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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, theatre and performance studies, and (new) media studies.

What unites the research conducted within ASCA are the following five principles of Cultural Analysis:

- 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 88 research groups, divided into three categories: funded research projects (31); reading groups & seminars (24); and network groups (33). 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**lobalisation & Migration
- **I**dentities
- **C**ultural and 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 2022, 25 PhD candidates and 7 staff members joined ASCA; ASCA offered 24 ongoing seminars and/or reading groups, and (co-)organized 134 conferences, lectures, workshops and other meetings; ASCA members acquired over 4,000,000.- Euro of external funding for their research; and 11 ASCA PhD candidates earned their doctor's title.

ASCA in 2022

The start of 2022 was marked by yet another Covid-related lockdown and ongoing travel restrictions in several parts of the world. In late February, Russia invaded Ukraine, an act of war that deeply shocked the world and the ASCA community. Though, in view of these bleak circumstances, we were at times beset by feelings of dejection and hopelessness, ASCA researchers continued to come together to think through the times we are living through, critically but also affirmatively, looking to envision and shape new, better futures. After an online ASCA workshop in 2021, the 2022 edition, titled “Staging Gender: Sexuality and Embodiment on Stage across Geopolitical Borders,” featuring Eliza Steinbock, who completed their PhD at ASCA, as one of the keynote speakers, could take place in-person. We also held another ASCA Summit, on “Fieldwork and (Re)Emerging Fields,” and many other events. A return to normal it was not, and there is a growing realization among ASCA researchers that such a return is not possible when we are facing so many catastrophes, not least the impending climate one. As in 2020 and 2021, there is a lot that, as a research school, we cannot make up for, but we continue to try to be there for each other, to support each other when needed, and to encourage each other to take care of others and ourselves.

Highlights of 2022, providing us with inspiration, hope and a sense of community, included:

Thinking with Derrida I 24-25 January 2022 I Doelenzaal

Organizer: Marie-Aude Baronian

Speakers: Joost de Bloois, Joseph Cohen, Jakko Kemper, Esther Peeren, Monique Roelofs, Angela Roothaan, Raphael Zagury-Orly.

This workshop aims at bringing together scholars from various orientations in the Humanities in order to discuss the place and the role of the work of Jacques Derrida in today’s context. Each invited speaker will hence present how the writings of Jacques Derrida affect their current research, concerns and reflections. Rather than exclusively proposing close exegesis of Derrida’s texts or chronological genealogies within his oeuvre, the workshop seeks to stress the relevance of Derrida’s thinking for addressing pressing issues and concepts that define and unpack our contemporaneity. The workshop will purposely not concentrate on a specific theme but it will give the speakers the opportunity to reflect upon why and how certain Derridean ideas are deeply challenging and (re)orienting the ways we think and we do research in the troubled epoch we are now facing.

War at Our Door | 2 March 2022 | Oudemanhuispoort

Speakers: Ellen Rutten (ASCA), Johana Kotišová (ASCA), Alexander Etkind, Olga Burlyuk, Michael Kemper, Christian Noack, Pola Cebulak.

The terror of the on-going Russian invasion of Ukraine has left many of us seeking answers to the shocking events unfolding. Why this massive act of violence, and why now? To what extent can geopolitical, political, cultural, and historical factors explain the events? What role do (social) media play in these developments? And what is our responsibility, now that we face war at Europe's door? UvA's European Studies and Russian & Slavic Studies programmes, student organisations Machiavelli, SES, Kleio and Radost, and the research schools ASCA, ARTES, ASH and AISSR, together with the inter-faculty ACES research centre, bring together a transdisciplinary panel of experts for a Q&A session to answer your questions. The event is meant to facilitate knowledge exchange, but also to offer a space to come together and jointly consider these deeply upsetting events.

ASCA Workshop 2022 | Staging Gender: Sexuality and Embodiment on Stage across Geopolitical Borders | 1-3 June 2022 | Doelenzaal

Organizers: Shekoufeh Behbehani, Martina Flores Mendeville, Alvaro Lopez.

Keynote speakers: Eliza Steinbock, Tina Gharavi, Mara Polgovsky Ezcurra, Buhlebezwe Siwani.

The stage is never a neutral space, it is not an innocent ground of representation and entertainment. When sexuality, gender, or race enter the stage, the political and the personal meet with far-reaching implications. After all, who is being represented and how? By whom? And for what audience? Two decades ago, José Esteban Muñoz (1999) argued for a personal/political staging that moves beyond mere oppositions. With the notion of disidentification, Muñoz addressed forms of staging and performing that cannot be collapsed into simplistic understandings of oppression and resistance. Muñoz's work hinted at the increasing multiplication of staged bodies, of staged understandings of sexuality and race that in the last decades have depoliticized and commodified once radical forms of entering the stage. But what does it mean to put these sociocultural markers on stage nowadays? How have the political and personal changed positions in the last twenty years? Moreover, how can the stage itself, from that of a play or a film to that of a smartphone or the street, affect that which is being staged? After all, to speak of bodies, of sexuality, and violence from a stage and to an audience from the Netherlands, Iran, or Argentina entails different ways of relating to and interacting with the world. How do the personal and the political change in the movement across these contexts? And how is that which is represented

transformed, misunderstood, and/or reconceptualized? All these questions aim to open a critical reflection and dialogue on the personal/political role of the stage; they intend to reflect on the ways that the stage (re)shapes gender, sexuality, and race across geopolitical borders in the contemporary moment. We want to rethink what the stage is according to its location, as well as its implications for the way in which we understand the world. We call for a dialogue that problematizes simplistic understandings of assimilation and resistance; we want to move beyond taking a film, or a play, or a street performance as either revolutionary or oppressive. In short, just like Muñoz, we aim at addressing the multiplicity of bodily, political, and social implications of the stage when it gets caught in the asymmetries binding different sociopolitical contexts.

Oceans as Archives Conference | 4-6 July 2022 | University Theatre

Organizers: Mikki Stelder (ASCA), Renisa Mawani (University of British Columbia), Kristie Flannery (Australian Catholic University).

Keynote speaker: Alexis Pauline Gumbs

The Oceans as Archives conference contributes to the growing field of critical ocean studies, while intervening in the erasures and occlusions performed in scripting the field as a new terrain of inquiry. This three-day interdisciplinary conference brings together scholars, poets, artists, and activists to share and discuss work that centers the ocean as a source of knowledge and a method for thinking, writing, and critical praxis. The conference provides a space for sharing ideas and theories anchored in the longstanding critical traditions of Black (diaspora) studies, Pacific Islander studies, Critical Indigenous studies, Caribbean philosophy, postcolonial theory, and decolonial and anticolonial critique.

Transitional Waters: Brackish Methods & Estuarine Fields | 8 July 2022 |

Doelenzaal

Organizer: FieldARTS

Beginning with the short film ~~~~ (2020) by Sami Hammana and an artist talk by Natascha Libbert on her exploration of maritime infrastructure, *I Went Looking for a Ship* (2018), our roundtable discussion follows with speakers from Sonic Acts, Field Academy, and Oceans as Archives collectively asking how researchers and artists alike can learn with and develop methods responsive to the material, historical, and ecological specificity of the estuarine field and its brackish waters.

The AnimalHuman Conference | 29 September 2022 | CREA

Organizers: Maarten Reesink and Fien Lindelauff (Centrum voor DierMens Studies)

Keynote speakers: Barbara Noske and René ten Bos.

This event will stimulate academic and non-academic knowledge exchange on animal-inclusive futures, and it will facilitate interdisciplinary collaborations. Various subjects, stemming from society to science, will invite attendees to start a dialogue and discuss human-animal relations. In addition to presentations by prominent scientists, this conference will also provide opportunities for networking as well as a Q&A session on human-animal studies specifically for students.

ASCA Summit I Fieldwork and (Re)Emerging Fields I 23 November 2022 I Doelenzaal

Speakers: Tânia Esteves Fernandes Cardoso, Jeff Diamanti, Johana Kotišová, Tommy Tse, Marija Cetinić, Pei-Sze Chow and Claudio Celis Bueno, Misha Kavka, Daniel Loick.

A growing number of ASCA members engage in fieldwork. In the morning panel of the summit, we reflect on the different forms of fieldwork undertaken by ASCA researchers, the issues that fieldwork can bring up (in "normal" times and in times of Covid or war), and the notion of the "field" (what/where is it and how do we account for the colonial history of the idea of the "field"?). In the afternoon panel, we introduce some of ASCA's new research groups and reflect on what (re)emerging fields these research groups are linked to, broadening out to a discussion of what we mean by "research fields" and what currency terms like "new" and "emerging" have in academic research.

Towards a Post/De-colonial Theatre Studies? | Book presentation and discussion | 13 December 2022 | University Theatre

Speakers: Azadeh Sharifi, Lisa Skwirblies, Kati Röttger.

Recent theoretical and societal debates around the legacies of colonialism have led to scholarly disciplines inquiring into their own research paradigms and founding assumptions. The event examines attempts in the discipline of Theatre and Performance Studies to critically interrogate its own ties to colonial projects and how methods and modes of scholarship in the field might be recalibrated towards decolonial futures. On the occasion of the publication of the German-language open-access book *Theaterwissenschaft postkolonial/decolonial*, edited by Azadeh Sharifi and Lisa Skwirblies, the event highlights lessons learnt and asks how the critical conversation might be carried forward in the Dutch context.

Management and Research Groups

In 2022, 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); administrative support is provided by Jantine van Gogh. 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 on a monthly basis 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. The vice-director takes responsibility for the PhD community, including the annual evaluations.

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), Nadica Denic (PhD candidate), Gaston Franssen (Professor of Literary Culture), Jeroen de Kloet (Professor of Globalisation), Julia Kursell (Professor of Musicology), Stefan Niklas (Assistant Professor of Continental Philosophy/Critical Cultural Theory), Boris Noordenbos (Associate Professor of Cultural Analysis), Patricia Pisters (Professor of Media and Film Studies), Ellen Rutten (Professor of Slavonic 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 foster the research 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. Yet a coherent profile is ensured by the fact that all research groups subscribe to ASCA's interdisciplinary, theory-driven humanities approach and engage 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 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 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. The findings are discussed with the

department directors and (positive and negative) recommendations are made concerning promotions and applications for sabbaticals and funding. If necessary, individual research and publications plans are made. 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).

- **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** bring together researchers with shared interests that meet on a more 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.

Network Groups	Coordinators	M	A	G	I	C
AI and Cultural Production	Pei-Sze Chow, Claudio Celis Bueno					
Amsterdam	Oliver Seibt					
Art - Activism - Conflict	Sruti Bala					
Art Education as Critical Tactics	Jeroen Lutters					
ASCA Cities Project	Carolyn Birdsall					
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 Delhay					
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	Gerrit Schaafsma					
Postcolonial Film Histories and Heritages	Emiel Martens, Asli Tuncer					
Queer Analysis	Diego Semerene, Misha Kavka					
Sex Negativity	Marija Cetenic					
The Significance of Phenomenology	Christian Skirke					
Thinking Artistic and Design Practices	Marie Aude Baronian					
Walking as Research Practice	Tania Cardoso					
Word and image	Mia Lerm-Hayes					
World Literature and the Environment	Jeff Diamanti, Emelia Quinn					

Funded Projects	Principal Investigators	M	A	G	I	C
Abolition Democracies	Daniel Loick					
Algorithms Exposed	Stefania Milan					
Apps and Data Infrastructures	Esther Weltevrede					
Big Brother Wants Your Vote	Beate Roessler					
Capture and Analysis Tools for Social Media Research	Bernhard Rieder					
Conspiratorial Memory	Boris Noordenbos					
Covid-19 App Store and Data Flow Ecologies	Esther Weltevrede					
Cross-Lingual Event-Centric Open Analytics Research Aca	Richard Rogers					
Cultural Practices of Citizenship	Sruti Bala					
Decentralising Conceptual Art's Internationalism	Elize Mazadiego					
Decolonizing Southeast Asian Sound Archives	Barbara Titus					
Fixers, Stringers and Foreign Crews	Johana Kotišová					
Imagining Institutions Otherwise	Chiara de Cesari					
Imagining the Rural in a Globalizing World	Esther Peeren					
Infodemic: Combatting COVID-19 Conspiracy Theories	Marc Tuters					
Making the hidden visible	Stefania Milan					
Maritime Imagination	Mikki Stelder					
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					
Preservation as Performance	Hannah Bosma					
Pressing Matter	Chiara de Cesari					
SoBigData++	Richard Rogers					
Sonic Entanglements	meLê yamomo					
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 Democracies Seminar	Daniel Loick					
Aesthetics and Politics in Critical Theory	Ben Moore, Marc Farrant					
Artistic Research	Paula Albuquerque					
ASCA Theory Seminar	Esther Peeren, Jaap Kooijman					
Aurality: Musical Modes of Knowledge Inscription	Barbara Titus					
Cities Seminar	Carolyn Birdsall					
Critical Cultural Theory	Aukje van Rooden					
Eastsplainers	Ellen Rutten					
Ethics and Politics of Digital Technologies	Beate Roessler, Hao Wang					
Externalities of Value	Daniel de Zeeuw, Jan Overwijk					
Media & Performance	Kati Rottger					
Moving Images: Preservation, Curation, Exhibition	Giovanna Fossati, Floris Paalman					
Neo-Luddite Seminar	Gavin Mueller					
New Histories of Public Spheres and Public Actions	Ellen Rutten					
Philosophy and Public Affairs	Beate Roessler, Henri Wijsbeck					
Political Ecologies	Jeff Diamanti, Joost de Bloois					
Politics and Performance	Sruti Bala, Elize Mazadiego					
Radical Right Reading Group	Daniel de Zeeuw, Marc Tuters					
This is Film!	Giovanna Fossati					
Trans* and Psychoanalytic Perspectives	Alvaro Lopez					
Trans-Asia Cultural Studies	Jeroen de Kloet					
Videographic Criticism Seminar	Jaap Kooijman					
We Have Never Had Sex	Marija Cetenic					

Researchers and Publications

The tables below show that ASCA again gained tenured research staff (expressed in fte) between 2021 and 2022. This is mainly due to new Assistant Professors being hired. The number of postdocs also continues to rise and will probably rise further now that the sectorplan for the Social Sciences and Humanities of the Minister of Education specifically encourages the creation of postdoc positions. The number of PhD candidates returned to the level of 2020, with the percentage of contracted PhDs remaining the same as in 2021, 19%. Ideally, there would be a greater percentage of contracted PhDs, but contract positions are scarce and highly competitive (in 2022, ASCA could only hire 2 PhD candidates with money received directly by the government – *eerste geldstroom*), and it should be noted that some self-funded PhD candidates do receive (some) funding. We continue to monitor how our PhD candidates fare on the job market, and 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 the numbers.

