



**OPEN
CALL**

17.-22.09.2024

**EXERCISING
MODERNITY
ACADEMY**

**EXERCISING
/EASTERN/
MODERNITY**

Pilecki-Institut Berlin
Pariser-Platz 4a, 10117 Berlin

OPEN CALL

EXERCISING MODERNITY ACADEMY

until 11:59 p.m.
on 29 July 2024

**submission
deadline**

17.09.2024-
22.09.2024

**event
date**

GEOGRAPHIES OF MODERNITY – COMMUNITIES, DISCOURSES AND RUPTURES

The Exercising Modernity Academy is an interdisciplinary program of artistic and intellectual exchange that aims to take a new look at Poland’s contribution to the legacy of modernity, including in an international context. The project aims to draw attention to the broader significance of the concept of modernity by tracing modernization practices in Europe and beyond, and by looking at the process of the emergence of modern European societies and states, especially in Central and Eastern Europe. It pays special attention to culture, specifically architecture, where different perspectives, ambitions, fears and hopes relevant to the formation of the 20th century world overlap.

The fifth edition of the **Exercising Modernity Academy**, entitled **Geographies of modernity – communities, discourses and ruptures // Geografie nowoczesności – wspólnoty, narracje i pęknięcia**, will be devoted to issues related to the shaping of societies under conditions of constantly changing national frontiers. Central and Eastern Europe experienced border shifts, forced migrations and significant transformations of the populations of the individual countries during the 20th century. Some were the result of wars and conflicts, others of social experiments based on ideological concepts aimed at creating a particular type of society. Where the population remained multi-ethnic at least in part, efforts were made to blur differences via the organization and controlling of social life. The effects of these actions and processes can be seen in the mental maps of the region that persist to this day, phantom borders and sentimental fantasies of lost “small homelands.” We revisit these issues in the reality of the ongoing war triggered by Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, which has forced many people to leave their homes and migrate to Western Europe either on a temporary or more permanent basis.

