

Confabulations (online, 19 Oct 22–29 Mar 23)

Online, Oct 19, 2022–Mar 29, 2023

Imogen Wiltshire

Confabulations: Art Practice, Art History, Critical Medical Humanities

is a new series of urgent conversations on health, medicine, and medicalized bodies triangulating three areas of practice and scholarship, each with its own lineages, disciplinary ambits, and trajectories of remembering and forgetting. Consisting of talks, workshops, readings, performances, and works-in-progress presentations, the online series intends to make explicit the contributions that artists and art historians can make to debates and developments in critical medical humanities and, in turn, to offer ways of expanding the possibilities of art practice and art history. Calling on artists and art historians who are 'medical humanities curious' as well as those who already identify with medical humanities, Confabulations aims to make and hold space for experimentation, risk, and dialogue in the hopes of fostering a community of practitioners and scholars interested in shaping future relations and interdependencies among art practice, art history, and critical medical humanities. www.confabulations.org

Confabulations is co-directed by Fiona Johnstone (University of Durham); Allison Morehead (Queens University, Canada), and Imogen Wiltshire (University of Lincoln, UK), and supported by funding from Durham University's Institute for Medical Humanities, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), and Leicester Wellcome Trust ISSF.

The winter 2022-23 program for Confabulations launches with an artist-led event exploring virality and care(lessness).

- "Viral With"

Wednesday 19 October 2022, 18:00 to 19:30 BST / 13:00 to 14:30 EDT. Online (Zoom).

<https://confabulationsdotorg.wordpress.com/current-programme/viral-with/>

Two papers and a conversation: Dr Zoë Mendelson (Head of Painting & Printmaking, The Glasgow School of Art), The Viral and the Expanded Field and Marita Fraser (Lecturer, MLitt Fine Art Practice, The Glasgow School of Art), Carelessness as a Method for Care.

Marita Fraser is an artist, writer and researcher who exhibits internationally with institutions including Kunsthau Vienna, Städtisches Museum Engen, Atelierhaus Salzamt Linz, and Perth Institute of Contemporary Art.

Zoë Mendelson is an artist and writer with an expanded field practice that owes its spatialisation, historical narratives and compositional framework to painting.

Four events in the winter 2022-23 program focus on entanglements of art, psychiatry, and therapy, in their histories, practices and institutions. Running from November to February, these bring together work on the space, experience, and spectacle of the asylum; art historical, curatorial, and creative engagements with art produced in psychiatric contexts; fabulations from mental health archives; collective listening to voices within the mental health system; and critical perspectives on the uses, training, and histories of art therapy. Throughout the series, attention is placed on both deconstructing mechanisms of institutionalizing, pathologizing and othering, and exploring ways of recovering voices and foregrounding forms of agency and resistance.

- In/From the Asylum

Wednesday 16 November 2022, 16.00 to 17.30 GMT / 11.00 to 12.30 EST. Online (Zoom).

<https://confabulationsdotorg.wordpress.com/current-programme/in-from-the-asylum/>

Focussing on the late-eighteenth and nineteenth-century asylum, this event brings together presentations by Leslie Topp, Anna Jamieson and Simone Schmidt (performing as fictional ethnomusicologist Simone Carver) to explore the architecture and space of the confining institution, the management and spectacle of those incarcerated and socially othered, and how, through creative practice with asylum archives, their voices might be heard.

Simone Schmidt (they/them) is a multidisciplinary artist, writer and musician.

Leslie Topp is Professor of Architectural History at Birkbeck, University of London.

Anna Jamieson is an interdisciplinary art historian and lecturer in the History of Art department at Birkbeck, University of London

- Art and Psychiatric Spaces

Wednesday 7 December 2022, 19.00 to 20.30 GMT / 14.00 to 15.30 EST / 20.00 to 21.30 CET. Online (Zoom).

