

SocialEast

Forum on the Art and Visual Culture of Eastern Europe



Seminar No.7: *Art and Espionage*

1.15 – 7.00pm, Friday 27 February 2009 (with registration from 12.45pm)

Kenneth Clark Lecture Theatre, The Courtauld Institute of Art
Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 0RN



Nina Levitt, *Comrade Valentina* (2006). © Courtesy the artist

This symposium considers the involvement of art during the Cold War with espionage, both on the level of international exchange and in specific national contexts. It deals with attempts within the Eastern Bloc to monitor artists through surveillance and networks of informers, the role of art espionage as an instrument of Sovietisation, and the methods used to control the involvement of artists in the international art world. There will also be discussion of the parallel role of Western organisations in activities from cultural espionage to the use of art as a propaganda weapon. The seminar will also consider artistic responses to the phenomenon of spying and the wider legacy of artistic espionage for the topography of contemporary art.

The symposium has been organised by SocialEast Forum in collaboration with The Courtauld Institute of Art Research Forum. The SocialEast Forum is conceived as a platform for innovative, transnational research on the art and visual culture of Eastern Europe. Based on active collaboration with institutes of art history across Europe and the involvement of prominent academics, curators and artists, SocialEast is an internationally-recognised generator of groundbreaking research into the art history of Eastern Europe during the Cold War. The SocialEast Forum was initiated by Dr. Reuben Fowkes at Manchester Metropolitan University in 2006 and documentation of the six preceding seminars can be found on www.socialeast.org.

To book a place: £15 (£10 concessions) Please complete a booking form (available at either <http://www.courtauld.ac.uk/researchforum/conferences/current.shtml> or <http://www.socialeast.org>) and send it with a cheque made payable to 'Courtauld Institute of Art' to: Research Forum Events Co-ordinator, Courtauld Institute of Art Research Forum, Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 0RN. For credit card bookings call 020 7848 2785/2909. For further information, send an e-mail to ResearchForumEvents@courtauld.ac.uk

Organised by Dr Reuben Fowkes and Dr Sarah Wilson

PROGRAMME

- 12.45 – 13.15 Registration
- 13.15 - 15.15 **SESSION 1 – WEST-EAST ART ESPIONAGE**
- Mark Boswell (Filmmaker, San Francisco Art Institute): *Gaczyne (or) Deep Inside the KGB Infiltration of Walt Disney's Brain*
- László Beke (Institute of Art History, Budapest): *Communication and Disinformation: Hungarian Aspects of the Activity of the Cambridge Five*
- Catherine Fraixe (Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Art de Bourges): *Inventing a European Art: US Involvement in the Struggle for a United Europe*
- Kädi Talvoja (Kumu Art Museum, Tallinn): *Missionary Work of an Pollockian in Moscow in 1957*
- Discussion
- 15.15 - 15.30 SHORT BREAK
- 15.30 - 16.40 **SESSION 2 – SECRET POLICE AND ARTISTIC UNDERGROUND**
- Doina Anghel (National Museum of Art Bucharest) and Raluca Voinea (Curator, E-cart.ro): *Surveiller et Partir: Lists, Informers Networks, Espionage, Cultural Censorship During 1945-1989 in Romania*
- Kata Krasznahorkai (University of Hamburg): *Code Name: "Schwitters". The First Hungarian Happening in the Reflection of a Secret Agents Report*
- Łukasz Ronduda (Center of Contemporary Art, Warsaw): *Neo-Avant-Garde Movements in the Polish Secret Services Files*
- Discussion
- 16.40 - 17.10 COFFEE/TEA BREAK
- 17.10 - 19.00 **SESSION 3 - CONTEMPORARY ART AND ESPIONAGE**
- Anthony Downey (Sotheby's Institute, London): *The Lives of Others: Artur Zmijewski's 'Repetition' and the Ethics of Surveillance*
- Nina Levitt (Artist, York University, Toronto): *And She Was: Installations Inspired by Women in WWII*
- Franciska Zólyom (Curator, Institute of Contemporary Art Dunaújváros): *Missing Evidence: an Artistic Attempt to Reconstruct the Story of an American Superspy*
- Paolo Cirio (Artist, Italy): *The Big Plot*
- Discussion
- 19.00 RECEPTION and Celebratory launch of the **special issue of *Third Text* (96/2009)** on Socialist Eastern Europe.

The special issue of *Third Text*, which is guest edited by Dr. Reuben Fowkes, includes essays by leading theoreticians dealing with the problematic of how to rewrite the art history of Europe after the Cold War to take into account the multiple histories of the countries of Eastern Europe. It also highlights the work of a new generation of scholars whose approach to European art history is comparative, pluralistic and goes beyond the binary oppositions that has structured much thinking about Modernism, Socialist Realism, and Conceptual Art. The thematic areas covered range from the modalities of Socialist Realism under Stalin, the achievements of the Post Avant Garde in Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia, to public attitudes to the socialist past and recent reflections on the cultural legacy of East European socialism in contemporary art.