Avant-garde Art out of the Borderlands (Vienna, 1-2 Oct 26)

Institute for Habsburg and Balkan Studies, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, Oct 1–02, 2026

Ana-Maria Milčić

This conference explores the relationship between avant-garde art and the borderland from the turn of the twentieth century to the Second World War, as well as post-1945 developments sometimes described as neo-avant-gardes. Borderlands are understood both geographically and conceptually: as negotiated zones between political, cultural, or ideological entities, marked by encounter, possibility, conflict, negotiation and friction.

More information, program and registration here: https://www.oeaw.ac.at/en/ihb/detail/event/sitting-on-the-fence-avant-garde-art-out-of-the-borderlands

Attendance is free. Registration required (see link above)

Start: 1 October 2026 at 10 am

Location: Room 1 and 2, 3rd floor, Georg-Coch-Platz 2, Institute for Habsburg and Balkan Studies, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna

PROGRAM

Keynotes

1 October 2026
17:00–17:45 | Sebastián Pineda Buitrago (University of Veracruz) – From America Tropical to The Birth of Fascism: Siqueiros's Manhattan Workshop, Industrial Technique, and the Geopolitics of Abstraction (1932-1936)

2 October 2026
16:25–17:10 | Katia Pizzi (University of London) – At the Frontiers of Futurismo

Full program

Day 1 – Thursday, 1 October 2026
09:30–10:00 | Registration / Coffee
10:00–10:10 | Opening Remarks
Panel 1 – Georgian and Romanian Avant-garde | starts at 10:10
Chair: Dimitra Grigoriou (Austrian Academy of Sciences)

10:10 | Tamar Barbakadze (independent scholar) – Negotiating Modernity: Avant-garde Art from Georgia as a Borderland Practice
10:30 | Katharina Tchelidze (Leuphana University) – Corrosive Borders: The H□SO□ Group and the Georgian Avant-Garde (1921-26)
10:50 | Ioana-Cristina Ciocoiu (University of Bucharest) – Restless “Muses”. Travel, Gender and the Romanian Avant-Garde
11:15–11:30 | Discussion
11:30–11:45 | Coffee Break
Panel 2 – Architecture and Design | starts at 11:45
Chair: Richard Kurdiovsky (Austrian Academy of Sciences)
11:45 | Jana Ndiaye Berankova (Czech Academy of Sciences) – Objects of Design and Objects of Desire: Psychoanalysis and Architecture in the Thinking of Karel Teige
12:05 | Jan Galeta (Masaryk University) – Cohabitation of Architectural Ideas in the Borderlands of Interwar Czechoslovakia
12:30–12:45 | Discussion
12:45–13:45 | Lunch Break (food provided for chairs and speakers)
Panel 3 – Exile, Migration and Diasporic Identities | starts at 13:45
Chair: Viola Rühse (Danube University Krems)
13:45 | Sonia Arribas (Pompeu Fabra University) and Irene Valle Corpas (University of Granada) – Crossing Limits: Fences, Exile, and Movement in Charlotte Salomon’s Work
14:05 | Chiara Harrison Lambe (Humboldt University of Berlin) – Identity in the Margins: Stella Steyn Between Cultures and Modernisms
14:25–14:30 | Short Break
14:30 | Adrián Rioja Herrero (Spanish National Research Council) – Out of Place and Out of Time? Debates on Surrealism and the Avant-Garde from the Spanish Exile in Mexico
14:50 | Nicol Maria Mocchi (University of Salerno) – Borderland Bodies in Marino Marini’s War-time Exile (1943-46)
15:15–15:30 | Discussion
15:30–15:45 | Coffee Break
Panel 4 – Spirituality, Modernism and Avant-garde | starts at 15:45
Chair: Julia Secklehner (Masaryk University)
15:45 | Justyna Balisz-Schmelz (University of Warsaw) – Borderlands as a Laboratory of Spiritual Seekership: The Case of Urszula Broll
16:05 | Maria Valentina Palmisano (University of Bologna) – Between Periphery and Modernism: The Transcendental Painting Group and Spiritual Abstraction in New Mexico, Then and Now
16:30–16:45 | Discussion
16:45–17:00 | Coffee Break
Keynote Lecture | starts at 17:00
Chair: Ana-Maria Milčić
17:00–17:45 | Sebastián Pineda Buitrago (University of Veracruz) – From America Tropical to The Birth of Fascism: Siqueiros’s Manhattan Workshop, Industrial Technique, and the Geopolitics of Abstraction (1932-1936)
17:45–18:00 | Discussion
18:00 | Drinks Reception

Day 2 – Friday, 2 October 2026
09:30–10:00 | Coffee
Panel 5 – Yugoslav and Post-Habsburg Borderlands I | starts at 10:00
Chair: Christian Huemer (Belvedere Research Centre)
10:00 | Kristina Pranjić (Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts) – Borderland Infrastructures of the Gorizia-Trieste Avant-Garde: A Contact Zone of Futurists, Zenitists, and Constructivists
10:20 | Sanja Sekelj and Petar Prelog (Institute of Art History, Zagreb) – Borderland as a Zone of Friction: Ljubomir Micić's Avant-Garde Strategies and His Egocentric Network
10:40 | Ana-Maria Milčić (Austrian Academy of Sciences) – At the Edge of Empire: Avant-Garde Art in Fiume from the Habsburgs to Fascism
11:05–11:20 | Discussion
11:20–11:35 | Coffee Break
Panel 6 – Yugoslav and Post-Habsburg Borderlands II | starts at 11:35
Chair: Daniel Grúň (Slovak Academy of Sciences)
11:35 | Miha Colner (Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Kostanjevica na Krki) – Subversive Narratives: Progressive Artistic Practices in Yugoslavia in the 1920s and 1930s
11:55 | Jane Schmidt-Boddy (Saarland Museum, Modern Gallery, Saarbrücken) – Existential Borderlands: Zoran Mušič's Abstract Landscapes, c. 1960
12:20–12:35 | Discussion
12:35–13:35 | Lunch Break (food for chairs and speakers)
Panel 7 – Performance, Intermedia and Post-war Avant-Garde Practices | starts at 13:35
Chair: Mia Gonan (Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna)
13:35 | Erchen Wang (Leipzig University) – Intermedial Performance in the Nonconformist Art Scene of the German Democratic Republic, 1970–1990
13:55 | Nicola Baird (independent scholar) – Paul Neagu's Palpable Art Practice: Toward the Dissolution of the Borderlands between Self and Object and Self and World
14:15 | cancelled
14:40–14:55 | Discussion
14:55–15:10 | Coffee Break
Panel 8 – Craft and 'Primitivism' Materialities | starts at 15:10
Chair: Katia Denysova (Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen)
15:10 | Orly Nezer (David Yellin College of Education and Levinsky-Wingate College) – Borderland Modernism in Clay: Viennese Ceramics between Vienna and Mandatory Palestine, 1933–1948
15:30 | Günter Berghaus (University of Bristol) – The 'borderland' within Europe: Prehistory, Primitivism and Provincialism
15:55–16:10 | Discussion
16:10–16:25 | Coffee Break
Keynote Lecture | starts at 16:25
Chair: Ana-Maria Milčić
16:25–17:10 | Katia Pizzi (University of London) – At the Frontiers of Futurismo
17:10–17:25 | Discussion
17:25–17:35 | Closing Remarks

If you have any questions please email: Ana-Maria.Milcic@oeaw.ac.at

Reference:

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