

00:00:00:10 **LAUREN CORNELL:** Hi everyone. I'm Lauren. It's pretty dark in here. It is a really great pleasure to welcome Lucy Steeds, curator and scholar, tonight, and to thank her for delivering the first talk in our Speakers Series this fall. Lucy told me that it wasn't necessary to introduce her, as she's going to be doing some kind of biographical work as part of her remarks; but I really wanted to outline her real importance and significance to CCS. I learned today— I just see Lucy as sort of part of Afterall Exhibition Histories. I got the background today. She was brought on to launch the Exhibition Histories series. This is this series. And she's been part of, an integral part, of all of these different books, nine to date, ten coming down the pike with *Festac '77*. These books are all really invaluable looks at underhistoricized exhibitions or practices. And also in their different kind of strategies, they offer innovative models of research. And I'm personally really proud, and I know that the faculty is as well, that CCS is part of the editorial advisory board and the support network that helps make these books possible.

00:01:41:17 Lucy also co-organized the last three conferences that CCS hosted at LUMA Arles, also in partnership with curatorial programs internationally. And she edited the trilogy of anthologies that came out of these events, including *Curating After the Global*, which you all just received; *How Institutions Think*; and *The Curatorial Conundrum*. Outside of these initiatives, Lucy is also a really incredible writer, and I would really encourage her to read her essays, which are staples of our curriculum. I particularly love her long and just incredibly detailed, exciting essay in the *Magiciens de la Terre* book.

00:02:33:07 So yeah, I wanted Lucy to start off our Speaker Series events because I think she's a really great model for us. She is a generous and dedicated and energetic researcher, and she's also a really leading figure in exhibition histories and in approaching curatorial practice in an experimental, antisciplinary, and international way that questions and breaks apart canonical art histories and conventions, which is so much in keeping with the spirit of our work here. So I would also like to thank Casey Robertson for organizing Lucy's accommodation and travel with such aplomb. He always does this so well with all of our guests. And also to Amanda, who I think just stepped out, but is so excellent in overseeing and welcoming everyone at CCS. This talk is being audio recorded, thanks to Hannah Mandel—I know she's here—and it will be made available in our archive, if you want to listen to it again, and of course, for members of the public. So thank you so much, Lucy.

[APPLAUSE]

00:03:58:11 **LUCY STEEDS:** Hello, everyone. Thank you so much, Lauren for that introduction. It was very generous. And thanks to everybody at CCS who's made the visit possible. Certainly, Casey is immaculate in his organization. But Lauren, I want to say a particular thank you to you because you're an exemplary series editor. I've found it really rewarding working on the books with you. So that's a particular thanks for, yeah, a collaboration that's rewarding.

00:04:27:10 And I'm going to read off my screen, so I hope it doesn't go to sleep on me. I hope you don't go to sleep on me most of all. So I'm not doing a big bio in any way, but I just wanted to elaborate what, you know, the basics of my current role. And as you can see, I'm based in London. You can probably hear that in my accent already. And in the English system, we have these very antiquated academic terms. So when it says I'm a reader in art theory and exhibition histories,

it does mean I read, but it kind of approximates to associate professor in the US scenario. So that's that bit disentangled. And then I just really wanted to flag exhibition histories as the focus of my work at the University of the Arts London, and as the book series which Lauren's already generously mentioned. I put books down here at the front so if you're not a student at CCS and you don't know them, please come and have a look at the end and I'll be happy to discuss any content that's in there. Okay, I'm going to start. I've mostly scripted myself, because I don't want to go off piece and take too much time. But yeah, we'll see if I can stick to time.

