

Kickoff seminar for the research network

The everyday life of urban monuments

Copenhagen, May 7th 2024

Place: Hovedkassen, Copenhagen City Hall

Participation is free, including lunch and coffee etc.

To sign up mail to: jakobp@kk.dk

The network is supported by Independent Research Fund Denmark.



Presentation

The explorative research network [*The Everyday Life of Urban Monuments*](#) studies the interrelationship between monuments, cities and everyday practices. We are interested in the ideologies and functions envisioned in the monumentalization of cities as well as the reception and uses of individual monuments and monument assemblies by the general public over time. We are preoccupied with developing methodologies for tracing how the bodies of citizens and monuments interact and continuously cross-fertilize urban spaces with new meaning. And curious about the historical and geographical variations of this interaction. Typologies and biographies of monuments and the ignition, care and participatory practices in the preservation and reinvention of the monumental heritage of cities are other important fields of interest.

In this kickoff seminar we address some of the basic questions at stake: What is the work of monuments? How are monuments experienced and what role do they play in the production and suspension of everyday life in the city? What is the temporality of urban monuments? And how are we able to trace monument-citizen interactions?

If you want to be an associated member of the network, please send a brief description of your work and research interests to Jakob Ingemann Parby, jakobp@kk.dk
For info about the network and the participants read [here](#).

Programme:

Tuesday May 7th

Venue: Hovedkassen, Copenhagen City Hall

[enter the main entrance and go left for about 100 meters or follow the signs or ask the city hall guards]

9.30-10.00: **Coffee and registration**

10.00-10.30: **Welcome and presentation of the network**

(Jakob Ingemann Parby, Museum of Copenhagen/Tanja Schult, University of Stockholm)

10.30-11.30:

The Work of Memorials

Keynote by Professor Andrew Shanken, University of California, Berkeley (author of *The Everyday Life of Memorials*)

This talk explores a number of approaches to thinking about the experience of memorials and monuments in their urban setting. It proposes that memorials (and the people who interact with them) are active agents in the process of creating and annulling the everyday and that these unusual objects perform vital functions in modern cities.

11.30-12.00: **Discussion**

Moderator: Tanja Schult, Senior lecturer/Associate Professor, Dep. of Culture and Aesthetics, University of Stockholm

12.00-13.00: **Lunch**

13:00-13.45

Temporary Monuments

Charlotte Sprogøe, PhD/senior curator, KØS Museum for Art in Public Spaces

This talk centres on contemporaneity, temporality and manifestations as artistic strategies for a rethinking of monumentality in public space and for new ways of engaging with the public.

13.45-14.30:

Experiencing the statuemanía of Copenhagen

Jakob Ingemann Parby, Senior researcher/curator, Museum of Copenhagen

Between 1880 and 1920 Copenhagen had its own version of statuemanía or Denkmalswut also found in other European metropolises like Paris, Vienna and Berlin with more than 50 monuments raised in the city during that time span. In the talk museum collections, media and municipal archives are used to shed light on the experience and reception of selected monuments demonstrating how the harsh debates and ambiguous metropolitan ambitions encircling their inauguration soon mixed with infrastructural planning concerns and more mundane problems.

14.30-14.45: **Coffee break**

14.45-15.30:

Surface Reading: Tracing Histories of Homophobia and Queer Resistance in Ørstedsparken's Monumental Landscape

Mathias Danbolt, Professor of Art History, University of Copenhagen

The presentation examines how sculptures and monuments in a popular gay cruising park in central Copenhagen has functioned as a site for homophobic violence as well as queer resistance for decades. Zooming in on a series of interventions in the park in 1984 where activist painted erotic symbols on monuments and wrote queer political graffiti across their base, the presentation addresses public monuments as a surface for negotiations of gender and sexual norms and practices. Yet, the history of such public interventions is often difficult to trace due to the continual renovation of public sculpture that works to secure that the surfaces of monuments remain clean and pristine.

15.30-16.30

Plenum debate: Monuments and the city

Moderator: Tim Cole, Professor of Social History, University of Bristol

16.45-18.15: **Monument walk and talk** from City Hall, main entrance via Højbro Plads to Christianshavns Torv