

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ART CRITICS  
AICA WORLD CONGRESS

**"IDENTITY AND DIVERSITY"**

DEBATE PROGRAMME  
WARSAW

May 31<sup>st</sup> - June 2<sup>nd</sup> 1999, ZaiKS hall

**Second day**                      **subject: MIGRATIONS**

Tuesday, June 1<sup>st</sup> 1999

- 9.00 – 10.00 opening of debate
- 10.00 – 10.40 **Sue Golding** "Nomadic codes"
- 10.40 – 11.00 **Elaine A. King** "Global Culture, Transaesthetics &  
Interactive Communication within the Postmodern  
Enlightenment Project"
- 11.00 – 11.30 coffee break
- 11.30 – 12.00 **Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes** "Joseph Beuys New Cross,  
Peripheries and Migration within Europe: James Joyce,  
Ireland And Poland"
- 12.00 – 13.00 discussion
- 13.00 – 14.00 lunch
- 14.00 – 14.30 **Angelika Bäumer** "Migration or persecution?"
- 14.30 – 15.00 **Peter Frank** "Locus Los Angeles: immigration in (and  
emigration from) a newly emerged international art center"
- 15.00 – 15.30 coffee break
- 15.30 – 16.00 **Christian Chambert** "Survival Kit"
- 16.00 – 16.30 **Janusz Zagrodzki** "The Art of overcoming borders"
- 16.30 – 17.00 **Virgil Hammock** "A place to Stand: Landscape  
and Identity in the Age of Globalisation"
- 17.00 – 17.30 discussion

## **Dr Sue Golding**

### **Nomadic codes**

The title of the paper could be: nomadic codes: skin, taste, burn it would be an exegesis on the carnal knowledges of journeying, and the codes/disciplines and habits one encounters and invents as a 'traveller' [as distinct from voyeur or tourist]. the question of taste [and what can and cannot go into the mouth, onto the tongue] will be 'investigated'. Perhaps we will come at a different way of understanding ethics and poetics, in a way, I hope that disloges the 'theoretical' islands of 'metaphor' and symbol and re-thinks things in terms of the violence [or not] of 'metonymy' rhythm, beat. I will try to have a series of slides and sound sculptures [if there are facilities].

**Dr Sue Golding:** a working philosopher and working artist. Head of theory at the Jan van Eyck Akademie, a post-graduate centre in fine art, design and theory [Maastricht] and reader in contemporary political philosophy, ethics and aesthetics [university of Greenwich, London: on sabbatical leave]. her many published works involve questions around body, genders, racisms, sexualities and pleasures, set out in detail in her eight technologies of otherness (Routledge: 1997), and detailed in her forthcoming: dirty theory [on fluids and culture in the age of wormholes and curved space-time). also writes under the name of Johnny de Philo.



**Elaine A. King**

**Global Culture, Transaesthetics & Interactive Communication  
within the Postmodern Enlightenment Project**

This presentation will explore the shifting impact of technological media on society at the close of this century, the evolution of an art of transaesthetics, and the evolution of a new kind of public space. Artist working with technology recognize its power to create significant cultural experiences. Increasing computer technology replaces conceptual systems founded on ideas of the center, margin, hierarchy, and linearity. A once closed system of art is expanding and opening up in dimensions never thought of before. The new electronic generated art is open and does not carry cultural baggage. Its aesthetics are as yet undefined. The newly evolving art. is not object bound but a perceived as a vehicle for communication and sharing.

Over the years, especially from the late 1970's onwards, artists with an open-ended vision of a global culture pioneered it by collaborating between North and South American, Asian and European cities to create a new transaesthetics. Today's avalanche of powerful new representational electronic tools have created a dramatic change in the premises for art, calling into question the way we see, the way we acquire knowledge, and the way we understand it. Psychologically because no clear answers exist in this time it is an unsettling time of transformation. All of this is occurring in an era that has been referred to as the Post-Modern Enlightenment Project.

The Postmodern Enlightenment Project has its own idea of progress. It is not linear but a concept of cultural evolution based in the belief that the whole human race is involved in a 'huge learning process'. This Postmodern attitude is both a historical and cultural category full of paradox, contradiction and divergent interpretation. This process is difficult, painful and conflicted. It cannot be reduced to simple answers or notions that the world is better or will get better. It is about learning, discovering and accepting our own reality and the reality of others. It is about discovery and a willingness to accept even radical discoveries. As in the past the Enlightenment was grounded in Western civilization's values, the Postmodern Enlightenment Project is global transcending all borders, encompassing not only one based in the West on rational thought but also in Third World Countries, and Central Europe.

The connective tissue of this international phenomenon is shared with a Post-Modern social model based on the concept of a socially constructed reality despite the many differences shared between nations and people. As a result of the expansion of the *World Wide Web* into networks of users, who can now tap into a vast range of information directories, resources data banks, cultural archive, international library holdings, a reinvention of the intellectual community is taking place. The NET has become a lightning rod for issues raised by electronic technologies. This convergence of television and telecommunication technology with state of the art, interactive computer technologies creates an inventive form of



**Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes**

**Joseph Beuys "New Cross", Peripheries and Migration within Europe:  
James Joyce, Ireland and Poland**

Ireland and Poland have essential historical and sociological facts in common: As small Catholic countries they have been subject to colonial powers very near by. The resulting ambivalence towards the colonialists' heritage and the strength derived from both analysing it from the outside and assimilating it, are important parallels.

The German artist Joseph Beuys encountered the Eastern periphery of Western Europe during World War II on the Eastern front and as an artist thereafter showed much interest in peripheral potentials to shape and enrich the centre: He compared Southern Italy and Ireland and turned towards Poland with a complex installation for the Łódź Museum entitled "Polentransport". During documenta 6, 1977, Beuys analysed "Trouble Spots in Europe" and the resulting need for migration. This theme he worked on repeatedly, in the migration workshop he organised at that documenta, and in works relating to Ireland and this country's or even Celtic culture's representative in Beuys' opinion, James Joyce. The writer had lived in many European countries, writing distinctly Irish/Celtic works, but nevertheless encompassing European traditions, creating a vision of European scope. To Beuys, he stood for the need to shape a new Europe by seeing historical and cultural "lines" spanning the Eurasian continent. Beuys called them "Eurasia staff" or his "new cross".

**Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes:** born 1967, has studied the History of Art, History and English Literature at the Universities of Heidelberg, London, Bonn and Cologne, where she worked as assistant to Prof. Antje von Graevenitz, before moving to Ireland to lecture in the History of Art at University College Dublin, The National College of Art and Design, Dublin, and the Open University. She has published and lectured on: Joseph Beuys, visual art inspired by James Joyce, contemporary Irish art, Aby Warburg etc. She is Secretary of the Irish Section of AICA.



**Angelica Bäumer**

## **MIGRATION OR PERSECUTION?**

The values have changed, an axiological pluralism has spread. We can't go back to the values of the past, but we have to do a lot to concentrate the ideas and philosophical theories to overcome the axiological chaos. The globalisation is a reality and we know that, in a very superficial, way everybody is informed about everything. Our mobility in all parts of life gives us the feeling to be at home all over the world. But this development is the reason that everything looks alike and the local and regional specialities disappear. The travellers of today don't take a deep, profound and sensitive view to the strange world they only find what they expected.

The end of the 20th century is the same as the beginning: there is war in Europe. This fact is the horrible recognition that neither the mobility nor the globalisation can save the world and that neither the international statute of human rights nor the knowledge of different ways of traditions can give peace and freedom.

We have to find a new philosophical and artistic approach which means in the same way, to find a new approach for dealing with the diverse problems of the world as to find the "equality in multitude". We have to understand that the globalisation is no longer only a political and economical chance but an intellectual challenge to find answers to the questions for sense and goals for a better future.

**Angelica Bäumer:** Born 1932 in Frankfurt/Main, living in Vienna/Austria. Parents were artists, Eduard Bäumer (1892-1977) and Valerie (1898-1982). 1933 Emigration to Salzburg because of the Nazi Regime. During the Nazitime Eduard Bäumer was considered "entartet" and he was forbidden to paint and exhibit. From 1944 to 1945 the family was hidden in an village in the mountains of Salzburg.

