

**26 April 2012**

Queering the Gays/Gaze: sex, street, and subculture in 1970s queer erotic photography

**Jennifer V. Evans** Associate Professor, Carleton University  
**C/O Berlin** International Forum for Visual Dialogues  
Oranienburgerstr. 35, 10177 Berlin **7.30 pm**  
Chair **Katrin Köppert**



Herbert Tobias 'Ich weiss nicht, zu wem ich gehöre...' (1976)  
© Berlinische Galerie/VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2008

The decriminalization of homosexuality in the 1960s enabled legal protection for homosexuality and made it possible for same-sex desiring men and women to produce, possess, publish and consume erotic images without fear of police retribution or censor. Although photography played a pivotal role in the construction of queer identities in the newly protected public and private spheres, the art world was slow to embrace sex, street and subculture as high art. This talk explores the tension between high and low – between the museum and the street – as a fundamental feature of efforts to queer the gays/gaze after Stonewall. It takes up the problem of nostalgia in 1970s queer erotic photography and analyses the history and transformation of subject formation through the constitution and portrayal of erotic looking and seeing. In cooperation with Department Mediengeschichte University Siegen.

**11 May 2012**

A Coup de Genre: The Trials and Tribulations of Bülent Ersoy  
**Alisa Lebow** Filmmaker, Brunel University & **Başak Ertür**  
PhD Candidate Birkbeck College  
**b\_books** Lübbenerstr. 14, 10997 Berlin **7.30 pm**  
Chair **Marietta Kesting**



'Bülent Ersoy under arrest for insulting a judge, Autumn 1980'

This presentation takes as its subject the real and fictional trials of Bülent Ersoy – a fantastically outrageous Turkish transgender singer, film star, whose public gender 'transition' coincided and collided with the 1980 military coup d'état in Turkey and its aftermath. There is a confused but fascinating feature film that came out in 1981, starring Ersoy (playing herself as a man and a woman), about her gender 'crisis', which relies on documentary footage to build sympathy for the star's admittedly unusual and exaggerated persona. Interweaving an analysis of *The End of Fame* with Bülent Ersoy's real life trials, Lebow and Ertür explore the trans-queer challenges posed by the star's public persona, not only to genre and narrative, but to the law itself, allowing a unique perspective on the fitful logics and legal hysterics of the Turkish Sept. 12, 1980 coup d'état. In cooperation with b\_books.

**31 May 2012**

Torture: The Feminine Touch  
**Coco Fusco** Artist and Writer, Parsons New School for Design  
**ICI Berlin** Christinenstr.18-19, Haus 8, 10119 Berlin **7.30 pm**  
Chair **Nana Adusei-Poku**



© Eduardo Aparicio

From 2005-2009, Fusco developed a series of projects that explored contemporary military scenarios as intercultural encounters, examining the role of female sexuality as a weapon in the War on Terror. Treating the so-called 'theatre of combat' as a dramatic and symbolic space, she concentrated on military prisons. Many of the War on Terror's most controversial images have emerged from military prisons run by the US military in Iraq, Afghanistan and Cuba, featuring depictions of ritualized humiliation of 'enemy combatants.' In her work about this subject, she attempted to analyze these spectacles of subjection and to consider how the American military has capitalized on the growing presence of women in its ranks, adapting originally feminist ideas about sexual assertiveness in order to exploit them as interrogation strategies. In cooperation with ICI Berlin, NGBK, Institute for Queer Theory

**14 June 2012**

In the blink of an eye: Post-war constructions of (in)visibility of victims and perpetrators  
**Klaus Müller** Dr., Museum Consultant & Filmmaker  
**Humboldt University**, Dorotheenstr. 26, Lecture Hall 208,  
10117 Berlin **7.30pm**  
Chair **Todd Sekuler**



© Klaus Müller

This lecture explores the opposition between the post-war invisibility of gay survivors of the Nazi regime and the desire of post-war society to portray Nazis as homosexuals. In order to forget that 'ordinary' men and women had become perpetrators, the Nazi was portrayed as an outsider: deviant and degenerate. Homosexuality came to signify transgression into evil. Due to their exclusion from post-war memory, some gay survivors blamed themselves for their victimization. Their shame, ongoing persecution, and – above all – post-war silence constitute a disturbing figure: the speechless victim. Using various films, including the film within the Berlin Memorial to Homosexuals persecuted under Nazism, the discussion thus moves between the invisible victim and the post-war image of a perpetrator, both of which served collective and voyeuristic needs.

