CULT OF IN

30 SEPTEMBER 2011

CULT/ure of IN/difference

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Programme Schedule: CULTure of (IN)difference 30th September 2011

Time	Session	Paper	Presenter
07:30	Coffee/Tea and Registration		
08:15 – 09:45	Education and the Arts	WORKSHOP – Teacher Training Through Integrated Arts in ECD: A Trans-Cultural Approach	Zenda Nel
		English Home Language Grade 12 Poetry – A Vehicle for Social Political Change	Tessa Harmse
09:45 – 11:15	Bringing it to the Streets	Task Force for Artist Participation	Matthias Pauwels
		From the Elite Gallery and into the Streets	Christine Devinish
11:15 – 12:00	Musical Interlude	What Kind of Music Should the South African Government Support?	Lynette LeRoux
12:00 – 13:00	LUNCH		
13:00 – 14:00	ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION		
14:00 – 15:15	Reading South Africa	TBA	Rudi Van Rensburg
		A Marriage Made in Heaven: the Functioning of Patriarchy and Nostalgia in *Boer Soek 'n Vrou*	Hilke Steenkamp
15:15 – 17:30	Aesthetics in SA	Aesthetics versus Functionality: Challenging Dichotomies in Information Visualisation	Anneli Botha
		South African Art: A Cracked Mirror	Tatum and Samuel
		Moving Images: a focus on public service announcements	Fatima Cassim and Chenette Swanepoel
		A visual analysis of contemporary art as catalyst for the altermodern cultural ideology	Nathani Luneberg
17:30 – 18:30	The Artists Speak	The Culture of Perceived Consciousness of the Real Through Photography	Irene Naudé
		Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities	Nathani Lüneberg
18:30 - 18:45	Closing	CULTure of (IN)difference	Mark Kourie
Supper and Afterparty at Tings 'n Times			

*Tea, coffee, water and snacks will be served in the venue throughout the day.

**Lunch is paid for! Please feel free to stay for it.

***Afterparty at Tings is not paid for, but promises to be fun. Please tag along!

Exhibition:

The Culture of Perceived Consciousness of the Real Through Photography
Irene Naudé

Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities
Nathani Lüneberg

4th Year Fine Arts Students Final Concepts
On display in the Gallery

Abstracts:

Session 1: Education and the Arts

Teacher training through integrated arts in ECD: a trans-cultural approach

Dr Zenda Nel
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The National Curriculum for Grades R-3 in South Africa states that children should not only be exposed to the music of their own culture but to those of other cultures as well. I found that ECD teachers are not unwilling to expose their learners to Western Classical music; they are indeed, very keen to do it but they do not always have the necessary skills and knowledge to do it in an exciting and fun-filled way.

The research was concerned with the implementation of a teacher training programme through integrated arts in Early Childhood Development. A series of training workshops were presented for Creole and French speaking ECD teachers during a pilot study in Mauritius. The same workshops were presented during the main research for black, musically untrained generalist teachers from underprivileged areas in three provinces in South Africa. The workshops created an opportunity for ECD teachers to gain confidence and practical experience to expose young learners in an active way to Western Classical music. Both the pilot study and the main research showed that the methodology used at the workshops proved to be suitable for the training of ECD teachers from different cultures and language groups. The methodology was based on the same principles used in traditional African music namely storytelling, dramatization, active music making and creative dance movements and costumes used in combination with developmentally appropriate activities for listening to Western Classical music. This vibrant and active way of listening contributes, according to Huib Schipper's paradigm, to a trans-cultural way of teaching.

This method will be demonstrated through a **practical hands-on workshop** during which participants will be dressed up in fantasy clothes while they experience that music, storytelling, dramatization and movement can be used as powerful educational tools to integrate the arts.

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English Home Lange Grade 12 Poetry – A Vehicle for Socio-political Change

Tessa Harmse

Since the early 1990's all aspects of the educational system have come under scrutiny. Language education has been an area of focus and of much debate in the education system. The Home Language syllabus focuses, broadly stated, on language, literature and creative writing. Poetry, an aspect of the literature component, has always been a rich source of cultural transmission. For some high school learners the only exposure they will ever receive to poetry is through the Home Language syllabus. Considering the advent of the new education system which acknowledges the existence of all cultures in South Africa, the question is raised – is diversity exemplified through the poetry prescribed through the Department of Education? The paper examines the poetry prescribed by the Department of Education, the collective cultural message portrayed by the works and whether it is suitable for a South African context.

