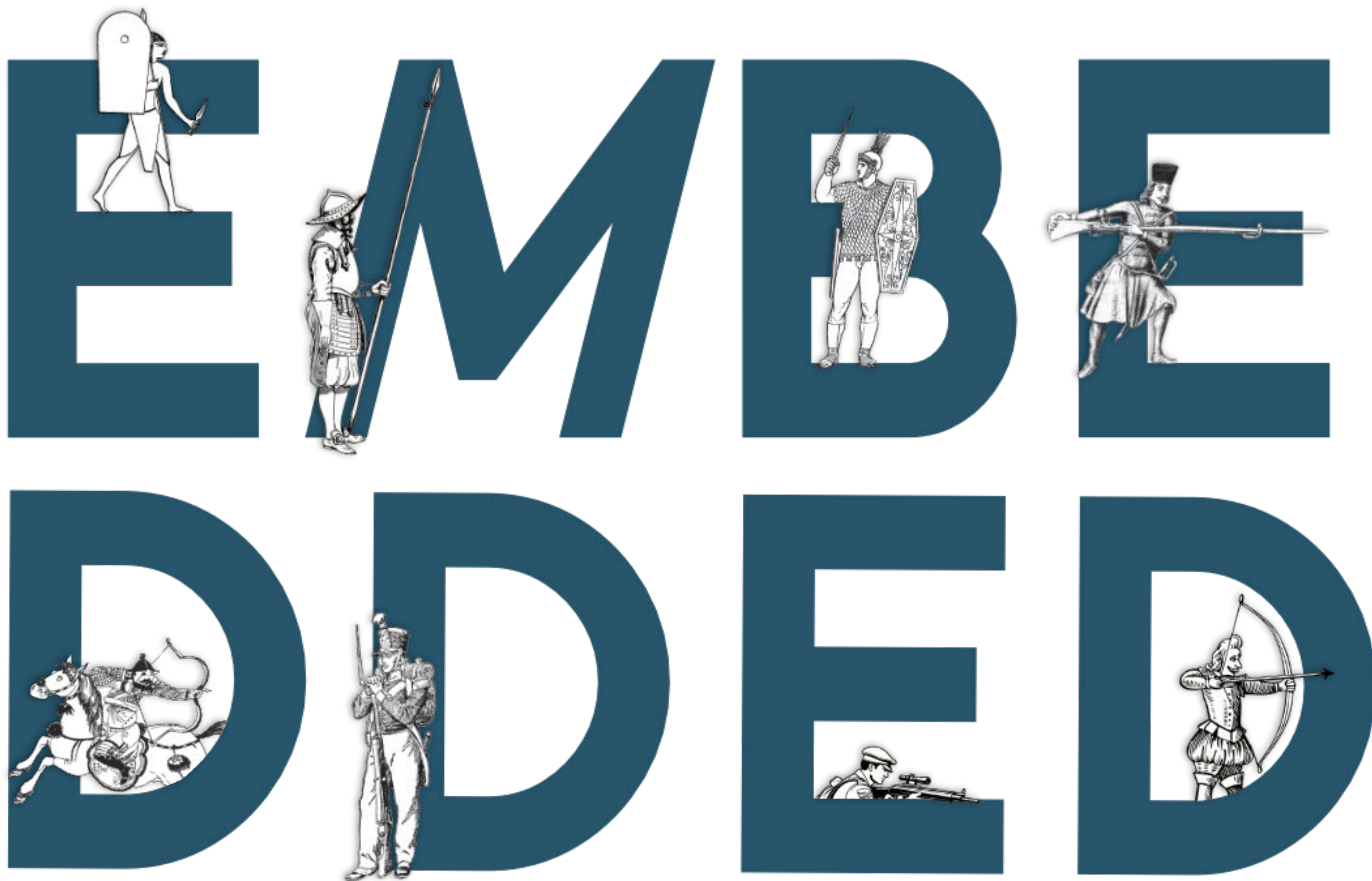


A conference organized by  
Mischa Gabowitsch and Jan Kusber

with generous support from the Georg Forster Forum



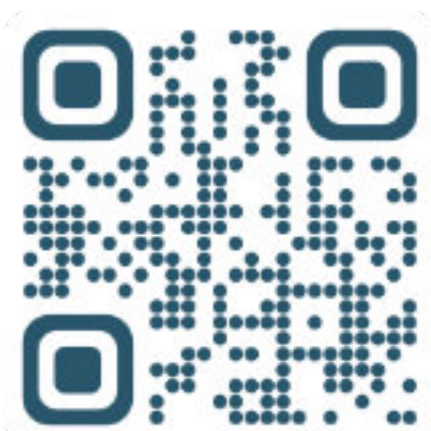
# THE MILITARY AS A PATRON OF THE ARTS

PART II

12 February 2025 - 15 February 2025

Fakultätssaal, Philosophicum

Jakob-Welder-Weg 18, 55128 Mainz



# Embedded: The Patron of the Arts. Part II

Organized by

Mischa Gabowitsch and Jan Kusber (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz)

Venue:

Fakultätsaal, Philosophicum, Johannes Gutenberg University

Jakob-Welder-Weg 18, 55128 Mainz, Germany

## Wednesday, 12 February 2025

17:00–17:30 Coffee

17.30–19:00 Kingsley Baird (Massey University Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa, Wellington): *Siren Songs, Trojan Horses, or Symbiotic Relationships? An Artist's Engagement with Military Institutions*. Public keynote lecture and discussion. Streamed via <https://uni-mainz-de.zoom.us/j/67862098745>. Chair: Mischa Gabowitsch (JGU)

19:00 Reception

## Thursday, 13 February 2025

9:00–9:30 Coffee

9:30–10:00 Mischa Gabowitsch (JGU Mainz): *Introduction*. Chair: Jan Kusber (JGU Mainz)

10:00–10:45 Nina Franz (Braunschweig University of Art): *Between Image Culture, Science, and Technology of War: Jacob de Gheyn as an Embedded Artist in the Dutch Military Reforms*. Chair: Jan Kusber (JGU Mainz)

10:45–11:00 Coffee break

11:00–11:45 Anmol Yasmin Ahmed (independent researcher, Vienna): *Visualizing the "Martial Races": Military Patronage and the Construction of Colonial Masculinities in the Indian Subcontinent*. Chair: Zhazira Bekzhanova (JGU Mainz)

