

OPEN PANELS and PEER SEMINARS

OPEN PANELS

1. Modernisms and avant-gardes: cross-disciplinary comparisons (an open panel)

In the rapidly-expanding field of avant-garde and modernism studies, two intersecting avenues of research in particular are emerging which are, arguably, of fundamental importance for our understanding of this field, but which do not appear to have received the attention that is their due. These are the study of the relation between the concepts, and the histories, of modernism across the range of cultural practices, and the study of the relationship between the avant-garde groupings of artists in different media within the cultural avant-gardes.

While there are major studies that have been published on the relation between literature and visual art, for the most part these either do not primarily address the modern period; if they do, they focus on the relations of cultural power, rather than on any broader relation between them. There is therefore a pressing need for studies, on the one hand, of the relations between the problematics, of modernisms across the range of cultural practices (both in Europe, and elsewhere); and on the other, of the relations between the avant-gardes of different cultural media within any given 'node' of the avant-garde network. The panel proposed here would limit itself, for reasons of practicality and clarity of focus, to consideration of such relations between literary and visual art modernisms and avant-garde groupings, across and within the nodes of the networks of the avant-gardes. As regards the relations between modernisms, it proposes to consider such questions as the following:

- What can we learn from a comparison of modernist visual and literary poetics as different modes of representation, expression and communication?
- What are the expressive potential and limits of both media, and what are the parallels and differences between the solutions which they offer, vis-a-vis novel and changing aesthetics, ideologies, historical conjunctures and worldviews?
- How might we compare the responses of poetry and the visual arts to the shifts in representational and epistemological paradigms triggered by that profound cultural change which modernist culture articulated in the century from c1850?

As regards the relations between avant-garde groupings, it would offer avenues of enquiry such as the following:

- How, if at all, might the modernism of writers and painters in a given conjuncture be compared, in terms of their aesthetic, philosophical and cultural concerns, their professional interests and their relation to emerging avant-gardes?
- What was the respective cultural weight and authority of literary and fine art experimentalism within the avant-garde formation of a given city within the period? What are the theoretical and methodological issues that such comparisons raise?
- How might the relation between modernisms, and/or the configuration of such cultural hierarchies within avant-gardes, be related—if at all—to the broader historical conjuncture of these formations?

Proposals are invited for papers on these and/or related questions.

Chair: Dr. David Cottington , Professor of Art History at Kingston University London, UK (d.cottington@kingston.ac.uk) .

2. Marcel Proust's Erotic Utopia (an open panel)

Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu* has been read as a war novel, as a chronicle of the belle-époque on the wake of its disappearance, and as an arrière-garde project. It can also be read as a manifesto for an erotic utopia, for a world in which erotic and aesthetic pleasures go hand-in-hand, and for a society in which gender and sexual identities are never fixed but always malleable. In *Time Regained*, World War I and sadomasochistic practices make an appearance, inviting readers to draw a parallel between erotic warfare and military sadism. This panel invites submissions analyzing the dimensions and characteristics of Marcel Proust's erotic utopia, as charted in his novel. The panel is also open to papers on Proustian erotic dystopias, since utopia is always the flipside of dystopia.

Chair: Dr. Rubén Gallo, Professor and Director, Program in Latin American Studies, Princeton University, USA.

3. Utopia and Dystopia in the French Landscapes and Cityscapes of the 1930s (an open panel)

A troubled period of French history, the 1930s were marked by a pessimism regarding the feasibility of the Third Republic as well as a sense of aesthetic crisis. In painting, this period saw a turn to the imagined or fictionalized landscape or cityscape. In contrast to the observational experiments and simplifications which had marked the work of Cezanne, the landscapes of the 1930s operate in an allegorical language, functioning as the site of a psychological projection in which two parallel tendencies can be detected, each with their relationship to the past clearly stated. The first is Utopic, oriented somewhat desperately towards the idyllic, class-free canvases of Puvis de Chavannes and Poussin, while the second is dystopic, presenting a ruined, empty or apocalyptic terrain onto which the pessimistic narratives about the present or future are projected. Welcoming papers on all artistic tendencies, this panel seeks to relate these features to political sympathies and the cultural politics of this period, with special attention to the way in which these paintings articulate anxieties or fantasies regarding class-relations, industrialization, or national and imperialistic identity.

Chair: Emilie Anne-Yvonne Luse, Duke University, USA.

