

**International Association of Aesthetics Interim Conference:**  
***European Avant-Garde – A Hundred Years Later***

Organized by the Slovenian Society of Aesthetics

Online (Ljubljana), 17–18 June, 2021

**Book of Abstracts**

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**Introduction**

In the first decades of the twentieth century, avant-garde art emerged in different national cultures: France (Post-Impressionism, Fauvism, Cubism, Dada, Surrealism), Italy (Futurism), Germany (Expressionism, Dada, Constructivism, New Objectivity), Russia/Ukraine/Georgia (Symbolism, Neo-Primitivism, Cubofuturism, Constructivism, Suprematism), Switzerland (Dada), Netherlands De Stijl's NeoPlasticism, Constructivism, Dada), England (Vorticism, Surrealism), Poland (Expressionism, Constructivism, Unism), Czechoslovakia (Cubism, Dada, Constructivism and Surrealism), Serbia (Expressionism, Cubism, Zenitism, Dada, Actionism, Surrealism), Croatia (Expressionism, Futurism, Cubism, zenitism, Dada, late Surrealism), Slovenia (Expressionism, Futurism, Dada, Constructivism), etc. In 1920 there was an avant-garde art rising in Novo mesto (Slovenia) called Novo mesto Spring. In Belgrade the Zenit art movement started off in 1921.

The 1920s were the years of the European avant-gardes. The European avant-garde was created by subverting or overcoming the hierarchical boundaries of the capitalist class society of high modernism. It was usually created in three modes:

1. from the crisis of society, culture and art within stable and traditionally developed high modernism;
2. by experimental development of artistic poetics of high modernism; and
3. by criticism, provocation, subversion or destruction of modernist canons, i.e. as a revolutionary or anarchist reaction to the totalizing and canonical vision and version of modernism as the dominant and hegemonic rational and instrumental culture.

With the conference we wish to reconsider historical avant-garde and its legacy. How do we understand historic avant-garde today? What is its legacy? How the social, political, economic and cultural context has changed and what conditions are there today for open artistic creativity?

We invited considerations on the following topics:

- Reconsiderations of the European avant-garde from today's perspective
- Studies in Eastern European and Central European avant-gardes
- The avant-garde legacy: connections between art and politics
- The avant-garde legacy: art, science, and technologies
- Avant-garde and society: autonomy of art?

Conference program committee:

Polona Tratnik, Aleš Erjavec, Lev Kreft, Miško Šuvaković, Tyrus Miller, Curtis Carter.

Conference organizing committee:

Polona Tratnik, Arnela Abdić, Stella Aslani, Mojca Puncer, Jan Babnik, Tomaž Toporišič.

**Sascha Bru (University of Leuven, Faculty of Arts, Belgium): *The Three Avant-Garde Traditions***

This talk takes to the structure of Peter Bürger's canonical *Theorie der Avantgarde* (1976), whose core chapters respectively dealt with (1) the so-called historical avant-gardes' significance within art *history*, (2) their role within the capitalist art *institution*, and (3) the *aesthetics* of the avant-garde work of art. By returning to the structure of Bürger's theory, I do not wish to rehash his well-known argument about the avant-gardes' revolutionary significance. Rather, I wish to demonstrate how, in hindsight, theorists, philosophers and critics of the avant-gardes in the forgoing century can be shown to have given shape to at least three partially overlapping discourses or ways of talking about an 'avant-garde tradition'—ways that chime with Bürger's tripartite structure in that they foreground either the historical, institutional or aesthetic projects common to all avant-gardes in the past century, whether they be historical, neo-, retro-, post-, .... These three discourses have in various degrees determined our understanding of the revolutionary legacy of the avant-gardes, but they have also and repeatedly led to estimations of the avant-gardes' (if not art's) overall demise or redundancy. Which of these discourses still allows us to isolate substantial extensions of the avant-garde in contemporary art? How do we best remember the century-old avant-gardes, not to call their legacy over and done with, but to project their criticality and revolutionary fervor onto our own time and times to come?

Sascha Bru is Professor at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Leuven (KU Leuven), where, as a generalist, he teaches in the art history and literary studies programmes, and also acts as the Head of the Theory and Cultural Studies Dept. Sascha's scholarly work can be situated in the field of avant-garde studies. His books include *Democracy, Law and the Modernist Avant-Gardes* (2009), *The European Avant-Gardes, 1905–1935* (2018), and, as co-editor, *The Aesthetics of Matter* (2013), *The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines: Europe, 1880–1940* (2013), *Futurism: A Microhistory* (2017) and *Realisms of the Avant-Garde* (2020). Sascha is, among other things, a founder and the current chair of the European Network for Avant-Garde and Modernism studies, and the PI of various research projects that investigate facets of European avant-garde culture.

**Polona Tratnik (Institute IRRIS & New University, Faculty for Slovene and International Studies, Slovenia): *Tactical Media: The Fourth Wave of 20<sup>th</sup> Century European Avant-Garde***

The historic avant-garde emerged at the beginning of the 20th century not only as movements striving for change in the field of art (so that it would no longer be detached from daily life, and the boundaries between art and daily life would be erased), but also as one that ascribed to art a central importance in changing social reality. Contrary to high modernism, their goal was not the production of works of art as highly valued end products – artifacts –, but practical activity, often involving concrete political objectives (consequently, some representatives were at the same time politically active, and some of these movements eventually made the transition into politics, and even war). According to the renowned theory of avant-garde of Peter Bürger avant-garde teaches how art should be integrated into the praxis of life. Avant-garde movements demanded a shift from the imaginary level to reality. Compared to the concept of modernity, ascertained Matei Calinescu, avant-garde looks ahead, towards a better tomorrow (at the same time usually demanding a complete destruction of the past). Neo-avant-garde is according to Peter Bürger not a genuine avant-garde, as it “institutionalizes the avant-garde as art and thus negates genuinely avant-gardiste intentions.” Bürger’s theory of avant-garde was written in the 1974, therefore, he did not address the third avant-gardiste wave, the retro-avant-garde of the 1980s, which could as well be questioned as regards its institutionalization and orientation towards the past. Tactical media appeared as a sort of media activism in the aftermath of the fall of the Berlin Wall and means the use of cheap do-it-yourself media or alternative use of new media, usually electronic, and present an alternative to the mainstream media, means of communication and power structures. Tactical media operate on the level of social reality and look ahead towards a better tomorrow. In this regard, tactical media could be interpreted as the fourth wave of the 20<sup>th</sup> century avant-garde, added to the three generations of the avant-garde: historic avant-garde, neo-avant-garde, and retro-avant-garde.

Polona Tratnik, PhD in Philosophy, full Professor, authors eight monographs, including *Art as Capital: The Intersection of Science, Technology and the Arts* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2021), *Conquest of Body: Biopower with Biotechnology* (Springer, 2017) and *Hacer-vivir más allá del cuerpo y del medio* (Herder, 2013). She is the Dean of the Faculty for Slovenian and International Studies of New University in Ljubljana, Slovenia, and senior researcher at the Institute IRRIS. She was a Fulbright Visiting Scholar at University of California Santa Cruz and guest professor at same university, as well as at Capital Normal University in Beijing, at Helsinki TAIK and at National Autonomous University of Mexico. She is the president of Slovenian Society of Aesthetics and vice-secretary general of the International Association of Aesthetics. She is a pioneer BioArtist and academic painter. <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Polona-Tratnik>

**Tomaž Toporišič (University of Ljubljana, Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television, Slovenia): Trieste, Ljubljana, Zagreb, Belgrade: Historical Avant-garde and the Conceptual Crisis of Europe**

The presentation will concentrate on selected artistic initiatives giving specific shapes to the multiple and complicated relations between the (theatre) avant-garde and the post-war crisis of identity in Central European art and culture. I will link specific representational tactics of the Trieste, Ljubljana, Zagreb and Belgrade avant-gardes, their manifestative thoughts on Europe in Crisis. Using those examples, I will try to show how the post WW1 crisis in the corner between Italian Futurism and Fascism, “Barbarogenius” of Ljubomir Micić, Slovene constructivist circle in Trieste and Karst Region, Worker’s stage in Ljubljana and expressionism, was linked to the political, cultural and aesthetic as well as ethic crisis. To what extent the aesthetic revolutions of constructivist circle in Trieste, Tank and Dada Tank in Ljubljana and Zagreb, Delak's Worker's Stage and Grum's expressionist plays in Ljubljana and Zenitism in Belgrade were the artistic and human responses of the avant-garde artists to the newly developed crisis in Europe after 1918? Or, to use the words of Srečko Kosovel, the Slovene constructivist poet: his poems *Ljubljana is asleep*: “In red chaos a new humanity / is approaching! Ljubljana is asleep. / Europe is dying in a red light.” And *CONS:Z*: “Europe is dying./ Sports, the economy, politics. / Japan versus Russia. / NEW CULTURE. / New culture: humanitarianism. / New politics: humanitarianism. / New art: for man. / Europe's hour of death draws near. / Anoint it with H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>. / The hour of grief. 7 A curtain has unveiled a new world.”

