

Æstetisk Seminar

*Æstetisk Seminar er tilrettelagt af Anette Vandsø og Niclas Nørby Jochumsen Hundahl,
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Mathias Danbolt

Tropaganda: Art, Colonialism and Battles over History

Art has long functioned as a battleground for negotiations of power, identity, and history. In this lecture, Danbolt examines how art and visual culture have shaped understandings of Denmark's colonial past in the Caribbean. Central to the lecture is the concept of tropaganda—tropical propaganda—which names aesthetic strategies through which beauty, sensuality, and idyll are mobilized to obscure and normalize historical violence and political power relations. Through analyses ranging from eighteenth-century portraits of slave owners and nineteenth-century sugar plantation landscapes to twentieth-century colonial commodity aesthetics, the lecture traces how colonial imagery has consistently worked to separate aesthetics from politics, past from present, and power from history. Danbolt situates these visual traditions within a broader critique of Danish art history's enduring tendency to marginalize colonial history, while also highlighting how contemporary artists have developed critical and reparative strategies for engaging colonialism and its afterlives. More than a century after the sale of the Danish West Indies to the United States in 1917, the lecture argues that colonialism continues to shape Danish visual culture and public debates. As such, Danbolt suggests that colonial perspectives remain essential for a more historically informed understanding of art history, memory politics, and contemporary negotiations of art, identity, and historical responsibility.

Torsdag den 28. maj 2026, Kl. 14:15-16:00

Kasernen, bygning 1584, lokale 124

Alle er velkomne / All are welcome