Border Control (Liverpool, 25-26 May 17)

Tate Liverpool, Albert Dock, Liverpool Waterfront, Liverpool L3 4BB, UK, May 25–26, 2017
Deadline: Nov 6, 2016

Julia Bailey

Border Control: On the Edges of American Art

Convened by Julia Tatiana Bailey (Tate) and Alex J. Taylor (University of Pittsburgh)
Supported by the Terra Foundation for American Art

Recent histories of American art have strived to cross its boundaries and expand its limits. As migration and expatriatism have come to be understood among its defining characteristics, once carefully delineated edges between the national and the foreign seem increasingly porous. This shift corresponds with the dissolution of other kinds of borders. Artists have long transgressed the limits of artistic movement, medium specificity and other imposed restrictions, sometimes sneaking well outside the bounds of art itself. Historians of American art have also begun to more actively cross the disciplinary limits that once constrained the field.

This two-day conference will bring together new scholarship exploring the edges and borders of post-war American art before 1980, the varied acts of traversal and attempts at containment that have shaped its histories. Presented as the culmination of the three-year Tate Research project 'Refiguring American Art', and to coincide with a related display at Tate Liverpool, the conference will bring together historians of art and visual culture engaging with American art in its global contexts. The conference will embrace scholarship that attends to the boundaries of American art in the broadest visual, historical and conceptual terms, including the fractious politics by which borders of many kinds are crossed and controlled. How have such dynamics altered the way artists work, or the way particular works of art look? What has been the impact of such barriers on the canon, and the various revisions of its limits? Topics may include:

- Borders, margins and edges as formal strategy in American art
- Frontiers and walls in the American cultural imagination
- Migration, travel and the artistic impacts of border crossings
- Conduits and obstacles in the global traffic of American art and artists
- Art at boundary lines, border zones and other thresholds between places
- The protection and dissolution of borders between movements and periods
- Marginal styles and mediums, and their art historical regulation
- Contested boundaries between artistic and non-artistic practices
- Interdisciplinary dialogues and disputes between American art and its others
- Creative encounters with the barriers of isolationism and exceptionalism

- Artistic entanglements in American cultural and geographical expansionism
- Cultural practices on the borders of gender, sexuality and ethnicity
- Containment and the ideological ends of American art and artists

The conference will take place on Thursday 25 and Friday 26 May 2017 at Tate Liverpool. A contribution towards travel costs will be made available to speakers, and Tate can provide letters of support for selected speakers to seek further support towards participation.

To propose a paper, please email an abstract of 200 words or less and a 50-word biography in a single Word document to julia.bailey@tate.org.uk by Sunday 6 November 2016.
Papers should be 15–20 minutes in length. Speakers will be notified by Friday 16 December 2016.

Reference:
CFP: Border Control (Liverpool, 25-26 May 17). In: ArtHist.net, Sep 29, 2016 (accessed Nov 20, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/13827>.