

## **‘Ethnic by design: creative agency, aesthetics, and community in the global marketplace’**

**Date :** November 30, 2011

Call for Papers: ASA 2012 3rd-6th April, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

‘Ethnic by design: creative agency, aesthetics, and community in the global marketplace’

Organiser: Nicolette Makovicky (Oxford)

Chair: Bodil Olesen (UEA)

Discussant: Prof Marcus Banks (Oxford)

Deadline for paper submission: 7th December, 2011 at

<http://www.theasa.org/conferences/asa12/>

This panel invites scholars to reflect critically on the growing interface between 'ethnic' arts and design, and its place in the geopolitics of the global marketplace.

Commonly defined as handcrafted commodities for the global market which advertise (and are advertised by) their 'indigeneity', 'tribal', 'folk', or 'ethnic' arts and artefacts are often construed as the embodiment of the authentic, exotic 'Other' of capitalist modernity. Recently, traditional artefacts and techniques have also begun making their way into the discourse, practices and spaces of contemporary design. From the newly established Etno-Dizajn Festival in Krakow, Poland, to the African & African Caribbean Design Diaspora Festival in London, design is being harnessed to re-think traditional techniques, patterns, materials for contemporary visual culture, interiors, and fashion. Conversely, under the terms 'ethically traded' or 'sustainable', programmes such as Thailand's OTOP ('One District One Product') and projects such as 'Contemporary Souvenir' (Ulster, Northern Ireland) promote collaboration between craftsmen and academically trained designers to develop new income streams for artisans, creating a mutual exchange of design concepts, tools and media. Such crossovers and interventions, however, exist as part of specific commercial and ideological regimes of power with corresponding notions of creative agency, aesthetics, and community which must be negotiated by participating actors.

Amongst the themes welcomed are the challenges of sustainability and recycling; the introduction and impact of new technologies and digital media on craft production; the commercialization of pattern and design; as well as issues of copyright and changing discourses of authenticity.