CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

SUMMER SCHOOL FOR SEXUALITIES, CULTURES AND POLITICS

(15-20 August 2016, Belgrade, Serbia)

organized by

Research Center for Cultures, Politics and Identities (IPAK.Center), Belgrade, Serbia

in cooperation with

Faculty of Media and Communications, Singidunum University, Belgrade, Serbia

CONFIRMED LECTURERS AND COURSES OFFERED

> ➢ **Lauren Berlant (University of Chicago, Chicago, USA):** *On the Inconvenience of Other People* **(15-16 August)**
>
> ➢ **Luciana Parisi (Goldsmiths University, London, UK):** *Abstraction - Sex - Automation* **(16-17 August)**
>
> ➢ **Laima Kreivytė (Vilnius Academy of Arts / European Humanities University, Vilnius, Lithuania):** *Queer Art and Curating: Strategies, Stories, Structures* **(18-19 August)**
>
> ➢ **Boryana Rossa (Syracuse University, New York, USA):** *Post-Internet Gender and Sexuality: Contemporary Performative and Guerilla Art Practices Online* **(20 August)**

SUMMER SCHOOL OPEN PROGRAMME

> ➢ Open lecture by Lauren Berlant: *On Being in Life without Wanting the World: Living in Ellipsis*
>
> ➢ Live Performance by Boryana Rossa: *On Focus: The Interior*

DURATION AND FORMAT

> ➢ 6 days.
>
> ✓ Intensive lectures in the morning with subsequent discussions.
>
> ✓ Discussions and seminars with the lecturers; all particfipants who deliver a paper will have the opportunity to receive direct input from the lecturers and discuss their work with fellow participants.
>
> ✓ Rich Open Programme with public lectures, performances and exhibitions.

ELIGIBILITY

> ➢ Applicants should be post/graduate students (MA or PhD students) and/or younger researchers interested in exploring the issues of gender, queer, cultural studies, visual arts and humanities and related areas. However, outstanding BA students are also considered and have the chance to enroll.

➢ We especially welcome applications from: independent scholars, cultural workers, artists, and activists interested in queer and gender studies.

➢ Applicants from all countries are eligible to apply.

APPLICATION

➢ All applicants should fill in the Application Form (available online at www.ipakcentar.org/application-form)

✓ Paper abstract is optional. If you wish to deliver a presentation, post your abstract in the Application form (appr. 500 words max.) for a presentation not exceeding 15 mins, or ignore if not applicable.

✓ Maximum number of participants: 40.

✓ Maximum number of students delivering presentation: 20 (maximum 4 presentations per afternoon session).

ECTS

➢ Students who deliver presentations will receive 4 ECTS, applicable on MA or PhD level at participants' home universities.

➢ Students who choose not to deliver a presentation will receive 2 ECTS, applicable on MA or PhD level at participants' home universities.

➢ ECTS are given according to FULL attendance of the school.

TUITION FEES AND APPLICATION DEADLINES

➢ **Appplicants from Central and East-european countries[1]:**

✓ 1st Deadline March 15: 200 Euro (payment due March 31)

✓ 2nd Deadline May 1: 230 Euro (payment due May 15)

✓ 3rd Deadline July 1: 250 Euro (payment due July 15)

➢ **Applicants from Europe and worldwide:**

---

[1] For the purpose of this call, the following countries fall under the term: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, Kosovo, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Albania, Romania, Greece, Turkey, Czech Republic, Poland.

- ✓ 1st Deadline March 15: 300 Euro (payment due March 31)
- ✓ 2nd Deadline May 1: 330 Euro (payment due May 15)
- ✓ 3rd Deadline July 1: 350 Euro (payment due July 15)
- ➢ **Singidunum University students: 150 Euro (no discount applicable).**
- ➢ **Former SSSCP students: 15% tuition fee discount out of the relevant fees (250/350 Euro, deadline notwithstanding).**
- ✓ The fee covers tuition, lunch, study materials during the school, and certificate.
- ✓ Use of library at the Campus with free internet.
- ✓ Coffee breaks and refreshments included.
- ✓ Cocktail Party for the opening of the SSSCP.
- ✓ Arrangements for accommodation, transportation, visa (if needed) and other expenses should be arranged by applicants on themselves. Recommendations for accommodation in Belgrade will be provided to admitted participants on a later stage. The organizers are ready to assist with visa arrangements in special circumstances.

CANCELLATION POLICY

If an applicant admitted as participant in the summer school wishes to disenroll, he or she is entitled to 90% of the tuition fee paid provided that the organizers are properly informed not any later than one (1) month before the program of the summer school commence.

If you fail to do so, we will be unable to reimburse your paid tuition fee.

