4 Sessions at AAH Annual Conference 21 (Birmingham, 14-17 Apr 21)

Birmingham, Jul 14–Apr 17, 2021
Deadline: Oct 19, 2020

[1] Challenging Orientalism: New questions of perception and reception
[2] Displaying Art in the Early Modern Period (1450 1750): Exhibiting practices and exhibition spaces
[3] The Social Life of Sculpture
[4] Video Art and Africa

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[1] Panel: Challenging Orientalism: New questions of perception and reception, at AAH Annual Conference Birmingham 14 - 17 April 2021

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Western visual culture has long depicted themes of Orientalism in paintings, drawings, sculptures, photographs and films. Since Linda Nochlin applied Edward Said's theory to paintings in 1983, these works have occupied a complex and often uncomfortable place in Western art history. Nevertheless, Orientalist artworks continue to present their dissonant character, as simultaneously crowd-pleasing favourites and critically discounted works. Recent exhibitions, including Oriental Visions: From Dreams into Light (Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris, 2019), Inspired by the East: How the Islamic World Influenced Western Art (British Museum, London, 2019–20) and Black Models: From Géricault to Matisse (Musée d'Orsay, Paris, 2019), reveal differing approaches to Orientalism and suggest a need to reconsider its place in contemporary art historiography.

Furthermore, the production of Orientalist visual culture did not end with postcolonialism. Contemporary examples continue to be produced and circulated, from the fine arts to cinema and the media, often without critical scrutiny. In parallel, the last decades have witnessed growing private and public collections of Orientalism throughout the Islamic world, notably in Abu Dhabi, Doha, Sharjah and Kuala Lumpur. How does their reception in these locations, and their inclusion and recontextualisation alongside collections of art from the Islamic world contribute to the existing Western art historical narrative? Where do Orientalist works sit in a postcolonial and neo-colonial world?

This session seeks to enlarge a contested field of art historical study by inviting submissions that re-evaluate its historiography, offer novel studies of Orientalist art from the 19th century to the modern day, and examine contemporary practices around its display and reception.

We are currently inviting paper proposals in the form of 250-word abstracts, using the form available here:

https://eu-admin.eventscloud.com/website/2065/sessions-2021/

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[2] Displaying Art in the Early Modern Period (1450 1750): Exhibiting practices and exhibition spaces

We invite paper proposals for our session at the Association for Art History's 2021 Annual Conference: "Displaying Art in the Early Modern Period (1450 1750): Exhibiting practices and exhibition spaces"

Over the years, despite the increased interest in spatial issues and some iconic studies (Luckhurst, Haskell, Koch), little attention has been paid to the long-term history of the exhibition space and exhibition-making practices. Before the appearance of the first painting exhibitions and the spaces specially designed to show collections, the idea of showing art was mainly related to the habit of dressing up spaces for political and religious commemorations, cultural festivals, and marketing strategies. Thus, various venues (palaces, cloisters, façades, squares, pavilions, auction houses, fairs, shops…), where sociability was performed and experienced, ended up becoming temporary and privileged platforms of exhibiting. What were those places and events? What aesthetic, cultural, social and political discourses intersected with the early idea of exhibition space? How did showing art shape a new vocabulary within these events and, vice-versa, how these occasions had conditioned exhibiting practices? Who were the producers, actors and spectators of these processes, devices, and spaces? How can we relate early exhibition logic with art history and exhibition design theories? Which kinds of sources (treatises, depictions) are involved?
The panel proposes to reconsider those events and habits that contributed to defining exhibition-making practices and to shaping the imagery of the exhibition space in the early modern period (1450–1750). Also, it seeks to define a new geography of exhibiting, not limited to Europe but expanded to include exhibiting practices in the early modern Americas, Africa, and Asia. It encourages connections between art history, exhibition studies, and architectural history, and studies crossing micro-histories and long-term changes, in order to open new perspectives of study and to foster historiographical research through an interdisciplinary approach.

