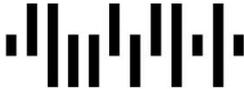


#CASconference


**contemporary
art society**

CAS Annual Conference: Re-Writing the Canon?

14 May 2019, 11.30—18.00

The Courtauld Institute of Art, Vernon Square, Penton Rise, London, WC1X 9EW



The CAS Annual Conference brings together scholars, curators and museum professionals to consider significant recent initiatives in collecting, exhibitions and display, and the issues they raise.

In recent decades, notions of a fixed 'canon', or a single narrative in modern and contemporary art has come under question from all sides. Museums and galleries have been at the centre of the debate,

playing an active part in revising art history. Modern art as a story of national histories and defined stylistic movements has come under scrutiny, with international museums adopting global, post-colonial and supra-national perspectives ranging far beyond the traditional Western-centric model. Boundaries and hierarchies of value between different art forms have been dismantled. Issues of identity and representation have come to the fore, and renewed attention is being paid to museums' responsibilities to their local communities.

How can museums keep pace and respond to these new imperatives? What happens when 'the grand narratives' are no longer considered fit for purpose? How are collections, exhibitions and displays to be rethought – according to what criteria, and for whom?

This event is organised by the Contemporary Art Society in partnership with The Courtauld Institute of Art Research Forum.

 THE
COURTAULD

Programme

11:00 – 11:25 On-site registration

11:30 – 11:45 Introduction by Caroline Douglas, Director, Contemporary Art Society and Martin Caiger-Smith, Head of the MA Curating the Art Museum, The Courtauld Institute of Art

Part I: Museum Collections

11:45 – 12:15 Christopher Bedford, Director, Baltimore Museum of Art, USA

12:15 – 12:35 Sook Kyung-Lee, Senior Curator, Tate Modern, UK

12:40 – 13:00 Hilke Wagner, Director, Albertinum, Dresden, DE

13:00 – 13:30 Discussion between the three speakers, moderated by Martin Caiger-Smith

13:30 – 14:30 Lunch

Part II: Exhibitions and Displays

14:45 – 15:15 Denise Murrell, Co-Curator of *Black Models: from Géricault to Matisse* at the Musée d'Orsay, Paris

15:15 – 15:35 E-J Scott, Curator of the Museum of Transology, hosted by Brighton Museum

15:40 – 16:00 Helena Reckitt, Reader in Curating, Goldsmiths, University of London

16:00 -16:30 Coffee break

Part III: Roundtable Discussion and Final Remarks

16:30 – 17:30 Discussion and final remarks, moderated by Ben Luke, The Art Newspaper

Abstracts & Biographies

Christopher Bedford

Creating and Implementing a More Inclusive Museum Vision

After a six-month strategic planning process, The Baltimore Museum of Art's Board of Trustees adopted a radically new mission and vision for the museum that focuses on excellence, relevance, and social justice. This new focus is now reflected in every area of the museum – from acquisitions and exhibitions to programs and personnel. Christopher will discuss the conversations that led to this new vision as well as the outcomes of its implementation.

Biography

Christopher Bedford is the Dorothy Wagner Wallis Director of The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) and the 10th director to lead the museum, which is renowned for its outstanding collections of 19th-century, modern, and contemporary art. Recognised as an innovative and dynamic leader for building greater community engagement and creating programs of national and international impact, Christopher served as director of the Rose Art Museum at Brandeis University for four years prior to joining the BMA and was appointed as Commissioner for the U.S. Pavilion for the 2017 Venice Biennale, in which an exhibition of new work by American artist Mark Bradford was presented. Previously, Christopher held the positions of Chief Curator and Curator of Exhibitions at the Wexner Centre for the Arts at The Ohio State University (2008-2012), where he organised a nationally travelling exhibition of the work of Mark Bradford. He also served as an Assistant Curator and Curatorial Assistant in the Department of Contemporary Art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2006-2008). Christopher is also a noted author and contributor to publications including *Art in America*, *ArtForum*, and *Frieze*, among others. He is currently a trustee of Art + Practice, Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance and Maryland Citizens for the Arts.

Sook- Kyung Lee

Indigenous Art: A Decolonial Project

Tate Modern's expansion in 2016 saw a culmination of a decade-long curatorial re-evaluation, focused on rethinking modernisms and reframing art histories. Ambitious presentations of works by previously lesser known women artists and thematic displays of the 20th and 21st century works from far-reaching geographies and cultures showcased Tate's commitment to seeking multiple and inclusive artistic perspectives. The recent establishment of Hyundai Tate Research Centre: Transnational signals the deepening of such a commitment, as it aims to contribute to the radical review of art and its histories beyond nation states or region-specific narratives. Instead,

transnational art histories emphasise the flow and exchange of people and ideas, movements and contacts forced or voluntary. One of the key research areas is indigenous art, Aboriginal and First Nation art practices that often defy conventional categories of media, chronology or authorship. This talk addresses the pressing issue of engaging indigenous art in contemporary art museums and its de-colonial implications.

Biography

Sook-Kyung Lee is Senior Curator, International Art (Hyundai Tate Research Centre: Transnational) at Tate Modern, UK. She is currently curating Nam June Paik, which will premiere at Tate Modern in late 2019 and tour in Europe, USA and Asia. As the leading curator of Hyundai Tate Research Centre: Transnational, Lee has a particular interests in transnational interconnectedness in artistic and curatorial practices. She previously led Tate Research Centre: Asia from its inception to conclusion in 2012-2018, and has held responsibilities for the research and acquisition of art from the Asia-Pacific region for Tate Collection. Lee was previously Exhibitions & Displays Curator at Tate Liverpool and curated several exhibitions and displays including Doug Aitken - The Source, Thresholds (part of Liverpool Biennial 2012) and parts of Constellations. She also served as the Commissioner and Curator of the Korean Pavilion for the 56th Venice Biennale in 2015

Hilke Wagner

Cold War Reverberations in Thinking and Displaying Museum Collections

Hilke is the Director of the Albertinum and came at the centre of a heated debate for her policy to integrate international art with a wider scope than the official GDR (German Democratic Republic) narrative. Unknowingly, she had unearthed the simmering grievances between East-West German relations. Her presentation will focus on the local context and its challenges. She will discuss the exhibition 'Focus Albertinum: East German Art Painting and Sculpture 1949-1990, an exhibition drawn from the Albertinum's collection which was accompanied by extensive panels, talks and events that aimed to initiate a dialogue with the public.

