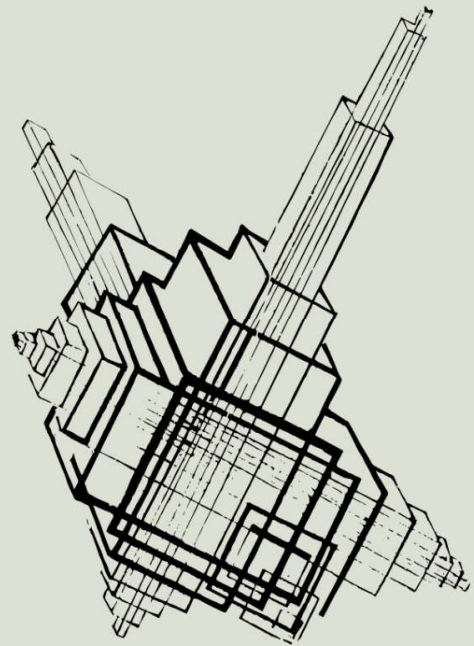


ONLINE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

"UTOPIA IN ART AND POLITICS"

FRIDAY, MARCH 19, 2021 | 16:00-20:30



Organised by



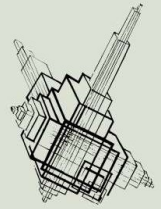
In collaboration with



Utopia: A word that in the course of the last two centuries has expanded its meaning and use from literature and the arts where it initially came from, to politics and generally to the way of thinking and gave derivative, opposite and complementary meanings: dystopia, eutopia, heterotopia i.a. Of all different social manifestations that could be characterized as "utopian", two are the most common: the use of the term in relation to **artistic production** and to **political theory**. Utopia offered to Politics the plan for universal social redemption under collective effort. Respectively, Art described and depicted Utopia, the struggles for utopian conquests but also the disappointments of dystopian failures and defeats. Are social desires related to the utopian political design and the utopian artistic vision? How individual or collective is Utopia?

The **online international conference** under the title "Utopia in Art and Politics" will take place on Friday, March 19, 2021, 16:00 - 20:30 EET / 15:00 - 19:30 CET / 14:00 - 18:30 GMT, **organized by MOMus-Museum of Modern Art-Costakis Collection (GR)**, in collaboration with the **University of Glasgow (UK)**.

The conference will present and discuss Utopia in Art and Politics through interdisciplinary approaches. The well-known philosopher and theorist of Architecture **Alexandros Tzonis** will comment on the term,



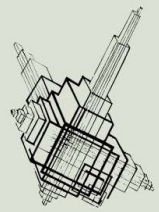
its applications and versions. References to the philosophy, aesthetics and theory of art in relation to the use of the term will be made by **Stavros Alifragkis**, **Liane Lefaivre**, **Orsan Senalp** and **Maria Tsantsanoglou**. **Thouli Misirloglou** will comment on the question whether participation as a politicized working process within art institutions can reveal aspects of Utopia and **Andreas Takis** will refer to the collective agency implied in the genre of Utopia. The well-known art historian, specialist in the movement of Constructivism, **Christina Lodder** will close the session of speeches talking about the timelessness of Utopia. A **discussion** will follow.

The conference will close with a **360° digital tour of the exhibition "Utopia Revisited. Literature, Philosophy and Politics in the Art of the Russian Avant-Garde"** with works from the Costakis collection of the MOMus-Museum of Modern Art, curated by Angeliki Charistou.

INFORMATION

Attendance is free on this link <https://www.livemedia.com/utopia21> and MOMus social media (Facebook [@MOMusModern](#), YouTube [MOMus Museums](#)).

The language of the conference is English. No translation in Greek is provided.



PROGRAMME

"Utopia in Art and Politics"

Friday March 19, 2021 | 16:00-20:30 EET

(15:00-19:30 CET / 14:00-18:30 GMT)

ONLINE LINK <https://www.livemedia.com/utopia21>

16:00-16:15 Introduction | Greetings

- **Andreas Takis**, Chairman of the MOMus Board of Administration
- **Emilios Christodoulidis**, Chair of Jurisprudence, School of Law, Glasgow University
- **Maria Tsantsanoglou**, Artistic Director of MOMus-Museum of Modern Art-Costakis Collection

16:20-16:40

Alexander Tzonis, architect, author, researcher, Emeritus Professor - TU Delft

Lettres sur la sympathie

16:45-17:05

Liane Lefaivre, o-Professor - University of Applied Arts in Vienna

Leon Battista Alberti's Hypnerotomachia Poliphili. The Desperately Beautiful Dream and furore of a 15th Century Revolutionary

