

Arts Santa Mònica
Centre de la creativitat
La Rambla 7 08002 Barcelona
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Admission free
Tuesday to Saturday from 11 a.m. till 9 p.m.
Sunday and holidays from 11 a.m. till 5 p.m.
Monday closed

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Departament de Cultura

SANTAMÒNICA

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BARCELONA

The Critical Dissemination
10th International Symposium on Art Criticism
November 13th and 14th, 2015

Peio Aguirre, Nuria Enguita, Mark Lewis,
Thijs Lijster, Aimar Pérez Galí, Irit Rogoff,
David G. Torres and Stephen Wright.

Curated by Oriol Fontdevila and Joana Hurtado Matheu

SANTAMÒNICA

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The Critical Dissemination

10th International Symposium on Art Criticism

13.11-14.11.2015

Where is art criticism today? Criticism is all over the artistic context to such extent that, in terms of contemporary art, critical attitude has become an almost universal requirement. At present, there is no artist, curator, educator or even art institution, which is not expected to take a critical position. This situation has also led criticism to spread among all media and those processes related to the structures of production and art support in such a degree that art criticism, as a genre, has practically disappeared.

Therefore, we place today's art criticism between the emergence of an attitude and the redefinition of a genre, a context of dissemination that we want to address at the ACCA's 10th International Symposium on Art Criticism. During the course of two days, a series of lectures, roundtables and workshops will take place with the intent to shed more light on that question and with the help of some of the leading voices of the national and international art context.

Conference Program

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13th, 2015 **CRITICALISM: THE EMERGENCE OF AN ATTITUDE?**

9 – 9.30 h Opening Presentation
Oriol Fontdevila, curator, writer and researcher, focusing on art practices and education.

9.30 – 10.30 h
Criticism in the Sphere of Circulation
Peio Aguirre
Criticism seems to have disappeared or become diluted, but its reissued presence comes back tirelessly again, especially online and in social networks. The market has been always in need advertising. As advertising, criticism is the biggest contribution of critical thinking to the market. The circulation of "criticism" is greater than ever. Criticism, meanwhile, cannot renounce what has historically been its main function: the building of the public sphere.

Peio Aguirre is an art critic, independent curator and publisher. He writes for the *Crítica and metacomentario* blog, and is the author of *La línea de producción de la crítica* (Consonni, 2014).

10.30 – 11.30 h
Curating and publishing as critical observation
Nuria Enguita
How can a classic publishing project contribute to the ecosystem of the arts today, one marked, on the one hand, by the flow and advertising of the virtual networks, and by its quick conversion into spectacle and marketing, on the other? How should we work on publishing, curating or programming events today from the present tense of thinking the currency of developments and what is new?

Nuria Enguita is an event programmer, curator and co-publisher of the magazine *Concreta*. She was a member of the curatorial team of the 31st Sao Paulo Biennial that took place on 2014.

11.30 – 12 h Break

12 – 13 h
To See What Happens When the Movie Camera Pictures the World of the Everyday
Mark Lewis
The pictorial tradition helps us understand better and more critically the world when we are not looking at pictures. Two of the things that I have learnt are: 1) That the moving image camera produces essentially an uncanny image; and 2) That the moving image camera learns from and copies the experience of the modern city, in so far as the modern city can be considered to be the primal scene of cinematic experience.

Mark Lewis is an artist focused on film and moving digital image. He is also a co-founder and co-director of *Afterall*. In 2009, he represented Canada at the 53rd Venice Biennale.

13 – 14 h
Sweating the Discourse: an embodied critique
Aimar Pérez Galí
It is a new way with which I try to deal, from another perspective, with the performance/lecture notion of *Sweating the Discourse*. It is, unlike traditional criticism, carried out by a subject onto an object of study, one that simultaneity of the physical and intellectual discourse makes subject and object coincide in the same person. Criticism is embodied and thus sweats. With this proposal, I will try to take a step ahead, to convey the alternative potential of this kinesthetic language.

Aimar Pérez Galí is a performer, choreographer, researcher, educator and writer. He has written *Sudando el discurso* (2013).

14 – 16 h Break

16 – 18 h First Part of the Workshops
Conducted in parallel by **Thijs Lijster** and **Stephen Wright**.

18 – 18.30 h Break

18.30 – 20 h Roundtable
With **Peio Aguirre**, **Nuria Enguita**, **Mark Lewis** and **Aimar Pérez Galí**.
Moderated by **Joana Hurtado Matheu**

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14th, 2015 **ART CRITICISM: THE REDEFINITION OF A GENRE?**

9 – 9.30 h Opening Presentation
Joana Hurtado Matheu: writer, curator and researcher specialized on art and cinema.