Biography

Hilke Wagner has been the Director of Albertinum since 2014, where she held exhibitions by a number of artists including Rosa Barbam, Tino Sehgal and Nevin Aladag. Previously, she was the Director of the Kunstverein Braunschweig e. V. where she curated exhibitions by Javier Téllez, Clemens von Wedemeyer, Rosa Barba, Maria Loboda, Marcel Dzama, Eva Kotátkova, Peter Piller, Simon Fujiwara, and others. In 2006 she was the Director of Situatio Art (for Max Imdahl), part of the Art collections of the Ruhr-Universität Bochum that include works by Richard Serra, Ad Reinhardt, Dan Flavin, Robert Ryman and Gotthard Graubner, as well as works from Africa and Asia since the Neolithic Age. From 2003 to 2006 she was the curator of the Kestnergesellschaft where she curated exhibitions by Thomas Hirschhorn, Sarah Morris, Santiago Sierra, Chris Offili and Peter Doig.

Denise Murrell

The Canon as Muse in Global Contemporary Art

An exploration of the varying strategies deployed by global contemporary artists to investigate and reimagine iconic works by past masters including Benois, Manet and Matisse, as seen in the recent *Posing Modernity* exhibition in New York, and its current Black Model expansion at the Musée d'Orsay. An analysis of varying methods, materials and choice of medium with which artists such as Ellen Gallagher, Aimé Mpane, Maud Sulter and Mickalene Thomas mount a reconsideration of and intervention with the canonical legacy, as they formulate a visual language reflective of the current moment of increasing globalization.

Biography

Denise Murrell is the co-curator of the exhibition *Black Models from Géricault to Matisse* at the Musée d'Orsay, Paris. She was the Curator of its precedent, *Posing Modernity: The Black Model from Manet and Matisse to Today*, at the Wallach Art Gallery, Columbia University, New York, where she is a Ford Foundation Postdoctoral Research Scholar. She is the author of the New York exhibition catalogue, published by Yale University Press, and an essayist for the Orsay catalogue. She received her PhD in art history from Columbia University in 2014.

E-J Scott

The Museum of Transology: Putting Gender on the Museum Agenda

The Museum of Transology, currently on view at Brighton Museum & Art Gallery, began by gathering everyday objects and stories from Brighton's trans community and is now the world's largest collection of material culture surrounding trans, non-binary and intersex lives. Each object has a handwritten tag attached to it that explains its significance to the donor. Heartfelt, intimate and emotive, they explore themes of ambition, desire and confidence, as well as social expectations of gender conformity. Brought together, these individual responses provide a revelatory account of the significant evolution of gender politics in the UK over the last fifteen years. According to one visitor (2017), the Museum of Transology is "...an important subject that affects us all, however we feel about our gender. This kind of display is exactly what museums should be doing." The Museum of Transology is a timely exhibition and has evoked an overwhelmingly positive response from visitors, the media, health providers, education institutions and the UK's LGBTIQ+ communities. Notably, it has engaged large numbers of new, 'hard-to-reach' visitors who have repeatedly communicated their desire to explore modern gender debates. This presentation will explore the curatorial methodology of building a display with the ambition of de-spectacularising the portrayal of one of the most marginalised groups in the UK, whilst systematically combatting their erasure from history.

Biography

E-J Scott is a curator, fashion historian, academic and cultural producer. His work currently focusses on using historic collections to tackle societal misconceptions of misrepresented communities, harnessing the social agency of museums to create broader positive social change through museology and exhibition making. This includes curating the Queer Walk Through British Art and Queer & Now at Tate Britain, the Museum of Transology at Brighton Museum & Art Gallery, his previous work at the National Trust (Assistant Costume Curator) writing and co-presenting the Prejudice and Pride podcast series with Clare Balding, and his role on Grayson Perry's series Born Risky.

Helena Reckitt

Fostering Feminist Relations

Helena will discuss the Feminist Duration Reading Group, which she initiated in 2015 to explore under-known and under-valued feminisms from outside the Anglo-American canon. Reflecting on tactics that the group has evolved – of holding regular meetings that support devolved forms of research based in embodied learning, the politics of citation, and intergenerational exchange – she wonders what the group's approach might offer to curatorial and musicological practice?

Biography

Helena Reckitt is a curator and researcher with a longstanding interest in legacies of feminist and queer art, thought and collectivity. She is editor of the books *Art and Feminism* (Phaidon Press), *Acting on AIDS* (Serpent's Tail), and *Sanja Ivekovic: Unknown Heroine, A Reader* (Calvert 22), and Consultant Editor for the recent survey *The Art of Feminism: The Images that Shaped the Fight for Equality* (Chronicle and Tate Publishing). With Jennifer Fisher in 2015/2016 she edited two issues of the *Journal of Curatorial Studies* on affect, curating, and relationality. In 2015 Helena initiated the Feminist Duration Reading Group, a monthly meeting dedicated to the collective exploration of overlooked feminisms from outside the Anglo-American feminist canon, which begins a year-long residence at the South London Gallery in June 2019.