1947-1953 Studies in Salzburg and Vienna: singing, piano and musicology at the University of Music, art history and architecture at the University of Applied Art.

1971-1988 Work freelance journalist for radio and television on following subjects: art critic and documentation, actual and background features about contemporary art, interviews with philosophers, psychologists and scientists.

TV documentation about Austrian artists, painters and architects.

1984-1985 Member of the Cabinet of the Minister of Art and Education, responsible for art and public affairs.

Since 1985 Art management, organisation of congresses (1992 general assembly and congress of AICA in Vienna), freelance journalist and author of books and articles about contemporary Austrian and international artists, lecturer and moderator at discussions.

Assistant professor for journalism at Universities Salzburg and Vienna.

1988 and 1990 curator for the Art Biennale Sydney.

1993 to 1995 editor in Vienna for the art magazine "neue bildende kunst".

Since 1984 member of AICA, 1986 to 1991 vice-president, 1991-1998 president of Austrian section. International vice-president responsible for Steering Committee.



## Christian Chambert

### Survival Kit

„Are you prepared????“, „Are you ready for more floods, more tornadoes, a horrendous hurricane season or other disasters that could make you homeless and destitute in an instant!“ And what about the earthquakes, the tricky problem with the layers of ozone, attacking meteors and the melting ice at the South Pole, if the climate turns warmer in that area of the globe? The Flood will come. Are you up-dated to meet the Y2K computer meltdown, face to face? „Will you know how to live and take care of your family in a post computer, recessionary or depressionary world full of shortages of food, water, money?“ Eureka on the Internet shows 1.564 hits - see quotes above - for „Survival Strategies“. We are inaugurating an era of disaster preparedness for boy scouts with kits for wilderness survival.

Walls are falling down, new political ones are built. Wars and ethnic conflicts are still going on and new ones get started without end. Overpopulation, homelessness, crop failure, poverty and fatal diseases such as AIDS are increasing dangers. What is the role of art in regions living close to chaos?

We travel around the world faster and faster clockwise and counter-clockwise, covering more and more countries. Our age, at the end of the second millennium, is nomadic, open, deconstructed, flowing, „on the move“. The outside comes inside and vice versa. What is the fate for the people, who cannot afford the equipment, which gives access to new media? For Paul Virilio speed is a foundation stone of the new society. But what will happen, when everything will be immensely speeded? What is the role of the media, which do not accept the frontiers of the national states? Mail, telephone calls, fax, e-mail, radio, television, the Internet are transgressing and trespassing the borderlines all the time, which gives us new possibilities as well as new problems.

For me it is important to find a way to survive surrounded by a virtual world, which reminds me of the one in „Archive X“. The agents Dana Scully and Fox Mulder seem to me more real than my own friends, when I am sitting alone in front of the television screen; only the stars are talking with me from somewhere out there. How can you be so sure that the paranormal phenomena are not natural, logic ones?

Is nature real, or artificial, or „Naturally Artificial“? Man is the master of nature. But when old religious systems are crumbling, the divining line between man and nature is vanishing. We are not convinced any longer, that we can do whatever we want with nature. The ecological problems reach across national borders and in the end afflict our own bodies. Nature strikes back. Both the imperialistic and patriarch idea of the superiority of the Western world, Robinson, and the inferiority of the Third World, Friday, imploded. Robinson Crusoe has become a soap and survival kitsch in the Swedish public service television. The statue of Mao is outlived behind the exhibition screen in Canton.

Will conceptions like 'privacy', 'artistic originality' and 'centre' and 'periphery' last? It is more and more difficult to say, where a work of art has been created or to tell about the material of an artist. Today many artists are not creating pieces for posterity, but recycling material in their works, realising that the stuff in their oeuvre is not eternal.

We live in a time when clock travels full circle faster and faster. Let us cycle backwards instead, to get new energy to come forward. Utopia is no longer the goal; instead survival is! But for many, the possibility of survival is utopian.



**Janusz Zagrodzki**

## **The Art of Overcoming Borders**

The paper takes up the problem, significant for art of recent forty years, of expanding borders of the work of art. It concerns not only overcoming artificially determined division lines between the sorts, but creating of works suppressing mental borders between particular countries; these are not only formal actions but notional ones. Each image, sound, sign or word can constitute a material in artist's hands, the material which should be used according to the essence of its message. Multitude of expressive means enables the choice of the one which is the most suitable in given moment, presenting the artistic idea the most precisely.

