QUEERING COLLAGE ONLINE SYMPOSIUM
Collage Research Network
3-4 December 2020
#QueeringCollage2020

ALL TIMES LISTED ARE IN GMT.

DAY 1: 3RD DECEMBER 2020

13:00-13:30: WELCOME AND ‘REGISTRATION’

13:30-14:30: SESSION 1
Oona Lochner, ‘Cutting Across Lines: Lil Picard and the Reorienting Effects of Collage’
Tara Ward, ‘Queering the Cubist Crib’

14:30-15:00: COFFEE BREAK

15:00-16:00: SESSION 2
Natasha Bissonauth, ‘Chitra Ganesh’s Tales of Amnesia (2002): Re-imagining Goddess Iconography through Queer Form’
Dawn Hoskin, ‘Byron Cutting a Dash: Screening the Pugilist Poet’

16:00-16:30: COFFEE BREAK

16:00-16:00: SESSION 3
Kris Belden-Adams, ‘Collaged Albums as a Means for Sub-Cultural Communication in William Whitney’s Fin-de-Siècle Photo Albums’
Zorian Clayton, ‘The Eddie Squires Scrapbooks: Cruising through the Space Age’

16:30-17:30: KEYNOTE
Catriona MacLeod, ‘Precarious Intimacies: The Papercut Albums of Adele Schopenhauer as Queer Spaces’

DAY 2: 4TH DECEMBER 2020

12:30-13:30: SESSION 1
Vivian K. Sheng, ‘A Lapse of Memory: Fiona Tan’s Moving Collage of Transcultural (Dis)identification’
Aiden Magro, ‘Collage as Queer Strategy: Simon Fujiwara’s Joanne (2016)’

13:30-14:00: COFFEE BREAK

14:00-15:30: SESSION 2
Melissa Rombout, ‘Suck: Queer Performativity and Political Speech in Gilbert and George’s Dirty Words’
Daniel Spaulding, ‘Postiority: From Front to Back (and Back Again)’

15:30-16:00: COFFEE BREAK

16:00-17:00: SESSION 3

17:00-17:15 – SHORT COFFEE BREAK

17:15-18:00 ARTIST TALK WITH JEREMY DIXON

18:00-18:15: CLOSING REMARKS
Abstracts and Biographies

Keynote
CATRIONA MACLEOD (she/her)
‘Precarious Intimacies: The Papercut Albums of Adele Schopenhauer as Queer Spaces’

As Melanie Micir’s and Aarthi Vadde’s recent work on women’s collage activities on the margins of modernism has argued, the critical potential and placement of “weakly theoretical” amateur works created, contained, and transmitted in precarious, semi-public spaces also deserve attention. Micir and Vadde coin the neologism “obliteration” for material not deemed worthy of publication or even preservation. My presentation investigates the nineteenth-century albums of Adele Schopenhauer, sister of the philosopher and daughter of Weimar salonnière Johanna Schopenhauer as an intimate, queer archive. Unpublished, despite concerted efforts by an erotic circle of female friends after her death, Schopenhauer’s work vanished, instead, into what can be described as a queer constellation of private albums or personal diaries. In their pages, and amidst other kinds of images and texts, delicate papercuts frolic in fantastic pleasure gardens and play out Eros and Psyche narratives.

The silhouette albums of Adele Schopenhauer that were first published almost a century after her meeting with Sibylle Mertens-Schaaffhausen, in 1913 and 1920, had been gifts to her beloved friends Ottelie von Goethe and Mertens-Schaaffhausen. As we know in the case of other European friendship albums, these can be considered three-dimensional spaces for female intimacy, repositories of emotion. However, the women who fashioned and made gifts of such pages also evinced what we might call a Nachlaß (literary estate) awareness and a Nachlaß drive, one that, however, bore little public fruit. In the turbulent years after her death, made difficult by Mertens’s disapproving children, Mertens, who had inherited almost everything, attempted to assemble and bring her friend’s oeuvre into the public eye: she visited the Leipzig book fair with a selection of items but failed to attract a publisher, and then tried to self-publish an album. When all these frantic efforts came to nothing, Mertens gave the entire collection in 1852 to the Weimar art collections, where they would languish in uncatalogued obscurity for two generations. What we have in the case of Schopenhauer and her circle of intimates is a tenacious “will to inventory” applied to the most marginal of artistic productivity.

Much of her recent work has been devoted to word and image studies and material culture in the context of German Classicism and Romanticism. She is completing a new book project, Romantic Scraps: Cutouts, Collages, and Inkblots, which explores how Romantic authors and visual artists cut, glue, stain, and recycle paper; generating paper cuts, collages, and ink blot poems in profusion, and combining them in what are for their time striking new hybrid forms such as the picture books of fairy-tale author Hans Christian Andersen (1805-1875) and medical doctor and poet Justinus Kerner (1786-1862). The book has been supported by a fellowship in 2018 from the ACLS.

