Contents

Introduction	2
Management and Research Groups	9
Researchers and Publications	14
PhD Program	17
Social Impact	19
Financial Overview	21
Events	23
New Research Groups	38
ASCA Awards	40
Defended Dissertations	44
Grants	52
New PhD Candidates	57
New Staff Members	70
Publications	83
Members	111

Introduction

Based at the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Amsterdam since 1994, the Amsterdam School of Cultural Analysis (ASCA) is an internationally renowned research institute and doctoral school dedicated to the critical and innovative study of culture from a broadly interdisciplinary perspective grounded in the humanities but increasingly extending to non-humanities fields. ASCA is not bound to one particular discipline, one particular theoretical approach or one type of cultural object. Home to more than 100 scholars and over 150 PhD candidates, it brings together cutting-edge scholarship in philosophy, musicology, literary studies, cultural studies, European studies, art history, theater and performance studies, and (new) media studies.

What unites the research conducted within ASCA are the five principles of Cultural Analysis, originally formulated by Mieke Bal:

• First, within ASCA disciplinary knowledge is highly valued and respected but is mobilized in conversation with other disciplines to allow new insights to emerge at the intersection of fields of knowledge. This **commitment to interdisciplinarity** is at the core of its mission.

• The second principle of Cultural Analysis that ASCA adheres to is that its research is **theoretically grounded**. Theory is not considered as a master discourse, but as opening up important critical perspectives in its dynamic engagement with particular cultural objects (which can be cultural products but also social phenomena). This engagement also tests and transforms the theories brought to bear on the objects.

• The third principle important for all ASCA research is that it is **socially relevant**: it aims to diagnose, dissect and answer urgent questions about the world we live in by working with theories and objects that themselves are not seen as coming out of the blue or as having fixed uses and meanings, but as emerging from and functioning within historically and socially specific contexts.

• The fourth principle that binds cultural analysis research is the centrality of **detailed analyses of cultural objects** (through close reading or other methods, including digital and ethnographic ones).

• The fifth and final principle of cultural analysis is that it offers an engagement with culture and society from a **contemporary perspective**. The past is

important, but always from the perspective of our present engagement with it. ASCA researchers ask: why and how does a cultural product, social phenomenon or theory still matter to us now?

With respect to the content of its research programs, ASCA has always adopted and promoted an open, bottom-up approach to foster a wide variety of curiosity-driven innovative and topical research. ASCA researchers are invited to create their own research groups to share and advance research findings; to organize academic events; to apply for grants; and to produce articles, books and dissertations. This open structure inspires innovative research; supports individual excellence; allows for cross-disciplinary collaboration; promotes work in emerging research areas; and has resulted in a dynamic, non-hierarchical research environment responsive to changes in both the academic context and society at large.

ASCA currently has 83 research groups, divided into three categories: funded research projects (21); reading groups & seminars (25); and network groups (37). Each group belongs to one or more of the five constellations that identify the broader thematic research areas ASCA focuses on. These five constellations, designated with the acronym MAGIC, are:

- **M**ediality
- **A**rts & Aesthetics
- **G**lobalization & Migration
- **I**dentities
- **C**ultural & Social Critique

The themes identified by the constellations are at the forefront of academic and public debates, allowing ASCA researchers to collaborate not only with each other, but also with external academic and non-academic partners. ASCA's vibrant PhD community is at the center of our activities and operates in a spirit of openness, collaboration and experimentation.

In 2023, 27 new PhD candidates and 21 new staff members joined ASCA; ASCA offered 25 ongoing seminars and/or reading groups, and (co-)organized 130 conferences, lectures, workshops and other meetings; ASCA members acquired over 7 million Euros of external funding for their research; and 14 ASCA PhD candidates earned their doctor's title.

ASCA in 2023

This year finally marked the end of Covid-related lockdowns and travel restrictions, although the ramifications of the pandemic and the continuing spread of the Covid virus continued to be felt by those suffering from long Covid and those with compromised immune systems. In addition, many ASCA researchers – especially PhD candidates and postdocs, and those with extensive care responsibilities during the pandemic – faced delays to their projects and publications. The Faculty of Humanities granted extensions for the projects most seriously affected, and so did some research funders, but the aftereffects of the pandemic will be felt for some time to come.

ASCA researchers also continued to be affected by the ongoing war in Ukraine, and another series of shocks came in October with Hamas' attacks and Israel's subsequent invasion of Gaza. To create space for voices that were less prominent in the public debate, ASCA facilitated a series of Teach-Ins. These well-attended and widely appreciated Teach-Ins involved ASCA members and others with a longstanding track record of engaging with the region, capable of contextualizing and historicizing the events in a way that moved beyond the simplistic dichotomies (such as the equation of any criticism of Israel as a state with antisemitism) adopted by many mainstream media and the Dutch and other European and North American governments. Making the Teach-Ins happen in a highly charged atmosphere and ensuring their inclusivity was not without its challenges, but we believe that they have provided an important forum allowing for dialogue between different views informed by personal experience, activist and artistic knowledges and research from and across various disciplines.

The 2023 ASCA Workshop on Forms of (More Than) Human Relationality was organized by Nadica Denić, Jasmijn Leeuwenkamp and Eszter Szakács, and featured keynotes by Kathrin Thiele (Utrecht University), Patricia MacCormack (ARU Cambridge) and Pooja Rangan (Amherst College). We also organized an ASCA Summit on Doing Research in a Polarized World with Slava Greenberg, Margriet Schavemaker, Sinine Nakhle, Daisy Tam, Yolande Jansen, Mikki Stelder, Jaap Kooijman, Sruti Bala and Marc Tuters.

As a research school, we cannot take away the grave concerns our members have about the state of the world, but we can continue to offer support and encourage our members to keep thinking critically, to remain open to other perspectives and to take care of others and themselves.

Highlights of 2023, providing us with inspiration, hope and a sense of community, included:

Eastsplainers Series I 16 January, 15 February, 23 March, 10 May, 28 June, 9 October, 31 October, 28 November 2023 I Vox-Pop and other locations
As the Russian war in Ukraine and imperialist Kremlin rhetoric continues to disturb world media, Eastsplainers offered a counterweight to 'westsplaining' – the habit of looking at developments in Central and Eastern Europe through Western lenses. In this series of public programs, we listened to academics, intellectuals and artists, including some who fled from the Russian war in Ukraine or who fled or migrated from Łódź, Minsk and Moscow, among other places, to the Netherlands. The Eastsplainers series' initial event took place in 2022, followed by 8 events in 2023 on journalism, music, literature, visual arts, media & memory, indigenous communities, performing arts and film & documentation. The Eastsplainers series was an initiative of ASCA member Ellen Rutten and Dorine Schellens (Leiden University), co-organized by Mari Janssen, Suzanne Rademaker and Zephyra van Rood. It received support from the University of New Europe, Middle- and Eastern-European studies publisher Pegasus, ASCA and the diversity and inclusion team of the Faculty of Humanities at UvA.

Critical Misanthropy Conference I 25-27 January 2023 I Oudemanhuispoort and Vox-Pop
Keynote speakers: Chloe Taylor (University of Alberta), Robert McKay (Sheffield), and Andrew Gibson (Royal Holloway)
Organizers: Eva Meijer and Emelia Quinn
Our world, as many worlds before it, is disappearing. The current climate crisis, loss of biodiversity, rise of populism, and failures of neoliberalism are forcing humans to reinvent themselves and to reconfigure relations with the natural world. In a seemingly inescapable system of violence perpetuated by humanity, we might question whether there is any hope left for the human species. This conference sought to address the following questions: How do we think ourselves as human whilst grappling with issues of our complicity and culpability in systems of oppression? How can, and how should, humans reinvent themselves and reconfigure relations with the natural world? How do we come to terms with our responsibility for widespread devastation, a responsibility owed to ecosystems and animals as well as to those humans living in precarious environments? What role can and should other animals play in this process, and what does this mean for understandings of

'animality'? And finally, how have writers, artists, performers, literary scholars, historians, and philosophers approached these questions?

Africadelic 2023 x Tolhuistuin: In Conversation with patricia kaersenhout I 25 May 2023 I Tolhuistuin

Supported by ASCA, Omek and the University of Colour.
The Africadelic Festival opened at Tolhuistuin with Africadelic Talks! Celebration of the work of visual artist patricia kaersenhout, with screening of her short film *Le retour des femmes colibris* (2022). *Le retour des femmes colibris* is a work of re-membrance which imagines a meeting between five women — Josephine Baker, Suzanne Césaire, Frida Kahlo, Paulette and Jeanne Nardal — in order to criticize and correct the invisibility of Black women at the First International Congress of Black Writers and Artists in Paris (1956) and in the Négritude movement in particular. This movie highlights Black women's contribution to liberation and social consciousness — which led to movements such as Négritude and Pan-Africanism. This special screening was followed by a conversation with patricia kaersenhout and philosopher Grâce Ndjako (ASCA), moderated by artist Chimira Natanna. They diedscuss Re-memory and the Négritude movement; the position of Black women, then and now. Finally, the speakers discussed their experiences and dance towards freedom as Black women in Dutch society, and how this influences their activism, their work as well as their creative explorations.

ASCA Workshop 2023 I Forms of (More Than) Human Relationality | 28-30 June 2023 I Doelenzaal

Organizers: Nadica Denić, Jasmijn Leeuwenkamp and Eszter Szakács.
Keynote speakers: Kathrin Thiele (Utrecht University), Patricia MacCormack (ARU Cambridge) and Pooja Rangan (Amherst College).
The rejection of traditional forms of dualistic thinking has led to a turn to relationality in the humanities, giving rise to new ontologies that move beyond the subject-object distinction (e.g.: Haraway; Tsing; Barad; Latour; Braidotti; Morton). Critical scholars and artists have emphasized relationality as an alternative way to reconceptualize and visualize various forms of connectedness to the world and to (more than) human forms of life. However, "relationality", as Judith Butler has recently reminded us in *The Force of Non-violence*, "is not by itself a good thing, a sign of connectedness, an ethical norm to be posited over and against destruction: rather, relationality is a vexed and ambivalent field in which the question of ethical obligation has to be worked out in light of a persistent and constitutive destructive potential." An investment in different forms of relationality, be they artistic, social, or

ecological in nature, is not an end in itself – it can, as some have argued, even reinforce the hegemonic and exclusionary concept of the human (Rangan). Many valuable perspectives emerged as responses to the call for ethico-political examination of relationality, and they have explored non-violence, willfulness, care, wholeness, opacity, and ambiguity in light of relationality, to name a few (Butler; Puig de la Bellacasa; Moiloa; Glissant; Fuery). Keeping in mind these perspectives, we might ask: How can we evaluate the potential of ethico-political accounts grounded in relational ontologies or frameworks? This ASCA workshop encouraged participants to explore the broader theme of "relationality" as an aesthetic, ethical or political response to the present moment defined by multiple forms of precarity. Accordingly, participants were invited to attend to both the destructive and sustainable relationalities lived and imagined among (more than) human forms of life. Our aim was to encourage relational thinking that expands critical, artistic, and political horizons and provides a more complex account of the constitutive inter- and intra-relationality that binds things, humans, and non-humans to the world and to each other.

Teach-Ins History Is Not Context, It's Reality – On Israel/Palestine I 20 October, 27 October, 3 November, 10 November, 15 November, 5 December, 21 December 2023 I Various locations

Organizers: Erella Grassiani, Mikki Stelder, Chiara de Cesari, Sudeep Dasgupta and Yolande Jansen.

Confused about what is happening in Israel and the Palestinian Territories? Want to learn more? Join academics and other experts for the teach-in series "History is Not Context, It's Reality" – On Israel/Palestine. An interactive series about the political and social reality in the region and how we got here. The teach-ins featured (and continue to do so) academics, activists and artists, including Palestinian and Israeli ones, discussing the following topics: The Ongoing Nakba; International Law and the Right to Resist; EU and Dutch Discourses on Israel/Palestine and Alternative Voices; Technologies of Repression; Settler-colonialism and Legacies of Colonialism; Palestine as a Feminist Issue; Atrocity Crimes in Israel/Palestine.

Getting over the Rainbow: 50+ Years of LGBTQ+ Liberation I 31 October 2023 I OBA Theater

The Amsterdam Book Launch of *The Richard Dyer Reader*, edited by Glyn Davis (University of St. Andrews) and Jaap Kooijman (ASCA). Co-organized by IHLIA - LGBTI Heritage, ASCA and NICA.

Richard Dyer is a British scholar whose writings on stardom, entertainment, and the representation of gender, sexuality and race have made a great impact in film and cultural studies. *The Richard Dyer Reader* covers more than five decades of Dyer's writing, and includes rare archival essays as well as some new pieces. In his essay "Getting Over the Rainbow" from 1981, translated in Dutch as "Een opfrissertje voor het morgenrood: Identiteit en plezier in een culturele flikkerpolitiek," Dyer argues that the movement for LGBTQ+ rights should not be separated from other rights-based movements, such as feminism and anti-racism. At the book launch, a line-up of guest speakers offered reflections on the complex entanglements of LGBTQ+ politics and battles for racial equality and emancipation, as well as on the ways in which pleasure and politics are bound together. Speakers: Richard Dyer, Eliza Steinbock, Sudeep Dasgupta, Bibi Fadlalla and Wigbertson Julian Isenia.

Art + Sacrifice Zone + Biopolitics: Who Has the Right To Live? Activism, Performativity and Necropolitics in the Chilean Environmental Crisis I 16 November 2023

Talk by Paulina Bronfman (Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso), organized by the Art and Activism research group | Moderated by Martina Flores Mendeville & Florence Evans.

During the last 20 years, Chilean artists have been active thinkers in reflecting on the environmental crisis in Chile and its political dimension. The "sacrifice zones" are characterized by high levels of contamination produced by the presence of heavy metals such as lead, copper, and arsenic, which significantly exceed the levels recorded in other regions of the national territory. In Chile, the expression "sacrifice zone" began to designate the same idea of both, the geographical location and the communities affected by the environmental impacts, identifying the concept with the denounce of contamination in the places they inhabit. 'Sacrifice zones" are places where the devastation has direct implications in the full exercise of the fundamental rights of people: the right to life, health, education, work, food and housing. The environmental damage has resulted in a situation of vulnerability and impoverishment of the communities. This talk explored diverse cases studies of artistic activism as repertoire of political action in Chile, analyzing cases from art, performance and music, that promote reflection and resistance on the environmental crisis produces by the sacrifice zones. Paulina Bronfman is the author of *Performance, ciudadania y activismo en Chile* (Editorial Oso Liebre) and working on her second book, *Scenic and performative practices as an ecological strategy in Chile*, focused on environmental artistic activism, funded by the Chilean Ministry of Culture and Arts.

Management and Research Groups

Until 1 September 2023, ASCA's management team consisted of the academic director (Esther Peeren, Professor of Cultural Analysis), the vice-director (Jaap Kooijman, Associate Professor of Media Studies) and the managing director (Eloe Kingma), with administrative support provided by Jantine van Gogh. During Esther Peeren's sabbatical – spanning the 2023/2024 academic year – Jaap Kooijman was appointed interim director.

The management team is jointly responsible for the day-to-day running of the research school. The academic director sits on the AIHR Research Council, which meets every six weeks or so to discuss general policies, strategic roadmaps and finances that are part of the policies and governance of the Faculty of Humanities, and liaises with the Heads of Department and Program Directors in the so-called "triangle," most importantly about new positions opening up. The vice-director is responsible for all matters concerning the PhD community, including welcome meetings, pilot study assessments and evaluation meetings.

The ASCA Board consists of a mix of senior and junior staff members, and two PhD representatives. Current members are: Sruti Bala (Associate Professor of Theater Studies), Jasmijn Leeuwenkamp (PhD candidate), Gaston Franssen (Professor of Literary Culture), Jeroen de Kloet (Professor of Globalisation), Oliver Seibt (Assistant Professor of Musicology), Jana Cattien (Assistant Professor of Philosophy), Boris Noordenbos (Associate Professor of Cultural Analysis), Patricia Pisters (Professor of Media and Film Studies), Emelia Quinn (Assistant Professor of English Literature and Culture), Bo Wang (PhD Candidate), Esther Weltevrede (Assistant Professor Media Studies).

The main task of the ASCA management team and Board is to facilitate the research activities of its members. We have chosen to do this by creating a community that is open, inclusive and supportive of bottom-up initiatives. ASCA hosts research groups that differ in size, aim, lifespan and in how active they are. A coherent profile is nonetheless ensured by all research groups subscribing to ASCA's interdisciplinary, theory-driven humanities approach and engaging with at least one of the thematic constellations. In their variety and flexibility, the research groups ensure that new pressing issues, emerging fields (such as animal politics or disability studies) and innovative approaches (such as new digital methods) can be taken up quickly in relation to the constellation

themes. The groups also showcase the vast range of themes, approaches, initiatives and collaborations ASCA members are involved in.

The assessment of research within ASCA occurs primarily at the level of the individual researcher, who may be a member of multiple research groups. Each individual is assessed annually by the ASCA director on the basis of their own report about their research activities. The assessment – which takes the form of a letter – is discussed with the researcher's Head of Department and on the basis of the assessment and upon request of the Department positive and sometimes negative recommendations are made concerning promotions, grant applications and sabbatical leaves. In cases of underperformance, individual research and publications plans are made with specific deadlines; if these are not met, ASCA, in consultation with the Department and the AIHR director, can take away research time.