4. States and disruptions of dream by avant-garde women poets (an open panel)

The Sitwells exploited simultaneously a nostalgia for the social thrill of pre-war modernist radicalism, and the refusal of the meanings of that stance which was current in the twenties. The bulk of their achievement after the immediate post-war years lies in the evocation of a pre-modern dream world, an imaginary alternative to modernity. (David Peters Corbett, *The Modernity of English Art 1914–30* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997, p. 160)

Led by Edith Sitwell, the 'Eiffel Tower Group' (Sitwell, Nancy Cunard, Iris Tree), established the radical anthologies *Wheels* (1915-21) intended to rekindle the waning pre-war zeal for cultural innovation. Sensationally labeled 'The Asylum School of Poetry', they opposed the postwar dullness propagated by the parallel anthologies of Georgian verse. Daughters of aristocrats, they

fuelled their reaction against and dislocation from their privileged backgrounds into avant-garde experiments with verbal texture, influenced by European art, music and ballet. In the 1920s, Sitwell spent time in Paris, forming an important alliance with Gertrude Stein in 1924, and moved there in 1932. Her lifetime liaison with Russian-born surrealist painter Pavel Tchelitchew also developed her groundbreaking, often disturbing, evocations of individual and collective anxieties and desires. More dystopian than utopian, her lengthy poems, such as *Façade* (1922), *Sleeping Beauty* (1924) and *Gold Cost Customs* (1929), interweave dream state with myth to mediate anti-traditionalist fervour:

One of the principal aims of the new poets is to increase consciousness, and, to do this, we must use all the powers that nature and intelligence and insight and dream and fact have given us. ... The modernist artist wishes us to see things for ourselves—not merely to believe the trees are green because we have been told so. (Edith Sitwell, 'Modern Poetry', *Time and Tide*, 30 March 1928: 308–9).

The panel would include other British poets, whose defamiliarising symbols and syntax were contiguous with their anti-feminine anti-conventionalism, such as Hope Mirrlees and Mina Loy, along with poets from other European countries.

Chair: Dr. Jane Dowson, Reader in Twentieth-Century Literature, De Montfort University, UK (jdowson@dmu.ac.uk).

5. The Futurist Utopia in North-European Countries (an open panel)

In the 1910s, the Futurist movement developed along two main strands in Italy and Russia. The former, led by F.T. Marinetti, was conceived from the onset as a radical, international movement that would change the future of art and literature and the fabric of human society. Russian Futurism had a less proselytizing spirit, but still made considerable impact in surrounding countries, as well as further afield. Both forms of Futurism had a lasting effect on the processes of renewal in European culture. Apart from the concrete changes they initiated in the ways poems or paintings were created, they also had a fundamental and long-lasting influence on the Utopian spirit of all subsequent avant-garde movements.

In the past decades, a large number of studies have examined the influence of Futurism in the Slavic and Hispanic world, in German-speaking countries and also outside Europe. However, little progress has been made with regard to Futurist traces in the arts and literatures of Northern countries, ranging from Iceland in the West via Scandinavia to Estonia in the East. At previous EAM conferences, a variety of papers have investigated the work of modernist and avant-garde artists from Northern countries, but very few of them have given Futurism more than a cursory glance. This panel with a focus on seven Northern countries is intended to change that situation.

Chair: Günter Berghaus (Dr. phil. habil.), Senior Research Fellow, University of Bristol, UK; General editor *Bibliographic Handbook of Futurism*, *International Yearbook of Futurism Studies*, *Handbook of International Futurism* (G.Berghaus@bristol.ac.uk).

6. Dystopian Visions in the Avant-garde and Modernist Short Story (an open panel)

If we view Modernism and Avant-gardism as artistic languages of rupture, then the renaissance of the short story form in the early twentieth-century often reflected this rupture and was utilized to considerable effect by certain authors. Incorporating literary experimentation, the genre's

potential for fragmentation, disturbance and complexity mirrors the dystopian worldview of the period in question. Sometimes reflecting a Bakhtinian notion of conflicting narrative voices, together with a Freudian concept of the uncanny, the short story would emerge as a radical avant-garde and modernist vehicle, questioning traditional forms, the importance of the narrator, and the overall relationship of the author to the reader. Wyndham Lewis, for example, in his own short stories, exemplified the Vorticist stances of detachment and dynamic form. Other writers whose stories reveal this experimental mode include James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Franz Kafka, Katherine Mansfield, Ernest Hemingway, Dorothy Richardson and May Sinclair.

Chair: Dr. Gerri Kimber, Senior Lecturer in English, University of Northampton, UK (gerri.kimber@northampton.ac.uk).