00:05:35:17 Okay. Today I am going to start with a question regarding curatorial studies as the focus for work here at Bard, and exhibition histories as my focus in London, asking, how do these two fields relate to one another? And I'll end by exploring the relationship between exhibition histories and the discipline of art history. In between and alongside, we'll consider two additional concerns. First, what types of exhibition are there, or how many cluster different modes of curatorial practice, and understand the different possibilities within a curatorial field. And two, another concern, when and why did exhibition histories start as a field of practice, and what's its use? There'll be time for questions at the end, but also, don't hesitate to interrupt me. I know this is a very formal setup, but I can speak very fast and the accent might not be conducive. So please, particularly points of clarification, if I say something you don't understand, call me on it so I don't lose you. I've discussed exhibition histories on curatorial courses in many places, including Cape Town, Taipei, Mexico City, and Moscow. But my relationship to Bard is particular because of the *Exhibition Histories* book, which we produced together. I want you all to feel that the resources we have generated in producing the *Exhibition Histories* books are yours to examine, test, and elaborate. You may not have questions immediately ready for me here today, but if they come later, you're more than welcome to contact me. So I've got two email addresses; they're all very visible online. Either one will do. That's just my intro, and it's really sincerely felt. We have more material than we could get in the books, so if you have questions about the books, don't hesitate.

00:07:30:25 Okay, the first part. Curatorial studies and exhibition histories. How do they relate to one another? Here's a diagram. Or a field sketch. This is how I suggest you see curatorial studies and exhibition histories in relation. So there's independent work in each field, I think, and also an overlap. There is influence from dialog with other fields; and museum studies, cultural studies, and sociology don't exhaust the possibilities. We could also mobilize visual cultures or anthropology or other disciplines. But now I'm going to zoom in on the overlap between curatorial studies and exhibition histories.

00:08:27:03 Here we see that when curatorial studies does exhibition histories, it tends to be from the perspective of the curator. So we get curatorial histories, the history of exhibitions from the point of view of curatorial practice. Also, exhibition histories can be curated. Or to put it another way, curatorial practice can do the work of or perform exhibition histories. So you may be aware of some fairly high-profile restaging of exhibitions. And that would be one example of this. Curated exhibition histories. So I'm thinking, for instance, perhaps what grabbed the most critical attention was the remake, staged in Venice in 2013, of "When Attitudes Become Form," and exhibition from 1969 that is highly canonized and much studied. And it was recreated in some detail. But increasingly, biennials are also self-historicizing or looking back in the gallery space, at their own history. And David Teh, who worked on the book with us, on [inaudible] installation, he recently put this in practice into Gwangju. He looked back at the history of the Gwangju Biennale, the first four editions, in the contemporary biennale. So those are examples, I think, of exhibition histories being done within curatorial studies.

00:09:54:18 And there's a growing literature, actually, on curatorial remakes. Lisa Greenberg was early to

thematize and theorize the practice, and much literature has come since. There's also a book coming out called *Of(f) Our Times*, which insists that exhibition histories shouldn't become academicized and needs to be artistic and curatorial, inventive rather than aridly scholastic, in its approach to [inaudible], even if produced on the printed page, in journal articles and books. But perhaps this isn't the whole story. We can come back to this idea of academicization, whether exhibition histories is too academic. So do I feel our books are too scholastic? Could they be more inventive? We could look at that in questions, if you like. Perhaps this isn't the whole story. When we're in the middle, here in the overlap between curatorial studies and exhibition histories, what are the differences of emphasis, depending on which field you're choosing to align with? There are many different answers to this question, none of them abiding or unassailably correct. So here's my own personal proposal, which focuses on two things. First, how we understand the word exhibition; and two, what agency we privilege has been at work? Within curatorial studies and in discussion of the curatorial, I'll suggest there are three characteristics. Exhibitions are considered to take a number of conventional forms, typically in museums, galleries, project spaces, or under the banner of a biennial. Two, a curator doesn't want to be restricted to producing exhibitions. They might work in another way; for example, curating public program events or curating a private collection. Three, the agency of the curator is the starting point for study. That's all within curatorial studies.

