

# FA345:

## Intercultural Practices: The Politics of Berlin's Art/Museum/Off-Spaces

Seminar Leader: Dr Annette Loeseke

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Office Hours: Tuesday, 1:30pm to 2:00pm before class (by appointment)

### Course Description

By exploring Berlin's intercultural arts scene and multi-faceted museum field, we discuss the impact of global debates on local arts institutions (and vice versa). The course is structured around the three themes *Global-Local: The Politics of Contemporary Art Spaces*; *Decolonizing: Whose Memory? Whose Identity Politics?*; and *Museums in Post-Migrant, Super-Diverse Societies*. Topics include global-local intercultural relations; contemporary art and curatorial ecosystems; writing art history/ies; memory and identity politics; decolonizing curatorial practices; cultural activism; and participation, community outreach and co-curation. The course is a mix of in-class sessions, field trips to museums and independent group work. At the end of the term, participants should have gained the ability to view a museum or arts space in their current political and social as well as historical contexts, while using a range of Berlin's museums as special points of reference. Students will be able to evaluate the display, web presence, and event program of a museum from both the institutional and visitor perspectives.

### Requirements

Participation includes an oral presentation of approx. 10 minutes and a 1-page hand-out about one of the museums visited during field trips, and active contribution to class. In order to foster class discussion, students are expected to prepare one assigned text of their choice for each session, as indicated in the schedule below. Course assignments include a mid-term paper (between 2,500 and 3,500 words), due Tuesday, 23 March 2021, and a final assignment consisting of an individual final paper (between 2,500 and 3,500 words), due Friday, 14 May 2021, and a final group project (20-minute presentation), due Tuesday, 18 May 2021.

PLEASE NOTE: For field trips, we meet in front of the respective museum (see schedule below).

### Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the staunchest regard for academic integrity and expects good academic practice from students in their studies. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected

standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

### Attendance

Attendance at all classes is a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. To account for minor circumstances, two absences from twice-per-week courses or the equivalent (e.g. one absence from a once-per-week course) should not affect the participation grade or require documentation.

Bard College Berlin does not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes, regardless of the reasons for the absences, whether excused or unexcused.

The full Bard College Berlin attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR SPRING 2021: Some students might need to begin the semester remotely due to travel restrictions caused by the pandemic. In addition, all students and instructors must refrain from in-person attendance if they are feeling ill. Instructors should make efforts to offer alternatives to in-person attendance where needed, including remote participation or asynchronous options.

### Assignments

#### Oral Presentation/Hand-out and Participation (30%):

10-minute Oral Presentation and 1-page Hand-Out and active participation in class discussion: Participation includes active contribution to class and an oral presentation with a 1-page hand-out. The oral presentation of approx. 10 minutes serves as an introduction to the respective museum visited during the respective field trip and should give a good overview of the museum's basic facts, history, museological concept, vision and mission, organisational structure (e.g. collection(s), departments, location in Berlin, urban context), etc. Please draw on the museum's website and other digital channels to prepare your presentation, and upload a 1-page hand-out onto Google Classroom in advance of the respective session. In order to foster class discussion, students are expected to prepare one assigned text of their choice for each session, as indicated in the schedule below.

#### Mid-term Paper, due 23 March 2021 (30%):

Mid-term Paper (2,500 to 3,500 words): For the mid-term paper, students are expected to select one of the museums visited so far (or one of the case studies explored in class, should museums remain closed due to the pandemic) and reconceptualize the display strategies and narratives according to the discussions in class and during field trips. Suggested structure of the paper: brief introduction, brief history of the museum (literature review), description of the displays, identification of problems, recommendations for improvement of displays, conclusion, list of references. The focus should be on a precise and coherent description, a critical analysis of potential problems (your own observations),

and recommendations for improvement (your conclusions). Please hand in your paper in a pdf format via email. Mid-term paper due 23 March 2021.

