Symposium
"Visual rhetorics of humour: using and forming an iconography of stereotypes"
October, 10-11th 2024
(Viljandi – Tartu)

Underlying vernacular representations, national and ethnic stereotypes are in the spotlight of different scientific disciplines, such as ethnopsychology, ethnography, cultural anthropology, and literary criticism among others. In this symposium we propose to consider national and ethnic stereotypes as an object of study of folkloristics. Particularly, we will pay attention to how stereotypes are visualised as independent objects in ‘classical’, post- or Internet folklore. Under the conditions of the iconic turn, the visual image is an elementary unit for the reading and interpreting of the message, through which more complex narratives are constructed. It thus seems important, following Erwin Panofsky, to consider in the stereotype ‘the correspondence between form and symbolic meanings’. The iconological method proposed in art history by Aby Warburg and Erwin Panofsky allows us to overcome the dominance of iconography and to give the image a broad cultural context, by which the process of interpretation and reinterpretation of the stereotype is considered as an ongoing process between one’s and other cultures (‘a mirror in a mirror’). National and ethnic stereotypes are most evident in humorous visualisations. Humour overcomes moral and social limitations, and at the same time, in order to be funny, a humorous message must be extremely concrete and understandable for a wide range of viewers. Therefore, we propose the presenters to analyse the iconography (system of established forms) of stereotype embodiment in humorous works (cartoons, memes, etc.) using the most adequate research methodology.

Keynote speakers:
Dr. Juho Korhonen (University of Turku, Finland)
Dr. Liisi Laineste (Estonian Literary Museum, Estonia)

Organizing Committee: Guillem Castañer (University of Tallinn), Anastasiya Fiadotava (Estonian Literary Museum), Indrek Grigor (Tartu Art Museum), Eva Laantee Reintamm (Kondas Centre of Naïve and Outsider Art), Sergey Troitskiy (Estonian Literary Museum), Mari Vallikivi (Kondas Centre of Naïve and Outsider Art)

The symposium will be held at the Estonian Literary Museum (Tartu, Estonia). Travel and accommodation costs must be covered by the participants. More details about transport and accommodation will be announced. The preferred mode of participation is on site in person, but also online and/or hybrid formats are allowed. The working language of the conference is English, Estonian, Russian.

Please send your submission no later than August 10, 2024. Please send us the title and abstract of your presentation, a short bio-info, and your affiliation via e-mail: sergei.troitskii@folklore.ee
Please do not hesitate to contact us if further information is required.