International Conference

The Icon as Cultural Model: Past, Present and Future

Organized by
the Open University of the Netherlands

25-26 January 2018
Amsterdam

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NICA | Netherlands Institute *for* Cultural Analysis

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Content

Introduction

Dear all,

Welcome to the International Conference *'The Icon as Cultural Model: Past, Present and Future'* that brings together scholars from various disciplines such as art history, literary studies, media studies, philosophy and history, to stimulate interdisciplinary reflection on how the study of cultural icons may contribute to our understanding of the dynamics of culture in general.

In this booklet you find all information needed on the program, the keynotes, the sessions and its speakers as well as information on the location, tips for further reading and a list of participants and contact addresses.

We wish you two inspiring days!

The organizing committee

Conference Theme

The Icon as Cultural Model: Past, Present and Future
Journalists, artists and scholars, among others, tend to refer to iconic events or images from the past in order to better understand present-day developments. For example, in the wake of the American elections media repeatedly referred to the iconic 'years of crisis' of the thirties of the last century. Also, they recalled George Orwell's iconic depiction of a dystopian society from his novel 1984 to contextualize the use of 'alternative facts'. In this respect, the icon functions as a model that generates cultural meaning by connecting past and present. But the icon not only shapes our (collective) image of the present, nor does it merely re-evaluate our image of the past. It also opens up potential scenarios for the future – be it brilliant or gloomy.

The making of specific icons is a much-studied topic in cultural studies, literary studies, art history and even in the history of science. However, theoretical and/or synthesizing studies on how the icon functions as a cultural model from which we can learn how to act or perform are scarce. The conference 'The Icon as Cultural Model' wants to fill this gap.

First, it will do so by addressing different manifestations of the icon. Traditionally understood as a static visual image, the concept of the icon is also used to refer to:
- a specific period (e.g. the thirties or sixties, the Enlightenment or Golden Age);
- a specific place (e.g. Waterloo or Woodstock, cities like Amsterdam, Rome or New York, or imaginary places such as Orwell's 'Oceania');
- a specific person (e.g. Christ, Michelangelo, Mae West);
- a specific phrase (such as Descartes' 'I think therefore I am' or Clausewitz' 'War is the continuation of politics by other means').

Static as the icon may be, its evaluation by different groups (artists, scholars, politicians) can change through time. Recently, scholars have shown an increased interest in phenomena linked to the theme of the icon: such as fan culture and celebrities, artists' self-representation, cultural marketing, and processes of canonisation. What makes the search, and explication of, cultural models so highly relevant today? By posing this question the conference's second aim is to encourage reflection on how the icon has functioned and still functions as cultural model (and how it can be studied as such).

In addressing the icon as cultural model the conference explicitly wishes to bring together scholars from various disciplines such as art history, literary studies, history and philosophy. In this way the conference offers room for joint interdisciplinary reflection on the question how the study of cultural models may contribute to our understanding of the dynamics of culture in general.

General Program

Day I (January 25th)
Venue: PC Hoofthuis, Spuistraat 134, Amsterdam

Time	Room 1.04	Room 1.05
9.00 - 9.30	Registration with coffee/tea	
9.30 - 9.45	Welcome & Opening by prof.dr. Erica van Boven	
9.45 - 10.45	Keynote I Prof.dr. Ann Rigney	
11.00 - 12.45	Session 1A - What Iconic Narratives Can Teach Us	Session 1B - Iconic Persons as Cultural Models
13.00 - 14.00	*Lunch*	
14.15 - 16.00	Session 2A - Spatial Dimensions of the Icon	Session 2B - Icons, Objects & Materiality
16.00 - 16.15	*Coffee/tea break*	
16.15 - 17.15	Keynote II Prof. Ginette Vincendeau	
18.00	*Drinks & Dinner at Kapitein Zeppos*	

Day II (January 26th)
Venue: Oude Manhuispoort 4-6, Amsterdam

Time	Room C.0.17	Room C1.17
9.30 - 10.30	Keynote III Prof.dr. Kees Ribbens	
10.30 - 12.15	Session 3A - Traveling Icons: Comparative Approaches	Session 3B - Icons, Popular Culture & Mediality
12.30 - 13.45	*Lunch at De Brakke Grond*	
14.00 - 15.45	Session 4A - Re-writing the Icon: Political Dimensions of the Icon	Session 4B - Analyzing Visual Icons: In Search of a Definition
15.45 - 16.00	*Coffee/tea break*	
16.00 - 17.00	Keynote IV Prof. dr. Jeroen Stumpel	
17.00 - 17.15	Closing remarks by dean prof. Rein de Wilde	

Detailed Program

DAY I (January 25ᵗʰ)

Venue: PC Hoofthuis, Spuistraat 134, Amsterdam

9.30 **Welcome (room 1.04)**
by prof. Erica van Boven (Open University)
and Marieke Winkler (Open University)

9.45 - 10.45 **Keynote by prof. Ann Rigney (Utrecht University) (room 1.04)**

11.00 - 13.00 PARALLEL SESSIONS

1A. What Iconic Narratives Can Teach Us (room 1.04)
moderator: Susan Hogervorst (Open University)

1. **Pieter de Bruijn** (Open University) – *'Connecting Histories: Iconic Narrative Structures in Museum Exhibitions'*
2. **Kirsten E. Kumpf Baele** (The University of Iowa) – *'Turning over a New Leaf: Pedagogical Opportunities of a Cultural Icon, Anne Frank's Chestnut Tree'*
3. **Jilt Jorritsma** (Koninklijk Nederlands Historisch Gezelschap, KNHG) – *'The Faustian Legacy of Das Abendland: A Cultural Model for Dealing with Unintended Consequences'*
4. **Herman Simissen** (Open University) – *'Theodor Lessing and the Arbitrary Nature of Cultural Icons'*

1B. Iconic Persons as Cultural Models (room 1.05)
moderator: Alex Rutten (Open University)

1. **Nina Geerdink** (Utrecht University) – '*Vondel as an Iconic Model for Honourable Authorship'*
2. **Jeroen Vanheste** (Open University) – '*T.S. Eliot: the Rise and Fall of a Cultural Icon'*
3. **Erica van Boven** (Open University) – *'The Cover of Ik Jan Cremer'*
4. **Gaston Franssen** (University of Amsterdam) – *'Representing Science and Schizophrenia: John Nash as Icon of the Mad Genius'*

13.00 - 14.00 *Lunch at PCHoofthuis*

14.15 - 16.00   PARALLEL SESSIONS

2A. Spatial Dimensions of the Icon (room 1.04)
moderator: Davy Depelchin (Open University)

1. Frank Inklaar (Open University) – *'The Making of an Icon: Hanzestad Zwolle'*
2. Paul van den Akker (Open University) – *'The Renaissance at a Glance. The Panoramic View of Florence'*
3. Rudi van Etteger & Kevin Raaphorst (Wageningen University) – *'Central Park as Icon'*
4. Connell Vaughan (Dublin School of Creative Arts) – *'The Enlisted Icon'*

2B. Icons, Objects & Materiality (room 1.05)
moderator: Martijn van der Burg (Open University)

1. Lieke van Deinsen & Jan de Hond (Rijksmuseum) – *'The Sword and the Album. Johan van Oldebarnevelt (1547-1619) and his Tragic Death as Cultural Icons in the Early Modern Dutch Republic'*
2. Meghen Jones (Alfred University)– *'Tea Bowls as National Treasures and Cultural Icons in 1950s Japan'*
3. Breanne Robertson (Marine Corps University) – *'Uncommon Valor as a Common Virtue: The Iwo Jima Flag Raising as Cultural Model'*
4. Noa Roei (University of Amsterdam) – *'Flag Art and Modern Idolatry: on the Work of Ivan Grubanov'*

16.00 - 16.15   *Coffee/tea*

16.15 - 17.15   **Keynote by prof. Ginette Vincendeau (King's College London) (room 1.04)**

18.00   *Conference dinner at Kapitein Zeppos*

DAY II (January 26th)
Venue: Oude Manhuispoort 4-6, Amsterdam

9.30 - 10.30   **Keynote by prof. Kees Ribbens (NIOD/Erasmus University) (room C.0.17)**

