

“VWI invites Institute for Contemporary Art at the Technical University Graz”

Wednesday, 24 April 2019, 3.00 pm
1010 Vienna, Rabensteig 3, 3rd Floor

Kathryn BRACKNEY

BEYOND BEARING WITNESS
ART AND LITERATURE AFTER THE HOLOCAUST, 1945-1963

In recent years, scholars have devoted increasing attention to memory of the Holocaust in the early post-war period before the Eichmann trial. This presentation highlights the cultural production of Jewish refugees during this period – but it focusses on forms of remembrance not primarily concerned with what has come to be known as ‘bearing witness’. In contrast to the landmark memoirs of survivors like Primo Levi or Elie Wiesel, who attempted to document for the world the genocide of Europe’s Jews, writers and artists like Avrom Sutzkever and Marc Chagall turned to surreal visual vocabularies both to memorialize destroyed Jewish communities and to make sense of their own indeterminate position in the post-war world. The hybrid figures and liminal space in their work convey both an enduring sense of proximity to the dead and, often, distance from the living. Together, the art and literature featured in this presentation constitute an alternative tradition of Holocaust remembrance.



Commented by Milica TOMIĆ

Kathryn Brackney is a Junior Fellow at the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies and a doctoral candidate in modern European intellectual and cultural history at Yale University. She was previously a fellow at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and the USC Shoah Foundation. Her article *Remembering ‘Planet Auschwitz’ during the Cold War* was recently featured in UC Berkeley’s journal, *Representations*.

Milica Tomić is an artist and head of the Institute of Contemporary Art at the Technical University in Graz. Tomić’s collective as well as investigative art projects offer an innovative way to engage with new forms of memorialisation beyond existing commemorative practices. Since 2002, she has been a founding member of the Grupa Spomenik and in 2010 she developed the interdisciplinary project *Four Faces of Omarska*. Her exhibitions have been exhibited in among other places the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin, the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Brooklyn Museum in New York, the Kunsthalles and the MUMOK in Vienna, the KIASMA in Helsinki, as well as at the Biennales in Venice, Sydney, and Istanbul.

Please register at anmeldung@vwi.ac.at by latest Tuesday, 23 April, 12.00 am and bring your ID.

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