With regard to publications, while the total number went down (from 344 in 2021 to 308 in 2022), which may in part be due to the pandemic (the effects of which were still dampened in 2020 and 2021 by the fact that many publications were already in the pipeline), the main decline was in non-refereed journal articles and professional publications. The number of publications in the categories ASCA values highest – refereed journal articles, books and book chapters – remained virtually stable (245 in 2021 and 242 in 2022), which, given the pandemic, is a good result.

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 declined from 17 in 2021 to 11 in 2022, which may again be due to the pandemic, which delayed many PhD projects.

We continue to look for ways to make postdocs more visible within ASCA and to provide them with more of a sense of community. In 2022, a welcome meeting specifically for postdocs was organized, which allowed postdocs to meet and to discuss postdoc-specific issues.

Main Categories of Research Output at Institutional Level						
	2020 %		2021 %		2022 %	
Refereed journal articles	130	38%	131	38%	140	45%
Books	20	6%	25	7%	22	7%
Book chapters	79	23%	89	26%	80	26%
Non-Refereed journal articles	39	12%	27	8%	10	3%
Professional publications	32	9%	43	13%	32	10%
Publications aimed at public	39	12%	29	8%	24	8%
Total publications	339		344		308	
Dissertations	12		17		11	
Tenured staff in fte	34		36		38	
Average publications p.p.	4,0		4,0		3,3	

Research staff in fte at institutional level						
	2020 %		2021 %		2022 %	
Tenured Staff						
Full Professor	7,52	22%	8,46	23%	7,05	19%
Associate Professor	8,02	24%	8,24	23%	7,98	21%
Assistant Professor	18,4	54%	19,51	54%	22,58	60%
Total Tenured Staff	33,94		36,21		37,61	
Non-tenured staff						
Postdocs	7,6		8,5		8,9	
PhD Candidates*						
Contracted	34	22%	30	19%	29	19%
Self-Funded	122	78%	124	81%	127	81%
Total PhD Candidates	156		154		156	
Total Non Tenured Staff	163,58		163,58		164,9	
* PhD candidates are counted in person, not in fte.						

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 top-quality 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 retaining funding for independent PhD projects in order to keep rejuvenating the research community and open up new research fields, ASCA has also 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 is necessary to attract and support self-funded PhD candidates and those with (partial) funding but no employment contract.

ASCA trains future scholars 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; externally or self-funded PhD candidates by email or in a meeting). During the annual evaluation, specific attention is paid to the progress of the project and the quality of the supervision, as well as to career perspectives and the building of a strong CV. 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 article or book chapter published before the defense and, if possible, to spend some time at a university abroad. During the evaluation meetings, it is emphasized that, as

much as possible, activities undertaken during the PhD trajectory should feed into the dissertation.

To supplement the PhD training program offered by the Faculty of Humanities, ASCA organizes annual skills workshops on publishing and the academic job market geared specifically to PhD candidates with an interdisciplinary profile. ASCA offers 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 success of ASCA's PhD training is evidenced by the fact that after graduating, 79% of ASCA's contracted PhD candidates that finished between 2012 and 2021 hold academic jobs (temporary or permanent), within and outside the Netherlands. Of the self- and externally funded PhD candidates that finished between 2014 and 2020, 63% 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 and secondary education.

Social Impact

The most prevalent form of societal impact ASCA research has is its contribution to scholarly and societal debates. We encourage our members to actively participate in such debates, but also realize that some of the topics - such as climate change, institutional racism, gender identity, warfare, refugees, farming industry, colonial legacy, alleged “wokism” in academia, among others - have become more politically charged. This can result in online backlash and threats, particularly for women and people of color. Our 2023 annual summit will be explicitly focused on academic research within polarized debates. ASCA members share their research and their expertise by participating in public events, including those co-organised and/or co-funded by ASCA. Important issues touched upon include questions of structural inequality based on race, gender, class and sexuality, redefining notions of national identity within globalisation, questions of post-truth, media literacy, data activism and autonomy and privacy.

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. Appearances on national and international television and radio include Ellen Rutten on the war in Ukraine (*Een Vandaag*, 31 March), Boris Noordenbos on the war in Ukraine (*BNR Nieuwsradio*, 5 May), Mark Deuze on Twitter (*RTL Nieuws*, 28 October), Monique Roelofs on “Wokeness” (*NOS Nieuws*, 26 December). Appearances in international media include Sruti Bala on anti-nationalism (*New Internationalist*, 13 January), Richard Rogers on fake news (*Les Echos*, 21 March), Misha Kavka on reality television (*Radio New Zealand*, 18 August), Daniel Loick on refugees (*Frankfurter Rundschau*, 23 September). Appearances in national printed media include Mark Deuze on cancel culture (*Trouw*, 28 April), Grâce Ndjako on Aimé Césaire (*NRC*, 5 May), Mirjam Prenger on public relations agencies (*Trouw*, 5 May), Sal Hagen on right-wing politics in the Netherlands (*Groene Amsterdammer*, 10 August), Michiel Leezenberg on Islam (*Trouw*, 24 October and *NRC*, 1 December), Arnoud Arps on Dutch colonialism (*Groene Amsterdammer*, 7 December). Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, ASCA members have actively participated in the debate about the war, most notably Ellen Rutten, who is also co-initiator of a new European university for refugee academics.

Public events supported by ASCA include *War at Our Door*, a Q&A session for UvA students about the war in Ukraine (2 March), *Digital Flux Symposium*:

Towards a common imagination at Framer Framed (31 March), *Artist talk on the Ecology of Form* (8 April), *Oceans as Archives Conference* (4-6 July), *Improving the Legal Status of Animals Symposium* (26 September), and the online *3rd Global Extraction Film Festival* (26-30 October).

Financial Overview

Working Budget FGW	41.000,00
Extra reservation	10.000,00
Total:	51.000,00
Conferences/workshops	40.137,74
Seminars	6.694,90
ASCA Workshop	8.740,12
Social events	1.617,27
Office	504,69
Total expenses:	57.694,72
Balance:	-6.694,72

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 2022, ASCA received a budget of 41,000 Euro. After two years of little traveling due to Covid, this year we resumed inviting people in person and hosting them in hotels and restaurants. In our enthusiasm and as a result of inflation, we overspent by almost 7,000 Euro. This was not a problem because of underspending in 2020 and 2021.

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. 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. Because of the growing number of researchers in ASCA and rising inflation, we will have to be more reticent in our spending: we will have to look more carefully at the applications to determine whether all costs are reasonable (also taking into account the environmental burden of having speakers come

from far away) and ensuring that the money is divided over as many different researchers and research groups as possible.

Events

- 11 January **Sharing Finitude – In Memoriam Jean-Luc Nancy**
Memorial symposium on Jean-Luc Nancy's work hosted by the Critical Cultural Theory Group, together with the Leiden University Center for Continental Philosophy (LCCP) and Knooppunt Fenomenologie (Gent).
- 14 January **European Islam: Remedy, Refuge or Repression?**
Lecture by Gulnaz Sibgatullina (UvA) in the New Histories of Public Spheres and Public Actions series, organized by Ellen Rutten.
- 24-25 January **Thinking with Derrida**
Workshop and Masterclass with Joseph Cohen (School of Philosophy, University College Dublin, Ireland) and Raphael Zagury-Orly (Institut Catholique de Paris / CRAL – EHESS and Collège International de Philosophie), organized by Marie-Aude Baronian.
- 26 January **Vegan Studies Network**
First lecture of the Vegan Studies Network's 2022 monthly online lecture series by Emelia Quinn about her book *Reading Veganism: The Monstrous Vegan, 1818 to Present* (Oxford University Press, 2021).
- 4 February **Artistic Research: Sharing Methods and Practices**
Session of ARRG with Alice Twemlow and Gabriel Paiuk.
- 4 February **(Re-)Reading "Classic" Film Theoretical Texts of the 1910s, '20s and beyond**
ASCA Reading Group organized by Bianka-Isabell Scharmann.
- 11 February **Neo-Luddite Research Seminar**
Organized by Agustin Ferrari Braun, Dieuwertje Luitse, Gavin Mueller, Toni Pape and Oscar Talbot.
- 15-18 February **Abdellah Taïa's 'Queer Moroccan Child'**

Series of events featuring writer and filmmaker Abdellah Taïa, organized by Diego Semerene.

- 18 February **Externalities of Value with Marina Vishmidt**
Combined lecture and masterclass by Marina Vishmidt, organized by Daniel de Zeeuw and Jan Overwijk
- 18 February **Control and Resistance in Public Space**
Guest lecture by María Mazzanti / Ameneh Solati (Failed Architecture) in the ASCA Cities Seminar Unfolding the Socially-Distanced City, organized by Carolyn Birdsall, Jelke Bosma and Tânia Cardoso.
- 23 February **Veganism: Politics, Practice, and Theory**
Second lecture of the Vegan Studies Network's 2022 monthly online lecture series by Eva Giraud (Sociology, University of Sheffield) about her book *Veganism: Politics, Practice, and Theory* (Bloomsbury, 2021).
- 25 February **Earth Beings at the Commodity Frontiers**
New Political Ecologies: Lecture by Federico Luisetti (University of St Gallen), organized by Joost de Bloois and Jeff Diamanti.
- 2 March **War at Our Door**
Q&A session about the war in Ukraine, co-organized by Ellen Rutten.
- 4 March **Infrastructures and Experience: Postcolonial Perspectives**
Cross-Media Research seminar, organized by Markus Stauff, Abe Geil and Sudeep Dasgupta.
- 9 March **This is Film! with Nour Ouayda**
First in a public lecture series devoted to notable projects in the fields of film restoration and film heritage, with guest Nour Ouayda (Metropolis Cinema Association Lebanon).
- 10 March **We Have Never Had Sex**

Seminar linked to the ASCA Research Group Sex Negativity, organized by Marija Cetinić, Tessel Veneboer and Stefa Govaart.

11 March

Moving Images with Julian Ross

Meeting of the research group Moving Images: Preservation, Curation, Exhibition (ASCA/UvA and Eye Filmmuseum).

11 March

Neo-Luddite Research Group

Meeting of the Neo-Luddite Research Group, organized by Agustin Ferrari Braun, Dieuwertje Luitse, Gavin Mueller, Toni Pape and Oscar Talbot.

11 March

Control and Resistance in Public Space

Guest lecture by María Mazzanti / Ameneh Solati (Failed Architecture) in the ASCA Cities Seminar Unfolding the Socially-Distanced City, organized by Carolyn Birdsall, Jelke Bosma and Tânia Cardoso.

14 March

Lecture by Lytle Shaw

Lecture by Lytle Shaw (New York University), organized by the ASCA Word & Image research group. Discussion led by Anja Novak.

22 March

Soapbox Journal Launch: 3.0 Impasse

Screening, Q&A and roundtable discussion moderated by Lynn Gommès and Oriana Rose on the subject of Impasse, featuring Sam Ellis, Nahal Sheikh and other contributing authors.

26 March

5G-sightseeingtour in Bijlmer-Arena!

Walking tour focusing on 5G infrastructures, organized by Niels ten Oever.