10.30 - 12.15   PARALLEL SESSIONS

> **3A. Traveling Icons: Comparative Approaches (room C.0.17)**
> *moderator: Lizet Duyvendak (Open University)*
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> 1. **Jan Oosterholt** (Open University) – *'The Iconicity of Lord Byron in the 19th Century Netherlands and Europe'*
> 2. **Janneke van de Stadt** (Williams College) – *'Out from under Carrol's Pinafore: Alice's Adventures in Soviet Russia'*
> 3. **Rui Lopes** (NOVA University of Lisbon) – *'Lisbon as an Iconic Setting of Romantic Intrigue'*
> 4. **Elisabeth Den Hartog** (Open University) – *'Plato's Cave: an Icon of Lasting Appeal'*
>
> **3B. Icons, Popular Culture & Mediality (room C.1.17)**
> *moderator: Marieke Winkler (Open University)*
>
> 1. **Camille Rouquet** (Paris Diderot University) – *'Photojournalistic Icons: Models for Reading Wars and Interpreting Public Opinion'*
> 2. **Yvonne Delhey** (Radboud University) – *'Hitler Goes Pop. Reflections on the Interaction between Media Representation and Cultural Memory'*
> 3. **Eddo Evink** (Open University) – *'Che che che! The Icon in the Age of Digital Reproduction'*
> 4. **Laura Rorato** (University of Hull) – *'Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio a Pop(ular) Icon?'*

12.30 - 13.45   *Lunch at De Brakke Grond*

14.00 - 15.45   PARALLEL SESSIONS

4A. Re-writing the Icon: Political Dimensions of the Icon (room C.0.17)
moderator: Marieke Borren (Open University)

1. **Catherine Makhumula** (University of Malawi) – '*Can a Cultural Icon Fall? #Rhodesmustfall and the Rewriting of Cultural Meaning'*
2. **Véronique Bragard** (UC Louvain) – '*Decolonizing Belgium: Belgo-congolese Creative Revisions of Iconic Monuments'*
3. **Maria Brock** (Södertörn University Stockholm) – *'Lenin as Cultural Icon'*
4. **Carla Zoethout** (Open University) – *The Fall of the Berlin Wall: from Communism to Liberalism to Illiberal Democracy'*

4B. Analyzing Visual Icons: In Search of a Definition (room C.1.17)
moderator: Nathalie Zonnenberg (Open University)

1. **Frauke Laarmann** (Open University) – *'The Recognizability of the Visual Icon'*
2. **Holly Crawford** (AC Institute NYC) – *'Mass Media Mouse and Artists: The Making and Appropriation of an Iconic Image'*
3. **Timea Andrea Lelik** (Leiden University) – '*Portraying the Icon: Unmasking the Image of the Cultural Model in the Work of Marlene Dumas'*

15.45 - 16.00   *Coffee/tea*

16.00 - 17.00   **Keynote by prof. Jeroen Stumpel (Utrecht University) (room C.0.17)**

17.00   **Closing remarks (room C.0.17)**
                by dean prof. Rein de Wilde (Open University)

Description of Sessions

1A. What Iconic Narratives Can Teach Us

This session's focus is on iconic narratives and narrative structures. How do iconic narratives represent a certain period or historical episode? What makes these narratives so appealing that they are being adapted and retold over time?
What constitutes these stories as iconic? How do cultural institutions, in particular museums, make use of iconic narratives and how do they contribute to their 'iconic' status? What do these narratives learn us about the past?

1B. Iconic Persons as Cultural Models

This session places the study of iconic persons within the broader framework of cultural modeling: how do iconic persons function as cultural role models? What do they represent (a specific cultural type, a set of cultural norms and values etc.)? And for whom do they function as a model? Due to what cultural or historical factors does the appreciation, evaluation and/or functioning of a specific icon change? And how can the shifting evaluation of the icon be understood in relation to broader social-historical developments?

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2A. Spatial Dimensions of the Icon

Icons are often linked to representations of specific persons (see session 1B) or objects (see session 2B). Yet, concrete places, sites or buildings are regularly coined 'iconic' as well. They can define the image of a city or even a country, they are used to shape group identity or function as privileged points of reference within the collective remembrance of specific historical events. How can we study the distinct spatial dimension of the icon? What (or who) makes a place or site 'iconic'? What determines the recognisability of an iconic place? To what extent is the iconicity of a city or public site influenced by procedures of cultural reproduction or branding?

2B. Icons, Objects & Materiality

This session's focus is on the distinct material aspect of the icon: how is an object understood and used as attribute of a specific icon, sometimes gaining iconic status itself? How does the adaptation of specific icons function in processes of identity formation (e.g. national identity, gender identity)? How do objects make the icon tangible? What institutions contribute to the iconization of specific (national) iconic objects or representations of these objects?

3A. Traveling Icons: Comparative Approaches

The reception or changing evaluation of specific icons is an important topic within the study of iconic representations. This topic can be explored from a historical point of view, as well as from a comparative perspective. This session explores the comparative perspective by focusing on the way specific icons are interpreted and re-evaluated within different (national)cultural communities. How does the icon function within diverse cultural contexts? What are the indicators of a changing evaluation and reception through time? What is to be gained from a comparative approach and what are the problems or pitfalls?

3B. Icons, Popular Culture & Mediality

Not only the re-writing and adaptation by different groups, communities and generations, also the reproduction of an iconic representation within different (popular) media contributes to a large extend to its 'iconic' status. This makes the focus on processes of adaptation (the creative transfer from one medium to another), and processes of appropriation (by both artists and commercial institutions) highly relevant within the study of the iconic. How is an icon shaped or even 'made' by popular culture and/or mass media? How does reproduction within the popular sphere create room for parody and satire? How does this medial or popular appearance of the icon shape our collective (cultural) memory?

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4A. Re-writing the Icon: Political Dimensions of the Icon

This session addresses the political dimensions of the icon: how do iconic representations function in political contexts? How are they used and applied to frame and interpret political developments? How are they used to articulate political positions? Special attention is paid to the process of re-writing: how is an icon attributed with new meaning(s) to remember and deal with (traumatic) historical events or episodes? How does the icon function within the public debate, for example in relation to the collective remembrance of historical events? Does the icon secure existing images, thus reducing historical memory, or does it keep collective memory alive by offering room for re-interpretation?

4B. Analyzing Visual Icons: In Search of a Definition

This session reflects explicitly on the cultural analysis of the visual icon as a cultural model. Additionally, it offers room for attempts to define the concept of the 'icon'. Can we distinguish certain characteristics of the icon by comparing different visual representations? What are the factors that determine whether or not a representation can function as an icon? How is the concept of the 'icon' understood and used in different professional disciplines that focus on understanding the visual, such as art history and the world of design?

Keynote Speakers

Prof.dr. Kees Ribbens

Prof.dr. Kees Ribbens is endowed professor of Popular Historical Culture and War at Erasmus University Rotterdam. Since 2006 he is affiliated as a senior researcher at NIOD (Netherlands Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies). Popular historical culture and public history in the broadest sense of the term are among his key interests. His interest includes both the history of the Second World War and the memories and representations of war and mass violence in the twentieth and twenty-first century. Ribbens is particularly intrigued by the medium of comics and graphic novels.

Prof.dr. Ann Rigney

Prof.dr. Ann Rigney holds the chair of Comparative Literature at the University of Utrecht. She is an elected member of the Royal Dutch Academic of Sciences (KNAW) and of the Academia Europaea. Ever since her PhD thesis, published as The Rhetoric of Historical Representation: Three Narrative Histories of the French Revolution (1990), she has been fascinated by the intersections between narrative, collective identity, and contestations of the past. She has published widely in the field of modern memory cultures, with projects both on the nineteenth century and on contemporary developments. She has also played an active role in Cultural Memory Studies with a particular focus on issues relating to mediation and transnationalism. Her most recent research deals with the memory of protest.

Prof.dr. Jeroen Stumpel

Prof.dr. Jeroen Stumpel holds the chair of Iconography and Art Theory at the History Department of Utrecht University. His research focuses on Renaissance art with a special interest in artistic techniques. He is coordinator of the interdisciplinary research program 'The Impact of Oil' that traces the rich history of oil painting, and pays specific attention to the consequences of the use of oil media for the visual arts. In 2006 Stumpel received the Wissenschaftpreis of the Aby-Warburg-Stiftung. In the academic year 2007/2008 he was visiting professor at Harvard.

