

Assessing Quality in Art History

The RIHA (Research Institutes in the History of Art)

The resolution was passed by the RIHA annual assemblies in Brussels (2010) and in Prague (2011) as a result of seminars on the theme of “Assessing Quality in Art History” held in June 2011 at the Sterling and Frances Clark Arts Institute in Williamstown, Massachusetts, USA. The resolution was translated from English by N.E. Feodorova, its publication was prepared by D.V. Trubochkin.

ART OF EASTERN CHRISTIANITY

Vladimir Sarabianov

The Image of the Priesthood in the Paintings of Kiev’s St. Sophia. Part II. Program of St. Sophia Cathedral and Old Russian Murals of the XI–XII Centuries

The article is a second part of the research which is dedicated to the phenomenon of the image of priesthood in Old-Russian painting of Pre-Mongol period. While the first part of the study is dedicated to the close examination of this theme in the murals of Saint Sophia of Kiev, the second part reveals the same tendencies in the Old Russian murals of the second half of the XI – XII centuries which develop the paradigm of Saint Sophia of Kiev. The main feature of these programs is the multitude of persons (bishops, deacons, Old Testament priests), who are deposed not only in the altar part but in the side apses, and in the east part of the naos. Other “Sophian” standards such as the frequent presence of the priests of Old Testament or the image of Jesus Christ the Priest also demonstrate the determinative role of the program of Saint Sophia of Kiev. The universal formula of the image of priesthood which had been realized in the murals of Saint Sophia got the new actuality in the period of the XIIth century when the Church was comprehended as the only source of political stability and unity of the state.

Keywords: prelates, high priests, apostles, deacons, painting program, iconographic conception, image of priesthood, church hierarchy, Byzantine tradition, continuity, medieval Russian painting of the pre-Mongol period, Byzantine art of the post-iconoclastic period, church decoration, mosaics, murals, iconography.

Maria Grinberg

Problems of Study Illuminated Manuscripts Minology of Simeon Metaphrastes XI–XII Centuries

The article presents an analysis of the main aspects of study of the illuminated manuscripts of the Menologion of Symeon Metaphrastes (second half of 11th — beginning of XIIth century). Special attention is given to the problems of codicological, and iconographic features of the illustrated volumes (44 manuscripts including fragments). Paleographical issues of the GIM Syn.gr.9 (1063) and other closely related manuscripts are examined in several contexts. The most important one constitutes the controversy over the provenance of the group of manuscripts from several Constantinopolitan scriptoria, including those of the “copiste du Métaphraste” and the Studiou monastery. The attribution and role of the GIM Syn.gr.9 in the total amount

of manuscripts that came down to us are also taken into consideration in this regard. A historiographical analysis permits to approach scantily explored aspects of the topic and to point problems which need to be addressed.

Keywords: Byzantine art, manuscript, GIM Syn.gr.9, codicology, historiography.

Svetlana Maltseva

Some problems of Serbian Medieval Architecture Periodization. The Term “Morava school”

The article reviews the history of research on the last period of Serbian medieval architecture usually referred to as “Morava school”. The author analyzes different concepts put forward by researchers in the past and sorts out the most important problems which remain unresolved up to date. These include the general classification of Serbian medieval architecture, definition of the main tendencies and logic in its development, distinguishing the main traits of its regional features in the 14th and 15th centuries, as well as finding out the character and measure of its involvement in the general evolution in Byzantine Paleologan architecture.

Keywords: Serbian medieval architecture, Byzantine architecture, periodization of Serbian medieval art, triconch, Morava school, Morava architecture, historiography of Serbian medieval architecture.

THEORY OF ART

Alexei Kurbanovsky

“Phantoms and Rippers”: Russian Nihilist Terrorists of the 1860-1880s in Painting and in Early Mass Culture

When late XIX century Russian painters introduced pressing social and political matters in their art, they followed the doctrine of social engagement championed by Pierre-Joseph Proudhon. This essay projects artistic developments against simultaneous rise of early mass culture and Nihilist terrorism in Russia (culminating in the Regicide of 1881). Political – and “aesthetic terror” that is, conscious undermining of the Academic “normative of the beautiful”, – were both legitimized by the appeal to the people, and both mediated by mass culture. The essay argues some analogy between Positivist “vernacular studies” (ethnography, anthropology, myth theory) – and gradual shift in artists’ minds from folkloristic motifs to the realization of primeval sacrificial function of art. Connections are suggested between the phenomenon of (Russian) political terrorism and the ritual murder of “sacred priest-king” in James George Frazer’s “The Golden Bough”, as well as with Friedrich Nietzsche’s meditations on the “death of God”. Creation was interpreted at this time as the ritual of “binding magic energies” which, when freed, would be able to transform not only art but social organization.

