

Seeing through history

Workshop Series with Claire Farago (University of Colorado Boulder) at Heidelberg University (Part I, May 18, 2016) and at Free University Berlin (Part II, May 24, 2016)

An activity of the *RNTP-Research Network for Transcultural Practices in the Arts and Humanities* in collaboration with the Chair for Global Art History of Heidelberg University and the DFG-Research Unit *FOR 1703 Transcultural Negotiations in the Ambits of Art. Comparative Perspectives on Historical Contexts and Current Constellations*, organized by Birgit Hopfener (FU Berlin) and Franziska Koch (Heidelberg University)

The two-part workshop “Seeing through history” re-considers art historical practice at an epistemological level, which presents an indispensable condition for the conceptualization and practice of art history in a transcultural perspective.

Since epistemological frameworks are constituted through particular histories and engender specific forms of knowledge related with objects, agents, artistic practices and aesthetic concepts, they command particular research questions that might not be relevant or transferable when addressing art related phenomena in different regional and cultural contexts and when taking into account diverging affiliated institutional structures.

The workshop series hence addresses the need of transcultural art historiography to account for multiple epistemological frameworks and their related histories. It poses the (self-) critical question how these frameworks have been constructed and re-constructed in cultural processes of exchange and negotiation and seeks to overcome dominant and essentializing categories of art historical writing as an institutionalized practice rooted in 19th century Europe. Consequently, the workshop series invites to also reflect on the ethical dimensions of writing art history. How can the individual researcher as well as powerful institutions of art history – the art history department, the museum, the art academy, the art market, to name but a few and culturally specific instances – productively and consciously relate to, critically reflect, and even partially change the situatedness in specific socio-political settings that (in-) form institutional authority and affiliated research horizons.

PROGRAM & ABSTRACTS

Workshop Series: *Seeing through history*

Part I, Heidelberg University

Where? Heidelberg Institute of European Art History, Room 003, Seminarstr. 4, 69117 Heidelberg

When? 18 May 2016, 9:00-13:00 c.t.

9:15-9:30

Birgit Hopfener & Franziska Koch (Co-Organizers)

Opening Remarks

Monica Juneja (Chair of Global Art History, Heidelberg University)

Welcoming Words

9:30-10:10

Samantha Schramm (University of Konstanz)

Summary of Claire Farago's *Whose History? Why? When? Who Benefits, and Who doesn't?* paper given at CIHA Rio de Janeiro, New Worlds: Frontiers, Inclusion, Utopias, Aug 24-29, 2015 and plenary discussion of the text

10:10-10:50

Franziska Koch (Heidelberg University)

Seeing Through Nam June Paik's Art Historical Reception in a Transcultural Perspective
Paper Presentation and Q&A

10:50-11:20 Coffee Break (incl. Walk to the Coffee Bar)

11:20-12:00

Mona Schieren (University of the Arts Bremen)

On Horizontal Argumentation and Metaphors of Transcultural Translation and Exchange Processes

Paper Presentation and Q&A

12:00-12:40

Birgit Hopfener (Free University Berlin)

Disjunctive Contemporaneity.

Re-mapping Contemporary Art History from a Transcultural Perspective

Paper Presentation and Q&A

12:45 Workshop End

followed by a Walk to the **Restaurant „Café Rossi“**, Rohrbacher Str. 4, 69115 Heidelberg for Lunch

Part II, Free University, Berlin

Where? Museum for Asian Art (back entrance), small lecture room, Takustr. 40, Berlin

When? 24 May 2016, 11:00-15:30, including one hour lunch break 13:00-14:00

11:00-11:15

Karin Gludovatz (Director of the research unit “Transcultural Negotiations in the Ambits of Art”, Dean of the Department of History and Cultural Studies, Free University)
Welcoming Words

Birgit Hopfener & Franziska Koch (Co-Organizers)

Opening Remarks

11:15-12:00

Alberto Saviello (FU Berlin, FOR 1703), summary and response to *Claire Farago’s “Letting Objects Rot,” in: Artwork through the Market*, ed. by Jan Bakos, Komenius University, Bratislava, Slovakia, 2005, p. 239-262 and plenary discussion of the text.