11:45–12:30 Géraud Sez nec (DELPAT, Paris): *The French Army Painters Working for Public Authority: From the Procurement to the Encouragement of Artistic Creation (1914–2024)*. Chair: Zhazira Bekzhanova (JGU Mainz)

12:30–14:30 Lunch

14:30–15:15 Martin Rempe (University of Konstanz): *Of Private Pleasure and Public Appeal: The Political Economy of Military Music in the 19th Century*. Chair: Oleg Reut (JGU Mainz)

15:15–16:00 Hauke Dorsch (JGU Mainz): *Musical Nationalism: The Indigenization of Military Marches in Ghana*. Chair: Oleg Reut (JGU Mainz)

16:00–16:30 Coffee

16:30–17:15 Izabela Curyłło-Klag (Jagiellonian University, Kraków): *Wyndham Lewis as an Official War Artist: Transformation of the Inhuman Vision*. Chair: Heghine Barseghyan (JGU Mainz)

17:15–18:00 Pieter Trogh (In Flanders Fields Museum, Ypres): *The Struggle to Depict War—the Curious Case of Photographer Frank Hurley during the First World War*. Chair: Heghine Barseghyan (JGU Mainz)

### **Friday, 14 February 2025**

9:00–9:30 Coffee

9:30–10:15 Konstantin Pakhaliuk (independent scholar, Haifa): *Military-Historical Activity in the Russian Army on the Eve of and During the First World War: The Aesthetic Dimension*. Chair: Arseniy Kumankov (JGU Mainz)

10:15–11:00 Alexander Reznik (Yerevan State University): *A Reluctant Patron? People's Commissar for War Leon Trotsky and Early Soviet Art and Literature*. Chair: Arseniy Kumankov (JGU Mainz)

11:00–11:15 Coffee break

11:15–12:00 Mischa Gabowitsch (JGU Mainz): *All the Marshal's Men: Kliment Voroshilov's Patronage Network and the Making of Soviet Military Art*. Chair: Niginakhon Uralova (JGU Mainz)

12:00–12:45 Andrea Kocsis (Edinburgh College of Art): *Resistance is Futile: Artists Between the Canon and the Cannon in Interwar Hungary*. Chair: Niginakhon Uralova (JGU Mainz)

12:45–14:30 Lunch

14:30–15:15 Kristo Nurmis (Tallinn University): *Avengers and the Man of Steel: Art for the Soviet Estonian Red Army Rifle Corps, 1942–1945*. Chair: Laura Innocenti (JGU Mainz)

15:15–16:00 Franziska Seraphim (Boston College): *Sketching Life in Sugamo: The U.S. Military and Japanese War Criminals between Punishment and Rehabilitation, 1945–1952*. Chair: Laura Innocenti (JGU Mainz)

16:00–16:15 Coffee break

16:15–17:00 Lourdes Hurtado (Franklin College, Indiana, *via Zoom*): *Past and Present of the Army According to Raúl Vizcarra's Illustrations in Actualidad Militar*. Chair: Mischa Gabowitsch (JGU Mainz)

17:00–19:30 *Walking tour of Mainz's old town led by Jan Kusber*

## **Saturday, 15 February 2025**

9:00–9:30 Coffee

9:30–10:15 Mayhill Fowler (Stetson College, USA): *Awkward Constellations: Generals, Divas, and the Multiple Lives of the Theater of the Carpathian Military District*. Chair: Dennis Wambolt (JGU Mainz)

10:15–11:00 Hilikka Hiiop and Robert Treufeldt (Estonian Academy of Arts, Tallinn): *Contradictory Stories of a Contested Legacy: Art within the Soviet Armed Forces*. Chair: Dennis Wambolt (JGU Mainz)

11:00–11:45 Linda Kaljundi (Estonian Academy of Arts, Tallinn): *In Secure Hands: Delegating Monument-Management to Defense Institutions in Post-2007/2022 Estonia*. Chair: Dennis Wambolt (JGU Mainz)

11:45–12:30 Jan Kusber (JGU Mainz): Concluding comments and discussion

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Administrative assistance: Ainura Garaeva, Natalia Kupermann, Christine Sauter

Poster design: Anastasia Bauer

## Keynote lecture

Kingsley Baird

### **Siren Songs, Trojan Horses, or Symbiotic Relationships? An Artist's Expanded Engagement with Military Institutions**

For over twenty-five years, my practice has engaged with military culture in several significant contexts. Firstly, as the designer of national memorials, which are key loci of military, commemorative rituals (e.g. the New Zealand Memorial in Canberra and the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior in Wellington). Secondly, by exhibiting in military museums; and thirdly, by participating in military commemorative events, such as being invited by the New Zealand Defence Force to play a role in First World War remembrance services at Gelibolu (or Gallipoli) in Türkiye in 2024. This lecture explores my personal experiences and motivations as an artist working in close proximity to military institutions, including an expanded notion of what it means to be “embedded” in that culture. I examine the potential risks—being co-opted by military agendas—and benefits—having a platform to use my creative voice to express the consequences of martial violence from my perspective. By way of example, I discuss building a temporary installation in the Bundeswehr's Museum of Military History in Dresden for “14—Menschen—Krieg,” an exhibition marking the centenary of the beginning of the First World War.

*Kingsley Baird is a visual artist, writer, and professor of fine arts at Massey University, New Zealand. His work investigates memory, memorialization, and remembrance, primarily in relation to war, culture, national identity, mythology, place, and new conceptual, aesthetic, and material ways of creating memory forms. His work includes the design of national memorials such as the New Zealand Memorial, Canberra, 2001, with Studio of Pacific), New Zealand's Tomb of the Unknown Warrior (2004), and The Cloak of Peace in Nagasaki, (2006); and temporary installations (In Flanders Fields Museum, Ieper/Ypres (2007, 2018), Historial de la Grande Guerre, Péronne (2013); Militärhistorisches Museum, Dresden, (2014). His website is [www.kingsleybaird.com](http://www.kingsleybaird.com).*

Anmol Yasmin Ahmed

## **Visualizing the “Martial Races”: Military Patronage and the Construction of Colonial Masculinities in the Indian Subcontinent**

This talk examines the visual construction of masculinity in British military handbooks that categorized some ethnic and religious groups of Indian soldiers as “martial races” during the colonial era. Focusing on the works of Lieutenant General George Fletcher MacMunn, illustrated by Major A.C. Lovett, the analysis explores how these publications used visual representations to reinforce racialized and gendered stereotypes. It also highlights the British military’s role as a patron of the arts, shaping the production of art—particularly paintings and illustrations—during the 19th century.

