

Minding the Gap (Berlin, 14–15 Nov 24)

Bode-Museum, Berlin, Nov 14–15, 2024

María López-Fanjul

Minding the Gap: Curatorial Academic Outreach and the Making of Relevant Museums.

Can scholarly research make museums socially relevant?

The relevance of museums is increasingly being questioned, and the number of people who do not see their interests and identities reflected in them continues to grow. This is particularly true for collections of pre-1900 objects.

As Western museums expand their communications, marketing and education departments, their curatorial core – dedicated to research as well as developing temporary exhibitions and permanent displays - often lacks strategies for attracting and retaining increasingly diverse and pluralistic audiences.

To bridge this gap, a new curatorial practice has begun to take root. It combines a deep knowledge of cultural-historical disciplines, a sensitivity to current social realities, and a willingness to communicate the results to the widest possible audience. This is known as 'curatorial academic outreach'.

Curatorial Academic Outreach aims to position the museum as a relevant institution in today's society by integrating social issues into the museum's narratives, weaving together scholarly research and audience development strategies. The fundamental tool of this curatorial practice is the multidisciplinary research of the museum's collections in order to create emotional and intellectual links between the scholarly work and the interests of the widest public.

In order to anchor and develop the curatorial practice of Academic Outreach in Western museums, a think tank of international museums is being created, the first meeting of which will take place in the form of a congress at the Bode-Museum in Berlin. This institution was a pioneer in Germany with the creation of an Academic Outreach curatorial position in 2017. Its transversal, integrative and multidisciplinary projects have become an international reference.

This congress is supported by Hoteles Meliá

DAY 1 / 14 NOVEMBER 2024

09:00 Opening of the Museum

09:30 Welcome

Dr. María López-Fanjul y Díez del Corral – Curator, Bode-Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

Panel I – Curating Special Exhibitions and Temporary Interventions

09:45 Crossing Cultures, Crossing Time: Transhistorical Projects in the Museum and Beyond

Dr. Jennifer Sliwka – Keeper of Western Art, The Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, Oxford

10:15 Points of view: the art museum as a place of multiple discourses
Dr. Till-Holger Borchert – Director, Suermondt-Ludwig Museum Aachen

10:45 Out of the Box! Challenges and Strategies of Curatorial Academic Outreach in Museums of Prints and Drawings
Dr. Dagmar Korbacher – Director, Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

11:15 – 11:45 Coffee break

11:45 Curating and Outreach: Observations from the Minefield
Dr. Jonathan Fine – Director, Weltmuseum Vienna

12:15 – 12:45 Discussion

12:45 - 14:00 Lunch Break

Panel II – New Perspectives on Theory and Practice

14:00 Emotive Spaces for “Old Masters”? Some considerations on Atmospheres
Dr. Christine Seidel – Associate Curator, The National Gallery, London

14:30 Museums, Knowledge and Engagement
Dr. Pablo Pérez d’Ors – Director, Museu Fundación Juan March, Palma

15:00 Curatorial Academic Outreach: first reflections on a methodology
Dr. des. Lilla Mátyók-Engel – Assistant Curator, Bode-Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

15:30 - 16:00 Discussion

DAY 2 / 15 NOVEMBER 2024

Panel III – Curating the Permanent Collection

10:15 Feminist Curating? Reframing Women Artists and Sitters
Dr. Flavia Frigeri – Curator, National Portrait Gallery, London

10:45 Academic Outreach in Practice at London’s National Gallery: Its Women and the Arts Forum: context and origins, outputs to date and reflections on future growth
Dr. Susanna Avery-Quash – Lead Curator, The National Gallery, London

11:15-11:45 Coffee break

11:45 Transformation through Access: University Collections in Transition
Dr. Jennifer Moldenhauer – Curator, Universität Heidelberg

12:15 What history does(n’t) teach us: the National Gallery of Ireland and living memory
Dr. Caroline Campbell – Director, National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin

12:45 – 13:45 Discussion

14:00 End of the Congress

The congress is open to the public and free of charge. Registration is not needed.

Reference:

CONF: Minding the Gap (Berlin, 14-15 Nov 24). In: ArtHist.net, Oct 17, 2024 (accessed Jun 21, 2025),
<<https://arthist.net/archive/42945>>.