The 'Mediatization' of the Artist (Amsterdam / Den Haag, 19-20 Jun 14)

Amsterdam/The Hague, Jun 19–20, 2014
Deadline: Dec 13, 2013

Rachel Esner

The ‘Mediatization’ of the Artist
19-20 June 2014
EYE Film Institute, Amsterdam/Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD), The Hague
Sandra Kisters, University of Utrecht
Rachel Esner, University of Amsterdam

Call for papers:
The international conference The Mediatization of the Artist aims to examine the various aspects of the visual-media presence of the artist from the nineteenth century to today. With the rise of notions of artistic autonomy and the simultaneous demise of old systems of patronage, artists increasingly found themselves confronted with the necessity of developing a public image. At the same time, new audiences for art discovered their fascination for the life and work of the artist. The rise of new media such as the illustrated press, photography and film meant that the needs of both parties could easily be satisfied in both words and images. This led to a transformation of the artist from a mere producer of works of art into a widely recognized celebrity.

The conference will revolve around four themes:
(1) The Artist in the (Illustrated) Press. One of the first manifestations of the artist in the media was in the nineteenth-century illustrated press. Since this time, visits to the artist’s studio, but also biographical portrayals and obituaries, have remained a popular genre in newspapers and publications from L’Illustration to Life and beyond, and have made a fundamental contribution to the cult of the artist.
(2) The Artist on Film. Almost immediately following the invention of photography, and later cinema, visual artists became subject to the camera’s gaze. From series of photographs of famous contemporaries to profiles and/or the documentation of artistic process, film and photography have developed into standard, but also mythologizing, media for the public’s understanding of the artist and the visual arts.
(3) Artists’ Self-Mediatization. Once a royal protégé, from the nineteenth century onwards, artists were forced to exhibit and sell their works in a highly competitive market. This necessitated the development of media strategies. From Gustave Courbet’s Pavillon du Réalisme to Ai Wei Wei’s blog, taking control of the public’s perception of one’s art and personality has remained a staple of artists’ practice to this day.
(4) The Artist in Popular Media. Another aspect of the transformation of the artist from an elite producer into a figure of popular culture revolves around new forms of mediatization such as cari-

catures and comics, but also – and perhaps more importantly – of the non-fictional artist as a character in docudramas, biopics, and tv-series. Here, the tragic or dramatic aspects of life and creation are the main focus, reinforcing the notion that the artist's very nature is eccentric, combining (once again) madness and genius.

We invite contributions that critically examine these forms of mediatization, their pros and cons, as well as their historical dimensions. We encourage an interdisciplinary, trans-historical, and trans-national approach, and welcome papers that are either theoretical or more case-study based.

Please send an abstract of no more than 300 words (for a 20-minute paper) and a CV to: Sandra Kisters (a.c.kisters@uu.nl) and Rachel Esner (r.esner@uva.nl) no later than 13 December 2013.
Speakers will be notified by the end of January 2014.
A publication inspired by this conference is foreseen; therefore please indicate in your abstract whether you would be interested in further developing your paper for a book of collected essays after the event.

Reference:

CFP: The 'Mediatization' of the Artist (Amsterdam / Den Haag, 19-20 Jun 14). In: ArtHist.net, Sep 13, 2013 (accessed Nov 22, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/5921>.