Language of contemporary art. is the result of abundance of activities and at the same time the source of creating forms and signs used according to natural rights of artistic material and intention it was to be used for. Artists from different countries and generations, despite great variety of interests, attitudes, ways of using the sign, showing their personal relations with reality, are united by unrestrained liberty of artistic actions, creating art with no limits. This text refers to events and individuals important for art, to artists who started their activity in sixties. These creators exactly opened many new ways and opportunities for their successors by overcoming conventionally understood borders of artistic expression and changing traditionally formed image of art. The common characteristic of these researches is incessant activity and continual renovation of ways of expression.

**Janusz Zagrodzki:** born Jan 3<sup>rd</sup> 1941, Warsaw. Studied at the fine arts faculty at UMK in Toruń (MA degree at monuments conservation, 1966); the faculty of philosophy and history of Jagiellonian University in Cracow (PhD, 1980). In 1966-1987 worked in Art. Museum In Łódź (curator, director of modern graphics and drawings section); in 1979-81 and during the martial law period curated not commercial and independent author galleries Ślad I and Ślad II; in 1987-95 worked at National Museum in Warsaw (curator, vice-director for contemporary art. issues); since 1973 has taught art history in PWSF in Łódź. Author of almost 100 papers, monographs, essays, catalogues, exhibitions and films, involving XX century art issues, starting from the turn of centuries, throughout the avant-garde activity, to problems of today's art.



**Virgil Hammock**

## **A PLACE TO STAND: Landscape and Identity in the Age of Globalisation**

It is difficult to speak positively about nationalism and identity in today's world where racial and religious wars are being savagely fought in the name of these same issues. Nevertheless, one's sense of national identity remains an important topic if we are to believe that nation states have different values from one another. Before I get myself in trouble note that I have said different and not necessarily better. As a citizen of a particular nation, Canada, I know that there are commonly shared values that make us a unique country. However, Canada is a nation that has always had a difficult time with its sense of identity.

First we were a colony of Great Britain and shared the mother country's values and then, more recently, Canada has been the uneasy recipient of an overwhelming American culture that threatens the very roots of our national identity. I would like to believe that there is something more to our nationalism than not being either British or American, but I am afraid that the latter not being American is often perceived by many people in my country as what it means to be a Canadian. I prefer the axiom that I recently heard in Finland: "We are no longer Swedes, and we don't want to be Russians so let us be Finns." But I would change it and say that we are no longer British, and we don't want to be Americans so let us be Canadians. I should tell you at this point that I am a citizen of both Canada and the United States American by birth and Canadian by choice so I have some stake in thinking that there are differences between the two nations or otherwise my living in Canada for thirty-two of my sixty years and becoming a citizen of Canada some twenty-six years ago would make little sense.

A country's art has always been a source of its identity. Dutch 17<sup>th</sup> century art is not only an representation of its nationalist pride, but an illustration of the beginnings of its bourgeois democracy and is very different from the French art of the same period. You can go country by country and generally gain an idea of what they think of themselves through their art. It is not important that a country's vision of itself be actually true, but only that its citizens believe the vision. Nor is it particularly important that the art that reinforces this vision be regarded as 'good' by some international standard of art history. This later point is particularly important if you believe, as do I, that art exists within history and not outside its boundaries. This is not to say that some art is better, some good and quite a bit mediocre. Indeed there are far more mediocre Dutch 17th century paintings than there are masterpieces. Good is, of course, another whole issue and outside the scope of this short paper. All art done by trained artists is subject to influences from the work of other artists whether or not the recipients own up to them. There has been much discussion over the last couple of centuries about the importance of originality in determining an art work's place in history (or more accurately art history) so much so that artists lie to themselves about their influences in order to claim that their work is 'original' and not influenced by outside forces. After all, everyone would like to claim that he or she invented the wheel and no one wants to be seen as a mere follower of another artist.

