

On the Spiritual in Russian Art (Cambridge, 7 Sep 2012)

University of Cambridge, United Kingdom, Sep 07, 2012

Deadline: Apr 15, 2012

Louise Hardiman

Cambridge Courtauld Russian Art Centre (CCRAC) Conference: 'On the Spiritual in Russian Art'

Date: 7 September 2012

Location: Pembroke College, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom

Keynote Speakers:

Professor Wendy R. Salmond (Chapman University, CA)

Dr Oleg Tarasov (Institute of Slavic Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow)

Convenors:

Louise A. Hardiman (lah45@cam.ac.uk)

Nicola Kozicharov (nlek2@cam.ac.uk)

(Department of History of Art, University of Cambridge)

The Cambridge Courtauld Russian Art Centre (CCRAC) was founded in May 2011 on the joint initiative of Dr Rosalind Blakesley of the Department of History of Art, University of Cambridge and Professor John Milner of The Courtauld Institute of Art, London. Arising from significant research over many years among faculty and graduate students in both institutions, it aims to stimulate debate, support collaborative work, and generate and disseminate research on all aspects of the visual arts, architecture, design, and exhibitions in Russia and the Soviet Union.

This conference, CCRAC's first in Cambridge, takes as its theme the concept of the 'spiritual tradition' in Russian art, in celebration of the centenary of Vasilii Kandinskii's seminal text, *Über das Geistige in der Kunst* (On the Spiritual in Art) (1910-12) – arguably one of the most influential works of Russian artistic thought in the context of international modernism. We propose this banner as a stimulus for a broader discussion of the intersection between spirituality and Russian art, which ranges beyond the extensive and enduring impact of Kandinskii's well-known manifesto for new directions in art. Through such exploration, we aim to highlight the current diversity and depth of Russian and Soviet art scholarship in Britain and overseas, while also providing a forum for the reassessment of one of its most frequently recurring and critical themes.

We invite papers on a wide range of subjects, periods, artists and media which engage with the subject of religiosity or spirituality in Russian and Soviet art. These could include topics such as:

- the icon tradition and its ongoing significance;

- the intersection of religious art and the secular tradition in Russian painting;
- the twentieth-century resurgence of interest in icons and the engagement with the icon tradition in avant-garde art;
- the religious tradition and the decorative arts, including folk art and the revival of interest in pagan Russia;
- religiosity and Soviet art;
- artists for whom the religious or spiritual aspects of their art assumed particular significance (e.g. Ivan Kramskoi, Nikolai Ge, Mikhail Nesterov, Nikolai Rerikh, Nataliia Goncharova, Vasiliï Kandinskii);
- new perspectives on significant works of Russian religious art (e.g. Andrei Rublev's Holy Trinity, Alexander Ivanov's The Appearance of Christ to the People);
- religiosity in contemporary Russian art (e.g. religion and spirituality in Soviet non-conformist art; Mikhail Epstein's concept of the "religious unconscious" in Russian post-modernism);
- the relevance of the spiritual tradition to the reception of Russian art, e.g. the Western perception of, and/or responses to religiosity in Russian art.

We invite submissions for 20 minute papers from established scholars, independent researchers and postgraduate students in all disciplines relating to the theme of the conference. Papers will be grouped into panels, organised thematically.

Abstracts of up to 300 words should be sent to Louise Hardiman (lah45@cam.ac.uk) and Nicola Kozicharow (nlek2@cam.ac.uk) by 15 April 2012. Please include the title of your proposed paper, your name, institutional affiliation and full contact information (address, phone number, and email).

The conference is supported by generous funding from the British Association for Slavonic and East European Studies (BASEES) and the Department of History of Art, Cambridge.

<http://www.heart.cam.ac.uk/events/spiritualinrussianart>

Reference:

CFP: On the Spiritual in Russian Art (Cambridge, 7 Sep 2012). In: ArtHist.net, Feb 26, 2012 (accessed Apr 7, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/2789>>.