

LAHP AHRC Collaborative PhD Studentship

The Shared Gaze: Reimagining Sexual Reproduction through Visual Arts Practices

Partner: Birth Rites Collection

Academic lead: Hermione Wiltshire, Royal College of Art

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Applications are invited for a LAHP/AHRC-funded Collaborative Doctoral Award at the **Royal College of Art in collaboration with Birth Rites Collection**. This fully-funded studentship will commence in October 2020.

This is a unique and rare opportunity for interdisciplinary research between the Royal College of Art and the Birth Rites Collection which is hosted by the Florence Nightingale Faculty of Nursing, Midwifery & Palliative Care, King's College London. By framing and examining midwifery, birth and neonatal care through the lens of contemporary visual art, the project builds on discourses that bring together elements of medical practices, historical narratives of birth, the caring professions, fine and applied art practices including curating.



Figure 1 Viewing Tereze, 2016, Courtesy Birth Rites Collection

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The focus of the project is to understand ways in which local engagement with the collection by student midwives, art students, medical students, research academics, independent midwives and doulas can inform ways of deploying the art works in ways that contribute to Feminist critique, new curatorial strategies and create pedagogic tool kits in both art and midwifery education. The collection lends itself to exhibitions, public tours and conference presentations, but holds the potential for more experimental outputs such as public performances, online archival interventions and collaborative stimuli including a dedicated publication.

The aims of the project are

1. To generate original and in-depth qualitative research in the field of visual aesthetics of birth, sexual reproduction and maternal studies.
2. To draw on the dynamic interdisciplinary potential between the scholarship at RCA in SOAH and the multifarious discourses the Birth Rites Collection generates.
3. To disseminate research through existing and new forums. (Symposia, conferences, BRC Summer School, public tours, Arts & Humanities module within the Midwifery Bsc and publication in journals, social media and a dedicated publication.

The successful researcher is envisaged to be in the field of arts practices including writing and curating. They will be able to work on site with the Birth Rites Collection, have access to the archive whilst being based at the RCA for doctoral training and participation in research groups. It would be supervised between Hermione Wiltshire, Senior Tutor in Photography, School of Arts and Humanities, Royal College of Art and Jane Sandall, Professor of Social Science and Women's Health in the Department of Women and Children's Health in the Faculty of Life Science and Medicine King's College London's Women & Children's Health department. Alongside at the RCA, the candidate will be mentored by Helen Knowles BRC's Curator and advised by Elsa Montgomery, Senior Lecturer, Florence Nightingale Faculty of Nursing, Midwifery & Palliative Care.

This is the first dedicated research platform across the fields of visual art & midwifery. It brings together the RCA and this unique public art collection to develop a broader discourse surrounding both childbirth and its performance as a transdisciplinary space in which to understand contemporary birth practices and their impact upon its different actors beyond the purely medical.

Website: <http://www.birthritescollection.org.uk>

Studentship details:

The AHRC-funded London Arts and Humanities Partnership (LAHP) brings together eight leading British research universities: King's College London, London School of Economics and Political Science, Queen Mary University London, Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, Royal College of Art, Royal College of Music, School of Advanced Study and University College London.

The studentship includes a stipend at the Research Council UK Home/ EU rate (£17,009 per annum 2019/20 rates) plus tuition fees for three and half years. The awarded candidate will also be entitled to a £550 per annum stipend top-up. As a LAHP student, the successful candidate will have full access to the LAHP Doctoral Training Partnership development activities and networking opportunities, joining a cohort of about 90 students per year. Studentships can be either full or part-time.

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Applicants should have a good undergraduate degree in a relevant discipline, and a Masters-level qualification or equivalent which meets AHRC requirements for research training. Applicants with relevant work/professional experience who are considering doing a PhD are also encouraged to apply.

Closing Date: 22nd March 2020

For more information and to apply for the studentship, please see the [LAHP website](#).



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