

# Reaktion Books Advance Information

## IN THE SHADOW OF YALTA

*Art and the Avant-garde  
in Eastern Europe*

Piotr Piotrowski

september 2011 | art | new in paperback | £20

- a comprehensive study of art and politics in Eastern Europe between the end of World War II and the fall of Communism
- brings together a wide range of issues, including artistic problems, movements, attitudes and kinds of expression, and compares and describes them to create a new art map of the region
- features more than 220 images by artists mainly unfamiliar to an English-speaking audience

'Piotrowski's achievement is to disinter the histories of various forms of modernism, post-modernism and the neo-avant-garde that flourished in Eastern Europe, to disentangle the fruitful misunderstandings on which some of them were based and to explain the originality that lay behind many of the apparent inconsistencies . . . Piotrowski writes clearly and readably, even in translation, and his groundbreaking study is augmented with numerous illustrations.'

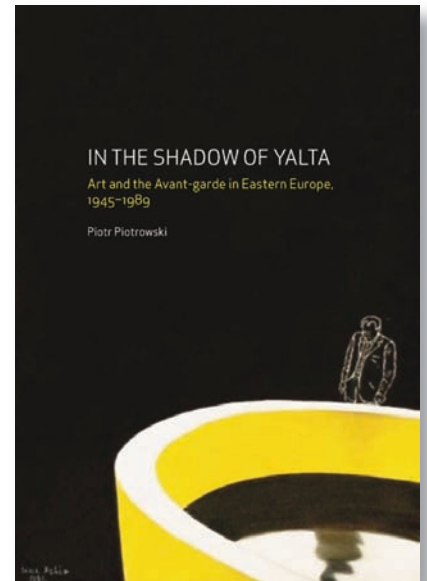
– *Burlington* magazine

*In the Shadow of Yalta* is a comprehensive study of the artistic culture of the region between the Iron Curtain and the USSR, taking in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Yugoslavia. Piotr Piotrowski chronicles the relationship between art production and politics in this zone between the end of World War II and the fall of Communism, focusing in particular on the avant-garde.

Beginning with an analysis of Surrealism in Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary, Piotrowski then examines the evolution of Modernism against the backdrop of the decline of Stalinism. He follows with an account of the neo-avant-garde experience: the body art and conceptual art made during the volatile political circumstances of the 1970s, the times of 'real Socialism'. The book concludes with an epilogue describing the end of the Communist system in East-Central Europe and the art that served witness to that end. Alongside the portrayal of the frequently challenging art that was made in response to such difficult circumstances, the common threads that emerge from the narrative are the erosion of ideology, the rise of consumerism and the emergence of political pragmatism.

Featuring more than 220 images by artists frequently unfamiliar to an English-speaking audience, *In the Shadow of Yalta* is a fascinating portrait of the art made in an area and during a time of crucial importance to the development of Europe as we know it today. The book will have much to say to art historians, art critics and students of art history interested in Central and Eastern European art, as well as general historians of the region.

Piotr Piotrowski is Professor ordinarius of Art History at Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland. He is the author of *Meanings of Modernism: Towards a History of Polish Art after 1945* (1999).



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