

Mental images. Hallucination in 19th and 20th century Art (Paris, 26 May 16)

INHA, Galerie Colbert, Paris, May 26, 2016

Deadline: Mar 6, 2016

Association 19-20

CFP for a study day on: "Mental images. Hallucination in 19th and 20th century Art" (Open until 6th March 2016)

The scientific definition of the word "hallucination" was established by Jean-Etienne Esquirol in the Dictionnaire des sciences médicales of 1817. The term was gradually emancipated from the scientific into the literary circle starting from the 1830s.

During the 1850s and 1860s, scientific debates intensified around the notion of hallucination, as well as its association with cognitive representation. Numerous scholars, such as Pierre de Boismont, Alfred Maury or Hippolyte Taine, thus found, the basis for an argument against a pathological reduction of hallucination in their respective studies of the imaginative power of artists.

The objective here is to explore the idea of an interdisciplinary continuum between mental images, dreams and hallucinations.

If artistic imagination can help describe hallucinations, just as the taste of arsenic inspired Gustave Flaubert's description of the poisoning of Madame Bovary, it is the other side of the question that shall be studied here: how did hallucination permeate the modern artist's imagination? How has hallucination materialized across artistic practices? Playing on the double meaning of this verb, we wish to study both the representation of hallucinations through artistic mediums, as well as the artistic methods used in communicating the hallucinatory experience to the spectator. Between retranscription and transmission, the range of practices may include conventional arts such as painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography, etc., as well as less traditional artistic forms such as environments, installations, light and sound shows, night clubs, etc.

The corpus can also include works of art produced during a hallucination, possibly in an automatic manner, as well as works produced post the hallucinatory experience. Whether it is pathological, hypnagogic, or induced with the help of psychotropic substances, the notion of hallucination intermingles two different perceptions of reality: the exterior world and the mental universe.

Potential papers may thus examine:

- Hallucination in its relationship to reality;
- The role of the faculty of imagination in creation;
- The materialization of hallucinations in artistic practices;
- The spectator before the hallucinatory work of art;

- Hallucination and the representation of mental images.

Other angles of research may also be integrated into this symposium.

Organized by the Association 19-20, this event is open to PhD students from all fields.

Prospective candidates can send their abstracts in French (maximum 500 characters) accompanied by a bio-bibliography to: association1920@gmail.com, by 6th of March 2016.

Note: The symposium shall be held in French language only.

19-20 is a doctoral association of Contemporary Art History based at the Paris-Sorbonne University. Its objective is to help recognize and diffuse the work of PhD students conducting research on 19th and 20th century art.

<http://1920.hypotheses.org/>

Association 19-20

Galerie Colbert

INHA

2 rue Vivienne

75002 Paris

Reference:

CFP: Mental images. Hallucination in 19th and 20th century Art (Paris, 26 May 16). In: ArtHist.net, Feb 24, 2016 (accessed Jun 7, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/12294>>.