Canadian art prior to World War One was directly influenced by European art and the same can be said for American art. In truth Canadian art was less highly developed than American art at the turn of the 20th century, if for no other reasons than our smaller population, vast hinterlands and our colonial mentality of the time. The Americans had Manifest Destiny and we had law, order and good government hardly the stuff of legends. Canadian art training in



the last half of the 19th century was not first rate. Art was mainly taught in trade schools as a commercial skill rather than as in fine art programmes designed to produce artists. Art was taught at my university from the mid- nineteenth century, but only, until the late 1930's, in the Women's College where it was part of the students' 'finishing' where besides painting and drawing the students learned skills such as china painting and leather work. Those few persons in Canada in the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries who wanted to have a quality fine arts education were forced to go either to Europe or to the United States. Most went to Europe and studied in academies in France, Germany and, in some cases, Belgium. In almost all cases they sought and received a very conservative education somehow missing all the excitement that was going on in Europe in the last thirty or forty years of the 19th century. Of course, for every rule there are exceptions and one or two young Canadians in Europe seem to have noted Impressionism and Post Impressionism in particular the Quebec anglophone artist James Morrice who worked closely with Matisse. Major influences for Canadian artists were the Barbizon School hence Millet and Dutch landscape and genre painting of the 19th century.

These styles, when imported to Canada, tinted landscape painting in a fashion that in reality did not match the actual landscape. This didn't seem to matter much as the people who bought the paintings likely saw the landscape through a romanticised European vision. Indeed the people who bought the paintings likely never ventured far from their urban homes in Toronto or Montreal into the wilderness to see the outback for themselves. Nationalism at this time was not much of an issue either as we were happy members of the British Empire and had only been an independent nation since 1867. All of this was to change in the early years of the twentieth century when a small group of Canadian artists took it upon themselves to try and define the nation in a new way through their art.

These artists, who were to form what is known as the Group of Seven in 1920, had their start in Toronto earlier in the century when through a series of circumstances they found common cause through shared ideas, not only about art, but in their shared nationalism. In the beginning the seven were actually eight: Lawren S. Harris, J.E.H MacDonald, Frederick Varley, Arthur Lismer, A.Y. Jackson, Franklin Carmichael, Franz Johnston and, the eighth 'member' Tom Thomson, a key figure in Canadian art who died tragically in a canoe accident in 1917. You could say that falling out of a canoe was a unique and fitting death for a member of a group who regarded themselves as rugged adventurers or to put it in the florid words of Group biographer, F.B. Housser, who said that they were: "...a new type of artist; one who divests himself of the velvet coat and flowing tie of his cast, puts on the outfit of the bushwhacker and prospector; closes with his environment; paddles, portages and makes camp; sleeps in the out-of-doors under the stars; and climbs mountains with his sketch box on his back." This sounds to us today like a bit out of Boys' Own Adventures or skit from Monty Python's Flying Circus, but it was an apt, if romantic, description of how the Group saw themselves at the time.

The artists of the Group were not born bushwhackers, indeed the membership of the original Group of Seven was neither homogeneous in training nor country of birth. Leaving aside, the Canadian born, and largely self-taught Thomson, three, Lismer, MacDonald and Varley were born in England and the other four in Canada. Lismer and Varley studied at the Sheffield School of Art in England and later at the Antwerp Academy of Art Carmichael, who studied in Canada, also ended up at the Antwerp Academy. Jackson studied in Canada, the United States and France; Johnson, in Canada and the United States; Harris in Munich and Berlin. MacDonald, although born in England, did all his studying in Canada. What they did have in common was a love of nature as a subject for their art. Several of them worked prior to World War One, by necessity, at the same Toronto commercial art firm, Grip Studios. The exception was the independently wealthy Lawren Harris who became identified as a leader



and spokesman for the Group. He also, with non-artist Dr. James MacCallum, a Toronto ophthalmologist, bankrolled the early development of the Group. The Group of Seven knew what they did not like about Canadian art at the beginning of the 20th century, and that was that they saw French, Dutch and British art as inappropriate sources to illustrate the spirit and vigour of Canada. They were determined to find a new way to paint their vision of Canada. What is surprising is that while rejecting the predominate European styles of the Canadian art of the time they enthusiastically adopted another, less known, European style for their model and that was Scandinavian landscape painting of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Harris and MacDonald travelled to Buffalo, New York in 1913 to see an exhibition of contemporary Scandinavian art. They liked what they saw, as Harris recalled in 1954: "MacDonald and I had discussed the possibility of an art expression which would embody the varied moods, character and spirit of this country (Canada).

