Alternate Realities (Boston, 21-22 Mar 25)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Mar 21–22, 2025
Deadline: Feb 1, 2025

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Alternate Realities: Reconsidering Power, History, and Representation.

The 41st Annual Mary L. Cornille (GRS ’87) Boston University Graduate Symposium on the History of Art & Architecture.

The 41st anniversary of the Mary L. Cornille (GRS ’87) Boston University Graduate Symposium in the History of Art & Architecture invites proposals for papers exploring themes of alterity through critically interrogating dominant historical narratives, canonical art prejudices and hegemonic power structures in visual and material culture, and in the field of art history.

Alternate realities exist beyond the accepted canon and the archive within the field of art history. This symposium will give emerging scholars a platform to unearth, illuminate, and honor those narratives and voices that have been marginalized, silenced, or erased within the dominant historical record. As educators and museum professionals, we are constantly at risk of reifying the elite and hegemonic potential of cultural institutions. Mining the museum and excavating the archive are at the heart of this symposium, but to combat complacency and ignorance, histories and realities that have been pushed to the margins must also be recognized. We seek papers that center alternative, subversive and resistance-oriented worldviews proffered by artists and communities through strategies that amplify community truths, cultural beliefs, and oral traditions, while questioning accepted canonical and archival structures. In the pursuit of expanding our perception of what is real and true, some of the questions we may ask include: which people and places have been left out of the art historical narrative? What accepted ideas in art history can be dismantled, expanded, or eradicated? How can we, as scholars in the field, be proactive and shape the field to handle alterity?

Possible subjects include but are not limited to: critical fabulation, global modernisms, reassessing archives, restitution and repatriation, collecting practices and institutions, the innovation of institutional pedagogical practices; art academies; workshops; counter-colonial and decolonial practices; south-south alliances; reclaiming visual autonomy; myth-making; alternate mediums; alternate time frames.

Submissions should align with the goal of this symposium to center BIPOC, LGBTQIA2S+, feminist, and counter-colonial voices, fostering a space for these perspectives to resonate within the academy and beyond. We encourage interdisciplinary approaches, bringing together art history, philosophy, architectural history, cultural studies, literature, and more. We welcome submissions from graduate students at all stages and from any area of study in the global history of art and

architecture. Papers must be original and unpublished. Please email as a single Word document: title, abstract (250 words or less), and CV to artsymp@bu.edu. The deadline for submissions is February 1st, 2025. Selected speakers will be notified in early February. Presentations will be 15 minutes in length, followed by a question-and-answer session and keynote lecture. The symposium will be held at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, on Friday, March 21st and Saturday, March 22nd, 2025.

This event is generously sponsored by Mary L. Cornille (GRS ’87). For more information, please visit our website or email artsymp@bu.edu.

Reference:

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