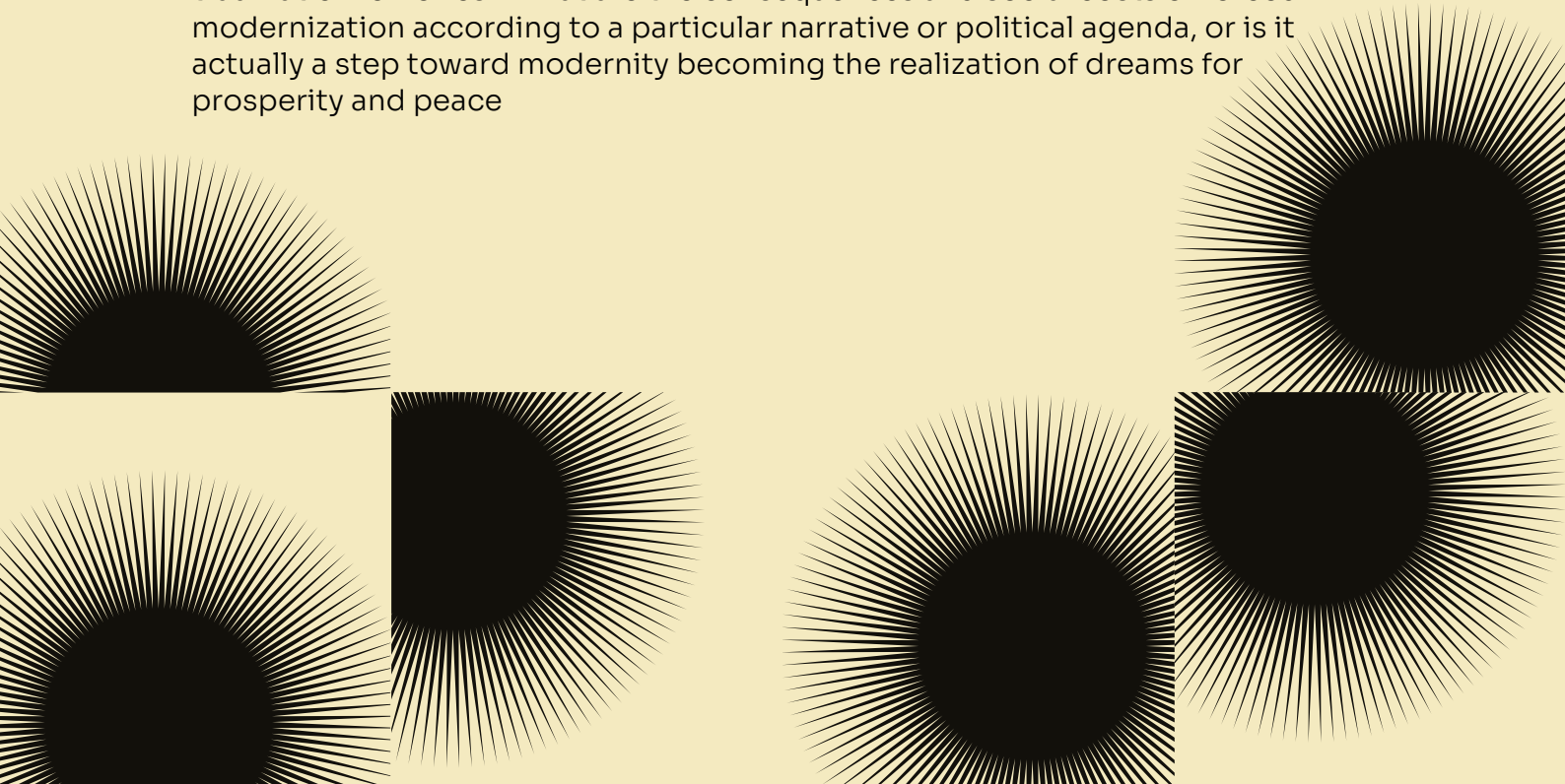
OPEN CALL

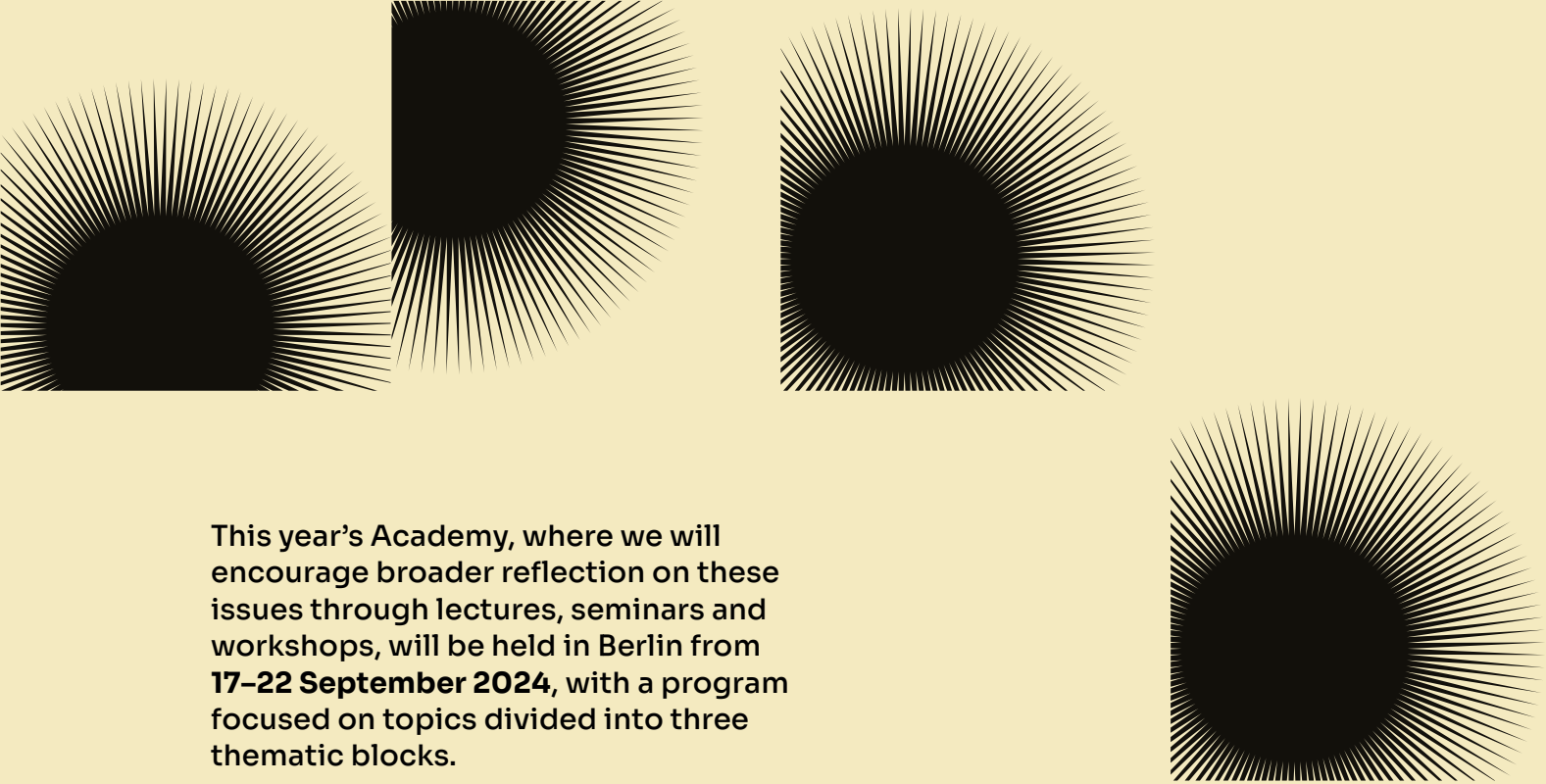
EXERCISING MODERNITY ACADEMY

During the 19th and 20th centuries, many Central and Eastern European states – such as Poland, Ukraine, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, as well as Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia – experienced modernization in the form of industrial development, urbanization, infrastructure expansion and social and political reform. The processes at the turn of the 20th century were often linked to the struggle for sovereignty and the strengthening of national identity, which was particularly important for countries that were striving for independence. Modernization and the associated rise in living standards often went hand in hand with increased nationalism and the affirmation of national culture and history, as well as attempts to produce national styles in architecture and art. The modern vision of the new society was inclusive and empowering for some, while exclusionary for others and their traditions and culture. At the end of the 20th century, modernization processes were in turn linked to the fall of the Iron Curtain and transitions to capitalist economies.

Contemporary modernization processes, such as European integration and globalization, also influence the formation of new understandings of community and new models of identification across the continent, including in Central and Eastern Europe. Our aim is to look at what preceded these processes and how 20th-century experiences can influence contemporary identity transformations.

During the next edition of the Exercising Modernity Academy, we also want to ask questions about the role culture and art played in these continuous processes of identity formation. To what extent was architecture, literature, painting, theater or film an instrument of change, and to what extent was it a symbolic signpost for aspirations? Can one see the scars in the space testifying to phantom