

DRAWING ROOM

Drawing Research Forum 2023/2024 Sessions – Part 1

Friday 13th October 2023

This afternoon of presentations and discussions, selected from an open call, provides access to recent research examining critical issues around contemporary drawing.

The session will feature presentations and a plenary discussion with artists examining diverse themes, and utilising and developing current discourse around contemporary drawing. The Drawing Research Forum provides a space for knowledge exchange between disciplines, encourages cross-fertilization of ideas and methodology, and fosters collaborations between artists and researchers.

SCHEDULE

2 – 2.05 pm	Welcome and Introduction
2.05 – 2.25 pm	Filippo Bosco - On “sick drawings”. Narratives of marginality
2.30 – 2.50 pm	Dr Andrew Chesher - Self-likeness without Identity: Lygia Clark's <i>Caminhando</i> as drawing
2.55 – 3.15 pm	Johannes Muselaers - If the draftsman has foresight, he cannot have sight: Philippe Vandenberg's (1952-2009) Aesthetics of Drawing
3.20 - 3.40 pm	Chaired plenary discussion

ABSTRACTS

Filippo Bosco - On “sick drawings”. Narratives of marginality

Drawing has a special relation to “sickness”, when the term is intended as a social construct (see Susan Sontag 1980, 1989). The historical definition of the medium has often pivoted to the artistic production of subjects divergent from the psycho-physical social norm (see the famous study of the drawings of the mentally ill, Prinzhorn 1972). Against the appropriation

of the obsessive or naïve imagery by highbrow artists, a show like *Zeichnen Heute* (Wien, 1971) opened and subverted the identity of the medium as an intersection of artistic and non-artistic practices that included drawings made by sick subjects. In the same vein, the artist Gigliola Carretti organized an art laboratory for the internees in the Collegno asylum (Turin), as a form of therapy and a negotiation of their identity through the practice of drawing. In this paper, I will articulate a possible theoretical frame which originates from that perspective, in order to look at marginality as an intersectional feature of drawing and sickness. I will present a brief anthology of “sick drawings” in contemporary art, which stage a subtle disruption and mutation of the subject or the execution process. Most are large series, and represent a daily practice or a condition of execution. For examples, Ketty La Rocca’s *Craniologie* (1973-74 –X-rays of the her skull retouched with writings); Giuseppe Gallo’s *Disegni malati* (1979 – tiny forms in China ink on paper) and Tomaso De Luca’s *Tropical Malady* (2012, a series of drawings in which colonial-style furniture is subjected to genetic mutations, mirroring the so-called ‘Haitian malady’ that was thought to have caused the cholera epidemic in Paris in 1832).

Dr Andrew Chesher - Self-likeness without Identity: Lygia Clark's *Caminhando* as drawing

The subject of this paper is a piece by the Brazilian artist Lygia Clark. *Caminhando* (1963) was proposed as an act to be carried out by the 'viewer'. They were to join the ends of a strip of paper to form a Möbius band, and then make a continuous cut along its perimeter thereby producing a line that disappears as it is made. Approaching the work as a drawing, I will explore Clark's *Caminhando*, firstly, as an open-ended process in which, in her terms, "the inside is the outside", and secondly as the potential of an image or likeness that remains, however, unrealised, or in Theodor Adorno's words, "self-likeness freed from the compulsion of identity".

Johannes Muselaers - If the draftsman has foresight, he cannot have sight: Philippe Vandenberg's (1952-2009) *Aesthetics of Drawing*

In his writings, the Belgian artist Philippe Vandenberg (1952-2009) extensively delved into the act of drawing. His claim that drawing occurs in a state of blindness resonates with Jacques Derrida's (1930-2004) contemplations on the medium. Derrida posits that drawing does not solely originate from a consciousness oriented towards visible reality. Instead, drawing co-originates in blindness, informed by traces of past experiences (i.e., memory or the subconscious). This lecture explores the different rationale behind Vandenberg's argument, drawing insights from both his art and writings, while engaging in a meaningful dialogue with Gilles Deleuze's (1925-1995) reflections on our time synthesis. From their perspectives, it situates the drafts(wo)man's blindness not in an orientation towards the past, but rather in an ongoing orientation towards the future.

BIOGRAPHIES

Filippo Bosco - I have been a PhD candidate at the Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa since 2018 and the 2021-2022 Pre-Doctoral Fellow at the Menil Drawing Institute in Houston, Texas. I completed my Masters degree in History of Art at the University of Pisa, with the dissertation 'Notes on Magic Realism. German and Italian painting in the Twenties'. In 2018 and 2020 I was affiliated with the Freie Universität in Berlin. My field of interest includes Italian art criticism and painting between XIX and XX centuries (with articles and catalogue essays on Pittura Metafisica), Postwar art theory (Pop Art and performativity) and Arte Povera graphic work (Penone, Centre Pompidou 2022). After co-curating an exhibition about the Futurist Giacomo Balla (2016) and the permanent collection (2017) in the Modern Art Gallery in Turin, I collaborated on the catalogue of the Cerruti Collection in Rivoli. My PhD project is dedicated to 'Drawing and Conceptualism: Paradigms, Practices and International Exchanges in Italy (1969-1979)'. I am currently writing a book on the early years and private sketches of Giuseppe Penone (1968-1970).

Dr Andrew Chesher - Dr Chesher's research focuses on Neo-avantgarde and post-conceptual practices with a special emphasis on phenomenology and critical theory. His essays include: 'Phenomenology After Conceptual Art' published in *Analecta Husserliana: The Yearbook of Phenomenological Research* (2018), 'Reconfiguring the Lifeworld: Spatial Experience in the Universe of Technical Images' in *Time, Space and Mobility* (2018), and 'Desublimating the Gestalt: Towards an Archaeology of Robert Morris's Anti Form' in *Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft* (2021). He has given academic papers at international conferences in Switzerland, Germany, Poland, Belgium and various parts of the UK, most recently the paper 'Broodthaers' Pleasure of the Text: On Une Seconde d'Éternité' at the conference 'Marcel Broodthaers and Cinema' at the Cinematek in Brussels (June 2022). He has also directed documentaries on modern music that have been screened in North America and Europe, including 'Knots and Fields: Darmstadt and the Legacies of Modernism' (made with David Ryan) (2010) and 'Changing the System' (on Christian Wolf) (2007). He gained his PhD from Chelsea College of Arts in 2007, where he is a senior lecturer in the Fine Art program.

Johannes Muselaers - Johannes is a PhD researcher at the Institute of Philosophy of the KU Leuven. Funded by the Methusalem research project '(Re-)Presentation in Image and Art', his thesis will examine the relationship between drawing, perception and reality. Muselaers holds a master's degree in Art History from the KU Leuven. Between 2017 and 2023, he served as head of collections at the Philippe Vandenberg Foundation in Brussels.