

# ПРОБЛЕМИ НА ИЗКУСТВОТО

ART STUDIES QUARTERLY

2023 **2**

Тема на броя: Лица на модерността / Faces of Modernity



# ПРОВОБАЕМ НА ИЗКУСТВОТО

## ART STUDIES QUARTERLY

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на науките – София

ГОДИНА 56-а 2023

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# От съставителя

## Editorial

Пределното време задава нужда да актуализираме представа и отново да очертаваме *Лица на модерността* в културата и изкуството. Темата на броя вдъхнови редица изследователи, а публикуваните текстове проектират нови времеви и пространствени акценти в континуума на модерната епоха. Взаимодействието между пресичащи се траектории създава структурната ос, която поддържа във функционираща цялост широкия диапазон на тематичния подбор. Проф. Андроника Мартонова пресреща двете си линии на научен интерес в полето на киноизкуството – кинокултурата в България от първата половина XX век и изкуството и културата на Далечния Изток. Ерудицията на автора лесно улавя пулса на модернизирания се живот в двете периферни за генериращите центрове култури. Отново на кръстопът, но вече на дисциплинни полета, гл. ас. д-р Жана Дамянова ще проследи в текстове от визуалната семиотика и история на изкуството пътя от религиозната образност до абстракцията у Василий Кандински. Друг, изявен вече съветски художник – Ерик Булатов, фокусира вниманието на д-р Лиляна Милкова. Аналитичният ѝ текст ще открие концептуалното пространство в неговите платна като пресичане на реалности – на идеологията и на свободната творческа изява. Взаимодействието на образ и текст, но вече в полето на детската илюстрация в България през 1960-те и 1970-те години, отбелязва трайният изследователски интерес на доц. д-р Катерина Гаджева. Модернизацията на социалистическата действителност, преведена чрез художествения език, достига до малкия читател и формира търсения идеологически патос в отношението към родината. Пресичането на родната традиция и модернизирания образност в сферата на предметния свят разглежда авторът на настоящото въведение във фокуса на Юбилейната изложба на приложните изкуства от 1960-а година. Стремешът към индустриализация на новия обществен строй в противотежестта на технологични и творчески проблеми акцентират изложението. Видимото до днес лице на модернизирания се художествен живот в България – галерията на ул. *Раковски* 125 обстойно разглежда Наташа Ноева. Детайлното проучване на изграждането и реконструкцията на съюзната галерия очертава перипетиите на отстоявания статут. Рецензираните издания доизграждат галерията от образи: на законодателя в изследователското поле на модерната епоха в нашия културен контекст – доц. д-р Ружа Маринска (гл. ас. д-р Нона Петкова); на европеизираната модерност в творчеството на Христо Берберов (проф. д. н. Благовеста Иванова); на осъвременената *Алегория на културното наследство* на Франсоаз Шое (гл. ас. д-р Владимир Димитров) и на „разомагьосването на вълшебните приказки“ в книгата на доц. д-р К. Гаджева (гл. ас. д-р Юлия Йорданова-Панчева). С благодарност към професионализма на авторите, анонимните рецензенти и екипа на списанието: Мария Митева.



