



novo nordisk
foundation

Benefitting people and society

Art Scholarships

2022

art

Scholarships
Fellowships
Investigator grants

2022 Abstract booklet

Introduction

The Novo Nordisk Foundation has supported research in art and art history for more than 40 years. Initiated in 1979, the area of support is deeply rooted within the foundation.

The Foundation supports research in art history, in practice-based art and curating, and in the interdisciplinary crossroads between art and science.

The objective for supporting this research field is to challenge existing dogmas, inspire new ideas and improve peoples' lives. Through art, individuals and society encounter questions of culture, identity, and community, which are explored and disseminated through research in art and art history. In addition, cross-disciplinary research within art and natural science may help put science matters into new perspectives.

With this area of support, the Foundation aims to significantly contribute to art and art history research in Denmark by providing the most talented researchers with the opportunity to conduct major research projects and pursue a research career within this field.

The Foundation annually supports research in art and art history with up to DKK 31.5 million through PhD Scholarships, Postdoc Fellowships, Investigator Grants, Project Grants and Visiting Professorships.

This abstract booklet presents the Scholarships, Fellowships and Investigator Grants awarded in 2022.

Mads Øvlisen PhD Scholarship

Art History after 1900



Katrine Bruun Jørgensen

Art Historian, Curator

katrinebruun@hotmail.com

Project title

Beauty and Emotions – Medievalism in Danish Art from 1880-1935

Grant

DKK 1.997.421

Duration

3 years

Place of research

Ribe Art Museum

Abstract

The ph.d. project aims to establish a new framework for understanding art works that employs medieval aesthetics, and focuses on works from the period 1880-1935 by artists such as Agnes Slott-Møller, Harald Slott-Møller, Joakim Skovgaard, and Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen. Several of these artists had prominent voices in their own time and took part in the establishment of the Danish artists association, Den Frie, but have since been declared outsiders in Danish art history.

The project challenges the gendered criteria that 20th century art historians used to exclude them from the art historical canon, and examines how these artists cultivated ideals of beauty and depicted emotions in their works. The project hereby renegotiates the role of a group of artists whose works didn't correspond to the aesthetic ideals of modernism.

Mads Øvlisen PhD Scholarship

Practice-based Art



Julie Edel Hardenberg

Artist

julie@hardenberg.dk

Project title

Between power and powerlessness- the de / colonized mind

Grant

DKK 1.999.829

Duration

3 years

Place of research

The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts

Abstract

In the PhD project "Between power and powerlessness- the de / colonized mind " I will examine the colonial memories and experiences that exist among the population in Greenland. With previous artistic studies of the Danish colonial history's political influence in Greenland, I will in my project turn the focus on what I call the de / colonized mind, exposed to crucial political and cultural influence from Denmark.

The project's hypothesis is that when you are born and raised in a society that is built with colonial structures and thought patterns, it is not always that you as a citizen are aware of your own contribution to reproducing the colonial system. Therefore, the project aims to examine the more invisible aspects of the colonial structures and shed light on the impact it has on the citizens / society: How do descendants of colonialism carry the colonial heritage with them? What are the processes you take on when you want to fit in or stand out?

Mads Øvlisen PhD Scholarship with extraordinary potential Art History before 1900



Casper Thorhauge Mønsted

Master of Arts in Art History
caspertmoensted@gmail.com

Project title

Materiality and space at the Danish royal court in the period between the Reformation and the introduction of absolutism: Ephemeral festival decorations during the reigns of Frederik II and Christian IV

Grant

DKK 2.0 million

Duration

3 years

Place of research

University of Copenhagen

Abstract

This Ph.D.-project seeks to investigate how ephemeral festival decorations and constructions on festive occasions at the time of Frederik II's and Christian IV's reign were used to 'augment' the space of the royal court. The decorations could be in the shape of figures stuffed with fireworks, parade wagons etc., and they were all made specifically for festive occasions and were not intended to last very long. Ephemeral decorations were used to set a proper stage for royal authority and splendour, as was the case with the royal castles of the time. However, the short-lived decorations and constructions sometimes also included archetypical representations of the king's enemies (e.g., the heathen, the Pope etc.) which typically weren't found in the castle's schemes of ornamentation.

Based on studies of various contemporary written as well as visual accounts of the 16th and the 17th century, this Ph.D.-project will analyse how ephemeral festival decorations and constructions supplemented the permanent royal architecture in staging royal splendour, and by doing so the project will investigate the notions of space and materiality of the time. Furthermore, it is my ambition for my project that it should contribute to the international research of early modern European courts that until now only rarely has included Danish examples.

Mads Øvlisen PhD Scholarship

Practice-based Art



Ragnhild May

Artist (Master of Fine Arts)
info@ragnhildmay.com

Project title

The Body as the Site for Composition - rethinking the relation between bodies, gender, instruments and sound

Grant

DKK 2 million

Duration

3 years

Place of research

The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts

Abstract

I am educated as a visual artist with a Master of Fine Arts in Music/Sound from Bard College (US) and a Post Master of Fine Arts from The Royal Institute of Art (SE). With a background in both visual arts and music composition, I work from a situated perspective by applying my specialized knowledge in performance and sound art to the entanglements of body and instrument.

I regard difference tones as an example of a type of relation where the boundaries between listener and instrument are blurred, inheriting concepts from post-human and feminist theory. I work with instrument wearables for the performer and/or the listeners bodies, exploring technology's potential to expand normative boundaries. Furthermore, to inform my artistic work, I analyze the use of instruments in existing visual art practices.

Mads Øvlisen PhD Scholarship

Art History before 1900

Therese Stougård
Art Historian

Project title

A Sibyl after the manner of Michelangelo
– Representations of Gender Identities in
Victorian Imitations of Renaissance Art

Grant

DKK 2 million

Duration

3 years

Place of research

University of Copenhagen

Abstract

The Italian Renaissance gained a large and widespread popularity in Victorian England. This interest manifested itself in the visual arts of the period where artists affiliated with The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood often imitated and paraphrased works by Renaissance artists.

Simultaneously, the Pre-Raphaelite art often gave visual form to many of the big changes regarding gender norms and identities that took place in the Victorian era. This PhD project wishes to investigate connections between these seemingly opposite tendencies in Pre-Raphaelite art: the backward-looking and the progressive.

The project's hypothesis is that imitation in many cases was used as an artistic means of reproducing new and non-traditional representations of gender in art, by drawing, for example, on the sensuality of Michelangelo's sculptures to reassess the Victorian ideal of masculinity, or the "captivity" of Florentine 15th century female portraits to express suffrage messages of women's liberation.

Mads Øvlisen Postdoc Fellowship

Practice-based Art



Jacob Fabricius

Curator

jacobfabriciussorensen@gmail.com

Project title

Anslagets kunst (Openings)

Grant

DKK 1.498.758

Duration

2 years

Place of research

Aarhus University

Abstract

Anslagets kunst (Openings) will investigate how curators can - through titles, books, seminars and works - set the stage for an exhibition's theme. Anslagets kunst (Openings) will examine how the viewer's experience of an exhibition can be influenced and affected by the curatorial choices. And furthermore, what are the curatorial tools that can be used to create and generate an atmosphere at the beginning of an exhibition?

In addition to a longer essay, I will do a series of interviews with renowned curators and artists on how they create friction and dynamic openings, thus influencing the impact of the viewer's perception of the exhibition space. Last but not least, I will curate a historical exhibition about Openings, as well as an exhibition consisting of ten new artistic opening commissions.

Mads Øvlisen Postdoc Fellowship

Art History



Stine Hebert

Curator

stinehebert@gmail.com

Project title

Sealed Narratives – Curatorial Strategies to Reactivate the Artistic Archive

Grant

DKK 1.499.989

Duration

2 years

Place of research

Women's Museum Denmark

Abstract

Sealed Narratives explores the International Festival for Women in the Arts held in Copenhagen in 1980. The festival was part of the UN's second Women's conference where influential artists, writers, musicians, dancers and performers from 35 countries visited Denmark. The project will investigate the intersectional starting point and the intertwined acts of separatism and community in the spirit of the times.

The purpose of the research project is to create an exhibition focused on the festival, which until now, has not been historicised. Curatorially, the ambition is to explore the main tenets of the event where the demand for structural change and equal rights is played out in a transnational exchange. The project pursues curatorial methods that will enable an engaging reactivation of the archival material, and surveys the mobilising efforts of the festival as a way to reflect upon the conditions for current social justice movements

Mads Øvlisen Postdoc Fellowship

Practice-based Art



Rikke Luther

Artist & PhD

Rikke.Luther@gmail.com

Project title

The Ocean-Lands: Mud Within the Earth System

Grant

DKK 1.499.916

Duration

2 years

Place of research

University of Copenhagen

Abstract

The Ocean-Lands: Mud Within the Earth System is an art practice-based research project, which examines the new 'mud-scapes' in Iceland, Greenland, and Denmark, focusing on the social, political, and bio-chemical effects, of their motion.

For millennia, static muds facilitated cultural exchanges across legal boundaries. Warming global temperatures result in their motion. Melting glaciers and inland ice result in mud. Ancient mud-flats and swamps reclaim space as human occupation recedes. Permafrost melts and sinks; land slips; lakes recede, and their beds collapse. Swelling muds slide toward the oceans, helping to facilitate the increasingly garbled circulations of the Earth System.

