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V-A-C Foundation presents the 5th Moscow Curatorial Summer School

Theme: 'Curatorial Things'
18 July–5 August 2016

This year's programme has been developed by Beatrice von Bismarck, Benjamin Meyer-Krahmer and the V-A-C Foundation.

The fifth edition of the Moscow Curatorial Summer School will take place between July and August 2016. This three-week course is devoted to the changing meaning and status of things. The shifting significance of the object is a development that has been especially evident since the beginning of the 21st century, affected by the acceleration of globalisation and digital technologies. But it can also be traced back to the growing scepticism towards how culture is presented and viewed that took place throughout the second half of the 20th century. This fundamental shift in the questioning of 'thingness' becomes particularly evident in the various modes of presentation that have informed and shaped the societal relevance and status of the curatorial. Given how imminently related curatorial practice is to presentation as a mode of being (public) in the world – in terms of its practices, methods and discourse – the curatorial has the potential to address, visualise and question the central effects of the changing status and function of the object. Even further than that, the presentational mode must be considered to have had a generative role in this development given its central position in the mobilisation of things with all its aesthetic, semantic, social and not least economic dimensions and influences.

In today's globalised exhibition system things are highly mobile, just like people, discourses and information. How things acquire meaning as exhibits comes under scrutiny when traditional concepts begin to dissolve and get re-formulated. This development has far-reaching consequences for the techniques, strategies and conditions of dealing with objects within an exhibition context. One notable strategy is a significant shift in the attitude towards exhibits from being containers of meaning to 'semantic monsters'. Formerly in Western culture exhibits were understood as repositories of meaning and thereby obtained the central constituting role in the conception of the museum. Just as this notion can be generalised in regards to non-Western exhibition practice and institutions, it cannot be applied to the curatorial practice of other disciplines, such as theatre, dance or film. Considering things as 'semantic monsters' requires an experimental reflection on notions and methods of presentation, contextualisation, actualisation, and documentation taking the ephemerality, immateriality and shifting encounters of things, people, objects and places into consideration. Additionally, things can acquire the status of agents, thus acting as participants in presentational situations. Challenging the line of demarcation between



things and human beings necessarily asks for a revision of the concept of presentation and a revision of the conditions under which art and culture become public.

The Russian and international professionals contributing to the Moscow Curatorial Summer School include Dieter Mersch, Charles Esche, Clementine Deliss, Sarah Pierce, Latika Gupta, Wayne Modest, Anna Titova and Stanislav Shuripa, Kirill Savchenkov and Alexandra Sukhareva, among others.

All classes at the Moscow Curatorial Summer School are in English. Participants are selected from an international call for applications. Some classes are open to general public.

The venue for the 5th Moscow Curatorial Summer School will be Moscow Oriental Art Museum – one of the biggest cultural institutions in the world for the preservation, research, and display of Oriental art. It is located in the centre of Moscow in the historical building known as the Lunins' House, a private residence built in the early 19th century by the architect Domenico Gilardi. The permanent display of the museum includes galleries of Chinese, Japanese, Korean art; Southeast Asia and Vietnam; The Caucasus and Middle Asia, including a significant collection of fine art of Iran, India and the Buddhist countries of Central Asia. The State Museum of Oriental Arts holds an outstanding collection of art of Nicholas Roerich, world famous painter, theosophist and writer, and his son Svetoslav Roerich, most of which is on display. The museum preserves a wide archeological collection, which also includes applied art of the Northern people of Russia. In addition to the galleries, the museum holds a wide programme of activities on an annual basis. These include: tea ceremonies, yoga, master classes and workshops, lectures, classes for children, music concerts, films, conferences for researchers and specialists in Oriental Art.

The 5th Moscow Curatorial Summer School calls for applications internationally. Everyone interested in the history and practice of curating and contemporary art is welcome to apply.

All workshops and project work are designed for a group of selected participants; some of the workshops and lectures are open to the public.

The Moscow Curatorial Summer School is free of charge. Participants from outside of Moscow are offered travel grant and accommodation. Non-Russian participants should have a valid passport to receive a visa.

For enquiries about the Moscow Curatorial Summer School or the application process please contact v-a-c@v-a-c.ru

Notes to Editors

Professor Beatrice von Bismarck is professor for art history and visual studies at the Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst (HGB) Leipzig and programme director of the academy's gallery. She lives in Berlin and Leipzig.

From 1989 to 1993 she worked at the Städelsches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie in Frankfurt am Main as curator of the department of 20th-century art and was responsible for organising solo exhibitions of artists such as Richard Long, Bruce Nauman, Dan Flavin and Jürgen Partenheimer. From 1993 to 1999 she worked at the University of Lüneburg, where together with Diethelm Stoller and Ulf Wuggenig she founded the Kunstraum der Universität Lüneburg. The exhibition projects she curated include: *Services* with Andrea Fraser/Helmut Draxler (1994), *Öffentlich/Privat* with Thomas Locher/Peter Zimmermann (1996), *Renée Green: The Digital Import/Export Funk Office* (1996–97), *Christian Philipp Müller: Der Campus als Kunstwerk* (1997–98) and, in collaboration with Hans-Peter Feldmann, *Interarchive* (1999–2002).

