Connoisseurship in Contemporary Art Research (Helsinki, 29-30 Nov 18)

Helsinki, Finland, Nov 29–30, 2018
Deadline: May 28, 2018

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Conference "Connoisseurship in Contemporary Art Research"

In recent years the field of art research has become wider and polymorphous. There are at least two reasons for this. The first concerns the development and strengthening of artistic research in art academies since the late 1990's. Today artistic research has become an umbrella term that covers all kinds of art research, especially research that concerns contemporary art.

The other reason is a consequence of structural changes in the universities and their curricula. Through these changes traditional disciplines have been merged into one another, transformed or constituted together with nearby disciplines. At the same time, practically-oriented and specific study programs that serve working life, for example curatorial studies, have become more general and increased in numbers within universities. Amongst these developments there have also appeared changes in methodologies and theoretical apparatus.

Along with these changes art research and its research community has gained lot of attention, support leading to an overall strengthening of interest for art. But something might have also been lost. One such loss or debilities concerns connoisseurship of contemporary art and its research history. In other words, less emphasis is put on the knowledge of art and familiarity with it's research material. The lack of empirical knowledge about the studied object can lead to a situation where the research arguments are based on a weak evidence.

This conference focuses on connoisseurship in art and asks, what does it mean when connoisseurship is used in relation to contemporary art and its research? The point of departure is that connoisseurship has to do with the expertise, knowledge and familiarity of research material. To be a connoisseur you have to know, sometimes intimately, a large body of art and artistic work. That knowledge allows you to draw relevant conclusions and make significant arguments.

The intention is not to deny, underestimate or depreciate current theoretical tendencies in art research but to return the emphasis – at least for a moment – to the questions and themes that concern the material bases of the contemporary art research.

So we want to discuss topics like for example:
- What does empirical material mean in different disciplines?
- How does it differ for example between literature studies and art history?
- What is research material in art history and especially in contemporary art history?

- What is research material in artistic research?
- What are the sources in contemporary art research / in artistic research?

Please email your paper proposal to kuva.connoisseurship.conference@uniarts.fi by 28 May, 2018. You need to provide a title, an abstract (200–300 words) for a 20 minute paper, your name and institutional affiliation (if any).

The conference is organised by the Academy of Fine Arts, University of the Arts Helsinki in collaboration with Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, University of Helsinki and University of Turku.

Reference:

CFP: Connoisseurship in Contemporary Art Research (Helsinki, 29-30 Nov 18). In: ArtHist.net, Apr 26, 2018 (accessed Nov 12, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/17962>.