

Contemporary Art and Politics (St. Louis, 3- 5 Apr 14)

Saint Louis, MO, Apr 3–05, 2014

Deadline: Dec 16, 2013

Sabine Eckmann

Contemporary Art and Politics

Session at the Midwest Art History Society Annual Conference, St. Louis, MO

Okwui Enwezor, artistic director of documenta 11, demonstrated, with his 2002 iteration of one of the most important exhibitions of international contemporary art, the acuity and significance of contemporary political art. While primarily focusing on art that employs documentary means, he exhibited a broad range of art forms that included multi- and single-screen video projections, photography, performance, and cross-disciplinary practices as well as more conventional mediums such as painting and sculpture. The art assembled at documenta 11 was in large part the result and consequence of radical political changes brought about by the end of communism in 1989/90, the decisive moment that for many marked the end of history as it terminated the competing political systems of communism and democracy and their respective promise for human betterment. Profoundly transforming nations and societies, the end of communism in Eastern Europe gave rise to escalating violence and accelerated worldwide terrorism and economic and political inequality between North and South.

Triggered by fast-paced globalization, these conditions have significantly contributed to individual experiences that are dominated by trauma, statelessness, and daily exposure to political violence and conflict. This situation created an urgency on the part of artists to participate in, visualize, and engage political realities. This panel seeks papers that examine contemporary political art in all media and from a wide range of artists working within and at the margins of the globalized and networked art world. Preference will be given to proposals that not only explore political themes but also analyze the aesthetic means through which artists conceptualize and visualize today's political realities as well as past histories of violence and conflict that are inscribed in the political and geographical landscape of our shared global world.

Send proposals of no more than 250 words by 16 December to Sabine Eckmann, Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, Washington University in St. Louis, Eckmann@wustl.edu

Reference:

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