

Oral Histories/Museum Histories (Brighton/online, 14 Jul 22)

Online/University of Brighton (UK)

Deadline: May 17, 2022

blogs.brighton.ac.uk/centrefordesignhistory/2022/04/06/event-oral-histories-museum-histories-june-2022/

Claire Wintle

Please join the Centre for Design History at the University of Brighton for a series of online lectures in June and a workshop in July (CFP below, deadline May 17) on the role of oral histories in researching museum histories.

Organised by Dr Claire Wintle (University of Brighton), Dr Linda Sandino (Victoria and Albert Museum), and Andrea Potts (University of Brighton).

How can oral history be used to research museums?

Oral history is an established research method in the broad field of cultural studies; museums often develop oral history projects with their external communities to enrich their collections and 'people' history beyond the museum walls. In recent years, however, researchers and practitioners have begun to use oral history to study the museum itself.

Oral history has the potential to shed light on how museums function as institutions as well as attending to subjective and personal experiences within those institutions. Yet it remains an under-developed method in the study of museums. In this future-oriented series of online public talks and in-person collaborative workshop, we seek to reflect upon the strengths and limitations of oral history to develop a shared practice in the study of museum institutional histories. Together, we will consider the following questions:

How can oral histories attend to the specificities of the museum context?

What insights into museums can oral histories produce?

What forms of museum knowledge do oral histories produce and how can we critically analyse them?

What are the limitations of using oral histories to research museum histories and how might we overcome them?

We hope that this programme will bring together a research community and stimulate further research projects going forward.

Online Public Talks, open to all (for details on how to register, please see below)

Pamela Henson, Smithsonian Libraries & Archives, US – 'Oral Histories at the Smithsonian' – Tuesday 14 June, 14:00-15:00 BST

Priyanka Seshadri, Independent Archivist, Delhi, India – ‘Oral Histories in Indian Museums’ – Thursday 23 June, 13:00-14:00 BST

Inkeri Hakamies, University of Helsinki, Finland – ‘Studying Finnish Museum Stories’ – Wednesday 29 June, 16:00-17:00 BST

Register for the online talks here:
<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/centre-for-design-history-university-of-brighton>

In-person workshop: Thursday 14 July 2022: 10am-5pm

Building on these public talks, the Centre for Design History at the University of Brighton will host a day-long, in-person workshop for those who wish to develop their methodological approaches to oral histories in relation to museum histories. 12-15 participants from all career stages who are working with oral histories or interviews as part of their research into museum practice will come together to share insights and explore the benefits and challenges of this approach. The workshop will be facilitated by Linda Sandino, co-editor of *Oral History in the Visual Arts* (Bloomsbury, 2013). Sandino has led and helped to develop several pioneering oral history projects relating to creative practice, including VIVA (Voices in the Visual Arts), life histories in art and design for National Life Stories at the British Library Sound Archive, and a major project documenting the history of curating at the V&A (London).

To apply to join the workshop, please submit a 300-word application (plus short bio) as a word.-doc by Tuesday May 17th 2022 to: centrefordesignhistory@brighton.ac.uk Please include your name, institution where applicable and a contact email. Early Career Researchers, PhD students, and museum practitioners are especially welcome. There will be some preparatory tasks set in advance of the workshop.

Your statement should address:

The subject of your research

The role and value that oral history (or interviewing) has played or will play in your work

The challenges and questions you are currently facing in the use of this method

Please note, we propose to share these statements with the members of the workshop in advance.

The workshop is generously funded by the Centre for Design History and the Centre for Memory, Narrative and Histories at the University of Brighton: places are free, and there are also four modest bursaries available to contribute to travel costs (£50). These are aimed at those who do not have institutional support to attend. If you would like to be considered for a bursary, please state this on your application. Successful applicants will be informed of their place by May 27th 2022.

More information can be found here:
<https://blogs.brighton.ac.uk/centrefordesignhistory/2022/04/06/event-oral-histories-museum-histories-june-2022/>

Reference:

CFP: Oral Histories/Museum Histories (Brighton/online, 14 Jul 22). In: ArtHist.net, Apr 13, 2022 (accessed

Jul 17, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/36391>>.