Modes of cultural production that combine theory and practice are central to Beatrice von Bismarck's approach. Among the fields of research with which she is currently working are the concept of artistic work, the aesthetic, social and political possibilities of curatorial work, the implications of globalisation for the cultural sphere, and the functions of the postmodern image of the artist.

In 2000, together with Alexander Koch, von Bismarck initiated the /D/O/C/K Project Department of HGB Leipzig. Exhibitions include: *3 Tage: Herstellen von Öffentlichkeit: Künstlerische Selbstorganisation* (2000) with Julie Ault, Dresden; *be creative! Der kreative Imperativ* (2002) in collaboration with Marion von Osten, the Institut für Theorie der Gestaltung und Kunst and the Museum of Design, both in Zurich; and *Raumvermittlung* (2006) with Dorit Margreiter, Leipzig.

In 2001–02 when the gallery of the HGB Leipzig was reopened, von Bismarck conceived a programme of exhibitions and events titled *Grenzbespielungen. Performativität und Übergangszonen*. Contributors included Ursula Biemann, Roger M. Buergel, Harun Farocki, Christian Jankowski, Monika Löw, Gordon Matta-Clark, Angela Melitopoulos, Christian Philipp Müller, Ruth Noack, Walid Raad, Gerald Raunig, Juliane Rebentisch, Oliver Ressler, Irit Rogoff, Martha Rosler and Hito Steyerl.

Dr. phil. Benjamin Meyer-Krahmer is visiting professor of image science and art history at the Institute of Theory at HGB Leipzig since 2011 and also works with Barbara Steiner on the Master's programme 'Cultures of the Curatorial'. His

research focuses on the epistemology of artistic curatorial practices. Meyer-Krahmer's publications include a monograph on the artist Dieter Roth, books on issues of artistic and curatorial practice, as well as numerous essays and articles in the field of art criticism. Benjamin Meyer-Krahmer studied comparative literature and history in Tübingen, Berlin and New York. After completing his doctorate about artist Dieter Roth, he worked in exhibition concept and design. Together with the artist Willem de Rooij he realised the publication and exhibition project *Intolerance* (2010–11) for the Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin.

Moscow Curatorial Summer School was conceived by the V-A-C Foundation in 2012 as an annual programme which runs for three weeks every July. While the intensive development of the contemporary art system in Russia has turned the curator into one of the most important and at the same time problematic figures within the Russian cultural context, the Summer School aims to foster discussion around questions such as: What are the professional boundaries and competences of a curator? What are the author's rights and professional duties? What levels of knowledge and skill define this new sphere of professional activity? How should this specialised experience be applied professionally? Students selected to take part in the Summer School are chosen on the basis of their applications. Students are involved in the preparation of curatorial projects and seminars; the lectures are open to the public.

1st Moscow Curatorial Summer School was held at the Russian State University for the Humanities and focused on the theme 'Doing Exhibitions Politically'. The programme was developed by Viktor Misiano and curated by What, How and for Whom/WHW (Croatia).

2nd Moscow Curatorial Summer School was held at the Presnya Historical Memorial Museum. Under the heading, 'This is the Show, and the Show is Many Things', the school's programme was curated by Raqs Media Collective (India) and developed by Viktor Misiano.

3rd Moscow Curatorial Summer School took place at the Museion Educational Centre at the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts and was entitled 'On the Museum's Ruins: The History Channel'. The theme was conceived by Dieter Roelstraete and the programme designed by Viktor Misiano.

About Moscow Oriental Art Museum

Moscow Oriental Art Museum is one of the biggest cultural institutions in the world for the preservation, research, and display of Oriental art. It is located in the centre of Moscow in the historical building known as the Lunins' House, a private residence built in the early 19th century by the architect Domenico Gilardi. The permanent display of the museum includes galleries of Chinese,

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Japanese, Korean art; Southeast Asia and Vietnam; The Caucasus and Middle Asia, including a significant collection of fine art of Iran, India, and the Buddhist countries of Central Asia. The State Museum of Oriental Arts holds an outstanding collection of art of Nicholas Roerich, world famous painter, theosophist and writer, and his son Sveloslav Roerich, most of which is on display. The museum preserves a wide archeological collection, which also includes applied art of the Northern people of Russia. In addition to the galleries the museum holds a wide programme of activities on an annual basis. These include: tea ceremonies, yoga, master classes and workshops, lectures, classes for children, music concerts, films, conferences for researchers and specialists in Oriental Art.

About V-A-C

V-A-C is dedicated to the international presentation, production and development of Russian contemporary art – across a multitude of forms and within the framework of an invigorated and informed exhibition, education and publishing programmes. Particularly important to the new generation of artists in Russia, V-A-C's focus is on practically supporting and expanding the platform for home-grown talent, giving artists the opportunity to experience, engage with and interrogate international cultural practices whilst developing an authentic and autonomous artistic language. It is deservedly considered as one of the key proponents in opening out contemporary Russian culture to the wider world, and practically supporting and developing emerging artists through finding new international platforms for exhibition and opportunities for commissions as well as ways of encouraging cross-cultural exchange - especially important in the current climate.

For all further information about the school and the foundation, please contact:

Helen Weaver

helen.weaver@v-a-c.ru

Tel. +44 (0)7772 159219