7. Primitivist Utopias from Tzara to Polke (an open panel)

For over a century the primitive has been at the heart of modernist culture uncannily illuminating and reinventing its critical resources as well as being the source of its unease, if not repulsion. Primitivism was a magnet of attraction as well as of critical refusal. It resided on the knife-edge of envy and denunciation, as well as for the projection of alternate imaginative utopias and the worst forms of racial chauvinism. Many artists have been drawn to primitivism as a provocation precisely because of its potential to disturb. But what is the spectre of the primitive a provocation for? Why would anyone freely identify with a label that carried such negative connotations since its inception? What is the fate of primitivism after Eurocentrism? Our speculations, shaped by the long histories of cultural exchange and projection in Australasia, seek to outline various provocations prompted by the appeal to primitivism through modernism.

Chairs: Dr. Andrew McNamara, Head of Visual Arts, QUT, Brisbane, Australia (a.mcnamara@qut.edu.au) & Dr. Ann Stephen, Senior Curator, University Art Gallery, University of Sydney, Australia (ann.stephen@sydney.edu.au).

8. Salvaging Modernism? The utopian aspiration and concrete realities of international modernist architecture (an open panel)

Avant-garde artists disrupted bourgeois culture's forms and institutions as a means to interrupt bourgeois society. International modernist architects sought, perhaps from related motives, to build a new society. If art's disruptive activities *alluded* to a radical rejection of bourgeois values, modernist architects sought radical social change by designing the buildings and planning the cities to *concretely* house it. Artists and architects were equally haunted by the slaughter of the 1914-18 war, as architects and planners responded to fear of future conflict after the bombing of cities in 1939-45 by espousing a revived humanism; but if reaction to fear was one polarity informing modernism, hope for a genuinely better world was another. In the East and West blocs, from housing to iconic buildings and city planning, how did international modernism succeed or fail to realise its dreams? Were the means used appropriate to the aims? Can the utopianism of modernist architecture and planning be salvaged from the rubble of demolished tower-blocks and the collapse of state-socialism?

Chair: Dr. Malcolm Miles, Professor of Cultural Theory, School of Architecture, Design & Environment, University of Plymouth, UK.

9. Utopias of Abstract Art (an open panel)

The early pioneers of abstract art, Wassily Kandinsky, František Kupka, Kazimir Malevich, and Piet Mondrian, shared the belief that art should not serve the reproduction of visible reality but be an expression of the absolute. Fascinated by esoteric ideas, occultism, and theosophy, they viewed art, and, in particular, the abstract approach, as a medium to advance human creative evolution and lead the way into a new age of spiritual renewal. The interwar period saw a secularization of the spiritual concerns of early abstraction; artists turned to science and technology and the ideals of modern industrial production. This panel will examine the utopian ideals that were closely intertwined with the production of abstract art, whose proponents derived their inspiration from metaphysics, the natural sciences, and modern technology and equated spiritual and technological advancement with social progress. The focus will not be so much on Constructivism but rather the ideas and theories, including anarchism, evolution, and *Lebensreform*, which shaped the artists' worldviews and their artistic production.

Chair: Dr. Isabel Wünsche, Professor of Art and Art History, Director of Humanities Research Center, Jacobs University, Germany.

10. The Future, thrown behind us and shattered: Modernism's Historiographies and Conservative Utopias (an open panel)

This panel examines how modernism's historiography conflicts with modernity's notions of temporality. Modernity orders historical events into a linear, progressive sequence, forming a narrative that pinpoints the present, and therefore the future, as the ever-rising summit of human achievement. This prioritising of present over past helps produce the concept of utopia. Modernism's historiography is often antithetical to this notion. Texts like Pound's *Cantos*, *the Wasteland*, and David Jones's *In Parenthesis* shatter rational sequence through anachronism. The idea of history as a fragmented field, unintelligible in totality, is carried over into modernist thought in Benjamin's 'Theses on the Philosophy of History', where the past becomes understandable only in a redemptive eschaton that has more in common with St. Augustine's historiography in *City of God* than the historical positivism of technical-industrial modernity. This panel asks whether modernism's radical historiography thus facilitates the imagination of antediluvian social models rather than the progressive utopias imagined by modernity?

Chairs: Dr. Christopher Townsend, Professor of the history of avant-garde film, Director of Post Graduate Research, Dept. of Media Arts, Royal Holloway, University of London, UK and Sarah Fill, Royal Holloway, University of London, UK.

