

DRAWING ROOM

Drawing Research Forum 2023/2024 Sessions – Part 2

Friday 23rd February 2024

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	Sasha Bergstrom-Katz – Art as Mental Imaging
2.30 – 2.50 pm	Grace Schwindt – Marking Memories of Historical Trauma
2.55 – 3.15 pm	Nicky Coutts – Drawing Beyond Human
3.20 - 3.40 pm	Chaired plenary discussion

ABSTRACTS

Sasha Bergstrom-Katz – Art as Mental Imaging

Artworks, particularly drawings and paintings on paper, have a curious relationship with the field of psychology. This presentation focuses on the ways in which artworks have historically been used as objects of psychology and how they have been figured as 'ripe for interpretation' within the field. I am most interested in how the interpretation of drawings and paintings has been utilised in a multitude of attempts to concretely register psychological processes and states. 'Art as a Mental Imaging' pulls together three case studies from art therapy, psychoanalysis and mental testing to critically

examine the ways in which drawings and paintings are registered and understood as medical and psychological images.

Grace Schwindt – Marking Memories of Historical Trauma

Grace Schwindt will discuss her project 'Movement Archive' which uses techniques from dance psychotherapy in workshop settings to explore historical trauma through memories stored in our bodies and those carried from one generation to the next. In her project, workshop participants trace the routes that the generated movements take with their hands. A video camera is used to record these ephemeral drawings made in space as mark-making and tracing of memories. The hands never touch and the space in between them seems to describe a memory of objects that are no longer there, for instance a cup of tea or a plate of food that, due to destruction of war, cannot be drunk or eaten any longer.

Nicky Coutts - Drawing Beyond Human

'Drawing Beyond Human' will centre on 'Man Stupid', a body of work by Coutts that began in response to video recordings of Koko, a gorilla that was taught American Sign Language in captivity, and who addressed the COP26 Climate Conference in 2014. In this presentation, this example of practice-led research will propose drawing as a means for making 'language' and vocabulary within interspecies encounters. It questions what such an exploration, at the limits of what is commonly understood as 'language', can contribute to concerns of how to act and live in proximity to the current climate emergency.

BIOGRAPHIES

***Sasha Bergstrom-Katz** is an artist and researcher working on technologies, objects and concepts from the history of the human sciences. Her recent PhD thesis entitled 'On Intelligence Tests: Psychological Objects and their Subjects' makes an aesthetic enquiry into the material cultures and history of intelligence testing in the United States. She is currently a postdoctoral fellow and artist-in-residence at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science and is co-editing a forthcoming volume on the topic of art & psychotherapy alongside Dr Sarah Marks and Dr Suzanne Hudson.*

***Grace Schwindt** is based in London, UK and works with sculpture, performance, film and drawing. Through her work she unfolds visual narratives exploring the effects of capitalist culture upon the body and psyche of the individual. She analyses the role that bodies, language and objects play in the construction of history and memory. Schwindt's works have been presented in museums and galleries as well as in theatres and other performance contexts. Recent solo exhibitions include Lacuna at Zeno X Gallery in Belgium in 2023, Defiant Bodies at Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, Switzerland in 2022/2023, and Your Movement at Kunsthall Gent, Belgium in 2022.*

***Dr Nicky Coutts** is an artist, researcher, and writer. She is currently Research Lead in the School of Fine Art at The Glasgow School of Art. Her research focuses on the pressures that humans place on species diversity and the environment, and the role of cross-species interactions in finding alternative ways to interact and live. Through a writing and visual practice centering on drawing, she explores how 'language' is often used to sustain the status quo and the potential for this to be shifted through working closely with 'oddkin' (Haraway). Her work has been shown widely in galleries and museums and she has a parallel writing practice with a forthcoming commission for 2HB at the Centre for Contemporary Art, Glasgow.*