

FOAM

FUTURE

MUSEUMS OF ART



FOAM - Future of Art Museums **Master in Contemporary Museum Practices**

At a glance

ECTS credits: 60

Duration of the course: 1 year


Courses will be taught in: English

Places available: 15

Campus: Bozen-Bolzano

Tuition fee: € 4.500,00

 **MUSEION**

 **unibz** Fakultät für Design und Künste
Facoltà di Design e Arti
Faculty of Design and Art

Course description 2025/2026

1st Semester

Dialogues on Contemporary Discourse 1

Marcello Barison

What do we see when we carefully examine the contemporary world? Among the many possible answers, one stands out: the question of what we, as a species, are becoming. There is no doubt that our way of being is now inseparable from the digital and information technologies that shape how we interact with the world. These technologies already seem inherently integrated into our existence, and it is reasonable to assume that soon they will no longer function as external tools, but will be internalized and assimilated into our biological, physical, and neurological makeup. From this perspective, humanity is undergoing a true transformation as a species. What is the human evolving into? What can we say about the characteristics of the being that will inhabit the Earth after us?

Marcello Barison is a fixed-term researcher in Aesthetics at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano. He completed his doctoral studies at the Istituto Italiano di Scienze Umane (SUM, now the Scuola Normale Superiore) in Naples, in collaboration with Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg in Germany. He has been a visiting professor at Shanghai Jiao Tong University and a collegiate assistant professor at the University of Chicago from 2015 to 2019. In addition to his lectures and publications on 20th-century continental philosophy, he has written on contemporary art, literature, and architecture.

The Public Realm

Roberto Gigliotti

The course starts from the assumption that the contemporary art museum, through its activities, can intervene not only the public sphere at large but also, literally, into the public space. Being more than a place where art is preserved, researched and exhibited, the art museum of the future is expected to break down its boundaries and establish a close relationship not only with its guests but also with the inhabitants of the territories in which it stands. During the class, approaches and case studies that correspond to this expanded understanding of the activities of the museum will be presented and discussed.

Roberto Gigliotti is Associate Professor in Interior and Exhibit Design at the Faculty of Design and Art of the Free University of Bozen Bolzano. He graduated in architecture at the IUAV in Venice and holds a Master in Landscape Architecture (MLA) from the Edinburgh College of Art. His work focuses on museography with a peculiar attention to the contemporary practices of exhibiting architecture. Before joining the Free University of Bozen Bolzano he was researcher at the TU Darmstadt. He is vice-president of the kunstverein ar/ge kunst and has co-curated several projects in the public space for the cultural association Lungomare.

Studio 1

Diogo Passarinho

The course will be structured as a design studio. Students will be given an exhibition theme and will be asked to develop it into a project proposal. Support by the studio leader will come in the form of frontal lectures and one-to-one review sessions. The aim of the course is to give students the possibility to develop all the aspects of an art exhibition: its conception, its content, its spatialization, its experience, its public program, its accessibility, its impact, its communication, etc.

Diogo Passarinho is a Portuguese architect, and founder of D_P_S, a practice based in Berlin. D_P_S is a research-based design studio, founded in 2015, investigating how emotional contexts can be brought into shaping spatial memories. The work of the studio has been showcased at the Helsinki, Venice, and Gwangju Biennale, Baltic Triennial, Hayward Gallery, Palais De Tokyo, Pirelli Hangar Bicocca, Oslo National Museum, Van Abbemuseum, to name a few examples. Mainly from public commissions, he works with a variety of clients from different fields, maintaining a strong focus on the cultural realm. Across the design spectrum, Diogo's practice encompasses architecture, exhibition and furniture design, research, curatorial and writing projects.

Experience the Museum

Museion staff

The course will be taught directly inside Museion by the museum's professional staff. During the course students will have the opportunity to experience the different departments that form a contemporary art museum today, which include curatorial department, business development & communication office, collection & archive, exhibition organization and production, and educational projects, in order to experience firsthand how the different departments collaborate. Moreover, students will be able to see which other activities, apart from exhibitions, form a contemporary art museum today as in fact, Museion describes itself as more than the sum of its exhibitions. Students will therewith be confronted with the challenges contemporary art museums face today and will learn important perspectives to tackle them with a particular focus on sustainability and social responsibility inside museums.

