

SOLDES

For Immediate Release

Heritability: A Roundtable

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PANEL DISCUSSION
Sunday November 17th,
2.30-4.30pm

RSVP Requested

“TWIN STUDY” ON VIEW
October 12, 2024 -
November 23, 2024

I see kinship as paradoxical. On one hand, the circumstances of one’s birth are arbitrary—no one asks to be born. But lived experience, not to mention psychoanalysis, suggests that selfhood is social, and deeply rooted. Because identity is increasingly a locus of economic activity, treated as a natural resource to be extracted, practices which claim to map parts of that otherwise “uncharted territory” have particular power.

Francis Galton popularized regression to the mean—the basis of economics—while attempting to demonstrate his familial superiority. His other invention: eugenics. Galton’s drive to measure reflected racism. But trying to find one’s place has a different tenor if undertaken as an exercise in political imagination. See: “Another world is possible.” After all, events that have taken on the mantle of “history” often seem remote from individual agency.

This roundtable hopes to follow kinship to its underlying mechanism, heritability—the measure of how successfully a trait will be passed down from one generation to another. This process has a fraught history, but also offers powerful tools which allow, as panelist David Joselit has theorized, “adjudication among several different and often contradictory world epistemologies, histories, and even ontologies.”

The exhibition “Twin Study” is drawn from an accidental archive of my maternal grandparent’s wedding. These were not pictures of family for family, but images intended to be severed from their context and presented to an outside. *Biyer Goyna*, or gold wedding jewelry, is worn by the architecture of this exhibition, and ritually connects its bearer to temporally and spatially distant sets of circumstances.

A dialectic of identity and inheritance a (word etymologically linked to both economic and biological determinism) is the departure point for this discussion.

–David Muenzer

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