

Art between the Pacific and Atlantic (Munich, 21-24 May 14)

Munich, Germany, May 21–24, 2014

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Postwar – Art between the Pacific and Atlantic, 1945–1965

The terms "postwar", "post-colonialism", and "post-communism" describe the historical conditions under which the world has developed since 1945. As individual subjects of art historical inquiry and analysis, they represent a three-part, long-term research and exhibition project developed by Haus der Kunst and international institutional partners to take place over eight years.

Conceived as an in-depth study of the postwar period, the four-day international conference, "Postwar – Art between the Pacific and Atlantic, 1945–1965" shifts from a Western/European vantage point to redirect attention to a multifocal and polyphonic history of art since 1945. By following the sweeping lines of the two oceans across Europe, Asia, the Pacific Rim, Africa, the Mediterranean, North America, and South America, "Postwar" straddles continents, political structures, economic patterns, and institutional frameworks to understand the complex legacies of artistic practice and art historical discourses that emerged globally in the aftermath of World War II's devastation.

PROGRAM

May 21

Welcome Note.

6:00-6:30.

Okwui Enwezor (Haus der Kunst, Munich)

Keynote.

6:30-7:15.

The Thaw: Soviet and Eastern European Art before and after the Death of Stalin

Boris Groys (New York University, Staatliche Hochschule für Gestaltung, Karlsruhe, and Bauhaus University, Weimar)

May 22

Keynote.

9:30-10:15.

Calligraphic Abstraction

Iftikhar Dadi (Cornell University)

Panel 1: Non-Aligned Networks.

10:30-12:30

A "third" alternative to the bipolar politics of the Cold War, the Non-Aligned Movement generated a vast transcontinental political and ideological network that cut across Asia, Africa, Europe, and Latin America. First conceptualized in 1955 at a meeting held in Bandung, Indonesia, and formalized in 1961 under the leadership of Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia, Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, Jawaharlal Nehru of India, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, and Sukarno of Indonesia, the Non-Aligned Movement included over thirty countries that did not subscribe to the Cold War's seemingly hegemonic capitalist/socialist binary. Collectively, they represented more than half of the world's population. While the political and economic resonances of the Non-Aligned Movement are by now well known, its art historical corollaries remain comparatively obscure. This panel examines the ways in which non-alignment may have exerted pressure on postwar aesthetic and ideological arrangements.

Non-Aligned Modernism - The International Network and Art Movement New Tendencies (First Phase, 1961-1965)

Armin Medosch (Independent Scholar, Vienna)

Indian Artists and the Soviet Fine Arts Exhibition

Devika Singh (University of Cambridge)

Southern Networks. The Alternative Modernism of the San Marino Biennale and the Convegno internazionale artisti, critici e studiosi d'arte

Paula Barreiro Lopez (Université de Genève), Jacopo Galimberti (Independent Scholar, Berlin)

Competing constructions of 'Indonesian' modern art and artistic identity in a politically fraught terrain, 1950-1959

Amanda Katherine Rath (Goethe University, Frankfurt/Main)

Break, 12:30-1:30

Panel 2: Ground Zero.

1:30-3:30

Hiroshima, August 6, 1945. Nagasaki, August 9, 1945. The apocalyptic imaginary invoked by the unprecedented devastation caused by the explosion of the atomic bomb accumulated into the image of the mushroom cloud and seeped into all aspects of cultural production. As such, the detonation of the atom bomb presents a fundamental rupture in the temporal, spatial, and political fabric of the postwar decades, resonances of which reverberated across the Atlantic and the Pacific. This panel brings to the foreground probing questions that triangulate ethics, ecology, and technological excess to examine dematerialization and void as artistic and aesthetic propositions in a post-atomic world.

Nuclear Reactions: Towards a Critical Artistic Practice in Japan's Long Postwar

Majella Munro (Tate Research Centre: Asia-Pacific, London)

Matsuzawa Yutaka's Art of Immaterialization: An Empty Gallery as an Apparatus

Reiko Tomii (Independent Scholar, New York)

The Work of Salvage: Jess, the Atomic Bomb, and Allegory

Tara McDowell (Monash University, Melbourne)

Nam June Paik, Before the Pioneer of Video Art

Sohl Lee (University of Rochester)

Break, 3:30-4:30

Panel 3: Refracted Tradition, Reconstituted Modernism.

