

Discussion and Book Presentation – 11 December 2024, 19:00, in English

Organized by
Marlon Miguel and Elena Vogman

With
Joana Masó
Marlon Miguel
Christian Scheerhorn
Elena Vogman

What is the relationship between social and mental alienation? How can one envision care and cure practices that counter the homogenizing policies of institutions and go beyond the neoliberal economy of individual well-being? The evening explores the legacies of institutional psychotherapy, a psychiatric reform and resistance movement that emerged in France in response to the fascist extermination of patients with mental and physical disabilities. Initiated at Saint-Alban psychiatric hospital by a collective of Marxist psychiatrists, activists, philosophers, and nuns from the Saint-Régis community, Jewish refugees and surrealist artists (among them Georges Canguilhem, Tristan Tzara, Jacques Matarasso, Paul Éluard, and Nusch Éluard), the movement embraced group therapies and patient-run cooperatives.

The recent publication of *Psychotherapy and Materialism* (ICI Berlin Press, 2024) edited by Marlon Miguel and Elena Vogman, offers the first English translation of two seminal texts by institutional psychotherapy co-inventors François Tosquelles, a Catalan psychiatrist and anarcho-syndicalist, and Jean Oury, founder of the La Borde clinic. Their materialist and ‘disalienationist’ approach was further developed in Frantz Fanon’s decolonial psychiatry and Félix Guattari’s schizoanalysis. It led to a radical rethinking of psychoanalysis, education, and social work promoted by figures like Gisela Pankow, Anne Querrien, and Ginette Michaud.

Joana Masó is a professor of French literature at the University of Barcelona. She is a researcher with the UNESCO Chair on Women, Development, and Cultures, and works at the intersection of literature, critical thinking, contemporary art, and curating exhibitions. She has coedited Hélène Cixous’s essays dedicated to art, *Poetry in Painting: Writings on Contemporary Arts and Aesthetics* (Edinburgh University Press, 2012). Since 2017, she has led the research project ‘The Forgotten Legacy of Tosquelles’ at the University of Barcelona, under the ADHUC — Research Center for Theory, Gender, Sexuality. She has published *Nusch Éluard: Sous le surréalisme, les femmes* (Seghers, Paris, 2024), the exhibition catalogue *Francesc Tosquelles: Avant-Garde Psychiatry, Radical Politics and Art*, co-edited with Carles Guerra et al for the American Folk Art Museum in New York (2024), and the forthcoming title *Tosquelles: Curing the Institutions* (Semiotext(e), 2025). She is currently working on different modalities of restitution of Dubuffet’s art brut through Tosquelles’ critical legacy.

Marlon Miguel is Co-Principal Investigator of the project ‘Madness, Media, Milieus: Reconfiguring the Humanities in Postwar Europe’ at the Media Faculty of Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, and a Visiting Fellow at ICI Berlin. He holds a double PhD in Fine Arts and Philosophy. His current research proposes to critically inquire into the notion of ‘disorder’ and to de-essentialize it, looking at the use of artistic media in critical psychiatric practices such as those of François Tosquelles, Frantz Fanon, Fernand Deligny, and Nise da Silveira.

Christian Scheerhorn studied philosophy and comparative literature in Paris and Berlin. He is currently completing a Master’s degree at Freie Universität Berlin with a research focus on the intersections of literature, media, and French philosophy. As a student research assistant, he contributes to the project ‘Madness, Media, Milieus: Reconfiguring the Humanities in Postwar Europe’ at Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, exploring the history of institutional psychotherapy and its media and milieu practices.

Elena Vogman is a media theorist, Principal Investigator of the research project ‘Madness, Media, Milieus: Reconfiguring the Humanities in Postwar Europe’ at the Media Faculty of Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, and a Visiting Fellow at ICI Berlin. Her research focuses on critical psychiatry, and feminist and postcolonial theory with an emphasis on film and media. She has published work in *October*, *Grey Room*, and *e-flux* and is the author of two books: *Sinnliches Denken. Eisensteins exzentrische Methode* (Diaphanes, 2018) and *Dance of Values: Sergei Eisenstein’s Capital Project* (University of Chicago Press, 2019).



Image credit: Film still from Hélène Álvarez Tosquelles and François Tosquelles, *Société lozérienne d’hygiène mentale* (Lozerien Society of Mental Hygiene), Institut Jean Vigo — Cinémathèque de Perpignan, 1954–57. Courtesy Michel Tosquelles.

Instituting Care: Psychotherapy and Materialism

