

The Exhibition as Interior (online, 9 May 23)

Online / Kingston University, London, UK, May 09, 2023

Deadline: Dec 5, 2022

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Call for Papers - The Exhibition as Interior

Conference (Online), Tues 9th May 2023

The Modern Interiors Research Centre, Kingston University, London, UK

Exhibitions have long been studied by scholars in the fields of art, design, and architectural history and cultural studies. They have, for example, been seen as representations of national or global identities; as communicators of a range of ideologies, from political fascism to Cold War socialism and corporate capitalism; and, most recently as tools for undertaking and sharing research. They have long been understood as having a didactic and/or a commercial function. Very often, however, the focus has been more upon their contents and their narratives than on their design. Very seldom have they been considered as a specific type of constructed interior.

This conference addresses histories, theories, and practices of exhibitions as interiors in a wide range of settings. They could include examples in purpose-built exhibition halls, pavilions, museums, and galleries, or others which temporarily occupy pre-existing structures such as hotels, department stores, transport spaces, heritage sites or private houses. It welcomes papers which consider the whole interior of the exhibition, from the building, the part of a building, or the temporary enclosure in which it is set, to the navigation within it. It embraces research on the spatial, material, and virtual qualities of exhibitions, the sensorial and the performative, as well as the political, social, ecological, and educational. It will also explore the roles and experiences of figures including the exhibition designer, curator, programmer, and exhibition visitor. Exhibitions under review could range from the cultural to the commercial and engage with examples created in both institutional and non-institutional settings, by amateurs and professionals, and through interdisciplinary, collaborative and/or participatory practices.

This new approach towards exhibitions as constructed interiors will open the possibility of engaging with ideas discussed in relation to interiors in general, from interiority to the relationship between the private and the public realms. It will also establish exhibitions as a site for discussion of themes of contemporary relevance, such as decolonisation, gender politics and the climate emergency. Importantly, the conference will also interrogate the consequences of adopting this perspective for contemporary curatorial and exhibition design practices.

Proposals for papers could address the following:

The exhibition as an interior space of modernity

The exhibition as an urban interior

The interior space of the purpose-built exhibition hall

Exhibitions in domestic spaces

From the physical to the virtual exhibition space

Exhibitions in cultural spaces, eg. museums, galleries, libraries, heritage sites

Exhibitions in public and commercial spaces, eg. department stores, transport spaces, industrial spaces

The exhibition as a sensorial space

The exhibition as a narrative space

The exhibition as a space of re/presentation

The exhibition as a space of research/experimentation/speculation

The exhibition as a space of power

The exhibition as spaces of temporality

The exhibition as political space

The exhibition as side of production

The exhibition as made, designed and crafted space

The exhibition as reconstructed exhibition space

Please submit an abstract of 300 words (Word doc) for a paper presentation based on original, unpublished research, including your name and institutional affiliation, to Professor Penny Sparke p.sparke@kingston.ac.uk and to Associate Professor Jana Scholze j.scholze@kingston.ac.uk by Monday 5th December 2022.

Reference:

CFP: The Exhibition as Interior (online, 9 May 23). In: ArtHist.net, Oct 4, 2022 (accessed Sep 17, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/37584>>.