

INTERVENTIONS

Friday, 31 May 2013
Corner College
Kochstrasse 1, Zürich

Interventions is an informal and open symposium that allows scholars and thinkers to present their recently finished work and their work in progress. Interventions thrives on the unexpected juxtapositions and clashes that result from addressing a wide range of philosophical and political issues such as autonomy, economy, finitude, aporias, capitalism, and many more. Interventions does not limit itself to a specific discipline and welcomes all intriguing papers from Switzerland and abroad.

SCHEDULE

- 14:00 Methods of tricksters in Húsavík, or: how to find new forms of intervening. *Anabel Sarabi*
14:45 Remembering Mnemosyne. *Jacob Miller*
15:30 On Thinking. *Julia Hölzl*
16:15 Appropriation: Ich und [...] die Frage der Aneignung. *Daniel Marti*
17:00 Perhaps this time we have gone too far. *Luce deLire / benedikt wagner*
17:45 "When the Forms of Musick change, 'tis a Promise of civil Disorder." *Christian Hänggi*
18:30 Geo-strategic vectors influencing the crossing of the Central Alps in the High Middle Ages. *Gian Trepp.*
19:30 and onward: barbecue at Corner College

ABSTRACTS AND BIOGRAPHIES

14:00

Methods of tricksters in Húsavík, or: how to find new forms of intervening

Anabel Sarabi

Since the late 1990s up until today it has been popular to make interventions – in art as much as in economy and politics. Interventions are used to pimp up cities, they are booked and collected together to make up an urban festival or just to support the strategies of politicians. We cannot distinguish anymore between artistic interventions and theatrically non-artistic interventions.

Intervening is acting, and this is obviously still necessary and needed. So, how to act and how to find another language of acting within the public life? Is intervening – if it wants to be free of commercialisation – at all possible within the art context? Is there a possibility to find new forms of intervening and bringing them together with other art formats?

Throughout the process of my artistic actions and my network I would like to think about intervening today and try to find other forms of intervening into systems, which are suspect to me cause of specific actions, ideas, pictures or scenes. I want to confront them with my ideas and imaginations, propose another reality for a certain time duration.

Anabel Sarabi studied Applied Literature, Music Theory and Philosophy in Düsseldorf and Bruxelles before she graduated with a Master's Degree in Contemporary Art Practices (Fine Art, Performance Art, Literature and

Music and Media Art) at the Bern University of the Arts and a Minor in Théâtre Musical (Biel/Bienne) in 2012. She works at the edge of scenic art, visual art and acoustic art, and so the formats are changing between operas, photographs, texts, radioshow, architectural models, curating programs, concert actions or treasure hunts. Since 2006, she is a member of the German-English artist group New Guide to Opera, founded in the late 1990s at the University of Applied Theatre Science Gießen.

14:45

Remembering Mnemosyne

Jacob Miller

Classical Greek literature recognizes both memory and forgetfulness. This paper takes a historical approach in order to compare texts by Diodorus Siculus (“Library of history”), Pausanias (“Description of Greece”), and Plato (“Critias” and “The Republic”) with contemporary cognitive-neuropsychological approaches and social research regarding both legal and illegal substance use in the United States. Siculus’ documentation of Mnemosyne, Critias’ invocation of Mnemosyne, Socrates allusion to the Lethe waters, and lastly The Cult of Trophonios are analyzed.

Jacob Miller is a 3rd year M.A. student in the Media and Communications division at the European Graduate School in Saas-Fee, Switzerland. Jacob has conducted research in several diverse areas such as mind-wandering, video game addiction, and paraplegia. Currently, his academic research has led him to explore the notions of non-logic, pseudo-logic, and experimental-logic in human decision-making processes.

15:30

On Thinking

Julia Hözl

Be it “in ruins” (Bill Readings), be it “in crisis” or be it “yet to come”– there seems to be no end to the *end of the university*.

But, and to re-examine Derrida’s all too timely question, “[t]oday, how can we not speak of the university?” How can we, today, not speak of the university, but instead re-think the question of thinking? How, and where, to think thinking today? How to *think* today, and where to think *today*?

Thinking, today, must not think merely another theory of thought: today, thinking must give (back) thought to thinking. Today, thinking must think the disaster sensu Blanchot, “[i]n search neither of the place, nor of the formula”– thinking today must, with Heidegger, “stay with the question”.

Julia Hözl holds the Maurice Blanchot Fellowship at the European Graduate School, where she also received her PhD. Currently completing a second doctorate at the Centre for Modern Thought at the University of Aberdeen, Julia has studied and taught a variety of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences in Austria, Spain, Switzerland, the UK, and Thailand, where she was appointed Visiting Professor at Ramkhamhaeng University, Bangkok, in 2009. Book publications include Transience. A poiesis, of dis/appearance (Atropos Press, 2010).

16:45

Appropriation: Ich und [...] die Frage der Aneignung

Daniel Marti

We should be careful though not to confuse the term Appropriation simply as a culture of copying styles. Prominent white male figures like Richard Prince and Jeff Koons may have set the tone of the agenda on authorship on behalf of originality and the banal for the past decades or so. Nevertheless, past the age of mechanical reproduction, the works of those artists – I am not arguing over their aesthetic merit – are perhaps no longer setting precedents over the boundaries of the intelligible over the banal. The attention has shifted for instance to those that are globally voicing their real concern in battles against Digital Rights Management (DRM) or the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA), to defend free circulation of information and free speech against big business interests. Appropriation, so to speak, is not something that should be of concern mainly to artists and creative entrepreneurs, it concerns as much the everyday consumer, let alone the next-door kid who's downloading content from P2P networks.