29 March

AI and Cultural Production

Meeting of the AI and Cultural Production research group, organized by Pei-Sze Chow and Claudio Celis Bueno.

- 30 March **Epistemic-Political Orientations: Rethinking Political Epistemology**
Presentation by Just Serrano-Zamora (RUG) in the Philosophy and Public Affairs seminar.
- 31 March **Digital Flux Symposium: Towards a Common Imagination**
Part of the Digital Flux Symposium hosted by Framer Framed and Non Native Native. ASCA member Jori Snels and curator Yu Minhong discuss how to communicate 'being-in-common' in the online realm.
- 1 April **Artistic Research**
ARRG meeting, organized by Paula Albuquerque, with Sabrina Huth & Ilana Reynolds.
- 7 April **Contagion**
Session of the ASCA Film-Philosophy Seminar Aesthetics of Contingency, organized by Monique Roelofs, Sudeep Dasgupta and Patricia Pisters.
- 7 April **Genre and the Historical Present: American Culture at the End of Growth**
Guest Lecture by Sean O'Brien (University College Dublin), organized by Ben Moore.
- 8 April **Artist Talk on the Ecology of Form**
Part of the ASCA Political Ecologies Seminar. Artist talk on the Ecology of Form with Marissa Lee Benedict, David Rueter and Daniel de Paula, organized by Jeff Diamanti and Joost de Bloois.
- 8 April **Jerusalem Online: Critical Cartography for the Digital Age**
Guest lecture by Valentina Carraro (UvA) in the ASCA Cities Seminar Unfolding the Socially-Distanced City, organized by Carolyn Birdsall, Jelke Bosma and Tânia Cardoso.
- 8 April **Unsociable: Antagonism and Abstraction in Contemporary Feminized Poetry**

Lecture and masterclass by Amy De'Ath in the Externalities of Value Series, organized by Daniel de Zeeuw and Jan Overwijk.

- 12 April **IN-SIGHT.it Kick-off Event**
An afternoon thinking together about standards, values and citizen participation! With Niels ten Oever and Stefania Milan.
- 13 April **Balancing and Limiting the Right to Privacy**
Presentation by Laurin Berresheim in the Philosophy and Public Affairs Seminar.
- 13 April **Dramatic Women**
SPUI25 symposium organized by Laurens De Vos on the occasion of the publication of his latest book *Dramatische Vrouwen. Een geschiedenis langs iconische theaterpersonages*.
- 14 April **Flashbacks: Voices and Visions from the Past**
Meeting of the research group Moving Images: Preservation, Curation, Exhibition focusing on the question how historical films can contribute to today's discussions on human rights. Organized in the context of the Movies That Matter film festival, with guest speaker Oksana Sarkisova.
- 14 April **Film Screening *Poets in the Living Room*, with director Julia Byl**
Poets in the Living Room is a documentary highlighting an archive of music recorded in the South Asian diaspora of Edmonton, Canada.
- 21 April **Critical Health Humanities**
Meeting of the research group Critical Health Humanities, with guest speakers Hester Hockin-Boyers (EUR) and Lasse Raaby Gammelgaard (Aarhus University).
- 21 April **We Have Never Had Sex**
Public Lecture and masterclass by Oxana Timofeeva.

- 22 April **Infrastructure and Experience**
Meeting of the Cross Media Research Group.
- 25-26 April **Ecocentric Reciprocities Workshop and Conference**
Hosted by the Political Ecologies research group, on the topic of Ecocentric Reciprocities: Valuing More-Than-Human Landscapes.
- 25 April **Walking as Research Practice with Christian Ernten**
Walking as Research Practice Seminar, organized by Tânia Alexandra Cardoso, with guest lecture by Christian Ernten
- 26 April **Queer Analysis Research Group – Inaugural Meeting**
Inaugural meeting of new research group Queer Analysis, which aims to forge a creative space for thinking through psychoanalysis, queer theory and trans theory together.
- 27 April **Veganism, Archives, and Animals: Geographies of a Multispecies World**
Lecture in the Vegan Studies Network's 2022 monthly online lecture series, with Catherine Oliver (Geography, University of Cambridge) speaking about her recent book *Veganism, Archives, and Animals: Geographies of a Multispecies World* (Routledge, 2021).
- 28 April **Moderating for a Friend of Mine: Affective Labor of Content Moderation and the Social Imaginary of Chinese Game Live-streaming**
Meeting of the Transasia Cultural Studies Group with a presentation by Fan Xiao.
- 29 April **Sabotage and Flow**
Masterclass by Fred Carter and lecture by Alexandra Campbell on Disrupting Flow: Infrastructure, Sabotage and Hydraulic Power.
- 29 April **Mieke Bal on Image Thinking**
Mieke Bal in conversation with bachelor students from the department of art history, University of Copenhagen, on her new book *Image Thinking*.

- 2 May **Towards a Vegan University**
Mini-symposium about contributing to a sustainable university, with Jan Stoop (EUR), Eva Meijer (ASCA) and Floris van den Berg (UU).
- 3 May **Soil as a Relational Medium: A Critique of ‘Crisis’ Discourse**
Political Ecologies Public Talk with David W. Janzen (University of Waterloo, Canada), organized by Jeff Diamanti and Joost de Bloois.
- 6 May **On Microfascism: Gender, Death, and War**
Meeting of the Radical Right Reading Group (RRRG) discussing *On Microfascism: Gender, Death, and War* by Jack Z. Bratich, organized by Marc Tuters and Daniël de Zeeuw.
- 11 May **The Normal and the Weird: Politics and Cultures of (Ab)normality in Contemporary Europe**
Organized by Maria Boletsi (ASCA), Florian Lippert and the NIAS theme group The Politics of (De)familiarization, sponsored by Netherlands Institute for Advance Study (NIAS), the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA) and The Groningen Research Institute for the Study of Culture (ICOG).
- 11 May **A Right to Gestate?**
Presentation by Gulzaar Barn (Utrecht University) in the Philosophy and Public Affairs Seminar.
- 13 May **Capture and Analysis Tools for Social Media Research**
First workshop of CAT4SMR, the initiative that builds and maintains Capture and Analysis Tools for Social Media Research.
- 13 May **Playing the City: Urban Representations and Spatial Practices in Digital Gaming**
Guest lecture by Thijs Jeursen (Utrecht University) in the Cities Seminar on (Post)Pandemic Urbanism, organized by Carolyn Birdsall and Jelke Bosma.

- 13 May **The Cultural Economy of Emancipatory Practice: Insights from Greece**
Lecture by Dimitris Soudias (Marilena Laskaridis Visiting Research Fellow, University of Amsterdam), moderated by Maria Boletsi.
- 16-25 May **Aesthetics of Death**
Research Seminar, organized by Itay Sapir (Art History, Université du Québec à Montréal).
- 16 May **Walking as Research Practice**
Meeting of the research group Walking as Research Practice, with artist-researcher Sophie Krier. Organized by Tanîa Cardoso.
- 17 May **Aesthetic Meaning-Making and Transformation: Art, Intimacy, and Myth**
Critical Cultural Theory seminar (CCT) with Stefan Niklas and Pinar Türer.
- 20 May **Independence: Intellectual Landscape and Global Resonances**
Organized on the occasion of the bicentenary in 2021 of the Greek War of Independence, this symposium brings together scholars from the international community whose research explores the War of Independence from different – Greek, Ottoman, and international – perspectives.
- 23-25 May **Truth, Transparency and Controversy: Critical Perspectives on Media Ideologies**
International Seminar, organized by Jeremy Hamers (University of Liège), Ingrid Mayeur (University of Liège), François Provenzano (University of Liège), Elise Schürgers (F.N.R.S/University of Liège) and Jan Teurlings (ASCA).
- 24 May **Zoning Out During Sex Together: Dissociative Style, Trans Poetics, Sex Negativity**
Session of ASCA/NICA seminar We Have Never Had Sex. Lecture and Seminar with Maxi Wallenhorst.

- 24 May **Spinoza Lecture by Lewis Gordon: Shifting the Geography of Reason**
The first Spinoza Lecture by Lewis Gordon is titled after an idea formulated by the speaker in the late 1990s, which became the motto of the Caribbean Philosophical Association. The concept addresses the significance not only of transcending the East-West movement of thought in hegemonic thought, but also its implicit “Northern-ness” and the Euromodern colonial geopolitics of reason it encumbers.
- 25 May **Architecture in the Aftermath**
Public Lecture & Masterclass with Daniel A. Barber, part of the Political Ecologies seminar, organized by Jeff Diamanti and Joost de Bloois.
- 25 May **A Question of Normativity**
Meeting of the Queer Analysis Research Group, organized by Diego Semerene and Micha Kavka, with guest speaker Anouchka Grose.
- 25 May **Africadelic x Omek x Paradiso x ASCA: Lecture by Mulatu Astatke**
Ethiopian musician, composer, and arranger Mulatu Astatke (HDR) will give a unique lecture in Paradiso Noord/Tolhuistuin. The father of Ethio-jazz will reflect on The Contribution of Africa’s Culture to the World.
- 29-31 May **Global Audiovisual Archiving: Exchange of Knowledge and Practices**
Eye Filmmuseum, the University of Amsterdam (UvA), ASCA and the Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) present the 7th Eye International Conference on Global Audiovisual Archiving: Exchange of Knowledge and Practices.
- 31 May **The Yoruba Drum Language: A Surrogate Communication on the African Talking Drums**

Meeting of the Aurality Seminar (ASCA). Workshop on Yoruba Drum Language by Olupemi Oludare, Ayanlere Alajede and Mariano Gonzalez.

- 1-3 June **Staging Gender: Sexuality and Embodiment on Stage across Geopolitical Borders**
ASCA Workshop 2022, organized by Shekoufeh Behbehani, Martina Flores Mendeville and Alvaro Lopez. Keynote speakers: Eliza Steinbock (Maastricht University), Tina Gharavi (filmmaker), Mara Polgovsky Ezcurra (Birkbeck, University of London) and Buhlebezwe Siwani (artist).
- 2 June **Screening and Roundtable Discussion with Domiziano Cristopharo**
ASCA Workshop Embedded Event, organized by Alvaro Lopez.
- 2 June **Physical Theatre Laboratory: Re-authoring the Body on Stage**
ASCA Workshop Embedded Event, facilitated by Mori Plaschinski.
- 2 June **Staging Violence and Queer Sexualities: Politics of the Explicitly (In)Correct in the Media**
ASCA Workshop Parallel Event. Screening of *La Perdición* (Cristopharo 2021), followed by roundtable discussion with filmmaker Domiziano Cristopharo, Jaap Kooijman and Diego Semerene.
- 2-18 June **Fuck Healing (?): Living the Wounded Life**
Curated and organized by Bethany Crawford, Erica Biolchini, Patricia Pisters and Dina Mohamed.
- 2 June **Hatred of Women**
We Have Never Had Sex Seminar Session, with performance lecture by Cassandra Troyan.
- 9 June **Conspiratorial Memory**

- Two-day workshop organized by the ERC-funded research project *Conspiratorial Memory: Cultures of Suspicion in Post-Socialist Europe*.
- 10 June **Urban Platform Visualities: Aesthetics, Desire, Communication**
Talk by Agnieszka Leszczynski (Western University) in the Cities Seminar on (Post)Pandemic Urbanism.
- 10 June **Race, Externality and the Violence of Real Abstraction**
Externalities Lecture Series with Alberto Toscano (Goldsmiths, London University), organized by Daniël de Zeeuw and Jan Overwijk.
- 13 June **Walking as Research Practice**
Practical walking session in Amsterdam, organized by Tânia Cardoso.
- 14 June **Earthquakes and Elemental Loss: Rethinking Disorientation Beyond the Anthropocene**
Critical Cultural Theory seminar with Marjolein Oele.
- 14 June **The Price of Lying: Public Lecture by Alexander Gubsky**
Publisher of the *Moscow Times*, Alexander Gubsky, who fled Russia and is now based in Amsterdam, speaks about what happened in Russia on and after 24 February 2022. Introduced by *Moscow Times* founder and journalist Derk Sauer, and followed by a discussion with ASCA scholars Ellen Rutten and Johana Kotišová.
- 22-23 June **Archives for the Future: on the Politics of Knowledge Production**
Lecture and Masterclass with Gil Z. Hochberg (Ransford Professor of Hebrew and Comparative Literature, and Middle East Studies at Columbia University and Chair of MESAAS), organized by Noa Roei.
- 22 June **In Time? Out of time? Marking Time in Caribbean Aesthetics**

Guest Lecture by Faith Smith (Brandeis University),
organized by Sruti Bala.

