

# Meshes of the Archive. Gender, Diversity, Archives and Cultural Heritage

## A PhD Seminar at the Centre Universitaire de Norvège à Paris, CUNP, Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 22–24 March 2022 Paris

The Norwegian research project [The Feminist Legacy in Art Museums](#) invites international PhD students to join a seminar on gender and intersectional perspectives on archives, museum collections and cultural heritage, 22–24 March 2022 in Paris.

Recent debates on decolonisation, gender equality and sexuality following in the wake of #metoo, the migration crisis and a heightened awareness of indigenous history, are an intensification of issues already pressing in and on museums. Despite 30 years of research, not even Sweden, perhaps the most gender mainstreamed society in the world, has managed to fully integrate gender and intersectional issues in the work and management of museums. Museums, cultural heritage, and archives still favour the stories of white men's great achievements (*Grahn & Wilson, 2018*).

Turning to the archive to counter the canon, has been a necessity, but this has also prompted a rethinking of archives, collections, and museums. How do we deal with the dire structural problems when working with museum collections, archives, and libraries? How do we approach the biographies and stories of those untold through the archive? How do we work to decolonize and democratize art collections, cultural heritage, and museums?

Digitalization has often been seen as a way forward for the dissemination of museum collections and archives to the public. But digital archives might rely more on dichotomic structures than any physical archive ever did, and gender hierarchies might be strengthened, and intersectional issues hidden. How do we ask about gender, race, or LGBTQ+ subjects in the archive, if not by proper names? What are the ramifications of creating separate archives for queer history like the Norwegian Skeivt Arkiv, or women artists like the French AWARE (*Archives of Women Artists Research and Exhibitions*)? Are these archives the answer to the established institutions' lack of gender and intersectional perspectives?

The archive has been subject to great philosophical scrutiny over the years; it has been theorized as space, place, and text, and thought of in terms of the relation of memory to history. Lately, there has been a shift in terminologies, from diagnosing the nature of the archive to the processes triggered by archival research, and instead of asking, what are we looking for, researchers ask, what happens in the archive? This allows for thinking what the archive might become. In recent years researchers of archives, collections

and museums have problematized how affect plays itself out in relation to archives, collections, and museums. How does this challenge and redefine the whole idea of discovery and information in the archive? If the general picture is that the narratives told follow the archive and this means telling stories of white men's great achievements, how do we invent new narratives from the meshes of the archive? This PhD course aims to discuss the role of gender and diversity in museums, archives and collections of art and cultural history from a broad field of perspectives.

### Confirmed keynote speakers

[Hilary Robinson](#), Loughborough University

[Maria Tamboukou](#), University of East London

[Nanette Snoep](#), Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum, Cologne

### Application process

We invite PhD students from History, Cultural History, Museum Studies, Art History, Literature etc. to share their research on/from museum collections, archives, libraries, and documentation centres.

There is a limit of 15 participating PhD students. Participants with paper (5 pages) will be prioritized. Those who would like to attend should fill in the application form and submit a short draft of their paper by **1<sup>st</sup> February 2022** latest (roughly 300 words).

### Programme

The program will consist of plenary key-note lectures (45-minute presentation, 30-minute discussion) and group work. Participant papers will be presented in a conventional conference setting (15-minute presentation, 15-minute discussion). Participants should present their own research. Working language: English

### Credits

Credits: 3 or 5 ECTS. Participation and presentation of paper will result in 3 ECTS, working over and submitting an edited version of the presentation (10-12 pages) after the seminar, will yield an additional 2 ECTS. Signed and authorized course diplomas will upon request be bestowed upon each PhD student participant having completed the course.

### If you have any questions, please contact:

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Keep updated and find your way to the application form at the following address: <https://www.ntnu.edu/flame>