Unleashing the Senses in the Art of the Americas (online, 8-10 Apr 21)

online / Fifth Annual Symposium of Latin American Art, Apr 8–10, 2021

Francesca Ferrari, Brooklyn

Touch, Taste, Turn: Unleashing the Senses in the Art of the Americas

The Fifth Annual Symposium of Latin American Art at the Institute of Fine Arts, the Graduate Center, and Columbia University: Presented by the Institute for Studies on Latin American Art (ISLAA). With Keynote Lectures by María Magdalena Campos-Pons, artist and Professor of Fine Arts, Cornelius Vanderbilt Endowed Chair of Fine Arts, Vanderbilt University, and Claire Tancons, writer and curator. The symposium will close with an original work by performance artist Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro.

This symposium will be held entirely online. Speakers will share short pre-recorded presentations three weeks before the event so that attendees can view the presentations on their own time. Panel discussions on April 9th will be dedicated to Q&A only. The keynote talks and performance will be presented live with reserved time for Q&A. In order to access the presentations and to receive the link for the symposium events, please register via: http://ifalatinamerica.org/symposium/. Full program below.

Cultural and artistic practices that engage with multiple senses (e.g. sight, smell, hearing, taste, touch, and beyond) have a long history in the Americas. Indigenous civilizations and Afro-diasporic communities have developed artifacts and practices that promote forms of knowledge grounded in presence, materiality, and sensorial perception. Examples include Andean quipus or knotted cords used to communicate information, Haitian Vodun visual and ritualistic practices summoning sensorial and spiritual energies, and seventeenth-century Tupinambá ceremonial feather capes. These legacies continue to inspire artists today, such as Cecilia Vicuña, who produces environments that evoke quipus; María Magdalena Campos-Pons, whose mixed-media works incorporate bodily interventions and soundscapes; and Guadalupe Maravilla, whose performances explore movement and the experience of migration.

With these precedents in mind, this year's iteration of the symposium will bring together interdisciplinary and cross-temporal scholarship focusing on objects and practices by makers and artists in the Americas that engage in multisensorial experiences. By placing an emphasis on multiple senses and their interrelation, the event will draw upon and expand on the "sensory turn," an approach more commonly associated with disciplines such as anthropology, history, and cultural studies since the late 1980s. Unleashing the senses poses important challenges to art history, a discipline founded on the privileging of sight, by underscoring the role of multiple senses in the creation of meaning.

Our event will recall previous undertakings by art historians and critics in the Americas who have embraced the sensorial to analyze or theorize Latin American, Caribbean, and Latinx art. Examples range from Brazilian poet Ferreira Gullar's 1959 Manifesto Neoconcreto to Nuyorican artist Raphael Montañez Ortiz's multimedia pedagogical projects in the 1970s, as well as the 1981 "Primer Coloquio Latinoamericano de Arte No Objetual y de Arte Urbano" in Medellín. Anticipating the "sensory turn," these efforts brought attention to practices previously undervalued in art history such as vernacular music and culture, self-taught arts and crafts, and performance.

Inspired by the rich and diverse artistic and historiographical production of the Americas, this event revolves around questions such as: What does a multisensorial approach bring to the understanding of Latin American, Caribbean, and Latinx art? Conversely, what does the production of those regions bring to the understanding of multisensorialism? What strategies can artists and scholars adopt to complicate the sense of sight? How are sensorial experiences conditioned by social, cultural, and historical variables, and how can they help us understand those variables? How does a multisensorial model put pressure on art history? How can museums and cultural institutions promote experiences that go beyond visuality?

