Art and Philosophy in Eastern Europe since 1945 (Florence/online, 26–27 Jun 25)

Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut, Florence, Italy, Jun 26–27, 2025
Deadline: Jan 17, 2025

Natalie Arrowsmith

Trading Zones: Art and Philosophy in Eastern Europe since 1945.

The Workshop investigates the trading zone between artistic and aesthetic practice and philosophical ideas in Central and Eastern Europe. We are interested in artists from the region who are engaged in a critical dialogue with philosophy and philosophical ideas (both from Eastern Europe and beyond), and whose work possesses transformative experiential, intellectual and political potential. We are equally interested in philosophers and theorists from the region whose thinking engages or addresses art. We view the relationship between art and philosophy as a productive form of synergy rather than as an instance of appropriation, static commentary, or prescriptive instruction. In the workshop, we hope to address the following questions, among others: which philosophical traditions and discourses have contemporary artists in or from Eastern Europe engaged with since 1945? How familiar and aware were theorists and philosophers from Eastern Europe with contemporary artistic trends, but also with the art of the past? Where have theorists or philosophers tended to conceive of art and aesthetic practice schematically, or with too much idealism? More generally speaking: to what extent can art and philosophy resist both all-encompassing formalism and ideological instrumentalization? And, last but not least, in relation to current theory formation: why is the interpretation of Eastern European art often still exclusively based on Western philosophical narratives, neglecting to take into account the rich traditions of theory and aesthetic thinking that exist in Eastern Europe, now and in the past?

Transdisciplinary Workshop at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut, Florence

Date: 26-27 June 2025
Organizers: Hana Gründler (Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max Planck Institut) and Sven Spieker (University of California, Santa Barbara)

Deadline: 17 January, 2025

Please send title, abstract (max. 250 words) and a short bio summarised in one PDF-document to paul.schneider@khi.fi.it by 17 January, 2025.

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