



Boundaries, Borders, and Transgression

**Fourth Annual Art Student Graduate Organization Symposium
Art Department, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**

March 24, 2018

Keynote Address by

Ila Sheeran, Associate Professor, University of Washington at Saint Louis

We invite papers and artist talks that scrutinize the theme of boundaries, borders, and transgression, however defined, across geographic and temporal space. All activities will take place on Saturday, March 24.

Brexit, Donald Trump's Border Wall, and the reemergence of far-right, populist parties in Europe: these represent only some of the most recent isolationist movements worldwide. Embodying a reaction against either real, perceived, or even potential transgressions upon national borders and/or cultural boundaries, each is ironically united in its anti-globalist vision to re-establish a firm division along those nationalistic and cultural boundaries that each nation considers integral to a uniform national identity. As scholars we know that boundaries and borders across time and space are fluid, both conceptually and physically, and as such are essentially arbitrary. Nevertheless, populist demagogues have garnered power with their xenophobic, isolationist rhetoric that presupposes borders are concrete, indisputable and are composed of a homogenous population. The perpetual stereotyping of "the other" in the justification of divisive and defensive agendas demands scholarly and artistic intervention.

How have rulers historically crafted and manipulated visual culture to construct, maintain, justify, and ultimately transgress borders and boundaries? How have artists responded to such efforts, either through subversion or submission?

How have objects, imagery, and the networks of transmission thereof constructed and deconstructed public understanding of boundaries, borders, and transgression in their own nationalistic and/or cultural milieu, but also in other environments, whether in the past or in contexts distant from their own? How have nationalistic movements evolved over time, and what happens as they are mediated through artistic intervention and cross-cultural reception?

Possible topics include but are not limited to:

- The portrayal of contemporary and historical isolationist or nationalistic agendas as commissioned by the powerful and produced by artists;
- Visual expressions of boundaries and transgression;
- The role of objects and images in nationalist movements, revolutions, and reactions;
- The role of artists outside the artistic realm in such movements;
- The exploitation and scapegoating of "the other" in justifying borders;
- The effacement of "the other" from the visual sphere.

Graduate students are invited to submit a CV (2 pages) and an abstract (maximum 300 words) by **January 16, 2018**. Applicants will be notified of the committee's decisions by **January 30, 2018** and will be expected to accept or decline the invitation within a week of acceptance. Drafts of papers and artist talks must be sent to the Symposium organizers and panel chairs by **March 3, 2018**.

Please send materials and questions to rmoz@live.unc.edu and bhmoore@live.unc.edu