Shared Practices (Tallin, 22-24 Oct 15)

Tallinn, auditorium of the Kumu Art Museum, Oct 22–24, 2015
Deadline: Jan 30, 2015

Anu Allas

The Kumu Art Museum's fall conference 2015
In cooperation with the Institute of Art History, Estonian Academy of Arts

Shared Practices: The Intertwinement of the Arts in the Culture of Socialist Eastern Europe

Changes in the culture of socialist Eastern Europe, which started to take place in the late 1950s in relation to Khrushchev's Thaw and its aftermath, brought about closer and more varied relationships between different forms of art. This process was encouraged by the idea of the synthesis of arts, which was promoted within the framework of the modernisation of official art, and by the emergence of innovative artistic practices, which would nowadays be referred to as interdisciplinary (different forms of conceptual art, installation and environmental art, happenings and performances, visual poetry, early sound art etc.).
The objective of the conference is to analyse the changes that happened because of contacts between various art forms and the expansion of their borders in the culture of post-World War II Eastern Europe. We will cover both the processes guided and encouraged by official ideology and movements that tried to distance themselves from or oppose themselves to the established canon. The conference organisers invite scholars to examine the issues of how operating in intersecting areas of different forms of art (visual art, theatre, music, literature, film, design, architecture etc.) and cooperation between artists gave rise to practical strategies which shaped the ideas emerging in artistic processes (instead of expressing existing ideas). A focus on the performative and material aspects of artistic practices allows us to view art not only as a symptom but also as a shaper of the social environment.
We are looking forward to theoretical presentations (dealing with the idea of the synthesis of arts in the official Soviet ideology, the manifestations of interdisciplinarity and the potential forms of its conceptualisation in the context of the socialist bloc etc.), as well as detailed examinations of specific artistic phenomena and presentations on changes in artists' self-awareness and position resulting from innovative artistic practices. Keeping in mind the expansion of borders of the artistic disciplines in different cultural contexts of the second half of the 20th century, the conference poses the question: what were the specifics of this process in socialist Eastern Europe?

Conference board: Anu Allas (Kumu Art Museum), Andres Kurg (Institute of Art History, Estonian Academy of Arts), Lolita Jablonskiene (National Art Gallery, Vilnius), Klara Kemp-Welch (Courtauld Institute of Art, London).

Please send your paper proposals (up to 300 words) by 30 January 2015 to the e-mail address

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