Session 2: Brining it to the Streets

Join us on the long march towards artist participation in South Africa!

Matthias Pauwels

For too long now, the African art world's potential has been subdued due to the colonial and post-colonial imposition of the ultimately Western concept of artistic autonomy and the accompanying endemic indifference of artists to the larger challenges of their working contexts. The tradition of autonomous art, however, is completely alien to the African indigenous tradition of ubuntu. This is the idea that we are all connected and that who and what we are, as well as what we can achieve, is ultimately the result of our relationships with other people. The native African artistic tradition can thus be said to have predated the recent relational and post-relational paradigm in Western art for many thousands of years. However, due to certain imported colonial misconceptions it has been alienated from its very roots.

Now is the time for Africa to reconnect to its indigenous traditions and steal the relational paradigm back from Western artists, curators and theorists. Artists in Africa should again take up its natural and world leadership with regards to art practices that fundamentally and constitutively participate in society. In short, instead of African artists having to catch up with their Western counterparts, it is actually the other way around!

The Task Force will present some effective and experimental policy measures concerning artist participation that are tailor made to the contemporary South African situation. The coming

time the Task Force will link up with key players and local stakeholders in the South African art sector with the aim of fine-tuning and implementing its measures.

Bio:

The Task Force for Artist Participation is founded in 2010 by cultural mediation firm BAVO. Its initial aim was to accelerate and radicalize the implementation of the City of Rotterdam's current cultural participation policy. Today, the Task Force plays an avant-garde role in formulating innovative policy initiatives that enforce societal participation of artists all over the globe.

Links:

http://www.kunstenaarsparticipatie.nl/bk/english.html.

http://www.bavo.biz.

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From the Elite Gallery and into the Streets[1]

Christine Devenish

"The people who run our cities don't understand graffiti because they think nothing has the right to exist unless it has a profit…" (Banksy 2006:8)

Modern Western society is run by capitalism. Its visual imagery surrounds us wherever we go. Through the use of murals, street signs, billboard advertising and graffiti, political and social messages are conveyed to the public. While some of these forms of representation, such as street signs, are necessary to our wellbeing, others, such as advertisements, are also viewed as inherent in our visual community, despite the fact that their function is purely economic. By contrast, artistic representations such as graffiti are not only disapproved of and branded as a form of rebellion, but are also regarded as illegal.

In a country which promotes freedom of expression, representations in society should be based on creativity and the articulation of different opinions, rather than on their form. A level of artistic merit and social purpose should be engaged with to create a more socially involved society, filled with diversity rather than consumer-driven products.

Art needs to move away from the elite and out of the traditional gallery setting into the streets, but this necessitates a shift in what is permitted to be represented on the streets to incorporate individuals in a move away from emotionless advertisements to a new sense of imagined community through the arts.

This paper is a call for a contemporary South African society in which people are shaken out of their indifference to the mass commercial signage which fills our urban landscape and encouraged to broaden their perceptions, embracing other forms of visual expression, so that our cities can come

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[1] Title provided by organisers on account of none given in the submission

alive with street art both reflecting and stimulating a vibrant culture of human involvement and participation.

Session 3: A Musical Interlude

Culture of Indolence

Rudi van Rensburg

Abstract not yet submitted

<p style="text-align:center">_____</p>

What kind of music should the SA government support?

Lizelle Leroux

We know that the world needs art and particularly, music. John Finnis refers to this as one of the seven human goods and it thus cannot be considered a mere optional extra. The problem though seems not to be the existence of and investment in music, but rather the choice as to which kind of music should be supported. Ronald Dworkin suggests that we can either follow an economical approach wherein there should be very little or no public support for the arts as the community should be able to demand exactly the kind of art it wants and the price they are prepared to pay for it. But, Dworkin also argues that people are better off when the opportunities their culture provides are more complex and diverse. Is it thus better to also be confronted with music that is more than mere entertainment?

According to Hannah Arendt the test as to a great work of art is whether it moves or grasps the spectator over the centuries. It is thus clear that in order to be considered 'real art' there needs to be two things present: a longevity or immortality and an action or reaction rather, which entails a change or movement.

