

## Collecting Geographies (Amsterdam, 13-15 Mar 14)

Amsterdam, Mar 13-15, 2014

Deadline: Sep 30, 2013

Dorine de Bruijne

### Conference

Collecting Geographies - Global Programming and Museums of Modern Art

### Call for Papers

Organized by Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; ASCA/ACGS University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Folkwang Museum, Essen; Tropen Museum, Amsterdam

Location: Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam

Dates: 13-15 March 2014

Deadline for papers: September 30, 2013

Admittance fee: €100,-

### Key-note speakers / panel participants

James Clifford, Sarat Maharaj, Annie Coombes

Kader Attia, Wendelien van Oldenborgh, Daniel Birnbaum and Tobia Bezzola.

For the latest information on key-note speakers and panel participants please keep an eye on our website: [www.stedelijk.nl/en](http://www.stedelijk.nl/en)

### Introduction

Against the backdrop of globalization today, museums for modern and contemporary art in the West are inclined to pay serious attention to the acquisition and presentation of art from all over the world, beyond the still prevalent dominance of European and North American art. Given, on the one hand, the extreme concentration of internationally operating art institutions in Western Europe and the United States, and the often radically different self-understanding of non-Western art institutions on the other, the institutional claims to the global need to be reviewed, contextualized and contested.

A critical reassessment of the history of Western art museums provides an entrance into this discussion. Often the current all-encompassing scope in exhibition and acquisition practices, contrasts with

conventional approaches which are assumed to be limited to a modernist focus on Western art and exhibition models. However, when taking a closer look to the institutional histories of such museums it often appears that they are more diverse and can offer interesting correspondences with today's curatorial practices and broadening international scope.

The Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, which recently (re-)opened its renovated and extended premises on Amsterdam's Museum Square, serves as a good example. Although it is now mainly known for fostering modernist and (neo-)avant garde art practices especially from Europe and, since the mid-60s, the United States, it boasted a bewildering variety of itineraries in its exhibition program throughout its past. But this history has been neglected or perhaps even 'purified' through a modernist lense. The Folkwang Museum in Essen is another example, which houses a large collection of historical non-Western art objects that have mostly been neglected as a starting point for its exhibition programs over the last decades.

The conference *Collecting Geographies - Global Programming and Museums of Modern Art* reflects on the value of these histories of 'art from elsewhere', as Okwui Enwezor calls it. The conference also takes a closer look at the new inquiries into the relation between art institutions, globalization and postcolonial discourse – think of the various new exhibition projects and acquisition policies of for example the Centre Pompidou, Tate Modern, Moderna Museet and the Stedelijk Museum. Moreover, there will be room for a critical investigation of the deployed terminology and theoretical discourse.

#### Conference set-up

For the conference *Collecting Geographies*, curators and academic researchers are invited to (re-)explore:

- global itineraries concretized in museum collections and exhibitions.
- past and contemporary policies for 'global' programming and acquisitions developed by modern and contemporary art museums.
- theoretical and methodological reflections on globalization and the art world.

The organisation specifically welcomes papers on the following topics:

- Exhibition and collection histories of modern and contemporary art museums, with special interest in ethnographic moments, primitivism and purification tendencies, and their reassessment in the context of today and tomorrow.
- The division of modern art and ethnography, as well as the division of modern and contemporary art museum and the ethnographic museum, and the

possible or impossible reconciliation of the two.

- Curatorial methods, attitudes and exhibition practices which can reconcile versatile or even oppositional practices, traditions and histories, both in and beyond the predominating model of the white cube.
- Museum strategies that focus on local affinities within a larger (art-historical/global) framework.
- Theoretical reflections on postcolonial theory, globalisation and the modern and contemporary art world.

#### Submitting papers/sessions

The call for papers is open to both institutional and independent researchers. It is also possible to submit proposals for sessions (max. amount of speakers per session: 5)

Abstracts of 300 words (plus short resume of 150 words) should be emailed to [globalconference@stedelijk.nl](mailto:globalconference@stedelijk.nl) before September 30 2013.

A committee compiled from the organizing institutions will assess the abstracts in October and determine the final selection.

Selected papers will be delivered at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, during a three-day conference to be held from 13 to 15 March 2014. A detailed program will be announced in December 2013, along with information and suggestions about travel and accommodation. The conference fee covers entrance to the museum, lunches and drinks organized within the framework of the conference.

The organizers will endeavor to make available a number of grants for non-institutional applicants, especially those travelling from outside Europe. Please contact the organizers for more information.

#### General info & Sponsor lines

This two day conference is organized by the Stedelijk Museum in the framework of the Stedelijk's long term project 'Global Collaborations', in cooperation with ASCA / ACGS University of Amsterdam and the following institutional partners: Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Folkwang Museum, Essen; Tropen Museum, Amsterdam a.o.

The conference Collecting Geographies - Global Programming and Museums of Modern Art is supported through the grants of the Mondrian Fund and Ammodo for Global Collaborations, as well as the aforementioned partner institutions.

#### Reference:

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