

# A History of Limits

## On the Architecture of Canon Narratives

FRIDAY, MARCH 18, 2016

8.30–10pm The Museum in Exile

Occulted Cartographies: Tracing  
Networks Concealed in Lists of Artists  
and Speculative Exhibition Histories  
LECTURE · *Kristine Khouri & Rasha Salti*

🔊 ES → EN A New Cultural Model of Solidarity  
LECTURE · *Claudia Zaldívar*

SATURDAY, MARCH 19, 2016

12–2.30pm Frameworks and Narrative  
Architectures

Architectures and Inversions  
of the Canon  
LECTURE · *Erhard Schüttpelz*

The Confines of the Unlimited  
LECTURE · *Mark Wigley*

A Debordered Formalism: On Mimicry  
and its Borders  
LECTURE · *Kerstin Stakemeier*

The Man in the Background  
FILM SCREENING AND LECTURE ·  
*Lene Berg*

BREAK: 2.30–3.30pm

3.30–6pm Inversions: When Narratives  
become Institutions

The Renegade Object and the Hollow  
Museum: On the current State of  
Museums in Palestine  
LECTURE · *Lara Khaldi*

🔊 ES → EN The Museum and the Other Side  
LECTURE · *Ticio Escobar*

Unframing the Nation:  
*Parergon* and Radical Allegory  
LECTURE · *David Teh*

Canonic and Anti-Canonic  
Artists' Travels  
LECTURE · *Diedrich Diederichsen*

BREAK: 6–6.30pm

6.30–9pm Limits: Hallucinating the Canon

Canon as Decomposition: Carl  
Einstein's Renegade Modernism  
in Context  
LECTURE · *Tom Holert*

T for Tiger, T for Theodolite  
LECTURE · *Ho Tzu Nyen*

Form Follows Fiction:  
Cases of Mistaken Identity in  
Central-Canadian Art  
LECTURE · *Luis Jacob*

A Choreography for a Burning Building  
LECTURE · *Nida Ghose & Malak Helmy*

Conference Language: English  
Moderated by *Anselm Franke &  
Paz Guevara*

8.30–10pm

## The Museum in Exile

The 1978 *International Art Exhibition for Palestine* in Beirut was meant to lay the foundations of a “museum in exile” for the Palestinian people. How does the predicament of exile change the conception of what a museum and its canon might be? Departing from the transnational network to which the exhibition *Past Disquiet* bears witness, the panel explores the relations between artists’ organizations, networks of solidarity, artist-donated collections, alternative museologies, and cultural politics in conditions of exile.

INTRODUCTION · *Anselm Franke*

### Occulted Cartographies: Tracing Networks Concealed in Lists of Artists and Speculative Exhibition Histories

LECTURE · *Kristine Khouri & Rasha Salti*

Kristine Khouri’s and Rasha Salti’s research to understand how the *International Art Exhibition for Palestine* came to be, started with a copy of the exhibition catalogue, which lists artists and acknowledges people and institutions whose contributions and support made it possible. It retraces the forgotten solidarity networks that connected militant artists in the realm of the tricontinental, anti-imperialist left during the 1970s, in the larger context of the Cold War. In addition, by revisiting artist-run museographic initiatives dedicated to the struggle against the military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet and the apartheid system in South Africa, it maps lost cartographies using testimonies and archives with the purpose of interrogating the historiography of artistic practice and perception.

KRISTINE KHOURI is an independent researcher and writer based in Beirut. The focus of her research is on the history of arts circulation and infrastructure in the Arab world. She curated *The Founding Years (1969–1973): A Selection of Works from the Sultan Gallery Archives* (2012) at the Sultan Gallery in Kuwait, and has contributed as author to several publications, including the magazine *Bidoun*, the *Art Asia Pacific Almanac*, and *Global Art Forum 6*.