boundaries? How is unwanted heritage sometimes incorporated and ingrained into the narratives of the communities it serves? What are the strategies for incorporating it without risking triggering conflicts and evoking traumatic memories? What are the consequences and social costs of forced modernization according to a particular narrative or political agenda, or is it actually a step toward modernity becoming the realization of dreams for prosperity and peace





This year's Academy, where we will encourage broader reflection on these issues through lectures, seminars and workshops, will be held in Berlin from **17-22 September 2024**, with a program focused on topics divided into three thematic blocks.

BLOCK I

ARCHITECTURE, ART AND DESIGN AS A TOOL FOR FOSTERING COLLECTIVE IDENTITY

Although an ancient invention, the idea of using culture and art for the purposes of a very specific narrative, usually of power, found many applications throughout the 20th century. Architecture is just one field of human activity that was used as a tool for the creation and manifestation of specific values, aspirations and ambitions. In the first decades of the 20th century, Central Europe was a melting pot of many nations and ethnic groups, from which a “new order” with its own horizon of dreams and inspirations sporadically emerged. The need to unite the national community and forge a coherent identity arose every time borders were shifted. Not only architecture, but also other fields of art (including literature, theater and film) were ideal tools for this. Sometimes it was the result of spontaneous efforts to find an answer to the question “who am I?” and other times a brutal narrative imposed by the authorities. One example is Socialist Realism, which imposed a heavily codified narrative on artists living in the Soviet bloc at the time. This block will focus on various attempts to use architecture and other art forms to build, merge or unify a collective identity, and the effects of these actions.