Individual Final Paper, due Friday, 14 May (30%) and Group Presentation, due Tuesday, 18 May (10%): Individual Paper (2,500 to 3,500 words) and Group Presentation (15-20 min.): The final assignment consists of an individual paper about one of the museums visited and a group presentation on the same museum. Students work in small groups to consult on one of the museums visited and develop a strategy to improve the presentation. Students are expected to draw on the input and discussions during our field trips, in-class discussions and sessions on exhibition design. Students are required to analyze the displays, examine the narratives produced on site and online (displays, wall panels, info material, photographs, museum websites, social media profiles, etc.), explore the topics discussed during class, identify problems, and create a plan for improving the display through an alternative exhibition model and/or digital tools. While the groups have 20 minutes to present their respective projects in class using Power Point or any other visual media tool, students are further expected to hand in their own individual paper on the same topic. Details will be discussed in class. Suggested structure of the individual paper and group presentation: brief introduction (museum situation and task), brief description of current displays and narratives, identification of problems, recommendations. Please hand in your individual paper in a pdf format via email and upload the group presentation, e.g. in a ppt format, onto Google Classroom. Final paper due Friday, 14 May 2021, and group presentation due Tuesday, 18 May 2021.

#### Policy on Late Submission of Papers

Essays that are up to 24 hours late can be downgraded up to one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where an instructor agrees to accept a late essay, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment. Grades and comments will be returned to students in a timely fashion. Students are also entitled to make an appointment to discuss essay assignments and feedback during instructors' office hours.

Students receive mid- and end-of-semester grades for their seminar work. Students are entitled to make an appointment with an instructor to discuss seminar participation, or may be asked to meet with the instructor at any stage in the semester regarding class progress.

### **Grade Breakdown**

- 30%: Oral Presentation/Hand-out and Participation.
- 30%: Mid-term Paper.
- 40%: Final Assignment: Individual Final Paper (30%) and Final Group Presentation (10%).

### **Essay Deadlines**

- Oral Presentation/Hand-out (10 min./1 page): due on the day of the respective field trip (please upload the hand-out onto Google Classroom in advance of the respective museum visit).
- Mid-term Paper (2,500-3,500 words): due Tuesday, 23 March 2021.
- Individual Final Paper (2,500-3,500 words): due Friday, 14 May 2021.
- Final Group Presentation (15-20 min.): due Tuesday, 18 May 2021.

## Readings

All assigned readings are available as online resources or uploaded onto Google Classroom. For each session, please prepare one of the assigned texts (see schedule below). Recommended structure:

1. Considering the title of the text, what do you expect from reading the text?
2. Read the text carefully and take notes or highlight sentences or key words you consider significant.
3. Summarize the text by rephrasing the main points in your own words (written text or key words).
4. To what extent has the text explored the issues you have expected in step 1?
5. What else was explored you didn't expect?
6. What is the most interesting issue explored, and why do you consider it significant?
7. Any other comment? Is the argument clear? Is the text inspirational? Have you missed anything? etc.

## Schedule

### Session 1 – 2 Feb 2021

#### Introduction – In-class session

As an introduction to the topic and the course we talk about our understanding of and experiences with arts spaces and museums, and our expectations for this course. We discuss the implications of the three overarching themes *Global-Local: The Politics of Contemporary Art Spaces*; *Decolonizing: Whose Memory? Whose Identity Politics?*; and *Museums in Post-Migrant, Super-Diverse Societies*.

PLEASE prepare one of the assigned texts for next session (see below). All assigned readings are available as online resources or uploaded onto Google Classroom.

### Session 2 – 9 Feb 2021

#### Contexts, Actors, Ecosystems – In-class session

In the second session, we explore key concepts in current cultural and museum studies debates. What do we mean by 'the politics of museums' or 'the politics of space'? How to define 'objects', 'exhibits', 'intangible heritage' and ephemeral artforms? How might varying notions of 'global-local' interconnectedness shape intercultural ecosystems? What are super-diverse societies? And what might be the implications for progressive, intercultural museum politics?