She is the author of Embodying Ambiguity: Androgyny and Aesthetics from Winckelmann to Keller (Wayne State University Press). Her most recent book, Fugitive Objects: Literature and Sculpture in the German Nineteenth Century, appeared in 2014 with Northwestern University Press and was awarded the Jean-Pierre Baricelli Prize for best book in Romanticism Studies. MacLeod also co-edited the volume Un/Translatables: New Maps for Germanic Literatures, which appeared in 2016. That project also resulted in two articles on displaced philologies connecting Kafka with his first translators into English, Edwin and Willa Muir, with reference to their role in Scottish modernist language debates over vernaculars.

Past Secretary of the International Association of Word and Image Studies, MacLeod is the co-editor of two volumes in the area of interarts scholarship: Elective Affinities: Testing Word and Image Relationships (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2009) and Efficacité/Efficacy: How to Do Things with Words and Images? (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2011). Since 2011, she has been senior editor of the journal Word & Image. In 2015, she was elected Vice President of the Goethe Society of North America, and became President in January, 2019.
Artist Talk

JEREMY DIXON (he/him)

‘The Fingers Are The Eyes’

Hazard Press would suggest that at the moment we are living in a world of collage with so many different stimuli, experiences and events crashing into each other in totally new and unexpected ways. Collage as an art form can provide us with a democratic, cheap, resilient and queer response as a means of bringing some sense of personal order and control to this confused and threatening environment. Collage has always had strong ties to the field of Artists’ Books (where the book object is a work of art in itself, rather than a book about art, artworks or artists) and the work of Hazard Press reflects this connection with books, images, poetry and writing. This illustrated presentation will look at both the influences on, and the work of, Hazard Press in relation to collage and queer lived experience. Jeremy Dixon is also a poet and so the use of erasure and Found text is also an important aspect of their use of collage in the books produced by Hazard Press. The presentation will examine the why, the what and the how of the processes Hazard Press goes through in designing their collage artworks in relation to specific completed projects. Examples of the work discussed will include: 52 Books In 52 Weeks – where a new book was created for each week of the year; Collaging Ken & Joe – a book for Joe Orton containing Found visual and text-based collage; my 1980s Scrapbooks – pamphlets sourced from Jeremy Dixon’s original (and now vintage) scrapbooks; making a collage – the practicalities of making a collage artwork; and using collage as a visual reflection of the poetry in Jeremy Dixon’s new poetry manuscript.

Following the presentation there will be an opportunity to ask questions about collage, queerness and the work of Hazard Press. Founded by Jeremy Dixon in 2010, Hazard Press is a queer, Welsh imprint creating Artists’ Books with individuality, compassion, humour and attention to detail. Encompassing the plurality and history of the meanings of the word ‘queer’, Hazard Press books have rather unexpectedly formed an on-going project of individual autobiography based on poetry, memory, queerness, music, images, and a delight in the accidental forms and diversions that the journey of planning and making an Artists’ Book project can take. The presentation will also look at the rather subtle and more tongue in cheek elements of humour that can also be incorporated into artists’ books. Jeremy Dixon has been a practitioner in the field of Book Arts for 10 years following a career in community and museum graphic design.
In 1981, US-magazine *High Performance* published a photograph of a woman’s silhouette standing at a ship’s railing, facing away from the camera and toward the Statue of Liberty in the misty background. The caption reads, “Lil Picard arrives in New York, 1937”. It is a photograph that works as collage, placing the woman’s body, like a cut-out figure and with nothing but the sea mediating in the middle ground, against the still distant Liberty Island. The caption prefigures an arrival that has not yet happened. Rather, mounting the woman’s body into the Statue’s haze of promises is a hopeful gesture of bringing both into close proximity, anticipating their actual meeting.

Lil Picard was a German born artist and art critic whose life spans most of the 20th century and who, I argue, used the principles of collage throughout her multi-faceted art. She began her career as cabaret dancer and journalist in 1920s Berlin where she befriended Dada artists such as Richard Huelsenbeck, George Grosz, Emmy Hennings and Hugo Ball. She emigrated to New York to be a designer of extravagant hats and trained as a painter. Influenced by Kurt Schwitters and closely acquainted with Alfred Jensen, she created proto-feminist collages that integrated everyday objects and language before, in the 1960s, she turned toward performance and befriended Andy Warhol – all the while writing art criticism for German and US-magazines. While there have been rumours of queerness (Picard’s friend, writer Patricia Highsmith is said to have been smitten on their first encounter), it is less content and sexual identity that have been smitten on their first encounter, it is less content and sexual identity that recommend Picard’s art for thinking about collage as a queer(ing) tool. Rather, it is how she uses collage to undercut the boundaries of art/life, artist/female body, art/writing.

