

EXHIBITIONISM

sexuality at the museum

Call for Proposals: “Exhibitionism - Sexuality at the Museum”, International Conference, December 9th - 11th, 2021

Deadline for submissions: August 15th, 2021

Conference organizers: Rebecca Fasman (*Kinsey Institute, Indiana University, Bloomington*), Hannes Hacke (*Research Center for the Cultural History of Sexuality, Humboldt University, Berlin*), Melissa Blundell-Osorio (*Wilzig Erotic Art Museum, Miami*)

The Kinsey Institute, the Wilzig Erotic Art Museum, and the Research Center for the Cultural History of Sexuality are hosting “Exhibitionism - Sexuality at the Museum,” a hybrid conference featuring online sessions during the day and evening events at WEAM for attendees in Miami and those who wish to travel to Miami. The conference will take place on December 9th - 11th, 2021 and aims to bring together researchers, museum practitioners, artists, and educators whose work involves sexuality in museums, collections, and exhibition spaces. We invite and encourage papers and presentations from a wide range of disciplines and institutions.

Conference background

Museums are an integral part of the historical construction and classification of sexuality. Collections of artifacts and artworks addressing sexuality have played an important role in the production of sexual knowledge. From antiquities to contemporary art to everyday, mass-produced objects, the stories of sexuality have been told and collected through material culture. The public display of these collections of material culture connected to sexuality has always been contentious. There is a lack of educational concepts and methods for talking about sexuality in a museum setting, as well as still deeply held restrictive notions of talking about sex.

At the same time, museums have often excluded sexualities and perspectives from women, people of color, Black people, queer people, disabled people, sex workers, indigenous people, and people from other marginalized communities. The racist and colonial legacies of museum collections, the exoticizing of non-western bodies and desires, and the objectification of women are well-known and studied. And yet, as more and more museums and exhibition spaces around the world recognize these extreme limitations, they are using artwork, objects, and other materials to talk about sexuality in new ways and critically engage with the diversity and intersections of sexuality, race, gender, class, and disability.

Museums are increasingly becoming spaces for community gathering, creating opportunities to engage audiences in programming that explores a variety of topics related to human sexuality. This is prompted in part by a growing number of museum and collections professionals who work with materials connected to human sexuality. But there is rarely a chance for a meaningful way for these professionals working on these topics to share and grow through their experiences and scholarship. This conference will remedy this issue.



Conference Goals and Intended Audience

- Highlight the diversity of approaches that museums and exhibition spaces around the world use to talk about sexuality in new ways through artworks, objects, and other materials.
- Explore the way museums are increasingly becoming spaces for diverse sexual communities, creating opportunities for empowerment and to engage audiences.
- Foster and contribute to critical scholarship and museum practice on sexuality and museums in relation to and in order to highlight de-colonial, BIPOC, feminist, LGBTQIA+, crip, and working-class initiatives and interventions.
- Connect researchers, museum professionals, artists, sex educators, and others working on sexuality and museums for intensive exchange and critical reflection to build networks and resources.

Topic ideas include but are not limited to:

- Curating Exhibitions on Sexuality
- Intersectional Approaches: Centering Marginalized Voices
- Being Explicit: Changing Language in Museum Texts
- Queering Museum Displays
- A Natural History: Sex at the Science Museum
- How to Deal with Depictions of Sexual Violence in Museums
- BIPOC Sexualities in Museums
- Desiring Antiquities: Histories of Collecting
- Classifications of Sexuality in Museum Collections
- Erotic Art: Private Collectors/Public Display
- Sexology and Anthropology: Colonial Legacies of Collecting Sexual Artifacts
- Decolonizing Sexual Knowledge in Museums
- LGBTIQ+ Community Museums and Collections
- Building Trust - Bringing Private Collections to the Public
- Connecting with Kink Communities in Museums
- Museums as Cruising Spaces
- Eroticism/Pornography/Art
- Feminist Intervention in the Erotic (Art) Canon
- A Male Gaze? Spectatorship and Voyeurism
- Sex in/and Contemporary Art
- Disability in the Erotic Archive
- Sex Museums as Spaces of Sexual Learning
- Target Audiences: Museum Education and Sexual Content
- Using Museum Artifacts for Sex Education
- Promoting Sexual Health - A Task for Museums?
- Marketing for Sex Museums
- Presenting the Histories of Sexuality Online - NSFW?
- Censorship, "Age Appropriateness", and Scandalization



Online presentation formats:

The conference will have online sessions during the day, including a mixture of pre-recorded talks, live discussions, inter-active sessions, and space for meeting other participants:

- **Presentations:** 20 min recorded talk, tour, interview, etc. submitted before the conference, followed by a live Q&A/discussion at the conference
- **Panel discussion:** 60 min, 3-4 people, live moderated discussion during conference (please provide list of people you)
- **Interactive session:** 60 min, live (e.g., label writing, storytelling with objects, sexual content on social media, grant writing, show your own collection, etc.)
- **Special interest group meeting/discussion room:** 60 min, live (e.g., museum and sex educators, curators at sex museums, BIPOC museum professionals, artists working with museums, thesauri enthusiasts, pornography archivists)

Speaker honorarium and logistics: Since these sessions are virtual, there is no travel or accommodation stipend, however we will offer an honorarium of \$200 if you are selected to present.

Submission deadline: August 15th, 2021

Submit your proposal: <https://forms.gle/nvhgXGKdByVWND2TA>

Website: www.exhibitionismconference.com

Questions? Contact us: info@exhibitionismconference.com



Kinsey Institute
INDIANA UNIVERSITY



WEAM

Normi Wilzig Erotic Art Museum