Prof. Ginette Vincendeau

Prof. Ginette Vincendeau holds the chair of Film Studies at King's College London. Her research focuses on French cinema, especially popular genres (thriller, film noir, comedy) and film celebrities. She has published widely on stardom in European and Hollywood film, with a special focus on the cinematic icon Brigitte Bardot. Ginette Vincendeau is a regular contributor to the international film magazine *Sight & Sound*, editor of *The Encyclopedia of European Cinema* (Cassell/ BFI, 1995) and biographer of director Jean-Pierre Melville. Currently she is co-editing the book *Paris in the cinema: Beyond the Flâneur* that aims at offering a new approach to the representation of Paris on screen.

Abstracts: Keynote Lectures

Prof.dr. Kees Ribbens (NIOD / Erasmus University)

Between Simplification and Diversity:
How World War II has been turned into an Iconic Era

In rather diverse societies across the world cultural icons have a very clear presence. Not only do they emerge in large numbers in various contexts, they are also increasingly identified as such – by scholars, journalists, opinion-makers and other observers of contemporary developments.

In this situation, icons find themselves in a somewhat curious position. Since they are supposed to refer to something special, even to something unique, the implicit assumption is generally that they are relatively rare. In reality, they are an increasingly common phenomenon, though still attracting growing attention. At the same time, there is little unanimity about the definition of cultural icons. Their recognisability is an important element, as is the special status of what is referred to. But does that offer sufficient grip for a consistent delineation to study icons from a cultural-historical perspective?

Closely connected to this is the question whether icons are by definition visual markers, images exclusively referring to specific persons, events and phenomena? Or should we, based on the current situation in the early 21st century, acknowledge that there are iconic eras that should not only be perceived as a collection of individual iconic persons and events, but ought to be considered as an icon itself, despite a certain lack of coherence which might even be highly characteristic.

The Second World War seems to lend itself very well to such an approach, while the study of the iconic meaning(s) of this era may also contribute to the mapping of the boundaries of the phenomenon. From this perspective, helpful questions can be raised about the producers and consumers of icons, about the cultural and geographical scope and the wider development of the phenomenon, and about the power or impotence of icons in society.

Prof.dr. Ann Rigney (Utrecht University)

From Icons to the Iconic

How can 'we, the people' ever be visualized? Isn't a democratic icon a contradiction in terms? This presentation will explore the different modalities whereby individuals or groups have been constituted as collective icons since the French Revolution. It will outline changes in modern iconicity and analyze their implications with reference to the visualizations of popular demonstrations, from *Delacroix's Liberté guidant le peuple* (1830) to more recent iconic photos such as Gezi Park's *Woman in Red* (2013).

Prof.dr. Jeroen Stumpel (Utrecht University)

The Lure of Iconic Images

In an obvious sense, the phrase 'iconic image' is a pleonasm - icon and image being synonyms. The fact that we apparently need such a phrase at all indicates that some images are more equal than others. The term 'iconic', used in this manner, is of relatively recent origin, but the class of venerated and specifically charged images is not.

What is it that makes some images stand out, and gain an exceptional status? There are strong and strange powers images may acquire, which ultimately will be rooted in neurological hardware; but they are also stimulated or checked by cultural contexts. Some features of the iconic image seem to remain stable over centuries, regardless of changing technologies for image production, and image reproduction. By looking back at various uses of images in the past, the anatomy of the iconic image will be better understood.

Prof. Ginette Vincendeau (King's College London)

Brigitte Bardot: Popular Film Star, Mass-media Celebrity, Modern Icon

In the 1950s and 1960s Brigitte Bardot was the most famous French woman on the planet and the first French mass-media celebrity. The cult, adulation and hostility she generated, verging on hysteria (leading to the term 'Bardot-mania') were unprecedented. But while the popularity of her films has waned, with a few exceptions such as *Et Dieu… créa la femme/And God Created Woman*, the film that launched her global fame in 1956, and Jean-Luc Godard's *Le Mépris/Contempt* (1963), her iconic status has endured.

Bardot was a star made by the image (photography and film) and her celebrity survived through the image. She was an icon in several senses – literally as the model of photographers, filmmakers and painters, culturally as creator and bearer of fashion and lifestyle that were widely imitated, and symbolically as the articulation of a sexualised rebellion against the conservative, patriarchal France of the time. Thus, while her 'sex goddess' identity harked back to traditional gender roles, she was also a figure of modernity and change. For Andy Warhol, who contributed to her iconicity with one of his famous silkscreen series in 1974, she was 'one of the first women to be really modern'.

This presentation discusses the emergence, evolution and impact of Bardot as a cultural icon and her continued relevance long after she stopped making films in 1973 (up to the present day when parallels have been drawn with the French President's wife, Brigitte Macron, in their combination of blond good looks, fashion sense, transgression and modernity).

Abstracts: Paper Presentations

Paul van den Akker (Open University)
The Renaissance At a Glance. The Panorama of Florence
It is most likely that a traveller to Florence will visit Piazzale Michelangelo. There, from a wide terrace in the southern hills, a beautiful panoramic view unfolds. One can see at a glance the Renaissance Tuscan city along the Arno river as the Medici had left it. Since the invention of the camera it must have been photographed unnumerable times. The earliest pictures date from the late fiftees of the 19th century, taken from nearly the same spot, at San Miniato or the Bobboli gardens. Thus when in 1869 the urban designer Giuseppe Poggi constructed Piazzale Michelangelo he drew on an existent tradition. But even before the camera's arrival the spot had already fascinated painters. The earliest one, as far as known, was Louis Gauffier at the end of the 18th century, followed by the more famous Jean-Baptiste Camille Corot who recorded it on canvas around 1835-40.

However, there is more to the popularity of this panorama than its picturesque beauty. It can hardly be a coincidence e.g. that it was the sight of the old city looming up before his eyes which deeply impressed Corot's fellow country man Stendhal, making him realise to enter the place where civilisation had once been reborn *(Rome, Naples e Florence*, 1819). Or take George Eliot, who chose the San Miniato prospect for the cinematographic opening scene of *Romola* (1863), her well founded historical novel situated in Savonarola's Florence around 1500. One of the early photographs aptly faces the title page of its first edition.

George Eliot for one, was very well acquainted with the growing 19th-century literature, scholarly as well as literary, in which the Italian Renaissance came to be interpreted as the awakening period of modern man liberating himself from medieval religious ties. Soon Florence, uptil 1800 hardly visited and studied except for its local history, would be honoured as the cradle of individual thinking and genial creativity. Its main spokesman, Jacob Burckhardt, characterised the city as 'the most important workshop of the Italian, and indeed of the modern European spirit' (*Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien*, 1860).

It will be argued that this 19th-century interpretation of Renaissance Florence played its part in raising the panoramic view of the city from the south to an iconic status. Underlying many 19th- and early 20th-century studies on the Italian Renaissance was a search for historical roots of a fast changing modern society. It asked for a kind of birth certificate, which the iconic image of the panoramic view of Florence was to provide. The succes of its spread will be interpreted in the light of what the sociologist Everett Rogers, as quoted by Alex Mesoudi in his *Cultural Evolution* (2011), has identified as the characteristics of succesful innovations, such

as a relative advantageousness over alternatives, compatibility with what is already known, and sufficient simplicity such that it can be quickly and easily understood.

Erica van Boven (Open University)
The Cover of Ik Jan Cremer

On 1 September 2010, the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam acquired an unusual object: the original cover design of the 'huge bestseller' *Ik Jan Cremer* (1964). Museum director Wim Pijbes justified his purchase arguing that it concerned an 'icon in the history of Dutch culture, which highlights a turning point in the change of mentality in the 1950s-1960s'. In the same year, the original manuscript of the novel, which in its time had attracted huge negative publicity, was proudly obtained by the Letterkundig Museum (Literature Museum), also referring to its alleged iconic meaning.

The press equally attributed the status of 'iconic image' to the cover. This quality is the subject of my paper. How could the cover of a novel, once rejected and despised, achieve such an extraordinary status in less than fifty years? Undoubtedly, Jan Cremer's striking publicity techniques, applied in an era when such practices were highly unusual in the world of literature, played a significant role. He came up with his own marketing campaign and carried out a sophisticated publicity strategy. 'I am my own advertising agency', he announced and he succeeded in launching himself, Jan Cremer, as a new, strong brand. Core of the campaign was this cover, designed by Cremer himself following his own very specific notions of shape and color. The image of the young author, pointing the headlight of his Harley Davidson directly on the viewer and showing his own name in large characters, has become an archetype in itself, independent from the novel's content. It stands for freedom and rebellion, the start of the 1960s. But it also became the model of a modern, commercial concept of authorship, a concept that marks the transition of literature as a small-scale phenomenon to a form of mass entertainment.

Veronique Bragard (UC Louvain)
Decolonizing Belgium: Belgo-congolese Creative Revisions of Iconic Monuments

Statues of Leopold II still haunt many Belgian cities despite the wish of activist groups and citizens to decolonize the Belgian landscape. This paper seeks to examine how belgo-congolese photographers or visual artists, such as Sammy Baloji, Nganji or Schreiber engage with colonial monuments to raise and affirm the

agency of art and the voice of the diasporic afropean community. This study will explore how these artists use photomontages, visual tensions, visual palimpsests and echoes when reframing the old colonial monuments that still haunt many Belgian towns. What role do these artistic and cultural interventions of Congolese artists play in analyzing and denouncing politics of remembrance and forgetting in Belgium? How can their works help a marginalized community come to terms with the trauma of (post)colonial times while engaging with the present and new forms of aesthetic engagement? How do they participate in political activism to counter the public amnesia regarding the colonial past of the country embedded in iconic monuments? Via a comparative approach to these decolonization creative responses, this paper will look at how iconic sites can be figuratively and symbolically dismantled or subversively recreated.

Maria Brock (Södertörn University Stockholm)
Lenin as Cultural Icon
In this paper, I am interested in exploring the numerous symbolic meanings and incarnations that Vladimir Ilich Lenin has assumed after his death in 1924. From posthumously becoming the object of a Soviet cult of personality to, more bizarrely, being displayed in an embalmed state in the centre of Moscow for more than 90 years, the real historical figure of Lenin has become the site of numerous projections and instrumentalisation.
Within the Soviet Union and Russia, ubiquitous symbolic use of Lenin iconography can be linked to Orthodox tradition, whereas the care and dedication with which his body has been preserved (or supplemented with other matter) evokes the treatment of the bodies of kings in European monarchic history (Yurchak, 2015). Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the continued function of keeping Lenin's body as-if-immortal has been put into question, while Lenin the icon has become symbolic of the spectre of communism as it continues to haunt the world both in the form of Lenin statues and busts which can be found in many parts of the globe, as well as in artistic interpretations and more commodified manifestations. This paper will look at the fate of some of these Lenin statues as ways of investigating the interaction between icon and shifting cultural and societal landscapes, as well as examining more closely artistic representations of Lenin in film and art.

Pieter de Bruijn (Open University)
Connecting Histories: Iconic Narrative Structures in Museum Exhibitions
Museum exhibitions often feature artefacts and images that have become iconic of the history that is on display. A well-known example is, for instance, the diagram of the 'Brookes' slave ship that is often used to represent the transportation of African

people across the Atlantic and the horrible circumstances they found themselves in. The power of the icon as a cultural model is demonstrated by the fact that the image is frequently presented without the important context of it being anti-slave trade propaganda (Cubitt, 2011).

Iconic connections in exhibitions are, however, not only made through objects and images, but also through narrative structures that invoke similarities between different time periods. Sometimes this is done intentionally through historical analogy or a rhyming narrative plotline in which the past and the present are represented as distinct, but fundamentally similar in order to evoke empathetic engagement (Zerubavel, 2003; De Bruijn, 2014). Often narrative parallels in exhibitions, however,

appear to stem from iconic narrative structures that are dominant in national memory cultures.

This paper will examine the ways in which iconic narrative structures manifest themselves in exhibitions on the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, World War II and the Holocaust in the Netherlands and the UK. It will analyse the narrative parallels between exhibitions of these different histories as well as the ways in which they have been narratively shaped based on templates originating from national memory cultures. In addition, it will explore how these narrative structures relate to the institutional backgrounds and educational approaches of the organizing museums. In doing so, this paper aims to contribute to our understanding of how iconic events are (re-)mediated and are developed into a cultural model.

Holly Crawford (AC Institute NYC)

Mass Media Mouse and Artists: The Making and Appropriation of an Iconic Image
From the late 1920s, when Disney released Mickey Mouse as a cartoon character, with references to historic events and persons, became an overnight success and internationally recognized image—an iconic image—representing American popular culture. Originally the Mouse was an optimistic feisty underdog and not a corporate logo. The Mouse's success produced an abundance of objects for an emerging consumer economy from watches for adults, to toys and comic books. In the 1950s, Walt Disney introduced a whole new generation to Disney— their cartoons and Disneyland—through television. Disney had established the Mouse as an icon of corporate success and American culture. The early stable image of the Mouse induced many Pop artists to appropriate his image, importing his humor, and nostalgically depicting the feisty, underdog Mouse of their childhood. In many cases the artists' work reflects their psychological attachment to the Mouse and the success of the work may also reflect the attachment of many viewers. More than 100 international artists (Peter Blake, Christian Boltanski, Luis Camnitzer, Enrique Chagoya, Mark Dion, Erro, Karen Finley, Gottrried Helnwein, Llyn Floulkes, Bernard

Lavier, Louise
Lawlor, Roy Lichtenstein, Paul McCarthy, Nadin Ospina, Euuardo Palolozzi, Martin
Parr, Philip Pearlstein, Joyce Pensato, Claes Oldenburg, Arthur Tress and Andy
Warhol), who have used the Mouse in their work. Oldenburg's being the most
extensive use of per graphic symbol. This paper will examine what Disney did
and how and why the Mouse, with a static image, but evolving meaning, was
appropriated by artists.

Lieke van Deinsen & Jan de Hond (Rijksmuseum Amsterdam)
*The Sword and the Album. Johan van Oldenbarnevelt (1547-1619) and his Tragic
Death as Cultural Icons in the Early Modern Dutch Republic.*
On the 13th of May 1619, after an intense political and religious conflict with
stadtholder Prince Maurice of Orange, the Land's advocate of Holland, Johan
van Oldenbarnevelt, was publicly executed in The Hague. The tragic death of
the Republic's political foreman struck a chord and in the decades following the
execution, numerous cultural accounts – from Vondel's famous verses on ''t Stokske',
the walking stick that supported the convicted to the scaffold, to several paintings
and prints (allegorically) depicting the execution – were produced. These accounts
transformed both the executed and the event into long-lasting icons. Over the
course of almost two centuries the iconic Oldenbarnevelt was put to use in the
strongly divided political climate of the Dutch Republic. This contribution aims to
shed light on the eighteenth-century use of (the execution of) Van Oldenbarnevelt
as an icon and the possibility to transform and expand the meaning and use such
a cultural icon over time. We will focus in particular on an initiative by the poet and
glass engraver Frans Greenwood (1680-1761) who in the early 1740s laid hands on
the sword, nowadays on view in the Rijksmuseum, that presumably decapitated
Oldenbarnevelt. Not only did he anchor the iconic function of the sword – which
is most likely not even the *real* weapon – with an engraved poem and put the
sword on show in his residence, he also initiated an album in which dozens of
contemporaries wrote down their (often emotional) poetic accounts on the weapon
and his tragic history. In doing so, the sword itself became a material icon for the
contemporary patriotic cause.

Yvonne Delhey (Radboud University)
*Hitler Goes Pop – Reflections on the Interaction Between Media Representation and
Collective Memory*
'History Goes Pop' (2009) is the somewhat provocative title of a study by Barbara
Korte and Sylvia Paletschek which explores historical representation in popular
media in the present day. History, the editors claim, has penetrated daily life more

than ever before, appearing to meet a multitude of needs within society: historical education; entertainment; relaxation; distraction; identification; orientation etcetera. History has become *histotainment*, meaning that historical knowledge is no longer imparted but rather must be presented in an experience driven, thrill seeking, event based culture. Given the modality of new media, history also includes increasing visualization, where recognizable icons are a favoured vehicle of expression.

For this very reason, the German magazine 'The European' chose to put Hitler's face on its front cover with the headline 'Hitlertainment. Germany's Leading Popstar'. By means of this coup, the editorial board reacted to a recent social development in which Adolf Hitler – in particular, his iconical appearance –seems to be omnipresent. Hitler is used not only to blacken certain political opinions, one also finds him in almost all forms of popular culture, even those with humorous and commercial aims. Hitler´s strong media presence goes hand in hand with an, in itself, paradoxical situation caused by the taboo, which to this day still engulfs his personality, his myth and his legacy.

