Putting Space into Action (Huddersfield, 30 Sep 16)

Heritage Quay, University of Huddersfield, Sep 30, 2016
Deadline: Jun 1, 2016

Dr Rowan Bailey

Putting Space into Action - Call for Papers

To coincide with the launch of Huw Wahl's new film about the 1970s radical art movement Action Space, this one-day symposium, hosted by the Centre for Sculptural Thinking, invites contributions that seek to explore how space – public and civic – can be put into action.

Founded by artist-educators Ken and Mary Turner in 1968, Action Space used large inflatable sculptures to create interventions with members of the public and different communities. Bringing together artists, performers, dancers, painters and musicians, the movement sought to produce cultural democratic spaces for art, education and creative play outside of the restrictive space of the gallery system. Huw Wahl's film features archive footage of the first ten years of Action Space in operation, alongside interviews with key members of the movement, present-day writers and theorists. It also presents a new iteration of an inflatable sculpture within which contemporary performances and happenings are staged.

This symposium invites contributions which seek to address the need to put space-into-action, with the aim of critically questioning how current modes and practices of cultural democracy contend with what public or civic engagement is in the wider context of arts-based initiatives.

Histories
- Revisiting the histories of artistic space interventions of the 1960s and 1970s.
- The cultural and historical receptions of the movement for cultural democracy and radical art actions.
- Historical and contemporary actions and counter-actions in public space.

Spaces
- The occupation and reclamation of public/civic spaces for the staging of 'happenings' or 'events.
- Public space - as a site of contestations - where the very notion of 'public' is brought into question by how space is managed, maintained, sustained and controlled.
- Common spaces/shared spaces/occupied spaces: what does it mean to hold a space-in-common?

Actions
- Differences between participation, the participatory and notions of public engagement.
- Democratic spaces for art-action and action-art.
- Dichotomies between the community arts movement and art activism, cultural democracy and

radical action.

Deadline for contributions:
01 June 2016.

Please send abstracts of 300 words max to Dr Rowan Bailey – r.bailey@hud.ac.uk

The symposium will take place at Heritage Quay on Friday 30 September 2016

For further enquires:
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Reference:

CFP: Putting Space into Action (Huddersfield, 30 Sep 16). In: ArtHist.net, Apr 12, 2016 (accessed Nov 4, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/12688>.