The analysis centers on visual portrayals of Indian soldiers from the North-West Frontier, often depicted as “martial races” with inherent warrior qualities. These illustrations, which romanticized colonial encounters and emphasized physical prowess and martial valor, contributed to the construction of idealized, yet stereotypical, images of Indian masculinity. By examining the interplay between text and image, this study reveals how visual representations reinforced colonial power dynamics and perpetuated racial and gendered stereotypes within the British colonial project in India.

The talk contends that violent colonial encounters, especially along the North-West Frontier, were often framed through a romantic lens, contributing to the construction of “martial races” and “noble savages.” This discourse not only highlights the creation and dissemination of specific masculinities within colonial contexts, but also explores the mystification of these encounters and their socio-political functions. The talk investigates how romanticized artistic representations legitimized imperial rule, obscured colonial failures, and gave rise to new expressions of masculinity.

I argue that British colonial patronage of the arts played a crucial role in producing and reinforcing mythic notions of “martial masculinity,” which, in turn, supported colonial power structures and upheld racist narratives. By unraveling the complex connections between military power, artistic representation, and constructions of masculinity, my study seeks to deepen our understanding of the enduring legacies of

imperialism and the complexities of postcolonial discourse. It emphasizes the need to critically interrogate historical narratives and artistic representations to deconstruct colonial myths and the gendered bodies they produced in postcolonial contexts.

*Anmol Yasmin is an independent researcher. She holds an MA in Nationalism Studies from Central European University and an MPhil in Political Science. Her areas of interest include post-/de-colonial theory, gender, and Islam.*

Izabela Curyłło-Klag

## **Wyndham Lewis as an Official War Artist: Transformation of the Inhuman Vision**

The talk examines Wyndham Lewis's involvement in the Great War, first as a gunner in the Ypres Salient and later as an official war artist for the Canadian War Memorials Fund. As the pre-war leader of Vorticism, Lewis found the commission to be a pivotal moment, prompting a shift in his perspective on humanity as a subject for art. It tempered his previously detached, mechanistic view of what he once regarded as "wild bodies" or "human puppets," leading to a more nuanced approach. He captured this transformation in his own words: "The war was a great human event, and human methods had to be adopted in dealing with it if it were to be registered in art at all" (*Weekly Dispatch*, 16 February 1919). Positioning his artistic response between two opposing traditions of war art—one in the style of Uccello, the other of Goya—he abandoned his modernist experiments in favor of an unembellished interpretation of his experiences, describing his war art as mere "journalism," too immediate for aesthetic distance. Despite his disdain for the war and frustration with official commissions, I argue that this period did not stifle Lewis's originality but instead proved transformative, pushing his work in a new direction—even at the cost of his disengagement from the postwar avant-garde.

*Izabela Curyłło-Klag is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Comparative Studies in Literature and Culture at the Institute of English Studies, Jagiellonian University Kraków. Her research focuses on modernism from cross-cultural and international perspectives. She has published a monograph on representations of violence in early modernist fiction based on her PhD thesis, along with numerous articles on avant-garde, modern, and contemporary literature and art. In collaboration with her colleagues from the Institute, she has co-edited an anthology of immigrant memoirs (The British Migrant Experience, 1700–2000, 2002) and four volumes of critical essays exploring the intersections of visual arts, history, and culture.*



Hauke Dorsch

## **Musical Nationalism: The Indigenization of Military Marches in Ghana**

For centuries, marching bands have been an integral part of armies, initially serving as emotional support for soldiers in battle and as a means of communication on the battlefield, later as the prerequisite of any parade celebrating armies and their achievements. Consequently, music was not just supported by the army but an essential part of its self-representation. Taking Ghana as an example, this talk shows not only how military musicians heavily influenced the development of Ghanaian popular music, but also how musicians play an important role in de-colonizing the country's Independence celebrations. Until recently, the military marches used for these events mostly originated from Great Britain or other countries of the former Empire. Only from the 2010s onwards did the Ghana Armed Forces' musical directors start what they call the indigenization of Ghanaian military music, transforming local music into formats that would fit the framework of military parades. Based on fieldwork and interviews with these musical directors as well as their writings on the history of military music and musical formats, this talk looks at the rationale behind this crucial change in Ghanaian military music.

*Hauke Dorsch is the director of the African Music Archives and teaches at the Department of Anthropology and African Studies at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz. He holds a PhD from the University of Hamburg. Research on music, migration, integration policy, and diaspora has taken him to Gambia, Senegal, Mali, Ghana, South Africa, Mozambique, Namibia, Cuba, the USA, Great Britain, France, and Germany.*

Mayhill C. Fowler

## **Awkward Constellations: Generals, Divas, and the Multiple Lives of the Theater of the Carpathian Military District**

The Theater of the Carpathian Military district was the only Russian-language theater in Lviv, Soviet Ukraine, from 1954 to 1991. It was an awkward institution operating at the intersection of radically different spheres and scales. For example, it was subordinate to the Soviet Ministry of Defense in Moscow, yet deeply embedded in local cultural and party networks in the city of Lviv. While it was a fully professional theater, performing for civilian audiences, it also served the military, even travelling to Afghanistan in 1984 to support the troops. Furthermore, unlike other theaters, here *nachalniki*, military officers tasked with managing the theater, advised and approved casting, repertory, and set design together with representatives of the military academy. Young men could even complete their military service in the technical workshops, and even, in one case, as a director. This institutional awkwardness created unusual spaces and situations for military men and artists. For example, at the meetings of the theater's artistic council, military men had the strange opportunity to reflect on war, its memory, and on how it should be told to new audiences. Tracing these awkward constellations that brought together generals, officers, designers, and performers can nuance our understanding of the relationship between culture and the Soviet military. Not only did the involvement with the military shape the theater's trajectory, but actually involvement with the theater shaped the individual lives of the men whose military careers were intertwined with particular artists, plays, and with this theater itself. Ultimately, the Theater of the Carpathian Military District operated at the fringes of civilian and military life, and its story highlights the tensions in telling the stories of war and being involved in war, loyalties to different audiences and patrons, and navigating layers of belonging in professional and personal life.