We invite proposals for 20-minute papers. Please download and submit the completed proposal form to the session co-conveners (pamelabianchi1@gmail.com). Abstract length is maximum 250 words.

https://forarthistory.org.uk/our-work/conference/2021-annual-conference/

Association for Art History's 47th Annual Conference (AAH), University of Birmingham, April 14 - 17, 2021
Deadline-CFP: 19 Oct. 2020

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[3] The Social Life of Sculpture

We invite paper proposals for our session at the Association for Art History's 2021 Annual Conference:

THE SOCIAL LIFE OF SCULPTURE

In contemporary artist Paul Chan's estimation, 'art is more and less than a thing' ('What Art Is and Where It Belongs,' e-flux journal 10, 2009). Taking this claim, as well as anthropologist Arjun Appadurai's influential formula of The Social Life of Things (Cambridge UP 1988), as points of departure, this panel will investigate the social life of art, and more specifically sculpture, by looking closely at artistic practices that chal-

lenge standard histories of the monument across varying periods and places. Within the context of 20th to 21st century art, such an inquiry might engage categories of assemblage or the readymade; in more transhistorical terms, this could involve reassessing the afterlives of ancient or classical modes of sculpture. Above all, we are looking for moments in which the unexpected resonance of 'things' is found. Rather than practices that simply celebrate the agency of things or the vibrancy of matter, we will consider how material and object choices call attention to historical and political conundrums. Whether by highlighting the significance of artefacts of popular culture or by excavating neglected materials and giving them new life, artists have engaged with the evocative potential of materials, their unstable sensibility, and the ways meaning is altered by context. We welcome papers that explore these connections and mine how artists deploy the social life of sculpture as a means to problematise both historic and imminent moments of geo-political crisis.

Session Convenors:
Christian Berger, Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, christian.berger@uni-mainz.de
Heather Diack, University of Miami, h.diack@miami.edu

Please submit your paper proposal directly to the Session Convenors via their email addresses using this form:
https://eu-admin.eventscloud.com/file_uploads/5962db02fddbe6985530763556cbee8f_PaperProposalForm.doc

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: Monday 19 October 2020

Post COVID-19 plans
Whilst it's difficult to know for certain how the current and future situation around COVID-19 might evolve, the Association for Art History does intend to host a 2021 Annual Conference. This will either be as a physical event in Birmingham, as a virtual event or, most likely, as a hybrid combination of physical and digital. We will be monitoring government guidelines and the situation closely and will look to make a decision on physical or virtual no later than 1 December 2020. A physical conference would adhere to all government and university health and safety rules, and we are already working towards a programme that takes existing social-distancing measures into account. If we have to pursue a virtual-only event it would not be compressed into the exact same four days, so as to accommodate different time zones and minimise screen fatigue.

Please note that all convenors and speakers must register and pay to attend the conference by the deadline as specified by the Association for Art History website:
https://forarthistory.org.uk/our-work/the-annual-conference/

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[4] Video Art and Africa

Session Convenors:
Katarzyna Falęcka, Centre d'Études Maghrébines à Tunis (CEMAT), Falecka.Katarzyna@caorc.org
Gabriella Nugent, UCL, gabriella.nugent.14@ucl.ac.uk

This session invites paper proposals that explore the deployment of video art by artists from Africa. Developed in the 1960s, video art emerged in the era of decolonisation, and its accessible technologies were later taken up by many people who had stories to tell. It is a medium of relative historical recentness and today favoured by artists operative in global contemporary networks. However, in comparison to the vast

and growing literature on African cinema, there is relatively little scholarship on video art from Africa. This session seeks to explore how artists from Africa have specifically employed the languages enabled by video, such as montage, the loop, repetition and duration, to work through both the distant and more recent pasts in Africa.

We are particularly interested in video works that explore histories of colonialism, decolonisation and nation-building projects. The archival turn in art has led artists to rework historical documents through video to elucidate local experiences and to contest old and clichéd assumptions with something previously unthought, unheard or unseen. These practices raise questions as to who owns history and how historical documents can be performed within the distinct needs and expectations of the present. Simultaneously, video has stepped in to address feminist histories, questions of labour, race and class, as well as transregional alliances. The panel thus invites proposals for papers which explore the potential, as well as possible shortcomings, of video art for addressing these histories.

Abstract max. 250 words. Deadline 19 October 2020.

Please email your paper proposal to the session convenors using the Paper Proposal Form (https://bit.ly/3eVYWZu).

Link to the session information: https://eu-admin.eventscloud.com/website/2065/video-art-and-africa/

Reference:
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