

The Stories We Tell Ourselves

Summer School 2023

with manuel arturo abreu, Niloufar Emamifar,
Sami Khatib, Shola von Reinhold, and Alan Ruiz

August 8-11, 2023

Open Call

Application period
through July 7, 2023

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Outline

On the occasion of Kunstverein München's bicentenary in 2023, the institution hosts three iterations of a Summer School entitled *The Stories We Tell Ourselves*. The format, began in 2021, explores alternative forms of collective knowledge production and negotiates the concept of an institution intended for the public. This year marks the third and last iteration. The Summer School takes place in the exhibition spaces and the urban surroundings of the Kunstverein, thereby allowing for the simultaneous presence of various approaches in the same place. Participants are invited to work together with guest lecturers and the curatorial team on four topics—Architecture, City and Archive, Institutional Histories, and Publishing—within the context of the institution's archive.

During the day, the four groups will engage with communal learning processes that include speculative re-formulations of the institution as well as field research in the social and cultural context of Munich. In the evenings, further approaches and questions will be presented by each group and discussed in (semi-)public formats such as lectures, discussion rounds, and screenings.

Together, we will consider which temporalities and politics such a non-conventional format of knowledge production is subject to, but also which it can challenge. This will be approached in four working groups:

Architecture

Rejection letters as traces for archival absences

with Shola von Reinhold (writer),
Gina Merz (Kunstverein München)

The architecture of an art institution attempts to contain the public—the question is: who constitutes this public? Who is allowed in? An entrance door (as well as an open call), while it is accessible for some, may be a closed gate for others. It allows for some bodies, stories, works to get in, be a part of the program—whereas others stay unread, unheard, untold. The archive leaves traces of absences through documents such as rejection letters, rarely images, protocols, lists of names—for example proving the initial refusal of a quest for a membership to Kunstverein München by Lola Montez in 1846. With writings by Saidiya Hartman, Trinh T. Minh-ha, Shola von Reinhold, and Maria Stepanova in mind, this working group aims to fabulate further the traces of archival biographies—deciding for them to be real, exactly like that. By rejecting their rejection, their stories will be slipped into the archive. Since: isn't an archive always fictional?

City and Archive

Migrating Marxisms

with Sami Khatib (cultural theorist and philosopher), Jonas von Lenthe (Kunstverein München)

The history of Marxism is a history of migration. Beyond the European metropolises, countless strands of an internationalist concept emerged in moments of transnational contact and found their application in specific, often anti-colonial struggles. In this year's Summer School, we want to explore these Marxisms and their interacting tension between local context and universalist idea: In which liberation movement did Frantz Fanon engage? What did Mahdi Amel argue about with Edward Said? Did Hegel know about the revolution in Haiti? And was Marx Eurocentric?

Institutional Histories

with Niloufar Emamifar (artist),
Gloria Hasnay (Kunstverein München)
and Alan Ruiz (artist)

The history of art institutions like the Kunstverein is formulated not only through that which is visible, but also through the various paratexts that are inscribed into art- and exhibition-making: administrative relations, labor economies, oral history, or unrecorded memories. Through collectively reading texts and discussing exemplary exhibitions as well as institutional operations, the working group will look at the conditions and processes of archiving and the causative relationships at play which always are collective and collaborative, though also conflictual. Together we will pursue questions around the methodology of working in and with archives of art institutions, particularly that of Kunstverein München, the laws of historiography, inter-organizational relations and dynamics that help produce the instituting subjectivity, as well as the “not-to-be-archived” and that which is consciously concealed, omitted, or erased from archives.

Publishing

with manuel arturo abreu (artist),
Maurin Dietrich (Kunstverein München)

What does it mean in the broader sense of the term “to publish” or “to make something public” to think about the structures in which an institution and its actors communicate? In this working group, the artist manuel arturo abreu will offer a variety of somatically and non-rationally driven forms of response and inquiry, including group sounding (vocalization, body movement-generated sounds, etc.), kaleidoscope conversation (a strategy learned from Portland artist sharita townie, where only questions are allowed during a given time), and asemic writing as cryptography (that is, writing without semantic marks, sitting at a blurry boundary between sentence and picture).

Application Process

The Summer School offers up to 40 spots and is open for applications from local and international students of Fine Arts, Art Theory, Curatorial Studies, Philosophy, Critical Studies, Architecture, and related disciplines as well as from artists and interested members of the public. The number of participants is limited to a maximum of 10 people per working group.

The application should include

Letter of motivation stating why you wish to partake in the Summer School and the desired working group (max. 250 words); curriculum vitae and contact details (1 page).

Please submit your application by July 7, 2023 to info@kunstverein-muenchen.de (1 PDF, max. 2MB)

Further Information

- participation in the Summer School is free of charge; two free meals per day are provided
- the Summer School takes place mostly in English
- travel expenses cannot be covered
- accommodation cannot be provided, but Kunstverein München offers support in finding something if necessary
- feedback regarding the participation will be given no later than July 14, 2023

Biographies of Guests

manuel arturo abreu (b. 1991, Santo Domingo) is a non-disciplinary artist who lives and works on unceded lands of Multnomah, Cowlitz, Clackamas, Chinook, Kalapuya, Confederated Grand Ronde people, and other Pacific Northwest First People. abreu works with what is at hand in a process of magical thinking with attention to ritual aspects of aesthetics. Since 2015, they have co-facilitated home school, a free pop-up art school in the Pacific Northwest with a multimedia genre-nonconforming edutainment curriculum, including residencies at Yale Union (2019) and Oregon Contemporary (2022/23). They also compose worship music as Tabor Dark. Recent projects include those at Palazzo San Giuseppe, Polignano a Mare; HALLE FÜR KUNST Steiermark, Graz; Kunstraum Niederösterreich, Vienna; Veronica,

Seattle; and Athens Biennial 7. They have written two poetry books—List of Consonants (Bottlecap Press, 2015), transtrender (Quimérica, 2016)—and one book of critical prose, Incalculable Loss (Institute for New Connotative Action, 2018).

Niloufar Emamifar is an artist living and working in New York. Her work has been presented at MoMA PS1, New York; Essex Street, New York; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; SculptureCenter, New York; and the Venice Biennale of Architecture, among others. Her solo exhibition Ex gratia is currently on view at Künstlerhaus Stuttgart.

Sami Khatib is a substitute professor of Art Theory and Media Philosophy at the Karlsruhe University of Arts and Design (HfG) and one of the

founding members of the Beirut Institute for Critical Analysis and Research (BICAR). He is the author of Teleologie ohne Endzweck: Walter Benjamins Ent-stellung des Messianischen (2013) and co-editor of the volume Critique: The Stakes of Form (2020).

Shola von Reinhold is a writer and artist. Her first novel LOTE was released last year with Duke University Press.

Alan Ruiz is an artist whose work examines the way space is produced as both material and ideology. He explores the way social institutions, and the architecture that contains them, may reflect social hierarchies, relations of authority, and unconscious irrational processes. His work has

been exhibited at the Kitchen, CCS Hessel Museum of Art, Queens Museum, the Storefront for Art & Architecture, and the Architekturmuseum der Technischen Universität Berlin. His investigation of what the built environment contains and excludes extends into the discursive form of writing, public lectures, and workshops. He has taught classes at the Rhode Island School of Design, Wesleyan University, the School of Constructed Environments at Parsons, and currently teaches at Eugene Lang, The New School, and the Hunter College M.F.A Program in Studio Art. Ruiz received his M.F.A. from Yale University and was a fellow in the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program.

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