

University of Graz | FWF Austrian Science Fund

Glocal Affairs

Art Biennials in Context

International symposium

Monday, April 27, 2015

9:15 – 18:00

Main Building, Sitzungszimmer SZ 01.18

Organized by the University of Graz

in cooperation with FWF Austrian Science Fund

Waltraud M. Bayer, PD Dr., Department of History

Sabine Flach, Univ.-Prof. Dr., Department of Art History

Conference languages: English and German

Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz, Universitätsplatz 3, 8010 Graz

T +43 316 3800 | www.uni-graz.at

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Glocal Affairs: Art Biennials in Context

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Contemporary art biennials have sharply risen in number and importance since the 1990s. The format of the recurrent exposition enjoys growing popularity, both on a global and local scale. It offers states, regions and cities alike a framework, ideally suited to present their national and local cultural identities within the current international context. Biennials have traditionally functioned as experimental platforms, showcasing a novel, alternative art discourse and demonstrating a critical, reflective approach. They have long served as an alternative narrative – challenging the established art and museum canon as well as more generally the dominant sociopolitical discourse. With the global proliferation of contemporary art biennials, their profile, functions and objectives are exposed to continuous change. Art biennials have become institutions in their own right.

Recent international research has attempted to analyze this exhibition model in depth, primarily in terms of its history, curatorial practice, the globalized context as well as the future perspectives. This symposium addresses a variety of these issues. It presents case studies on authoritative recurrent exhibitions (e. g. documenta) in contrast with the fledgling biennials in the former USSR.

The post-Soviet and former Eastern Bloc countries have developed at different speed after the demise of socialism. As for the Russian Federation, it long lagged behind the international development, but recovered strongly with the mil-

lennium and now hosts various contemporary art formats: The major international Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art, the Moscow Young Art Biennial, as well as the locally significant biennials in the Volga region and the Urals. The Russian case study is juxtaposed with curatorial experience drawn from the Northern and Southern Caucasus (Vladikavkaz and Baku) as well as the largely Islamic post-Soviet Central Asian states. Indicative of the progress achieved and changing institutional dynamics was Manifesta 10. The tenth edition of the European Union biennial was hosted in St. Petersburg (controversially discussed amid the Ukrainian crisis in 2014).

The empirical, site-specific approach is accompanied by a review on the fast growing theoretical discourse, which owes so much to the research focus Global Studies at ZKM Karlsruhe. The results of this joint theoretical and practical expertise are represented at the Graz symposium.

Programm

Session I

Russia and Europe: Reflecting on a Challenging Discourse

9:15 – 12:30

Chaired by Alexandra Wachter, Wien

Sabine Flach, Graz

Welcoming address

Waltraud M. Bayer, Graz ❖

Art Biennials in the Russian Federation

Coffee Break

Hedwig Fijen, Amsterdam

Manifesta 10: The European Biennial in St. Petersburg

Anastasia Lesnikova, St. Petersburg / Amsterdam

Daily Operations of Manifesta 10 at the State Hermitage, St. Petersburg

Lunch Break

12:30 – 14:00

Session II

Biennials as a Global Format: Expanding the Artistic Geographical Map

14:00 – 18:00

Chaired by Mira Fliescher, Graz

Beral Madra, Istanbul

An Unfinished Mosaic: Two Decades of Contemporary Art Scenes in Turkey, Caucasus and Central Asia

Sabine Flach, Graz ❖

The documenta in Kassel – an Overview

Coffee Break

Andrea Buddensieg, Karlsruhe ❖

The Role of Biennials in Global Art

Closing discussion / Round Table

Dinner 19:00

❖ Sessions will be held in English or German.
Kunstbiennalen in der Russischen Föderation
Die documenta in Kassel – ein Überblick
Die Bedeutung von Biennalen für Global Art

Abstracts

Waltraud M. Bayer **Art Biennials in the Russian Federation**

The demise of the USSR in the early 1990s triggered off profound changes in the sociopolitical system of the newly formed Russian Federation which in turn unleashed major changes in the artistic and cultural fabric of the country. Socialist Realism imploded, art was no longer in the service of the Communist party, no longer exposed to repression and state censorship. Gradually a new artistic canon was formed.

