

The Rise of the 'Technocelebrity'. Le Corbusier and W. Gropius

Ref. BAP-2022-7

The research groups Modernity and Society (MoSa), History, Theory and Criticism of Architecture (HTCA) (both KU Leuven) and the research centre for Architectural History, Theory and Criticism (hortence) of the Faculty of Architecture La Cambre-Horta (ULB) are looking for a candidate for a fully funded 4 year PhD position in the framework of the project: 'The Rise of the 'Technocelebrity'. The Politics of Social Expertise in the Public Careers of Le Corbusier and Walter Gropius'. The project brings together expertise from modern history, history of architecture and media history in order to explore the relation of experts and celebrity in the 20th century through the cases of two exemplary architects.

The successful candidate will be based at MoSa and the department of history of KU Leuven. KU Leuven is consistently ranked among the top research universities in Europe. It is located in the center of the historic town of Leuven. About 30 km from Brussels and two hours away from Paris, London and Amsterdam, it has a strong international appeal. It also has a rich history and a unique friendly atmosphere, with a great range of museums, concert halls and other cultural hot spots. For more information, visit <http://www.kuleuven.be/english/>.

<https://www.arts.kuleuven.be/mosa/english/index>

Project

The successful candidate will research modernist architects Le Corbusier and Walter Gropius as 'Technocelebrities' (TC). The project assumes that Le Corbusier and Gropius as TCs turned into social and political key figures through bundling strands of discourse that had previously not been connected and that the media and the public played an active role in shaping these TCs in a phase of accelerated technological and social change between the 1920s and 1960s. The project will question how democratic the phenomenon of TC was, how to position the phenomenon in the 'age of extremes' and the Cold War specifically and how it was gendered. It will do so by data mining different (mass) media but also through intense archival research on both architects and their networks.

The successful candidate will be supervised by prof. Martin Kohlrausch (supervisor, MoSa, KU Leuven) and by prof. Hilde Heynen (co-supervisor, HTCA, KU Leuven) and dr. Veronique Boone (co-supervisor, hortence, ULB) and is expected to carry out the following tasks:

- Write a thesis in the domain of 20th century history including media history and history of architecture
- Realize archival research and data mining of digitized media
- Participate in research workshops and academic conferences
- Prepare academic publications among which at least one peer-reviewed journal article
- Contribute to an exhibition and digitization/screening of film material
- Participate in the activities of MoSa

Profile

- Excellent command of English, good passive knowledge of French and ideally also German. Willingness to, if need be, improve both languages to good passive knowledge within first year of PhD required
- Master's degree in History, Architecture or a related discipline with excellent results and demonstrated research capacity
- Ability to independently pursue research
- Strong interest and preferably research experience in 20th century history, history of media and/or architectural history
- Good digital literacy and ideally already experience with data mining techniques such as topic modeling

Offer

- We offer a fully funded, full-time PhD position in a 4-year research project (initial 1-year position with 3-year extension upon satisfactory performance). Salary and benefits are in accordance with the university salary scales for PhD students and highly competitive by international standards.
- You will carry out your PhD as part of an international research project in a stimulating intellectual environment.
- You will complete the doctoral training program in History at the KU Leuven Faculty of Arts
- You will benefit from guidance and research training from experts in the field, a work space and resources to attend and present at conferences.

Interested?

Candidates should submit the following documents: Motivation letter / Curriculum vitae (in English or Dutch), list of publications (if available) and the names and e-mail addresses of two referees

For more information please contact Prof. dr. Martin Kohlrausch, tel.: +32 16 32 49 76, mail: martin.kohlrausch@kuleuven.be.

You can apply for this job no later than February 28, 2022 via the online application tool :

<http://www.kuleuven.be/eapplyingforjobs/light/60085525>

KU Leuven seeks to foster an environment where all talents can flourish, regardless of gender, age, cultural background, nationality or impairments. If you have any questions relating to accessibility or support, please contact us at diversiteit.HR@kuleuven.be.