

With

Elizabeth Brogden, Natalia Cecire,
Tita Chico, Anne Eusterschulte,
Christiane Frey, Amelia Groom,
Daniel Liu, Roger Maioli, Marlon Miguel,
Nikolai Preuschoff, Malte Fabian Rauch,
Pauline Selbig, John H. Smith,
Elisa Tamarkin, Michelle Ty,
Elena Vogman, and Cynthia Wall

Keynotes by

Marianne Schuller and
Hans-Jörg Rheinberger

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KUNSTLABOR
BERLIN INSTITUTE FOR CULTURAL INQUIRY



Fritz Thyssen Stiftung
für Kunst und Wissenschaften

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**Michelle
conference**

Organized by
Elizabeth Brogden,
Christiane Frey,
and Ulla Haselstein
**23.-24.
05.2019**

**Contextualizing the Small
in Science, Philosophy,
and Literature**

ICI Berlin

in English

Michelle

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were replete with large-scale projects and interests: the rise of the most colossal modern literary form, the novel; the craze for panoramas; the pursuit of imperial ambitions by both European and American powers. At the same time, however, interest in minutiae proliferated on both sides of the Atlantic, as histories of the microscope and the micrological have revealed. The molecular and infinitesimal gained new importance in philosophy, mathematics, the natural sciences, medicine, and literature, as new technologies gradually rendered the ‘invisible world’ available to human observation. In tandem with this development, the notion of milieu became increasingly prevalent, as instantiated most prominently by the concept of the ecological niche in evolutionary biology. The question of how organisms interact with their milieus emerged as a new area of inquiry across a range of fields; the minuscule beings and objects that had hitherto attracted interest mainly because of their newly discovered individuality were now scrutinized with growing intensity in their environmental context.

This conference brings together scholarly work that addresses these two cultural-epistemological developments: first, the role of minutiae, as manifested in all kinds of diminutive units or categories (for instance: the animalcula, the infinitesimal, the minor, the particular, the seemingly irrelevant, the typographic detail, the cellular, the clue); and, secondly, the interaction between these tiny phenomena and their surroundings. *Milieus of Minutiae* explores the ways in which what is subvisible or easily overlooked is situated in philosophy, cultural production, and scientific experimentation from early modernity through the twentieth century, with a view toward the contemporary moment. Medieval thought granted discrete being to that which is otherwise considered negligible and only relational—a status later held by both the minor and the milieu—and this conference constellates approaches that restore ontological viability to both of these categories between premodern and contemporary thought. At the same time, it explores the historical dimensions of a micrology of knowledge and aesthetics, reflecting on the objectivity, supra-metonymy, and epistemological value of these units across a wide range of cultural, intellectual, environmental, social, and material milieus.

Thursday, 23 May 2019		Friday, 24 May 2019	
Morning Coffee		Morning Coffee	
10:00 – 10:30	INTRODUCTION Elizabeth Brogden, Christiane Frey, Ulla Haselstein	10:00 – 12:15	MERE MILIEUS Chair: Claudia Poppel
10:30 – 12:45	LOOKING CLOSELY Chair: Ulla Haselstein	Amelia Groom, Matte Fabian Rauch.	Partially Submerged Ruins Counter Cartography: Agamben – Debord – On Kawara
Tita Chico.	Thinking Small: Or, a Literary History of Scrutiny	Michelle Ty.	Umwelt and the Color Line
Elizabeth Brogden.	Clew-less Fiction: Narrative Detail Beyond Realism		Lunch Break
Elisa Tamarkin.	Regarding Irrelevance	13:45 – 16:00	MINIMAL RELATIONS Chair: Arnd Wedemeyer
	Lunch Break	John H. Smith.	The Calculus of the Psycho-Physical Difference
14:00 – 16:15	DIMINUTIVE AESTHETICS Chair: Mareike Schildmann	Anne Eusterschulte.	Interactions between Metaphysical, Physical and Literary Minutiae: From Giordano Bruno to James Joyce
Pauline Selbig.	Minor Milieus: Benjamin's Mode of Writing	Christiane Frey.	Encapsulated Minima: Duns Scotus, Leibniz, Ruyer
Nikolai Preuschoff.	The Minute in Robert Wal- ser's Novel The Tanners		
Marlon Miguel & Elena Vogman.	Le Moindre Geste: Cinema and Milieu after Fernand Deligny		Coffee
	Coffee	16:30 – 18:00	MICRO-WORLDS MAGNIFIED Chair: Elizabeth Brogden
16:45 – 18:15	TRIVIA(L) MATTER(S) Chair: Christiane Frey	Natalia Cecire.	Shelled Life: Sexuality and Subjectivity at the Level of the Cell
Cynthia Wall. Roger Maioli.	"Of a PARENTHESIS" The Rise of the Novel and the Knowledge of Particulars	Daniel Liu.	Positivism vs. Molecular Imagination after the Abbe Diffraction Limit, 1874–1939
	Refreshments		Refreshments
19:00	KEYNOTE Nanoästhetik: Zur imaginativen Kraft des Kleinen	19:00 Hans-Jörg Rheinberger.	KEYNOTE Experimental Environments: 'Micrologies of Knowledge'
Marianne Schuller.	(Nanoaesthetics: On the Imaginative Power of the Small)		