

CALL FOR PAPERS

Museum Why? Practice, Agency and Knowledge in the Art Museum

Conference at University of Copenhagen 22-24 May 2024

Art museums stand at a crossroads, grappling with dynamic challenges and transformative demands that emanate both from within and beyond their traditional confines. In the current landscape, external political and economic pressures are reshaping the objectives of these institutions. Simultaneously, the ever-evolving landscape of artistic production is prompting the reevaluation and reorientation of established museum practices.

As we witness new research agendas emerge within art history, museology, cultural studies, and related fields, it becomes apparent that Western hegemonic ideas of art, culture, and knowledge, which have historically defined the structure and self-understanding of museums, are undergoing a profound shift. The motivations for this shift are twofold – questioning the foundation of art museums and fuelling internal aspirations for the creation of more impactful, inclusive, and relevant institutions.

Against this backdrop, the conference, "*Museum Why? Practice, Agency and Knowledge in the Art Museum*," seeks to deepen our understanding of the constellation of art production, audience commitment, and museum operations. We invite contributions that delve into these practices as a heterogeneous yet entangled set, characterized by numerous, often overlapping, competing, and sometimes contradictory interests, agencies, and power relations.

Key questions

- How can we rethink knowledge production in the art museums of the future?
- How do artistic practices navigate, challenge, and change institutional infrastructures?
- How can increasingly diverse publics be reflected in and by museum practices?
- How can we rethink the unifying logics of preservation, archive, and collection?
- How can museum dissemination reflect contemporary ideas of representation?
- How can museums become critical, relevant, and significant actors in their communities?
- How can we diversify knowledges, historical analyses, and creative thinking?
- How can we co-create and integrate museum knowledge and academic scholarship?

Proposals

Please submit your abstract proposal (max 250 words) and a short bio (max 50 words) to pass@hum.ku.dk no later than **March 8, 2024**. We welcome academic papers and artists' and practitioners' presentations (20 mins), as well as group panels (90 mins). Notification of acceptance no later than March 22, 2024.

Practicalities

The conference registration fee is 80€ including conference dinner for presenting participants. Emerging scholars and independent artists/cultural workers with presentations can apply for reduced conference fee and support for travel and accommodation (flat rate 250€).

Organizers

The conference is co-organized by *The Novo Nordisk Foundation Center for Practice-based Art Studies (PASS)* at University of Copenhagen and the Nordic art museum network *Museum Why?* formed by Museet for Samtidskunst, Malmö Konstmuseum, Trondheim Kunstmuseum and Kiasma.

- Rasmus Holmboe, research fellow, *Museum Why?* rashol@samtidskunst.dk
- Nanna Balslev Strøjer, network coordinator, *Museum Why?* nanna.balslevstrojer@malmo.se
- Mikkel Bogh, director PASS, UCPH, mibo@hum.ku.dk

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the organizers.

CONFIRMED KEYNOTES AND ARTISTIC CONTRIBUTIONS

Paul O'Neill, Artistic Director of PUBLICS, Helsinki, Finland & Visiting Professor at MA Curatorial Practice, Estonian Academy of Fine Art, Riga, Estonia.

Martha Fleming, Associate Professor at PASS – Center for Practice-based Art Studies, University of Copenhagen and PI of 'Field/Work in the Archive: Herbaria as Sites of Cultural Exchange' at the Natural History Museum of Denmark.

Apparatus 22 (RO/BE), art collective founded in 2011 by current members Erika Olea, Maria Farcas, Dragos Olea together with Ioana Nemes (1979 - 2011) in Bucharest, Romania.

Floating Museum (US), Chicago based arts collective co-directed by Avery R Young, Andrew Schachman, Faheem Majeed and Jeremiah Hulsebos-Spofford.

THE CONFERENCE IS KINDLY SUPPORTED BY:

Novo Nordisk Foundation, Statens Kunstfond, Kulturkontakt Nord, and Nordisk Kulturfond.