its own right? For example, how do wider notions of sculpture and its relationship with other art forms intersect with discourses relating to histories of collecting, display and place-making? How best can sculpture be re-formed (re-thought?) within academic and curatorial disciplines?

In light of these questions, this conference hopes to re-consider the boundaries and hierarchies of sculpture within art history and visual culture, broadening how it is understood in terms of its medium, form, materiality, and cultural significance. We welcome proposals for 20-minute papers which explore these themes or which address any other aspect of re-forming sculpture, from antiquity to the modern day. The Summer Symposium is organised by the Association for Art History's Doctoral and Early Career Research Network. The 2018 organisers are Caroline McCaffrey-Howarth (University of Leeds) and Clare Nadal (University of Huddersfield/ The Hepworth Wakefield).

Topics can include but are not limited to:

- The significance and legacies of sculptural heritage in Leeds and Yorkshire
- Hierarchies of sculpture as an art historical category
- Sculptural aspects of decorative arts, architecture, photography, painting, and film
- Non-traditional mediums for sculpture, e.g. porcelain, 3-d printing, light or digital sculpture, ephemeral or recycled material, such as dissolving clay, etc
- Histories of collecting or displaying sculpture
- Formations of private or public sculpture collections
- How sculpture is curated or framed in the modern museum or within an outdoor environment
- Practice-led or practice-based approaches to sculpture

To propose a paper: Please send a Word document with your contact information, paper title, an abstract of 300 words, and a short biographical note. The submission of abstract is open to current doctoral researchers and early career researchers within 3 years of receiving their doctorate.

Proposals should be sent to [reformsculptureforarthistory@gmail.com](mailto:reformsculptureforarthistory@gmail.com) by 16 March 2018.

Reference:

CFP: (Re-)Forming Sculpture (Leeds, 26-27 Jun 18). In: ArtHist.net, Jan 20, 2018 (accessed Apr 23, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/17136>>.