

EUROPE



Remco Torenbosch, *EU*, 2011-2013. Courtesy the artist and Wilfried Lentz Rotterdam.

With his project *EU*, artist Remco Torenbosch investigated the blue color of the European flag. The variety of shades Torenbosch encountered during his research seems to be symptomatic for the identity of the European Union and places its official slogan 'Unity in Diversity' in a whole new light. The EU uses this motto since 2004 in order to express a feeling of shared European identity and cultural affinity among the member states. Although the exchange between European countries on an economic, financial and social level has grown substantially since the 1960s, it is evident that this has not bridged the cultural gap. Europe is above all a cultural notion. In recent years, there seems to be a growing focus on cultural diversity instead of unity. From the financial crisis of 2008 to the imminent Brexit, the emphasis on national identity has grown throughout the continent. This has plunged Europe in an identity crisis from which many people fear it won't emerge. At the same time, this development has encouraged many to dedicate themselves to regain a feeling of European unity. Increasingly, attention is being paid to the role of the arts in bridging national diversity and create a sense of union, solidarity, and cooperation.

A glance into the history of art and architecture reveals that European artistic exchange has a long and rich past. Although the idea of 'schools' has formed the basis since Early Modern times for the emphasis on regional and, in later centuries, national (artistic) identity, a widespread cultural and artistic cross-fertilization has always been a part of European art history. Travelling people, and specifically artists, brought new stories, motifs, and methods into circulation. A notable example is the mass migration between the fourth and sixth centuries. But one could also think of the dissemination of the Gothic style and techniques by medieval master masons, or the journey to Rome which many artists undertook since the seventeenth century to learn from their illustrious predecessors of the Italian Renaissance. In addition, these circulations of ideas and people contributed significantly to Europe-wide movements such as the Baroque, the Enlightenment and Romanticism. In virtually all countries, regardless of differences in language and culture, the same issues were discussed during those periods. This has unmistakably left its mark on European art and culture.

This also applies to present-day Europe, in which there is likewise a kindred attention for certain matters and questions in all corners of the continent. Examples vary from the legacy of the 1968 revolution to the handling of the refugee crisis and a growing number of Islamic Europeans. And specifically in the art world, the question of the line between activism and art is tackled Europe-wide. Even the rise of populist and nationalist sentiments throughout the continent could in this perspective be seen as a symptom of a shared European culture.

Art does not only provide a meaningful insight into how European exchange and a shared European identity manifested themselves in the past, but might also enable a redefinition of that identity and contribute to possible solutions for Europe's current divided state of being.

Article welcomes proposals related to the theme outlined above. For example, essays that focus on:

- ★ European identity
- ★ European Union
- ★ Rising populism and nationalism in Europe
- ★ European migration issues
- ★ Geopolitical relations within Europe: East v. West, North v. South
- ★ Europe in international context
- ★ European revolutions
- ★ European networks of artists, curators, and/or collectors
- ★ The mobility of art and artists within Europe
- ★ European avant-gardes
- ★ Europe-wide movements in art and architecture

The deadline for submission of proposals is 5 April 2019. Published essays are usually between 1500 and 3000 words. The deadline for articles is 22 May 2019. We are also looking for an artist's contribution in text and/or image. Proposals and suggestions can be emailed to article@stichting-art.nl.

Article is a scientific journal about topical themes in the visual arts, architecture, and design. Article is published by students and alumni Art History at Utrecht University for a broad public of art buffs. The magazine is affiliated with Stichting Art and offers students and young alumni a platform for their research results in addition to essays from renowned colleagues. Article appears twice per academic year.