DESCRIPTION OF COURSES

- ➢ **Lauren Berlant (University of Chicago, Chicago, USA): *On the Inconvenience of Other People***
  - ✓ **Lecture 1: *Sex in the Event of Happiness* (for SSSCP students only)**

This lecture thinks with *Last Tango in Paris* and the general desire to separate out considerations of sexuality from movement imaginaries for social change in the post-60s west. It asks how transforming sexuality might induce unlearning attachments to historical reproduction that fix the world in a calcified realism: it is about the violence of unlearning even cruel attachments. It is a propositional talk, a talk on behalf of learning from experiments, jokes, heuristics, produced from the middle of violence.

- ✓ **Lecture 2: *On Being in Life without Wanting the World: Living in Ellipsis* (Open Lecture, mandatory for SSSCP students)**

This lecture continues the work on unlearning cruel optimism of the previous lecture, focusing on dissociation as a way of remaining attached to life. Reading with Claudia Rankine (*Don't Let Me Be Lonely*), the novel and film of *A Single Man* (Christopher Isherwood, 1964; Tom Ford, 2009), and Harryette Mullen (*Sleeping with the Dictionary*), it describes an aesthetics and a subjectivity shaped on one side by suicide and on the other by a life drive that is also, paradoxically, negative, in that it turns toward life by turning away from the world of injury, negation, and contingency that endure as a defining presence for biopolitically-defined subjects. It suggests attending to and developing a dissociative poetics.

- ➢ **Luciana Parisi (Goldsmiths University, London, UK): *Abstraction - Sex - Automation***
  - ✓ **Lecture 1: *Automation and Gender***

In Western culture the distinction between techne and philosophy, automated machines and thinking can be said to subtend the articulation of gender as bound to a form of instrumental reasoning that prevents feminist, queer and gender politics to become philosophical or conceptual. The first part of this class will unpack the relation between automated machines and instrumental reasoning. The history of automated machines shows us that instrumentality sides with task-oriented functions that can reliably be repeated, without error. This demonstrative use of machines, from mechanical to cybernetic to computational machines, however implicitly contains a gender-technology alliance able to reject the presumed givenness that grounds gender to nature. Whilst nature is instinctual and indeterminate, automated machines are determinate and final. The gender-automation alliance will be then explored as a concrete possibility of articulating a politics of machines that engages with the rejection of the "myth of the given." The history of automation, it will be argued, already marks the beginning of a gender politics that is not only denaturalized from the biological strata, but also, and importantly, from the ontological split between thinking and instrumentality. One way of developing a productive view of instrumentality is offered by contemporary American pragmatism, and the theorization of use in terms of use-meaning. This last point of discussion will be further contextualized and developed in the subsequent class Artificial Intelligence and Sex.

During this class, we will look at examples of automated machines in history and will use films (from the *Stepford Wives* to *Ex-Machina*).

✓ **Lecture 2:** *Artificial Intelligence and Sex*

Central to critical theory is the rejection that technoscientific epistemology, accused of rationalising material relations, grounds the ontological condition of thought, reducing possible configurations of political subjectivity mainly to what can be known, measured, calculated. If being follows the technoscientific explanation of what being is, it is argued that the political project for political thought is destined to fail. This anti-technoscientific view aims to preserve ontological autonomy from the technoenvironment in which it operates. It identifies technology with power and separates the sacredness of the human thought from the automated systems invented by humans. Whilst the longing for common state of immunity from the technoscientific artificialisation of thought constitutes, one could argue, the bedrock of critical theory, this class aims to unpack how the development of computational logic becomes productive for the articulation of a formalism of and for sexual, gender, queer politics.

This lecture addresses how the development of artificial intelligence has led to the development of a computational logic and how this has forced the classical understanding of reasoning to become open to non-monotonic thinking. This classical view of logic will be here explored through American pragmatism. We will discuss how non-deductive logic and the theorization of logic in terms of use-meaning can contribute to develop an artificial logic of sex through and with machines.

➤ **Laima Kreivytė (Vilnius Academy of Arts / European Humanities University, Vilnius, Lithuania):** *Queer Art and Curating: Strategies, Stories, Structures*

In these two lectures we will discuss queer strategies, stories and structures in contemporary artistic and curatorial practices. How different queer lenses change the straight perspective and challenge dominant visual regimes? Looking at the recent queer exhibitions and art works we will analyze their role in questioning cultural, social and political representation. The issues of queering the canon, fighting censorship, crossing boundaries of public and private, deconstructing "grand national narratives" and hierarchical structures of the art world will also be addressed.

