CALL FOR PAPERS

The Graduate Union of the Students of Art (GUStA) at the University of Toronto is pleased to present the Sixth Annual Wollesen Memorial Graduate Symposium in cooperation with the History of Art Students’ Association (HASA) and the Department of Art on March 15th, 2019.

Date: March 15, 2019
Location: East Common Room, Hart House, 7 Hart House Circle, Toronto

Title: Confronting the Exhibitionary Order

To know what properly appertains to one individual is to have before one the classification -or the possibility of classifying- all others.” - Michel Foucault in The Order of Things

The theme of this year’s graduate symposium is “Exhibitionary Orders.” The history of display tactics of visual and material culture created staging realms that imbued problematic and controversial resonances, shaping today’s culture and society. We welcome innovative contributions that critically engage with the history of exhibitionary orders and classification systems as tools for defining, ordering, and representing the world as an endless exhibition. Modernism as an aesthetic movement presented itself as ahistorical and transnational, grounded in essentialism and universality. However, the classification systems that helped inform modernism were dependent on comparative cognitive shortcuts and coded stereotypes that lay claim to the superiority and accomplishments of western civilization. World fairs are pivotal examples of how classification systems operated, as they become staging realms where countries were systematically organized from least to most civilized. Anthropological and ethnographic research also substantiated a lot of racist stereotypes, contributing to this narrative of objective ordering. This symposium seeks to question how the creation, presentation, and dissemination of visual and material culture and knowledge have resulted in the perpetuation of problematic imperial hierarchies. Debates around reparations continue to percolate in today’s political climate, urging us to interrogate the display tactics of museums, galleries, and biennials, as well as larger questions of exhibitionary orders in the world. In collaboration with HASA’s conference titled “The Problematic in Art,” the Wollesen Memorial Symposium hopes to facilitate a productive discussion that challenges the problematic histories and practices of display, particularly viewing and ordering the world as exhibition.

We encourage submissions from students and scholars from various backgrounds and disciplines.

Potential topics and ideas may include, but are not limited to:

- World exhibitions as sites for the creation, dissemination and transfer of knowledge
- The nineteenth-century cult of the exhibition
• Embodiment
• Colonial exhibitions and the development of museums, display tactics, staging realms, and exhibitionary order
• Ethnography and anthropology (human exhibits, ethnographic portraiture, etc)
• Commodity fetishism
• Colonial representation and propaganda
• Historiography and the construction of historical narratives
• Defining, ordering, and representing the world
• The Enlightenment and classification systems
• Colonialism/ Postcolonialism/ Decolonialism
• Imperial hierarchies
• Center and periphery
• Self-representation, mimicry, hybridity, and processes of disavowal
• Simulacrum, hyperreal, simulation, (mis)representation
• Verisimilitude, pictorial certainty
• Mythologies/ the power of the myth and its transposition into representational forms
• Stereotypes as vehicles of authenticity (perpetuated through painting, photography, film, ethnography, etc.).
  • The male, western gaze
  • The separation of art from the artist
  • Biased ideals of connoisseurship

Presentations should be 20 minutes in length and will be followed by a 10-minute question and answer session for each presentation. The Symposium will employ both presentations and panel discussion in the program. Chosen works may be selected for either approach. Selected presentations will be chosen for publication in the Wollesen Art Journal, an online publication of the symposium proceedings. For more information, please visit: https://gustasymposium.wordpress.com/.

Please submit an abstract (.doc/. docx/. pdf) of no more than 300 words to the Graduate Students of Art at gustasymposium@utoronto.ca by Friday, December 21, 2018 at 5:00 pm EST. Participants will be notified by email by the middle of January.

With appreciation,

Laura Tibi and Maria Mendoza Camba

Co-Chairs of the 6th Annual Wollesen Memorial Graduate Symposium