

# Semblants

LACAN CIRCLE OF MELBOURNE & AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR PSYCHOANALYSIS

2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL WORKSHOP

SATURDAY 13 MARCH 2010

9.30AM – 4.30PM

The Australian Institute of International Affairs  
124 Jolimont Road • East Melbourne 3002

## **Program**

9.00 – 9.30 Registration

9.30 – 9.40 *Welcome* – Russell Grigg, President of the Lacan Circle of Melbourne

9.40 – 10.20 *Alabaster: The grain of the voice in the realm of semblance* – Dominique Hecq

I argue for the grain of the voice to be on the side of truth and knowledge and look at the cloak of poetry in another language. Also, as I claim the voice is a symptom, it cannot be a semblant.

Dominique Hecq is a Belgian-born writer with a long-standing passion for psychoanalysis. She is a member of the Lacan Circle of Melbourne.

10.20 – 11.00 *Formulations of the object in Lacan prior to 1963: Antecedents to the semblant* – Serena Smith

Prior to the introduction of objet *a* in 1963, Lacan formulates the object in a variety of ways. These early conceptualizations shed light on his later concept of semblant and the tension between the object we can enjoy and the thing which is on the horizon of desire and when encountered produces trauma and anxiety not pleasure. The paper will present these earlier formulations of the object in Lacan and suggest ways in which they contribute to our understanding of the semblant. Where possible clinical examples will be used to illustrate the various forms of the object.

Serena Smith is an analyst in private practice and member of ACP. She coordinates the clinical seminar program of the ACP and lectures in the Master of Psychoanalysis program at Victoria University. She has an interest in the object of the gambler.

11.00 – 11.30 Morning tea

11.30 – 12.10 *Love and the semblant* – Susan Schwartz

Lacan's statement "Love . . . is addressed to the semblant" (*Seminar XX*) raises questions about the function of love—and hence the Imaginary—in the transference, about the relation of the semblant to object *a*, and about the semblant as an effect of discourse, that is, of an operation of the symbolic upon the real. In *Seminar XIX*, Lacan maintains that the analyst occupies the position of object *a* in the transference *qua* semblant; he is thus a product of the analysand's discourse, not its cause. In *Seminar XX*, this statement is refined: the analyst is not the semblant but he can occupy the place of the semblant in order to allow the object *a* to appear. I will argue that for the subject, "making believe" with the semblant bears on Lacan's later re-thinking of the Imaginary—and of love—as a means of knotting the Real and the Symbolic.

Susan Schwartz is a psychoanalyst in private practice and President of the Australian Centre for Psychoanalysis. She teaches in the Master of Psychoanalysis program at Victoria University.

12.10 – 12.30 Questions

12.30 – 1.30 Lunch

1.30 – 2.10 *Semblants: the imaginary masquerading as real* – Justin Clemens

The concept of 'the semblant' is most fully deployed in Lacan's later work, where it seems to bring together themes that had previously been separated, including the phallus, the Name-of-the-Father, language itself. I would like to suggest that the semblant - an apparition which at once conceals (nothing) and misdirects attention from what it conceals (nothing) - can be best understood as an imaginary element that masquerades as something real.

Justin Clemens is Secretary of the Lacan Circle of Melbourne. He has published extensively on psychoanalysis, including editing *Jacques Lacan and the Other Side of Psychoanalysis* (Duke UP 2006), with Russell Grigg. He teaches at the University of Melbourne.

2.10 – 2.50 *Semblance and discourse* – Leonardo S. Rodríguez

This paper discusses the relations between the functions of the semblant and of discourse from theoretical and clinical perspectives.

It examines those relations in four connections:

1. Play and games.
2. The formations of the unconscious.
3. Autism and the psychoses.
4. The position of the analyst in the analytic experience.

There are some common features concerning semblance in these four areas of research, but also interesting questions arising from their particularities.

Leonardo S. Rodríguez is a psychoanalyst, Analyst Member of the School of Psychoanalysis of the Lacanian Field, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Psychological Medicine, Monash University and convenor of the Master of Psychoanalysis program, Victoria University.

2.50 – 3.15 Afternoon tea

3.15 – 3.55 *So why does everything turn out to be a semblant, anyway?* – Russell Grigg

At the beginning the concept of “semblant” has a specific meaning and application but over time just about everything comes to be a semblant: language, the Other, the Name-of-the-Father, the phallus. In this presentation I will discuss the reasons for the concept’s being introduced, then trace its evolution and try to explain why it develops in the way it does.

Russell Grigg, president of the LCM, practices psychoanalysis in Melbourne and teaches philosophy and psychoanalytic studies at Deakin University.

3.55 – 4.30 Round-table discussion

Cost: Members of the LCM and ACP: \$90

Students: \$70

General admission: \$100

Morning, afternoon tea and lunch are included in the price of admission.