*Mayhill C. Fowler is associate professor in the Department of History at Stetson University, affiliated faculty in the Program in Theater Studies at Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, and affiliated researcher with the*

*Center for Urban History in Lviv. She holds a PhD from Princeton University and has held fellowships at the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute and the University of Toronto; in 2019–2020 she was a Fulbright scholar to Ukraine. Her book Beau Monde on Empire's Edge: State and Stage in Soviet Ukraine (2017) is forthcoming in Ukrainian translation, and she is finishing a book on women in theater in Ukraine. She holds an MFA in Acting from the National Theater Conservatory (USA) and is a former actress.*

Nina Franz

## **Between Image Culture, Science, and Technology of War: Jacob de Gheyn as an Embedded Artist in the Dutch Military Reforms**

In the special situation of the early so-called Dutch Golden Age, an emerging capitalist concern for the capture of land and bodies coincided with a concrete military interest, a new understanding of science, and an innovative visual culture. In the course of the Dutch Military Reforms, inaugurated by Maurice of Orange around 1600, the engraver Jacob de Gheyn applied his skills to the invention of a new form of military discipline, which Ulrich Bröckling has described as the “birth of modern military science.” As the essential media of the Dutch drill instructions, de Gheyn’s engravings had a mimetic effect on the soldiers’ bodies, while simultaneously offering a device for the capture, analysis, and synchronization of the soldiers’ bodily movements. The presentation sketches the role of the artist as an agent of military science, entrenched in a visual culture on the cusp of capitalist accumulation and colonial expansion.

*Nina Franz is a researcher in media studies and cultural history and theory. She currently works as research associate with a teaching emphasis on the history and theory of technology at the Braunschweig University of Art’s Institute of Media Studies. Previously she was a research associate at the Institute of Cultural History and Theory at Humboldt University, Berlin, where she defended her PhD; at the Excellence Cluster Bild Wissen Gestaltung, Berlin; and at the Faculty of Media at Bauhaus University, Weimar. She has briefly worked as a curator for contemporary art and continues to be interested in the perspective of artistic practice on knowledge production and societal transformation. Her research focuses on the history of imaging technologies in the context of automation, warfare and European colonialism. Other topics range from the politics of medical imaging and the female body to questions of human self-destruction in light of the climate breakdown and the nuclear threat and the deployment of artificial intelligence in current warfare.*

Mischa Gabowitsch

## **All the Marshal's Men: Kliment Voroshilov's Patronage Network and the Making of Soviet Military Art**

Kliment Voroshilov (1881-1969) was one of the most loyal and long-lived members of Stalin's leadership team. A Civil War hero with an impeccable proletarian pedigree, he was a revered if somewhat ineffective military leader and the object of a personality cult second only to Stalin's. Voroshilov was also, throughout the Stalinist period and well into the 1960s, the most important patron of the arts in the Soviet Union. He maintained a network of artistic clients that included painters, sculptors, and architects united by traditional aesthetic tastes, an interest in military themes, and a repudiation of avant-garde styles and abstraction. As the creator of the Grekov Studio of Military Artists, an institution he founded in 1934 that is active to this day, Voroshilov also played an important role in institutionalizing military patronage of the arts in the Soviet Union.

This talk traces the evolution of Voroshilov's patronage network among artists. It begins by focusing on his relationship with the painter Mitrofan Grekov (1882-1934), whose adroit use of military leaders as patrons started before the First World War. It then traces Voroshilov's patronage activities to the period after the Second World War, when Voroshilov's network expanded internationally, with the inclusion, in particular, of the Hungarian sculptor Zsigmond Kisfaludi Strobl (1884-1975).

*Mischa Gabowitsch, historian and sociologist, is Professor of Multilingual and Transnational Post-Soviet Studies at Johannes Gutenberg University, where he directs the Russian sub-department at the Department of Translation, Linguistics, and Cultural Studies at the GERMERSHEIM campus. He holds BA and MA degrees from Oxford University and a DEA and PhD from the School of Advanced Social Studies (EHESS) in Paris, and has held positions at Princeton University, the Einstein Forum in Potsdam, and the University of Vienna. His most recent book publication is Monuments and Territory: War Memorials in Russian-Occupied Ukraine (2025), written with Mykola Homanyuk.*

Hilkka Hiiop and Robert Treufeldt

## **Contradictory Stories of a Contested Legacy: Art within the Soviet Armed Forces**

The legacy of the Soviet occupation of Estonia has left behind many objects of monumental art, originally created to decorate the closed-off buildings housing military units by artists who served as conscripts in these units. In 2017, we started mapping military structures with monumental art objects and interviewing Estonian residents who served as artists in the Soviet armed forces. First of all, we tried to map the legacy of Soviet internal military art. According to a rough estimate, approximately 7% of about 2,000 different monumental works on military grounds have survived to this day, mostly in remote locations. Public knowledge of these artworks is limited and their value contested.

For example, a military artist painted a huge mural representing a sailor on the wall of the mine unit's clubhouse on Naissaar Island. It includes a range of Soviet symbols, such as a red star, the cruiser Aurora, or the BAM railway from Lake Baikal to the Amur River. This mural painting and another one near Hara Bay were conserved by the Estonian Academy of Arts in 2017–2020. After the structural collapse of Hara harbor in 2024, the conserved painting perished.

To gain a better understanding of the mechanism of military art, we carried out a number of interviews with former military artists from Estonia. It seems that a large number of future Estonian artists started their artistic careers in the Soviet armed forces. Our interviewees pointed out that the position of artist was a highly desirable one in the armed forces in the 1980s as it provided a certain social status and freedom that made it easier to remain sane. Themes were prescribed but the artists were able to maintain a degree of creative freedom, and their work was shaped by the extent to which each unit's commander appreciated art. Outside of their official tasks, artists were relatively free to fulfil private commissions from their fellow conscripts, as well as other officers.

Following 24 February 2022, we have continued our documentation, but the conservation and physical preservation of military art must be rethought today.

