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Art and Mortality

Symposium: 19-20 September 2014

Day one | Friday 19 September: Sir Roland Wilson Building, Australian National University
Day two | Saturday 20 September: James O Fairfax Theatre, National Gallery of Australia

Centre for Art History and Art Theory
School of Art
ANU College of
Arts & Social Sciences
Art and Mortality: Symposium 19-20 September 2014

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Death is one of the enduring themes in the arts, engaging visual artists working in all media. How do their art works, from the past and present, relate to contemporary concerns about dying and death? This two day symposium brings together leading art historians, curators and artists to discuss ideas associated with mortality and the visual arts. Topics to be addressed include: the symbolism of death, death and anatomy, death masks, photography and the limits of representation, the scene of death, and ethical and social issues. On the second day there is a special focus on works in the National Gallery’s collection and a viewing of the exhibition Arthur Boyd: Agony and Ecstasy. Film screenings, Tender (2013) and Amour (2012), are also included in the conference program.

Convened by Professor Helen Ennis, Sir William Dobell Chair of Art History, Director of the Centre for Art History and Art Theory, ANU School of Art. Art and Mortality has been organised by the ANU School of Art Centre for Art History and Art Theory in partnership with the National Gallery of Australia. It is funded by the ANU Research School of Humanities, and the ANU College of Arts and Social Sciences.

Centre for Art History and Art Theory, ANU School of Art

ANU School of Art (SoA) is located within the Research School of Humanities and the Arts, College of Arts and Social Sciences (CASS). The School prepares students for professional careers in visual arts, media arts and design, and art history. It has built a reputation as a leading arts educator offering specialist training in Art History and Art Theory, Ceramics, Furniture, Glass, Gold and Silversmithing, Painting, Photography and Media Arts (including digital video, computer animation, networked art and electronic sound), Printmedia and Drawing, Sculpture and Textiles. The SoA philosophy embraces the use of new technologies such as computer-based design and multimedia applications which are used to develop both new visual forms and to enliven and expand traditional media.

The newly-established Centre for Art History and Art Theory is part of ANU School of Art and focuses on teaching and research in a wide range of art historical and theoretical areas. It offers the Bachelor of Art History and Curatorship, and teaches courses in undergraduate programs, graduate coursework programs and graduate research programs. It also offers higher degree research (Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy) in art history and art theory.

Staff research specialisations are in the following areas: Asian art, historical to contemporary; curatorship; portraiture and identity; histories of photography; craft and design history; Australian art; and the history of artists’ materials and techniques. The Centre works closely with the national cultural institutions located in Canberra and organises a number of public events and focused conferences and workshops every year. The Centre also hosts the Australian Consortium on Asian Art.

Life|Death: a photographic exhibition of existence and mortality

Opening night: 23 October, 6pm
Photospa, Level 1, ANU School of Art
20 – 25 October 2014

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Places to eat on ANU Campus, Day one, Friday 19 September.

Cafés listed and an estimated walking time to lecture theatre

- Hedley Bull Centre, corner of Liversidge and Garran Rd – 3 min walk
- Fellows Bar and Café, University House, corner of Liversidge and Garran Rd (other side of Hedley Bull) – 4 min walk
- CHATS Café and Restaurant ground floor, near the ANU School of Art Gallery (Ellery Cres side) – 10 min walk
- Biginelli’s, School of Music, building 100, level 5 (Childers Street side) – 15 min walk
- The Street Theatre Café, 15 Childers Street, Acton – 20 min walk

There are many other cafes, restaurants and bars in the ANU vicinity including New Acton. More information can be found at anu.edu.au or lost on campus application http://lostoncampus.com.au/anu/main

Places to eat at the NGA, Day 2, Saturday 20 September

- Gallery Café. Open 10am – 4.30 pm daily
- The Street Café. Open 8.00am – 2.00pm (weather depending)
- Members’ Lounge. Open 10.00am – 2.30pm (check closing times as they may vary in afternoon)