Philosopher Sara Ahmed, in her scheme for a *Queer Phenomenology* (2006), argues that the social is ordered along lines directed mainly by Whiteness and “compulsory heterosexuality” (Rich 1980), which orient bodies to face a certain direction, bringing into view some objects (of desire) while relegating others out of reach. Tying the phenomenological concept of consciousness as oriented toward something to the figure of sexual orientation, Ahmed shows how some objects and bodies are placed “on parallel lines, as points that should not meet”. Sliding off or cutting across these lines, she argues, and bringing into contact what is supposed to stay apart can expose the contingency of what appears as given, serving a queer “politics of disorientation”.

This, I argue, offers an astoundingly helpful description of what collage can do: cutting across the lines that structure the world and sticking together what used to be apart to irritate orientations and affiliations, to create new meaning(s). In my own gluing-together of Ahmed’s queer phenomenology with Picard’s art (with occasional side notes to her friend and fellow critic Jill Johnston), I will offer a theoretical comment on how collage might work as a queer(ing) tool for reorienting the world.

Oona Lochner is a research assistant at the Institute of Philosophy and Sciences of Art at Leuphana University of Luneburg, Germany, and member of the DFG Research Training Group “Cultures of Critique”. Her PhD project addresses forms of feminist art criticism since the 1960s, asking how writing about art can contribute to a negotiation of subjectivity. Its focus is on three US art critics of the 1960s and 1970s (Jill Johnston, Lucy Lippard, Arlene Raven), whose texts hover between subjective voice and its disappearance. Together with Isabel Mehl, Oona is part of the collaborative "From Where I Stand", thinking, speaking, and writing about the current conditions and possibilities of feminist writing about art. From 2011 to 2013 she was editor of the magazine *Texte zur Kunst*, and she has studied art history, cultural studies and German philology in Vienna, Austria, and Munster, Germany.

TARA WARD (she/her)

‘Queering the Cubist Crib’

In the scholarly and not-so-scholarly literature, there are many euphemisms employed to describe the 1908 marriage of artist Sonia Delaunay-Terk (1885-1979) to the gallerist Wilhelm Uhde (1874-1947). The “whiteness” or “convenience” of the union is used to signal, more or less explicitly, Uhde’s sexual preference for the houseboy rather than his wife. In positioning Delaunay-Terk as a beard, these descriptions also insist upon her need to preserve a sense of propriety for her family as well as the financial incentives to perform bourgeois heteronormative domesticity. These “compromises” are then supposedly cast aside when she becomes pregnant with the painter Robert Delaunay’s child. A traditional marriage of artist and wife hastily sets everything in order. Such are the tales told of Delaunay-Terk’s early and supposedly ephemeral encounters with queerness.

Her artwork suggests a dramatically different way of story. During her marriage to Uhde, Delaunay-Terk produced traditionally feminine, if Fauvistically hued, portraits. With the birth of her son Charles, she embarked upon a radical practice of collage and fabric appliqué. This is not to say that either the medium or the Orphist forms she
made with it are inherently queer. Instead, it is the fact that she used brightly colored paper and fabric to fashion covers for books, lamps, tables, her son (a baby quilt), and even the bodies of herself and her friends. Photographs of the artists’ apartment reveal a bourgeois interior visually rearranged by applying cut materials to various surfaces. By placing these celebrated objects back into the context of the artist’s abrupt transition to both motherhood and married life with a domineering painter, their role in helping to assert Delaunay-Terk’s difference from her social position becomes clear.

This paper will make three claims about Delaunay-Terk’s collage practice. First, that the Delaunays’ Orphist style emerged from these paper and fabric experiments rather than in painting, and that Sonia Delaunay-Terk preceded her husband in these formal developments. Next, it will show that the practice of covering everyday objects served distance their author from domesticity and motherhood at the same time that these brightly colored and even brash works were an almost theatrical performance of other types of relationships. The closet and camp sewn together into a dress or pasted next to each on a book. Finally, I will argue that this implies that an early form of abstraction was a form of queering or asserting a different kind of relationship to the historical structure of middle-class feminine life. Thus, Delaunay-Terk’s work stands in opposition to not only the masculine, universalist pretensions associated with the Cubist milieu, but also to broader claims about modern art’s divorce from private life.

Tara Ward is a Lecturer III in the History of Art Department at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She teaches twentieth- and twenty-first century visual culture with a focus on gender theory and Foucauldian methodologies. Her research interests include Orphism, color theory, and Instagram.

Natasha Bissonauth is Assistant Professor of Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at the College of Wooster (OH). She has a Ph.D. (Cornell University) in Art History and focuses on queer feminist contemporary art. Her first book project examines play as a subversive aesthetic in queer of color art. Recent publications in include, ‘A Camping of Orientalism in Sunil Gupta’s Sun City’ in Art Journal, ‘The Dissent of Play: Lotahs in the Museum’ in South Asia’s special issue on Play, Pleasure and Fun in South Asia, and ‘The Future of Museological Display’ Museums, Gender, and Sexuality Activism, which covers art by Ganesh. New research interests include examining the role of the speculative in the study of indenture studies.

NATASHA BISSONAUTH (she/her)
‘Chitra Ganesh’s Tales of Amnesia (2002): Re-imagining Goddess Iconography through Queer Form’

In 2002, as a South Asian diasporic art scene was emerging in New York City, Chitra Ganesh revisited comic books from her childhood, a series titled, Amar Chitra Katha, that propagandizes hetero-patriarchal visions for Indian nationhood -- largely through narratives of Hindu myth. The result was an artwork in the form of a zine titled Tales of Amnesia, a queer parody of Amar Chitra Katha’s goddess iconography through digital collage. Almost twenty years later, I contextualize Tales of Amnesia’s goddess imagery and the nationalist ideologies from which it unhinges to highlight how scenes of queer desire trouble diasporic attachment to home and nationhood. With the rise of nationalist Fascism in places like India, the US, and around the world, this analysis, located in the South Asian diaspora, is very timely and needed. However, Ganesh’s queering of nationhood does not only rely on an analysis of content. By way of focusing on the artist’s form, I attend to how she cut-and-pastes between mythological and science fictional images, reveal rich queer archival returns. Moreover, these comic book collages enact an aesthetic of opacity, dissonance, and irreverence that rupture, explode even, the storytelling form, whilst also gesturing towards its reimagining.

In this paper I open by describing her collages as a parodic aesthetics of play at the heart of the visual culture of difference. Then I proceed by tracing Ganesh’s artistic biography and background. However, the main thrust of my paper will focus on how her digital collages on different pages and multiple frames of Tales of Amnesia, enact non-linear comic book narratives about femme sexuality and sexual irreverent power in a world without men that ultimately troubles and modifies conventional modes of historical narrative and archival processes of recovery. Overall, her digital collages upset and upend a conventional form of storytelling (the comics-meets-myth-genre) to invent her own.
Byron Cutting a Dash: Screening the Pugilist Poet

In 1829, Pierce Egan’s *Boxiana Or, Sketches of Ancient and Modern Pugilism, Vol 2*, described a four-part folding screen decorated with collaged images and text:

> Angelo’s Screen. - This sporting piece of furniture, in the possession of LORD BYRON, and so much admired by the higher flights of the FANCY, from the numerous portraits and anecdotes it contained … was made principally from the first volume of *BOXIANA*. At his Lordship’s sale it proved a good sporting lot, and produced a handsome sum. It originally cost his Lordship £250.

The screen survives to this day. Decorated on one side with portraits of several well-known boxers and boxing scenes, along with blocks of text providing anecdotes, the other side features a number of famous figures from the theatre.

The physical screen provides a theatre of display. The collage creating a visual homage and domestic propaganda of sentiment for the figures featured. Sharp angled disjointed blocks of text surround the smooth edges of the figures, building a backdrop for the men that appears simultaneously sturdy and disrupted.

Whilst Byron’s number of personal ‘non-heterosexual’ relations may prompt a surface ‘queer’ reading of the display of exposed, virile, ‘masculine’ bodies, this paper will look to create a more varied collage of themes to consider, including:

- Changing/challenging assumed cultural perceptions of the masculinity/femininity of collage in domestic spaces
- Consideration of how ‘queer’ readings of this screen can go beyond acknowledgement of perceived cultural contrasts and contradictions
- Fashioning figures of masculinity – especially noting the waves being made by Byron’s contemporary Beau Brummel (another owner of a ‘scrap screen’)
- Multiplicity of masculine posturing – notably, alongside the boxers posed for a fight, John Jackson stands smartly dressed calmly holding his hat and another figure stands posed with his hand tucked into his waistcoat.
- Fighting as fine art - a masculine beauty? – NB: the figure of John Jackson was cut from a print that showed him standing (seemingly in an art gallery) alongside a classical sculpture and in front of a framed painting of two boxers.
- Notions of spontaneity within collage (with reference to William Burroughs) and the destruction of published works to create a personal space.

