LCCA Summer School (Alüksne, 6-8 Aug 25)

Alūksne, Latvia, Aug 6–11, 2025
Deadline: Jun 22, 2025

Andra Silapētere

Call for applications for the annual LCCA Summer School “Art, Agency and Institutional Transformation”.

This year's Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art (LCCA) Summer School will take place for the 12th time and for the first time will be organized in Alūksne, a city on Latvia’s Eastern border offering rich historical and cultural heritage. The 2025-year’s programme will be dedicated to institutional critique and its diverse contexts in the recent past and contemporary situation in Central and Eastern Europe.

The Summer School is open to early-career artists, art historians, humanities and social science scholars, curators and cultural studies researchers. MA and PhD students are particularly encouraged to apply.

Institutional critique in art emerged as a movement during the 1960s and 1970s within the Eurocentric context of Western Conceptual Art, as artists began to expose the political, social, and economic structures underlying the art world. Over time, institutional critique scope has expanded and it has evolved beyond its origins and is now regarded as an analytical tool or a methodology used and practised not only by artists but also by curators, institution directors, activists. Ultimately, institutional critique is reimagined for our crisis-ridden present as a "praxis of care": a methodology for evaluating the frameworks of state governance to ensure they meet the needs of every citizen. (Karen Archey, 2022)

In the art landscape of Central and Eastern Europe, institutional critique is uniquely shaped by the region's historical, political, and social developments, particularly Soviet rule and the transition from it to liberal democracy, and capitalism. Art in this context has addressed questions such as the censorship, propaganda, legacies of the Soviet past, national identity, memory, and the redefinition of cultural institutions in the post-Soviet era. Today, the art landscape in the region engages in a wide range of collaborative and activist practices as part of its critique, including forming artist-run spaces, (re)organizing institutions and creating alternative exhibitions and education models, and participating in social and political movements. To rethink these processes in a regional and global context the programme will draw on developments in critical thinking, artistic research and creative practices related to recent debates in contemporary culture.

Together with the lecturers, participants will explore the commonalities and local differences in institutional critique within the realms of art and culture in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). We will discuss how external and local factors have influenced processes in the region and what

kinds of institutional practices have shaped the national-European dialectic in the development of CEE arts. The programme aims to rethink how institutional critique post-1989 has conceptualized the position and role of CEE on the global stage, and whether the dichotomies of the latter half of the twentieth century, such as East versus West, continue to influence these discussions.

We will rethink questions related to art criticism and cultural reflection, and how they influence and shape the cultural scene. Furthermore, our exploration extends to the concepts of inclusion and sustainability and how to ensure they don't merely become a policy or protocol for institutions and practitioners in the fields of art and culture. Conversely, we will also consider strategies to prevent the instrumentalization of culture and art for addressing issues such as education, healthcare, and sustainability, that often occurs through policies and grants.

The programme of the Summer School is created by Andra Silapētere, Mārīte Lempa, and Andris Freibergs.

To apply, please fill in the application form and attach a motivation letter here: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdJyJ5O8qg2EKM2A74S_APPUl_pBpph7CB5JlRWK94d1VUK3w/viewform
Application deadline: 22 June 2025. Information on participation in the Summer School will be provided individually by email by 26 June.

The programme of the Summer School will be held in English. Participation is free of charge; however, participants must cover partial accommodation and catering costs of EUR 150. To add, everyone is welcome to attend the free open lectures that will be held at the Summer School. More information regarding the content of the Summer School programme, as well as on how to apply for the open lectures, will be published soon.

Accessibility: Please contact us if you have any questions about the accessibility of the Summer School and let us know about your individual needs to help ensure it is accessible to all participants.
If you have any questions regarding the application process, please contact Andris Freibergs (lccasummerschool@gmail.com) or Andra Silapētere (silapetere@lcca.lv).

Reference:

ANN: LCCA Summer School (Alūksne, 6-8 Aug 25). In: ArtHist.net, Jun 8, 2025 (accessed Nov 24, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/49457>.