

New Approaches on Disability and Art History (Zurich, 3-4 Jun 22)

Institute of Art History, University of Zurich, Jun 3–04, 2022

Deadline: Jan 21, 2022

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Unlearn the Body: New Approaches on Disability and Art

Workshop hosted by the “Rethinking Art History through Disability” Research Project

Organized by Amanda Cachia (University of California, San Diego) and Virginia Marano, Charlotte Matter and Laura Valterio (University of Zurich)

Disability is receiving increasing attention in art historical research, writing, and conference panels, yet many questions remain to be explored. Recent studies have called attention to the need of thematizing disability within art history, including foundational texts by Tobin Siebers and Ann Millett-Gallant, and edited volumes on various related topics (see reference list below). This two-day workshop, entitled “Unlearn the Body: New Approaches on Disability and Art History,”* will bring a diverse group of a dozen thinkers together to focus on methodological aspects in art history and related fields, in order to share and explore different approaches to engage with disability in art (history). We are specifically interested in the way that methods informed by queer and feminist approaches, critical design and access interventions, global and environmental perspectives, or the notion of materiality can provide new prospects on the topic.

Previous research and publishing has mainly focused on the disabled body as a subject of artistic representation. Yet the question needs further attention: how do diverse and non-normative embodiments construct subjectivity and act as a creative political force in art? By concentrating on the works of artists with disabilities, this workshop aims to explore the way in which their agency and transformative potential has been shaping the history of art. In doing so, it proposes alternative paths to map out the intersections of Disability Studies and Art History.

Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- Crip time; the notion of time in the production of art
- Body posture and productivity; the notion of horizontality; leaning; crawling; illness, idleness, and inaction
- The ways in which non-normative bodies challenge conventions in art(making), i.e. artists painting with their feet
- Translation practices; the relation between different media and the mediation of the experience of disability
- Concepts of care, vulnerability and intimacy
- Intersections of disability and race, gender, sex, age, class

- Access as it informs disability praxis, theory, and disability justice.

The workshop will be organized around morning and afternoon discussions with input papers by the participants, and will culminate in a final group reflection on the presented methodologies and their possible applications.

We encourage applications from art historians and scholars in related fields of expertise including visual culture, women's and gender studies, critical race studies, indigenous studies, queer studies, cultural studies, and more. Our workshop is also interested in receiving applications from PhD and MA students, curators, educators, and artists.

The workshop will take place at the University of Zurich on Friday, June 3 and Saturday, June 4, 2022. Accommodation in Zurich and part of the travel costs will be covered for the speakers. A publication of the proceedings is planned.

Please send your abstract of 250 words and a short biography to disability@khist.uzh.ch by January 21, 2022. For further information see www.khist.uzh.ch/disab.

*The first part of the workshop's title, "Unlearn the Body," is borrowed from a 2020 video work by the artist Panteha Abareshi.

REFERENCES (ORGANIZED CHRONOLOGICALLY):

- Tobin Siebers, *Disability Aesthetics*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010.
- Ann Millett-Gallant, *The Disabled Body in Contemporary Art*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.
- Re-Presenting Disability: Activism and Agency in the Museum*, edited by Richard Sandell, Jocelyn Dodd, and Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, London: Routledge, 2013.
- Petra Kuppers, *Studying Disability Arts and Culture: An Introduction*, London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014.
- Disability and Art History*, edited by Ann Millett-Gallant and Elizabeth Howie, London: Routledge, 2017.
- The Routledge Handbook of Disability Arts, Culture, and Media*, edited by Bree Hadley and Donna McDonald, London: Routledge, 2018.
- Contemporary Art and Disability Studies*, edited by Alice Wexler and John Derby, London: Routledge, 2020.
- Dis_ability Art History*, *Kritische Berichte*, no. 4 (2020), edited by Felix Jäger and Henry Kaap.
- Disability, Arts, and Culture: Methods and Approaches*, edited by Petra Kuppers, London: Intellect, 2022.
- Disability and Art History from Antiquity to the Twenty-First Century*, edited by Ann Millett-Gallant and Elizabeth Howie, London: Routledge, 2022.
- The Routledge Companion to Art and Disability*, edited by Keri Watson and Timothy Hiles, London: Routledge, 2022.
- Creative Access: Disability Art Activism and Curating Accommodation*, edited by Amanda Cachia, London: Routledge, 2022.

Reference:

CFP: New Approaches on Disability and Art History (Zurich, 3-4 Jun 22). In: ArtHist.net, Dec 10, 2021 (accessed May 1, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/35516>>.