Invitation à la soutenance publique de thèse
Pour l’obtention du grade de Docteur en Langues, lettres et traductologie
en cotutelle avec l’Université de Liège

Monsieur Benoît CRUCIFIX

DRAWING FROM THE ARCHIVES
COMICS MEMORY IN THE GRAPHIC NOVEL, POST 2000

Le mardi 25 août 2020 à 15H00
À l’Université de Liège
Place du 20-Août

Pour assister à la soutenance, veuillez vous inscrire par mail pour le 21 août au plus tard en écrivant à : benoit.crucifix@uliege.be

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At a turning point of its institutionalization and in a fast-changing media environment, the graphic novel prompted a fascination with the history of comics and a rediscovery of semi-forgotten works: by 2004, the graphic novel was a well-established phenomenon, and its stabilization opened up a moment when moving forward meant looking backward, caught by Art Spiegelman’s oft-quoted aphorism “the future of comics is in the past.” This interplay of innovation and tradition, rupture and continuity, is a puzzling phenomenon in the graphic novel, and yet one that has remained comparatively unaddressed. For all their differences and idiosyncrasies, cartoonists as Chris Ware and Art Spiegelman—but also Seth, Charles Burns, Daniel Clowes, and others—share a common visual heritage and an interest in passing it on to new readers and next generations. This dissertation is an inquiry into the gestures of transmission that embed the contemporary graphic novel within a longer history and a collective memory. It is organized around a set of practices that, taken together, all illustrate ways of ‘drawing from the archives’ in its twofold meaning: as a process of selecting from material repositories and as an appropriation of its objects that entails a more or less significant kind of graphic intervention or manipulation. Whether it is within the framework of an exhibition or on an online platform, drawing, or redrawing, or more generally using and displacing drawn images are here orchestrated as performative gestures of transmission. In focusing on such gestures, this dissertation embraces both settings in which traditional gatekeepers have a strong hold (the museum, the library, the book market) and where comics might (un)willingly integrate or replicate the canonizing mechanisms of an official culture; and makes room for more attention to smaller vernacular gestures that establish and sustain a relationship with the past in the margins of (or in collaboration with) more traditional mechanisms of preservation.

Le jury est composé de Mesdames et Messieurs les professeur∙es :

Maud HAGELSTEIN (Université de Liège), Présidente et lectrice
Véronique BRAGARD (UCLouvain), Promotrice et Secrétaire
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