Art History and Socialism(s) after World War II (Tallinn, 27–29 Oct 2016)

Estonian Academy of Sciences main hall (Kohtu 6, Tallinn), Oct 27–29, 2016
Registration deadline: Oct 20, 2016

Kristina Jõekalda

Art History and Socialism(s) after World War II: The 1940s until the 1960s

Conference on art historical writing during the early Soviet era
on 27th-29th October 2016
at Estonian Academy of Sciences main hall (Kohtu 6, Tallinn).

The research team of the Institute of Art History and Visual Culture at the Estonian Academy of Arts "Historicizing art: Knowledge production in art history in Estonia amidst changing ideologies and disciplinary developments" is organising an international conference "Art History and Socialism(s) after World War II: The 1940s until the 1960s" from 27th to 29th October 2016. The conference will take place at the Estonian Academy of Sciences main hall (Kohtu 6, Tallinn).

Although the Soviet and Eastern European socialist regimes of the latter 20th century seem to lie in the distant past now, research on them still has many uncovered areas. This applies not least to the role of "socialist" art historians, their activities and functions in universities, exhibitions and the mass media, and especially their academic text production. Deriving from a complicated socio-cultural set of relations, the common denominator for which was "socialism", these art historical "acts" shaped the general comprehensions of art, culture and history in the society at large. With the overall historiographical turn in the humanities, scholars from the Baltic to the Balkan region have begun to re-address the various histories of artworks, architecture, artistic styles and whole epochs that these practices constructed. Conferences on this recent art historical past have been held and scholarly publications issued, including in English, today’s lingua franca, but the vast majority of research remains only in native languages, thus circulating mainly at the local level.

The conference offers the researchers of socialist art history a common platform to introduce and compare art historical practices across the former Soviet Union and the socialist countries of Europe. Paraphrasing the late Piotr Piotrowski, the time is ripe for the project of a "horizontal" reading of socialist art history. As with different "socialisms", "socialist art history" as an umbrella term covers a variety of ways of writing the history of art and architecture. Moscow's influence varied greatly depending on the decade, region and particular situation. In addition to ideological pressure and terror, other factors - of which neighbours might not have been or still might not be aware - affected the art historical ideas and practices of different Soviet republics and the satellite states in Eastern and Central Europe. The making of art history and its visual displays by

means of exhibitions (as well as contemporary artistic practices) also depended on the international art history discourse, even though the range and accessibility of literature etc. varied from country to country.

The post-World War II socialism and related art historical discourse had many faces: too many for a single conference. Therefore we have launched a series of conferences, the first of which will be held in Tallinn in October 2016, focusing on the decades immediately following the war. In 2017 and 2018 follow-up conferences will be held in Leipzig and Berlin.

This English-language conference comprises speakers from all over Europe, Russia and America. The programme includes both historiographical and theoretical accounts on the periodisation and writing of the history of art and architecture in the former Soviet Union and its satellite states.

Participation in the conference is free of charge. Registration closes on 20th October 2016.

Programme, registration and all relevant data via http://www.artun.ee/en/x/conference-art-history-and-socialisms.

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

THURSDAY, 27TH OCTOBER

18.00 KEYNOTE PAPER, Branko Mitrovic, Prof. Dr. (Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim),
Collectivist Historiography and its Methodologies

20.00 Opening reception

FRIDAY, 28TH OCTOBER

09.30 Introduction, Krista Kodres, Prof. Dr. (Estonian Academy of Arts; Tallinn University)

09.45 PANEL 1, moderator Marina Dmitrieva, Dr. (Centre for History and Culture of East Central Europe, Leipzig)

Almira Ousmanova, Prof. Dr. (European Humanities University, Vilnius),
Not-Ready-Made: Flashback to the Soviet Version of Marxist Art History

Ekaterina Boltunova, Dr. (Higher School of Economics, Moscow),
Reinterpreting Imperial Art in the Post-War USSR: Soviet Views of National Heritage

Milena Bartlová, Prof. Dr. (Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design, Prague),
New Political Orientation of Czech Art History around 1950

12.00 Lunch

13.30 PANEL 2, moderator Krista Kodres, Prof. Dr. (Estonian Academy of Arts; Tallinn University)

Nikolas Drosos, Dr. (McMaster University, Hamilton, Canada),
'People's Realism?: Interpreting Renaissance Art in 1950s Poland

Elena Khlopina, Dr. (Higher School of Economics, Moscow),
Research Method of A. A. Fedorov-Davydov and the Teaching of Art History in Lomonosov Moscow State University in the 1950s-1960s

Tereza Johanidesová, MA (Charles University; Václav Havel Library, Prague),
Did Marxist Iconology Exist in Czech Art History?