At the level of the research groups, the ASCA director inquires annually with the coordinator(s) about the group's activities and output (publications, seminars and other events, valorization, etc.), including whether the group is still active (if not, it is disbanded), whether the website description needs updating and which constellation(s) the group engages with.

ASCA distinguishes three different types of research groups: funded research projects, readings groups & seminars, and network groups (see Table).
- **Network groups** bring together researchers with shared interests that meet on an ad hoc basis. Although these groups do not necessarily work towards defined outputs, they frequently lead to conferences/workshops or other events, publications and funding applications.
- **Funded research projects** are projects comprising one or more researchers that are externally funded at the national or European level (ERC, VENI, VIDI, VICI, Horizon2020); their performance goals are fixed, as is their lifespan.
- **Reading groups & seminars** are groups that meet regularly (generally once a month) to discuss articles, books or work in progress, or around a specific theme, sometimes with guest speakers. Reading groups & seminars often result in conferences or other events, joint publications and funding applications.

Network Groups	Coordinators	M	A	G	I	C
AI and Cultural Production	Pei-Sze Chow, Claudio Celis Bueno	■				■
Amsterdance	Oliver Seibt	■			■	
Art - Activism - Conflict	Sruti Bala	■			■	■
Art Education as Critical Tactics	Fabiola Camuti	■	■			■
ASCA Cities Project	Carolyn Birdsall	■	■	■		
ASCA Comics Studies	Rik Spanjers, Kristina Gedgaudaitė	■	■	■		
Cosmologies	Halbe Kuipers, Erica Biolchini	■	■	■		■
Crisis, Critique and Futurity	Maria Boletsi	■		■	■	■
Critical Health	Gaston Franssen	■		■	■	■
Cross Media	Markus Stauff	■				
Decolonial Meridians	Sunderason, Szakács, Mazadiego	■	■	■		
Digital Emotions	Ellen Rutten				■	■
Digital Methods Initiative	Richard Rogers	■		■		
Ethics and Politics of Digital Technologies	Beate Roessler	■				■
Fashion/Representations in Global Context	Christine Delhaye			■	■	
Film and Philosophy	Patricia Pisters, Monique Roelofs	■			■	■
Game Lab	Toni Pape	■			■	■
Geomediations	Patricia Pisters, Leonie Schmidt	■			■	■
Global Digital Cultures	Thomas Poell	■		■		
Literature of the 21st Century	Ellen Rutten	■		■		
Modern and Contemporary Art	Mia Lerm-Hayes		■			■
Moving Images	Giovanna Fossati		■			■
Music and Culture	Barbara Titus	■		■	■	
Networked Images	Annet Dekker	■	■		■	
Peripheries Project	Esther Peeren, Hanneke Stuit			■	■	■
Philosophy and Public Affairs	Beate Roessler					■
Postcolonial Film Histories and Heritages	Emiel Martens, Asli Tuncer	■		■	■	■
Reading Pain	Assel Kadyrkhanova	■		■	■	■
Queer Analysis	Diego Semerene, Misha Kavka	■			■	■
Sex Negativity	Marija Cetenić	■			■	■
The Significance of Phenomenology	Christian Skirke					■
Thinking Artistic and Design Practices	Marie Aude Baronian	■	■		■	
Videographic Criticism Group	Jaap Kooijman	■			■	
Walking as Research Practice	Tania Cardoso	■	■		■	
Word and image	Mia Lerm-Hayes		■		■	
World Literarture and the Environment	Jeff Diamanti, Emelia Quinn	■		■		■

Funded Projects	Principal Investigators	M	A	G	I	C
Abolition Democracies	Daniel Loick				■	■
China Fashion Power	Tommy Tse	■		■	■	■
Conspiratorial Memory	Boris Noordenbos				■	■
Decolonizing Southeast Asian Sound Archives	Barbara Titus	■		■	■	■
EcoIslam	Leonie Schmidt	■		■	■	■
Entangled Freedoms	Sanjukta Sunderason	■		■	■	■
Fixers, Stringers and Foreign Crews	Johana Kotišová	■			■	■
Imagining Institutions Otherwise	Chiara de Cesari		■			■
Imagining the Rural in a Globalizing World	Esther Peeren	■		■	■	■
Making the hidden visible	Stefania Milan	■				■
Maritime Imagination	Mikki Stelder			■	■	■
Moral Truth	Thomas Nys			■	■	■
Early Language Development in the Digital Age	Stefania Milan	■				■
Narratives from the long tail	Giovanna Fossati	■				
Opinion Dynamics and Cultural Conflict	Richard Rogers	■				■
Platform Labour	Niels van Doorn	■		■		■
Pressing Matter	Chiara de Cesari		■	■	■	
SoBigData++	Richard Rogers	■				■
The Platformization of the Global Sex Industry	Thomas Poell			■		■
The Politics of (not) Eating Animals	Eva Meijer				■	■
Untimely World Pictures	Simon Ferdinand	■	■		■	■
Worlding Public Cultures	Chiara de Cesari	■	■		■	■

Seminars and Reading Groups	Conveners	M	A	G	I	C
Abolition Democtracies Seminar	Daniel Loick					■
Aesthetics and Politics in Critical Theory	Ben Moore, Marc Farrant		■			■
Artistic Research	Paula Albuquerque	■	■			
ASCA Theory Seminar	Esther Peeren, Jaap Kooijman	■	■	■	■	■
Breaking the Loop	Toni Pape, Daniel de Zeeuw	■	■	■	■	■
Cities Seminar	Carolyn Birdsall	■	■	■	■	■
Cosmology Workgroup	Halbe Kuipers, Erica Biochini	■			■	■
Critical Cultural Theory	Aukje van Rooden					■
Eastsplainers	Ellen Rutten			■		■
Ethics and Politics of Digital Technologies	Beate Roessler	■				■
Externalities of Value	Daniel de Zeeuw, Jan Overwijk	■				■
Global Africa	Tommy Tse, Fairuzah Atchulo	■		■		■
History is not Context, It's Reality: Israel/Palestine	Yolande Jansen a.o.				■	■
Media & Performance	Kati Rottger	■	■			
Moving Images: Preservation, Curation, Exhibition	Giovanna Fossati, Floris Paalman	■				
Philosophy and Public Affairs	Beate Roessler, Henri Wijsbeck					■
Planetary Memecry	Daniel de Zeeuw	■				■
Political Ecologies	Jeff Diamanti, Joost de Bloois		■	■	■	
Politics and Performance	Sruti Bala, Elize Mazadiego				■	■

Queer Analysis Reading Group	Diego Semerene, Misha Kavka					
This is Film!	Giovanna Fossati					
Trans-Asia Cultural Studies	Jeroen de Kloet					
Useful TV Standing	Markus Stauff					
Videographic Criticism Seminar	Jaap Kooijman					
We Have Never Had Sex	Marija Cetinic					

Researchers and Publications

The tables below show that ASCA again gained research staff between 2022 and 2023. The significant rise – from 46,64 to 64,10 fte – is mainly due to new Assistant Professor hires, made possible by the Faculty's current financial situation and the extra money provided by the Sector Plan for the Social Sciences and Humanities of the Minister of Education. The number of PhD candidates rose slightly, with the percentage of contracted PhDs dropping slightly from 19% to 17%. We hope this percentage will rise again when, in 2024, a significant number of contracted PhDs will be hired as part of the starting grants awarded to new Assistant Professors. While the starting grants require PhD projects linked to the research interests of the Assistant Professor(s) who will be the daily supervisor(s) of the PhD, ASCA will continue to call for the financing of open PhD calls inviting projects devised by PhD candidates themselves, as we believe that this offers most potential for bottom-up innovation.

With regard to the large number of non-contracted PhD candidates, it should be noted that some of these do receive (some) funding. We also strive to give such candidates a realistic idea of what pursuing a PhD without (full) funding will entail, encourage our non-contracted PhDs to apply for the AIHR Finishing Fellowships when they near completion and continue to monitor how all our PhD candidates fare on the job market. As long as a high percentage of both contracted and self-funded PhDs end up obtaining academic positions, we do not see a reason to curb their number.

With regard to publications, the total number of publications went up (from 308 in 2022 to 385). This is due to the growing number of researchers within ASCA, as is evident from the fact that the average number of publications declined from 3,0 to 2,9. It should be taken into account that most new staff are Assistant Professors – with many transitioning from a teaching position without research time – who might be expected to need some time to fill up their publication pipeline. The number of publications in the categories ASCA values highest – refereed journal articles, books and book chapters – went up (refereed journal articles, from 140 in 2022 to 162 in 2023; book chapters, from 80 in 2022 to 92 in 2023) or remained stable (books, with 22 in 2022 and 22 in 2023).

ASCA continues to encourage its researchers to aim for high-quality peer-reviewed publications, especially in international journals and with international academic publishers.

The number of defended PhD dissertations went up from 11 in 2022 to 14 in 2023. It should be noted that several ASCA's funded PhD candidates were granted extensions by their funding bodies due to COVID-19 delays.

We continue to look for ways to make postdocs more visible within ASCA and provide them with more of a sense of community. In 2023, an ASCA postdoc group was formed which meets regularly to discuss post-doc specific issues. The group is coordinated by Kristina Gedgaudaite and Fieke Jansen.

Main Categories of Research Output						
	2021	**%**	**2022**	**%**	**2023**	%
Refereed journal articles	131	38%	140	45%	162	42%
Books	25	7%	22	7%	22	6%
Book chapters	89	26%	80	26%	92	24%
Non-Refereed journal arti	27	8%	10	3%	34	9%
Professional publications	43	13%	32	10%	40	10%
Publications aimed at pub	29	8%	24	8%	35	9%
Total publications	**344**	**100%**	**308**	**100%**	**385**	**100%**
Dissertations	17		11		14	
staff members	97		103		132	
Average publications p.p.	3,5		3,0		2,9	

Research staff in fte at institutional level									
	2021	**#**	**%**	**2022**	**#**	**%**	**2023**	**#**	**%**
Staff									
Full Professor	8,46	14	19%	7,05	13	15%	5,3	18	8%
Associate Professor	8,24	15	18%	7,98	15	17%	5,3	20	8%
Assistant Professor	19,51	58	44%	22,58	57	49%	36,4	75	57%
Postdocs	8,5	10	19%	8,9	18	19%	17,1	19	27%
Total Staff	**44,71**	**97**	**100%**	**46,46**	**103**	**100%**	**64,1**	**132**	**100%**
PhD Candidates	fte	#		fte	#		fte	#	
Contracted PhDs	18,8	30	19%	24,7	29	19%	26,8	27	17%
Self-Funded PhDs		124	81%		127	81%		135	83%
Total PhD researchers		**154**	**100%**		**156**	**100%**		**162**	**100%**

PhD Program

ASCA offers an internationally recognized PhD degree, awarded by the University of Amsterdam. The ASCA curriculum, which brings together academic staff, PhD candidates, and selected Research MA students in collaborative and supportive contexts, is designed to provide high-quality, comprehensive scholarly and professional training for future scholars working within the interdisciplinary humanities.

Sustaining ASCA's vibrant PhD community is a top priority. While emphasizing the importance of expanding funding for independent PhD projects (now only possible through NWO's PhDs in the Humanities scheme, as the Faculty of Humanities' funding for such positions has been replaced by PhDs funded through the starting grants) in order to keep rejuvenating the research community and open up new research fields, ASCA has been increasingly successful in securing national and European funding for large projects that include PhD candidates (and postdocs). Having a critical mass of funded PhD candidates employed by the Faculty of Humanities, who have more time for their research and are therefore able to be more involved in ASCA events and their organization, helps to keep the PhD community vibrant.

ASCA trains young researchers to develop an informed understanding of cultural phenomena, stimulating them to combine theorization with detailed analysis of specific case studies. The seminars, courses, and workshops offered within the training program are open to all ASCA PhD candidates, as well as to other scholars, including those working in other research schools or faculties, and those outside the university (artists, curators, activists, etc.).

The PhD project is considered as a collaborative endeavor in which the PhD candidate is the central figure, supported by the supervisors and ASCA's vice-director. At the start of the PhD project, all PhD candidates and their supervisors have a welcome meeting with ASCA's vice-director. At this meeting, an individually tailored training program is drawn up. PhD candidates work under the close supervision of (at least) two senior researchers and are evaluated on an annual basis (contracted PhD candidates in meetings; non-contracted PhD candidates by email or, if issues are flagged, in a meeting). During the annual evaluations, specific attention is paid to the progress of the dissertation and the quality of the supervision, as well as to career perspectives and the building of a strong CV for the academic or non-academic job market. PhD candidates are encouraged to gain teaching experience (up to

0.2 fte of teaching in the 2nd and 3rd year is expected for candidates with fulltime contracts), to have at least one peer-reviewed article or book chapter published before the defense and, if they are so inclined, to spend some time at a university abroad. In the evaluations, it is emphasized that activities undertaken during the PhD trajectory should feed into the dissertation as much as possible, to avoid delayed completion.

Supplementing the PhD training program offered by the Faculty of Humanities, ASCA organizes annual skills workshops on publishing and the academic job market. The advice given – by ASCA's director and vice-director, and recent ASCA alumni – is geared specifically to PhD candidates with an interdisciplinary profile.

ASCA provides opportunities for PhD candidates to present their work and to take part in the organization of international events, from the annual ASCA workshop, organized by a team of PhD candidates, to smaller events related to the research groups.

The effectiveness of ASCA's PhD training is evidenced by the fact that after graduating, 78% of ASCA's contracted PhD candidates that finished between 2012 and 2023 hold academic jobs (temporary or permanent), within and outside the Netherlands. Of the self- and externally funded PhD candidates that finished between 2014 and 2023, 62% hold an academic job (temporary or permanent). Finished ASCA PhD candidates who pursue non-academic careers end up (or, in the case of many self-funded PhD candidates, continue) working mainly in the cultural sector, in policymaking and in secondary education.

Social Impact

The most prevalent form of societal impact of ASCA research is its contribution to scholarly and societal debates. Most ASCA research critically engages with contemporary issues in arts, politics, media and culture with the aim of making productive contributions to the public debate. Its audience consists of professionals from the field of cultural production, policymakers, activists and members of the general public with an interest in the critical analysis of culture. ASCA researchers are eager to share their research. Although we encourage our members to actively participate in such debates, we also realize that some of the topics – such as climate change, institutional racism, gender identity, alleged "wokism" in academia – have become so politically charged that speaking about them can result in online backlash and threats, particularly for women and people of color. To address this challenging situation, we chose "Doing Research in a Polarized World" as the topic of the 2023 ASCA Summit and asked researchers to share their experiences and best practices. Regardless of the difficulties, ASCA researchers continue to intervene in contentious public debates.

In addition, ASCA members engage with the public debate by publishing in non-academic journals and national and international newspapers, and by appearing in media, including television, radio and podcasts. Contributions to **national media** (radio and television) include Marrigje Paijmans and Gaston Franssen on Dutch literature in *De Taalstaat*, NPO Radio 1 (14 January), Jaap Kooijman on American culture in *BNR Big Five* (1 February), Mark Deuze on Twitter (22 March), online threats (25 May), and social media in the war in the Middle East (22 October) in the NPO1 television program *Een Vandaag*, Deuze on internet videos about farming (30 May) and Franssen on Dutch politics (24 October) on *RTL Nieuws*.

Contributions to **national newspapers** include Mark Deuze on social media (7 January), Gaston Franssen on celebrity culture (13 January), Jaap Kooijman on wokeness (11 February), and Ellen Rutte on academic inclusiveness (2 September) in *Het Parool*; Michiel Leezenberg on philosopher Aboe Nasr al-Farabi (26 January), Deuze on scrolling on social media (31 January), Geert Loving on Twitter/X (16 August), Sal Hagen on radicalism and social media (10 October), Richard Rogers on social media (23 October), Esther Peeren on the Dutch student loan system (24 October), and Yolande Jansen on political slogans (1 November) in *de Volkskrant*; Franssen on Dutch literature (27 January), Deuze on social media and news (21 May) and Twitter/X (17 August),

and Jansen on the need for a ceasefire in Gaza (21 November) in *Trouw*; Margriet Schavemaker on the university's VOC-room (27 January) and Deuze on nepotism in media (1 February) in *Algemeen Dagblad*; Daan Roovers about the use of philosophy (10 August), Jansen about climate protests (5 September), Leezenberg about Spinoza (21 September), Lovink on online memes (30 October), and Yaniv Hagbi on writing (9 November) in *NRC*.

Contributions to **national magazines** include Michiel Leezenberg on philosophy and picture books in *De Correspondent* (14 January); Jaap Kooijman on alleged wokeness in academic teaching in *One World* (23 January); Geert Lovink on the future of the internet (25 January), Esther Peeren on Dutch farming (31 May), and Gavin Mueller on economics (20 September) in *De Groene Amsterdammer*; Gaston Franssen on blended learning (24 February) and Noa Roei on Palestine and Jewish students (11 July), Yolande Jansen on the anti-woke debate (13 July), and Anke Bosma on representation of Dutch farmland (12 December) in *Folia*; Natalia Sánchez Querubín on AI in the climate debate in *Metropolis M* (22 March); Ellen Rutten on post-Soviet culture in *Vrij Nederland* (24 March); Jeroen de Kloet on social media in *Science.net* (27 March); Erik Borra on AI in journalism in *Villamedia* (29 August); and Marc Tuters on conspiracy theories in *Vice* (21 September).

