Radical Culture in Eastern Europe (online, 27 Sep-4 Oct 21)

Online, Sep 27–Oct 4, 2021
Deadline: Jun 30, 2021

David Crowley

To the Left of Power? Radical Culture in Eastern Europe in the 1960s and 1970s

New research has put attention on the different faces of the Counterculture that emerged and spread in Eastern Europe under communist rule in the late 1960s and 1970s. Communes, psychedelics and other aspects of the hippie lifestyle were embraced as alternatives both to conservative 'bourgeois' life and the hollow revolutionary rhetoric of Soviet power. Some took a more ideological approach by aligning themselves to the Civil Rights and the Anti-Vietnam War movements in the West, or by drawing inspiration from the liberation movements in Cuba and Africa or even the Cultural Revolution in Mao's China. Sexuality and gender also formed new fronts of political action and thinking.

In this workshop, contributors will explore the ways in which Counter-Cultural affinities and New Left politics - defined broadly - were channeled by artists, theatre, film-makers, writers, musicians and others in Eastern Europe in the 1960s and 1970s. In particular, we are interested in proposals of contributions exploring local adoptions and adaptations of countercultural ideas: how, for instance, was the expression of anti-imperialism or communalism shaped by the experience of living as a citizen of the 'Soviet empire'? What were the effects of esoteric ideas on counter-cultural production? How was Marxist thinking used to shape new critiques of power in societies where Marxism-Leninism was a matter of doctrine? What was taken from local marxist traditions - like the work of György Lukács and Moisei Kagan - and what was imported? How were ideas and practices 'refracted' by their mediation in translation, or by exchange in liminal settings like Yugoslavia, East Germany and Finland?

We invite short, speculative papers for a workshop over two afternoons - 12.30-16.30 EEST (13.30-17.30 CEST) on Monday 27th September and Monday 4th October 2021 (same times). Presentations should be c. 20 mins long. Both events will take place via Zoom and will be open to members of the public, fellow researchers. We hope that participants will be available to join both events.

Keynote speaker to be announced.

This workshop will be the first step in the production of an edited volume or a theme-issue of a scholarly journal.

This event is organised under the auspices of Nep4Dissent scheme, an EU-funded COST Action

and the Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art.

Proposals should take the form of an abstract of c. 200 words plus a short biographical statement. Please send them to lcca@lcca.lv by 30th June 2021. Proposers will hear back by 7th July 2021.

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Reference:

CFP: Radical Culture in Eastern Europe (online, 27 Sep-4 Oct 21). In: ArtHist.net, Jun 4, 2021 (accessed Nov 8, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/34264>.