00:11:55:12 By comparison, let's compare the assumptions I personally insist on for exhibition histories. Now, exhibitions are any public context for art, so they don't necessarily need a curator. For instance, when artists' work with publics themselves are mediated; and even when an exhibition or public situation for art does not involve a curator. Then curatorial intentionality is not necessarily primary in determining meaning for the publics engaged, just as artistic intentionality need not be primary in art's reception either. In sum, for exhibition histories, the agency of art's exhibition is the starting point for study, not the intentionality of the curator, nor that of the artist. And this doesn't mean I'm trying to denigrate the role of the curator; I'm just saying there are more agencies in play in an exhibition than just the curatorial.

00:12:57:19 You may have picked up that I'm stressing an expanded notion of exhibitions. In both fields, in curatorial studies and exhibition histories, we are concerned with more than just the most common forms of exhibition. But here, I'm racing ahead. The statement about expansiveness begs the question, what forms of exhibitions— Sorry, excuse me. What forms do exhibitions most commonly take? How would I sketch a typology of exhibitions? To answer that, I have another couple of slides. Quite simply and pragmatically, my answer involves asking what, where, who, and then grouping shows accordingly. It's really annoying, but after this comes out of line. I had it; it was all beautifully consistent, I promise.

00:13:56:02 Okay. So of course, this oversimplifies. For instance, I'd argue that a collective of artists might produce a survey show by working on it as one; and a solo artist might be invited to curate or produce a group show. So obviously, this is not every permutation; this is a coarse scale sketch. And of course, there are overlaps. So for example, a survey of an individual artist's work may include a newly commissioned project. And an international survey of recent artistic practice might have particular essayistic or discursive ambition, or more loosely, a broad unifying theme. [inaudible] where asks what home or framework is operative. Which amounts to asking, for whom is an exhibition intended? Who will access it? So this, again, isn't an exhaustive list, but it's a summary. And alternative venues or extramural activity might involve, for example, a cinema, your own front room, the outdoors, a mail art project, or printed or online initiative. So that's the where question. Although it's also a who question, because it's a for whom question. The by whom question asks who is hosting or doing the framing. And of course, the different

categories I've listed here might come together or merge to produce a set of shows, and you might have an in-house director working with a independent curator or an artist.

00:15:33:17 At this point, I want to turn to books and Afterall's *Exhibition Histories Series*, as that all these types of shows, all these categories, all these different possibilities, they get covered in the books that I work on in collaboration with Lauren and Tom here at Bard. So we've published a book a year since 2010. And we mark ten years with our tenth publication next month. Each of these books takes an issue in art that seems engaging now and it examines this issue through study of a past exhibition, or a pair or cluster of exhibitions, involving art that is contemporary to that past moment in time. To date, we've looked back as far as 1957, and we've come up as recent as 1998. We've produced one book with a US focus, one with a UK focus, and all the other books have looked more broadly or elsewhere. For instance, Paris, Amsterdam, Havana, Chiang Mai. And I'm just going to zoom in on one book at the moment because I don't want us to keep at this superficial level. I've picked the US book, since we're in the US. So it's book five in the series, and the theme or title is *Exhibition as Social Intervention*. And the cover image here is Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle's block party, a block party initiated by the artist in Chicago, where the exhibition took place. It was an exhibition without any exhibition space except the city of Chicago itself. Eight different artists or artist groups were commissioned to work with local communities to produce art in situ, which was much rarer at that time than it is now. And I'm also citing this because Mary Jane Jacob, who was responsible for curating this exhibition, has her papers here at Bard. There's also a lovely essay in this book by Helmut Draxler, which analyzes the late 1980s, 1990s moment in which there's a crossing between the exhibitionary and the discursive, in what he calls the project exhibition. And I think that picks up on— Let me skip back.

00:17:57:13 [inaudible] I've grouped together thematic essays that discursive activists performed in an archival. I think Helmut's essay in this book does a really lovely job of thinking that through reversely, in the form of the project exhibition which, as I said, unites the discursive and the exhibitionary.

