Art Born in the Revolution (London, 24-25 Feb 17)

Courtauld Institute of Art and Royal Academy of Arts, Feb 24–25, 2017

Natalia Murray

Courtauld-Royal Academy International Conference

Art Born in the Revolution. Russian Art and the State. 1917-1932

24-25 February 2017

This conference explores the extraordinary diversity of art made in Russia during one of the most turbulent periods in modern history. Turned overnight into the ruling party, the Bolsheviks aimed to use the power of mass propaganda in order to establish their founding mythology and disseminate their ideas to an overwhelmingly rural and illiterate population. Already in 1917 the leader of the new Bolshevik State, Vladimir Lenin, proclaimed that culture should support political needs, and the first day of our conference will aim to address the question of how useful visual art was to the Revolution, as well as how cinema, printed media and even consumer goods were used for propaganda. On the second day we will discuss the death and immortalisation of Lenin and consequent firm establishment of Stalin's autocratic rule. We will consider the creation of Leninism as a central propaganda tool of the Communist system, and the birth of a new Soviet man – perfect and immortal.

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Friday 24 February (DAY 1)
Kenneth Clark Lecture Theatre, The Courtauld Institute of Art

13.30 – 14.00
Registration at the Courtauld Institute foyer

14.00 – 14.15
Welcome and Introduction
Dr. Natalia Murray, Courtauld Institute of Art

SESSION 1: Art in the Service of the Revolution
Chair: Natalia Murray (Courtauld Institute of Art)

14.15 – 14.45
Professor John Milner (The Courtauld Institute of Art) 'Art in Revolution: was art beyond price: the shift from Commerce to Commissar'

14.45 – 15.15

Dr. Anna Kaminskaia (St. Petersburg Art and Industry Academy) ‘Unpublished memoirs of Nikolai Punin Art of the Revolution’

15.15 – 15.45
Professor Ian Christie (Birkbeck College, University of London) 'What should a Soviet film be? Competing projects under the new regime'

15.45 – 16.15
Discussion

16.15 - 16.45
COFFEE/TEA BREAK (Tea/coffee provided in Seminar room 1)

SESSION 2: Use of printed media and consumer goods for propaganda
Chair: Natalia Budanova (Courtauld Institute of Art)

16.45 – 17.15
Dr. Luba Sterlikova (Curator and writer, Washington DC) 'Posters: Constructing Soviet Identity'

17.15 - 17.45
Dr. Julia Tulovsky (Curator at Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey) ‘Patterns of Revolution: Textile Designs by Popova and Stepanova’

17.45 – 18.15
Dr. Marie Collier (Courtauld Institute of Art) ‘Visualising Socialist Construction: Photo-illustrated periodicals and the production and dissemination of Soviet culture’

18.15 - 18.45
Discussion

18.45-20.00
Wine Reception

Saturday 25 February (DAY 2)
Reynolds Room, Royal Academy of Arts

10.30 – 10.45
Welcome and Introduction
Ann Dumas, Royal Academy of Arts
Inna Bazhenova, President, IN ARTIBUS Foundation

SESSION 3 Soviet Immortality
Chairs: Ann Dumas (senior curator, Royal Academy) and Elena Sudakova (director, GRAD)

10.45 – 11.15
Dr. Konstantin Akinsha (International curator, Budapest) ‘The Funeral of the Revolution - Funerals of Lenin, Mayakovsky and Malevich and their impact on Soviet culture’

11.15 – 11.45

Professor John Bowlt (University of California) "Lenin Lived! Lenin Lives! Lenin Will Live!": Challenging Mortality in the Early Soviet Republic

11.45-12.15
Professor Nicoletta Misler (Università di Napoli) ‘Bodies in Revolution : from Free dance to Mass Parades’

12.15-12.45
Professor Maria Gough (Harvard University) ‘His Master’s Voice’

12.45-13.15
Discussion

13.15-14.30
BREAK FOR LUNCH

SESSION 4 Soviet Art in Totalitarian State
Chair: Maria Mileeva (Courtauld Institute of Art)

14.30 – 15.00
Professor Robert Service (Fellow of the British Academy and of St Antony's College Oxford) ‘Making and Ordering Art in Revolutionary Times, 1917-1932’

15.00 – 15.30
Professor Christina Lodder (University of Kent, President of the Malevich Society) ‘The Revolution in Art Education: The Moscow Vkhutemas’

15.30 – 16.00

16.00 - 16.30
Professor Christina Kiaer (Northwestern University, Chicago) ‘Collective Body: Revolutionary Art from Productivism to Socialist Realism’
Dr. Mike O'Mahony (University of Bristol): 'Sport for Art's Sake, or Art for Sport's Sake?: Imaging Sport after the Revolution'

16.30 - 17.00
Discussion

17.00 – 18.30
Visit to the exhibition

Reference:
CONF: Art Born in the Revolution (London, 24-25 Feb 17). In: ArtHist.net, Jan 21, 2017 (accessed Nov 9, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/14580>.