Keywords: positivism, nihilism, terror/ism, mass culture, debasement/vulgarization, folklore, magic, ritual.

Boris Sokolov

V.V. Kandinsky's Theory of Non-Objective Art in the 1920s-30s. From Social Prophet to Art Messiah

The article deals with the late stage in V.V. Kandinsky's theory of new art and with his changing views on art's future and its social role. On the basis of Kandinsky's papers, pronouncements, and interviews of the 1920s-30s the author shows his change from the radical ideas (of a new world born in catastrophes) to the conception of parallel analyses and synthesis in art forms, and co-existence of figurative and abstract art ("great realism" and "great abstraction"). Kandinsky's social position is also discussed: in the 1930s he talked more about the problems of contemporary society being divorced from spirituality; in the "purity" of new art he sees the creative element that saves humanity from turning into "a chewing and digesting mechanism".

Keywords: Kandinsky, avant-garde, art theory, non-objective art, art of the 1930s, dehumanization of art, Messianism.

Evgeny Kondratiev

Cyberarchitecture: Expressive Possibilities and Aesthetic Dimension

The article analyzes the aesthetic meaning of digital experiments in contemporary architecture. It considers the phenomena of "non-uniform architecture", or "blob-architecture" based on nonlinear, biomorphic structures. The paradoxical character of such structures consists in algorithmic imitation of natural prototypes. The author uses the category of "hyper-surface" (J. Deleuze) to elaborate the approach to the understanding of architectural ambiguity. The author also addresses to the approach of an American critic S. Perella according which the semiotic interpretation of dynamic architectural form as a kind of text should be widen with topological theories. The article reveals theoretical propositions of the Los Angeles School of Urbanism, which constitute a new conception of postindustrial urbanism. The author introduces the concept of the "radical digital solipsism" into the actual aesthetic theory. The article throws new light on the aesthetic interpretation of contemporary architecture.

Keywords: nonlinear architecture, biomorphic structure, imitation, ambiguity, hyper-surface, topology, postindustrial urbanism, digital solipsism.

Andrey Burov

Artistic Function of Systemic Recurrence in Photography

The article analyzes the origins and development of the phenomenon of systemic recurrence as an example of a specific element of photography – "photo phrase". This phenomenon has its own specific features and is able to perform artistic and aesthetic tasks, primarily through repetition of a single image.

Keywords: photography, repetition, difference, visually, «photo phrase», «phraseism».

Alexandr Novikov, Nadezhda Mankovskaya

Philosophy of Art as a Vocation. On V.V. Bychkov's 70's anniversary

The essay analyzes V.V. Bychkov's contribution to the philosophy of art and to the theory and history of aesthetics. It demonstrates that this renowned aesthetician has

developed a version of contemporary aesthetics that he calls postnonclassic aesthetics. Its structure (1. classic aesthetics; 2. non-classics; 3. aesthetic virtualistics) and the contents of the second and third sections were derived primarily in the process of his analysis of contemporary art. Non-classics and aesthetic virtualistics in fact constitute a philosophy of the avant-garde, modernist, and contemporary art and include a number of paracategories appropriate to these types of art. In addition to that, the essay demonstrates that Bychkov has fundamentally developed and introduced into academic circles the hitherto unknown history of Orthodox aesthetics, from the early Church Fathers to the Russian twentieth century inclusively. He devoted several substantial monographs to each of its periods: Patristic aesthetics; Byzantine aesthetics; Old Russian aesthetics; Russian theurgic aesthetics.

Keywords: philosophy of art, aesthetics, avant-garde, modernism, postmodernism, virtualistics, Orthodox aesthetics.

EPOCH. ARTIST. IMAGE

Alla Aronova

Fire Gardens of Empress Elizaveta Petrovna

The article is dedicated to the art of fireworks in Russia in the first half of the XVI–II century. Particular attention is paid to fire entertainments of Elizabethan times. Widespread graphic material (prints and drawings) is analyzed to reveal compositional techniques of fireworks displays. Their characteristics are traced, as well as the changes that occurred in the device fireworks for 1700–1750. The article analyzes the relationship between the set design of fireworks and parks planning of the first half of the XVIII century.