The time of constant change sets the need to update the notions and to once again outline the *Faces of Modernity* in culture and art. The theme of the issue inspired a number of researchers, and the published texts project new temporal and spatial accents into the continuum of the modern era. The interaction between the intersecting trajectories creates the structural axis that maintains the wide range of thematic selection in a functioning whole. Prof. Andronika Martonova meets her two lines of scientific interest in the field of cinema art – the cinema culture in Bulgaria from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the art and culture of the Far East. The author's erudition easily captures the pulse of modernising life in the two cultures peripheral to the generating centres. Again at a crossroads, but already on disciplinary fields, Asst. Prof. Zhana Damyanova, PhD, will trace in texts from visual semiotics and art history the path from religious imagery to abstraction in Wassily Kandinsky. Another, this time prominent Soviet artist, Erik Bulatov, focused the attention of Lilyana Milkova, PhD. Her analytical text will highlight the conceptual space in his canvases as an intersection of realities – of ideology and of free creative expression. The interaction of image and text, but this time in the field of children's illustration in Bulgaria in the 1960s and 1970s, notes the enduring research interest of Assoc. Prof. Katerina Gadjeva, PhD. The modernization of socialist reality, translated through artistic language, reaches the young reader and forms the desired ideological pathos in the attitude towards the homeland. The author of the present introduction examines the intersection of the native tradition and the modernised imagery in the material world in the focus of the Jubilee Exhibition of Applied Arts from 1960. The pursuit of industrialisation of the new social order in the counterweight of technological and creative problems accentuate the exhibition. The face of the modernising artistic life in Bulgaria visible to this day – the gallery at 125 *Rakovski* Str. is thoroughly examined by Natasha Noeva. The detailed study of the construction and reconstruction of the Union Gallery outlines the vicissitudes of the defended status. The reviewed editions complete the gallery of images: of the legislator in the research field of the modern era in our cultural context – Assoc. Prof. Ruja Marinska, PhD (Asst. Prof. Nona Petkova, PhD); of the Europeanised modernity in the work of Hristo Berberov (Prof. Blagovesta Ivanova, Dsc); of the updated *Allegory of the Cultural Heritage* of Françoise Choay (Asst. Prof. Vladimir Dimitrov, PhD) and of the “disenchantment of fairy tales” in the book of Assoc. Prof. K. Gadjeva, PhD (Asst. Prof. Yulia Yordanova-Pancheva, PhD). With gratitude to the professionalism of the authors, anonymous reviewers and the team of the journal: Maria Miteva.

# Summaries

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## CROSSROADS OF MODERNISM

*Andronika Mårtonova*  
Institute of Art Studies,  
Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

The present text focuses on the reception of early Japanese cinema screened in Bulgaria in the period between the two world wars. The main objects of research are the film *Crossroads* (1928) by Kinugasa Teinosuke, and the extensive review written by Pantelei Karasimeonov in the authoritative magazine *Nasheto kino*. The articulation in the Bulgarian perimeter of artifacts, narratives, personalities, practices, and traditions coming from the Far East can also give us answers to the questions – who are we? and where are we? in the world cinema process. Kinugasa is an emblem of the Japanese film avant-garde, and it is definitely a challenge for the researcher to try to read his films not only through the lens of the time, but also in the diverse contexts of Bulgarian modernism. Through the texts of Nikolay Raynov, Geo Milev, Dobri Nemirov, Kiril Krastev, we try to understand how adequate was the Bulgarian intellectual elite in the attempt to understand the nature of cinema and its avant-garde manifestations.

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## THE ROAD OF MODERNISM IN KANDINSKY'S PAINTING: FROM RELIGIOUS IMAGERY TO ABSTRACTION. THE ANALYSIS OF *COMPOSITION 4* (1911) AT THE CROSSROADS BETWEEN VISUAL SEMIOTICS AND ART HISTORY

*Zhana Damyanova*  
Faculty of Philosophy  
Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

The article reconstructs a virtual debate between the visual semiotics and the art history to trace the path of a possible collaboration between the two research fields. Initially, dialogue seems impossible since visual semiotics ranks among the nomothetic sciences and art history occupies a place among the ideographic sciences. The epistemological features of the two sciences in development prove that Windelband's distinction ceases to be pertinent. Hubert Damisch detaches the semiotic study of painting from the nomothetic linguistic model, and Mieke Bal and Norman Bryson

outline a collaborative strategy around an insightful definition of the sign as event. Some features of modernism are traced, demonstrating a connection between the semio-linguistic paradigm in semiotics and avant-garde art: cubism and abstractionism. The study of Jean-Marie Floch on the abstract painting *Composition 4* as Kandinsky's transition from figurative to non-figurative to abstract discourse is critically analysed.

