A Mediated Magic
The Indian Presence in European Modernism

AN INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ARRANGED BY
AXEL AND MARGARET AX:SON JOHNSON FOUNDATION
IN STOCKHOLM AND ENGELESBERG ON THE 28TH OF AUGUST 2017
Front cover: Mandala by Carl Gustav Jung.
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OUTLINE

A MEDIATED MAGIC –
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This seminar is an initiative to discuss the impact of India in the history of ideas, philosophy and the arts at the turn of the 20th century. It is a part of Indian Influences on the West, a larger project run by Axel and Margaret Ax:son Johnson Foundation during 2016-2018 and part of the Foundation’s ongoing effort to further the dissemination of scholarly knowledge within the Humanities and Social Sciences. In 2016, the Foundation partnered with Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi to hold a workshop on Indian Roots of European Modernism: The Visual and Performing Arts which is now being developed further.

The aim is to investigate the historical and philosophical influences of Indian thought upon art, music, dance, theatre and psychology in the West at the turn of the 20th century. There was already a strong base for the circulation of Indian ideas via Schopenhauer’s enchantment with Hinduism (in turn via Antequil-Duperron’s Latin translations of some Upanishads), followed by the Schlegel brothers’ translation in 1823. Yet, few know of Richard Wagner’s unfinished opera called the Buddha Project, Les Ballets Russes or Serge Diaghilev’s debt to Anna Pavlova’s Le Ballet Hindou. The impact of these influences also came to life in the costume designs of Léon Bakst, Konstantin Stanislavsky’s little known use of yogic practices, Carl Gustav Jung’s collaborations with leading Indologists, and the importance of Theosophy and its founders and leaders: Helena Blavatsky, Annie Besant and Rudolf Steiner, on the pioneers of abstraction: Wassily Kandinsky, Mondrian, Kazimir Malevich and Hilma af Klint.

This remains a less explored line of research on the historical influence of Indian thought on early abstraction in Euro-American art. A legacy of the Arts and Crafts Movement as well as a much desired “enchantment” sought by the high art practitioners this was a milieu that found easy acceptance of individuals such as Ananda K. Coomaraswamy and Rabindranath Tagore whose ideas had a vast impact on popular culture in the West.
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<td>VISIT to the Rolf de Maré Museum of Movement, with Jane Pritchard</td>
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<td>10:30</td>
<td>DEPARTURE with charted bus to Engelsberg</td>
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<td>ARRIVAL and CHECK-IN at Engelsberg Iron Works</td>
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<td>INTRODUCTION Modernity’s Muse by Naman P. Ahuja</td>
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<td>Ananda in Stockholm - Indian Art, Symbols and Texts in Hilma af Klint’s Work by Julia Voss</td>
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<td>“Enchanted” India - Reception, Inspiration, and European Art Music by Christopher Scheer</td>
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<td>Interconnectedness by Kalpana Sahni</td>
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<td>Exoticism, Mystery and Horror Can Go No Further. Léon Bakst, the Ballets Russes and Southeast Asian Culture by Jane Pritchard</td>
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Programme

Monday 28th of August 2017

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Modernity, Culture and Psychology

17:30  ‘The World in One Nest’ - Tagore and Coomaraswamy’s Utopian Community Visions of Social Action, Artistic Production and Transformative Politics by Kristine Michael

17:50  Theory of Symbol and History of Culture: Philosophical Aesthetics of Ananda K Coomaraswamy by Rakesh Pandey

18:10  Jung’s ‘Intensive Unconscious Relation to India’ in Liber Novus by Sonu Shamdasani

18:30  DISCUSSION moderated by Naman P. Ahuja

18:50  CLOSING REMARKS

19:00  DRINKS and DINNER
BIO: Naman P. Ahuja is Professor at JNU (Jawaharlal Nehru University), New Delhi and Co-Editor of Marg Publications, Mumbai. He has held curatorial charge of Indian sculpture at the British Museum apart from curating several exhibitions of both classical and modern Indian art in India and internationally. Previously, as Fellow at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, he authored a comprehensive catalogue of their ancient Indian collections and over successive Fellowships at the Getty Institute he has researched the art of Gandhara. He has been a Visiting Professor at the University of Zurich, the Kunsthistorisches Institute in Florence, the University of Alberta in Edmonton and at SOAS, his alma mater.

