

Enchanted Modernities

Theosophy and the arts in the modern world

Amsterdam, 25-27 September 2013

Conference Programme



UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM

DAY 1 - WEDNESDAY 25 SEPTEMBER

8.00-8.50 **Registration** (Singelkerk)

9.00-10.30 **Welcome** (Singelkerk)

Session 1 (Singelkerk)

Chair: Sarah V. Turner (University of York)

Keynote Address: Raphael Rosenberg (University of Vienna)

'Mapping the aura in the spirit of art and art theory: Blavatsky, Leadbeater, Besant, and Steiner'

10.30-11.00 *Coffee break* (Singelkerk)

11.00-13.00 **Session 2**

Panel 2A: Early abstraction / art institutions

Location: Singelkerk

Chair: Rachel Esner (University of Amsterdam)

Marty Bax (Bax Art, Amsterdam), 'Mondrian and the power of primary colours'

Dmitrij Kraft (Ludwig-Maximilian- University, Munich), 'Malevič's avant-garde artistic concepts and the esoteric occult tradition of his period'

Rose-Carol Washton-Long (Graduate Center, City University of New York), 'Back to Barr - MoMA's 2013 origins of abstraction exhibition: a regressive narrative of modernism'

Pietro Rigolo (The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles), "'Instilling in humanity warmth and a new spiritual light": Theosophy and modern art in Harald Szeemann's exhibitions'

Panel 2B: Architecture and applied arts

Location: Doelenzaal

Chair: Helena Čapková (Waseda University)

Susan R. Henderson (Syracuse University), 'Lauweriks, Behrens, and the Kunstgewerbeschule in Dusseldorf'

Sven A. Clausen (Independent Scholar, Lübeck) 'The method Lauweriks, system-based design and Theosophy in architecture'

Mariël Polman (Netherlands Cultural Heritage Agency and University of Amsterdam), 'Van Nelle: The stratification of colours of an exceptional factory'

Jonathan Massey (Syracuse University, New York, USA), 'Ornament as time and space: Reconsidering Modernism via Claude Bragdon and Bruno Latour'

13.00-14.00 *Lunch* (Singelkerk)

14.00-15.30 **Session 3**

3A: Symbolism

Location: Singelkerk

Chair: Gillian McCann (Nipissing University)

3B: Music 1

Location: Doelenzaal

Chair: Rachel Cowgill (Cardiff University)

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Christel Naujoks (Aix-Marseille University), 'Spiritual steps and artistic evolution of Paul Sérusier (1864 – 1927)'

Pascal Rousseau (Université Paris I), 'Aristie and Sâr Peladan: Occultism and the sacerdotal mediation of art'

Sarah V. Turner (University of York), 'Orphic modernity: Theosophy, the visual arts and cultural exchange between Britain and Belgium in the early twentieth century'

Andrew Owen (Louisiana State University), 'Holst's Textual Synthesis: The Texts of The Hymn of Jesus'

Dominik Šedivý (University of Salzburg), 'Dodecaphonic universalism: Equivalent balance as a counter model to monocentrism and duality'

Lucy Craddock (The Open University), "'Point of Departure": The enduring influence of Theosophy on the composer Edmund Rubbra'

15.30-16.00

Coffee Break (Doelenzaal and Singelkerk)

16.00-18.00

Session 4

4A: Australia, Canada, and Mexico

Location: Singelkerk

Chair: Massimo Introvigne (CESNUR, Turin)

Patricia Plummer (University of Duisburg-Essen), "'An enthusiastic exponent of Theosophy and the teachings of Krishnamurti": Louisa Haynes Le Freimann (1863-1956), Australian artist and Theosophist'

Jenny McFarlane (Independent Scholar, Canberra), 'Centre and periphery: Leadbeater in Sydney'

Gillian McCann (Nipissing University), "'Spirit as Transforming Power": Theosophy and the arts in Canadian perspective'

Susana Pliego Quijano (Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Mexico), 'Creation, generation, transmutation and rebirth in the work of Mexican artists Diego Rivera, Xavier Guerrero, José Clemente Orozco and Dr. Atl'

4B: Eastern and Southern Europe

Location: Doelenzaal

Chair: Boaz Huss (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev)

Victoria Ferentinou (University of Ioannina), 'Theosophy, occultism and Greek symbolism: the case of Frixos Aristeas'

Spyros Petritakis (University of Crete), "'Through the Light, the Love": The late religious work of Nikolaos Gyzis (1842-1901) under the light of the Theosophical doctrine in Munich in the 1890s'

