

Through Klasson's method *Le troisième angle*, contemporary post-human and new materialism theories, I will argue that the camera really became her extended organ highly integrated in her performative method, with its own agency affecting the final result. Klasson as a (Swedish) *photographer* or a (French) *body artist* places her in two different contexts and thus two different historiographies of art.

11:20

Lunch Break

12:30

John Potvin, Associate Professor in the Department of Art History at Concordia University in Montreal:
'Staging the Deco Dandy at International Expositions in 1920s Paris and Athens'

Abstract

If, as scholars have shown, Paris was a 'woman's city', then Parisian fashions for men, and men's attention to elegance, style and modern design was, as we might conclude, non-existent or trivialised at best. The modern metropolis, fashion and gender became so inextricably linked that by the time of the 1923 *Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes* in Paris, it was concluded in the twelve-volume encyclopaedia, that: 'Whereas men go to London for suits and shirts, women all dream of being dressed in Paris'. These grand claims, while true in some measure, have obscured the relationship French tailors and their clients have had in the economic and cultural life of the country. If men went to London for the tailored goods and bespoke accessories of sartorial gentleness, the assumption is that men's fashions were removed from everyday life of Paris as much as from the national concerns of post-war reconstruction and the balance of payment. This paper will explore the critical transnational path that men's wear took beginning with the 1925 Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes and then the 1928 Exposition de France à Athènes to become an important marker of national wellbeing and a formidable force within the sartorial landscape.

13:45

Coffee Break

14:00

Peter Dickinson, Professor in the English Department and the School for the Contemporary Arts at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver:

'Performing the Distributed Voice of Trauma: Some Local and Transnational Reflections'

Abstract

At the beginning of her classic study *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*, Cathy Caruth draws our attention to the human voice that cries out from the traumatic wound, a voice that attempts to speak 'a reality or truth that is not otherwise available'. But she also notes that this voice is addressed to another and that in this 'encounter with another' we find the necessarily intersubjective and relational experience of trauma: 'the very possibility and surprise of listening to another's wound'. Each of the performances I discuss in this paper invite an active listening to the pain of another that does not attempt to separate the individual experience of past trauma from the subject who has suffered it, but that through the live, real-time process of bearing witness to its performative repetition in the present distributes its ownership, and likewise the social responsibility for channeling its effects. I explore this idea of the performatively distributed voice of trauma through a brief examination of three works of interdisciplinary performance. The first, *Tightrope*, by the Montreal-based queer performance duo 2boys, is a work of cabaret theatre that combines spoken word story-telling, singing, and drag in order to channel an historical archive of grief and loss around AIDS that also becomes a future-oriented act of transnational repertory remembrance. The second case study is *The Events*, Scottish playwright David Greig's staging of the aftermath of a mass shooting that is based on his research into the 2011 massacre on the Norwegian island of Utøya. Greig's play calls for the on-stage presence of a different community choir at each performance. Thus incorporated into the tragic events of the play, these choirs also distribute an empathically embodied response to their effects through the shared act of song. I conclude by discussing Betroffenheit, a collaboration between Vancouver-based choreographer Crystal Pite and the writer and actor Jonathon Young. In this acclaimed work of dance-theatre the combining of somatic and acousmatic techniques of expression, not least through the art of lip-synch, distribute what might have remained a private and distinctly local experience of trauma and grief into a public and performatively transnational act of kinaesthetic empathy.

15:15

Concluding remarks (**Dirk Gindt**)

Transnational Performativities: Performing Identities in a Global Context

Interdisciplinary symposium
16 May, 2018

Department of
Culture and Aesthetics



Stockholm
University



Betroffenheit by Kidd Pivot. Photo: Michael Slobodian



Programme

09:00

Opening remarks (Dirk Gindt)

09:05

Johanna Karlsson, PhD student at the Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies, Aberystwyth University in Wales:

For This World and the Next: Bobby Sands' Body as a Medium of Communication

Abstract

This paper will look at how IRA prisoner Bobby Sands performed Irishness as well as Catholicism in order to attract the attention of a transnational audience during his time second period of imprisonment (1977-1981). In order to do that and to trace Sands's urge to perform, I turn to Judith Butler's *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly* and her defining the concept of performativity: "[...] not a question of first having power and then being able to act; sometimes it is a question of acting, and in the acting, laying claim to the power one requires".