Tomaž Toporišič is a dramaturg and theatre theoretician, an associate professor in history and theory of drama and performing arts and a vice-dean of the Academy of Theatre, University of Ljubljana. From 1997 to 2003 he was the artistic director and from 2003 to 2016 a dramaturg of Mladinsko Theatre. In 1995 he co-founded Exodos Festival of Contemporary Performing Arts. In 2013 he was a guest programmer of Maribor European Capital of Culture. He was a curator of several exhibitions for Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space (PQ). His primary research interests are contemporary performing arts, literature and visual culture. He is the author of four books on contemporary performing arts. His latest essays: The new Slovene theatre and Italian futurism, (Re)staging the rhetoric of space, Deconstructive readings of the avant-garde tradition in post-socialist retro-avant-garde theatre and Death and Violence in Contemporary Theatre, Drama, and Novel (Oliver Frljić, Anja Hilling, Simona Semenič, and G. W. Sebald.

**Artem Radeev (St. Petersburg State University, Department of Aesthetics and Culture Studies, Russia): “Communist deciphering of reality” in Russian Avant-Garde: A Case of Dziga Vertov**

One of the features of Russian avant-garde is a search for new forms of the relation between artist and reality.

This is reflected in early Soviet cinema. The most intensive confrontation in early Soviet avant-garde cinema was the dispute between S. Eisenstein and D. Vertov. This dispute ultimately resulted in two metaphors – cinema-eye and cinema-fist. The first implied a contemplative attitude to reality (Vertov), the second implied a violent attitude to the viewer (Eisenstein). However, the contemplative attitude does not consist in creating poetic sketches (as it was in the 20-30s European cinema). Contemplation in Vertov's avant-garde cinema supposes an idea of «communist deciphering of reality».

The standard interpretation of this idea is that a man with a camera shows some features of the new Soviet political system. However, this interpretation is irrelevant since the metaphor of eye refers not to the director's eye, but to the camera's eye. It is not the artist who shows the features of the Soviet system, but the cinema-eye that can register the features of the system. It is the cinema-eye that can detect the communist ideas in reality itself, it is the cinema-eye that produces the «communist decoding of reality».

This can be shown by the example of rare Vertov's film «The Eleventh Year». This film describes the celebration of the 11th anniversary of the Soviet revolution. The film is designed so that the viewer can see through the cinema-eye that not only Soviet citizens, but also reality itself are celebrating the 11th anniversary of the revolution.

The eye as one of the metaphors of the Russian avant-garde refers to the idea of synthesis of media and reality.

Artem Radeev, Doctor of Philosophy, is Associate Professor at the Department of Aesthetics and Cultural Studies of St. Petersburg State University, Russia. Author of books *Nietzsche and Aesthetics* (2013), *What is Film Experience?* (2020). The head of Russian Society of Aesthetics. Founder of Russian journal in aesthetics *Terra Aestheticae*. Fields of interest: aesthetic experience, philosophy of film, philosophy of G. Deleuze, etc.

**Darko Štrajn (Educational Research Institute, Slovenia): *Weimar Cinema and other German Avant-Gardes***

Adorno and Horkheimer remarked in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* “Not the good but the bad is the subject matter of theory.” This aphorism can be taken as a methodological starting point in an approach to the unique time in cinema history, which was highlighted by Lotte Eisner in her seminal book on Weimar cinema *Die dämonische Leinwand*. Together with another book on the subject matter by Siegfried Kracauer *Von Caligari zu Hitler*, it generated a strong impact on a widespread perception of the historic and artistic phenomenon of the mostly silent films in Germany of 1920s. As Thomas Elsaesser pointed out, their interpretations made “films appear as the books’ illustrative evidence”. Both books form a “Möbius strip before one’s eyes” embracing German political history and a relationship between the avant-garde movements in other arts in Germany of the time and cinema production dominated by UFA studios. The movements, which composed German avant-garde in literature, painting and theatre like expressionism, *Neue Sachlichkeit* and Dada are often reflected in art histories and cultural theory in a manner, which excludes cinema, only allowing sometimes that the artistic movements influenced cinema production of the time. However, the whole picture of the period in German arts would be incomplete without regards to the imagery provided by films that contributed along with radical art a visibility of “the bad”. As much as some exceptional films happened to be ground-breaking regarding the cinematic form, they were anticipatory as well regarding the accumulation of the looming ultimate historic evil. Now, in our post-cinematic age a television series *Babylon Berlin* offers the intrinsic re-thematisation of film-noir, which was a legacy of Weimar cinema in Hollywood due to the migrant German film authors.

Darko Štrajn graduated in philosophy and sociology at the Faculty of Arts – University in Ljubljana, Slovenia, where he acquired his doctorate on Fichte’s philosophy. Along with his work at the Educational Research Institute in Ljubljana he lectures on film theory and the epistemology of humanities at the graduate School for Studies in Humanities (AMEU - ISH) in Ljubljana and at the School of Arts at the University of Nova Gorica. His research comprises topics like aesthetics, film and media studies, politics, education and social change. He authored five books and many book chapters as well as hundreds of other publications. His most recent book (2017) was published in English under the title *From Walter Benjamin to the End of Cinema*.



**Ernest Ženko (University of Primorska, Faculty of Humanities, Slovenia): *An Exercise in Categorization: Avant-Garde Cinema of the 1920s***

In 1920 German director Robert Wiene shot a silent horror film *Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari*. This feature film, which is now considered the quintessential work of German Expressionist cinema, not only introduced one of the most distinctive approaches in the history of cinema, but also contributed to a long-lasting discussion about the avant-garde art of the 1920s. During the same key decade, two other important contributions to avant-garde cinema appeared and developed. The first was related to French Impressionist cinema, also known as the first or narrative avant-garde, and the second to Soviet montage cinema. All three cinematographies that flourished in the 1920s were a part of larger and well-established avant-garde movements (Impressionism, Expressionism, Constructivism), which were more or less confined to specific geographic and cultural contexts, however, also had worldwide influences. Several relevant questions result from this setting and will be discussed in the presentation. Firstly, to what extent and under which conditions could French Impressionist, German Expressionist and Soviet montage films be categorized as avant-garde art? And in this context, to what extent can “the seventh art” be subsumed under the category of (avant-garde) art at all? Secondly, can French Impressionist, German Expressionist and Soviet montage films be considered proper cinema movements, as proposed by David Bordwell, or they only result in loose groups of film works, as pointed out by his critics? And lastly, could these movements be considered a part of a larger (unifying) avant-garde movement in cinema of the 1920s, which shows characteristics, similar to other established avant-garde movements in the arts? These questions will be discussed in the presentation in order to contribute to a cognitive map of the avant-garde art, particularly in the part, which remains to this day (at least partially) uncharted.

Ernest Ženko studied philosophy at Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. Between 1999 and 2001 he was employed at the Institute of Philosophy of Scientific research center of Slovenian academy of arts and sciences, and in 2003 he moved to Faculty of humanities, University of Primorska in Koper, Slovenia, where he was elected Full Professor for philosophy of culture in 2014. He currently holds a position of Full Professor at Media studies; Anthropology and Culture Studies; History and Biopsychology at the same university. His research interests include philosophy, aesthetics, critical theory, film theory, photography, social psychology, theoretical psychoanalysis and philosophy of science.

