University of Huddersfield Repository

Bailey, Rowan

Sculptural Plasticity and the Brainbody

Original Citation


This version is available at http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/31562/

The University Repository is a digital collection of the research output of the University, available on Open Access. Copyright and Moral Rights for the items on this site are retained by the individual author and/or other copyright owners. Users may access full items free of charge; copies of full text items generally can be reproduced, displayed or performed and given to third parties in any format or medium for personal research or study, educational or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, provided:

- The authors, title and full bibliographic details is credited in any copy;
- A hyperlink and/or URL is included for the original metadata page; and
- The content is not changed in any way.

For more information, including our policy and submission procedure, please contact the Repository Team at: E.mailbox@hud.ac.uk.

http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/
Rowan Bailey (University of Huddersfield)

Sculptural Plasticity and the Brainbody

This paper proposes to explore, through new materialist insights drawn from art and neuroscience, an alternative imaging/imagining of brain plasticity. Such a reading presents the brain image in and through enactments of the brainbody; a phenomenon which accounts for the brain’s own entanglement with ‘bodies, mind, behavior, socio-cultural contexts, and meaning-making’ (Schmitz and Höppner, 2014: 546). The paper will examine curatorial strategies deployed by Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, in particular, insights generated out of dOCUMENTA (13) (2012) and the 14th Istanbul Biennial SALTWATER: A Theory of Thought Forms (5 September-1 November 2015). These international exhibitions engage a diffractive methodology of reading through the form-iterations generated by the brain on socio-cultural and psychic levels. Secondly, analysis of a recent film by Ursula Biemann and Mo Deiner entitled Twenty-One Percent (2016), presents an approach to artistic research where the brainbody phenomenon and agential matter meet through the chemical compound structure of the body and its intra-celestial relationship to the universe. Finally, the paper will consider brain imaging technologies in the context of The Human Connectome Project, and to the ways in which a reading of this brain – as a collective speculative fiction of newly discovered regions – could think neuronal imaging beyond the formal necessities of neuroscience and into the spaces of our plastic imaginations. By rethinking the historical and contemporary technologies and apparatuses of brain imaging through the channels of artistic research, a diffractive imaginary for sculptural plasticity will be realised.