RASHA SALTİ is a writer, researcher and curator of art and film based in Beirut. She co-curated a number of film programs including *The Road to Damascus* with Richard Peña (2006), and *Mapping Subjectivity: Experimentation in Arab Cinema from the 1960s until Now*, with Jytte Jensen (2010–2012) showcased at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. In 2011, she was a co-curator of the 10th edition of the Sharjah Biennial for the Arts. Salti has also edited a number of books including *Beirut Bereft: The Architecture of the Forsaken and the Map of the Derelict* (Sharjah, 2009).

Together, KHOURI and SALTİ are the founders of the History of Arab Modernities in the Visual Arts Study Group, a research platform dedicated to the social history of art in the Arab world. Their current work focuses on the history of the *International Art Exhibition in Solidarity with Palestine* that opened in Beirut in 1978. This research was transformed into the exhibition *Past Disquiet: Narratives and Ghosts of the International Art Exhibition for Palestine, 1978*, which opened at the Museu d’Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA) in 2015 and is hosted in its second iteration at HKW from March 19, to May 9, 2016.

### A New Cultural Model of Solidarity

LECTURE · *Claudia Zaldívar*

The Museo de la Solidaridad, founded in Santiago, Chile, in 1972, was meant to offer an alternative cultural model based on the principle of solidarity, in respect both of the donation of works within an extensive network of artists, in order to build a collection and as regards its political purpose, to bring the arts to the people. Under the socialist government of Salvador Allende (1971–1973), it was a museological model intended to help establish a society characterized by justice, and to overcome the elitist character of cultural institutions. After the coup d’état the museum closed;

however, the networks of solidarity continued to exist and the museum managed to operate in exile, becoming a model for the international anti-imperialist solidarity movements of the 1970s. The talk will give account of the history, foundations, and re-readings of the museum throughout its lifetime, as a point of departure for revising the canon.

CLAUDIA ZALDÍVAR, an art historian and expert in cultural policy, is currently Director of the Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende in Santiago, Chile. From 2002 to 2010, Zaldívar was at the helm of Galería Gabriela Mistral (GGM), Santiago. Exhibitions organized by her include *Juan Downey: Instalaciones, Dibujos y Videos*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Santiago (1995), *JAAR/SCL/2006*, Sala de Arte Telefónica – GGM, Santiago (2006), and *Made in Chile*, featuring Josep-Maria Martín, GGM (2010). In 2004 and 2005, she conceived the colloquium and publication of *Arte y Política* with Nelly Richard and Pablo Oyarzún. In 2013, she edited the catalogue raisonné *Museo de la Solidaridad Chile*. The museum had also been the theme of her thesis at the University of Chile in 1991.

12–2.30pm

## Frameworks and Narrative Architectures

What are the foundations on which a canon's architecture rests? What are their myths of origin? The contributors to this session cut through the build-up of canon narratives and their frameworks across different registers, exploring the politics of discourse, processes of valorization, and configurations of mediality. From the constitutive role of primitivism in the historical phases of Western canon-formation, through the politics of form and mimicry in modern art history to the ideologies inscribed in the category of limitless art and the contemporary artistic space and the ideological framework of the Cold War.

### Architectures and Inversions of the Canon

LECTURE · *Erhard Schüttpelz*

The talk gives a rough idea of the radical changes, consequences, and inversions of canon-formation during the last 300 years, focusing not only on the fine arts, but on the arts in general, through four cuts: around 1716 (the Gunpowder Empires); 1800 (Berlin and elsewhere); 1900 (High Imperialism); and today. Before modernity, in the times of an "Archaic Globalization," artistic canons were technical models to reproduce the past and make it available for future practice. When the Moderns finally decreed the obsolescence of Antiquity, this technical unity fell apart, and the modern concepts of Art, Literature, and Music evolved. The consequences have been paradoxical ever since, from anti-classicist inversions of artistic hierarchies to a newly developed Eurocentrism and its critique.

ERHARD SCHÜTTPELZ lives and works in Siegen. He has studied and researched in Hanover, Exeter, Bonn, Oxford, Cologne, New York, Constance, and Vienna. In 1994, he was awarded a doctorate in German language and literature at the University of Bonn and in 2003 habilitated in new German literature and general literary studies at the University of Constance. Since 2005, he has been a professor for media theory at the University of Siegen. His publications include the monographs *Figuren der Rede* (Berlin, 1996) and *Die Moderne im Spiegel des Primitiven* (Munich, 2005). Together with Ehler Voss and Heinz Schott, Schüttpelz also contributed to the exhibition *Animismus* at HKW (2012).