**Zoltán Somhegyi (Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church, Hungary): *Avant-Garde Anatomy. Dissection and Re-composition of Art and its History in the Oeuvre of Milorad Krstic***

Numerous artists have revisited or got inspired by artworks of earlier periods, thus making their own paraphrase of previous creations. Not only artists of the (early) Modern Age had revisited Antiquity, but even Avant-Garde artists have not entirely dissociated themselves from certain forms, motifs, approaches or themes of the classical traditions – despite the focus on creating along new visions, and offering radically novel perspectives *in* and *for* art and its infrastructure, that was a similar target in most of the movements within the classical Avant-Garde. Later however, even Avant-Garde itself got historicised, and, as a consequence, became possible subject-matter of reevaluation, as we can observe it in the paraphrasing practice of several artists from the 20th and 21st centuries.

The works of Milorad Krstic – that are put in the centre of this study as a thought-provoking case study with fascinating consequences to aesthetics too – represent a particular approach within the aforementioned revisitations of art in general and the re-interpretation of Avant-Garde and 20th century art in particular. One of the specialities of his approach lies in the fact that he does not merely return to previous works, including those that are of crucial importance in the Avant-Garde, simply for inspiration, but his practice of the evaluative examination of the art of the 20th century will be essentially defined by the Avant-Garde techniques. In his “*Das Anatomische Theater*” he dissects the 20th century, but then encyclopaedically re-assembles the fragments to a novel total work of art that presents the history of art of the period. Then, in his full-length animation movie “*Ruben Brandt, Collector*” he continues re-assembling and re-telling art history by constantly inserting fragments of it in the novel work itself, hence the collection will become not only the subject-matter of the film, but even one of its most spectacular feature.

Zoltán Somhegyi is a Hungarian art historian with a PhD in aesthetics, and is Associate Professor of art history at the Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary. As a researcher, he is specialised in eighteenth-nineteenth century art and theory, and besides that his other fields of interest are contemporary fine arts and art criticism. He is the Secretary General and Website Editor of the International Association for Aesthetics, member of the Executive Committee of the International Council for Philosophy and Human Sciences, Consultant of Art Market Budapest: International Contemporary Art Fair, and Editor-in Chief of HAS – Humanities, Arts & Society Magazine.

[www.zoltansomhegyi.com](http://www.zoltansomhegyi.com)

**Mojca Puncer (independent, Slovenian Society of Aesthetics): *The Avant-Garde Politics of Time: The Case of Postgravity Art***

This paper asks whether Dragan Živadinov's 50-year postgravity theater project *Noordung:: 1995–2045* can be described as a particular avant-garde politics of time. The project is an original mixture of experiences of historical avant-garde and postmodernism (retroguardism), space science and advanced technologies. It is not our aim to provide a list of all pre-existing artistic and scientific avant-garde conceptions and theoretical premises that are constitutive of this very complex project. However, it is useful to mention important historical artistic avant-garde movements such as Suprematism and Constructivism (the latter had a strong social program in addition to formal innovations), which are closely linked to scientific and technological progress (space exploration, cognitive science, quantum theory, etc.). Above all, we share a general theoretical and philosophical discourse on modernity and the avant-garde, but the aspect of temporality is less often addressed, so a particular focus is placed on the ways that are essential for understanding some of the most important philosophical arguments concerning time. Associated with historical temporalization are both certain historical epistemologies and certain orientations of practice, certain *politics of time* (Osborne). Just as modernism, postmodernism and contemporary art – with their avant-garde impulses – are also interventions in the field of the politics of time. To sketch the ways in which the consideration of time is an important part of philosophical thought (Marxist as well as Nietzschean positions: The former are characterized by historicity, critique and radicality, the latter by timelessness, contemplation and anti-modernity) on a range of issues, particularly in their attention to the politics of time (the time of workers/artists, reference to various notions of past and future in a range of political contexts), the treatment of Project Noordung reveals the paradoxical affinity with both certain (post-)Marxist and (post-)Nietzschean notions of time. Thus, on the one hand we have the Benjaminian attempt to fuse messianism and historical materialism, on the other the Deleuzean perspective (Aion vs. Kronos) paired with modern and contemporary science-oriented theories (e.g. Russian cosmism, transhumanism, etc.). For us, the aforementioned philosophical considerations are significant above all from the point of view of questioning otherwise heterogeneous but project-compatible conceptions of temporality, which would reveal the specific avant-garde subversiveness and distinct political character of the project in question (constant enactment of the relationship between art and power, involvement in real socio-political and technological structures, openness to social life, turn from utopia to heterotopia, etc.). In this case of the postgravity art project, we want to find an answer to the question of what is the adequate model of avant-garde artistic practice today and what are its theoretical and philosophical premises about time as emphatically political.

Mojca Puncer holds a PhD in philosophy from the University of Ljubljana. She is Associate Professor of philosophy at the University of Maribor. She works as a university lecturer and independent researcher, theoretician, critic and curator in the field of contemporary art. She is a member of the executive committee of Slovenian Society of Aesthetics. She is the author of the books *Contemporary Art and Aesthetics* (2010) and *Interspaces of Art* (2018).

**Ana Kocjančič (independent): *The Importance of Avant-Garde Scenography in the Direction of Ferdo Delak***

Among the avant-garde generation of theatre directors, it was Ferdo Delak, alongside Bratko Kreft, who introduced new, avant-garde approaches to the workers and professional stages in Slovenia. I will try to explore the significance of the set designs in Delak's directorial works. He first tried out new scenographic methods (light projections, different heights, posters/text transformed into paroles) on the Workers' Stage in Ljubljana and was assisted by a set designer Ljubo Ravnikar. Delak also premiered some of the performances of the Workers' Stage at the Ljubljana Opera Theatre under the directorship of Mirko Polič, who encouraged the modernisation of stage direction and set design. With those novelties, Delak influenced the aesthetics of opera theatre performances. The most notable performance of this period was Ivan Cankar's "The Farmhand Jernej and his Rights" on the Opera stage in Ljubljana (premiere 21 May 1932), with which he toured on smaller Slovenian amateur stages. He also opened the Slovene Theatre in Trieste after the Second World War (premiere 2 December 1945) with an adaptation of this play in the same scenography and brought avant-garde approaches into the post-war era. Around 1930, Delak began working at the Opera in Ljubljana, performing some operas and operettas in new style, where he collaborated with scenographer Vasilij Uljanišičev (e. g., *Robinzonade*). He was also still working with scenographer Ravnikar at the theatre in Maribor. They performed adaptation of Jurčič's »The Tenth Brother« and Kozina's operetta »Majda«.

This paper will seek to answer several questions. How did Delak's stage direction and set design from the Workers' Stage influence the style of productions on professional stages during and after the two wars period? Did Delak stick to the principles that he and Černigoj wrote in *Tank* magazine? What was the impact of Delak's performances after the Second World War? And if Delak's former revolutionary gesture, as Dušan Moravec writes, really cooled down when he came into contact with the icy reality of a job in a professional theatre?

Mag. Ana Kocjančič (1977) is an Art historian and researcher for history of scenography in Slovenia. She completed a master's degree of "Scenography in Slovenian Drama Theaters between the Wars of the World (1918-1941)" in 2006, at the Department of Art History at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana. Since then she has been researching the history of Slovenian scenography and its connection with the development of Slovene fine arts and the effects of European theater movements and European fine art on its development. Between 2006 and 2009, she was a professional assistant in the field of scenography and theatrical techniques in the emergence of a new theater terminological dictionary, which was created and published (2008) at the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SASA/SAZU, Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti) in Ljubljana. She is the author of monography "Prostor v prostoru-Scenografija na Slovenskem od 17. stoletja do leta 1991" and exhibitions, many articles, television and radio shows on the development of Slovenian scenography.

**Lenka Lee and Ondřej Krajtl (Masaryk University, Department of Aesthetics, Brno, Czech Republic): *From a Pioneer Outsider; Outside the Currents: Josef Váchal, an Artist on the Edge***

Josef Váchal (1884 - 1969) is still a Czech neglected author and creator of the first half of the twentieth century whose life and work reflect many changes in society, typical of the Central European area. As a generational companion of European interwar avant-garde artists and theorists (Teige, Toyen, Marinetti, Duchamp etc.) he was influenced by his personal experience of the First World War, which he spent on the Italian front. His work thus deals with similar themes as other avant-garde artists, in many cases he also precedes them, but at the same time Váchal always stands on the edge, outside the main artistic currents. He has moved from war experiences and social criticism to environmental issues, until he finally enshrines himself in esotericism and mysticism.

