

Моргом мокрого хлеба  
вехой в монашенке-рыбе  
ведрами неба одр  
(м)шь

! вычерпнут вогнутый гулко  
рогом омяченной мысли  
высоли бликомеленье  
мигобиеньем в ликоведенье(!

колет льдину дуги  
купола пепла мглы  
зуб пружинных сленаний  
вывих наступции-превден  
и иней желата скворец вебеси звы себея

( ) фелртр факете-чекявы бном  
(в) Голь Громовдкого сока  
вчкюлю в икего-ом старось в дужи вечерь  
соур (небица Лб панцирь Лб прель)  
милля лэбро лможси  
фвло-лэвкши очне олобон мльп

# Methods Workshop September 28, 2023



ры никонова  
пневматический дуэт  
с фонетическими  
маргиналами, 1983/84

## Russian Art & Culture Group Forschungsstelle Osteuropa

Cover: Ry Nikonova, Pneumatic duet with phonetic marginals, 1983-1984, *Transponans*,  
no. 31, 1986, "MANI" (Moscow Archive of New Art), FSO 01-066/22

## METHODS WORKSHOP ON SOVIET NONCONFORMIST ART

Research project “Between the Avant-Garde and Nonconformism: Soviet Artists and their Alternative Practices between the Thaw and Stagnation”, a research collaboration between the Research Centre for East European Studies (Forschungsstelle Osteuropa - FSO) at Bremen University and the Russian Art & Culture Group (RACG) at Constructor University.

### ABSTRACT

There are many research gaps yet to be addressed in the studies of Soviet unofficial art from art-historical, historical, sociological, and literary perspectives. Our methods workshop aspires to reflect on how this should be done and what kind of existing methodological and conceptual approaches are potentially productive for research in this field. By focusing on the discussion of actor-network theory, gender perspectives, and the concept of multiple modernisms, participants of the research project strive to facilitate further engagement in reflecting on appropriate methods and theories.



## PROGRAM

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

**VENUE:** Constructor University Bremen  
IRC-Seminar Room I

10.30 -  
12.00

### Session I: **MULTIPLE MODERNISMS**

Presenter: Irina Riznychok (Forschungsstelle Osteuropa)  
Respondent: Kristian Handberg (University of Copenhagen)

Text for Discussion: Terry Smith, "Art History's Work-in Pro(re)gress - Reflections on the Multiple Modernities Project," in: *New Histories of Art in the Global Postwar Era*, ed. Flavia Frigeri and Kristian Handberg, London: Routledge, 2021, pp. 12-23.

Lunch Break

13:00 -  
14.30

### Session II: **ACTOR-NETWORK THEORY**

Presenter: Georg Sokolov (Constructor University)  
Respondent: Elena Korowin (Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg)

Text for Discussion: Gundela Hachmann, "Network Analysis in Literature and the Arts: Rethinking Agency and Creativity," *Journal of Literary Theory*, vol. 17, no. 2 (September 2023): 221-240.

Coffee Break

15:00 -  
16.30

### Session III: **GENDER PERSPECTIVES**

Presenter: Natalia Fedorenko (Forschungsstelle Osteuropa)  
Respondent: Klavdia Smola (Columbia University, New York / Technische Universität Dresden)

Text for Discussion: Klavdia Smola, "Speaking Outlaw: Performing Masculinity in Soviet Underground Culture" (2023)

**Initial idea and organization:** Prof. Dr. Isabel Wünsche, Natalia Fedorenko, Irina Riznychok, Georg Sokolov.

The event is organized by the Russian Art & Culture Group (RACG) at Constructor University in collaboration with the Research Centre for East European Studies (Forschungsstelle Osteuropa - FSO) at Bremen University.

## ABSTRACTS

### Session I: **MULTIPLE MODERNISMS**

**Presenter: Irina Riznychok (Forschungsstelle Osteuropa)**

Terry Smith's "Art History's Work in Pro(re)gress - Reflections on the Multiple Modernities Project" offers an insightful theoretical overview of the concept of "multiple modernisms" rather than methodological tools for its applicability. The prime concern of the article is to explore "multiple modernisms", discussing such key terms as "mainstream modernism", "radical revisionism", minor, global, planetary, and situated art that shaped art history of the twentieth century. According to Smith, contemporary artworks are characterized by mobility and "inherent heterochronicity" that take distinctive forms in the many art-producing centres throughout the world since the 1950s. However, a main research question remains open: does the "multiple modernity" approach adequately articulate the complexities of the worldwide shift from modern to contemporary?

In her presentation, Irina Riznychok will discuss "multiple modernisms" as a potentially productive model for re-considering the legacy of "provincial" art scenes within the major narrative of Soviet nonofficial art. In doing so, she indicates changes in metropolitan-provincial relations within Soviet nonconformist art by revealing diverse channels and networks that regional artists explored in their day-to-day practices. The presentation will demonstrate potential problems of adopting a specifically decolonial research lens to the investigation devoted to Soviet regional art scenes.

## Session II: **ACTOR-NETWORK THEORY**

**Presenter: Georg Sokolov (Constructor University Bremen)**

The second session of the workshop will deal with network analysis and potential benefits of its application to the studies of Soviet nonconformist art. In her article "Network Analysis in Literature and the Arts: Rethinking Agency and Creativity", published in the September 2023 issue of the *Journal of Literary Theory*, Gundela Hachmann uses different modes of network analysis, including visualization informed by a computational method and Actor-Network Theory (ANT) as developed by Bruno Latour, to analyze public lectures on poetics (Poetikvorlesungen). This complex approach enables her to understand public lectures, given by writers, poets, and film directors, as a mode of (per)forming, visualizing, and tracing creative networks. She proposes to understand a creative subject as an actor in a network, which is not limited to fellow artists, social and cultural institutions, or artworks but may include different figures of intellectual and artistic influence.

In his presentation, Georg Sokolov will use this approach to examine the networks of Leningrad nonconformist artists. The presentation will be focused mostly on the creative networks, (per)formed by several representative figures of Leningrad unofficial artistic milieu. Tracing those networks will help us to reflect upon the questions, concerning such categories as authorship, artistic self-understanding, influence, and intentionality in relation to Soviet nonconformist art.



### Session III: **GENDER PERSPECTIVES**

**Presenter: Natalia Fedorenko (Forschungsstelle Osteuropa)**

In her latest article “Speaking Outlaw: Performing Masculinity in Soviet Underground Culture”, Klavdia Smola analyzes how the identity of a Soviet underground artist was constructed based on gender-inflected expressions and how “being a man” shaped the speech and behaviour within the unofficial Soviet art scene. Gender deconstruction of (self-) archives, memoirs, and personal accounts allows us to trace the connections between the masculine discourse and the gender regime of unofficial Soviet culture and to reveal strategies of legitimation of non-conforming artistic voices rooted in a masculine identity.

In the final section of the workshop, Natasha Fedorenko will reflect on the applicability of methodological insights from Klavdia Smola’s article to her historical PhD project dedicated to artistic couples of the Soviet unofficial art scene. In her presentation, she will address the challenge of indicating specifically gendered utterances and strategies of artistic legitimation, thus opening the floor for a broader discussion on the thin line between insufficient contextualisation and the danger of overinterpretation.

All texts and information were provided by the authors and included with their approval.

**FOR YOUR NOTES**



<https://russian-art.net>