In this article I will attempt to address the differences between the so-called low art music where the focus is purely on the pleasure thereof, the immediate enjoyment without any need to revisit or evaluate in order to reach a deeper understanding- music that is easy to fathom and pleasant to experience versus high art music wherein an element of foreignness is always present, a quality of something extraordinary not from this world and not easily understood the first time.

I will also refer to a third category namely middle art. Here there is unfortunately no promise of longevity as it is closely connected and reflective of a particular context but does have a quality of revisiting or foreignness, whether it is only to confront the listener with uncomfortable subjects or by inspiring the listener to rethink and maybe even critically evaluate his world.

Session 4: Reading South Africa

TBA

Rudi van Rensburg

Abstract not yet submitted

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A marriage made in heaven: the functioning of patriarchy and nostalgia in _Boer soek 'n vrou_

Hilke Steenkamp

An Afrikaans free verse poem was written by the author for a prospective contestant who wanted to enter KykNet's television programme, _Boer soek 'n vrou_ (season four). The poem had to accompany the entrant's application form and had to serve as a 'love letter' to the entrant's chosen farmer. The main themes explored in the poem include: nostalgia, the evocation of clichéd images related to farm activities and nature scenes as well as a woman's quest for so-called eternal love.

The author has chosen to supplement the poem by adding a visual dimension to the literature. Photographs illustrating farm life and other themes explored in the poem are included to take the reader on a visual, nostalgia-inducing journey.

Literature, photographs and media products are open-ended texts and as such, the author attempts to critically analyse the poem, the supporting photographs and the television programme. This analysis reveals the following:

Firstly, the influence of patriarchy is clear in both the poem and the television programme. As an ideology, patriarchy reveals, distorts and hides certain aspects of being a farmer. The hidden aspects include droughts, farm murders, and poor living conditions of farm workers.

Secondly, nostalgia is created in the poem by descriptions of stereotypical farming activities, metaphors of nature, and the implicit promise of finding a soul mate. The author regards nostalgia as a device that weakens the fetters of rationality. As such, the television programme, poem and photographs rely heavily on invoking a feeling of nostalgia to draw the reader/viewer into an idyllic, irrational world where 'true love' is attainable.

By closely examining the functioning of nostalgia and patriarchy, the constructed nature of the chosen media (poem, photographs and television programme) are revealed. Nostalgia serves patriarchy by helping the reader/viewer call farming images and the quest for love to memory. These memories are induced by stereotypical depictions of men and women, of farmers and of farming activities. As such, the 'reality' programme, the depictions of farm scenes in the photographs, and the poetic devices employed in the poem, are mere vessels through which patriarchy is perpetuated.

Wat sal 'n boerseun se hart warm laat klop?

Onbekende boer, waarmee sal ek jou myne maak?
Om jou dalk te vertel dat ons sy aan sy
deur die natgedoude landerye sal stap;

kalwers in die kraal sal jaag;
hordes hoenders in sal hok;
saam van hoekpaal tot hoekpaal sal ry.

Tussen stroop, oes en die ploegskaar
tussen mieliekorrels, aartappels en sonneblomsaad,
sal ons oomblikke optel – verweef in die plaasstof –
sal ons momente van geluk skep.

Langs die waterstroom sal ons lê in 'n fluisterende stilte vasgevang –
dis net ek en jy.
Dis die bittersoet boeretroos op die stoep,
terwyl ons tuur na die purper son wat stadig wegsypel op die horison.

Ek sal jou vra om die son vir my te vang;
in die nag sal jy suukies die maan vir my steel
en jy sal die Suiderkruis as halssnoer om my nek hang.

Waarom was dit nog net altyd jy?
Dis jou lag vasgevang in 'n goiingsak, stralend deur die gate.
Dis die lug waarteen jy afgeëts is.
Dis die buitelyne van jou siel.
Jou oë soms deurpriemend, soms toegesluier –
verkykend bespied jy die hemelruim.

Soos wat jy afwagtend talm teen skemer
        soekend na wolkvliese,
        wonderend blitse opsoek,
        snuifend, ruikend soos die beeste
        rondtrap en vogtigheid in die bries bespeur,
so wag ek al my hele lewe lank vir jou.

Session 4: Aesthetics In SA

Aesthetics versus functionality: challenging dichotomies in information visualisation.