While many other avant-garde artists increasingly associate their work with technical progress and modernity, Váchal is moving in the opposite direction - his work is characterized by the use of pre-modern techniques, especially the use of woodcuts and hand typesets.

In our paper we follow Váchal's characteristic style and his specific aesthetics which uses graphic techniques associated with high art, reflects the poetics of art brut, however, its content deals with folk culture and spirituality and low genres. The masterpiece, in addition to the monumental book about Šumava (range of mountains in Southern Bohemia), is the Bloody Novel, a book based in content on pulp and Gothic novels, created as a woodcut. Váchal engraved all the text passages and illustrations into wooden boards and printed by hand for a narrow circle of his supporters. In this way (which, among other things, foreshadows the work of, for example, Andy Warhol) he created a fascinating world which has only recently begun to receive awards from the lay and professional public.

Dr. Lenka Lee is Assistant Professor at Masaryk University (Department of Aesthetics) in Brno. She has been working in the fields of everyday aesthetics, popular culture studies, classical animal fables and courtly culture. Her early monograph *The Treatise De Amore in the Context of Courtly Love* searches the set of rules of the courtly love expressed by various literary genres. The traditional animal fables and the change of their position and meaning in the medieval era, especially in the school texts became a starting point for Lee's search of the role of the traditional allegories in popular culture. Her recent studies focus on the everyday aesthetics, especially on the characteristic features connecting urban subcultures and rural environments. Lee is a member of The Nordic Network for Women in Aesthetics and Czech Society for Aesthetics.

Mgr. Ondřej Krajtl is a Ph.D. Candidate in Seminar of Aesthetics, Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University, Brno. He specializes in visual communication, popular culture, comics and ideology.

He often presents and writes papers together with his colleague Lenka Lee focusing on connection between the traditional and contemporary aesthetics (*The Periphery of Concepts: Notes on Dynamics of Some Aesthetic Categories; Everyday aesthetics: aesthetic attitude, distance and media literacy; The Models of popular culture, the aesthetic function and Sherlock Holmes*).

**Sandra Shapshay (City University of New York (CUNY), Department of Philosophy, Hunter College & the Graduate Center, U.S.A.): *From Marcel Duchamp to Vija Celmins: The Readymade Re-Made in America***

The aim of paper is to reconsider the European avant-garde, especially the Dada provocations of Marcel Duchamp, from today's perspective, specifically through the lens of contemporary Latvian-American artist, Vija Celmins. Starting in the late 1970s, Celmins began making perceptually indiscernible copies of stones that she found near the Rio Grande. She described the natural stone as a "readymade" and the bronze, painted copy as the "made," in explicit reference to Marcel Duchamp.

In addition to the very different political and artworld contexts, however, which makes Duchamp's readymade gesture more mocking, shocking and acerbic, there is another crucial difference between Celmins' readymades (the natural stones) and the readymades of Duchamp: Hers aren't made by any human artisan or manufactured by human industrial processes; rather, they are "made" by nature.

In this paper, I shall argue that Celmins' perceptually indiscernible paired stone works culminate a genial narrative that she is building on the conceptual foundation of Duchamp, and which offers a parallel but distinctly different development of art's "grand narrative" to that of Warhol. They can be understood as a sustained artistic meditation on what distinguishes the values of art from those of nature. The perceptually indiscernible "redescription" of the natural stone is not a provocation about what distinguishes a work of art from a common manufactured artefact (Duchamp) or from an ordinary product of consumer capitalism (Warhol); rather, Celmins, returns afresh to the original remit of Western art—the imitation of nature. Taking up from Duchamp she invites us to contrast how we conceive of and value a natural object, like a lovely, smooth, dappled natural stone, from how we conceive of and value its painstakingly, artistically constructed twin. In raising these questions, Celmins offers an *environmental stage* in the grand narrative and the self-consciousness of art.

Sandra Shapshay is Professor of Philosophy at Hunter College & the CUNY Graduate Center (City University of New York). Her research areas are aesthetics and ethics in the 19<sup>th</sup> c, with focus on Schopenhauer and Kant, environmental aesthetics, especially theories of the sublime, and public art. With Levi Tenen, Shapshay co-edited a special issue of the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, "The Good, the Beautiful and the Green" (2018). Recent publications include: "What is the Monumental?" *JAAC* (2021), "A Two-Tiered Theory of the Sublime" *BJA* (2021), and "Kantian Approaches to Ethical Judgment of Art" in the *Oxford Handbook of Art and Ethics*, ed. James Harold (forthcoming). Her current book project is titled "Bodies in Stone and Steel: An Aesthetics of Monuments and Memorials." She is currently the American Society for Aesthetics delegate to the IAA and is delighted to participate in her first IAA conference.

**Zhen Yang (Sun Yat-Sen University, Department of Philosophy (Zhuhai), Guangzhou, China): *Artwork as an Occurrence of Appearing: An Analysis on Cattelan's Comedian***

Why did a banana become into an artwork? According to the institutional theory of art, on the one hand, it is crowned by the art world to be an Art; on the other hand, it is defined by the context of art history to be an art. But the institutional theory can hardly explain the changeability of the authorized banana. Thus, the theory of notation can make a further explanation that the *Comedian* by Cattelan became into an artwork not according to its material facts but its concepts or notation. But such a theory is not qualified to explain why people still crowded into the exhibition to see just a 'concept'. It shows that even the so-called Conceptual Art depends on the real happening of special experiences, rather than authorization or conception. In appreciation, not only Avant-garde arts but also classical arts have not been treated as 'something', but been treated as a happening or an appearing at present timely and spatially. Physical facts are just the moment for such a happening. From this point of view, there is no wide gap between classical arts and Avant-garde arts.

Dr. Yang, Zhen is an associate-professor in the Department of philosophy (Zhuhai campus) of Sun-Yat-Sen University, focusing on contemporary aesthetics, especially the problems of aesthetic experience (e.g. its uncertainty, temporality and spatiality) and thereby the connections between aesthetics and ethics, avant-garde and traditional arts, analytic and continental aesthetics, and eastern and western aesthetics.

**Jacob Lund (Aarhus University, School of Communication and Culture, Denmark):  
*Exhibition as Transformative Reflection***

The paper wishes to address the topics of "The avant-garde legacy: connections between art and politics" and "Avant-garde and society: autonomy of art?" Taking Forensic Architecture's project *Triple-Chaser* as its point of departure the paper explores the role of exhibition acts in contemporary aesthetic and artistic practices. It claims, in dialogue with Juliane Rebentisch's endeavours to bring philosophical aesthetics up to date, that works of art are capable of producing a reflective transformation of our non-artistic everyday lifeworld and argues that the act of exhibition, of making visible or perceptible, is a decisive element in such a reflective transformation of the non-aesthetic and non-artistic social reality that the art work addresses or in which it embeds itself. The act of exhibition makes something/the work present but, at the same time it creates a distance, precisely because the appearance of the work has been arranged and addressed to someone/us; what is exhibited is given as having been organised and deliberately made available to appear to us (cf. Tristan Garcia). This distance installs a difference, a pensive image in the language of Jacques Rancière, that is what allows for transformative reflection. When Forensic Architecture for instance make use of reenactments in their investigations of human rights violations real space is turned into a model of itself, and a negotiation of what it means can begin. An agency like Forensic Architecture, however, operates in a number of different forums to communicate and exhibit their investigations, of which the forum of art is but one as they see each forum, i.e. place of exhibition, as a distorting lens of its own kind.

Jacob Lund is Associate Professor of Aesthetics and Culture and Director of the research programme *Contemporary Aesthetics and Technology* at the School of Communication and Culture, Aarhus University, Denmark. He is also the Editor-in-Chief of *The Nordic Journal of Aesthetics* (since 2007). Lund has published widely within aesthetics, art studies, critical theory, and comparative literature on topics such as image-politics, subjectivity, memory, mediality, enunciation, and contemporaneity. From 2015 to 2020 he was PI (with Geoff Cox) on the collective research project The Contemporary Condition, which focused on the concept of contemporaneity and changes in our experiences of time as these might be seen to be registered in contemporary art: [www.contemporaneity.au.dk](http://www.contemporaneity.au.dk). As part of this project he recently published *Anachrony, Contemporaneity and Historical Imagination* (Berlin: Sternberg, 2019). His current research concerns the work of art in the age of a globally networked image-space.



