Session at CAA (New York, 10-13 Feb 21)

New York, Feb 10–13, 2021
Deadline: Jul 20, 2020

ArtHist Redaktion

[1] The Evolving House Museum: Art Collectors and Their Residences, Then and Now

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Session sponsored by the Society for the History of Collecting

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Date: 4 Jun 20

The National Trust for Historic Preservation estimates that more than 15,000 house museums exist in the United States. It is an astounding figure that, as one writer has noted, exceeds the country's number of McDonald's fast-food restaurants. House museums are founded for a variety of reasons, from preserving architecturally significant structures to safeguarding the former homes of historically or culturally noteworthy men and women and their legacies. In other cases esteemed art collectors, such as Henry Clay Frick or Albert C. Barnes, established museums in their former residences to house their collections in perpetuity rather than donating them to preexisting institutions. While many successful examples like the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum continue to thrive, other lesser-known house museums do not attract enough support to remain operational. House museums, it seems, must evolve in order to remain relevant and to continue to attract visitors.

This session encourages participants to explore a variety of themes relating to art collectors as founders of house museums in the United States and elsewhere. Questions to consider include, but are not limited to:
What motivates collectors to establish private house museums instead of donating their collections to preexisting institutions? How have collectors' original intentions manifested themselves in their museums and to what extent have founder mandates contributed to the survival or demise of their institutions? How have house museums' collections or buildings evolved over time, and how have museums reinterpreted their collections to remain relevant to contemporary and diverse audiences? Are these changes in keeping with or a departure from their founders' visions? And how have major historic events like the 2008 financial crisis or the recent COVID-19 pandemic impacted house museums?
Please send your proposal of ca. 250 words as well as your CV (3–5 pages) before July 20, 2020 to Margaret Iacono and Esmée Quodbach (evolvinghousemuseum2021@gmail.com).

Reference:
CFP: Session at CAA (New York, 10-13 Feb 21). In: ArtHist.net, Jun 12, 2020 (accessed Apr 25, 2024), <https://arthist.net/archive/23196>.