

## Contested 'That' (online/Norwich, 23–24 Apr 21)

online / Norwich, Apr 23–24, 2021

Deadline: Feb 15, 2021

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Call for Papers/Artefacts

Contested 'That': Creative conflict in theory and practice'

International Conference

Created and Contested Territories Research Group at Norwich University of the Arts, Norwich, Norfolk, UK invites proposals for contributions to the international conference 'Contested 'That': Creative Conflict in Theory and Practice' with the aim connect with creative practitioners and theorists tackling conflict around or within art practices that might be broadly characterised as dealing with 'that which is contested'.

### Context

Art is frequently depicted by art history, and by history more widely as being possessed of the quality of transcendence or transgression. Over time, many creative practitioners have turned their gaze to varied and disparate manifestations of social division, grappling with issues of diaspora, migration, colonisation, decolonisation collective amnesia, gender, identity, transnationalism and climate change in their practice. This with greater or lesser measures of success.

The new coronavirus pandemic has thrown into sharper relief the shifting ideological and ethical dilemmas brought about by the recent environmental, racial and social mo(ve)ments. In light of these seismic shifts, many creative practitioners have felt compelled to reconsider their place, means of production and distribution, along with their role and usefulness to society.

This reconsideration has, in many instances, taken place behind closed doors, in isolation or in archipelagos of unshared understanding. This conference is an attempt to re-connect the creative conscious and conscientious at a time when individual practice can seem insignificant in the context of what some have described as a global scientific and political headwind. The conference looks at shared experiences of the contested in a changing world, and in doing so, it addresses some of the fundamental, if not existential, questions facing creative production and interpretation against a backdrop of uncertainty and a future in flux.

The conference seeks to air thoughts from artists, designers, architects, historians and filmmakers whose work contests ideas and practices that have been accepted or taken for granted, or the work of practitioners who are calling for new modes of creative production and/or new frameworks of understanding its own domain; in short, those who are seeking to re-locate themselves and find ways of re-inhabiting the mantle of 'creator'.

### Strands of interrogation and questions

'Contested,' understood as called to witness, disputed, challenged, argued, opposed, questioned, and created as the result of a contest is the lens suggested by this conference to explore pressing issues that mark past and recent creative ways as contested practices.

The conference seeks contributions that address the three main strands of interrogation, but are not limited to:

1. Contested subject matters and practices with the aim of answering the following questions:  
What might constitute controversial subject matter in contemporary creative practice?  
When does an artefact become contested and is this synecdochal to the moment that a wider artistic practice become contested?  
If a peripheral or contesting practice becomes mainstream, does it lose its credibility/status as a contestant?  
Did previous modes of emergent creative production start as always challenging the status quo?
2. Contested approaches and methodologies pertaining to opposed artefacts & buildings.
  - a) We seek contributions that look at theoretical frameworks of understanding the products of contestation afresh.
  - b) Case studies of interpretations and modes of reception of artefacts+buildings that have been contested throughout time are welcome.
3. The creator (artist/designer/architect/media practitioner) as the witness of social and political conflicts as well as a challenger of the status quo.
  - a) We seek contributions that interrogate ways of being in the world in conflict situations (war, engaged in political, environmental, and racial causes)
  - b) The creator as a contender in controversial art/architectural 'contests' or competitions.

The conference seeks contributions in the format of scholarly papers, artefacts and performances to create a dialogue between scholars (theorists, art and architectural historians) and artists, designers, and architects to share their expertise and unique perspectives on what constitutes a contested creative practice in the third decade of 21st century.

### Contributions

Please send proposals for 20-min papers in English in .doc or .docx format (maximum 300 words in English), creative pieces – images of artifacts (no more than 20MB) as pdf and 5 minute-performances video file before 15 February 2021 to the following address [cactus@nua.ac.uk](mailto:cactus@nua.ac.uk)

All the submissions should include a 50-80 word-bio in a separate document.

Please note that creative pieces, performances and experimental forms are encouraged. Please specify whether you will be presenting a 20-minute paper in parallel or in an alternative form such as a screening, performance, or something else. If one of the latter, please specify how much time you will require.

### Calendar

- 15 February 2021 – Deadline for Receiving Proposals

- 28 February 2021 – Acceptance Notification
- 15 March 2021 – Confirmation of Invited Speakers
- 6 April 2021 – Deadline for Papers/Artefacts/Performance
- 15 April 2021 – Deadline for Registration
- 23 and 24 April 2021 – Conference Dates

For further enquiries, please contact [cactus@nua.ac.uk](mailto:cactus@nua.ac.uk) and for further info see <https://createdcontestedterritories.net/contested-that-creative-conflict-in-theory-and-practice/>

Reference:

CFP: Contested 'That' (online/Norwich, 23-24 Apr 21). In: ArtHist.net, Jan 8, 2021 (accessed Jul 13, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/24210>>.