Luther's project explores 'The Social-Organisational Effects of Ocean-Land Muds in Motion' and 'The Bio-Communicative Effects of the Ocean-Land Muds in Transition', as part of the larger attempt to build a new ethical and aesthetic public language capable of communicating the crisis within the Earth System.

Mads Øvlisen Postdoc Fellowship

Art and Natural Sciences



Tobias Dias

PhD, researcher, writer, editor
idetd@cc.au.dk

Project title

A Nameless Science: Art, Expertise, and Infrastructure

Grant

DKK 1.416.806

Duration

2 years

Place of research

Aarhus University

Abstract

Today's knowledge society does not just feature disputes between "post-truth" politicians, scientific experts, and the "infodemic" of conspiracy theorists. It is constituted and facilitated by vast but often far more subtle and invisible technoscientific infrastructures engrained within almost all aspects of everyday and ecological lives.

In this project, I turn to art practices, primarily based in the West from the late 1990s to the present, to understand how some of these infrastructures have been explored and publicly contested in art infrastructures and forms of counter-expertise: in public labs and the amateur employment of biotechnologies as tactics for critically inquiring into phenomena such as GMO and ART, forensic and para-judicial investigations into ecocide, the construction of an anti-cancer toolkit, and the invention of self-organized universities. The project suggests that such endeavors are trying to make knowledge infrastructures a common and democratic concern.

Mads Øvlisen Postdoc Fellowship

Art History



C.C. McKee

Assistant Professor of Modern Art
cmckee1@brynmawr.edu

Project title

Seeing Independence in the Tropical Environment: An art history of black women's ecological struggles for freedom in the Danish West Indies, 1792-1917

Grant

DKK 1.5 million

Duration

2 years

Place of research

University of Copenhagen

Abstract

'Seeing Independence in the Tropical Environment' (SITE) examines the prevalent representation of black women in the landscape in artworks from the Danish West Indies produced from the 1792 abolition of the slave trade to the islands' sale in 1917. I explore whether these artworks also reveal black women's practices of counter-representation by asking the interrelated research questions: Do these images provide new ways of understanding black women's engagement with Caribbean environments? If so, how did this relationship shape black women's prominent role in the struggles for freedom and enfranchisement in the nineteenth-century Danish Caribbean?

Previous scholarship has shown how these artworks by white male artists minimized black women's agency by positioning them as mere fixtures of the landscape. By contrast, SITE argues that the entwined analytic categories of race, gender, and ecology allow us to understand black women's engagement with the environment as a means of resisting oppression both before and after slavery's emancipation in 1848.

Investigator Grant in Art History Research



Gunhild Borggreen

Associate Professor in Art History
and Visual Culture
gunhild@hum.ku.dk

Project title

Transcultural Modernism: Artistic Inter-
change between Denmark and Japan, 1945-
1970 (TraM)

Grant

DKK 4 million

Duration

4 years

Place of research

University of Copenhagen

Abstract

The project draws on theories of transculturation and global art history with the aim of analysing the artistic interchange between Danish and Japanese modernism in the postwar period.

The project has three goals. The first is to formulate a transcultural aesthetics with attention to reciprocity and symmetry within artistic exchange, including the themes of universality and abstraction. The second goal is to examine archives of individual artists and to map the infrastructure of artistic interchange as empirical foundations for formulating a transcultural aesthetics. The third goal is to contribute to the current debates of decolonial art history by using research outputs, public events and dissemination to promote a transcultural perspective concerning representation of East Asian culture in Denmark.

By exploring the global entanglements of postwar modernism, the project contributes to transforming art history from a Eurocentric perspective to that of a global art history.

Investigator Grant in Art History Research



Morten Hansen

Art Historian, Ph.D

mortensteen2001@yahoo.com

Project title

The Sack of Rome and the Crisis of the Sacred Image, Rosso to Parmigianino

Grant

DKK 1.894.407

Duration

3 years

Place of research

The Danish Institute of Science and Arts in Rome

Abstract

That artists during outbreaks of disasters create works that attempt to make sense of apparently meaningless events is nothing new. This is what happened after the Sack of Rome in 1527 by Emperor Charles V. It led to an exodus of artists, traveling as far north as Lombardy and to Sicily in the south. During the Sack, the unexpected happened: the allegedly miraculous images failed to protect the city, as if God wrathfully had withdrawn his presence from the icons.

Previously in Rome, supernatural images had been models for modern painting. Raphael for instance produced an altarpiece so beautiful that it was said to have miraculously survived a shipwreck. Abandoning all claims to the “divinity” of art, the refugee artists turned to ugliness and debasement for a penitential kind of painting, aiming to restore the broken bond between God and humans. Other artist who fled Rome would go on to defend with pictorial means the miraculous images against Protestant accusations of idolatry.

