

GERHARD RICHTER: QUESTIONS FOR PAINTERS

POSTGRADUATE SYMPOSIUM

10 AM – 7 PM

MONDAY 16 OCTOBER 2017

\$65pp

[Register here](#)

Interested postgraduate students, early-career researchers and academics from universities throughout Australasia are invited to attend and contribute to a dynamic dialogue on art practice as framed through Richter's example.

This postgraduate symposium focuses on practice-based research, and provides an opportunity to meet and hear from distinguished artists working at the nexus of practical and theoretical approaches to contemporary painting. Speakers will use their own research and practice-based methodologies as case studies in shaping this discussion.

The symposium is organised around two central themes and, as Richter's practice so ably demonstrates, the play between oppositions: abstract versus figurative; conceptual versus craft-based; painting versus photography—is the most fruitful means towards analysis and discussion.

CO-CONVENORS: DR JULIE FRAGAR, ANGELA GODDARD AND DR ROSEMARY HAWKER

POSTGRADUATE SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM

EXHIBITION TOUR

10:00AM QAGOMA

Join Dr Rosemary Hawker, curator of 'Gerhard Richter: The Life of Images', for a special tour of the exhibition.

11:00AM Walk to QCA (15 mins)

FIRST SESSION

11:15AM Graduate Research Centre Lecture Theatre Griffith University South Bank S07_1.23

Welcome from Professor Derrick Cherrie, Director, QCA and convenors

The rebirth of figuration: practice based and theoretical responses to the photographic as precipitated by Richter's photo paintings

This session considers current approaches to figurative image-making in painting, examining subjects and subjectivities in relation to photographic and mediated visual languages.

Painting is traditional but for me that doesn't mean the academy. I felt a need to paint; I love painting. It was something natural – as is listening to music or playing an instrument for some people. For this reason I searched for themes of my era and my generation. Photography offered this, so I chose it as a medium for painting.

—Richter in *Conversation with Paolo Vagheggi*, 1999

Photography has almost no reality; it is almost a hundred per cent picture. And painting always has reality: you can touch the paint; it has presence; but it always yields a picture – no matter whether good or bad. That's all the theory. It's no good. I once took some small photographs and then smeared them with paint. That partly resolved the problem, and it's really good – better than anything I could ever say on the subject.

—Richter, *Interview with Jonas Storsve*, 1991

Speakers:

Chair: Dr Julie Fragar

Dr Celeste Chandler (Melbourne)

Dr Natalya Hughes (Sydney)

Dr Sam Leach (Melbourne)

LUNCH

1:00PM Griffith University Art Museum Foyer

SECOND SESSION

2:00PM Graduate Research Centre Lecture Theatre Griffith University South Bank S07_1.23

Painting post-medium: conflicting messages for painters

This session will explore the expansion and transformation of the practice and interpretation of 'painting'. It aims to discuss abstraction and spatiality in light of Richter's influence along with a wide range of critical positions and artistic practices relating to medium-specificity.

When we describe a process, or make out an invoice, or photograph a tree, we create models; without them we would know nothing of reality and would be animals. Abstract pictures are fictive models, because they make visible a reality that we can neither see nor describe, but whose existence we can postulate.

—Richter, *Text for catalogue of documenta 7*, Kassel, 1982

Painting is the making of an analogy for something non-visual and incomprehensible – giving it form and bringing it within reach. And that is why good paintings are incomprehensible. Creating the incomprehensible has absolutely nothing to do with turning out any old bunkum, because bunkum is always comprehensible.

—Richter, *Notes*, 1981

Speakers:

Chair: Angela Goddard

Daniel Boyd (Sydney)

Dr Simon Ingram (NZ)

Huseyin Sami (Sydney)

3:30PM Afternoon tea

GROUP DISCUSSION

4:00PM Graduate Research Centre Lecture Theatre Griffith University South Bank S07_1.23

5:00PM Closing drinks Griffith University Art Museum Foyer

PERFORMANCE

6:00PM Griffith University Art Museum

In a new and extended version of his renowned exhibition performance, *my space, your words, their grey*, Austrian artist Philipp Gehmacher asks: what is grey life, grey space, grey movement? Setting up a 'grey' space in the gallery, where subject and object relations can be interrogated, the performance sits somewhere between experiments in the effects of the (non-) colour grey as conducted by Gerhard Richter and the hard-edged painter Ellsworth Kelly. Spanning representation, abstraction, grey as a colour, a non-colour or a state, this experiential work brings bodies, gestures, text, images and objects together in seeking to reconcile the artist's body and its own idiosyncratic dialogue with the things of this world.