In showing a few examples of Neo-Avantgarde Collectives like IRWIN of the Neue Slowenische Kunst (NSK) that invented a whole new vocabulary of the impossible yet all the more necessary artistic re-production between anonymity, identity and conceptual ideas, I would like to address how Appropriation could be contextualized perhaps more meaningfully and that could help us understand something more about our own creativity.

*Daniel Marti (*1972) is an artist/performer and interdisciplinary networker/activist. He studied Photography at Institut Kunst Basel (MA FHNW 2012) and is the author of wegorythm.net, a blog to experiment in unconventional ways of blogging as a self-meditating practice issues around paroxysms of Appropriation.*

17:00

Perhaps this time, we have gone too far

Luce deLire / benedikt wahner

In recent years, questions of 'queer futurity' have moved some minds, trying to evaluate possibilities of a distinctively queer future, or the other way around, arguing against the very concept of 'futurity' as an appropriate means for queer politics. I am going to pursue a some-folded project:

- a) I am going to delineate some conditions for "queer philosophy" or "queer theory", elaborating on Halberstams "in a queer time and place." I will then try to sketch an understanding of "queerness" linked to "sexuality" on the one hand, and "[global] capitalism" on the other.
- b) I am going to structure the discourse of "queer futurity" around three understandings of "negation," choosing one modus due to its relation to a).
- c) I am going to situate "the trans*body" [as a case of potential queerness] as a figure of "constellative time," linked to "jouissance" perhaps.
- d) Following this, I shall use Avital Ronell's slogan "[perhaps] this time, we have gone too far" and its emphasis on "testing" to formulate the praxis of trans*bodies, engaging with "constellative time" as "devastating experimentation". [no pomo].

But – as always – it is also possible that I decide upon doing something completely different. Stay tuned :).
Kisses / luce.

// A life / in which / chocolate is so weightless / it breaks / if just a feather touches it / thought I / and Mr. / "why is a women so beautiful / with a book so heavy / on a day so bright / at a place so queer?" / turns around, saying / "if we're lucky / between the two of us / there's nothing more but / 2.5 mm PVC" / "but full / can never feel as good as / slim" says I / and he – rolling around / – disappears. //

17:45

“When the Forms of Musick change, 'tis a Promise of civil Disorder”: Reading Thomas Pynchon through Jacques Attali

Christian Hänggi

In his highly original work *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, Jacques Attali claims that music is prophetic of the political and economic order of society. He names three eras in the history of Western music and – subsequently – society, which are partly overlapping: the eras of sacrifice, representation, and repetition. To these he adds a fourth era, that of composition, which in his 1977 account was reverberating from a possible future and today, arguably, may be seen as partially actualized. Examining three passages from Thomas Pynchon’s latest novels, *Mason & Dixon* (1997), *Against the Day* (2006), and *Inherent Vice* (2009), this paper will map Attali’s theory on Pynchon’s own prophecies. In this, late-eighteenth-century music announces the liberation of slaves (“’Tis ever the sign of Revolutionary times, that Street-Airs become Hymns, and Roist’ring-Songs Anthems.”); late-nineteenth-century “jass” stands for the promises of anarchism; and the 1960s turn to recorded and commodified music heralds a society of individuals in “solitude, confinement and mutual silence” who “would actually be spending money to hear rock ‘n’ roll.” Nevertheless, throughout Pynchon’s work there are glimpses of the era of composition, which creates “in common, the code within which communication will take place” and which is no longer a question of marking or producing the body, but of “taking pleasure in it” (Attali).

Christian Hänggi received his PhD from the European Graduate School. Currently embarking on a second doctorate with the working title Thomas Pynchon’s Sonic Fictions at the University of Basel, Christian lectures from time to time at the Autonomous School Zurich and at Ramkhamhaeng University in Bangkok. As of fall 2013, he will also teach at the University of Basel. Book publications include Hospitality in the Age of Media Representation (Atropos Press, 2009).

18:30

Geo-strategic vectors influencing the crossing of the Central Alps in the High Middle Ages

Gian Trepp.

Between the 10th and the 13th century, there were many trails crossing the Central Alps between the Great St. Bernhard pass to the west and the Brenner Pass to the east. This leads to the question who used which trail, and why?

The question sounds simple, but the answer is not. Because there are only very few written sources about that matter, one has to rely mostly on ex-post considerations about possible connections of known facts.

Who wanted to cross that part of the Alps? How and why were the different trails chosen? What about the local, regional, and imperial power structure of this era? What kind of local people were living there? What kind of resources were available for transportation?

At the centre of the argument is the Grimsel/Gries route, the shortest route between Speyer, Worms, and Mainz in the North and Pavia in the South, the centres of the ruling dynasties of the Holy Roman Empire at that time.

My interest to answer these questions arises from my project to write a family history. Our ancestors lived along the Grimsel/Gries route before they emigrated to the Rheinwald valley and Davos in the middle of the 13th century.

*Gian Trepp (*1947) is an economist, author, and journalist living in Zürich. Latest book publication: Bertelsmann. Eine deutsche Geschichte, 2007.*