

OPEN CALL FOR PAPERS

3rd Conference of Baltic Art Historians

REPRESENTING ART HISTORY IN THE BALTIC COUNTRIES: EXPERIENCES AND PROSPECTS

Art History Department of the Art Academy of Latvia
and the Latvian National Museum of Art
Riga, 6–8 October 2016

The Art History Department of the Art Academy of Latvia in collaboration with the Institute of Art History of the same institution and the Latvian National Museum of Art restarts the series of conferences of Baltic art historians, initiated by two meetings of the previous years – *The Geographies of Art History in the Baltic Region* in 2009, hosted by the Estonian Academy of Art together with the Estonian Association of Art Historians in Tallinn, and *(Un)blocked Memory: Writing Art History in Baltic Countries* in 2011, co-organized by the Vytautas Magnus University and the Vilnius Academy of Arts in Kaunas.

The agenda of art historians in the three countries during the five years since the last of these events has seen certain changes. New volumes of national art histories are published and being prepared, new opportunities of the digital era are tested to learn the benefits and shortcomings of virtual reconstructions and internet-based resources. New museum spaces for art are being created in theory and practice. Already these and many other steps made give ground for critical self-reflection and discussion, going back from the present developments and future prospects to the lessons of the past and vice versa. Much more important transformations, however, have taken place during twenty-five years since the re-establishment of Baltic independence. In 2001, after the first decade of this span of time, Latvian art historian Eduards Kļaviņš wrote that our art history “is still climbing out of the ruins of the previous methodological barracks, trying both to preserve something of the old and at the same time to find better materials and technologies for more solid buildings”. What and how has been built ever since on this post-socialist construction site? Or perhaps the site with its ruins has been also used as a shipyard for building vessels able to navigate in unexplored waters? If so where have these journeys lead and how have they changed the pre-existing maps of art history? How do the active fleets function and how and the ‘maritime museums’ or ‘cemeteries of ships’ look like?

Swedish art historian Dan Karlholm, in his book *Art of Illusion: The Representation of Art History in Nineteenth-Century Germany and Beyond* (Bern etc.: Peter Lang, 2004; 2nd ed. 2006), extended “the concept of historiography to include not just textual or institutional endeavours, but a host of different images as well”, dealing with “practices of representing art history in various media”. The organizers hope that the perspective of this extended critical historiography can provide a broader look at art history as a practice and product, a process and its result at the same time.

Suggested topics and their combinations include (but are not limited to):

- Construction site on the ruins or a shipyard?: Art history as a discipline during twenty-five years of Baltic independence
- The changing discourse and idiomatic varieties: Baltic art history(-ies) since the inception of the discipline

- Mapping space and time: Areas and segments of the regional art histories, their state of research and representation
- Parallel efforts towards an integrated art history: Established elements, ‘new’ components and remaining boundaries
- Written, published, illustrated, collected, exhibited, musealised, digitalised: The media-based aspect of art history throughout times
- Identity, visibility and interaction: Baltic art history(-ies) in the interdisciplinary and international cultural context

Both general surveys and case studies focused on contemporary or historical issues are welcome. Contributions are expected from Baltic and foreign scholars including graduate / PhD students researching the visual arts, architecture, design and related areas.

Working language of the conference is English. Presentations should be 20 minutes long. Abstracts (max. 2500 characters incl. spaces / 400 words) with a short CV should be sent to **Kristiāna Ābele** (kristiana_abele@hotmail.com) by **15 May 2016**. Accepted papers will be notified by 1 June 2016.

Participation in the conference is free of charge. Organizers will provide participants with accommodation in Riga. Selected papers will be published in a peer-reviewed journal.

All recipients and readers of this CFP are invited to share it to all possibly interested colleagues both in the Baltic States and abroad.

Academic board

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Convenors

Silvija Grosa (project director), Kristiāna Ābele and Ginta Gerharde-Upeniece

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