12:00-12:45

Amrei Buchholz (Hamburg University)

Questioning Mimetic Representation. Reflections on Stylistic Classifications of Art
Paper Presentation and Q&A

12:45-13:45 Lunch Break

13:45-14:30

Ursula Helg (Free University Berlin)

Material Culture in Translation. Reflections on Objects from the South
Paper Presentation and Q&A

14:30-15:15

Susanne Leeb (Leuphana University Lüneburg) summary and response to **Claire Farago’s *Whose History? Why? When? Who Benefits, and Who doesn’t?*** paper given at CIHA Rio de Janeiro, *New Worlds: Frontiers, Inclusion, Utopias*, Aug 24-29, 2015 and plenary discussion of the text

15:15-15:30 Concluding Discussion

(Please note: Claire Farago will additionally give a lecture on her latest book about Leonardo da Vinci and his ‘Trattato della Pittura’ on Monday, 23 May 2016, Free University Berlin, Institute of Art History, Koserstr. 20, 14195 Berlin, Hörsaal B, 18:00)

Abstracts

Part I, Heidelberg University

Franziska Koch (Heidelberg University)

Seeing Through Nam June Paik's Art Historical Reception in a Transcultural Perspective

The paper addresses the reception of Nam June Paik's art works and poses the question if he was a "transcultural" artist *avant la lettre* in a time when the border-crossing collaboration that he and his Fluxus colleagues sought and realized was at odds with the reinforced national borders resulting from the Cold War. The paper serves to outline the preliminary structure of a post-doc project that intends to critically re-visit the dominant art historical discourse on Fluxus and Nam June Paik in particular. It starts from the curious observation that despite the high international recognition of Paik's individual and collaborative works and the frequently emphasized cultural "hybridity" of his aesthetic and multi-media approach, cultural aspects and their impact on the popular, academic as well as institutional reception have not been studied in great detail. However, they seem to account for the imbalanced canonization of his individual and collaborative works at various levels.

Franziska Koch is Assistant Professor of Global Art History at Heidelberg University. Her research profile includes modern and contemporary art and artistic exchange between Asia (China and Korea) and Europe, theories and histories of the art exhibition and curatorial practices, transcultural approaches to the study of art, and the question of authorship in collaborative artistic practices. Selected publications: She co-edited *Negotiating Difference. Contemporary Chinese Art in the Global Context*, Weimar: VDG, 2012. Her ph.d.-thesis will be published as *Die "chinesische Avantgarde" und das Dispositiv der Ausstellung. Konstruktionen chinesischer Gegenwartskunst im Spannungsfeld der Globalisierung*, Bielefeld: transcript, in August 2016. She is the co-founder of two international research networks: International Research Network for Modern and Contemporary Chinese Art (Lisbon 2015) and RNTP- Research Network for Transcultural Perspectives in the Arts and Humanities (Berlin 2015).

Mona Schieren (University of the Arts Bremen)

On Horizontal Argumentation and Metaphors of Transcultural Translation and Exchange Processes

Along with the reflection on conceptualities, the paper proposes to consider alternative movements of thought and writing. Traditional conventions of Western-oriented argumentation parameters, authorship and subjectivization are often poorly suited for a contextualizing examination of the mostly delicate transcultural contexts that are frequently woven from complex references. Such shifts will be explored using the example of the Asianist connections in the oeuvre of the Canadian-American artist Agnes Martin.

Mona Schieren is teaching researcher at the University of the Arts Bremen. She studied art history and philosophy at the University of Hamburg and École Nationale d'Art de Nice. She was head of the research project *iMediathek* and since 2008 part of the EU-project *GAMA. Gateway to Archives of Media Art*, (2002-2009) and lecturer at the

Department of Cultural History, University of Hamburg. She curated exhibitions such as “NOT BERLIN AND NOT SHANGHAI. Art Practice on the Periphery” at Guangxi Arts Institute, Nanning/China 2008; “Stadt– Rand–Fluss” at Künstlerhaus Lothringer 13, Munich, 2006. *Videoparadiso* Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart, Kunsthalle Bonn, Académie Royale des beaux arts de Liège, 2005. Selected publications: *Agnes Martin – Transkulturelle Übersetzung. Zur Konstruktion asianistischer Ästhetiken in der amerikanischen Kunst nach 1945*, Munich: Verlag Silke Schreiber 2016; *Kunsttopographien globaler Migration*, co-ed. with Birgit Mersmann et al. In: *Themenheft der kritischen berichte, Zeitschrift für Kunst- und Kulturwissenschaften* 43/3 Marburg: Jonas Verlag, (June) 2015; “Linienaufrisse. Untersuchungen im Werk von Agnes Martin”. In: Mateusz Kapustka/ Tristan Weddigen (eds.): *Bild-Riss. Textile Öffnungen im ästhetischen Diskurs*, Zürich: Edition Imorde 2015; *Look at me! Celebrity Culture at The Venice Art Biennale*, co-ed. with Andrea Sick, Nürnberg: Verlag für Moderne Kunst 2011.

Birgit Hopfener (Free University Berlin)

Disjunctive Contemporaneity.