Amongst his books, The Making of the Modern Indian Artist-Craftsman: Devi Prasad (Routledge, 2011), provided a case-study of the impact of the Arts and Crafts Movement on India. Divine Presence: The Arts of India and the Himalayas (Five continents editions, Milan, 2003, translated into Catalan and Spanish) is a succinct introduction to the forms and styles of Indian sculpture. The Body in Indian Art and Thought (Ludion, Antwerp, 2013, also in French and Dutch) explores a variety of fundamental approaches to the aesthetics of anthropomorphic representation in India and what are the larger ideas that drive people to make images. And most recently, The Art and Interiors of Rashtrapati Bhavan: Lutyens and Beyond (Publications Division of India, 2016, coedited with Partha Mitter) explores how the design of the home of the President of India was created with a variety of early modern art influences: Victorian, Art Nouveau, Palladian classicism and the spirit of the Arts and Crafts Movement were modified to incorporate a vocabulary of Indian design ornament that would impress an Indian public.

SYNOPSIS: Our seminar investigates the impact of Indian history of ideas and philosophy on European Modernism at the turn of the 20th century. The list of artists, performers, writers and thinkers selected for our scrutiny in this conference is not a comprehensive examination of what was a widespread phenomenon. Even a cursory examination of these names however distils the common denominator of their quest for expressing an emotional register in their work, one that was not rational or founded in empiricism, but a need to be able to find tools that would allow them to communicate ideas (or a magic) that was felt subliminally, intuitively, secretly.

They were each seeking an anchor for their praxis, but stood embarrassingly against the grain of post enlightenment empiricism. At the heart of all of this project then, lies
a question about whether the particular strain of Indian culture that was being selected was the necessary panacea for this. A kind of magical other. A construction of an India was at work that permitted them to have a vocabulary and foundation for that magic that is necessary in all art.

While laying out the broader significance of the subject from an art historical perspective this paper brings focus on the general problems encountered when dealing with question of enchantment and spirituality in art. If Primitivism collapsed African identities into a whole without caring about what those objects meant to their own communities, we equally need to see if something similar was taking place within Orientalism specifically with regard to India. The role of understanding which stereotypes have been attached to India, and how they came to have such force will be examined. Equally, the introduction ends by asking why stereotypes have such tenacity, and what necessary function do they fulfill.
KURT ALMQVIST

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BIO: Kurt Almqvist is the President of Axel and Margaret Ax:son Johnson Foundation for public benefit since 1999. He is the founder of Axess Magasin (2002) and of Axess Television (2006) which is part of the Foundation's programme Forum Axess, which started in 1999, as well as editor of the Foundation's seminars and books.
Photograph from William Empson's *The Face of the Buddha.*
RUPERT ARROWSMITH

A FORGOTTEN ANCESTRY: WESTERN MODERNISM AND ITS DEBTS TO INDIA

BIO: Rupert Arrowsmith is an author, cultural historian, and occasional poet, who currently resides in Rangoon, Myanmar. He is an honorary fellow of University College London, and a doctoral alumnus of Christ Church College of the University of Oxford. He has published numerous books and articles on the nature of intercultural exchange between Asia and the West, and has recently completed a book on Myanmar history and spirituality, to be published next year.
Website: http://rupertarrowsmith.com/

SYNOPSIS: Rupert Arrowsmith, author of Modernism and the Museum (Oxford University Press, 2010) demonstrates the ways in which Victorian London systematically devalued the historical sculpture of India, even as the Subcontinent’s traditions of design were being appropriated wholesale by its globalized industrial machine. At display venues such as the British Museum, the statuary of Greece and Rome was held up as ‘true’ art, while historical Indian sculpture was labelled and exhibited as though it could have value only to anthropologists. Arrowsmith shows that these prejudices began to change mainly due to the influence of globetrotting Asian educators such as Ananda Coomaraswamy and the Japanese art historian Okakura Tenshin, but that such alterations in thinking occurred primarily among working artists rather than among the academic and curatorial communities.

