

ARTISTIC SUBVERSIONS: SETTING THE CONDITIONS OF DISPLAY

Young Researchers' Colloquium

February 2, 2017

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU), Main Building (De Boelelaan 1105), 14A-00

9:00-9:30 REGISTRATION & COFFEE

9:30 INTRODUCTION

Angela M. Bartholomew, PhD Candidate, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU)

10:00 PANEL ONE

The Periphery and the Frame: Inclusion & Exclusion

1. *Social Structures: Helio Oiticica's Parangolés*, Alida Jekabson

Hélio Oiticica's *Parangolés* – costumes created in Rio de Janeiro in the mid-1960s – debuted in a 1965 site-specific performance. This paper discusses the artist's intention and the cultural context of production, as well as the powerful response to the *Parangolés* by Brazil's cultural elite. Drawing from postcolonial theories within the framework of the Brazilian dictatorship, Oiticica's work can be viewed as gesture of resistance against the prevailing social climate. This simultaneous subversion is the primary goal of his work. Further possibilities will be explored for a context in which Oiticica's *Parangolés* are fully realized with respect to their intended setting.

Alida Jekabson is currently enrolled in the MA program in Art History at CUNY Hunter College, concentrating in modern and contemporary Latin American art. Research interests include curatorial methods, costume history and art education. Jekabson holds a BA in Art History and Education from Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania.

2. *Vector Pioneers: Progressions in the Chicano Art Movement*, Sally Mincher

Artists played a crucial role in the massive wave of civil rights activism of the Mexican-American community in the Southwest USA in the 1960s. Their ubiquitous, but 'low-grade' modes of art production in the streets, in the fields, and in communities grew into a Chicano Art Movement. Based on the ethos of these origins, artists have continued to developed dialogues of social criticism and political intervention. They have not only continued to generate unique ways of circumventing the mainstream art apparatus but also to evolve modes of conceptual art that operate within it, such as in multimedia installations that transform museum spaces.

Sally Mincher is an independent curator and researcher based in the UK. She lived in Canada and the USA as a practicing artist where she became involved with community art collectives in East Los Angeles. In 2012 she completed a PhD on the Chicano Art Movement at the University of Essex. She is currently writing on Chicano art and curating an exhibition in L.A. in 2017.

3. *The Master's Tools Revisited: Towards a 'Decolonization' of Curatorial Praxis?*, David Frohnappfel

Sara Ahmed describes processes of inclusion of racialized bodies in 'white' institutions through the logic of *conditional hospitality*, where acts of inclusion maintain the form of exclusion. Haitian artists from weak socio-economic strata are welcomed in 'Euro-North American' institutions but under self-serving interests. The artists of *Atis Rezistans* are never asked to co-curate exhibitions alongside 'Western' curators, despite the fact that since the early 2000s they have re-appropriated the term *musée d'art* and became curators of their own art spaces. Can autonomous curations of 'source communities' effectively contribute to a decolonial modification of the official chain of power in the globalized artistic milieu?

David Frohnappfel is a PhD candidate at Freie Universität Berlin with the research project *Disobedient Musealities*. He was a fellow in the Max-Planck research group *Objects in the Contact Zone* in Florence. He worked as a curator of the *3rd Ghetto Biennale 2013* and curated the exhibition *NOCTAMBULES* in 2015.

DISCUSSION

Moderated by: Jelle Bouwhuis, Curator, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam

11:30 BREAK

11:45 PANEL TWO

The Work of Art as Exhibition

1. *Bertrand Lavier Presents Bertrand Lavier: The Work of Art as Exhibition*, Susan L. Power

The work of French contemporary artist Bertrand Lavier has singularly succeeded in articulating how modern art is tethered to the notion of 'exhibition value'. Integrating the object with the 'exhibitionary complex' by means of a conceptual rather than physical labyrinthine space, Lavier envisions his works in relation to the particular conditions of a given exhibition space, consistently assuming authorial status over monographic shows of his work. Emblematic of his distinctive approach to the entangled issues involving the artwork and its context are Lavier's iterations of two gallery installations *The Martin's Paintings* and *Walt Disney Productions*, in which the artist playfully upends established exhibition practices.

Susan L. Power is an independent scholar and curator specialized in modern and contemporary art and based in Los Angeles. Power received her doctorate from the Université de Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne in 2012. Transnational in scope, her research examines strategies of display, from the early surrealist experiments in exhibition design to contemporary artist interventions.

