

WHAT IS AN AVANT-GARDE? An Austrian Approach

Aston University (Birmingham)

Organizers: Heide Kunzelmann
(h.kunzelmann@aston.ac.uk),
Uwe Schuette
(u.schuette@aston.ac.uk);
co-organisation: Angela Kershaw
(a.kershaw@aston.ac.uk),
Daniela Kraemer
(d.kraemer@aston.ac.uk).

The symposium is part of the lecture series on Avant-garde, organized and sponsored by the Centre for the Study of Literature and Society (CSLS), Aston University and the Austrian Cultural Forum.

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Location: Department of Languages and Social Sciences, Aston University, Aston Triangle, Birmingham B4 7ET, United Kingdom.

Deadline: January 15, 2005.

Contact: Heide Kunzelmann,
tel.: +44 / 121 / 204 / 3763;
email: h.kunzelmann@aston.ac.uk

This symposium aims to investigate literary responses to Austria's past from the 1940s onwards, focusing on what has been called a »synchronicity« of an avant-garde and a post-avant-garde movement in Austria. This phenomenon of a twofold movement is due to the specific socio-historical conditions to be found in pre- and post-war Austria. It has not yet been fully discussed how these conditions have generally fostered a somewhat »blurry« image of an Austrian avant-garde, as opposed to the distinctly identifiable French avant-garde of the 1930's. The symposium endeavours to contribute to the discussion on whether to categorize Austrian writing of the 1950's and 60's as either »avant-garde«, »neo-realist«, or chiefly politically motivated.

Papers are invited on:

- Different definitions of »avant-garde« literature, especially socio-critical approaches to the topic,
- Austrian history of the 20th century and its implications for modern Austrian literature,
- Political and aesthetic resistance by means of words/language,
- Literature and ideology,
- The 18th century Austrian tradition of the »Volkskomödie«/»Volkstheater« (Nestroy a.o.) and its influence on 20th century literature.

Keynote speakers are:

- Rüdiger Goerner,
- Wolfgang Müller-Funk,
- Klaus Kastberger,
- Friedrich Achleitner (with a lecture from his avant-garde works).