

ARCHIVES FOR THE FUTURE

An Art and Visual Culture Conference

28-29 March 2014 (TBC)

The University of Westminster (TBC)

Organised by Mnemoscape and supported by the University of Westminster.

www.archivesforthefuture.wordpress.com

CALL FOR PAPERS

Deadline for submission: 18 November 2013

Archives are becoming increasingly fetishized and (an)aestheticized in contemporary art practice and academic discourse. This conference comes out of a shared sense of frustration at this. In response, it intends to explore the present and futuristic potential embedded in the archive, moving away from practices of postmodernist deconstructionism and historical revisionism.

Archives have generally been considered as conservative institutions aimed at preserving the past in the present – and so perpetuating the traditional structures of power. In contrast, we are interested in bringing to light the generative and creative side of the archive, what Derrida has defined as its ‘institutive’ power. How can archives be used to generate the ‘new’ and to convey possible alternatives to the present status quo? How can we turn archives from historical records into instruments of future planning and agencies of radical thinking? Is it possible to build an archive which works as an open space of imagination and a mean of projection into the future? Is it possible to archive the future to come and, at the same time, to remain open to the unpredictable and the unknown?

We invite submissions that are concerned with reinstating the archive as site of political confrontation, of action and intervention in the present, as well as as site of re-projection and re-imagination for the future. We are particularly interested in creating a dialogue between theory and practice and as such we welcome contributions from artists, thinkers and curators alike.

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

- Artists working with archives: activating the archive and its inherent possibilities for the future, beyond historical revisionism
- Transmissibility and the use of the archive as a machine to transport the present into the future
- Use of fictitious archives to generate alternative versions of the past/present and different potential futures
- Re-consideration and re-visionism of modernist utopian projects as a mean to recover a long-term projectuality
- Archaeologies and excavations of the future
- The haunting and repetitive aspects of the past and their return in the present
- Applications of Derridian's concept of ‘messianicity without messianism’

- Notions of retrospective or preposterous responsibility (Mieke Bal)
- Ideas of reflective nostalgia (Svetlana Boym)
- Speculations on the future of the archive in the digital era
- The centrality of documentation in art production (Boris Groys); the use of archival documentation to produce new artworks
- Personal archives and autobiographical artworks: archiving oneself for posterity and its contribution to imagining the future
- Erased past: negotiations with 'lost' or 'erased' archives (as in cases of war, censorship or neglect) as part of an ethics of testimony
- Art practice and historiographic methodologies: what are the responsibilities for the future? Towards a methodology projected into the future.

Submission Guidelines

Deadline for abstracts: 18 November 2013

To submit a proposal for a paper please send an abstract (300-500 words), a CV, five key words and a short biographical note (100 words). Please send the abstract, the key words and the biographical note in a single Word document (.doc /.docx).

Email your submission to: mnemoscape@gmail.com

From the submitted abstracts we will make a final selection to be presented at the conference. Successful applicants will be notified by 18 December 2013

The full-length papers of 20 minutes will be required by 10 March 2013

For more information about the conference, please contact the conveners, Elisa Adami and Alessandra Ferrini at mnemoscape@gmail.com

Visit the website www.archivesforthefuture.wordpress.com



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