Please prepare one of the following texts for today's session:

Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean (2005): "Objects and interpretive processes," in *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture*, ed. by Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, London/New York: Routledge, 103-123.

Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean (2005): "Exhibitions and Interpretation: Museum Pedagogy and Cultural Change," in *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture*, ed. by Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, London/New York: Routledge, 124-150.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara (2012): "From Ethnology to Heritage: The Role of the Museum," in *Museum Studies. An anthology of contexts*, ed. by Bettina M. Carbonell, Malden/Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 199-205.

### Session 3 – 16 Feb 2021

#### **Local Case Studies – In-class session**

In preparation of our planned field trips to national and local museums in the second half of the semester, we explore recent temporary exhibitions as well as ongoing projects in Berlin. These include the presentation of colonial photographs from Berlin's Ethnological Museum in a recent temporary exhibition at the James Simon Gallery on Museum Island; exhibitions about the respective Asian art and ethnographic collections commissioned by the Humboldt Lab Dahlem, which operated from 2012 until 2015 in preparation of the future Humboldt Forum in Berlin's reconstructed palace building; and a current project on decolonizing Berlin, run by FHXB Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg Museum, the local borough museum located in Berlin-Kreuzberg.

Please browse the assigned websites and prepare the following text for today's session:

Lythberg, Billie, Wayne Ngata and Amiria Salond (2019): "Curating the uncommons: taking care of difference in museums," in *Curatopia: Museums and the future of curatorship*, ed. by Philipp Schorch and Conal McCarthy, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

#### **WEBSITES:**

Humboldt Lab Dahlem, Kulturstiftung des Bundes:

[https://www.kulturstiftung-des-bundes.de/en/programmes\\_projects/archive/detail/humboldt\\_lab\\_dahlem.html](https://www.kulturstiftung-des-bundes.de/en/programmes_projects/archive/detail/humboldt_lab_dahlem.html).

Humboldt Lab Dahlem, Berlin, main page:

<http://www.humboldt-lab.de/en/projektarchiv/index.html>.

Exhibition 'Object Biographies':

<http://www.humboldt-lab.de/en/project-archive/probebuehne-6/object-biographies/teaser/index.html>.

Exhibition 'Enchantment/Beauty Parlour':

<http://www.humboldt-lab.de/en/project-archive/probebuehne-6/enchantment-beauty-parlour/teaser/index.html>.

Exhibition 'Exhibiting Korea':

<http://www.humboldt-lab.de/en/project-archive/probebuehne-7/exhibiting-korea/teaser/index.html>.

## Session 4 – 23 Feb 2021

### **Global Case Studies – In-class session**

The case studies we explore in this session provide a global context for our planned field trips to Berlin's art spaces. Inspirational organizations and initiatives museums have developed to tackle intercultural issues include the Museum of New Zealand, Te Papa Tongarewa, and its co-curatorial approach in collaborating with Maori curators and communities; the anthropological Dutch World Culture Museum and Research Center for Material Culture in Amsterdam and their initiative to unlock indigenous knowledge in order to tackle the climate crisis; and recent debates about how museums in Europe, e.g. the Museum of Asian Art in Berlin, the Rijksmuseum's Asian Pavilion in Amsterdam or Shanghai Museum, have framed 'Asian', 'Chinese' or 'Chinese regional minorities' art and culture.

Please browse the assigned websites and prepare one of the following texts for today's session:

Mallon, Sean (2019): "Agency and authority: the politics of co-collecting," in *Curatopia: Museums and the future of curatorship*, ed. by Philipp Schorch and Conal McCarthy, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Sandahl, Jette (2019): "Curating across the colonial divides," in *Curatopia: Museums and the future of curatorship*, ed. by Philipp Schorch and Conal McCarthy, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Tapsell, Paul (2011): "'Aroha mai: Whose museum?' The rise of indigenous ethics within museum contexts: A Maori-tribal perspective," in *Museum Ethics*, ed. by Janet Marstine, London: Routledge, 85-111.

