

## ***The non-aligned contemporaneity?***

International conference

27 and 28 May 2019

Moderna galerija, auditorium

Speakers:

**Fernanda Carvajal, Dóra Hegyi & Eszter Szakács, Tvrtko Jakovina, Joy Mboya, Vali Mahlouji, Vera Mey, Igor Štiks**

### PROGRAMME

#### **Monday, 27 May 2019, 6 p.m.**

18:00 - 18:15 welcome by **Zdenka Badovinac**, director of the Moderna galerija and **Bojana Piškur**, curator of the exhibition Southern Constellations: The Poetics of the Non-Aligned

18:15 - 19:15 **Tvrtko Jakovina**: *On the Relevance of Small Countries; How Yugoslavia discovered non-alignment and became the Third World leader*, opening talk

#### **Tuesday, 28 May 2019, 1:30 - 6:30 p.m.**

13:30 - 14:00 **Igor Štiks**: *The 21st-century Left and the Spectres of Yugoslav Socialism: Anti-Fascism, Non-Alignment, Self-Management and Multinational Federalism*

14:00 - 14:30 **Fernanda Carvajal**: *Traces to resist the present. Towards a non-aligned genealogy of the Southern Conceptualisms*

14:30 - 15:00 **Dóra Hegyi & Eszter Szakács**: *Mezosfera Magazine: A Proposition for a Pan-Peripheral Network*

15:00 - 15:15 break

15:15 - 16:00 discussion moderated by **Bojana Piškur**

16:00 - 16:30 **Vera Mey:** *Artistic Alignment in Southeast Asia: case studies exploring a „geographic horizon“ of the art and visual culture of the region*

16:30 - 17:00 **Joy Mboya:** *Cultural Undertakings as acts of Nation Formation in Post-colonial African States: the case of The GoDown Arts Centre, Nairobi, Kenya*

17:00 - 17:30 **Vali Mahlouji:** *The Shifting Sands of Utopias*

17:30 - 17:45 break

17:45 - 18:30 discussion moderated by **Tjaša Pogačar Podgornik**

The conference is part of the *Southern Constellations: The Poetics of the Non-Aligned* exhibition and will be in English.

The conference is part of a larger project New Mappings of Europe, supported by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union and including the collaboration of the Museum of Yugoslavia from Belgrade, the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna and the Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art, in addition to Moderna galerija.

**[www.newmappingsofeurope.si](http://www.newmappingsofeurope.si)**



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA  
MINISTRY OF CULTURE

## The non-aligned contemporaneity?

A conference is dedicated to the question how to harness the historical visions of the non-alignment in the light of the current global geopolitical situation. Another important question tackles the legacy of culture in the spirit of NAM's internationalism and its potentials for the present day. Naturally, these questions should not be considered as part of some kind of exoticism linked to the past, nor should they harbor nostalgia for the movement itself, for as we know, what many NAM states actually practiced was quite far from the principles the movement promoted. From today's perspective, the concepts of nation-states, identity politics, and exclusive national cultures, which appeared in the cultural political agendas of the time, can be seen as problematic. The concept of solidarity also needs to be treated with caution: with whom are we solidary, and how are we solidary? How can we avoid the "white savior complex"? And what should be done with the fact that Syria, Pakistan, Libya and most African states are still members of the NAM?

Nevertheless, the movement should not be forgotten in so far as it envisioned forms of politics that took as their starting point peoples and societies that had been forcibly relegated to the margins of the global economic, political and cultural system. The movement also proposed new models that "enabled people to live and not merely to survive". The struggle against poverty, inequality, and colonialism in the world system, coupled with trans-national solidarity could be useful in a reconsideration of the history and legacies of the NAM today, at a time when colonialism has yet again become more than evident.

However, to truly reconsider the legacy of the NAM in the cultural framework of today more radical measures would need to be considered – not only on the declarative level, but on practical, applicative levels: on the level of governance, knowledge production and heritage. Next, it would be necessary to translate these new formats and concepts into the spaces of policymaking, not only into those of art and culture, but also in relation to the state, national welfare, and the mechanisms of public administration.