- 1 July **Fieldwork That Breaks Your Heart**
Seminar organized by Johana Kotisova bringing together
four journalism researchers/media sociologists to raise
particular epistemological, methodological, and personal
aspects and implications of doing heartbreaking fieldwork.
- 4-9 July **FieldARTS 2022 // Transitional Waters**
A week-long intensive research retreat in environmental
humanities, hosted by ASCA and NICA, organized by Jeff
Diamanti, Fred Carter and Johan Haldna.
- 4 July **Marine Temporalities // Capitalist Development**
FieldARTS keynote lecture by Liam Campling & Alejandro
Colás, organized by Jeff Diamanti and Fred Carter.
- 4-6 July **Oceans as Archives Conference**
Conference organized by Mikki Stelder (ASCA), Renisa
Mawani (University of British Columbia) and Kristie Flannery
(Australian Catholic University).
- 5-8 July **Thinking (with) Care**
European Summer School for Cultural Studies (ESSCS), co-
hosted by ASCA and NICA, organized by Esther Peeren, Ilios
Willemars and Kim Sommer.
- 7 July **Art versus Politics?**
Mini-symposium on the occasion of the farewell of René
Boomkens as professor of cultural studies at UvA/ASCA.
- 8 July **Transitional Waters: Brackish Methods & Estuarine Fields**
FieldARTS screening & roundtable, organized by Jeff
Diamanti and Fred Carter.
- 7 September **Collective Talking about Collective Making**
Symposium with and about theatre collectives in The
Netherlands and Belgium, organized by Theatre Studies,
supported by ASCA.

- 7 September **Reading Group Re-Reading "Classic" Film Theory**
First session of reading group, organized by Bianka Scharmann.
- 9-10 September **Practitheorizing Counterinstitutions**
Workshop organized by IMAGINART (Vidi project Chiara de Cesari) at documenta fifteen in Kassel, Germany.
- 12-16 September **Music beyond Fixity and Fluidity: Preservation and Performance as Instauration**
Workshop co-organized by Hannah Bosma.
- 13 September **Abolition Democracies**
First session of the Abolition Democracies seminar, organized by Safae El Khannoussi el Boudirini, Daniel Loick and Oscar Talbot.
- 13 September **Fantastic Failure: Google Glass Ten Years After**
Guest lecture by Erkki Huhtamo in the Research Group Moving Images: Preservation, Curation, Exhibition.
- 14 September **Decision-Making Under Uncertainty: Precautionary Reasoning, Pandemic Restrictions and Asymmetry of Control**
First session of the 2022-23 Philosophy and Public Affairs Colloquium with Lucie White (Utrecht University).
- 20 September **Lacan's The Meaning of the Phallus**
Discussion organized by the Queer Analysis Research Group, directed by Diego Semerene and Misha Kavka.
- 21 September **Extraterritoriality and the Weaponization of Images**
Lecture and Masterclass with Maayan Amir (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel), organized by Noa Roei.
- 23 September **(un)Common Grounds: Reflecting on documenta fifteen**
Hybrid forum gathering a network of thinker-speakers to discuss the issues raised during the 100 days of documenta fifteen in Kassel, Germany.

- 23 September **Images of Abstraction: Operational Media and Experience**
Session of the Cross-Media Research Seminar, organized by Markus Stauff, Sudeep Dasgupta and Abe Geil.
- 26 September **Improving the Legal Status of Animals**
Symposium co-organized by Eva Meijer (ASCA). Scholars and experts from different fields – such as philosophers, lawyers, politicians from different political parties, and animal welfare organizations – discuss the legal status of animals in the context of the Netherlands and Europe, and develop scenarios for improvement.
- 26 September **The Rearguard of the Revolution**
Reading Group on Texts from Radical Collectives, organized by Yorgos Karagiannopoulos, Catrinel Rădoi and Aristotelis Tokatlidis.
- 29-30 September **Walking-with Amsterdam WARP Conference 2022**
Conference of the Walking as Research Practice Research Group, organized by Tânia Cardoso and Alice Twemlow.
- 26 September **Creative Writing for Academics**
Workshop offered by Marie Beauchamps.
- 29 September **The AnimalHuman Conference**
Conference of the Centrum voor DierMens Studies, organized by Maarten Reesink and Fien Lindelauff.
- 29 September **ASCA Transasia Cultural Studies**
Transasia Cultural Studies Group meeting, organized by Jeroen de Kloet and Pengnan Hu.
- 30 September **Terrains of Struggle**
First session of the 2022-2023 Political Ecologies Seminar, organized by Jeff Diamanti, Fred Carter and Joost de Bloois.
- 30 September **The Queerness of Babies**
Symposium organized by the Queer Analysis Research Group, coordinated by Misha Kavka and Diego Semerene.

- 5 October **Political Obligation, Membership, and the Problem of Judgment**
Presentation by Thomas Fossen (Leiden University) in the Philosophy and Public Affairs Colloquium, organized by Gerrit Schaafsma.
- 6-8 October **Isolation, Arts, Engagement**
The 3rd International Amsterdam Comics Conference, organized by Erin La Cour, Manon Parry and Rik Spanjers.
- 7 October **Revolt! Degrowth! Decolonize! Global Climate Agendas, Local Struggles**
Conversation about our contemporary climate crisis and its colonial and capitalist underpinnings, organized by Mikki Stelder.
- 7 October **Breaking the Loop, Closing the Cycle: Recursive Media Aesthetics and Ecology**
Seminar organized by Toni Pape, Marein van den Heuvel, Riley Gold and Daniël de Zeeuw.
- 7 October **Artistic Research with Charles Rouleau and Sharelly Emanuelson**
Meeting organized by the Artistic Research Research Group (ARRG), coordinated by Colin Sterling and Marta Pagliuca Pelacani.
- 18 October **Discussion Queer Analysis**
Discussion of Marie Couvert's "The Baby and the Drive" and Jacques Lacan's "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the I Function as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience," organized by the Queer Analysis Research Group.
- 20 October **ASCA Videographic Criticism Group**
Seminar, organized by Jaap Kooijman and Monica Baptiste Gouffray, to watch and discuss audiovisual essays, present and discuss work in progress, and read articles about videographic criticism.
- 26-30 October **3rd Global Extraction Film Festival**

Streamed online for free worldwide: 250+ Documentaries and Shorts from 50+ countries highlighting the destructive impacts of extractive industries. Organized by Jamaican environmental filmmaker Esther Figueroa (Vagabond Media) and Dutch film scholar-practitioner Emiel Martens (ASCA, Caribbean Creativity), co-sponsored by ASCA.

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| 26 October | <p>A Right to Gestate?
Presentation by Gulzaar Barn (UvA) in the Philosophy and Public Affairs Colloquium, organized by Gerrit Schaafsma.</p> |
| 3 November | <p>Portals of Invention: A ‘Techno-logical’ Reading of the Prometheus Figure in Beckett’s The Unnamable
Lecture by Thomas Thoelen, organized by Marc Farrant.</p> |
| 4 November | <p>Viral Justice: How We Grow the World We Want
Spui25 Event with Ruha Benjamin and Sennay Ghebreab, organized by Huub Dijkstra.</p> |
| 5 November | <p>Militant Poetics: Uncommon Disruptions & the Calamity Form
ASCA Political Ecologies Seminar and Perdu present a lecture and readings by Anahid Nersessian & Daniel Eltringham.</p> |
| 11 November | <p>Reflections on the Encounters between Psychoanalysis and Queer Theory
Talk by Eve Watson (Dublin-based psychoanalyst), organized by the Queer Analysis Research Group</p> |
| 16 November | <p>The Epistemological Preconditions of Markets and Their Historicity
Presentation by Lisa Herzog (RUG) in the Philosophy and Public Affairs Colloquium, organized by Gerrit Schaafsma.</p> |
| 16 November | <p>Rebel Dykes
ASCA/AUC screening of the documentary film <i>Rebel Dykes</i>, directed by Harri Shanahan and Siân A Williams, with Hilla Dayan and Eliza Steinbock.</p> |

- 17 November **Reimagining, Repurposing, Reckoning: Colson Whitehead's The Underground Railroad and the Aesthetics of Infrastructure**
English Department Lecture by Laura Bieger (Ruhr-Universität Bochum), organized by Marc Farrant.
- 23 November **ASCA Summit: Fieldwork & (Re)Emerging Fields**
During the morning session, Tânia Esteves Fernandes Cardoso, Jeff Diamanti, Johana Kotišová, and Tommy Tse will present how they employ fieldwork. In the afternoon, Marija Cetinić, Pei-Sze Chow and Claudio Celis Bueno, Misha Kavka, and Daniel Loick will present their newly started research groups.
- 24 November **Restlessness and Intimacy**
ASCA Seminar Film and Philosophy 2022-2023, first session, organized by Sudeep Dasgupta, Monique Roelofs, Patricia Pisters, Pinar Türer and Tessa de Vet.
- 25 November **Discussion Queer Analysis**
Discussion with Eve Watson and Noreen Giffney on Clinical Encounters in Sexuality: Psychoanalytic Practice & Queer Theory, organized by the Queer Analysis Research Group.
- 30 November **Eastsplainers #1: Language**
Opening of the public lecture series Eastsplainers, with Ukrainian linguist Oksana Kononchuk. Eastsplainers features intellectuals and artists who fled from the Russian war in Ukraine or who fled or migrated from Łódź, Minsk, and Moscow, among other places, to the Netherlands.
- 1-2 December **Operational TV: Video Refereeing and Image-Based Decision Taking**
Workshop organized by the Cross-Media Research Group.
- 1 December **L'Intrigue dénouée: Mythe, littérature et communauté dans la pensée de Jean-Luc Nancy**
Book launch, organized by Aukje van Rooden.
- 6 December **Cultural Analysis, Critical Theory, and the Global South**

Lecture by Paulina Aroch Fugellie (Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Mexico City), organized by Esther Peeren.

7 December

ASCA PhD Skills: Publishing and the Job Market

Organized by Esther Peeren and Jaap Kooijman for ASCA PhD candidates.

7 December

Refugee Protection and the EU

Presentation by Siba Harb (Tilburg) in the Philosophy and Public Affairs Colloquium, organized by Gerrit Schaafsma.

9 December

Exploring Visual Datasets of Security: Mapping, Visualizing, Narrating

Presentation by Francesco Ragazzi and Ruben van de Ven, hosted by the research group Moving Images: Preservation, Curation, Exhibition.

13 December

Towards a Post/De-colonial Theatre Studies?

Book presentation and discussion with Azadeh Sharifi, Olisa Skwirblies and Kati Röttger.

14 December

What is Aesthetic Experience?

Lecture by James Kirwan, organized by Christian Skirke.

New Research Groups

AI and Cultural Production

ASCA Research Group coordinated by Pei-Sze Chow and Claudio Celis

How should we as scholars in the humanities and social sciences respond to and engage with a technological development that is now inserting itself into our fields of inquiry and creative practices? How can we engage with the practitioners building creative AI tools to address issues of trust, agency, bias, and fairness?

In this era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has by now become ubiquitous in our everyday lives, driving technologies and processes in healthcare, transport, security, communications, and beyond. AI-powered technologies are now being used in the cultural and creative industries at various stages of production, both in the creative and artistic dimension and in the business and commercial aspects.

To a certain extent, there is an inherited idea that creativity and creative labour cannot (or should not) become automated, as if these were unique traits of human activity. From this perspective, the deployment of AI in cultural production can be seen by some as undermining the spontaneity and freedom of human actions and creative agency. Other cultural critics prefer to focus on more concrete consequences of this technology, such as its ethical, political, and economic dimensions. From a different perspective, enthusiasts of the technology may not only celebrate its economic and technical benefits, but also argue that the fact that machines can now perform creative tasks in the field of cultural production represents a radical step towards a true artificial intelligence. On the contrary, critics of this phenomenon could contend that this is possible only because of the process of standardisation and normalisation that the culture industry actually entails. Finally, there are those who suggest that the radical advances in artificial intelligence and algorithmic technologies calls for a redefinition of inherited categories such as those of creativity, originality, culture, etc.

Despite the multiple perspectives and approaches to the topic, what is becoming evident are not only its urgency and complexities, but also the need for interdisciplinary research. How should we as scholars in the humanities and social sciences respond to and engage with a technological development that is now inserting itself into our fields of inquiry and creative practices? How can we engage with the practitioners building creative AI tools to address issues of trust, agency, bias, and fairness?

In this group we seek to understand the social, aesthetic, economic, and political consequences of this phenomenon while forging connections between

researchers from different disciplines as we explore new perspectives, approaches, and methods for the study of AI in cultural production. Work on this project includes establishing a reading group (from February 2022), a seminar series featuring talks by UvA students, staff and other invited guests, and an international research network.

Sex Negativity

Coordinators: Marija Cetinić (she/her), University of Amsterdam, Tessel Veneboer (she/her), Ghent University, Stefa Govaart (they/them), P.A.R.T.S | Participants: Dr. Amy De'Ath (she/her), King's College London, Jo Giardini (they/them), Johns Hopkins, Dr. Kate Lawless (she/her), Huron University College.