Tapsell, Paul (2012): "Partnership in Museums. A Tribal Maori Response to Repatriation," in *Museum Studies. An anthology of contexts*, ed. by Bettina M. Carbonell, Malden/Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 575-579.

WEBSITES:

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa:

<https://www.tepapa.govt.nz>

<https://www.tepapa.govt.nz/about/what-we-do>

<https://www.tepapa.govt.nz/about/collections>

<https://www.tepapa.govt.nz/about/repatriation>

RCMC Research Center for Material Culture, Amsterdam:

<https://www.materialculture.nl/en>

RCMC's EU-funded 'Taking Care' initiative to tackle the climate crisis:

<https://www.materialculture.nl/en/research/projects/taking-care>

## Session 5 – 2 Mar 2021

### **Case Study In Focus: Alte and Neue Nationalgalerie – In-class session (Short Field Trip on 20 or 27 Apr)**

In this in-class session, we look at the iconic buildings and politicized collections of the Old National Gallery on Museum Island and the New National Gallery at the Kulturforum near Potsdamer Strasse. By taking as in-depth case studies the Old National Gallery, presenting 19<sup>th</sup> century German and French paintings, and the New National Gallery, presenting early 20<sup>th</sup> century and modernist art, we explore the conflicting intercultural debates about cultural politics, collecting practices and curatorial strategies by state-representatives, museum directors and private collectors. Drawing on Françoise Forster-Hahn's provocative question ('Shrine of Art or Signature of a New Nation?'), we consider the opening of both National Galleries for international contemporary art in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and mid-20<sup>th</sup> century and discuss to what extent both national galleries might be interpreted as art gallery and or political monument. We also identify Eurocentric bias and blind spots in the current display of the Alte Nationalgalerie and discuss how the gallery might reconsider its presentation in the global now. This session further serves as a preparation to our field trip to the Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum of the Contemporary, which aims to revise the museum's collection and displays in order to produce a more diverse, intercultural presentation: How might the intercultural concept of the politicized Old and New National Galleries serve as an analytical framework to revise the Western-centric collection of contemporary art on display at the Hamburger Bahnhof?

PLEASE NOTE: While this session will likely be held remotely, we might include a short visit of the Alte Nationalgalerie on 20 or 27 April (tbc). The Neue Nationalgalerie is currently closed due to refurbishment and scheduled to open again in August 2021.

Please browse the assigned websites and prepare one of the following texts for today's session:



Forster-Hahn, Françoise (1996): "Shrine of Art or Signature of a New Nation? The National Gallery(ies) in Berlin, 1848-1968", in *The Formation of National Collections of Art and Archaeology*, ed. by Gwendolyn Wright, Hanover/London: University Press of New England, 78-99.

Grodzinski, Veronica (2011): "Wilhelm II., Hugo von Tschudi and Jewish Patronage of French Modern Art," in *Jewish Collectors and Their Contribution to Modern Culture*, ed. by Annette Weber, Heidelberg: Winter Verlag, 119-132.

Paret, Peter (2001): "The Tschudi Affair," in *German Encounters with Modernism, 1840-1945*, ed. by Peter Paret, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 92-118.

Alte Nationalgalerie: [About](#) and [Collection](#)

Neue Nationalgalerie: [About](#) and [Collection](#)

## Session 6 – 9 Mar 2021

### **Exhibition Design, Interpretation and Learning – In-class session**

In this workshop session, we draw on our discussions of 'intercultural' (and sometimes contested) art collections and explore how exhibitions might be reconsidered by new ways of curating and designing interior environments. Students work in small groups to test how experimenting with various exhibition models might help museums revise their presentations in order to become more inclusive.

In the second part of the session, we discuss recent trends in empirical visitor studies, audience development, community outreach, social inclusion, participation and co-curation. How might empirical research on visitor experience inform curators, education and outreach managers, and PR managers to address intercultural issues? Students work in small groups to explore how increasingly intercultural visitors might experience exhibitions in different ways and how insight into interpretation and learning processes within diverse cultural contexts might help museums develop exhibitions and programs that better cater to the shifting needs of increasingly diverse societies.