## ABSTRACTS AND BIOGRAPHIES

Fernanda Carvajal

---

### **Traces to resist the present**

#### **Towards a non-aligned genealogy of the Southern Conceptualisms Network**

---

What misalignments do the demands of anti-colonialist, anti-racist and anti-interventionist policies provoke on today's Left? How can we put into practice non-colonial forms of solidarity, when the decision to link with others involves crossing the (national, economic, racial, or sexual-gender) borders of what we codify as known and safe? In this presentation I go back to some impulses and practices linked to the Non-Aligned Movement of the sixties and seventies, to trace a possible genealogy that can re-signify, challenge and inspire Southern Conceptualisms Network collaborative practices in the last ten years. We are in a very different scenario from the one that gave birth to the Non-Aligned Movement. After the end of the bipolar order, we live under a neoliberal capitalism without counterweights, authoritarian and militarized, which is constantly renewed and expanded, reinforcing the image of its own inevitability. Southern Conceptualisms Network was born in 2007 at a time of the rise of populist governments in Latin America that combined the redistribution of consumption and the expansion of rights with devastating neo-extractive models of accumulation. In this context, inspired by the intellectual networks of the seventies, the Southern Conceptualisms Network has mobilized an internationalist practice from the scale of political friendship that seeks to generate conditions for other forms of affectivity, production of knowledge and political disobedience. This presentation reflects on contemporary forms of internationalism that appeal to more fragmentary, mixed, unpredictable, and extra-institutional modalities that cannot be conceived from the logic of inter-state or inter-institutional cooperation. The aim is to think about the potentialities of the internationalist policies of the third world countries in the sixties and seventies from the call for solidarity and non-alignment as traces to resist the present.

**Fernanda Carvajal** was born in Santiago de Chile and has lived in Buenos Aires since 2008. Sociologist, with an MA in Communication and Culture and PhD in Social Sciences, she works on the intersections between art, sexuality and politics since the 1970s, to trace alternative queer genealogies from Latin America. She integrates different collectives such as Southern Conceptualisms Network, the group Micropolitics of sexual disobedience in art, and Sex and Revolution archive program. At present, among other projects, she works together with Alejandro de la Fuente in the conformation of the Mares of the Apocalypse Archive.

Dóra Hegyi & Eszter Szakács

---

## Mezosfera Magazine: A Proposition for a Pan-Peripheral Network

---

Mezosfera (<http://mezosfera.org/>), an international online magazine published by tranzit.hu in Budapest, was launched in 2016 with the aim, among others, to reassess the notion of “Eastern Europe” while also building alliances through this process. The talk introduces two recent Mezosfera thematic issues: Propositions for a Pan-Peripheral Network (October 2017) and Refractions of Socialist Solidarity (May 2018). These two issues break with examining Eastern Europe in relation to Western Europe and Western-oriented discourses. Instead, the issues foreground the historical, transnational connections that were established and practiced between Eastern European and African and Asian countries during the Cold War. Hungary and the other Eastern European Warsaw Pact countries were not members of the Non-Aligned Movement, yet Hungary, through the ideology of socialist internationalism, built state-directed diplomatic, economic, and cultural relations with “Third World” countries. After the Eastern European regime changes of 1989, however, all sentiments connected to the former system were thrown out, the cultural links created between “Second World” and “Third World” countries were mostly cut, and are today mostly forgotten. The Mezosfera issues thus also query the complexities of rediscovering and reinterpreting these past connections, while underlining the paradoxes of state-directed solidarities as well. At the same time, the issues likewise attempt to assess the contemporary relevance of these very relations. With the issues’ contributors, Mezosfera also connected with similar-minded and geopolitically focused research-based art initiatives in the Global South to raise and contextualize several issues: Is it possible and worthwhile to reactivate the knowledge that was part of the popular consciousness in one political system and erased in the other? Is it possible to construct new and viable models for transregional solidarity, a “politics of friendship?”

**Dóra Hegyi and Eszter Szakács** are co-editors of Mezosfera magazine.

**Dóra Hegyi** is a curator and critic based in Budapest. Since 2005 she has been the director of tranzit.hu, a member of the transnational network tranzit.org in Central and Eastern Europe. She is an initiator, curator, and editor of exhibitions and educational, research and publication projects that consider art as a field of critical debate that can mediate between different fields and disciplines and function as a catalyst for change. Her recent projects as co-curator and co-editor include Creativity Exercises. Emancipatory Pedagogies in Art and Beyond (2014–19); War of Memories (2015); Imagining Conceptual Art (2017); 1971. Parallel Nonsynchronism (2018–19).

