

[sic!]



SUMMER INSTITUTE COLOGNE



[Techniques of Imagination]
New Perspectives in the Historiography of Art, Media Culture, and Theatre

[sic!] – Summer Institute Cologne 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 suburbs of Cologne, [sic!] provides a unique setting for learning and discussion, combining gracious surroundings with facilities for daily seminars, and offering access to exceptional archival materials in proximity to one of Germany's most vibrant metropolises.

The application deadline is April 15, 2013.
You will find the application form and more information on <http://sic.uni-koeln.de>
If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Sascha Förster (coordination) via sascha.foerster@uni-koeln.de



[sic!]



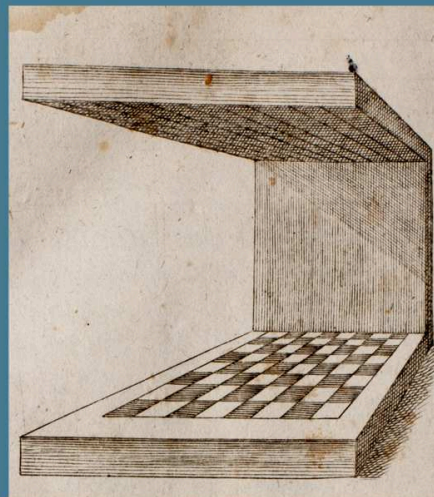
About [techniques of imagination]

Imagination has a very long history and an array of applications in the domain of contemporary arts and the humanities. Philosophers have long described it as a faculty of mind, with Aristotle first asserting its centrality to experience and thought. Renaissance artists, writers, and musicians deployed the imagination as a means to create new, unknown entities. In the course of time, imagination has come to signify the free flow of thoughts and emotions; and the means by which artistic practices enable expression. Imagination is thus a process and a condition of appreciation: it creates things and enables individuals to be receptive to those products. At the same time, imagination requires certain skills and techniques. It is not merely a mental capacity but it roots also in material products and crafts. The history of imagination can be read in the light of these technical aspects.

Through a one-week international summer workshop, [sic!] proposes to inquire into imagination as a *techne* by exploring the contingency of imaginative techniques. Historiography in the disciplines of art history, digital culture/game studies, and theatre history turns again and again towards questions of presence, distance, reiteration, and repeatability in repertoires. These and other matters provide the framework for a necessary and promising discussion among representatives of a variety of fields, practices, and disciplines.

[sic!] offers small-scale seminars in Art History, Theatre Studies, and Game Studies as well as platforms for cross-disciplinary dialogues; evening lectures; and a forum to present and discuss projects. An international (post)graduate program for PhD students, [sic!] consists of seminars led in English by faculty from the Cologne University and Northwestern University (Chicago).

The application deadline is April 15, 2013. The fee (meals, course material) is 150 Euro. More information on <http://sic.uni-koeln.de>



Seminar I [Art History]

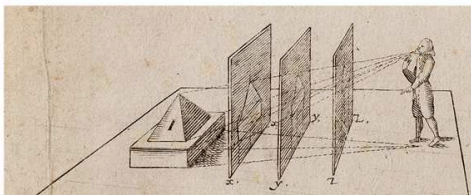
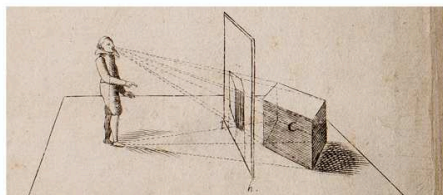
Claudia Swan (Northwestern University), Stefan Grohé (Cologne University)

Imagination in the first place is a capacity of the mind which in some way operates parallel to picturing understood as the making of (material) images. If it is right that one of the core principles of the arts is that they materialize imaginations, mimesis and representation occur under special circumstances.

The seminar will address three different levels of art historical research on imagination. It will attempt to differentiate from the art historian's point of view between imagination, picturing and picture making and to define imagination in the arts in relation to other fields of representation, like observation, documentation etc.

The main part will be made up of discussions about the iconography of imaginations: imagining the other, imagining death, imagining the invisible. Imagining the other will study the ways, in which distant worlds, their people, rites and objects have been conceived through art. It will connect especially the interrelatedness of knowledge and imagination. Imagining death will deal with a prime example of figurative thinking, the challenge for the artist to give shape to that which makes an end to all forms. The question for the possibilities of representing the invisible as such will give the opportunity to discuss further examples like depictions of gods and dreams or micro- and macroscopic bodies.

In a third part the workshop will ask within the framework of the arts of the early modern and modern period, which are the media of imagination. Is imagination bound to media like painting, sculpture and the graphic arts and how is it determined by their respective capacities to suit the materialization of imagination? Examples will be taken mostly from Dutch and German art of the early modern period.



Seminar II [Theatre Studies]

Tracy C. Davis (Northwestern University), Peter W. Marx (Cologne University)

Meeting where the TWS houses an extraordinary collection of theatrical models, works on paper, photographs, and puppetry spanning many cultures and centuries prompts questions about how artistic practices combine myriad techniques that in turn facilitate the free flow of thoughts and emotions. These constitutive repertoires of techniques travel from one artistic tradition to another and one medium to another as performance yet are also represented by these static artefacts. How does theatre historiography account for the imaginative act in its moment of performance and reception? What is the historian's role in understanding imagination and its technologies of transmission in any culture or period, and how are historians implicated in practices of imagination, transfer, and retention? Is the practice of history necessarily different from the practices of performative transmission?

This seminar will discuss key texts on theatre historiography and discuss case studies that span the early modern period to the present. Participants are invited to send in questions and case studies that bear upon these problems.

Seminar III [Game Studies]

Benjamin Beil (Cologne University), TBA

Do new digital technologies lead to new techniques of imagination? The computer and particularly the Internet have been represented as enabling technologies, turning consumers into users and users into producers. The unfolding online cultural production by an 'creative audience' has been framed enthusiastically as participatory culture.

However, have these (supposedly) new tendencies towards user-created content and the 'appropriation' of cultural objects and texts by users, fans, and gamers really changed the media landscape profoundly? A main focus of this seminar will be the area of video game modding – at first glance a 'typical' example of audience creativity and community-based creative design. But on closer inspection, modding scenes turn out as a rather confusing network of community and producer interests – creative freedom vs. legal constraints, hacker-ethics vs. 'modding-as-a-business-model', etc. This seminar will discuss key concepts of participatory culture(s). It aims to critically engage with the discourse around 'new' and 'old' techniques of imagination in the digital age.