Anneli Botha
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The amount of data we interact with has increased exponentially in the last few years, and in an attempt to make information more accessible and understandable, an increased focus is being placed on the design of information. Information visualisation is one such design practice, where large data sets are presented visually in order to reveal patterns and larger contextual insights. Information visualisation practice is traditionally approached from computer science and engineering disciplines, but the democratisation of this field, through the accessibility of data and easy-to-use software, has led designers and artists to embrace the field as a valuable platform to

create communicative and compelling visual artifacts. A sub-category of information visualisation called 'information aesthetics' has thus emerged, applying visualisation techniques in more artistic and experimental ways, with a strong focus on visual appeal. Although there is an increased interest in the aesthetic value of information visualisations, more traditional visualisation practitioners believe that the 'aesthetics' distracts from the functional or analytical goals of visualisation artifacts. This divide between aesthetics and functionality may, however, be a result of two common misconceptions about aesthetics within design discourse. On the one hand, aesthetics is seen as an afterthought, the superficial visual appeal considered after all other design decisions have been made. This may be contested, since the aesthetics of design artifacts relates to more than mere surface appeal. On the other hand, aesthetics is often distrusted, with 'decoration' seen as a sign of subjective interference into otherwise objective or neutral information transfer. This is also challenged, since complete objectivity is not only unattainable, but also unhelpful in creating engaging communicative artifacts. This paper thus proposes a new perspective on the interconnected nature of aesthetics and functionality in information visualisation.

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South African Art: a cracked mirror

Ms. Tatum Hodgkinson and Mr. Samuel Sleeman

Art performs the function of holding up a mirror to its society, showing all its flaws and perfections. This paper will demonstrate that it is when the reflection of social reality is no longer represented in the art of that society, that the art becomes obsolete and treated with indifference. By contrasting the art from the South African era of Apartheid with contemporary art, it will be shown how the means of art no longer serves the purpose of self-reflection, instead it reflects what ought to be rather than what is. The nature and purpose of the art forms available to the majority during apartheid served the purpose of creating and inspiring necessary social change. The art of today in the same sense serves a small minority and the art of the majority is more practical, aimed at being a means of survival, thus it reflect the integrated South Africa that is expected. Making use of Lacan's mirror theory this paper will show the importance of integration of the psyche and the outer world, when this fails to occur, indifference in the outer object may be the result. Hegel's dialectic is a means of social progress which is propelled by self-reflection. Art is a tool through which this self-critiques can occur. Since South African art no longer reflects a true representation of society onto itself there can be little social progress. This is closely related to Foucault's dominant discourse which suggests that a contextual social narrative dictates this discourse. However when there is a discrepancy between the narrative and the discourse apathy may be the result. There are institutions such as the media which attempt to give an accurate depiction of our society. The questions must be asked though, is this enough and is it accessible to the majority. Only through a revolution of artistic thought, no longer showing the dominant discourse of false integration but showing the truth of racial separation can art become relevant once more.

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Moving Images: a focus on public service announcements

Fatima Cassim and Chenette Swanepoel

Abstract not yet submitted

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A visual analysis of contemporary art as catalyst for the altermodern cultural ideology

Nathani Lüneburg

This paper presents a perspective on the interrelation between 'altermodernism' and contemporary arts through visual analysis. Altermodernism derived from the French art critic Nicolas Bourriaud, who has curated the *Altermodern* exhibition at the Tate Triennial in 2009. This exhibition announced the end of postmodernism and the dawn of altermodernism[2] in art. During the preparation for this exhibition, it was proclaimed that contemporary art is a product of globalised living and that it is characterised by the artists' cross-border cross-cultural negotiations and the use of fiction as an expression of autonomy[3]. Bourriaud[4] explains that artists of the altermodern ideology "explore the past and the present to create original paths". He maintains that the altermodern presents time as multiplicity rather than linear and that the altermodern artist considers history as a field to explore, as seen in the works of international contemporary artists such as Marcus Coates, Conrad Botes, Cai Guo-Qiang and the Russian collective AES+F. As opposed to postmodernism's declaration of history's end, the altermodern artists navigate through history and employ it to create personal narratives. Altermodern ideology focuses on mobility, displacement, cultural nomadism and 'otherness'[5] which refers to the contemporary artist's 'struggle of diversity'. According to Bourriaud this struggle is caused by postmodernism's mass globalization and multiculturalism. Consequently, Bourriaud[6] suggests that postmodernism's obsession with multiculturalism and the constant search for identity has forced society into a new arena of cultural ideology: a borderless geographical space where the artists travels and migrates across the world, as evident in the selection of contemporary artworks exhibited at international exhibitions such as the the 17th Sydney Biennale 2010, Venice Biennale 2011, Singapore Biennale 2011, the 4th Beijing International Biennale 2010 and the Joburg Artsfair 2010. Through visual analysis of various contemporary artworks, this paper wishes to establish that a rising amount of contemporary artworks embody altermodern characteristics, and that contemporary art accordingly acts as catalyst for the altermodern ideology.

