

**THE CONVULSIVE NURSERY:**  
**SURREALISM AND CHILDHOOD SEXUALITY**

**Monday May 10<sup>th</sup> 2010, 10.00 – 5.00pm (6.00-7.30 keynote)**

**The Whitworth Art Gallery, University of Manchester**

Tickets: £15.00 (£5.00 students and unwaged) – tickets can be paid for onsite but must be booked – please contact Silvia Loreti at

[silvia.loreti@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:silvia.loreti@manchester.ac.uk)



Robert Gober, *Tilted Play Pen*, 1986. Wood, enamel, paint, 91.1 x 141.9 cm.  
Private collection, London. © Robert Gober / Courtesy of Matthew Marks  
Gallery, New York.

Queer studies and childhood studies have become increasingly intertwined over the last decade. Interest has been concentrated on the late nineteenth century as age of consent legislation coincided with the psychoanalytic investigation of childhood sexuality in the work of Sigmund Freud and others. The neglect of the study of childhood within the history of Surrealism is striking – despite André Breton's assertion, in the first manifesto, that childhood memory was the easiest route into the marvelous. In works by artists and writers as diverse as Hans Bellmer and Dorothea Tanning, Toyen and Max Ernst, or Michel Leiris and Nelly Kaplan – the child is a focus point for a discussion of anxiety, sexuality and the formation of subjectivity itself. This conference will bring together a number of speakers to discuss the issue of childhood and sexuality within both surrealist works and practice that might be seen as part of its legacy.

Introduction: 10.00am

**Dr James Boaden** (University of York)

*The Convulsive Nursery: Surrealism and Childhood Sexuality*

10.50pm

**Prof. David Lomas**, (University of Manchester)

*Family Secrets*

11.40pm

**Prof. David Hopkins**, (University of Glasgow)

*Childhood and Ferocity: Toys and Entertainment in Recent Art*

12.30-1.30 LUNCH

1.30pm

**Prof. Mignon Nixon**, (Courtauld Institute of Art, London)

*Maman*

2.20pm

**Prof. Michael Moon**, (Institute of the Liberal Arts, Emory University, Atlanta)

*Henry Darger and the Brontes: Little Girls, Adult Juvenilia, and Homemade Surrealisms and Post-Surrealisms*

3.10 - 3.30pm COFFEE

3.30pm

**Prof. Carol Mavor**, (University of Manchester)

*Tragic Candy Time: Minou Drouet and the Photograph*

4.20-5.00pm DISCUSSION

### **Keynote Lecture**

6.00pm

Arts Lecture Theatre, Samuel Alexander Building, University of Manchester  
(This lecture is free and open to all)

**Prof. James R. Kincaid** (University of Southern California)

*"Surrealism will usher you into death": Childhood, the Imagination, and Nothingness*

Co-sponsored by the AHRC funded Centre for the Study of Surrealism and Its Legacies and CIDRA