

## Politics of Form. Contemporary Art, Exhibitions, Critique (Kassel, 5–6 July 24)

Kassel, documenta und Museum Fridericianum gGmbH | documenta Institut, Jul 5–06, 2024

Sofia Asvestopoulos, documenta Institut und Museum Fridericianum und documenta gGmbH

Symposium "Politics of Form. Contemporary Art, Exhibitions, Critique".

In recent research on contemporary art, the category of form has once again been given greater consideration. Current positions take a decidedly political approach to form, thereby overcoming traditional (and often unjustly branded as apolitical) notions of aesthetic formalism. The symposium follows this impulse and combines it with the assumption that form cannot be thought of merely as an aesthetic phenomenon, but that as such it is always also a social form. This approach makes it possible to break down very different problems of contemporary art in a new way. These include, for example, the exhibition form of contemporary art, questions of value form, infrastructural conditions and reified working conditions, the (mimetic) relationship between social reality and artwork. It is precisely by understanding form as a social form that aspects such as race, class and gender can be addressed, which are inscribed in the artworks as social contexts in the same way that they shape their content.

The topic of the symposium ties in with relevant debates of recent years. These include, for example, the proposal to replace the concept of "format" with that of "medium" in order to do justice to the digital conditions of contemporary art. Or even the consideration of localizing the category of form not only in art but also in everyday patterns of social order. However, the expansion of the category of form does not mean its dissolution. Rather, the scattered debates (in which the concept of form itself is sometimes explicitly avoided) show that the category of form must be supplemented by aspects of mediation through and as form. For it is only in its made-ness and as through form that the autonomy of art is articulated. While the symposium will focus on contemporary art and current theoretical developments, it will also revisit (forgotten) formalist traditions and make them productive for the present.

The symposium is dedicated to the memory of Marina Vishmidt (1976–2024), who planned to speak at the symposium and who remains an inspiration for thinking about form as social form.

Friday, July 5 to Saturday, July 6, 2024

Time:

Friday, July 5, 10 am–6.30 pm

Saturday, July 6, 10 am–4 pm

Location: Fridericianum, Veranstaltungsraum, Friedrichsplatz 18, 34117 Kassel

No registration required. Free entry.

All lectures and discussions will be held in English.

Concept and coordination: Felix Vogel

#### Schedule

Friday, 10 am–12.15 pm

Felix Vogel: Introduction

Rizvana Bradley: The Corporeal Division of the World and the Critique of Form

Adrian Anagnost: Provincializing the European Art World: Turba, lumbung, and other Forms of Collectivity at documenta 15

Chair: Paula Stoica

#### Lunchbreak

Friday, 2–4 pm

Vinicius Spricigo: Far Beyond Anthropophagy: The Large-Scale Exhibition as a Transnational Platform

Fiona McGovern: Shifting Perspectives. Museum Collections and their Re-Reading through the Format of the Exhibition

Chair: Vera Wolff

Friday, 4.30–6.30 pm

Sezgin Boynik: Contemporary Art as Uneven and Combined Development

Eva Barto: Avoidance and Excess

Chair: Louis-Antoine Mège

Saturday, 10–12 am

Maria Muhle: Formgiving within the Milieu. Reflections on an Aesthetic of the Milieu

Markus Klammer: General and Specific Form

Chair: Claire Valérie Zimmermann

#### Lunchbreak

Saturday, 2–4 pm

Jenny Nachtigall: Possessive Formalism

Peter Osborne: Contemporary Art as Historical Art

Chair: Felix Vogel

#### Reference:

CONF: Politics of Form. Contemporary Art, Exhibitions, Critique (Kassel, 5-6 July 24). In: ArtHist.net, Jun 26, 2024 (accessed Jan 7, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/42217>>.