The paper describes several actual examples as a means of discussing the different angles and cultural meanings which the use of Hitler's image and his myth elicit. The focus lies on satirical and comical representations, on the specific influence the media has on these and the transnational reception of such images. The aim is to establish an interdisciplinary framework with which to analyse highly tabooed icons in their significance for the collective memory.

Rudi van Etteger & Kevin Raaphorst (Wageningen University)
Central Park as Icon

Central Park is an iconic park; its presence in contemporary film alone justifies that status. A status that would not be questioned by any enquiry made. If anyone would not understand central park as 'park' one would question the judgement of the evaluator not the status of central park as park. Its sharp boundaries and contrast with its environment make it clear and distinctive. Its style is the quintessential shape of a park with large trees, promenades, ponds, and meadows. Its shape and form as park is accentuated by the distinct and most urban of all contexts: the skyscrapers of Manhattan. As icon, central park functions as a cultural model as its influence can be seen and experienced in the shape, proportion, style, and function of many parks designed since.

In this paper we will discuss the iconic status of central park in terms of Peirce's theory of signs. Iconicity, from a Peircean semiotic perspective, entails the perceived similarity or likeness between a sign and its meaning. As a cultural model, we argue that the power of the iconic sign to shape and reshape meaning could be derived from both its indexical and symbolic sign functions. In doing so, we aim to shed

light on how spatial objects can become iconic, whether it is possible to design spatial objects with iconicity in mind, and what the advantages and disadvantages of a firm grasp of this concept could be for the field of Landscape Architecture.

Eddo Evink (Open University)

Che Che Che! The Icon in the Age of Digital Reproduction

In his seminal essay 'Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit', Walter Benjamin has traced the influence of modern technology on our understanding of images and artworks. In his view, the singularity that used to give images their special meaning, i.e. their 'aura', is lost when images become endlessly reproducible. Benjamin mainly discusses photography and film as technical procedures that radically change our understanding of artworks as well as of the concept of art. In addition, Benjamin focuses on the political consequences of this development, calling for a politicization of art instead of an aestheticization of politics.

In my presentation I shall elaborate on Benjamins analyses by projecting them on the digital age in which we live today, and in which the reproducibility of images is drastically expanded. I shall first discuss how icons can develop their specific iconic function by combining several references and associations in one image. Secondly, the intensifying and amplifying role of digital media will be shown as a force that first strengthens the development and impact of iconic effects, but then also disarms icons by disseminating their referential functions rapidly. Thirdly, I shall explain why this deeply problematizes Benjamin's hope for a political utilization of images in our digital age.

Gaston Franssen (University of Amsterdam)

Representing Science and Schizophrenia: John Nash as Icon of the Mad Genius

Celebrities can be understood as iconic forms of collective representation central to the meaningful construction of contemporary society. In particular, celebrity discourses offer audiences ways to negotiate norms of selfhood in a particular culture: they determine what it means to be a talented, successful, beautiful, or in any other way exemplary individual. Although celebrity culture often revolves around successful self-realization, it forms a background against which deviant, problematic or pathological forms of selfhood, in which the self is considered to be 'at risk' (such as in mental illness), are perceived and understood as well.

This presentation analyzes how the celebrity-icon, norms of selfhood, and popular ideas about mental illness are interrelated by focusing on a case study: the story of John Nash (1928-2015). Nash, a celebrated, Noble Prize wining mathematician, is often described as an 'icon' of genius, but at the same time his fame is based on

his struggle with schizophrenia, documented in Sylvia Nasar's 1998 biography *A Beautiful Mind* and popularized by its successful 2001 film adaptation.

Nash's case, I will argue, is far from static or straightforward: an analysis of the construction of his celebrity persona, with special attention to Nasar's biography as well as the 2001 adaptation, reveals that Nash's iconic status is the product of an ongoing, co-constructed illness narrative that attempts to orchestrate several contradictory elements: the Romantic notion of the tortured genius, the modern(ist) stereotype of the mad scientist, the scientific ideal of self-effacement, and a meritocratic ideology of self-improvement.

Nina Geerdink (Utrecht University)
Vondel as an Iconic Model for Honourable Authorship

Joost van den Vondel, the most renowned poet of the Dutch Golden Age, can safely be called a Dutch literary icon. Already in his own time, he was regarded as the prince of poets. Many younger poets referred to him as a source of inspiration, which soon made him into a cultural model for a particular, classicist, approach. Vondel's reputation has also shaped modern scholarship. Even in recent studies of seventeenth-century Dutch literature, Vondel is mostly not just a protagonist, but a standard with which to measure other authors. Since moneymaking did not fit the high ideals of Vondel's classicist poetics, one of the striking consequences of his iconic status is a blind spot for the economic imperatives of literary authors.

In my paper, I will investigate which role Vondel's iconicity has played in the early modern debate about moneymaking by literary authors. Did authors from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, just like modern scholars, consider literary culture as a hierarchical place and did they see Vondel's career as normative? In addressing these questions, I will make use of a corpus of written and visual sources dealing with profitable authorship, which I have developed in the context of my larger research project *Poets and Profits. A New History of Dutch Literary Authorship* (1550-1750) (funded by NWO). In so doing I aim to illuminate the significance of icons as cultural models in evaluating arts.

Elisabeth den Hartog (Open University)
Plato's Cave: an Icon of Lasting Appeal

Plato's allegory of the cave has an iconic status, not only within philosophy, but in many other fields as well. Within philosophy, the allegory of the cave is considered a source of historical knowledge that sheds light on Plato's conceptions of reality and truth. Outside philosophy, the allegory (or elements thereof) is appreciated for being still appropriate to enlighten the *condition humaine*. It is argued for example, that the lasting appeal of this allegory lies in its pictorial elements (chains,

prisoners, artificial light and shadows etc.), which are interpreted differently according to the cultural context of their time. Thus, the image of the passage from the cave to the outside world can be interpreted as an ascent from the realm of changeable appearance to the realm of true reality, as a reduction of the realm of appearance into its foundation by transcendental subjectivity, or quite contrary, as a replacement of reality by metaphysical illusions. Though all these interpretations emphasize ideas of liberation, with which the passage to the outside world is accordingly associated, they also differ in meaning. As I will show in my paper, in current adaptations of the allegory of the cave, a re-evaluation of the element of the shadow can be observed. Different from Plato, who rejected the changeable complexion of the shadow in favour of the permanent lucidity of the Idea, contemporary philosophers take the shadow as the hallmark of human knowledge. In this view the flexible shadow stands for the historicity and perspectivity of all knowledge. This re-evaluation is paralleled by a reversion of the Platonic ranking of art and philosophy. Within this reversion art is rewarded as a therapy for the blindness caused by philosophy's sole trust in rationality. This will be illustrated by different artworks from the history of modern art that allude to Plato's allegory.

Frank Inklaar (Open University)
The Making of an Icon: Hanzestad Zwolle

Zwolle's Golden Age (as in most cities in the river IJssel valley) is between 1380 en 1480. The city was thriving and many beautiful buildings were constructed. Culture and education blossomed under the wings of the religious reform movement 'Moderne Devotie'. Off and on the city was part of the Hanze, the league of trading cities in Northwest Europe. In the next centuries the Hanseatic past of Zwolle never played an important role in the identity of the city. In 1930 for instance the city celebrated its 700th birthday. In the festivities, which focused on the main events of Zwolle's history, the Hanze period wasn't even mentioned. Fifty years later the Hanze period was rediscovered as an iconic period in the city's history. Zwolle founded the New Hanze ('die Hanse der Neuzeit') and since then Hanze has become a main part of Zwolle's city branding. Nowadays Zwolle calls itself even Hanzestad Zwolle. How has this happened and more importantly why is this branding successful? Hanze as a brand is appealing to tourists, but also plays a role in economic cooperation. The New Hanze has become a successful network of cities in Northwest Europe. And apparently Hanze is a powerful regional identity marker in the IJssel valley. In Hanze the region has found something to be proud of, something which can meet the dominant Hollandocentric historical discourse in the Netherlands. In the Hanze period Zwolle has rediscovered its own Golden Age and turned this into a powerful regional icon.