Ivan Gerát, Dr. (Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava; University of Trnava),
Marxist Iconology in Czechoslovakia before 1968

16.30 Coffee/tea

17.15 PANEL 3, moderator Epp Lankots, Prof. Dr. (Estonian Academy of Arts)

Carmen Popescu, Dr.,
Writing in the Void: Architectural History in Socialist Romania

Juliana Maxim, Dr. (University of San Diego, California),
Socialist Historiography between Nation and Revolution: Writing the History of Romanian Architecture in the 1960s

Bart Pushaw, MA (University of Maryland, College Park),
Heroic Modernists of Peasant Blood: The Revolutionary Turn in Baltic Art Histories

SATURDAY, 29TH OCTOBER

10.00 PANEL 4, moderator Virve Sarapik, Prof. Dr. (Estonian Academy of Arts)

Nataliya Zlydneva, Prof. Dr. (Russian Academy of Science; Lomonosov Moscow State University; State Institute for Art History; Moscow State Conservatorium),
Rereading the 1920s: Alternative Paths of Soviet Art History

Raino Isto, MA (University of Maryland, College Park),
'Modelling Reality': Writing the History of (Socialist) Albanian Sculpture - the Case of Odhise Paskali

Karolina Labowicz-Dymanus, Dr. (Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw),
Modernism on the Secret Service of Superstructure, Marxism-Leninism as a Base of Modern Polish Art History

12.15 Lunch

14.00 PANEL 5, moderator Antje Kempe, MA

Piotr Juszkiewicz, Prof. Dr. (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan),
Socialist Modernism, Socialist Structuralism: Mieczysław Porębski’s Socialist Art History

Katja Bernhardt, Dr. (Humboldt-University, Berlin),
'Socialist Kunstwissenschaft? in the GDR

Marina Dmitrieva, Dr. (Centre for History and Culture of East Central Europe, Leipzig),
Riddles of Modernism in the Late Soviet Discourse: Mikhail Lifshits's Battle against 'New Barbarism'

Epp Lankots, Prof. Dr. (Estonian Academy of Arts),
'Unscientific': The Architectural Historiography of Leonhard Lapin

17.00 Coffee/tea

17.30 CONCLUSIONS, moderator Michaela Marek, Prof. Dr. (Humboldt-University of Berlin)

Discussants: Milena Bartlová, Marina Dmitrieva, Krista Kodres, Branko Mitrovic

ORGANISATION
Venue: Estonian Academy of Sciences main hall (Kohtu 6, Tallinn)

Programme managers:
Prof. Krista Kodres, PhD (Estonian Academy of Arts; Tallinn University);
Prof. Michaela Marek, PhD (Chair of Art History of Eastern and East Central Europe, Humboldt-University of Berlin);
Kristina Jõekalda, M.A. (Estonian Academy of Arts);
Kädi Talvoja, M.A. (Estonian Academy of Arts).

Organiser:
Team of Estonian Research Council grant PUT788 Historicizing Art: Knowledge Production in Estonian Art History amidst Changing Ideologies and Disciplinary Developments (principal investigator Prof. Krista Kodres)

Host:
Institute of Art History and Visual Culture, Estonian Academy of Arts

Partners:
Centre for History and Culture of East Central Europe, Leipzig University (Dr. Marina Dmitrieva, PhD);
Chair of Art History of Eastern and East Central Europe, Humboldt-University of Berlin (Prof. Michaela Marek).

Conference website:
http://www.artun.ee/en/x/conference-art-history-and-socialisms

Reference:
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