Yuri Stoyanov (SOAS, University of London), 'Theosophy and orientalism in the artistic legacy of Nikolay Raynov (1889-1954): A belated polymath and Theosophic "heresiarch"'

Małgorzata A. Dulcka (Jagiellonian University) and Karolina M. Kotkowska (Jagiellonian University), 'The idea of womanhood in the paintings of Kazimierz Stabrowski and its Theosophical inspiration'

18.00-19.30 **Launch of Abraxas 4 (Fulgur Press) and welcome reception** (Singelkerk)

DAY 2 - THURSDAY 26 SEPTEMBER

10.00-12.30 **Visits to the exhibitions at the Library of the Amsterdam Centre of the Theosophical (Adyar) and Ritman Library**

14.00-16.00 **Session 5**

5A: The Baltic region

Location: Singelkerk

Chair: Raphael Rosenberg (University of Vienna)

Massimo Introvigne (CESNUR, Turin), 'Čiurlionis' Theosophy: Myth or reality?'

Tessel M. Bauduin (Radboud University, Nijmegen), 'Hilma af Klint, metaphysical empiricism, and the iconography of Theosophy'

Caroline Levander (University of Gothenburg), 'The spiritual ideas of Hilma af Klint: A reading of the system of symbols in her paintings'

5B: Music 2

Location: Doelenzaal

Chair: James Mansell (University of Nottingham)

Olga Panteleeva (University of California, Berkeley), 'Exorcising scholarship: Sabaneyev's Scriabin and conflicting epistemologies of the Russian Silver Age'

Luciano Chessa (San Francisco Conservatory), "'Music the Dead Can Hear": Thought/sound forms in Luigi Russolo's Art of Noises'

Deniz Ertan (De Montfort University), 'Junctures of Theosophy, modernism and American music, 1918-1923'

Christopher Scheer (Utah State University), 'Locating music in Theosophical thought: Maude MacCarthy, John Foulds and music from "Beyond the Veil"'

16.00-16.30 *Coffee Break* (Doelenzaal and Singelkerk)

16.30-18.00 **Session 6**

6A: India and Japan

Location: Singelkerk

Chair: Gauri Viswanathan (Columbia University)

Helena Čapková (Waseda University, Tokyo), 'Mystical spirit of Japan: Stefan Lubienski and transnational artistic networks in the 1920s Japan'

6B: Performing arts

Location: Doelenzaal

Chair: Christopher Scheer (Utah State University)

Fae Brauer (University of East London and University of New South Wales), 'Hypnotic dancing: Performing art, parapsychology and psychic Theosophy'

Yorimitsu Hashimoto (Osaka University), 'A medium for new India and new Japan? James H. Cousins' appreciation of Tami Koume and Gurcharan Singh'

Janhavi Dhamankar (Oxford Brookes University), 'Exploring the Theosophical impulse of Bharatnatyam: A dialogue between modernist aesthetics and classical traditions'

Johanna J. M. Petsche (University of Sydney), 'The Sacred Dance of the Enneagram: G. I. Gurdjieff's Movements and their Esoteric Meaning'

Robin Veder (Pennsylvania State University), 'A Dreier Lithograph: Modernist choreography for the neuro-muscular "new race"'

20.00-21.30

Session 7 (Stedelijk Museum)

Chair: Marco Pasi (University of Amsterdam)

Keynote Address: Linda Dalrymple Henderson (University of Texas, Austin)
'Rethinking Theosophy in its early 20th-century context'

Round-table dialogue with artists and scholars

'Theosophy and the spiritual in modern and contemporary art'

Coordinated by Marco Pasi and Sarah V. Turner

with the participation of Linda Dalrymple Henderson, Frederik Söderberg and Christine Ödlund

DAY 3 - FRIDAY 27 SEPTEMBER

9.00-10.30

Session 8

8A: The influence of Rudolf Steiner

Location: Singelkerk

Chair: Walter Kugler (Oxford Brookes University)

Benedikt Hjartarson (University of Iceland), 'Modern esotericism, aesthetic Lamarckism and the historical avant-garde'

Wolfgang Zumnick (Oxford Brookes University), 'Concerning the influence of Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophy on the early work of Joseph Beuys'

Reinhold J. Fäth (Hochschule für Künste im Sozialen, Ottersberg), 'Artists within and around the group AENIGMA (1918 - ca. 1928)'

8B: Occultist symbolism

Location: Doelenzaal

Chair: Wouter J. Hanegraaff (University of Amsterdam)

Pádraic E. Moore (Independent scholar, Dublin) 'A. E. and the Theosophical Society in Edwardian Dublin'

