

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS
for a series of
three one-week seminars on periodization in the history of art
to take place at the **New Europe College-Institute for Advanced Study in Bucharest**

A program supported by the Getty Foundation
as part of its *Connecting Art Histories* initiative

We propose a series of three seminars of one-week duration each on **periodization** and related issues in the history of art, whose addressees are to be **early-career art historians from East-Central Europe**, and which would include a number of invited guest speakers, from this region, and outside it. Though a sense that the conventional periodizations are in need of revision can be detected earlier, a more pointed reflection on this topic can be noticed after the demise of communism and the dismantling of the colonial system. In the aftermath of the 1989 events in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, a number of scholars felt the pressing need to reconsider the place of local art histories within the established narratives, and to reflect on how these local histories might fit within the Western canon, or to question its authority. Art historians dealing with modern and contemporary art were particularly sensitive to such questions, but this gradually became a more general concern, affecting the writing of histories of art of earlier periods. Frictions between the generally accepted periodizations and local trajectories in art became more apparent, making it necessary to reflect on approaches that could address such concerns, and on the instruments art historians may put to use in order to tackle particular case studies. It thus seems to us that periodization, with the many issues related to it, is a topic likely to elicit interest from colleagues and younger scholars from countries in the region, and to lead to fruitful exchanges not just across the discipline, but across national borders, and – through the presence of the invited speakers – across regional ones. While we don't expect the invited speakers to concentrate on topics of exclusively regional interest, we feel that sensitivity towards questions concerning periodization in local contexts may prove productive when bringing together younger scholars from this region and inviting them to reflect on periodization with their own scholarly concerns in mind. Taking into account these concerns seems to us of crucial importance: “anachronism” proved to be a very productive concept in rethinking the Renaissance, as Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood did, e.g., but it is not always obvious how one can expand its use; or how one could work with such concepts as “horizontal art history”, and how to best handle “entangled histories”, “transfers”, not to mention “canons” in specific art historical situations.

This series of seminars aims, on the one hand, to address questions that are (or so we deem) of interest to art historians in the countries of East-Central Europe in ways that would counter a piece-meal approach, mostly dictated by national borders, in favor of a more unified one, and would provide an opportunity to identify common concerns, and perhaps also case studies that could (or should) encourage cross-border collaboration. It hopes to contribute in this manner to a better communication between art historians in this region, which has been – and up to a point may be said to have remained, despite slight improvements – wanting. A broad framework for researching art historical narratives in the region on a comparative basis is still lacking. There is also limited cross-cultural knowledge at the level of curricula and teaching methodologies. In universities across the region Western Art is researched and taught mostly according to the established periodization and categories (the Middle Ages, Renaissance, Baroque, historical avant-gardes, contemporary art etc.). Should it, and could it be taught differently? There is less consensus regarding the same categories in Eastern and Central Europe, which is not a homogenous cultural entity. Can such a consensus be reached? In what ways would this prove productive?

Structure and content

The Program will consist of a series of three one-week seminars with the participation of up to 20 early career scholars from East-Central Europe, up to 4 keynote/guest speakers, the Coordinator and the Consultants. Each seminar will have three main components:

- Talks delivered by keynote/guest speakers, followed by discussions;
- Discussions taking as a starting point key texts relevant for the topics approached in the seminars;
- Presentations of works in progress/case studies by the addressees of the Program, that is, early career scholars from East-Central Europe, and discussions on them with colleagues, guest speakers, coordinator and consultants.

Talks by keynote/guest speakers may be supplemented by (and in some cases substituted with) panel discussions, with the participation of Western scholars and scholars from East-Central Europe.

Key texts will be suggested by the Coordinator and Consultants, with input from the invited guests, as well as from the addressees. They will be circulated in advance among them.

During each of the seminars we would expect about a third among the participants to present their work in progress on a case study, which would make for six-seven papers in all. Scholars presenting papers will be identified in advance (and their agreement to do so secured), and papers will be – whenever possible – circulated before the seminar among the participants, so as to make possible a productive, in-depth discussion.

These activities will alternate during the working days of the seminars, which will make for an overall duration of slightly more than a week.

