



# Call for papers: History in Art & Art in History

Conference organized by  
Frederiksborg - Museum of National History & Roskilde University  
The conference is funded by the Carlsberg Foundation.

**Date: 11-12 May 2026**

**Venues: Carlsberg Academy and Frederiksborg**

With this conference, Frederiksborg and Roskilde University aim to explore the complex connections between art and history. These connections have never been limited to the mere reflection of history in art. Social transformations, ideological shifts and political struggles have long provided the subject matter for artists, while also shaping artistic forms and practices. At the same time, art has actively participated in the making of history by constructing narratives and shaping collective and individual memories, influencing our imagination and interpretation of the past. To paraphrase W.J.T. Mitchell one might say that art is *"a way of history making, not just history mirroring."*

The conference seeks to open a dialogue on the many ways that art and history intersect and, in some instances, collide. By bringing together diverse perspectives, the conference aims to rethink the boundaries between art and history and to consider how their many entanglements continue to influence cultural memory, historiography and artistic practice.

History painting was once regarded as the most prestigious form of visual art and an artistic genre that claimed authority as the ultimate mediator of the past. Its subjects were initially drawn from mythology and religion, later embracing the nationalist depiction of 'the important events in history' closer to the present. When Frederiksborg was founded as a Museum of National History by J.C. Jacobsen in 1878, the vision of a monumental and uplifting national story seemed perfectly suited to the genre. Today, the museum holds many of Denmark's most iconic history paintings – works that have not only entered our collective memory, but actively shaped ideas of Danish history and identity. How should we, as researchers, museums, and artists engage with these works and the narratives they construct and how can we today explore how art constructs, questions, and reimagines history across time?

**The conference welcome papers addressing a broad range of topics that may include:**

- The relationship between art and history
- The connections between History, Art and Power
- Art, politics and propaganda
- The history of history painting and its future
- Art and representations of religion, gender, ethnicity, and national identity – any identity
- Museums, Art and History

Papers addressing other theoretical, methodological, and ethical questions relating to the subject are also most welcome. We invite both individual papers as well as sessions.

**Deadline for abstracts: March 1, 2026. Accepted abstracts informed March 16, 2026.**



## **Format**

- 20 min per paper and 10 min discussion. 3 papers per session. Sessions will be 90 minutes long
- Session organizers are responsible for planning the session (including the format of the session, number of papers, time allotted to each presenter, the appointment of the session chair, discussant, etc.)
- The session organizer, chair and discussant can be the same person
- The conference organizers are responsible for matching individual papers into sessions

## **Individual papers should include the following information:**

- Name of presenter, institutional affiliation, address and e-mail
- Title of the proposed paper
- 200–300-word abstract

## **Complete session proposals of at least three papers/panelists should include the following information:**

- Session title
- The session organizer's name, institutional affiliation, address, and e-mail
- 200–400-word abstract of the session
- Format of the session (paper session, panel, roundtable)
- The following information for all participants: - Names and roles (presenter, chair, commentator) - Institutional affiliation, address, and e-mail - Titles and abstracts of individual papers, (200–400-word abstract per paper)

## **Confirmed speakers:**

Ibrahim Mahama, visual artist based in Ghana.

Jordan Bear, Associate professor, Department of Art History, University of Toronto.

Matthew Potter, Professor in Art and Design History, Northumbria University.

## **Conference Fee:**

Standard fee (including conference dinner): DKK 1,200

Student fee (including conference dinner): DKK 700

Standard fee (excluding conference dinner): DKK 1,000

Student fee (excluding conference dinner): DKK 500

**Register here for the conference: <https://events.ruc.dk/historyinartartinhistory/conference>**

## **Program TBA**

## **Organizers:**

*Lone Kølle Martinsen*, PhD. Head of Research, Frederiksborg, lkm@frederiksborg.dk

*Mette Houlberg Rung*, PhD. Head of Collections and Exhibitions, Frederiksborg, mhr@frederiksborg.dk

*Hans Fabricius-Rahbek*, PhD Fellow. Roskilde University & Frederiksborg, hansfr@ruc.dk

*Kim Esmark*, PhD. Associate Professor, Roskilde University, kesmark@ruc.dk