Art and Ephemerality (Bristol, 26-27 Jun 14)

Bristol, Jun 26–27, 2014
Deadline: Apr 1, 2014

Tilo Reifenstein, Manchester

The Student Summer Symposium is a two-day annual conference of postgraduate research papers which takes place at a different university each year in early Summer. This year the Association of Art Historians (AAH) and the University of Bristol invite proposals for papers for the theme of:

Art & Ephemerality
University of Bristol, 26–27 June 2014
Deadline for submissions: 1 April 2014

Call for Papers
Artworks and objects that are not intended to last or only remain briefly in existence invariably accentuate the passage of time. In collaboration with the University of Bristol, this year's AAH Student Summer Symposium will explore the implications of ephemerality for art and its histories through a wide range of historical and critical perspectives.
How do ephemeral practices—from medieval and early modern rituals to contemporary site-specific and performance-based events—intersect with the history of art and exhibitions? How should art history negotiate methodologies and strategies of documentation and preservation, when the delicate nature of materials sometimes results in the transformation, deterioration, or even disappearance of the work? When objects are irretrievably lost, is it possible to access them through documents that attempt to instigate a sense of permanence that was denied at the time? And how have museums and other exhibition spaces attempted to collect, display and preserve ephemeral objects? In the wake of recent technological developments, how do the dialectics of permanence and impermanence related to momentary flickers of celluloid or transitory pixels on a screen differ from those of bygone times? How do (media) technologies invoke notions of ephemerality and contemporaneity across different historical times?
We welcome contributions from all periods and contexts that engage with the relation between art and ephemerality within aesthetic, cultural, social, and material frameworks. Topics may include, but are not limited to:

• Histories of and critical perspectives on ephemeral artworks and artefacts
• Ephemeral architectures: monuments, festivals, world fairs, expos and biennales
• Issues of documentation and conservation pertaining to ephemeral art
• Methodologies of studying ephemeral objects
• Relations between permanence and temporality in collections and exhibitions
• Ephemeral practices and their commodity status

• The afterlife of the artefact: recycling, transforming, rebuilding
Keynote Speakers
• Prof. Simon Shaw-Miller, History of Art Department, University of Bristol
• Prof. Paul Binski, History of Art Department, University of Cambridge; more to be confirmed.
Paper Proposals by 1 April 2014
Abstracts of no more than 250 words for 20-minute papers plus a 100-word biography should be emailed as a single Word document to artandephemerality@gmail.com by 1 April 2014. The symposium is open to all, however speakers are required to be AAH members.

Organisers: Anna Bonewitz, Tilo Reifenstein, Ruth Walker and Sophia Zhou. Conference website: http://www.aah.org.uk/events/summer-symposium

Reference:
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