From the start, Russia's leading artists, curators and intellectuals demanded a turn-around, a thorough restructuring of the now defunct Soviet art system, a modernization drive in line with international standards and trends. One of their earliest claims called for Russia's integration into the global art discourse and biennial culture. Lacking in state funds and expertise, Russia's representations in external biennials (such as in Venice and São Paulo) at first depended largely on grants from the emerging national corporate elite as well as on foreign sponsorship.

In 1992, the Ministry of Cultural Affairs decreed the founding of the National Centre for Contemporary Arts (NCCA), thus creating an institution in charge of formulating a new contemporary art canon as well as Russian biennial policies at home and abroad. Throughout the 1990s, NCCA (co-)organized and shaped

external Russian biennial exhibits. In Russia – along with their regional expansion and establishing of branches – they launched two major biennials along the Volga and in the Urals. (They also co-founded the Moscow Young Art Biennial).

The millennium ushered in a new state policy. Under the liberal cultural minister Mikhail Shvydkoy (Švydkoj) a government program to foster and – at last – to adequately finance contemporary arts was adopted. The move was a milestone in many respects: A council of experts for contemporary art was created within the ministry, funding was increased – for collections and departments to be formed, and funds were allocated for new or remodeled architectural premises to be used as art venues. Above all, the program led to the creation of the Moscow Art Biennial (2003), the first version took place in 2005.

This perennial exhibition, still without a permanent base, put Russia on the global biennial map. It was instrumental in repositioning art and museums in a contested society. It broke the ice for shifts in discourse, format and critique. It pioneered global exhibition standards, inaugurated the reevaluation of curatorial work, and succeeded in raising public awareness.

In retrospect, the first biennial version introduced the Russian public to a better comprehension of contemporary art and its functions in a society, which not long ago considered this art widely an elitist, intellectual minority program.

With each following edition (2007, 2009, 2011) the success of the Moscow Biennial and as a result the status of contemporary art and institutions in general seemed to grow. In 2012, when President Putin began his third term, cultural policy changed. The newly appointed Minister of Cultural Affairs, Vladimir Medinskij, issued the slogan "Russia is not Europe". He called for a patriotic, orthodox Russian cultural political agenda, in line with Russia's unique, stand-alone role, not with global trends. When visiting *Manege*, the main venue of the Fifth Moscow biennial in 2013, he commented negatively on the art shown there. He reprimanded artists that contemporary art must not be reduced to "abstract, cubist or defaced art", nor to brick heaps termed installation art, instead art must become "comprehensible" again.

Andrea Buddensieg **The Role of Biennials in Global Art**

Worldwide Biennials can be seen as mirror of the process of transformation triggered by globalization. The proliferation of the format biennial in the meantime has developed many different discourses and concepts and has led to the institutionalization of the format. The research project *Global Studies* at ZKM Karlsruhe aims at exploring the role of biennials in the global art worlds.

The exhibition *The Global Contemporary* at ZKM aims at documenting how biennials have proliferated across the globe and how they serve as relay stations in

a cartography unprecedented in modern Europe. In data visualization we tried to explore the spread of the biennial system that has given rise to a network of institutions and curators who seek cultural identity in regional art and its position in a global exchange of artists and art concepts.

The last result of the above mentioned Global Studies at ZKM was a conference in 2014 in cooperation with IBA (International Biennial Association) and the ifa Institute, Stuttgart on the challenge and perspectives of the biennialization.

Hedwig Fijen
Manifesta 10: The European Biennial
in St. Petersburg

Since 2010, Manifesta had been working on the selection of an adequate location for the Manifesta decade show, and since 2012, Manifesta organization had been preparing the biennial in the State Hermitage Museum, jointly held there. The venue was chosen to mark two anniversaries: to commemorate the 250th anniversary of this once imperial museum and of the 20th anniversary of Manifesta. We finally opened our doors on 28 June 2014 to 1.5 million visitors in the Winter Palace and to almost 100.000 people at the General Staff Building of the Hermitage on Palace Square. The main event was combined with a Public Program spread throughout the city. For a period of 125 days, in addition to the biennial program, the City of St Petersburg was hosting contemporary art within more than 56 collateral projects in the city.