VIVIAN K. SHENG (she/her)

‘A Lapse of Memory: Fiona Tan’s Moving Collage of Transcultural (Dis)identification’

This paper examines Fiona Tan’s 2007 Film — *A Lapse of Memory*, which creates a moving collage of embodied identification and disidentification across material-discursive boundaries between East and West. The work was inspired by a chance encounter with the Royal Pavilion in Brighton, England. Constructed in the Indo-Saracenic style and born of imperial navigation and fantasy, the Royal Pavilion is a hybrid structure, which embodies the allegorical capacity of collage and cannot retrieve an origin with certainty and consensus. Tan’s work was filmed in the exquisite, over-elaborated interior of the building, which is a mixture of Chinoiserie and Mughal-Islamic fashion. Decorated and furnished by British and French artisans who never travelled to East Asia and India, the inside of the building is hardly organic but fabricated, proffering while deferring a clearly identified cultural origin. The abundance of trompe-l’oeil artifice, at times, makes it difficult to discern wall from floor, upright from flat, as well as real from fictive. Tan’s footage engenders no overriding knowledge,
but fragmented and manifold articulation of history and cultural tradition that disorients viewers spatially, culturally and conceptually. More importantly, Tan created a tangible, corporeal avatar who inhabits and personifies the Royal Pavilion. The character, named at first as Henry and then as Eng Lee, is a grizzled Caucasian-looking man, who, according to the voice-over, suffers from senile dementia and loses himself in incoherent and fragmentary memories of an ambiguous past straddling East and West. Tan’s camera captures his daily routines, like practicing Tai Chi or Chi Qong and performing the traditional Japanese tea ceremony. The close-ups of his bare feet and crumpled face heighten the physicality and hapticity of Tan’s footage in which Henry or Eng Lee stages bodily grounded navigation, identification and disidentification, making and remaking connections with myriad incommensurable cultural elements in his surroundings. His presence and habitation revive the Royal Pavilion as an allegorical architectural collage that shatters and queers any stable conception or paradigm of East and West. Displayed on a wide screen, the work engenders an affective material environment that compels viewers’ physical, sensory engagement. Viewers are enabled to follow the steps of Henry or Eng Lee across the interiors of the building. Seemingly disconnected narratives and images are also variously associated and assembled to engender their own understandings and interpretations. Tan’s work, in this sense, forges open-ended dialogues and identifications in and with difference without attempting to assimilate or appropriates the experience and thought of others. It facilitates the formation of social relations while avoiding over-identification and the problematic conflation of different subject positions. This paper considers how Tan’s A Lapse of Memory, via digital and filmic manipulation, constitutes a dynamic, cross-cultural collage of queer (dis)identification, which is open to viewers’ embodied perception, apprehension and interpretation intertwined with the slippage of memory and history, provoking critical reflections on the formation of identity and collective relations beyond pre-existing sociocultural origins and established structures of authoritative discourses.

**Vivian K. Sheng** is an art historian working on contemporary transnational art and an assistant professor in contemporary art at the University of Hong Kong. Her research investigates the intricate interrelation between women, domesticity and artistic practice in association with growing international travel and cross-cultural exchange, which significantly challenge any stable and absolute conception of home, belonging and place. Relevant questions and concerns are explored in her current book project—*Art,
be seen and heard that is present in Fujiwara’s varying and expansive body of work, the idea of what constitutes a collage must be expanded to include collages of identities, collages of fiction and truth and collages of public and private. These collages address current issues of being queer in a time of inclusivity, exclusivity and identity politics and provide a strategy for walking the line between so as not to be complicit in capitalism, misogyny and heteronormativity, all forces which have demanded art and media to be succinct, single strands which follow one narrative.

Aiden Magro is currently an Art History honours student at the University of Sydney. My honours thesis titled “Censorship and Discrimination: Reshaping the Singapore Archive” deals with queer Singaporean artist Loo Zihan’s reenactment of Brother Cane originally performed in 1994 by Josef Ng. At the core of the thesis, and at the core of my interests and methodologies in art history, is the importance of strategies to regain subjectivity over history, specifically the strategies queer artists use to recover such subjectivities.

MELISSA ROMBOU (she/her)

’Suck: Queer Performativity and Political Speech in Gilbert and George’s Dirty Words’

I propose a close reading of selected montage works by British artist duo Gilbert and George through the perspectives of queer performativity and political speech. Drawing upon and reframing J.L. Austin’s How to Do Things with Words (1962), I discuss Gilbert and George’s multi-panel photographic installations as spatial occupation and ideological contestation of a disturbed and disturbing national rhetoric during Thatcher era in Britain. My paper is drawn from my larger investigation of the agency of political art through montage operations.

Gilbert and George’s rhetorical strategies in the Dirty Words series (1977) operate as confrontations in the British public sphere by focalizing poverty, alienation, racism and homophobia. In each monumentally scaled construction, photographs of the figures of Gilbert and George—performing in their ubiquitous “everyman” suits—flank a juxtaposition of their own photographs (street views, snapshots of people, and “found object” views of scrawled urban graffiti featuring “dirty” words, such as “suck”, “cock”, “cunt”, “shit”, “piss” and “bollocks”).