9.30 – 10.30 h
Infrastructure
Irit Rogoff
The institutional, the financial and the corporate join forces with cultural rhetorics in the form of infrastructures – seemingly neutral, seemingly enabling but ultimately the very tool for denying critical entry points. Given that infrastructures are the building blocks of capitalism's modus operandi, is there a potential to think this model of efficient delivery critically?

Irit Rogoff is a writer, teacher, curator and organizer. She is Professor of Visual Culture at Goldsmiths London University, a department she founded in 2002, and is the author of *The Way We Work Now* (2016).

10.30 – 11.30 h
The Enfranchisement of Critique: From Specificity to Compatibility
Stephen Wright
Modernity accustomed us to seeing critique as a specific activity available to all. Yet the critical tools themselves seem to have been repurposed for other uses in our historical moment characterized by

the overcoming of the division of labour between critical practice and theory. Critique now operates sundered from itself, its self-understanding founded not on its specificity but rather on its compatibility with other art-related activities, seeding itself in all sorts of fields, in the service of a broad-based heuristic usership.

Stephen Wright is a Paris-based art writer and teaches the practice of theory at the EESI, European School of Visual Arts. In 2013, he published *Toward a Lexicon of Usership* (Van Abbemuseum, 2013).

11.30 – 12 h Break

12 – 13 h
Towards an 'Espacement' of Criticism
Thijs Lijster
The shift from modern to contemporary art in the 1980s comes with both a de-territorialization and de-territorialisation of criticism. Although I consider this development critically, I argue that new theoretical sources might generate the discourse that allows us to step out of the expert field of traditional criticism, thus creating a new space for criticism.

Thijs Lijster is Assistant Professor in the Philosophy of Art and Culture at the University of Groningen. He coedited *Spaces for Criticism. Shifts in Contemporary Art Discourses* (Valiz, 2015).

13 – 14 h
GREBNEERG
David G. Torres
The avant-garde could have finally accomplished its goal: to be kitsch. It has done so, however, taking an unexpected path, maybe not imagined: is criticism not always in the worst of situations? Is it not the feeblest authors, those who do not speak for themselves and always talk about the experiences of others, who use it? Criticism would, therefore, connect with unimaginative and non-creative art forms and writing, and would show that "the big culprit" was right, but in reverse.

David G. Torres is an art critic for *El Cultural* and *Bonart*. He is the author of the essay *No más mentiras* and director of the Master of Contemporary Art at the IL3 (University of Barcelona).

14 – 16 h Break

16 – 18 h Second Part of the Workshops
Conducted in parallel by **Thijs Lijster** and **Stephen Wright**.

18 – 18.30 h Break

18.30 – 20 h Roundtable
With **Irit Rogoff**, **Stephen Wright**, **Thijs Lijster** and **David G. Torres**.
Moderated by **Oriol Fontdevila**

Workshops

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13th AND 14th, 2015, FROM 16 TO 18 H

The Crisis of Criticism
Conducted by **Thijs Lijster**
What is the "crisis of criticism" that has been the subject of so many debates during the last decade, and what are its origins? Can we even speak of a crisis, if criticism is virtually omnipresent? This workshop will start with a brief historical overview of art criticism, followed by discussions on the function of the critic (e.g. interpretation, judgment, connecting the work to the socio-historical context), the use and misuse of criticism, and ways out of the crisis.

During the following session, we change the tone from a "crisis" to a "displacement" of criticism, and discuss several structural shifts in the field of criticism. What is, for instance, the implication of the shift from art criticism in journals to Internet criticism on blogs, discussion forums, etc.? Or what happens when artists or curators themselves become critics? We will try to make sense of what criticism can be or become in our contemporary mediatized and globalized public sphere.

A Lexical Turn: Rethinking the Terms of Critique
Conducted by **Stephen Wright**
The powerful conceptual vocabulary inherited from Western modernity presents us with an unusual paradox. The terminological toolbox is full; all the word tools are there, and in great shape too. But, somehow, they're not quite the right tools for the jobs at hand; they are the right tools for a job no longer needed – tools calibrated to older conceptual edifices, founded in mainstream art-sustaining environments, aligned to practices (before they were even called that) stemming from aesthetic autonomy.

This two-afternoon workshop will take a first stab at rethinking our conceptual vocabulary, assessing in a new light terms that we take for granted that we might wish to retire, considering terms from other fields which might be introduced into art-critical discourse. What we need, perhaps more than anything, is a retooled lexicon. This has nothing to do with drumming up some sort of new expert speak or coining neologisms, and everything to do with repurposing common terms from other lexical fields, other practices of knowledge.

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