**Eszter Szakács** is a curator, editor, and researcher in Budapest. She has been a curator at tranzit.hu since 2011, where she has, among other, curated the Curatorial

Dictionary project, been the (co-) editor of online and print publications, and organized the Budapest presentation of *Two Meetings and a Funeral* by Naeem Mohaiemen. Her ongoing research focuses on the “Second World” and “Third World” relations in the Cold War, and she is currently co-editing a publication on transnational solidarity with Naeem Mohaiemen. She is a curatorial team member of the OFF-Biennale Budapest.

**Tvrtko Jakovina**

---

## **On the Relevance of Small Countries**

### **How Yugoslavia discovered non-alignment and became the Third World leader**

---

After the break with the Soviet Union in 1948, Tito’s Yugoslavia was a country between two worlds. Since the Yugoslav government and the ruling party remained Communist – although the system was “modified” into self-managed socialism in order to show a clear distinction from the Soviet model – Yugoslavia could not turn back to the East, not even after the de-Stalinization in the Soviet Union, nor could it orient itself to the West. As the changes in the Soviet bloc with Nikita Khrushchev turned out to be less substantial than Belgrade had hoped, and Western Europe was quickly building the European Economic Community, Yugoslavia’s prospects in the second half of 1950s were rather bleak.

Parallel to decolonization, which became a world process, interest in the Third World grew, especially among the European left, and Yugoslavia quickly seized the opportunity. The Third World was the only way out of isolation, the only way for a small country to be able to play a part in the world order and world organizations, especially the UN. The newly emancipated parts of the world were where Yugoslav goods were of relevance and where the country’s huge ambitions could be manifested and fulfilled. Non-alignment meant different things to different member states, but the Yugoslav interpretation was regarded as middle-of-the road and accepted by a majority of them. In my presentation I will try to illustrate the importance of the non-aligned ideas for emancipation in general, the global relevance of the idea and the movement that still exists, and especially the importance of Yugoslavia for NAM and of NAM for Yugoslavia. Non-alignment was not against the West or against the European orientation of Yugoslavia; it was a tool for preserving Yugoslavia in the center of world events and allowing it to play a more important role in the world.

**Tvrtko Jakovina** is a tenured professor and former head of the Department of History, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb. He is the author of *Socijalizam na američkoj pšenici* (2002), *Američki komunistički saveznik; Hrvati, Titova Jugoslavija i Sjedinjene Američke Države 1945-1955* (2003), *Treća strana Hladnog rata* (2011), “Croatian Spring – 40 years

Later /Hrvatsko proljeće, četrdeset godina poslije" (editor, 2012), *Trenuci katarze. Prijelomni događaji XX stoljeća/* (2013) and "25 Years of Croatian Independence – What is Next? / 25 godina hrvatske neovisnosti – kako dalje?" (editor, 2017). He has also authored many articles on the foreign policy of Tito's Yugoslavia and on Croatian history in the 20th century.

Jakovina is a lecturer at the Diplomatic Academy in Zagreb and guest-lecturer at Istituto per l'Europa centro-orientale e balcanica, University of Bologna. Previously, he was visiting fellow at the London School of Economics. He taught at the University of Split and is currently teaching several courses in different PhD programs at the University of Zagreb. Jakovina has given lectures at different universities in Poland, Finland, Slovakia, France, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Indonesia, the People's Republic of China, the USA etc.

In 2014/2015 Jakovina has been head of the History Department, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb. In 2010 Jakovina became a member of the Council for Foreign Policy and International Relations of the Croatian President Ivo Josipović. He is vice-president of the Croatian Fulbright Alumni Association, member of the Board of the Croatian-American Association, Management Board President of the Center for Democracy and Law "Miko Tripalo" and member of several editorial boards. He regularly contributes to the daily newspaper *Jutarnji list* and occasionally for the Zagreb weekly *Globus*. From 2013 to 2016 he was anchor of the Croatian television show *Treća povijest*.

Jakovina studied at several universities in the United States (University of Kansas, was Fulbright Visiting Researcher at the Georgetown University). He obtained an MA in American Studies at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium, and a PhD from the University of Zagreb (in 2002).

