

## Inactivity (Berlin, 11-12 Jul 24)

Berlin, ICI Berlin Institute for Cultural Inquiry, Jul 11-12, 2024

Natalie Arrowsmith

Inactivity – Between Aesthetic Practice and Socio-Political Challenge.

A Transdisciplinary Workshop of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut and the Interdisciplinary Centre for Baltic Sea Region Research (IFZO), University of Greifswald, in Cooperation with the ICI Berlin Institute for Cultural Inquiry.

Organized by Oliver Aas, Hana Gründler, Antje Kempe and Barbara Kristina Murovec.

The workshop examines artistic, aesthetic, and philosophical practices of inaction throughout history in response to today's age of hyperactivity and 24/7 accessibility. It would fall far too short to perceive inactivity simply as the opposition of activity, as it encompasses various phenomena such as resistance, omission, and boredom. Equally, it might be limiting to interrogate practices related to inactivity merely as a critique of the modern conceptions of the subject and productivity. Therefore, the aim is to determine whether inaction can be considered as an agent of change, as a progressive form of 'doing' at a time when traditional 'actions' may have become obsolete. The lectures explore and question various modes of inactivity in different cultures and political systems, including those usually considered good (reflection), bad (passivity), and questionable (withdrawal). Understood as a moral and political category, we encourage a broad approach to 'inactivity' which is becoming a key aesthetic and epistemological term for the twentieth and twenty-first century.

### PROGRAM

11 July 2024

14:00–14:30 Hana Gründler and Antje Kempe

Welcome and Introduction

From Withdrawal to Distraction

Chair: Simon Godart

14:30–15:00 Helen Lewandowski

'Powerful' and 'Interesting': Photojournalism and Aesthetics in Luc Delahaye's Work

15:00–15:30 Jakub Marek

The Right to Be Distracted. On the Problem of Inactivity, Focus, and Distraction

Abandonment and Evasion

Chair: David Ventura

16:00–16:30 Ewa Macura-Nnamdi  
Abandoned Lives: On Inaction in Wolfgang Fischer's Styx

16:30–17:00 Wing Ki Lee  
Tang Ping and Contemporary Sinophone: Subconsciousness, Subtext, and Subdue

Productive Inactivity?  
Chair: Emir Yigit

17:30–18:00 Tobias Ertl  
Artistic Inactivism: Conceptual Art and Modernity's Productivist Paradigm

18:00–18:30 Anne Gräfe  
The Ambiguity of In/Activity in John Knights "The Right to be Lazy"

Evening Lecture  
Moderated by Hana Gründler

19:00 D. Graham Burnett  
Apophatic Activism. Science, Politics, and Silence in the 1960s  
(Livestream available)

Friday, 12 July  
Retraction  
Chair: Valerio Aparo

9:30–10:00 Michael Krimper  
"Le désœuvré, l'oisif": The Unemployed Writer from Benjamin to Bataille

10:00–10:30 Amanda Wasielewski  
Never Work Again: Creative Labor, AI and Radical Retreat

Apathy and Resistance  
Chair: Oliver Aas

11:00–11:30 Josip Klaić  
Gorgona Group: Inactivity as Resistance to the Socialist Regime

11:30–12:00 Renata Salecl  
Apathy, Inactivity, and Alienation: The Three Virtues of Neo-Liberalism

On Doing Nothing and Slowing Down  
Chair: Michal Zechariah

13:30–14:00 Ellie Power  
Aimless Drifting and Slowness in Urban Films

14:00–14.30 J. Igor Fardin and Richard Lee Peragine  
(In)activity and Architecture: "doing nothing apart from..."

(Not) Sleeping

Chair: Magdalena Nieslony

15:00–15:30 Angelica Stathopoulos

Bad Sleep as Moral Good

15:30 Anne Glassner, Performance and Lecture

Active Sleep! I'm Going to Rest

No online attendance or livestream available (in-person only). Only for the lecture by D. Graham Burnett a livestream will be available: <https://www.ici-berlin.org/events/d-graham-burnett/>

#### VENUE

ICI Berlin Institute for Cultural Inquiry

Christinenstr. 18/19, Haus 8, D

10119 Berlin

At the venue: To attend in person, please register using the form on this page: <https://www.ici-berlin.org/events/inactivity/>

--

Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut

Via Giuseppe Giusti 44

50121 Firenze, Italia

+39 055 24911-1

info@khi.fi.it

www.khi.fi.it

khi.fi.it/newsletter

instagram.com/khiflorenz

facebook.com/khiflorenz

x.com/khiflorenz

@khiflorenz #khiflorenz

#### Reference:

CONF: Inactivity (Berlin, 11-12 Jul 24). In: ArtHist.net, Jul 3, 2024 (accessed Apr 6, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/42271>>.