

Minor Photography: the Case (Post)Surrealist Photography (Leuven, 19–20 Nov 10)

Mieke Bleyen

Friday 19th and Saturday 20th November 2010

University of Leuven, Lieven Gevaert Research Centre for Photography

Deadline: April 15th, 2010

<http://www.lievengevaertcentre.be/conferences.htm>

keywords: photography and politics - the global and the local -
photography and art -photography and medium specificity - Deleuze &
Guattari

The Lieven Gevaert Research Centre for Photography organizes an international conference the aim of which is twofold: Firstly to open the debate on the use value of the notion of minor-photography for photo theory. Minor photography is understood as a type of photography that, similar to the "minor literatures" theorized by Deleuze and Guattari, develops new visions of the medium due to a specific use of its own peripheral position, both geographically and institutionally, and to its creative distance from the "centre".

Secondly, to apply this notion to a largely overlooked corpus of (post)surrealist photography both in Belgium and in other "peripheral" locations in its dynamic relation to the "dominant" language of the centre (or centres: Paris, London, New York).

Hence, the conference will be divided into two parts, although overlapping papers are also welcomed.

November 19: Minor Photography?

This session firstly seeks to develop theoretical positions on the notion of minor photography. Although a „definition“ of minor photography will always be relative, since it depends on what the „major“ or dominant use of the medium is in a very specific context (time and place), nevertheless some characteristics could be ascribed to it. Deleuze and Guattari define the minor in terms of deterritorialization, politicization and collectivization. The question rises then how these features could be transferred to the medium of photography? Second, this part of the conference wishes to develop a suitable procedure or method to connect

this very concept to specific corpuses (in this case (post)surrealism: see day 2)

Papers are welcomed to elaborate on this double viewpoint. Amongst others, the following questions could come to the fore as a preparation of the round

table session that will conclude the first day of the conference:

- How does minor photography relate to minor or marginal positions?
- How can photography be political? See for instance Jacques Rancière's Politics of Aesthetics or Vilém Flusser's notion of the photographic apparatus
- How could we associate the notion of "minor" with that of "avant-garde"?

November 20: (post)surrealism: cases of minor photography

The second day will relate the above mentioned questions to specific case studies of (post)surrealist photography and hence seeks to contribute to a remapping of the history of surrealist photography. In line with recent developments in surrealism scholarship, this conference will question the idea of a "universal surrealist language" of photography, which often comes down to a reduction to its Parisian forms. Instead, surrealist photography will be considered in its heterogeneity, with a special focus on the dynamics between the so-called "centre" or dominant position and "periphery" or marginal position, both understood in cultural, geographical and institutional terms.

Topics for this conference might include, but are not limited to:

- Photography as a "minor medium" in relation to painting and literature
- The role played by the nation (or local identities) in an artistic production that explicitly questions this very notion
- The problem of situating photography that in terms of avant-garde "comes too late" or didn't receive any attention due to its marginal position
- Surrealism's inner conflict with mechanisms of canonization, commercialisation and fame

Practicalities

The conference languages are English and French.

Proposals for presentation are to be submitted by March 15, 2010 at the latest. They are to be sent by email to Mieke.bleyen@arts.kuleuven.be and must include the following :

- (in a separate file): your full name, gender, academic/professional status and email address; institution/ of attachment ; or (for a doctorate student)

the name of your director of thesis, as well as your contact email address.

- the proposed form of the presentation (maximum of 500 words- Times New

Roman, size 12) in English or French preceded with a title.

Accepted proposals will give rise to an oral presentation of twenty minutes, followed by a debate. These may also be followed by publication, in the form of an article, in the acts of the conference (subject to the opinion of the scientific committee and an editorial committee).

Key Dates:

April 15, 2010 : Deadline for submission of proposals.

June 15, 2010 : Announcement by the scientific committee (including Jan Baetens, Hilde Van Gelder and Alexander Streitberger) of accepted proposals.

September 15, 2010 : Deadline for sending complete article (30,000 characters, including spaces).

Reference:

CFP: Minor Photography: the Case (Post)Surrealist Photography (Leuven, 19-20 Nov 10). In: Arthist.net, Feb 17, 2010 (accessed Jul 26, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/32363>>.