

CFP: GSA 2022: Untimely Deaths: Cultural Figures in/from the GDR, Houston (15.03.2022)

Discussion published by Sonja Klocke on Monday, March 7, 2022

Open Call for Papers sponsored by the GSA Interdisciplinary GDR and German Socialisms Network for the 46th Annual Conference of the German Studies Association, Houston, TX, September 15 - 18, 2022.

Deadline: March 15, 2020

Untimely Deaths: Cultural Figures in/from the GDR

2021 saw the untimely passing of a number of important cultural figures active in East Germany in the 1980s. In January, the poet and writer Barbara Köhler passed at the age of 61. Trained at the Johannes R. Becher Literature Institute in Leipzig, Köhler was active in literary circles in East Germany's "alternative" scene in the 1980s, publishing her first collection, *Deutsches Roulette*, in 1991. In April, the photographer Erasmus Schröter died suddenly at the age of 66. Trained at the Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst Leipzig in the late 1970s, he was known for his black-and white photographs of marginal figures at night or, later, of unpopulated cityscapes. Then in August 2021, the curator Claudia "Wanda" Reichardt died unexpectedly at the age of 59. In the 1980s, she had run two small "alternative" art galleries in Dresden, and more recently, had curated an important exhibition on silkscreen prints made in the GDR. Their untimely deaths leave behind feelings of shock and loss - and questions of what could have been.

In this time of uncertainty when we all confront our mortality on a daily basis in just deciding whether to go to the grocery store, work, or an academic conference, we are calling for papers that examine the lives and works of cultural figures in or from East Germany who passed too soon - be it recently or during the Cold War. Authors like Brigitte Reimann, Maxi Wander, Irmtraud Morgner, and Franz Fühmann - whose 100th birthday was celebrated in numerous events in Berlin in January 2022 - and visual artists like Petra Flemming and Wolfgang Peuker are just a few of the (unfortunately many) possibilities.

We welcome proposals on all cultural areas, especially art, dance, literature, music, and theater, and encourage papers that engage with intermedial collaborations across fields.

Please submit a 200 to 250-word abstract and a 2-page CV to April Eisman (eismana@iastate.edu) and Sonja Klocke (sklocke@wisc.edu) by **March 15, 2022**. We

expect to create a sequence of 2-4 panels.

The GDR and GERMAN SOCIALISMS NETWORK is a vehicle for connecting the diversity of current scholarship on the GDR with a broader academic base that explores the impact and meanings of Socialism in all of its manifestations, from its beginnings in the 19th century to the present. Encouraging both speculative and empirical methodologies, the Network seeks to bring together scholars operating in all fields and time periods for a productive exchange that questions the world in which we live and the political machinations that created it.

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Diese Ankündigung wurde von H-GERMANISTIK [Johannes Schmidt] betreut - editorial-germanistik@mail.h-net.msu.edu