I consider Dirty Words in conjunction with works from a slightly later group of constructed panels by Gilbert and George, so-called “Britisher” works (1979-1980). Each multi-image composition from this series places at the centre “laddish” portraits, featuring disaffected, unemployed young men. Gilbert and George, as gay men who survived the era of hyper-masculinized Mods and Rockers (as well as specific representations of tough East End laddishness in period portrayals such as the 1967 film To Sir, with Love), address the fomenting and explosive rage of male youth as focalizers at the centre of their narratives who are simultaneously threatened (impotent) and threatening (potent).

As interventions of spatial illusionism, the works introduced above perform first as an aesthetic strategy in which the mosaic of fragments, each with its own connotations, reveals the tensions between the visual (and sometimes also textual) fragments and the spatial field. This is discernible in characteristics of disjunctive scale, incoherent spatial relationships and the violence of its constituting operations: dismemberment (cutting), force (fitting) and stitching (suture). Gilbert and George deploy the grid as a graphic and a theoretical device of the imperative: their use of photographic montage as a minor language (Kafka) points to the hegemonic social construction of male identity through forced fitting, as well as to the dismantling of this normative categorization through breaking the pictorial rules of naturalism.

As queer interventions, the works discussed in this paper perform as visual speech acts, the graffiti “dirty words” functioning as imperatives addressing the brutalization of life in the United Kingdom under Thatcher marked by racism, homophobia and social injustice. My analysis opens intertextual pathways to queer performativity and political speech in other forms by their contemporaries: the films My Beautiful Laundrette (1986) and Sammy and Rosie Get Laid (1988) by Stephen Frears and Hanif Kureishi; Derek Jarman’s film The Last of England (1987); the homoerotic skinhead painting series by Richard Atila Lukacs; and the concomitant rise of punk rock as a narrative voice of opposition and refusal.

Melissa Rombout is an independent curator and museum planner based in Ottawa (Canada). Her doctoral dissertation How to do Things with Pictures in the Museum: Photography, Montage and Political Space (forthcoming 2020) was conducted at the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis initially under the supervision of Prof. Mieke
Bal, and more recently Prof. Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes and Prof. Sophie Berrebi. Her dissertation proposes how J.L. Austin’s concept of the transformative nature of speech can be expanded as a “toolbox” for thinking about political art generally, and the uses of montage as a rhetorical strategy in particular, and how beholders are engaged as subjects by visual speech acts in quite distinct ways: to enjoin in refusal; to consider another vantage point; to bring into consciousness through productive looking; to participate as a collective community; to make space for; and to force recognition through citation.

DANIEL SPAULDING (he/him)
‘Posteriority: From Front to Back (and Back Again)’

In 2009, the Los Angeles-based artist Richard Hawkins exhibited a collage series that he subtitled A Treatise on Posteriority. These works combine reproductions of the backsides of classical statues with a text that speculates, profanely, on moments of “alternate frontality” in Greek and Roman sculpture. Hawkins treats his male objects of desire, whether River Phoenix or Antinous, in much the same way: cut from their print matrix, and peeled away from their intended unidirectional orientation, they become lodestones of a queer impulse to seek sensuality lurking behind every reified form. In this paper, I borrow the neologism “posteriority” to identify an alternate genealogy of modernist subversion in the exposure of the artwork’s rear. The subversion that collage wreaks upon the traditional coherence of the picture plane, then, might have less to do with the fact that the elements of collage have edges than with the fact that they have backsides. In Picasso, famously, pieces cut from the same sheet of newspaper sometimes reappear reversed in the same pictorial field, with distinct semantic roles. Some fifty years later, Clement Greenberg would observe that Cubist collage “pretty much turned traditional illusionist paintings inside out,” swapping clear spatial distinctions for a churning field of nonbinary low relief – a physicality that “had, in effect, been extruded from the picture plane.” In another essay, on the painter Kenneth Noland, Greenberg notes that the “confessed wovenness and porousness” of the artist’s stain paintings “suggest a penetrable, ambiguous plane, opening up the picture from the back so to speak.” And for his part, Michael Fried (the homophobia of whose attack on “literalism” has recently come to light) tellingly paraphrased Greenberg by writing that, “in the work of Pollock and Newman, but even more in that of Louis, Noland, and Olitski, the new illusionism both subsumes and dissolves the picture surface – opening it, as Greenberg has said, from the rear.” These are moments in which the modernist deconstruction of figure-ground relations flashes a repressed queer vocabulary. Going all the way back to Caspar David Friedrich’s 19th century Rückenfiguren, or figures-seen-from-the-rear, I suggest that we can read the language of modernist formalism not as a dryly normative “optical” discourse but rather as an “ambiguous,” reversible fabric pulsing with the barely-contained powers of the posterior.