Meghen Jones (Alfred University)
Tea Bowls as National Treasures and Cultural Icons in 1950s Japan
The tea bowl holds a profound significance in Japan today as a locus of tea ceremony aesthetics and ideology. Treasured tea bowls, or *meiwan* (literally "named bowls") are the subject of numerous recent publications, and crowds clamor to see them on display in museum exhibitions. Tea bowls have come to be understood as embodiments of particular Japanese national aesthetics and value systems. The tea bowl's status as the most significant icon within tea rituals, however, is a modern phenomenon. Until the early twentieth century, Japanese tea connoisseurs considered the tea caddy, not the tea bowl, as the most important object of adoration. This paper examines the economic, social, and cultural contexts that gave rise to the construction of the tea bowl as a national icon in modern Japan. To illuminate this history, the eight tea bowls designated by Japanese government authorities as national treasures, beginning in 1951, will be discussed in terms of their various demonstrations of personal status, cultural significations, and reflections of modern Japanese political contexts. With five of the eight bowls of Chinese origin, and one of Korean origin, fundamental to the iconic status of the tea bowl in modern Japan has been the enduring symbolic power of elite forms of Chinese material culture, assertions of colonialist power dynamics, and constructions of autochthonous forms of Japanese aesthetic expression. Tea bowls in the immediate aftermath of World War Two provided material linkages to an idealized past as well as present political realities.

Jilt Jorritsma (KNHG)
The Faustian Legacy of das Abendland: A Cultural Model for Dealing with Unintended Consequences
'In Europe, Faust is never far away' (Mathieu Segers, 'Introduction,' in: *Re:Thinking Europe: Thoughts on Europe: Past, Present and Future*). Throughout history, the character of Faust has taken many forms in literature and art. Writers such as Christopher Marlowe, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Ivan Turgenev and Thomas Mann have used the tale of the (supposedly real) Doctor Faustus to represent the tragic downfall of a man who sold his soul to the devil. His most iconic adaptation was probably offered by Johann Wolfgang Goethe, whose depiction of the Faustian Bargain warns against man's striving for new forms of knowledge that exceed the boundaries of what it means to be human. Still today, this motive is used to give meaning to present-day developments in the field of artificial intelligence, and to warn against the growing, uncontrollable power of Google and Silicon Valley. Faust has become an icon of the unintended consequences of our actions: it warns modern man that he will bring about something which he himself can no longer understand and, therefore, no longer control. In this paper, I want to

tackle the question how the story of one man came to be a cultural model for the entire continent of Europe. I will focus on Oswald Spengler's conception (in *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, 1918-22) of European culture as a 'Faustian' civilization, characterized by an expansive, world-dominating soul that will lead to the downfall of Europe itself. It will be shown that, in the wake of World War I, the iconic figure of Faust enabled Europe to give meaning to the alarming observation that its desires could only give birth to atrocities.

Kirsten F. Kumpf Baele (The University of Iowa)
*Turning Over a New Leaf – Pedagogical Opportunities of a Cultural Icon: Anne Frank's Chestnut Tre*e

There is no denying that Anne Frank has long ago achieved iconic status: a mere glimpse of one of her smiling pre-war schoolgirl photographs floods us with the sad truth that we know lurks behind her image. So too, her red and white plaid diary, the Secret Annex, as well as the chestnut tree visible to Anne from the attic window, have all garnered attention as cultural icons, and, which over time, have acquired greater meaning through their association with Anne Frank. The chestnut tree is unique among these since, as a living entity, it easily translates Anne's message of continued hope and exemplifies her desire to impact the world beyond her death. In 2010, the tree succumbed to disease but lives on via the Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect's Sapling Project, which seeks to share Anne's humanitarianism by way of these young seedlings 'taking root' at select places around the world. However, there is another avenue, overlooked in scholarship, which the chestnut tree as icon makes possible: that of a pedagogical tool. As the *New York Times* revealed earlier this year, "Many of the younger and foreign visitors who flock [to the Anne Frank House] have little knowledge about the Holocaust – and sometimes none about Frank." (Siegal, 21 March 2017) This reality encourages educators like myself to question how today's young are being taught about Anne and other Holocaust victims. My study uncovers the complexity of the chestnut tree as it applies to and influences the educational sector both on literary and digital platforms.

There are numerous children's books which focus specifically on Anne's tree, and through it make the dire subject of Anne's story palpable to young audiences. Anne only mentions the tree three times, and yet, it has come to symbolize her on-going legacy. It is only due to its status of icon that allows it to be utilized as a communicative means and didactic device. In Jewish culture, the tree carries symbolic significance. From the first and most well-known Trees of Life and Knowledge of Good and Evil, to the Jewish National Fund's Israeli afforestation efforts, to the tree-centered Jewish holiday Tu BiShvat, to the Jewish family tree associated with such tragedy, one can argue that at pivotal points in history the tree has generated much cultural meaning in Judaism.

Frauke Laarmann (Open University)
The Recognizability of the Visual Icon

An often heard explanation for what an icon is, is the phrase: we all recognize it immediately when we see it. If that would be true, it should be possible to create visual icons. But the recognition of an image as icon implicates that it already had become one. Mostly that doesn't happen immediately. A lot of cultural icons had to gain their status during history. It wasn't certain at all that one of the photos Alberto Korda had taken from the public of one of Fidel Castro's speeches, would become the modern icon for revolution, even for people who didn't know anything about Che Guevara. Also Rembrandt's *Nightwatch* wasn't ment to be the iconic visual image of Dutch art and culture in the seventeenth century like it is today.

Most attempts to explain how an image became an icon focus on their history. Very often a certain kind of publicity was necessary to promote an image. But first of all the visual object needs the potential to become an easily recognizable image.

In my paper I will investigate a series of now well known icons on similar aspects. Which visual features have images in common to provide them with the potential to become iconic? Searching on the internet for 'icon', it seems to be nothing more than the small pictograms we use to control our electronic devices. What do these signs have in common with our 'high' cultural icons?

Timea Andrea Lelik (Leiden University)
Portraying the Icon: Unmasking the Image of the Cultural Model in the Work of Marlene Dumas

Marlene Dumas' works address gender, race and sexuality by challenging conventional art historical canons of representation. Religious and cultural icons such as Mary Magdalene, Jesus Christ, Naomi Campbell, Marilyn Monroe or Phil Spector are often unrecognizable in Dumas' work. Dark-skinned Mary Magdalenas with short hair as well as depictions of Marilyn Monroe on her deathbed make up some of Dumas' active commentary on the role and function of cultural icons in contemporary culture. She takes as a starting point existing iconic personae, which she depicts in unusual and unexpected manners to unmask the fact that cultural images represent collectively created stereotypical identities, voided of own subjectivity and identity.

By close-reading works by Marlene Dumas depicting such famous icons as Mary Magdalene or Marilyn Monroe, I will analyze the manner in which Dumas exposes the creation of the cultural icon and how this impacts the understanding of cultural role models in contemporary society. I will further investigate the consequences of Dumas' transgression of representation on the genre of contemporary portraiture as well as on the future artistic depictions of such icons.

Rui Lopes (NOVA University of Lisbon)
Lisbon as an Iconic Setting of Romantic Intrigue
This paper discusses the construction and implications of the depiction of Lisbon as a site of romantic intrigue in the audiovisual fiction of the US and UK. The Portuguese capital's screen image was established through a wave of World War II productions, with over a dozen movies in the early 1940s presenting the city as an escape route for refugees, as a meeting point for spies, and – with its beautiful vistas and glamorous casinos – as the last remnant of peace and hedonism in a devastated Europe. The notion of Lisbon as a backdrop for romance, where international intrigue was secretly fought, became so iconic that it continued to inform post-war film and television, gradually integrated into Cold War narratives. Such an image, how-ever, was not just the product of WWII, but also limited by its context: with the US and UK undertaking tense negotiations with Portugal until mid-1944 regarding the use of the Azores airbases and the embargo of wolfram sales to Germany, the resulting screen image was carefully negotiated with the respective propaganda offices in order to avoid offending the Portuguese regime. Notably absent from this city of touristic sights and foreign spies were Lisbon's widespread poverty, social conflict and political repression. By romanticising local living conditions and sanitising the regime's practices and ideology, Lisbon's iconic screen presence contributed to safeguard Portugal's benign image abroad even as the Salazar dictatorship became a survivor of the fascist era in the post-WWII order and, later, the last European power to violently resist the winds of decolonization.

