

## Bodily Matters (London, 7–8 Jul 16)

University College London, Institute of Advanced Studies, Jul 7–08, 2016

Registration deadline: Jul 6, 2016

Dr. Gemma Angel

Bodily Matters: Human Biomatter in Art. Materials / Aesthetics / Ethics

From Andy Warhol's oxidation paintings, made using urine, to Andrew Krasnow's two and three-dimensional artworks utilising human skin, Bill Fink's meticulously constructed images created with human hair, to Marc Quinn's blood-sculpture series *Self* – and Rose-Lynn Fisher's photographic series *Topography of Tears* – the human body has been used not merely as the subject of art works, but also as their substance. Diverse in terms of their image and object-making practices, and encompassing casting and sculptural processes, drawing, painting and photography, these artworks nevertheless have one thing in common: they can all be considered to be examples of what we term "biomaterial" artworks.

The human body has long provided a source of interest for artists, as both the subject and object of a wide range of artistic practices throughout history and across cultures. The body in art has been the subject of an extensive and growing literature that engages with themes as diverse as the history of anatomy and the arts, contemporary performance art, body modification practices such as tattooing, bioart practices that utilise living matter as its new media, and extensive feminist and queer readings of art, power and politics. Whilst the human body thus remains an important concern for scholars studying visual and material culture in fields such as art history, anthropology and the medical humanities, little scholarly attention has been paid to modern and contemporary art practices that use the raw material of the human body itself in the production of artworks.

This interdisciplinary conference seeks to address this by examining the creative manipulation and use of human biological matter in the production of artworks, their display and critical reception. Artworks in all media will be considered, providing that human biomatter has been used in the production of the work. The conference aims to explore all forms of biomatter-as-art-medium, in multiple forms: Body fluids such as blood, semen, tears, milk and vomit; excreta such as faeces, urine and sweat; skin and adnexa such as hair and nails; bone and teeth; organs and whole bodies; and cell cultures and DNA. Human bodily materials are frequently invested with highly symbolic cultural power and complex visceral and emotional entanglements, thus the use of human biomatter as art medium opens up an intriguing cultural space to reflect critically upon the relationships between materiality, aesthetics, affective response, ethics and the production of cultural meaning.

View further information and sign up to the Bodily Matters Mailing List at:

<http://thanatocorpus.com/bodily-matters/>

Registration is now open here: <http://bit.ly/1shFRlr>

## PROGRAMME

Thursday July 7th

09:00-09:30 Registration and Tea/Coffee

09:30-10:00 Welcome Gemma Angel (UCL Institute of Advanced Studies)

### SESSION 1 What Remains: Traces, Transitional & Fluid Matters

10:00-10:30 Dr Elinor Cleghorn (University of Oxford, Ruskin School of Art)

Light remains: Alchemical affect in Angela Strassheim's 'Evidence'

10:30-11:00 Dr. Jeanette Kohl (University of California, Riverside, Department of Art History)

Blood Heads. From San Gennaro to Marc Quinn

11:00-11:30 Dr. Maria Hynes (Australian National University, School of Sociology)

A Wisp of Sensation, A Slice of Life

11:30-12:00 Zane Cerpina, visual artist (PNEK, Production Network for Electronic Art)

Body fluids performance through the lens of somaesthetics

12:00-13:00 Lunch Lunch to be provided at IAS Common Ground

### SESSION 2 Blood & Bone: Post-mortem Afterlives, Trauma & Ethics

13:00-13:30 Edward Bacal, PhD Candidate (University of Toronto, Department of Art)

Abstract Materialities: The Anonymous Corpse in the Work of Teresa Margolles

13:30-14:00 Dr. Jessica Auchter (The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Department of Political Science & Public Service)

Looking at Bones After Atrocity: Human Biomatter post-Genocide

14:00-14:30 Linda Miller MBBS BSc MSc, clinician & independent scholar

The Phoenix effect; body art arising from the ashes

14:30-15:00 Sarah-Jane Norman, visual artist (Sydney, Australia)

Heirloom

15:00-15:30 Tea/Coffee Break

### SESSION 3 Second Skins

15:30-16:00 Dr. Laini Burton (Griffith University, Queensland College of Art)

Printed flesh, fashioned bodies

16:00-16:30 Sandra Minchin, PhD candidate & visual artist (Deakin University, Department of Fine

Art)

Art Lives Longer than life... becoming a breathing canvas.

16:30-17:00 Dr. Tarryn Handcock (RMIT University, School of Fashion and Textiles)

Touch and Trace: Ethical methodologies for encountering Körper skin in critically reflective design practice

17:00-17:15 Concluding remarks

17:30-19:00 Drinks Reception at IAS Common Ground

Friday July 8th

09:00-09:30 Registration and Tea/Coffee

09:30-10:00 Welcome Gemma Angel (UCL Institute of Advanced Studies)

SESSION 4 Liminal Matters: Self-portraiture, Body Surface & Memory

10:00-10:30 Ana Dosen, PhD candidate (Singidunum University, Faculty of Media & Communication)

Reverse Pygmalion: Hananuma Masakichi's True 'Ruin'

10:30-11:00 Heidi Kellett, PhD candidate (Western University, Department of Art History)

Skin Portraiture: The Technology Metaphor and Contemporary (Bio)Art

11:00-11:30 Karly Etz, PhD candidate (Penn State University, Art History Department)

Killing the Zombie: The Transformation of Contemporary Abstraction through the Translation of the Tattooed Body

11:30-12:00 Dr. Bharti Parmar, artist & independent scholar

Ploca-cosmos; hair, entanglement and the universe

12:00-13:00 Lunch Lunch to be provided at IAS Common Ground

SESSION 5 The Extended Body: Biomedicine, Micromatter & the Transhuman

13:00-13:30 Dr. Diego Mantoan (Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Department of Philosophy & Cultural Heritage)

The Northern Way to Medical Display: The clinical methodology of Glaswegian artists in the 1990s and Christine Borland's skeleton-works

13:30-14:00 Maria Tittel, PhD candidate (Universität Konstanz, Literature Arts Media)

HeLa: Speculative Identity – On the 'Survival' of Henrietta Lacks in Art

14:00-14:30 Katy Connor, PhD candidate & visual artist (Bournemouth University, Centre for Experimental Media Research)

'Untitled\_Force': Becoming Nylon through 3D Print

14:30-15:00 Dr. Simon F. Park (University of Surrey, Department of Microbial Sciences)

The Extended Self: visualizing the human bacterial symbiont

15:00-16:00 Tea/Coffee Break

#### KEYNOTE

16:00-17:00 Oron Catts (Director, SymbioticA, The Centre of Excellence in Biological Art, School of Anatomy, Physiology and Human Biology, The University of Western Australia; Visiting Professor of Contestable Design, School of Design Royal College of Arts, London)

When bodies grow apart – neolife meets the post human

17:00-17:15 Concluding remarks

For the programme see also:  
<https://thanatocorpus.files.wordpress.com/2016/01/bodily-matters-conference-programme.pdf>

#### Reference:

CONF: Bodily Matters (London, 7-8 Jul 16). In: Arthist.net, May 15, 2016 (accessed May 29, 2025),  
<<https://arthist.net/archive/12966>>.