**Aleš Erjavec (Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Ljubljana, Slovenia): *The Avant-Gardes, Ideology, the Political***

When relating today to the main concepts and categories in the twentieth century we frequently end up with the triad of modernism, postmodernism and the avant-gardes. After giving the matter some further thought we may end up by proclaiming the avant-gardes the only still relevant category among the three noted ones. By saying this I am not claiming that today the avant-gardes should be considered to be the only still remaining conceptually productive term but that after the long history and existence of all three terms the avant-gardes are the only ones that we today employ in theoretical discourse and that the avant-gardes alone continue to warrant theoretical attention--this automatically signifying that they continue to capture our attention and -why not- fascination. I employ fascination as a metaphor for SDE all the art that today (this of course refers also to past art) offers as a means of fascination, identity and difference.

In the paper the avant-gardes will be related to two concepts -- of ideology and the political.

Aleš Erjavec, born in 1951, was the Director of Research at the Philosophy Institute of the Slovenian Academy for Natural Sciences and Professor of Aesthetics at the University of Ljubljana and held the Chair for Cultural Studies at University of Primorska, Faculty of Humanities in Koper. From 1984 until 1999 he was the Head of the Slovenian Society of Aesthetics, and from 1998 until 2001 President of the International Union for Aesthetics. His books include: *K podobi /Toward the Image/* (Ljubljana 1996), *Túxiàng Shìdài* (Changchun 2002), *Postmodernism and the Postsocialist Condition* (ed.; Berkeley 2003, Taipei 2009), *Ljubezen na zadnji pogled. Avantgarda, estetika in konec umetnosti /Love at Last Sight. Avant-Garde, Aesthetics, and the End of Art/* (Ljubljana 2004, Belgrade 2013), *Aesthetics and/as Globalization* (ed.), (Ljubljana-Beijing 2004, Beijing 2010), *Postmodernism, Postsocialism, and Beyond* (Newcastle 2008), *Estetika in politika modernizma /Aesthetics and Politics of Modernism/* (Ljubljana 2009) and *Aesthetic Revolutions and Twentieth-Century Avant-Garde Movements* (ed.) (Durham, 2015, Belgrade 2016, Shanghai (forthcoming)).

**Lev Kreft (University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts, Slovenia): *Avant-Garde Manifesto***

In this paper, avant-garde manifesto is treated as an (anti)artistic genre which should be analysed first and foremost as rhetoric device which, by using special effects of addressing the public, builds a kind of performance using subversive intertextual means. These means belong to transitional line between art and politics. Their political moment consists of oxymoron because manifestoes develop poetics of irrational deliberation. As anti-aesthetic and anti-artistic genre, they represent forceful break through into the public sphere, leaving behind destruction of institution of art and institution of politics. As provocative political device, they develop criticism of the institution of art and the institution of politics built on terms of aesthetic modernism and political modernity subverting hegemony of their concepts. Manifesto is a provocation tout court: it calls forth and challenges institution of art and institution of politics to reveal their ruptures, but what they make visible is that relationship between art and politics is productive because they both are networks of power. Twentieth century was a century of avant-gardes because it was a century of totalitarianism and massive violence. Here is a promise: twenty-fifth century will have its avant-garde as well.

Lev Kreft (1951), studied philosophy and sociology. PhD on the artistic left and avant-garde (University of Ljubljana, 1988). Professor of aesthetics at the Faculty of Arts (University of Ljubljana; retired). Research and publication on avant-garde, postmodernism, contemporary art, history of aesthetics, art and politics, philosophy of sport, aesthetics of sport, Critical Theory and Marxism. Founding member of the Slovenian Society of Aesthetics and of the European Association of the Philosophy of Sport, serving as president of both. Regular and active presence at the activities of the International Association of Aesthetics from Dubrovnik Congress (1980) on, and two terms member of its Executive Committee. Member of Slovenian Parliament (1990-1996).

**Miško Šuvaković (president of the International Association of Aesthetics; Singidunum University, Faculty of Media and Communications, Serbia): *Systemic Issues on European Avant-Gardes***

In the theory and history of modern art, the avant-garde is contextually defined in three different ways: (1) the general notion of the avant-garde: as the leading force and forerunner of the historical development of modernism; (2) the notion of historical avant-garde: as a transstyle denoting radical, excessive, transgressive, critical, projective, experimental, and interdisciplinary movements from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-thirties; (3) transgressive notion of the avant-garde: as a transstyle denoting radical, excessive, transgressive, critical, projective, experimental and interdisciplinary artistic strategies and tactics in the dialectics of modernity, postmodernity and modernity during the twentieth century.

As a term, the avant-garde is historically defined because it is inherent in the inconsistencies and contradictions of industrial bourgeois society, and its modernist culture in its transformation into a mass consumer and media society. The emergence of the avant-garde originated in French culture in the mid-nineteenth century, when modernist ideals of art autonomy became constraint to the permanent radical development and transformation of art and culture in a productive and market society. In the first decades of the twentieth century, avant-garde art emerged in different national cultures: France (Symbolism, post-Impressionism, Fauvism, Cubism, Dada, Surrealism), Italy (Futurism), Germany (Expressionism, Dada, Constructivism, New Objectivity), Russia (Symbolism, Neo-Primitivism, Cubo-Futurism, Constructivism, Suprematism), Switzerland (Dada), the Netherlands (De Stijl's Neoplasticism, Constructivism, Dada), England (Vorticism, Surrealism), Poland (Expressionism, Constructivism, Unism), Czechoslovakia (Cubism, Constructivism and Surrealism), Serbia (Expressionism, Cubism, Zenitism, Dada, Actionism, Surrealism), Croatia (Expressionism, Cubism, Zenitism, Dada, Surrealism), Slovenia (Expressionism, Dada, Constructivism), etc. The French, Italian, German and Russian avant-garde in the first decades of the twentieth century are called paradigmatic avant-garde. The term "paradigmatic avant-garde" means typical or hegemonic avant-garde that determine the horizon of the historicization of the international concept of avant-garde. Local or non-paradigmatic avant-garde is characterized by intellectual artistic practices of left or right orientation associated, most often, with private actions or publications of avant-garde small-circulation magazines. Specific avant-garde phenomena are, therefore, indicated as artistic movements - isms - of international character, for example, Dadaism, Constructivism, Surrealism, etc.; but also as artistic groups of a certain geographical location (Berlin dadaists, Belgrade surrealists, Soviet constructivists), that is, as fictional movements or phenomena related to an artist who promotes his views and actions locally or internationally (Wyndham Lewis Vorticism, Ljubomir Micic's Zenitism, Czech avant-garde Karel Teige). The avant-garde before the First World War had the character of masculine, militant and colonial or imperial nationalism, German Expressionism (Der Sturm), British Vorticism, Italian Futurism. During and immediately after the First World War, first of all with the appearance of Dada - the left anarchist avant-garde was constituted. In the context of the politics of the Bolshevik revolution, the revolutionary avant-garde, above all, Constructivism, was constituted in the Soviet Union. French and European Surrealisms set up the concept of Freudian-Marxism as a critical productive platform. The French Dada, with the practices of Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia, suggested a Western liberal model of artistic provocation. Five avant-garde modalities can be identified in Yugoslavia: in Croatia (Zagreb): Expressionism, Zenitism and Dada; in Croatia (Rijeka): Italian Futurism; in Serbia (Belgrade): Zenitism, post-Dada and Surrealism; in Vojvodina (Subotica, Novi Sad): Hungarian Activism and proto-Dada; in Slovenia (Ljubljana, Novo Mesto, Trieste): Constructivism and Activism.

Miško Šuvaković received his PHD from the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Arts in Belgrade 1993. He has been professor of applied aesthetics, Faculty of Music in Belgrade (1996-2015). He is professor of applied aesthetics & theory of art and media, Faculty of Media and Communications, Belgrade. He is member of Slovenian Society of Aesthetics and Society for Aesthetics of Architecture and Visual Arts Serbia. He is President of the Internationalč Association for Aesthetics (IAA). He has published or edited 50 books in Serbian, Croatian and English.

