

Art History of Socialist China (online, 18–19 Jun 21)

online / Universität Hamburg, Kunstgeschichtliches Seminar, Jun 18–19, 2021

Juliane Noth

Art History of Socialist China: A State-of-the-Field Discussion

Online workshop on Zoom, Friday and Saturday, 18 and 19 June 2021, 2 pm CEST

Organizer: Juliane Noth, Kunstgeschichtliches Seminar, Universität Hamburg

In recent years, scholars of Maoist China have increasingly explored the use of images, displays, and other visual materials and how they were deployed for political ends. What remains largely absent from these studies are, paradoxically, the visual and aesthetic qualities of the images and media in question, their agency and that of their creators, and thus the possibility that they might offer ambiguous and multilayered readings. Art historians on the other hand, who are trained to analyze and interpret images, have shown more interest in art-specific discourses and how individual artists responded to given tasks or settings on a formal or iconographical level. Indeed, the assumption that images produced in Maoist China possessed a lot of political, but very little artistic value might be one reason why a comparatively small number of art-historical studies have been written on Chinese art from the period between 1949 and 1979. It is only recently that several new studies have begun to more fully assess the complexity of artistic production between political exigencies and aesthetic choices. In this workshop, we will discuss methodological issues and case studies which allow us to seek new perspectives on the image production of that period as well as the relation between art, propaganda, and visual culture in a broader sense.

For the access link please register per e-mail: arthistorysocialistchina.kunst@uni-hamburg.de

Programme:

Friday, 18 June 2021

14:00 Margit Kern, Universität Hamburg

Welcome

14:10 Juliane Noth, Universität Hamburg

Introduction

14:25 Claire Roberts, University of Melbourne

Painting the Figure: Ye Qianyu, Dance and Sketch Conceptualism

15:10 Yi Gu, University of Toronto

Magic Lanterns and the "Dark Matter" in Mao's Art World, or What We Could Learn from Socialist Amateurism

15:55 Break

16:10 Zheng Shengtian, Institute of Asian Art, Vancouver Art Gallery/Simon Fraser University
Siqueiros in China in 1956

Saturday, 19 June 2021

14:00 Juliane Noth, Universität Hamburg
Red Guard Art and the Mass Production of Images

14:40 Christine I. Ho, University of Massachusetts Amherst
Socialist Art History and the Problem of Form

15:30 Discussion

16:30 Virtual get-together

More information:
<https://www.kulturwissenschaften.uni-hamburg.de/ks/ueber-das-institut/art-history-socialist-china-program.pdf>

Reference:

CONF: Art History of Socialist China (online, 18-19 Jun 21). In: ArtHist.net, May 26, 2021 (accessed Feb 6, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/34210>>.