

Transcultural Positions in Curating and Pedagogies (online/Dresden, 14–16 Jul 22)

online / Dresden, Jul 14–16, 2022

Deadline: May 22, 2022

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Lessons Learned? Transcultural Positions in Curating and Pedagogies

Location: Dresden State Art Collections (Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden/SKD), Dresden, Germany in the framework of the second edition of the Transcultural Academy organised at the Japanese Palace.

Organized by the Worlding Public Cultures team of Heidelberg University

As the drive to expand, explore and inform museum collections through global histories gains momentum, a pressing question remains: what is the role of art historical pedagogy in the museum? The concept of pedagogy is etymologically posited on the distinction between an adult and a child, and privileges teaching over learning. In past decades, there has been a decisive move to rethink the role of museums away from teaching through visuality (Alpers) towards becoming sites of emancipatory and critical learning. Exhibitions such as the Documentas X and XI (curated by Catherine David in 1997 and Okwui Enwezor in 2002 respectively) or the iteration of Havana Biennale directed by Gerardo Mosquera in 1989, adopted open transactions across curating, learning and teaching. In addition, a growing number of cross-disciplinary platforms and collectives across the Global North and South – small in scale, locally anchored, and horizontally organized – have brought forth radical modes of cultural critique and transnational networks opposing exploitation, precarity, homophobia, militarization and xenophobia. The radicalism of such “micro-organizations” (von Osten) has now begun to rebound on larger institutions. Presently, a number of museums, particularly in Europe and North America, are introducing forms of self-reflection about audiences and collections.

The international Academy, ‘Lessons Learned? Transcultural Positions in Curating and Pedagogies’, explores the successes and failures of existing pedagogical practices in museums, and potentials for new transcultural and ‘worlded’ approaches. Conceptualized by Heidelberg University’s team of the international research project, ‘Worlding Public Cultures: The Arts and Social Innovation’, this Academy will unfold as a three day series of on-site and virtual discussions, excursions and exhibition visits around the Dresden State Art Collections (SKD) from the 14-16 July 2022. The SKD museums hold amongst the most important and expansive present-day collections in Germany. They speak to histories of transcultural collecting and conservation in Germany since the 16th century. Later in 2022, SKD will hold a ‘Transcultural Academy’ at the Japanese Palace to rethink curatorial presentations, and audience engagement via an artist residency programme. Funded by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media (BKM), this

aims to rethink and reflect upon the role of ethnographic collections in the context of current debates around decolonization.

'Lessons Learned? Transcultural Positions in Curating and Pedagogies' invites scholars from the fields of Art History, Transcultural Studies, Anthropology among others, alongside museum professionals, critics, activists and artists and others to deliver panel papers of 20 minutes around one or several of the following questions:

- What methodological practices are needed to embrace transcultural and 'worlded' approaches in museum curating, research, archiving and public outreach?
- How can museum taxonomies be 'retold' through research based on collaboration and consultation?
- What strategies (such as cross-disciplinary studies of language, society and embodied cultural practices) can museums employ to surmount museums' emphasis on visibility and material culture?
- What is the role do funding bodies and selection committees play with regards to research and curatorial outputs?
- What different approaches to 'decolonizing' museums have been developed so far?

Please submit abstracts of no more than 500 words and a short biography (150 words) to Dr. Eva Bentcheva (eva.bentcheva@hcts.uni-heidelberg.de) by 22 May 2022. Travel to and from Dresden, as well as accommodation for 3-4 nights (depending on arrival from international or regional destinations) will be covered by the Academy organizers.

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Reference:

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