Sex is not a “natural” landscape of stability upon which the “unnatural” vicissitudes of culture play out, as Judith Butler and other feminist scholars have shown. Sex is not “a passive surface, outside the social and yet its necessary counterpart” (*Bodies That Matter*, 5). Rather, sex is a regime of identity troubled by a vexed history of contestations over what a body is or should be; how it is to behave, gesticulate, speak, walk, cry and scream. Genes, hormones, the (non)emergence of organs, technological histories, proprioception, acts, and socio-cultural habits arbitrarily yet tenaciously congeal into a phenomenological reality that, once it appears, cannot fully efface the untidy state of things that undergirds it.

In the wake of the “sex wars” of second-wave feminism, the struggle for gay rights and the AIDS crisis, the emergent field of queer theory heralded sex as its preferred analytical category (Sedgwick 1985, Moon 2011). Countering feminist theory’s liking for “gender”, queer scholarship gauged “sex” better equipped for challenging the normative routes of identificatory practices, and desire at large (Butler & Martin 1994). Gayle Rubin’s instructive “Thinking Sex” (1984) termed the most pressing ideological formation permeating identification and desire “sex negativity”. Demonstrating—across disciplinary bounds—that the excess of signification sex induces is all too frequently canalized into “the notion that sex *per se* is harmful” (144), Rubin’s was a call for “theoretical as well as sexual pluralism” (171).

But the history of sex does not merely conjure the normative pressures of State apparatuses. In opposition to Rubin’s usage, sex negativity as we use it, precisely points to a negativity that radically troubles the coherence of any such pressures. For us, sex negativity has critical-material valence.

Sex is thus more than a body’s binary or nonbinary embodiment, and surely more than a series of acts. In psychoanalytic thinking, talk of the emergence of the subject is inundated with talk of sex. Positing the concept of the

unconscious, psychoanalysis thinks about sex as something other than the merely biological or cultural. Maybe, then, what sex is could be described as an intellectual mode of discernment marked by an (il)logic that resides in “this symbolic hole”, keeping it open, rendering it “operative in all its unsettling force”, against “non-thinking” (Žižek, *Sex or The Failed Absolute*, 13-14).

The status of sex in recent queer, feminist, and anti-capitalist theory has been unevenly assumed under sign of the body. This research group invites scholars to consider sex in its singular form of fundamental contradiction in which we (want to) “take our place” or occupy a position—through dialogue, reading groups, and (in)formal gatherings. It is not concepts that are problematic, but rather the effacement of the inherent contradiction of which they are a part, insists philosopher Alenka Zupančič (*What is Sex?*).

"There is no sexual relation," Lacan declares, suggesting that sex is exemplary in the way it induces an encounter with an irresolvable structural antagonism that cannot be effaced. That this contradiction cannot be resolved means that sex is of ontological relevance, and further, that sex bears an unbearable relation to negativity. As Mladen Dolar insists, "speaking obliquely is the proper way to speak about sex" ("Running Wild," 90-91). Heeding the circumlocutionary mode that speaking of sex demands, we will think sex in its ontological relevance (Lacan, Zupančič 2017, Long Chu 2019); its relation to negativity or nonsovereignty (Bersani 2018, Berlant & Edelman 2014); the relatedness of transness and Blackness (Bey 2017); its figuration in cultural objects (Elagoz 2021).

Mediated by poetry, performance, philosophy, film, and critical theory, the goals of the research group include: reading and thinking together (attending especially to theories of negativity in contemporary critical theory; performance theory; Marxist-feminist social reproduction theory; psychoanalysis; philosophies of time; Black studies and afropessimist thought; queer theory; trans theory); gathering a critical and aesthetic archive of work on sex and negativity; developing interdisciplinary research projects; artistic research collaborations; workshoping research papers of members; organizing guest lectures, readings, and performances through the *We Have Never Had Sex* seminar; collective writing and publishing in (non)academic platforms and journals; acquiring research funding and developing new research projects; establishing an international network of researchers; collaborating with poets, writers, artists, and performers.

Queer Analysis

Organizers: Misha Kavka and Diego Semerene

Queer Analysis is a research unit dedicated to investigating queer objects, subjects, encounters and practices as they contribute to and resonate with contemporary culture. Tracing our roots to the intersection of queer theory and psychoanalysis alongside the intensification of LGBTQ+ activism since the 1990s, we embrace various understandings of 'queer' to open up analysis of the conditions for living out non-normative genders and sexualities today. In particular, we pursue a core interest in the question of desire – its theories, mediations and symptoms as testaments to the destabilizing effects and affects of the technological zeitgeist. We understand psychoanalysis to be the language we have for approaching desire rigorously and take queerness to be a generative mode of building, engaging, enacting, creating and consuming cultures. What do queer subjects want and what is wanted of queerness? How are such desires created, mobilized, sustained and stilled? By practicing 'queer analysis', our aim is to seek out (in)appropriate modes of analysis for studying the question of desire through a queer/ing lens.

Queer Analysis aims to forge a creative space where scholars drawn to psychoanalytic and queer theory' logics and methods can do work. We believe in their imbrication and in the urgency of their interpellation in order to think through the questions of our time. While our framework is psychoanalytic, we are interested in a range of interdisciplinary discourses and practices that can enter into conversation with psychoanalysis in their approach to desiring practices and media technologies.

With an eye to elucidating, mapping and innovating (in)appropriate methodologies, the Queer Analysis research unit will begin by tethering our work to the following axes:

- **The child** as a desiring subject and figure of queer desire
- **Trans* desires** relating to theory, practice and activism
- **Automated intimacies** reflecting desire in/of/for technologies of repetition, predictable pleasures and instant gratification

We invite interdisciplinary scholars, analysts and graduate students interested in the engagement of gender and sexuality studies through a queer theoretical and/or psychoanalytic perspective to join us for lectures, reading groups, workshops, symposia, and tutorials.

2023 ASCA Awards

The 2023 ASCA Awards Committee, consisting of Daniel Loick, Emelia Quinn, and Yvette Wong, has given awards to the following researchers: **Jana Cattien**, **Divya Nadkarni**, and **Asli Özgen-Havekotte**.

Jana Cattien, ASCA Article Award 2023



The award for the best article by an ASCA member goes to Jana Cattien, 'On not becoming Chinese: The racialisation of compliance' published on *Radical Philosophy*.

Since the fall of 2019, the outbreak of covid-19 pandemic was not merely causing sickness and death, but the renewal of forms and ideologies of lives. The social order and our sense of self were changing. During that period of global crisis, there were a group of scholarships putting focuses on thinking about how to overcome or reconfigure distancing and isolation from the perspective of embodied connectivity and the embodiment of connectivity. Alongside this mentioned line of scholarships, Jana Cattien's philosophical article delineates one of the challenging dilemmas that appeared during the pandemic—the racialized relations between China and the West.

Whilst COVID-19 scripts a unique episode in human history, Jana Cattien hereby unpacks the longstanding racialization between Europe and the East. As she addressed, the fact that East Asian people have been seen as carriers of Covid-19, being obedient to the public health measures rather than preventing its spread, "reflects the persistence of Orientalist associations of Chineseness with compliance and conformity, on the one hand, and disease and bodily weakness, on the other".

Furthermore, by having a dialogue with John Stuart Mill's classic liberal text *On Liberty*, Jana Cattien acutely explicates the nostalgia of pandemic Europe "for an idealised past in which 'our' horror at the 'alienness' of compliance was still

untroubled by the uncomfortable fact of ‘our’ waning superiority”. Her article speaks along with both political and philosophical concepts, crucially underling the racialization of different embodiments of health measures. The committee sees this article as an outstandingly timely and influential response to the continuing racist idea of Chineseness.

Divya Nadkarni, ASCA Dissertation Award 2023



Divya Nadkarni’s thesis, “Poetic Understanding and Political Community: Actualizing Plurality through Poetry,” speaks to a question that has long plagued those who seek to justify the devotion of their careers to the reading and analysis of poetry: what is the point of poetry? This question is increasingly pertinent in the face of the neoliberalisation of the modern university and concomitant devaluation of the humanities, forcing a continual justification of what poetry can do or make happen.

If the perceived difficulty and inaccessibility of poetry is one of the principal drivers of critique as to its ineffectiveness for political influence, Nadkarni offers a corrective: that poetry’s difficulty is essential to its political power, where poetry is difficult in the same way that other people are difficult to understand. In this framing, poetry offers us a way of attending to and appreciating the opacity of others; of forging solidarity across lines of race, caste, and class without seeking to erase difference.

Nadkarni posits the politicality of poetry not as something to be found in the content of the poem, nor in the ambitions of the poet, but as belonging to the act of reading itself and the interaction between reader and poem. The thesis is not therefore about poetry that is explicitly political in thematic content, but views poetry as political through the ways in which it demonstrates “how to facilitate political community through transformative processes of understanding” (9). She advances the concept of “poetic understanding” to consider poetry’s contribution to contemporary politics in its offer of a way of radically transforming and reshaping our ways of relating to each other. This

involves seeing ourselves as a ‘we’, a ‘we’ that does not homogenise but that is constituted by difference in relation.

This thesis is of timely relevance, in an age of increasing political polarization and shocking indifference, particularly in the Global North, to the plight of refugees. Nadkarni’s decolonial, anti-racist, and anti-identitarian analysis offers up poetry as a way of grappling with our differences in order to construct new communities in the context of racial othering and the legacies of coloniality. The thesis also contributes to wider conversations about the role and value of literary study, offering a passionate reinvestment in the political importance of the humanities.

The committee particularly noted the sophistication and poeticism of the prose as well as the impeccable presentation of the thesis. Nadkarni demonstrates a deft handling of theoretical material to advance a thoughtful, nuanced, and complex reflection on poetic value and modes of reading.

Asli Özgen-Havekotte, ASCA Book Award 2023



The award for the best book by an ASCA member goes to Asli Özgen’s brilliant study *The Aesthetics and Politics of Cinematic Pedestrianism: Walking in Films*, which came out in 2022 with Amsterdam University Press. In this book, Asli investigates a seemingly trivial everyday act – walking – to reveal its uncanny, courageous, insurgent, and willful facets. Utilizing the theoretical tools provided by the interdisciplinary toolbox of urban studies, film theory, philosophy and feminist theories, Asli explores the cinematic aesthetics of walking to shed light on the affective and corporeal experience of the modern pedestrian. Through a captivating array of case studies, the book meticulously dissects iconic archetypes like the flâneur/flâneuse, the vagabond, and the nomad, unveiling how filmmakers have rebelled against oppressive structures through showing the simple yet subversive act of walking. In her book, Asli skillfully employs the theoretical frameworks of a number of heretogeneous

thinkers, from Lefebvre via Rancière to Braidotti, to illuminate the hidden narratives surrounding feet, shoes, and audacious wanderers. The committee found that this book was serious and light at the same time – it has the two seemingly paradox characteristics of a good walk.

Dissertation Defenses (11):

Fan Yang

Chinese Women's Cinema Through a Feminist Lens

Supervisor: Misha Kavka | 12 January 2022

I will reveal that the scholarship of Chinese women's cinema started with a cautious stance toward Western feminism but developed into the hegemony of the latter, thus locating the breakthroughs of Chinese women's filmmaking within a Western theoretical framework while ignoring and stigmatizing the "alien". I will argue that the major feminist narratives in Chinese women's cinema are in fact constructed by local feminist discourses, which, on the basis of internal logic and trajectories, claim specific inflections in those "Western counterparts" and alternative feminist agendas in those "alien".

Marloes Geboers

The Social Visuality of Distant Suffering. How social media create new boundaries of visibility

Supervisors: Richard Rogers, Sabine Niederer | 21 April 2022

Images of distant suffering depict people whose hardships the observers do not share or experience directly. As such images circulate, social media grant them a visuality that reflects the attention economy governing this space. Social media make these images —depicting suffering, protest, the hardship of revolution— part of their 'metrified machinery', designed to commodify and standardize sociality into countable clicks, likes, and views. The thesis, titled *The Social Visuality of Distant Suffering*, investigates how the prominent affective affordances of social platforms —hashtags, buttons, and image-based posts— and their use practices shape the visuality of distant suffering. The research consists of case studies into Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, and contributes to the theorization of social media photography and distant suffering, while taking on a critical approach toward platform affordances. Methodologically, the studies demonstrate new protocols for analyzing networked visual content. The findings shed light on how the commercial ranking mechanisms of platforms perpetuate power asymmetries, standardize complex sociality at the expense of particular emotional expressions, and move profound critical voices out of sight.

Halbe Kuipers

Perspectives and Event. A study on modes of existence & the more-than human. Perspectivism and process philosophy

Supervisors: Patricia Pisters, Erin Manning | 15 June 2022

What if a thing seen is not the same thing, or cannot even be seen in different perspectives, ontologically so? This simple proposition, called “ontological perspectivism,” turns on its head the common conception of what a perspective is and what shifting in perspective would be. Following this proposition down the rabbit hole, this thesis on perspectivism studies certain scenes, from discursive to filmic, to learn to interpret and evaluate— what Nietzsche calls the plural art of interpretation – lived experience as real in its affects and not in some way lesser. From a Yanomami Amerindian seeing an evil being and not a construction truck, to a child seeing an invisible creature under the table, to a racialized person experiencing the threat of a police car policing, the aim of the study is to contrast these perspectives with the given Eurocentric modern worldview based in good and common sense, problematizing its order of rank and opening thought to more-than human modes of existence.