*Hilkka Hiiop is Professor at the Estonian Academy of Art's Department of Cultural Heritage and Conservation, and Dean of the Faculty of Art and Culture. Her PhD thesis discussed the conservation of contemporary art. She has studied and worked as a conservator in Berlin, Amsterdam, and Rome, supervised a number of conservation and technical investigation projects in Estonia, curated exhibitions, conducted scientific research on conservation and technical art history, and published a number of scholarly articles.*

*Robert Treufeldt was born in Tallinn in 1965. He obtained an MA in art history from the University of Tartu in 2000. His field of research covers military structures of the 19th and 20th centuries, former military structures and landscapes and the possibilities of their conversion and present-day use. He is a member of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and its International Scientific Committee on Fortifications and Military Heritage (IcoFort).*

Lourdes Hurtado

## **Past and Present of the Army According to Raúl Vizcarra's Illustrations in *Actualidad Militar***

In recent years there has been a growing interest in the relationship between the Peruvian military and visual artists. Most scholarly work has paid attention to the 1968 military coup and the Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces, especially to its first phase under the leadership of General Juan Velasco Alvarado (1968-1975). This research usually discusses artist Jesús Ruiz Durand and the posters he created in the early 1970s for the Revolutionary Government. Posters were powerful propaganda tools for the regime, they were displayed in public spaces and their target audience were civilians, especially workers and peasants, who had to be persuaded of the Revolution's achievements. Another thread of the historiography has examined the circulation of images that promoted certain aspects of the revolutionary project, especially through caricatures in printed media and TV ads.

However, this scholarship has not paid attention to the images used by the military in the years before the 1968 coup, especially in the magazine *Actualidad Militar*. Since its creation in 1962, this military periodical was conceived as a vehicle that would connect the military with civilian populations and strengthen ties between different garrisons of Peru. The magazine's editors emphasized the importance of images, especially illustrations, in promoting awareness among the military about the history of the Peruvian army.

This talk examines the illustrations created by Raúl Vizcarra for *Actualidad Militar*. Vizcarra was a professionally trained artist who belonged to the *Indigenista* generation of the 1920s. He created some important paintings depicting the independence of Peru, but his career as an oil painter never took off. In the 1960s, he was working for the army's office of military press. The military used his illustrations for the magazine's covers, especially between 1962 and 1965. The images created by Vizcarra during this period reflect part of the tensions that the Peruvian army experienced in the context of the Cold War in Latin America. On the one hand, they visualized the army's historical continuity between past and present, between the 19th and



20th centuries. On the other hand, the illustrations expressed the army's role as a martial force that in the 1960s had to contain the threat of international communism. Although Vizcarra had illustrated a range of books and magazines, his images for *Actualidad Militar* were mostly made for consumption by the military.

*Lourdes Hurtado trained as an anthropologist at the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos in Lima, Peru. She has a doctoral degree in history from the University of Notre Dame (Indiana, USA). She is a Professor of History at Franklin College (Indiana), where she teaches classes on Latin American history.*

Linda Kaljundi

## **In Secure Hands: Delegating Monument-Management to Defense Institutions in Post-2007/2022 Estonia**

Since the late 2000s, Estonian politicians and state authorities have increasingly viewed and treated monumental art as a security issue. One of the key moments in this process was the Bronze Soldier crisis of 2007, when the relocation of a Soviet Second World War memorial in Tallinn led to widespread riots, but also to cyber-attacks and other indirect interventions by the Russian Federation. Another important milestone was the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, which led to the mass removal of Soviet Second World War monuments and extensive debates about Soviet and Russian heritage in Estonia in general.

The close association of monuments with security has also led to the increasing delegation of monument management to institutions linked to the Ministry of Defense. Over the last few decades, these institutions have gained considerable power over the dismantling of monuments and the reburial of soldiers' remains. They have also been proactive in commissioning and erecting new monuments and memorials.

This talk aims to map and analyze these developments, examining the role of the Ministry of Defense and the institutions under its jurisdiction (including the War Graves Commission, the War Museum, and the Institute of Memory) in the dismantling of monuments and the creation of new ones. It also looks at the legislation and policy-making behind these processes.

The securitization of monuments was largely triggered by the Bronze Soldier crisis, but was also influenced by the events that preceded it, including the removal of a monument in Lihula to Estonian soldiers who fought on the side of the Germans in the Second World War. In the years following this crisis, however, there were no initiatives to dismantle or recontextualize other Soviet war memorials. Nor did such initiatives follow the invasion of Crimea. However, these years did see the opening of the War of Independence Victory Column in 2009 and the National Memorial to the Victims of Communism in 2018. The Ministry of Defense and its institutions played a major role

in both projects. Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, their role in dismantling monuments has only increased.

In an attempt to synthesize these developments, the talk also asks questions about the implications of the securitization of monuments, as well as the effects of extensive monument management on defense institutions themselves.

*Linda Kaljundi is a historian and curator and Professor of Cultural History at the Estonian Academy of Arts. She holds a PhD from the University of Helsinki, and has worked on Baltic and Nordic pre-modern and modern history and historiography, collective memory and nation-building, and the entangled histories of the environment, colonialism, and science. She has co-edited collections of articles and catalogues, published the monograph History in Images—Image in History: National and Transnational Past in Estonian Art (with Tiina-Mall Kreem, 2018), and co-curated a number of exhibitions at the Kumu Art Museum. She is currently leading a joint project of the Estonian Academy of Arts and the University of Tallinn titled How to Reframe Monuments (2024–2026).*

Andrea Kocsis

## **Resistance is Futile. Artists Between the Canon and Cannon in Interwar Hungary**

This talk examines how interwar Hungarian artists moved within the shifting art landscape under the influence of political and national interests funneled through the military-political commissions. These commissions, I argue, significantly altered the equilibrium between form and message in public art. Artists, in response, had to deftly move between kitsch and canon, while their creative freedom was often constrained by legislation, committee policies, propaganda institutions, and budget restraints. This is especially true of public commemorative art. Over two thousand war memorials were unveiled during the interwar period across Hungary, and together with other media such as paintings, murals, and prints, commemorating heroes on commission was one of the few available avenues for established artists to sustain themselves.

By analyzing artists' professional trajectories from war to interwar, it explores how they navigated the constraints imposed by state commissions, which often dictated conservative aesthetics and nationalistic messages while striving to maintain creative expression. The study challenges the dismissal of military and public art as artistically inferior, arguing instead that these works are an integral part of the artistic canon, reflecting the social, political, and economic pressures of their time. Through case studies and contemporary critiques, the talk highlights the ways in which these artists balanced the demands of their commissioners and audiences with their personal artistic aspirations, contributing to a broader understanding of the cultural dynamics of public art during this period. Ultimately, I call for a reevaluation of the artistic value of public memorials, positioning them as both products of their historical context and within the artists' personal careers.

