Call for abstracts for the conference

AESTHETIC RELATIONS

Copenhagen 20-22 January 2021

The global pandemic is developing new ways of regulating how we relate to our neighbors, to the material objects we interact with, and to the air we breathe, and new ways of segregating certain groups from access to fundamentals such as coming together, mobility and the choreography of our everyday. It is increasingly clear that in our current moment, a meaningful approach to the concept of ‘aesthetic relations’ will specifically include sense-relations in our societies, both in- and outside of the arts.

Movements of resistance are overthrowing statues of colonial history and thereby they challenge aesthetic relations of identity and belonging set up by canonized artworks; these events remind us of art’s implication in larger infrastructures that connect people and institutions across large lapses of time and space, as well as artworks’ participation in unequal distribution of material wealth and symbolic access.

Aesthetic Relations encourages scholars across disciplines to analyze and historicize such present changes’ influence on a broad understanding of aesthetic relations. The invitation departs from the assumption that in order to understand the challenges of our historical present, we need to look back and both learn from the past, unlearn history, and lean into reparative practices already (in)accessible.

We urge contributors to critically historicize the conceptual and material heritage of (Western) aesthetic relations by consulting theoretical terms, cultural artefacts and infrastructures from other times, possibly even before and outside modernity, and beyond the global north. This might include:

Analytical questions working with
- Case studies on the regulation of aesthetic relations
- Cultural analyses of historical forums, situations, events, objects, infrastructures and practices
- A historization of excluded contributors, interests and modes of production in the arts
- Analyses of artistic engagements in conceptions and negotiations of public space
- Rethinking the role of institutions’ mediation of social and aesthetic relations

Methodological questions
- Rethinking of models of cultural analysis
- Revisioning epistemic violence in the vocabulary of aesthetic theory
- Revisiting the past through reparative, healing or confrontational readings
- Questioning the methodologies and roles of cultural history
- Theorizing moments of redistribution from within and around the arts
Practical information
For the conference, we invite papers from across broad fields of studies, such as art and aesthetics, cultural studies, gender studies, critical race studies, media studies, sociology, philosophy, political science & anthropology. Furthermore, we welcome scholars from artistic research as well as cultural workers from and outside institutions.

We urge colleagues to suggest both abstracts for solo presentations (20+10mins), panels (90mins) and roundtables (120mins), and especially encourage scholars to develop transdisciplinary collaborations for this occasion.

Please submit your abstract proposal (max 300 words paper or 500 words panel/roundtable) and a short bio (max 100 words) to artasforum@hum.ku.dk no later than 25 October 2020.

The price of the conference will be 70 € + additional costs for conference dinner. Emerging scholars and independent artists/cultural workers presenting papers can apply for support - we cover hotel costs and conference fee for up to ten persons in total.

Conference organizers
The conference is organized by the New Carlsberg Foundation research center Art as Forum, Department of Arts and Cultural Studies at the University of Copenhagen. Read more about the center and find announcements of keynote speakers here: https://kunstogkulturvidenskab.ku.dk/forskning/kunsten-som-forum/

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