BLOCK II

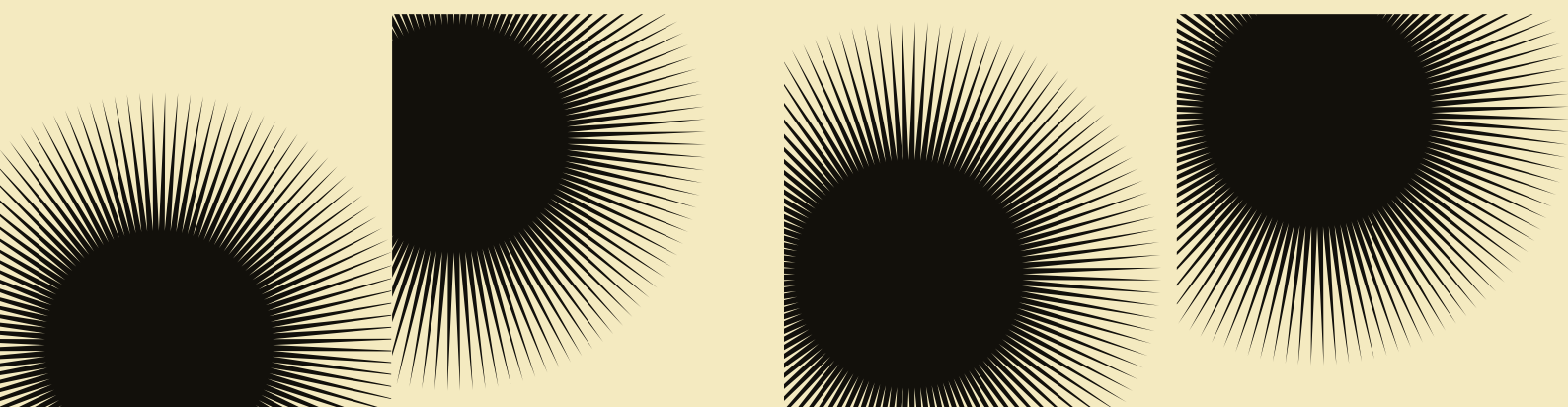
NARRATIVES ON ARCHITECTURE AND ART AS THE HERITAGE OF A /DEFINITE/ PAST AND THE RESULTING STRATEGIES TO MAINTAIN OR DESTROY IT

The shaping of narratives about the collective (including national) past is inevitably based on the selection of those parts of history that allow the construction of a particular type of story. Most often, it is a story that supports the construction of positive self-identification of the group for which it is produced. Both tangible heritage, including architecture, and intangible heritage are sometimes used in this process as a source of examples and a kind of “evidence” or, on the contrary, are subjected to neutralization (destruction, removal from view, obscuring) when they pose a challenge to this narrative or when they remind us of what has been silenced. Similarly, groups excluded from certain collective narratives (by migrations, including forced ones, changes in borders and national identities) spin stories about the heritage left behind elsewhere, often to the point of mythologizing it. In this thematic block, we will examine what happens to architecture and art under the pressure of such narratives and the treatments to which they are sometimes subjected.

BLOCK III

SCATTERED SOURCES OF MODERNITY

This thematic block aims to look at the less recognized and more scattered sources and migration paths of modernity (modernities) that developed on the side-lines of the main narrative in modern thinking about architecture, art and design as a tool for modernization. This sometimes arose by way of a reaction to overly dogmatic approaches to the mainstream, and sometimes of a spontaneous creation resulting from the search for one’s own identity. We will analyze the centers of architectural training in Central and Eastern Europe that contributed to the development of the style in the region, the relationships between them, as well as the spheres of influence (not only from the West, but also from the East) in which they were located. We intend to reflect on the sources of modernization in the so-called former Eastern Bloc countries both before and after the Second World War.





