

Summary

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Abstracts

Ovanes Akopyan

Monica Centanni: “The real killer of Warburg's legacy was Gombrich”

In October the State Institute for Art Studies hosted the Second International Sarabianov Congress of Art Historians under the title “The History of Art and ‘Rejected Knowledge’: from the Hermetic Tradition to the 21st Century.” This year marks the 150th anniversary of Aby Warburg, who carried out pioneering work on this topic, so it was natural that one of the Congress sessions was devoted to his legacy. Monica Centanni is a Professor at IUAV University Venice and chief editor of *Engramma. La tradizione classica nella memoria occidentale*, which specializes in study of the classical tradition in Western culture (Warburg’s lifelong interest). She took part in the Congress and here discusses Warburg, Gombrich, the Renaissance and the future of the Warburg Institute in conversation with Ovanes Akopyan.

Keywords: Aby Warburg, the Mnemosyne Atlas, the Warburg Institute, Ernst Gombrich, Marsilio Ficino, Engramma.

Mikhail Iampolski

Allegory in the Painting of Vitaly Komar

The article considers the latest art project by Vitaly Komar, *The Allegory of Justice*, and shows that, in this cycle of works, allegory has to be understood broadly, not merely as the conventional denotation of a concept (that of justice), but as a way of upholding and at the same time destroying univocal signification. One way of broadening the import of allegory is the device, much used by the artist, of comparing forms on the basis of similarity or analogy. The second is an understanding of allegory as a ready-made in the spirit of Duchamp. This expansion of the understanding

of allegory prevents the signification of images from being narrowed down to a durable personification of a concept, but, on the contrary, expands that signification, generating a complex internal circulation of meanings.

Keywords: allegory, symbol, Justice, Nemesis, Liberty, shadow, magic, Ouroboros, Vitaly Komar.

Olga Medvedkova

In the Beginning, There was Fire. Vitruvius and the Origin of the City. Authorized translation by Nikolai Molok

The article deals with some issues in the *Ten Books* of Vitruvius and illustrations from various editions of the treatise, which appeared in the first half of the 16th century. At the beginning of the Second book Vitruvius describes how forest fire led to the discovery of language (the origin of language), the formation of communities (the origin of society) and construction of the first dwellings (the origin of architecture). For Vitruvius fire is an architectural locus, the symbolic hearth of civilization. It is not merely destructive, but is a cleansing force that enables a return to pristine simplicity. In terms of urban planning, this means that fire provides the opportunity to rebuild a city, giving it a harmony, which it previously lacked. Fire is the limit point of the urban utopia: the devouring flames create a tabula rasa, without which demiurgic, creation, ex-nihilo, cannot occur.

Keywords: Vitruvius, the origin of architecture, primitive dwelling, fire, urbanism, utopia, Fra Giocondo, Raphael, Peruzzi, Cesariano, Martin, Goujon, Ryff.

Yulia Patronnikova

Between Ideal and Reality: Filarete’s *Libro architetonico* and Other Urban Planning Projects of the Renaissance

The article looks at how the *Libro architetonico* (“Treatise on Architecture”) of Filarete, and other urban planning projects of the Renaissance reflect a harmony and balance between the ideal and the real. Filarete’s book, which is among the most interesting works of architectural thought of the time, presents the ideal city of Sforzinda in great detail, including its social space, taking its cue from the reality of the time, and reflects the world-building principle that was characteristic of early Renaissance consciousness. Sforzinda can be regarded as a real project, since it was connected with the reality of Italian towns. This is in contrast with 16th century projects, where the dream of an ideal world assumes an increasingly utopian character.

Keywords: Renaissance, Leon Battista Alberti, Antonio Filarete, *Libro architetonico*, Sforzinda, ideal city, project, Hypnerotomachia Poliphili, island of Cythera, Leonardo da Vinci, Anton Francesco Doni, Bernard Palissy.

Tatiana Shovskaya

Stage Design for a Theatrical Performance in Honour of the House of Habsburg in Prague Castle (1617)

The theatrical performance *Phasma Dionysiacum Pragense* was staged on 5 February 1617 in Prague Castle before the Emperor Matthias Habsburg and his court. The

performance, which included music, singing and ballet, was part of a three-day shrovetide carnival. The *Phasma Dionysiacum* was presented in a specially built temporary theatre with Baroque scenery in the hall of the Royal Palace, and enhanced by the use of sound and light effects as well as stage machinery. The event is documented by several contemporary descriptions and an engraving. The author uses these sources to reconstruct the temporary theatre and mise en scène, placing them in the context of the theatre architecture and stage design of the period.

Keywords: Phasma Dionysiacum Pragense, early Baroque scenography, Habsburg court theatre, carnival in the first part of the 17th century.

Olga Petrunina

Cockpit-in-Court: the Theatre of Inigo Jones

Inigo Jones was the first English architect to refer in his work to Italian Renaissance forms. His surviving drawings include the design of the Cockpit-in-Court theatre, a structure at Whitehall that had been used for cock fighting before its redesign as a venue for stage presentations. The article deals with the creation of the new theatre, analyzing specific features of organization of the stage and auditorium, which reflect the influence of Italian theatre architecture on Inigo Jones.

Keywords: Inigo Jones, Cockpit-in-Court, cockpit, English theatre of the 17th century, Teatro Olimpico, Andrea Palladio, theatre architecture.

Sergei Fofanov

Greenberg vs. Kemenov. The Irrelevance of Two Cultures

In 1947 *VOKS Bulletin*, the official magazine of the USSR's All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, published an article by the prominent Soviet art historian and art critic, Vladimir Kemenov, entitled "Aspects of Two Cultures". Kemenov criticized the "degeneration" of contemporary bourgeois western art and lavished praise on the new "healthy and optimistic" direction of Soviet artists practising socialist realism. The text was published in English and read by many western art professionals. One of the first reactions was from Clement Greenberg who published a sharp riposte to Kemenov's text and the assessment of the state of contemporary western art, which he voiced. Greenberg was particularly dismayed by Kemenov's harsh anti-American rhetoric. Both texts are extraordinary documents of cultural politics from the first years of the Cold War.

Keywords: Cold War, cultural politics, art criticism, socialist realism, propaganda, abstract expressionism, ideology, *VOKS Bulletin*, *Partisan Review*, degeneration, totalitarianism, Clement Greenberg, Vladimir Kemenov, American way of Life.

Clement Greenberg

Irrelevance versus Irresponsibility. Translated by Olga Serebryanaya

Clement Greenberg wrote the article "Irrelevance versus Irresponsibility" in 1948 in response to a publication by the British poet, writer and critic, Geoffrey Grigson, and to

an article by the Soviet art critic, Vladimir Kemenov, "Aspects of Two Cultures", which appeared in the English-language version of the Moscow periodical, *VOKS Bulletin*, in 1947. Greenberg was dismayed both by Kemenov's aesthetic views and by his anti-American diatribe. Greenberg's article, excerpts from which are published in Russian for the first time, is an important document reflecting controversies over figurative and abstract art in the context of the Cold War. The translation is from: *Clement Greenberg, "Irrelevance versus Irresponsibility"*, *Partisan Review*, 1948, Vol. 15, No. 5, pp. 573-579. Parts of the translation were published in *Aperto*, No. 2, autumn 2016.

Keywords: socialist realism, abstractionism, "bourgeois" art, *VOKS Bulletin*, totalitarianism, Clement Greenberg, Vladimir Kemenov.

Anna Florkovskaya

"Abstract art is hooliganism on a world scale". Contemporary French Art at Moscow Exhibitions (1957, 1961)

This article looks at relations between modern French and Soviet art in the period of Khrushchev's Thaw, focusing on the French National Exhibition, held in Moscow in 1961, and events in artistic life that preceded it, such as the 6th World Festival of Youth & Students in 1957. Until now the French National Exhibition has only received passing mention in various memoirs and studies, and the history of its preparation and conduct is here presented for the first time. Archive documents reveal debates between the organizers over ideological and aesthetic matters as well the first reactions of visitors to the sight of new art after 20 years, during which socialist realism held absolute sway. French art was represented at the exhibition by painters of the Second School of Paris and figurative artists developing the art traditions of the 1920s-1930s. These works were highly relevant to young Soviet artists of the Thaw period. The article also describes the importance of the French Exhibition of 1961 for the Russian émigré community and gives examples of how various Soviet artists and collectors perceived what they saw at the Exhibition.

Keywords: art politics, abstract art, Second School of Paris, unofficial art.

Alexei Kurbanovsky

Headless Horsemen: Official Soviet Art of the 1960s-1970s in the Context of International Pop Culture

The article examines correspondences between Soviet art of the 1960s (the co-called "severe style" and "the art of memory") and some aspects of contemporaneous pop art in the UK and US. Similarities are found in the existential motifs of "sacrifice-waste", mythologizing tendencies, interpretation of folklore and the aesthetic heritage of the past, as well as in some formal devices. The mediating agency of this convergence was mass culture, which led to the formation of a consumer mentality and – in both the USSR and the West – to a superficial "pop synthesis" of the contemporary and the traditional, of what was creative and what was borrowed. The victory of mass culture, pop art and collective consciousness "aestheticized" reality and formed the art landscape of post-modernity.

Keywords: pop art, mass culture, consumption, consumerism, well-being, waste, sacrifice, severe style, folklore, heritage, counterculture.