Manifesta 10 was curated by Kasper Koenig, with Joanna Warsza acting as curator for the Public Program.

Hosting the tenth Manifesta edition in the State Hermitage implied not accepting any censorship or self censorship. This aspect was part of the discussion with Mikhail Piotrovsky, director of the Hermitage, who was our strongest ally. Until the very end and despite mounting protests, he defended the presence of Manifesta in his museum, called upon the public to view it as an intervention not as a subversive action. To justify the relevance

of the event, he repeatedly stressed the long standing joint tradition of European and Russian art for a period of 250 years since its founding by Catherine the Great. Mikhail Piotrovsky kept supporting and legitimizing our joint endeavor in public, referring to the freedom of artistic voices valued at the State Hermitage. He argued that the Museum's project to show contemporary art was in line with a long tradition, with the museum profile, it did not necessarily reflect the Kremlin's changing political policy.

The challenge of hosting a contemporary art biennial in a repressive society (as exemplified by Putin's Russia today) and in a byzantine institutional complex (as exemplified by the Hermitage) was an issue pertaining specifically to this biennial edition. In its tenth edition, Manifesta was facing a political complexity in combination with an institutional structural challenge: M 10 was faced with a renowned classical institution barely familiar with contemporary artistic practices; it dealt more with incredible bureaucratic decision making structures and financial incapacities than with the immediate exposure to censorship.

In this presentation Manifesta Director Hedwig Fijen will reflect upon the decision to host M10 at this controversial venue and the outcome the tenth jubilee Manifesta edition in St. Petersburg in 2014.

Sabine Flach
**The documenta in Kassel –
an Overview**

The lecture gives an overview of the history and the conceptual developments of the documenta in Kassel.

Anastasia Lesnikova
**Daily Operations of Manifesta 10 at the
State Hermitage, St. Petersburg**

My contribution deals with my professional experience as production coordinator of MANIFESTA 10. It is about the specifics of a contemporary art biennial format in the context of a classical museum. It thus reflects on the institutional challenge to implement this novel format in an imperial setting, the daily search for compromise. The tenth edition of Manifesta stands for a new phase in the development of contemporary art practices in the Hermitage Museum and in St. Petersburg as well.

My presentation will give insight into my daily work as a coordinator of production at the local St. Petersburg office. This required the following tasks:

- Leading communications and collaboration between the Manifesta 10 production team and the State Hermitage Museum staff and services
- Assisting the Head of Production on the definition and development of the exhibition with the curatorial team

- Securing Manifesta 10 exhibition spaces (together with Head of Production)

- Advising and coordinating the production team in relation to the State Hermitage Museum procedures and venues' regulations and limitations

- Being responsible for M10 production local suppliers network

- Coordinating works of local contractors and Hermitage staff members with the supervision of Head of Production

- Assisting the team on the production of new commissioned artworks and loans as well as on the installation, maintenance and dismantling of the entire exhibition

- Defining artists' and loan agreements following Russian law, customs regulations and State Hermitage Museums methods (together with Head of Production)

In essence, I deal with a variety of very practical issues, the specifics of daily operations and with the challenges of M10 in the Russian context.

Beral Madra
An Unfinished Mosaic: Two Decades of Contemporary Art Scenes in Turkey, Caucasus and Central Asia

In this presentation, I will briefly scan the developments and structures of contemporary art characterizing the past two decades in Turkey, in South and North Caucasus, and in Central Asia.

For me, the main motive for this retrospective approach on contemporary art is the need to find common and solid ground, visions and goals that may contribute to improved communication and flourishing relations between these art communities. In fact, contacts between these regional scenes are still rare, in slow progress.

