Routledge Companion to Art Biennials

Deadline: Jan 31, 2024

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We invite abstracts for chapters of previously unpublished work to be included in the Routledge Companion to Art Biennials, which is under contract and is expected to be published in 2025. Editors: Nanne Buurman and Panos Kompatsiaris.

Art biennials are periodic manifestations of large-scale, international, and group art shows that take place every two or more years in a certain city or location. Drawing on the legacies of historical exhibitions of this kind, including the Venice Biennale (founded in 1895), São Paulo Art Biennial (founded in 1951), and documenta (founded in 1955), the art biennial has become a format that not only addresses but also shapes publics around the world. Varying in scope, scale and budget, biennials can be found on all continents and in over 100 countries, serving a variety of cultural, social, political and economic functions. Since the 1990s, art biennials have therefore been the subject not just of art history but of interdisciplinary study touching upon a plethora of aspects, including the histories of exhibition-making, the dynamics of creative labour and the creation of new urbanities in the context of capitalist globalization. As an emerging field in the process of an institutionalization, biennial studies draw on art historical, anthropological, sociological, political-economic and curatorial approaches to explore the cultural, political and economic implications of biennials. The Companion aims at producing a comprehensive account of biennials in their complexity and ambiguity, grouping together writers from diverse disciplinary, geographical, and professional backgrounds and stages of their careers. Overall, the volume aims to become a key reference point in biennial studies, presenting the current state of research in the field as well as opening up transdisciplinary and transnational horizons for future biennial research.

We are looking for proposals related but not limited to the following topics/keywords:
histories of individual biennials or clusters of biennales in specific regions; fields of biennial production, publication and distribution; cultural networks, foundations and associations; biennales and museums; medialities, formats, forms and displays; (post)digital conditions; historiographies and epistemologies, theories and methods of biennale research; stories, gossip, speculations; socio political contexts and functions; cultural politics and biennale policy;(im)possibilities of representation; (post)socialist conditions; (post)nationalism, (post)fascism, neoliberalism; gentrification and the urban space; cosmopolitanism and nomadism; glocal audiences; (post)colonial conditions; posthumanism; ecology and sustainability; exoticization and discrimination; identity politics; restitution, repair, reflexivity; curatorial discourses and practices; new curatorships; publics and outreach; (post)curatorial conditions; artists-as-curators, curators-as-artists; collectivity and collaboration; making of publics; subjectivation, education, professionalization; paracuratorial aspects; biennale professionals and stakeholders (i.e. educators, guides, guards, art handlers, press officers, lenders, shippers); geo- and biopolitical dimensions; conflicts, frictions and poten-

tialities, subversion, resistance, queering; institutional and infrastructural critique; alternative models; (de)centering and (de)materialization; curatorial ethics and responsibilities; power relations; labour conditions; privatization, socialization and funding; gender, race, class dimensions; racism, antisemitism, classism; patriarchy, (anti)feminism, trans- and homophobia; privilege; biennales in times of crises; war and pandemics; the end or futures of biennials

Please send an abstract of up to 400 words including references as well as a 150-word biography to companionab@proton.me by 31 January 2023. Contributors will be notified by end of February. The completed chapters of up to 5000 words should be submitted by July 15, 2024.

Reference:

CFP: Routledge Companion to Art Biennials. In: ArtHist.net, Nov 23, 2023 (accessed Nov 9, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/40676>.