Contributions to **international media** include Gavin Mueller on AI and pop music in *The Los Angeles Times* (6 July); Mueller on technology and the labor movement (21 September) and Misha Kavka on reality television (6 October) in *The New York Times*; Beate Roessler on the principle of human dignity in *The Guardian* (23 November); and Mueller on the Hollywood writers' strike on CNN (25 September).

Financial Overview

Working Budget FGW 2023	41.000,00
Expenses	
Conferences/Workshops	20.045,44
Seminars/Reading Groups	12.685,97
ASCA Workshop	9.368,68
Social events/Administration	2.380,28
Total:	44.480,37
Balance:	-3.480,37

ASCA receives an annual budget from the Faculty of Humanities to finance the PhD training program, research events, external representation, administration and other costs. The size of this budget depends on the financial situation of the Faculty of Humanities and on the total amount of research time ASCA members have. Personnel costs (of academic and administrative personnel) and other overhead costs are not paid from the annual budget. In 2023, in spite of its growth in numbers, ASCA received the same budget as the previous years: 41,000 Euro. By being stricter about awarding money for the organization of events, as we announced in our previous annual report, we managed to only overspend 3,480 Euro in 2023 – in 2022 (in the wake of the pandemic, when very few events could be organized), we overspent by 6,695 Euro. In the coming years, given that the budget will probably not increase even as our numbers do, we will monitor the budget for the annual workshop more closely and monitor the costs for other events; to make sure as many ASCA members as possible have the chance to organize events, we give precedence to events organized by ASCA members who have not recently organized anything else.

All ASCA members and research groups can apply for money from the annual budget to fund research activities such as the organization of workshops, conferences and other academic meetings with guest speakers. If the event involves and is targeted at ASCA members, and a description and full budget (including contributions by other sponsors) is provided, ASCA will grant the application for an amount up to 1,000 Euro. On principle, ASCA does not pay honorariums to academics in full, non-precarious employment, but honorariums may be paid to precarious academics, artists and activists. The

majority of the annual budget is reserved for activities organized by members and research groups. Another part (about 9,000 Euro) is reserved for the ASCA International Workshop.

Events

10 January	**Luxury City: Aesthetics and Exclusion After Lockdown** ASCA Cities Seminar – guest presentation by Christoph Lindner (University College London).
16 January	**Eastsplainers #2: Journalism** Panel discussion with journalist Alexander Gubsky (Moscow Times) and media researcher Johana Kotišova (UvA/Vrije Universiteit Brussel).
17 January	**Toward the Abolition of Photography's Imperial Rights** Masterclass with Ariella Aisha Azoulay | Organizers: Ermelinda Xheza and Yonathan Listik.
18 January	**"the world as a jewel in the hand'' film screening and conversation with Ariella Aïsha Azoulay** Film screening and conversation with Ariella Aïsha Azoulay | Location: FOAM (Fotografiemuseum Amsterdam) | Organizer: Linda Xheza.
19 January	**East/West perceptions in Europe in the 21st century** Workshop on East/West perceptions in Europe in the 21st century | Part of the ASCA research group Literary Studies in the 21st Century | Organizers: Marleen Rensen, Ellen Rutten, Anna Seidl.
20 January	**More (than) Film Theory** Lecture by Kyle Stevens | Organizers: Eugenie Brinkema and Abe Geil.
25-27 January	**Critical Misanthropy Conference** Conference featuring, among others, Chloe Taylor (University of Alberta), Robert McKay (Sheffield), and Andrew Gibson (Royal Holloway) | Organizers: Eva Meijer and Emelia Quinn.
28 January	**The Factory, the Plot & the Edges of the Black Atlantic** Lectures and Performance with J.T. Roane (Rutgers University), Christine Okoth (King's College London) and Alexander Cromer (Leiden University) | Hosted by the ASCA Political Ecologies Seminar: Terrains of Struggle | Organizers: Joost de Bloois and Jeff Diamanti.

2 February	**“Taxis vs Uber”: A Conversation with Juan Del Nido** Juan Del Nido, author of *Taxis vs Uber: Courts, Markets, and Technology in Buenos Aires*, discusses his book with Niels van Doorn and Valentina Carraro.
8 February	**Cyberfeminism Index (Book Launch)** Launch of *Cyberfeminism Index*, a publication by Mindy Seu (Rutgers and Yale), academic, designer and researcher | Organized by Natalia Sánchez-Querubín.
9 February	**Reimagining the Past, Envisioning the Future, from a New Center** Lecture by Mark J. Butler in the Amsterdance Lecture series | Organizers: Oliver Seibt, Ian Pocervina and Sydney Schelvis.
10 February	**Prosthetic Species: Security Dogs and the More-than-Human Sensing of Urban Danger** ASCA Cities seminar talk by Rivke Jaffe (University of Amsterdam).
15 February	**Abolition Ecology: Police, Violence, Ecology** Oscar Talbot in conversation with Andrea Brock, Harriet Bergman and Luetzi bleibt | Organized by the Abolition Democracies Group.
15 February	**Can’t You Take a Joke?: Humorlessness as a Moral Vice** Presentation by Jordan Mackenzie (Virginia Tech), with a response by Thomas Nys (UvA) | Philosophy and Public Affairs Colloquium.
15 February	**Eastsplainers #3: Music** Edition of Eastsplainers devoted to music and sound. With cellist Maya Fridman, percussionist Konstantyn Napolov and pianist Hanna Shybayeva.
22 February	**Truth as Force: A Materialist Picture** Presentation by Frieder Vogelmann (Freiburg) with a response by Christian Skirke | Philosophy and Public Affairs Colloquium.
8 March	**Clever Monkey – Stubborn Donkey** Seminar exploring the emerging tripartite relationship between animals, humans and technologies | Organizers: Gavin Mueller and Mari Bastashevski.

8 March	**This is Film! #1: Cimatheque - Alternative Film Center Cairo** Lecture by Tamer El Said (Artistic Director of Cimatheque) paired with a screening of Atteyat Al-Abnoudy's documentaries | Series organized in collaboration with Eye Filmmuseum.
8 March	**On the Ecological Complexity of Artificial Intelligence** Talk by Adam Nocek (Arizona State University) | Organizer: Patricia Pisters.
9 March	**Master, Slave and the Negative Power of the Unconscious** Session with Charlotte Szász (Leuphana University of Lüneburg) | ASCA-NICA Seminar We Have Never Had Sex | Coordinated by Marija Cetinić.
10 March	**The Aesthetics and Politics of Cinematic Pedestrianism: Walking in Films** Launch of Asli Özgen's book published by Amsterdam University Press in the series Film Culture in Transition.
14 March	**Planetary Memecry: New approaches to sociality, affect, and meaning in online subcultures** Series organized by Idil Galip, Marc Tuters and Daniël de Zeeuw | Guest speaker: Gabriele de Seta on Spiritual Pollution: A Decade of Chinese Digital Folklore.
17 March	**Formalism and Violence** Masterclass with Eugenie Brinkema (MIT).
17 March	**Vibratory Milieus: Transæctional Environments, Inhuman Ecologies, and Urban Dwellers** ASCA Cities Seminar presentation by Clemens Finkelstein (Princeton University).
22 March	**This is Film! #2: Dispossesed Archives** Lecture by Amal Alhaag (3rd Eye Scholar in Residence), Barby Asante and Jeftha Pattikawa paired with film excerpts | Series organized in collaboration with Eye Filmmuseum.
23 March	**Eastsplainers #4: Literature** Polish cultural historian Iwona Guść and Russian writer Maxim Osipov talk about literary developments, under the guidance of poet and literary historian Martje Wijers.
24 March	**Desire for Trans** Symposium organized by the Queer Analysis group of Diego

	Semerene and Misha Kavka | With Eliza Steinbock, Marija Cetinić, Eva Hayward and Adnan Hossain**.**
24 March	**Toxic Coloniality or Colonial Toxicity?** ASCA Political Ecologies: Terrains of Struggle seminar with Samia Henni | Organizers: Jeff Diamanti, Joost de Bloois and Fred Carter.
3 April	**Going Out – Walking, Listening, Soundmaking** Walking as Research Practice (WARP) | Masterclass with Elena Biserna | The Masterclass comprises a lecture and walkshop with Elena Biserna.
5 April	**Workshop on Christoph Menke's A Theory of Liberation** ASCA's Philosophy and Public Affairs and Duitsland Instituut. | With Christoph Menke, Dorothea Gädeke (Utrecht), Francesca Raimondi (Düsseldorf), Katharina Bauer (Rotterdam), Tom Vandeputte (Sandberg Institute Amsterdam) and Beate Roessler (UvA).
12 April	**This is Film! #3: Human Rights Film Festival** Lecture by Oksana Sarkisova (director of Verzio) paired with screening of *Life of the Agent* (Gabor Papp, 2004) | Series organized in collaboration with Eye Filmmuseum.
13 April	**The American Academic Job Market** Workshop with Eugenie Brinkema | Organizer: Esther Peeren.
14 April	**Anti-Caste Critiques and Postcolonialism** Talk by Jayaseelan Raj (George-August-Universität Göttingen and University of London) co-organized by the International Solidarity for Academic Freedom in India initiative (InSAF India).
14 April	**Living in Tide: The Climate of the Urban Sea** ASCA Cities Seminar talk by Nikhil Anand (University of Pennsylvania).
14 April	**Making a Queer Graphic History - with Added Lesbians!** Lecture by Kate Charlesworth | Organized by Rik Spanjers, Vasiliki Belia and Erin La Cour.
17 April	**Decolonial Meridians** First meeting of the new ASCA Research Group, Decolonial

	Meridians: Art-Histories-Theories | Organizer: Sanjukta Sunderason.
17 April	**Reparations for International Slavery: The Crimes Against Humanity Justification** Presentation by Maeve McKeown (RUG) in the Philosophy and Public Affairs Colloquium | Respondent: Wouter Veraart (VU).
18 April	**Anglo-pessimism: A Case Study in the Electronic Dance Music Industry** Lecture Mathys Rennela | Organized by the Amsterdance Research Group.
18 April	**Climate Change and Academia: What Role to Play?** SPUI25 event co-organized by Gerrit Schaafsma and Jetske Brouwer, with support of ASCA | With Harriët Bergman, Thomas Wells, Anne Kervers, Christel van Eck and Marthe Wens.
19 April	**ASCA PhD Supervision Workshop** Organizers: Esther Peeren and Jaap Kooijman.
19 April	**Making Memes: A Media History** Planetary Memecry seminar organized by Idil Galip, Marc Tuters and Daniël de Zeeuw | Speaker: Hannah Barton (Birkbeck, University of London).
19 April	**The Sting of Death: Why Additive Theories of Well-being Fail To Meet the Epicurean Challenge** Philosophy and Public Affairs | Speaker: Govert den Hartogh (UvA) | Respondent: Gulzaar Barn (UvA).
19 April	**Spirits, Forests, and Screens** Workshop with Erik Bordeleau on the work of Apitchapong Wheerasethakul and cosmological cinema | Organizers: Halbe Kuipers and Erica Biolchini.
19 April	**Digital Childhoods: Learning Within New Media** ASCA/Spui25 event organized by Stefania Milan and Karla Zavala Barreda | Part of the project Early Language Development in the Digital Age.
20 April	**Art, Play and Philosophy** Critical Cultural Theory seminar with Anne Boissière (University of Lille), Stephen Harris (University of Leiden),

	Monique Roelofs (UvA) and Laurie Schram (artist, based in Den Haag).
26 April	**This is Film! #4: Chilean Exile Films** Eye-ASCA Series | Lecture by José Miguel Palacios paired with a screening of a compilation of Chilean exile films.
2 May	**After the Political, Aesthetic Affiliation: On Assayas's Carlos and Irma Vep** Lecture and Workshop by Brian Price | Organizers: Abe Geil and Eugenie Brinkema.
10 May	**Internet Memes in an Age of Global Culture** With Asaf Nissenbaum | Part of the series Planetary Memecry.
10 May	**Writing (Greek) Poetry on Facebook: Archives, Networks, Dissemination** Laskaridis lecture by Eleni Papargyriou, Marilena Laskaridis Visiting Research Fellow | Organized by Maria Boletsi.
10 May	**This is Film! #5: Film Heritage in India** Eye-ASCA Series | Lecture by Shivendra Singh Dungarpur on Film Heritage Foundation and screening of *Amar Akbar Anthony* (Manmohan Desai, 1977).
10 May	**Eastsplainers #5: Visual arts** With multidisciplinary artist Tasha Arlova and Anfisa Doroshenko, a PhD student in cultural studies at Kyiv-Mohyla Academy and senior researcher at the Khanenko Museum for World Arts in Kyiv.
12 May	**Aesthetic Powers and Digital Experiences of Urban Change** GDC/ASCA Cities talk by Mónica Degen (Brunel University London) | Organizer: Carolyn Birdsall.
15 May	**On Topological Regimes** Public lecture and masterclass by Nora Fulton | Part of the We Have Never Had Sex Series | Organizer: Marija Cetinić.
17 May	**From History to Activism: Comics in Contemporary Greece** MSCA Fellowship launch event organized by Kristina Gedgaudaitė | Talk by Kristina Gedgaudaitė | Response: Rik Spanjers | Chair: Maria Boletsi.
19 May	**Somic Acts and FieldARTS at Ruigoord for Maritime Frictions**

	A special event for FieldARTS held in the shadow of the oil terminal in the port of Amsterdam with a listening session, community dinner, talks, film screening, experimental sound art and DJ set | Organized by Jeff Diamanti.
24 May	**This is Film! #6: Dutch Film in the 70s and 80s** Eye-ASCA Series | Lecture by Rommy Albers and former Eye trainees Carolina Battaglini and Martine Bouw with screening of *Waar de Ratten Koning Zijn* (1985, Barbara den Uyl).
25 May	**Operational Imaginaries Workshop** Organised by Abe Geil (University of Amsterdam) and Laliv Melamed (University of Groningen).
25 May	**What are Genitals?** ASCA/NICA seminar series We Have Never Had Sex by the research group Sex Negativity | Public lecture and seminar by Jamieson Webster and Marcus Coelen.
25 May	**B(l)ending Research Methods in Fashion Scholarship** ASCA X *International Journal of Fashion Studies* workshop with Rosie Findlay, Tommy Tse, Paolo Volonté, Marie-Aude Baronian, Daniel de las Heras Romano, Mary Hanlon, Misha Kavka, Vésma Kontere McQuillan, Diego Semerene, Johanna Pezold, Sophie Wood and others.
25 May	**Africadelic 2023 x Tolhuistuin: In Conversation with patricia kaersenhout** The Africadelic Festival opens at Tolhuistuin with Africadelic Talks! Celebration of the work of visual artist patricia kaersenhout, with screening of her short film *Le retour des femmes colibris* (2022).
26 May	**GameLab on Interactive Narratives** GameLab session organized by Toni Pape.
29 May	**Fuck Healing (?): The Insomniac Dreamers** Workshop organized by Erica Biolchini, Bethany Crawford, Dina A. Mohamed, Patricia Pisters and Bogna Bochinska.
31 May	**Bareback Now Symposium** Symposium organized by Misha Kavka and Diego Semerene with Antonios Poulios (psychoanalyst/University of Crete),

	Elliot Evans (University of Birmingham) and Gary Needham (University of Liverpool).
2 June	**Instrumentalizing Culture for Collaboration: Athens Radio Broadcasting during the Axis Occupation (1941-1944)** Laskaridis lecture by Yannis Stamos, Marilena Laskaridis Visiting Research Fellow | Organizer: Maria Boletsi.
2 June	**Memory of Coal: Stories of Extractivism, Fossil Fuels, and Vegetal Pasts from the East of Ukraine** Political Ecologies seminar co-curated with Fabienne Rachmadiev and with guest speaker Darya Tsymbalyuk.
4-7 June	**Activating the Archive: Audiovisual Collections and Civic Engagement, Global Collaboration, and Societal Change** Eye Filmmuseum 8th Eye International Conference in collaboration with ASCA.
6 June	**My Serial Killer, Myself: What the Modern Encounter with the Serial Killer Archetype Says about Media and Humanity** Brown bag discussion with ASCA Affiliate Researcher Laura Glitsos (Edith Cowan University, Perth, Australia) chaired by Mark Deuze.
7 June	**What Is To Be Repaired? Scattered Speculations on Postcolonial Justice** Philosophy and Public Affairs Colloquium with Jamila Mascat (Utrecht University). Response by Jana Cattien.
8-9 June	**Relational Subjects, Objects and Institutions: Artistic Convergences between Latin America and Europe Post-1945** Conference organized by Elize Mazadiego and Felipe Martinez | Keynotes by Diana Sorensen (Harvard University) and Ana Magalhães (Director Museu de Arte Contemporânea - Universidade de São Paulo).
9-10 June	**Troubling Universalisms: Politics and Aesthetics in Critical Theory Symposium** Symposium, masterclass and keynote lecture by Kandice Chuh (CUNY), author of *The Difference Aesthetics Makes: On the Humanities "After Man*" (2019) | Organizers: Ben Moore, Marc Farrant and S. Bergs.