Please prepare the text by Elaine Heuman Gurian and re-read one of the texts by Eilean Hooper-Greenhill:

Gurian, Elaine Heumann (2018): "On the Importance of 'And': Museums and Complexity," in *The Future of Museum and Gallery Design*, edited by Suzanne MacLeod et al, London: Routledge.

Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean (2005): "Objects and interpretive processes," in *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture*, ed. by Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, London/New York: Routledge, 103-123.



Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean (2005): "Exhibitions and Interpretation: Museum Pedagogy and Cultural Change," in *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture*, ed. by Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, London/New York: Routledge, 124-150.

## Session 7 – 16 Mar 2021

### **'Decolonizing Kreuzberg': FHXB Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg Museum – In-class session**

In this in-class workshop session, we reflect on our discussions so far and prepare our planned field trips in the second part of the semester. We further explore the newly launched initiative about 'Decolonizing Kreuzberg' run by the FHXB Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg Museum in one of Berlin's most diverse and intercultural neighborhoods, which seeks to research the multi-layered material traces of German colonialism in the borough. Taking the FHXB museum's initiative as a case study, we discuss to what extent museums should consider themselves pro-actively as an integral part of a wider cultural, political, economic and social ecosystem and explore how to exhibit or otherwise address the often underlying conflicts and tensions within memorial places ('Erinnerungsorte'). By examining the ongoing public controversies about renaming streets referring to contested colonial legacies, we explore what might be the role of museums, cultural centers and off-spaces in decolonizing today's super-diverse societies and fostering intercultural practices.

Please browse the assigned website and prepare one of the following texts:

Golding, Viv and Wayne Modest (2019): "Thinking and working through difference: remaking the ethnographic museum in the global contemporary," in *Curatopia: Museums and the future of curatorship*, ed. by Philipp Schorch and Conal McCarthy, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

McMaster, Gerald (2012): "Museums and the Native Voice," in *Museum Studies. An Anthology of Contexts*, ed. by Bettina M. Carbonell, Malden/Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 377-382.

Witcomb, Andrea (2019): "Curating relations between 'us' and 'them': the changing role of migration museums in Australia," in *Curatopia: Museums and the future of curatorship*, ed. by Philipp Schorch and Conal McCarthy, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

FHXB Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg Museum: <https://www.fhxb-museum.de/index.php?id=1&L=1>.

## Session 8 – 23 Mar 2021

### **Egyptian Museum (Neues Museum) on Museum Island – Field trip**

The Egyptian Museum is housed in the Neues Museum on Museum Island in Berlin's historic center. On our first field trip, we explore the multi-layered displays and (post-)colonial narratives of 'Egypt' from

the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries as presented at the Egyptian Museum. We particularly explore the 'Egyptianizing' effects and multi-layered presentation of various (historical) notions of 'Egypt' and the meta-presentation of these historical exhibition concepts.

PLEASE NOTE: We meet in front of the **Neues Museum** on Museum Island. Address: Bodestraße, 10178 Berlin. Google Maps: [Neues Museum on Museum Island](#).

Please prepare one of the following texts for today's session:

Jung, Mariana (2013): "100 Years of the Discovery of Nefertiti," 421-426, and Olaf Matthes (2013): "Ludwig Borchardt, James Simon and the Colourful Nefertiti Bust in the First Year After Her Discovery," 427-437, both chapters in *In the Light of Amarna. 100 Years of the Nefertiti Discovery*, ed. by Friederike Seyfried, Exhibition Catalogue, Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag.

Mitchell, Timothy (2004): "Orientalism and the Exhibitionary Order," in *Grasping the World. The Idea of the Museum*, ed. by Donald Preziosi and Claire Farago, Aldershot: Ashgate, 442-460.