Catherine Makhumula (University of Malawi)
Can a Cultural Icon Fall? #RhodesMustFall and the Rewriting of Cultural Meaning
This paper discusses #RhodesMustFall a South African student-led movement in order to understand how cultural icons contribute to an increased understanding of the dynamics of culture in post-apartheid South Africa. The paper investigates how the "falling of a monument" became an iconic moment, which came to represent the collective imaging of the present, the re-writing of the past and the opening up potential scenarios for the future. In addition, the paper also discusses how the MustFall hashtag (a linguistic and semiotic media event) became a larger reference point in itself in addition to referencing other events.
Initially organised by the students at the University of Cape Town, the #Rhodes-MustFall movement led a protest aimed at taking down the statue of Cecil John Rhodes which stood at the centre of the University of Cape Town in South Africa. The #RhodesMustFall movement claimed that the statue was a symbol of colonialism and is representative of institutionalized racism and the promotion of a culture of exclusion particularly for black students. Since the successful removal of the statue, South African students and activist have championed other #mustfall

movements aimed at changing the status quo regarding the social economic situation of the South African black majority.

Jan Oosterholt (Open University)
The Iconicity of Lord Byron in 19th Century Netherlands and Europe

Lord Byron is one of the most striking 19th century examples of an icon in the modern sense of the word. During his lifetime Byron was already well known far beyond the borders of his native land. News about his taboo breaking literary work and his likewise unconventional way of life spread rapidly across the European continent. Far into the 19th century Byron and the main characters from his narrative poems remained models for the rebellious 'romantic' hero: a modern version of Milton's fallen angel (see Praz' *The Romantic Agony*).

Much has been written about Byron's work, life and reputation. All this interest makes Byron ideally suited for research into the historical development of an icon as a cultural model. In the 19th century Netherlands Byron functioned mainly as an anti-model, which contained everything that was regarded as un-Dutch. The Dutch reception of Byron was entangled with the discussion about the supposed unDutch character of Romanticism. Paradoxically, there was also an appropriation of Byron and his work, resulting in a Christian 'light' version of the 'Byronic hero'.

The main subject of the lecture is the 19th century Dutch appropriation of Byron and his work. This will be analysed in light of the image of Byron in other European countries. Are there any patterns to be discovered in the ways in which an icon functions in different national contexts? Does an icon, in the spirit of Ian Watt's 'modern myths', represent a specific period?

Breanne Robertson (Marine Corps University)
"Uncommon Valor was a Common Virtue": The Iwo Jima Flag Raising as Cultural Model

On February 23, 1945, Associated Press photographer Joseph Rosenthal snapped a photograph of six Marines raising the American flag during the Battle of Iwo Jima. With its patriotic theme and compositional precision, the image soon superseded the historical event it depicted to inspire a war-weary nation. The photograph circulated in magazines and newspapers, became the signature image on war bond posters and postage stamps, and even received the Pulitzer Prize.

Well after the end of the war, Rosenthal's photograph has retained its iconic status through a continuous process of reproduction and satire. From sculptor Felix de Weldon's monumental rendition of the scene in the Marine Corps War Memorial to Under Armor t-shirt designs and searing political cartoons, the flag raising at Iwo Jima has served a cultural model upon which U.S. citizens have inscribed, revised,

and debated the performance of patriotic citizenship. Taking the work of Robert Hariman and John Louis Lucaites as a starting point for discussion, this paper traces the cultural meaning of Rosenthal's photograph and its numerous afterlives over the past seventy years to elucidate its persistent emotional resonance and rhetorical relevance in the present day. Special emphasis will be given to the inherent tension between the image's historical specificity and malleable agency as cultural model in light of the official U.S. Marine Corps decision in 2016 to update the identification of historical persons depicted in the photograph. How has the revisionary outcome of this investigation undermined or rewritten the cultural meaning of Rosenthal's famous image for the U.S. Marine Corps, in particular, and the American public, in general?

Noa Roei (University of Amsterdam)
Flag-Art and Modern Idolatry; on the Work of Ivan Grubanov
In Ivan Grubanov's installation *United Dead Nations*, presented at the Venice Biennial in 2015, piles of tainted flags are scattered on the patterned floor within an exhibition space. The surrounding white walls include protrusions of names of countries that no longer exist, in a memorial fashion. Instead of an explanatory text, a video is presented at the entrance to the space, showing the artist at work; stepping on the flags, spilling paint and flogging them on the floor. In my contribution to "The Icon As Cultural Model" conference, I will take *United Dead Nations* as the starting point of an investigation into the politics of the flag as modern secular icon, and more specifically, into the political controversies that various iconoclastic art projects have instigated. Projects such as Dread Scott's installation "What is the proper way to display a US flag"? (1989) or the more recent "Shit instead of Blood" video by Israeli artist Natali Cohen Waxberg (2014) renounce the venerated status of the national flag to an extent that led to the artists' arrests and, in the case of Scott, to US congress legislation. Understanding the dynamics at play through W.J.T.Mitchell's writing on the rhetoric of iconoclasm, however, I read such dissident acts as "idolatry turned outward" (1986: 198), upholding the cultural status of the flag through its very debasement. Grubanov's *United Dead Nations* is exceptional in this regard, in the sense that its rebellious nature is not easily detectable. Sanctioned by a variety national and artistic institutions, the work's focus on "dead flags" presents a double-edged critique, pointing simultaneously to national and artistic idolatry practices of our modern times.

Laura Rorato (University of Hull)

Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio a Pop(ular) Icon?

According to the art historian Patrick Hunt (2004) 'Caravaggio is the most renowned Old Master of recent times. More articles, books, exhibitions, films and novels have been devoted to him than to all of his contemporaries combined' (p. ix). If Caravaggio's iconic status and transnational popularity can almost be taken for granted today, what is still relatively unexplored is the painter's impact across different media, in particular in the some areas of popular culture like music, dancing, theatre, fashion, advertising and graffiti. Today's paper will focus on fashion, advertising, and graffiti as all three cultural forms are visually very powerful but work in different ways and are thus useful to reflect on iconicity from different perspectives and to problematize the notion of "popular". In particular we will analyse how designers like Vivienne Westwood, Carine Roitfeld and Versace engaged with Caravaggio, how Caravaggio has been used to promote products as diverse as wine and coffee machines, and we will conclude with some comments on the significance of Caravaggio in the works of spray can artist Andrea Ravo Mattoni. Through these case studies the paper will address the following questions: 1) What makes Caravaggio such a globally iconic figure today? 2) What kind of mechanisms facilitate the transition of a canonical artist from the museum to the market place? 3) What happens o the original "meaning" of an artist's work when his/her image moves across different cultural forms? 4) Is the concept of 'naked icon' (Pugh and Weisel 2013, p. 7) applicable to Caravaggio?

Camille Rouquet (Paris Diderot University)

Photojournalistic Icons: Models for Reading Wars and Interpreting Public Opinion

A few photographs printed in the American press during the war in Vietnam have become known as "icons". The numerous reproductions and remediations of photographs such as the *Napalm Girl* (Nick Ut, 1972) or the *Saigon Execution* (Eddie Adams, 1968) throughout the decades following the end of the conflict became a way for the nation to recover from the defeat and atone for the pain caused to civilians and soldiers alike. These photographs were given retrospective meanings by the press, the political world, even by historians, and are now common and universal models for reading current events. Their power resides in their embodiment of the events pictured in a crystallized still image. This crystalized composition makes them not only adaptable to new contexts but also inescapable as templates for historical interpretation. New worldwide conflicts are nowadays read through the lens of iconic photographs from the mid-20th century and their respective photographic representations often compared.

It must also be noted that the constant recalling of iconic photographs in the press and in various arts and mediums has reinforced the idea that images can

change opinion. This theory is much discussed in various historiographical fields and the examples taken to illustrate it or prove it are photographs proven *not* to be influential. But the writing of history is such that the more tame or clean photographs lend themselves much more easily to this discourse than the graphic or violent representations of massacres (images from My Lai, 1968, being one of the best examples in this context).