00:18:23:24 Now, rather than going through all these books, classifying them in terms of what, where, who for the shows they cover, I want to suggest thematic clusters instead. So here, this first trio, we're looking at curatorial experimentation and exhibition form. And just to mess with this immediately, the yellow book at the bottom, which looks at the São Paulo Biennale of 1988, this could also go up there; it's also an experimentation of exhibition form. But for now, I'm keeping it down here, with another two books that both also look at global representations of art. And global is in inverted commas because there's a take on worldwide artistic production, which of course, can never be absolute. And then the third category is artist projects. So artist-led initiatives to make art public. And in fact, for all these three books, in the artist projects section, they've all happened to be artist collectives. There's no individual artist here. In each case, it's a collective of artists producing a show. So this all looks very tidy. But I have to say it's emerged from our commissioning process. It did not drive our book publications. So this tidiness only comes into visibility through looking back and taking stock. And that importance of feeling your way, rather than working top-down, is something that characterizes pretty much everything I do. I enjoy stepping back taking stock, but I'm not necessarily theory-led. I think theory and practice have to merge together.

00:20:00:09 So to sum up at this point, I'd suggest two things to consider when reflecting back on which past shows you find particularly interesting and you think, if investigated further, might inspire your own work. One— I guess there's lots of ones and twos in this. I'm sorry. I'm very binary. There's also [inaudible] three-legged stool, I'm sorry. I bullet point my thoughts, you can see. I'm

trying to make it clear, what I'm trying to say. So two points. One, what research questions do your favorite shows answer for you? For us at Afterall, the research questions might be twofold: where has there been critical experimentation in the exhibition form, and how has global contemporary art been differently inflected through exhibitionary practice? But you might be more interested in, for example, how socially-engaged practice operates most effectively or, say, where experimental institutional practices have opened up new possibilities. There might be more institutional focus, rather than one-off exhibition focused. Number two, the second thing I'm recommending you consider is what type of exhibitionary practice interests you. And here, the what, where, who questions will help you to understand the pragmatics of different situations and clarify how you see yourself operating in future. Are you passionate about what makes a great collection display in a museum? Or is setting up a project space for emerging artists in a place where there's provisions lacking your goal? So I've presented a general typology and I've presented a specific-exhibition-histories-according-to-Afterall typology. But what I'm really encouraging you to do is to take your own research questions and see where they lead you.

00:21:47:09 Okay. I'm going to head on to when and why did exhibition histories start as a field of practice. And I have to say, Lauren asked me to address this specifically. I'm hoping to surprise you with my answer, Lauren, because I think you had something in mind, and I will come to that, but it's not where I'm going to start. So these are images of a very famous, much-discussed show, the "Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme." So it's an international exhibition of Surrealism. It's the one that took place in February, 1938, January-February 1938, in the Galerie Beaux-Arts in Paris. It was organized by the key Surrealists at the time, André Breton and Paul Éluard, and Marcel Duchamp is billed in the catalog. He's got a great title. He's generator-arbitrator. And Man Ray is the master of lighting. And if you know the show visually, it's probably not initially these images that come to mind. Duchamp is particularly responsible for a whole room with coal bags suspended from the ceiling. And you walked into a sort of cave, with soot coming down from the ceiling. And where Man Ray is credited as the master of lighting, he requested the whole show be in the dark. You were given a flashlight on entry, in order to navigate it. This is kind of canonical exhibition history. This corridor of mannequins I'm showing you here because if you look top left of this image, you see a poster for André Breton's Humour Noir—black humor event, as staged in the context of the International Expo held in Paris in 1937. And top right of the right-hand image is the poster for the International Surrealist exhibition at the New Burlington Galleries in London, two years before. So by connecting this show with previous events by the Surrealists, they sound an anchoring note of gravitas in an otherwise anarchic and seemingly playful exhibition. So this, for me, is one starting point for exhibition histories. These are artists historicizing their own exhibition history in the present. And it's interesting that this is partly why these shows are canonical, because they're very well-documented and they're already historicizing themselves, in the moment of making new shows. We might compare them with Dada projects, which were much less documented and have only recently gained as much attention. And there's always this problem of much-discussed shows occluding other shows. Which shows should we look at, and why, is always a big question for us afterward.

