Why so Nordic? The ‘Nordic’ as fact and fiction (Helsinki, 20-22 Oct 25)

Helsinki, Finland, Oct 20–22, 2025
Deadline: Feb 28, 2025

Anna Parviainen, Helsinki

Call for Papers on “Why so Nordic? The ‘Nordic’ as fact and fiction in art history” for the 14th triennial NORDIK Conference of Art History in the Nordic Countries.

The NORDIK 2025 conference “Why so Nordic? The ‘Nordic’ as fact and fiction in art history” is organized by the Nordic Association for Art Historians NORDIK in collaboration with the University of Helsinki, Faculty of Arts, Department of Cultures, Art History. We invite scholars and all interested parties to reflect and discuss this contested concept.

The Nordic seems a powerful concept, equal parts liberating and oppressive. It has been a concept of exclusion—of colonized subjects, of the have-nots, of women—but it has also been a concept of radical alternatives to hegemony, whether in politics or art. Nordicness is defined as much from outside of the region. Romantic and racist frames of reference intermingle in fantasies of the North. Even the most powerful concepts and slogans erode with time, and the political and social structure of the Nordic welfare state with its strong cultural ambitions seems replaced by superficial branding. How has art, design, and architecture contributed to the various concepts of Nordicness expressed through history? And how do we deal with the multiplicity of identities and interpretations connected to this term, today?

Confirmed keynote speakers:
Mathias Danbolt (Professor of Art History, University of Copenhagen)
Merike Kurisoo (Director of the Niguliste Museum and Adamson-Eric Museum)
Anna Ripatti (University Lecturer in Art History, University of Helsinki)

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We hereby announce a Call for Papers for the conference. Preference will be given to paper proposals that are at a high level of reflexivity and at the forefront of research and practice in art history or related branches of study such as visual culture, critical theory, landscape studies, or museum studies. Contributions based upon artistic research and practice are highly welcome.

We will accept paper proposals until the 28th of February 2025 for the 29 sessions listed on our website (https://www.helsinki.fi/en/conferences/nordik-2025/call-papers). The proposals must be in English and include a title, abstract of the theme/subject of the presentation (max. 300 words), and keywords plus a short author bio (max. 100 words), and contact information.

Please submit your proposal as a PDF via e-mail to the Session Chairs—see contact info on each session. Questions can be directed to the session chairs regarding each session. For general inquiries regarding the conference, contact: nordik2025@helsinki.fi.

Reference:
CFP: Why so Nordic? The ‘Nordic’ as fact and fiction (Helsinki, 20-22 Oct 25). In: ArtHist.net, Dec 1, 2024 (accessed Nov 24, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/43436>.