17:10-17:30

Orsan Senalp, researcher - Centre for Systems Studies, University of Hull

Red Star vs Hammer & Sickle: The Fall and Rise of Alexander Bogdanov

17:35-17:55

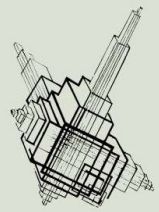
Maria Tsantsanoglou, art historian, artistic director of MOMus-Museum of Modern Art-Costakis Collection

Arvatov's "Materialized Utopia" and Tatlin's unfinished projects

18:00 -18:20

Stavros Alifragkis, adjunct lecturer - Department of Architecture, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki & Hellenic Open University

*Soviet Science Fiction and Utopia in the 1970s:
The Architecture of Andrei Tarkovsky's Stalker (USSR, 1979)*



18:25-18:45

Thouli Misirloglou, art historian, acting director of MOMus-Experimental Center for the Arts

Renegotiating power relations in art institutions and the new museum ethics

18:50-19:10

Andreas Takis, Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Legal Method -Faculty of Law of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Chairman of the MOMus Board of Administration

Collective Agency in Social Utopias

19:15-19:35

Christina Lodder, Emerita Professor, scholar of Russian art of the early twentieth century, President of the Malevich Society

Utopia: The Never-ending Story

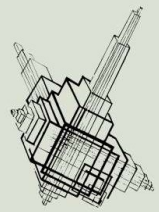
19:40-20:00_Discussion | Short Statements

- **Marco Goldoni**, Senior Lecturer, School of Law, Glasgow University
- **George Pavlakos**, Professor of Law and Philosophy, School of Law, Glasgow University
- **Emilios Christodoulidis**, Chair of Jurisprudence, School of Law, Glasgow University
- **Igor Voronkov**, independent scholar, 20th century Russian and European historian

20:00-20:15_Discussion | Q&A

20:15-20:30_360° virtual tour of the exhibition

"Utopia Revisited. Literature, Philosophy and Politics in the Russian Avant-Garde" with works from the Costakis collection of the MOMus-Museum of Modern Art, curated by Angeliki Charistou.



ABSTRACTS & BIO's

Stavros Alifragkis

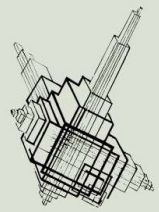
adjunct lecturer - Department of Architecture, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
& Hellenic Open University



Soviet Science Fiction and Utopia in the 1970s: The Architecture of Andrei Tarkovsky's Stalker (USSR, 1979)

Soviet filmmaker Andrei Tarkovsky's (1932-1986) cinematic landscapes are generated by and, at the same time, become projections of an inner, emotional geography, whose features reflect, alter and distort the spaces of quotidian life of the former USSR. This presentation focuses on *Stalker* (USSR, 1979), a non-typical science-fiction movie, loosely based on *Roadside Picnic* (1972) by Arkady (1925-1991) and Boris (1933-2012) Strugatsky, and the enigmatic 'zone', a post-apocalyptic industrial wasteland, to examine the way cinematic spaces can inform the construction of utopian or dystopian landscapes and the contested space in between. The idiosyncratic architecture of the 'zone' -an amalgam of natural and humanmade landscapes- is utilised here as a vehicle for unearthing the special features of this uniquely utopian space.

Stavros Alifragkis, DiplArch (AUTH), MPhil (Cantab), MArch (NTUA), PhD (Cantab), researches the history and theory of 19th and 20th c. architecture and the city in different mediums of artistic expression. He has participated in many conferences and has published papers in Greek and international journals. Adjunct Lecturer, Department of Architecture, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, and Hellenic Open University



Liane Lefaivre

o-Professor - University of Applied Arts in Vienna



Leon Battista Alberti's Hypnerotomachia Poliphili. The Desperately Beautiful Dream and furore of a 15th Century Revolutionary.

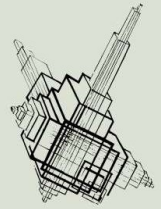
The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* was published at the press of the famed Venetian publisher Aldo Manutio in 1499. Among its distinguishing feature are: that it takes place twice removed from reality, in a dream dreamed inside a dream; that its is an exceptionally erotic love story; that it is one of the most learned books of the Renaissance about the fine arts, clothing, culinary architecture and literature of antiquity; that it is generally considered the most beautiful book ever published, a masterpiece of typography and layout, unlike any other; that, thanks to it's strange, inscrutable prose, now in Tuscan, now in Latin, now in Greek, Hebrew, Arabic and Chaldean and hieroglyphics, it is also one of the most unreadable books ever published. It is a frenetic, fantastic specimen of linguistic furore, hurling great semantic dust clouds as it kicks pitches along on its impetuous course. Finally, because it is anonymous, there are conflicting theories about its authorship. Controversially, I have attributed it to Leon Battista Alberti, the author of the rational *De Re Aedificatoria*, the first Renaissance treatises of architecture, painting, and sculpture. If I am correct, the book is the desperate utopian manifesto of a civic humanist confronted with the increasingly triumphant rise of tyrannical absolutism toward the end of the 15th century in Italy.