2. *El Pintor Gordín en el ICI*, Catalina L. Imizcoz

In 1992, Argentinean artist Sebastián Gordín was not invited to participate in an important collective exhibition that was organized by the Ibero-American Cooperation Institute to showcase local talent. His artwork/exhibition *El Pintor Gordín en el ICI* took place on the sidewalk, just outside the exhibition's venue. It consisted of a maquette that replicated the Institute's space and contained a miniature solo show. Every evening, Gordín placed the maquette in front of the institution and gave the passersby free guided tours. By pretending to be indifferent to the conditions of display, *El Pintor Gordín en el ICI* raises questions about their pivotal role.

Catalina L. Imizcoz is a publisher, researcher, and producer. She recently finished a Master on Exhibition Studies at Central Saint Martins, London. She is interested in critical histories of exhibitions and publications, and wrote her dissertation on the Argentinean magazine *ramona*. She works at Phaidon Press.

DISCUSSION

Moderated by: Katja Kwastek, Professor of Modern and Contemporary Art, VU

13:00 LUNCH (on your own)

14:00 PANEL THREE

Installation (as) Art & the Exhibition (of) Space

6. *Reversing the Logic of Display: Empty Exhibitions*, Anne Gregersen

Exhibitions without exhibited objects or without an (accessible) exhibition venue constitute a radical examination of the exhibition as form and concept. The paper will consider historical as well as contemporary examples of such interventions (from Yves Klein's *Le Vide* to Martin Kippenberger's *MOMAS* to Maria Eichhorn's closing of Chisenhale Gallery) and discuss how they have reversed the standard logic of display. By turning the (empty/closed) exhibition into the prior condition for the artwork to come into being, the mentioned examples point to the fact that the production of art in the 20th century is inseparable from its exhibition.

Anne Gregersen is postdoc at the Department of Art and Cultural Studies at the University of Copenhagen with affiliation to J.F. Willumsens Museum. She finished her PhD in 2015 on the topic of the Danish artist J.F. Willumsen. Her current project investigates the phenomenon of artist-curators working within an institutional setting.

7. *When Space Becomes Exhibition: A Contemporary Syllogism*, Pamela Bianchi

Nowadays the exhibition space is, in most cases, an active device for the curatorial setting. The role of the exhibition space has experienced over time an evolutionary process, a kind of syllogism where first work becomes exhibition, then space becomes work, and finally, space becomes exhibition. How does space embody the work, the exhibition, and vice versa? Through historical and contemporary examples, such as *Chateau de Tivoli* (1990) by Jan Fabre, *Riverbed* (2014) by Olafur Eliasson, or *Parasimpatico* (2010) by Pipilotti Rist, this presentation will focus on the integration between the exhibition space and the poiesis of the exhibition: an aesthetic overlap.

Pamela Bianchi is Senior Lecturer in History of Contemporary Art, and doctor in Aesthetic Sciences and Technologies of Arts at the University of Paris 8. Her research interests include the history of the exhibition space, the spatial aesthetic of contemporary arts, and the spectatorship experience. In addition to numerous articles, she is the author of *Espaces de l'oeuvre, espaces de l'exposition. De nouvelles formes d'expérience dans l'art contemporain*, Paris, Connaissances et Savoirs, 2016.

8. *De-installing Ideas: Installation as an Institutional Discourse*, Jack Smurthwaite

This paper critically re-examines the term 'installation' – opposing previous categorizations of genre, form or medium – in order to posit it, primarily, as discourse internal to the museum and gallery system. In this way, part of the meaning of the term 'installation' lays in its homogenizing function, in its ability to group heterogeneous art works and art forms under one neat term for the benefit of the institution. By exploring the space between installation as a category and installation as a concept, it is hoped that the question of art's ontology, in general, can be re-approached.

Jack Smurthwaite is an independent curator and researcher based in London. He has curated public programs for the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA), London and is a recent graduate of the Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy (CREMP), where he completed his MA in Philosophy and Contemporary Critical Theory.

