

Call for Papers 'Museums in the German Democratic Republic (GDR)', 2nd to 4th June 2019, Kunsthalle Rostock (D)

Almost 30 years after the GDR's dissolution, a comprehensive history covering the variety of its museums still remains to be written. Because of their proximity to the idea of popular education and their high capacity for ideology, museums are always reflections of the political system that supports them – which makes them a particularly meaningful medium when it comes to a differentiated approach to cultural policy.

The Richard Schöne Gesellschaft für Museumsgeschichte e.V. (Richard Schöne Association for Museum History / www.richard-schoene-gesellschaft.de) seeks to fill this gap by holding a conference on 'Museums in the German Democratic Republic'. The conference will be held at the Kunsthalle Rostock. This location is known as the only contemporary museum building for modern art built in the GDR. From 2nd to 4th June 2019 researchers are invited to talk about their projects, to connect to each other and to discuss their findings in new perspectives while presenting the topic to a wider public.

We especially ask for contributions focussing on local practices, on regional and national frameworks and the positioning of specific topics in the international museum development. Our aim is to get an idea of the character of museums in the GDR and their change, from the Soviet Occupation Zone (SBZ) to the GDR's legacy after 1990. Research surrounding all kinds of museums are welcome – e.g. on museums of art and history as well as on collections of technical and natural history, workers' museums, museums of local history and others.

The following topics might be of interest:

- **Biography of Museums:** Facts and figures, developments
- **Museum Policies:** Organisation, political pressures, administrative framing, education policies, didactics in history, topics and taboos in exhibitions
- **Museum Visitors:** Sociology, reception, research on visitors
- **Museum Architecture:** Aspirations, claims and realities, examples and delimitations, role of monument preservation
- **Exhibitions and Presentation Policy:** Types of presentation, ideology and didactics
- **Museology:** Structures, concepts and models
- **Work Routine and Career Paths:** Job profiles, structures, biographical approaches
- **Collection Methods / Biographies of Objects:** Iconic objects, collecting the SBZ's and GDR's history, influences on collecting, relations to the state-controlled art market

- **Protection and Restitution of Cultural Goods:** Responsibilities and organisation, restitution to the Soviet Union and Eastern European States, restitution in the SBZ (1945-1949) and in the GDR (1949-1990)
- **International Relations / Museums and Foreign Cultural Diplomacy:** Self-presentation and representation of museums in the GDR abroad, foreign exhibitions in the GDR, institutionalised and informal exchange networks (to the German Federal Republic, the Soviet Union, the Eastern Bloc, to the Baltic and Nordic countries, UNESCO, ICOM etc.)
- **Museums in the GDR – what remains?**

This list is not exhaustive and we welcome all original submissions covering topics relevant to museums in the GDR for consideration.

The conference will take place from 2nd to 4th June 2019 at Kunsthalle Rostock as part of its 50-year Anniversary. Conference languages will be German and English. A publication is envisaged.

Please submit your abstract for papers and a short CV by Friday, 30th November 2018 (23:59 CET) to museen-in-der-ddr@richard-schoene-gesellschaft.de . Abstracts should consist of a maximum of 2.000 characters including spaces.