11. All women art spaces as heterotopias (an open panel)

One of the important elements of the women's art movement emerging in the 1970s was the creation of all women art spaces. They existed for a longer period of time or just during one exhibition or even one performance. They were to offer an alternative to the unfriendly reality of male-dominated art world and aimed at creating an environment where women artists could address the experiences of women. The most famous of them - *Womanhouse* (Los Angeles 1972) - has already been thoroughly analysed. This panel seeks to explore much lesser known women art spaces functioning in different European countries. Its focus will be on the 1970s but proposals that deal with initiatives that were undertaken later are also invited. Papers are expected to

analyse ideas, forms of their implementation and effects of these diverse heterotopias. The panel chair's proposal to characterise all women art spaces as heterotopias is to be discussed.

Chair: Agata Jakubowska (Hab. Ph. D.), Associate Professor at Department of Art History, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poland (jagata@amu.edu.pl).

12. Modernism and Ritual (an open panel)

In 1913, the pagan sacrifice in Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* portrayed the power of the ritual to dominate the behaviour of a community. Against a backdrop of archaic customs, the revolutionary and complex composition highlights the enduring potency of the ritual, whose manifestation endures as a formative agent in society.

The 'ritual' assists in the affirmation of a collective identity. It both symbolises and actualises collective ideals by providing a means of engagement; traditions are renegotiated, reflecting ideological shifts. As European modernism heralded a new era of cultural practice that rejected tradition and restructured the world according to utopian ideals, what role did rituals play in creating new, imagined histories, and uniting disparate communities through a shared experience?

This open panel proposes an examination of how modernist ideals shaped, and were shaped by the ritual. Taking an interdisciplinary approach, we would like to solicit papers from a range of historical and theoretical perspectives that consider the breadth of roles the ritual played in transforming modernist cultural practice.

Chairs: Essi Viitanen, UCL, UK (essiviitanen@gmail.com), and Alex Trott, Royal Holloway, University of London, UK (alexandra.trott@gmail.com).

13. Technotopia (an open panel)

Ever since Marx's *Capital*, cultural critics, philosophers, authors and artists have thought about the relation between man and machine. Heidegger and Benjamin questioned the relation between art, technology and society, as did the Italian Futurists, British Vorticists, and Russian constructivists. This panel invites papers that deal with technology in modernist and avant-gardist literature and art: how does technology change us as individuals and/or as society? How does it affect the way we look at the past and view the future, and/or the way in which we experience literature, art and culture? The panel welcomes both methodologically inspired papers that deal with current critical thinking on the 'posthuman(ist)', and specific case studies that explore the relation between man and technology in early-twentieth-century literature and art. For more information, please contact the chair.

Chair: Dr. Birgit Van Puymbroeck, Yale University, USA (birgit.vanpuymbroeck@ugent.be).

14. Italian Modernism and its Poetic Voices: Myths, Dystopias and Cityscapes (an open panel)

Research in the field of Italian Modernism has been recently opened by a series of publications both in the ambit of Anglo-American academia by Luca Somigli and Mario Moroni, as well as within the more recent discussions in the Italian Academia lead mainly by well eminent scholars such as Romano Luperini, Raffaele Donnarumma and Massimiliano Tortora. There still exists a gap

in the agreement of what exactly is Italian Modernism and which voices can be included in this area of transformations both for the human subjectivity and for their artistic expression. Often Italian Modernism is still connected to the development of the novel and prose writing. More recently Prof. Luperini has included poetic voices, such as that of Eugenio Montale and his poetic production influenced by many European preceding contemporary voices, *in primis* the influence of T.S.Eliot. It is this the moment when the discussion of Italian Modernism is starting to heat up and

This panel proposes to discuss further the ambit of Italian Modernism vis a vis the other poetic voices of the time both Italian and European in the hope that research in the Italian Modernist field may grow and gain more affinity to contemporary studies in European Modernism.

Chair: Dr. Rossella M. Riccobono, Lecturer in Italian, University of St Andrews, UK.

15. Kandinsky's Great Utopia: the Synthesis of Arts (an open panel)

The founders of the Blaue Reiter publication Wassily Kandinsky and Franz Marc held the idea that the synthesis, where the means of different arts were brought together, could renew and transform the culture. Kandinsky called this his Great Utopia. The synthesis of art can be considered in many ways. *Historically* it can be related to the old German idea of total work of art. In the Blaue Reiter community it entered a new stage towards its realization. The synthesis of arts also suggests the *political utopia* of internationalism. According to Kandinsky there was no reason to develop or study the methods of art of one nation only, but with their synthesis avant-garde could transcend the limits of national art. The synthesis of arts has also a great *theoretical* interest. Kandinsky developed it in his 1926 book from *Point and Line to Plane*, where he intended to raise the methods of arts to scientific level.