4:30-6:30

The artistic practice and art historical discourses that emerged in the aftermath of the Second World War's devastation were both diverse and dissonant. Through specific case studies, this panel thus examines the differing conceptions of artistic modernity that emerged in the Asia-Pacific region. The aim is to re-engage seemingly transparent and purportedly established art historical nomenclatures such as abstraction, realism, traditionalism, and modernism to examine the heterogeneities that both structured and delineated postwar modernism's global itineraries.

New Mural and Politics: A Case Study of the New Mural Campaign in Peixian in 1958

Lingling Amy Yao (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign)

War After War in Southeast Asia: Revisiting Church and State and the Emergence of the Modern Form

Patrick D. Flores (University of the Philippines)

Antipodean Visions; Postwar Art in Australasia and the South Pacific

Terry Smith (University of Pittsburgh)

Remapping the Postwar City as International Event

Ming Tiampo (Carleton University, Ottawa)

Break, 6:30-6:40

Keynote.

6:40-7:30.

Keynote, Catherine David (Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Pompidou)

May 23

Keynote.

9:30-10:15.

Paolozzi in Post-War Paris: The Second American Invasion

Walter Grasskamp (Akademie der Bildenden Künste, München)

Panel 1: Concrete Visions, Transatlantic Worlds.

10:30-12:30

Adopting an approach that is both regionally specific and cross-culturally comparative, this panel situates the production and reception of Concretism within transatlantic networks that stretched from Paris to Buenos Aires, São Paulo to Munich. A focus on Latin America further brings to surface complex negotiations between the social and the aesthetic, offering critical perspectives on radical and intractable realignments of artistic centers and peripheries during the tumultuous decades following the conclusion of the Second World War.

Cuba's Concretos: The Constructivist Revolution

Abigail McEwen (University of Maryland, College Park)

Time, Space, Borders: A Possible Map of Concrete Art from an Argentinean Perspective

Federico Deambrosis (Politecnico di Milano)

Political Entanglements of Brazilian Modernism and its Reception in Postwar Germany, 1951-1959

Susanne Neubauer (Freie Universität, Berlin)

Brazil: Disarranging Concretism

Gerardo Mosquera (Independent Curator, Havana and Madrid)

Break, 12:30-1:30

Panel 2: Nation(s) Seeking Form.

1:30-3:30

How might artistic and intellectual movements from the former colonies and peripheries impact our understanding of postwar modernism? Through specific case studies, this panel presents a social-historical and critical understanding of postwar aesthetic practices in Africa and the Middle East. In doing so, the panel repositions art historical debates on authenticity and derivativeness, questions West/non-West dichotomies, examines the porosity of purportedly national and ostensibly transnational aesthetic formations, and probes the fissures between nationalist and avant-garde constructions of culture.

I See Wonderful Things! The Art and Liberty Group and Manifestations of Surrealism in Egypt 1939-1945

Sam Bardaouil (Art Reoriented and Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich)

'Enemy of the People': The Baghdad Group of Modern Art

Nada Shabout (University of North Texas)

Uche Okeke, Ibrahim El Salahi, and Postcolonial Modernism in the 1960s

Chika Okeke-Agulu (Princeton University)

A Look Back to the Future: Art in Turkey in the 1950s

Burcu Dogramaci (Institut für Kunstgeschichte-LMU München)

Break, 3:30-4:30

Panel 3: Form Matters.

4:30-6:30 (Venue: Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte)

Traveling exhibitions and biennales not only formed an intrinsic part of postwar cultural diplomacy but also became potent sites for the display of ideology and politics. This, in turn, politicized formal aspects of art as conduits that made ideology and politics visible. Needless to say, form mattered. This panel examines the exhibition as a discursive site to explore the political aspects of postwar display cultures and art historical strategies.