The fact that Sands and his fellow prisoners had little choice but to use their bodies as weapons makes it an even clearer and stronger case of performativity: the weaker and more fragile the body, the more powerful the images of resistance. It was not until Sands directed the violence towards his own person (as opposed to Protestant targets in Northern Ireland) and went on hunger strike, that the world opened its eyes to the Belfast H-Block prisoners.

How did Bobby Sands, despite no communication with the outside world permitted, perform and convey his identity as an Irishman and a Catholic to a transnational audience? What part did Sands's body play in this communication; both before and during the hunger strike that eventually lead to his death? What performative shapes did the protest take as Margaret Thatcher refused negotiations with the H-Block prisoners?

09:35

Sofia Iaffa Nylén, PhD student in Literature Studies at the Department of Culture and Aesthetics, Stockholm University:

'I don't know, she says that she leaves because of poverty': Political exile forming and disrupting identities in Cristina Feijóo's 'Como en las Películas' (1995)

Abstract

This presentation brings up some questions that have emerged in my research on exile literature from Argentina, Chile and Uruguay between 1970-2000. I focus on a specific instance in my study, which relates to the more wide-ranging question of how this body of literature makes a rethinking of exile necessary. Specifically, I discuss Cristina Feijóo's short story 'Como en las películas' (1995) against the backdrop of the scholar Claudio Guillén's ideas in his text 'On the Literature of Exile and Counter-Exile'. I will present a critique of Guillén's text to evaluate if his ideas are useful for my thesis-project.

My main conclusion is that Guillén contributes with valuable knowledge about important traditions of themes, styles, literary figures and genres in the history of exile literature, but that this might need to be complemented with a study of how the literary texts respond to the historical and political context of the specific exile that condition them. In line with Edward Said, I will argue that exile has gained a new, different meaning and form in our contemporary and globalized world and that the texts I study both reflect and question how these new exile conditions shape identities. This can, I suggest, be grasped through a performative approach to the literary text and to the exile subject.

10:05

Coffee Break

10:20

Iain Sands, PhD student in Korean Studies at the Department of Asian, Middle Eastern, and Turkish Studies, Stockholm University:

Performing in the 'CulturalBorderlands': Unpacking Performance Practices of a North Korean Musical Troupe in South Korea

Abstract

North Korean individuals suffer traumatic human rights abuses during their escape from the North. Upon arriving in the South, despite being officially welcomed as 'ethnic brethren', many North Korean defectors find that hopes for a better life are not realised. On one level North Korean defectors are ethnic Koreans and speak the same language as their hosts. On another, they are in a territory entirely foreign to them. Against this background, I suggest that rather than escaping trauma, it is intensified in this new environment as North Korean defectors struggle to negotiate new identities as liminal subjects in a cultural borderland. In this paper I discuss

a dance performance by the troupe Pyongyang Minsok Yesultan and raise the following questions: How are traumatic experiences articulated in the performance? To what extent is restoration of agency achieved for North Korean trauma-subjects through such performance practices? I argue that performance practices represent potentially empowering sites through which traumatic experience may be expressed in embodied ways that open a space for potential restoration of agency.

10:50

Lotta Granqvist, PhD student in Art History at the Department of Culture and Aesthetics, Stockholm University:

The camera as extended organ: Penetrating Eva Klasson's body of work

Abstract

This paper will present a selection of works from the years between 1975-1978 and highlight the performance qualities in Eva Klasson's (1947) works and artistic method. Klasson worked with the camera as a tool and a witness trying to question the very essence of photography. For many years she only photographed her own body in a macro perspective revealing pores, hair, urine, mucus, knots etc. with an extremely sharpness. She stated early on that she recognized her camera as one of her organs and called her method *Le troisième angle* (The third angle).

Klasson was born in Sweden and practiced the craftsmanship of photography as an assistant to several photographers before she moved to Paris around 1970. In the aftermaths of the student revolution in 1968 Klasson's artistic career set off. The French art critics described her work as a photographic revolution. With a remarkable artist's book Klasson placed herself at the forefront of the intersection between photography, conceptual art and *art corporel*.

Klasson worked intensively with her unique method in the 1970s but left the art scene in the mid 1980s. Despite successful exhibitions in several important art cities in Europe and the USA, international reviews celebrating her as an avant-garde artist and not least her own artistic statements repeatedly refusing labelling her work as photography, she is since the re-discovery thirty years later firmly given an identity as a Swedish photographer.

What happens with the analysis of Klasson's oeuvre when the context is broadened and the artistry rather is seen in the light of an artist performing her transnational artistic identity with visual and thematic connections to a European feminist body art avant-garde of the 1970s?