

The personal, fashionable and archival spaces of Hair (London, 25 Nov 16)

London, Somerset House, Nov 25, 2016

Deadline: Oct 14, 2016

Fashion Research Network

Call for Papers

The personal, fashionable and archival spaces of Hair

A symposium organised by the Fashion Research Network to accompany Hair by Sam McKnight, an exhibition held at Somerset House Trust

Date: 25 November 2016

Venue: Somerset House, London

Of all the body's components, hair is perhaps the most ambiguous, being both corporeal and in many ways as much a fashion accessory as a bag, shoe or hat. Hair is an intrinsic yet expendable aspect of the self; an organic entity that we may alter almost infinitely. We cut, shape, and style it in order to transform an image, or regenerate an identity. In so doing we negotiate many, unspoken social and cultural rules. Away from the body, hair evokes mortality, histories, or serves as a keepsake, a reminder of the bodies to which it was once attached.

This interdisciplinary symposium draws on the many meanings and connections of hair, by examining three spaces in which it may be displayed: the salon, catwalk and museum. We invite PhD and early career researchers to submit paper proposals of up to 500 words that fit into these spatial categories:

The Catwalk

The catwalk considers the role of hair in high fashion, in fashion and other types of representation, and creative industries. It explores hair styling as an act of 'making' fashion, of producing an image for display. Suggested topics include hair within magazines images, catwalk shows and advertisements, collaborations between stylists and other professionals, and the notions of 'fashionable' hair, of stylist as artist or performer, of the model as a canvas for someone else's work.

The Salon

The Salon explores the personal and social aspects of hair and the hair salon. How does it function as a space of self-expression and ritual? What are the coded practices performed within the salon walls? How does personal hair grooming connect to family, culture and history? How is the act of hair styling transformative, and what does it say about experiential aspects of identity?

What are the intimate relationships negotiated within the salon.

The Museum

This section discusses hair in museum collections, in exhibition displays, and in artwork. What challenges does the curator face in terms of installation and conservation? How does hair change a historical construction, or render it realistic or theatrical? What does it signify in artwork, in relation to other media? What are the stories that hair in archival collections tell?

We invite proposals for twenty-minute papers from researchers in any academic field, the art and creative industries or museums, who draw on a range of resources that illustrate the visual, material and textual scope of hair culture, including hair, wigs, garments, imagery, magazines, image books, video, literary and other texts, and home photos. Please also include a short bio of about 150 words.

Deadline: 14 October 2016 (the FRN will notify all applicants the following week on the success of their proposals)

Contact for questions and submissions: fashionresearchnetwork@gmail.com

Reference:

CFP: The personal, fashionable and archival spaces of Hair (London, 25 Nov 16). In: ArtHist.net, Sep 19, 2016 (accessed May 20, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/13723>>.