### The Confines of the Unlimited

LECTURE · *Mark Wigley*

The ever-expanding fantasy of art without limits is supported by a very specific limit, a wall that pretends not to be a wall. The empire of white surfaces that spread virally across the planet over the last century to house the concept of art-as-expansion is itself a single collaborative artwork. It is a massive work that aspires to invisibility and has accomplished it with such canonic force that it no longer needs to be there to be there. The fantasy of the limitless is the defining and most confining form of blindness.

MARK WIGLEY is a professor of Architecture and Dean Emeritus of Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation. A historian and theorist, he explores the intersection of architecture, art, philosophy, culture, and technology. His books include *Derrida's Haunt: The Architecture of Deconstruction* (Cambridge, MA, and London, 1993); *White Walls, Designer Dresses: The Fashioning of Modern Architecture* (Cambridge, MA, and London, 1995); and *Constant's New Babylon: The Hyper-Architecture of Desire* (Rotterdam, 1998). He has curated exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Witte de With, Rotterdam; and the Canadian Center for Architecture, Montreal, among others and is currently co-curating the Istanbul Design Biennial 2016. His latest book is *Buckminster Fuller Inc: Architecture in the Age of Radio* (Zurich, 2014).

## A Debordered Formalism: On Mimicry and its Borders

LECTURE · Kerstin Stakemeier

Canonized understandings of Formalism as a Cold War lapse are relinquishing a line of thought that previously guided many socially consequential understandings of art. In 1923, Russian Productivist Boris Arvatov and Berlin-based publicist Lu Märten both framed their work as one of Formalism. Märten posited that “in the beginning of all history ... lies form – not art,” while Arvatov claimed that both “practical and poetic form” are “a specific way of practical organization.” Neither Arvatov nor Märten saw Formalism as inimical to the debordering of art into life. But their Formalism carved out borders that have since shifted hugely, as today the relation of artistic and non-artistic form appears to be outright mimetic. The talk explores the consequences and limits of artistic mimicry by suggesting a debordered Formalism.

The writer KERSTIN STAKEMEIER is professor at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Nuremberg. With a background in Political Science and Art History, the shifting discords between both are central to her work. She was a researcher at the Jan van Eyck Akademie, Maastricht (2009–2010) and initiator of the *Space for Actualization* (with Nina Köller, Hamburg, 2007–2008). Among the publications she writes for are *Texte zur Kunst*, *Springerin*, and *Artforum*. Her published works include *Painting: The Implicit Horizon* (with Avigail Moss, Maastricht, 2014/15); *Power of Materials / Politics of Materiality* (with Susanne Witzgall, Munich, 2014); and *Fragile Identities* (with Susanne Witzgall, Munich, 2015). Two books co-authored with Marin Vishmidt, *A-Autonomy* and *Entgrenzter Formalismus*, are to be published by b\_books/Polypen in 2016.

## The Man in the Background

FILM SCREENING AND LECTURE · Lene Berg

Lene Berg will present her video *The Man in the Background* (2006) and the publication *Encounter: Gentlemen & Arseholes* (Berlin, 2006), two elements of her project about art and propaganda during the Cold War. Both video and book explore the framework of the CIA-financed Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF) and the roles played by the CCF's director Michael Josselson and his wife Diana.

LENE BERG's work includes installations, photography, text, and film. She has also produced a number of projects in public spaces and directed three feature films. Berg exposes and plays with clichés while reconfiguring fact and fantasy in a quest for new forms of narration. Her work suggests that consensus views of politics, history, and sexuality are often misleading and that they reveal considerably more in what they exclude. Selected solo exhibitions include the 55th Venice Biennale, Norwegian Pavilion (2013); Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, Oslo (2012); and Konsthall C, Stockholm (2012). Selected group exhibitions include *Ape Culture*, HKW, Berlin (2015) and *The Shadow of War*, Kunstnernes Hus, Oslo (2014). Berg lives and works in Berlin and New York.

