

Desire's Multiplicity and Serendipity

Desire, wandering about and forming assemblages, might be accompanied by serendipity or mate with *jouissance* or the *power of the erotic*, even as it fails to reach its presumed aim. Heteronormativity still reigns, implying a distinction of heterosexual and same-sex desire drawing its power from a supposedly exclusionary binary order of sex. While multiple desires that used to be marked as deviant have gained socio-cultural space, we wonder whether acknowledging a multiplicity of desires challenges hetero-normativity or other normative or hierarchizing regulations of desire. Shouldn't rather *desire's multiplicity* be pursued, insisting on the impossibility of pinning desire down to an identitarian logic or limiting it to the alternative of lack or productivity?

Instead of running on a single track, we take desire to be functioning in a multiple manner. We call on desire's *serendipity* to grasp its illogical, contingent modes as a figure of fortunate *errans*. Fortunate *errans* – a paradoxical figure that forecloses any simple positivity of fortune. In order to think desire beyond canonical distinctions such as lack/productivity, imaginary/symbolic, progressive/conservative, collective/individual, we suggest various passages and interconnections that may help to find or lose desire beyond the socio-symbolic order. Meandering beyond well-trodden paths may lead us astray, but longing for error, randomness, failure, and non-teleological temporalities might also enable the fortuitous happenstance of fulfilling unfulfillable desire.

The lecture series looks for queer reconceptualizations of desire, its cultural articulations and lived realities. We would like to ask how we can get from the critique of desire as a hierarchizing and normalizing force to the heterotopias of desire. What would it mean to understand or experience desire as opening up to alterity, undermining its own involvement in structural inequalities and normative violence?

The lecture series is a collaboration between the *Institute for Queer Theory* and the *ICI Berlin Institute for Cultural Inquiry*. The ICI's Core Project *Errans* inspired the series insofar as it inquires critically about ways of valorizing erring without functionalizing it, of allowing for the possibility of considering it “as the necessary condition not only for humanity but for life and history” and of celebrating the very movement of erring in itself. The series also draws on former co-operations like the international conference

Desiring Just Economies / Just Economies of Desire and the lecture series *The Subtle Racialization of Sexuality. Queer Theory, the Aftermath of Colonial History, and the Late Modern State*.

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