

Instruction and the Didactic Impulse (Iasi, 11–12 Jun 26)

Institute for Multidisciplinary Research in The Arts, George Enescu National University of the Arts, Iasi, Romania, Jun 11–12, 2026
Deadline: Jan 15, 2026

Cristian Nae

Instruction and the Didactic Impulse in Postwar Art from Eastern Europe.

Conference at the Institute for Multidisciplinary Research in The Arts, National University of the Arts, Iasi, in collaboration with the Graduate Center for Literary Research, University of California Santa Barbara.

Organized by Cristian Nae (George Enescu National University of the Arts, Iasi) and Sven Spieker (UC Santa Barbara).

In this two-day conference we are interested in instances of instruction and what we call a didactic impulse—here understood as instruction that aims for dialogue and conversation rather than mere indoctrination—in postwar and contemporary Eastern European art. Instruction and the didactic have been productive, if unacknowledged and undertheorized, categories in post-formalist art production from the late 1960s and '70s that have found expression, among other things, in an increased interest in lecturing and other forms of teaching and demonstration, and didacticism as artistic techniques. If this development extended to Eastern Europe, what are the specific characteristics of such an “instructional turn” in this region, both during state-socialism and in more recent times? And how can we assess art-related practices such as curating and artistic research in Eastern Europe from such a perspective?

The issues we want to address during the conference include: art instruction as a form of art production; teaching and lecturing as art; the didactic aesthetics of socialist realism; instruction as demonstration and performance; instruction and didactic “showing” in conceptual art; didacticism and aesthetic autonomy in artistic research; instruction as a form of social critique; (art) demonstration and revolutionary politics; didacticism, critical pedagogies, and the politics of affect; the didactic as part of socialist curatorship and exhibitions; ecological aspects of art-as-instruction; instruction and/as anti-modernism.

Please send proposals of no more than 300 words, accompanied by a brief 200 words narrative CV, by January 15, 2026 to spieker@ucsb.edu or Emil-Cristian.Nae@unage.ro. Participants will be informed in February 2026.

Reference:

CFP: Instruction and the Didactic Impulse (Iasi, 11–12 Jun 26). In: ArtHist.net, Nov 28, 2025 (accessed Jan

27, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/51245>>.