

Call for Papers

ARTS WITHOUT BORDERS

RETHINKING METHODOLOGIES OF ART AND CULTURE IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

Interdisciplinary conference for young researchers (MA, PhD, Post-Doc)

6 – 8 June 2013, University of Bern

Bern, Switzerland

Keynote Speaker:

Prof. Dr. Arnd Schneider, Department of Social Anthropology, University of Oslo

In recent decades, global processes have had a profound impact on the humanities and social sciences. These processes are defined by an increasing migration and mobility of people, objects, and ideas across cultures and borders, a phenomenon that signals a need to address the contact zones of exchange and clash, and the energies or tensions produced in the process. While the impact of these phenomena on artistic production is acknowledged, the specific effects on our modes of analysis of those productions have yet to be addressed. Under the heading *Arts With(out) Borders*, this conference connects to theoretical and methodological challenges within the study of arts and culture. It furthermore asks whether borders — both physical and symbolic — have been built up or dissolved within the practice of research due to the increased mobility of culture and ideas and an expanding global interwovenness. Such issues have become relevant across disciplines, but they have not been satisfactorily recognized or addressed. The conference seeks to bring together young researchers from various disciplines concerned with methodologies in the study of arts in a global context. It shall provide a platform to discuss the effects of global cultural processes on the analysis and study of artistic production, and the broader implications in political, social and cultural issues.

While scholarship on methodology remains fairly separated by disciplines, recent efforts suggest a rethinking of methodologies in the light of global processes. Such efforts seek to integrate approaches from the disciplines of art and culture through a combined methodology or collaboration with scholars from other disciplines. For example, Gillian Rose's *Visual Methodologies* (2012) calls for a *critical methodology* that engages with the site and contexts of image production in its analysis. While this book serves as an introductory text, its integral approach sheds new light on the impacts of the global proliferation of images and information. In *Contemporary Art and Anthropology* (2006), Arnd Schneider and Christopher Wright engage in a dialogue between artists and anthropologists to explore correspondences between the two disciplines. These publications among others call for a re-evaluation of methodological approaches to all realms of artistic production, which will lead to more effective research strategies.

We expect that researchers who examine artistic production as effected by global processes have encountered challenges in their methodology, and have thus considered or are practicing a manifold, cross-disciplinary approach to their topic. Therefore, the conference is particularly relevant to the genres of global studies, (trans/inter)cultural studies, curatorial or museum studies, heritage studies, and interdisciplinary research institutes. We invite proposals that engage with issues of methodology on a theoretical level or by means of case studies. In particular, we encourage participants to discuss problems and challenges in their own research. Presentations may address, but are not limited to the following topics:

- How may the methods of image/music/performance analysis be adjusted to processes of cultural transfer when, for example, the meaning of the artistic expression may change depending on the context?
- How do socio-cultural practices, such as museum display or public performance, change the meaning and reception of a specific artistic production?
- What approaches may be used to address the intersection of cultural appropriation and representation in artistic practices? How do such practices inform discussions about cultural identity?
- How does international cultural policy shape artistic production in order to foster intercultural communication?
- How does the understanding of political art change in view of a global audience? How do artists use the global context in order to express and promote a local political agenda and how should this be reflected within research?
- What challenges does research face regarding the interpretation of artistic expression in case of cultural conflict? How does the researcher's position affect the selection and interpretation of data?
- How have practices of field research been impacted by the increasing availability of research materials due to digitization? How might this affect the researcher's end result?
- How have social media sites provided new outlets for artistic production for artists? What are the implications for the analysis of these images?

We also encourage theoretically informed visual arts proposals using posters, models or video as a way of approaching the research topic. Every contribution is scheduled 20 minutes of presentation and 10 minutes of discussion.

Proposals

Please submit an abstract of 250-300 words and a brief bio-note in .pdf format to the organizers at: conference@artswithoutborders.ch

Applicants with visual arts proposals may submit up to 5 images in .jpeg or .pdf format or a sample of audiovisual material in .mp4 along with the abstract and bio. Please indicate the equipment and technical requirements for your presentation. Proposals will be accepted in English and German.

Deadline for proposals: March 17, 2013

A limited number of stipends are available to cover the cost of travel for participants. In addition, free accommodations may be available upon request.

The conference is organized by graduate students of the Center for Cultural Studies (CCS) and of the Institute of Advanced Study in the Humanities and the Social Sciences (IASH). It is funded by the Mittelbauvereinigung der Universität Bern (MVUB), the CCS and the IASH.

For additional information visit our website: www.artswithoutborders.ch