PROGRAM

Thursday, April 8, 2021, 6 pm – 7:30 pm

Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Anna Indych-López, Professor of 20th-Century Latin American and Latinx Art at the Graduate Center, CUNY

Edward J. Sullivan, Helen Gould Sheppard Professor in the History of Art at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University

María Magdalena Campos-Pons, Keynote Talk and Q&A

"Trance/Senses. Performativity: A Conversation with María Magdalena Campos-Pons"

Friday, April 9, 2021, 11 am – 3:35 pm

11 am – 11:45 am Panel 1: Taste / Ingestion / Oral Epistemologies

Moderator: Horacio Ramos, Ph.D. Candidate, The Graduate Center, CUNY

Discussant: Susanna Temkin, Curator at El Museo del Barrio, New York

- "Tasting the Enemy: Art, Food, and Cannibalism in Brazil," Rodrigo Brum, Lecturer in Film and Media Installation, German University in Cairo
- "Stretchy, Glossy, and 'Disgusting:' Mopa Mopa practice and Orality in Colonial Andean Culture," Catalina Ospina, Ph.D. Candidate, University of Chicago
- "On Ayrson Heráclito's Bori, 2009," Bernardo Mosqueira, M.A. Student, CCS Bard; Artistic Director, Solar dos Abacaxis, Rio de Janeiro.

11:50 am – 12:35 pm Panel 2: Turn / Movement / Space

Moderator: Tie Jojima, Ph.D. Candidate, The Graduate Center, CUNY

Discussant: Katia Maciel, Professor, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro

“Palpitaciones telúricas: Mexican Modernism and Physiological Aesthetics in Landscape Painting,” Rebeca Barquera, Ph.D. Candidate, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM)
“Ana Teresa Fernández’s Borrando la Frontera, Transborder Touch, and Refusing to Side with Colonialism,” Barbara Sostaita, Ph.D. Candidate, University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill
“Through Other Senses: Cildo Meireles’ Eureka/Blindhotland (1970-1975) and Através [Through] (1983-1989),” Caroline Alciones de Oliveira Leite, Ph.D. Candidate, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro

2 pm – 2:45 pm Panel 3: Touch / Haptic

Moderator: Gwen Unger, Ph.D. Candidate, Columbia University

Discussant: Ana M. Franco, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Art History at Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia

“Flesh Made Word: Polysemic Sensation in the Met Feather Mosaic Triptych,” Nathalie Miraval, Ph.D. Student, Yale University
“The Distinction between the Senses of Sight and Touch in the Definition of a ‘Mestizo Style,’” Cristóbal F. Barria Bignotti, Boursier at the Centre allemand d’histoire de l’art, Paris

2:50 – 3:35 pm Panel 4: Ritual / Embodiment

Moderator: Julián Sánchez González, Ph.D. Candidate, Columbia University

Discussant: Maya Jiménez, Ph.D., Adjunct Assistant Professor of Art History at Pace University and Borough of Manhattan Community College

“Scenting Reparation: Aromas as Ritual Remedies in the Colonial Paintings of Cristo en el aposentillo,” Carolina Sacristán Ramírez, D.; Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey, Campus Puebla.
“La danza andina como performance y práctica religiosa para la sanación del duelo,” Antuané de la Flor, M.A., University of Engineering and Technology, Lima
“Molten and Modified: Technological Style and Processual Facture in Goldwork from Ancient Colombia,” Eric Mazariegos, Ph.D. Student, Columbia University

Saturday, April 10, 2021, 12 pm – 2:15 pm

Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Katherine Manthorne, Professor of Modern Art of the Americas at the Graduate Center, CUNY

Lisa Trever, Lisa and Bernard Selz Associate Professor in Pre-Columbian Art History and Archaeology, Columbia University

12 pm – 1:30 pm

Claire Tancons, Keynote Talk and Q&A

“Mangrove as Muse: Sensing the Skin of the Unseen (Reflections on an African Diasporic Sensorium)”

1:30 pm – 2:15 pm

Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro, Performance and Q&A

“A cambonagem em um incêndio inevitável”

The Fifth Annual Symposium of Latin American Art is organized by the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University; The Graduate Center, CUNY; and Columbia University, with the support of the Institute for Studies on Latin American Art (ISLAA) and the John Rewald Endowment at The Graduate Center, CUNY.

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