The most important books he has edited or written are: *Impossible Histories* (2003, 2006) with Dubravka Đurić; *The Neo-Aesthetic Theory* (2017); *3E: Aesthetics, Epistemology and Ethics of Speculative and De Re Media* (2020).

**Joosik Min (Yeungnam University, Korea): “AG” Group and Korean Avant-Garde**

The "AG" group, which appeared in the Korean art scene in the late 1960s, became the first avant-garde art movement in Korea. Artists and theorists formed a group together to actively examine the advanced art phenomena of the West at that time, and tried to lead both theory and practice in an advanced direction. I will focus on the conceptual principle of avant-garde and look at the unique Korean aspects that emerge from this movement. To this end, from the early avant-garde in Europe in the 19th century to the neo-avant-garde in the late 20th century, I will examine its meaning and its development. And then I will shed light on the activities of the AG group in Korea on a schematic topography of the Western avant-garde. Through this examination, we learn that the AG group shares the core of "system criticism" with Western avant-garde, and that the Western avant-garde phenomenon they embraced at that time was mainly neo-avant-garde. Considering the social situation of Korea at the time, we find that the term avant-garde which is advocated in the AG movement does not correspond much to the political and social context, and only aims to transform within the art system. The AG group attacked the existing Korean academic art system and continued to examine acceptance of advanced modern art. As a result, it is significant that a new experimental spirit has been introduced into Korean art.

Joosik Min is Professor of Aesthetics at Yeungnam University and the former President of Korean Society of Aesthetics. He earned B.A. and M.A. Degree from Seoul National University, Korea and Ph.D. from the University of Tokyo, Japan. He was a visiting professor at International Research Center for Japanese Studies and at Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. He has been a chief organizer of International Conference of Eastern Aesthetics since 2000. His research interests include the aesthetic way of life, the theory of creativity, comparative aesthetics and Korean aesthetics. His publication includes *East Asian Culture and Korean Aesthetic Consciousness* (2017), *East Asian Culture and Korean Aesthetic Sensibility* (2017) and *Culture and Creativity East and West* (2016).

**Valentina Hribar Sorčan (University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts): *Franz Marc's Avant-garde Animal Painting***

I would like to present the art of Franz Marc, a founding member of the group *Der Blaue Reiter*, who shows us through his depictions of animals the possible direction that modern man should take. I want to show an artist whose paintings are the intersection of key painting styles of the first decade of the 20th century and on the threshold of the First World War (especially German Expressionism, Futurism, Cubism and then the beginnings of abstraction); an artist who was a companion of the historical avant-gardes, but whose vision of the modern world was not social and political, but anthropological: his paintings focus almost exclusively on animals, especially horses, in all their grandeur and beauty. The glorification of animals in Franz Marc's paintings was soon followed by war clashes, in which many horsemen fought; among the overlooked victims were also no small number of horses. Franz Marc tried to look at the world from the perspective of horses: why these animals, and why animals at all, in what sense? Are we on the trail of an artistic representation of a new anthropology no longer based on man?

Valentina Hribar Sorčan (born 1969), Doctor of Philosophy, is Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Professor of French Language and Literature, employed at the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts, Department of Philosophy. She lectures in philosophy of art, aesthetics and philosophical anthropology and also translates contemporary French philosophy. She is a member of the *Slovenian Society for Aesthetics* and *The European Association for Aesthetics*. Address: Filozofska fakulteta, Oddelek za filozofijo, Aškerčeva 2, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia. E-mail address: [Valentina.HribarSorcan@ff.uni-lj.si](mailto:Valentina.HribarSorcan@ff.uni-lj.si); [valentina.hribar-sorcan@guest.arnes.si](mailto:valentina.hribar-sorcan@guest.arnes.si)

**Hanyun Jiang (Academy of Fine Arts, Tsinghua University, China): *Modern Chinese literati arts as a Translingual Practice of European Avant-Garde Art***

Chinese intellectuals in the 20th century embraced much of the artistic knowledge from the European avant-garde and used it to transform the tradition of literati art. Xie-Yi as the key term in Chinese literati arts, thus became, as an aesthetic translation, and an aesthetic of reproduction of the sense of speed and momentariness of modern life.

Paradoxically, however, the 20th century Chinese scholars and artists consciously misinterpreted this as a form of socialist realism, and thus 20th century Chinese literati painting differed most from the tradition in that it served the needs of the people rather than the disinterested aesthetics of the individual, or to be more precise, the elites. Art historians of the period only acknowledged the art of Post-Impressionism and Cubism yet were critical of the art of the Futurists. This narrative of art history writings was out of the motivation that redefining modernized visual experience for the people and the nation. From the traditional literati painting of utopian landscapes to the modern literati painting of the mountains and rivers of the motherland, it emphasized the conversion of the idle elite subject to the productive laboring subject and the transformation of man himself through the transformation of picturesque nature. We can therefore see nature in modern literati painting as a polyphony of realism nature and lyrical nature, that is, a synchronic agency between European classical paintings and avant-garde art. In this sense, modern Chinese literati art is actually an art historical practice in which European avant-garde art serves as its key reference, linking the aesthetic forms of nature and revolution, thus reproducing the motherland's mountains and rivers into a mass, everyday modern world, and more importantly, the new people who view it.

JIANG, Hanyun, postdoctoral fellow at Academy of Fine Arts, Tsinghua University. She achieved PhD degree from School of Arts, Peking University. Her research interests include Modern Chinese History.

**Jale Erzen (Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey): *Dance as Liberation***

Till the twentieth Century one's relation to the body was unconsciously felt to be under state, religious or family authority. One's body did not primarily belong to oneself. One of the most telling liberating factors was industrialization that severed the binding relation of the body to the society, to the world and to labor. The alteration of the natural environment with the proliferation of man-made, industrial objects created a mechanized nature reflecting the newly mechanized body of man, which meant a programmed bondage that, on the other hand, made man conscious of enslaving forces from which she tried to free herself through art.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century one of the most attention grabbing art forms of the avant-garde with which many intellectuals and artists were involved was dance. If the avant-garde was largely a political stance (Margolis), Dance was directly political, trying to liberate the body from the domination of authority. The Bauhaus performances of dance with their unusual geometric costumes, Josephine Baker's almost naked performances, and Eurithmy's novel theoretical and performative innovations that also concerned new educational ideas, can be cited as ground breaking avant-garde examples. Eventually such examples became important tools in international cross influences opening the way to a second wave of avant-garde interventions after the second World War, such as the Japanese Butoh and Japanese Gutai movement in Painting.

My paper will deal with the avant-garde notions behind dance and the liberating movements for the body, citing examples from early twentieth century dance and theatre.

Jale N. Erzen, painter and art historian, founder of the SANART Association of Aesthetics and visual Culture; has edited the Turkish journal of art BOYUT, was the general secretary of IAA between 1995-1998, vice president between 2010 and 2016, and President till 2019. She organized the 2007 IAA Congress in Ankara. She has international and local publications on Islamic aesthetics, general aesthetic issues, Ottoman and World architecture, modern painting and art. She teaches at the Middle East Technical University, Faculty of Architecture and has held part time teaching positions in other universities. She received the French Ministry of Culture's Chevalier in the Arts award, Turkish Chamber of Architecture's Contribution to Architecture Award, and the Best Art Critic Award in Turkey among other international and local recognitions.



**Enea Bianchi (National University of Ireland, Galway, Ireland): *Alienation and Overcoming of Art in Futurism, Dadaism and the Situationist International***

This paper explores the different critiques that three European avant-garde movements, namely Futurism, Dadaism and the Situationist International, have raised against the idea of art. In spite of sharing several claims and assumptions, such as the scorn of Western aesthetic and artistic traditions, the bourgeois mindset and the broader capitalist society, the three avant-gardes developed heterogeneous paths and reached antithetical conclusions and outcomes. To put it briefly, Futurists praised the violent expansion of the artistic domain covering all aspects of everyday life; Dadaists believed that the liberation process of the artist could not be separated from the refusal of art itself; Situationists proposed the overcoming of the Western idea of art in sight of social creativity. But how did these avant-garde understand the notion of art? And, specifically, in what terms did they interpret the relationship between art, revolution and life? By comparing and contrasting these movements, this paper discusses crucial issues of the European avant-gardes, focusing not only on art autonomy and heteronomy, but especially on the radical critique of Western art as an ‘alienated category’, following Guy Debord’s and other Situationists claims. In so doing, it wishes to rekindle the attention on how the artistic realm can be compared – so to speak – to an ideological ghetto which, nonetheless, allows creativity to assert itself in a capitalist society. The dichotomy lies then in those who are contempt with this ghetto and those who wish for the effective realization of meaning and creativity in the collective environment.

