

## Avant-Gardes / Contagion / Hygiene (online, 26 Nov 21)

University of Glasgow / online, Nov 26, 2021

Disa Persson, University of Glasgow

Avant-Gardes / Contagion / Hygiene is an interdisciplinary symposium hosted online by the University of Glasgow on the 26th of November 2021.

The event brings together scholars in the fields of art history, theatre, visual culture, and literature to explore intersections and interactions, dating from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century, between the artistic avant-garde and themes of health and hygiene, such as illness, contagion, cleanliness, and contamination.

Whilst the ongoing covid-19 pandemic has brought these themes - as well as the complex and highly charged discursive field they inhabit - to the fore of popular and political discourse, they have always been central to debates around processes of modernisation.

Examining the artistic oeuvres of some of the great names of modern art - Edgar Degas, Edvard Munch, Pablo Picasso, George Orwell, Marcel Duchamp, Antonin Artaud, et al. - the symposium investigates instances where the heightened political, social, and cultural currencies embedded within such hygienic issues have been mobilised, and subversively exploited, to fuel the critical strategy at play.

As such, the symposium promotes an interdisciplinary and socio-historically contextualised understanding of the criticality of the avant-garde gesture and seeks to cultivate scholarship that moves beyond and transgresses the limits of traditional academic subjects to produce innovative and thought-provoking connections and interrelations across various fields.

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### Speakers:

David Hopkins (Professor of Art History, University of Glasgow)

Anthea Callen (Professor of Art, Australian National University)

Fae Brauer (Professor of Art and Visual Culture, University of East London)

Carl Lavery (Professor of Theatre and Performance, University of Glasgow)

Abigail Susik (Associate Professor of Art History, Willamette University)

Allison Morehead (Associate Professor of Art History, Queen's University)

Alison Syme (Associate Professor of Modern Art History, University of Toronto)

Peter Fifield (Lecturer in Modern Literature, Birkbeck, University of London)

Disa Persson (Doctoral Researcher in Art History, University of Glasgow)

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Registration and full program with abstracts:  
<https://symposium-avantgardes-contagion-hygiene-2021.eventbrite.com>

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#### PROGRAM:

##### Avant-Gardes/Contagion/Hygiene

9.00-9.10: Welcome

##### Materials/Substances

9.10-9.50: Anthea Callen (Australian National University): 'Avant-Garde Matters: Degas, dirt and hands-on practice'.

9.50-10.30: Peter Fifield (Birkbeck, University of London): 'I sometimes think that the price of liberty is not so much eternal vigilance as eternal dirt': George Orwell, grubbiness, and hygiene'.

10.30-10.50: Q&A

##### Dissemination/Contamination

11.00-11.40: David Hopkins (University of Glasgow): 'Fifty Cubic Centimetres of Infected Air: Duchamp's 'Paris Air' Ready Made Re-considered'.

11.40-12.20: Disa Persson (University of Glasgow): 'Spittle, Dust and Flies: The Avant-Garde Journal 'Documents' and Tuberculosis in the Visual Culture of Interwar France'.

12.20-13.00: Carl Lavery (University of Glasgow): 'Artaud and Mustard Gas: Plague, Pesticides, and God's Atoms'.

13.00-13.20: Q&A

##### Lunch

##### Experiences/Conditions

14.00-14.40: Allison Morehead (Queen's University): 'Unflinching Bodies: Amalie Skram's Anti-Psychiatry, Edvard Munch's Avant-Garde Psychiatry, and Feminism c. 1900'.

14.40-15.20: Alison Syme (University of Toronto): 'The Female Painter and the Lady Doctor'.

15.20-15.40: Q&A

##### Bodies/Sexualities

15.50-16.30: Fae Brauer (University of East London): 'Exposing Sexual Contagion: Fourniers'

Syphilography and Picasso's Syphilitic Bodies'.

16.30-17.10: Abigail Susik (Willamette University): 'Overwork as Sexual Contagion: Surrealist Sewing Machines and Masturbation as Liberation'.

17.10-17.30: Q&A

Reference:

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