



Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - 2024-2025

Exchange

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam offers many English-taught courses in a variety of subjects, ranging from arts & culture and social sciences, neurosciences and computer science, to economics and business administration.

The International Office is responsible for course approval and course registration for exchange students. For details about course registration, requirements, credits, semesters and so on, please [visit the exchange programmes webpages](#).

History of Collecting and Exhibiting (1500-present)

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| Course Code | L_GCBAGES217 |
| Credits | 6 |
| Period | P4 |
| Course Level | 200 |
| Language Of Tuition | English |
| Faculty | Faculty of Humanities |
| Course Coordinator | dr. H. Piena |
| Examiner | dr. H. Piena |
| Teaching Staff | dr. H. Piena |
| Teaching method(s) | Seminar |

Course Objective

1. You acquire knowledge on collecting and exhibiting, as well as on (living) collectors and collecting institutions and are able to connect this knowledge to longterm developments in the history of collecting and exhibiting.
2. You gain insight into relevant current debates and theories.
3. You get familiar with the many layers of meaning within an object as primary source in historical research.
4. You gain insight into the agents that shape meaning and the ever changing significance of collected objects.
5. You gain insight into the many ways how to get across this layered meaning in exhibitions.
6. You get familiar with the acquisition and deaccessioning of museum objects.
7. You are able to apply your newly acquired knowledge on theory and experiences in a blog post.

Course Content

Throughout history, private and museum collections have reflected the shifting perceptions the collectors had of themselves and of the world around them. What was the nature of knowledge at different moments in time, for instance with respect to the body, to one's own and other cultures, and how did changes in such knowledge systems come about? By focusing on interrelated themes such as (1) research and classification; (2) collecting science; (3) travelling and exploration and (4) the institutionalisation of collecting, we will discuss the contingently changing realities of museums and collections. In turn, the modes of collecting, organizing and displaying influenced the way the public thought about themselves and their culture.

By means of an introduction, you are asked to bring your own object to reflect on its meaning and your message to future generations. A private collector, who will be invited to the introduction seminar, will do the same on his collection. During the following sessions looted art from the World War II will be discussed, as well as the shifting perception on material culture from former colonies. The process of the creation and subsequently appropriation of heritage will be illustrated with examples through time. The cause, benefits and drawbacks of the recent distinction between

material and immaterial heritage will be explored and finally contemporary collecting and the question on authority is addressed: who decides what becomes, is and remains heritage?

Additional Information Teaching Methods

Lectures, seminars, fieldwork, excursions.

Method of Assessment

Assessments consist of active participation in the classroom, attendance of museum visits, completing written assignments, and a formal presentation.

Literature

Csilla E. Ariese and Magdalena Wróblewska, *Practicing Decoloniality in Museums. A Guide with Global Examples*. Amsterdam: University Press, 2022, p. 11-18; 21-24; 37-40; 51-54; 67-70; 81-84; 97-100.

Frans Grijzenhout, 'In these days of convulsive political change'. Discourse and display in the revolutionary museum, 1793-1815.' In: *Performing the past. Memory, History, and Identity in Modern Europe*. Jay Winter, Karin Tilmans, Frank van Vree (eds.), 2010, p.287-303.

Mayke Groffen, *Collecting Contemporary Home Life. Het verzamelen van eigentijdse*

wooncultuur. Thesis. Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam, 2021, p.13-46

Susan Hogervorst, 'Corona Heritage and the Omnipresence of the Present'. In: *Public history weekly*, 2021, 9 (6) DOI: [dx.doi.org/10.1515/phw-2021-18601](https://doi.org/10.1515/phw-2021-18601).

Stijn Reijnders, Gerard Rooijakkers en H       Verreyke, 'From display cabinets to engine rooms. An essay about collecting present-day culture in the city museum'. In: *Sophie Elpers en Anna Palm (red.), Musealisierung der Gegenwart*. Bielefeld, 2013, 29-40, p.33-34.

Additional Information Target Audience

BA2 History students, BA2 and BA3 MKDA students, International humanities students, level 200-300.

Additional Information

This course is obligatory in the second year for students of History with a 'Heritage studies: histories, memories, spaces'- specialization.

For them this course is a prerequisite for the second year course 'World Heritage & Conflict, and the third year course Research Seminar Heritage and Public History. The course is complementary as well to the MKDA-course 'Exhibition Machines' and also welcomes MKDA-students (minor). For international exchange students at BA2 or BA3 level a basic knowledge of (art) history is required.

Explanation Canvas

All announcements and communication will take place through Canvas

Recommended background knowledge

This is a BA2 history course, open for MKDA and History students. For international exchange students (level 200-300) from other disciplines

a basic knowledge of (art) history is required.