00:24:24:25 Here's another starting point. Another moment when exhibition histories as a field of practice emerges. We're looking at The Gutai, which is the bulletin of the Gutai Art Association in Japan. And it's number 33, from the 20th of October, 1955. It's a special edition of the journal, of the Gutai journal, documenting and elaborating an exhibition titled "Experimental Outdoor Modern Art Exhibition to Challenge the Midsummer Sun," as staged in the forests of the Ashiya River for a fortnight, three months before this publication comes out. In some ways, this enables the transient exhibition, as staged in a remote part of the country and outside the hegemonic West, to reach new audiences after the event, as history, rather than as actuality. And again,

this canonical practice occludes, by its visibility, other projects. For instance, Jikken Kobo another collective active in China at the time, made their first presentation in 1951; but that was undocumented and is much harder to bring back into public debate.

00:25:41:23 After these artistic experiments by the Surrealists, by the Gutai Group, exhibition histories started to become the focus of independent research and argumentation—so independent is the key term there—with critical, scholarly, and curatorial uptake. From the 1960s to the 1980s, there were sporadic books and at least one exhibition produced across Europe which seeded the field. There was important work done in French, German, English— Sorry, excuse me. French, German, and Dutch, alongside English. In the 1990s, these seeds began to grow. Crucially, two curating or curatorial programs were founded within academia. So here at CCS Bard, and also at the Royal College of Art, in London. And I think it's interesting that CCS came into the world as curatorial studies, and the Royal College in London, it was a course about curating. And that difference is interesting, being curating and curatorial. There's obviously a lot of writing about it. But it's there, enshrined in the terms of these two academic programs. exhibition histories in this moment in the 1990s becomes curricular, a part of higher education, albeit it within the vocational discipline of curatorial studies, not as a standalone academic discipline like art history. In the spring of 1995, here at CCS, Bruce Altshuler gave a pro seminar covering the history of exhibition.

00:27:16:08 Just a year before, he had published this important book, *The Avant-garde in Exhibition*, offering a chronological assessment of twenty shows from 1905 to 1969. And there were two important contemporaneous initiatives, which— I'm sure you know these things, but I'm just constellating them to build a picture of the beginnings of exhibition histories. So this anthology of essays, edited by Reesa Greenberg, D.W. Ferguson, Sandy Nairne, was published in London in '96. And this is Mary Anne Staniszewski's *The Power of Display*, looking at shows at MoMA, published in 1998. So between them, this trio of books established exhibition histories for contemporary art in the English language. Here at Bard, Bruce, Altshuler's Pro Seminar led to binders that you'll still find in the CCS Archives, assembling student research, investigating case studies of past shows. The Pro Seminar was then steadily reshaped by Altshuler's successors, including Martha Ward, Andrea Fraser, and Christian Rattemeyer, into the current History and Theories, a curating course that's still operative. So that was the 1990s, in which exhibition histories became anchored in these three books and two curatorial courses, very much between London and New York.

00:28:45:11 In the next decade, in the 2000s, more curatorial courses emerged, and there was a gathering of energy around the published work started in the 1990s. So there's more books by Altshuler, the big volumes produced by Phaidon, *Exhibitions That Made Art History*. And these cover the period 1863 to 2002, and there's like fifty-nine case studies, massive volumes. It's quite a brief analysis, if you've looked at them, but they assemble extensive primary materials. Hans Ulrich Obrist brings out *A Brief History of Curating* in 2008, predominantly interviews with artists and with curators. So yeah, a history of curating, curatorial history interview, privileging the curatorial take on what it is to produce and exhibition and work with the public. And there are two books on Harald Szeemann that come out in this period. There's, again, another massive book, a catalog of all his exhibitions. And there's a slimmer volume edited by Florence Derieux, *Harald Szeemann Individual Mythology. Methodology*, excuse me. And this slimmer book on Szeemann includes a quote, which is much debated. I'm just going to park it with you here; we can discuss it later in questions, if you want. In her introduction, Derieux writes, "It is now widely accepted that the art history of the second half of the twentieth century is no longer a history of artworks, but a history of exhibitions." So this is a moment when we really arrive at an almost evangelical project for exhibition histories. But I want to note that all the books I've flagged so

far are very largely focused on European and US case studies, with only a few exceptions. So actually, Bruce Altshuler's very interested in the Gutai shows, for instance, and he puts China Avant-Garde, I think, in his big Phaidon volumes. But that's pretty much it in all that, everything I've flagged so far.

