

German Visual Culture 1871-1990 (Belfast, 12-14 Apr 06)

Debbie Lewer

Call for Conference Session Papers

"Contested Histories in German Visual Culture 1871-1990"
33rd AAH Annual Conference, 12-14 April 2007, School of Art and Design
University of Ulster, Belfast.

Convenors: Dr. Debbie Lewer, Department of History of Art, University of Glasgow, d.lewer@arthist.arts.gla.ac.uk and Dr. Christian Weikop, Department of Art History, University of Sussex, c.weikop@sussex.ac.uk

Proposals are invited from scholars in relevant fields for this one-day session, to be held as part of the Association of Art Historians Conference 2007, University of Ulster, Belfast, on the theme of Contestations. Please note that all participants will be subject to the overall regulations, fees and guidelines laid down by the AAH for the conference. See www.aah.org.uk/conference/2007-conference.php for details.

The aim of the session, initiated by Debbie Lewer and Christian Weikop, is to encourage debate and exchange of new research findings. It is intended that a subsequent event exploring this theme will follow the session at a future date and it is hoped that a publication will result. For this reason, informal expressions of interest from researchers as well as proposals for the Belfast session are welcome.

Call for Papers

German visual culture has produced many different representations of and engagements with history, the past and the remains of the past. In terms of form, content, programme and ideology, this has been - and still is - a "contested" field. This session will examine relations between the material traces of the past, narratives of German history and the critical and conceptual frameworks for a range of objects and aesthetic practices in Germany since the late nineteenth century.

How have aesthetic appropriations of the past in German visual culture affirmed or critiqued dominant political culture? What is the significance of the presence or absence of particular histories of, or in, art? To what extent is the envisioned past indexed to the social and political

imperatives of the present and stakes for the future? How has art practice negotiated the dialectic between history and experience? Methodologically, should we be "contesting" the way histories of histories in recent German art and culture are established? Addressing such questions, the session aims to encourage debate on the "contested" nature of the (German) past.

The session will focus on German visual culture between unification and re-unification, but the "histories" referenced may be much older. Possible topics might include issues around style, revivals and historicism; monuments and memorials; the representation or commemoration of wars, historical figures and revolutions (from Arminius to the German Peasants' War and the Reformation, the World Wars, 1968 or indeed 1989); the changing conditions of "history painting"; the search for cultural roots or the affirmation of identity in the past; debates around "German" art and art historiography; "Entartete Kunst" and its legacies; "neo"-avant-gardes; the presences and absences of the National Socialist past; the function of "history" under the conditions of the Cold War in the visual cultures of the Federal Republic and the German Democratic Republic; retrospective confrontations with the RAF / Baader-Meinhof, and the "Historikerstreit" in the 1980s. Papers presenting new, unpublished research on a range of visual media and material culture (including e.g. photography and architecture) are welcome, as are papers of a primarily theoretical, methodological or polemic nature.

Submission of proposals

Abstracts for papers must be no more than 250 words in length and should be accompanied by a brief CV with contact and affiliation details. Please bear in mind that papers presented must be in English and must last no more than 20 minutes. The deadline for receipt of abstracts is 10 November 2006. Please submit abstracts by email to BOTH convenors:

Dr. Debbie Lewer: d.lewer@arthist.arts.gla.ac.uk

Dr. Christian Weikop: c.weikop@sussex.ac.uk

Please feel free to contact the session organisers should you have any queries.

Reference:

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