By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, avant-garde artists such as Jacob Epstein and Eric Gill were experimenting wholesale with aesthetics and iconography derived directly and overtly from Indian sculpture, shifting the accepted foundations of Western art in a way that would permanently transform both its techniques and its subject matter, and which would entail profound consequences for the development of Western dance, literature and philosophy. Arrowsmith’s most recent book is an annotated first edition of the English poet and philosopher William Empson’s famous lost manuscript on Asian art The Face of the Buddha (Oxford University Press, 2016), and he will end his talk by discussing the ways in which exposure to Indian religion via visual art consolidated and reinforced Empson’s antipathies towards monotheistic religion, and reinforced the secular trajectory of post-war British philosophy.
BIO: Louise Belfrage (1975) has a BA in Comparative Religion from Stockholm University. She began working at Axel and Margaret Ax:son Johnson Foundation in 2000, today operating as its International Advisor and member of the Axess Magazine editorial board. She has organised many international academic seminars, such as The Engelsbergs Seminars, The Roots of Violence, Hilma af Klint – The Art of Seeing the Invisible and Museums of the World. Together with Kurt Almqvist, she is editor of Roots of Violence (2013), Hilma af Klint – The Art of Seeing the Invisible (2015), Museums of the World (2016) and Hilma af Klint: Seeing is Believing (Koenig Books, 2017). She is currently heading Indian Influences on the West, a seminar and lecture series looking at the historical and contemporary influences of India on the arts and ideas of the West which is part of the Ax:son Johnson Foundation’s on-going effort to further the dissemination of scholarly knowledge.
Photo of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry.
Helena Čapková

**Theosophy as a Vehicle for Indian Modernism – the Architecture of Golconde Dormitory**

BIO: Helena Čapková is an Assistant Professor teaching art history at the School of International Liberal Studies of the Waseda University in Tokyo. She received her PhD at the TrAIN (Transnational Art Identity and Nation) Research Centre of the University of the Arts in London. Her research focuses on the exchange within the artists' network that connected Japan and Central Europe in the interwar era. Other areas of interest include: Transnational Visual Art Studies, Theosophy, and visual arts, Japonisme and Modernism. Helena's book about Czech purist architect and progressive stage designer Bedřich Feuerstein and Japan was published in June 2014. Her research on Theosophy and Art was so far published for the Czech audience in the almanac of the congress of Czech art historians, which focused on art and science. The essay is entitled Theosophy as network, concerning new research methodologies in the context of interwar Japan. Many projects are currently in progress, such as a publication and an exhibition of Golconde dormitory in Puducherry, India and its theosophical background, exploring artistic collaborations between the architects and ashramites/commissioners.

SYNOPSIS: Modernist and a Czech-American Antonín Raymond (1888–1976) was the key architect of the Golconde dormitory, the newly commissioned house for yoga practice in Sri Aurobindo ashram, Puducherry. This unlikely choice of a leading designer lead to investigation and later understanding of the significance of Theosophy and its networks in India and internationally, which is the subject of this paper. Raymond and his wife and co-designer Noémi Pernessin Raymond (1889–1983), were active participants in architectural, spiritual, and Theosophical activities in Japan in the interwar period. The Raymonds’ complex net of connections, the membership in the Theosophical Society (TS), combined with their admiration for the Orient and its arts were instrumental in the process of commissioning the Golconde, which resulted in an extraordinary architectural achievement. The transnational approach taken in this study offers an unexpected insight into the concept and design process of this building, which is considered by architectural historians as the prime example of Indian modernism. Hence, instead of focusing on the architectural and construction elements and processes of this project, the core of this text deals with the networks of contacts and personal stories of some key agents—the Raymonds and Zina and Stefan Lubienski (1893–1976)—involved in the early stages of this creative encounter.

One more membership showed to be crucial for uncovering the transnational and
theosophical history of the Golconde. Both couples were members of the “Garaku-tashu” (1919–1940), which can be translated as ‘Circle for Studying Curios’ that is all the ordinary, everyday things that were becoming a part of modern Japanese culture. The eccentric artist and leader, Mita Rinzo (1876–1960), created in his Tokyo home a temple – Heibonji or ‘temple of the ordinary’ – devoted to worship of collecting and which he used as a meeting place for intellectuals with passion for things, religion, folklore, history, spirituality, and new ideas coming from abroad.

The group was composed of people from diverse occupations, interests and gender, and included people such as the American anthropologist Frederick Starr (1858–1933), the Indian studio potter Sardar Gurcharan Singh (1898–1995), journalist and Indian revolutionary Keshoram Sabarwal, Polish artist and diplomat Stefan Lubienski and his partner, dancer and medium Zina. It is significant that Singh, Sabarwal, Lubienski, Noémi Raymond and Saint Hilaire were members of the Theosophical society.