Over the last three decades, this region has gone through political and economic transformations, local wars and cultural shocks. As a result, societies and individuals suffered and revolted. It has been a blistering process, which culminated in Maidan in Kiev, in Gezi in Istanbul and in the Arab Spring in Cairo.

Indeed, the entire region is still in a critical condition. On the one hand, people have become aware of their power and are initiating a promising democratization process, which is changing the status of states and governments. On the other hand, authoritarian presidents and governments are leading their countries into war, terrorism and repressive, even totalitarian regimes.

Given the current unimaginable human tragedy in the region, it is at first quite unrealistic to expect contemporary art and critical artistic production to be of prime concern to these societies. However, the accumulation of visual art theory, practice, and material, cunningly permeated into the appreciation and consciousness of the people. I am convinced of the influence of contemporary art and artists exerted on traditional societies. Contemporary art discourse is instrumental in implementing new ways of thinking, democracy and freedom of expression through its multi-disciplinary strategies and genres. Even if their repertoire is not reflected in the official culture policy of their respective countries, their contribution beyond doubt is felt.

Within this socio-political and geographical context, it is noteworthy to look at three topics:

- a. at the awareness and perception of the public in matters of contemporary art concepts, forms, and aesthetics
- b. at the approach and attitude of local and international art experts / institutions towards each other, and finally
- c. at contemporary art infrastructure, systems, and the emerging culture-industries that currently seem to illustrate all the peculiarities of Adorno's *Enlightenment and Culture Industry* or Debord's *Society of the Spectacle* interpretations.

I would like to present some of the promising and somehow sustainable contemporary art projects I was involved in as a lecturer or curator:

- at the Open Society Institute workshop and conference, Baku, Azerbaijan, 01/2002
- at the AICA Turkey Forum, Istanbul, in conjunction with the 8th Istanbul Biennale *Art Criticism and Curatorial Practices East of EU*, with participants from South Caucasus and Middle East, 09/2003
- *Caravansarai*, Symposium, Tbilisi, Georgia, 10/2003
- *A Consumption of Justice*, Artists from the Balkans, Middle East and South Caucasus, Diyarbakir Art Center, 05/2015
- *Aluminium* Contemporary Art Festival, Baku, 12/2005
- *Sinopalia* Contemporary Art Festival in Sinop, 2006-2012
- *Neighbours in Dialogue*, Istanbul Collection for Ars Aevi, Sarajevo, Feshane-L Amire, artists from Turkey, South Caucasus and Middle East, 03/2007
- CA Workshop Yerevan, Free University, 07/20007
- *Neighbours in Dialogue*, exhibition Opening, Sarajevo, 10/2008
- Bahcesaray, Crimea, Contemporary Art exhibition, jointly curated by Turkey, Greece, Russia, Ukraine, 09/2008
- Soviet Agitart (from the Samvel Baghdasaryan Collection, Yerevan), Istanbul, 2008
- Central Asia Pavilion, 53rd Venice Biennial, supported by HIVOS, 2009
- Jury membership of the 6th competition of INNOVATION, organized by NCCA, Moscow, 2010
- *Curating Georgian Visual Art*, Workshop for Contemporary Art Curators, Open Society Georgia Foundation, Tbilisi, 11/2011
- Pavilion of the Republic of Azerbaijan at the 54th Venice Biennial, 2011
- Artistic director of the 3rd Çanakkale Biennale, 09-11/2012
- *Fascinans and Tremendum*, Aidan Salakhova Solo Exhibition, Moscow Museum of Modern Art, 11/2012
- Nikita Alekseev / Ivan Egelski, Kuad Gallery, 2012/2013
- Artistic director of the 4th Çanakkale Biennale, 09-10/2014

Waltraud M. Bayer is a senior research fellow at the University of Graz, Austria, specializing in Russian and (post-) Soviet cultural and museum studies. She teaches, lectures, and writes on art collecting, museums, and the art market in Eastern Europe.

She studied in Vienna, St. Paul / Minneapolis, Washington, DC, and in Moscow, graduated from Vienna University (MA, PhD), and received her post-doctorate (Dr. habil.) from the University of Graz.