You can propose a paper from the field of *history avant-garde art* considering the Blaue Reiter artists, Kandinsky's activities during and after the Russian Revolution, and/or his activities in Bauhaus. Papers from the field of *theory of art/aesthetics* considering the problems of synthesis of art in Kandinsky's books and articles are also welcome.

Chair: Dr. Irmeli Hautamäki, Adjunct professor of Aesthetics, University of Helsinki, Finland (Irmeli.Hautamaki@kolumbus.fi).

16. Ornament as a Gesture of Utopia (an open panel)

The concept of ornament is laden with a great deal of aesthetic meanings and political aims from democracy to totalitarianism. Ornament is a gesture of utopia. In the late 19th century, John Ruskin and William Morris called for a rejection of the mechanical and unauthentic ornamentality of revived styles, which was regarded as decay. They proposed instead an honest ideal of ornament based on nature that would also express a new social ethic. The aim was to make handcrafted beauty available to everyone. Henry van de Velde propagated and developed the ideas of his British examples in Continental Europe, but unlike Ruskin and Morris he believed in mechanized production. Van de Velde supported a socialist and industrial ideal and wanted to free ornament from the restrictions of naturalism.

Adolf Loos of Austria, on the other hand, questioned the whole meaning of ornament as an anachronism. After Loos, modernism was restrained with regard to ornament – albeit with many exceptions. In the 1920s and 1930s, classicism and Art Deco restored ornament to the core of

design, while the International Style condemned it as decline. The International Style, however, created its own structural ideal of ornament. Le Corbusier's design programme with its support of dynamic capitalism had no role for traditional ornament.

Totalitarian states such as Germany and the Soviet Union made ornament a means of their ideology. The classical language of ornament served the message of both Soviet Man and the Third Reich.

Postmodernism discovered in ornament and its deconstruction the means to question the dogmas of modernism and totalitarianism.

I propose that, as chairman, I will assemble an open panel to discuss the political agendas of utopias with the concept of ornament as a starting point.

Chair: Dr. Kimmo Sarje, Adjunct Professor of Aesthetics at the University of Helsinki, Finland (kimmo.sarje@kuva.fi).

17. The Relevance of the Utopia Concept in the Russian Avant-Garde / La pertinence du concept d'Utopie dans l'avant-garde russe (an open panel)

The emphasis on the "utopian" feature as the basis of the Russian avant-garde, which inherits to social utopias of the past, is very common. It is no coincidence that during perestroika, when history in general and particularly history of art of the 1910–1920's has been reconsidered, the idea of the "utopianism" was largely determined by the failure of building fair society. Accordingly, this social failure was interrelated with the avant-garde tendencies in arts, treated now as utopian. The Great Utopia exhibition (1992) – one of the major events in this context – marked this attitude. Once coined by Vasily Kandinsky, the designation "Great Utopia" does not seem now however to represent the basic intentions of the Russian avant-garde in depth. Does the concept of "utopia" reduce Russian avant-garde experience to a social dreaminess or some abstract and unsuccessful formation of a new human and society? At the same time one should differentiate between ideology of transforming a human by labor (i.e. building Belomor channel), on the one hand, and the idea of creating new forms of life of a "radiant mankind" (Tsiolkovsky) or "suprematist nature" (Malevich), on the other. It is no coincidence that the "utopian" feature is ascribed to avant-garde exactly when history is reconsidered under postmodern spell. Pastiche attitude of this concept limits the analysis of constructive and creative potentials of the artistic avant-garde. Thus vigor and radicalness for which avant-garde was so remarkable, is dematerialized to the point, when it is possible to identify avant-garde with conceptual art and its offshoots, making both terms equally confusing. Does the "utopian" approach still lead to better understanding of the constructive and vital energies of the Russian avant-garde or shall we reconsider it?

