On the Dynamics of Production (Düsseldorf, 2-4 Apr 14)

Haus der Universität, Heinrich-Heine-Universität, Düsseldorf, Apr 2–04, 2014
Deadline: Oct 31, 2013

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“You were not expected to do this”
On the Dynamics of Production
(Distraction/Interference – Resistance/Accident)

International Conference
Conveners:
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@ Graduiertenkolleg Materialität und Produktion,
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In ordinary terms, the word production refers to an act of creation and its result, or to a process at the end of which there is a materialisation of some kind, or to the act of making something present. By productively interfering with this common idea of production we would like to work towards establishing different ways of thinking about this concept.

Distraction and Interference as well as Resistance and Accident are exemplary categories of the unexpected moments that may or may not take place in the course of production. They remind us that production cannot be reduced to the momentum of ‘achieving a product’. Rather, these categories help to reveal the physical presence of those who produce, the materiality of the objects involved and the unforeseen effects of the ‘product’. Furthermore, they allow us to question the alleged linearity of the processes that form part of production. Thereby, Distraction, Interference, Resistance and Accident make us aware to what extent production involves a ‘lived’ and ‘living’ tension between the producer and what is being produced, between the subject and the world. Distractions or Interferences involve an examination of the subject of production. Correspondingly, on the side of the objects of production, Resistances or Accidents are capable of – and sometimes violently so – interrupting any given course of production.

These dynamics of production and their distinctive and creative potentialities will form the main focus of this conference. In order to structure the topic, the conference will be divided into four sections. The following suggestions serve purely illustrative purposes.

Who: Traces of production This panel aims to question the unexpected traces of the producers‘ presence, from medieval copyists’ variations to Hitchcock’s cameos in his own movies. There are at least two different approaches towards exploring the traces of production: on the one hand, by starting from the object so as to find the unexpected traces of the authors‘ physical presence (beyond his signature); on the other hand, by starting from the author/actor in order to see the (un-) intentional plan of leaving archaeological traces in the course of production.

Where: Spaces of production This section investigates the relationship between distance and production in two different directions. Firstly, by concentrating on the interval between task and result and on the singular forms of creation evolving from this space. Secondly, unexpected results can also emerge from any production of distance in terms of material objects or practices such as: proxemics in theatrical performances, modern museography, Warburg‘s Bilderatlas.

Why: About the necessity of resistance Far beyond the contingency of the unexpected, this session aims to examine the material presence of a refusal to produce. This is manifest in, for example, the modern idea of going on strike or in the well-known “I would prefer not to“ with which Melville's Bartleby stubbornly decides to resist the process of copying. The identity between task and result is only alleged and this tends to conceal the self-productive presence of production as an intrinsically human process! We would like to analyse the political aspects of resistance by concentrating on the potentialities of inaction.

When: Temporalities of production This panel will attempt to highlight historical continuities as well as ruptures in the unexpectable dynamics of production. This can be achieved by asking how the very notions of production or temporality, for example, have been modified in the course of historical evolution. From the copyists of antiquity to the invention of the printing press and beyond, from the ‘birth of the artist’ in the 12th/13th centuries to Walter Benjamin’s concept of technical reproduction, this session is dedicated to the heterogeneous and discontinuous processes of production and their relation to the category of the unexpected.
We would like to invite scholars from the Humanities and related

fields (art, history, literature, cultural studies, art history, cultural anthropology, sociology, philosophy etc.) to engage with this subject in a 20 minute paper.

Abstracts of no more than 600 words with a title and a short professional biography of no more than 100 words (.pdf or word.doc) should be sent to notexpected@phil.hhu.de by October 31st 2013.

Papers should be in English; however, papers in German or French may also be accepted.

A publication of the proceedings of this conference is foreseen; therefore, please indicate whether you would be interested in further developing your paper for a publication of collected essays after the event.

Reference:

CFP: On the Dynamics of Production (Düsseldorf, 2-4 Apr 14). In: ArtHist.net, Jul 12, 2013 (accessed Nov 1, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/5746>.