Andrea Kocsis received her MPhil and PhD in Heritage Studies from the University of Cambridge (through an Economic and Social Research Council Doctoral Training Partnership). Her doctoral research focused on the impact the national First World War

commemorations had on the urban landscape of the capital cities London, Paris, and Budapest. She was an Assistant Professor in History and Data Science at Northeastern University London before joining the Institute of Design Informatics at the College of Art at the University of Edinburgh as Chancellor's Fellow in Humanities Informatics.

Kristo Nurmis

## **Avengers and the Man of Steel: Art for the Soviet Estonian Red Army Rifle Corps, 1942-1945**

This talk examines cultural production for the Soviet Estonian Red Army Rifle Corps during the Great Patriotic War. This unique military formation, composed primarily of forcibly mobilized men from recently occupied independent Estonia, posed a distinct challenge to the Red Army Political Directorate. As soldiers from a formerly independent “bourgeois” country, they represented diverse social backgrounds and had limited exposure to Soviet culture. Initially regarded as a suspect element, they were removed from the frontlines and sent to harsh conditions in work battalions near Norilsk and the Urals. However, by 1942, the Estonian Communist Party secured their re-mobilization and also facilitated the formation of Estonian art ensembles, drawing on evacuated or conscripted artists, writers, and musicians. This talk investigates the art these former “bourgeois” artists produced and its role in advancing the ideological objectives of the Red Army. It examines how their work engaged with nationalist anti-German narratives, particularly through the archetype of the Avenger (*Tasuja*) from Eduard Bornhöhe’s 19th century novel, while also needing to adapt to Stalinist wartime propaganda. The analysis highlights the tension between Soviet nationality policy, the army’s political apparatus, and the mainstream Russian- and Ukrainian-centric military cultural production, and how Soviet Estonian artists and soldiers navigated these competing demands, ultimately shaping their own identity as the first generation of Soviet Estonians.

*Kristo Nurmis is a Lecturer in 20th Century History at Tallinn University's School of Humanities. He earned his PhD from Stanford University with a dissertation titled Crafting Illiberal Europe: Legitimation, Mobilization, and Mass Influence in the Soviet and Nazi-Occupied Baltic States, 1940-1953. He has published several articles and book chapters on various aspects of Soviet and Nazi rule in the Baltic States during the Second World War.*

Konstantin Pakhaliuk

## **Military-Historical Activity in the Russian Army on the Eve of and During the First World War: The Aesthetic Dimension**

This talk discusses the development of military-historical activity in the Russian Imperial Army at the beginning of the 20th century, specifically focusing on projects that were intended to develop new forms of expressing its military glory. In particular, my talk addresses museum activities and the work of the trophy commission. Special attention will be paid to the army's aesthetic program, namely its search for forms of expressing both imperial and nationalist ideas simultaneously. Rather than focusing on the perception of the army by artistic communities, I explore what exactly the military demanded. The talk is based on documents from the Russian State Military Historical Archive that I studied in 2020–2021, including the collection of the trophy commission, which I examined in full.

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the army discussed the project of a Russian Museum of Military History, for which it was going to select or commission paintings from leading Russian artists such as Nicholas Roerich and Vasilii Surikov. The archival record allows us to assess what the army demanded from artists and how it perceived questions of historical accuracy.

During the First World War, two separate trophy commissions collected objects for a future museum of the World War, the War Chamber. In addition to actual trophies, a group of artists was organized to make military sketches or portraits of heroes. I discuss the work that was done by 1917, the activities of artists on the front, as well as discussions among the military regarding the aesthetic content of the artists' work. These narratives will be placed in the context of the broader discussion at the time about how to memorialize the ongoing war.

*Konstantin Pakhaliuk is an independent researcher based in Haifa. He holds a BA, MA, and PhD from the Moscow State Institute of International*

*Relations and a joint MA from the Moscow School of Social and Economic Sciences and the University of Manchester. He worked at the Russian Military Historical Society from 2013 to 2022. In 2022 he left Russia in response to the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, and has since been declared a “foreign agent” by the Russian Ministry of Justice. He is the editor or co-editor of numerous collections of articles or historical documents, and is the author, most recently, of a book about regional museums in Russia titled V poiskakh russkoi drevnosti (In Search of Russian Heritage, 2025).*



Martin Rempe

## **Of Private Pleasure and Public Appeal: The Political Economy of Military Music in the 19th Century**

This talk explores why and how the military increasingly invested in music in the course of the 19th century, and what effects, both intended and unintended, these investments had. While these questions were not unaffected by wars and their outcomes, the main focus is on structural developments that unfolded and matured in peace times, at least within the empires under consideration here. Indeed, the talk takes an imperial and comparative perspective, looking at the political economy of military music in the British, French, and Habsburg empires as well as in Prussia and later the German Empire. I argue that although music became early on the most military of the arts, featuring high prestige and public appeal, its funding during the 19th century often remained precarious and sometimes even the private pleasure of regimental officers. Despite this patronage “on the cheap,” the talk reveals the profound social and aesthetic impact of the military’s musical investments on 19th century European musical culture as a whole.

*Martin Rempe is a historian of modern European and global history at the University of Konstanz and currently a fellow of the DFG Heisenberg Program. He holds a PhD from Humboldt University of Berlin. He specializes in the history of development, the social history of music and cultural work, as well as the history of European-African relations. Rempe is the author of Entwicklung im Konflikt. Die EWG und der Senegal, 1957–1975 (Development in Conflict: The European Economic Community and Senegal, 1957-1975, 2012) and of Art, Play, Labour: The Music Profession in Germany (2023). Together with Klaus Nathaus, Rempe co-edited the handbook Musicking in Twentieth Century Europe (2021).*

Alexander V. Reznik

## **A Reluctant Patron? People's Commissar for War Leon Trotsky and Early Soviet Art and Literature**

Russian revolutionary Lev (Leon) Trotsky, the Russian Bolshevik People's Commissar of Military Affairs (1918–1925), is well-known for his own writings as well as his connections with prominent international artists and writers such as Diego Rivera and André Breton. Trotsky's patronage ties with Russian artists, writers, and poets remain less well-known. The peculiarity of his case is that after the end of the Russian Civil War, in 1922, Trotsky proposed to the members of the Politburo to engage in *patronazh* (patronage) over writers and poets, or in other words to establish relations typical of the pre-revolutionary authorities. Archival documents, still only partially known, demonstrate that since the Civil War Trotsky had been approached for support by a wide variety of individuals. They were often ideologically so distant from the Revolution that they could not even be called "fellow travelers," and yet Trotsky helped many of them without receiving them in person and without establishing the reciprocal relationship that is characteristic of a patron-client relationship. They included the poet Fedor Sologub and the painter Boris Kustodiev, both of whom Trotsky helped with a variety of services and resources. By contrast, Yury Annenkov's iconic portraits of Trotsky produced in 1923 were commissioned by the army as a corporation rather than by Trotsky himself, though Trotsky's personality made a positive impression on the artist, as described in his 1966 memoirs. Finally, Trotsky also used patronage as a source of political support, as in the case of the Komsomol poet Aleksandr Bezymensky. This talk reviews what we know about Trotsky's patronage and its specific features. It suggests that we should view Trotsky as a kind of reluctant patron. Paradoxically, Trotsky was both more involved in the literary and artistic processes of his time than anyone else and at the same time he did not utilize the clientele available to him on the scale that he would have been able to afford.