Il est souvent d'usage de mettre en relief le contexte "utopique" ayant présidé à la formation des avant garde russes, suivant en cela la tradition des utopies sociales. Pendant la Péréstroïka, au moment où l'on cherche à repenser l'histoire et l'histoire artistique des années 1910- 1920, c'est "L'Utopisme" que l'on choisit de retenir, on attribue alors l'échec de l'idée de la construction d'une société socialement plus juste à l'esprit des avant-gardes russes. L'exposition "La Grande Utopie" (1992) devient un évènement culturel majeur, marquant ainsi la « ré-émergence » des avant-gardes. Aujourd'hui, ce terme de "Grande Utopie" ne paraît pas refléter les dispositifs fondamentaux et vitaux de l'avant-garde russe. Comment la notion d'utopie a-t-elle réduit l'expérience de l'avant-garde russe, à une expérience de rêverie sociale ou de faillite dans la

construction de l'homme nouveau ? En même temps, ne faudrait-il pas prendre en compte cette frontière qui sépare d'un côté l'idéologie de la transformation de l'homme par le travail, comme dans le cas de la construction du Bélomorkanal et de l'autre, l'idée de la création de formes de vie nouvelles - l'"Humanité rayonnante" chez Tsiolkovsky - ou de la nature repensée d'après le modèle suprématiste chez Malévitch ? Ce n'est pas un hasard qu'à l'époque de repenser l'histoire, on attribue le concept d'utopie à l'avant-garde : ce concept se constitue à la base du pastiche et ne permet pas d'activer l'énergie constructive et vitale de l'avant-garde dans ses différentes formes d'expression. Une confusion terminologique se construit progressivement sur l'identification de l'art conceptuel et de ses successeurs aux avant-gardes, en dépit de la dématérialisation de leur ardeur (et du radicalisme). Mais cette idée d'utopie encore présente aujourd'hui permet-elle vraiment de saisir l'importance de l'énergie constructive et de création vitale de l'avant-garde russe ?

Chairs: Dr. Konstantin Dudakov-Kashuro, Associate Professor, Lomonosovsky Moscow State University, Russia (dudakovkashuro@gmail.com); Dr. Natalia Smolyanskaya, Associate Professor at Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow, Russia (smolianskaia@yandex.ru, nsmolianskaia@yahoo.fr).

18. Dada Lives: Writing the Self and Dada History (an open panel)

This open panel examines how autobiography and memoirs have contributed to – and stifled – the historiography of Dada. Louis Aragon, Hugo Ball, Raoul Hausmann, Richard Huelsenbeck, Marcel Janco, Man Ray, Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes, Hans Richter, and Tristan Tzara all penned memoirs (in different forms and with varying purposes) to buttress their views of Dada; they also contributed to the shaping of Dada history either by controlling access to personal collections of Dada material or by advising museums on Dada exhibitions. This panel is interested in charting the legacy of these autobiographical interventions onto Dada history: can a history of Dada be written without the subjective intervention of its lead participants? Is there a genre called the Dada memoir, and, if so, of what does it consist? What happens to key figures in Dada who did not stake out a subjective history of the movement?

Chair: Marius Hentea, Assistant Professor of Literary Studies, Ghent University, Belgium.

19. INSULT, DEBATE, DISPUTE: DADA AGAINST TOTALITY (an open panel)

It is commonplace to think of Dada as a movement which was at conflict with existing cultural and social structures. This session invites speakers to explore Dada as a movement which was at conflict with itself. We invite proposals which examine Dada as a site of argument, disagreement and discord, and therefore work against notions of the utopian modernist or avant-garde movement as something characterised by totalising vision or agreed set of goals. As well as papers exploring disputes, conflicts, spats and arguments among the Dadaists themselves (for instance Huelsenbeck's antipathy towards Schwitters, or Picabia's tirades against Breton), we welcome papers which deal with the representation or mobilisation of the insult within Dadaist production. The textual or artistic representation of disagreement, physical conflict, disunity and so on would therefore be other appropriate and welcome themes.

Chairs: Dr. David Hopkins, Professor of History of Art, University of Glasgow, UK (David.Hopkins@glasgow.ac.uk) and Dr. Debbie Lewer, Senior Lecturer in History of Art, University of Glasgow, UK (Deborah.Lewer@glasgow.ac.uk).

20. Phalansteries, groups, circles and guilds. Modernist aesthetics and the utopian lure of community (an open panel)

It is perhaps possible to argue that one of the differences between Avant-garde and Modernism concerns the ways in which Avant-garde aesthetics and practices developed within or into groups and movements, while Modernism, especially literary modernism, has long been investigated in the wake of the primary role played by individual voices and authorship. Group artistry, however, is central in the elaboration not only of the Avant-garde but also of modernist aesthetics and ethics throughout Europe and the United States. Together with the more renowned instances such as the Wiener Werkstätte, Bauhaus, the Omega workshops and the groupings which followed the outbreak and success of the Russian Revolution, a number of less known collective experiences (circles, little magazines, theatre companies, guilds) are crucial in the understanding of the aesthetics production and practices of both Avant-garde experiences and modernist ones, also from the point of view of their (very different) utopian goals. Whether institutionalised or informal, most of these groupings, which were housed both in urban and rural surroundings, involved artists, authors and thinkers working together in a collective attempt to reassess/reformulate the issues of art, creativity and craft in the light of communal practices and choices.