Savoy, Bénédicte (2013): "Futurists, Bow Your Heads! Amarna Fever in Berlin, 1913/14," 452-459, and Voss, Susanne (2013): "The 1925 Demand for the Return of the Nefertiti Bust, a German Perspective," 460-468, both chapters in *In the Light of Amarna. 100 Years of the Nefertiti Discovery*, ed. by Friederike Seyfried, Exhibition Catalogue, National Museums in Berlin, Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag.

PLEASE NOTE: Mid-term paper due today.

30 Mar 2021 – Spring Break: No class

Session 9 – 6 Apr 2021

### **Pergamon Museum and Panorama Exhibition on Museum Island – Field trip**

In 1930, the Pergamon Museum with its collection from the (so-called) Ancient Near East was the last museum on Museum Island to open its doors to the public. Having been planned as an imperial institution to display large-scale architectural elements unearthed during various excavations by German archaeologists in West Asia, it remained unfinished by the end of World War I and proved to be a burden to the young Weimar Republic's self-image in the aftermath of a lost war. We look closely at the way monumental architecture from West Asia has been preserved and exhibited up until today and explore the effects of the arrangement on global as well as local visitors from increasingly diverse, intercultural societies. (Please note that, due to reconstruction work, major pieces of the museum are

currently not on display.) In the second part of the session, we visit the temporary exhibition “Pergamon: Masterpieces from the Ancient Metropolis” with a digitally based 360° Panorama by Yadegar Asisi. We immerse ourselves in the panorama exhibition to examine how this multimedia spectacle compares to the historical, yet equally spectacular reproductions of ancient monument-facades in the Pergamon Museum and discuss whether—or to what extent—the panorama exhibition challenges or rather reinforces stereotypes about contested 'intercultural' heritage and (conceptual) appropriation.

PLEASE NOTE: We meet in front of the **James Simon Gallery** (new entrance building) on Museum Island. Address: Bodestraße, 10178 Berlin. Google Maps: [James Simon Gallery, Museum Island](#).

Please prepare one of the following texts for today's session:

Bilsel, Can (2005): “The Undoing of a Monument: Preservation as Critical Engagement with Pergamon’s Heritage,” in *Future Anterior: Journal of Historic Preservation: History, Theory, and Criticism*, 2(1), 12-21.

Bilsel, Can (2012): “Reconstructing Pergamon: Antique Fragments, Modern Visions,” in *Antiquity on Display. Regimes of the Authentic in Berlin’s Pergamon Museum*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 89-124.

Bilsel, Can (2012): “Reconstructing Babylon: The Return of the Archaic,” in *Antiquity on Display. Regimes of the Authentic in Berlin’s Pergamon Museum*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 159-188.

Bilsel, Can (2012): “Architecture in the Museum: Monuments for a Mass Spectacle,” in *Antiquity on Display. Regimes of the Authentic in Berlin’s Pergamon Museum*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 189-215.

## Session 10 – 13 Apr 2021

### **Museum of Islamic Art (Pergamon Museum) on Museum Island – Field trip**

The Museum of Islamic Art is housed on the upper level of the Pergamon Museum. We discuss current trends in cross and intercultural museum studies as presented by the Museum of Islamic Art and explore what might be the role of museums housing intercultural collections in the context of today's super-diverse societies (see the respective publications by Klas Grinell and John Reeve). Projects and initiatives to be discussed include the interventionist, interactive installation “Objects in Transfer”; “Multaqā”, a tour guide traineeship program for refugees from Syria and Iraq; or “Tamam”, a new education and outreach program developed by the museum. Drawing on Avinoam Shalem's essay (see below), we discuss what we mean when we say 'Islamic art'.

PLEASE NOTE: We meet in front of the **James Simon Gallery** (new entrance building) on Museum Island. Address: Bodestraße, 10178 Berlin. Google Maps: [James Simon Gallery, Museum Island](#).

Please prepare one of the following texts for today's session:

Grinell, Klas (2018): "Carpets and ceramics. Misrepresenting Muslim cultural heritage in Europe," in *Eurozine* 18 Oct 2016, 1-12 (first published in Swedish in *Ord & Bild* 3-4/2016). URL: <https://www.eurozine.com/carpets-and-ceramics/?pdf> (accessed 27 May 2019).

