GLOBAL ART HISTORY & THE PERIPHERIES (PARIS, 12-14 JUN 13)

Ecole Normale Supérieure (Paris), Terra Foundation for American Art (Paris), Institut national d’histoire de l’art, June 12 - 14, 2013

Global Art History and the Peripheries

Established in 2009, Artl@s is a project of a Spatial (Digital) history of arts and letters, providing scholars with the tools and support needed in order to expound their narratives and qualitative evidence with spatial representations and quantitative analyses.

On June 12, 13 and 14, the Artl@s team organizes an international conference titled “Global Art History and the Peripheries”, in partnership with the École normale supérieure, the Terra Foundation for American Art and the Institut national d’histoire de l’art, inviting researchers to gather and develop a removed and well-thought out approach to the question of the peripheries in art history.

PRESENTATION

Organization: Catherine Dossin, Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, Michela Passini (the Artl@s Project)

Creating a place for peripheries has been one of the main issues of a global approach to art as it has developed over the past twenty years. In the legacy of postcolonial studies in particular, a global approach encourages revisiting a story whose margins have been too long forgotten or disregarded and devalued. Studies on non-Western regions have thus, since the 1990s, grown remarkably, especially in Central European and South American art. This renewal also leads to renewed disputes over museum collections. Some of the problems raised by the global project have yet to be resolved. Can a global approach integrate artistic peripheries into the canons of a history still far too oriented towards the universalist and linear model that particularly crystallizes the notion of modernism? If, since the publication of the work Provincialism (1962) by Sir Kenneth Clark, the history of art has been engaged in a reflection on the spatial dimensions of artistic production, and has thus called upon concepts
of 'center' and 'periphery', these two notions are still being associated with a hierarchical conception of artistic production. This tendency—to designate artistic "peripheries" as places where artistic production is less decisive for art history than in the presumed centers for artistic activity—remains strong to this day.

How do we overcome these prejudices, themselves linked to a historiography strongly determined by the canons of Western modernism focused first on Italy, then Paris, and finally New York? Indeed, if only it were a question of embracing forgotten areas research, the historian would never leave this hierarchical presupposition. Retaining a canon in which the periphery would be measured as the focal point would further exile and subject the peripheries to a cartoonish diffusion model. However, by refusing to follow issues of progress or to compare them to the canon, peripheries are all the more excluded by forcing them to be places of "specificity" unrelated to the history of the so-called centers. Generally speaking, the very idea of a global history, where all would have a place, does not come out of Western conceptual models (James Elkins, Is Art History Global?). Rather, this notion has been brought about by Western institutions—universities or museums—which always seem to win at the game of globalization which even the contemporary art market was able to absorb. Finally, the valorization of non-Western areas elicits the production of new peripheries: it has created a destructive Western model, more overbearing than what one would have thought because it drowns the stories and productions of already outlying areas in an even stronger oversight: specialists of Western or, in particular, Eastern European art cannot find their place in the discipline.

Some, favoring the idea of conflict, have attempted to show to what extent artistic "peripheries" have been and are still active and selective. Others, sometimes radically, call into question the use of the same 'center' and 'periphery' categories. They value particularly complex approaches that can characterized as mixed (Serge Gruszinski), geographical (Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann), circulatory (Michel Espagne), horizontal (Piotr Piotrowski) or connected (Romain Bertrand); these approaches, however, involve a multilingualism, mobility and access to a multiplicity of sources enjoyed by few historians. The problem is all the more punishing for museums whose collections have been established according to the dominant diffusion model. Is it possible to construct a history of art which takes into account gradients of activity, information and circulation? A truly "horizontal" history that, despite the problems created by different sources, languages, cultural traditions, is still able to make room for lesser-known productions of universal heritage?

The Artl@s team (www.artlas.ens.fr) invites researchers to gather and
develop a removed and well-thought out approach to the question of the peripheries in art history.

PROGRAM

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12 2013
École normale supérieure
45, rue d’Ulm (Paris 5e), Amphi Rataud

10 – 10:30 am: Tea & Coffee

10:30 – 10:40 am: Michel Espagne (Centre national pour la recherche scientifique, Labex TransferS), Welcome

10:40 – 11 am: Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel (École normale supérieure), Introduction: Thinking the Peripheries in the Context of a Global Art History?

