

IMMA



Hannah Arendt, 1944. Photo: Fred Stein (1909-1967), copyright Alamy.

# Hannah Arendt, Art and Thinking

IMMA Reading Group  
November 2019 – April 2020

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## HANNAH ARENDT, ART AND THINKING

The role of the aesthetic imagination as a political *act* was a key focus for the political theorist Hannah Arendt. While she rarely wrote about artworks her thinking sought to link the 'public sphere' as a 'space of appearances' to sense and the aesthetic imagination. How might we read Arendt's interest in *judgment* as a form of political thinking that draws on the *work* of art? Arendt identified a 'crisis of culture' as being intimately related to a 'crisis in thinking'; therefore, this reading group will aim to engage with what might be the relationship between Hannah Arendt, Art and Thinking?

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### **Date**

November 2019 - April 2020.

### **Venue**

#### **Studio 5**

IMMA - Irish Museum of Modern Art, Royal Hospital, Kilmainham, Dublin 8.  
For directions, visit [www.imma.ie/en/nav\\_14.htm](http://www.imma.ie/en/nav_14.htm).

### **Description**

The group will meet in IMMA on Thursdays for two hours (6.30pm – 8.30pm) on the following dates:

21 November 2019  
5 December 2019  
23 January 2020  
27 February 2020  
12 March 2020  
30 April 2020

The programme will be led Dr. Sinéad Hogan. The group is open to anyone with an interest in the work of Hannah Arendt. It will be of particular interest to artists, curators, cultural and political theorists, art critics, and those with an interest in the role of art and aesthetics as a tension between the public and private spheres.

### **Places**

The group will consist of maximum fifteen people. Group members must commit to attending all sessions at the time of registration.

## Indicative Programme

### SESSION 1:

Preparatory Reading: 'Prologue' and Chapter 1 'Vita Activa and the Human Condition', in *The Human Condition*, University of Chicago Press, 1998, pp 1-21

### SESSION 2:

Preparatory Reading: Chapter 7 'The Public Realm: The Common', in *The Human Condition*, University of Chicago Press, 1998,

### SESSION 3:

Preparatory *listening*: Hannah Arendt "Zur Person" Full Interview (with English subtitles):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dsolmQfVsO4>

### SESSION 4:

Preparatory Reading: Chapter 6, 'The Crisis of Culture' in *Between Past and Future: six exercises in political thought*, The Viking Press, New York, 1961.

### SESSION 5:

Preparatory Reading: Chapter 3, 'What makes us Think?', in *The Life of the Mind*,

### SESSION 6:

Preparatory reading to be chosen by the Reading Group.

## Conveners

The 'Hannah Arendt, Art and Thinking' reading group has been developed by Dr. Sinéad Hogan in discussion with Lisa Moran, and all six sessions will be facilitated by Sinéad and Lisa.

**Dr. Sinéad Hogan** is an art researcher working in the Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT). She lectures on the Art and Research Collaboration MA (ARC) and the BA in Art programs. Her writing, teaching and research concentrates on the relationships between art, philosophy and ethics, with a particular focus on the role of aesthetics in an 'other-than-Art' context.

**Dr. Lisa Moran** is curator of Engagement and Learning programmes in IMMA with a focus on research and IMMA's relationship with the third level sector. Projects include IMMA Summer School: Art and Politics; IMMA|texts; Groundwork: the art museum as a site for research; Art | Memory | Place and the *What is\_?* programme.

## Registration

- Registration is free.
- Pre-registration is necessary.
- The series is open to anyone with an interest in the work of Hannah Arendt and its relevance to contemporary art theory and practice. No prior knowledge or experience of Hannah Arendt's work is required.
- Applicants must confirm that they can attend all six sessions at the time of registration.
- Applicants must be available to read two or three readings in advance of attending each session. Readings will be sent to group members via email at least two weeks in advance of each session.
- Places are limited so early registration is advised.

**To register**, please entitle your email Hannah Arendt, Art and Thinking reading group and send the following information to [lisa.moran@imma.ie](mailto:lisa.moran@imma.ie)

- Name
- Contact email address
- Indicate whether you have prior knowledge/experience of Hannah Arendt's work or visual arts practice or theory.
- Explain why you wish to join the Hannah Arendt, Art and Thinking reading group.
- Confirm that you are available to attend all six sessions.
- Confirm that you are available to read two or three preparatory readings in advance of each session.

## Further Recommended Resources

Group members are not required to purchase any materials for this series, however, a selection of the following resources might be useful to access prior to the commencement of sessions.

### Podcasts:

- BBC Radio 4, *In Our Time* on Hannah Arendt:  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08c2ljg>
- Danielle Celemajer, 'Hannah Arendt on Thinking and the Political,' on Philosophy Overdose:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZ2AH7u\\_9Xo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZ2AH7u_9Xo)

### Videos

- Hannah Arendt 'Zur Person,' full Interview (with English subtitles):  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dsolmQfVsO4>
- Judith Butler, 'Hannah Arendt, Ethics, and Responsibility'. 2009 1/10, European Graduate School Lecture:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vOwdsO6Kkkl>

### Books:

- Hannah Arendt, The Promise of Politics*, Edited and with an introduction by Jerome Kohn. New York: Schocken Books, 2005.
- Hannah Arendt, *The Life of the Mind*, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978.
- Hannah Arendt, (1958), *The Human Condition*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958.
- The Portable Hannah Arendt*, Peter Baehr, Ed., Penguin Classics, 2000.
- Hannah Arendt: The Last interview and other conversations*, Melville House Publishing, 2003
- Hannah Arendt, (1961), *Between Past and Future; eight exercises in Political Thought*, Penguin Classics, 2006
- Hannah Arendt, (1951), *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Penguin Books, 2017.

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**Reference Texts:**

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/arendt/>

Cecilia Sjöholm, *Doing Aesthetics with Arendt*, Columbia University Press, 2015.

**Resources**

The Hannah Arendt Centre for Politics and Humanities, Bard, NY.

<http://hac.bard.edu>