

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Alternative Memories / Possible Futures of Visual Arts

1st November 2018

New Europe College – Institute for Advanced Study (21 Plantelor Str., Bucharest) Conference chaired by Horea Avram and Mihai Ometiță

Keynote speaker:
Prof. Ryszard W. Kluszczyński

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 9:30-10:00 | <i>Meeting over coffee + word of welcome</i> |
| 10:00-10:45 | Corina Cimpoieru (National Centre for Dance – Bucharest, Romania)
<i>Performing the Archive: The “Making of” and “Showing Off” of the Romanian Dance History</i> |
| 10:45-11:30 | Luana Stroe (University of Bucharest – Romania)
<i>The Anxiety of Fluency: A Typology of the Recorded Literature</i> |
| Coffee break | |
| 11:45-12:30 | Horea Avram (Babeș-Bolyai University – Cluj-Napoca, Romania)
<i>Cinema of Attractions Revisited One Hundred Years Later: Medium, Content, Spectatorship in Multi-screen Installation Art</i> |
| Lunch break | |
| 14:00-14:45 | Sylwia Borowska-Kazimiruk (Polish Literature Institute, Warsaw University – Poland)
<i>The Future of the Past: Regaining the Common History of Art and Philology</i> |
| 14:45-15:30 | Maria Chatzidimou (University of Hamburg – Germany)
<i>Alternative Holocausts</i> |
| 15:30-16:15 | Sabin Bors (Independent scholar, Romania)
<i>Diffractive Archives: A Trans-disciplinary Perspective on Future Archiving</i> |
| Coffee break | |
| 16:30-17:30 | KEYNOTE TALK: Memory, memorial, and mnemo-art. Subversive art of commemoration
Prof. Ryszard W. Kluszczyński (Professor of Cultural and Media Studies, Head of the Department of Electronic Media and Chair of School of Media and Audiovisual Culture, Lodz University / Professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Lodz – Poland) |

This conference is part of the project „100 to 100. Memory and foresight +/- a century (100 la 100. Memorie și perspectie +/- un secol)” co-funded by AFCN (The Administration of the National Cultural Fund), Romania, 2018. The project does not necessarily represent the standpoint of the Administration of the National Cultural Fund. AFCN cannot be held liable for the content of the project or the manner in which the outcomes of the project may be used. These shall devolve entirely on the beneficiary of the financing.

PROIECT CO-FINANȚAT DE:



CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS

Corina Cimpoieru (National Centre for Dance – Romania)

Performing the Archive: The “Making of” and “Showing Off” of the Romanian Dance History

The presentation revisits and reflects on a selection of Romanian dance history projects, initiated and produced by The National Center for Dance Bucharest. Animated by the will to reenact the Romanian dance history and its archiving sources and as well its absences, these projects engaged with different forms of reenactment (performing discourse, choreographic reconstructions, digital reconstructions, performance shows, installations) that will be theoretically and performatively discussed during the presentation. Reflecting on the potentiality of reenactment both as a research tool for cultural knowledge production and as well as an art form mediation, the proposed case studies will stand for the contemporary promise of the archive to actualize the history of dance and to manifest itself as a site for its "making of" and "showing off".

Luana Stroe (University of Bucharest – Romania)

The Anxiety of Fluency: A Typology of the Recorded Literature

In 1911, the French National Sound Archives created the Archives de la Parole, that later will become Musée de la parole et du geste. This is the first sound library, and here was made, in 1913, the first audio recording in Rumanian language: Elena Văcărescu read aloud two poems of Ienăchiță Văcărescu. From now on, Romanian writers will start recording their literary work at the national radio station, from the histrionic Minulescu, until contemporary writers.

Within the last century, in the transition from Electrecord to the recent audio-book, the recordings on magnetic tape changed their cultural stake: they do not represent a related form of broadcast literature anymore, but a method itself, and yet one that has proved not to be evanescent.

Because this topic allows interdisciplinary extensions, the modulations and interferences of such a subject involves crossings from studies of literary history to studies of cultural history, from sound phenomenology to studies of musicology. Considering that my main material is a vocal one, the analysis can't be reduced at a simple philological point of view. That's way terms from voice pitch and agogics will be very often mentioned.

My research area, otherwise a pioneering one, can't be explored with rigidity. We must take allowance for the fact that this field is in a continuous evolution in terms of technique, therefore is difficult to predict its evolution. We should only remember that, in 1655, Cyrano de Bergerac imagined the magnetic tape as an utopian object, and today it is possible for us to put together a documented history of our literature read aloud at the national station and entered into our cultural patrimony.

