

# INCCA Central and Eastern Europe - INCCA CEE

International Network for Conservation of Contemporary Art – Central and East Europe group;  
Initiation of the INCCA CEE group took place on Monday, March 2nd, 2009

Group INCCA CEE coordinator is Iwona Szmelter,  
Head of the Painting and Modern Art Preservation Laboratory  
Faculty of Conservation-Restoration of Works of Art  
Academy of Fine Arts (AFA) in Warsaw, Poland  
Full professor in the science of visual art and conservator-restorer.

Group vice coordinator is Monika Jadzińska.  
Assistant to professor Szmelter and conservator-restorer.

Iwona and Monika were founding members of INCCA and have been active members since 1999.  
Amongst other things they participated in the 3-year EU project Inside Installations (2004-2007).

## The founding group

Iwona Szmelter, professor, AFA Warsaw, Faculty of Conservation-Restoration, Poland  
Monika Jadzińska, assistant, AFA Warsaw, Faculty of Conservation-Restoration, PhD candidate, Poland  
Duska Cikovic, PhD candidate AFA Warsaw, conservator Museum of Modern Art, Rijeka, Croatia  
Hilkka Hiiop, MA, conservator-curator, Estonian Art Museum, Tallinn, Estonia  
Ela Wysocka, PhD candidate AFA Cracow, Poland  
Joanna Waško, conservator National Gallery Zacheta, Poland  
Aga Wielocha, freelance conservator, Poland

## Areas of interest

- Theory
- Science and diagnostics
- Conservation-Restoration
- Expertise
- Education and Training
- National and Regional Scientific Projects
- International Collaboration and Projects
- Documentations, archives, interviews with the artists
- Seminars, conferences

**Structure** - we are open for professionals but also for business. In everyday practice we will continue to share our experiences and consult each other when specific questions arise. There is no direct membership to INCCA-CEE. Members simply join the international organization and participate by making contributions to the Artists' Archive database and other INCCA activities.

## Description of the region

Accordingly to the cultural specific's of Central and Eastern Europe – today it is a term describing former communist states in Europe, after the collapse of the Iron Curtain in 1989/90. Historically and geographically this term is broader and versified included Austria, East Germany and Russia. Specific art and traditions were observed here since Medieval time, especially fruitfully in the territory of post Austro-Hungarian Empire in XIX/XX century. The context of mental and historical tradition is

continued in the spirit and charm. The current context of visual culture is more international in universal sense but often inspired by history of the region.

In scholarly literature the abbreviations CEE or CEEC are often used for this concept. CEE includes all the Eastern bloc countries west of the post-World War II border with the former Soviet Union, the independent states in former Yugoslavia (which were not considered part of the Eastern bloc), and the three Baltic states — Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania. Some of those countries joined the EU in 2004 and the other in 2007 and they are still in the period of transformation. The Central-East region in Europe extending from the border of Germany in the west, Baltic Sea in the south to the border with Greece and Ural in the south and east, includes CEE and CIS:

Baltic states: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania;

Central - Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, (in rich historical cultural sense – Austria, south-east Germany), Romania, Bulgaria, Albania;

States of former Yugoslavia: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia;

Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS): Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, partly Russia; Central Asia-partly Turkey. The list of countries is so long that their cultural diversity is obvious.

**The Care of Culture Heritage** mostly is based on governmental regulations; most of collection modern and contemporary art are part of the national or regional museums of art.

The reflection on the roots is very positive, for example well known Art Museum (Muzeum Sztuki) in Łódź, started from „International Collection of Modern Art, group R.A. - Revolutionary Artists” in 1931. It was the second after MoMA (1929) modern art collection in the world. In 2008 Art Museum in Łódź have opened the second building called „MS2” destined particularly to contemporary art. Generally museums in this region are founded by governments. Therefore we have many new initiatives, such as “Sign of Time” in Poland, long-term project (governmental-private 50:50) related to establishing new contemporary art collections and some private activities.

INCCA CEE mission is very important to record artist’s data, disseminate knowledge and create science for the preservation in the best manner all the contemporary art, especially for modern artworks collected in museums in this region. We must also try to preserve. Through conservation high schools mission, newsletters and we make a great job with dissemination of knowledge and the mission of INCCA in such broad area as CEE.

The situation of conservators for modern and contemporary art is very specific. It is part of duties classical trained conservators. In many countries, as Poland, Czech, Hungary - training included modern art conservation as voluntary pathway for master course. In many countries we have heard about lack of initiatives for modern art preservation (till today).

### **Governing structure of INCCA group**

The group has a coordinator and vice-coordinator. Certain group members are responsible for topics related to their expertise.

Conservation science: Iwona Szmelter, Monika Jadzińska, Hilikka Hiiop

Dissemination of knowledge: Iwona Szmelter, Monika Jadzińska, Hilikka Hiiop

Documentation: Aga Wielocha, Joanna Waško

Transport: Aga Wielocha, Joanna Waško

Electronic media and internet: Ela Wysocka

International relations: Monika Jadzińska, Duska Cikovic, Hilikka Hiiop

### **Group history**

INCCA CEE activities are a continuation of our regional (Polish Ministry Of Science of High Education) and international projects. Group members were involved in a number of European funded projects such as the INCCA Founding Project (1998-2002) and Inside Installations (2004-2007), EUREKA!, COST. Another project to mention “Preserve it for Future” started in 1994. This academic project was based on research in high schools in the region, public workshops and interviews with artists. This resulted in a publications started

from Warsaw's, (ISBN 83-87321-71-0), which were presented among others in DVD and CD format and sent to all galleries, museums and libraries in Poland. In first stage a Polish group of conservator-restorers, scientists, curator and artist related to INCCA goals was established on December 18, 2007 and engaged in organization of regional net.

