

The Arctic throughout History: Visual & Cultural Conceptions (New York 4 Apr 24)

The New York Public Library, Apr 05, 2024

Deadline: Oct 16, 2023

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The Arctic throughout History: Visual and Cultural Conceptions.

We invite the submission of abstracts for papers to be presented at the symposium The Arctic throughout History: Visual and Cultural Conceptions, organized in conjunction with the exhibition The Awe of the Arctic: A Visual History at the New York Public Library. The exhibition is an in-depth study of visual depictions of the Arctic, both real and imagined, throughout the last 500 years. Drawing heavily on the Library's collection of prints, photographs, and books, the exhibition seeks to understand the ways in which the Arctic was depicted and disseminated throughout Europe and America, while also challenging its historical and contemporary romanticization.

The symposium will bring together scholars working across the humanities who are interested in questions about how the Arctic has been represented and understood historically, and its relevance in our global culture today. It asks questions such as: What sort of visual or textual sources became the authorities on the Arctic region, and how do they shape the persistence of certain stereotypes or myths about the far North? How should we consider illustrations in relation to textual narratives and scientific data? How are contemporary artists using (or are inspired by) the Arctic in relation to its environment, history, and community? What can we learn from histories of the Arctic to reframe current understandings of the landscape and its people?

Paper topics might include (but are not limited to):

- Individual studies of artists (painters, photographers, printmakers, or filmmakers) working in the Arctic or their artworks
- Early depictions of the Arctic
- Studies of maps and shifting Arctic geography
- The Arctic as portrayed in fictional literature
- Women in the Arctic
- The representation of natural phenomena in the Arctic, such as the aurora borealis, paraselene, or parhelion
- Portrayals of Indigenous communities and customs
- The in/visibility of Arctic colonialism and capitalism
- Individual expedition narratives and national pursuits
- The cult of the Explorer and embellished narratives
- Arctic ephemera, taxidermy, and relics
- Popular artifacts depicting Arctic scenes such as stereographs, cigarette cards, trade cards, post-

cards, games

- Technology and representation in the Arctic (printmaking, cameras, color photography)
- Climate change and artistic expression
- Arctic wildlife and its representation

We invite proposals for 20-minute presentations.

Please submit a 250-word abstract and maximum 2-page CV by October 16, 2023 to arcticsymposium@nypl.org

Organizers: Elizabeth Cronin and Maggie Mustard

The Arctic throughout History: Visual and Cultural Conceptions is organized in conjunction with the exhibition The Awe of the Arctic: A Visual History at The New York Public Library, March 15-July 13, 2024.

Reference:

CFP: The Arctic throughout History: Visual & Cultural Conceptions (New York 4 Apr 24). In: ArtHist.net, Sep 12, 2023 (accessed Jun 7, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/39980>>.