We heard there was an exhibition of modern Scandinavian paintings at the Albright (Knox) Gallery in Buffalo and took the train to Buffalo to see it. This turned out to be one of the most exciting and rewarding experiences either of us had. Here was a large number of paintings that corroborated our ideas. Here were paintings of Northern lands created in the spirit of those lands and through the hearts and minds of those who knew and loved them. Here was an art bold, vigorous and uncompromising, embodying direct first hand experience of the great North, and our conviction was reinforced...From that time on we knew we were at the beginnings of a great adventure." They had seen Scandinavian art before in reproduction in publications such as the British art magazine *Studio* and that was why the two artists took the trouble to travel to Buffalo to see it. The work they did see in the flesh confirmed that this was a worthy model for them to follow. However, what is interesting are the roots of this influence on Canadian art.

The Scandinavian landscape painting of its so-called golden age, which spans roughly between 1890 and 1910, was heavily influenced by French Symbolist and Synthetist painting namely in the person of Paul Gauguin. Several Scandinavian painters such as Pekka Halonen, a Finn; Karl Nordström, a Swed; and Jens Ferdinand Willumsen, a Dane, either studied directly with Gauguin in Paris or were influenced by his work that they saw in exhibitions. Another connection with Gauguin was through his wife, Metti, who was Danish and who befriended many important Scandinavian artists and showed them her husband's work in her own collection. The northerners were drawn to the ideas and techniques of Symbolism more than they were to the exotic subject matter of many French Symbolist artists. The Scandinavians wanted to give visual expression to the mystical qualities of the northern landscape and Symbolism/ Synthetism gave them the theoretical basis to do so. A good case can be made to label these Scandinavian artists and the Group of Seven as Neo-Romantics who used Symbolist's theories in the pursuit of their populist art. Romanticism was very much at its end at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginnings of the 20th century. It was replaced by Modernism and the idea of an avant-garde which had at its very roots elitism and which strove to be anti-popular. Romantics wanted to save the world while the avant-garde saw themselves as alienated from society, in particular, middle class society. Many of the Scandinavian landscape artists of the Golden Age and certainly all of the members of the Group of Seven were fervent nationalists who saw their art as a way to bring the message to the common people. In the words of Group member J.E.H. MacDonald who said in 1931 that what was wanted was an art that was not fashionable or 'Parisian' and that could be "...understood and enjoyed without metaphysics". This certainly can be seen as a reaction against modern art, but the Group wanted to create, and maintain, an art accessible to all Canadians and they believed that avant-garde art was not able to do that. It was also widely believed as late as the 1930s by the Group, and their supporters, that "...abstraction is not a natural form of art expression in Canada".



The ideals of the Group of Seven were doomed to fail to the forces of the steamroller effect of Modernism and brings into question the validity of nationalistic art. The Group's art, when placed in the canon of 20th century art, looks hopelessly out of date and in the eyes of many down-right reactionary. Taken out of the history of art, however, their art takes on an importance to the history of Canada that far outweighs its shortcomings as independent art works. They, like their Scandinavian counterparts, were in the right place at the right time. Canada was a country ripe to shed its colonial trappings. The Group believed, as did the Scandinavians, that the country's identity was synonymous with its Nordic landscape and their vision struck a chord with the Canadian public. Their works still resonate with a majority of Canadian people who see themselves as a nation through the Group's paintings. The Group of Seven's work seen outside of their Canada context are of very little importance to anyone except as pleasant, if out-dated, landscape paintings. It is a fate common to work such as theirs where its very strength, nationalism, is its major weakness. I doubt what the Group of Seven accomplished with their art could be repeated today in Canada. We are too damn sophisticated and our artists want to be counted on the world stage. In truth, the visual arts in Canada lack the popular audience that the Group enjoyed. The visual arts in Canada, and I venture to say most other places, does not speak to the people, but to itself. The Group of Seven did do one thing they let us be Canadians.

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