

Curating Magic (online, 29 Oct 22)

Online, Oct 29, 2022

Deadline: Aug 15, 2022

Helen Bremm, Cambridge

BAN Seminar: Curating Magic

British Art Network (BAN) seminar exploring magic as content, theory and/or practice in exhibition making

Magic '... the means of approaching the unknown by other ways than those of science or religion.'
(Max Ernst, 1946)

Inspired by exhibitions such as *The Dark Monarch: Magic and Modernity in British Art* (Tate St Ives, 2009/2010), *Enchanted Modernities: Mysticism, Landscape, and the American West* (Nora Eccles Harrison Museum of Art, 2014), *Spellbound: Magic, Ritual & Witchcraft* (Ashmolean, 2018/2019) and most recently *Surrealism and Magic: Enchanted Modernity* (Peggy Guggenheim Collection and Museum Barberini, 2022), as well as recent publications including *Magic*, the latest of the Whitechapel's Documents of Contemporary Art (2021, edited by Jamie Sutcliffe), this call for papers encourages research on the ways in which magical thought and practice are central to art and culture. It considers how magic's continued importance as counter-cultural force and epistemological strategy might be reflected in art, art history and curation, and hopes to reappraise how occultism and magic might be reflected not only in the content of an exhibition but how they might, in turn, inform curatorial practice itself.

To this end, we invite proposals for 20-minute-long presentations on magic and magical thinking as the content of, or curatorial strategy behind, art exhibitions. The seminar aims to facilitate dialogue between curators, artists, those working within museum learning, interpretation and programming, early-career researchers and anyone interested in pursuing curating. A keynote will be followed by presentations and a panel Q&A. The presentations can cover a range of aspects regarding the intersections of art and magic in curating, including but not limited to:

- Making visible the invisible
- Mediating the materiality of magic
- Archival and institutional context of occult artworks and collections research
- Presenting magical objects versus visual arts influenced by magical traditions
- Transnational and decolonial approaches to magic and art
- Explorations in mediumistic art, or the spirit world as artistic/curatorial inspiration

Please send abstracts of 300 words, accompanied by a short bio, to curatingmagic2022@gmail.com by 15th August 2022. We are aiming to confirm selection by 31st

August 2022.

Seminar Organisers:

Helen Bremm Doctoral researcher, Trinity College, University of Cambridge

Tor Scott Collection & Research Assistant, National Galleries of Scotland, AHRC-funded collaborative doctoral researcher with the University of Edinburgh

Emma Sharples AHRC-funded collaborative doctoral researcher with Tate and the University of Cambridge

This seminar is kindly supported by the British Art Network and we are able to offer a speaker fee.

Reference:

CFP: Curating Magic (online, 29 Oct 22). In: ArHist.net, Jun 16, 2022 (accessed Dec 20, 2025),

<<https://arthist.net/archive/36964>>.