*Aleksandr V. Reznik holds a PhD in Russian History. He is currently a visiting researcher at the Center for Culture and Civilization Studies at*

*Yerevan State University. His work focuses on political culture, communication, and the languages of the Russian Civil War, with a particular emphasis on the concept of civil war, leader cults, and the legacy of Leon Trotsky. He has published extensively on the Russian Civil War, revolutionary political culture, and the biographical and ideological dimensions of Trotsky's legacy. His works include Trotskii i tovarishchi: Levaia oppositsiia i politicheskaia kul'tura RKP(b), 1923–1924 (Trotsky and Comrades: The Left Opposition and the Political Culture of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), 1923–1924, 2017) and the edited anthology L.D. Trotskii, pro et contra: obraz L'va Trotskogo v kul'turnoi pamiati Rossii (Lev Trotsky, Pro et Contra: The Image of Leon Trotsky in Russian Cultural Memory, 2016). His articles have appeared in Kritika, Historical Materialism, and Canadian-American Slavic Studies, among other journals. His ongoing projects explore the contested historical and political meanings of the concept of civil war and the genesis of leader cults in early Soviet political culture.*

Franziska Seraphim

## **Sketching Life in Sugamo: The U.S. Military and Japanese War Criminals between Punishment and Rehabilitation, 1945-1952**

In the late 1990s, as American veterans who had been young men in occupied Japan after the Second World War came to the end of their lives, a small collection of fascinating drawings, cartoons, and crafts surfaced in the basements and attics of some of these vets—mementos they had been given as parting gifts by Japanese war criminals they had once guarded at Sugamo Prison in Tokyo. This was only a fraction of hundreds of sketches through which a few of the convicted documented life in the American-run prison in the late 1940s and early 1950s with the blessing of U.S. military officers. They were later reprinted in memoirs and in document collections in Japan but have only been lightly touched as a source of academic research. Initially using the back of Red Cross paper and asking US guards to lend them pencils, the prison “artists” were amateurs with a keen sense of the spatiality of social and cultural relations: both the absolute power of their American captors and the collapsed hierarchies amongst those held responsible for defeat. What began as personal practice and gift-giving morphed a couple of years later into a prison job—the Art Room—that counted as “hard labor.” Here a team of inmates produced sketches and cartoons for the weekly prison newspaper, as well as woodcuts and posters to advertise the various cultural programs that the American administration encouraged in an effort to showcase its humane penal policies and teach their erstwhile enemies democracy. By 1951, Sugamo Prison published a number of journals and poetry collections, all of them with original illustrations, as well as the testimonies of executed war criminals, and they sold well.

My contribution reads the inmate-produced artistic record of Sugamo Prison as a source for understanding how the U.S. military ran Sugamo Prison as part of its occupation of Japan, shifting from punishment to rehabilitation. Penal policies are at the center of making sense of both the existence of the drawings and their content, and vice versa: these sketches are about relationships, and their visual languages owe much to a colonial and imperial gaze long honed. They

give us much to unpack in terms of text (life in Sugamo) and context (cultures of U.S.-Japanese military relations), and memory—for they had an unlikely afterlife as well.

*Franziska Seraphim is Associate Professor of Japanese History at Boston College, where she also directs the Asian Studies Program. She holds a PhD from Columbia University, and is the author of War Memory and Social Politics in Japan, 1945-2005 (2006) and most recently “Locating Social Movements in Japan’s Long Twentieth Century” in the New Cambridge History of Japan v. 3 (2023). She is currently working on a global and social history of Allied punishment of Japanese and German war criminals after World War II through the spatial prism of the prison, the project from which her contribution is drawn.*

Géraud Seznec

**The French Army Painters Working for Public Authority: From the Procurement to the Encouragement of Artistic Creation (1914–2024)**

Going back to the “Painters of the King’s Conquests” created in 1620, the French corps of army painters may have the longest pedigree of any such institution existing today. This talk traces the history of the corps over the past century.

*Lieutenant-colonel Géraud Seznec graduated from the École du Louvre and the Institut national du patrimoine (INP). He joined the French Army in 2000 and worked at the Paris Military Museum as Lieutenant, serving as assistant curator at the Department of Artillery and Emblems. He was the curator of the Museum of Non-Commissioned Officers in Saint-Maixent-l'École in 2006–2011 and of the Foreign Legion Museum in Aubagne (2011–2017). Since 2017 he has worked at the French Army Heritage Delegation (DELPAT) as assistant to the General, contributing to the development of the Army’s heritage management policy.*

Pieter Trogh

## **The Struggle to Depict War—The Curious Case of Photographer Frank Hurley During the First World War**

The First World War marks a turning point in the history of war photography. Photos by both private, amateur photographers and professional, embedded photographers appeared in the press during the first year of the war. From 1916 onward, the authorities focused on more professional, controlled, and directed photography, both for documentary and propaganda purposes. Against this background, Flanders Fields, the infamous front zone on the Western Front in Belgium, was also extensively photographed. A notable figure in this process was the Australian photographer Frank Hurley, who was officially appointed by the Australian Army in 1917 to photograph the war.

Deeply impressed by what he saw at and behind the Flanders front, Hurley quickly realized the impossibility of portraying war by means of classical photography. Thus he began to experiment with new techniques and perspectives, eventually arriving at what he called “composites,” pictures that are made up of several different images, or, in other words, Photoshop *avant la lettre*. This, thought Hurley, was the only way to represent the war in photographs, the only way that came close to reality. Not everyone agreed. Hurley had heated discussions about it with his superiors, which eventually led to his resignation.