The panel aims at investigating the role played by the diverse communities disseminated throughout Europe and intends to focus on the following aspects although other suggestions are welcome:

1. It seems important to draw an accurate map of these experiences: some are well known and however still deserve full attention (Carpenter at Millthorpe, Omega, Charleston), others have hardly ever been approached critically (Eric Gill and the crafts at Ditchling; Ben Nicholson and Adrian Stokes at Carbis Bay, the Tolstoian communities in Essex, and, later, Roland Penrose at Farley Farm)

- In the US, the charting of these collective ventures would lead to the groupings around the little magazines *Others*, *The Masses*, *The Broom*, *The Rogue*, *The Freewoman*, *The Dial*, *The Blind Man* or to marginal places such as Provincetown and Taos.

- Other European countries offer a wealth of communal experiences which have played an important role in the articulation of Modernism: Monte Verità in Switzerland; Rudolph Steiner at Dornach in Switzerland; Mas Angirany and the Maurons in France; the meetings at the Abbaye de Pontigny; De fem in Sweden; Worpswede in Germany.

2. On the methodological and theoretical side of things, a closer knowledge of places and persons should trigger an exploration of the nexus group/artistic expression: what happens to the single artists' authorial voice when it is merged in a choir? How are the issues of signature, format, visibility, impact and acceptance dealt with in the various communal experiences?

3. In many cases, various forms of artistic expression coexist in the community: how does that affect the aesthetic discourses of the group. It is easy to imagine that such coexistence triggers forms of interaction between different media and techniques and therefore invites processes of accelerated cross-fertilization.

4. Little is known about the political status of some of these communities and of the ways in which they interact, if at all, with the social and cultural groups around them. Investigating the strategies

of inclusion and exclusion would undoubtedly be worthwhile: who and what validates belonging to the group?

We invite contributors:

- a. To fill in the white places of our initial map. What happened in Europe? The Northern countries, Italy? Eastern Europe? What about the organization of communities and how did it affect artistic production and visibility?
- b. To elaborate on the theoretical aspects of authorial identity, agency, originality, subversion.
- c. To interrogate the role played by the multiple discourses entailed by an artistic community: does collective living encourage forms of discursive hybridisation and artistic cross-fertilization?
- d. To explore and assess the cultural and political status of such communities: where are their boundaries, how do they behave in terms of inclusion/exclusion, what is their relationship with the dominant groups in which they are immersed?

Chairs: Dr. Caroline Patey, Professor of English literature, Università degli Studi, Milan, Italy, and Dr. Laura Scuriatti, Liberal Arts University in Berlin, Germany.

21. Interwar Utopia of Re-creation: Avant-garde Quest for new Art, Culture and Society (an open panel)

Panel is dedicated to various aspects of avant-garde theoretical and practical efforts to re-generate foundations of European culture and society. Individual and collective undertakings, being aimed at establishing new art, changing the social structure and forming new Man through (anti-) aesthetic, ideological and political action, comprised destructing traditional forms and institutions of bourgeois art and culture (Expressionistic spirituality, Dadaistic nonsensicality) and imposing new ones (Futuristic cult of machines and mechanics, Constructivistic applicability), aspiring after total work of art through individual synesthetic creation (Kandinsky, Schoenberg) or collective actions (movements, happenings) and spectacles ("Parade", "La creation du monde", "1002. Night"), activating additionally motives and techniques of archaic mythopoetic, folklore (Slavic and Scandinavian nations), primitivistic and exotic origins. This re-forming effort of avant-garde ended paradoxically in a dystopian form - in art of the Stalin era, Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, as well as in neoclassicistic, traditional and politically committed tendencies in other countries.

Chair: Dr. Bojan Jovic, Institute for Literature and Art, Belgrade, Serbia.

