

Making Modernism in Imperial Germany
One Day Symposium
Friday 3rd February 2023, 1.30pm – 5.30pm
The Courtauld, Vernon Square

Organised by Kellie-Ann Sabin and Anne Grasselli

Dorothy Price

Dorothy Price joined The Courtauld in September 2021 from the University of Bristol, where she was Professorial research lead for the Transnational Modernisms Research Cluster, and a founder member and inaugural Director of the Centre for Black Humanities, an interdisciplinary research centre dedicated to researching the histories, art and thought of people of African descent. Her work has a particular emphasis on modernism in Germany and post-war art in Britain and demonstrates how critical race expands readings of the visual.

She was Editor of *Art History*, the journal of the Association for Art History and has collaborated widely with international, national and regional museums and galleries, working with Spike Island, Arnolfini Arts Bristol, Tate Britain and Lowry Salford. She founded the Tate/Paul Mellon Centre's British Art Network subgroup on Black British Art and is lead curator for the Royal Academy of Arts' current exhibition, *Making Modernism*.

Natalia Sidlina

Dr Natalia Sidlina has worked at Tate Modern as Curator, International Art, since 2015. A specialist in modernist émigré art, her research and curatorial practice address transcultural histories, connections, and global exchange of ideas of the early 20th century artistic practices in Eastern and Western Europe. She is the curator of the current *Cezanne* exhibition and the forthcoming project dedicated to the *Blaue Reiter* at Tate Modern. Her recent exhibitions and the

associated publications include *Erik Bulatov* (2018), *Naum Gabo - Constructions for Real Life* (2020), *Natalia Goncharova* (2019) and *Sophie Taeuber-Arp* (2021).

Lynette Roth - *Emil Nolde's Mulatto (1913)*

Acquired in 1954, Emil Nolde's *Mulatto* (1913) is one of the most significant German expressionist artworks in the collection of the Busch-Reisinger Museum at Harvard University. Painted more than a century ago, the brightly colored canvas depicts a dark-skinned woman. Due to a dating error, the unknown sitter was long presumed to represent a colonial subject in German New Guinea and not, as the correct date suggests, a Black stage performer in the burgeoning Berlin metropolis. The mutability of the sitter's identity is inextricably tied to the work's title; written by the artist on the verso, it refers solely to the subject's mixed-race heritage. Common at the time, the term "mulatto" is now considered offensive.

Like many of his expressionist contemporaries, Nolde believed non-Europeans to possess "authentic" qualities and relied frequently in his work on the Western trope of the romanticized, exoticized "Other." While art historians of German expressionism have long addressed this issue of "primitivism," they have yet to draw substantially from the discipline of Black German studies. Nolde's *Mulatto* offers just such an opportunity to re-think the relationship of race in the narrative of German nationhood and modern German art.

Lynette Roth is Daimler Curator of the Busch-Reisinger Museum. Her research focuses on art from German-speaking countries from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In addition to re-thinking the museum's core holdings of German expressionism and eighteenth century porcelain, Roth's current projects include exhibitions on women makers in the history of the photogram and issues of German art and identity after 1980.

Nina Lübbren - *Nude peasant girls in the art of Otilie Reylaender, Paula Modersohn-Becker and Clara Rilke-Westhoff*

Around 1900, women artists in Worpswede engaged with issues of childhood, adolescent sexuality, feminine spectatorship and the power structure between artist and peasant model. This paper focuses on Otilie Reylaender's painting *Beta, Naked*, on Paula Modersohn-Becker's pictures of naked girls and on Clara Rilke-Westhoff's bronze figurines of nude girls. The chosen works are situated within the categories of female nude, peasant, model and girl. However, these various categories are in tension with one another and even cancel each other out. Exploring the intersecting themes of the rural, the nude and the child allows us to bring into fresh focus these artists' gendered, urban and professional interventions in early twentieth-century modernism.

Nina Lübbren is an Associate Professor in Art History and Film at Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge. She is the author of *Rural Artists' Colonies in Europe, 1870-1910* and of *Narrative Painting in Nineteenth-Century Europe*. She is the editor of *Visual Culture and Tourism* and has published a number of essays on women sculptors in Weimar and Nazi Germany.

Deborah Lewer - *Expressionism, War and the Matter of Print*

This paper considers the significance for Expressionism of the war of 1914-18 and its aftermath. It does so by focusing on the mediating role of prints and printmaking and the shifting debates in war and revolution around art, politics and religion. As well as taking a fresh look at selected wartime and post-war print production, this paper explores further how artists and theorists of Expressionism drew explicit connections between the experience of war, the imperatives for a culture of regeneration and the material properties of the print. As such, the research seeks to shed further light on the stakes for German modernism following the collapse of empire.

Deborah Lewer is Senior Lecturer in History of Art at the University of Glasgow and a Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. She has published widely on Dada, Expressionism and wider aspects of German visual culture. She has a particular interest in the intersection between art, politics and theology in modernity and is currently preparing a monograph on Hugo Ball, founder of Dada in Zurich.