

Character in an Interior / Character of an Interior (13–15 Jan 22)

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Faculty of Art Studies, Jan 13–15, 2022

Deadline: Oct 31, 2021

Martyna Łukasiewicz

Character in an Interior/Character of an Interior
International Conference on Vilhelm Hammershøi

The first exhibition of Vilhelm Hammershøi (1864–1916) in Poland (organized by the National Museum in Poznan: 21.11.2021–23.01.2022 and the National Museum in Krakow: 04.03–08.05.2022) provides an opportunity for international, scholarly debate on Hammershøi, inspired by one of the most significant themes in his work. The remarkable interiors, empty or with a lone figure, invite reflections on narrative efficiency, complexity of palette, the role of light, contemplative mood, and sense of space, all of which interact with, and inflect, our understanding of the composition. Although Hammershøi's interiors contain a limited number of motifs, all his works are characterized by a significant iconic-spatial complexity. These interiors offer different directions of gaze and open up various perspectives. The tension between a partial opening of space and a simultaneous closure of access to it defines the visual dramaturgy of many of Hammershøi's paintings. These features, which are further complicated by intangible qualities of the medium – such as surfaces that are at once substantial and ephemeral – challenge the viewer in ways that protract the moment of perception. This nexus of the literal and the implied, of presence and absence, suggest certain key questions.

Among the most important of these are the nature of a figure's presence and the relationship of that figure to surroundings that feature a modest, but often meaningful, selection of motifs: windows, doors, pictures in frames, furniture, mirrors, etc. Furthermore, a situation in which the interior is as much a sphere of intimacy for the character as a limitation upon it may provoke a multilevel analysis that takes into account, for example, the discrete narrative potential of a scene.

One of the key issues in Hammershøi's art, namely the relationship between figure and place, is among the essential themes of modern art. As a result, Hammershøi's works are included in a very wide array of artistic and historical phenomena across various geographies. That is why we aim to examine painterly comparisons with a broad range of historical and geographical references, and to reflect on the interior theme in a wide perspective: one that includes, but is not limited to, the aesthetics of reception, the hermeneutics of the image or intertextuality. Hammershøi's art also encourages questions about the image-viewer relationship, self-reflective motifs, as well as the tension between visible and invisible, and the relationship between photography and painting.

On the one hand, we aim to examine issues that define Hammershøi's painterly idiom from various points of view. On the other hand, we want to explore references in Hammershøi's works to

the artistic tradition and art of his time, within Denmark and beyond, to examine the nature of his reception among artists and writers, and to extrapolate from these analyses an understanding of how Danish paintings generally interacted with those of other, European artists.

Guidelines for Proposal Submissions:

Please send the paper abstract not to exceed 500 words and short CV including affiliation and contact information by October 31, 2021 to: hammershoiconference@amu.edu.pl

Conference languages: English, Polish

Contact: Martyna Łukasiewicz, m.lukasiewicz@amu.edu.pl

Organizers:

Faculty of Art Studies, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

Centre for Nineteenth-Century Studies, Aarhus University

National Museum in Poznań

Keynote speakers:

Maria Poprzęcka, Professor, Collegium Artes Liberales, University of Warsaw

Peter Nørgaard Larsen, Chief Curator, National Gallery of Denmark

Gertrud Oelsner, Director, Hirschsprung Collection

Reference:

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(accessed Jul 8, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/34735>>.