3.30–6pm

## Inversions: When Narratives become Institutions

How does one do things with canon narratives? How does one de- and re-construct canon narratives to accommodate other realities and historical experiences – histories of oppression, indigenous ontologies and practices, and critiques of nation? How do art history and institutions change when these narratives, and the historical vectors and agencies within them, are inverted and read against the grain? A panel on the flipsides of the canonic and the unconscious of modernity.

### The Renegade Object and the Hollow Museum: On the Current State of Museums in Palestine

LECTURE · *Lara Khaldi*

Over the past few years, there has been an accelerated desire and an actual proliferation of the building of several museum and archive projects in Palestine. While those projects have been in the form of shelved proposals for at least the past fifteen years, recently they are in the phase of realization, but a realization that is constantly failing. Khaldi will introduce the different museum projects and their desires, present the inherent impossibilities faced by these museums, and discuss why and what this means for both the Palestinians and for the institution of the museum as such.

LARA KHALDI is an independent curator based in Jerusalem, Palestine. She recently completed the de Appel Curatorial Programme, Amsterdam, and her MA in Philosophy, Art & Critical Thought at the European Graduate School, Saas-Fee. She is currently teaching at the International Academy of Art, Palestine, Ramallah. Khaldi has curated a number of exhibitions, including *Art Dubai Projects*, Dubai (2015); *Father Can't You See I'm Burning*, de Appel Art Center, Amsterdam (2014); and *Gestures in Time*, with Katya Garcia Anton (Jerusalem Show 6 and the 5th Riwaq Biennale, 2013). She frequently collaborates with Yazan Khalili on lecture performances and exhibitions such as *Love Letter to Mars*, Office for Contemporary Art (OCA), Oslo (2014).

### The Museum and the Other Side

LECTURE · *Ticio Escobar*

The crisis of the autonomy of the aesthetic has become a key issue in contemporary art: Whereas its formal language used to be the determining factor, art is now being read in view of its social impact and its relations with the other – i.e. that which is not art and that which would be a different art. This shift not only enhances the problematic involved in the very notion of art, but also problematizes its practice and institutions. With the Euro-American canon put into question, we are no longer capable of determining in absolute terms whether a given piece is a work of art or not. This difficulty triggers uncertainty, yet has us ponder other ways to define art and alternative art forms. The talk will discuss these new options with respect to the museum.

TICIO ESCOBAR is a lawyer, curator, professor, art critic, the co-founder and the current Director of the Centre for Visual Arts / Museo del Barro, Asunción, Paraguay. He has published more than a dozen monographs on art and culture in Paraguay and Latin America featuring reflections on philosophy and ethnographic observations. These include *The Curse of Nemur* (Pittsburgh, PA, 2007) and *The Invention of Distance* (London, 2015). His numerous awards for studies on the relations of indigenous and contemporary art include the Guggenheim Fellowship, the Prince Claus Prize, and the Bartolomé de las Casas Award. From 2008 to 2013, Escobar was the Minister of Culture in Paraguay. He is the author of the legislation on Paraguayan culture.

## Unframing the Nation: *Parergon* and Radical Allegory

LECTURE · *David Teh*

National identification has been fundamental to Thai modern art becoming contemporary, first as a matter of celebration, later as an object of ironic critique. However, in the last decade this theme has receded, as artists have devised more equivocal and subtly coded takes on national experience, averting to new, transnational realities and to marginal identities often excluded from monolithic constructions of national history. Yet if nation is less and less the subject of contemporary art, it remains operative as a frame (*parergon*), as the site of a subversive play. In Thailand's fractious political present, the artist appears not as an engaged, political subject but as a withdrawing, sovereign subject, and thus even more implicated in the deepening symbolic crisis of the country.

