

Pressemitteilung

Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut

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Forschungs- / Wissenstransfer, Wissenschaftliche Tagungen
Biologie, Kulturwissenschaften, Kunst / Design, Philosophie / Ethik, Umwelt / Ökologie
überregional



A public academy in Berlin explores the role of plant life in artistic and aesthetic practices

The interdisciplinary 4A_Lab Academy "Ecological Entanglements across Collections – Plant Lives and Beyond" takes place from 4–8 November 2024 in Berlin. Through a series of panels, lectures, workshops, collection visits, and performances, the academy invites participants to collectively (re)think human entanglements with vegetal and non-human life, in dialogue with the collections of the Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz (SPK). The Academy is organized by the 4A_Lab, a research and fellowship program of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut in cooperation with the Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz.

The interdisciplinary 4A_Lab Academy "Ecological Entanglements across Collections – Plant Lives and Beyond" builds on the ecocritical turn in the humanities and invites to collectively (re)think human entanglements with vegetal/non-human life—with and against the Berlin collections, with and against their meaning and manifestation as repositories for vegetal/non-human life. As much as plants have contributed to the making of human worlds, human intervention has also had a deep impact on vegetal ecosystems: the plant-human relationship is one of reciprocal interplay and mutual exchange, with humans existentially depending on plant life. Recent studies have highlighted how these organisms, far from being passive receivers at the other end of the life spectrum, are endowed with active forms of sensory perception.

For all these reasons, vegetal life constitutes a privileged field of investigation and knowledge production, be it in terms of applied technologies, theoretical thinking, or through practices of reciprocity. This new awareness calls for novel paradigms of historical and transhistorical inquiry, focusing on the wide range of interactions between humans and plants across time and space. In particular, there is a need for transdisciplinary and transregional approaches to the interactions of plant biodiversity and human ecologies that can help to retrace the Anthropocene, and think beyond it.

The academy "Ecological Entanglements across Collections—Plant Lives and Beyond" explores the role of plant life in artistic and aesthetic practices, human knowledge production, and theoretical critical thinking across histories, communities and geographies. The program will include special events such as guided tours (in English and German), a live performance by radio artists Kate Donovan and Ella Finer, and a recital by baroque harp player Margret Koell.

Day one will open the discussions with a critical reassessment of environmental thought as inseparable from religious and political constellations, racial and colonial dominations, the arts, the history of science, and plant biology—reflected in 'Discourses, Imaginaries, and Common Sense'. Day two will focus on the critical appraisal of the colonial legacies in 'Environmentalism in Contemporary Art after 1970'. Day three is dedicated to the nexus of 'Vegetability, Power and Resistance in and across Asia 1600–1850, as Paradise Drama'. Here, scholars discuss the making of gardens as religious, spiritual, and power structures, in search of resilience, with a special session dedicated on the collections of the Oriental Department of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin. Day four will consider communication between vegetal/non-human life forms and 'Plants, Sensory Interactions and Language in Early Modern Europe', that will reflect on perceptions, the senses, sound, smell, music, and feelings in and through plant natures before Modernity.

It will lead into the collections of Berlin's Gemäldegalerie and the holdings of the Staatliches Institut für Musikforschung and the Musikinstrumenten-Museum. Day five will be looking into 'Plant Photography, Coloniality, and Art in and after the 1920s' and again will include a presentation of selected materials from the collections. A round table critically discussing 'Disciplines, Systems of Knowledge, and Curatorial Practice' will conclude the event.

Monday, 4 November 2024: Forschungscampus Dahlem, Foyer

Tuesday, 5 November 2024: Hamburger Bahnhof – Nationalgalerie der Gegenwart, Aktionsraum

Wednesday, 6 November 2024: Simón Bolívar Lecture Hall, Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut/Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin

Thursday, 7 November 2024: Kulturforum, KGM Lecture Hall

Friday, 8 November 2024: Museum für Fotografie, Fürstensaal

Events and lectures will take place on-site, are open to the public, and will be mostly accessible online via pre-registration. Please note that some events have a limited number of participants.

Full Program:

<https://www.khi.fi.it/en/aktuelles/4a-lab-academy-program.php>

Events in German / Veranstaltungen auf Deutsch:

<https://www.khi.fi.it/en/aktuelles/4a-lab-academy-events-in-german.php>

Registration:

<https://www.khi.fi.it/en/aktuelles/4a-lab-academy-registration.php>

Speakers and Participants:

<https://www.khi.fi.it/en/aktuelles/4a-lab-academy-speakers-and-participants.php>

Venues:

<https://www.khi.fi.it/de/aktuelles/4a-lab-academy-venues.php>

Concept and Organisation:

Hannah Baader & 4A.Lab team

in collaboration with Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz

Management/Coordination:

Antje Paul, assisted by Tanja Wieczorek, Jule Ulbricht, Tina Plokarz, Devin Gökdemir, and Nicoleta Certan

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@khiflorenz #khiflorenz

#4A.Lab #4A.LabAcademy #EcologicalEntanglements

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URL zur Pressemitteilung:

<https://www.khi.fi.it/en/aktuelles/veranstaltungen/2024/11/ecological-entanglements-across-collections.php>



4A_Lab Academy "Ecological Entanglements across Collections – Plant Lives and Beyond"
Bijan Dawallu / Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut



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