The 15th annual Modernist Studies Association (MSA) conference took place at the University of Sussex between 28th August and 1st September 2013. The conference attracted over 600 delegates from around the world, and we believe that MSA15 was the largest event dedicated to modernism held in the UK to date.

Tributes have poured in from cities including Amiens, Baltimore, Berlin, Cardiff, Columbus, Glasgow, Halifax, Phoenix, Poznan, and Tripoli—to name just a few. Between January and August alone, the conference website received 13,000 unique hits, and the organisers fielded over 6,000 e-mails.

While the majority of delegates were waged academics, roughly one-third of attendees were postgraduate students, and many undergraduates made up a team of 30 volunteers.

The conference included 100 panels, 24 seminars, and 14 roundtables. There were also 6 pre-conference workshops on matters of publishing, public outreach, the digital humanities, and copyrighting. Most of the extensive range of special events was fully booked; particularly popular were the visits to local sites of modernist interest. Two different poetry readings and a screening at the oldest continuously operating purpose built cinema in Britain were also well received by delegates.

Over 400 delegates attended each of the three plenary events, which featured Griselda Pollock, Gillian Beer, Rachel Bowlby, Ben Highmore, Esther Leslie, Gabriel Josipovici, Michael Sheringham, and Terry Eagleton. 11 publishers, many of whose authors were present as delegates, held exhibitions and meetings at the conference.
Feedback received from delegates after the conference was overwhelmingly positive. ‘Overall satisfaction’ was rated at 4/5; ‘Quality of panel selection’ and ‘A/V Services’—the latter notoriously temperamental at conferences of this scale—were both marked particularly highly.

“A marvellous affair from start to finish” (Baltimore, Maryland)

“Enormous and yet personal” (Cambridge, U.K.)

“A great MSA, memorable on all accounts” (Halifax, Nova Scotia)

“A superb conference!” (York, U.K.)

“Brilliant, absorbing, flawless” (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)

“A great conference” (Amiens, France)

“Enjoyable and substantive” (Tulsa, Oklahoma)

“I thoroughly enjoyed it” (Poznan, Poland)