Her book publications include *Die Moskauer Medici: Der russische Bürger als Mäzen, 1850 bis 1917* [1996, *The Moscow Medici: Bourgeois Art Patronage in Tsarist Russia, 1850-1917*], *Verkaufte Kultur: Die sowjetischen Kunst- und Antiquitätenexporte, 1919-1938* [2001, *Russia's Sold National Treasure: Art Exports to the West, 1919-1938*], and *Gerettete Kultur: Private Kunstsammler in der Sowjetunion* [2006, *Private Art Collectors in the Soviet Union, 1917-1991*]

She is currently leading an interdisciplinary, international research project *Post-Soviet Art Museums in the Era of Globalization* at Graz University, the first phase was finished in 2012. After evaluation, the project in its second phase focuses on contemporary art, presently continued under: *Creating Contemporary Art Museums in the Post-Soviet Space*. Since 2008 this research focus has been funded by the Austrian Science Fund, FWF

Andrea Buddensieg is curator and project manager of the research department Global Studies at ZKM Center for Art and Media. Currently she is the project manager and part of the curatorial team of the major ZKM project GLOBALE running 300 days from June 2015 on comprising about 20 exhibitions, performances, music rehearsals, and conferences.

She received her PhD in art history from the University of Bonn. At ZKM she held several positions. She was part of the project management team for the exhibition *Iconoclash*, curated by Bruno Latour in 2001/2002. From 2002 to 2006 she ran the Public Relations Department at ZKM and from 2006 to 2013 the research project GAM – Global Art and the Museum. In 2011/2012 she curated together with Peter Weibel the exhibition *The Global Contemporary. Art Worlds after 1989*. Her main research interests are twentieth-century design and contemporary art. She has lectured at several academies, and in 2008 she was guest scholar at CASVA, National Gallery of Art, in Washington D.C. She has contributed to exhibition catalogs and is coeditor of the books *Contemporary Art and the Museum. A Global Perspective* (2007), *The Global Art World. Audiences, Markets, Museums* (2009), *Global Studies. Mapping Contemporary Art and Culture* (2011), and *The Global Contemporary and the Rise of New Art Worlds* (2013)

Hedwig A. M. Fijen, Director of the International Foundation Manifesta with its headquarters in Amsterdam. The foundation is the initiator and co-producer of Manifesta, the European Biennial of Contemporary Art. She conceptualized numerous projects on new architecture and innovative processes in contemporary arts and culture, commissioned by museums, ministries, city councils and art organizations. She has held numerous short- and long-term memberships in international juries, committees, and boards. She is an active member of the International Biennial Association (IBA), the Committee for Dutch Art in International Context at the Netherlands Foundation for Visual Arts, Design and Architecture, and the Committee for the International Cultural Policy at the Dutch Council for Culture.

She studied History and History of Art at the University of Amsterdam (BA, MA). Before 1993, she worked as a curator at the Netherlands Office for Fine Arts, operating in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, Cuba and many other countries. Later she was advisor for the European Commission Culture Grants.

She is founding director of Manifesta, since its origin in Rotterdam in 1993. Under Fijen's direction Manifesta has developed into the fourth most influential in the world. Over this period, Fijen has vastly expanded Manifesta's operations with theoretical and educational projects including the Manifesta Journal, Manifesta Publications and the Manifesta Coffee Breaks. Hedwig Fijen is in charge of all aspects of the Manifesta organization

including the selection of Host cities, thematic content and the curatorial selection. The final execution of the concept of the curators is her responsibility.

She has lectured extensively and wrote many articles in the context of Manifesta as a biennial.

The Jubilee edition of the biennial, MANIFESTA 10, took place in St. Petersburg, Russia, in partnership with the State Hermitage Museum. Hedwig Fijen is currently working on the upcoming edition of Manifesta Biennial, Manifesta 11, to be hosted by the city of Zürich in 2016.

Sabine Flach is Professor of Modern and Contemporary Art and Chair of the Department for Art History at the Karl-Franzens-University, Graz and permanent Member of the Faculty for Contemporary Art and Art Theory at the School of Visual Arts, NYC. She has taught at the Universities of Kassel, Hamburg, Technical University of Berlin, Humboldt University of Berlin, SVA – School of Visual Arts, NYC, and at Mills College, Oakland, San Francisco; from 2000-2010 she worked at the Center for Literary and Cultural Research where she was head of the „WissensKünste. Die Kunst zu wissen und das Wissen der Kunst“ research department. Publications: *The Glass Veil. Seven Adventures in Wonderland*. Bern, Berlin, New York (co-authored monography with Suzanne Anker, 2015); together with Suzanne Anker: *Embodied Fantasies. Between Awe and Artifice*. Bern, Berlin, New York 2013; *Sensing Senses. Die WissensKünste der Avantgarden*. Künst-

lerische Theorie und Praxis zwischen Wahrnehmungswissenschaft, Kunst und Medien. 1915 – 1930, Munich (forthcoming 2015).

Mira Fliescher is postdoctoral research assistant at the Institute for Art History, Karl-Franzens-University, in Graz. After graduating in Art History at the Ruhr University-Bochum, she was doctoral researcher at the DFG-doctoral research centre *Identity and Difference*. In 2012 she finished her doctoral thesis on *Signatures of Alterity* at the University of Fine Arts in Brunswick. From 2011 to 2013 she worked as a postdoctoral researcher at the DFG-doctoral research centre *Visuality* in Potsdam and in 2014 as postdoctoral researcher at the Institute for Critical Theory at the Zurich University of the Arts. Her Publication include: *Signaturen der Alterität. Zur medialen Reflexivität der Kunst Yasumasa Morimuras*, Bielefeld 2013; ed. with Elena Vogman and Lina Maria Stahl: *Umreißen. Eigenwege der Zeichnung, Series Sichtbarkeiten vol. 3*, Zürich, Berlin 2014; ed. with Florian Dombois, Dieter Mersch and Julia Rintz: *Ästhetisches Denken. Nicht-Propositionalität, Episteme, Kunst*, Zürich, Berlin 2014; ed. with Elena Vogman: *Georges Didi-Huberman: Der Kubus und das Gesicht. Im Umkreis einer Skulptur Alberto Giacomettis*, mit einem Nachwort der Herausgeberinnen, Reihe DENKT KUNST, Zürich-Berlin: diaphanes 2015, ed. with Elena Vogman: *Georges Didi-Huberman: The Cube and the Face. Around a Sculpture by Alberto Giacometti*, with an afterword by the editors, series THINK ART, Zürich-Berlin 2015

Anastasia Lesnikova

Graduated from Art History Department, State Institute of Culture, St. Petersburg, in 2008.

Curator at the Stieglitz Museum of Applied Arts, St. Petersburg, 2008-2010, lecturer at the St. Petersburg State University, 2009-2010

Curator and project coordinator at The State Hermitage Museum, Contemporary Art Department, 2012-2014

Curatorial assistant in Hermitage exhibitions, e. g.: *Dmitry Prigov: Room of the Artist* (2012); *Jake and Dinos Chapman: End of Fun* (2012); *Gegenlicht: German Art from the George Economou Collection* (2013); *The White City: The Bauhaus architecture in Tel-Aviv* (2013); *Architecture the Dutch Way 1945-2000* (2013); *Marijke van Warmerdam. Time is ticking* (2014)

Since 2014 production coordinator for Manifesta 10, St. Petersburg, European Biennial of Contemporary Art

Beral Madra, Istanbul-based curator, critic, lecturer, mentor of Istanbul Scholarship program with Berlin Senat (1995-2013), Visual Arts Director of Istanbul 2010 ECOC. Currently she is director of BM Contemporary Art Centre and artistic director of Kuad Gallery, she lectures at Yeditepe University