Re-mapping Contemporary Art History from a Transcultural Perspective

Under the conditions of a spatially as well as temporally disjunctive global art world art practices constitute themselves through critical engagements with multiple historical and epistemological frameworks. By doing so, they pose great challenges to the discipline of art history, its institutionalized canon of contemporary art, its categories of research, its conventional spatial and temporal orders and its narrative logic. The paper introduces artistic cartographies of contemporary art historiography as telling examples. Based on Qiu Zhijie’s “Total Art Map” (2012) as a case study it will examine how the artwork re-writes or better re-maps the conventional narrative of social art practice through references to multiple histories and epistemological structures from a transcultural perspective. The paper also asks in how far such cartographic artworks ask for a re-conceptualization of global art history as a cartographic practice and reflects upon contemporary art’s interventions in and effects on art history and the discipline’s ethical responsibility to enable a polyphone discourse of global contemporary art and art histories.

Birgit Hopfener studied art history and sinology in Berlin, Karlsruhe and Nanjing. She holds a post-doctoral research position at the Department of Art History at Free University Berlin and is an associate member of the Cluster of Excellence “Asia and Europe in the Global Context” at Ruprecht-Karls-University Heidelberg. In 2011 she finished her doctoral dissertation on installation art in China. The book entitled *Transkulturelle Reflexionsräume einer Genealogie des Performativen: Bedingungen und Artikulationen kultureller Differenz in der chinesischen Installationskunst*, was published in 2013. Currently, she works on her second book project (Habitationsprojekt) “*Disjunctive Contemporaneity. Artistic Cartographies of Transcultural and Arthistorical Self-positioning*” (working title). She is the co-founder of the research network “Arts and Humanities Research Network for Transcultural Perspectives (RNTP)”, which is conceived as critical, interdisciplinary and international research association of scholars, who study phenomena and processes of cultural exchange in the field of the arts.

Part II, Free University, Berlin

Amrei Buchholz (Hamburg University)

Questioning Mimetic Representation. Reflections on Stylistic Classifications of Art

Based on the example of Paraquarian sculptures, the paper examines the correlation between form and meaning of works of art from a transcultural point of view. In Paraquarian sculptures of the 17th and 18th century meaning is generated not only by figurative Christian iconography, but also – probably primarily – by supposedly ‘non-mimetic’ expressions. Taking this into consideration, allocation of meaning and interpretation as much as established classifications of art history – e.g. stylistic taxonomy – need to be re-considered.

Amrei Buchholz studied modern and contemporary German literature, art history and Latin America Studies in Berlin, Madrid and Buenos Aires (2004-2011). She held a Ph.d.-scholarship of the DFG Graduate Research Group “Sichtbarkeit und Sichtbarmachung. Hybride Formen des Bildwissens” at University of Potsdam (2011-2014). She completed her dissertation on “Alexander von Humboldts Modell der Erdkruste. Vergleichendes und verknüpfendes Sehen im >Atlas du Nouveau Continent<“ at the Universität der Künste Berlin (supervised by Prof. Dr. Tanja Michalsky) in 2016. Since the end of 2014, she is research fellow at the Department of Art History at University of Hamburg and a post-doctoral research member of the DFG Research Group “Transcultural Negotiations in the Ambits of Art” with the project “Die Skulptur der paraquarischen Jesuitenreduktionen”. Her research interest includes cartography, image theory and epistemology of the image. Selected publications: “Alexander von Humboldts Ansichten des ‘Weltbaues’. Ausgewählte Handzeichnungen aus seinen Tagebüchern”. in: *Umreißen. Registrieren, Fehlgehen und Erfinden im Zeichnen*, ed. by Mira Fliescher et al., Berlin: diaphanes, 2014, p. 99-114. “Panorama, Diorama und ästhetische Landschaftsdarstellung”. In: *Handbuch Bild*, ed. by Stephan Günzel et al., Stuttgart: Metzler, 2014, p. 181-187. Together with Lina Maria Stahl: “Epistemologie: Bilder als Wissen”. In: *Handbuch Bild*, ed. by Stephan Günzel et al., Stuttgart: Metzler, 2014, p. 125-130. “Bewegte Ekphrasen. Lebende Gemälde in Derek Jarmans ‘Caravaggio’”. In: *kunsttexte.de*, 1(2012), 11 pages.

