

Call for papers for the ICLA 2016 (July 21 – 27) group section 17257:

Texts with No Words: Communication of Speechlessness

The aim of the panel is to discuss and focus on an unavoidable and at the same time poetically most productive phenomenon in the context of language: that of speechlessness in the broadest sense. Speechlessness has to be considered as a paradigmatic topic of modern literature which serves to discuss radical changes in media, society, and art. Rhetoricians and authors explicitly rely on a lack of words as a medium of expression for aesthetic ideas (linguistic innovation, intermedial relations of literature with music, painting, film, dance, etc.), for certain social conditions (economic marginalization, deprivation of legal, human or individual rights, loss of individual or cultural identity), and for psychological and physical reasons, etc. The panel aims to consider the intertwining of speechlessness as a phenomenon of texts and its meaning in the creative and/or reading process.

We are therefore interested in the question of how speechlessness appears and is used in both literary genres (fiction/prose, poetry, drama) and theoretical texts from 1900 to the present. This period is particularly interesting for a number of reasons: Firstly, the turn of the century brings with it a number of technical and scientific inventions. Secondly, social, media, and aesthetic innovation change the literary system and perception of art. Thirdly, the 20th century is historically marked by its many wars and genocides (WW 1+2, the Holocaust, the Spanish Civil War, Balkan Wars, etc.). All these occurrences have a deep impact on artistic creation and are reflected still today.

Speechlessness can refigure on a number of levels. Topics of particular interest are therefore:

- Explicit expressions on the level of story and discourse as well as on the level of medium/medial materiality
- Implicit representation on a phonetic, graphic, and semantic level (metaphors, symbols, blank spaces (*Leerstellen*), silence etc.)
- Speechlessness in a creative, textual, and receptive perspective (as preverbal phase preceding and accompanying the process of writing and imagination; as triggering contents; as causing certain emotions such as fear, astonishment, shock, empathy, etc. in the reading process).

Submission details:

We invite you to send a short abstract (of ca. 500 words) and a short academic resume (biobibliography) for a 30-minute presentation to: <http://icla2016.univie.ac.at/abstract-submission/> by **August 31st** (under: Topic A "The arts as universal code", group section 17257 "Texts with No Words: Communication of Speechlessness"). Notification of acceptance by October 3rd.

For further information on the ICLA 2016 please consult <http://icla2016.univie.ac.at/faq/>

For further information on the group section see: <http://allgemeine-und-vergleichende-literaturwissenschaft.uni-graz.at/> or contact one of the organizers: Prof. Susanne Knaller: susanne.knaller@uni-graz.at; Dr. Doris Pichler: doris.pichler@uni-graz.at; Dr. Rita Rieger: rita.rieger@uni-graz.at

ICLA 2016: *The Many Languages of Comparative Literature*

International Comparative Literature Association

Topic A: "The arts as universal code"

XXIst Congress, July 21 – July 27, 2016

University of Vienna, Austria