

Queer Theory of the Avant-Garde (Manchester, UK)

Manchester, UK, Jun 27–28, 2011

Deadline: Apr 18, 2011

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Queer Theory of the Avant-Garde

An international conference organised by the Centre for the Study of Surrealism and its Legacies, University of Manchester

27th - 28th June 2011, Manchester, UK.

Much in the historical avant-garde now appears germane to the set of contemporary discursive practices known as 'queer theory'. In its broadest conception, the move of queering, as a troubling of identity, is particularly recognisable in dada and surrealism. Consistent with aspects of its metaphysics, a certain strand of surrealism suppressed the queer, even as it acknowledged it; and yet surrealism, broadly conceived, attracted more queer artists and writers than any other twentieth-century avant-garde. This conference seeks to render productive the tension in queer theory between historical agency and the disruption of identity. The historically situated sexuality of groups and individuals is urgent here; but further, we seek to address queer theory's own historicity. Poststructuralism, whose challenges to identity and representation have so informed queer theory, bore a complex relation to the avant-garde, with thinkers such as Jacques Derrida and Gilles Deleuze rejecting 'orthodox' surrealism even as they privileged related figures such as Lautréamont, Jarry, Bataille and Artaud. Might poststructuralism, and indeed queer theory itself, constitute postmodern avant-gardes? Again, contexts beyond interwar Paris arguably fostered the queerest surrealisms, folding sexual into spatial margins. How might these peripheries put into question Eurocentric accounts of avant-gardism?

This two day interdisciplinary conference, the concluding event of a three-year AHRC research project about surrealism and sexuality, aims to reinscribe the interrelation between queer studies and the historical, spatial and theoretical dimensions of the twentieth-century avant-gardes – to bring queer theory together with the theory of the avant-garde. We invite papers that cross-reference any aspects of queer theory, critical theory and avant-gardism.

Please send proposals of no longer than 300 words, along with a brief CV, to Joanna.Pawlik@manchester.ac.uk. The deadline for proposals is 18th April 2011.

Reference:

CFP: Queer Theory of the Avant-Garde (Manchester, UK). In: ArtHist.net, Mar 28, 2011 (accessed Sep 15, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/1125>>.