

# Art History and Visual Culture

## Research Seminars 2016-17



### 'An act of creativity: Leonor Fini and the role of costume'

*Rachael Grew*

**Wednesday 11 January 2017 1.00-2.30pm | Martin Hall Room 1.17A**

Leonor Fini (1907-1996) placed transformation and metamorphosis at the core of her work and frequently expressed this through the act of dressing up. This paper will explore the ways in which dressing up creates links between Fini's art, design, and her own life, ultimately assessing the extent to which Fini uses costume to refuse a fixed identity and advocate ambiguity and flux instead.

### 'Matisse at War: The Artist's Book in a Time of Crisis'

*Kathryn Brown*

**Thursday 26 January 2017 1.00-2.30pm | Martin Hall Room 1.09**

Henri Matisse published only one artist's book during the Second World War: *Pasiphaé, Chant de Minos* (1944). This paper explores the charged social, political, and artistic context of the work's creation and examines the risks that Matisse ran in working with Henry de Montherlant, an author accused of collaboration during post-war literary purges in France. It is argued that the work's reception has rested on a crucial distinction between, on the one hand, the textual connection of *Pasiphaé* to Montherlant's political writings and, on the other hand, the impact of the book as a material object produced by Matisse.

### 'Now you have touched the women you have struck a rock'

*Marion Arnold*

**Thursday 23 February 2017 1.00-2.30pm | Martin Hall Room 1.09**

All South African women were touched by apartheid and its aftermath, and printmaking, in the form of artists' books, offers women opportunities to narrate historical and mythical stories, and tales of their daily lives. My paper discusses and illustrates a range of stories.

### 'Artists' collections of ethnographic material: object biographies and decolonisation'

*Julia Kelly*

**Thursday 9 March 2017 1.00-2.30pm | Martin Hall Room 1.09**

The acquisition of non-western artefacts by explorers or missionaries has been subject to much historical critique; yet the collection of the same objects by artists, in the name of artistic research, is seen as relatively benign. Ownership by a (western) artist is usually an integral part of the meaning and valuation of such objects, both artistically and financially. Their subsequent interpretation and display, however, conceal the deep-seated colonial assumptions they embody. The collections of a range of 20th-century artists, including André Breton, Louise Nevelson and Jacob Kramer, will be used as case studies.

### **‘Kant and Heidegger: Appearing Fashionable and Being Fashionable’**

*Malcolm Barnard*

**Thursday 4 May 2017 1.00-2.30pm | Martin Hall Room 1.09**

---

Kant’s position is that style and therefore fashion have no part in the critical account of the conditions for knowledge and Heidegger’s position would be that fashion is part of the everyday, the herd, and thus inappropriate to an account of Being. This paper will argue that style and fashion are not absent from these accounts and that both thinkers have more to say about style and fashion than they let on.

### **‘Calls to Action! Unruly rhetorics and ‘paper politics’: art and the pamphleteer’**

*Gillian Whiteley*

**Thursday 18 May 2017 1.00-2.30pm | Martin Hall Room 1.09**

---

Ahead of two days of events and an exhibition, [For and Against: Art, Politics and the Pamphlet](#) (co-organised by RaRa with Radar 26-27 May 2017), this paper presents work-in progress on research for a publication which considers art’s historical and contemporary intersection with the pamphlet. From the leaflets of the 1960s Dutch Provo to the downloadable manifestos of the performative family activist Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home, it engages with the DIY format and materiality of the pamphlet as well as its radical political traditions.

### **‘Materializing a Transversal Politics in and of Art’**

*Marsha Meskimmon*

**Thursday 1 June 2017 1.00-2.30pm | Martin Hall Room 1.09**

---

This paper explores the potential of art to materialize a transversal politics - a non-binary, intersectional politics of difference that moves beyond both normative universalism and essentialist identitarian positions. Developed through close readings of a series of contemporary artworks, the paper proposes that art does more than ‘represent’ politics, and argues for exploring art as an active mode of experimental world-making, or a form of corporeal-materialist *Gedankenexperiment*.

For more information please contact Marsha Meskimmon [M.G.Meskimmon@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:M.G.Meskimmon@lboro.ac.uk)