Daniel Spaulding is an Assistant Professor of Modern and Contemporary Art at the University of Wisconsin – Madison. He received his Ph.D. from the Department of the History of Art, Yale, in 2017. His research focuses on art made in Western Europe during the twentieth century; he also works on critical theory and methodology, the history of art history, and 18th-19th century Romanticism. With Daniel Marcus and Jennifer Nelson, he is a cofounder of Selva: A Journal of the History of Art. Writings of his have appeared in publications such as Art Journal, Historical Materialism, Oxford Art Journal, and Radical Philosophy.

DANIEL FOUNTAIN (he/they)

English playwright John Kingsley Orton (1933–1967), whose pen name was Joe Orton, is now well known for provocative plays such as Entertaining Mr Sloane (1964). However, a significant body of collages that he completed with his lover Kenneth Leith Halliwell (1926–1967) between the years 1959 and 1962 are less so. During this period, Orton and Halliwell stole at least seventy-two books from their local Islington and Hampstead libraries as a protest against the ‘rubbishy books’ that lined their shelves – an opinion that was likely heightened by their initial rejection from the publishing world. They made collages on top of the dust jackets, added new and scandalous blurbs, or replaced author photos before they returned the books to their shelves, often waiting to see the shocked reactions from library patrons. Replacing a vignette of Hampton Court Palace was now two half-naked men who appear to wrestle before the Great Mosque of Herat. The blurb of a clichéd murder mystery set among the English upper-classes now invited
readers to ‘have a good shit’ while reading it. Lady Lewisham, the author of a book on female etiquette, is now supposedly pictured in the nude.

Both men were later convicted of malicious damage and theft, resulting in a harsh prison sentence of six months that was likely heightened due to their homosexuality and attack on public morality - ‘because we were queers’, Orton would explain. Orton’s biographer, John Lahr, claims that their endeavor was nothing more than a childish ‘prank’ but, I will argue, it was a form of protest and an attack on an institution of knowledge which, at the time, excluded ‘deviant’ voices and only reflected the tastes of Britain’s elite. Their process of queering the library allowed them to insert same-sex desire into the hallowed halls of the public library, while also criticizing middle and upper-class pretentions through the deliberate selection of titles by revered authors such as John Betjeman, Agatha Christie and even the plays of William Shakespeare.

Although the collaged library books are now beginning to receive long overdue attention, scholars fail to take into account the inherent queerness of their collage practice, and they do not consider the erotic potential associated with Orton and Halliwell’s material methodology. For example, in their cut-ups the duo often used phallic iconography or exploited the homoerotic potential of certain images, effectively queering images from books about the military or fitness. Particular attention will therefore be given to the content of some of these collages, focusing on their tactics and material choices which enact this process of queering of the library. Using high quality reproductions kindly provided by the Islington Local History Centre, I will conduct a close reading of some of the collages and reproduce details (the cut, the tear, the sticky residues) that would ordinarily only be visible in an archival setting.

Daniel Fountain is an artist, writer and freelance lecturer. Between 2018—2021 they are the recipient of a fully funded practice-led PhD at Loughborough University that explores the intersections between craft and queerness in contemporary art practice. Daniel has exhibited artwork on an international level and has published widely on themes of craft, trash and queerness, including an article on ‘Queering Collage’ for the Collage Research Network. A longer version of this conference paper has also been accepted for publication in Queer Print Cultures (University of Toronto Press, 2021), edited by Vance Byrd and Javier Samper Vendrell.

More details about Daniel’s work can be found via their website.

Kris Belden-Adams (she/her)
‘Collaged Albums as a Means for Sub-Cultural Communication in William Whitney’s Fin-de-Siècle Photo Albums’

Dozens of late-nineteenth-century metal women’s hair pins radiate from the center of an album page, and larger tortoise-shell-patterned pins crowd around them. The pins are labeled with handwritten initials or names – presumably of the women who formerly owned them – and the dates when they came into Amherst College/Harvard Law School student William Belcher Whitney’s possession. Two small mugshots of well-coiffed, hat-wearing women are tucked behind several metal pins, which have been stitched with white thread onto the album page. The pins are displayed like trophies from women whom Whitney persuaded to literally – and perhaps figuratively – let down their long locks from the confines of proper “up-dos.”