Liane Lefaivre is o-Prof. at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna. Among the books she has authored are: *Modernist Rebels, Viennese Architecture since Otto Wagner* (London: Lund Humphries, 2017), *Ground Up City, Play as a Design Tool* (Rotterdam, OIO, 2006), *The Power of Play* (Tsinghua University and the TUDelft,

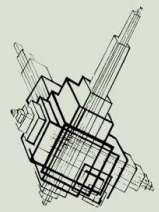
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2010). With Alexander Tzonis she has co-authored *Aldo van Eyck, Humanist Rebel* (Rotterdam, O10, 1999) and many books on Critical Regionalism, most recently *Regionalism in an Age of Globalization* (London, Routledge, 2021 second expanded edition). Her *Leon Battista Alberti's Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (Cambridge, MA, MIT Press, 1996) won the American Association of Publishers award for Best Scholarly Book of the Year, among others.



Christina Lodder

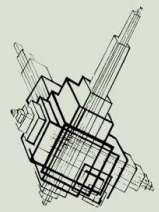
Emerita Professor, scholar of Russian art of the early twentieth century, President of the Malevich Society



Utopia: The Never-ending Story

Utopian thinking was a crucial aspect of art and politics during the Revolutionary period in Russia. In this paper, I will focus on Lenin's plan of Monumental Propaganda, which was inaugurated in spring 1918. In particular, I will be looking at the programme's various links with the historical descriptions of utopia, as presented in Campanella's *City of the Sun* (1602) and St Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516).

Christina Lodder is an internationally renowned scholar of Russian art of the early twentieth century. She is President of the Malevich Society, and co-editor of Verlag Ferdinand Schoeningh's (formerly Brill's) Russian History and Culture series. Her numerous publications include *Russian Constructivism* (1983); *Constructing Modernity: The Art and Career of Naum Gabo* (co-author, 2000); *Gabo on Gabo: Texts and Interviews* (co-editor, 2000); *Constructive Strands in Russian Art* (2005); *Rethinking Malevich* (co-editor); *Utopian Reality: Reconstructing Culture in Revolutionary Russia and Beyond* (co-editor, 2013); *Aleksei Gan's Constructivism* (translator, editor, 2013); and *Celebrating Suprematism: New Approaches to the Art of Kazimir Malevich* (editor, 2019).



Thouli Misirloglou

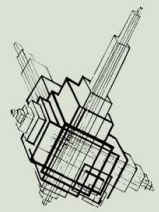
art historian, acting director of MOMus-Experimental Center for the Arts



Renegotiating power relations in art institutions and the new museum ethics

The new 'living' code of museum ethics urges to further inclusion by democratizing the regimes of art and knowledge production. Following the appeal for the emancipation of the spectator, this paper will try to address the question whether participation as a politicized working process within art institutions can reveal aspects of utopia. Can museum workers assume agency? Is the museum both enabler and inhibitor for democratic action?

Thouli Misirloglou (PhD) has studied Art History at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. After several years of working in museums, mainly at the Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art, where she had been appointed Director in 2017, currently she is the Acting Director of the MOMus-Experimental Center for the Arts. She has collaborated with numerous artists, museums and cultural institutions, both public and private, and has organized exhibitions and festivals. She has participated in the development of European cultural programs and has been the general co-ordinator and member of the artistic committee of Dimitria Festival (City of Thessaloniki) for five years.



Örsan Şenalp

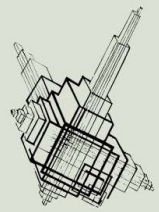
researcher - Centre for Systems Studies, University of Hull



Red Star vs. Sickle & Hammer - Scientific-Utopian and Revolutionary Politics of Alexander Bogdanov

As it is well known, the Hammer and Sickle symbolise Lenin's strategy for the Revolution, which Lenin thought achievable if the alliance between the industrial proletariat and proletarian peasantry is maintained. The symbol came about as a product of an official competition held after the October Revolution. Originally it was aimed for the upcoming May Day celebrations, but it has become the symbol of Marxist-Leninist socialist and communist movements, parties and states globally. On the other hand, the Red Star symbol refers to a future communist society that is yet to come about. Although its history has not yet been established by research, Red Star symbolism overlaps with the sharp image Alexander Bogdanov masterfully portrayed in his 1908 novel, which bears the same name. Bogdanov's Red Star was published many times, especially after the October Revolution, when Bogdanov was one of the leaders of the Proletkult movement and later on and accepted as the starting point of the genre of Bolshevik sci-fi / utopian novel. My talk will be about the fall and rise of Alexander Bogdanov and the importance of his 'lost paradigm'. I will present an overview of his scientific, utopian, and revolutionary politics, the decay of his contribution, as well as its re-discovery and renewal. Contrasting the anti-authoritarian line of his politics to Lenin's – which Bogdanov explicitly dubbed as an authoritarian one well before the Revolution – I will be using the metaphor of clashing symbols: Red Star vs Hammer and Sickle.

