

## Facing America (London, 10 Jul 15)

London (United Kingdom), Eccles Centre for American Studies, The British Library,  
Euston Road, Jul 10, 2015

Deadline: Apr 27, 2015

Joanna Pawlik and Doug Haynes

Call for Papers

Facing America: a Visual Art and American Studies Symposium

Keynote speakers: Professor David Peters Corbett (UEA) and Professor  
Celeste-Marie Bernier (Nottingham)

"The face is a veritable megaphone."

"How do you dismantle the face? [...] This takes all the resources of  
art, and art of the highest kind."

- Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*

As Deleuze and Guattari suggest, the face is indeed culturally, socially  
and historically very loud. So what would be at stake in dismantling it,  
or thinking about it critically? What regimes has the face propped up?  
Who or what might be exposed by its interrogation?

Nowhere more than in the practice of art has the face played a prominent  
role. This symposium thus invites reflections on the face in American  
art and visual culture. The face in all its many formations and  
deformations may be considered: from faces in portraiture to the face as  
landscape, the face of the earth, or the disappearance of faces in big  
data. Rhetorics of expression, pathos, belonging, recognition,  
encounter, identity, and threat are often articulated in facial terms.  
How have these rhetorics been figured in American art and visual  
culture? Conventionally it's the eye that has loomed large in the study  
of art; what would it mean to turn to the face?

Facing America is organised by SAVAnT (Scholars of America Visual Art  
and Text), a research network fostering collaboration and dialogue  
between American Studies and Art History. Papers might therefore wish to  
question the public faces of these disciplines, exploring their  
intersections and divergences.

Approaches might include but are in no way restricted to: notions of the  
portrait; Michael Fried's sense of pictorial "facingness;" the face in

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psychoanalysis; the face as mask; the face in representations and contestations of national, racial, ethnic, sexual, gender and class identities; the virtual or simulated face; the de-faced face; the abstracted face; or the metaphorical face.

Abstracts of 200 words for papers of 20 minutes and very brief bio are required. Please send by April 27th to: [facingamericasyposium@gmail.com](mailto:facingamericasyposium@gmail.com)

Reference:

CFP: Facing America (London, 10 Jul 15). In: ArtHist.net, Mar 14, 2015 (accessed May 22, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/9729>>.