Session 4: The Artists Speak

The culture of perceived consciousness of the real through photography.

Irene Naudé

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[2]Bourriaud, N. 2009.*Altermodern.*[O]. Available: http://www.colorado.edu/arts/3d/works/pdf/Altermodern.pdf. Accessed on 2010/06/03. P 2-4.

[3] Enwezor, O. 2008. *Modernity and postcolonial ambivalence.* London: Altermodern Tate Triennial. P 1.

[4] Enwezor, O. 2008. *Modernity and postcolonial ambivalence.* London: Altermodern Tate Triennial. P 1.

[5]This 'otherness' does not refer to the racialised 'other' such as found in Colonialism. It rather refers to the artist as the 'other'; a nomad organism with no concrete sense of belonging or home.

[6] Bourriaud, N. 2009.*Altermodern.*[O]. Available: http://www.colorado.edu/arts/3d/works/pdf/Altermodern.pdf. Accessed on 2010/06/03. P 2-14.

The main question of my discussion engages discursively with the camera's fundamental premise of documentation and the representation of the observed real. Assumptions are often made regarding the concept of the real and its relationship to photography in particular. I argue that photography circumvents elements of the transient moment captured, which leads to this notion of irrepresentability. Photography has the ability to freeze moments in time and make them last through images that are generally trusted by society. However, these photographic images of people and/or historical events are a confirmation of the absence of the referent. I question how photographs relate to reality if they reproduce lifeless fragments outside time and context, and thereby create a schizophrenic sense of time.

Photography can be described as a language of images written with light. Language, be it oral, visual or graphic, is needed to create history. Photography therefore, as a language, also writes history with words of light. However, as visual communication, photography can only capture immediate evidence but not the ongoing narrative, in other words, the spatial but not the temporal continuity in images. As a result, during the process of the translation of light into still images (or thoughts into words), gaps are formed. However, to address the theme of this conference, I use the practical component of my current research, in which I implement a portable camera obscura where there is no perceiving consciousness, due to the lack of the viewfinder

In my research I document termites as they repair their mounds. The captured images are printed using Liquid Emulsion and Van Dyke Brown processes. These images as well as the methodology during this exercise will question the real, consider the absence of the referent and address the gaps that are formed during the translation process of photography. It will also create an opportunity for dialogue within the relational aesthetic discourse.

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Artwork: *Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities*

Nathani Lüneburg

It has been said that history is similar to perception and structure, while memory entails personal stories which form a personal identity (David W Blight 2002:1[7]). W Walter Menniger suggests that (in Greene 2004:6[8]) history is not only a factual academic representation of past events but also includes emotions and beliefs which are connected to personal sentiment. Last mentioned sentiment is recognisable in *Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities*; a stop-frame animation where history and memory becomes intertwined and presents an illogical, non-linear narrative. This animation implies that memory can be interpreted as a fragment of an actual observation in the past, interwoven with an individual's personal narrative and process of remembering. By using metaphorical visual narrative Lüneburg implies that history and memory are concurrent components of the same past, peculiarly interwoven into an incarnation of fact and fiction. Through a kaleidoscopic clash of

[7] Blight, D W. 2002. Historians and 'memory'. *Common-Place* 2:3. [O]. Available: www.common-place.org. Accessed on 2010/08/22.

[8] Greene, M A. 2004. The Messy business of remembering: history, memory and archives. *Archival issues* 28:2.

colours, bizarre creatures and outlandish bustles, the characters *Yrotsih* (film camera) and *Yromem* (girl) disappears and resurfaces as they travel through an unknown galaxy where everything seems slightly familiar, but simultaneously indefinite. Moreover *Yrotsih & Yromem's Galaxy of Impossibilities* presents the strange and almost impossible nature of history and memory to collect and recollect in an objective chronological and structured manner; and its tendency to masticate, absolve, consume and to store the past in fictitious non-linear modes.

Acknowledgements and Closing: Mark Kourie