Dates:

- First seminar: **mid-May 2019**;
- Second seminar: **first half of November 2019**;
- Third seminar: **last week of May 2020**

Location

The seminars will be hosted by New Europe College-Institute for Advanced Study in Bucharest. It has the necessary infrastructure and staff for such an undertaking, and while NEC hasn't been in the habit of organizing events of exactly this kind, it did organize over the years a large number of international and regional workshops, symposia, conferences etc. of variable duration. It also hosted over the years several Fellowship programs supported by the Getty Foundation.

Guest speakers

Zdenka BADOVINAC, curator and writer, since 1993 Director of the Museum of Modern Art in Ljubljana;

Mieke BAL, Professor of Theory of Literature and founding Director of the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA), University of Amsterdam;

Patrick FLORES, Professor of Art Studies at the Department of Art Studies at the University of the Philippines, Curator of the Vargas Museum in Manila, and Adjunct Curator at the National Art Gallery, Singapore;

Andrea GIUNTA, Professor of Art History at the Universidad de Buenos Aires and former Chair in Latin American Art History and Criticism at UT Austin;

Krista KODRES, Professor at the Institute of Art History and Visual Culture of the Estonian Academy of Arts, Tallinn, and Head of the Doctoral Curriculum in Art History;

Saloni MATHUR, Professor, Modern and Contemporary South Asian Art, Department of Art History, UCLA;

Matthew RAMPLEY, Professor, Department of Art History, Curating and Visual Studies, Chair of Art History, University of Birmingham;

Miodrag ŠUVAKOVIĆ, Professor of Theory of Art and Theory of Culture at the Transdisciplinary Master and Doctoral Studies at the Faculty of Media and Communication, University of Arts in Belgrade;

Christopher WOOD, Professor and Chair, Department of German, New York University (Affiliated Faculty, Department of Comparative Literature and Institute of Fine Arts).

Consultants

Edit ANDRÁS, PhD, Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Art History, Centre for the Humanities of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, Hungary;

Ruxandra DEMETRESCU, PhD, Professor of History and Theory of Art, Head of the Doctoral School, National University of Arts, Bucharest, Romania;

Emil Cristian NAE, PhD, Associate Professor in the Department of Art History and Theory, Faculty of Visual Arts, “George Enescu” National University of Arts, Iași, Romania;

Bojana PEJIĆ, PhD, curator, independent art historian and lecturer based in Berlin;

Mara RAȚIU, PhD, Associate Professor within the Theory Department at the University of Art and Design in Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

Consultants will act during the seminars, alongside the Coordinator, as “tutors” or “mentors” to the participants, e.g. during the discussions we propose on a number of key texts, and during the presentations of the participants. We also count on them to act as guest speakers or as “respondents” to the interventions of other invited speakers, especially of Western colleagues.

Coordinator of the Program

Anca OROVEANU, PhD, Academic Coordinator of the New Europe College-Institute for Advanced Study, Bucharest, Professor of History and Theory of Art at the National University of Arts in Bucharest.

ELIGIBILITY

The program targets early-career art historians from Central and Eastern European countries. They should hold a PhD or be in a demonstrably advanced stage of work on the thesis and be citizens of one of the former socialist states in East-Central Europe or of the post-Soviet republics. **Once selected, the applicants are expected to take part in the whole series of seminars.**

Travel, accommodation and meals will be arranged and covered by the organizing institution.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications will be submitted in electronic format only, to the address: applications@nec.ro

Candidates are asked to enter in the Subject field of their e-mail message “Periodization seminar series”.

There is no application form for this program. The applications will include, besides their **CV, publications list** and **two letters of reference** from scholars acquainted with their activity and written specifically for this series of seminars, **a letter of intent**, explaining as fully as possible the reasons of their interest to take part in this series; applicants would be asked to include, in addition, **the sketch of a project (or a more elaborate form of it) addressing a case study or a question/questions pertinent to the themes of the seminar series**, that might be presented and

discussed during the seminars. These elements will all constitute criteria of selection. Special weight will be accorded to their engagement (as shown by their previous and current interests) in the questions we propose to raise during this series of seminars.

The deadline for the submission of applications is November 30.

The results of the selection process will be communicated by February 15

Once the team of participants is decided, you will receive additional information on the first seminar, including reading suggestions.

Should you need during the application process additional clarifications/information, please address them to Ana-Maria Sîrghi (asirghi@nec.ro)