

East-Central European Art Forum

Inaugural conference

Theorizing the Geography of East-Central European Art

26-27 October 2018

Piotr Piotrowski Center for Research on East-Central European Art

Department of Art History, Faculty of Historical Sciences

Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland

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According to Piotr Piotrowski, the core of practicing art history and scientific research resides in meetings and vibrant discussions with scholars, art writers, artists, and curators. Piotrowski became a major figure of the East-Central European art scholarship not only because of his writings but also owing to the fact that he was building networks. We are under no illusion that we can replace him in that. Yet, as his intellectual heirs, we perceive it as both a challenge and an opportunity to continue his work of bringing people together. Therefore, we intend to initiate the East-Central European Art Forum – regular, biennial meetings of scholars working on East-Central European art of the 20th and 21st century.

Forums will be organized alternately in Poznań (at the Adam Mickiewicz University where Piotr Piotrowski worked throughout his life) and in another city important for the research on the region, but not necessarily restricted to its geographic boundaries. Such a global perspective was strongly advocated by Piotrowski during the final stages of his work. The first Forum will be organized in Poznań in October of 2018.

The Forum Advisory Board: Edit András (Hungarian Academy of Sciences), Maria Hlavajova (BAK, Utrecht), Luiza Nader (Academy of Fine Arts, Warsaw), Sven Spieker (University of California, Santa Barbara)

Theorizing the Geography of East-Central European Art

The inaugural conference will focus on issues raised by Piotrowski in his books. Entitled *Theorizing the Geography of East-Central European Art*, the conference will address the notion of critical cartography (as introduced by Irit Rogoff) and various theoretical approaches towards it. While in the book *In the Shadow of Yalta: Art and the Avant-garde in Eastern Europe, 1945- 1989* Piotrowski discussed the possible revision of the artistic geography of what he chose to call Central-Eastern Europe, in his last, unfinished book (*Globalizing the Art of Eastern-Central Europe*, about to be published in Poland), he changed his methodological approach to discussing art in Eastern Europe in the global perspective. According to the author of *In the Shadow of Yalta*, the new geography of the region involving the art geography or, what Piotrowski called “horizontal art history” “must encompass not only the metaphysics of the place, but also the entire range of historic factors appearing at the juncture between traditions, definitions of the place situated within local tensions, mythologies, inferiority complexes, political and social structures and, on the other side, cultural trajectories, reception of cultural models, and export and import of artistic and other processes”. In his last book - *Globalising the Art of East-Central Europe* - Piotrowski proposes a project of comparative studies of “geohistorical margins and marginalized cultures of the East and Global South, the Far North, and every other part of the globe located outside the center-based understanding of culture” (Introduction). It thus proposes a new global research perspective under the slogan “Peripheries of the world, unite!”, but also requires re-thinking the geography of East-Central Europe. This constitutes a starting point for the conference that aims at bringing together scholars who are interested in a discussion on how we place Eastern European art and its histories on the maps of global art histories that are continuously being drawn anew.

We are interested in texts that offer new theoretical conceptualizations of geographies of East-Central European art and/or critical analysis of existing theoretical take-holds on the subject. Although we appreciate historical analysis, as the emerging research Center devoted to East-Central European art and its history, we are basically interested in the present-day condition of the reflection on East-Central Europe and its possible future developments.

We assume that conference presentations will encourage re-thinking of the following issues:

- notions of Central, Eastern, and East-Central Europe
- notions of Communist and Post-Communist Europe, Former East/West, Former Eastern Europe
- notion of the Other (both close and distant)
- relational and critical geographies as appearing in art historical narratives of East-Central European art
- map as seen from the peripheries

- location(s) and relativization of the center
- horizontal art history
- global maps - binary vs rhizomatic structures
- East-Central European art historical narratives in the context of national and global politics

but that they will also offer new categories and interpretative approaches.

Abstracts (1500-2000 characters) and a short bio should be sent until February 4, 2018.

Authors of submitted proposals will be notified of acceptance by the end of February 2018.

All submissions should be sent to piotrpiotrowskicenter@gmail.com

There will be no conference fee. Travel expenses and accommodation will be covered for the speakers.

The conference conveners are – prof. Agata Jakubowska and dr Magdalena Radomska (Department of Art History, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań).



ERSTE Stiftung

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