
S P E A K E R S

Alexander Dunst (NOTTINGHAM)
Eva Gruber (KONSTANZ)
Sebastian Honert (ERLANGEN)
Dennis Kersten (NIJMEGEN)
Sirkka Knuuttila (HELSINKI)
Katy Massey (NEWCASTLE)
Hanna Meretoja (TURKU)
Markus M. Müller (TRIER)
Anja Müller-Wood (MAINZ)
Sascha Pöhlmann (MÜNCHEN)
Nicole Schröder (PADERBORN)
Pieter Vermeulen (LEUVEN)
Eva Zehelein (FRANKFURT)

O R G A N I Z E R S

Jan D. Kucharzewski (DÜSSELDORF)
Stefanie Schäfer (HEIDELBERG)
Lutz Schowalter (TRIER)

Guests are welcome.

For further information, please visit
www.subjectivity08.net or email us at
subjectivity08@gmail.com

Conference Fee: 30 Euro

With the generous support of



Gesellschaft von Freunden und Förderern der Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf e.V.

Fritz Thyssen Stiftung
FÜR WISSENSCHAFTSFÖRDERUNG

C O N T E X T

After the subject has been challenged, marginalized, fragmented, deconstructed, and pluralized in many postmodern modes of expression and thinking, there now seems to be a growing interest in reconceptualizing the relevance of subjectivity as a constitutive element in cultural production and in theoretical discourses. In contemporary literature, North American writers such as Bret Easton Ellis, Jonathan Franzen and Richard Powers have begun to seek a "reengagement with the world's living concepts" (Powers) by reintroducing the subject as an essential factor of textual production and reception. Furthermore, works of up-and-coming authors such as Jonathan Safran Foer, Marisha Pessl and Jeffrey Eugenides share a focus on matters of fictional autobiography and a vital concern for the self. In literary criticism, this shift is paralleled by a turn to subject-based ethical questions originating from both philosophy and poststructuralist thought (Hale 2007). In contemporary media culture, New Media technologies offer a variety of possibilities for articulating and constructing subjectivity in virtual spaces, a fact to which the abundance of personal pronouns in generic product names – from ego-shooters to iPods, from MySpace to YouTube – attests. Finally, contemporary material culture continues to provide ample space for performances of subjectivity, reaching from fashion to advertising and beyond.

The conference seeks to explore these sites of contemporary cultural production with a focus on literature, literary criticism, and cultural theory, but also inviting contributions from scholars working in the fields of media studies, art history, and material culture. Central to the conference are the following inquiries: Where and how are subjectivities (re)constructed in contemporary culture? How might these (re)constructions be assessed in the context of current debates in literary theory, cultural studies, philosophy, etc.?

"hello, i say, it's me"

(Re)Constructions of Subjectivity in
Contemporary Literature and Culture

April 04-05, 2008
Heinrich-Heine-Universität
Düsseldorf



www.subjectivity08.net



"hello, i say, it's me"

FRIDAY, APRIL 04, 2008

12:00 - 1:00 Registration

1:30 pm Welcoming Remarks

2:00 - 2:45 pm - PANEL I
(Re)Inscribing the Subject in Literary History and Literary Theory

SASCHA PÖHLMANN (MÜNCHEN)
'The Solipsist Errs': Narrating I² in Shelley Jackson's *Half Life*

2:45 - 3:00 pm - coffee break

3:00 - 4:30 pm
N.N.
To be announced

HANNA MERETOJA (TURKU)
From Problematization to Rehabilitation of Subjectivity in the French Postwar Novel: Alain Robbe-Grillet's *In the Labyrinth* and Michel Tournier's *The Er1-King*

4:30 - 5:00 pm - coffee break

FRIDAY, APRIL 04 (ctnd.)

5:00 - 6:45 pm - PANEL II
Contemporary Subjects in Crisis

SIRKKA KNUUTTILA (HELSINKI)
The Postrational Subject and the Challenge of Expressing Traumatic Memory

ALEXANDER DUNST (NOTTINGHAM)
Post-Schizophrenia, Post-Postmodernism: Dialogical Subjectivity and the Return of the Other

7:00 pm - Dinner

SATURDAY, APRIL 05, 2008

9:30 - 11:00 am - PANEL III
Embodied Subjectivities

ANJA MÜLLER-WOOD (MAINZ)
Being 'Me' and *Being Dead*: The New Materialism in Contemporary British Fiction

MARKUS M. MÜLLER (TRIER)
Adolescence Forever Lost or Regained? Aging Subjects in North American Novels

11:00 - 11:15 am - coffee break

SATURDAY, APRIL 05 (ctnd.)

11:15 - 1:15 pm - PANEL IV
Renegotiating the Postcolonial Subject

EVA GRUBER (KONSTANZ)
Repositioning the Racialized Subject

KATY MASSEY (NEWCASTLE)
Considering Mixed-Race Subjectivities

PIETER VERMEULEN (LEUVEN)
Beyond Melancholy: Lyric Subjectivity in Chang-Rae Lee's *Native Speaker*

1:15 - 2:30 pm - lunch

2:30 - 4:30 pm - PANEL V
Narrating Subjectivities

DENNIS KERSTEN (NIJMEGEN)
Life after the Death of the Author: The Adventures of Robert Louis Stevenson in Contemporary Biographical Fiction

EVA ZEHELEIN (FRANKFURT)
'I am no one': Subjectivity and Self in Richard Powers' *The Echo Maker*

NICOLE SCHRÖDER (PADERBORN)
Narrating (My) Self: Subjectivity in Recent American Novels

4:30 - 5:00 pm
FINAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION