



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh College of Art



Nationalism and Internationalism in the Cold War: Diplomacy, Identity, and Networks of Culture in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe

Date: 6th of September 2023.

Venue: West Court, Edinburgh College of Art Main Building
74 Lauriston Place, Edinburgh, EH3 9DF.

This event will take place both in person and online.

Please indicate if you will be attending in person
or online when booking your ticket through Eventbrite.

Details on online attendance will be sent separately.

Eventbrite Link: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/nationalism-and-internationalism-in-the-cold-war-tickets-705381614397?aff=oddtcreator>

This workshop assembles scholars who will illuminate cultural interactions across continents during the Cold War, exploring the ways that cultural contacts between the East, West and South served both domestic and international agendas. Their contributions will examine how the staging of art exhibitions, international biennials and conferences, as well as the expansion of mass media, were enmeshed with ideological positions. This event will highlight how these activities aimed to both redefine national identities and global positions, as well as pursue new political, economic, and cultural alliances and networks.

9.30-10am: Registration/Coffee.

10-11am: "Socialist Internationalism and the Gritty Politics of the Particular"

Keynote Lecture by Dr Kristin Roth-Ey.

Abstract: *This keynote explores different approaches to the question of scale in writing international and cultural history, with a particular focus on the example of Radio Moscow, the Soviet Union's main international broadcasting operation. Socialist internationalism was an orchestra with one score, in theory, but multiple would-be conductors and scores of musicians—some harmonizing and others out of tune, some working off a brand-new score and others hawking their instruments in the alley behind the hall, eager to try a new profession. How do historians approach the diversity of experience within generalizing terms, such like 'socialist internationalism' and 'Second-Third World relations'?*

Bio: Kristin Roth-Ey is a historian of modern Russia at the UCL School of Slavonic and East European Studies. She is the author of *Moscow Prime Time: How the Soviet Union Built the Media Empire that Lost the Cold War* (Cornell Univ Press, 2011), a holistic analysis of Soviet mass media culture in the post-WWII era. In recent years, her work has focused on the international dimensions of Soviet media culture, including its instrumentalisation in Soviet outreach to the developing world. As a founding member of the Socialist Goes Global Project, she conceived and edited the volume *Socialist Internationalism and the Gritty Politics of the Particular: Second-Third World Spaces in the Cold War*, which was published by Bloomsbury in 2023.

11-11.45am: "The Art of Soft Power: Yugoslavia's Cultural Engagements with the East, West, and Third World", by Dr Stefana Djokic.

Abstract: As the only socialist country that actively cooperated with both blocs, and a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement, Yugoslavia defies bipolar Cold War dichotomies. This presentation will examine Yugoslavia's diplomatic efforts and cultural engagements with the Soviet Union, the West and the Third World during the early Cold War period. It will show that Yugoslavia heavily invested in the export and import of culture, investigating how art exhibitions were mobilised to project a national identity in international spheres, and how this identity depended on which border was crossed.

Bio: Stefana Djokic is currently completing a research post-doc at The University of Edinburgh. Her research posits Yugoslavia as an active participant in the cultural Cold War, bringing to light Yugoslav efforts at showcasing Yugoslav culture and establishing its presence on the global scene. Her PhD broadened the current understanding of the diverse relations between US art and Yugoslav art, challenging well-worn Cold War narratives in terms of an East-West binary. She is a Junior Fellow of the project "Linking Art Worlds" (2022-2024), led by experts Beáta Hock, John J. Curley, and Tomáš Pospiszyl. She also contributed to the collaborative research project "Art of the United States in European Writing ca. 1945-1990" and to its published anthology "Hot Art, Cold War – Southern and Eastern European Writing on American Art 1945-1990", an initiative of the journal *Art in Translation*, supported by the Terra Foundation (www.usartineurope.eca.ed.ac.uk).

11.45-12.30pm: "Historical Monuments and Hungarian Self-Representation at International Architectural Conferences, 1964-1972", by Helka Dzsacsovszki.

Abstract: The 1960s saw the broader internationalisation of monument protection alongside a proliferation of specialised conferences, which increasingly facilitated exchanges between experts. Amplified by these platforms, Hungarian architectural conservation rose to international prominence, culminating in hosting the Third ICOMOS General Assembly and Symposium in Budapest in 1972. The paper will analyse how Hungarian conservation professionals, the popular press, and the political elite used historical monuments at international conferences in Hungary and abroad to represent national identity and affirm transnational cultural allegiances within and sometimes even beyond the Eastern Bloc.

