

23rd Ann Conf South African Visual Arts Historians (Johannesburg, Sept 2007)

Jillian Carman

First Call for Papers: 23rd Annual Conference of the South African Visual Arts Historians (SAVAH), University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 12 – 15 September 2007

'SOUTH AFRICAN ART HISTORY IN AN AFRICAN CONTEXT'

Recent SAVAH conferences have served as platforms for critical debates on transformation, with a focus on the extent to which these debates have transpired within the context of institutional, historical, social and political changes in South Africa. The forthcoming conference, at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, aims to direct this focus more clearly onto the disciplines of art history and visual arts studies per se by interrogating the ways in which these essentially Western disciplines are being (re)written and studied in South Africa in relation to South Africa's status within a wider African discourse.

We invite papers that address issues and problematics around the ways in which art history and visual arts studies are theorised, studied, and practised in the (South) African context, as well as papers that invoke these theoretical issues in relation to artworks and art-making practices. These may well engage issues raised by the following rubrics through specific case studies:

Methodological issues in art history/visual arts studies in (South) Africa: papers under this rubric could look at modes of writing as they relate to artists' biographies; ethnic classifications; constructions of meaning; the art/craft debate; questioning the canon in relation to a South African or wider African context.

Historiographical issues in art history/visual arts studies in (South) Africa: papers under this rubric could include constructions of narrative dealing with historical exclusions and inclusions; who has done the writing; circulation and distribution; notions of ownership of knowledge; the establishing of aesthetic value (as resistance / as convention).

The production and archiving of art history, i.e. the role of major events, exhibitions, and competitions in the shaping of African discourse; corporate support for the arts/corporate collections; the 'afterlife' of

catalogues; the role of commercial galleries; debates around public space/public art and architecture; issues around digital / virtual archiving.

Educational issues (possibly in a workshop format): how is art history/visual studies taught at secondary and tertiary levels ; examining the lack of art history/visual studies in the South African/African school systems; engaging transformation within the context of visual studies; publishing for education; research in education.

We also envision a student session for presentation of postgraduate research that addresses these rubrics.

Please forward a provisional title and abstract (approx. 300 words) to Prof. Anitra Nettleton, Division of Visual Arts, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg 2050 / E-mail Anitra.Nettleton@wits.ac.za by Friday 13 April 2007.

Dr Jillian Carman
14 Lurgan Road
Parkview
Johannesburg
2193
South Africa
Tel +27 11 646 5039
Mobile 083 227 9843
Fax +27 11 710 6117
jillianc@bellatrix.co.za

Reference:

CFP: 23rd Ann Conf South African Visual Arts Historians (Johannesburg, Sept 2007). In: ArtHist.net, Feb 13, 2007 (accessed Jul 1, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/28983>>.