The upper-class, Victorian-era practice of women crafting albums has been well-explored in our histories as expressions of fulfilling gender-dictated destinies. Masculine counterpart practices are rare, but also have stories to tell. Whitney’s series of collaged albums provide richly adorned accounts of a bustling social life involving courting many women at once, bonding with classmates, participating in “masculine” activities such as sports, and upholding his family’s social expectations as a “Whitney.” He would have been a fine prospect for marriage for many women at nearby all-female collages, which encouraged their students to become dutiful wives and mothers who supported their husbands and tended the family’s social profile.

Only at a closer look does this cisgender narrative falter. Whitney’s snapshots in casual, familiar poses with male classmates – some of whom are photographed in bed together – suggest his engagement in “homosocial/sexual” relationships. Whitney, who never married or had children, therefore did not conform to the cisgender expectations of men in his social caste. Traces of an intimate relationship with a classmate appear in several other photographs.

Moreover, the hairpin collage page of his album, which can be interpreted as proof of his courting of multiple women, also speaks to early-twentieth-century gay subculture. A “dropped hairpin,” for example, was a metaphor for letting other men know that you were straight-appearing to keep up social pretenses, but ready to “let your hair down” to signal your availability to other willing gay men.
This paper rebuilds Whitney’s narrative in view of the album’s subcultural meanings, and it examines Whitney’s struggle to conform to cisgender norms. Collage, it will be argued, allows metaphors to enjoy more tangible form, while speaking in the language of a genre (the photo album) that had an established cisgender normativity. This is to say, collage enables Whitney to use the collaged language of a heteronormative cultural artifact to subvert its usual expectations.

Kris Belden-Adams is Associate Professor of Art History at the University of Mississippi, and specializes in the history and theory of photography. She is the author of *Photography, Temporality, Modernity: Time Warped* (2019, Routledge) and *Photography, Eugenics, ‘Aristogenics’: Picturing Privilege* (2020, Routledge). She also is the editor and contributor of two chapters to the volume *Photography and Failure: One Medium’s Incessant Entanglement with Mishaps, Flops, and Disappointments* (Bloomsbury Academic Press, 2017), and the co-editor of the forthcoming volume *These Are Our Stories: Global Expressions of ‘Other’ Histories, Narratives, and Identities in Photographic Albums* with Mary Trent.

Zorian Clayton (he/him)

‘The Eddie Squires Scrapbooks: Cruising through the Space Age’

Eddie Squires (1940-1995) was a gay, working class textile designer whose eye-popping fabrics and ultra-kitsch, sci-fi inspired designs took the 1960s space-race era by storm. His talent and charisma saw a great rise through the ranks at Warner & Sons Ltd (now Warner Fabrics). Snapped up in 1963, one year out of the Central School, London, he spent his entire career with the same firm, becoming a company director in 1984 until his health from AIDS related complications forced his early retirement in 1993. In his last years, he completed a life-long project of scrapbooking his life and design inspirations, and arranged to bequest them along with dozens of other designs and fabric samples to the V&A.

The nine scrapbooks are a treasure trove of queer life in London over a 30 year period, containing Polaroids of a denim and leather night at the now closed Coleherne pub in Earl's Court; friends and lovers posing at home or around town; diary entries and snapshots of holidays around the world and a lot of other personal effects. Kitsch graphics are collaged with all manner of space-related and robot designs in marketing and packaging; pulp paperback covers; hot queer crazes from Barbarella to Bowie; visionary architecture and other worldly planets- the scrapbooks provide a wealth of material compiled by one queer science fiction fan with an exceptional eye.

The proposed talk will be a journey through the queer wonderland of Eddie Squires’ collaged scrapbooks and a look at his wider influence in the world of design as a Fellow of the Chartered Society of Designers and the Design Council.

Zorian Clayton is an Assistant Curator of Prints at the Victoria & Albert Museum, specialising in 19th and 20th century posters, lithography, and paper ephemera. He has been the co-chair of the Museum’s LGBTQ Working Group for the past eight years and has curated numerous special events and research projects on queer artists in the V&A collections. Since 2016, he has worked jointly as a programmer at the British Film Institute for the BFI Flare Festival, the largest LGBTQ film festival in Europe.

Before these two posts, Zorian had a wide-ranging career working in research and editing for the BBC and producing independent documentary films for French television. He is a board member of Trans Creative, a Manchester-based arts company formed in 2017 to inspire, advocate, and make space for transgender people to tell their own stories in theatre, film, and the visual arts. Over lockdown he co-curated ‘Found in Translation’, a trans masculine and non-binary virtual art exhibition in association with the annual Trans Vegas festival, Manchester.

Further Information and Registration

For more information on the details of the conference or if you have any issues accessing any links, please contact the organisers by email at collarerearchnetwork@gmail.com.

You can also follow us on Twitter and check our content on our website, where we will post any updates about the conference.

Registering for the Queering Collage: An Online Symposium is free. Registration is required in adherence to Data Protection Regulations. No data is collected. Please follow the link.