The concept of Theosophy itself was loose enough to incorporate the strands of various world religions, and appealed to a global audience sympathetic to the idea of a “universal brotherhood” at once at odds with, and yet inherently part of, the imperial hierarchical system. Scores of anthropological texts and translations of sacred texts published during the heyday of the TS movement emphasized the importance of unseen and supernatural powers in Eastern belief systems, and supplied Western countries with exciting new material (in their own languages) and nourished a never-sated appetite for the “Orient” and the “exotic”. The “evidence,” gathered by an assortment of academics, imperial civil servants, religious missionaries and cosmopolitan travelers, was then assimilated into Theosophical texts such as Blavatsky’s *Isis Unveiled* (1877), a text characteristic in its fusion of Western and Eastern spiritual traditions. As Gauri Viswanathan reminds us, the Theosophical Society was a “cosmopolitan movement that acquired worldwide adherents.” In today’s language: it was a society that quickly went global.

The Raymonds were approached with an unlikely commission of the Golconde because of their theosophical connections they built in Japan. Moreover, it was theosophy and generally, their commitment to new spirituality that created an avenue for mutual understanding between the ashram members and spiritually tuned designers.

‘The World in One Nest’ – Tagore and Coomaraswamy’s Utopian Community Visions of Social Action, Artistic Production and Transformative Politics

**BIO:** Kristine Michael is a ceramic artist, art educator and researcher, writer and curator of Indian ceramic art traditions based in New Delhi. Trained at the National Institute of Design under Dashrath Patel and under Alan Caiger-Smith at Aldermaston Pottery, she has exhibited her work nationally and internationally. Her works are in collections of Cartwright Hall, Bradford, and The British Council, UK - The Clay Studio, Philadelphia, USA - National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, World Ceramic Forum, Icheon Korea, Essl Museum, Austria, and private collections. She is the recipient of several awards among which are the Charles Wallace Trust Award, Nehru Fellowship for the V&A Museum, IFA Collaborative and Research Grant, etc. She has published and lectured on Indian traditional and contemporary ceramics and taught as visiting lecturer at Indus College of Architecture Karachi, IIT Design Centre Mumbai among others. She is a PhD scholar at School of Arts & Aesthetics Jawaharlal Nehru University studying colonial interventions in art education at the early Indian Art Schools of the late 19th century. Kristine is currently Curriculum Leader for the Visual and Performing Arts at The British School, New Delhi teaching the International Baccalaureate.

**SYNOPSIS:** Utopian collaborative and collective art practices from the latter part of the 19th century in India linked to nationalism as political-aesthetic projects both influenced and impacted transnational relationships between India and England. It charted new ways of putting the world together by seeking to restore meaning to labour, resuscitating craft production, education and cultural expression as an intrinsic part of nationalism. Two of the key contributors to this debate were Ananda Coomaraswamy and Rabindranath Tagore and this essay will explore their involvement and influence in artist communities in India and England in the early 20th century.

The essay traces the co-operative model of Tagore’s Sriniketan Rural Reconstruction Institute to bring self reliance to local people through a learning framework reflecting the practical adaptation to village life of the Santi Niketan ideals of environment, education through independence, perceptual learning through creative activities and the development of social responsibility. Whereas Santi Niketan had the fine arts as the focal point, crafts became central to the Sri Niketan and Shikshha Satra curriculum. This model was Tagore’s legacy to England’s Dartington Hall through the Elmhirsts who initiated the Dartington Experiment in 1925 as a part of
the Tagorean vision on integrating educational idealism and a progressive school in a rural economy.

The essay considers the anti-industrial critique of the Arts and Crafts movement in England and its debates on tradition and craft nostalgia through the works of Coomaraswamy who engaged directly with the impact of colonialism on crafts, unlike William Morris who, though articulating one of the most powerful critiques of Victorian industrialization, only tangentially engaged with colonialism. Just as it did for other protagonists of the Arts and Crafts movement, harking to a ‘medieval’ golden age as a state where there was harmony between individuals, spirituality and creativity, Coomaraswamy applied the most useful of the Morris’s insights to the thoughts of his mentor in nationalism- Tagore. The essay explores Coomarswamy’s role in the circle at Norman Chapel, Broad Campden and the Essex House Press with CR Ashbee, Eric Gill and others which became increasingly important in the years to follow in their writings dealing with the social function of art, education and society and the differing perceptions of the ‘traditional’. In his classic, *The Indian Craftsman* published in 1909, he states the only conditions under which craft will survive that include socialist ideals and the spiritual conception of the purpose of art inherently expressed in the craftsmen of India.

