

Mnemoscape Magazine, issue: The Anarchival Impulse

Deadline: Jun 30, 2014

www.mnemoscape.wordpress.com

Alessandra Ferrini, University of Westminster

Mnemoscape Magazine, first issue, Septembre 2014:

The Anarchival Impulse

Deadline for submissions: 30 June 2014

To mark the launch of Mnemoscape Magazine, which coincides with the ten years anniversary of the publication of Hal Foster's *An Archival Impulse* (2004), we would like to prompt a reflection on the notion of the 'anarchival'.

An Archival Impulse, has establish itself as a seminal essay tackling the emergence of a specific archival tendency in contemporary art. However, as Foster noticed, this trend could perhaps be better defined as an "anarchival impulse". For the first issue of Mnemoscape Magazine, we would like to return to Foster's early intuition and propose an epistemological shift in the study of archival art practices, one that privileges their anarchival disposition, while speculating on the positive and liberating aspects of forgetting. In the age of the mega-archive of the Internet and in the universe of data clutter and virtual hoards, we believe, the question of the tension between keeping and discarding becomes all the more dramatic and urgent. Furthermore, as the world is swiped by greater political instability, conflicts, civil wars and rebellions, it is pressing to reflect upon the status of both the institutional and personal archive, meditating over the consequences that acts of war and destruction bear on the archive.

The suffix 'an' derives from ancient Greek and means at once 'above' and 'against'. As such, anarchival should be read as a force that both opposes to the traditional institution of the archive and is integral to its proper functioning – since the power of the archive lies precisely on the negative privilege of deciding what to destroy. As an impulse rather than as a feature of the system, the anarchival manifests in different forms. It may be:

-Destructive: a primordial self-destructive force; an instinct to discard, destroy, smash, erase and deface. In this sense, it resembles the Freudian death drive, a blind impetus whose "silent vocation is to burn the archive and to incite amnesia" (Derrida,).

-Subversive: a counter- movement whose ultimate aim is to oppose the Foucauldian power structure of the institutional archive and to reaffirm a denied subjectivity.

-Anarchic: a redefinition of archival methodology that escapes hierarchical structures and normative practices, towards a self-sustained, anti-static model outside the realms of the law.

-Generative: a conceptual and practical extension of the notion of the archive beyond the archive itself as a result of the implementation of new digital technologies and the consequent formation of temporalized, ephemeral, fluctuating and multi-modal archives.

We invite submissions of single-authored or joint papers, interviews, reviews of art exhibitions, art projects, multidisciplinary collaborations that present particular instances of anarchival impulses or critically reflect on this paradigm.

Possible topics could include but are by no means limited to:

- The aporia of the archive and the invincible death drive;
- The deliberate or accidental destruction of archives, collections or single records and their effects;
- Creative destruction or destructive creation in contemporary art;
- History of modern art as a continuous process of defacement and refacement (Bruno Latour);
- Iconoclasm and iconoclasm;
- The problems of ultra-conservation and over-production in contemporary art: the inhibitory and paralysing effects of tradition and the positive aspects of forgetting;
- The anarchival as a form of counter-knowledge production, as a dynamic that unlocks, liberates the archive;
- The fear of or fascination with digital amnesia;
- Is Internet an archive or an-archive?
- The anarchival tendencies of techno-capitalism;
- Examples of anarchives or anarchoeologies.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

Deadline for abstracts: 30 June 2014

To submit a proposal for inclusion, please send an abstract (300 words max) and a short CV.

Email your submission to: mnemoscape@gmail.com

Selected candidates will be notified by the 10th of July 2014. Completed papers are required by the 31st of August 2014. Please notice that we welcome less traditional formats, including predominantly visual submissions. This should be mentioned within your abstract. The format of your submission and of the visual material to be published will be discussed with the selected candidates and tailored according to the nature of the work in question.

As a general scheme, the formats for the final papers are:

- Articles and interviews: between 1500 and 2500 words
- Large scale projects: max 2000 words
- Exhibition reviews and single artworks presentations: max 1000 words

ABOUT MNEMOSCAPE MAGAZINE

Mnemoscape Magazine is a quarterly online magazine dedicated to furthering research into con-

temporary visual culture and art practices that operates at the interstices of political and historical scrutiny, with a special focus on issues of memory, methodology and the archival impulse. The first issue of Mnemoscape Magazine will be published in September 2014, followed by a second issue in January 2015.

ABOUT MNEMOSCAPE

Mnemoscape was funded in April 2013 by Elisa Adami and Alessandra Ferrini. During its first year of activity, it has functioned as an online research platform dedicated to contemporary art practices exploring issues of memory, history and the archival impulse. This first phase culminated in the organisation of two events, Autobiography and the Archive, a film screening at the Whitechapel Gallery and Archives for the Future, a conference that took place at the University of Westminster (both in London and supported by the International Association for Visual Culture). Mnemoscape Magazine is the second phase of the project. It will be launched in July 2014 with the publishing of the new website and the release of Issue#0, in which the first year of Mnemoscape's activity will be archived and reflected upon.

For more information, please contact Mnemoscape (Elisa Adami and Alessandra Ferrini) at mnemoscape@gmail.com

Reference:

CFP: Mnemoscape Magazine, issue: The Anarchival Impulse. In: ArtHist.net, May 17, 2014 (accessed Aug 6, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/7727>>.