## Vali Mahlouji

---

### **The Shifting Sands of Utopias**

---

The paper discusses *A Utopian Stage*, an open-ended, evolving project by Archaeology of the Final Decade (AOTFD) that summons a complex space of international modernity led by the 'third worldist' sensibilities of the immediate post-colonial period. In the lead up to, and the aftermath of, the collapse of European hegemonies and the rise of the global south a fluid exchange of ideals of solidarity, international cooperation, and national self-determination (core impulses of the Non-Aligned Movement) became possible across geographies, histories and forms in ways and on a scale that had never been possible before. Countless utopian universalist episodes and ideals - transcendental internationalisms, radical liberations, emancipating solidarities – emerged and dissolved. *A Utopian Stage* traces a cultural atlas that conjures the ambitions and contradictions of those ideals and evokes a conjunction of modernism, art and revolution where marginalised communities could imagine themselves at the forefront of all.

As its point of departure, the project excavates the radical aspirations of the virtually-forgotten Festival of Arts, Shiraz-Persepolis (1967-1977). As a nexus for hyper-modernist networks of artists and experimentalists which defined the 1960s and 1970s, the festival exalted in the dawn of the post-colonial age, embodying an optimistic drive to reimagine a potential new world as an open universal arena for mutual exchange.

In 1977 the festival itself was targeted and attacked through moralising, religious accusations of decadence, obscenity and blasphemy by Islamists and was subsequently banned in Iran in 1979. Many of the artists involved were banned from work and its archives were destroyed or removed and remain banned to date.

AOTFD's painstaking retrieval of those side-lined materials aims to push back those accusations to reveal a seminal modernist event and its euphoria of togetherness in line with ideals of progress, openness, alterity and inclusivity. The festival's obliteration itself resonates revealingly with the diminishing emancipatory prospects of the Non-Aligned Movement in the face of dangerous, populist far right religious discourses, on the rise since the late seventies. The reinsertion of this material into the public sphere and its de-stigmatisation is a political act – an act against regressive populisms that cut short the vision of progressive movements in the third world.

**Vali Mahlouji** is a curator, advisor to the British Museum, the Bahman Mohassess Estate and director of Kaveh Golestan Estate. In 2010 he founded Archaeology of the Final Decade (AOTFD), a non-profit curatorial platform excavating accounts of culture, which have remained obscure, banned or lost through material destruction, acts of censorship, political, economic or human contingencies. AOTFD has placed artworks in international collections including: Tate Modern, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, British Museum and Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Mahlouji's recent curatorial work includes exhibitions at SAVVY Contemporary, Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Dhaka Art Summit 2018, Foam Fotografiemuseum Amsterdam, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, MAXXI Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo, Whitechapel Gallery, Singapore International Festival of Arts, Bergen Triennial and de la Warr Pavilion. Upcoming exhibition will be at Sursock Museum in Beirut.

He has been published by various institutions, including, the Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin, the Guggenheim Museum, New York, Asia Society Museum New York and Yale University Press.

## **Joy Mboya**

---

### **Cultural Undertakings as acts of Nation Formation in Post-colonial African States: the case of The GoDown Arts Centre, Nairobi, Kenya.**

---

What imperatives arise when a plan to build new cultural infrastructure, as a natural evolution in the life cycle of an arts organization, turns out to be a gesture of great signification? How does the importance of its development as the first major post-colonial capital investment in arts and culture inform the process of its actualization? This presentation looks at the case of The GoDown Arts Centre in Nairobi, which is in the process of being built anew.

The cultural and political landscape in which The GoDown has emerged, and operates within, will be briefly set out. The social and political forces, and the thinking that inform the choices made by the organization in its programmatic mission over the past decade and a half will be examined - what have been the impacts of a generally weak institutional and cultural policy environment in Kenya's arts sector on The GoDown, and the local cultural landscape broadly? How has the organization approached artist and audience development? What has been the effect on it of reliance on international funding partners?

The presentation will also demonstrate the approaches and processes of designing and rebuilding the arts space, the importance of linking the process to the shaping of urban identities in a young Kenyan state and the embedding of an ethos of inclusivity, participation and sustainability within the project. Contradictions and contestations at social, cultural and political levels that the project brings to the fore will be examined, as well as opportunities it simultaneously opens up for charting out an endogenous, independently-directed purpose and program, underscoring the fact that nation formation is not only political and economic but also cultural.