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## ERIK BULATOV'S "WORD PAINTINGS" AND THE LATE-SOVIET VIEWER/READER

*Liliana Milkova*  
Yale University Art Gallery

The article examines the paintings of the Russian artist Eric Bulatov created in Moscow in the 1970s, when he began including words and phrases in them. The visual experiences that the combination of image and text evoke in the viewer-reader are analyzed, as well as the techniques used by the author to encode information about human existence in the conditions of ideological and physical control. As carriers of such information, the paintings *Entry – No Entry* (1974–1975), *Glory to the CPSU* (1975), and *Stop – Go* (1975) represent artistic primary sources that can be understood in the context of Samizdat, a clandestine printing and distribution system of materials not censored by the Soviet authorities. Painted in a period of heightened political propaganda, they countered ideological effects on human consciousness, creating a conceptual space where thought could break free from ideological reality.

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## "LOOK AT OUR MOTHERLAND NOW!" THE MODERNIZATION OF SOCIALIST BULGARIA REPRESENTED IN CHILDREN'S ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE 1960S AND 1970S

*Katerina Gadjeva*  
Institute of Art Studies,  
Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

The illustrations in many children's books present the beautiful nature of Bulgaria – the blue mountains, the green plains, the orchards overflowing with fruit. However, these are the geographical features of the Motherland, which every generation has been raised to love regardless of the era. In the 1960s and 1970s, a number of transformations took place in the country that changed both people's daily lives and art. Illustration was tasked

with the important role of introducing children to the achievements of the socialist system, such as asphalt roads, factories, modern cities with traffic lights, and street telephones. Furthermore, the illustrations even open the door to the future, awakening curiosity and fostering ambitions for improvement in young minds.

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## THE JUBILEE EXHIBITION OF APPLIED ARTS OF 1960/1961 – AN ATTEMPT TO MODERNIZE ARTISTIC PRACTICES

*Maria Miteva*  
Institute of Art Studies,  
Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

The article is part of the study of applied arts in Bulgaria. The focus is the 1960 Jubilee Exhibition of Applied Arts defined as "first of its kind" due to the central place it occupies for development of these types of arts. The large-scale exhibition received a wide response in the daily and specialized press. Texts from the special issue of *Izkusvo (Art)* magazine dedicated to the exhibition are analyzed. The works of monumental arts, ceramics, wood carving, textiles, etc. are considered as models for implementation in production in the new political and social order of the People's Republic of Bulgaria. The attempt to modernize the artistic process and the inclusion of applied artists in the general aspiration to build a socialist society unfolded a number of problems caused by delayed and accelerated development. The specific weaknesses were openly discussed at the exhibition and the results achieved were taken into account. The sought-after modernization in the period in the field of art in Bulgaria was repelled by the unexperienced modernity from the previous period.

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## 125 RAKOVSKI GALLERY – FACE OF THE MODERNISING ARTISTIC LIFE IN BULGARIA. ARCHITECTURAL FORM, CONSTRUCTION, RECONSTRUCTIONS

*Natasha Noeva*  
Institute of Art Studies,  
Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

The article focuses on the gallery at 125 *Rakovski Street* - one of the first architectural environments designed for an art gallery in post-liberation Bulgaria, and the only one that has not changed its status to this day. The paper focuses on the history related to the

idea of creation and its significance, the formation of the Exhibition Space Fund; the fundraising, the construction, the opening. Attention was paid to the first description of the technical works on the exhibition space, drawn up by architect Milko Bichev, stating that it was done according to a Western standard, showing that the architectural project was thought

out in its entirety and in accordance with the purpose and functions of the spaces. Unpublished facts about the gallery and its architect are presented. Its importance as the first gallery to integrate a specially designed skylight structure in 1940 is examined. Based on newly discovered documents, the history of its reconstruction after the bombings

of Sofia (1944) is traced, the difficulties in its reconstruction, the attempts of the UAB to restore it in every way, even to turn it into a modern cinema, as well as the efforts of the Union for the management and maintenance of the gallery area.