00:30:42:02 So I want to highlight now instead, an interesting widening of focus geopolitically that also takes place in the 2000s. This is a catalog produced to accompany a show, but it also works very well as a standalone book. It's Wu Hung's *Cancelled: Exhibiting Experimental Art in China*. And the show took place at the David and Alfred Smart Museum in Chicago, in 2000. And this is a book marking fifty years of the Biennale São Paulo, published by the foundation in Portuguese, in 2001. And interestingly, there are three comparable books in 2005, one marking 110 years of the Venice Biennale, one on fifty years of Documenta, and one on ten years of Manifesta. So there's a real moment here where biennials around the world that had been going for a certain number of years get into the mode of self-historicization. And this is a book by Patrick Flores, *Past Peripheral: Curation in Southeast Asia*, produced in 2018. And as I've already flagged, in 2010 we launched Afterall's Exhibition Histories book series. So we've moved. I've done the sort of classic history for you, starting with artist initiatives in the thirties and fifties, moving to preliminary— I didn't go into the sort of sixties-eighties moment, with the sort of seeding of exhibition history, mostly across Europe. Then we land in the 1990s, [inaudible] curatorial classes[?] and initial publications. And then this diversifies in the 2000s.

00:32:22:14 So how have we responded at Afterall to what came before our work? All our books include two key elements: plurivocality—we unite curatorial, artistic, and independent critical voices, anthologizing newly commissioned essays alongside archival material and interviews looking back; and revisitation. We attempt to do justice to the exhibition or exhibitions, such as they were experientially. For example, through walkthroughs, literally tours through images of exhibitions that we're studying. And across the series, we've avowedly sought to decentralize shows in Western Europe and North America. I'm now going to flip through some of our books with you, just highlighting some of the other features of our approach to exhibition histories. First, if considering shows that are well-celebrated or canonized within long-established curatorial courses, then we sought to complicate their achievements and to foreground other exhibitions their fame has occluded.

00:33:21:09 This is the first book in the series, and we look at *When Attitudes Become Form*, the very famous Szeemann exhibition; but we juxtapose it with *Op Losse Schroeven*, a very related exhibition that opened a week earlier, in Amsterdam. And we're looking at Lucy Lippard's numbers shows. And part of our project there was to bring her out of the shadow of Seth Siegelaub. She's much more prominent now, actually, than when we initiated this book. Here again is another much-canonized show, but also vilified, as well as celebrated. So our bid in this instance was to challenge false familiarity, when I decide to reopen the debate. So those are all the try and destabilize the canon. This is the book that destabilizes the canon. This is the "Magiciens de la Terre," show, the book looking at the show that took place in the same year, more or less [the same global climes, but from a very different geopolitical perspective. And I have to note that we brought this book out first, before "Magiciens" felt important, rather than just starting with the known and then going to the less-well-known.

00:34:36:01 Secondly, within exhibition histories, we've sought to complicate understandings of what exhibitions actually might be. We've produced two books on scattered site projects in very different contexts. *Cultural Action*, we've already mentioned. *Chiang Mai Social Installation* is the book that I've flagged that David Teh co-edited with us. And there's another complication of what an exhibition might be. We've made one book on a series of shows produced without

the public. In this context, all the exhibitions took place at one person's flat, with invited guests, essentially. These were not produced in the public realm. And we've dedicated another book to an exhibition that is also equally itself an artwork. So this is not just an exhibition, it's also an artwork. It was made as an artwork as much as an exhibition. Thirdly, we've learnt to work collaboratively in shaping the books, with selected experts invited not only to contribute essays for specific books where they have specialist knowledge, but also to play a strong role in the editorial process, determining the content and texture for that book. This is the São Paulo Biennale book that we worked on [inaudible]. And here's the David Teh book. And here, I want to stress that although the books all look alike or very similar from their covers, the treatment inside differs considerably, avowedly responsive to the particular case studies at issue.