LOCATION AND DATE

The Exercising Modernity Academy 2024 will be held in Berlin from **17–22 September 2024**.

SELECTION OF CANDIDATES

A maximum of 16 candidates will be selected through an open call. Researchers in the humanities, curators or artists from Poland, Germany or Israel (or residing in these countries – citizenship is not required) can apply to participate in the **Exercising Modernity Academy**. Persons from Belarus or Ukraine are also welcome. Candidates are required to have at least a communicative knowledge of English and should be at least 18 years old.

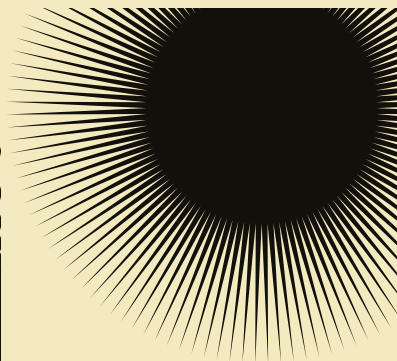
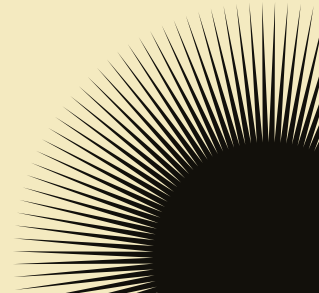
WHAT WE OFFER

- Free participation in the Exercising Modernity Academy 2024 with renowned and experienced researchers and creators.
- Partial reimbursement of travel expenses in the amount of:
 - **up to 120 EUR** for participants traveling from Poland and Germany;
 - **up to 300 EUR** for participants traveling from Israel;
 - **up to 200 EUR** for participants traveling from Ukraine or Belarus.
- Free accommodation in Berlin for those from outside Berlin.
- Partial meals (breakfast and lunch).
- Interesting accompanying program.
- Graduates of the Academy will be able to submit a research or artistic project created or developed during the Academy to a special scholarship program dedicated to issues of modernity in the 20th century and organized by the Pilecki Institute in Berlin. You can read about the previous edition of the scholarships in the Scholarships tab:
<http://exercisingmodernity.com/stypendia-2022-2023/>

APPLICATIONS

Candidates are invited to send their applications in English via email to:

apply@exercisingmodernity.com until **11:59 p.m.** on **29 July 2024**. Please include **“Academy 2024”** in the subject line of the email.



APPLICATIONS SHOULD INCLUDE

The following signed and scanned forms:

- a statement on the administration and protection of personal data – attachment no. 1;
- a statement of consent for the processing of personal data and likeness – attachment no. 2.
- an artistic or academic biography and/or portfolio.
- a conceptual outline of a six-month research/art project related to the themes explored by Exercising Modernity Academy 2024 (maximum of 3,000 characters with spaces).
- documents should include the applicant's full contact details and address of residence.

All the above documents should be sent in English.

We reserve the right to contact selected candidates for additional online interviews.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Only individual applications will be considered.
- Successful applicants commit to attend the Academy 2024 meetings in September in Berlin, to which end a contract will be made with the participants.
- Classes and workshops will be conducted in English.
- Information about the Exercising Modernity project and previous editions of the Academy can be found at www.exercisingmodernity.com
- All questions or concerns can be addressed to: **contact@exercisingmodernity.com**
- Recruitment will be resolved at the beginning of August 2024. The list of qualified applicants will be posted on the websites of the Pilecki Institute **www.instytutpileckiego.pl** and the project **www.exercisingmodernity.com** as well as on the Partners' websites.
- The organizers are not obliged to justify the decisions of the evaluation committee. An appeal procedure is not foreseen.
- In the case of qualification for participation in the project, the content of this document will constitute an attachment to the contract concluded between the candidate and the Pilecki Institute in Berlin and will constitute the assumptions of the regulations.

ORGANIZATION

Organizer:

