

RADICAL FILM NETWORK MEETING

BERLIN 02nd–05th May 2019

OPEN CALL

You are invited to submit presentations, lectures and workshops for the upcoming three-day event **Radical Film Network Meeting**. The Meeting, which will take place from **2nd – 5th May 2019** in Berlin's **Silent Green Kulturquartier** will focus on **artistic/creative and political/ethical positions within the global radical film cultures**. We welcome contributions from individuals and communities both inside and outside academia, from artists, activists, filmmakers, researchers, scientists and others, looking for answers to the question: **“What is radical film?”**

Contributions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Video activism, Counter Cinema, Counter Publicity and Radical Film;**
- **Radical film as an artistic strategy;**
- **Forms of radical film activism and political agitation;**
- **Political filmmaking and ethical issues;**
- **Radical film cultures and future orientation(s);**
- **Creativity and innovation in radical film cultures;**
- **Radical aesthetics and politics;**
- **Global radical film cultures;**
- **Questions of inclusion/exclusion in radical film cultures;**
- **Collaborative and participative practices in radical film cultures;**
- **(Self)representation, identity and privacy in radical film cultures;**
- **Radical films and their distribution with digital technologies;**

Interested participants are invited to submit one proposal in following format:

- **Short lecture, film- or project presentation (6 min 40 s Pecha Kucha style)**
- **Lecture, film- or project presentation (max. 25 min)**
- **Workshop (max. 2.5 hours)**

Proposals should be kept to a maximum of 1 **page** (lecture), or 2 pages (workshop), and can be sent in either **English** or **German** to: opencall@radicalfilm.net

Deadline for submissions: 28th February 2019

Limited funds to cover expenses for lecturers, presenters and workshop leaders will be provided. Participants who do not reside in Berlin are eligible to apply for a travel and accommodation grant. The event will be held in English. The programme details will be announced in due course.

Please send any enquiries to the above address.

What is Radical Film?

The terms '**radical**' and '**radical film**' can be applied to a variety of cultural and artistic practices. In the context of the Radical Film Network, however, '**radicality**' refers first and foremost to a political affiliation with progressive forces, as well as taking an active role in improving social justice, regardless of whether this be workers' rights, environmental sustainability, gender, race or sexual equality.

On the basis of this ideological orientation, the participants of the radical film network practice and celebrate potential cinematic radicality in myriad ways. They develop new and challenging aesthetic praxes, experiment with the medium itself and seek to apply political ideals to production and distribution processes. The question, 'What is radical film today?', is asked time and again with ever-changing replies.

In cooperation with the Harun Farocki Institute the event '**WHAT IS RADICAL FILM?**' will create a temporary space at the Silent Green Kulturquartier Berlin with the intention of initiating exchange and dialogue between actors of the Radical Film Network, Berlin filmmakers and cultural practitioners. Furthermore it intends to foster and continue the British-German dialogue, currently aggravated by the political upheaval of Brexit. Participants plan to ask the joint questions: "What is radical film?" and "What is radical film able to achieve?"

Radical Film, Counter Cinema and Counter Publicity

The dominance of the film and media industry, whose system of social representation and formulaic entertainment is seen as a symbolic apparatus of oppression, has triggered the formation of many filmic counter-movements that pose radical aesthetic and ideological questions.

As early as the 1920s, experimental formats were developed as an alternative to the feature films preferred by major cinema distributors. These were accused of defiling viewers with superficial entertainment, with Dziga Vertov even entitling his dramatic feature film of 1924, 'Opium of the People'. In the 1970s the term '**counter-cinema**' was coined to describe alternative film productions that question the familiar, break conventions and seek out new narrative means. The films of the counter-cinema movement, (also known as guerrilla cinema), sought to exhibit and denounce the hegemonic practices found in commercial film and explore other forms of subjectivity. They referred to the agendas of Third Cinema, anti-colonialist cinema, and sought to highlight the contradictions that political filmmakers were exposed to, from self-conception to the prevailing market terms of film production.

Taking this discourse as a reference, the video activist groups of the 80s began to use video as a propaganda tool to resound the era's political concerns. With the aim of establishing a **counter-public**, it allowed them to occupy new information channels that reached beyond television. In opposition to the dominant media, the activities of these groups deliberately focused on perspectives that remained under-represented by the media, and also used exaggeration and fictionalization as methods to clarify their alternative points of view. The development of digital technologies and the Internet finally lead to a dramatic expansion of the video activist arena and, with it, formed a completely new set of questions. In times of constant online accessibility to film and television, fake news and life-hack clips, it is difficult to speak of a single leading medium. Instead, the question gaining importance is, who are the followers, fans and the corresponding cultures of attention.

Independent film production and video activism, as well as the film and media industry, must assume an assertive standpoint within this new environment. Never before has film technology been so affordable, so easily accessible and so easy to market internationally as today. At the same time, however, the ubiquitous availability of moving pictures is disrupting the distribution and sales structures that before had generated income for producers, as well as created a form of selection and stringency, albeit arbitrarily. With these aspects in mind, discussions surrounding the formats and forms of **radical film** will be the theme of the event, along with finding ideas to recontextualise them, with the aim of proving that oppositional and radical filmmaking is still as diverse, colourful and lively as ever.

In recent years an interdisciplinary discourse has developed around **counter images and movement images**, covering all areas of cultural life, including theatre, exhibitions, cinema, TV, and the Internet. It consistently attempts to find new means of narration and representation that undermine conventional codes and conventions by opposing, alienating and deconstructing them by offering different methods of representing and interpreting the world. Artists and filmmakers can, however, still employ conventional narrative patterns, using familiar formats to relate an alternative message. In doing so, they take advantage of cinema's illusionism to convey a different view of the world, using fiction to clarify their ideas in a humorous and ironic way.

Continuing the spirit in which the Radical Film Network (RFN) was founded, the Radical Film Network Meeting aims to bring together activists, academics, filmmakers and artists to jointly answer the question, "**What is radical film?**".