

Photography Performing Humor (Brussels, 24–25 Nov 2015)

Brussels, LUCA School of Arts, Nov 24–25, 2015

Liesbeth Decan, LUCA School of Arts - Campus Sint-Lukas Brussels

The international conference "Photography Performing Humor" will explore the nature and meaning of the relationship between photography, performance and humor within the field of visual arts and visual culture. Although humor is clearly omnipresent in a wide spectrum of photographic practices – ranging from advertising or art photography to family snapshots with their obligatory 'smile' or the classic Tower of Pisa joke – the topic has yet to be fully discovered by researchers. While in recent years photography theory has witnessed the affective turn, its focus remained largely on photographic representations of suffering, trauma and loss. It is no coincidence then, that one of the central metaphors to think the affective quality of the medium, Barthes' punctum, relates affect to being wounded. This conference resolutely chooses to elaborate a lighter, humorous side of photography and aims to map different strategies and practices.

PROGRAM:

TUESDAY, 24 NOVEMBER 2015

9:30 am Coffee & registration

10:30 am Welcome

Liesbeth Decan (LUCA School of Arts, Brussels)

Opening word

Carl Van Eyndhoven (dean LUCA School of Arts)

10:40 am Introductory speech

Mieke Bleyen (KU Leuven)

11:00 am Keynote lecture Esther Leslie (Birkbeck University of London)

"Photography and Laughter's Shattered Articulation"

12:00 am Lunch break

1:00 pm Alexandra Olivia Tait (University College London)

"Düsseldorf's Commedia dell'Arte: Artistic Self-Staging in polke/richter richter/polke (1966)"

1:30 pm Andrei Venghiac (based in Gothenburg)

"Reflections on the Concept of Play"

2:00 pm Coffee break

2:30 pm Heather Diack (University of Miami)

"Playing It Straight: The Alliance of Humor and Photography in Conceptual Art"

3:00 pm Sandra Krizic Roban (Institute of Art History, Zagreb)

"Elements of Humor in Proto- and Conceptual Photography in Croatia"

3:30 pm Liesbeth Decan (LUCA School of Arts)

"Petit Maître liégeois meets Bassie Lebon: Jacques Lizène – Lieven Segers." Short introduction to the exhibition"

4:00 pm Reception at Sint-Lukasgalerie

Exhibition "Petit Maître liégeois meets Bassie Lebon: Jacques Lizène – Lieven Segers"

6:30 pm Keynote lecture Louis Kaplan (University of Toronto)

"A Morbid Sense of Humor: Reflections on Photography's Dark Comedy"

WEDNESDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2015

10:00 am Coffee & registration

10:30 am Keynote lecture Tanya Sheehan (Colby College, Waterville, Maine – Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts)

"Revival and Subversion: The Racial Politics of Amateur Photographic Humor"

11:30 am Coffee break

12:00 am George Emeka Agbo (University of the Western Cape)

"Facebook and Photographic Humourisation of Political Activism in Nigeria"

12:30 am Sian Bonnell (based in Cornwall; Falmouth University, Cornwall)

"Wilful Amateur"

1:00 pm Lunch break

2:00 pm Lieven Segers (based in Antwerp; MAD-Faculty, Hogeschool PXL, Hasselt – LUCA School of Arts, Genk)

"8 words on making something good"

2:30 pm Thomas Mailaender (based in Paris and Marseille)

Screening "A Very Serious Job"

3:00 pm Coffee break

3:15 pm Ann Kristin Krahn (Braunschweig University of the Arts)

"Adding a Giggle: Lee Friedlanders Practice of the 'Shadow Self-Portrait'"

3:45 pm Benjamin Picado (Fluminense Federal University, Icaraí, Niterói, Rio de Janeiro)

"The Involuntary Grace of a Snapshot: Humorous Eventfulness in Images of Photojournalism"

4:15 pm Kevin Atherton (based in Dublin; National College of Art and Design, Dublin)

"Performing the Performance Documentation"

8:00 pm Lieven Gevaert Leerstoel Lectures (at deBuren, Leopoldstraat 6, 1000 Brussel)

Paulien Oltheten (based in Amsterdam)

"Sifting and sorting / centrifugal thoughts"

Hilde D'haeyere (KASK School of Arts, University College Ghent)

"CINEMACINE. Lecture on the Mechanisms of Screen Comedy"

Concluding debate

9:30 pm Reception

Venue: LUCA School of Arts, Paleizenstraat 70, 1030 Brussels

Admission to the conference is FREE, but do not forget to REGISTER by sending an email to performinghumor@gmail.com

Reference:

CONF: Photography Performing Humor (Brussels, 24-25 Nov 2015). In: ArtHist.net, Nov 12, 2015
(accessed Dec 27, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/11507>>.