Keywords: fireworks, garden, illumination, ephemeral architecture, Home Office gun, Academy of Sciences, Engraving Chamber, Anna Ivanovna, Elizaveta Petrovna, Jacob von Staehlin, Mikhail Lomonosov.

Khlopina Elena

The Problem of “Primitive” in the Russian and American Portraiture of XVIII–XIXth Centuries

The author examines place and role of primitive in pictorial tradition, relationships of “high” and “low” in art, analyses what was the integration of “neophytes” – America and Russia – into the European art. In this study the special attention is given to the analysis of the artistic language and the pictorial qualities of the “primitive” paintings.

Keywords: painting, portrait, primitive, tradition of painting, Russia, America, archetype, coloristic.

Anastasia Loseva

Impressions V.D. Polenov about Egypt in the Context of Memories of Russian Pilgrims and Travelers of the second half of the XIX Century

The article focuses on the first trip of the artist V.D. Polenov to the Middle East and his stay in Egypt. The study of this material motivated the author to set two tasks. First, to

compare the epistolary and picturesque heritage of the artist, preserved in the course of that journey, given that Polenov as a painter and as a novelist pointed different characters and episodes. The article traces how the epistolary and picturesque material matches and varies. The second task involves assigning letters of the artist with notes and recollections of Russian pilgrims and travelers to the East. The article reveals the matches in the material seen by the artist and expressed in his paintings as well as in his literary heritage. *Keywords:* V.D. Polenov, S.S. Abamek-Lasarev, Egypt, Middle East, letters, Russian pilgrims, traveler, drawing, landscape, Mamontovsky circle, archeology, pyramid, temple.

Olga Davydova

The “Overtones” of Russian Symbolism. F. Botkin, A. Savinov, N. Hafkina and other Artists in the Context of International Modern Style.

The article presents a historical and conceptual research dedicated to the creators of Russian symbolism in the context of European art of the late XIX – early XX centuries. F. Botkin, N. Hafkina and A. Savinov were either forgotten or insufficiently studied by the historians of art. The fates of these artists are united under the general motive «The garden of oblivion» as the metaphorical point, as well as by iconography of emotional and imaginative space of their works. The art of these masters demonstrates not only decorative and poetic stream of Russian *modern*, but also the international version of this style in the spirit of expanding boundaries of Western symbolism, enabling to follow its principles and features in a more specific and consistent way.

Keywords: Russian symbolism, international modern, iconography, decorative, poetical, garden, oblivion, memory, soul.

Polina Trusova

Maurice Denis. “Legend of St. Hubert”: between Symbolism and Classicism

The article is devoted to the cycle of painted panels by Maurice Denis (1870–1943), the founder and spiritual leader of the Nabis group. The cycle “Legend of St. Hubert” had a special place in the career of that symbolist artist signaling a turn from decorative painting in the spirit of Gauguin’s “synthetism” to generalized forms of classical art and from symbolist to religious mysticism. The author dwells on signs presaging that turn to classical tradition found in the said cycle. Attention is given to the artist’s theoretical views reflecting the social and political trends of the epoch. Analyzed is the role of Baron Cochin who commissioned the cycle; discussed is the ideological situation that influenced Denis’ outlook.

Keywords: panel, symbolism, plastic equivalents, neo-traditionalism, naturalism, classicism, positivism.

Dmitry Tokarev

“Nothing Has Changed for Two Thousand Years”. Russian Theme in the Painting of Alphonse Mucha

The article deals with the “Russian” pictures by the Czech painter A. Mucha, including “Abolition of serfdom in Russia”, as well as a series of photos made in 1913.

The Moscow photos of Mucha, a well-known graphic artist and one of the main figures of the “Modern style”, reflect his interest in the dynamic images: the artist liked to take pictures of people in motion and this spontaneous, “quick” photographing helped him to find new means of expressiveness. When working on his pictures and posters, Mucha used to do preliminary photos of models (he sat himself quite often) however in Moscow his experience of director and actor was supplemented by a practice of attentive observation. Particular emphases are placed on the fact that some figures were simply copied from the photos to the painting “Abolition of serfdom in Russia”, so that even the angle of photographing was carefully preserved. In order to prove an eventual influence of the Russian painter V. Surikov on his Czech colleague, the article proposes a comparative analysis of the “Abolition of serfdom in Russia” and of the “Morning of Streltsy’s execution”.