Queer art combines activist approaches and camp aesthetics, mis(s)appropriations and celebration of diverse sexualities. Its artistic strategies encourage subversion of norms, uncovering hidden experiences, transgression boundaries and institutional critique. Many queer exhibitions are research-based visual narratives, linking archival material and personal

testimonies. Therefore story-telling will be another important issue to discuss. How is memory (re)constructed by the means of collecting untold stories and re-enacting of the past events? Queer narratives demand queer structures – a specific type of exhibition architecture. It aims at creating unusual spatial experience, mixing art and vernacular objects and "bending" the optical perception. How does it work? Is queering of international art mega-structures like the Venice Biennale possible? These and many more questions will open the space for debates.

➢ **Boryana Rossa (Syracuse University, New York, USA):** *Post-Internet Gender and Sexuality: Contemporary Performative and Guerilla Art Practices Online*

Early radical statements that Internet will provide freedom of expression, tools of mobilization for the revolutionary masses and a territory free of gender discrimination (because everyone performs through an avatar) proved to be naïve. The once new technological and networking "tools of liberation" have been long ago instrumentalised for the purposes of the status-quo. The artistic and the activist avant garde is again struggling to find new ways to challenge established positions and discriminative practices. Additionally, the Internet anonymity, sometimes associated with the opportunity to freely share politically or socially inconvenient opinions, also gives way to reactionary behavior often hidden behind the mask of the political correctness in the real world, where more often phobic positions are unacceptable.

In this lecture I will review artistic and activist practices that utilize new tools and invent actions to challenge the brutality and the cynicism of the post-Internet-scape. Works by Angela Washko, Moleindustria, Jennifer Chan and others will be reviewed along with vloggers like Eldar Bogunov, Krolik Black and my personal work in collaboration with artist and filmmaker Oleg Mavromatti.

Student presentations are supposed to identify similar practices that might be their own as well. It will be appreciated if these examples are culturally specific. The presenter is supposed to introduce the audience to the context as well and be able to handle comparative analysis, situating these culturally specific practices in trans-cultural context.

LIVE PERFORMANCE BY BORYANA ROSSA: *ON FOCUS: THE INTERIOR*

The body has been perceived differently at different historical times. These historical comprehensions had produced images that are often in contradiction, revealing how complicated for us is to understand our body and how it relates our social life.

For instance the liberation of female body and sexuality, proclaimed by feminists during the sixties, was often built on empowerment of women through the iconography of the goddesses and by essentially feminine imagery. This perception, whose power, especially at the time, cannot be denied, had been challenged not only by the persisting misogyny, which continues to endorse the feminine as subordinate to the masculine, but also on another level by technological enhancements that provide with an ideal the feminine shape to those who may not have it, creating new territory for women's objectification. Additionally, the contemporary feminism and queer ideas started involving androgynous and trans-gendered aesthetics and social practices that extended the previous ones.

This piece will be homage of the *Interior Stroll* by Carolee Schneemann, perhaps one of my favorite and most influential performance art pieces and iconic for the sexual revolution from the last century in the Western world.

As an Eastern European I gather different history, but also I am from a different generation - grown up during the time of sharp technological acceleration in the 1990s that produced new territories inhabited by both misogyny and feminism, such as the virtual space and the plastic surgery, by that creating new contradictions, whose resolution requires new approaches. I will be wearing my "Amazon Armor Bra" - it is a lens-bra that shows my after-mastectomy scars and the text that I will read will be different than Schneemann's worship of vagina, attempting to update the performance towards contemporaneity.

LECTURERS: BIOS

> **Lauren Berlant (University of Chicago, Chicago, USA)**

Lauren Berlant is the George M. Pullman Distinguished Service Professor at the Department of English, University of Chicago, where she has been teaching since 1984. Berlant received her Ph.D. from Cornell University. She writes and teaches on issues of intimacy and belonging in popular culture, in relation to the history and fantasy of citizenship. She writes on public spheres as affect worlds, where affect and emotion lead the way for belonging ahead of the modes of

rational or deliberative thought. These attach strangers to each other and shape the terms of the state-civil society relation. She is the author of, among other books, *Sex, or the Unbearable* (with Lee Edelman), *Cruel Optimism*, and *The Female Complaint: The Unfinished Business of Sentimentality in American Culture.*

➢ **Luciana Parisi (Goldsmiths University, London, UK)**

Luciana Parisi is Reader in Cultural Theory, Chair of the PhD programme at the Centre for Cultural Studies, and co-director of the Digital Culture Unit, Goldsmiths University of London. Her research draws on continental philosophy to investigate ontological and epistemological transformations driven by the function of technology in culture, aesthetics and politics. Her writing aims to develop a naturalistic approach to thinking and technology. She is interested in cybernetics, information theory and computation, complexity and evolutionary theories. Her writing addresses the technocapitalist investment in artificial intelligence, biotechnology, nanotechnology. She has written extensively within the field of Media Philosophy and Computational Design. In 2004, she published *Abstract Sex: Philosophy, Biotechnology and the Mutations of Desire* (Continuum Press). In 2013, she published *Contagious Architecture. Computation, Aesthetics and Space* (MIT Press). She is currently researching the history of automation and the philosophical consequences of logical thinking in machines.