Wigbertson Julian Isenia

Queer Sovereignties: Cultural Practices of Sexual Citizenship in the Dutch Caribbean

Supervisors: Sruti Bala, Rivke Jaffe, Rose Mary Allen | 23 June 2022

This dissertation examines the reimagination of sexual citizenship by same-sex desiring and trans* subjects in the Dutch Caribbean through cultural practices, focusing primarily on Curaçao. Analysing archival documents, performances, novels, photographs, letters to the editors of newspapers, and erotic lexicons, I propose approaching these subjects' cultural practices through the theoretical lens of what I call 'queer sovereignties'. The concept of queer sovereignties refers to the positions staked out by same-sex desiring and trans* subjects as they reimagine how to achieve collective autonomy within the postcolonial context of the non-independent Caribbean, and emphasises how these positions both disrupt and conform to hegemonic notions of sexuality, gender, and nation.

Aris Emmanouloudis

A Game of Pawns: Fan-Made Content and Resistance in Online Video Game Communities

Supervisor: Joyce Goggin, Torill Mortensen | 9 September 2022

The focus of this project is tactics of resistance in online video game communities. I am interested in how these communities form and develop based on fan-made content, and what questions arise in terms of hegemony and power relations for all participants, namely the fans and the industry. The dissertation discusses issues, such as exploitation and gift economies, cultural

resistance, and community fragmentation. To explore those issues, I selected three cases of fan communities that emerged around specific video game projects. All constitute projects that began as resistive, alternative readings by fans which were later absorbed by the gaming industry. I followed the development and evolution of those communities for the entire duration of my research, while also interviewing their leaders for a more insightful approach. Within the platforms used by the aforementioned communities there exists a framework for collaboration between fans and companies, but also for conflict. Labour is potentially decommodified, and workers become participants, either as leaders or followers in an enormous, interconnected mediascape. In the end, however, the entertainment industry system seemingly invariably finds ways to capitalise on the effort of fans.

Achia Anzi

Countering Universalism: Decolonisation and the Order of Art

Supervisors: Esther Peeren, Ernst van Alphen, Noa Roei | 15 September 2022

This study explores the relation between colonialism and art, and analyses decolonial practices of contemporary Indian and Israeli artists. Adopting a discursive and historicist framework, I contour the emergence of a new approach to what came to be known as “art” in the eighteenth century. Designated in this study as the order of art, this new mode of distributing artefacts was responsible for several developments which are usually understood as separate phenomena: the establishment of the modern museum, the emergence of the discipline of aesthetics, the consolidation of art as an autonomous field, and the appearance of artistic styles such as Neoclassicism, Romanticism, Realism, and Impressionism. This study argues that these developments were linked to colonial expansion and the coloniser’s endeavour to universalise the domains of knowledge and culture. The analysis of the order of art and its relation to colonialism serves as a background to explore decolonial art practices. One of the central arguments of this study is that the order of art began to decline in the last century; this watershed enabled artists from non-Western societies to question the order’s premises. Each of the chapters of this study delves into the convolution of art and coloniality and examines artistic strategies that attempt to delink the two.

Maral Mohsenin

The Archives Must Go On: An Archaeology of Digital Image Technologies within European National Film Archives (1990-2020)

Supervisors: Giovanna Fossati, Benoît Turquety | 7 October 2022

The thesis retraces the historical evolution of discourses and techniques on the subject of digital film technology in European film archives. The idea is to cross-study the techniques and the discourses in the socio-historical context of archives.

Andrés Ibarra Cordero

No Progress: Queer Chronotopes in Late Twentieth Century Fiction

Supervisors: Murray Pratt, Rodrigo Andrés | 28 October 2022

This dissertation examines how a corpus of late twentieth-century novels convey literary representations of queer chronotopes. The analyses of this corpus are informed by the critical underpinning of scholars such as Carolyn Dinshaw (1999), Lee Edelman (2004), Heather Love (2007), and Elizabeth Freeman (2010). I examine how my chosen literary narratives undermine normative views of how queer subjects identify over time, refusing hegemonic processes and rejecting liberal agendas of assimilation, as endorsed by post-Stonewall gay politics. Drawing on Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope (1996), and Peeren's critical contribution on Bakhtin's theorisation (2008), I use the chronotope as the configuration of time-space coordinators which produces narrative meaning and articulate literary identities. In my critical intervention to re-adapt Bakhtin's concept, my thesis concludes that queer chronotopes destabilise cultural understandings of time's linearity, chronology, progress, and reproductive futurity. In doing so, I further examine the productivity of specific cultural concepts, such as, "backwardness", "coming-out", "temporal drag", and "decadence". These concepts highlight the chronotope's capability to shape anachronistic subjectivities, modify genres, subvert traces from a historical past and its memories, and its ability to symbolise a transgressive worldview at odds with modernity's progress. With their invocation of a regressive past, as a form of cultural memory, queer chronotopes unsettle progressive expectations of gay liberalism and inclusive agendas of equality and assimilation within current sexual politics.

Barbara Cueto

White Papers on Dissent. Politics and Poetics of Blockchain

Supervisors: Mia Lerm-Hayes, Emilie Sitzia | 10 November 2022

White Papers on Dissent investigates blockchain technology as a tool for radical imagination. It moves away from economic discourses to understand this technology as a social apparatus, which can organise social life circumventing hegemonic economic principles, like the accumulation of capital and the focus on productivity. This PhD aims to explain how the technology can concoct new social imaginaries, where the creativity to adapt its

affordances conveys new elsewheres and otherwhises: new forms of utopia with a biopolitical production adjusted to the characteristics and desires of the post-digital society. *White Papers on Dissent* examines blockchains through two complementary angles: the politics within the technology and its aesthetic experimentations. On the one hand, it delves into how the different uses of the technology develop new political imaginaries, forms of subversion, and activism. On the other hand, it explores how artists working with blockchains give rise to new forms of aesthetic resistance as they are exercises that recreate, in the present, a desired unwritten future.

Divya Nadkarni

Poetic Understanding and Political Community. Actualizing Plurality through Poetry

Supervisors: Ellen Rutten, Josef Früchtel | 11 November 2022

This project develops an intersubjective pragmatist framework for reading poetry that takes the actualization of a decolonial and anti-identitarian political plurality as the basis of poetry's politicality. At its core is the concept of 'poetic understanding': a transformative quality of understanding that is a necessarily dynamic, contingent, non-hierarchical, and anti-identitarian process of transformation and constitution, where who I am comes to be constituted in my process of understanding, as does who the other is. I develop this framework by bringing together four distinct conceptual fields: I build on Hannah Arendt's theory of political plurality, Édouard Glissant's concepts of relation and opacity, John Dewey's pragmatist theory of aesthetic experience, and Sylvia Wynter's model of decipherment to examine poetry as a site of intersubjective transformation, where a genuine plurality of relation in interaction, divested of discriminatory and hierarchizing mechanics, can be actualized. In such a conceptualization of poetic understanding, I argue, lies an as-yet-underestimated cornerstone of solidary understanding, and the crux of poetry's political contribution

Hao Wang

Algorithmic Colonization. Automating Love and Trust in the Age of Big Data

Supervisors: Beate Roessler, Robin Celikates, Daniel Loick | 21 December 2022

Algorithms are playing crucial roles in mediating our daily life, making our choices in an increasingly efficient and automatic manner. My dissertation argues that the tendency of automating our everyday life can potentially reduce our interactive relations into an automatic enforcement of punishments and incentives, where there is no need for the social process of promises, dialogue, or shared meaning in the Big Data society.

To make an in-depth analysis of this problem, I develop a critical theory approach based on Habermas's the colonization of the lifeworld thesis, to critically capture how algorithms constantly intrude into the lifeworld, and how the intrusion can have the potential to crowd out our free interactions and exploration with others in love and trust relations. As argued, such a process of algorithmic colonization may lead to a culture of objectification, a society of manipulation, and a colonized self in the algorithmic society.

Grants

ASCA Members were awarded over 4 million Euros for their research initiatives.

Eke Reberger (Geert Lovink, ASCA) – NWO PhD Fellowship for Teachers

AI in het ontwerponderwijs: een kritische oriëntatie (AI in Design Education: A Critical Investigation). [funding goes to teaching institute]

In toenemende mate wordt gebruik gemaakt van artificiële intelligentie in diverse producten. Dit heeft verschillende ethische, ecologische, maatschappelijke en sociale consequenties waarnaar recent veel onderzoek is gedaan. Ontwerpers die aan producten met artificiële intelligentie werken zouden nu en in de toekomst met deze consequenties rekening moeten houden. Een brede kritische oriëntatie ontbreekt echter vooralsnog binnen dergelijke ontwerpprojecten. In dit onderzoek wordt een actueel kritisch referentiekader voor ontwerpers ontwikkeld. Daarnaast worden verdere mogelijkheden voor het versterken van de kritische oriëntatie op artificiële intelligentie binnen ontwerpprojecten in het ontwerponderwijs in Nederland onderzocht.

Castor Brouwer (Blandine Joret, ASCA) – NWO PhD Fellowship for Teachers

Another Disappearing Audience? Towards an Integrated Study of Standpoint Epistemologies and Intersectionality for Critical Media Literacy Education. [funding goes to teaching institute]

Considering the rising impact of audiovisual media alongside increasing diversity among high school students in the Netherlands, it is important to incorporate inclusive and critical media literacy in contemporary education practice. When it comes to teaching students critical media skills, however, this multiplicity of backgrounds is largely left unconsidered, obstructing the core principles and strengths of diverse classrooms. This project bridges this gap by implementing intersectionality and standpoint epistemologies into critical media literacy education. Through combining an integrative literature review with interpretative (audience) ethnography, this research answers to how specifically audiovisual media literacy relies on inclusive and emancipatory educational practices.

Alexander Roidl (Esther Weltevrede, ASCA) – NWO PhD Fellowship for Teachers

Kritische onderzoekstools: hoe kan kritisch ontwerp bijdragen tot de ontwikkeling van onderzoekstools in de geesteswetenschappen? (Critical

Research Tools: How Can Critical Design Contribute to the Development of Research Tools in the Humanities?) [funding goes to teaching institute]

Dit project bekijkt hoe onderzoekstools worden ontwikkeld in de geesteswetenschappen. Het probeert vat te krijgen op hoe de ontwikkeling van onderzoekstools, bijvoorbeeld voor het verzamelen, analyseren of visualiseren van data, de manier verandert waarop aan onderzoek wordt gedaan en kennis wordt vergaard om deze ontwikkeling te verbeteren. Het doel van het project is om betere onderzoekstools te creëren voor onderzoek in de geesteswetenschappen, die kritische reflectie, reflexieve interpretatie of ambiguïteit ondersteunen. In het algemeen draagt het project bij tot een kritischer begrip van software en technologie.

Richard Rogers (ASCA) - HORIZON-CL4-2021-HUMAN-01-27

Vera.ai: VERification Assisted by Artificial Intelligence. Coordinated by University of Sheffield. [€ 470,000]

vera.ai seeks to build trustworthy AI solutions against advanced disinformation techniques, co-created with and for media professionals and set the foundation for future research in the area of AI against disinformation. Key novel characteristics of the AI models will be fairness, transparency (including explainability), robustness to new data, and continuous adaptation to new disinformation techniques.

Tommy Tse (ASCA) – ERC Consolidator

Fashioning Power through South-South Interaction: Re-thinking Creativity, Authenticity, Cultural Mediation and Consumer Agency along China-Africa Fashion Value Chains. [€ 2,000,000]

The project investigates how, in the context of the Belt and Road Initiative, China's global power is manifested, negotiated, and resisted in people's daily life in a South-South setting using fashion as an exemplary case. Fashion is recognised as a significant economic force globally and one of the most poignant indicators of cross-cultural exchange. By critically examining China-Africa networks of fashion production, trade and consumption, this project will theorise how fashion is created, circulated, valued, and consumed in and through *Global Souths Value Chains* (Guangdong-Nairobi-Maputo), dissecting complex dynamics and expressions of power. Using a multi-disciplinary, multi-method, multi-sited, and multi-scalar approach, the following questions frame this project and its four subprojects: 1) How are everyday fashion products designed and produced in China for African markets; 2) How do Chinese and Africans interact to value and trade fashion products for Kenyan and Mozambican markets; 3) How and by whom are cultural differences negotiated

and mediated in the marketplace; and 4) What values, meanings and “power” do African consumers derive from consumption, and what ideas and constraints are imposed on them?

