

Border | Aesthetics

Border Aesthetics International Conference
Call for Papers WITH EXTENDED PROPOSAL DEADLINE
5-7 September 2012
University of Tromsø, Norway

Keynotes:

Debra A. Castillo (Cornell University)
Ulrike Hanna Meinhof (University of Southampton)
Frederik Tygstrup (University of Copenhagen)

Resident artists:

Chto Delat? / What is to be Done?

This conference will investigate how changing perceptions of borders relate to shifting aesthetic practices. In so doing, it draws upon two guiding observations that must inform any notion of a border aesthetics, these being a) that aesthetic theories and practices regularly invoke and engage with notions of the border; and b) that borders are in turn capable of producing aesthetic effects and can themselves be conceived of as aesthetic objects. Papers can focus on the literature, film, photography, visual design, urban planning, and video art to name but a few examples. Also work produced by creative artists working in or imagining border regions will be welcomed. In particular, the Barents Region and the Mediterranean are important areas of study but we also will consider – and encourage – investigations of other regions.

Our concentration on border regions enables the Conference not only to explore and develop further the relatively new field of migratory aesthetics, but it will also formulate what might provisionally be called a zonal aesthetics. Indeed, one of its principal goals will be precisely to establish how a new 'aesthetics of space' of a kind likely to be required by the study of the divergent groups, objects, values and activities that inhabit and pass through border zones can be described, explained, negotiated, and evaluated.

In the process, the conference will explicitly address the question of how aesthetic activity participates in the processes by which people relate to the real and conceptual geographies in which they live and through which they move. This focus is both socially engaged and inquisitive about the dynamic ways in which cultural phenomena are ascribed value through aesthetic practice. At the same time, it situates the conference at the vanguard of current thinking about aesthetics.

See our Website for a full account of our project and our past activities <http://uit.no/hsl/borderaesthetics>.

The keynotes are Ulrike Hanne Meinhof, Frederik Tygstrup and Debra Castillo, and resident artists are participants in the artist collective Chto delat? / What is to be done?. **Ulrike Hanna Meinhof** is Professor of German and Cultural Studies at the University of Southampton and a specialist in discourse analysis. Her main areas of research currently involve ethnographic research on transnational networks of migrants, especially musicians from African countries, in multicultural neighbourhoods across European border communities, in provincial regions and in metropolitan spaces across Europe. She has previously led the *EU Border Identities* and *Changing City Spaces* projects; ongoing projects are *SoFoNe: Searching for Neighbours: dynamics of mental and physical borders in Europe* and *TNMundi: Diaspora as social and cultural practice: A study of transnational networks across Europe and Africa*. **Frederik Tygstrup** is the director of the Copenhagen Doctoral School in Cultural Studies and Associate Professor of

Comparative Literature at the University of Copenhagen. His primary specialization is in the history and theory of the European novel and his present research interests focus on the intersections of artistic practices and other social practices, including urban aesthetics, the history of representations and experiences of space, literature and medicine, literature and geography, literature and politics. **Debra A. Castillo** is Stephen H. Weiss Presidential Fellow, Emerson Hinchliff Professor of Hispanic Studies and Professor of Comparative Literature at Cornell University. She also directs the Latin American Studies Program. In her often transdisciplinary research, she specializes in contemporary narrative of the Americas, gender studies, and post-colonial literary theory. Her most recent book is the co-edited volume (with Kavita Panjabi) *Cartographies of Affect: Across Borders in South Asia and the Americas*. The platform **Chto delat / What is to be done?** was founded with the goal of merging political theory, art, and activism in early 2003 in Petersburg by a workgroup of artists, critics, philosophers, and writers from Petersburg, Moscow, and Nizhny Novgorod. They are at present working on a project concerning the Norwegian-Russian border.

Panel proposals, especially from existing border studies groups, are especially welcome, as well as proposals for individual papers focusing on:

- shifting aesthetic practices: changing perceptions of borders?
- aesthetic categories and ethical values in presentations of border zones
- emerging medial and aesthetic techniques in presentations of border zones
- aesthetic activities in lived border regions
- from migratory aesthetics to zonal aesthetics
- the aesthetic activity of migrants, minorities, and trans-national identities within border zones
- liminality and relationality in border films, literature, art and music
- aesthetic consumption: border festivals, border tourism
- the theory of aesthetic and spatial boundaries
- visibility, visibility and memory in border zones
- the role of aesthetics and cultural production in the bordering process
- aesthetics and the politics of borders

We are seeking proposals for 20 minute papers in English by 20 June 2012. Please include the following information in your proposal:

1. Provisional title
2. 5 keywords
3. An abstract, including an account of the subject matter and methodology of research of not over 200 words
4. Brief CV in 2-3 sentences

When we receive your abstract we will respond within three days until the call for papers ends on 20 June, 2012. We will then inform you how to complete registration for the conference by 15 July 2012 using our conference website. Blocks of Rooms at a conference rate have been reserved in two hotels in Tromsø. Description of the hotels and the reservation number for each hotel will be made available on the Conference website. Please book your hotel rooms early since Tromsø is a well-known tourist destination in September.

The conference is the final activity of the Border Aesthetics Research Project, Department of Literature and Culture at University of Tromsø, Norway. We are supported by the Norwegian Research Council KULVER Programme and the HSL Faculty, University of Tromsø (through the Border Poetics/Border Culture research group), and cooperate with the curator collective Pikene på broen. The conference will begin Wednesday early evening the 5th of September and end

with a dinner on Friday evening on the 7th. The conference fee will be 900 NOK. Exhibitions to take place during the conference are being arranged. We look forward to receiving your abstract or panel suggestions.

Send all communications directly to both Johan Schimanski and Stephen Wolfe: (johan.schimanski@uit.no; stephen.wolfe@uit.no) after which you will receive a web based registration form. More information will soon be available on the project website (<http://uit.no/hsl/borderaesthetics>).