DISCUSSION

Moderated by: Anna Lundström, PhD, Lecturer and Researcher, Stockholm University & Researcher, Moderna Museet, Stockholm

15:30 COFFEE BREAK

16:00 PANEL FOUR

Authenticity & the Production of Value

9. *From Harmony through Warning to Filth:*

The Installations of James McNeill Whistler, Joseph Kosuth, and Darren Waterston, Rachel Schwartz

This presentation examines three related works of installation art, one historic and two contemporary, to investigate the work of James McNeill Whistler as a source of interventional practice for present-day artists. After exploring Whistler's *Harmony in Blue and Gold: The Peacock Room* (1876-77), his audacious transformation in the London home of his patron, this presentation demonstrates how two contemporary American installations, Joseph Kosuth's *Whistler's Warning (c.c.c.c.)* (2003) and Darren Waterston's *Filthy Lucre* (2014), while charting paths that depart from Whistler's aesthetic harmonies, also establish the continuing vitality of Whistler's interventional precedents for current practice.

Rachel Schwartz is a master's student in art history/museum studies at the City College of New York. She has completed internships in New York at the Drawing Center and the New-York Historical Society, and in spring 2017 will be interning in the photography department of the Museum of Modern Art.

10. *The Attention Economy as a Condition of Display*, Steyn Bergs

In today's digital attention economy, online visibility has become an imperative for most artists, who see themselves forced to carefully fashion, monitor, and steer their online presence. The Internet's attention economy, then, imposes its conditions of display on artistic production. As examples of practices that attempt to problematize or subvert these conditions, Julia Weist's *After, About, With* (2012-2015) – in which the artist attempted to manipulate the reception of a Haim Steinbach artwork in the online environment – will be discussed alongside Vermeir&Heiremans' *extension #23 Art House Index (AHI-)*, an algorithm tracking the value of Vermeir&Heiremans's work in real time.

Steyn Bergs is a researcher and a critic. He is conducting his PhD research on commodification, value, and reproduction in digital artworks at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. He is co-editor-in-chief of *Kunstlicht*, journal for art, architecture, and visual culture, and has published in *Metropolis M*, Stedelijk Museum's *Global Collaborations* platform, and *Open!*.

11. *The Jungle in the Peephole*, Tamar Shafir

The diorama is a paradoxical format because it uses illusion and stagecraft to achieve the sensation of veracity, from 19th-century gigantic paintings to 20th-century animal taxidermy. In its perpetual pursuit of an "aesthetics of livingness", its performance is continuously destabilized by the technological progress that it encourages. For the 2016 London Design Biennale, Makkink&Bey created a blue foam diorama of their own living room, subverting both the material simulation and institutional gaze that characterize the exhibition format. The foam diorama appeals rather to a digitally catalogued and networked understanding of permanence and curatorial narrative.

Tamar Shafir is a writer and designer based in Rotterdam. She works as a design researcher at Het Nieuwe Instituut and a lecturer on design and critical writing at the Design Academy Eindhoven and the Sandberg Instituut. In 2013, she co-founded the studio Space Caviar with Joseph Grima in Genova.

DISCUSSION

Moderated by: Sven Lütticken, Lecturer in Art History, VU

17:30 CONCLUDING REMARKS/PLENARY DISCUSSION

Katja Kwastek, Professor of Modern and Contemporary Art, VU

17:45 BREAK

18:15 KEYNOTE LECTURE

Angela Dimitrakaki & Kirsten Lloyd

Angela Dimitrakaki and **Kirsten Lloyd** both work at The University of Edinburgh. Angela is Senior Lecturer in Contemporary Art History and Theory and directs the MSc Programme in Modern and Contemporary Art while Kirsten is Lecturer in Curatorial Theory and Practice and heads the MSc by Research in Collections and Curating Practices. In 2013 they co-curated the international project *ECONOMY* in Scotland (www.economyexhibition.net), which expanded to include the edited volume *ECONOMY: Art, Production and the Subject in the 21st Century*, published by Liverpool University Press in 2015. Continuing their collaboration, Kirsten and Angela are currently co-editing a special issue of the journal *Third Text* on Social Reproduction and Art (September 2017). They are also developing their own projects. Besides her work as an independent curator, Kirsten is writing on a book on realism and the document, while Angela is working on the books *Feminism, Art, Capitalism* and *The Economic Subject in Contemporary Art*.

19:15 CLOSING RECEPTION

The Young Researchers' Colloquium, *Artistic Subversions: Setting the Conditions of Display* is held in conjunction with the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam's 'Lose Yourself! – A Symposium on Labyrinthine Exhibitions as Curatorial Model' (February 3-4).