

The Bourgeois Public Discusses Art (Prague, 17–18 Oct 24)

Prague, Oct 17–18, 2024

Deadline: Jun 25, 2024

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The Institute of Art History of the Czech Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Czech Literature of the of the Czech Academy of Sciences

cordially invite you to the workshop
organized as part of the Strategie AV21 program, City as a Laboratory of Change

The Bourgeois Public Discusses Art II:
Arts and their Publics in Central Europe Between Regional and European Centres.

October 17–18, 2024

lower lecture hall at the Institute of Czech Literature
(Na Florenci 3, Prague)

From the end of the 18th century and particularly in the 19th century, vernacular art rooted in the regions became an attribute of national identities as they formed within multinational states. However, the value of such art was always defined not only in relation to historical models but also to the often-distant centres of European art. The Central European public of the 19th century thus emerged from the systemic, national, and other differentiations and relations with European and regional artistic centres (Paris, Vienna, Dresden, Munich, Leipzig, etc.), but also, importantly, from the mutual intellectual ties between the regions (e.g., in the programs of “Slavic” art subverting the narrow perspectives of Western Neoclassicism and Romanticism or the idea of “small literatures” and the artistic overcoming of their limitations).

The workshop aims to explore the dynamics of art as a means of shaping the modern bourgeois public (Reinhart Koselleck, Jürgen Habermas) amidst the tensions that characterized Central Europe at the time. As modern nations emerged, their cultural symbols gained significance within the multilingual milieu of Central European states, particularly the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and its surrounding regions. As a result of the contact between the art world and the public sphere, art became nationalized and autonomized. To capture this dynamic in a broader sense, the workshop will use a comparative method to examine the various art forms and their publics (Meike Wagner, Sven Oliver Müller, Eva Kernbauer), the overlapping spaces and media involved in the art debate at the time (Werner Faulstich, Werner Telesko), strategies of negotiations over art’s capital between artistic centres and the nation (Pascale Casanova), the process of shaping cultural attitudes (Carol Duncan, Tony Bennett), or the art market (Pierre Bourdieu).

From a transnational perspective, the workshop will focus on the institutional, market, and media

networks of relationships within which the Central European publics were formed in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (schools, learned and art societies, museums, theatres, galleries or exhibition halls, concert halls, salons, art associations, markets, and specialized periodicals), as well as on the mediators between the art and public spheres and their strategies (critics, translators, curators, publishers, etc.). How did the debates about the individual art forms influence each other in relation to the European, regional, and local artistic centres, the political and economic networks, and the widening circle of actual or model recipients of art? To what extent were debates about art tied to national languages and communities and guided by traditional religious, social, state, market, and artistic mechanisms?

We aim for a transnational perspective based on the methods of art and literary history, cultural and media history, and aesthetics, which will help us to shed light on the positions and the rise of the public aspect of art in the socially, linguistically, and nationally differentiated Central Europe of the long nineteenth century. Special attention will be focused on the following areas:

- The art public in nineteenth-century Central Europe and its construction in the tensions between autonomization, nationalization, and other heteronomies of art;
- European, regional, and local centres and artistic peripheries, their mutual relations, and their role in the formation of the Central European public;
- The publics of theatre, literature, fine arts, and other fields: parallels and differences in their formation.

Please send your abstract of max. 1800 characters/250 words to dobias@ucl.cas.cz (Dalibor Dobiáš) and machalikova@udu.cas.cz (Pavla Machalíková) by June 25, 2024. You will be notified about the selection of submissions shortly after. We expect the final submissions to be 20 minutes long. The colloquium is planned as a two-day event with international participation. The conference languages will be English, alternatively Czech, Slovak, and German. The selected and subsequently edited papers will be published.

The workshop is organized with the financial support of the AV21 Strategy Research Program The City as a Laboratory of Change and the GAČR grant projects Literary Criticism in the Czech Lands at the Time of the Formation of National Canons (1806-1858) (GA CR 23-05437S) and Spaces, Buildings, Authors: The Construction of the Cultural Public in the Czech Lands, 1790-1918 (GA CR 24-12190S).

Reference:

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