

Art Writing and the Body (online, 1-3 Sep 21)

Online (Zoom), Sep 1-03, 2021

Deadline: May 1, 2021

Thomas Hughes, London

This three-day online conference, co-organized by Thomas Hughes and Will Parker, in conjunction with the Decadence Research Centre at Goldsmiths and the British Association of Decadence Studies (BADs), will explore how art writing from the Romantic period to the present registers the body, its sensations, and sensory responses. It will consider the ways in which artists, writers, and critics register traces of the visual encounter as an embodied aesthetic experience.

Construing the body in the broadest sense and drawing on the recent work of scholars including Carolyn Burdett, Whitney Davis, and Marion Thain on aesthetic perception and embodied cognition, we aim to examine the aesthetic, cultural, and political implications of embodiment. We will discuss the ways in which the boundaries of the body are delineated and transgressed and how language is able to register desire and loss in encounters with the ravishing or disturbing art object. How does difference of all kinds animate the agonies and ecstasies of art writing? How has art writing engaged with queerness, difference, and otherness? How are the concepts of mimesis and naturalism that are embedded in western epistemology problematized by art writers? What other models does art writing offer us for thinking about relations between the human and the non- or post-human? How do aesthetic and decadent art writers, for example, conceptualize the body in relation to notions of beauty, disease, decay? What forms of collaborative practice has art writing taken and what forms does it continue to take? How have artists engaged with these questions? What is art writing?

We invite proposals for two kinds of presentation:

- Twenty-minute conference papers.

- Short, ten-minute quickfire position papers or provocations. These shorter presentations might, for example, focus on a single passage of prose, stanza of poetry, or facet of an object. They might also be composed of a personal response to the themes of the conference, or a subjective reflection on practice.

Please send abstracts of about 300 words to Will (willfrancisparker@hotmail.com) and Thomas (Thomas.Hughes@courtauld.ac.uk) by 1 May 2021, stating clearly which kind of presentation you propose.

Reference:

CFP: Art Writing and the Body (online, 1-3 Sep 21). In: ArtHist.net, Mar 26, 2021 (accessed Mar 28, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/33697>>.