

LIST 2: Paper abstracts for *Spectator Rules*

Norris, Allison; Independent Scholar; allison.m.norris@gmail.com

"Yeah, but what does it mean?"

In terms of today's art, making meaning is hardly left to the casual observer or museum-goer. A general reliance upon museum interpretive materials and curatorial assistance all but discourages viewers from formulating independent ideas in regards to contemporary works, and essentially nullifies Roland Barthes' primary argument that meaning is separate from the maker and instead relegated to the audience, as laid out in *Death of the Author*. However, it does also potentially validate aspects of the same argument, depending upon the semantics of the situation, when one considers the meaning-making hierarchy of the viewer, curator, and the artist.

The idea of meaning-making in a contemporary museum and gallery setting can then best be set out in one of two primary ways. First, that the autonomy of the viewer is surrendered to the curators and artists by directly and/or passively requesting information on a work of art rather than actively developing an independent interpretation and thus meaning of one or more works. Second, that the viewer is still distantly in control of the making of meaning, by requiring some form of information provided to them when they visit a gallery or museum space, thus prompting the manifestation of meaning.

Chung, Nugin; Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania; noginchung@gmail.com

"Passability and Impassability of Two Gates"

This paper examines the relationship between spectators and two installation pieces -- Christo and Jeanne-Claude's *Gates* (2005) and Do Ho Suh's *Gate* (2011) -- and complicated, if not contradictory, meanings they convey. Both of the works create an environment for viewers to navigate either in New York City's Central Park or in the Seattle Art Museum, to feel soft textures and airy movements of fabrics the gates are made out of, and to experience the visual by being exposed to either interactions between nature and orange gates or a multi-media display on the surface of the gate featuring animations based on traditional East Asian paintings and serial photographs of the artist's childhood home. Since viewers are asked to pass the gates in these, there is no separation between the pictorial world of art and our mundane world of daily existence. However, viewers realize impassability of the two gates since they prevent viewers from entering the implied interior spaces. They are forever destined to meander around over seven thousand gates outside or to circle around the walls of the architectural space unable to enter inside. This paper will argue spectatorship enhances the meaning of passability and impassability of the two works.

Brockman, Kristin; The Ohio State University; brockman.59@osu.edu

"Constructive Alienation and Terror"

Unlike the work of their contemporaries, video and film artists Martha Rosler and Harun Farocki videos not only engage viewers in a dialogue of the media's role in public understanding, but also seek to activate history and redefine what constitutes knowledge -- ultimately engendering activated spectatorship via the televisual means they interrogate. In this paper, I argue that both artists activate spectators through the systematic collection and re-presentation of information, and invite viewers to become active participants rather than

passive consumers of history. Their work involves connecting seemingly fragmented bits of information to provide vehicles of communication and a means of restructuring symbolic law. The subject matter for each of the works – Rosler's A Simple Case of Torture (Or How to Sleep at Night) (1983) and Farocki's Inextinguishable Fire (1969) and Eye/Machine I, II, and III (2001-2003) -- is politically ambitious, distinct from their contemporaries in the focus, depth of criticism, and extent to which appropriation of the media is used as a means of subversion. These videos work to bridge the divide between the spectator and actual events by engaging the audience in a critical reexamination of what they visually and aurally consume.

Sherer, Scott; The University of Texas at San Antonio; scott.sherer@utsa.edu

"Representation as Lived Experience"

The portraits produced by Alberto Giacometti are evidence of the artist's questioning of the conditions through which one presents oneself and engages with others, and in 1957, the writer and playwright Jean Genet reflected upon these themes in an essay produced after visiting Giacometti's studio. The provocative works produced by the two men represent their struggles to consider embodied experience through artistic representations. This essay examines the creative triangulations among artists, the portraits they create, and their audiences and argues that Giacometti's and Genet's fractured representations represent the modern subject as simultaneously spectator and generator of new significance.