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

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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

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: facingamericasymposium@gmail.com

Reference:

CFP: Facing America (London, 10 Jul 15). In: ArtHist.net, Mar 14, 2015 (accessed Nov 5, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/9729>.