Jan Stottmeister (Independent Scholar, Berlin), 'Theosophical symbolism: Melchior Lechter (1865-1937)'

10.30-11.00

Coffee Break (Doelenzaal and Singelkerk)

11.00-12.30

Session 9

9A: Visual arts: Germany and France

Location: Singelkerk

Chair: Linda Dalrymple Henderson (University of Texas, Austin)

Ryan Kurt Johnson (University of Alaska), 'Anatomy of an icon: Fidus' Lichtgebet, experiments in modern spiritualities, and the aesthetics of the body in fin-de-siècle German culture'

Susan Bagust (Royal Musical Association), 'The Theosophical world view and the collapse of form and content in early twentieth-century expressionism'

Boaz Huss (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev), 'Ideal reality: Esotericism, artistic culture and Jewish identity in the Cosmic Movement and the Idéal et Réalité circle'

9B: Music 3

Location: Doelenzaal

Chair: Anna Gawboy (Ohio State University)

Nick Attfield (Christ Church College, University of Oxford), 'Modernism, Anthroposophy, and the symphony: Anton Bruckner in the writings of Erich Schwepsch'

Marco Pasi (University of Amsterdam), "'Natura renovatur": Giacinto Scelsi's music and the esoteric milieu of his time'

James Mansell (University of Nottingham), 'Theosophical music in the "Age of Noise"'

12.30-13.30

* Lunch* (Singelkerk)

13.30-15.00

Session 10

10A: Rationalism, mysticism and surrealism

Location: Singelkerk

Chair: Eva Fotiadi (University of Amsterdam)

Walter Kugler (Oxford Brookes University), 'Between rationalism and mysticism: Andrej Belyj, 1880-1934'

Anita Stasulane (Daugavpils University), 'The messianic art of Nicholas Roerich: Engagement of youth in Theosophy'

Wouter J. Hanegraaff (University of Amsterdam), 'Leonora Carrington and the Occult'

10B: North America

Location: Doelenzaal

Chair: Susan R. Henderson (Syracuse University)

Emily Gephart (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), 'Theosophy and the dreaming imagination: Art, science and faith in the paintings of Arthur B. Davies'

Anna Cannon (University of California, Santa Barbara), 'Builders of the Future: Claude Fayette Bragdon (1866–1946) and Mikhail Matiushin (1861–1934)'

Elizabeth L. Langhorne (Central Connecticut State University), 'The Teacher and His Student: Schwankovsky and Pollock in Search of the Golden Flower'

15.00-15.30 *Coffee Break* (Singelkerk)

15.30-16.30 **Session 11** (Singelkerk)

Plenary Open Access session

(sponsored by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research, NWO)

Discussion with Demetrius Waarsenburg (KNAW), Dominik Šedivý (University of Salzburg),
and conference organizers, Marco Pasi and Sarah Turner

16.30-18.00 **Session 12** (Singelkerk)

Chair: Christopher Scheer (Utah State University)

Keynote Address: Anna Gawboy (Ohio State University, USA) 'Synaesthesia imagined, synaesthesia revealed'

CONFERENCE CLOSE

20.30-22.00 **Exceptional concert with Luciano Chessa
at the Italian Institute of Culture, Amsterdam**
(Keizersgracht 564)

Chessa will perform music by G. Scelsi, G. Chiari, R. Sender Barayón, S. Bussotti, and L. Chessa
Conference participants will have to register for the concert by sending an email to:
iicamsterdam@esteri.it

Conference Organisation Team

Lead Conference Organiser/ Network Partner: **Marco Pasi** (University of Amsterdam)

Conference Organiser/ Network Partner: **Sarah Victoria Turner** (University of York)

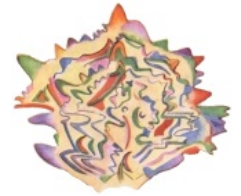
Conference Organiser/ Network Partner: **Christopher Scheer** (Utah State University)

Conference Administrator/Network Facilitator: **Katie Tyreman** (University of York)

Secretary of the Center for History of Hermetic philosophy and related currents, University of
Amsterdam: **Nadine D. Faber** (University of Amsterdam)

Enchanted Modernities

A research network on theosophy, modernism and the arts, c. 1875-1960



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Enchanted Modernities: Theosophy, Modernism and the Arts, c.1875-1960

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Please check the conference website for updates, registration, and practical information:

<http://www.york.ac.uk/history-of-art/amsterdam-theosophy-conference/>

Cover Image: **Christine Ödlund, *Audiography*, 2013 (watercolour, water-soluble pencil and pencil on paper, 137 x 91 cm). Courtesy Galleri Riis.**