Enea Bianchi (enea.bianchi@nuigalway.ie) obtained his PhD at the National University of Ireland, Galway with a dissertation on Mario Perniola’s philosophy. He is part of the editorial board of the journal of aesthetics and cultural studies *Ágalma* ([www.agalmarivista.org](http://www.agalmarivista.org)), and member of the research group “The Philosophy and Practice of Objects / Things” (NUI Galway: <http://www.nuigalway.ie/philosophy-practice-objects-things/>). He has held conferences in China, Brasil, Peru, Ireland, Serbia, Poland and in several Italian cities. Among his latest publications: “In Praise of a Strategic Beauty” (*The Polish Journal of Aesthetics*, 2020); “The Adventures of the Thing” (*AM Journal of Art and Media Studies*, 2020); “Mario Perniola’s Early Art Theory” (*Ágalma*, 2020).

**Martta Heikkilä (University of Helsinki, Department of Aesthetics, Finland):  
*Deconstruction and the Autonomy of Art: The Avant-Garde of Différance***

In this paper, I inquire what the notion of the autonomy of art means in deconstructionist philosophy, especially in Jacques Derrida. As I suggest, the question of autonomy is more crucial to the aims of deconstructionist readings of art than it has been thought before, while it is also a highly ambivalent matter at the core of the concept of the “work of art”.

For modernist theoreticians, art’s autonomy means that it forms a conceptually unified field and differs from all other domains of expression: the aim of art is to develop the very medium of expression and form involved in each particular art. For Derrida, art belongs to the scheme of Modernist avant-garde in that it experiments with the limits of earlier art, but he also radicalizes this idea of experimentation. For him, what we call “art” is infinitely fluid regarding its concept and practices. While a reaction against Modernist theories of art, Derrida’s thinking nevertheless seems to derive from Modernism’s fundamental principles.

In Derrida, instead of autonomy provided by medium, what we understand as “art” necessarily depends on its contexts that allow a phenomenon to be treated as art. As the framework is never stable and determinable, it cannot provide any final coherence to what belongs to art either. Therefore, as I suggest, art does have autonomous value in Derrida’s questioning. While it forms part of the larger text of a culture, art differs from all other phenomena – from other texts – in that it has a special function among them. Namely, it “exposes its own exposition”, or shows that it is showing something, as Derrida brings out in *The Truth in Painting*. To be asked is the nature of such autonomy here, and how it relates to the ideas of Modernism and the avant-garde.

Martta Heikkilä is Adjunct Professor in Aesthetics at the University of Helsinki. Among her special research interests are the theory of contemporary art, aesthetics and art criticism in modern continental philosophy, particularly phenomenology and poststructuralism. Her current research project concerns the concept of the ‘work of art’ and its philosophical contexts during the past few decades. Heikkilä has written her PhD on Jean-Luc Nancy’s philosophy of art, and she is the author of the soon forthcoming book *Deconstruction and the Work of Art: Visual Arts and Their Critique in Contemporary French Thought* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2021).

**Rodrigo Duarte (Federal University of Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte, Brazil): *Mario Perniola's Concept of Tropicalism***

Among the authors who have recently dealt with aesthetics and philosophy of art, the Italian philosopher Mario Perniola (1941-2018) can be considered worldwide one of the most influential thinkers. His theoretical interests were expressed in concepts like “sex appeal of the inorganic”, “enigma”, “strategic beauty”, and “artistic shadow”, among others. Besides Perniola's more “universalistic” approaches, he was particularly interested in non-Western cultures as a kind of counterpoint (and sometimes also inspiration) to the Europe's “classical” avant-garde. Among the countries, in which was possible to find such cultures Perniola praised especially Brazil — a country in which he maintained, since the 1990s, a holiday apartment close to the shore, in state of Pernambuco, where he spent circa forty days annually. But Brazil was to him not only a vacations destiny, but also address of some very interesting theoretical approaches on its culture and society, especially in what he called the Brazilian “tropicalism”. My analysis focuses on two moments of this less known aspect of Perniola's thought: the first appears in his preface of the Nr. 10 of the Journal *Ágalma*, edited by him, entitled “Tropicalismi” (“Tropicalisms”) — a special issue of the journal, in which he gathered some of the world's best experts in that matter, approaching it from the most relevant viewpoints. The second moment of Perniola's approach to tropicalism is in his book *20th Century Aesthetics. Towards A Theory of Feeling*, where the chapter “Towards a Theory of Feeling” (in a section entitled in the Italian original “Modernizzazione brasiliana como tropicalismo” — “Brazilian Modernization as Tropicalism”), focuses more closely and extensively on the previously mentioned concept.

Rodrigo Duarte earned his PhD at the University of Kassel (Germany) in 1990 and became professor of the Philosophy Department at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (Belo Horizonte, Brazil) the same year. He was a visiting scholar at the University of California in Berkeley (USA) in 1997, a visiting professor at the Bauhaus Universität Weimar (Germany) in 2000, and a visiting professor at the Hochschule Mannheim (Germany) in 2011. He served as president of the Brazilian Association of Aesthetics (ABRE) from May 2006 to October 2014. In addition to numerous articles and chapters of collective works, in Brazil and abroad, his book publications include (amongst others): *Teoria crítica da indústria cultural* (Ed. UFMG, 2003), *Dizer o que não se deixa dizer. Para uma filosofia da expressão* (Ed. Argos, 2008), *Deplatzierungen. Aufsätze zur Ästhetik und kritischen Theorie* (Max Stein Verlag, 2009; 2. Auflage: Springer Verlag, 2017), *Pós-história de Vilém Flusser. Gênese-anatomia-desdobramentos* (Editora Annablume, 2012) and *Varia Aesthetica. Ensaio sobre arte & sociedade* (Relicário Edições, 2014).

**Curtis Carter (Marquette University, U.S.A.): *Transformations in Art East and West: Chinese Contemporary Art: Change and Tradition***

Artful currents flowing between Chinese and Western art have undoubtedly been constrained by the now multiple year Pandemic. Uncertainties generated from limits to East/West Travel and artistic exchange during the Pandemic have no doubt imposed limits on the transformative exchanges in art activated among artists East and West developed during the Twentieth century. The fruitful links both to traditional Chinese ink painting and to the foregrounds of experimental arts emerging from experiences with art and artists East/West are nevertheless reflected in the practices of Contemporary Chinese artists. This paper will explore artistic themes in the work of two Chinese contemporary artists, Pan Gong Kai and Xu Bing, whose art practices represent different ways of addressing their engagement with Chinese artistic traditions and contemporary art practices in the West. While there is much to differentiate the art practices of these two distinguished Chinese artists, they share both openness to changes in their art practices while keeping an eye on their Chinese cultural heritage.

Curtis L. Carter, Ph. D., is Donald J. Schuenke Chair, Professor of Aesthetics Department of Philosophy, Marquette University. Professional Leadership (Selected): Chairman Aesthetics Committee, FISP (International Federation of Philosophical Societies) 2018–; President International Association for Aesthetics, 2010–2013; Treasurer, International Association for Aesthetics 2016–, Executive Director/Secretary Treasurer American Society for Aesthetics, 1996-2006. President, Dance Perspectives Foundation, New York 1988 -1998. Founding Director, Haggerty Museum of Art 1984-until 2007. Recent Publishing (Selected): “On the State of Dance Philosophy,” *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 2021. “Criticism as a Form of Cognition,” *Filozofski Vestnik*, 2020. *Border Crossings: Aesthetics into the Arts*, Henan University Press 2017; Editor/Contributor, *Unsettled Boundaries: Philosophy, Art, Ethics: East/West*, 2017; “Somaesthetics and Dance,” *Contemporary Pragmatism*, vol. 12, No 1, 2015 100–115. Co-Editor, *Aesthetics and Everyday Life East/West*, 2014; Guest Editor, contributor, *Art and Social Change*, IAA Yearbook, 2009.

