Thinking with John Berger (Cardiff, 4-5 Sep 14)

Cardiff, Sep 4–05, 2014
Deadline: Mar 1, 2014

Professor Jeff Wallace

Thinking with John Berger
A 2-day conference at Cardiff Metropolitan University
Cardiff, Wales, UK
4-5 September 2014

Keynote speakers:
Professor Bruce Robbins (Columbia University)
Professor Peter de Bolla (University of Cambridge)

Call for papers

John Berger presents a uniquely diverse model of critical artistic and intellectual work. He is, variously, artist (and a philosopher of drawing); art critic/theorist; 'art geographer' (Edward Soja); novelist (although preferring to call himself a storyteller); poet and dramatist; film-maker; photographic collaborator; theorist of migration; political activist in the domains of anti-capitalism and human rights.

This conference
This conference at Cardiff Metropolitan University places a focus on the transformative potential of Berger's work for educational practice. Berger may be said to have kept a distance from the institutional lecture hall, seminar room or studio; yet his work, through an interdisciplinarity seemingly without boundaries, continues to impact upon a number of academic fields. In dedicating himself to 'the job of thinker and artist' (Sally Potter), Berger seems also consistently to have orientated himself towards the future and to practice: he is, in the words of Sukhdev Sandhu, 'in the best sense, a teacherly writer and performer' -- a teacherly method characterised, that is, by the principles of collaboration and equality.

The conference therefore takes an exploratory approach to the question of how we might, as educators, use, discuss, learn from and continue to develop Berger's thought. In what ways might that thought help to transform curricula, pedagogy, and our work as writers, artists and

teachers? How pertinent is it, for example, to the growing internationalisation of the academy and to questions of global educational citizenship? Or how relevant as a critical resource within the context of a new, corporate and marketised environment in education? Might Berger's 'radical humanism' (Tilda Swinton) help to carve out alternative futures?

The conference will be held at the University's Llandaff campus, close to historic Llandaff village and cathedral, and a 30-minute walk through parkland to Cardiff city centre. It is organised by Cardiff School of Education, with the collaboration of Cardiff School of Art and Design, and will coincide with the opening of a new centre for CSAD at the Llandaff campus.

Call for Papers
Proposals for 20-minute papers are invited. The conference is open to contributors from all subject areas and disciplines, though it is anticipated that it will be of principal appeal to those interested in Berger's impact upon the following fields: literary studies; visual arts; art history; philosophy; creative writing; film production and education; performance; drawing; photography; cultural geography; critical and cultural theory. Topics for papers will be organised into panels, which might include or resemble, but are definitely not restricted to, the following:

- Criticism beyond a hermeneutics of suspicion
- Storytelling and fiction in the C21
- Aesthetics and materialism
- Intellectual work today
- 'Planetarity', global citizenship, cosmopolitics
- Pedagogy in art history
- Developments in photography and education
- Combinations of theory and practice in writing
- Consequences and cultures of the 'new poverty' (John Berger)
- Spatial theory and 'art geography'
- Radical cinema
- Spinoza and a new vitalism
- Drawing and writing

Proposals should be no more than 300 words in length, and should be sent to the conference email address: bergerconference@cardiffmet.ac.uk
Deadline for proposals: 1 March 2014 (revision to previously published deadline)
Queries and correspondence regarding the conference should be addressed to Professor Jeff Wallace at jwallace@cardiffmet.ac.uk, or call 00 44(0)29 2041 7102.

The conference website, with information regarding fees, accommodation and logistics, is at http://www.cardiffmet.ac.uk/bergerconference
In the meantime, queries on these issues should be addressed to Huw Jones or Donna O'Flaherty, conference administrators, at bergerconference@cardiffmet.ac.uk (tel 00 44 (0)29 2020 5754 or 00 44 (0) 29 2041 7078/6577)

Reference:

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