This project’s major contribution is threefold. *Theoretically*, it will move beyond a Western-centric epistemology to map the chains, restraints and materialities of China’s power expansion through fashion. *Methodologically*, this project will synergistically collect and triangulate empirical information along complete South-South commodity chains through multi-sited ethnography, semiotic and visual analysis, individual and focus group interviews, and wardrobe archival studies. *Empirically*, it will provide evidence of how Chinese-African fashion industries impact upon the social, cultural, economic and affective lives of African consumers in the context of increasing globalisation, digitalisation, consumerism, and China’s ambition abroad.

Matthias de Groof (Patricia Pisters, ASCA) – Marie Curie Postdoc Fellowship

EcoFilmCongo: Ecologies of filmmaking from the Global South. Integrating Film Studies and Environmental Humanities in and through Cinema. [€ 254,330.40]

Though least responsible for the environmental crisis, the Global South bears its greatest costs. Increasingly, environmental films from the Global South – circulating everywhere from small screens to major film festivals – have proved to be empowering, as they are used as tools for advocacy. However, despite their potential to raise global awareness, they remain unexamined in academia. Rethinking the environmental crisis from within the humanities and social sciences needs to include experience-based perspectives from the Global South. My project takes the DR Congo as a case-in-point.

How does environmental filmmaking from the DR Congo expose abuses and reflect upon the uneven distribution of the environmental crisis? In this project, I will research their alternative understandings of the causes of the crisis and how they articulate worldviews as responses to it. To do this, I will implement decolonial perspectives on environmental humanities within film studies and acquire innovative research skills. Thereafter, I will study three dimensions of the films from my case study: local production practices, content and circulation.

The fellowship will allow this research to be embedded in the Amsterdam School of Cultural Analysis (ASCA) at the University of Amsterdam. Prof.

Patricia Pisters, who will supervise the project, is one of the leading voices in film studies. Moreover, a considerable amount of research groups in the ASCA study topics that align with the project. The project will benefit considerably from fieldwork and from a secondment for additional training at the Rachel Carson Centre for Environment and Society in Munich which would ensure that

my project is enriched, debated and presented. The project will enable the transfer of scientific knowledge and skills between these two institutions and will help me leverage my future academic career and undertake further research, publication and outreach.

Kristina Gedgaudaite (Maria Boletsi, ASCA) – Marie Curie Postdoc Fellowship
Recollected: History, Memory and Imagination in Contemporary Greek Comics and Graphic Novels. [€ 187,624.32]

Approaching Greek graphic novels as a site for both artistic innovation and social critique, ReCOLLECTED sheds light on ways in which comics can inform our views on present-day cultural landscapes and engage with broader social issues pertaining to the role of popular culture and cultural heritage in shaping identity and redrawing the boundaries of national belonging. The aim of the project is two-fold. Firstly, it aims to assess what led to the boom of comics in the Greek cultural field over the past decade and identify any shared patterns and characteristics of these comics. Secondly, the project will then use this data to propose categories and conceptual tools that comics can offer for cultivating alternative visions for tackling contemporary problems. In order to reach these aims, ReCOLLECTED relies on an interdisciplinary methodology, combining tools and insights from comics studies with anthropology, cultural analysis, data visualization. The project will develop in close collaboration with comics artists themselves in order to integrate their own perspectives into the framework and in hope to spur debate in the field as well as new directions in comics practice as a result of this collaborative effort. Skills and training gained at UvA in advanced methods for combining ethnographic data and close-reading of cultural texts, conducting interviews and data visualization will ensure that the project contributes to cultural innovation within Greece as well as responds to the latest developments within the transnational field of comics studies.

Salvatore Giusto (Thomas Poell and Chiara de Cesari, ASCA) – Marie Curie Postdoc Fellowship

Scar-Facebook: Organized Crime and Populist Digital Media Politics in Contemporary Naples, Southern Italy. [€ 187,624.32]

The interactive forms of mass communication that characterize digital platforms of social mediation such as Facebook and Instagram intersect the institutional life of current democracies on multiple levels while serving as powerful ‘echo chambers’ for a plethora of rather controversial populist political agencies. As shown by the Ph.D. dissertation I have defended at the University of Toronto in 2019, this is especially true within subaltern social

spaces such as those punctuating the urban peripheries of Naples, Southern Italy. There, far-right movements and criminal organizations regularly employ the online social media to elicit consent amid the local poor and establish dynamics of political patronage with them. How do legal and criminal processes of digital networking cooperate in the entrenchment of populist politics within the most socially vulnerable areas of current democracies? How do these processes impact the socio-cultural lives of the Neapolitan poor in terms of political mobilization? What public policies and social interventions could challenge the conditions of structural violence and indirect governmentality engendered by these populist processes of digital mediation in Naples and beyond? My project will respond to these questions by providing ethnographic insights on the informal dynamics of digital mediation co-involving current Neapolitan gangsters, populist institutional operators, and their lower-class publics. I will conduct this project through innovative qualitative methods of socio-cultural research, which will integrate the ethnographic techniques I have learnt and practiced during my previous anthropological studies with the online techniques of ethnographic analysis informing the fields of digital media studies and digital humanities. I plan to do so through my engagement with the University of Amsterdam. As such, this project will also allow me to be reintegrated within EU academia after ten years of scholarly work in North America.

Jeroen de Kloet (Hannah Poon) (ASCA) – NWO PhDs in the Humanities

Surviving in Abeyance: Digital Networks and Resistance in Hong Kong after the Anti-Extradition Bill Movement [€ 190,396.16]

Hong Kong's Anti-Extradition Bill Movement in 2019-20 kwam ten einde onder druk van de nieuwe National Security Law. Desondanks vinden activistische netwerken manieren om te overleven, ze verplaatsen zich naar andere arena's die minder worden gecontroleerd door het regime: de consumentenmarkt, pop fan-culturen en de diaspora. Met deze sociale netwerken als casestudies stelt dit project de vraag: welke nieuwe vormen van verbinding en verzet worden mogelijk gemaakt door digitale technologieën, na de beëindiging van de anti-ELAB beweging, en hoe beïnvloeden deze tactieken de politieke strijd in niet-democratische samenlevingen zoals Hong Kong?

Thomas Poell (Sinine Nakhle) (ASCA) – NWO PhDs in the Humanities

Protesting Bodies and Aesthetic Practices: Examining Contestation, Art, and Media in Contemporary Beirut. [€ 190.396,16]

Sinds 2019 hebben er in Beiroet massale protesten plaatsgevonden. Deze protesten worden voortgestuwd door de esthetische, affectieve en performatieve productie van kunstenaars, activisten en culturele instellingen. Deze artistieke praktijken worden gekenmerkt door belangrijke vertaalmomenten, waarin protesterende lichamen een digitale vorm krijgen en aanzet geven tot nieuw protest. Hoewel de meeste hedendaagse sociale bewegingen worden aangedreven door een constante stroom van dit soort esthetische praktijken, is er weinig bekend over hoe dit vertaalproces vorm krijgt. Dit project biedt hierin inzicht aan de hand van acht gedetailleerde casestudies naar esthetische digitale praktijken tijdens de recente protesten in Beiroet.

Steve Jankowski (ASCA) – Wikimedia Research Fund

Slow Editing Towards Equity [€ 40,429]

Wikipedia's policies have the potential to enable and increase Wikipedia's capacity for knowledge equity. At the same time, this potential has been limited by the way they can also operate as barriers for this same goal. Policies are slow to change, conservative in their iterations, and they rely on community precedent and practice for legitimacy. As such, they resist bold changes and cannot be redirected on the basis of external academic or institutional authority. This poses a problem for initiatives that wish to address knowledge gaps at the level of policy. To aid in rectifying this situation, the proposed project investigates the types of socio-technical skills that Wikipedians can cultivate for this kind of "slow editing" in order to move equity initiatives through the policy development process.

Stefania Milan (ASCA) – HORIZON-CL2-2022-HERITAGE-01-03

SPES - Sustainability Performances, Evidence and Scenarios. Coordinated by Università di Firenze. [€ 255,995]

Richard Rogers (ASCA) – HORIZON-CL2-2022-DEMOCRACY-01-07

SoMe4Dem - Social media for democracy – understanding the causal mechanisms of digital citizenship. Coordinated by Sciences Po. [€ 330,993]

Richard Rogers (ASCA) – European Media and Information Fund, Gulbenkian Foundation [€ 40,000]

Andrea Meuzelaar (ASCA) – CLARIAH Teaching Fellowship

"They look just like us": the representation of Ukrainian refugees on Dutch public television. [€ 13,378]

The proposed project uses the CLARIAH Media Suite functionalities for distant reading and close-reading of the representation of Ukrainian refugees on news and current affairs programs, available in the Sound and Vision Archive. The project starts from the hypothesis that the current coverage of Ukrainian refugees shifts away from the threat and securitization frame that was often used to cover the 2015 ‘refugee crisis’ (e.g. Georgiou 2017, Chouliaraki and Stolic 2017). Using Media Suite search, bookmarking, video annotation tools and Automatic Speech Recognition, the project will investigate the thematic patterns of television coverage, the discourses of race, class, gender, religion, the imaginations of the Dutch nation and Europe, and the visual repertoires of the coverage.

Arnoud Arps (ASCA) – Niels Stensen Fellowship [Funding goes to researcher]
Studying carefully selected cinematic and literary case studies, this project investigates how the end of the Dutch colonial era is transculturally, transnationally, and cross-medially remembered in the Netherlands and Indonesia. He hypothesizes that the focus on processing historical trauma in remembrance texts, rather than the acts of violence themselves, offer an opportunity to go beyond simple black-and-white definitions of perpetratorship on the one hand, and victimhood on the other. Arnoud Arps’s project aims to provide a model for further comparative research on how ‘shared colonial history’ between nations is remembered across cultures, nations, and media by mapping out structures of memory-making and determining how the complex relationship between countries is intrinsically linked by media that continuously return to the colonial past. This model can be utilised to form memory junctions instead of deepening memory chasms between these nations. As a Niels Stensen Fellow, Arnoud will conduct research at the University of Oxford and at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Hanneke Stuit (ASCA) – NIAS fellowship [Funding goes to researcher]
Colonial Continuities: The Carceral Idyll and the Will to Confine
In the Netherlands, carceral imaginaries tend to cluster into three seemingly unrelated strands: in popular culture there is a fascination with prisons as spectacles, collective memory tends to focus on experiences from camps during World War II, and contemporary media foreground precarious living conditions in refugee camps and migrant detention centers. Surprisingly, colonial histories that have structured these sites of confinement and surveillance, are often overlooked in discussions and depictions of these carceral forms.

Hanneke Stuit aims to explore the development of the “carceral idyll” – the belief that confining people in the right way and in the right place will benefit society – as portrayed in literature, documentaries, and marketing materials related to three specific detention sites in the Netherlands: the Colonies of Benevolence, camp Westerbork, and the asylum center in Ter Apel. The project seeks to shed light on the often unacknowledged influence of Dutch colonialism on imprisonment, both at home and abroad.

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New PhD Candidates (25)

Claudia Aanonsen, *Producing Cybersecurity Knowledge: A Sociotechnical Analysis of Cybersecurity and Associated Cultures*

Supervisors: Rocco Bellanova, Stefania Milan

This PhD project explores the formation of cybersecurity as a configuration between social, cultural, and technical modalities. Although studies of technology through lenses of Science and Technology Studies and Critical Security Studies have examined the entanglement between humans and machines, these approaches remain scarce in studies of cybersecurity. The project will build from these advances to empirically explore the ecology of cybersecurity as an interplay between knowledge production and technological engineering. Through two case studies of cybersecurity strategies in Norway and the UK, I aim to understand how sociotechnical imaginaries interact with the physical realities of international politics.

Omar Barghouti, *Ethical Decolonization & De-dichotomization of Identities in a Settler-Colonial Conflict: A Moral Foundation for a Secular Democratic State in Historic Palestine*

Supervisors: Yolande Jansen, Sarah Bracke

In settler-colonial contexts, a particularly pernicious form of colonial regime that seeks to not just dispossess and disenfranchise the indigenous population but to substitute it altogether by a settler population that controls the land and resources, the indigenous nation aspires to decolonization to guarantee self-determination and sometimes its very existence. But what does decolonization look like after the settlers have dominated the land for centuries, as in the case of “the Americas,” or even decades, as in the case of Palestine? Liberation through the expulsion of the colonists, as in the non-settler colonial situations that prevailed through most of Asia, Africa and Latin America, becomes much more complex and presents serious ethical questions.

