

The 10th Annual Lotman Conference at Tallinn University

“YOU CAN STILL SURPRISE ME” LOTMAN’S LATER OEUVRE: RESULTS AND RESEARCH PROBLEMS

**The organisers are inviting submissions for the 10th Lotman conference
at Tallinn University, 8-10 June 2018**

In 2018, the tenth anniversary annual Lotman conference will be held at the University of Tallinn. The title of the conference includes Juri Lotman’s favourite quotation from Leo Tolstoy’s unfinished novel *The Decembrists* as it vividly reflects the impression left by Lotman’s works from the late 1980s and early 1990s.

The topics and questions raised in them amaze with diversity: the concept of the semiosphere, the theory of the explosion, the study of the processes of unpredictability in historical and cultural processes. As for Lotman’s last book, *The Unpredictable Workings of Culture*, his colleague and frequent coauthor Boris Uspensky pointed out as its most poignant feature “[its] affirmation of the unity of our knowledge: the humanities and natural sciences are viewed . . . from the same angle, and this is a deliberately adopted position.”

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Lotman continued to study the culture of everyday life (monograph *High Society Dinners* (with Elena Pogosyan), series of television lectures “Conversations on Russian Culture”, later published as a book). He wrote a large number of texts for the general reader, and lectured in front of huge television audiences. What is more, in Lotman’s last texts there appear strong autobiographical motifs. The author’s tone changes: the thoroughgoing political change of the time makes him think about the place and role of the humanities in the topical historical processes.

Our conference is conceived as one among a variety of attempts to engage with Lotman’s late oeuvre. There is a plan to publish a collection of articles based on the materials of the conference.

The topics discussed at the conference include, but are not limited to the following:

- *literature and general culture in Lotman’s work from the late 1980s and early 1990s
- *“Clio at the Crossroads”: history and semiotics
- *“from the kitchen to the living room”: problems of the study of everyday culture
- *semiosphere, dialogue, explosion: problems of the dynamics of culture
- *biographical and autobiographical motifs as a philological problem
- *questions in film poetics
- *Lotman’s late works and postmodernism
- *the epistolary heritage of a scholar
- *biographical contexts of the late oeuvre of Lotman

The conference welcomes submissions in English and in Russian, the two working languages of the conference. Speakers shall be allocated 30 minutes in total: 20 minutes to deliver the presentation and 10 minutes for discussion.

The submissions should be sent via e-mail no later than **1 February 2018** and include:

- The title and a short abstract of the proposed presentation (up to 2000 characters with spaces)
- A short CV (name, surname, institutional affiliation, scholarly degree, description of scholarly interests — up to 1000 characters with spaces).

The organising committee will choose the presenters based on scholarly merit and thematic relevance for the conference. The results will be announced via email no later than **1 March 2018**.

The submissions in English should be sent to Piret Peiker: piretpeiker@hotmail.com

The submissions in Russian should be sent to Tatjana Kuzovkina: tatjana.kuzovkina@gmail.com

Useful information:

The conference will take place in the Mare building of Tallinn University, 5 Uus-Sadama Street, 10120, Tallinn, Estonia.

There is no conference fee. All conference events are free of charge for the presenters. The conference cannot offer any grants for travel or accommodation. However, please do not hesitate to turn to us, if you need advice making your arrangements. If you need our help with obtaining the Estonian visa, please let us know.

Organising committee: Rein Raud (chair), Tatjana Kuzovkina, Mihhail Lotman, Vadim Parsamov, Piret Peiker, Elena Pogosyan.