

Introduction: Affect and Relationality

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We are pleased to publish the second special issue of the *Journal of Curatorial Studies* on how affect theory has informed contemporary curating. Whereas the previous issue on 'Museums and Affect' surveyed a range of affects including empathy, love, darkness, trauma, banality, curiosity and devotion in regard to architecture, installations and media platforms, this issue on 'Affect and Relationality' investigates how the curatorial works to conduct, transmit and circulate affects through embodiment, autobiography, labour, intuition and social media.

The increasing pressures of neo-liberalism have shifted the tasks of the curator from selecting artworks and organizing exhibitions to cultivating networks and capitalizing upon one's conviviality. Three articles in this issue address the newfound prominence and consequences of such affective labour. Helena Reckitt examines how in the current climate of reduced budgets and economic precarity institutions increasingly depend on curators to expend their energy on courting funders and instrumentalizing their contacts. Drawing on feminist social reproduction theory, and analysing exhibitions and artist-curator projects, she questions how exploitative supportive labour can be both contested and made more ethically responsible and personally sustainable. Nanne Buurman focuses attention upon curator Carolyn Christov-Barkargiev and the catalogue for her ambitious dOCUMENTA (13) exhibition. Noting that self-promotion is now a requirement of post-Fordist society, she explores how the conventional catalogue format has been affectively reconfigured by gendered, biopolitical and autobiographical concerns. Scrutinizing curators' expansion of their practice onto social media, Jennifer Fisher surveys how the popular platform of Instagram transmits the affect of connection both tangibly and proximally. By fostering a range of haptic relationalities, curators engage Instagram to stay in touch, to

provide access to the behind-the-scenes of the exhibitionary complex, and to perform ethico-aesthetic formations of the self.

The affect of relationality also bears significance for artist-curators and the embodied experience of visitors encountering compelling and uncanny objects. Lisa Blackman reflects upon the philosophical implications of beholding some of the affectively-charged objects in London's Foundling Museum. In her analysis, the evocative feelings generated by the objects impact debates about subjectivity and mediation, and yield new ideas about the agency of affectively-engaged publics. Finally, Mark Clintberg and Jon Davies write about two artist-curated exhibitions that foreground queer affect and play off the trope of the haunted house. While the first project, by Geoffrey Farmer, utilizes a Wunderkammer aesthetic of artefacts and artworks to comment on haunting and shame, the second, by Allyson Mitchell, draws on the stigmatized persona of the feminist killjoy to address persistent traces of misogyny and homophobia.

Overall, these articles elucidate the diverse ways that affect and relationality energize and connect curatorial networks, positionalities, institutions, communities, technologies and the current zeitgeist. In turn, the ways that these contingencies are enacted and responded to signal the decentred dynamics now operating in the production of curatorial knowledge.