

The **POLITICS** and **POETICS** of exhibiting : Proposing new institutional models through exhibitions

Louisiana Museum of Modern Art and Aarhus University welcome you to a two-day exchange of research, dialogue, and debate. The conference *The Politics and Poetics of Exhibiting: Proposing New Institutional Models Through Exhibitions* seeks to explore and discuss the role and possibilities of exhibition practices in a museum landscape, where understandings of the art museum as a public institution are rapidly changing. Keynote speakers include Nora Sternfeld, Yvette Mutumba, James Voorhies, and Kirsten Astrup & Maria Bordorff.

In recent years, international public movements such as #MeToo, Black Lives Matter, decolonization actions and global climate protests has put the art museum as a public institution under increased scrutiny, a critical attention which calls for introspection. A concrete, recent example that the museal (self-)understanding is changing can for example be observed in the approval of a new museum definition at the International Council of Museums (ICOM) in August 2022, which departs from the previous definition in fundamental ways, stressing the importance of diversity, sustainability, and an ethically informed museum practice.

Since the 1960s art museums have increasingly been met with critique of the schism between their self-image as public, democratic institutions and the gendered, classed, and colonial power structures that have also permeated these institutions. However, it is relatively new that art museums themselves have started to use their cultural authority to challenge and renegotiate their own hegemonic structures. Here, the exhibition functions as one of the central arenas where the critique and discussion of the art museum as a public institution takes place.

One of the central focus points of the conference under the headline '*The Politics and Poetics of Exhibiting: Proposing New Institutional Models Through Exhibitions*' is the role of exhibitions in transforming or revising the institution from within: Is it enough to *exhibit* critique or must the criticism also result in changed infrastructures and museum practices? If the museum's collection is what distinguishes the art museum from other cultural institutions such as galleries, biennales, exhibition centers and so on, how can the "permanence" of museums and their collections be put in dialogue with the "urgency" of contemporary political and social issues? How do exhibitions respond to shifts in museal self-understandings, and are new approaches to exhibition-making relevant?

The conference seeks to explore the role and relevance of exhibitions as concrete, spatial arguments that lend themselves to deliberating new ideas about how the art museum could work as a public institution today.

Organizers

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Mathias Ussing Seeberg, Curator and Head of research, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art

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