Reeve, John (2018): "Islamic Art, the Islamic World – and Museums," in *The Contemporary Museum: Shaping Museums for the Global Now*, ed. by Simon Knell, London: Routledge, 55-73.

Shalem, Avinoam (2012): "What do we mean when we say 'Islamic art'? A plea for a critical rewriting of the history of the arts of Islam," in *Journal of Art Historiography*, no.6 (June), 1-18.

## Session 11 – 20 Apr 2021

### **Humboldt Forum – Field trip**

The new Humboldt Forum in the reconstructed former royal/imperial palace building houses the Museum of Asian Art, Ethnological Museum, City Museum Berlin and Humboldt Lab. After the demolition of the former palace, severely damaged during the Second World War, in 1950, the seat of the East German parliament ('Palace of the Republic') was built in 1976. After the German reunification in 1990, the former East German 'Palace of the Republic' was demolished, and the reconstruction of the former royal/imperial palace building started. After some delays, the venue partly opened in December 2020. By exploring the multi-layered legacies sketched here, we discuss the controversies sparked by the plan to house the ethnographic collections in a reconstructed palace building connected to German colonialism. Taking the Humboldt Forum as a case study, we ask whether and how today's museums should openly reflect on their own political history and their historical relationship to power. Instead of positioning themselves in the homogenizing narrative of the 'universal museum' or 'museum of world culture', how might museums address their heterogeneous, shifting history and political instrumentalization over time, and position themselves as global-local institutions, i.e. as historically and geographically situated in time and place?

PLEASE NOTE: We meet in front of the Humboldt Forum Palace Building, main entrance under the cupola. Address: Schloßplatz, 10178 Berlin. Google Maps: [Humboldt Forum Palace Building](#).

Please browse the assigned websites and prepare one of the following texts for today's session:

Chakrabarty, Dipesh (2000): "Introduction," in *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 3-23.

Clifford, James (2019): "The times of the curator," in *Curatopia: Museums and the future of curatorship*, ed. by Philipp Schorch and Conal McCarthy, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Curtis, Neil G. W. (2012): "Universal Museums, Museum Objects and Repatriation: The Tangled Stories of Things," in *Museum Studies. An Anthology of Contexts*, ed. by Bettina M. Carbonell, Malden/Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 73-81.

Kaplan, Isaac (2016): "The Case against the Universal Museum," in artsy.net. URL: <https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-the-case-against-the-universal-museum> (Accessed 14 June 2018).

Humboldt Forum (pls consider that this is the official website!): <https://www.humboldtforum.org/en/>  
About: <https://www.humboldtforum.org/en/about/>  
Colonialism and Coloniality: <https://www.humboldtforum.org/en/colonialism-and-coloniality/>  
Programs: <https://www.humboldtforum.org/en/programme-2/>  
Architecture: <https://www.humboldtforum.org/en/building-site/>  
Reconstruction: <https://www.humboldtforum.org/en/building-site/reconstruction/>

## Session 12 – 27 Apr 2021

### **Agency, Protest, Resistance – Museum Treptow: Exhibition on German Colonialism – Field trip**

Today's field trip takes us to the municipal Museum Treptow-Köpenick in the Southeast of Berlin. We explore the museum's new exhibition 'zurückGESCHAUT' ('Looking back') about the First German Colonial Exhibition which was part of the Berlin Trade Exhibition in nearby Treptow Park in 1896. Conceptualized in collaboration with activists and NGOs such as Berlin Postkolonial e.V., 'Looking back' is the first permanent exhibition in Germany to engage critically with the country's colonial past and postcolonial present. Open to the public since 2017, the exhibition particularly focusses on the 106 women, men and children who were recruited in formerly colonized African countries in order to perform, in public, traditional cultural practices in the context of the Berlin Colonial Exhibition. The exhibition is of critical importance since curators and activists effectively challenged Eurocentric approaches, racist perspectives and wording from the colonial era.

