

CALL FOR PAPERS:

Conference: *Art Histories, Cultural Studies and the Cold War*

Date: Friday 24 September 2010

Venue: Institute of Germanic & Romance Studies, University of London

Keynote Speaker: Miranda Carter (author of *Anthony Blunt: His Lives*, 2001)

Study Day: *Cold War Cities*

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Twenty years ago the world witnessed the most momentous geo-political changes since the end of the Second World War: the fall of the Berlin Wall, the implosion of the Soviet Union and the emergence of the USA as the global superpower. The period of the Cold War (c.1948-89) was one of ideological struggle and profound cultural crisis, no less so than for the discipline of Art History, rooted in the ideals and aspirations of the European Enlightenment. But the crucible of the Cold War also witnessed the re-definition of Art History, the birth of the New Left and a nascent tradition of Cultural Studies.

In 1952 Erwin Panofsky wrote a paper surveying *Three Decades of Art History in the United States* – an essay pervaded by an acute sense of how the development of the discipline of Art History, and the lives of individual art historians, had been shaped by the momentous political events of the 1930s and 40s. In a specific reference to McCarthyism, Panofsky noted how ‘nationalism and intolerance’ remained a terrifying threat to academic freedom and that ‘even when dealing with the remote past, the historian cannot be entirely objective.’ Although the situation was less extreme in the UK, intellectuals and academics with left wing sympathies such as Frederick (Frigyes) Antal, Francis Klingender and Eric Hobsbawm still faced ‘red baiting’ and other challenges in gaining employment in universities and other teaching-related posts.

Writing in 1960 to Adrian Stokes about his book *Art and Illusion*, Ernst Gombrich reflected on the ‘considerable shock’ with which he discovered that Art History had been misused to propagate pseudo-historical myths on both the Right and the Left. Some decades later Peter Fuller was faced with a changing political landscape and the need to re-consider his own response to national identity and to the Marxism he had cherished earlier in his career.

This conference on Friday 24 September, organized by the department of History & Philosophy of Art at the University of Kent, aims to explore how the Cold War delineated approaches to Art History, Historiography and Cultural Studies and how its conditions and constraints shaped the professional careers and influenced the writings and ideas of scholars and cultural theorists. We welcome a wide range of perspectives

that might include, for example, the use of particular methodologies, the choice of specific subjects for analysis that were explicitly politically motivated or contextualised readings of particular art historical monographs or reviews of wider art historical topics, such as 'the Renaissance' or 'the history of Modern Art', as sites of displaced ideological conflict.

Alternatively, papers might involve the exploration of state patronage and of the intellectual debates and cultural events around the visual arts, whether overt in the form of Soviet Realism, or more covert as in the CIA-funded Congress for Cultural Freedom. Contributions are not confined to Anglo-Saxon Art History and we welcome Post-Colonial and European perspectives (from both sides of the former Iron Curtain).

A related study day on Saturday 25 September, organized by the Centre for the Study of Cultural Memory (CCM) at the Institute of Germanic & Romance Studies, will explore **Cold War Cities**. We welcome papers from a variety of angles and disciplines, including history, art history, film, architecture, politics, memory and cultural studies. Amongst other things, papers may address: post-war memories; cities at the centre/cities at the fringes; architecture, including divisive architecture (e.g. walls); cities in film; the Eastern Bloc, especially former Yugoslavia; utopian/distopian cities; cities and the space race; migration; terrorism and the city.

Please send your abstract (250 words max) by 24 February 2010 to G.F.Pooke@kent.ac.uk or B.D.H.Thomas@kent.ac.uk (for the Art Histories Conference); to katia.pizzi@sas.ac.uk or ricarda.vidal@sas.ac.uk (for the Cold War Cities study day).