In conclusion, the essay considers what questions could be reframed in the context of today’s alienation between consumer and maker in the post-industrial digital age. Could this help us to re-configure the idea of the human hand and reclaim the act of making from nostalgia and traditionalism by recasting it as a force of conceptual, political and social possibilities in the 21st century?
SYMBOLS AND THE HISTORY OF CULTURE: PHILOSOPHICAL AESTHETICS OF ANANDA K. COOMARASWAMY

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BIO: Rakesh Pandey is a fellow at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi. His research interest lies in the area of intellectual and cultural history of modern India, with particular focus on knowledge formations, philosophy of culture and historical theory. He is currently working on a monograph dealing with the aspects of colonial archaisms and the making of cultural knowledge. He is further interested in exploring the modern interpretations of precolonial textual traditions in India and the philosophical aesthetics of Ananda K. Coomaraswamy. He obtained his doctoral degree in intellectual history from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. He has previously taught modern history at the University of Hyderabad.

SYNOPSIS: Human culture has been variously interpreted as grounded in the social and material processes across time, but it has also been seen as network of meanings, which is symbolically conveyed. Cultural forms and objects seem to invoke their symbolic meanings by transcending the boundaries of historical time.

The theory of symbol, which has been central to the rise of modern philosophy of culture, thus, stands in curious antagonism to historical theory. The career of the theory of symbol has witnessed a dual role as it seeks some specific historical expression and a universal human meaning at the same time. In this presentation, I intend to discuss the way this enigma between the theory of symbol and history of culture becomes evident in the philosophical aesthetics of Ananda K. Coomaraswamy (1877-1947), as he straddles through the two scholarly trajectories of modern Indology and cultural history. While his large corpus has been the mainstay of Indian art history, his aesthetic theory has also evolved as the critique of modern civilization. I try to discuss this with particular meanings Vedic, Buddhist and Platonic ideas acquired in the late writings of Coomaraswamy, as he shifts his attention from Indian art forms and artisanal objects to a metaphysically oriented textual hermeneutics. While Coomaraswamy shapes his philosophical aesthetics in the light of tradition and perennial philosophy, his symbolic interpretations of traditional metaphysical and aesthetic vocabulary address several issues, which have been at the heart of European modernism. In this process, he emerges both as an inspiration and as someone who develops an antinomian stance towards the intellectual trends and institutions of modernism.
Costume Design by Léon Bakst (1913) for Anna Pavlova’s Ballet Hindou.
BIO: Jane Pritchard is curator of dance for the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (V&A). She curated Diaghilev and the Golden Age of the Ballets Russes, 1909–1929 for the V&A which was adapted for Canada, Spain and the USA and edited the accompanying book. Previously she was archivist for Rambert Dance Company and English National Ballet, and created the Contemporary Dance Trust Archive.

Other exhibitions include Les Ballets 1933 (which toured Britain and the USA), Rambert Dance Company at 75, A Flash of Light: The Dance Photography of Chris Nash and Hand in Glove, a performed costume exhibition. She curated seasons of dance films for the BFI Southbank, London; the British Council for Japan, the Philippines, and Korea; and the Nureyev Foundation. She lectures widely on dance and has made BBC radio programs on the Ballets Russes and the 19th century composer for dance Georges Jacobi. She has contributed to numerous publications including the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, The Annual Register, Dance Chronicle, Dance Research and The Dancing Times. She was a recipient of a Churchill Travel Fellowship and the Anthony Denning Research Award. Her most recent book is Anna Pavlova Twentieth-Century Ballerina. She was awarded an MBE for services to the arts in the 2014 New Year's Honours.

SYNOPSIS: Through his work for Serge Diaghilev's Ballets Russes and many other outlets in the West, Léon Bakst brought jewel-like symphonies of colour to theatre design, fashion and applied arts at the start of the twentieth century. Bakst excited audiences with his exotic designs and India and Southeast Asia provided inspiration for what were popularly referred to as 'Hindu ballets'. Bakst's own source of inspiration came through the visit of Siamese dancers to St. Petersburg which he and choreographer Mikhail Fokine saw, and written as well as pictorial accounts of Russian and French visitors to the area. Bakst never visited India himself.

