

engage in the visual arts

**Rules of engagement: Art, Conflict and Gallery Education
engage International Conference 2008
5 – 7 November, Brighton**

Conference Programme

Wednesday 5 November

De La Warr Pavilion and Towner Art Gallery

12.30 – 16.45 Optional pre-conference visit to the De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill on Sea and tour of the new Towner Art Gallery in Eastbourne.

Brighton Museum and Art Gallery

18.15 onwards Registration

18.45 – 20.30 Evening reception

Thursday 6 November

Sallis Benney Theatre

09.00 onwards Registration and tea/coffee

09.30 – 11.15 **Memory of Fire: The War of Images and Images of War**

The opening session considers the ideas that have shaped this year's Brighton Photo Biennial (BPB) and the issues its organisers have confronted in dealing with the controversial subject of war. The Biennial's various exhibitions encompass film and photographic images made by photojournalists, artists and non-professionals from the Vietnam era to the present day, including the world première at Fabrica of Thomas Hirschhorn's *The Incommensurable Banner*, a horrific photographic frieze depicting human bodies blown apart by weapons in Iraq and other conflict zones. As a whole, the BPB raises important questions about the causes and consequences of conflict and the ways in which it is recorded, mediated and remembered.

09.30 - 9.35 **Jane Sillis**
Director of engage
(Welcome to delegates)

09.35 - 9.45 **Sheila McGregor**
Conference Programmer
(Introduction to conference programme)

09.45 – 10.00 **Helen Cadwallader**

Director of Brighton Photo Biennial

10.00 – 10.25

Julian Stallabrass

Curator of Brighton Photo Biennial

10.25 – 10.45

Julian Germain

Photographer and curator of the Brighton Photo Biennial exhibition *War Memorial* at Aspex Gallery in Portsmouth

10.45 – 11.15

Panel discussion and questions from the floor chaired by **Veronica Sekules**, Head of Education at the Sainsbury Centre for the Visual Arts and vice-Chair of engage

Various locations

11.30 – 12.30

Breakout Sessions and tea/coffee

12.30 – 14.00

Lunch (Donatello Restaurant)

Sallis Benney Theatre

14.00 – 15.30

Hostage of the past? Culture and the Legacy of Conflict

Drawing on their own experience, two speakers explore how artists and institutions operate 'on the ground' in the aftermath of conflict. In societies or regions where the fault lines of division run deep, what conditions and processes can bring about long-term reconciliation? Is this a realistic aspiration? Or are we forever prisoners of our past? And what role can art, artists and cultural institutions play in dealing with the legacy of conflict?

14.00 - 14.30

Karmit Zysman

Social-cultural historian, philosopher and educator and founder of Discovery Centre, Kosovo

14.30 - 15.00

Andrea Rea

Troubles Archivist, Arts Council Northern Ireland

15.00 - 15.30

Panel discussion and questions from the floor chaired by **Felicity Allen**, Head of Learning at Tate Britain

15.30 – 16.00

Tea/Coffee

Various locations

16.00 onwards

Delegates will have the opportunity to visit exhibitions in the Brighton Photo Biennial.

16.00

Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning through

Design reception for anyone with an interest in the links between museums and galleries, design archives and Higher Education.

- 16.00 **Soapbox** – delegates will give ten minute presentations in the Sallis Benney Theatre on recent work, case-studies and other practice that they would like to share with colleagues.
- 16.00 **Fringe / Regional meetings** – Co-ordinators, Area Reps and Special Interest Reps may choose to hold meetings at this time, further details will be circulated.

The Basement

- 18.00 Drinks and special screening of Polish artist **Artur Zmijewski's film *Them***, one of the most powerful and talked-about exhibits in Documenta 12. Drawing on the 'atelier' model of his own art school education, Zmijewski invites four different social, political and religious groups to come together in a workshop situation. His disturbing film documents the gradual breakdown that occurs as the members of each group make a banner expressing allegiance to their cause.
- 18.45 – 19.45 engage AGM
- 20.00 – 22.00 Conference dinner

Friday 7 November

Sallis Benney Theatre

- 09.00 – 09.30 Registration and tea/coffee
- 09.30 – 11.15 **What's in it for me? The Politics of Participation**
- Participatory and collaborative projects are a mainstream element of many gallery programmes and a staple ingredient of art biennial culture. This session attempts to dissect the discourse that has emerged alongside this increasingly dominant strand of practice, highlighting important questions about how such work is commissioned, who claims authorship, where its aesthetic value lies and how its social, political and educational impact can be assessed. There will be a particular focus on how participatory projects seek to resolve or open up areas of disagreement, conflict and dissent.
- 9.30–9.40 **Janice McLaren**
Head of Education and Projects, The Photographers' Gallery
(Introduction to session)
- 9.40 – 10.00 **Janna Graham**
Artist, educator, curator and member of Ultra-red
- 10.00–10.20 **Pierre Coinde and Gary O'Dwyer**
Artists, The Centre of Attention
- 10.20–10.40 **Faisal Abdu'Allah**
Artist

10.40–11.15 Panel discussion and questions from the floor chaired by Janice McLaren

Various Locations

11.30 – 12.30 Breakout Sessions and tea/coffee

12.30 – 14.00 Lunch

Sallis Benney Theatre

14.00 – 15.45 **Who calls the tune? Art, Politics and Funding Policy**

In an uncertain political climate, as politicians and funders reappraise their positions and priorities, debates about the familiar issue of instrumentalism have come sharply into focus. At the same time, the traditional battle lines between left and right have become increasingly blurred. Can art indeed make a difference where political action has failed? Or is it largely an irrelevance in combating the real social and economic causes of exclusion and disaffection? Does a preoccupation with 'audience led' programming and social impact pre-dispose organisations against experimentation and (in the words of Sir Brian McMaster) lead to measurement rather than judgement? Or does it compel us to think more rigorously about what we do and why we do it?

14.00 - 15.00 **Maev Kennedy** of The Guardian chairs a discussion in which each of four speakers considers the question, "Should cultural funding be tied to social policy objectives?"

Munira Mirza (Director of Policy for Arts, Culture and the Creative Industries, Greater London Authority)

Andrew Nairne (Executive Director, Arts Strategy, Arts Council England)

Bernadette Lynch (museum writer and consultant)

JJ Charlesworth (freelance art critic and lecturer, and reviews editor at Art Review magazine)

15.00 - 15.45 Questions from the floor and plenary discussion

15.45 Conference Ends