



McGill University's Department of Art  
History and Communication Studies  
Presents:

# Innovation & Its Contestants



Innovation is a buzzword with remarkable contemporary currency, one frequently instrumentalized in the constant search for new technologies, means of production, market adaptations, scientific discoveries and social changes. With its more insidious applications in mind, a number of recent academic discussions – from visual culture studies and the global art history to the history of science and media archaeology – have come to treat the paradigm with caution, even scepticism. Yet at the same time, for better or for worse, it remains implicit within the bulk of humanistic academic production. This one-day interdisciplinary conference thus confronts innovation at a crossroads. It interrogates its place within theory and praxis by asking: How are we best to approach and define innovation in contemporary academic discourses? Is the paradigm purely a means of disarming social pressure for an all-inclusive equalized prosperity; or might it be recuperated to provide a stimulus for sustainable growth? Can we understand innovation in a broader global spectrum without falling into the trap of cultural essentialism; or does this concept perpetuate Western-centric views and mores? Can the concept of innovation be used for the analysis of historical periods; or does it figure too easily in teleological narratives?

MAI (Montréal, arts interculturels)  
3680, rue Jeanne-Mance

## April 18<sup>th</sup> 2014

9:00 am - Coffee and refreshments  
9:30 am - Presentations begin  
5:00 pm - Keynote Speech  
6:30 pm - Reception

*free and open to the public*

### Keynote Lecture by Dr. Keith Moxey

Barbara Novak Professor of  
Art History and Department Chair at  
Barnard College

In the context of renewed attention to the phenomenological presence of the image and its ability to determine the nature of its reception, this talk focuses on its time. What is the time of the work of art? How does it make time? We will discuss the consequences for the history of art of an approach that acknowledges the anachrony of our relation to the past in the face of a continuing need for chronology.

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[www.ahcsconference.wordpress.com](http://www.ahcsconference.wordpress.com)

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AHCS Speaker Series  
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