

Brief summary of “Stay Real” How to identify, preserve and work with authenticity in House Museums and Collection Museums in the Nordic countries, 10 December 2019, The Hirschsprung Collection, Copenhagen

The seminar was organized by Rasmus Kjærboe (Ribe Art Museum and Aarhus University) and the members of the Network for Danish House Museums, The Danish Association of Art Historians, The Faaborg Museum and the Hirschsprung Collection who also supported the seminar financially and organisationally.

As an opportunity for networking and the sharing of knowledge and insights about house museums, the seminar sought as many contributors as possible. At 88 participants we were at maximum capacity at the museum, and of these xxxx spoke on a topic related to the theory and praxis of house museums.

The seminar was briefly introduced by Gertrud Oelsner, director of The Hirschsprung Collection, and Britta Tøndborg, head of research at Museum Vestsjælland, after which Rasmus Kjærboe held a short talk on the theme of the seminar entitled “House museums, collection museums and authenticity, a short introduction to the seminar”. We are extremely grateful that Linda Young, eminent scholar of house museums had travelled all the way from Australia to give the keynote lecture “Is there a museum in the house? Sceptical ways of looking at house museum”. In her talk, Dr Young reflected on ways to understand house museums as a category and the changing nature of their conception through time.

“Museum Voices I” and the subsequent “Museum Voices II” served as a platform for museum professionals, conservators and researchers to introduce their unique institutions, research and different projects related to them. The theme of authenticity and staying real to an institution’s identity reverberated throughout the short 6-7 minute talks.

After lunch, two expert panels presented new and in-depth knowledge. The first panel with Pernille Henriette Wiil, Theis Vallø and Ida Brændholt Lundgaard was chaired by Gertrud Hvidberg-Hansen, director of Faaborg Museum, and focused on research into atmospheres and the concept’s promise and potential for house museums. The second panel with Michael Højlund Rasmussen and Morten Ryhl-Svendsen examined authenticity in conservation and restoration along with risk assessment and was chaired by Rikke Bjarnhof, director of the School of Conservation (KADK). A final talk by Charlotta Nordström looked at the two historic collections of Pontus Fürstenberg and Ernest Thiel and put them in relation to concerns about the home as an art collection. Jesper Stub Johnsen, deputy director at the National Museum of Denmark, summarised the day’s events and urged everyone to join the network by signing up to its mailing list.