11 – 11:30 am: Michela Passini (Centre national pour la recherche scientifique), Centres and Peripheries in the International Museum System. Exhibiting National Art Histories in Jeu de Paume Museum between the Wars

11:30 – 12 am: Carmen Popescu (Paris 4 Sorbonne University – The Nomad Seminar), At the periphery of architectural history – looking at Eastern Europe

12 – 12:30 pm: Olivier Marcel (Bordeaux 3 University), Mapping Art from the Global South – the Case of Nairobi and the Benefits of a Relational Approach to Peripheries

12:30 – 1:30 pm: Lunch at the restaurant of the ENS

1:30 – 1:45 pm: Catherine Dossin (Purdue University), Introduction: Taking a Closer Look at the Peripheries

1:45 – 2:15 pm: Ewa Brobowska (Terra Foundation for American Art Paris), The Boundaries of Empires in Quest of an Artistic Center: the Case of Polish artists, 1890-1914

2:15 – 2:45 pm: Jérôme Bazin (Paris-Est Créteil Val-de-Marne University), The geography of Communist art after 1945: other centralities, other universalities

2:45 – 3:15 pm: Kristine Khouri (Independent Scholar), Beyond Kuwait: Mapping the Sultan Gallery of the 1970s

3:15 – 3:45 pm: Tea & Coffee
3:45 – 4:15 pm: Annika Öhrner (Uppsala University), Historical microspaces and methods towards horizontal art history. Swedish artists in Paris 1908-1925

4:15 – 5:15 pm: Rasha Salti (Independent Scholar), The International Art Exhibition in Solidarity with Palestine of 1978

5:15 – 5:45 pm: Giovanni Rubino (University of Udine), Arte programmata. Italian Art in Former Yugoslavia in the 1960s and 1970s

5:45 – 6 pm: Concluding remarks

6:00 – 7:00 pm: Reception, École normale supérieure

THURSDAY, JUNE 13 2013
École normale supérieure
45, rue d’Ulm (Paris 5e), Amphi Rataud

10 – 10:30 am: Tea & Coffee

10:30 – 11:30 am: David Cottington (Kingston University), Towards a historical understanding of the ‘historic’ avant-garde: trans-national and inter-disciplinary considerations

11:30 – 12 am: Derek Sayer (Lancaster University), “All the beauties of the world”: modernism, seen from twentieth-century Prague

12 – 12:30 pm: Catherine Dossin (Purdue University) and Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel (École normale supérieure), The German Century: Towards a Geopolitical Art History

12:30 – 1:30 pm: Lunch at the restaurant of the ENS

1:30 – 1:45 pm: Michela Passini (Centre national pour la recherche scientifique), Introduction: Measuring and Visualizing the Centers and the Peripheries

1:45 – 2:15 pm: Sophie Raux (Lille 3 University), Visualizing spaces, flows, agents and networks of the Art Markets in the 18th century: some methodological challenges

2:15 – 2:45 pm: Mathilde Arnoux (Centre allemand d’histoire de l’art), How the analysis of artistic exchanges challenges categories. Some observations based on the research program “To Each His Own Reality”

2:45 – 3:15 pm: Carolyn C. Guile (Colgate University), Borderlands: Mapping Early Modern Architecture in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth
3:15 – 3:45 pm: Catherine Dossin (Purdue University), Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel (École normale supérieure), and Nicole Kong (Purdue University), Artl@s

3:45 – 4:15 pm: Tea & Coffee

4:15 – 5:30 pm: General discussion with all the presenters and the audience, Which Methods to Tackle the Peripheries?

5:30 – 6:30 pm: Reception, École normale supérieure

FRIDAY, JUNE 14 2013
Terra Foundation for American Art
29, rue des Pyramides (Paris 1er)

9:30 – 10 am: Tea & Coffee

10 – 10:45 am: Zahia Rahmani (Institut national d’histoire de l’art), Why an Art and Globalization Research Program at INHA? And why me?

10:45 – 11:45 am: Catherine Grenier (Centre Georges Pompidou), The Role of the Museums in the Decentering of the History of Art. Visit of the new display of the collection of the Centre Georges Pompidou

11:45 – 12:15 pm: Sophie Orlando (Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University), Sources for a Decentered History of the Arts

12:30 – 2 pm: Lunch at the restaurant of the INHA
Institut national d’histoire de l’art
2, rue Vivienne (Paris 2e), Salle Walter Benjamin

2 – 2:10 pm: Antoinette Le Normand-Romain (Institut national d’histoire de l’art), Welcome

2:10 – 2:20 pm: Michela Passini (Centre national pour la recherche scientifique), Introduction

2:20 – 3:20 pm: Piotr Piotrowski (Adam Mickiewicz University), Towards a Horizontal Art History

3:20 – 4 pm: Tea & Coffee

4 – 5 pm: James Elkins (The School of the Art Institute of Chicago), Ten examples of encounters with alternate art historical practices

5 – 5:15 pm: Pause

5:15 – 6:45 pm: David Cottington (Kingston University), Béatrice
Joyeux-Prunel (École normale supérieure), Piotr Piotrowski (Adam Mickiewicz University), Carmen Popescu (Paris 4 Sorbonne University, The Nomad Seminar), Derek Sayer (Lancaster University), Veerle Thielemans (Terra Foundation for American Art), moderated by Catherine Dossin (Purdue University), Which Place for the Peripheries in the Global Art History?

6:45 – 8 pm: Reception at the Terra Foundation for American Art

Check this program, the presenters biographies and abstracts on the artl@s website:

REFERENCE: