Artists of the Coenties Slip (Düsseldorf, 20-24 Jul 20)

Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf, Jul 20–24, 2020
Deadline: Jan 31, 2020

Dr. Pamela Geldmacher

In summer 2017 The Menil Collection curated the exhibition "Between Land and Sea: Art-ists of the Coenties Slip". It was the first contemporary focus on a loose gathering of various artists who settled between 1956 and 1963 in dilapidated lofts at a harbour section in New York, the so-called Coenties Slip. Among them were Robert Indiana, Agnes Martin, Ellsworth Kelly or James Rosenquist, who later became known as famous individual artists. After noticing 'The Coenties Slip' within several biographies of e.g. Agnes Martin, James Rosenquist, Lenore Tawney or Ellsworth Kelly, this exhibition was one more impulse to look closer on an artist community that was, up to then, neglected by the art or scientific world.

The International Summer School "Materiality, Collectivity, Diversity – Artists of the Coenties Slip" has the aim to broaden the discourse not only about the artists themselves, who lived and worked at the Coenties Slip, but also about associated topics, that can be linked to the artists and their changes in work at the Slip. The key terms Materiality, Col-lectivity and Diversity might not only expand the whole discussion in order to connect it to other artists, groups and theoretical terms. It will also be useful, to bring up central and well-known art-historical terms together with an unknown gathering of artists.

On the basis of these research desiderata, (inter-)national Master and PhD students, (junior) scientists and institutionally established partners are invited to discuss topological, temporal, material, participatory and collective configurations. The interdisciplinary exchange should be one of the focal points of the upcoming Summer School. Master and PhD students with a background in media and cultural sciences, art history, material studies, gender studies, social sciences are kindly invited to apply for. Every participant will be free to decide, either if she or he focuses on an artist, a genre or a theoretical field, that can be linked to the title of the International Summer School.

The following questions introduce four potential scientific areas:

Topology
How did space and production on the Coenties Slip condition each other? What impact has the spatial location in New York for these artists, and vice versa, how did the artistic practices and the joint action shape the space (including the replacement of Paris as an art metropolis by New York)? And, more general, which influence take topological phenomena on the actions of the artists?

Materiality

Which relevance does the material of the environment have for artists? Based on the Coenties Slip: How did the inherent principles of the artists working in New York and their specific handling of the material change within the 1950s and 1960s? Which concept of production can be worked out for the artists and how did it actually develop in that time? How did these artists influence central developments in art history in the second half of the 20th century, such as Fiber Art, Minimal Art, Hard Edge and Pop Art? Which stylistic and formal aesthetic features are distinctive for this? And how can production and materiality be interlinked with regard on artistic work in general and in contrast to contemporary approaches?

Diversity
Which gender- and diversity-theoretical questions become important in the light of the fact that the individual biographies of the artists show utterances that take up these topics? What role did female protagonists play in particular within that time, especially with regard to the Abstract Expressionists, that were active in New York at almost the same time?

Collectivity
How can the connection, that the artists of the Coenties Slip had, be described? Which crucial statements can be made about the singular artists and the influence of their popular neighbours? More generally: From which point on is it possible to talk about an artist group, a collective, a community or just a loose artist gathering? Which impact has collective work on singular artists if we think of e.g. all -isms within the Avantgarde?

Costs for travel and accommodation are provided in form of a reasonable administration fee. Please send us your abstract of not more than 300 words as well as a short bio-graphical note to pamela.geldmacher@hhu.de by 31st of January 2020. Within that abstract we are highly interested in your motivation and your main scientific interest depending the topics mentioned before. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.
All participants will be informed until 15th of February 2020.

Reference:
CFP: Artists of the Coenties Slip (Düsseldorf, 20-24 Jul 20). In: ArtHist.net, Nov 21, 2019 (accessed Nov 25, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/22138>.