Orsan Senalp is a researcher with a background in labour, social justice, and digital activism. He is currently researching at the University of Hull, Centre for Systems Studies. His research topic is the work and ideas of Alexander Bogdanov and their relevance to the systems paradigm and the unity of science debate.



Andreas Takis

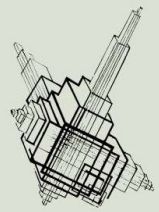
Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Legal Method - Faculty of Law of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Chairman of the MOMus Board of Administration



Collective Agency in Social Utopias

Universal brotherhood runs as a core idea through most literary Utopias. Many blame it for the totalitarian aspects of being politically enacted or, again, for the decay of the genre into an *hors-la-mode* sci-fi. What such current opinions usually miss is the fact that universal brotherhood does not refer to an end-result of Utopia's function, but rather to the collective agent that is addressed and practically summoned for the purpose of its being implemented. The pragmatics of Utopian discourse implicitly mould a type of collective agency which is echoed by modernist political ontology.

Andreas Takis teaches Philosophy and Legal Method at the Faculty of Law of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and is the Chairman of the MOMus Board of Administration.



Maria Tsantsanoglou

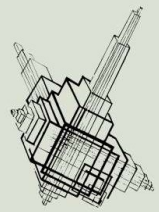
art historian, artistic director of MOMus-Museum of Modern Art-Costakis Collection



Arvatov's "Materialized Utopia" and Tatlin's unfinished projects

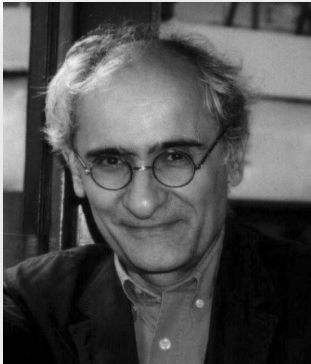
The Monument to the Third International by Vladimir Tatlin was one of the most fascinating and grandiose designs of the 20th c. dating from 1919-20 but it existed only in the form of drawings and models and was never actually constructed. Between 1929 and 1932 Tatlin was engaged in realizing one of his most bold and bizarrely utopian projects: the construction of a flying machine, which he named Letatlin. But for all the artist's efforts, the Letatlin never flew. Aesthetic theorist Boris Arvatov had referred in 1923 to the power of art to implement utopian designs, contributing autonomously to the evolution of everyday life.

Maria Tsantsanoglou is acting general director of MOMus and the artistic director of MOMus-Museum of Modern Art-Costakis Collection. Art historian and curator specializing in the period of Russian avant-garde. Advisor for cultural issues and press attaché at the Greek Embassy in Moscow (1990-2002). She has taught history of art at the Lomonosov University, Moscow (1997-2001). She has been teaching Russian Art at the University of Macedonia, Department of Balkan, Slavic and Oriental Studies (Thessaloniki) since 2002.



Alexander Tzonis

architect, author, researcher, Emeritus Professor - TU Delft



Lettres sur la sympathie

I will discuss concisely the works we call 'utopias', their development and actuality in the framework of the notions of 'counter-factual', 'dreamwork' 'manifestoes' and 'fakes'. I will focus briefly on the second part of the 18thC, a period during which 'utopias' become about 'what has to be done', declarations of 'human rights', 'plans', but also 'negative-utopias'.

The title '*Lettres sur la sympathie*' is borrowed from the title of a book by Sophie de Condorcet, (a collection of letters to her husband marquis Nicolas de Condorcet, author of *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain*, a 'new utopia' written in written during his imprisonment before his death in 1794.) Sophie discusses the innateness of human bonding and community driven by the force of 'sympathie ' next to the search for material good life and their obstruction by oppressive institutions and biases.

Alexander Tzonis is an architect, author, and researcher. He has made contributions to architectural theory, history and design cognition, bringing together scientific and humanistic approaches in a synthesis. Since 1975, he has been collaborating in most projects with Liane Lefaivre. In 1985, he founded and directed Design Knowledge Systems (DKS), a multidisciplinary research institute for the study of architectural theory and the development of design thinking tools at TU Delft. Tzonis is known for his work on the classical canon, history of the emergence and development of modern architectural thinking, creative design by analogy, and introducing the idea of critical regionalism.