

Session description

G Contemporary Art and Northern Heritage - Art as Innovation

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This session will focus on innovative methods of art in the context of Arctic cultures and communities. The range of contexts in which artists now work is vast, from large-scale permanent public art to temporary interventions based, for example, on traditional and indigenous ways of knowing or environmental or sustainability issues. Art made in this way forms the nexus between traditional and contemporary practices.

The social and cultural issues facing many communities, such as unemployment, ageing populations and questions of wellbeing and cultural heritage, present challenges for many countries and regions around the world and the Arctic is no exception. However, the particular conditions of life in the Arctic – extreme weather, communities on the periphery with traditional ways of living under threat – all interact to form a unique local situation that requires new ways of thinking and new approaches. The varied cultural heritage of the Arctic presents both challenges and opportunities for artists. This session will explore some of the ways that artists have used social and cultural contexts as starting points for art projects often tightly connected to, and in collaboration with, local people (Jokela, Coutts, Huhmarniemi & Härkönen, 2013; Jokela & Coutts, 2014).

The *HCA* session will include presentations of case studies in which art and artistic processes have been central to creating art in socio-cultural settings. In this model of art, theory and practice are fused with culturally sensitive methods of making art. The session chair will invite participants to take an active part in the discussions.

Jokela, T., Coutts, G., Huhmarniemi, M., & Härkönen, E (Eds.) (2013). *Cool: Applied Visual Arts in the North*. Rovaniemi: Publications of the Faculty of Art and Design of the University of Lapland Series C. Overviews and Discussion.

Jokela, T. & Coutts, G (Eds.) (2014). *Relate North 2014: Engagement, Art and Representation*. Rovaniemi: University of Lapland Press.