

THE INTERPLAY OF ART AND GLOBALIZATION – CONSEQUENCES FOR MUSEUMS

Call for Papers for an IFK_Conference

Internationales Forschungszentrum Kulturwissenschaften (Vienna)

Place: Vienna

Date: January 25-27, 2007

Convener: Hans Belting (IFK, Vienna)

Commentators: Peter Weibel (ZKM Karlsruhe), Beat Wyss (HFG Karlsruhe), John Onians (University of East Anglia), Ladislav Kesner (Cultropa Prague).

Applications shall be submitted via

E-Mail to:

Prof. Hans Belting, Director;
IFK Internationales Forschungszentrum Kulturwissenschaften;
Reichsratsstrasse 17;
1010, Vienna;
Austria
Email: ifk@ifk.ac.at

Deadline: September 30, 2006.

Focus

As a medium of global participation and awareness, contemporary art claims to be universal, but it simultaneously presupposes local roots, alternative genealogies, and plural modernities. The postcolonial era in non-Western sites often uses art in a twofold manner: it claims contemporary art to exist everywhere, as a medium of global participation, and, at the same time, stages local art history as a claim for an independent avant-garde and a different modernity, whether such claims are a fiction or not. The interplay of art and globalization thus may bring to the fore, at one and the same time, an aggressive localism that makes use of culture as weapon of otherness and defense, and a transnational art, indifferent to claims of geography, history, and identity.

In light of this development, local museums of whatever culture and location are forced to redefine their meaning, purpose, and function both contextually and globally. Since art museums connect to a given society and its official self-interpretation, they have also to act as civic laboratory which implies that they have to offer tempting narrations about the relation of art, society, and history not only for visitors from abroad but also for the broad cultural and social spectrum of the local clientele. The delicate agenda of positioning a museum between the local and the global raises questions of how to respond to intercultural and transnational aspects of art while ensuring a place-bound genealogy of art history, and of how to deal with both - traditional »art«, if it can be labeled as such, and global, that is contemporary art. Though many debates have recently focused on the challenge of a non-Eurocentric view on art recognizing the specificities of Latin American, African, Indian, Asian art production etc., many prominent museums in the West did not reshape their politics of display to successfully meet this challenge. Rather one can observe either a »ghettoization« of non-Western art within special collections and a curatorial populism selling it as exotic art for mass audiences, or one can observe global expansion strategies of Western museums such as MOMA's and Pompidou's attempts to create outlets in major urban destinations beyond the US and Europe.

The conference shall foster the debate of these complex issues in an interdisciplinary format calling for proposals by cultural theorists, cultural historians, museum experts, art historians, and experts of other disciplines. The presentations shall address the interplay of art and globalization and its consequences for museums and collections, and shall analyze the implications for their corporate identity, exhibition politics, and marketing strategies.

Practical Information

PhD students and post-doctoral researchers are eligible for participation in this conference. Interested researchers should submit a paper proposal in English (350 words), a *curriculum vitae* and the full contact coordinates (postal address, email, phone number) by September 30, 2006. The conference presentations will last 20 minutes. The working language is English. Successful applicants will be notified by October 25, 2006. The IFK will cover travel and accommodation costs.