00:36:06:01 Which brings me onto methodology. Or to put it another way, if I've sketched how exhibition histories differs from curatorial studies, how is it different from art history? What possibilities does it offer us distinctly? And answering this question forms the conclusion of my talk today. My work within exhibition histories—writing, teaching, editing, and curating—aims both to entangle and to open up art histories. This means working both with and against the older discipline. I have always fought against exhibition histories being subsumed by or assimilated into art history, refusing to concede its designation as a "mere subgenre," to quote Claire Bishop. In fact, if forced to thinking along such hierarchical lines, I suppose I'd see exhibition histories as a field that can itself incorporate art history alongside other disciplines and practices. But at the same time, I feel passionately about exhibition histories working to deterritorialize art history, to decenter Western Europe and North America within global discussions, and to undo the imposition of disciplinary methodologies by listening before responding, and nurturing the dialogic possibilities that emerge. So here's a diagram. It's my last.

00:37:34:13 So exhibitions, artworks, curatorial, and artistic practice all fuel both art history and exhibition histories. They're all coming in here. If you're pursuing art history, you're probably following one of these arrows, these three lines of research. And each of these probably imply a particular disciplinary or methodological [inaudible]. If you're practicing exhibition histories, you're looking at a durational field and a given place and time for art's exposure, and you're responding to that particular situation. Here, any number of art historical methodologies may help; but ultimately, you have to address art in its given context, in relation to adjacent art and adjacent non-art, in relation to a host environment and institutional ideologies, among geopolitically and historically particular publics.

00:38:34:03 To help clarify the differences between art history and exhibition history, let's compare the unit as well as the means of study. For art history, the focus lies on the artwork as bounded and fixed, if not eternal, as an entity, even with data, to be addressed empirically. Here, methodological norms or disciplinary norms, as traditionally established in Western Europe and then elaborated via New York and the ivy league schools of the US around the rest of the world. For exhibition histories, the unit of study is art in exhibition. Or the art-public encounter, where the categories of art and public are unstable and substantiated only circumstantially and specifically. Crucially, this may also take place anywhere in the world, and it demands methodological norms that are responsive to those circumstances, as much to the research questions that we bring to them.

00:39:27:19 Finally then, what's the use of exhibition histories? Teresa Gleadowe, who founded the curating course at the Royal College of Art in London a couple of years— Oh, it's about the same time, actually, as here at Bard. I'm still not quite certain of the date. She has written, quote, "These academic programs took on the job of defining a body of knowledge and delineating a professional field," end quote. Accordingly, exhibition histories might be used—and indeed, is

all too often used—to precisely define, or even police that body of knowledge, in the form of a fixed canon of landmark shows. By comparison, rather than talking in terms of a delineated professional field, your very own Lauren Cornell talks in terms of curatorial purposes, parameters, and possibilities. And here, exhibition histories, not as a top-down curatorial canon, but as a bottom-up field of inquiry, which is how you pursue it, after all, has lots to offer.

00:40:30:05 In summary and conclusion then, I believe exhibition histories offers at least three things. This is my last three-way point. One, what does it offer you? It offers you a worldwide situated approach to past moments of contemporary art, which puts the present into a critical condition. Two, it offers an archival and simultaneously creative methodology that honors the essentially experimental and discursive nature of exhibitions, or of art in the public domain. And three, it offers a community of thinkers and practitioners, because no one individual can author the history. There are only histories, plural, of shows, plural, to be put into conversation and debated for their relevance today. And that's pretty much where I'm going to end. I've got other slides, other books that are coming up, which I can flag if you want to discuss them; but I'm going to end with my three uses of exhibition histories and take questions. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]