

Small Nations and Global Identities: Czech Questions

Thursday 5 July 2018

9.30-5.30pm – FREE

Ikon Gallery, Brindleyplace, Birmingham, B1 2HS

This one-day symposium considers the formation of modern Czech identity in the arts, politics and media, focusing on key global events of the 20th century. It responds to various celebrations in the Czech Republic and the UK, including the centenary of the foundation of Czechoslovakia in 1918 and fiftieth anniversary of the Prague Spring and Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

In addressing the relationship between the small nation and its global identity, the programme explores three themes: the mythic portrayal of interwar Czechoslovakia as a Western oriented state and of the Czech people as passive victims of global events; the cyclical gain and loss of state sovereignty, covering the separation of the Czech and Slovak Republics in 1993; the construction of Czech identity in relation to 'others', including German, Slovak and Roma diasporas.

Organised by Dr. Marta Filipová and Prof. Matthew Rampley, University of Birmingham, the symposium includes an exhibition tour with Czech artist Vladimír Kokolia, curator Miroslav Ambroz and Ikon Director Jonathan Watkins. Leading historians and theorists participating at the symposium include

- Dr Jakub Beneš, University of Birmingham
- Dr Rajendra Chitnis, University of Bristol
- Prof Mark Cornwall, University of Southampton
- Dr Tom Dickins, University of Wolverhampton
- Dr Celia Donert, University of Liverpool
- Prof Mary Heimann, University of Cardiff
- Dr Kelly Hignett, Leeds Beckett University
- Dr Monika Metyková, University of Sussex
- Dr James Partridge, University of Oxford
- Prof Jiří Příbáň, University of Cardiff
- Dr Peter Zusi, University College London

Small Nations and Global Identities: Czech Questions is supported by Ikon, the Birmingham Centre for Modern and Contemporary History, the Birmingham Research Institute for History and Cultures and Public Engagement Office, University of Birmingham, Czech Club Birmingham CIC and the Embassy of the Czech Republic in London.

SESSION	TIME	ACTIVITY
Admin	9.30 – 10am	Registration
Tour	10 – 10.45am	Exhibition tour with artist Vladimír Kokolia, curator Miroslav Ambroz and Ikon Director Jonathan Watkins
Welcome	10.45 – 11am	HE Libor Sečka, Embassy of the Czech Republic in London and Marta Filipová, University of Birmingham
Morning: Czech sovereignty	11am–12.30pm Chair: Matthew Rampley	Jiří Příbáň, The history of Czech statehood and national identity
		Mary Heimann, The State that Failed
		Jakub Beneš, Populist nationalism between 1918 and 1948
Lunch	12.30 – 1.30pm	Own arrangements
Afternoon: Czech myths	1.30 – 3.30pm Chair: Klaus Richter	Rajendra Chitnis, The Czech Myth of Resistance: Silence as a Response to the German Occupation
		Peter Zusi, On the Fringes of History: Richard Weiner Observes the Foundation of the Republic
		Kelly Hignett, Constructing Czech Identity 'From the Margins'
		Tom Dickins, The influence of the past, as reflected in the slogans and counter slogans of the socialist era
Tea break	3.30 – 4pm	All welcome
Evening: Czech others	4 – 5.30pm Chair: TBC	Mark Cornwall, Mapping a Queer Geography of Interwar Czechoslovakia in Europe
		Celia Donert, The Rights of the Roma: The Struggle for Citizenship in Postwar Czechoslovakia
		Monika Metyková, Brno 1918-2018: The City of Czechs, Germans and Jews

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