

Ephemeral Architecture in Central-Eastern Europe (Budapest, 28–29 Nov 2013)

Budapest, Nov 28–29, 2013

Deadline: Jun 15, 2013

Miklós Székely, Ludwig Museum - Museum of Contemporary Art

The Research Centre for the Humanities, Institute of Art History, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, in cooperation with CentrArt Association - New Workshop for Art Historians, is organizing an international symposium entitled Ephemeral Architecture in Central-Eastern Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries. This will be held in Budapest, 28-29th November, 2013.

It will focus on Central-Eastern Europe as a fluid geo-political conception and politically unstable territory with constantly shifting borders within the given timespan. Recognizing the growing interest in the latest research on ephemeral architecture, this conference will focus on temporary constructions erected for national and international exhibitions as a means of conveying ideas to an immediate audience. In this perspective the pavilion will be considered as a hub of architectural and artistic trends, political visions and cultural and social issues. Its complex political, cultural, social, economic and urban context will be analyzed: the exterior and interior design of an exhibition pavilion, along with its location within the exhibition park and neighboring edifices, its function as projecting regional, national or corporate representation.

After a long and sparsely documented history from ancient times to the 18th century ephemeral buildings appear in the course of 19th century architecture with new characteristics. Over the course of the 19th and 20th centuries ephemeral buildings have often offered the latest architectural solution for contemporary ideas, ideologies and trends. They were usually intended by architects to function as an autonomous experimental genre, providing new possibilities in terms of concept, planning, setting and display. They were also powerful means for nation building, mass entertainment as a new phenomenon, as well as they provided a “magic frame” for the latest achievements of the civilization in the 19th century. Later they were often appropriated and utilized by dictatorial regimes for their own needs; for demonstrations of power or, for performing the role of flagships of modernism. The research on ephemeral architecture calls into question the relationship between national/corporate buildings and their international critical reflections too. Papers also expected to address issues like the relationship between built-up environment of these temporary constructions and their perception, the reflection of their target audience.

The first conference in the series, entitled Progressive Tendencies in Ephemeral Architecture – Hungarian Case Studies was held in Budapest, on 29th January 2011, with a special focus on the Hungarian pavilion architecture of the 19th and 20th centuries. It raised questions concerning the link between architectural trends and national politics. The advanced aspect of a pavilion was analyzed as a primary architectural value in connection with national, regional and corporate policies.

The second conference aims to get together art historians, architectural historians and scholars from various academic disciplines (history, political history, history of design, anthropology, ethnography, cultural and visual studies) applying inter-disciplinary approach to the topic.

Papers addressing the following issues are welcome:

- Interaction between politics, location and architectural concepts
- National / corporate representation at national or international events
- The place of the construction within the exhibition territory
- Ephemeral architecture and the urban landscape
- approaches to interior design and exhibit display
- The role of pavilions in the nation building process
- The presence and/or the hidden aspects of social and gender issues in pavilions
- Social and political events in close relation to ephemeral architecture
- Understandings and misunderstandings in critical reflections upon ephemeral architecture
- The afterlife of the pavilion: transformation, rebuilding, musealization
- The memory of the pavilion

All kinds of approaches to this topic are welcomed. Papers can be case studies, or can be constructed around methodological and/or theoretical questions.

Deadline: 15 June, 2013. Please send an abstract of no more than 300 words and a current CV of no more than 2 pages to Miklós Székely, organizer of the conference (szekely.miklos@btk.mta.hu, cc to: szekely.miklos@gmail.com). Confirmations will be sent out by the end of June, 2013. The conference venue is ensured by Budapest City Archives.

Reference:

CFP: Ephemeral Architecture in Central-Eastern Europe (Budapest, 28-29 Nov 2013). In: ArtHist.net, Mar 1, 2013 (accessed Jan 3, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/4784>>.