DAVID TEH is a writer, curator, and researcher based at the National University of Singapore, specializing in Southeast Asian contemporary art. His curatorial projects have included *TRANSMISSION*, the Jim Thompson Art Center, Bangkok (2014); *Video Vortex #7*, Yogyakarta (2011); *Unreal Asia*, 55, IKF Internationale Kurzfilmtage, Oberhausen (2009); and *The More Things Change*, the 5th Bangkok Experimental Film Festival (2008). Teh's writing has appeared in *Third Text*, *Afterall*, *Theory Culture & Society*, *LEAP*, and the *Bangkok Post*; and his book on *Thai contemporary art* will be published by MIT Press in 2016. He is also a director of *Future Perfect*, a gallery and project platform in Singapore.

## Canonic and Anti-Canonic Artists' Travels

LECTURE · *Diedrich Diederichsen*

Hubert Fichte was both a great skeptic with respect to the humanist disciplines and an ardent practitioner of such classic academic virtues as descriptive accuracy, collecting and classifying, material inventories and taxonomies, and wrote a series of canonizing texts. However, above all, he subjected himself to a classical apprenticeship in the tradition of German artists and writers: an educational journey to the south, yet completely reinventing it in the process.

DIEDRICH DIEDERICHSEN was a journalist and editor for various music magazines in the 1980s, and a university teacher, visiting professor, and associate lecturer in, among other places, Pasadena, Weimar, Vienna, and Los Angeles in the 1990s. From 1998 to 2007, he was a professor for aesthetic theory / cultural studies at the Merz Akademie, Stuttgart. Since 2006, he has been professor for the theory, practice, and communication of contemporary art at the Institute for Art Theory and Cultural Studies at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Vienna. His most recent publications include *Über Pop-Musik* (Cologne, 2014); *The Whole Earth: California and the Disappearance of the Outside* (co-edited with Anselm Franke, Berlin, 2013); and *The Sopranos* (Zurich, 2012). Diederichsen publishes regularly in, among others, *taz.die tageszeitung*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, and *Texte zur Kunst*.

6:30–9pm

## Limits: Hallucinating the Canon

This panel opens up to a broader speculative and imaginative discussion of canon narratives, the politics of mimesis and critique: How can one open up the canon architecture to its anarchic exterior? What does it mean to inhabit and displace canon narratives through lived experience? Is it possible to engage the canon in a hallucinatory fashion, as if to drill holes through it, in order to engage the haunted ontologies of colonial modernity?

### Canon as Decomposition: Carl Einstein's Renegade Modernism in Context

LECTURE · *Tom Holert*

Carl Einstein (1885-1940) is considered increasingly as a canonical figure of twentieth-century art theory. However, it took a while until his multidimensional critical practice gained international acclaim. This was due in part to the erratic nature of Einstein's intellectual project(s) of canonization – elaborated primarily in *Negerplastik* (1915), *Die Kunst des 20. Jahrhunderts* (first published in 1926), and in *Georges Braque* (1934), which ventured with anti-representationalist ideas of the “destruction and extension of standardized reality” (by Cubism and Surrealism among others). The talk will engage with Einstein's calls for “irrationalism” and “hallucination,” and the incommensurabilities of his canon politics, both with regard to the historical contexts and their relevance today.

TOM HOLERT lives and works in Berlin as an art historian, critic, curator, and artist. He is co-founder of the Harun Farocki Institute in Berlin and founding member of the Akademie der Künste der Welt in Cologne. Together with Anselm Franke, Holert is preparing an exhibition project for HKW on Carl Einstein. His recently published books include *Übergriffe. Zustände und Zuständigkeiten der Gegenwartskunst* (Hamburg, 2014); *Troubling Research: Performing Knowledge in the Arts*, edited with Johanna Schaffer and others (Berlin, 2014); and *Deadwood* (Berlin and Zurich, 2013)

### T for Tiger, T for Theodolite

LECTURE · *Ho Tzu Nyen*

In the ancient Malayan cosmology, the tiger is a medium of the ancestral spirits, a creature of transitions and metamorphosis. Ho Tzu Nyen has been tracking the intersecting histories of humans, tigers, and weretigers in the Malayan world through a series of works. Ho weaves the diverse strands into a single image – Heinrich Leutemann's drawing of 1865, *Unterbrochene Straßenmessung auf Singapore* (“Interrupted Road Surveying in Singapore”). It depicts an event that took place in the Singaporean forests in 1835: a Malayan tiger had surprised a party of surveyors, but it ended up attacking only the theodolite, a machine used for precise measurement. Humans, machines, and animals – all are depicted midair – as though in that pregnant moment of suspension, worlds collide, and perhaps slide into each other.

