

Politics, Poetics and Practice: New paradigms for theory-practice interchange in creative media production

Department of Media, Canterbury Christ Church University

Friday, 6 May 2011

As part of a research project focusing on theory-practice interchange in creative media production, the Department of Media at Canterbury Christ Church University will be hosting a one-day colloquium exploring the ways in which creative practice is – or might be – understood in ‘political’ terms.

If media arts practice engages with those networks of thought we term ‘theory’, then what exactly is the radical potential of theory-practice interchange, and wherein lies its political dynamic? In particular the colloquium seeks to consider the ways in which issues of poetics and aesthetics (radical or otherwise) might or might not figure within political formulations of media arts practice.

Participants in the colloquium will be invited to reflect upon their own practice within the context of theory-practice interchange, to explore the political potential/dynamic of their own praxis, and to situate this praxis within the broader context of theoretical discourse. In particular, participants will be asked to reflect upon the way in which theoretical formulations play through the creative process in their own work.

Presentations of approximately 15 mins will be followed by an equal time allowed for *discussion* (rather than the standard Q&A). Presentations should address the issues outlined above, and should be designed to contribute to and stimulate discussion.

Points for reflection might include, but are not limited to:

- relationships between form, ideology and practice
- the extent to which established theoretical frameworks remain relevant to your own practice in a rapidly changing mediascape
- the radical potential of old media ; the radical potential of new media
- the limitations and strengths of established ‘political’ formulations of media practice [e.g. Brecht, Adorno, Benjamin, etc]
- the potential of new theoretical models to inform practice
- the politics of affect; the politics of sensation; the politics of performance; the politics of representation, etc, etc, etc.
- the ‘avant-garde’, the ‘independent’ and the ‘experimental’: the contemporary relevance (or otherwise) of historical paradigms for radical media arts practice

- historical and international perspectives [“There was a surprising degree of orthodoxy in British video in the seventies that did not apply on the continent or in the States. Here it was all structuralism and deconstruction” (Steve Hawley)]
- *“I’m interested in...”* - arts practice beyond the model of personal expression
- the social function of creative media arts practice
- oppositional poetics, negative differentiation and the constitutive other [counter-cinema, the mainstream, deconstruction, appropriation]
- the political potential of non-dialectic, non-binary forms [montage vs folding]
- the radical potential of the unknowable within existing regimes of knowledge

Participants will be asked to contribute one of their own short films to a screening of work held on the evening before the colloquium. This is designed to support discussion during the colloquium itself.

Participants will be provided with accommodation for the night of Thursday 5th May, 2011, if required, and will be reimbursed for the cost of economy rail travel to and from Canterbury.

If you would like to join the colloquium, please contact Andy Birtwistle (andy.birtwistle@canterbury.ac.uk) as soon as possible to confirm participation, and then email a title and a 100-200 word outline for your proposed presentation by 1st March, 2011.