Herman Simissen (Open University)
Theodor Lessing on the Arbitrary Nature of Cultural Icons
In 1930, the German philosopher Theodor Lessing (1872-1933) retorted against an address by dr. J. Goebbels, then *Gauleiter* (district leader) of the NSDAP for Berlin and responsible for propaganda by his party. Goebbels did reproach Lessing for having compared the German president Paul von Hindenburg with Fritz Haarmann, the notorious serial killer from Hanover. Lessing, however, never did: virtually everything Goebbels said to accuse him was in fact wrong. Hence, Lessing replied:

> In the history of culture, the history of religion, doxography, numerous historical images, for instance the image of Socrates, only rest on a few sentences that were passed on by contemporaries. [...] What if all that remains from me will be the sentence in the address of dr. Goebbels, as all that remains from Catalina is nothing but the address by Cicero? Terrible! And one still fights against the scepticism of my Geschichte als Sinngebung des Sinnlosen? (Theodor Lessing, 'Über einen Ausspruch von Doktor Goebbels', in: *Das Tagebuch* 11 (1930), reprinted in: Theodor Lessing, *Ich warf eine Flaschenpost ins Eismeer der Geschichte. Essays und Feuilletons*, ed. by Rainer Marwedel. Darmstadt and Neuwied (1986), 73-74, there 74)

Thus, Lessing uses a short text on a personal experience not only to refute the false accusation by Goebbels, but, moreover, to explain an aspect of his philosophy of history: the sheer fortuity of which evidence is handed down from the past, and which is lost. As a result, the image of the past can only be arbitrary, Lessing claims. Likewise, historical reputations or, for that matter, cultural icons result from utter coincidence. In fact, they mainly express present needs, wants and desires, Lessing argues, and they do not describe the past. In his philosophy of history, Lessing discussed this claim at length, as will be explained in this lecture.

Janneke van de Stadt (Williams College)
Out From Under Carroll's Pinafore: Alice's Adventures in Soviet Russia
In the context of children's literature there is no greater or more enduring icon than Lewis Carroll's Alice, the girl who travels to the nonsense-world that is Wonderland, meets with a series of highly fraught adult figures, and must negotiate power as both concrete manifestation and abstract concept. Sweden's Pippi Longstocking, the USA's Dorothy from the *Wizard of Oz* series, and Japan's Chihiro from Miyazaki's *Spirited Away,* just to name a few, can all claim her as their kin. At the heart of the Alice figure, as both iconic child and narrative, are issues of identity and development: once she falls down the rabbit hole, or walks through the looking glass, Alice finds herself constantly struggling with her size, her identity, her sense of logic and ethics, and others' expectations of her behavior. Carroll, to a great extent, traces (and mourns) her transition from childhood to adolescence.

My paper will focus on two Russian appropriations of the Alice figure and on their dialogue not only with the original text but also with one another. The first is Vitaly Gubarev's *Kingdom of Crooked Mirrors* (1951), which is a children's novel popular to this day, and the other is a scene from Nikita Mikhalkov's Oscar-winning film, *Burnt by the Sun* (1995), which is set at the start of the Stalin purges. My paper will discuss how Carroll's beloved icon of dreamy childhood becomes a progressive developmental nightmare once it is co-opted as cultural model by the Russian state.

Connell Vaughan (Dublin School of Creative Arts)
The Enlisted Icon as Collectable
Iconic sites have come to function as both lucrative revenue resource and powerful international tokens of culture. UNESCO listing has come to function as the gold standard for iconic places. This list, of "outstanding universal value," is an ongoing curation that formalises a key aspect of icon making, namely: the icon as collectable. Since 1978 the number of UNESCO World Heritage Sites and Monuments ("properties" in the jargon of UNESCO) has steadily risen to 1052, as of June 2017. This paper focuses on how we are to understand the project of such enlisting. First, it addresses the fruitfully ambiguous criteria used for inscription and the practice and politics of list creation, and second it outlines the growing cultural experience that regards the atelic list as something to be collected.

It focuses on the growing literature questioning the politics of the heritage industry. Central to this literature has been the identification of a Eurocentric bias (what I call 'Big Cathedral Syndrome') and its accompanying aesthetic assumptions in a supposedly global project (see Pocock 1997, Cleere 2001; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004; Labadi 2013). Ostensibly at stake in this list is not simply a personal aesthetic preference, a bucket list, but rather the cataloguing of civilization and its global icons.

It then argues that the dynamics of the list demand a dual beholding: you are to be simultaneously impressed by its manageable and it overwhelming nature. The beholder is converted into collector. Each entry is thus converted to an addictive commodity. Collecting can be entertaining, educational and productive but the idea of collecting all "properties" is ludicrous, if not megalomaniacal. The experience however, is one that demands more than a shallow box-ticking exercise. It enforces pilgrimage and all of its intoxicating anticipations, struggles, compromises, herding, revelations, inequalities, judgements and disappointments.

Jeroen Vanheste (Open University)
T.S. Eliot: the Rise and Fall of a Cultural Icon
In the first half of the 20th century, T.S. Eliot gradually obtained the status of a cultural icon. His monumental poems *The Waste Land* and Four *Quartets* combined revolutionary innovations in literary form with striking images of a struggling European culture. Eliot was considered the poetic voice of a Europe endangered but determined to survive. His literary and social criticism was regarded as authoritative as his poetry. Eliot won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1948 and became both a symbol of sublime cultural values and a celebrity. In those years he seemed to be everywhere: his essays were widely read, he took part in many media performances, and plays like *The Cocktail Party* were performed hundreds of times in London and on Broadway. When he died in 1965, his reputation seemed unassailable. However, this was to change completely in the decades that followed. Formerly a cultural model and an icon of high art and outstanding moral values, Eliot now became an icon of elitism and conservatism and, even worse, of antidemocratic, misogynic and reactionary ideas.
This change in appreciation is closely related to a more general change in the Western ideas about culture. From the 1960s onwards, high art has been relativized as just one of many forms of culture, in no way superior to other forms like popular or folk culture. Furthermore, new 'genealogical' approaches towards culture, such as those of postcolonial and gender studies, have severely criticized high art for its discriminatory power politics. 'High art is dead', Cynthia Ozick famously wrote in 1989, 'it is now our unsparing obligation to disclaim the reactionary Eliot'. Although several scholars have come to Eliot's defence, the general image remains that of a conservative thinker with an elitist and antidemocratic idea of art and culture.
In this paper we argue that T.S. Eliot offers a highly interesting case illustrating how the dynamics of culture can change the perception of an icon. Both the former view of Eliot as an icon of the Good and Beautiful and the latter view of Eliot as an icon of reactionary elitism, are in fact simplifications and misrepresentations that must

be understood against the background of broader cultural developments. A more balanced and fair judgment is only possible by trying to see through the cultural paradigms that first sanctified and later desecrated Eliot.

Carla Zoethout (Open University)

The Fall of the Berlin Wall: From Communism to Liberalism to Illiberal Democracy?

1989 was the year of the fall of the Berlin Wall. After some forty years of devastating communist rule, a new era began, an era of freedom, of states under the Rule of Law and of better standards of living. One after the other , the countries in Central and Eastern Europe, adopted new constitutions according to the liberal-democratic model, with civil rights and liberties, democracy and constitutionalism as central themes.

However, almost thirty years later, a gradual change to more authoritarian models is taking place in the former Eastblock. Particularly in Poland and Hungary, the once applauded constitutional court is now packed with government supporters and those who oppose the incumbent regime are no longer certain of their positions. Hungarian premier Orban has explicitly declared not to be in favour of liberal democracy any longer. What is even more, he openly says to embrace the notion of an 'illiberal democracy', thereby expressing the fact that the regime is still supported by a majority of the population, but does not by definition favour liberal ideas. Does this mean that within a period of 30 years, we experienced an evolution from communism to liberalism to illiberal democracy? What is meant by this term? Is democracy without the liberal idea of the rule of law, of government under law, possible at all? Does the icon of the Berlin Wall and its positive feel, forever belong to the past?

Locations

PC Hoofthuis
(University of Amsterdam)
Spuistraat 134
1012 VB, Amsterdam
Room 1.04 & 1.05

Oudemanhuispoort
(University of Amsterdam)
Oude Manhuispoort 4-6
1012 CN, Amsterdam
Room C.0.17 & C.1.17

See the conference website for maps
www.ou.nl/web/the-icon-as-cultural-model/

Kapitein Zeppos (dinner)
Gebed zonder End 5
1012 HS, Amsterdam
www.zeppos.nl

De Brakke Grond (Friday's lunch)
Nes 43
1012 KD, Amsterdam
www.brakkegrond.nl

Further Reading (selection)

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Aknowledgements