9 June	**Bernadette Mayer Round Table** Round Table organized by Matthew Rana | With Marija Cetinić, Divya Nadkarni, Mia You, Kay Gabriel.
9 June	**Sexual Subjectivity** Discussion with Linda Martin Alcoff (Hunter College, City University New York) and Catriona Mackenzie (Macquarie University) organized by Beate Roessler.
15 June	**Value Beyond the Groove: Musico-Archival Materials as Sources for History** Lecture by Hazem Jamjoum | Organizers: Maksim Abdul Latif and Hannah Bosma.
23 June	**Literature and/on Social Media** Workshop organized by Eleni Papargyriou & Maria Boletsi with the support of the ASCA research group Crisis, Critique and Futurity.
23 June	**Decolonizing Southeast Asian Sound Archives** Online Presentation of DeCoSEAS EU-SEA Visiting Fellow Vu Thi Minh Huong.
26 June	**Film Culture in Transition: An Afternoon in Honor of Thomas Elsaesser** Mini-symposium on the occasion of the 80th birthday of Thomas Elsaesser in honor of his seminal importance for the discipline of Media Studies.
26 June	**The 1981 Massacre in Iran: Uncovering a Forgotten Mass Atrocity** Marking the 42nd anniversary of the 1981 massacre in Iran, the Rastyad Collective (bringing together scholars and investigative journalists) discusses this neglected historical event.
28-30 June	**Forms of (More Than) Human Relationality** ASCA WORKSHOP 2023 | Organized by Nadica Denić, Jasmijn Leeuwenkamp and Eszter Szakács | Keynotes by Kathrin Thiele (Utrecht University), Patricia MacCormack (ARU Cambridge) and Pooja Rangan (Amherst College).
28 June	**Eastsplainers #6: Media & Memory** This edition of Eastsplainers is dedicated to media, cultural memory and conspiracy theories. With Anna Greszta, Maria Plichta and Boris Noordenbos.

8 July-26 August	**Dóra Maurer – SUMUS – We Are Together** Exhibition part of the valorization program of Eszter Szakács' PhD project in the research group IMAGINART.
5 September	**"The Control Center of the Home": Surveillance, Useful Television and American Postwar Domesticity** Online Presentation by Hannah Spaulding for rthe Useful Television Standing Seminar | Organizes: Markus Stauff and Anne-Katrin Weber (University of Lausanne).
11 September	**The Movement to Redress the Japanese Military "Comfort Women": Grassroots Concerns and Responses Today** Guest lecture by Gil-Soo Han (Monash University, Melbourne) | Organizers: Fay Mercier and Marcus Stauff.
20 September	**The Primacy of Private Blame** Philosophy and Public Affairs seminar lecture by Philip Robichaud (VU) | Commentator: Thomas Nys (UvA).
21 September	**Global Africa The Fold: Fashioning K(New) Narrative** Reading group organized by Fairuzah Atchulo, Qidi Feng, and Tommy Tse | Keynote speakers: Erica de Greef and Lesiba Mabitsela, founders of the Africa Fashion Research Institute in Cape Town.
22 September	**The Ethics of End-of-life Decisions** Conference organized on the occasion of the publication of *What Kind of Death: The Ethics of Determining One's Own Death* by Govert den Hartogh | With a keynote by Wayne Sumner and a discussion with Govert Den Hartogh.
22 September	**Breaking the Loop, Closing the Cycle: Recursive Media Aesthetics and Ecology** Breaking the Loop seminar | Organizers Toni Pape, Daniël de Zeeuw and Sofie Njålsdatter Johannessen.
28 September	**Contaminated Temporalities** Lecture by Sasha Shestakova | Organizer: Fabienne Rachmadiev.
28 September	**Walking as Research Practice (WARP): Special Issue WARP x Soapbox Journal** ASCA's WARP Research Group presents the Special Issue WARP x Soapbox Journal.

9 October	**Eastsplainers #7: Indigenous Communities** Discussing indigenous communities from Central and Eastern Europe, and from the Russian Federation in particular, with pianist Aliya Ishakova and Lana Pylaeva.
11 October	**Adorno on the Essay // Film & the Anthropocene** The Critical Cultural Theory Seminar presents two talks by Jack Dignam and Eduardo Carli de Moraes.
11 October	**Sharing Use and Authority: The Value of Group Ownership** Philosophy and Public Affairs Colloquium organized by Beate Roessler and Tijn Smits | Speaker: Yara Al Salman (UU) | Commentator: Johan Olsthoorn (UvA).
12-13 October	**Covering the Russian Invasion of Ukraine: Local Media Professionals and Open Source Investigators** Workshop organized by Lonneke van der Velden, Olga Burlyuk, Johana Kotišová and Guillén Torres Sepulveda.
12-13 October	**Women's Life Writing and Post-Communism** Expert Workshop organized by Marleen Rensen and Anna Seidl.
12-14 October	**The Concept of Total Unity and the Idea of Man: Nature, Man and History in Schellings Identity System from 1804** The second of two international conferences dedicated to Schelling's 1804 Identity System. Co-organized by the CNRS in Paris, the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität in Freiburg, the Bergischen Universität in Wuppertal and ASCA.
13 October	**The Plastic Turn** The ASCA World Literature and Environment Working Group hosts Dr. Ranjan Ghosh | Organizers: Emelia Quinn, Jesse van Amelsvoort, Jeff Diamanti, Elena Menendez and Serra Hughes.
20 October	**History Is Not Context, It's Reality – On Israel/Palestine: The Ongoing Nakba** Organizers: Erella Grassiani, Mikki Stelder, Chiara de Cesari, Sudeep Dasgupta and Yolande Jansen | First in a series of teach-ins about the political and social reality in the region and how we got here.
24-27 October	**Polyphony and Polyrhythm – A Week with Simha Arom** Hosted by Julia Kursell.

25 October **Remix, Reimagine & Reanimate: The Archival Potentials of Videographic Criticism**
The ASCA research group Moving Images: Preservation, Curation, Exhibition, together with ASCA's Videographic Criticism Research Group and UvA's AMIA chapter presents a lecture by Will DiGravio.

27 October **On the Poetics of Sex**
Public lecture, masterclass and poetry reading with Ariana Reines | Organized by ASCA's Sex Negativity Group, part of the seminar We have Never Had Sex.

27 October **History Is Not Context, It's Reality – On Israel/Palestine: International Law and the Right to Resist**
Organisers: Erella Grassiani, Mikki Stelder, Chiara de Cesari, Sudeep Dasgupta and Yolande Jansen. With Jeff Handmaker (EUR/ISS), Omar Barghouti and Alessandra Spadaro.

31 October **Decolonizing Architecture Art Research**
Special Workshop organized by the Artistic Research Group in collaboration with DAAR (Decolonizing Architecture Art Research).

31 October **Eastsplainers #8: Performing Arts**
This edition of Eastsplainers devotes attention to the performing arts of Central and Eastern Europe. With Kasia Lech, Igone de Jongh and Anna Seidl, who address the challenges encountered by art performers during their migration experiences.

31 October **Getting over the Rainbow: 50+ Years of LGBTQ+ Liberation**
The Amsterdam Book Launch of *The Richard Dyer Reader*, edited by Glyn Davis and Jaap Kooijman. Co-organized by IHLIA - LGBTI Heritage, ASCA and NICA.

3 November **The Voice of Vibrant Matter: Eco-Polyphony in Ruth Ozeki's 'A Tale for the Time Being'**
Lecture by Claudia Dellacasa organized by Elio Baldi. Discussant: Jeff Diamanti | Co-hosted by the World Literature and the Environment group.

3 November **History Is Not Context, It's Reality – On Israel/Palestine: EU and Dutch Discourses on Israel/Palestine, and Alternative Voices**
Teach-in organized by Erella Grassiani, Mikki Stelder, Chiara

	de Cesari, Sudeep Dasgupta and Yolande Jansen. With Dimitris Bouris, Noa Roei and Esha Guy Hadjadj.
9 November	**Critical Cultural Theory with Michael Thomas and Katia Hay** Critical Cultural Theory seminar (CCT) with presentations by Michael Thomas and Katia Hay.
10 November	**History Is Not Context, It's Reality – On Israel/Palestine: Technologies of Repression** Teach-in about the political and social reality in the region and how we got here. | Organizers: Erella Grassiani, Mikki Stelder, Chiara de Cesari, Sudeep Dasgupta and Yolande Jansen. With Jill Toh, Naomi Appelman, Valentina Carraro, Miriyam Aouragh, Chris Jones and Tasniem Anwar.
10 November	**Radical Digital Cultures: Exploring Feminist, Queer and Intersectional Technocultures** First session of ASCA-NICA Seminar organized by Sara Nuta and Marissa Willcox.
15 November	**History Is Not Context, It's Reality – On Israel/Palestine: Settler-Colonialism & Legacies of Colonialism** Organizers: Erella Grassiani, Mikki Stelder, Chiara de Cesari, Sudeep Dasgupta and Yolande Jansen | Speakers: David Theo Goldberg (UC Irvine) & Saree Makdisi (UCLA) | Discussant: Annelies Moors (UvA) | Chair: Jan Mendes (UvA).
16-17 November	**Politics of Machine Learning Evaluation** Workshop organized by Dieuwertje Luitse, Anna Schjøtt Hansen and Tobias Blanke.
16 November	**Art + Sacrifice Zone + Biopolitics: Who Has the Right To Live? Activism, Performativity and Necropolitics in the Chilean Environmental Crisis** Talk by Paulina Bronfman, organized by the Art and Activism research group | Moderated by Martina Flores Mendeville & Florence Evans (ASCA PhD candidates).
21 November	**Music as Technology of Transition** First session of the Music Discussion Group, hosting Oliver Seibt.
21 November	**Working on the Self: Psychiatric and Psychotherapeutic Uses of Video**

	Online Presentation by Renée Winter organized by the Useful Television Standing Seminar | Organized by Markus Stauff (ASCA) and Anne-Katrin Weber (University of Lausanne).
21 November	**Objects of Desire** Double book launch with Carolyn Birdsall and Elodie A. Roy.
22 November	**ASCA Summit: Doing Research in a Polarized World** ASCA Summit 2023 with Slava Greenberg, Margriet Schavemaker, Sinine Nakhle, Daisy Tam, Yolande Jansen, Mikki Stelder, Jaap Kooijman, Sruti Bala and Marc Tuters.
23 November	**Archiving Syrian Music and Beyond** Symposium-Workshop organized by Maksim Abdul Latif and Hannah Bosma.
23 November	**Against Aggression: Monstrous and Resonant Forms of Uncontrollability** Public lecture at SPUI25 by Hartmut Rosa | Commentator: Daniel Loick | Moderator: Beate Roessler.
28 November	**Eastsplainers #9: Film & documentary** Aliona van der Horst, Dore van Duivenbode and Otto Boele discuss documentaries that cover historical and recent developments in Poland and the Russian Federation.
30 November	**Caring Chinese Cinemas** Workshop organized by Jeroen de Kloet, Hu Pengnan and Patricia Pisters.
30 November	**Natives Against Nativism, Palestine and Postcolonial France** Book talk in the FTS/ASCA Colonialism and Its Afterlives seminar series with Olivia C. Harrison (University of Southern California | Chair: Sarah Bracke (Sociology, UvA) | Discussant: Rébecca Franco (Sociology, UvA).
5 December	**History Is Not Context, It's Reality – On Israel/Palestine: Palestine as a Feminist Issue** Teach-in organized by Erella Grassiani, Mikki Stelder, Sinin Nakhle, Chiara de Cesari, Sudeep Dasgupta and Yolande Jansen. Speakers: Khadeja Ibrahim and Joharah Baker (MIFTAH), Layal Ftouni (UU) and Sarah Bracke (UvA) | Moderator: Sinin Nakhle.

7 December	**Film Series: Documenting Audibilities** Screening of *Gónô Tmutul: Building a House of Stories* by Christina Juan (London), with discussion of the director with Luc Marraffa and Layan Nijem.
11 December	**ASCA PhD Skills: Publishing and the Academic Job Market** Organized by Jaap Kooijman.
13 December	**Critical Theory and Family Abolition** Philosophy and Public Affairs Series| Speaker: Marina Martinez Mateo (München) | Commentator: Gulzaar Barn.
14 December	**"How long can the moon be caged?" – Voices of Indian Political Prisoners** Book Presentation and Seminar organized by Sruti Bala.
14 December	**Rock Figurations and Philosophy: The "Afterlife" of Rock Painting in Palestina de Goiás, Brazil** Critical Cultural Theory seminar with Carla Milani Damião.
14 December	**Palestine Teaches: Prison Stories** First session of a workshop series on what we can we learn from Palestine | Organizers: Eleri Connick and Safae el Khannoussi.
15-16 December	**Prefiguring World(s) Through Artistic Practice** A series of events at the women's center in Rome, Lucha y Siesta. Organized by Aria Spinelli of the IMAGINART Project.
21 December	**History Is Not Context, It's Reality: Atrocity Crimes (Genocide, War & Crimes Against Humanity) in Israel/Palestine** This teach-in brings perspectives from Holocaust and genocide studies on genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in conversation with international law. Speakers: Raz Segal (Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Stockton University), Alessandra Spadaro (International Law, Utrecht University), Ugur Üngör (Holocaust and Genocide Studies, UvA/NIOD), Nahed Samour (Law and Islamic Studies, The Race-Religion Constellation Project, Radboud University Nijmegen).

New Research Groups

Networked Images

Coordinator: Annet Dekker

This group is part of the CSNI (Centre for the Study of the Networked Image), which brings together researchers from cultural studies, software studies, contemporary art, media and performance practice who seek knowledge and understanding of how network culture transforms the production and circulation of images. CSNI understands that the "networked image" is at the centre of a new global mode of reproduction and representation in which the visual image is paramount. We realise that what constitutes an image has been radically transformed, and with it the theories that allow us to study it. Although we have to date largely followed a historicity based on the photograph, we recognise the anachronism, and the need for an enlarged scope that can account for the image as a dynamic, distributed and computational object that unsettles received notions of space-time — no longer limited to traditional representation (what media artist and theorist Harun Farocki has called "operative image"). Yet in using the term "networked image" — preferring it to operative image (or even post-photography) — we aim to emphasise the network as a descriptor of dynamic social relations as much as technological infrastructure. Moreover, our aim is to broaden the discussion of the networked image to address planetary scale computation, the politics of infrastructure, and wider ecologies that would include non-human entities and environmental concerns.

Activities: Seminar every 6 weeks in which group members discuss ongoing projects, give peer feedback and read new and classic texts relevant to their research.

We are also part of international collaborative events that are organized within the larger network of CSNI. See: https://www.centreforthestudyof.net.

Decolonial Meridians: Art-Histories-Theories

Coordinators: Sanjukta Sunderason, Eszter Szakács, Elize Mazadiego

This is a new research group at ASCA that aims to read – in collective and relational ways – intersections of art (artistic form/iconography/genre), historiography (histories/narratives/schools) and epistemology (knowledge/thought/theory). We are colleagues across Art History and Cultural Analysis, and open to researchers and early career scholars – across the humanities – who are interested in thinking theoretically *via* rooted, particular histories *beyond* hierarchical geographies sustained by imperialism (for instance, "empire/metropole"), Cold War (for instance, "First, Second, Third Worlds"), or globalization (for instance, "Global North/South"). We want

to think via the concept *Meridians.* While the concept of *meridian* combines time, space, and transit, its construction historically is tied to colonial reordering of geographies. By using "decolonial" *meridians* we are rejecting this rationality and also forging potential "relational" (Glissant) lines – of dialogues, intersections, and even conflict – between 20th and 21st century artistic thought from widely disparate geographies. This includes the decolonizing worlds of Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin Africa, as well as counter/hegemonic art and visual practices in European, East European, and North American contexts. We hope to make *Decolonial Meridians* a close-reading and workshop-based collective that will think via the connecting lines between art-histories-theories and provide a space for graduate students/researchers to share thoughts in progress. Such a space is much-needed, given the thirst among students to read non-Eurocentric texts/histories/forms, but also a potential danger that arises from reading the "non-Eurocentric" in dissociation with Euro-American (mostly hegemonic, or even the marginal therein) spaces. Such dissociation (suggested in current decolonial thought, for instance, via the concept of "de-linking") – while theoretically and politically critical – is historically unsustainable given the entangled nature of such geographies. *Decolonial Meridians thus aims to develop a social-intellectual space and conceptual vocabularies for connecting geographies/artistic epistemes historically and critically – via contradictions and difficulties as much as via affinities and potentials*.

Cosmologies Workgroup: The Ontological Turn
Coordinators: Erica Biolchini, R. Gold and Halbe H. Kuipers
Cosmological thinking as it has been popping up in the humanities of late, offers some elbow room in the all too dominant, all too human modern ontology, or what John Law aptly calls the "One World World". Finding its expressions perhaps primarily in anthropology and the study of non-modern ontologies, spearheaded by figures such as Claude Lévi-Strauss, and more recently Eduardo Viveiros de Castro and Eduardo Kohn, it has found or refound its ways to other fields as well including philosophy, notably Alfred North Whitehead's cosmological process philosophy; politics, as with Isabelle Stengers and in her wake Bruno Latour's cosmopolitics; technics, with for instance Yuk Hui's cosmotechnics; but also the fields of cinema and literature where it sets out to open the way for non-representational sensibilities in attuning to more-than human worlds.

2024 ASCA Awards

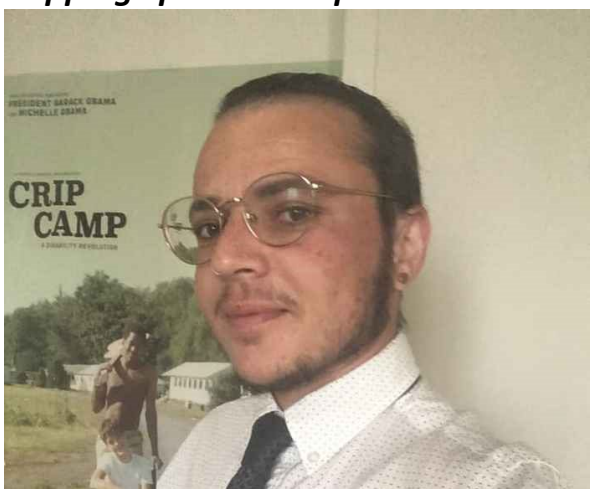
The 2024 ASCA Awards Committee, consisting of Anna Greszta, Divya Nadkarni and Gaston Franssen, has given awards to the following researchers: Slava Greenberg, Shahin Nasiri, and Nadica Denić.

2024 ASCA Article Award: Nadica Denić, Epistemic Decolonization of Migration: Digital Witnessing of Crisis and Borders in *For Sama*. In Blaagaard BB, Marchetti S, Ponzanesi S, Bassi S, editors, *Postcolonial Publics: Art and Citizen Media in Europe*. Venice: Edizioni Ca' Foscari. 2023. p. 95-112.



It is evident that migration is one of the key issues of our age. A far more complex, underlying issue pertains to the question how knowledge about migration is produced. What, exactly, do we know about migration? Which media, actors and institution set the parameters of the conversation about migration and to what extent are migrant voices included in this conversation? This year, the ASCA Best Article Award is awarded to a study that investigates how forms of digital witnessing can intervene in migration discourses and policies. The author of this article does so by focusing on *For Sama*, a 2019 documentary directed by Waad al-Kateab and Edward Watts. This documentary captures key events in the life of al-Kateab and her family as they grapple with the impact of the Syrian Civil War and the lived experience of migration as a profound crisis of everyday life. The author argues, and convincingly demonstrates, how al-Kateab, by this act of witness, gives voice to the migrant reality and succeeds in addressing audiences on her own terms. By doing so, the documentary contributes to the process of epistemic decolonization of migration. Considering the timely and urgent topic of this article, and its profound and deeply emphatic analysis, we unanimously agreed that the ASCA Best Article Award should be awarded to the article 'Epistemic Decolonization of Migration: Digital Witnessing of Crisis and Borders in *For Sama*' by Nadica Denić.

2024 ASCA Book Award : Slava Greenberg, *Animated Film and Disability: Cripping Spectatorship*. Indiana University Press, 2023.



Slava Greenberg. Animated Film and Disability: Cripping Spectatorship. Indiana University Press, 2023.

Can one see with ears and hear with eyes? A seemingly simple question that follows from Slava Greenberg's book confronts and reconfigures one's implicit sensory hierarchies of being-in- and experiencing the world. A reading that makes one question their understanding of the everyday is a good one; a reading that induces (self-)reflection on the reader's own positionality is a remarkable piece of intellectual work.

Slava Greenberg explores the complexities of disabled bodyminds representations in what may be the most transgressive cinematic convention – animation. As a powerful tool of imagination that goes beyond the possibilities of physical bodies, not only human ones, Greenberg's cases are a fun ride, ranging from ancillary (and fascinating) insights about mainstream productions like Pixar's Nemo and Netflix's hit BoJack Horseman to in-depth case studies of avant-garde animations like Rocks in My Pockets. Here, animation becomes not only an entry into the world of crip filmmakers but also a means to evoke in spectators an alternative understanding and awareness of their own bodies. Greenberg subverts conventional perceptions of gaze- and able-centric spectatorship, and by rethinking both audio and visual pleasures, asks what happens if we sensory disorient and crip (blind, deaf) the spectator?

The book is erudite in execution, ASCA in spirit, and empathetic in its message: animated lived experiences and their innovative artistic forms, when confronted with critical disability studies perspective, give us a powerful tool to envision futures that will accommodate diverse bodyminds.

2024 ASCA Dissertation Award: Shahin Nasiri, *Rethinking Freedom from the Perspective of Refugees: Lived Experiences of (Un)freedom in Europe's Border Zones*



Shahin Nasiri's thesis, "Rethinking Freedom from the Perspective of Refugees: Lived Experiences of (Un)freedom in Europe's Border Zones," speaks to a question that has long been at the center-stage of political theory and political philosophy: what is freedom? Where Shahin consolidates his groundbreaking contribution is in asking: what is freedom from the perspective of refugees, political subjects who have attempted to escape acute conditions of unfreedom? The question of freedom, Shahin argues, is at the heart of "every genuine inquiry into the meaning and significance of refugeehood."

At stake in refugees' aspirations of freedom and experiences of (un)freedom, Shahin argues, is a crucial epistemological and political issue: Eurocentric conceptions of freedom take racialized concepts of citizenship and statehood as prerequisites. In drawing out this epistemological limitation, Shahin argues that refugees are excluded not only from the domain of political membership, but also from any agential claims to freedom. In response and in challenge, Shahin pushes at the limits of the concept of freedom. How can the very nature of freedom be rearticulated, Shahin asks, by taking as a paradigm the lived experience and perspectives of refugees? Rather than simply taking refugeehood as a state of unfreedom, the thesis asks to understand "the heterogenous practices and projects of freedom that are expressed in [refugees'] lived experiences of flight and practices against acts of border making."

This project is much more than one that champions for the cause of refugees in today's time of increasing political polarization and indifference, particularly in the Global North, to the plight of refugees who are seen either as abject subjects in need of protection or as disruptive "enemy-like strangers." Shahin's work is a theoretical and philosophical undertaking, as much as it is an ethically driven one. The interpretive phenomenological method that Shahin takes up and further develops through his interviews with in-flight refugees in Lesvos

and other parts of Greece allows for a paradigmatic development of a concept of freedom from the lived experiences of refugees. This we might say, is a powerful example of what a decolonial theoretical practice might look like. The concept of freedom receives its critical substance as entangled with and constructed through the refugees' everyday practices of being in community: navigating abandonment, making friends, sharing resources, etc., from outside of the hegemonic frameworks and privileges of citizenship and state-membership.

Subsequently, Shahin's project poses a timely challenge and offers a corrective to the paradoxes of un-freedom implicit in human rights discourses. It further contributes to broadens critical theoretical discourses on solidarity, community, political friendship. The committee particularly noted Shahin's warm and solidary handling of complex theoretical material alongside sensitive personal narratives of refugees, to advance a thoughtful and nuanced rethinking of the concept of freedom.

Dissertation Defenses (14)

Stacey Vorster

Curating Justice After Apartheid: South Africa´s Constitutional Court Art Collection

Supervisors: Carrol Clarkson & Mia Lerm-Hayes | 11 January 2023

Stacey was the curator of this collection (2012-16) before embarking on this research project with Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes and Carrol Clarkson as her supervisors. The study asks: What insights do artistic and curatorial frameworks have to offer to the project of justice? The growing body of interdisciplinary and provocative research on the relationship between the humanities and jurisprudence is evidence of the value of a broader range of discourses and approaches to address past and ongoing conflicts in a deeply unjust world. This study takes an art historical approach informed by the theoretical focus of cultural analysis to investigate the art collection of the Constitutional Court of South Africa as a means through which to examine the potential of art to recalibrate accepted principles of justice. As a monument to the democratic project of the country as well as the most senior bearer of responsibility for human rights, the Constitutional Court's carefully considered visual interface and its collection of over six hundred artworks, amassed over the last 25 years, provide a rich entry point into establishing art's recalibrating potential in sites of justice.

Pablo Muruzabal Lamberti

Befriending the Ears - The Transformative Power of Listening

Supervisor: Josef Früchtl | 2 February 2023

In Greek and Roman antiquity, philosophical discourse was meant to form one's character according to the ideals of a certain school of thought. Oral teaching, and therefore, listening, was seen as the most appropriate vehicle for encouraging practitioners to transform themselves over time. Philosophy was meant to pass through the hearing into the soul. In this dissertation, Pablo Muruzabal Lamberti seeks to contribute to the creation of an overview of the history of philosophy on listening in Western thought, a subject which to this day has received scant attention. In addition, his aim is to revitalise some of the existential dimensions of spiritual listening for us today and provide orientation for present-day Philosophy as a Way of Life (PWL) practices.

Çiğdem Buğdaycı Gürsoy

Recapitulating Love: Modernity, Secularity, and Sufism in Turkey

Supervisors: Yolande Jansen, Toni Pape & Brian Silverstein | 20 February 2023

This dissertation argues that the notion of love in Turkey refers not merely to an emotion but rather to reason, rationality, and a scientific mindset. It is situated among a plethora of interconnected fields, from culture to politics, and is woven into questions of national identity. It focuses on an eclectic range of examples, including modernist literature, a cartoon, and popular contemporary television series, all of which address *ashk* from various discursive perspectives. This emphasis on love, *ashk* in Turkish, is derived from its ambivalent meaning in that it both refers to romantic and Sufi love. Using Michel Foucault's genealogical method, I draw a genealogy of love in Turkey by situating *ashk* at the intersection of modernization, secularism, gender, and Islam. Although *ashk* signifies an epistemological break with the Ottoman Islamic past, primarily in republican discourse, I argue that the Sufi concept of love persists in secularized Turkey in diverse forms. Throughout my analysis, love, with its ambivalence, both complies with and resists secularization, highlighting the crucial role of emotions, culture, and traditions in the making of an alternative modernity.

Arnoud Arps

Forever Narrating "Merdeka": Memori Melompat, Popular Culture, and the Indonesian War of Independence

Supervisors: Jeroen de Kloet & Leonie Schmidt | 29 March 2023

The Indonesian War of Independence is ubiquitous in Indonesian popular culture. Memories of the past and the cultural products that represent it go hand in hand. These cultural products participate in a narrativizing project that help to define the Indonesian War of Independence and the meaning of freedom (*merdeka*) after Indonesia's independence. By analysing case studies from historical re-enactment, cinema, and music, this dissertation studies how cultural memories of the Indonesian War of Independence (1945-1949) are produced, represented, and consumed through contemporary Indonesian war-themed popular culture released between 2009 and 2019. It proposes to see these cultural memories as a form of *memori melompat* ('jumping memory'). In Indonesia, memories of the war travel temporarily, briefly, and not far from the nation. It therefore suggests more of a jump rather than a journey.

Erik Borra

Object-activity: Repurposing the Dual Nature of Web Data for Digital Research

Supervisor: Richard Rogers | 11 April 2023

In this dissertation I address what I call the dual nature of web data. I underline how central content objects of online platforms not only hold social and cultural data but also encapsulate programmed actions that afford social activity with these objects (cf. Engeström, 2005). By connecting concepts from object-oriented programming with methodologies for a sociology of associations, I repurpose the unitary actions (cf. Agre, 1994) defined by platforms on natively digital objects to add methods, measures, and research instruments to digital methods (Rogers, 2013a) and controversy mapping (Venturini & Munk, 2021). Addressing calls to attend to mediation effects in platform data (Lazer et al, 2021; Marres, 2015a), my focus on the dual nature of web data highlights both how online platforms participate in social activity and how object-activity can be repurposed to demarcate issue spaces, study the representation of voice, and characterize issues using measures of partisanship and controversiality. Based on data from Twitter, Yahoo! search, and Wikipedia, my case studies contribute to academic fields like journalism studies, political communication, the public understanding of science and technology, and cultural heritage.

Oluchi Igili

Let´s Make the Law Because We Live the Law: New Perspectives on the Role of Political Theatre in Nigeria

Supervisors: Kati Röttger & Sruti Bala | 21 April 2023

This dissertation investigates the role theatre practitioners played in the democratic evolvement of Nigeria from the 1940s. It situates the investigation first within the larger framework of political theatre and specifically in the interrogation of laws deemed inimical to the citizens' wellbeing. It connects the dots between diverse theatrical forms: folk opera, modern(ist) plays and TfD, and from that interplay introduces the Legislative Theatre methodology as a form which could conceivably be employed in drafting Nigerian citizens into the lawmaking processes. It theorises Legislative Theatre as a *playfully serious* engagement which facilitates the navigation of the interstice between theatre as 'play' and theatre as a productive enterprise. From the perspective of Nigeria's current democratic situation, the dissertation argues for the resuscitation of political theatre as practiced pre-1999, the rejigging of TfD and the adoption of Legislative Theatre with the intent of cultivating healthier

democratic habits and engaging the citizens in making the laws under which they live by playfully living the law in the theatre.

Josh Weeks

Roberto Bolaño and the Labyrinthine Mode: Navigating Neoliberal Modernity

Supervisors: Shelley Godsland & Hanneke Stuit | 31 May 2023

This project analyses how the textual strategies deployed by the Chilean author Roberto Bolaño contribute to a critical (re)framing of neoliberal modernity. To do this, it proposes an understanding of Bolaño's fiction through 'the labyrinthine mode': a literary poetics that replicates the effects of trying to navigate a labyrinth. Writing in the wake of the dictatorial instalment of neoliberalism in his native Chile and beyond, Bolaño posits the labyrinth as an inescapable structure that expresses the space-time of the globalised present. In doing this, he prepares the ground for an immanent critique of neoliberal modernity – a critique that foregrounds the networks of violence that underpin late capitalism whilst simultaneously establishing narrative and affective lines of flight through which hope may emerge.

Tjalling Valdés Olmos

Genres of Rurality. Contesting Normative Imaginations of the Globalized US Rural

Supervisors: Esther Peeren & Jaap Kooijman | 19 June 2023

In *Genres of Rurality: Unsettling Affect in Popular Imaginations of the Globalized US Rural* I ask what kind of understandings of the 21st-century globalized US rural emerge through popular reiterations of established rural genres like the idyll, the Western, and the anti-idyll. My study engages these understandings as determinately affective in their function and, as such, I provide an analysis of what kind of divergent feelings dominant genres of US rurality manage, and investigate how such feelings inform political mobilizations of the US rural in a contemporary moment that is marked by a supposedly increasing rural-urban divide. By also turning my attention to critical reframings of US rural and non-urbanized space, I ask what happens when, for example, queer, Black, and/or Indigenous subjects, experiences, and histories interrupt dominant historical and contemporary imaginations of US rurality. While critical and subversive rearticulations of US rurality can certainly misalign rural-urban binaries and divides, redirect normative feelings that stick to US rural geographies, and potentially inform different political futures, such texts also often fall back on some of the insidious and exclusionary promises dominant genres of rurality exude. This suggests that it will take a great deal of imaginative and affective labor to radically unhinge the popular imagination of

the US rural from the promises it has articulated since the early days of settler colonialism and prompts the main question: what kinds of collective and ambiguous attachments, fantasies of belonging and moments of discontent, affective investments and disinvestments, and political stakes do contemporary imaginations of US rurality manage, and for whom?

Gemma Newlands

In the Eye of the Beholder: Ascribing Value to Work in the Digital Economy

Supervisors: Mark Deuze & Christian Fieseler | 22 June 2023

As new occupations emerge in response to the growth of the digital economy, the relationship between digital technology and labour has resulted in significant changes in how work is evaluated. By critically examining the ways in which humans and artificial intelligence (AI) are co-evolving and the ways in which work is becoming more technical and less human(e), this dissertation provides insights into the challenges and opportunities of this rapidly changing landscape. The integrated dissertation offers six distinct and self-standing articles which provide theoretical, empirical and methodological contributions to understanding the process of work evaluation in the digital economy. Taking a micro-level approach, I present the results of a qualitative interview study that I conducted with app-based food delivery couriers in Norway and Sweden on the topics of workplace recognition and perceived employability. I then take a meso-level approach by examining companies utilizing digitally mediated labour, investigating how these organizations surveil, measure and advertise the human labour they depend on. Finally, to address the macro-level societal perceptions, I detail the results of a quantitative study into the perceived occupational prestige and perceived occupational social value for a comprehensive and robust list of occupations, including those in the digital economy. This work is framed as a contribution that speaks to different audiences, primarily sociologists and other social scientists, but also policymakers, business leaders, and the general public, who all have a stake in understanding the implications of AI in the workplace.

Shahin Nasiri

Rethinking Freedom from the Perspective of Refugees: Lived Experiences of (Un)freedom in Europe's Border Zones

Supervisors: Yolande Jansen & Daniel Loick |13 September 2023

In mainstream political discourse, refugeehood is increasingly being associated with victimhood, powerlessness, and abnormality, and political crises. This prevailing framework fundamentally disregards refugees' political subjectivity and ignores emancipatory phenomena and practices of freedom, which are

embedded and expressed in refugees' migratory movements. This philosophical investigation aims to contribute to our understanding of the dynamic relationship of freedom and unfreedom from the perspective of refugees. To examine this dynamic relationship, this study draws on narratives and lived experiences of refugees, which were collected during in-depth interviews with refugees (Greece). These experiential accounts have been analysed and theoretically discussed in accordance with the guidelines of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). This study critically contextualizes refugees' perceptions and understandings of freedom in ongoing theoretical discussions concerning refugeehood and freedom. In doing so, it explores the multifaceted act of flight, lived experiences of (un)freedom, socio-political structures of abandonment, and autonomous relations and arrangements by which refugees enact freedom in receiving states.

Moosje Goosen

Learning to Live With Ghosts: The Practice of Research

Supervisors: Patricia Pisters & Esther Peeren | 5 October 2023

This research engages with the age-old existential questions that have preoccupied philosophy from its beginning: How to live? How to die? In dialogue with, first and foremost, the work of Jacques Derrida, I attempt to describe the tension that arises when, becoming ill, these general questions become particular and come to *matter* personally. Parallel to this research, I was diagnosed with an incurable auto-immune disorder, which required me to prepare for death, or a lung transplant—which I received in 2017. How to continue practicing philosophical thought while ill, when the body is foregrounded by continuous practical concerns? Using a phenomenological approach and deviating from the norms and conventions of academic discourse, this research makes a hauntological intervention into philosophy, from its spectral margins; from my sick-bed. As such, it looks at what thinking as a practice and experience entails, and under what conditions it is made possible. With texts by Virginia Woolf, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, Edgar Allan Poe, Annie Ernaux, M. NourbeSe Philip, and others, it argues for the presence of literature and poetry in and as philosophical thinking—as an alternative method to engage in the questions of life (and death), always as *lived experiences*, rather than as object of knowledge. The dissertation concludes with *On Wards*, an experimental work of autobiographical fiction about the experience of *having survived*, thanks to organ donation.

Lamyk Bekius

'Behind the Computer Screens': The Use of Keystroke Logging for Genetic Criticism Applied to Born-digital Works of Literature

Supervisors: Karina van Dalen-Oskam, Dirk van Hulle & Mariëlle Leijten | 6 October 2023

The digital environment in which present-day literature is composed changes the materiality of the sources available for genetic criticism significantly, since common word processors tend to hide the writing operations: additions are visualised on our screen as inline text production, and deleted text 'disappears' from the screen. This makes it a difficult endeavour to reconstruct the writing process, but does it herald the feared end of genetic criticism? Behind the computer screens argues that this will not be the case as long as genetic criticism adapts to working with digital files. As one of the ways in which genetic criticism can adapt to the Digital Age, the study examines the use of one method in particular: keystroke logging. To explore the possibilities of keystroke logging, it analyses the writing processes of Gie Bogaert, Jente Posthuma, Roos van Rijswijk, David Troch, and Ellen Van Pelt. By examining this keystroke logging data, we can study the writing process at an unprecedented level of granularity, including the sequentiality of text production and revision, which allows for a new type of what this study calls 'nanogenetic' research.

Eva Sancho Rodriguez

The Politics of the Apolitical: Irony, Sincerity, Engagement

Supervisors: Josef Früchtl, Patricia Pisters & Robin Celikates | 4 December 2023

What do political engagement and apathy mean against the backdrop of a rapidly changing society? What kinds of problems are being expressed when people complain that young individuals are too ironic or too sincere? This dissertation explores the problems of understanding contemporary (progressive) citizenship by analyzing the cultural preoccupation with irony and sincerity in post-millennial Anglosphere Western culture. It presents a framework of philosophical and cultural-historic analysis in order to understand the valuation of the Modern ideal of 'sincerity' for citizenship. While central to modern culture, there is a lack of clarity in how 'sincerity' can be an ideal that revitalizes citizenship. For this reason, the work of Stanley Cavell, Charles Taylor and Lionel Trilling provide specific criteria. Additionally, the problems of individualized and fragmented societies are difficult to counter via the appeal to sincerity and authenticity. The risk of a "Wordsworthian" personalization of politics risks obscuring the necessary procedural (temporally unfolding) dimensions of political engagement and democracy. An exploration of different 'structures of feeling' analyses the dangers of the ideal within

specific Western conditions. Its conclusion points to the need to create balance between the personalized and procedural aspects of political imagination and self-understanding, and offers insights as to how to navigate this imbalance.

Anke Bosma

"I Don't Think That's Romantic At All!": Imagining the Dutch Rural in an Age of Globalization

Supervisors: Esther Peeren & Hanneke Stuit | 13 December 2023

The rural is deeply affected by and intertwined with globalization, but this is often rendered invisible in popular culture. Bosma's dissertation examines how Dutch literature, film, and television imagines the contemporary rural, specifically to what extent it obscures or makes apparent the impact of globalization, including colonial legacies, capitalist extraction, environmental harm, the exploitation of migrant labor, racism, and disinvestment, on rural areas. A particular focus is on how rural imaginations that lean on idyllic and authentic ruralities tend to gravitate towards supporting traditional power structures and xenophobia and as such have the potential to foster the emergence of extreme right populist and white supremacist politics.

Grants

ASCA members were awarded over 7 million Euros for their research initiatives.

Alice Plutino	Marie Curie Fellowship	140,718.24
Jeroen de KLoet	ERC Advanced	2,500,000.00
Thomas Nys	NWO Open Competition M	400,000.00
Sanjukta Sunderason	ERC Consolidator	2,000,000.00
Leonie Schmidt	ERC Consolidator	2,000,000.00
Total		7,040,718.24

Marie Curie Grant – Alice Plutino
DREAM-Film: Democratising Research and Restoration of Audiovisual Media and Film - Practices and methods to improve the accessibility to restoration and promote competency exchange
Alice Plutino was awarded a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions fellowship, which is part of the European Union's research and innovation programme Horizon Europe. The fellowships are intended to stimulate the cross-border mobility of experienced researchers both inside and outside the European Union.
The fellowship is a personal grant, which last for two years. The project is supervised by Giovanna Fossati.

ERC Advanced Grant – Jeroen de Kloet
Resilient Cultures – Music, Art, and Cinema in Mainland China and Hong Kong



The European Research Council (ERC) has awarded an Advanced Grant to Jeroen de Kloet, Professor of Globalisation Studies at the UvA. The grant is in the amount of 2.5 million euros. De Kloet will use the grant to conduct research into popular music, contemporary art and queer cinema in Mainland China and Hong Kong. The cultural sector in Mainland China and Hong Kong is

changing rapidly, largely due to processes of digitisation and platformisation. Platforms such as WeChat, Douban, Douyin/TikTok, Xiaohongshu and Weibo enable new forms of culture and create new audiences. In 'Resilient Cultures – Music, Art, and Cinema in Mainland China and Hong Kong' (RESCUE) De Kloet will investigate the resilience of pop music, contemporary art and queer cinema in a rapidly changing cultural, technological and (geo)political context. Within RESCUE, De Kloet will set up a network of scholars, cultural practitioners and NGOs in Mainland China, Hong Kong, East Asia and Europe. To increase the social impact of the project, there will be several workshops, a podcast series, performances, outreach activities at major music festivals, participatory art projects, film screenings and an exhibition. The research findings will testify to the polyphony, diversity and vitality of cultural productions in Mainland China and Hong Kong. In addition, De Kloet hopes that they will also inspire and lead to connections with other places in the world.

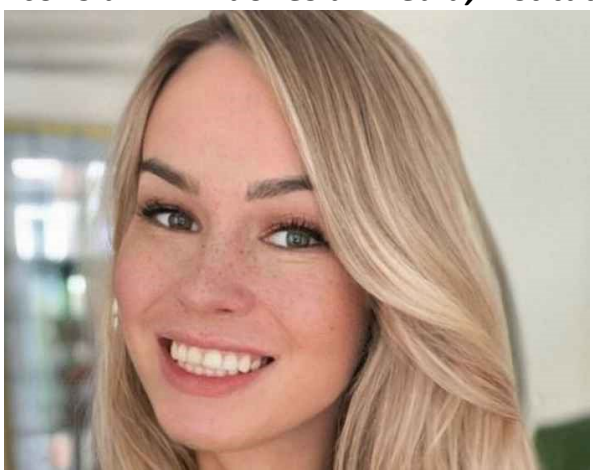
NWO Open Competition Grant – Thomas Nys
Moral Truth: Exploring the Concept of Practical Cognition in Kant's Ethics
Moral judgments seem to claim objective validity. To believe torture is permissible is a mistake. But how should we understand this error? Within Kantian ethics, this objectivity is currently seen as the result of a process of "construction": moral principles are rules of action to which we subscribe as rational beings. Moral knowledge, then, takes shape through a rational process. This research argues that Kant employed a more robust idea of moral knowledge through a close analogy between the practical and theoretical. Not only does this provide a more faithful Kant interpretation, but also a stronger foundation for moral knowledge.

ERC Consolidator Grant – Sanjukta Sunderason
Entangled Freedoms: Decolonial Modernisms as Transnational Relations of Resistance, 1940s-1980s



How have artists and thinkers in the decolonising 20th-century worlds of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East imagined freedom, especially in relation to its contesting meanings during the Cold War? In her research, Sunderason removes the concept of freedom from the hegemonic contradictions of 'First World' versus 'Second World' values, and instead examines freedom through (artistic) interventions and representations of independence, liberation, and emancipation in the 'Third World'. Sunderason proposes turning 'decolonial modernisms' – modernist art that emerged uniquely within 20th-century decolonisation – into critical historical archives. With her project team, Sunderason will connect diverse histories and multilingual archives to develop new methodologies for theorising decolonisation through dialogue and solidarity as well as through the differences and contradictions that shape the Global South.

ERC Consolidator Grant – Leonie Schmidt
Eco-Islam in Indonesia: Media, Institutions, Publics



Innovative solutions to the climate issue are often sought within the natural sciences - technical fixes such as geo-engineering, for example. But climate change is also a problem that the humanities must address, says Schmidt. In her project she will therefore conduct research into cultural approaches to climate change. She will focus specifically on the Global South, much of which is on the front lines of climate change. While the Global South has seen a wide array of creative experiments and cultural approaches to climate issues, this has not so far been reflected in research. In Indonesia, for example, an eco-movement has emerged within Islam in which artists from the world of pop music, films, TV and on social media read the Koran as a ‘green’ book which calls on Muslims to be stewards of the earth. This and other cultural approaches from the Global South will be at the centre of Schmidt’s research.

Gerda Henkel Grant – Stefan Niklas

A Planetary Aesthetics for the Future Democratic Society

The project develops the programmatic outlines of a theory of planetary aesthetics as contributing to the reflective self-understanding of democratic co-existence under the critical conditions of the “Anthropocene”. Such a theory reflects: how aesthetic practices enable ways to imagine and to virtually experience the planetary system of the earth, how this opens up a perspective on the continued habitability of the planet as the fundamental goal and self-understanding of democratic coexistence, how especially the art of science fiction offers the concrete forms and speculative content for such a planetary perspective, and how the debate about the political dimension of the "planetary age" must urgently be expanded towards the aesthetic. The three sub-projects address (1) the theoretical links between aesthetics, democracy, and the study of the earth system, (2) science fiction as the aesthetic “pre-school” for a speculative perspective of the planetary, and (3) the programmatic synthesis of such a planetary aesthetics for the coming democratic society.

ArtiC Seed Grant – Noa Roei

Aesthetic Configurations, Impact and Spaces of Care



As part of the UvA-wide theme-based collaboration programme, nine midsize projects and 12 seed grants have been awarded. These grants enable UvA scholars from different faculties to collaborate on small-scale, innovative interdisciplinary research projects or to prepare grant proposals. ArtiC: Art in Care - Aesthetic Configurations, Impact and Spaces of Care is one of the seed grants that was awarded funding; it belongs to the 'Healthy Future' sub-theme of the programme, that attends to mental and physical health in relation to cultural factors, behaviour, participation in society and the realisation of equal

opportunities. ArtiC is a collaboration between the humanities, medical and social and behavioural faculties. Its main focus is to investigate how caregivers interact with aesthetic interventions, such as art spaces in the hospital. The project also aims to explore how artistic interventions in health care can best be evaluated. This grant project builds on the existing work of the non-academic partner Stichting Project Stimulus, that explores the collaborative potential between museums and hospitals for the creation of sustainable working and living environments through the curation of art exhibition experiences. Project team: Noa Roei, Assistant Professor, Department of Literary and Cultural Analysis, AIHR, Faculty of Humanities; Jeanette Pols, Professor, Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, Amsterdam UMC; Maya Lane, Lecturer, Faculty of Social and Behavioural Science, AISSR; Simone Stergioula, independent researcher, ASCA

New PhD Candidates (27)

Parvez Alam, *On the Genealogy of Walter Benjamin's Conception of Now-Time: The Significance of Sufi Influence in the Analysis of Theoretical, Cultural and Political Representations of the Now*
Supervisors: Maria Boletsi, Joost de Bloois & Yaniv Hagbi
Walter Benjamin in his On the Concept of History constructed a concept called "now-time", which he also describes as a non-linear conception of messianic time. In this research, I will propose an interpretation of this concept that genealogically connects it with the concept of *waqt* found in Sufi literature and Islamicate philosophy. We live in a present in which the production of perpetual crisis has become the norm in mainstream popular culture, conspiratorial and far-right subcultures, as well as in mainstream political rhetoric. The proposed genealogy of now-time will shed new light on the relevance of the concept in the study and critique of cultural objects that represent our present as a period (often perpetual) of crises.

Fairuzah Munaaya Atchulo, *A Fashionable Mediating Power: Examining the Role of Fashion as a Mediating Power in Africa-China Relations in Kenya and Mozambique*
Supervisors: Tommy Tse & Patricia Pisters
Relying on a methodology of interviews, focus groups, policy analysis and on-site evaluation, this thesis situates Africa-China relations within a neocolonial paradigm in Kenya and Mozambique, and within this context offers a critical examination of fashion as a cross-cultural exchange between Africans and China to exhume the various perspectives on how fashion is created, circulated, expressed, valued and used as a mediator and resistor. The theoretical framework for this examination includes theories of Neocolonialism, Soft Power and Cultural Identity with a concurrent, multi-level framework research design with fashion at the center of two categories of Internal (case countries) and External factors (China).

Ilker Bahar, *Mirror Dwelling in VRChat, Its Queer Potential and Role in Community Building and Intimacy*
Supervisors: Misha Kavka & Toni Pape
This research aims to delve into the social/cultural dynamics of VRChat platform. With a digital ethnography in VRCHat and its Discord servers, it will investigate 1) how users interact with each other, form and maintain relationships, and experience intimacy and sexuality in VRChat, discuss 2) the role VR/AR wearables play in users' perceptual, affective, and embodied

experience, and explore 3) the impact of immersion technologies on self-expression, identity, authenticity, and performativity. Hence, it will contribute to our understanding of the prospects of mediated body, identity, and intimacy in the Web 3.0 era by engaging with queer, affect, and cultural theories.

Rodrigo Brum, *Through Southern Lenses: A Post-Colonial Exploration of Film Schooling in Africa and Latin America*

Supervisors: Giovanna Fossati & Asli Özgen

This research project has two interconnected objectives. It seeks to (1) critically examine the Third Cinema movement's impact on pedagogical projects and (2) compose a dissertation that explores the diverse paths taken by young filmmakers to consolidate their artistic practices within the social, political, and economic constraints of the Global South, providing a comprehensive reflection on educational methods tailored to the specific needs of countries in Latin America and Africa. Within the current landscape of cinema studies, little attention has been devoted to the educational journeys of filmmakers in the Global South, as scholars and critics often prioritize the final cinematic products over the formative process. Therefore, this research endeavor strives to fill this void by exploring and addressing the challenges and opportunities that shape film education in these regions. The research methodology involves a comprehensive examination of pedagogical projects within the context of the Third Cinema movement, an analysis of the conceptual foundations underpinning these projects, and interviews with African and Latin American filmmakers regarding their formative years. These interviews will shed light on filmmakers' training experiences, creative processes, and the impact of formal and informal education on their work.

Bethany Crawford, *Pleasuring Technics*

Supervisors: Misha Kavka & Toni Pape

Starting from the theoretical position of technics as the “exteriorisation” of memory and affect, which recursively conditions culture, this research propositionally considers pleasure as an influential affective force with the potential to exceed and pervert the contemporary economic structures of technical production. Through analysis of selected *vibratory media*, extending from, and beyond, technical objects that are explicitly related to the stimulation of pleasure within the sex-tech industry, this research will analyse modes of vibration as related to both technical production and pleasure by means of motion, reverberation, resonance and circuitry. Interrogating the conditions of technical production warrants critical enquiry in the contemporary era where almost every facet of lived existence is

technologically mediated. Working from vibration as a physical action that sensorially privileges aural and tactile perception situates this research within a queer and feminist critical theoretical framework through focus on bodily experience which challenges the ocularcentrism of much contemporary Western critical theory. With the understanding of pleasure as a corporeal and sensory creative response, this thesis will methodologically synergise creative practice and theoretical investigation.

Qidi Feng, *Wig Trade in Guangzhou: Entangled Beauty, Authenticity, and Identity*

Supervisors: Tommy Tse & Jeroen de Kloet

This project will explore the China-Africa trade of wig and other beauty products in Guangzhou. It will examine how beauty, real/fake hair, and the authenticity of blackness are entangled through wig trade in China. Rather than focusing only on the economy and in/formality of China-Africa trade, this project proposes to understand wig trade as a mediated process, as to detangle the plural meanings of authenticity and its intersectionality with marginalised history, racialised gender, and individual desires. Through long-term fieldwork, the project will further examine how the economic and cultural values of beauty and authenticity are designed, commodified, and consumed in the global value chains.

Julian Fernandez, *A Postmodern Vaudeville: Analysing the Dramaturgical Devices for Distancing, Commentary and Reflection in the Musicals of Bob Kander and Fred Ebb*

Supervisors: Kati Röttger, Millie Taylor & Julia Kursell

This research project examines Kander and Ebb's work from a theoretical perspective, by focusing on the assimilation of earlier theatre forms, such as Varieté, Vaudeville and Minstrel Shows, etc. The research will determine the dramaturgic use of these theatre forms, their motivation, as well as their consistency as a stylistic device throughout the duo's career, while drawing parallels to Brechtian methods and inspecting Kander and Ebb's work for postmodern and concept musical aspects, as well as self-commentary and irony. An in-depth look at the development of these musicals, as well as Harold Prince and Bob Fosse's contributions to their work will establish this discussion. Furthermore the project will deal with the reception of the most well-known Kander and Ebb shows and their revivals- investigating the factors that helped them to their successes and how these factors help shape an analysis based on interpretation and social context.

Will di Gavio, *Remix, Reimagine & Reanimate: The Archival Potentials of Videographic Criticism*

Supervisors: Jaap Kooijman & Floris Paalman

My project centers on the potentials of videographic criticism to engage with filmic archives, and in particular reimagine how scholarly engagement with the archive can reach new and diverse audiences. My project will also explore the possibilities of videographic criticism itself as it relates to form, exhibition, and scholarly practice. I will work with archives that have a substantial collection related to independent and avant-garde cinema. Videographic criticism has certain roots in the avant-garde. My intention will be to understand the history of the avant-garde, but also to unpack how videographic criticism marks a continuation -- and differentiation from -- the avant-garde.

Serra Hughes, *Worlding Communication: Novel Communication Barriers in Global Science Fiction and Speculative Literature*

Supervisors: Esther Peeren & Emelia Quinn

The novel communication barrier, an innovation beyond the norms of empirical reality that obstructs mutual understanding, is identified in this thesis as a distinct literary trope across a transnational range of science fiction and speculative literature. Locating this mechanism across a diverse corpus of texts from the Cold War period to the present and from the United States to Britain, Canada, Nigeria, Poland, Spain and China, this PhD project is the first to untether these novelties from their local contexts to develop urgently needed clarity on communication in a world of deepening divides. *Worlding Communication* uses Eric Hayot's theory of worldedness to demonstrate how novel communication barriers confront a world-representational norm, affirming the existence of a universal world-concept of communication while calling attention to the possibility of its transformation. The thesis identifies three key categories through which the novel communication barriers manifest – through ontological alterity, differing modes of consciousness, and physical blockages – and substantiates their transformative potential through Jurgen Habermas's theory of communication in order to demonstrate how the friction generated by communication disturbances creates new worlds. Taking a world literary approach to a global crisis, this project answers the call to approach literature in more expansive ways, not only to reflect on the economic, cultural, and social transformations of globalization but also to address them, demonstrating, in the process, the vital role literature has to play in reimagining the ways the world can be transformed.

Katerina Kallivroussi, *Greekness and Crisis: Decolonial Perspectives and Alternative Futurities in the Visual Arts, Film and Performance during the Greek Crisis*

Supervisors: Maria Boletsi, Eva Fotiadi & Kristina Gegaudaite

This PhD project focuses on the visual arts, film and performance developed during the so-called Greek crisis (2009-2018) and its aftermath. More specifically, the project seeks to examine artworks that critically engage with the notion of Greekness during the aforementioned period in an effort to a) trace changes in the conceptualization of Greekness during that period in comparison to the perception of Greekness in artistic production in the 19th and 20th century, and b) offer alternatives to the dominant nationalist discourses within which Greekness is usually contextualized, while raising broader questions of identity and belonging in a late capitalist, increasingly globalised world. By specifically utilizing post- and de-colonial theories and practices, the project contributes to the ongoing debates about the crypto-colonial status of Greece, an idea introduced by Michael Herzfeld, and the country's framing as a debt-colony during the crisis. By engaging with these theories and practices the project seeks to investigate how artistic production in Greece can prompt us to trace and forge alliances between Greece and societies that have faced forms of indirect and direct colonialism in the past and the present, such as those in post-communist countries and the Global South. Ultimately, my aim is not only to analyze *whether* and *how* the selected artworks trouble Greekness and national belonging, but also to contribute to the ongoing discussions about the global character of the financial "crisis", its interconnection with other forms of crises, such as the "refugee crisis", as well as with global resistance and decolonial movements, which challenge the binaries between North and South as well as East and West.

Timoteus Anggawan Kusno, *Dismantling the Nostalgia: Art Practices Dealing with Colonial Leftovers*

Supervisors: Leonie Schmidt & Jeroen de Kloet

Throughout my doctoral research, I want to examine and reflect on my practice as an artist, dealing with and working on the (de-)colonial issues within the slippery terrain of history. I will dig into the specter of Indonesia's colonial histories through my art projects, in which I mobilize an ethnographical approach. In this Ph.D. in the arts, I will investigate my practice of working with Indonesian colonial objects, matters, and discourses; including my collaboration with the Rijksmuseum for the "Revolusi!" exhibition, my

video art series "Phantoms," and my long-term project of the 'fictional' Centre for Tanah Runcuk Studies.

Annemijn Kwikkers, *Unregulated Automated Journalism*
Supervisors: Beate Roessler & Eva Groen-Reijman
This project will evaluate the extent to which unregulated automated journalism, despite its many opportunities for online journalism and for the dissemination of information, stands to undermine democracy. The ability of automated journalism to decisively influence public opinion has potentially severe political consequences. These consequences are compounded by the ease with which these technologies can be bought and sold, as well as how they can evade existing regulation. Since the providers of automated journalism are privately owned and for-profit entities (e.g. OpenAI), they will enable affluent parties to buy influence and weaken democracy. It is unclear who is accountable for fictitious news stories or deep fake images as the parties involved have plausible deniability. This raises the question of whether the goals and standards of public and private parties are sufficiently aligned for automated journalism to be responsibly deployed to perform such a key public role in a democratic society. It is this unprecedented ethical environment that this article aims to shed light on.

Vuma Levin, *Reimagining Traditional Indigenous South African Musical Transcription and Notation For Applied Composition and Performance Practices*
Supervisors: Walter van de Leur & Maya Verlaak
The transcription of traditional indigenous South African musics is essential to my practice-based research as a composer-performer in South African Jazz. Through this work, I have noted that hegemonic, western conceptions of transcription cannot adequately account for several musical parameters central to these musical cultures. Therefore, this research aims to explore the creative potentialities of alternate systems of transcription and notation. To do this, it will define and problematise the practice of transcription, undertake a historical exposition and investigation of contemporary transcription practices and subject several field recordings to conventional and alternative notational frameworks. This data will be used to develop compositions, a performance recital and a dissertation. In doing so, the research hopes to show how alternate frameworks yield creative outcomes that broaden the expression of textual and contextual information, inadequately captured by conventional staff notation, that is nonetheless essential to understanding traditional indigenous South African musical epistemologies and praxis.

Xichen Liu, *Let's Get the Dosage Right! The Pharmacology of Boredom and Technology in the Digital Age*

Supervisors: Misha Kavka & Daniel de Zeeuw

In the digital age, users find themselves willing to be trapped in a recursive loop of digital boredom, compulsively waiting to be entertained by media and technology. Boredom never went away as expected, it is notably obstinate in today's digital cultures. However, boredom is ambivalent and ambiguous, its complexity also refracts our increasingly entangled relations with technology and digital capitalism. Therefore, this research repurposes boredom as an approach to examine our relations with digital technology, affects, as well as contemporary capitalism today. This research argues that by attaching great importance to the pharmacology of boredom and technology, we may hopefully withdraw from our everyday inauthentic digital presence, the digital *Ge-stell,* the tempting illusion promised by contemporary capitalism. The research draws on Heideggerian profound boredom, late Marxist critique on digital boredom, and affective formation to examine two media objects: *zhenghuo* livestream in China, and the videogame *Disco Elysium*, showing that to create a curative technical milieu for our psychosomatic existence in capitalist societies, we need to constantly experiment with boredom and technology as *experimental pharmakon* in order to get the dosage correct.

Gabriel Maher, *Spatial Justice Imaginaries | Q(ueerinG)IS*

Supervisors: Stefania Milan & Davide Beraldo

The project 'Spatial Justice Imaginaries | Q(ueerinG)IS,' critically deconstructs the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS), a geospatial technology used for spatial analysis, in Amsterdam's data-driven urbanism. GIS technology elicits ethical concerns connected to urban surveillance, monitoring, measurement, and classification of people within a city. The research focuses on data and spatial justice implications for people with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, expressions, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC), self-identifying as queer. In the context of increasing anti-LGBTQI+ violence and gentrification, the project explores the normative processes inherent to GIS and data-driven decision-making. It underscores the urgency to align data to spatial justice agendas, particularly vital for marginalised groups.

Gülce Özkara, *My Life in the Bush of Ghosts: Artistic Use of Obsolete Audiovisual Media to Excavate Postcolonial First-Person Narratives*

Supervisors: Asli Özgen & Giovanna Fossati

This project explores the use of obsolete audiovisual media in the works of contemporary artists from the SWANA region to articulate erasure, trauma,

and silence related to the cultural memory of colonization. Artists use obsolete media in innovative ways: they record, playback and display through the obsolete to examine how the silenced past overflows through the interstices of the present in the form of spectral images and sounds. They excavate first person narratives and expand the frame of documentary and archival practices. Their works demand academic scrutiny using theoretical frameworks of ethnography, cultural analysis, decolonial theory, and media archaeology to explore the novel artistic articulations of remembering and restoring absences in the cultural memory of (de)colonization.

Erinne Paisley, *Un-Hinged: Mobilizing 'Love' as a Force for Furthering Understandings of 'Autonomy' and 'Freedom' within Sex Cultures for Women in the Digital Age*

Supervisors: Misha Kavka & Ladan Rahbari

This PhD project aims to provide a more nuanced understanding of how women experience, form, and navigate romantic love in relation to sexual autonomy and freedom. The research will use an interdisciplinary approach that builds from media studies, sociological, and cross-cultural analysis and further draws on intersectional feminist, affect theory, history of emotions, critical race, and queer studies perspectives. Through this, contributing to the theoretical frame of 'feminist love studies'. Methodologically, using cyberethnography, feminist discourse analysis, and interview based technology based on Hinge application usage by women. Ethnographic research will be conducted in Amsterdam, Netherlands; Montreal, Canada; London, England.

Martina Raponi, *An Acoustemology of the Unheard: The Technology, the Narrative, and the Art of Listening beyond Aurality*

Supervisors: Geert Lovink & Cecile Malaspina

This research aims to excavate what is unheard in sound. The title echoes *unsound* (Goodman, 2012), a now established term in sound studies, but it is disambiguated from it insofar as it focuses on the material and non-sonic implications of sonic phenomena, sound and acoustic processes, perceptual faculties and habits. The relevance of this study resides in the fact that it takes into consideration cultural phenomena and discourses from an acoustemological (Feld, 1992) perspective. This doctoral project aims to elucidate the non-sonic implications of sonic phenomena and their hitherto neglected importance for ways of knowing and producing knowledge; including and especially those foregrounding sonic experience. By privileging the sonic perspective without surrendering fully to its phenomenological premises, I acknowledge how sound and sonic phenomena can function as

effective metaphors and epitomes of the complex cultural, political, and societal systems of our contemporaneity, in a critical tension with the visual paradigm.

Lingli Ren, *"Earthy-Taste Culture": Laughter, Comedy and Chinese Rural Imaginations*

Supervisors: Esther Peeren & Jeroen de Kloet

Despite its relatively peripheral status compared to urban areas, the Chinese countryside has never been absent from popular culture and has featured especially prominently in comedic genres. Whether in films, television programmes, stage shows, or online videos, rural-themed comedy has attracted a wide range of domestic audiences. The production of rural-themed comedy in the PRC is a historical cultural practice that reflects on addressing the problems of how to view the nation's past and future, how to define the proletarian identity, where the Party-State's ideological boundary is, and what public entertainment and happiness can be in socialist/post-socialist China. It also displays China's strong cultural ambition and anxiety in relation to the rest of the world. This study makes an innovative attempt to scrutinize the under-studied cultural form of Chinese rural-themed comedy, taking it as a window on China's competing rural discourses and changing social relations and structures, in the context of dramatic processes of modernization and globalization. By tracing the comic expression of China's "earthy-taste culture" from 1949 to 2022, this study develops an original perspective on the historical formation of the Chinese rural imaginaries and the changing cultural-political meaning of the Chinese countryside. Also, this study adds a valuable Chinese case study to broader investigations of the countryside's media representation and cultural-political transformation under the influence of global modernization processes.

Vanessa Richter, *Imaginaries of Artificial Intelligence: Mapping (Social Media) Platforms' Role in Shaping (Public) Tech Imaginaries*

Supervisors: Thomas Poell & Christian Katzenbach

The imagination and future perception of what AI can and should become have led to different trajectories showcasing the importance of social and cultural discursive imagination in envisioning and determining trajectories of AI and its integration into society. These imaginations can be understood as "sociotechnical imaginaries" (Jasanoff, 2009; Jasanoff & Kim, 2015), i.e. the societal understandings of how the possibilities, potentials, and risks embedded in certain technologies are socially constructed. Imaginaries greatly influence how societies deal with emerging key technologies like AI (Bareis &

Katzenbach, 2021). In turn, different stakeholders try to push their own imaginaries into public discourse through different channels such as media and policy to become publicly institutionalized. Social media platforms (SMP) such as Twitter, YouTube, TikTok, and Douyin play an essential role in this process as both stakeholders themselves and spaces for stakeholders from industry, politics, media, civil society, and academia to interact in the ongoing AI discourse. Simultaneously, as SMPs employ and innovate AI products, they benefit from positive AI imaginaries, which leads to a conflict of interest where the platform has clear incentives to shape public discourse around AI. Therefore, my PhD project questions the impact of (social media) platforms on AI imaginaries while considering different stakeholders from industry, politics, media, academia, and civil society.

Charles Rouleau, ***Littorals as Ecocritical Sound Milieus: Ecomusicological Field Recording-based Artistic Research in Transitional Space***

Supervisors: Julia Kursell & Jeff Diamanti

Littorals are privileged sites for ecocritical listening, places to witness how the climate crisis is reshaping sound milieus of these transitional spaces, in constant renegotiation between movements of water and the pressure from the land. Littorals are sites of polyphonic encounters and what this art-based research project proposes is threefold. First, littorals will be investigated as transitional sound milieus from an ecomusicological and artistic research perspective. Secondly, the metabolic and relational encounter between the artist-researcher and the field will be analyzed. Finally, compositional strategies will be examined for their potential to render the affective, the speculative and the metabolic aspects of these encounters, and how field recording compositions can be used as artefacts to engage in conceptual displacement.

Lisa Schouten, ***The Sound of Egyptian Counterculture: Rewriting Notions of Class, Identity and Culture through Mahraganat***

Supervisors: Jaap Kooijman & Maaike Voorhoeve

The project will be an analysis of the musical phenomenon Mahraganat. Through a framework of Counterculture and bourdieu's conceptualization of taste, the music’s relation with and influence on notions of identity, class and culture in Egypt will be questioned. The research will be threefold, consisting of an analysis of lyrics’ linguistic aspects, a discussion of the artists’ complicated legal and social standing (with e.g. the Musicians’ Syndicate) as well as a cultural analysis of the identity politics (both top-down and bottom-up) involved in Mahraganat.

Tijn Smits, *Moral Truth: Exploring the Concept of Practical Cognition in Kant's Ethics*

Supervisors: Beate Roessler & Thomas Nys

Constructivism has become the dominant meta-ethical interpretation of Kant's ethics, positing that Kantian moral judgments can be true or false but only as the valid result of a human procedure of construction. This has led to the widespread view that the truth status of moral judgments is derivative to a condition of practical adequacy. This project proposes a competing model of moral truth based on the concept of practical cognition, drawing a close analogy between theoretical and practical forms of cognition, by which the 'real possibility' of (moral) objects is tested. The research formulates a robustly realist meta-ethical account that provides a stronger foundation for moral objectivity than its constructivist alternative, but also avoids the speculative metaphysics of existing intuitionist models. The project researches the reception of Kant's moral metaphysics by his British and German successors and investigates the implications of the proposed meta-ethical model for our belief in the existence of free will and for the role that intuitions are thought to play in ethical decision-making.

Natalia Stanusch, *Seeing with, by, and of AI: Mapping the Regimes of Algorithmic Vision*

Supervisors: Richard Rogers & Natalia Sánchez-Querubín

This Ph.D. project aims to critique and map contemporary algorithmic scopic regimes, focusing specifically on generative AI technology. I organize my study around the notions of mapping and digital methods, and three entry concepts and case studies, each envisioned as a chapter of the dissertation: Infrastructure ('mapping *of*') focuses on mapping (as in 'making visible') certain regimes of power within the tech industry and the related power imbalances that underline the production and maintenance of computer vision and AI products; Moderation ('mapping *with*') focuses on practices of training data and moderation that inform current AI products, are thus used to extrapolate algorithmic gazes. Digital methods are used to operationalize the algorithmic scopic regimes and ways of engagement with them.

Marieke van der Steen, *Public Space Mime: Zero and the Politics of Daily Movements*

Supervisors: Monique Roelofs & Annemie Halsema

This PhD project researches how the theatre practice of 'Dutch mime' can be used as a multilayered lens to address and disrupt the political dimensions of everyday movements in public spaces. Central is the mime practice of zero: a

practice of standing still, a 'non-movement', but at the same time an awareness/alertness of the body in relation to time and space and the ambiguity of the present situation as the starting point for play/performance (De Langen 2022). As research in the fields of critical phenomenology, critical race theory, gender studies, crip theory and sociology points out, dynamics of sexism, racism and ableism are institutionalized, normalized and ingrained in bodily habits. There is a 'somatic norm' at work in public spaces, effecting who is seen as a political subject (Puwar 2004). This project argues, on the one hand, that the awareness of time and space within the practice of zero can be a way to address and disrupt these 'bodily and spatial politics'. On the other hand, these "bodily politics" are connected to colonialism and capitalist thinking, which considers certain bodies as “productive bodies” and others as “wasteful” or “out of place”. Therefore, zero is not a "neural" starting point: not-moving is already political. The project offers an interdisciplinary perspective, combining mime with aesthetic theory, critical phenomenology and performance philosophy. It investigates and problematizes the idea of productivity through the concept and practice of zero and looks through public space performances at the possibility for play and disruption of the everyday.

Veerle van Wijngaarden, *A Duty to Desire? On the Politics of Sexual Desire*
Supervisors: Daniel Loick & Jana Cattien
The project examines how sexuality and sexual desire are related to social forms of oppression and examines what makes them important for subjectivity. It looks at the relation between recognition and sexual subjectivity (Chapter 1/the pilot study); the possibility and desirability of changing desires according to political views (Chapter 2); the problem of transgression in sexuality, especially in the realm of sexual violence and consent (Chapter 3); and how forms of sexual misrecognition are re-appropriated in queer activism, mobilising misunderstandings of sexual identities and sexual desires to develop new ways of sexual subjectivity (Chapter 4).

Yuko Yoshida, *Silence after Catastrophe: Disaster Survivor Witnessing in Contemporary Japan*
Supervisors: Ellen Rutten & Ernst van Alphen
This project unpacks contemporary survivor testimonies, films, photographs, art works, and collaborative acts of witnessing to examine how cultural silence of contemporary Japan is generated under the discourse of commemoration and recovery practices during the aftermath of a natural disaster. The author examines transformative modes of survivor witnessing to uncover discrepancies between survivors’ memories and other kinds of memory, and to

contemplate this recovery crisis. These and other acts of survivor witnessing become processes that contribute to break through this crisis and the lack of forgiveness and healing.

New Staff Members (21)

Kristina Gedgaudaitė



Kristina Gedgaudaitė's research interests fall within the fields of 20th century Greek literature and culture, cultural memory, migration, comics and graphic novels. Her first monograph *Memories of Asia Minor in Contemporary Greek Culture*, published by Palgrave Macmillan Memory Studies Series, probes into the legacies of the Greco-Turkish War in present-day Greece. Her current research project explores contemporary Greek comics and graphic novels, bringing critical attention to the ways in which comics can inform our views on present-day cultural landscapes and provide analytical vocabulary to assess their potential. Previously, Kristina has held teaching and research positions at Princeton University, University of Amsterdam and University of Oxford. She is a co-convener of the cultural analysis network Greek Studies Now and a co-editor of the Reviews+ section of the Journal of Greek Media and Culture.

Nermin Elsherif



Nermin Elsherif is a scholar of digital cultures whose expertise lie at the intersection of memory studies, media studies, and Middle-Eastern studies. Her doctoral project examines the coproduction of statist conservative nostalgic discourses over Facebook in post-revolutionary Egypt. In her online/offline ethnography she outlines how social imaginaries, archival photographs, and platform affordances interplay. She is currently a lecturer in the Media Studies department (UvA).She is also a former Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions fellow and a DAAD-alumni. She was the PI of the Global Digital

Cultures seed project Social Media After the Arab Uprisings that examined the cultural and the political dimensions of digital disinformation. In an earlier life, Nermin was an architect and an urbanist who used to design spaces, maps, and books.

Assel Kadyrkhanova



Assel Kadyrkhanova is a visual artist and researcher. She holds a PhD from the University of Leeds and an MFA from Newcastle University. Her artistic research looks at art as a medium of memory with a specific focus on memory and trauma in post-Soviet Kazakhstan. Kadyrkhanova works across drawing, moving image and installation art. As a postgeneration artist, she explores traumatic "inheritance", seeking to touch upon traces and symptoms of trauma and confront narratives that persist in postcolonial and post-totalitarian societies. She has exhibited her works internationally and disseminated her research through publications, artist talks, and conferences. She contributed to the edited volume *Stalinism in Kazakhstan: History, Memory, Representation* (2021). Her hand-drawn animation film *All the Dreams We Dream* was screened at Documenta 15, Kassel, as part of the DAVRA Collective public programme (2022), and Calvert Journal Film Festival (2021).

Marloes Geboers



Marloes Geboers is a postdoctoral researcher in the Humane AI and Global Digital Cultures research areas.Her work revolves around the visuality of

warfare as produced within and through platforms and their fast-evolving participatory modalities. Her dissertation focused on platform affective affordances and their role in constructing regimes of visibility relating to the Syrian war. Alongside these topics, she authored work on platform-afforded digital violence aimed at journalists. She blends digital methods and automated image analyses in order to study performative expressions that replicate, imitate or subvert propaganda narratives in more or less tactical ways. These user practices shape and are shaped by platform vernaculars that have a profound impact on the way we see and experience war within contemporary media ecologies. Marloes has a background in political science (MA) and journalism (BA), and she has teaching experience in digital methods and ethics of AI.

Maria Fernanda Boza Cuadros



Maria Fernanda Boza Cuadros (PhD, Syracuse University 2019) is a Peruvian historical and anthropological archaeologist whose work takes critical and decolonial approaches to disentangle experiences of marginalization in Peru since the European invasion in the sixteenth century. Her current research, funded by the Wenner Gren Foundation, focuses on Peruvian so-called forgeries dating to the nineteenth century held by European museums, with emphasis on their production, circulation in the antiquities market, and their curation in museums across Europe. This project highlights the role of marginalized artists/excavators in the high-brow antiquities market, and how the rise of the museum curator as an authoritative voice further rendered these artists invisible. Before joining to ASCA, she was the lead researcher at the “Projekt Peru” at the Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum Hannover, and a Post-Doctoral Research Fellow at MARKK (Hamburg).

Leni Van Goidsenhoven



Foto: Michiel Devijver

Leni Van Goidsenhoven recently started as an Assistant Professor of Disability Studies at LCA. Her research focuses on disability, illness, neurodiversity, inclusive learning environments, and representations of non-normative bodyminds in arts and literature. She has a special interest in reconceptualizing 'voice', the importance of integrating lived experiences in research, and accessibility aesthetics. She mostly engages with new materialist thinking, crip theory, Mad and Disability studies, and (speculative) care ethics. At this moment, Leni is also a guest curator for the City theatre NtGent. Before coming to the UvA, Leni worked as a postdoctoral researcher at the Philosophy Department of the University of Antwerp, where she was involved in the ERC project NeuroEpigenEthics, and at the Literary and Cultural Studies Department at KU Leuven.

Claudio Celis Bueno



Claudio Celis Bueno is Assistant Professor in New Media and Digital Culture at the UvA and co-director of the AI and Cultural Production research group at the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis.He is the author of the book *The Attention Economy: Labour, Time and Power in Cognitive Capitalism*. Since 2018 his research has focused on the politics of machine vision in order to propose novel ways of understanding the relation between images and power. During 2023 he's also a Research Fellow at the Institute for Advance Study (IAS).

Paula Helm



My work is situated at the intersection of STS and application-oriented ethics. The larger goal and mission of my work is to move AI-Ethics from the PR- to the Engineering- and Development-Level. To reach this goal, I am collaborating closely with partners from Computer Science, applying and combining co-creation approaches with empirical ethics, future methodologies, experimental designs and feminist technoscience. I hold a doctorate in philosophy (summa cum laude). Before starting my current position, I was a research associate at the MCTS at the Technical University Munich and the International Center for Ethics in Science at Tübingen University, where I was co-leading work-packages in several national and EU-projects concerned with the creation and ethical advancement of AI-Systems in various domains. Before that, I completed my PhD while I was working as a research associate at the University of Frankfurt in an interdisciplinary research project dealing with the "Structural Transformations of Privacy". I was also a visiting scholar at the Center for Surveillance Studies at Queen's University (invited by David Lyon) and at New York University, where I worked with the Privacy Research Group (invited by Helen Nissenbaum) and the Institute for Public Knowledge during the exciting period of the emergence of Critical Algorithm and Data Studies. I am a working mother of two.

Lucia Bainotti



Lucia Bainotti (PhD) is Assistant Professor in Digital and Visual Media Analysis at the department of Media Studies of the University of Amsterdam. She is currently working in the SoBigData++ project, focusing on the elaboration of visual analysis techniques for social media research (particularly with regard to

TikTok and other short-video platforms). Her main research interests revolve around digital consumer culture and the increasing platformization thereof; issues of social status and distinction in the attention economy; and gender-based violence online.

Thalia Ostendorf



Thalia Ostendorf (Amsterdam 1990) is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Amsterdam. She holds a BA and MA in Comparative Literary Studies from Utrecht University, and attained her doctorate from the University of St. Andrews, Scotland. She was part of the second cohort of Oxford Europaeum Scholars, and a Scottish Graduate School for Arts & Humanities (SGSAH) Doctoral Intern at the National Trust for Scotland (NTS). She also writes articles and short stories, and is one of the co-founders of Chaos Publishers, now an imprint of Das Mag Publishers.

Barnita Bagchi



Barnita Bagchi is, from 1 August 2023, Chair and Professor of World Literatures in English at the University of Amsterdam, and was previous to this Associate

Professor in Comparative Literature at Utrecht University in the Netherlands, where she worked for fourteen years. Prior to this, she worked at the Institute of Development Studies Kolkata in India. Barnita is a feminist translator, literary-cultural critic, and cultural historian. She has published widely on utopia/ dystopia, histories of transnational and women's education, fictions of formation and education, and women's writing in western Europe and south Asia. Barnita's current projects include research on ageing and women in South Asia (with 20th and 21st century memoirs, essays, and fiction as sources), on transcultural utopia and its afterlives, recent dystopian fiction analyzed from transcultural perspectives, and on the resonances of Jane Austen's fiction in colonial and postcolonial South Asia.

Fernando van der Vlist



Fernando van der Vlist is Assistant Professor of Cultural Data & AI in the Department of Media Studies at the University of Amsterdam. His research centres around the study of digital media ecosystems, platforms and apps, data, and artificial intelligence (AI) in culture and society. He is actively involved in the App Studies Initiative, the Digital Methods Initiative and the Public Data Lab. Previously, Fernando worked as a postdoctoral Researcher in the focus area 'Governing the Digital Society' at Utrecht University and at the DFG Collaborative Research Centre 'Media of Cooperation' at the University of Siegen, Germany. His work encompasses the interdisciplinary fields of Internet Studies, Platform Studies, App Studies, Software Studies, and Critical Data Studies. Through the use of innovative methodologies and digital methods, he conducts analyses and visualises the intricate relationships among platforms, apps, users, and society, providing insights into the social, cultural, and political-economic dimensions of digital media. His research has been published in leading scholarly journals in the interdisciplinary field of Media Studies and has been funded through national research councils. He received his PhD from Utrecht University and holds an MA and BA from the University of Amsterdam, as well as a BDes from the Willem de Kooning Academy. You

can follow him on Twitter, Google Scholar, or visit his website at fernandovandervlist.nl.

Alex Gekker



Alex Gekker, (PhD., Utrecht University) is an Assistant Professor in Digital Research Methods, Media Studies department, University of Amsterdam. His research incorporates various aspects of digital media, primarily focusing on platforms and interfaces to analyse maps, surveillance assemblages, autonomous cars, videogame ecosystems and more. He published in New Media & Society, American Behavioral Scientist, Surveillance and Society, and Geoforum. He co-edited two Open Access books on mapping, one on temporality and the other on play. His previous position was a Senior Lecturer at the Dan Department of Communication, Tel Aviv University. In the past he has worked in a variety of media positions, as journalist, editor, and spokesperson.

Mónika Simon



Mónika Simon is an incoming postdoctoral researcher under the University Research Priority Area on Trust in the Digital Society (TRUST RPA). This jointly appointed postdoc position is spearheaded by Marc Tuters and Jan B. Engelman (Faculty of Economics and Business). As a postdoctoral researcher, Mónika will employ mixed-methods to study narratives of (dis)trust and delve individual susceptibility to such narratives in the digital society. She is currently finalising her PhD at the Amsterdam School of Communication Research

(ASCoR), specialized in political communication under the Newsflows ERC project led by Damian Trilling, where she studied the dynamics of (cross-domain) information flows using computational content analysis techniques such as network analysis, neural topic modeling, and LLM-assisted approaches to natural language processing.

Jacob Engelberg



Jacob Engelberg is Assistant Professor of Film, Media, and Culture. He completed his BA in English and Film Studies, and MA in Sexual Dissidence, at the University of Sussex, before completing his PhD in Film Studies at King's College London. His current research considers the relations between sexuality and the cinema, particularly as these pertain to questions of epistemology, hermeneutics, form, and historiography. In the monograph he is currently completing, Jacob proposes the theoretical utility of cinematic figures of bisexual transgression for a radical recalibration queer film studies. Jacob has also completed research into pornographic film, articulations of Jewishness in transnational cinemas, and the cinema of Ingmar Bergman. His work has appeared in the *Journal of Bisexuality* and *Porn Studies*, where he is currently editing a special collection on bisexuality and pornography. Jacob also has chapters under contract with Routledge, Wiley-Blackwell, Intellect, and Liverpool University Press.

Alice Plutino



I'm Alice Plutino, and I recently moved from the Computer Science Department of the University of Milano, where I worked as a Post-Doc researcher. This year I've been awarded a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Postdoctoral Fellowship, which will support my research at ASCA Department. My research focuses on film materials digitization, color restoration, and quality assessment. I am also an Adjunct Professor at Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia (Rome), and at Università degli Studi di Milano, teaching digital film restoration and digital media conservation. I am the author of the book "Tecniche di Restauro Cinematografico and of several journals and conference papers of national and international relevance.

Elio Baldi



After his studies in Amsterdam, Utrecht, Bologna and Warwick, Elio Baldi returned in 2016 to the UvA to teach. His main research topics are the works of Italo Calvino, but he has also worked (extensively) on topics such as (Italian feminist) science fiction, reception and circulation of literary works, translation, the relation between science and literature and between the Humanities and Natural Sciences, as well as on works of Behrouz Boochani, Giacomo Leopardi, Dante Alighieri and others. Forthcoming are a translation in Dutch of Calvino's *Invisible Cities* (together with Linda Pennings) and an edited

volume on the reception and translation of *Invisible Cities* around the world (together with Cecilia Schwartz).

Roberto Filippello



Roberto Filippello (he/him) is Assistant Professor in the department of Media Studies (TV and Cross-Media Culture team). Prior to joining the University of Amsterdam he was a Killam Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of British Columbia. He works across the fields of Critical Fashion Studies, Queer Studies, and Media Studies. His research investigates how fashion has been used across various contexts, with a focus on the Mediterranean and the MENA region, to shape spaces of political expression and community formation. He is particularly interested in how fashion practices (such as design, photography, and short films) can function as affective forms of critique that destabilize the colonial, heterosexual, and capitalist fantasies embedded in the western imagination, and ultimately carve out alternative aesthetic imaginaries. He is currently at work on his first monograph, on queer and feminist fashion in Palestine/Israel.

Selin Gerlek



Selin Gerlek is an assistant professor in philosophy of technology and politics at the department of philosophy. Her research focuses on digital citizenship, transformative processes in human-technology relations, mediated cultural practices, as well as embodied and hermeneutic relations. She embraces various philosophical approaches, including (Post-)Phenomenology, Philosophy of Technology, and Feminist Philosophy. At the University of Amsterdam, she is

involved in the university's Sector Plan theme "Digital Citizenship", the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA), and the Platform for the Ethics and Politics of Technology (PEPT). Since 2021, she has worked as an ethicist and is a permanent member of the Ethics Committee of the Private University of Witten/Herdecke, Germany.

Fieke Jansen



Fieke Jansen is a co-principal investigator of the critical infrastructure lab and a postdoc researcher at the University of Amsterdam. Her research interests are to understand power and conflict around the environmental impact of expanding internet infrastructures. She is also the co-lead of the Green Screen Climate Justice and Digital Rights coalition. In her PhD at the Data Justice Lab at Cardiff University she looked at the institutional and societal implications of data-driven risk scoring and biometric recognition in Europe. Fieke is a former Mozilla and Green Web Foundation fellow where she explored ways to frame the climate crisis as a core digital rights issue. Prior to starting her PhD Fieke worked for Hivos, where she set up the Digital Defenders Partnership, and at Tactical Tech, where she led the politics of data program.

Amir Vudka



Amir Vudka holds the position of Assistant Professor in Film, Posthumanism, and AI. His research interests encompass speculative philosophy, genre cinema, the convergence of film and warfare, media spectralities, and the examination of the mystical and spiritual dimensions of technology and its impact on human consciousness and culture. In addition to his academic

pursuits, Amir serves as the artistic director for the Sounds of Silence festival, which celebrates the synergy of silent film and live music, and the Altered States festival, dedicated to exploring altered states of consciousness at the juncture of technology and magic.

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