

Saturday, 5 August

10:00–11:30

Agita Lūse

Talk and workshop:

***From Acknowledgement to Social Justice:
Representations of Disability in Social
Movements, Academia, and Museums***

About 15 percent of the global population live with some form of disability and this number is increasing annually (WHO 2021). At the same time, disability issues often remain on the periphery of political and media agendas; the people whose lives are shaped by one or another kind of impairment largely appear to be absent from the public sphere. Over the period of the previous half-century, disability rights movements have steadily grown and given rise to various forms of social activism. Nevertheless, these developments have been far more characteristic of western democracies than the Third World and the former socialist countries. It is only since the adoption and ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability in the early 2000s that governments have begun to pass regulations aimed at greater social protection and inclusion of the concerned population.

Three prominent cultural fields allow the wider public to be invited to acknowledge the life stories, interests, talents, and creative endeavors of people with disabilities; namely, the academic field of disability studies, non-profit disability rights organizations, and artistic and community engagement projects carried out by museums and other cultural institutions. In my lecture I will give a short overview of the variety of forms in which these three fields have engendered dialogical relationships between their audiences and people with disabilities, thus promoting a more inclusive and socially just society.

Suggested reading:

Catherine Kudlick. "An Interview with Henri-Jacques Stiker, Doyen of French Disability Studies." *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies* 10, no. 2 (2016): 139–54.

Arndís Bergsdóttir. "Dis-/Abling Absence: Absencepresence as Matters That Matter." In *Understanding Disability throughout History*, edited by H. B. Sigurjónsdóttir and J. G. Rice, pp. 95–112 (London and New York: Routledge, 2022).

Kathryn Church, Danielle Landry, Catherine Frazee, Esther Ignagni, Cindy Mitchell, Melanie Panitch, Jennifer Patterson, Sandra Phillips, Poirier Terry, Karen Yoshida, and Jijian Voronka. "Exhibiting Activist Disability History in Canada: Out from Under as a Case Study of Social Movement Learning." *Studies in the Education of Adults* 48, no. 2 (2016): 194–209.

Sander L. Gilman. "Madness as Disability." *History of Psychiatry* 25, no. 4 (2014): 441–49.

All reading materials are available here:
ej.uz/lcca-summer-school-2023-reading

Agita Lūse is Assistant Professor at Riga Stradiņš University. She holds a PhD from the University of Bristol and specializes in medical and psychiatric anthropology. She has conducted research on such topics as the westernization of Latvian psychiatry, patient advocacy organizations, and the social aspects of psycho-social ill health and disability, as well as popular genealogical practices and history of ideas. Among her publications are more than fifty scholarly papers. She has been teaching, among others, the MSc-level courses *Disability: Representations, Experience, and Public Policy and Understanding Madness*.