This illustrated presentation looks at several of the early ballets Bakst designed, including L'Oiseau de feu (1909), Le Dieu bleu (1912) and Oriental Fantasy (1913) considering where some of Bakst's ideas came from and the impact they made on audiences. It will also place Bakst's work in the context of other representations of Southeast Asia on the fin-de-siècle ballet stage.
Russian Theatre Director Alexandre Tairov.
**Kalpana Sahni**

**Interconnectedness**

*BIO:* A well-known academic, Kalpana Sahni has been recognized as a scholar of unusual diversity who has written extensively on Russian literature and culture, on Central Asia and on multiculturalism.

Having spent her early schooling years in Moscow, she returned there for her doctorate on L. Tolstoy and R. Tagore, before joining the Centre of Russian Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi (from 1972 to 2003). Her continuing interest in multiculturalism has led her to researching the influences of Indian and Asian thoughts on early Russian and European Modernism. Some of her published books include:


**Synopsis:** This paper discusses the cultural pollination of Eastern perceptions on Modernism. It focuses on certain aspects of the work and philosophy of the Russian theatre Director, Alexander Tairov, and the poets, composers and painters associated with his theatre. It also explores the Indian influences, particularly Yoga, on Konstantin Stanislavsky, and his praxis.

The paper goes onto explain how The East had attracted European intellectuals since the early 19th century. It was a long era in Europe of continuous wars and destruction and also a time when the blueprint of a utopian, just society began to fade. Conventional values of the Enlightenment began to be questioned amongst some leading intellectuals. Much of early Modernism in literature, art and music was also linked to these counter-enlightenment ideas. They were the forerunners to Modernism.

The paper suggests a new reading of Eastern influences that have conventionally been dismissed as pseudo-spiritualism and mysticism.
From the book *Thought Forms* by Annie Besant and C W Leadbeater (1901) depicting the perception of the classical music of Wagner.
Christopher Scheer

“Enchanted” India: Reception, Inspiration, and European Art Music

BIO: Christopher Scheer is the Associate Professor of musicology at Utah State University in Logan, UT. In 2009 he was a Leverhulme International Visiting Fellow at Liverpool Hope University where he spearheaded the organization of a colloquium on Theosophy and the Arts, out of which developed the Leverhulme sponsored network (of which he is a member), “Enchanted Modernities: Theosophy and the Arts, 1875-1960,” in which he has played an integral role as organizer, artistic director, and curator. A catalogue/edited book connected to the network sponsored exhibition “Enchanted Modernities: Mysticism, Landscape, and the American West,” will be published by Fulgur in the coming year. Scheer’s research is focused on late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century British musical culture. He recently edited a collection of essays, with Dr. Eric Saylor, on The Sea and the British Imagination that was published by Boydell, and is currently working on a monograph about the operas of Gustav Holst for the Ashgate Interdisciplinary Opera Series. Scheer is also a visiting curator at the Nora Eccles Harrison Museum of Art overseeing their Museum + Music series, and is a board member of the North American British Music Studies Association.

SYNOPSIS: As musicologist Ralph Locke argues, the later 19th and early 20th century represents an important transition period for European music where traditional clichés of representing the other in music began to weaken. With the increased availability of knowledge about non-western cultures, mediated through the various colonial projects undertaken by European nations, more nuanced and individualistic musical depictions of indigenous cultures began to appear.

With the rise of the “new musicology” in the 1980s, and as postcolonial discourse began to permeate the field of musicology over the last twenty years, scholars have also looked beyond compositional practice to the influence of Indian ideas and philosophy on European musical culture more generally. One important aspect of this is the role of esoteric organizations like the Theosophical Society, who served as conduits for knowledge about India, Hinduism and Buddhism in particular. Such organizations arose, in part, because of a growing European and American middle-class interest in alternatives to Judeo-Christian religion and Enlightenment philosophy. As expressed in the texts of one of Theosophy’s founders, Helena Blavatsky, Indian religion and philosophy represented a “purer” expression (than western Christianity) of a primal knowledge that unified religion and science. Theosophical
leaders like Blavatsky drew an important distinction between the desirable knowledge of the ancient past, and the reality of contemporary India that had corrupted this knowledge and needed to be “rehabilitated.”