Bio: Helka Dzsacsovszki is a Doctoral Candidate at the Professorship of Recent Building Heritage Conservation at the Technical University of Munich. She studied Architectural History and Architectural Conservation at the University of Edinburgh. Her ongoing doctoral research looks at international architectural networks during

the Cold War and the intersection of modern architecture and monument conservation theory from East-Central-European perspectives.

12.30-1.30pm: Lunch Break.

1.30-2.30pm: 'Connections, Erasures, Ambivalence: The Lives and Afterlives of Eastern European Solidarity in Global Perspective'

Keynote Lecture by Prof. James Mark.

Abstract: *This keynote will address the importance of considering postwar socialist internationalism in broader historical perspective. Questioning claims that this was an unnatural inauthentic phenomenon that stood outside national traditions, it will rather explore how Cold War political and cultural solidarity work can usefully be placed in longer term histories of regional internationalism, from campaigns to abolish slavery in the 19th century, to solidarity with Ukraine today.*

Bio: *James Mark is a Professor of History at the University of Exeter. He has published extensively on questions of Eastern European cultures of memory, on the social and cultural history of Communism, and, most recently, works that write Eastern European history in the context of global Empires and their ends. He is author of *The Unfinished Revolution. Making Sense of the Communist Past in Central-Eastern Europe* (2010, Yale) and co-author *Europe's 1968: Voices of Revolt* (2013, OUP), *1989: a Global History of Eastern Europe* (2019, CUP) and *Socialism Goes Global: The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the Age of Decolonisation* (2022, OUP). *Off White: Central and Eastern Europe and the Global History of Race*, a volume co-edited with Catherine Baker, Bogdan C. Iacob and Anikó Imre, will be published later this year with MUP.*

2.30-3.15pm: "'There Is Not a Single Biennial in the World That Could Satisfy Everyone': Some Perspectives on the History of the Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Arts", by Gregor Dražil.

Abstract: *This presentation will address some key aspects of the history of the Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Arts, one of the oldest international printmaking biennials in the world, from its establishment in 1955 until the early 1980s. It will first outline the basic characteristics of the exhibition (organisation, curatorial concept, participation) and then focus on two selected topics relating to the Biennial. The first theme will be the participation, presentation, and valorisation of non-Western artists and countries in the context of the Biennial, where I will emphasise the Western-centric approach that the organisers of the Biennial fostered. The second theme will focus on the issue of the artistic medium—printmaking. I will focus on the situation that arose at the end of the 1960s, when traditional definitions of the art medium were being fundamentally questioned.*

Bio: *Gregor Dražil has a master's degree in art history from the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts, and is currently working on his Ph.D. thesis at the same department. He has been employed at the International Centre of Graphic Arts (MGLC) in Ljubljana since 2018. Since the 2019/2020 academic year, Dražil has been co-leading the fieldwork and excursions course for MA students of Art History at the Art History Department, Faculty of Arts.*

3.15-4pm: "Reciprocal Art Exhibitions Between Egypt and USSR During the Postwar Period", by Dr Maria Mileeva.

Abstract: *This paper will discuss the extent of Soviet cultural engagement with Egypt, the African national liberation struggles, and pan-Arabism by examining a number of art exhibitions organised between the 1950s and the late 1970s. It will assess critically Soviet claims to anti-imperialism, peace, international solidarity, and friendship amongst the Second and Third Worlds. Focusing on changing definitions of realism, nationalism, and humanism across the socialist world, this paper will bring to light a series of transnational encounters that have largely remained forgotten.*

Bio: *Maria Mileeva is a Lecturer at The Courtauld Institute of Art, London. Her research and teaching centre around postcolonial and decolonial narratives of the Russo-Soviet imperial projects and Soviet multinationalism. Maria's current book project interrogates the linkages between the cultural policies of socialist realism and socialist internationalism in the postwar period. Maria is the co-convenor of PPV (Perverting the Power Vertical: Politics and Aesthetics), UCL.*

4-4.30pm - Closing Q&A/Roundtable Discussion.

4.30-6pm - Drinks Reception.

This workshop has been organised by Dr Stefana Djokic as part of her SGSAH post-doctoral research fellowship award.