Horea Avram (Babeș-Bolyai University – Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

Cinema of Attractions Revisited One Hundred Years Later: Medium, Content, Spectatorship in Multi-screen Installation Art

In my presentation I will discuss the actuality and relevance of a key film theory paradigm, "Cinema of Attractions," as a tool for analyzing the multi-screen video installation practice. The term was proposed by film scholar Tom Gunning in 1986 and refers to the early film style and reception which emphasized primarily the effect, the appearance, the "attraction" rather than the narrative. I will demonstrate that recent multi-screen installations paradoxically articulate an artistic discourse and spectatorial engagement that can be related to the "attraction" associated with the early twentieth century cinema. I argue that this mutation takes place at three levels: medium (the use of multiple screens leads to the dispersion of the single viewpoint and visualization means), content (narrative fragmentation), spectatorial experience (based on a shared, interactive and changeable experience rather than the immersive, uni-directional spectatorship as in standard cinema). In this process, we can identify a contamination with another concept derived from film vocabulary, "Expanded Cinema" coined by media theorist Gene Youngblood in 1973, which describes the important changes in artistic practice in the early 1970s, namely the expansion of the cinematic model towards installation. I will discuss these issues taking as examples video installations by German artist Julian Rosefeldt and Icelandic artist Ragnar Kjartanson.

Sylwia Borowska-Kazimiruk (Polish Literature Institute, Warsaw University – Poland)

The Future of the Past: Regaining the Common History of Art and Philology

In Danuta Ulicka's *Writting History - Shaping History of (Not Only Polish) Literary Studies* the goal of contemporary philology is to regain its own history. A return to the past in research would lead to the restoration of the forgotten texts and the reconstruction of the literary tradition in its fuller, interdisciplinary shape. It is a necessary step towards the "future of the past" – a critical reflection on today's conditions of practicing literary studies.

The subject of my speech will be an attempt to relocate this task to the common theoretical space of literary studies and art history. To some extent, forgetting the achievements of philology is closely related to the reconfiguration of the theoretical canon of art history – it is the evocation of aesthetic texts that amount to a wider, avant-garde worldview, depriving individual, not just literary artistic activity. Recalling forgotten or unobvious themes of reflection from the borderline between the two fields would allow us to rethink our own, today's foundation of research into the past in their interdisciplinary possibilities and challenges. The common ground for such theoretical idea might be *visual studies*, focused on the problem of seeing.

Maria Chatzidimou (University of Hamburg – Germany)

Alternative Holocausts

The paper aims to discuss parodic representations of the Holocaust in Cinema as alternative memories, which function as prosthetic cultural memories and as part of a wishful thinking of the victims and/or of the audience. Parody is thought within Simon Dentith's definition: as a range of cultural practices and not just as a genre and it is analyzed as such. The setting point of my analysis is Alan Johnson's 1982 remake of Ernst Lubitsch's *To Be or Not to Be* (1942) and I continue with Radu Mihaileanu's *Train de Vie* (1998) and Roberto Benigni's *La Vita e Bella* (1997) to finally examine Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds* (2009). Part of the discussion is the gradual shift in the films from the representation of traumatic or subtle "historical" narratives of escape to heroic alternative narratives and from films that associate victims with silence to revengeful agents. Can parodic representations in Cinema provide an alternative canvas for the unheard stories and the imagined ones, can it be a space safe from any commodification of trauma?

Sabin Borş (Independent scholar, Romania)

Diffractive Archives: A Trans-disciplinary Perspective on Future Archiving

The presentation discusses "diffractive archives" as based on an extensive doctoral research and an installation project on archives, knowledge, and contemporaneity. Its main formulation references the need to conceive new situations for archival practices, so as to account for the continuous materialisation of meaning and difference. The institution of difference as a practice of knowledge can revitalise the discursive materialities and re-politicise the aesthetic and affective foundations that underlie alternative ways of making politics. The archive as diffractive practice and methodology—a practice of constantly re-situated knowledge—references Karen Barad's notion of "diffraction" to conceive archivization as a dynamic, non-hierarchical entanglement of matters and significations. Both theoretically and as a multi-modal documentary media sculpture, the project of a diffractive archive aims to mobilise new ways of thinking and to outline a shift in how we think of archives—from a discursive practice and the materialisation of discourses, to various forms of speculative engagement where notions such as diffraction, dissonance, or conflict impact our operative and notional construction of archives, memory, and history.