**Tyrus Miller (University of California, Irvine, U.S.A.): *Anaphorizing Histories: On the Entanglements of Paleo-, Neo-, and Tardo-Avantgardes***

This paper explores one of the key temporal logics of the avantgarde over its century-plus history, its paradoxical conjunctions of newness and repetition, radical origination and revival, prematurity and aging. I will focus in particular on intentional reiterations of classical avantgarde works that utilize the retrospective perspective on avant-garde “futures past” to explore the temporal conditions of the avantgarde’s historical emergence and continuation, whether as a field of possibilities for new artistic invention or as an object of critical historical analysis and study. Such pairings of an original avantgarde work conceived as an unprecedented new instance of art, an anticipatory singular example or “paleotype,” with a reiterated later instance conceived as a renewing variation, a “neotype,” or an entropic repetition, a “tardotype,” reveal figurative logics of anticipation, reanimation, fulfillment, and decay that are, I would argue, constitutive of the avantgarde, but which only become legible with the passage of time and the elongation/dissemination of its moment of origination. In turn, these pairings underscore the disruptive and reconstructive possibilities of avantgarde temporal distensions and repetitions, highlighting the constructivistic, nominalistic logics of time fundamental to the artistic orientations of the avantgarde. Drawing theoretical inspiration especially from Walter Benjamin’s montage of discontinuous historical materials carrying “temporal indices” and their re/animation in a moment of shock, as well as Theodor W. Adorno’s consideration of the “aging” of the avantgarde, I will briefly survey a set of example pairs, including Marinetti’s “Futurist Manifesto” and Enrico Baj’s “Slow Futurist Manifesto,” Stravinsky’s *The Rite of Spring* and Katarzyna Kozyra’s video animated restaging with elderly bodies, Samuel Beckett’s *Quad* and his own *Quad II*, Vladimir Tatlin’s project *Monument to the Third International* and Dan Flavin’s 39 versions of his neon *Monument to V. Tatlin*, and Kazimir Malevich’s *Suprematist Composition: Airplane Flying* and Ian Hamilton Finlay’s *Homage to Malevich*.

Tyrus Miller is dean of the School of Humanities and a professor of English and Art History at University of California, Irvine. He is the author and editor of several books on modernism and the avant-garde, including *Late Modernism: Politics, Fiction, and the Arts Between the World Wars* (1999); *Singular Examples: Artistic Politics and the Neo-Avant-Garde* (2009), and *Modernism and the Frankfurt School* (2014), and the *Cambridge Companion to Wyndham Lewis* (2016). He has also edited and translated Georg Lukács’s post-World War II essays in Hungarian, *The Culture of People’s Democracy: Hungarian Essays on Literature, Art, and Democratic Transition, 1945-1948* (2013). He has a book forthcoming from Edinburgh University Press in 2022 entitled *Georg Lukács and Critical Theory: Aesthetics, History, Utopia*.

**Danira Sovilj and Vladimir Kovač (University of Belgrade, Faculty of Architecture, Serbia): *Avant-Garde – Art that Changed the World?***

The first decades of the 20th century were marked by a great rebellion against tradition, current habits and aesthetics. This manifested itself in art through avant-garde movements throughout Europe. Through their revolutionary concepts and tendencies, these movements sought to change the overall social and cultural environment. At the same time, the character of the historical context was such that it coincided with the revolutionary aspirations of the avant-garde movements, and their art had a significant political engagement.

The ways in which members of these movements conceived their ideas and activities were varied. The aim of this research is to examine different models of action of avant-garde movements, their influences and effects on cultural and social transformation. This implies an analysis of the methods and echoes in society that the activities of avant-garde artists had. The research examines the effect of the utilitarian approach of constructivists and productivists, pointless and meditative in suprematism, critical denial of the bourgeois epoch in dada, or aggressive provocations in surrealism. Also interesting for the research is the influence of the fierce fighting spirit of the German artistic left, as well as the activation of the nationalist content in Italy.

Through research the goal is to acquire knowledge and reach conclusions about the potential to significantly influence the wider social community and human consciousness through the visual arts. The avant-garde is a suitable testing ground for research on this topic due to the large number of diverse artistic practices that, with more or less success, have pursued the same goal – a revolutionary transformation of culture and society. In addition, avant-garde art and ideas were decades ahead of their time, and rethinking this phenomenon may be significant to us in terms of comparison with today's visual arts context.

Danira Sovilj (1990) is a PhD in the field of architecture and urbanism. In 2015, she was elected as an teaching assistant in the field of visual communication and architectural graphics at the University of Belgrade – Faculty of Architecture, Department of Architecture. She specializes in architectural practice and graphic design. She has exhibited in over 30 collective exhibitions, five of which are of an international character. Since 2018 she is a member of the Association of Fine Artists of Applied Arts and Designers of Serbia (ULUPUDS), ICOGRADA (International Council of Graphic Design Association), ICSID (International Council of Societies of Industrial Design).

Vladimir Kovač (1984), PhD, is an assistant professor in the field of visual communications at the University of Belgrade - Faculty of Architecture. His scientific and pedagogical interests are visual and graphic representation, with a special focus on the role of drawings in architecture and design. As an author or co-author he participated in many international conferences and has published papers. He has also completed more than 400 projects and has won over 50 awards and recognitions in visual and graphic design competitions.

**Petja Grafenauer and Daša Tepina (University of Ljubljana, Academy of Fine Arts and Design, Slovenia): *Art, Artists, Autonomous Communities, and Rebellion: Case of Ljubljana 2020/2021***

The aim of the presentation is to document, contextualize and theorise artists rebellious actions in Slovenia in 2020-2021 and understand them as followers of avant-garde movements of the 20th century. We claim that when an art becomes confrontational, it fights for its autonomy in experience and production and can reach a point of becoming avant-garde.

Counterculture holds the power to create alternative realities, where counterpower is being built. The social movements are also determined by spaces of autonomy. From the occupation of Metelkova army barracks in 1990s a wider squatting movement arose around the region, which resulted also in the temporary occupation of Rog bike factory.

Diverse actions of a strong alliance between artist, anti-capitalist, antifascist, ecological movements and other civil structures challenging the oppressive autocratic powers will be addressed. We will also focus on actions for 2021 eviction of Metelkova 6 as the hub of the art and civil society NGO's and emphasize the violent eviction of AT Rog Ljubljana in January 2021.

When art becomes confrontational and demands the impossible, it struggles for its space and place, and becomes life itself, it becomes avant-garde. As Brane Kovič said that most of the avant-garde poetics is based on the global vision of changing the world, to establish an alternative value system and social relations through art (1989, 13). In the struggle for freedom and the definition of it, art steps from the zone of aesthetic to the field of ethics, from the zone of private/individual to a field of public/social.

Avant-guards are a critique of the existing order and are in a search of the alternatives, so we can understand them as an element of intersection between aesthetic and politics. Rancière notes that social revolution is a daughter of aesthetic revolution, which is based on self-education art, which is the formation of a new sensorium - one which signifies, a new collective ethos. So, politics of aesthetics is a way of producing its own politics, proposing to politics re-arrangements of its space, re-configuring art as a political issue or asserting itself as true politics (2010, 117–120).

Dr Petja Grafenauer (1976, Ljubljana) is an assistant professor at the ALUO Department for Theory, University of Ljubljana. She is a specialist in local Slovene and regional art after the Second World War, primarily painting and contemporary art. Since 2012 she has also been researching cross-sections of the economy and art. She regularly publishes her findings in scientific, professional and popular media. Currently she is working on a research project with a focus on analyzing dynamics of cultural exchange in the non-aligned movement.

Daša Tepina, PhD (1982, Ljubljana) is an assistant researcher for art theory at the ALUO Department for Theory, University of Ljubljana. Her main research interests include social movements, autonomous spaces and communities, anarchism, art and utopias. Currently she is working on a research project with a focus on analyzing dynamics of cultural exchange in the non-aligned movement.