Material Culture in Transition (Cambridge, 18-20 Jun 15)

CRASSH, University of Cambridge, Alison Richard Bldg, 7 West Rd, CB3 9DT, Jun 18–20, 2015
Deadline: Mar 15, 2015

Alexi Baker

Call for Papers and Art

Objects in Motion: Material Culture in Transition

Proposals for papers and for visual and performing art are welcome for the three-day interdisciplinary conference 'Objects in Motion: Material Culture in Transition'. The conference is supported by and will be held at the Centre for the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (CRASSH) at the University of Cambridge on 18-20 June 2015. The deadline for all proposals is 15 March 2015, and registration is expected to open in April 2015 (http://www.crassh.cam.ac.uk/events/25668).

'Objects in Motion' will bring together diverse scholars, curators, writers, and artists to discuss material culture in transition. Material objects are produced within specific contexts - geographical, cultural, and temporal. This is true for things as diverse as the Great Sphinx built in Egypt at least 4500 years ago, the Lindisfarne Gospels illuminated in 8th-century Northumbria, a wooden ceremonial mask carved in 19th-century Nigeria, or a mobile phone made in 21st-century China.

What happens when objects such as these transition into other contexts? How are differences in use and meaning negotiated? Sometimes later reinterpretations and reincarnations (including ‘fakes’ and reproductions) incorporate elements of the objects’ original use and meaning, and other times they diverge entirely. This can affect not only the objects themselves but also the knowledge and experiences embedded within or produced by them – as with books, musical recordings, and technologies.

Scholars, curators, writers, and artists from all disciplines are welcome to propose relevant talks. Visual artists (including photographers) are also welcome to propose artwork on the theme to be displayed in the Alison Richard Building. Proposals for performing arts may be made as well, within the constraints of space and time stated below. The papers and art, selected by both CFP and invitation, will be complemented by events at local museums.

These diverse contributions will help to shed light on material culture dynamics which remain highly relevant even today despite the growth of multinational corporations, global communication, and increasing standardisation. They will also foster productive dialogue on different disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches to studying and responding to these dynamics.

Guidelines for proposing a paper

Proposals for talks should be emailed to the convenor Dr. Alexi Baker (ab933@cam.ac.uk) by 15 March 2015. They should include a title, an abstract of up to 250 words, a brief biography, contact information, and any institutional affiliations. Scholars at all stages of their careers including independent scholars are encouraged to apply, as are artists and writers who would like offer talks reflecting on the conference theme.

Guidelines for proposing visual or performing arts

Proposals for visual or performing arts which reflect upon the conference theme should be emailed to the convenor Dr. Alexi Baker (ab933@cam.ac.uk) by 15 March 2015. The visual artwork will hang in the ground floor seminar rooms of the Alison Richard Building from the time of the conference until at least October 2015, and must be fitted to the available space and hanging facilities.

The artist(s) must be able to transport their works to the Alison Richard Building themselves and to install them with limited assistance from staff. Each piece will need to come fitted with string or hooks on the back so that they can be attached to the hanging rails in the seminar rooms with nylon string. (The type of rails in use can be seen here: https://arbpublicart.wordpress.com/exhibiting-at-the-arb) Small labels may also be affixed near the artworks using white-tack.

Proposals for performing arts will be considered as well as long as they can be staged within the limited space of a seminar room, and have a running time of less than one hour. Possibilities could include for example recitations, musical performances, or self-contained dramatic performances. Proposals for visual or performing arts should consist of:
- Contact information and any institutional affiliations
- Title of the installation or performance
- Description of up to 250 words
- CV and (if available) website of the artist
- Examples of the work of the artist
- Detailed installation or staging requirements

For further information please visit:
https://www.academia.edu/10675608/Objects_in_Motion_-_Call_for_Papers_and_Art

Reference:
CFP: Material Culture in Transition (Cambridge, 18-20 Jun 15). In: ArtHist.net, Mar 2, 2015 (accessed Nov 26, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/9600>.