➢ **Laima Kreivytė (Vilnius Academy of Arts / European Humanities University, Vilnius, Lithuania)**

Laima Kreivytė is a lecturer at the Vilnius Academy of Arts and European Humanities University. She introduced a course on queer theory and art at Vilnius University's Gender Studies Centre in 2008. Kreivytė was a researcher from Lithuania for *Gender Check. Femininity and Masculinity in Eastern European Art* at the MUMOK in Vienna (2009-2010). Exhibitions she has curated include *From Dusk Till Dawn: 20 Years of LGBT Freedom in Lithuania* (Contemporary Art Centre, Vilnius, 2013), Lithuanian pavilion in 53rd Venice Biennale (2009), *Baltic Mythologies* in Prague Biennale III (2007). Kreivytė participates in feminist art and research projects and works with the artist collective Cooltūristės.

➢ **Boryana Rossa (Syracuse University, New York, USA)**

Boryana Rossa lives and works in Sofia and New York in the cross-section of performance art, film, photography, media arts and curating. She is assistant professor at the Transmedia department in Syracuse University, teaching transmedia, film theory, and performance art. Recently Rossa finished her dissertation titled *Post-Cold War Gender Performances. Cross-cultural Examination of Gender Performances viewed through Film Re-enactments.* at Rensselaer Institute, Troy, New York. Her works have been shown at the Museum of Modern Art (MUMOK), Vienna; Brooklyn Museum, New York; National Art Gallery Zacheta, Warsaw; 1st and 2nd Moscow Biennial; 1st Balkan Biennial, Thessaloniki; Coreana Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul, etc. In 2004 together with Oleg Mavromatti she established the art-collective ULTRAFUTURO. The group works in the field of performance, investigating the influence of science and technology in society. She is also one of the directors of Sofia Queer Forum.

SUMMER SCHOOL DESCRIPTION

The Summer School for Sexualities, Cultures, and Politics is permanent project, originally initiated by the Department for Gender Studies at the Institute for Social Sciences and Humanities "Euro-Balkan", Skopje, Macedonia and the Faculty of Media and Communications - Singidunum, Belgrade, Serbia. In 2014, the School has moved to and was taken up organizationally by IPAK Center.

The general aim of the School is to gather young post-graduate students, scholars and teaching staff from both Eastern and Western Europe and promote a shared platform for research and trans-disciplinary theoretical reflection on the complex modes of interweaving sexuality, culture and politics, and consequently of exchanging and questioning geopolitically determined discourses in the research of sexualities, gender studies, and queer theory. Our idea is to provide students, scholars and teachers with the opportunity to question, decenter and democratize these areas by way of deferring the notion of theoretical and geopolitical privilege which is often implied by these research areas, and thus to introduce new models of rethinking context-specific phenomena related to sexualities and, vice versa, to enrich theoretical paradigms with context specific phenomena and research.

In this way, the School's long-term goal is to

(1) strategically stimulate the particularization and application of key ideas and theories in sexuality research locally, and to

(2) universalize and popularize crucial and underprivileged positions and ideas on the European level, regardless of the East/West divide which is still central to the development of queer theory and sexuality research.

Our endeavor is not to relativize the embeddedness and situatedness of knowledges about sexualities, but to recognize and disrupt the existing invisible borders that obstruct the free dissemination of ideas as they are being determined by various hegemonic forces – political, educational, economic - in both Eastern and Western contexts of doing academic and artistic work related with our desires, bodies, and sexualities.

CONTACT PERSONS

Slavčo Dimitrov slavco.dimitrov@ipakcentar.org
Stanimir Panayotov stanimir.panayotov@ipakcentar.org
Academic coordinators of the Summer School

Milka Vasilijević milka.vasilijevic@ipakcentar.org
Jovana Timotijević jovana.timotijevic@ipakcentar.org
Local coordinators of the Summer School

Jelisaveta Blagojevic jelisaveta.blagojevic@ipakcentar.org
Director of the Summer School

Research Center for Cultures, Politics and Identities
(IPAK.Center)
Karađorđeva 65
11000, Belgrade
Serbia
Email: office@ipakcentar.org
Website: www.ipakcentar.org