Museion is the museum for modern and contemporary art in Bolzano. Since 2020 it is directed by the Dutch art historian and exhibition maker Bart van der Heide. At its core, the museum is committed to fostering international art, culture and innovation in South Tyrol. Museion believes that cultural heritage isn't set in stone; it's a dynamic force, constantly evolving through conversations with artists, thinkers, and creators, and guided by a foundation of inclusive civic values. This is reflected in the exhibitions, in the collection and in the public formats. Through Museion Academy, one of the programming lines of Museion, the museum focuses on constant dialogues with universities and academies at a national and international level. Its aim is to set a pioneering example for a contemporary museum model, one that evolves to align with the ever-changing social dynamics of our times. Simultaneously, Museion upholds its vision of sustainability, aiming to be an agent of growth and empowerment, while also being a significant employer where every team member plays a pivotal role.

2nd Semester

The Future of the Museum

TBD

The course will be held in the form of an intensive seminar and will introduce the students to the main issues and problematics that define the current state and the possible evolution of art museums in terms of their governance, social engagement and impact, all in the perspective of a sustainable transition of our society. International case studies and best practices will be discussed that are questioning and redefining the role and political agency of art museums within their local and global communities.

The Digital Realm

Davide Tommaso Ferrando

Organized as an intensive seminar, the course will offer students an overview of how digital communication technologies can be used to design exhibitions that extend the museum's space beyond its physical boundaries, along with the theories underlying these exhibition practices. Specifically, it will explore the relationship between art and Extended Reality, as well as the wide and diverse landscape of digital and online exhibitions. The course will include readings, discussions, case study analyses, and student presentations.

Davide Tommaso Ferrando is fixed-term researcher in Interior & Exhibit Design at the Faculty of Design and Art of the Free University of Bozen Bolzano, as well as an architecture critic and curator, particularly interested in the intersection between architecture, city and media. He has been guest lecturer in institutions such as La Biennale di Venezia, University of Melbourne, The Berlage, Architectural Association, and ETSA Madrid. Together with Daniel Tudor Munteanu, he is the founder of the Unfolding Pavilion (2016-ongoing) and the curator of the 4th Timisoara Architecture Biennial – Beta (2022). Davide writes regularly on The Architectural Review.

Dialogues on Contemporary Discourse 2

Elisabetta Rattalino

How have artworks and artistic practices shaped discourses concerning museology, exhibition making and cultural production at large? Conversely, how has the museum as an institution shaped artistic practices? Delving into the history of art from the 1900s until today, lectures, readings, discussions, and visits will address how artists have envisioned new roles for the museum and expanded its very notion at different times. Examining primarily but not exclusively environments and spatial practices, socially engaged art and practices of civic participation, environmental art and art-science collaborations, the module will offer historical coordinates and theoretical tools to enable students to critically approach the contemporary debates on artistic production and its longstanding relation with museums.

Elisabetta Rattalino is an art historian, and holds a PhD from the School of Art History of the University of St. Andrews (2018). Her research engages with artistic practices and visual cultures from 1960 to present day, with a focus on Italy's rural environments, and has been supported by the Bibliotheca Hertziana – Max Planck Institute for Art History (2024), the Istituto di Cultura Italiana di Mumbai (2023), the Bauhaus Dessau Foundation (2021), CIMA – Centre for Italian Modern Art in New York (2018).

Studio 2

Sepake Angiama

The course will be structured as an experimental project-oriented studio. Starting from the understanding of art museums as critical agents of transformation, students will be given a topic focused on education, pedagogy and community engagement to develop into a project proposal, where “project” is here conceived in the widest possible sense of the word. Support of the studio leader will come in the form of frontal lectures and one-to-one review sessions. The aim of the course is to give students the possibility to develop all the aspects of an experimental cultural project capable of expanding the agency and civic role of the art museum by establishing a relationship with its local and global communities.

Sepake Angiama is the director of the institute of international visual arts, as a curator and educator, whose interest lies in discursive practices, the social framework, and how we shape and form our experience in understanding the world. This has inspired her to work with artists who disrupt or provoke aspects of the social sphere through action, design, dance, and architecture. While in her position as Head of Education, Documenta 14 she initiated the project Under the Mango Tree: Sites of Learning in cooperation with ifa (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen) which gathers artist-led spaces, libraries and schools interested in unfolding discourses around decolonizing education practices that destabilize the European canon, through examining alternative epistemologies, embodiment practices, notions of unlearning and indigenous knowledge. Previously she was the Head of Education for Manifesta 10 hosted by the Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg. She is currently a Fellow for BAK, Utrecht (basis voor actuele kunst) where she addresses through her research, Her Imaginary, how science fiction and feminism may harness the perfect tools for capturing a pedagogy of political and social imagination. Through this research project she developed, Letter from the Future, a series of writings that develops the transposition of our collective political imaginary within the context of the library project, 'We Summon All Beings Here Present, Past and Future'.