PLEASE NOTE: We meet in front of the municipal museum building at 2:30pm. Please note that the museum closes at 4:00pm. Address: Sterndamm 102, 12487 Berlin. Google Maps: [Museum Treptow-Köpenick](#)

How to get there:

– e.g. from S9 station Schöneeweise: take the bus 160 or M11 direction Dahlem Dorf, get off at Johannisthal Kirche (70m from the museum), approx. 50 min. journey from Alexanderplatz (S9);

– e.g. from U7 station Zwickauer Damm: take the bus M11 direction Schöneeweide, get off at Johannisthal Kirche (70 m from the museum).

Please browse the assigned website and prepare one of the following texts for today's session:

Museum Treptow-Köpenick, exhibition 'zurückGESCHAUT':  
<https://www.visitberlin.de/en/event/zuruckgeschaut>.

Fernando, Anujah, "lookingBACK" and the question of gaze. A Review of the Permanent Exhibition at the Berlin Museum Treptow. In: blog How to move on with Humboldt's legacy, University in Cologne/Humboldt University in Berlin. URL: <https://blog.uni-koeln.de/gssc-humboldt/en/translation-underway/>.

Phillips, Ruth B. (2004): "Where is 'Africa'? Re-Viewing Art and Artifact in the Age of Globalization," in *Grasping the World. The Idea of the Museum*, ed. by Donald Preziosi and Claire Farago, Aldershot: Ashgate, 758-774.

## Session 13 – 4 May 2021

### **Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum of the Contemporary – Field trip**

The Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum of the Contemporary, together with the Alte Nationalgalerie and the Neue Nationalgalerie (see session 5), forms part of the National Galleries of the National Museums in Berlin. Since its opening in 1996 the Hamburger Bahnhof has presented visual art primarily from Europe and North America post-1960. We explore the history of the collection and discuss recent initiatives to reconsider collection policies and curatorial practices from an intercultural perspective, for example the museum's recent initiatives "Museum Global" and "Hello World: Revising a Collection", aiming at diversifying the collection and including more artworks from women and artists from the Global South. Drawing on our discussions and field trips during the semester, and our examination of the Old as well as New National Galleries in particular, we explore how the intercultural concept of the politicized Old and New National Galleries might serve as an analytical framework to revise the Western-centric collection of contemporary art on display at the Hamburger Bahnhof.

PLEASE NOTE: We meet in front of the museum's main entrance. Address: Invalidenstraße 50-51, 10557 Berlin. Google Maps: [Hamburger Bahnhof - Museum of the Contemporary](#).

How to get there: – from S/U5 Hauptbahnhof, take a 7-min. walk to the museum.  
– from S 1/2/25/26 Nordbahnhof or from U6 Naturkundemuseum, take the tram M8 or M10 direction Hauptbahnhof, get off at Invalidenpark and take a 5-min. walk.

Please browse the assigned website and prepare one of the following texts for today's session:

Mathur, Saloni (2012): "Museums and Globalization," in *Museum Studies. An Anthology of Contexts*, ed. by Bettina M. Carbonell, Malden/Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 510-516.

Onciul, Bryony (2019): "Community engagement, Indigenous heritage and the complex figure of the curator: foe, facilitator, friend or forsaken?" in *Curatopia: Museums and the future of curatorship*, ed. by Philipp Schorch and Conal McCarthy, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Hello World: Revising a Collection, Exhibition at Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum of the Contemporary: <https://www.smb.museum/en/exhibitions/detail/hello-world-revising-a-collection/>

## Session 14 – 11 May 2021

### **Final Presentation – In-class session**

Students present their final group project. Exploring your main take-aways from the semester in a closing discussion, we ask what might be the role(s) of museums in society and in the context of current political debates.

### PLEASE NOTE:

- Final group presentation due Tuesday, 11 May 2021.
- Individual Final Paper due Friday, 14 May 2021.