In this talk, I address the conflict between Frank Hurley, Australian war photographer, and Charles Bean, his supervisor and representative of the Australian army command, on the role and potential of war photography during the First World War. In doing so, I outline Hurley’s trajectory, focusing on his psychological evolution through the impact of the war experience, and juxtapose this with Bean’s growing responsibility as chief historian in the creation of Australia’s official history, in which he had a rock-solid view of the role of photography. Their arguments went beyond mere censorship or propaganda, touching on key questions that can be asked of any war: how do you really portray war and what is the authenticity of war photographs?

*Pieter Trogh is a researcher and curator at In Flanders Fields Museum, Ypres, Belgium. Since 2011, he has coordinated the museum's ambitious List of Names project. He holds MA degrees from Ghent University and the Free University of Brussels. His main First World War research themes are civilian casualties, refugees, war memories, photography, the aftermath of the war, and commemorative practices. His publications include De Geschreven Oorlog: een anthologie van teksten van het front in België, 1914-1940 (The War in Writings: An Anthology of Texts at the Front in Belgium, 1914-1940, 2016), with Piet Chielens; De Namenlijst: een algemene inleiding (The List of Names: A General Introduction, 2019); 'For Civilisation', The First World War in the Middle East, 1914-1923 (2022); and Americans in Flanders Fields, 1914-1919 (2024). In addition, he has written several articles and book chapters on a variety of other topics related to the First World War, and represented the museum in European projects addressing conflict heritage or contested war memories (such as APPEACE and UNREST).*



## Session chairs

*Heghine Barseghyan is a PhD student at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz. She holds BA and MA degrees in Arabic Studies from Yerevan State University. Her research interests center around language policy, identity, and cultural transformations in the Caucasus. Her PhD research focuses on imperial and Soviet language policies in Armenia and Dagestan from the 1900s to the 1930s, exploring their implementation and sociocultural impacts.*

*Zhazira Bekzhanova is a sociolinguist specializing in the intersection of gender and language. She holds an MA in Language and Linguistics from the University of Lancaster and a PhD in Foreign Philology from Kazakh Ablai Khan University of International Relations and World Languages. She has contributed to several research projects addressing gender inequality in Kazakhstan and Central Asia, including initiatives supported by global organizations such as the Global Challenges Research Fund, UNESCO, and UN Women. At present she is a postdoctoral research fellow at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, working on a project on Soviet and post-Soviet history textbooks.*

*Laura Innocenti is a PhD candidate at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz. She holds a BA in Applied Foreign Languages (English and Russian) from Aix-Marseille University and an MA in International Relations from Monash University in Melbourne. Her research interests include activism, memory, historical narratives, and linguistics, particularly in Russia and the post-Soviet region. Her PhD project, *War and Migration: Exiled Russian Activists and Memory Debates in Their Host Countries*, examines how Russian memory activists, currently in exile in Germany, Georgia, and Lithuania, use memory practices and narratives to promote social change in Russia and engage with the memory debates in their host countries.*

*Arseniy Kumankov is a Philipp Schwartz post-doctoral fellow at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz. He is a political philosopher specializing in*

*war studies, ethics of war and peace, and political and social theory. He holds a BA, MA, and PhD from the Higher School of Economics in Moscow. Between 2013 and 2022, he taught at the Moscow School of Social and Economic Sciences and the Higher School of Economics, where he was deputy dean for research at the Faculty of Humanities and associate professor. In 2022–2024, he was a research scholar in politics at Princeton University and taught at UMass Amherst. He has authored numerous articles in Russian and English on war and peace, as well as three books in Russian, and is the editor of a book series published by the New Literary Observer (NLO) publishing house. He is a member of the European Chapter of the International Society for Military Ethics in Europe (EuroISME), Concerned Philosophers for Peace, and the Independent Institute of Philosophy.*

*Jan Kusber has been Professor of East European History at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz since 2003. He holds MA and PhD degrees from Christian Albrecht University of Kiel. He is the author, editor, or co-editor of numerous books on Russian and North-East European History, including the monographs Katharina die Große. Legitimation durch Reform und Expansion (Catherine the Great: Legitimation through Reform and Expansion, 2021), Kleine Geschichte St. Petersburgs (A Brief History of Saint Petersburg, 2009), Eliten- und Volksbildung im Zarenreich während des 18. und in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts. Studien zu Diskurs, Gesetzgebung und Umsetzung (Elite and Popular Education in the Tsarist Empire in the 18th and During the First Half of the 19th Century: Studies on Discourse, Legislation, and Implementation, 2004), and Krieg und Revolution in Rußland. Das Militär im Verhältnis zu Wirtschaft, Autokratie und Gesellschaft (War and Revolution in Russia: The Military and Its Relationship with the Economy, Autocracy, and Society, 1997).*

*Oleg Reut is a Philipp Schwartz post-doctoral fellow at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, conducting a research project titled Who Chooses to Remember? The Russian Diaspora's Commemoration of Russia's Unnamed War. He is also a research associate at the Karelian*

*Institute of the University of Eastern Finland, participating in a research project on Transnational Death: Practices of Death and Remembrance in the Transnational Everyday on the Finnish-Russian Border. He holds an MSc from Petrozavodsk University and a PhD from St Petersburg State Technical University. Through his academic career, he has lectured on international relations, political theory, research methods in the political and social sciences, the politics of memory, globalization and transnationalism, and political developments in Russia and across Nordic Europe.*

*Niginakhon Uralova is a researcher and journalist from Uzbekistan, and a PhD candidate at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz. She holds a BA in Philology and Language Teaching from Uzbekistan State World Languages University in Tashkent, and three MA degrees: an MA in Politics and Security from the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, an MA in European Studies, Human Rights, and Democratization in the Caucasus from Yerevan State University and Tbilisi State University, and an MA in Central and East European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies from the University of Glasgow, the University of Tartu, and Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary. She studies Islam, gender, identity, and other socio-political developments in Central Asia with a focus on Uzbekistan. Her current PhD research explores the intergenerational transmission of memories about the Soviet Union in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.*

*Dennis Wambolt graduated from Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz in 2024 with an MA in history. His master's thesis was titled "Republic Elections in Soviet Lithuania in 1947 and 1951: Propaganda and Fake Democracy in a One-Party-Dictatorship in Formation." Since 2024 he has worked as a research assistant at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz.*