

Abstracts of articles

Jesús-Pedro Lorente

Galleries of modern art in nineteenth-century Paris and London

Museums of contemporary art tend to be exclusive landmarks of great capitals. We are used to finding art galleries in the most prominent of locations, either in old palaces, or in purpose-built museum buildings. For the special case of galleries of contemporary art, however, it is also a common policy to provide space at the middle of an out-of-town park, or else into the heart of an urban renewal area, using modern arts as 'flagships' of city regeneration. This article strives to show that today's dilemmas and choices about the siting of galleries of art are a legacy of the nineteenth century, recalling the lively controversies concerning the urban setting of the Parisian *Musée des Artistes Vivants* and its London equivalents. The different national cases are explored, to reveal several distinct models of gallery formation.

Nick Prior

Edinburgh, Romanticism and the National Gallery of Scotland

An explanation for the formation of the National Gallery of Scotland is proposed which affirms the priority of local conditions of cultural production. In the absence of a fecund tradition of art patronage in Scotland, the modernization of Edinburgh's art field in the early nineteenth century depended on the activities of civic elites. The Scottish model of art museum development resembled the later American model more than it did the earlier French one. What was particular to Edinburgh, though, was a strong form of Romanticism in the early nineteenth century. The romantic landscape trope indexed the security of bourgeois power by the 1830s. But its own role was to act as a catalyst in the formation of collection-oriented and professional art institutions, and of a gallery-going public in the capital.

Dorothy Rowe

George Simmel and the Berlin Trade Exhibition of 1896

In tracing a theoretical history of modernity peculiar to Imperial Berlin after 1871, the urban themes developed in the writings of the German social theorist, Georg Simmel, have proved to be particularly pertinent. The exhibition of 1896 provides Simmel with a major site of investigation into the visible effects of the commodified urban sphere upon the individual city dweller which finds one of its most spectacular forms in the rise of the mid-nineteenth-century 'World Exhibition'. The paper outlines aspects of Simmel's theories of the differentiation of the individual in the capitalist metropolis as a background to an investigation into the various functions assigned to the 1896 Berlin Trade Exhibition both by its organizers and by Simmel.

Roy Hartnell

Art and civic culture in Birmingham in the late nineteenth century

This paper looks at Joseph Chamberlain's Birmingham and claims that George Dawson's famous 'civic gospel' which laid the ground for the municipal reforms was permeated by a consensus view of the moral and civic role of art. It suggests that it was this combination of philosophy in action through art which created the special Birmingham context for a vibrant civic culture which led to the political and artistic achievements of the 1870s and 1880s. For a few brief years, this combination enabled Birmingham to stand above other British cities and lay claim to the titles of 'the best-governed city in the world' and 'perhaps the most artistic town in England'.

Malcolm Miles

Art and urban regeneration

The case for art in urban regeneration is widely promoted. Some local authorities and development corporations see it as a means of access to an international cultural map; others see it as enabling the construction of identities for communities. The case remains speculative. The model of post-Enlightenment cities is one of exclusion and confinement, whereby 'awkward' aspects of the city, such as the insane or vagrant, are excluded from view and confined in institutions. This compartmentalization of the city extends into policies for single use zoning and a general retreat from public space. If there is a role for art in urban renewal, it is in reclaiming the decorative as an aspect of public space, not in replicating monuments which affirm the dominant, divisive culture.