

GSAH | Interdisciplinary Cultural Studies | Global Studies

Globality

Prof. Dr. Alexander Alberro, Columbia University

Public lecture: 25.04.2024, 6.15pm–7.45pm, Unitobler, Lerchenweg 36, F005
Colloquium: 26.04.2024, 10.15am – 5.00pm, UniS, Schanzeneckstrasse 1, A017



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1.5 ECTS Lecture &
ColloquiumA
(Pflicht- oder
Wahlpflichtbereich
ICS und GS /
Wahlpflicht-
bereich SLS,
SINTA)

Registration

via KSL und E-Mail
to
michael.toggweiler@unibe.ch

Public lecture

Contemporary Art at the Nexus of Cultures

Prof. Dr. Alexander Alberro

Virginia Bloedel Wright '51 Professor of Art History,
Columbia University

Moderation:

Prof. Dr. Elize Mazadiego

Art History, Universität Bern

My paper engages decolonial theory to explore the dynamic exchanges that materialize today at sites where the aesthetic ideals and values of disparate art frameworks meet. I acknowledge Western art's epistemic dominance and proliferation but supplant its illusion of universality by recognizing a multiplicity of equally valid coexisting art formations with their own artistic narratives and practices. Many of these configurations are geographical, evolving outside the Western context. However, some are cultural and ideological, developing within the dominant formation's domain. I see the Western framework as at once crucial and insufficient for understanding contemporary art and seek to relativize its significance by bringing into focus the complex negotiations that transpire at its boundaries. My thesis is that the sites of encounter between the Western and other art frameworks are where artists produce much of today's most innovative and transformative art.

Mandatory reading (colloquium, all texts on ILIAS)

Chinua Achebe, "The African Writer and the English Language," in Isidore Okpewho, ed., Things Fall Apart: A Casebook (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2003), 62-63;

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, "Decolonizing the Mind," Diogenes, 184:46/4 (Winter 1998), 101-104;

Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," in Jonathan Rutherford, ed., Identity: Community, Culture, and Difference (Lawrence and Wishart, 2001), 222-237.

Alexander Alberro



Alexander Alberro, Virginia Bloedel Wright Professor in the Departments of Art History at Barnard College and Columbia University, has written widely on modern and contemporary art and theory. He is the author, most recently, of *Interstices: At Contemporary Art's Boundaries*, forthcoming with University of Chicago Press in 2024. He is also the founding editor of the University of California Press' book series "Studies on Latin American and LatinX Art," and sits on the editorial boards of *Art Margins* and *Journal of Curatorial Studies*. Along with *Interstices*, his books include *Abstraction in Reverse* (2017); *Working Conditions*, edited (2016), *Luis Camnitzer In Conversation with Alexander Alberro* (2014); *What is Contemporary Art Today?* edited (2012); *Institutional Critique*, co-edited (2009); *Art After Conceptual Art*, co-edited (2006); *Museum Highlights*, edited (2005); *Conceptual Art and the Politics of Publicity* (2003); *Recording Conceptual Art*, co-edited (2001); and *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*, co-edited (1999). He has also published in a broad array of journals and exhibition catalogues, and delivered many lectures internationally.

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