

Re-Writing Objects & Histories of Sculpture (London, 11–12 May 12)

The Courtauld Institute of Art, Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 0RN, May
11–12, 2012

Deadline: Mar 23, 2012

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Call for Papers

MOVING IN THREE DIMENSIONS:
RE-WRITING THE OBJECTS AND HISTORIES OF SCULPTURE
(A Conference on Sculpture and Change)

Papers are invited for the conference 'Moving in Three Dimensions: Re-writing the Objects and Histories of Sculpture', the concluding event of the Research Forum project on sculpture and change, 'Three Approaches to Three Dimensions'.

Although it provides an opportunity to explore some of the issues raised by the preceding workshops, participation in the earlier stages of the project is not necessary in order to present a paper at the conference.

The Conference will be structured around three themes, addressing some of the motivations for changes to sculpture and its contexts, their outcomes and the new approaches to writing their histories which they call for.

Contributions are sought from those who pursue the art-historical investigation of sculpture, those concerned with its curation and display and those responsible for its conservation and technical examination. Each session will be thematically focused, without bias to either period or discipline, drawing on a wide range of methodologies and expertise.

SESSION 1: CONVERSION, ICONOCLASM AND REVOLUTION

The discourse surrounding the traumatic events leading to the removal, transport and relocation of sculpture often centres on the acts of destruction associated with revolution and iconoclasm. However, the changes resulting from re-use and conversion, whether spiritual,

functional or symbolic, are as important to our understanding of the objects and locations of sculpture in their surviving states as are the records and physical traces of loss. Papers are invited for this session which approach issues raised by changes made to sculpture in situ, objects whose location has remained static whilst their function has been altered, and the disfigurement, dismemberment and disguise of sculpture in the face of radically shifting social and political contexts.

SESSION 2: PLUNDER, EXPORT AND SALE

Questions of the export and redisplay of sculpture, whether as the result of sale or plunder (and of whether those two means of acquisition can justifiably be separated) are pertinent not only to the kinds of looking which are made available in their aftermath but also to those modes of address to objects and contexts which are lost. Whilst the restitution and re-housing of many sold and plundered objects continues to be sought, it is seldom into their original place of display and begs the question of whether a type of location such as a museum or gallery is significantly (or in any way) different depending on its broader location in a particular city or country. This session will feature papers addressing some of the issues surrounding the local and global movement of sculpture, its markets, the traces it leaves and the ways in which it is recorded.

SESSION 3: COMPETITION, COLLECTION AND CLASSIFICATION

The study of sculpture has, to varying degrees, been conditioned by the classification of its objects. This has been accomplished not only according to their medium, place of origin and maker, but by the groups into which they have been collected, collections often fuelled by competition between nations, institutions and individuals. This session will focus on the presentation and investigation of sculpture within the confines of these artificial groupings. It will comprise contributions exploring the opportunities for new sculptural scholarship that such groupings present, the ways in which they have determined the course of sculptural historiography and the mechanisms by which they have been brought together.

Please send proposals of no more than 250 words by 23 March 2012 to jim.harris@courtauld.ac.uk

Conference papers will last twenty minutes.

For more information on the preceding workshops and the conference please see:

<http://www.courtauld.ac.uk/researchforum/events/2011/autumn/ThreeDimensions.shtml>

Organised by Dr Jim Harris (The Courtauld Institute of Art)

Reference:

CFP: Re-Writing Objects & Histories of Sculpture (London, 11-12 May 12). In: ArtHist.net, Mar 3, 2012
(accessed Sep 13, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/2835>>.