### **Recent activities**

2008 May-June

Exhibition and every Saturday conservation-curatorial workshops titled "This is not an exhibition", with National Gallery of Modern Art "Zacheta". The highlight was the role of documentation in the preservation of the work of contemporary art. It was presented that proper documentation is necessary if the piece is to be correctly interpreted, exhibited, and cared for, it virtually prolongs its existence. On the public eye was preparing documentation, drawing up conservation instructions, photographing and filming the assembly of works. Plus two public seminars and book titled:

"On the Care of Collections", ed. J. Pużyńska, M. Bogdańska, Zacheta, 2009, ISBN 97-883607-13-25-9. People involved: curators: Joanna Pużyńska, Małgorzata Bogdańska, conservators: Joanna Waško, Iwona Szmelter, Aga Wielocha, Anna Czajka and many others.

2008 April, 6-7

Organization of two-day forum "Conservation-Curatorial Care; classical and modern" during an international conference "Towards New Museum" in co-operation with regional Mazovian Center of Culture. Continuation for public in stakeholders activities. People involved: Iwona Szmelter, Derek Pullen (Tate), Dorota Ignatowicz, Aga Wielocha, Joanna Waško

2009 February 11- March 2

AFA in Warsaw, public lectures "To be or not to be – for contemporary art". On March 2<sup>nd</sup> during a panel discussion after the lectures we voted to establish our initiative in INCCA as the 'Central and Eastern Europe INCCA group'. The initiation of the working group 'INCCA Central & Eastern Europe' took place on the following Meeting on Monday, March 2, 2009. People involved: Iwona Szmelter, Monika Jadzinska, Ela Wysocka, Aga Wielocha, Joanna Waško, Magda Kijanko

2009 May- July

Iwona Szmelter gave a paper during the international conference: *Alina Szapocznikow, Documents. Works. Interpretations* at the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw, 15-16 May 2009. Lectures in print. This conference coincided with the exhibition: "Awkward Objects, Alina Szapocznikow and Maria Bartuszo, Pauline Boty, Louise Bourgeois, Eva Hesse, and Paulina Ołowska", 14 May– 26 July 26th, 2009 at the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw; care and preservation - AFA conservators under the supervision of I. Szmelter

2009 February- May

Participation in project 'Care of the Foksal Gallery Legacy', related to the preservation of the oldest and well known avant-garde gallery in Poland - Foksal Gallery, active in visual arts and conceptual area in Warsaw since 60ties. Preparation for retrospective exhibition in Tallinn 2009, May-July. AFA conservators under the supervision of M. Jadzińska, I. Szmelter; curator Karolina Łabowicz-Dymanus

2009 February-August

Project 'Material paintings from 1950s-1960s; conservation and arrangement'; presentation during retrospective exhibition of Jadwiga Maziarska, CSW, June-July 2009 (project will be continued)

### **Next steps**

After confirmation our group by SC we are going to realize mission of INCCA in Central and East Europe in official way. Our first aim is to participate as a group during the Modern Art: Who Cares? II congress in 2010. A programme committee made up of professor Iwona Szmelter, Monika Jadzińska MA, Duska Csikovic MA, professor Dorota Folga-Januszewska, Joanna Waško MA, Ela Wysocka

MA will organize a panel discussion and brainstorming session after which we will decide the best way to move forward. We remain a voluntary group or (perhaps) establish the foundation INCCA CEE (as has been done by the INCCA North America group). In everyday practice we will continue to share our experiences and consult each other when specific questions arise.

### **Contact INCCA CEE**

Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw  
 Faculty of Conservation-Restoration of Works of Art  
 Att: Iwona Szmelter, Monika Jadzińska  
 Wybrzeże Kosciuszki nr 37  
 00 279 Warsaw  
 Poland  
 Email's: [iwona.szmelter@gmail.com](mailto:iwona.szmelter@gmail.com) , [monika.jadzinska@gmail.com](mailto:monika.jadzinska@gmail.com)

### **Potential INCCA members** (in alphabetical order); our co-workers :

Bednarski Krzysztof, artist (installations), Warsaw (Poland) and Rome (Italy)  
 Datko Zofia, freelance conservator, Warsaw  
 Folga-Januszewska Dorota, curator, professor of art history, University KSW, Warsaw  
 Gola Jola, art historian, curator, Museum AFA in Warsaw  
 Gramatyka Jacek, dr hab., academic teacher, engaged in establishing and managing museum in AFA Poznań , academic teacher  
 Ignatowicz Dorota, Head of Conservation Department, National Museum in Warsaw  
 Karneder Zofia, freelance conservator, Cracow  
 Korona Monika, academic teacher, AFA in Poznań  
 Kusz Urszula, conservator in Museum of AFA, Warsaw  
 Kowalski Wojciech, professor, lawyer, specialist in copyright and preservation law, academic teacher in Silesian University, Katowice  
 Mikstal Katarzyna, student of Masters Course, AFA, Warsaw  
 Monkiewicz Dorota, curator, MWW-project, Director of Museum of Contemporary Art in Wrocław  
 Sitkowska Maryla, Head of Museum of Academy of Fine Art, Warsaw  
 Słomczyńska Monika, artist (sculptor), at the same time student of conservation-restoration, Toruń  
 Zadora Anna, PhD candidate in Warsaw, academic teacher, Silesian University, Katowice

In addition a number of the group's existing members have contacts with conservators and curators in other parts of Europe for example: Sofia ( Bulgaria), from Prague (Czech), Tallinn (Estonia), Kaunas (Lithuania), Budapest (Hungary), Moldova, Ukraine etc.