

Iron Curtains or Artistic Gates? (online/Vienna, 19–20 Sep 24)

Online / Hochzeitsoktogen, Upper Belvedere Prinz-Eugen-Straße 27, 1030 Vienna, Austria., Sep 19–20, 2024

Anna-Marie Kroupová, Universität Wien

Iron Curtains or Artistic Gates? Communism and Cultural Diplomacy in the Global South (1945–1991 and Beyond).

International Workshop.

This workshop challenges traditional East-West Cold War narratives by examining the cultural interactions between communist Europe and the Global South. We will primarily focus on art, culture, and heritage as sources of new insights into historical narratives. We ask the following questions: How can artistic expression contribute to the rethinking of historical narratives? How have political circumstances shaped artistic and cultural production, and vice versa? What were the underlying power dynamics? And what are the contemporary legacies of such interactions? We will examine the role of various artistic media, personal actors, and cultural institutions as conduits for diplomacy and solidarity in the second half of the 20th century and investigate the multifaceted exchanges that shaped these relationships. By discussing a variety of transcultural case studies alongside theoretical frameworks, the workshop shall identify the key actors who have been instrumental in fostering long-lasting camaraderie and cultural exchange with decolonized regions. In doing so, the workshop will ultimately address the significance of cultural diplomacy in shaping historical and contemporary global relations and the corresponding solidarity movements.

Organizers: Anna-Marie Kroupová & Noémie Étienne (University of Vienna).

Program.

Thursday, 19. 9. 2024

9.00 | Early Coffee

9.30 | Welcome Words: Anna-Marie Kroupová & Noémie Étienne (University of Vienna)

Museum Encounters. Chair: Eva Kernbauer (University of Applied Arts Vienna)

9.45 | Jakub Gawkowski (Central European University, Vienna): Art Museum as a Cold War Space of Encounter. Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź in Dialogue with Mexico, Cuba and Chile in the long 1960s

10.25 | Fabiola Martínez Rodríguez (Saint Louis University, Madrid): Cultural Diplomacy and Revolutionary Art. FNAP's Travelling Exhibition of Mexican Art

11.05 | Marcin Lewicki (University of Warsaw): From Poland Through the São Paulo Biennial to the

International Art World

11.45 | Lunch Break

Representations. Chair: Oksana Sarkisova (Central European University)

13.15 | Domnica Gorovei (University of Bucharest): Romania's Cultural Relations with Western Francophone African Countries in the 60s and 70s. Case studies: Cote d'Ivoire and Upper Volta (Burkina Faso)

13.55 | Maria Silina (Ruhr University Bochum and Université du Québec à Montréal) & Yi Gu (University of Toronto Scarborough): The East in Moscow. Chinese-Soviet Art Exchanges at the Oriental Museum

14.35 | Christine Varga-Harris (Illinois State University): Cultural Outreach and Soviet Representations of Decolonizing Africa through the Lens of Gender, 1956–1964

15.15 | Coffee Break

Education. Chair: Katalin Cseh-Varga (Academy of Fine Arts Vienna)

15.45 | Sasha Artamonova (Northwestern University): Photographic Training of African Students at "Schule der Solidarität" in East Berlin

16.25 | Anna-Marie Kroupová (University of Vienna): Art Students from the Decolonized World in Czechoslovakia after 1968

17.05 | Coffee Break

17.30 | Keynote Lecture: Beáta Hock (Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe and Humboldt University of Berlin): Vectors and Dynamics of Cold War Cultural Exchanges. A Triangulation

Friday, 20. 9. 2024

9.00 | Early Coffee

Camaraderie. Chair: Christiane Erharter (Belvedere, Vienna)

9.30 | Jovanka Popova (Museum of Contemporary Art, Skopje): Collection of Solidarity. The Legacy and Future of the Museum of Contemporary Art – Skopje

10.10 | Olja Triaška Stefanović (Academy of Fine Arts and Design, Bratislava): The Elephant in Tito's Menagerie. Animal Diplomacy and the Non-Aligned Movement

10.50 | Rado Ištok (National Gallery Prague and Charles University, Prague): Modern African Art of the 1960s between Paris, Vienna and Prague

11.30 | Lunch Break

Formations. Chair: Noit Banai (Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna)

13.00 | Marcelo Mari (University of Brasília): Modern Art Museums in Brazil as Fortresses of Freedom (1948–1951)

13.40 | Maroš Timko (Czech Academy of Sciences): Between Prague and Bogotá. Czechoslovak Cultural Diplomacy and Colombian Communism in the 1960s

14.20 | Louise Thurin (Independent Researcher): Modernist Mosaics in Sub-Saharan Africa

15.00 | Coffee Break

Circulations Chair: Noémie Étienne (University of Vienna)

15.30 | Gaele Prodhon (National Institute for Art History, Paris): Official and Non-official Photographic Trajectories Between Algeria and the Brother Countries of Eastern Europe. Between Realities and the Imaginary

16.10 | Christopher Williams-Wynn (4A_Lab, Berlin and Florence): Diplomacy of the Cell. The Formal Traces of Solidarity Between Argentina and East Germany, c. 1979

16.50 | Closing Remarks

To register, please contact workshop.ironcurtains@gmail.com, as space is limited. Include your contact information and the specific days/sessions you wish to attend. Attendance is free and on a first-come, first-served basis.

For the livestream of the workshop, please also contact workshop.ironcurtains@gmail.com. The Zoom link will be provided in due time.

For further details and information on upcoming events at the Chair for Cultural Heritage, please visit our website: <https://heritagestudiesvienna.com/>.

Workshop Partners: Faculty Center for Transdisciplinary Historical and Cultural Studies (University of Vienna); Belvedere, Vienna; FSP Global History (University of Vienna); Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Research on the Consequences of War; New Cold War Studies Research Group (University of Vienna); Vienna Doctoral School of Historical and Cultural Studies.

Reference:

CONF: Iron Curtains or Artistic Gates? (online/Vienna, 19-20 Sep 24). In: ArtHist.net, Jul 26, 2024 (accessed Aug 3, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/42437>>.