SUMMER SCHOOL
WALTER BENJAMIN
PORTBOU
2016
22–25 SEPTEMBER
COMMENORATIVE EVENTS
SUMMER SCHOOL WALTER BENJAMIN
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THE CONCEPT OF HISTORY, PASSAGES BOOK, ART AND HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAMME

Thursday, 22nd September. Centre Civic Ca l’Herrero
9.30h Opening Remarks by Chantal Benjamin and Sigrid Weigel (English language)
10.00h Reading and discussion of “The concept of History”. (Source: Reader providing a bi-lingual version of the text)
12.00h Session directed by Sigrid Weigel (English language)
12.00h Explanation by the participants in the exhibition “The briefcases of Walter Benjamin” about Walter Benjamin’s work and concepts
13.00h Presentation of a film project about Walter Benjamin by Mateo Ramirez Lleut, student from UPT, Barcelona.
16.30h Panel with the professors from the art schools: Jean Calens (Ecole des Beaux Arts, Bordeaux); Wim Westerveld, Knut Ebeling, Barbara Junge and Hannes Brunner (Weissensee Kunstschule Berlin), Carlos Lozana and Estela Rodriguez (Escola Llotja i Disseny, Barcelona). Debate with the students.
18.00h Projection of the film “Der Himmel über Berlin” by Wim Wenders. Discussion about the film.
Friday, 23rd September. Centre Civic Ca l’Herrero
10.00h Reading and discussion of fragments from Passagen book. Session directed by Sigrid Weigel (English language)
12.00h Projection of Chape & Mimi (15’’ by Eric Esser, from Berlin, winner of the Film Festival of Cinema of the Border 2014. This is a film about friendship, homeland and identity.
Afternoon and Evening
Banyuls-sur-mer. Salie Novelty, 5, rue du 14 juillet.
20.30h Lectures and activities organised by the Association Walter Benjamin “sans frontières”. (French language)
19.30h Presentation of the application Chess-border by Francel Ancel.
19.00h Title and subject: Chess-border (**) modulation de l’espace et fréquence temporelle. (*) https://www.studiosbouyet.com/fr/portfolio/chess-border/ 18’30h Jean-Louis Balleret, historian from Niévre (Bourgogne): About the concentration camp of Vernichou, close to Nevers where was imprisoned Walter Benjamin (diaporama).
17’00h María Mailt, Lex passages/ messages de Walter Benjamin. Novelist, psychologist, expert on Kafka and Walter Benjamin.
20.30h Guided tour to Passagen Memorial. Meeting point: Centre Civic Ca l’Herrero.
17.30h Performances by students from Ecole des Beaux-Arts de Bordeaux (EABABK).
Saturday, 24th September. Centre Civic Ca l’Herrero
10.00h Panel about the concept of Art in Benjamin thinking and Benjamin critical acclaim. (English language):
22’00h Projection of the film “Pasajes” by Dani Karavan, Wim Wenders and Chantal Benjamin. Dispositions of migration at the International Portbou Railway Station with students and authorities.
Sunday, 25th September
8.00h Opening of the exhibition “The briefcases of Walter Benjamin. Dispositions of migration at the International Portbou Railway Station with students and authorities.
Moderator: Pilar Partcerisas.
12.00h Guided tour to Passagen Memorial. Meeting point: Centre Civic Ca l’Herrero.
19.00h Introduction to performing the film by Lloret de Mar. Performance the film by Mateo Ramirez Lleut, student from UPF, Barcelona.
Sunday, 22nd September.
10.00h Presentation of the local and international artwork from Portbou. Project by Dani Karavan, Wim Wenders and Chantal Benjamin during the 75th Anniversary of Walter Benjamin’s death (2015).
17.30h Presentation of the project of Portbou: “The Quest for the Aura, Freedom from the Past, Reflection on the Possibilities of Politicalising Art Works and Media”.
19.00h Presentation of the project of the Association Walter Benjamin de Portbou as a National Cultural Good (Bé de Cultura d´Interés Nacional). 13.00h Wreath laying and official speeches at the cemetery of Portbou.


This first edition of Walter Benjamin Summer School in Portbou is directed by Sigrid Weigel the well known expert, from Zentrum für Literatur und Kulturforschung Berlin, with the collaboration of Chantal Benjamin, grand-daughter of Walter Benjamin, social worker and trainer in Human Rights (Alice Salomon Hochschule Berlin), Gerard Vilar (UAB), Eric Puig Punyet (UIC) and writer at Le Rayon Vert by AH AH AH editions with Baptiste Housset (Novelty, 5, rue du 14 juillet). Students from École des Beaux Arts de Bordeaux (EABPBK), Natalia Cantó (UOC), Swen Seebach (UAB), Pilar Parcerisas (Assoc. Passatges) and with students from Ecole des Beaux Arts de Bordeaux (EABABK), who brought light to the challenges that this situation poses to our European society.

This event brings an international, interdisciplinary and cosmopolitan perspective to study Walter Benjamin philosophy in an exceptional environment. Portbou, a little village in the frontiers with France, in the Costa Brava, where Walter Benjamin decided to die as an anonymous person, where today the Passages Memorial by Dani Karavan honours this philosopher, as well as all those anonymous fugitive who went to exile in search of freedom.

76th Anniversary of the Walter Benjamin’s death (Berlin, 1900-Portbou,1940).


Director of the Seminar: Sigrid Weigel (Zentrum für Literatur und Kulturforschung Berlin), with the collaboration of Pilar Parcerisas.


Place: Centre Civic Ca l’Herrero, c/ Méndez Nuñez, 2, Portbou.

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The Summer School shall be one cornerstone of the ongoing engagements to build and establish a Walter Benjamin House in Portbou, the village where Walter Benjamin lived abruptly after crossing the Pyrenees at the border between France and Catalonia. During the Second World War the Mediterranean coast turned into the light of hope providing a gateway to exile and a future life for innumerable persecuted persons during Nazi-time. This place is nowadays again the scenario where many refugees dream to have an opportunity to continue their life, although the sea is the first barrier that decides their fate. However, European countries overwhelmed by a socioeconomic and political crisis become the second barrier. It is in this context where Walter Benjamin’s thoughts could help us understand and empathize with this problematic, as well as bring some light to the challenges that this situation poses to our European society.

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