Moderated Movements - Presenting German Modernism in America after 1945

Dorothea Schöne (Kunsthau Dahlem, Berlin)

Formalists and Marxists. Renato Guttuso, Venice Biennale, and the Quest for Realism in Cold War Italy

Alessandro Del Puppo (Università degli Studi di Udine)

Optical, Kinetic, Programmed: The Short Season of the 'Political Quality' of the Art Object

Alessio Frasoni (Independent Scholar, Rome)

Colors of Utopia or Post-War Paris/New-York Dream of Universalism

Serge Guilbaut (University of British Columbia)

Break, 6:30-6:40

Keynote.

6:40-7:30.

The Necessity of Concreteness: An Abstract Art that is not Abstraction

Mari Carmen Ramirez (International Center for the Arts of the Americas, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston)

(Venue: Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte)

Reception, Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte

May 24

Keynote.

9:30-10:15.

Godzilla's Schizophrenia: Americanization and the Culture of Defeat in postwar Japan

Alexandra Munroe (Guggenheim Museum, New York)

(Venue: Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität)

Panel 1: Communism, Socialism, Aesthetics.

10:30-12:30

(Venue: Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität)

How did artists, critics, and intellectuals reinforce and bolster, negotiate, or even subvert and resist political ideologies? To what extent did the ideologies of Communism and Socialism discursively shape critical modernist practices? This panel attempts a cross-cultural examination of the aesthetics and political dimensions of artistic forms in communist and socialist contexts. Special attention is paid to both "official" and "dissident" forms of art practice in Eastern Europe, Soviet Russia, and China.

Re-form: Eastern Europe in 1956

Nikolas Drosos (Graduate Center, CUNY, NY and CASVA, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC)

Abstraktion, Realismus und die Durchlässigkeit des "Eisernen Vorhangs" -

Das Beispiel polnische Kunst in Bundesrepublik und DDR von 1955-1965

Gregor H. Lersch (European University Viadrina Frankfurt/Oder)

Restoring Modernism 1945-1965: The Role of the New Left in Shaping the Narrative

Eva Forgacs (Art Center College of Design, Pasadena)

The Creation and Definition of Artistic Value in Communist China

Vivian Li (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor)

Break, 12:30-2:30

Panel 2: New Practices in/of the Social.

2:30-4:30

The late 1950s and 1960s presents a turning point in artistic production, with a number of artists turning to mutable materials and pioneering an altered relationship with the social. The concluding panel turns to this crucial historical juncture to examine the theoretical and conceptual challenges that such practices presented for the strictures and closures of the art world, both during and beyond the postwar decades.

Arte Povera: Against the 'First World'

Nicholas Cullinan (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York)

'Zero on Sea': An International Crossroad of the Art of Active Social Engagement, 1955-1965

Midori Yamamura (Pratt Institute, New York)

Redefining Neo-avantgardes at the Margins: Manzoni and Oiticica's Subversive Practice

Lara Demori (University of Edinburgh)

At the Crux of the Postwar - Collective Exhibitions at Signals London (1964-66)

Isobel Whitelegg (Nottingham Contemporary, London)

Concluding Note.

Okwui Enwezor (Haus der Kunst, Munich)

Closing Reception, Haus der Kunst

Conference Partners:

Tate Modern, London; Institut für Kunstgeschichte,
Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität; Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte,
Munich

Conference Venues (All panels are at Haus der Kunst, unless otherwise noted)

Haus der Kunst, Prinzregentenstraße 1, 80538 Munich

Institut für Kunstgeschichte, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität hosted at
Hörsaal A 140, Geschwister-Scholl-Platz 1, 80539 Munich

Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte, Katharina-von-Bora-Straße 10, 80333
Munich

Postwar – Art between the Pacific and the Atlantic, 1945-1965 is funded
by the German Federal Cultural Foundation and the Goethe-Institut.

For information regarding conference content and specific panels,
contact Dr. Atreyee Gupta (Goethe Fellow, Haus der Kunst, Munich) at
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For registration and tickets, paper abstracts, and detailed schedule,
please see conference website: <http://postwar.hausderkunst.de/>

Reference:

CONF: Art between the Pacific and Atlantic (Munich, 21-24 May 14). In: ArtHist.net, May 1, 2014 (accessed Jun 20, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/7572>>.