

Love Objects: Engaging Material Culture

Date : November 9, 2007

The Design Research Group are organising a one day conference on the relationships between people and their objects, to be hosted by the Faculty of Visual Culture, National College of Art and Design, Dublin on 14th February 2008.

The relationship between people and their objects is a complex and multifaceted one, which is continually negotiated between the material and the immaterial. Objects are used as tokens of affection, symbolic gestures and statements of devotion and can be represented, employed and appropriated in a multitude of ways. They carry out important roles in our relationships with each other, either as bearers of significance, or through embodiment, engagement or control. The seductive quality of objects can also mediate our relationships with them, as they engage our emotions in both subliminal and visceral ways. In doing so they facilitate the projection and subversion of identities, and the creation of the contexts in which they operate.

It is expected that selected papers will be collected in an edited anthology. Papers are invited to contribute towards thematic areas, which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Mind – memory, nostalgia and symbolic value; collecting, hoarding and losing objects; objects and rites of passage; the representation of love of / in objects; objects and devotion
- Body – sex, desire and romance; wrapping, covering and wearing; kitsch and ironic objects; the queer and the camp; objects as tools in sustaining / subverting gender roles; objectification and commodification
- Environment – the role of objects in the construction and performance of identities and relationships in public / private spaces; green objects and sustainable design
- Networks – mediating, signifying and negotiating relationships, including the interpersonal, the group and the political

Papers should be of 20 minutes duration and abstracts of max. 300 words should be submitted by 16 November 2007 to: designresearchgroup@eircom.net

Convened by the Design Research Group

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