



[sic!]

[sic!] 2014 – The Invisible
Call for Participation



[sic!] Summer Institute Cologne

Cologne University's international interdisciplinary summer institute [sic!] 2014 will take place from 15th to 23rd of July 2014. After last year's founding event on "Techniques of Imagination", participants and faculty of [sic!] 2014 will focus on historiographical perspectives on "The Invisible". We invite graduate and post-graduate students from Art History, Media, Film, Theatre, Performance and Cultural Studies to apply for our international program. Each participant may choose from three seminars led by a pair of scholars from Northwestern University (Evanston, USA) and the University of Cologne. 2014's program includes seminars on Art History, Theatre and Performance Studies and Film and Media Studies. In addition to our seminars we offer interdisciplinary academic workshops that allow for a dialogue across the seminars. Each participant can choose one

seminar and a workshop, thus composing his/her individual study program. Seminars and workshops are framed by study trips, evening lectures by faculty, and poster presentations by students.

[sic!] will be hosted by the Theaterwissenschaftliche Sammlung (TWS) of Cologne University, one of the largest archives of theatre history in Europe. Situated in the picturesque manor house Schloss Wahn, located in the outskirts of Cologne, [sic!] provides a unique setting for learning and discussion, combining gracious surroundings with facilities for daily meetings, and offering access to exceptional archival materials in proximity to one of Germany's most vibrant metropolises.

All sessions will be conducted in English.

A provisional timetable and more information can be found on our website

<http://sic.uni-koeln.de>.

The Invisible

While [sic!] 2013 looked into questions and theories about "Techniques of Imagination", this year's program investigates "The Invisible". The ambiguity of this topic – seemingly an anathema for Media and Cultural Studies – turns our attention to important questions of methodological approaches to what cannot be seen (anymore) but was/is there nevertheless. "The Invisible" also turns our attention to phenomena that transcend our perceptual order. How are these phenomena always connected to medial and artistic strategies? What methodological approaches are used to work with them? The framing questions – how can "The Invisible" be shown, performed, depicted, enacted, researched? – guarantee stimulating dialogue between all disciplines at [sic!] 2014. The perspectives on "The Invisible" can be rooted in theatre, media and art history, film studies,

archaeology, digital media, video games, cultural history, performance practice, and many more traditions.

[sic!] 2014 invites scholars and students alike to look for old manifestations, new traces, and novel approaches (in)to cultural history and historiography.



Application

The fee for participation in [sic!] 2014 is EUR 150.00.* Accommodation expenses are not included in the fee, but the team of [sic!] 2014 will be happy to assist in organizing accommodations. Graduate and postgraduate students who are interested in participating are asked to send their application form and CV to sascha.foerster@uni-koeln.de no later than 19 April 2014. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered. The application form can be found on our website <http://sic.uni-koeln.de>.

Any questions may be directed to Sascha Förster: sascha.foerster@uni-koeln.de

* You may apply to be considered a case of hardship. For more information, e-mail the coordinator: sascha.foerster@uni-koeln.de

Seminar I – Art History

– Stefan Grohé, Claudia Swan

Art makes visible. The origins of painting, in the West, are traced to the preservation of the likeness of the dead and the absent: art makes the absent present. Western Christian art bore the responsibility of providing a material substitute for the unseen God and for rendering visible concepts and notions. From early modern times on this legacy enabled art to act as the prime medium for rendering that which cannot be seen, e.g. imaginative fantasies, concepts, or the observations of modern science. Techniques had to be conceived to show dreams, ghosts, and angels as well as sounds, atmospheric phenomena, and rays. The course will address this fundamental paradox: it will offer students a focused introduction to the literature on one of the most fundamental thematics in the

history of (Western) art, emphasizing how art conceals and reveals simultaneously; its relation to seeing and knowing; and the dialectics of presence and absence. Examples will be taken from medieval, early modern and modern art. The aim is to discuss the possibility an iconography of the invisible.

Seminar II – Media Studies

– Jacob Smith, Brigitte Weingart

Media technologies have often prompted the desire to gain access to a realm of sensory experience that exists beyond the immediately visible world. In this seminar, we will investigate questions of media and “The Invisible” along two complementary lines of inquiry. The first is concerned with the ways in which optical media have been used to visualize the formerly unseen in the material world, or to picture the invisible presence of occult (‘hidden, clandestine’) forces, ranging from cosmic effluvia to demons and ghosts. The dialectics of visibility and invisibility that emerge from our genealogical analysis of pre-modern visual practices informs our discussion of techniques in contemporary cinema and ‘imaginee-ring.’ Just as optical media technologies have been mobilized to expand the

boundaries of the visible, modern technologies of sound have facilitated an auditory media culture that is adjacent to, but different from visual culture. A second line of inquiry in the course will thus engage with the scholarship of Sound Studies and the history of sound media in order to think about how "The Invisible" can also be understood to mean "The Audible." Topics discussed in this class include the place of media in the history of the senses, Renaissance spiritual magic, occult discourses surrounding mediated voices, ghost photography, microscopy and microcinematography, natural radio, the sonification of data, and the invisible as narrative device in film and radio.

Seminar III – Theatre Studies

– Tracy C. Davis, Peter W. Marx

Is it there? Yet? Again? Still? The invisible challenges our sense of perceptual order – it marks an uncertainty that goes beyond semiotic questions of representation and mere physical sight: is there more than we can see? And if so, how do we know? And can we share this insight?

While Brecht's Galileo tries to persuade the cardinals to just 'look' (through the telescope) and discover the truth lying open in front of their eyes, Hamlet assures Horatio that there are more things in heaven and earth "Than are dreamt of in your philosophy." For Galileo scientific truth is as visible as the Ghost is to Hamlet. The visible and the invisible are contingent categories depending on cultural and epistemological frameworks. Through representation,

we can understand the invisible as a cultural category that transcends optics and literal sight. The invisible registers in various forms of art and media, taking many shapes and forms, challenging the semiotic order and categories of experience. Beyond offering experiences of the invisible, art and media create intellectual reflections of the invisible and thus develop theory about it. Theatre is granted unique license to render visible what is otherwise invisible. At the same time, theatre reflects contingent orders of visibility, the senses, and truth-telling predominant in each culture and in relation to specific artistic and historic frames. What are these differences? We will explore perspectives on the history of invisibility, its relation to theatre in various contexts, and the challenges and potential of a historiography of the invisible.



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Deadline for applications: 19 April 2014

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