This strongly colonialist interpretation of Indian thought, where ancient “truths” receive “authentic” interpretation from western interlocutors, to then be turned to “reeducating” indigenous peoples, was not unlike the process that Nicholas Dirks describes in the British colonial adaptation of caste for administrative purposes. The inherent imperial mindset as regards Theosophy’s approach to India has important implications to how Buddhist and Hindu philosophy was appropriated in European, and especially British, musical culture.

To illustrate this, we will consider three brief interlocking examples of the intersection of Indian thought with European music related to the Theosophical Society. The first considers the use of Buddhist and Hindu terminology by Theosophists to explain the esoteric meaning of music. The second considers how one composer, Gustav Holst, treated the concept of Maya in his opera Savitri, and opens up consideration of the final example, the role of Indian thought in the historiography of European music, specifically Richard Wagner.

These examples illustrate how European cultures of enchantment functioned as important interpreters of Indian civilization for Europeans from the 1880s and 1920s. Though India provided powerful inspiration for composers into the 1920s, as postwar Modernism was increasingly characterized by such terms as disenchantment and formalism, Indian philosophy and religion struggled to overcome its associations with enchantment and was instead relegated to the “new age,” becoming one of the others against which Modernism sought to define itself.
BIO: Professor Sonu Shamdasani is the Vice-Dean (International) of the Faculty of Arts & Humanities, Co-Director of the Health Humanities Centre at UCL and General Editor of the Philemon Foundation. He works on the history of psychology and psychiatry, from the nineteenth century onwards, and is the author and editor of numerous works.

SYNOPSIS: The title cites an entry in Jung’s dream diary for 1917. Jung had commenced a study of Hindu and Buddhist scriptures in 1910, the results of which featured in his 1912 *Transformations and Symbols of the Libido*. Utilising the comparative method, he subjected them to psychoanalytic interpretation, viewing them as symbols of the libido, primordial images residing in the phylogenetic layers of the unconscious. However, his engagement with these texts took a different turn in his self-experimentation. This talk traces his involvement with these conceptions during this period, studying how figures from them entered his fantasies and also shaped his understanding of them, paving the way for his later cross-cultural comparative psychology of the individuation process, and collaborations with noted Indologists, such as Wilhelm Hauer, Heinrich Zimmer and Mircea Eliade.
Hilma af Klint, *Buddha’s Standpoint in Earthly Life*, Series II, No. 3a. Oil on canvas, 37 x 28 cm, (1920).
**BIO:** Julia Voss, born in 1974, studied German literature, philosophy and art history in Freiburg i. Brsg., London and Berlin. She did her Ph.D. in art history on "Darwin's Pictures. View of Evolutionary Theory – 1837 to 1874“ (Yale University Press, 2010). She was the deputy head of the cultural section of the German newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and the head of the arts department for ten years. She is currently fellow at the Lichtenberg-Kolleg - The Göttingen Institute of Advanced Studies with a project on Hilma af Klint. She is honorary professor for art history at Leuphana University in Lüneburg.

**SYNOPSIS:** In 1917 the German art historian Gustav Friedrich Hartlaub wrote with respect to the Expressionists of a “new Nazarenertum”. Hartlaub was an intimate connoisseur of the avant-garde movements. In 1923 he became director of the influential Mannheimer Kunsthal. He proved his sharp eye for new art movements and his talent for coining terms when he introduced “Neue Sachlichkeit” into art history through one of his exhibitions.

With “New Nazarenertum” Hartlaub stressed an element that he believed was crucial for artists as diverse as Edvard Munch, Erich Heckel, Wassily Kandinsky or Franz Marc: mysticism and spirituality. Yet, although he rightfully pointed to the artist’s interests in occult Christian traditions he seemed to have underestimated the importance of another source: non-European arts and texts. In the case of the Munich based group “Blaue Reiter” Japanese and Indonesian artworks had been frequently cited by the artists as role models. In Stockholm Hilma af Klint refered to texts, images and symbols from Indian traditions.

As much as the art of the Renaissance cannot be thought of without the rediscovery of a Ancient Greek texts and artworks the innovations of the avantgarde owed themselves to the reception of non-European cultures. More importantly, this time reception was no one-way street. Whereas Ancient Greece had ceased to exist at the time of the Renaissance, Indian art and culture was still flowering. Texts and artworks travelled back and fro between Europe and India. They had already trav-velled on these routes for a long time. Famously, Rembrandt is known for having owned a collection of Indian miniature paintings.

In my talk I will contextualize Hilma af Klint’s work within the tradition of the mutual exchange between Europe and India.
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