HO TZU NYEN is a Singaporean filmmaker and visual artist whose practice spans video, writing, and theatre. His works have been exhibited at the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (2015); Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo (2015); 10th Shanghai Biennale (2014); Guggenheim Museum New York (2013); Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2012); Artspace, Sydney (2011); and 24th Venice Biennale, Singapore Pavilion (2011). His performances have been staged at the Asian Arts Theater, Gwangju (2015); the Vienna Festival (2014); and the Esplanade Theatre Studio, Singapore (2014). His films have been presented at the Directors' Fortnight at Cannes Film Festival (2009) and at the 66th Venice International Film Festival (2009). He was a resident of the DAAD Berlin Artists-in-Residence program, 2014/2015.



## Form Follows Fiction: Cases of Mistaken Identity in Central-Canadian Art

LECTURE · *Luis Jacob*

Margaret Atwood wrote *The Double Voice* as part of her cycle of poems *The Journals of Susanna Moodie* (1970). Atwood's "double voice" suggests the divided world-view of Moodie, a nineteenth-century British settler in North America coming to terms with her new environment. As well, it points to Atwood's own literary act of ventriloquism – projected through the voice of Susanna Moodie – at play in her book. Atwood's writings emerged in the years following the centennial of Canada's Confederation in 1967. They provide a starting point for a speculative consideration of artists like Joyce Wieland, Michael Snow, and General Idea within the discourses of anti-imperialism and cultural nationalism that circulated in Central Canada during that time.

LUIS JACOB lives in Toronto, Canada. Working as an artist, curator, and writer, his research-based practice addresses social interaction and the subjectivity of aesthetic experience. Since his participation as an exhibiting artist in documenta 12 (2007), he has gained an international reputation with numerous group and solo exhibitions, including the solo shows *In a Material World*, WORK Gallery, London (2013) and *A Finger in the Pie, A Foot in the Door, A Leg in Quicksand*, Kunst-halle Lingel (2012). He has curated, among others, *Funkaesthetics*, Justina M. Barnicke Gallery, University of Toronto, and Confederation Centre for the Arts, Charlottetown (with Pan Wendt, 2009); and *Golden Streams: Artists' Collaboration and Exchange in the 1970s*, Blackwood Gallery, University of Toronto (2002).

## A Choreography for a Burning Building

LECTURE · *Nida Ghouse  
and Malak Helmy*

The talk takes its cue from Clare Davies's *Proposal for a dance choreography to be performed at the Royal Opera House*, in which a woman, coming to grips with the end of a relationship, burns like a building. The text was written for *Emotional Architecture*'s first publication, which explored a moment in 2008 when animate and inanimate forms in Cairo began to shed and exchange their properties, perform the behavior of the other, and possess action and color at will. Concerned with spontaneous combustion and material refusal, the talk traces a particular trajectory of performance, alongside the notion of an electrical short circuit, to assume the gap that opens up between possible and impossible worlds when things catch fire by themselves.

*Emotional Architecture* is a project by NIDA GHOUSE and MALAK HELMY. Conceived as an exercise in addressing the social, intellectual, and psychic legacies of entering and leaving collaborations, the project was initiated in Cairo in 2012. In thinking through a range of situations – from minor artist collectives, and temporary social movements, to grand historical narratives – it began by asking: What happens to knowledge that was borne in collaboration when collaborations break up? (As they often do.) Two publications from an ongoing series have resulted from this process: *We started by calling it the summer of two fires and a landslide*. (Cairo, 2014) and *No Fantasy without Protest* (Cairo, 2015).

CLOSING REMARKS · *Anselm Franke*

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[hkw.de/pastdisquiet](http://hkw.de/pastdisquiet)  
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