**26 June 2012**

United in Anger. A History of Act Up  
**Jim Hubbard** Filmmaker  
Babylon Rosa-Luxemburg-Str. 30, 10178 Berlin **7.30 pm**  
Chair **Lukas Engelmann**



© Jim Hubbard

Screened for the first time in Europe, *United in Anger*. A history of Act Up is the first feature-length documentary

about how ACT UP (the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power), a group of men and women of all races and classes, came together to change the world and save each other's lives. The film takes the viewer through the planning and execution of a dozen exhilarating major actions that forced the U.S. government and mainstream media to deal with the AIDS crisis. The film reveals how the group's complex culture – meetings, affinity groups, and approaches to civil disobedience – mingle with profound grief, sexiness, and the incredible energy of ACT UP. Utilizing oral histories, as well as rare archival footage, the film depicts the efforts of ACT UP as it battles corporate greed, social indifference, and government neglect. 3 Euro entry fee.

**Concept & Organization** Talking Eyes is presented by the Research Group Visual Culture based at DFG Graduate School 'Gender as a Category of Knowledge' at Humboldt-University in Berlin: Nana Adusei-Poku, Lukas Engelmann, Marietta Kesting, Katrin Köppert, Anne-Julia Schoen, Todd Sekuler.

**Design Studio** Fusun Türetken [www.fusunturetken.com](http://www.fusunturetken.com)

**Main Funding** DFG Graduate School 'Gender as a Category of Knowledge' at Humboldt-University in Berlin. More info: [www.geschlecht-als-wissenskategorie.de](http://www.geschlecht-als-wissenskategorie.de)

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The series 'Talking Eyes' wants to encourage the use of Irit Rogoff's 'curious' eyes (2002) by providing a platform to foreground marginalised discourses. The series will open up theoretical and practical interventions for subversion from various angles: Five events shall weave a net around the figure 'Talking Eyes', opening a space to engage more closely with affective dimensions of images and their production. 'Talking Eyes' enter the visual realm, zooming in on the subject that is presented. With 'Talking Eyes', subjects and relations are perceived by way of an embodied gaze, introducing questions of sexualised, racialised and gendered subjectivities; pornotropic, forensic, clinical and military detection; surveillance and control of disease; as well as crime and war. 'Talking Eyes' evoke a desire to unite image and language. Discussions on the strategies and limitations of representational practices and interventions will be synchronised and positioned next to technological aspects of image production.

Imaging technologies, experimental designs, and pictorial strategies construct visual materialities that always depend on the gendered and racialised iconographies within the specificity of their historical moment. The visual data of the fixed gaze of surveillance cameras, for example, generate images of disciplined pedestrians, as well as of femininity devoid of affects. Graphic images of electrocardiograms or microscopic depictions of viruses can simultaneously offer abstract perspectives on diseases as well as work on the 'cleansing' of individual and collective body/ies. Documentary footage can serve to capture and render visible aspects of activism or may be manipulated to interrogate the borders between fiction and documentary, if not to distort popular perception of historical persons and events. The figure of the 'Talking Eyes' can also be found in the invasive gaze of pornography or in military interrogations, which follows the phantasm of 'complete/total visibility', or in the subject formation enabled via engaging with queer erotic photography.

The research group 'Visual Culture' of the interdisciplinary graduate research program 'Gender as a Category of Knowledge' at Humboldt-University in Berlin has invited an exciting group of speakers – at once artists, activists and academics – who will engage with these various topics. Thus, the 'Talking Eyes' series, to be held in renowned cultural and intellectual institutions, intends to intrude and break up, and thereby re-animate old and new debates in visual culture, and inspire critical research across academic disciplines.

# TALKING EYES

A LECTURE SERIES

*presented by*

THE RESEARCH GROUP  
VISUAL CULTURE

*based at*

DFG GRADUATE SCHOOL  
'GENDER AS A CATEGORY OF  
KNOWLEDGE'  
HUMBOLDT-UNIVERSITY

BERLIN