Keywords: applied graphic arts, décor, playbill, poster, pastel, foreshortening, model, topos.

Anastasia Sirenko

The Cimmerian School of Painting. Konstantin Bogayevsky, Mikhael Latri

The Crimea was a rich source of subjects for generations of Russian painters. The most familiar names in that line are I.K. Aivazovsky and his followers A.I. Fessler, L.F. Lagorio, and A.V. Ganzen. They were inspired by the beauty of the Black Sea to depict its moods in their works. The artists of the so-called Cimmerian School – K.F. Bogayevsky and M.P. Latri – while basing their art on predecessors, turned to the ancient land of Cimmerians with its ragged beauty and antiquity which absorbed the culture of many passing tribes. This article deals with that Cimmerian School of painting which emerged at the turn of the XIX–XX centuries in the eastern part of the Crimea.

Keywords: the land of Cimmerians, the Cimmerian School of painting, K.F. Bogayevsky, M.P. Latri, Russian art at the turn of the XIX–XX centuries; heroic-historical landscapes, German school of painting, the Munich Secession; Izdebsky’s Salons.

Yulia Spiridonova

To the History of Existence of N. Roerich Artistic Heritage in the Collections of Paris

The article presents search results of heritage of N.K. Roerich in museums and private collections of Paris. The author made an attempt to recover fragments of existence of art pieces with unknown location. In particular, the reconstruction of a chain of museum’s transfers led to discovery of the work of Roerich in the National Museum of Modern Art.

Keywords: N. Roerich, Museum of Decorative Arts, Museum of Luxembourg, religious paintings, sketches for Parkhomovka church.

Elena Gribonosova-Grebneva

The Image of Height in K.S. Petrov-Vodkin’s Art

The article considers the antinomy of a synthesis between an “icon” and a “picture” in the works by K.S. Petrov-Vodkin. The planetary spheroid image of height found in

many of his works not only reflects the chief vector of his world outlook searches, but defines the semantic and plastic multi-layer nature of his art opening a lively dialogue between a realistic approach to the pictorial space while enriching it with symbolism.
Keywords: K.S. Petrov-Vodkin, XX century art, P.A. Florensky, F.Nietzsche, the image of height, icon, picture, Khvalynsk, spheroid perspective, Russian cosmism, antinomy of cognition, geotropism, Volphil, artistic synthesis.

Anna Gerasimova

The Ceremonial Crossbows from Braunschweig

The styling of late XVIth century German crossbows from Braunschweig is discussed as an example of specific language of the court culture, which has been traditionally used by the masters of international Mannerism. Iconological analysis of the styling reveals a well-considered artistic program based on a complex symbolic system, as was required for the decoration of ritually significant objects in the late XVIth century.
Keywords: Crossbow, ceremonial weapon, Germany, XVIth century, decorative and applied arts, international Mannerism, court culture, iconology.

Alexander Zhilin

Ornamentation of Cold Steel and Firearms of XVII century in Russia

The article deals with the peculiarities in ornamenting cold steel weapons and firearms, of defensive armament and military outfit in the XVII century. This is treated as a sample of Russia's general decorative applied art of the late middle ages which was marked noticeably even in the XVI century with a mixture of ancient Russian and foreign traditions (borrowed from Iran, Turkey, and Western Europe).
Keywords: ornamental weaponry, cold steel arms, firearms, defensive armament, artifact, decorative applied art, Russia, tradition.

ARTISTIC LIFE HISTORY

Elena Borovskaya

The Art of Drawing Applied to Crafts. The St. Petersburg School of Drawing and the Development of Decorative Applied Arts (1839–1917)

The article raises the questions of expert approach towards the problems of art education and decorative applied art. On the example of the St. Petersburg School of Drawing the author traces the development of Russia's art in the mid-XIX century and shows its stylistic variety. This is done on the material of little-known sources from the history of St. Petersburg School of Drawing whose role is discussed in forming the style of young artists and in the development of national decorative art.
Keywords: history of Russian art, St. Petersburg School of Drawing, art education, decorative applied art.

