

Objects & Affects: Artists and the Ethnographic Archive

Date: 26th of April, 2017

Location: Paviljoen, Research Center for Material Culture, Museum Volkenkunde, Steenstraat 1, Leiden

Ethnographic collections are spaces for histories of relations, colonial relations, knowledges, desires, lifeworlds, materials, and techniques. The ethnographic archive is a particular kind of historical reservoir: it is an anthropological and artistic legacy, but also a legacy of colonialism and its technologies of power, inextricably linked to systems of control. This seminar invites artists and academics to explore the relevance and potential of ethnographic archives - including objects, photographs, and sounds - for contemporary makers. What is the agency of objects in ethnographic collections, how do they bring us into action, into relations; how do they affect us? What complex histories and intentionalities do these objects embody? In our modern life it seems to be hard to experience enchantment. Thinking with Jane Bennett, who challenges this view, we question: how can objects be a source of enchantment? How can they inspire, captivate and disturb? What might be the relation between the creative imagination and the archive? And what are the ethical implications when artists activate and intervene in ethnographic archives?

RCMC has invited students of the Master in Artistic Research (KABK) to interpret our ethnographic collections in new ways and to create new works inspired by them. During this seminar their works will be presented, performed and discussed.

The seminar is part of a collaboration between The Royal Academy of Art and the RCMC.

Programme

14:00 Introduction by Prof. dr. Wayne Modest (head Research Center for Material Culture)

14:10 – 14:45 Vincent Vulsma (artist)

14:45 – 15:00 Q&A led by Jasper Coppes (artist)

15:00 – 16:00 Viewing and performance of works by students of Master Artistic Research (KABK), followed by coffee & tea break

16:00 – 16:15 Sara Blokland (artist, curator, researcher)

16:15 – 16:30 Dr. Margaret Tali (researcher and curator)

16:30 – 17:00 Panel discussion with Yuki Kihara (artist), Mirjam Linschooten (artist) and speakers moderated by Janice McNab (head of Department, Masters of Artistic Research KABK)

17:00 drinks!

