

## Postdoctoral Fellow, Conservation, Materiality, Knowledge, HKB Bern

Apr 15, 2024–Jan 31, 2025

Application deadline: Feb 12, 2024

Hanna B. Hölling

Bern University of Applied Sciences – Academy of the Arts (HKB) is one of the leading Art Universities in Europe with a broad range of Bachelor and Master Programs, a variety of advanced-level courses and a doctoral school Studies in the Arts which it runs collaboratively with the University of Bern. Its four research institutes perform cutting-edge research on topics related to artistic practice in visual and performing arts, music, theater, design and conservation.

Within the research project Performance: Conservation, Materiality, Knowledge, funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) and situated in the Research Institute Materiality in Art and Culture, we are seeking to appoint

**SNSF POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW 75%**

Commencing on April 15, 2024, and concluding on January 31, 2025, this short-term postdoctoral fellowship aims to enhance the academic journey of a recent PhD graduate or an individual with an equivalent qualification. It offers the opportunity to engage in focused research while benefiting from valuable mentorship.

Now in its culminating fourth year, the SNSF project Performance: Conservation, Materiality, Knowledge (2020-24) is dedicated to probing the questions of conservation of performance-based works, their temporal specifics, the involvement of the human body, the world of their extended trace history and the considerations of memory and archive. It examines traditional conservation ideals along with the notions of care and care ethics, and their complex relations to knowledge, skill, and technique. Unlike queries that situate these questions within other disciplines, this project uniquely views performance through the lens of conservation, emphasizing the necessity for conservators to engage with and deepen this area of study.

The Research Institute Materiality in Art and Culture explores the intricate connections among the materiality of art and cultural artifacts, their human and environmental contexts, and ongoing existence as spatio-temporal, economic, and political constructs, whether within or outside collections. Through material and cultural analysis, reflective-theoretical approaches, and addressing critical conservation questions, the Institute parses the human-made world and its expression in culture.

Join a dynamic team comprising both accomplished and early-career scholars, artists, choreographers and conservators for an opportunity to contribute to groundbreaking research. The ideal

candidate should showcase proficiency in independent research ideally within contemporary conservation, where art history, performance studies, visual studies, heritage studies and the conservation of performance intersect. Critical reflection on existing sources, active engagement in current debates, and adeptness in interdisciplinary collaboration are essential skills for success in this role.

We require a candidate with a strong publication record at the postdoctoral level committed to excellence and a high work ethic. The ideal candidate must demonstrate flexibility and dynamism in team collaboration to achieve project goals and contribute to knowledge through both written and oral publications. They should excel in communication, possess creative thinking skills, and engage confidently with practitioners and academic researchers. Essential qualifications include a relevant PhD or equivalent in conservation of contemporary art, art history, or performance studies, along with a keen interest in the project's questions.

This is a 75% FTE, fixed-term position spanning from April 15, 2024, to January 31, 2025. The fellow collaborates closely with the Project Lead, Prof. Dr. Hanna Hölling.

#### Main responsibilities

- Facilitate the completion of the Performance: Conservation, Materiality, Knowledge research project by providing dedicated support during its final phase over a span of 9.5 months.
- Collaborate effectively with team members to ensure the successful delivery of a two-week research festival in September 2024.
- Contribute to the organization and facilitation of workshops, as well as other methods of communication and dissemination, aimed at a diverse audience before, during and after the festival (e.g. the delivery of two sessions and a presentation at the 36th CIHA World Congress).
- Contribute to the concluding phases of book publication, encompassing tasks such as liaising with authors, securing image rights, and coordinating with the publisher.
- Collaborate on the publication of an interview series, involving editorial tasks and correspondence with authors, publishers, and other stakeholders.
- Play a significant role in the maintenance of the project's website featuring its outputs and disseminating its key findings.
- Work independently and support other members of the project team.
- Participate in project meetings and other project-related events.
- Deliver other agreed-upon outputs, such as writing oriented towards both the general public and professional readership as well as writing of final project reports.
- Possess an excellent command of academic and spoken English, and preferably, proficiency in one of the Swiss national languages.

The interviews for this position will be conducted on February 20, 2024, in Bern. Queries about this opening can be directed to Hanna Hölling, at [hanna.hoelling@hkb.bfh.ch](mailto:hanna.hoelling@hkb.bfh.ch)

Applications require: (1) a cover letter, (2) a statement of research and teaching experience and interests, (3) a curriculum vitae including names and contact information of three academic referees able to speak to the candidate's suitability for this post (4) a list of publications.

Please note that we only accept online applications in English or German. The deadline for applica-

tions is February 12, 2024. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

To apply for this position, please follow this link:  
<https://recruitingapp-2536.umantis.com/Vacancies/5651/Application/New/2>.

To stay updated on our latest work, you can either view our content on our YouTube channel (<https://shorturl.at/nxBL9>) or read our recent publication, Performance: The Ethics and the Politics of Conservation and Care, Vol. 1, available from Routledge in hardcover and open access (<https://shorturl.at/fzILT>).

Reference:

JOB: Postdoctoral Fellow, Conservation, Materiality, Knowledge, HKB Bern. In: ArtHist.net, Jan 25, 2024  
(accessed Dec 15, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/41065>>.