Maya Semina

The First Soviet Pinakothek in Ryazan (1918–1938)

The article traces the story of formation and evolution of what was known as “the first Soviet pinakothek” in Ryazan. It was organized as a department of the Ryazan

city museum and later that picture gallery passed its 20th anniversary in the status of the Regional art museum. In different periods it was headed by Andrey Fesenko, an experienced Art historian, an alumnus of Sorbonne, and his pupil Georgy Vagner who rose to be a noted expert on medieval Russian art. The author shows the sequence of the gallery's changing expositions reflecting the process of its development. For the first time researched and systematized are the archive documents on acquisitions of paintings and graphic works from the State Museum Fund.

Keywords: the Ryazan museum, picture gallery, Narcompros, Russian art of the XIX–XX centuries, Filipp Malyavin, Andrey Fesenko, Georgy Vagner, the Tretyakov Gallery.

Boris Ioganson

The Initial Thirty Years of Moscow's Artists' Union (1932–1962)

The article considers peculiarities of art life in the USSR from 1932 to 1962 through the prism of a thirty years' period in the history of Moscow's Artists' Union. On the basis of specific facts the author shows the ambiguity of that time when opposite trends co-existed in ideological campaigns and in real life of the artists. While leftist works of the early XX century were removed from the museum expositions and attacks were launched at the formalist art, we find evidence in the press that many of the "formalists" actively participated in many exhibitions within the country and abroad. Yet official powers practiced a dictate of official ideology through artists loyal to it.

Keywords: representative art of the 1932–1962, art groupings, Moscow's Artists' Union, socialist realism, formalism.

MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ART PROBLEMS

Nadezhda Musyankova

Kitsch in Representative Art of the XX Century's Last Quarter

The article considers the elements of kitsch used in painting, sculpture, and photography in the last quarter of the XX century. The deliberate appropriation of such elements by actual artists proved to be an effective strategy for getting fame and profit in the context of contemporary culture. The popularity of such works was reached through mechanisms of mass culture, since kitsch commands easy perception without any intellectual effort. The author cites examples of interpreting kitsch by most successful Russian and Western artists: V. Dubosarsky and A. Vinogradov, T. Novikov, V. Mamyshev-Monro, A. Petrova, D. Kuns, Piere and Jille, L. Rezun-Zvezdochotova, S. Sherman.

Keywords: kitsch, glamour, camp, mass culture, contemporary art, V. Dubosarsky and A. Vinogradov, K. Zvezdochotov, M. Konstantinova, T. Novikov, V. Mamyshev-Monro, Ya. Morimura, D. Kuns, Piere and Jille, L. Rezun-Zvezdochotova, S. Sherman.

Svetlana Kazakova

Science Art: Quality Criteria for Contemporary Art in the Cultural Context

The article analyzes the impact of the industrial and technological culture on the art criteria of a certain time period in history. The crisis of academic art school and the following revolutionary changes in art and culture are considered in the context of the fundamental changes of the material and technical basis. The author comes to a conclusion that the significant potential of the «Science art» as an integral and powerful artistic trend, meets the essential criteria – adequacy to the contemporary human culture.

Keywords: culture, contemporary art, scientific art, the quality criteria of art, industrial and technological culture.

Maria Oganesyants

Museum Curatorship as a Factor of Contemporary Art's Actualization.

(Based on the activities of the Department of Contemporary Art at the Russian Museum)

The article describes the prominent figure of actual culture – the curator, his role in the formation of museum's fund, in creating and replenishing strategies, in the exhibition policy as well as in the recognition of the contemporary artists and new trends in art. The object of study is the curatorial activities of the leaders of the Contemporary arts Department of the Russian Museum in 1920–1930s (N.N. Punin) and 1990–2000s (A.D. Borovsky). This time frame allowed to detect changes in conceptions and forms of the museum's curatorship, taking into consideration the context of ideas typical to the nature of contemporary art and the institutional museum politics concerning new art directions. The author proposes to determine the value of the curator at the museum by the degree of contemporary art's actualization in the curator's program, which depends on the presence of definition of «modernity» in art and on the ways of its interpretation.

Keywords: Art museum, curator, contemporary art, actualization, exhibition activities, avant-garde.

CONFERENCES

Mikhail Trenikhin

Reflection on Symbolism in Moscow

The article traces the key lines of the international conference entitled “Symbolism as Art Trend Viewed from the XXI Century” held in Moscow 16–19 April, 2012. The author presents in brief the most interesting reports made at the conference and gives a synopsis of the study of symbolism as a phenomenon. The conference was a logical sequel of other projects organized by the State Research Institute of Art History and the Joint Research Group “European Symbolism and Art Nouveau”.