

French Theory (Brussels 11-14 May 11)

Brussels, May 11-14, 2011

Lejeune, Université Catholique de Louvain

French Theory: reception in the visual arts in the United States between 1965 and 1995

There are many American artists, active in the second half of the twentieth century, whose practice and theory have been influenced by philosophy, literary studies and social sciences. In this regard, several French scholars have benefited from early sustained interest. Among these are major figures such as Claude Lévi-Strauss, Roland Barthes, Pierre Bourdieu, Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan, Louis Althusser, Jean-François Lyotard, Jean Baudrillard, Jacques Derrida or Gilles Deleuze. The influence of this French thought in the American universities, from the mid-1970s on, notably contributing to the emergence of the Cultural studies, has been the subject of various studies, including the important and recent work by French scholar Francois Cusset (French Theory. How Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze, & Co. Transformed the Intellectual Life of the United States. trans. by Jeff Fort. University of Minnesota Press, 2008). However, the reception of such a thinking in the specific field of the visual arts has not yet been the subject of systematic research, with the exception of a few and relatively dispersed studies. Among the later are some essays by Sylvère Lotringer (founder of Semiotext(e) journal) considering artistic practice posterior to the mid-1970s, and by Sande Cohen. Still, it turns out that some artists could gradually have access to various pieces of this corpus as soon as the second half of the 1960s, thanks to first translations, conferences, travels or thanks to the presence of some authors on the territory itself. Thus, this symposium intends to study the reception of this French thought in the field of the visual arts from 1965 until 1995. A year that marks the eve of a movement of critical evaluation of the influence of these authors on the American intellectual field initiated by the now famous « Sokal affair », among other events.

Program:

Wednesday May 11 8pm

Inaugural conference

Palais des Beaux Arts, Brussels

Sylvère Lotringer (Professor, University of Columbia, New York City) "Nietzsche à Las Vegas. Une rencontre intempestive"

Thursday May 12

09:00 Welcome address

09:15 Introduction

Chair: Thierry Lenain (Professor, Université Libre de Bruxelles)

9:45 François Cusset (Professeur, Université de Paris Ouest Nanterre)

"Raisons de l'art et folie de la théorie".

10:30 Erik Verhagen (Maître de conférence, Université de Valenciennes)

"De la mort de l'auteur à la naissance du lecteur. Une perspective conceptuelle".

11:15 Break

11:45 Larisa Dryansky (Chargée de cours, ENSAD, Paris)

"Post-minimalisme et phénoménologie sartrienne : les cas de Mel Bochner et Dan Graham".

12:30 Lunch

Chair: Dirk Snauwaert (Wiels, Director)

14:00 Katia Schneller (Professeur, Ecole supérieure d'art de Grenoble) "Développer une "activité structuraliste" dans le domaine artistique, un moyen de décroquer les catégories traditionnelles".

14:45 Stephen Melville (Professor, The Ohio State University)

"Minimalism and the Fate of "Theory".

15:30 Break

16:00 Peter Osborne (Professor, Kingston University, London)

"October and the Problem of Formalism".

Friday May 13

09:00 Welcome address

09:15 Introduction

Chair: Thierry de Duve (Professor, Université de Lille 3)

9:45 Jean Michel Rabaté (Professor, Pennsylvania University, Philadelphia) "Rire avec la Méduse : Cixous, Horn, Spero et Schneemann".

10:30 Rachel Haidu (Associate Professor, University of Rochester, New York)

"Le système des objets : film, feminism and the domestication of the sign".

11:15 Break

11:45 Kassandra Nakas (Assistant professor, University Of Arts, Berlin) "'Simulationism' and its Discontents : Peter Halley reading Baudrillard".

12:30 Lunch

Chair: Hans de Wolf (Professor, Vrije Universiteit Brussel)

14:00 Benjamin Greenman (Lecturer, Glasgow School of Art & Open University in Scotland)

"Blanchot, Tel Quel and the formation of a Sadean aesthetic in the work of Vito Acconci".

14:45 Philip Armstrong (Associate Professor, The Ohio State University)

"(Imp)possibilities : Receptions of Lacoue-Labarthe".

15:30 Break

16:00 John Rajchman (Professor, Columbia University, New York)

"A New York Story : How to do the history of theory in the visual arts today".

Saturday May 14

09:00 Welcome address

09:15 Introduction

09:45 Roundtable with :

- Victor Burgin, Emeritus Professor, University of California, Santa Cruz ;
- Laura Mulvey, Professor, Birbeck University, London;
- Alexander Streitberger, Professeur, Université Catholique de Louvain ;
- Hilde Van Gelder, Professor, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven.

11: 30 Debate and conclusion

Organised by (SIC), in collaboration with the Centre de Recherche en Théorie des Arts (CeRTA - UCLouvain) and the Lieven Gevaert Centre (LGC, KULeuven - UCLouvain).

With the support of WIELS, Fonds National de la Recherche Scientifique (FRS-FNRS), Terra Foundation for American Art (TERRA), Jeunesse & Arts Plastiques (JAP), Institut des Civilisations, Arts et Lettres (INCAL - UCLouvain), Service culturel de l'Ambassade de France, Wallonie-Bruxelles International (WBI).

For further informations, please contact : frenchtheory@uclouvain.be

or visit www.sicsic.be or http://www.wiels.org/site2/event.php?event_id=477

Reference:

CONF: French Theory (Brussels 11-14 May 11). In: ArtHist.net, May 2, 2011 (accessed Jun 24, 2026),

<<https://arthist.net/archive/1311>>.