

Showing Making. Representations of Image Making (Amsterdam Jun 09)

Ann Sophie Lehmann

Call for Papers

SHOWING MAKING. International Conference on the Representation of Image Making and Creative Practices in Ritual, Art, Media and Science

June 18 - 19, 2009

Filmmuseum, Amsterdam

organized by the Department of Media and Culture Studies (Utrecht University) and the Meertens Institute (Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences)
in collaboration with the Dutch Filmmuseum.

If making is thinking, as Richard Sennett has recently argued in his book *The Craftsman*, studying making can enable us to understand cultural products, such as images. In current academic debate, images are often discussed as immaterial bearers of meaning. Yet paintings, films, computer animation and scientific images are the results of skilled procedures and complex interaction between makers, materials, tools and technologies, which generate and shape meaning. Based on tacit knowledge, these procedures and interactions tend to evade textual description and are, although enclosed in the finished product, usually not recorded. So how do we get our hands and minds at these material procedures if we want to study the meaning of making?

We propose to study visual genres specifically dedicated to the representation of image making; depictions of practice that have in fact a long tradition in western and non-western cultures. These depictions contain information about the social, anthropological, technological, material and aesthetic dimensions of image production. However, they are shaped by interesting paradoxes. On the one hand they enable a peek behind the scenes, providing knowledge about image making procedures. On the other hand they invest creation with magical qualities and mystify the actions of the image-maker. As mediated constructs, they display ideal aspects of creative processes and tend to omit failure or routine - as art works they foreground self-referentiality as critical strategy. Taking these aspects into

consideration showing making can be turned into a theoretical tool to study image making as intellectual and meaningful practice.

This conference wants to trace instances of showing making across media, history and cultures. From St. Luke painting the Virgin Mary to Bob Ross painting trees; from depictions of bronze casting and glass blowing to the opening of the eyes of the Buddha and the ritual creation of idols; from youtube video's of drawing contests, makezine's and tutorials on powerpoint to the history of the making-of; from art and industrial documentaries to illustrated handbooks on calligraphy, pottery or photo shop; from painting elephants and apes to the representation of scientific and medical imaging procedures; from self-referential animation to v-jaying and beyond.

The goal is to gather material for a history of showing making, to analyze how image-making procedures and technologies are represented, to study the epistemic and performative elements of showing making and to create a framework in which the visualizations of image making and creative practice can be theorized.

Sessions and confirmed key-note speakers

The Display of Creative Practice - Timothy Ingold, Social Anthropology, University of Aberdeen

Scientific Images in the Making - Pamela H. Smith, History, Columbia University

Image Making Rituals - Donald Swearer, Buddhist Studies, Harvard Divinity School

Showing Painting - H. Perry Chapman, Art History, University of Delaware

The Making of the Making-of - John Wyver, Illuminations and School of Media, Art and Design, University of Westminster

Please email your abstract of max. 500 words and a short cv by MARCH 15 to:

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you will be notified in the first week of april

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Reference:

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