Coordinator of the first two editions of Istanbul Biennale of 1987 and 1989

As a long-term (co-)curator at Venice Biennale, she curated Turkish art exhibitions in various editions of Venice Biennale (nos. 43, 45, 49-51); she was co-curator of the exhibition *Modernities and Memories – Recent Works from the Islamic World* at the 47th Venice Biennale. In 2011 she was Advisory Curator of the Pavilion of Azerbaijan at 54th Venice Biennale

She has widely worked in Eastern Europe and the post-Soviet space. She was co-curator for *Atmosphere 41 Degree. Contemporary Art from Georgia*, resulting from the Georgian Government initiative *Georgian Seasons* to support contemporary art (Siemens Art Gallery, Istanbul, 2007) and for *Bahçesaray, Crimea, Contemporary Art Exhibition* (Turkey, Greece, Russia, Ukraine, 2008). She curated the Solo Show of Aidan Salakhova at the Moscow Museum of Modern Art (2012), also *Alanica*, Exhibition and Symposium, Vladikavkaz, South Ossetia (2013) and was co-curator of 3rd and 4th Çanakkale Biennale (2012-2014)

She co-founded Diyarbakır Art Centre (2002-2010) and the Foundation of Future Culture and Art in 1994.

She is honorary president of AICA, Turkey, established in 2003.

Numerous publications, e. g.: *İki Yılda Bir Sanat* (Essays on Biennale, 2003); *Maidan*, Essays on Contemporary Art in South Caucasus and Middle East, 2007; *Home Affairs*, Essays on Contemporary Art in Turkey, 2009

Alexandra Wachter is a researcher, curator and mediator in the areas of architecture, art and contemporary history. She studied history and Russian in Salzburg, Edinburgh and Moscow (MA) and recently completed a PhD (on *The Last Heroes of Leningrad. Coping strategies of Siege survivors in Soviet and post-Soviet society*) at the University of London / Queen Mary. Her academic interests include oral history and cultures of remembrance.

She is co-curator of the exhibition *Soviet Modernism 1955-1991. Unknown History* (2012) and co-editor of the anthology by the same title. From 2002 to 2006 she was project leader of the Austrian *Architekturtage* [Days of Architecture]. She has collaborated on numerous publications on architecture, art, and history.

The symposium is part of the research project CCAM undertaken at Graz University and funded by the Austrian Science Fund FWF (2012-2015). Whereas CCAM – *Creating Contemporary Art Museums in the Post-Soviet Space* – follows a broad approach on the process of institutionalizing contemporary art in the Russian Federation, the symposium highlights a central aspect of this work: post-Soviet biennial culture within the broader global context.

The focus was chosen in line with the university art history program and its current spring curriculum. In late 2013, Graz University created a full professorship for modern and contemporary art, held by o. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Sabine Flach, currently the head of department. She is co-organizer of the event.

Some academic courses in the spring term overlap with the subject matter of the symposium:

a. Prof. Flach's department runs an interdisciplinary lecture series on global art in historical perspective. The series contains presentations of contemporary art (as exemplified by the Venice Biennial and documenta, Kassel)

b. In addition, it organizes an excursion to the Venice Biennial (May 2015) within its master's program, teaching the history of the Venice Biennial (with special consideration of earlier editions and of exemplary national pavilions)

The symposium thus constitutes a complementary and consolidating addition to the graduate courses offered. It provides a forum for international specialists and faculty members, for graduate and undergraduate students. It presents students with the opportunity to acquaint themselves with authoritative expertise and innovative research in their field in an exchange with applied global art history. It explores state-of-the-art research issues in an interdisciplinary, transnational perspective.

Note: FWF also co-funded the forerunner conference *Post-Soviet Art Museums in the Era of Globalization* (Contemporary Art + Institutions) which took place at Kunsthaus Graz in June 2010. It was jointly organized by director Peter Pakesch, Kunsthaus, and Waltraud Bayer, Graz University.

Creating Contemporary Art Museums in the Post-Soviet Space | CCAM
UNI Graz | FWF P 25079-G21 | Project Leader PD Mag. Dr. Waltraud M. Bayer

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