Barbara Bleij, *The Theory of Tonal Jazz Harmony: Towards an Integrated Approach*

Supervisor: Walter van de Leur

Harmonic theories in jazz arose in practical contexts, in service of (the pedagogy of) performance and composition. However, they often overemphasise some aspects of harmony at the cost of others. In pedagogy this unbalance is becoming increasingly unsatisfactory and for scholars such theories do not provide sufficient analytical frameworks by any means. However, academic music theory has not yet postulated shared alternatives for jazz. This

considerably hinders the music-analytical study of jazz and impedes fruitful exchange between scholars. This work aims to provide a theory of tonal jazz harmony that serves both the pedagogical practice and academic music theory. The work consists of two parts. One part presents the theory. In this theory, melodic (horizontal), harmonic (vertical), and stylistic aspects of tonal jazz harmony are integrated and grounded in a solid theoretical foundation. The second part is a commentary on this theory in the form of annotations. These annotations provide context, discussion, explanation, reflection, and critique with respect to the pedagogical and methodological choices, theoretical background, and sources.

Castor Brouwer, *Another Disappearing Audience? Towards an Integrated Study of Standpoint Epistemologies and Intersectionality for Critical Media Literacy Education*

Supervisors: Sudeep Dasgupta, Blandine Joret

Considering the rising impact of audiovisual media alongside increasing diversity among high school students in the Netherlands, it is important to incorporate inclusive and critical media literacy in contemporary education practice. When it comes to teaching students critical media skills, however, this multiplicity of backgrounds is largely left unconsidered, obstructing the core principles and strengths of diverse classrooms. This project bridges this gap by implementing intersectionality and standpoint epistemologies into critical media literacy education. Through combining an integrative literature review with interpretative (audience) ethnography, this research answers to how specifically audiovisual media literacy relies on inclusive and emancipatory educational practices.

Florence Evans, *Temporary Monuments and Disappeared Architectures: Activism, Performance, and Memory in Buenos Aires, 1995-2003*

Supervisors: Sruti Bala, Boris Noordenbos

My project aims to show, through this and other relatable examples, activists and artists (and activists as artists) repudiated dominant amnesia surrounding Argentina's dictatorial regime through embodied performances in contested spaces of Buenos Aires. Whether enacting solidarity with communities of relatives of the disappeared through experimental public artworks (Grupo Arte Callejero) and street theatre (Grupo Etcetera; Emilio Garcia-Wehbi) to walking the city with handheld cameras in search of the disappeared (M, Nicolás Prividera, 2007), the urban environments of Buenos Aires took on a dually symbolic and material basis for the mobilisation of memory in each of the cases I examine.

Agustin Ferrari Braun, *Lady Credit's New Clothes: The Constitution of European Financialised Subjectivities through FinTech Platforms*

Supervisors: Thomas Poell, Niels van Doorn

This research project seeks to study the processes of financialization in the European Union by interrogating the role of FinTech platforms in the creation of financialized subjectivities, contingent collective relationships to money, markets, and time, among others. To do so, it will develop a research approach that positions platforms as nexuses between governmental and corporate initiatives, and the affective experience of ordinary users. These experiences will be studied through multi-sited ethnography in the Netherlands, Spain, and Romania, three nations representing the different modalities, frictions, and conflicts of EU membership. The data will then be complemented by critical textual analysis of the EU's policies regarding FinTech, and multi-situated platform analysis of the most popular services in each country. Through a layered research design, the present project aims to provide a critical perspective on the ongoing process of European financialization from the Humanities, contributing to a discussion so-far dominated by economics and business studies.

Jueling Hu, *Techno-futurism(s) in China: Infrastructure of Imaginaries and the Fabrication of Power*

Supervisors: Misha Kavka, Christine Bichsel

The current rise of techno-futurism(s) in China produces a series of promises that the “future” will differ from the present by its progress in technology. I investigate the taming of technology into collectively desired future(s), inquiring why and how the advance in technology becomes the way of national futuremaking. I approach the production of technocentric future(s) as being publicly performed, institutionally stabilized, and collectively held imaginaries (Jasanoff and Kim 2015), focusing on not only how the future(s) is conceived, described, and interpreted, but also how it is experienced in embodied ways (Milani and Richardson 2021). These aspects require attention to the material and immaterial actors that condition people's encounters with these imaginaries. I develop this research with a particular material perspective, unfolding the imaginaries of the future in those conventionally considered as the “cultureless” (Berlant 2016) – infrastructure, spatial arrangements, and institutional structures. Moving beyond structure-agency binary, I examine the infrastructure of imaginaries as the interface that connect techno-futurism(s) in collective forms with individual desires. I consider science fiction parks in China to be ideal sites for meeting the research objectives as they are entities of future-producers that spatially gather different social sectors in an urban

microecology. Applying ethnographical methods, I examine the production of discourse and the sensory experience of the time in the spatial arrangements of pipes, wires, technological devices, exhibition installations, etc. Hypothetically, I position technofuturism(s) in the fabrication of power in the negotiation between nation-building, tech capital, and the techno-orientalist culture embedded in the global postcolonial system.

Safae el Khannoussi el Boudrin, *Postcolonial Carcerality: Thinking Abolitionist Strategies in North Africa*

Supervisors: Daniel Loick, Jana Cattien

In this dissertation, I will explore the relationship between the historical trajectory of carceral institutions in the North-African states of Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria and the sovereign nation state from the post-independence era to the present. In the light of the growing debate on incarceration, this research examines the relationship between political configurations of postcolonial societies, the instrumentalization of prisons as mechanisms of violence, and sovereignty. Drawing on Achille Mbembe's concepts of 'postcolony' and 'necropolitics', this doctoral thesis will offer a conceptual understanding of the type of power that shapes carceral spaces in which life is perpetually at stake. Similarly, I develop the notion of postcolonial carcerality: a term that defines the expanding intersection of geography, economic and political alliances and carceral space in the Maghreb. Finally, I will develop a theoretical abolitionist grounding of prison studies in the Maghreb region and hence prepare the abolitionist discourses within these societal contexts in such a way that they can be read as an impulse for the contours of a future democracy.

Linda Kopitz, *Artificial Amsterdam: Architectural Writing and the Urban (Re)imagination of Nature*

Supervisors: Markus Stauff, Maryn Wilkinson

At a moment of environmental crisis, nature as 'environment' appears to be in a constant state of tension with globalization, technologization and urbanization. Moving beyond these dichotomies, this PhD proposes that the cross-mediated process of architectural writing provides an entry point into the production of nature(s) within the city. Embedded in environmental discourses, architecture plays an increasingly important role not only in shaping cities spatially – but also in shaping our shared understanding of sustainable futures. Exploring the entanglement of artificial and real environments – the 'natural', the 'urban' and the 'virtual' – in architectural writing, this project focuses on Amsterdam as one specific socio-political setting. From the initial imagination of buildings via drawing architectural sketches and designing models, to their

virtual rendering, and physical production on construction sites, as well as their continuous communicative positioning, this process importantly takes place in and through different media forms. This PhD argues that a deeper engagement with the architectural process from the initial idea to the built structure and its communication are paramount in understanding the social, political, and cultural connotations of space-making. With specific attention to the sensory qualities of both nature and architecture, this project aims to offer a new starting point for thinking about an ethics of care for ourselves and the environment. Approaching existing and emerging sustainable architectural projects critically allows for a further exploration of the interdependency between spaces, places and caring communities and opens up larger discussions about a (re)imagination of modern life in a changing environment.

Shin-Jie Lee, *Dwelling Spaces: A Study on the Aesthetics and Politics of Contemporary Artist-in-Residencies*

Supervisors: Margriet Schavemaker, Sruti Bala

This study aims to contribute to a critical understanding of contemporary artists-in-residency programmes (AiR), and examine how their practices and models cross disciplinary boundaries, interact with their local contexts and intervene in ongoing social debates. Sketching the contours of global debates while considering local conditions, the doctoral project explores the infrastructural logics, material realities, and embodied processes of AiR and consider their intellectual, social-political, and ecological influences.

Christine Loss, *Super Homines Curans: Superheroes, Care, Power and Democracy*

Supervisors: Boris Noordenbos, Misha Kavka

Although fields of superhero and care studies have already received considerable academic attention, analyses of the superhero genre are insufficient, if we do not study how this genre that revolves around superheroes taking care of others in need, conceptualises care, both in its emotional attachment and care activity. Likewise, the care scholarship remains lacking without analyses scrutinising how care is narrated and culturally made sense of. My research therefore fills this gap by charting how the most popular cinematic franchise, the Marvel Cinematic Universe in its current phase, imagines 'how to care'. Utilising cultural analysis as methodological framework, my research will discuss 1) how this new MCU phase reframes heroes as relational, situated, responsive and responsible characters that are in line with care theorists conceptualisation of democratic citizenship 2) how these films and shows are critical of parochialism and paternalism as power hierarchies when helping

others and also trouble naturalised notions of care as feminised and racialised 3) how these objects reluctantly become critical of their heroes' own use of violence and challenge the genre's conventional use of excessive righteous whilst also exposing the structural violence that underlies care-harming ideas of privatised and individualised biologically connected care units. Ultimately, my research challenges 'common-sense' understandings of care as 'natural' rather than socially learned and aims to critically show that although care-harming ideologies present the status quo politically and economically these days, there are nonetheless strong residual values of care embedded in our culture, that could be ignited politically and intellectually (Lynch 10).

Luc Marraffa, *Interrupting Broadcasts/Broadcasting Interruptions: A Study of Subjectivation in Colonial Soundscapes*

Supervisor: meLê Yamomo

"Hey, you there!" – this interpellation by a police officer, famously analyzed by Althusser, has spawned a plethora of academic concepts, only few of which focus on the sonic aspect of the interpellation. During my PhD at Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA), I plan to build on my previous work in philosophy and musicology to approach interpellations as sonic acts, and examine their role in the formation of colonial subjectivities. I will research what the amplification and propagation of sonic acts does to subjectivities enlisted under the colonial project as agents of domination, and/or as indigenous elements, to be colonized. Analyzing the use of broadcasts in de/colonial struggles from French and Dutch (ex-)colonies from the 1940s onwards, my work asks how broadcasting practices, instrumental in colonial domination, can be – and have been – subverted as emancipatory tools?

I approach broadcasts, on public radio for example, as large scale, mass uses of sound and study the material culture that facilitates them. I center the technological practice of sound reproduction and amplification – the dissemination of which from the 1940s onwards coincides with the rise of decolonial movements – and explore its subversive potential: an interpellation being always already iterative, its mass scale reproduction puts additional strain on questions of authenticity and originality.

Katy McAlary, *Creating Beauty as an Act of Resistance: How a Feminist Global Graffiti Art Movement Shapes a Revolution through a Techno-Corporeal Aesthetic*

Supervisors: Monique Roelofs, Sudha Rajagopalan

This research will explore the overlap in modern protest tactics and the aesthetic promise of protest the Fearless Collective - a global art movement piloted by

Shilo Shiv Suleman - utilizes in combatting violence enacted against marginalized communities around the world. The Fearless Collective addresses issues and stigmas steeped in fear – for women, queer/trans individuals, indigenous communities wrought with colonial erasure, sex/factory workers – and combats them with love through public (collaborative) displays of art. While this art is physically and geographically situated, the awareness addressing the issue expands to social media feeds, birthing a broader movement at the confluence of beauty and protest. Thus, the empowerment embodied in the collaborative creation of each work becomes emboldened by the aesthetic promise of resolution. I aim to analyze the beauty along with other pertinent aesthetic dimensions of the art and the profundity of location chosen for exhibition, juxtaposed with the aesthetic promise, and how the perception via social media upholds or evolves when geographically removed.

Brian McKenna, *Analogue Visual Music: An Artistic Query into the Relation of Self & Technology*

Supervisors: Paula Albuquerque, Julia Kursell

The artistic research PhD project explores analogue electronic instruments and visual music through forms of media archaeological re-enactment. This questions how unique properties of pre-digital audiovisual media can be applied to notions of the 'self' as it relates to technology. The work is centered around the construction and use of high-definition video synthesizers in a modular interface format. Resulting modular synthesis designs will be published according to an open-source community ethic of accessibility and formative dialogue. These analogue visual music instruments are offered as meaningful alternatives to largely ubiquitous digital techniques used in contemporary video art. Analogue modular tools are characterized by interface tactility, instantaneous signal flows, nonlinearity, surprise, and ephemerality. These aspects will be employed in the production of artworks which aspire to self-reflexivity. The project contextualizes the interactions between humans and technological systems through aesthetic considerations: my audiovisual artworks, which self-reflect on their own production process, provide access to insights into how notions of the human self are shaped by technological choices.

Rosa Menkman, *Untangling Resolutions: Through the Lens of the Image*

Supervisors: Geert Lovink, Florian Cremer

The thesis I would like to write investigates the setting of resolutions through five lenses, and aims to offer an expanded definition of 'resolution,' including its inherent politics of the unseen compromise. A research into the setting of resolutions requires to ask questions such as: how is the rendering pipeline

governed? and how can the different steps within this pipeline - or layers of governance - be revealed, or even deconstructed? To answer these questions, I will describe the processes that consolidate into a final resolution, and reconsider the realms of compromised possibilities from a material, financial, genealogical, aesthetic and political point of view.

Julia Mullié, at this moment stanley brouwn is at the distance of x feet from this pointe

Supervisors: Margriet Schavemaker, