

Collecting Asian Art in Prague (Prague, 17–18 Jun 21)

National Gallery Prague, Salm Palace at Hradčanské Square, Jun 17–18, 2021

Simone Wille

Collecting Asian Art in Prague: Cultural Politics and Transcontinental Networks in 20th Century Central Europe

"Collecting Asian Art in Prague: Cultural Politics and Transcontinental Networks in 20th Century Central Europe" is organised by the Collection of Asian Art at the National Gallery Prague and the Austrian Science Fund's (FWF) research project "Patterns of Transregional Trails" (P29536-G26). This conference looks at collections of Asian art in and outside Prague from the perspective of the national cultural politics interconnected with individual encounters as well as institutional cultural and diplomatic exchange in Central Europe during the 20th century. The focus will lie on collections of Asian art – hereby used as an umbrella term for East Asian, South-East Asian, South Asian, Central Asian and West Asian art. The location includes Prague and its neighbouring cultural centres in Central Europe, thereby allowing a comparison of the mechanisms of collecting and presentation across time and place in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Rather than viewing the collection as connected to a deterministic account of cultural flows through centers and peripheries, the conference will focus on international and transcontinental networks. It will look closely at the role these networks played in establishing the grounds for collecting, displaying and narrating Asian art in Central European museums, which were used as platforms for cultural diplomacy or propaganda. By revisiting historical entanglements and relational comparisons that connect Asia and Central Europe, the conference's framework will focus on exhibitions, diplomatic exchange, and discursive aspects on art from Asia in the context of cultural politics.

Conference location: National Gallery Prague, Salm Palace at Hradčanské Square

For online registration: collectingasia@ngprague.cz

or

<https://www.ngprague.cz/en/event/3092/collecting-asian-art-in-prague-conference>

Symposium Convenors: Markéta Hánová, Yuka Kadoi, Zdenka Klimtová, Simone Wille

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Programme

Day 1 (17 June 2021)

10:00–10:30

Welcome & Introduction by Alicja Knast, Director General, National Gallery Prague

10:30–11:00

Panel 1: Entangled Histories of Cultural Politics

Moderator: Simone Wille

Markéta Hánová, National Gallery Prague

The Birth of the Asian Art Collection at the National Gallery in Prague and Cultural Politics in the Twentieth Century

11:00–11:30 Break

11:30–12:30

Panel 2: In Active Dialogue with Asia

Moderator: Markéta Hánová

Yuka Kadoi, Institute of Art History, University of Vienna, Austrian Science Fund (FWF)

The Ideals of the East: Asian Art and the Crisis of Visual Expression across the Globe, ca. 1900

Tomáš Winter, Institute of Art History, Czech Academy of Sciences

Picasso's Meeting with Buddha

12:30–14:00 Lunch Break

14:00–15:00

Panel 3: Cultural Geographic Re-Orientation – Part 1

Moderator: Yuka Kadoi

Johannes Wieninger, former curator of the Asia collection, MAK – Museum of Applied Arts

Collecting – Searching – Showing. Asian Art in Central Europe. Competing and Networking during the 20th Century.

Uta Rahman Steinert, Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

Big Gifts to Keep Friendship Warm

15:00–15:30 Break

15:30–17:00

Panel 4: Cultural Geographic Re-Orientation – Part 2

Moderator: Michaela Pejčochová

Petra Kuhlmann-Hodick, Kupferstich-Kabinett, Staatliche Kunstsammlung Dresden

Cultural Politics and Transcontinental Networks in 20th-Century Central Europe

Dagmar Pospíšilová, National Museum – Náprstek Museum, Prague

Collecting after the Second World War. New Trends in the Museum Collecting Strategy under the Influence of Political Changes in Post-War Czechoslovakia.

Agnieszka Kluczevska-Wójcik, Vice-President, Polish Institute of World Art Studies Warsaw

"I Have Shown You Japan..." Feliks Jasieński and Japanese Art Collections in Poland

Day 2 (18 June 2021)

10:00–11:00

Panel 5: Cultural Diplomacy and Propaganda, Private and Institutional Collecting

Moderator: Markéta Hánová

Michaela Pejčochová, National Gallery Prague

Emissary from the Far East: Vojtěch Chytil and his Significance for the Building of the Collections of Asian Art in Central Europe

Beatrix Mecsi, Art Historian, Associate Professor, ELTE Institute of East Asian Studies

How Did an Ancient Tomb from North Korea Appear in Hungary? The Anak 3 Tomb's Mural Copies in Context

11:00–11:30 Break

11:30–12:30

Panel 6: Modernism Between Solidarities, Friendships and Intellectual Exchanges

Moderator: Simone Wille

Zdenka Klimtová, National Gallery Prague

Lubor Hájek and Indian Modernist Art

Sanjukta Sunderason, Assistant Professor, Art History, University of Amsterdam

Freedoms in Motion: Transits of Modern Indian Artists in Central Europe in the 1950s

12:30–14:00 Lunch Break

14:00–15:00

Panel 7: Trans-Modernist Routes Beyond Western Europe

Moderator: Dagmar Pospíšilová

Simone Wille, Art Historian, University of Innsbruck, Austrian Science Fund (FWF)

M. F. Husain's Drawings in the Collection of the National Gallery Prague. Artistic Form beyond National Representation.

Jan Wollner, Academy of Art, Architecture and Design, Prague

Central European Artists in Baghdad

15:00–15:30 Break

15:30–16:30

Panel 8: Asian Art in Central Europe: Past, Present and Future

Moderator: Yuka Kadoi

Matthew Rampley, ERC Principal Investigator Continuity / Rupture: Art and Architecture in Central Europe 1918–1939, Masaryk University in Brno

Asian Art, Czech Museums and the Manifesto of Decolonization

Partha Mitter, Professor Emeritus, University of Sussex

Decolonising Modernism

16:30–17:00 Conclusion

Reference:

CONF: Collecting Asian Art in Prague (Prague, 17-18 Jun 21). In: ArtHist.net, May 19, 2021 (accessed May 9, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/34156>>.