

What Lies Ahead for Art History & Visual Studies? (Oslo, 4-5 Dec 25)

Oslo, Dec 4–05, 2025

Deadline: Jul 31, 2025

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What Lies Ahead for Art History & Visual Studies?

Conference on the occasion of the 150th anniversary for Art History at the University of Oslo.

In 1875, Lorentz Dietrichson (1834-1917) was appointed Professor of Art History at the University of Oslo. With his professorship, art history was established as an academic field in Norway. 150 years later, the discipline has undergone several transformations.

The development in Oslo follows international trends. Not only have the numbers of faculty and students drastically multiplied, art history has also expanded its field of interest to include visual studies, and the discipline has lived through the numerous theoretical “turns” in the humanities during the last fifty years.

Furthermore, there is now an explicit ambition to adopt a global perspective in teaching as well as in research, radically expanding the scope of the traditionally national and Eurocentric discipline.

These and similar transformations have set new premises for our discipline in a world that is very different from the one in which Lorentz Dietrichson practiced art history 150 years ago. What are the consequences for our self-understanding as art historians – what is art history today?

We are taking art history’s 150th anniversary at the University of Oslo as an occasion to reflect on questions like this, to take stock of our discipline and to look towards the future of art history and visual studies.

We therefore invite colleagues from Norway, the Nordic countries and around the world to a two-day conference in Oslo to share historiographical perspectives and reflect together on challenges and opportunities for research and teaching in art history and visual studies.

Confirmed keynote speakers are Mårten Snickare (Stockholm University) and De-nin Lee (Emerson College).

We invite 20-minute conference presentations in English.

Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- The notion of art: a sine qua non for art history?

- Art history, visual studies, material culture: disciplinary boundary issues?
- The future of art history teaching
- Questions of technology and media
- Art and epistemologies
- Art historiographies and chronologies
- A Global art history? Traditions, innovations, implications
- Neuroscientific/cognitive theories on the perceptions of artworks
- Eco-criticism in art and art history
- Gender and queer studies in art history and visual studies
- The art historian as activist

Please submit a proposal of no more than 250-300 words before 31 July.

You can submit your proposal through this webpage: <https://nettskjema.no/a/520624#/page/1>

Reference:

CFP: What Lies Ahead for Art History & Visual Studies? (Oslo, 4-5 Dec 25). In: ArtHist.net, May 10, 2025 (accessed Mar 30, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/49214>>.