

Space Oddity. Exercises in Art and Philosophy (Venice, 5–7 Oct 22)

Venice, Sala Giovanni Morelli, Malcanton Marcorà, Oct 5–07, 2022

Deadline: May 22, 2022

Andrea Nalesso

4th Postgraduate International Conference

Space Oddity

Exercises in Art and Philosophy

Our understanding of reality is filtered through myriad media, and we have the ability – and power – to gather, ignore, tweak, and explore the information needed to define what we mean by “reality”. The concept of “space” (in its broadest sense) plays an important role in an individual’s explanation of reality, and we must deal with a plurality of models and concepts of it.

As elaborated in the text *Space and Time in Art*, the Russian theologian, philosopher and art theorist Pavel Florensky states “all culture can be interpreted as the activity of organising space”. Starting from this culturological reading, Florensky identifies three spatial “dimensions” and three corresponding genres of activity: (1) The space of our vital relations, and the activity of “Technique”; (2) The mental space and its organisation, and the activities of “Science” or “Philosophy”; (3) The space between the previous two, and the activity of “Art”. Ultimately, all have the same aim: to change reality to reconstruct space.

According to leading scholars and critics, the late 1980s saw a “spatial turn” take place in literary, social, and cultural studies. In 1991 Fredric Jameson theorised a shift from the paradigm of time to the paradigm of space; from modernism to postmodernism. The pandemic era has refocussed investigation on the present paradigm, where Florensky’s spaces have been concentrated through cyberspace almost overnight. Through the notion of the “semiosphere” (as elaborated by Juri Lotman 100 years ago), should we reconsider the concept of space as a cultural category altogether?

The postgraduate conference *Space Oddity: Exercises in Art and Philosophy* aims to explore and problematise space as a cultural category through the exercise of art and philosophy.

The conference addresses but is not limited to the below questions:

- What defines space in art and philosophy?
- How and to what extent philosophy and art can help us focus and explain different definitions and interpretations of space?
- What ontological distinctions, subcategories, and tools can we apply to the understanding of space?
- How do art and philosophy relate to topographic, metaphoric, or outer space?

- Does the concept of space include not only physical objects but also facts of the intangible realm (e.g. language and traditions)?
- Could the same space produce different meanings/interpretations in terms of perception?
- Could our space perception be driven or manipulated by external factors?

How to participate

Candidates are welcome to send a proposal for a 20-min presentation in English to infoveniceconference@gmail.com no later than 22nd May 2022.

Please note that participation is open to PhD researchers only.

The applicant's proposal has to be prepared in one PDF file in English, and provide the following information:

- Name and surname,
- Contact details,
- Academic affiliation,
- Provisional title,
- A 400-word (max.) abstract,
- A 150-word (max.) bio

The file has to be named by the following rules: Surname_Name_Title (example: Brooke_Antony_Architectural elements of space identity).

Successful applicants will be notified by 1st June 2022. We will provide further information about the programme upon selection.

The conference will be both on-site and online.

As a result of the conference, a collection of academic papers will be published.

Successful candidates will be provided with detailed information after the selection.

Reference:

CFP: Space Oddity. Exercises in Art and Philosophy (Venice, 5-7 Oct 22). In: ArtHist.net, May 12, 2022 (accessed Dec 18, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/36678>>.