<https://confabulationsdotorg.wordpress.com/current-programme/art-psychiatric-spaces/>

This event explores ways of engaging with art made by artist-patients in psychiatric contexts, through art historical, curatorial, and creative writing work. Each dealing with a distinctive context, speakers Katrin Luchsinger, Rose Ruane and Kaira M. Cabañas refigure relationships between art and psychiatry, working with objects, collections and practices in ways that expose discrimination in diagnosis, that open up ways of considering individual lived experiences of illness, and that rethink or disrupt dominant ways of delineating 'art.'

Katrin Luchsinger, PhD is an art historian. She taught art history of the 19th century and modernism at Zurich University of the Arts and was a researcher at the Institute for Cultural Studies in the Arts (Zurich).

Rose Ruane is an artist and writer based in Glasgow.

Kaira M. Cabañas is Professor in Art History Art and affiliate faculty in the Center for Latin American Studies at the University of Florida, Gainesville.

- Critical Perspectives on Art Therapy

Wednesday 18 January 2023, 18:00 to 19:30 GMT / 13:00 to 14:30 EST / 10:00 to 11:30 PST.

Online (Zoom).

<https://confabulationsdotorg.wordpress.com/current-programme/critical-perspectives-on-art-therapy/>

Art therapy is a field that both sits uneasily within histories of art and is largely a conspicuous absence within critical medical humanities. Comprising three papers and a conversation with Leah Gipson, Suzanne Hudson and Elizabeth Otto, this event engages in historicizing and analyzing the practices and processes of art therapy, critically probing the early development, professionalization, underpinnings, and assumptions of the field.

Leah Gipson is Assistant Professor in the Art Therapy and Counseling Department at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Suzanne Hudson is Associate Professor of Art History and Fine Arts at the University of Southern California

Elizabeth Otto is Professor of Modern and Contemporary Art History at the University at Buffalo, State University of New York.

- Institutional violence in mental health: collective listening as practice and protest

Wednesday 1 February 2023, 16.00 to 17.30 GMT / 11.00 to 12.30 EST. Online (Zoom).

<https://confabulationsdotorg.wordpress.com/current-programme/institutional-violence-in-mental-health/>

Join artist, writer and cultural producer Eve Loren for a collective listening workshop inviting creative responses to stories of institutional violence in mental health. This workshop is open to all, and you don't need any experience of art making to take part. Please bring along anything that might support you in your listening, and whichever medium you'd like to work with. This workshop will be video recorded and live scribed by Merlin Evans, who produced the original illustrations for the audiobook.

Eve Loren is an artist, writer and cultural producer with 12+ years' documentary practice including award-winning work for television, film, theatre and cultural institutions.

Merlin Evans is an award-winning medical artist, writer, educator and director of Drawn to Medicine and the founder of the online illustration school Inktuition.

The winter / spring programme concludes with two curated events:

- Stomache Ache

Late February or early March 2023; date to be confirmed. Online (Zoom).

Curated by Vanessa Bartlett. Full details and booking link to follow.

<https://confabulationsdotorg.wordpress.com/current-programme/stomach-ache/>

- Lying In: Bed

Wednesday 29 March 2023, 16.00 to 18.00 GMT/ 17.00 to 19.00 CET. This event will run for two hours including a short break. Online (Zoom).

<https://confabulationsdotorg.wordpress.com/current-programme/lying-in-bed/>

Through two talks and a film contribution based on a performative art project, Angela Alves, Monika Ankele and Céline Kaiser present a collaborative exploration around the bed as space of negotiation.

Angela Alves is a choreographer and performer living in Berlin and identifies as crip artist.

Monika Ankele is a historian and scientific researcher at the Department of Ethics, Collections and History of Medicine at the Medical University of Vienna (Josephinum).

Céline Kaiser is a professor of media cultural studies and scenic research at the Hochschule für Künste im Sozialen, Ottersberg.

For further information visit www.confabulations.org

Reference:

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