

Migration and the Visual Arts in Denmark (Copenhagen, 24 Sep 21)

The Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, Copenhagen, Sep 24, 2021

Deadline: Apr 2, 2021

Nicholas Parkinson

Crossing Borders: Migration and the Visual Arts in Denmark, 1800-2021

The purpose of this conference is to highlight the migration of artists and ideas to Denmark over the past 200+ years and to examine their collective influence on the history of the visual arts. From museums to art history books, Denmark is presented as a historically monocultural society whose artistic production has centred on the expression of Danish national identity. Immigration and multiculturalism, by contrast, are described as new social phenomena, unknown to Denmark and the Danish art scene before the 1960s. However, recent scholarship has cast doubt on these ethnocentric historical assumptions, demonstrating that migration and multiculturalism are not new to Denmark, but rather have established traditions visible within Denmark's museums and collections, artistic practices, and communities.

This conference therefore invites new and multidisciplinary scholarship that examines the long legacy of migration and its influence on the visual arts in Denmark to bridge the present with the past. We invite presenters from diverse traditions including, but not limited to, art historians, museum professionals, artists, sociologists, and political historians to present research on the history of visual arts (painting, sculpture, architecture, photography, film, illustration, post-media practices, etc.) in Denmark. Papers should follow along one or more of the following subthemes:

- Migrant Artists and Their Communities in Denmark. This subtheme invites papers examining the lives of artists who have migrated to, studied, or worked in Denmark, as well as the work of Danish artists who are descendants of migrants or transnational adoptees. Papers that challenge the importance of monocultural nationalism to Danish society, including through analyses of multilingualism, regional identities, entangled definitions of nationality, and national indifference, are also encouraged.

- Laws, Institutions, and Patrons. This subtheme invites papers examining persons, practices, and institutions in Denmark that have supported the careers of migrant artists and promoted pluralism in the Danish art world. Papers might address the influence of individual persons and institutions such as patrons, gallerists, and funding bodies, or papers might analyze the effects of broader environmental factors such as changes in legislation and law enforcement practices.

- Representing the Past for the Present. This subtheme invites papers examining the representation of migrants in art historical spaces in Denmark, including museums, universities, and public spaces, or the lack thereof. Papers might take a historiographic lens of analysis to explain the absence and erasure of migrant histories, or alternatively suggest new strategies for representing non-monocultural histories in the future.

- Regions, Centers, and Peripheries. This subtheme invites papers that reread Danish art history by focusing on geography and the significance of connections across space, locally and longer distance. Papers might challenge conventional center-periphery models or examine new or overlooked geographical models.

Applicants should submit a 300 word abstract along with a CV to Nicholas Parkinson (nikp@glyp-toteket.dk) by April 2nd, 2021. Limited financial support will be available to help cover travel expenses for speakers travelling outside of the Copenhagen metropolitan area. Speakers unable to travel due to legal, employment, or health restrictions will have the chance to deliver their talks remotely via videoconference.

Lead Organizer: Nicholas Parkinson, Ph.D., Mads Øvlisen Postdoctoral Fellow, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek

Scientific Committee

Anne Ring Petersen, Dr.phil, Ph.D., Professor, University of Copenhagen

Nicol Savinetti, Ph.D., Director, IMMART - International Migration Meets the Arts

Kristian Handberg, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, University of Copenhagen

Rasmus Kjærboe, Ph.D., Curator, The Hirschsprung Collection

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