Ursula Helg (Free University Berlin)

Material Culture in Translation. Reflections on Objects from the South

The problem of the art-historical identification of non-western visual cultures is not new. There were many attempts in the waning nineteenth and early twentieth century not only to present the artefacts that had been shipped from the colonies in exhibitions, but also to site them theoretically, taxonomically, and institutionally. Many of the old questions have acquired new relevance through the globalizing tendencies in art history. Divergent local practices and regimes of perception raise numerous questions concerning materiality in translation. They illuminate entangled histories and force us to rethink western aesthetic concepts and epistemic structures going back to Enlightenment. In my paper I will refer to some examples and discuss some of the problems.

Ursula Helg is an art historian and social anthropologist. She holds a Phd of the University of Zurich and published on European, African and Transcultural Art History. She had a grant from the Swiss National Science Foundation in 2009 and she was a Research Fellow at the IFK International Research Center for Cultural Studies in Vienna in 2012. At present she holds a research position at the FU-Berlin, where she is working on the *minkisi* power objects from the famous Robert Visser Collection of the Ethnological Museum Berlin. (The (In)Authenticity of “*minkisi*” (Congo): Translations and Musealisations of Power Objects in and from the Contact Zone).

Claire Joan Farago is Professor of Renaissance Art, Theory, and Criticism at the University of Colorado Boulder. She has held visiting professorships at the Universities of Melbourne, North Carolina at Chapel Hill, UCLA, York (UK), and elsewhere. Among her wide-ranging writings on Early Modern art, as well as on art theoretical and epistemological problems, are: *Art Is Not What You Think It Is*, co-authored with Donald Preziosi (2012); *Re-Reading Leonardo: The Treatise on Painting across Europe 1550 to 1900* (2009); *Leonardo da Vinci and the Ethics of Style* (2008); *Transforming Images: New Mexican Santos in-between Worlds*, co-authored with Donna Pierce with additional contributors (2006); *Grasping the World: The Idea of the Museum*, co-edited with Donald Preziosi (2004); *Compelling Visuality: the Work of Art in and out of History*, co-edited with Robert Zwijnenberg (2003); *Leonardo da Vinci: Selected Scholarship in English*, 5 vols. (1999); and *Leonardo da Vinci's 'Paragone': A Critical Interpretation with a new edition of the text in the Codex Urbinas* (1992). Her most recent book, *Art as Institution: The Fabrication of Leonardo da Vinci's Trattato della Pittura, 1651*, forthcoming from Brill Press in 2017, involved an international team of Leonardo experts who collaborated for a decade to produce the first modern edition of the only text through which Leonardo's ideas on painting circulated for nearly two centuries. Farago is best known for her edited volume, *Reframing the Renaissance: Visual Culture in Europe and Latin America. 1450 to 1650* (1995), which helped precipitate broader geographical, temporal, historical, conceptual, and methodological reformulations of the Renaissance and its intersection with contemporaneous visual and material cultures worldwide. This year a roundtable honoring the much cited volume was convened at the Renaissance Society of America annual conference.

Susanne Leeb is Professor of Contemporary Art at Leuphana University Lüneburg. She is member of the advisory board of *Texte zur Kunst* and co-editor of the book series *POLYPeN* at *b_books* Berlin. Together with Kerstin Schankweiler she chairs the section for global, post-colonial and transcultural art history of *Sehepunkte/Kunstform*. Her ph.d.-thesis was published as “Die Kunst der Anderen. Weltkunst und die anthropologische Konfiguration der Moderne”, Berlin: *POLYPeN*, 2015.

Alberto Saviello studied history of art and Romance literature in Düsseldorf, Rome, and Munich. In 2011 he finished his dissertation on visual representations of the Prophet Muhammad in Western European printed books advised by Prof. Avinoam Shalem. The book was published last year. Since August 2011 he is a researcher in the DFG Research Group “Transcultural Negotiations in the Ambits of Art” at the FU Berlin with a project on artistic and religious contacts between Muslims, Christians and Hindus in early modern India.

Samantha Schramm currently teaches at the Cluster of Excellence “Asia and Europe in a Global Context” and is associated researcher at the University of Konstanz in the Department of Media Studies. From 2010 to 2015 she was research fellow at the Department of Media Studies at the University of Konstanz and from 2010 to 2014 member of the DFG Research Network “Media of Collective Intelligence”. In 2012 she completed her Ph.D. thesis at the HfG Karlsruhe with a dissertation about concepts of site in Land Art. Selected publications: “Art and Media. Participation and Relation”, in: Mathias Denecke et al. (eds.), *ReClaiming Participation. Technology – Mediation – Collectivity*, Munich, p. 177–183; “‘The People’s Choice’. Transcultural Collectivity and the Art of Shared Knowledge Production”, in: *Transcultural Studies*, 2 (2015) <http://heiup.uni-heidelberg.de/journals/index.php/transcultural/article/view/20205>.