**Joy Mboya** is Executive Director of The GoDown Arts Centre, Nairobi, Kenya. As a performer and cultural activist, educated as an architect, she has led the centre's development as a site for artistic experimentation, cross-sector partnerships and creative collaboration. Currently, she is leading the GoDown's ambitious redevelopment into a civic-scale cultural institution, which will be the first in Nairobi since Kenya's Independence. Her work has been recognized by several awards including the Head of State Commendation medal (2009) and the Order of the Golden Warrior (2013) for her outstanding leadership in the cultural field in Kenya. She is a Ford Foundation Fellow (2015).

Vera Mey

---

## **Artistic Alignment in Southeast Asia: case studies exploring a “geographic horizon” of the art and visual culture of the region**

---

Notions of alignment dominated the Cold War political arena, spurred on by new alliances and allegiances which connected mutually subjugated Global South members. With these political shifts came artistic changes in Southeast Asia, motivated in part by multiple independence movements within the region, demanding a new image of the future. The Bandung 1955 Asia Africa Conference and the ensuing Non-Aligned Movement formalized in Belgrade in 1961 were watershed events which anchored a new mode of representation – both politically and within visual culture – arising out of the fervor for sovereignty. Through looking at these shifts within iconography of visual culture, we can begin to see multiple references within the art that challenge different spatial and temporal definitions of the region of Southeast Asia.

This research considers both traditional and modern art forms which reference tradition, identifying a tension or blurring of the boundaries between the national and the international. This opens a conversation on the regional: a framing of Southeast Asia generated both from within and outside. Within these works there is an allusion to a horizon that is more intimate and knowable than the global, yet also outside of the immediate local. Looking at the iconographic shifts within works of this period will elucidate how image culture of Southeast Asia was continually expanding and yet remained rooted in pre-national forms and attitudes. Using a thematic concept of alignment rather than reverting to essentialized categorizations confined to the individuated nation, allows for the amorphous and entangled alignment of politics and art to be taken into account, as well as asserting how art is a space to test the limitations of affiliation and territorialization.

**Vera Mey** is a PhD candidate at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Prior to this, she spent several years working as a contemporary art curator in institutions including ST PAUL St Gallery, AUT University, New Zealand and the NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore, a contemporary art research center. More recent independent work has included co-curating and curating exhibitions in New Zealand, Bangkok, Paris, Phnom Penh, Shanghai, Singapore, and Tokyo including in 2017, “Sunshower: Contemporary art from Southeast Asia 1980s to now” at the Mori Art Museum and National Art Centre Tokyo which was the largest survey of Southeast Asian artists to be exhibited. In 2015-16 she was a scholar on *Ambitious Alignments: New Histories of Southeast Asian Art*, a research initiative of the Getty Foundation. She is co-founder of the peer reviewed journal *Southeast of Now: Directions in Contemporary and Modern Art in Asia* published by NUS Press (Singapore).

Igor Štiks

---

## **The 21st-century Left and the Spectres of Yugoslav Socialism: Anti-Fascism, Non-Alignment, Self-Management and Multinational Federalism**

---

In my lecture I will analyze how the contemporary Left responds to what I will call the four “specters” of the defunct Yugoslav socialist project, and why anti-fascist resistances, non-alignment in global relations, economic and political self-management, and multinational federalism are still crucial for a clear (and nowadays lacking) definition of the Left’s vision and political strategy in the 21st century.

**Igor Štiks** is a writer and scholar. Earning his PhD at the Institut d’Études Politiques de Paris and Northwestern University, he worked for years at the University of Edinburgh. He is currently professor of politics at the Faculty of Media and Communications in Belgrade. His recent publications include *Nations and Citizens in Yugoslavia and the Post-Yugoslav States: One Hundred Years of Citizenship* (Bloomsbury, 2015) and, together with Srećko Horvat, *Welcome to the Desert of Post-Socialism* (Verso, 2015). His award-winning novels *The Judgment of Richard Richter* and *A Castle in Romagna* have been translated into fifteen languages. Štiks works at the Faculty of Media and Communications in Belgrade.