

Postcolonial Hauntologies (Amsterdam/Montreal, Mar 25)

University of Amsterdam (NL) and Concordia University, Montreal (CA)

Deadline: Dec 20, 2024

Mehmet Berkay Sülek, University of Amsterdam

Postcolonial Hauntologies: Art in the Presence–Absence of the Past.

The spectral turn was marked by the publication of Derrida's *Specters of Marx* in 1994; it saw the spectre as a conceptual signifier of the “invisible visible”, or not-fully-realised presence that claims space (Derrida: 1996; Peeren, Pilar Blanco: 2013). The spectre can signify a form of traumatic presence that continues to haunt individuals and societies that have not confronted their troubled pasts. For example, Nicholas Abraham's term phantom is linked to the transgenerational transmission of shame and guilt. In a broader sense, legacies of violence can persist in affected societies, manifesting in various forms and carrying the threat of re-emergence. In postcolonial contexts, the haunting legacies may include traumas resulting from centuries of racial othering or the delayed consequences of environmental violence.

Art plays a crucial role in addressing colonial legacies by offering a space for reflection, reconnection, and resistance. Contemporary artists explore the potentialities of their media – indexical, performative, or time-based while touching upon traces and resonances of past and ongoing violence. Museums and institutions face the challenge of dealing with ruptures and continuity within postcolonial structures.

In this two-day workshop, we aim to bring together critical reflections from artists, activists, curators, and early-career researchers. We welcome contributions that reflect on (but are not limited to) the following questions:

- What role does art play in addressing the haunting presence of the past?
- How do artists use their media to touch upon or actualise spectral traces? What kinds of temporalities do they create when engaging with haunting legacies?
- In what ways can museums challenge and transform postcolonial legacies?
- How can artistic and curatorial methods help us rethink archives and reconfigure archival practices?
- How can engaging with postcolonial legacies help us to build cross-border solidarities?

We seek contributions from diverse contexts, particularly welcoming voices from academically underrepresented regions, such as post-Soviet Central Asia. Please respond with a 250-word abstract and a 100-word bio to a.kadyrkhanova@uva.nl and alexandra.tsay@mail.concordia.ca.

The event will take place at two universities: the University of Amsterdam and Concordia Universi-

ty during the first week of March 2025. Although hybrid panels are possible, presenters are expected to attend in person. In your submission, please indicate whether you would be attending the Amsterdam or Montreal sessions.

Deadline for abstract submissions: December 20th, 2024.

Convenors:

Dr. Assel Kadyrkhanova is a visual artist, researcher, and a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA), University of Amsterdam.

Alexandra Tsay is a curator and researcher. Currently, she is pursuing a doctoral degree at the Department of Art History at Concordia University.

Mehmet Berkay Suçdek is a PhD Candidate in Art History at the University of Amsterdam.

Reference:

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