



SYMPOSIUM

GOD IS BACK IN TOWN. CONSIDERATIONS ON PUBLIC ART, SECULARITY AND THE CITÉ



Thursday 10 and Friday 11,
December 2015

Rennes 2 University, Campus Villejean
Amphi L3 and Amphi 01

International Symposium organized at Rennes 2 University in partnership with the Bauhaus University, Weimar and the Oslo National Academy of the Arts with the support of Région Bretagne, EA 3208 Arts: Pratiques et Poétiques, and the International Office SRI.

PROGRAM

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2015

Amphi L3

9H00 Registration/ Coffee

9H30 **Welcome**

Leszek Brogowski, Vice-President for Research, Rennes 2 University

Marion Hohlfeldt, Head of PACT, Rennes 2 University

Rethinking Public

Chair: Anthony Larson, Rennes 2 University, FR

10H00 Boris Buden, Bauhaus University, Weimar, DE,

Once Upon a Public Space: Art After the Return of God

10H30 Ophélie Naessens, University of Lorraine, Metz, FR, **Reveal the Veil**

11H00 **Coffee break**

11H15 Maria Parsons, Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT),
Dun Laoghaire, IE, **Feminism and 'Post-secular Time': Women's Bodies
and Public Art**

11H45 Round table: **Mask and Cover, Being Public**

with Paul Ardenne, Boris Buden, Maria Parsons, Ophélie Naessens,
Moderator: Anthony Larson

12H30 **Lunch break**

Open Access

Chair: Olga Schmedling, Oslo National Academy of the Arts, NO

14H00 Bleuwenn Lechaux, Rennes 2 University, FR, **Art for Activism's Sake**

14H30 Matei Bejenaru, University of the Arts George Enescu, Iasi, RO,
**Songs for a Better Future. Performance Practices in Public Spaces
in Post-communist Romania**

15H00 **Coffee Break**

- 15H15 Silvy Panet-Raymond, Concordia University, Montreal CA,
Open Links: Creatively Processing Transmission
- 15H45 Round table: **Public Art of Multicultu(r)al Interaction**
with Matei Bejenaru, Bleuwenn Lechaux, Mari Linnman,
Silvy Panet-Raymond, Moderator: Olga Schmedling
- 16H30 Public Discussion
- 17H30 Closing

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2015

Amphi 01

- 9H30 Registration/ Coffee
- 9H45 **Welcome**
Ivan Toulouse, Head of Visual Art Department, Rennes 2 University

Restricted Memory

Chair: Merete Røstad, Oslo National Academy of the Arts, NO

- 10H00 Marion Hohlfeldt, Rennes 2 University, FR, **Do not Depict me. Withdrawal and Iconic Vacancy**
- 10H30 Frédéric Sotinel, École nationale supérieure d'architecture de Bretagne ENSAB Rennes, FR, **Mirroring (ir-)religious pasts. Void, emptiness and fulfilment in public space**
- 11H00 **Coffee**
- 11H15 Veit Stratmann, École nationale supérieure de Beaux-Arts ENSBA, Lyon, FR, **Obligated Memory**
- 11H30 Antoine Beaufort, ars nomadis, Rennes, FR,
Rewrite the Past: the Budapest Monument of Discord
- 11H45 Round table & Public discussion: **The Politics of Remembrance in Public Art**
with Antoine Beaufort, Marion Hohlfeldt, Frédéric Sotinel, Veit Stratmann;
Moderator: Merete Røstad
- 12H30 Closing remarks

GOD IS BACK IN TOWN. CONSIDERATIONS ON PUBLIC ART, SECULARITY AND THE CITÉ



Recent developments in Western countries have made it necessary to pay attention to the underlying status quo of proclaimed or supposed secularism in Western democracy. Secularism, as the French *laïcité*, not only creates an open public sphere that ideally addresses each

citizen, it also secures all beliefs, mainstream or minority, as belief is considered to be private. However, the distinction between public (secular) and private (religious or atheist) has lately become porous as groups of citizens or interest groups defeat secularism. We need to recognize that public space is undergoing a post-secular turn that changes its normative quality and scope, as Rawls and Habermas have explicitly argued. In his 2009 book "Zone of transition", Boris Buden underlines that the "mother tongue" of the (post-communist) return to religion is the criticism of culture. "The new belief presents itself as a culture in contrast with the main culture [...] that is substantiated through this cultural difference. That is exactly what gives religion its extraordinary political power today".

This symposium seeks to analyse some examples of public art that deal with these conditions of a post-secular public space. How does public space maintain a highly normative discourse on the increasingly invalid division between private and public spheres and make social normativity visible? How can public art maintain or even initiate democratic processes, or establish new imaginaries that are able to resist secularity drifting when faced with rising particularities of religious or nationalistic extremes? If public space is not simply public anymore, what about public art?

Scientific Coordinator: Marion Hohlfeldt, PACT, EA 3208

Contact: marion.hohlfeldt@univ-rennes2.fr