22. The Radical Now – Where/What/Who is avant-garde today, and how? (an open panel)

The call for this conference is written in the past tense. The EAM Network, like culture and academia more generally, continues the tendency to view the avant-garde as primarily a historical phenomenon – something that happened in the past, in a period "roughly between 1850 and

1950”, to quote the website. Attention given to a/the “neo”-avant-garde often simply reaffirms this passéist perspective by updating it, perhaps as far as the 1970’s, maybe all the way to ‘89. But a principle at work near the heart of the avant-garde adventure in many of its most famous cases is that only the now is historically relevant. Consequently, it can and should be argued, an avant-garde (a movement, an initiative, a project) can only ever be avant-garde now.

This panel invites contributions engaging the question: Where/What/Who is avant-garde now? and, always also, where do you stand in relation?

Chair: Dr. Alan Prohm, <http://alanprohm.wordpress.com/>

23. Jewish Messianism and Avant-Garde (an open panel)

Marc Chagall, El Lissitzky, Natan Altman, László Moholy-Nagy, Henryk Berlewi, Sonia Delaunay, Chaïm Soutine, Jacques Lipchitz - already only the most well-known names provide us with an impressive list of artists who profoundly characterized the Central and Eastern European Jewish contribution to the development of modern art at the beginning of the 20th century.

This panel focuses on a seemingly simple question: is there an affinity between the emergence of "Messianic" modern art and various Avant-Garde movements such as Russian Suprematism and Polish or Hungarian Constructivism around about the turn of the last century and the process of Jewish assimilation in the Habsburg empire and Russian tsardom respectively? An additional question is, of course, whether Modernism in general may be connected to this process and in what way both "Messianic" dreams and eclecticism, so conspicuously obvious in the region, was determined by the presence of Eastern Jewish culture and philosophy. Shortly: what is the role of Eastern Judaism when it comes to the politically radical and at the same time transgressive nature of Central and Eastern European Modernism?

What about the possible connection between “Hebraism”, Jewish Messianism, Talmudic philosophy, and Kabbalistic speculations and the most radical, Utopian Avant-Garde movements of the region? Was Russian Cubo-Futurism, Suprematism, Productivism, Polish and Hungarian Constructivism actually fostered by ideas and practices articulated in Eastern Jewry? And what was the impact of Anti-Semitism on how the artists related to stylistic purity and their own cultural identity in the region already prior to the emergence of Avant-Gardism? How did the supposed biblical ban on “graven images” influence the approach of the Jewish artists?

Chair: Professor Tom Sandqvist (Dr.phil.), University of Arts, Crafts and Design in Stockholm, Sweden, and University of Lapland, Finland (tom.sandqvist@mbox322.swipnet.se).

Peer Seminars

24. Cities and Modernity (a peer seminar)

In any account of modernity as a sociological phenomenon, or modernism as an artistic one, urban experience looms large. The metropolis or large city provides not only the venue in which new

technologies, economic forms and political movements are nurtured, but also the existential setting for 'modern' experience and modern individuality. But although the cities of the twentieth century share an affinity with the modern, they imagine this modernity in many different ways. Not every city could embody modernity as a radical joining together of the ancient and the fashionable, as Benjamin thought Paris did, or as a display of what rational planning and engineering might achieve, a typical route for cities in the United States and Canada. In this seminar we will explore the relationship cities across the world have with modernity: what they think it means to be modern and how they embody this vision in planning policy, architecture, politics and cultural forms. Papers that examine a single city in depth are encouraged, although any paper relevant to the topic will be considered.

Chair: Dr. Ken Hirschkop Associate Professor, Department of English Language and Literature University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada (khirschk@uwaterloo.ca).

25. Questioning/Challenging Modernism/Modernity (a peer seminar)

The narratives of "modernism" and "modernity" are challenged today by researchers who seek to put forward the heterogeneity and incommensurability of discourses, styles, practices and careers of writers, artists and intellectuals who are usually subsumed under these general notions. We are not, however, dealing with the disappearance of modernism or with post-modernism, but rather with liquid or plural modernity and with networks of relocated modernisms that move in time and in space and transcend national boundaries – in other words, with a creative network that challenges modernism and modernity and develops them further, converting contradictions and oppositions into unifying dynamics. Drawing on recent works that have pluralised the research on 20th century modernism and avant-garde movements, this seminar is addressed to graduate students and researchers interested in charting and analysing challenges to modernism and modernity as well as alternative modernisms in different kinds of national and transnational contexts.

Chairs: Dr. Nathalie Aubert, Professor of French Literature, Oxford Brookes University, UK; Dr. Jyrki Nummi, Professor of Finnish Literature, University of Helsinki, Finland; Dr. Harri Veivo, visiting professor, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris 3, France.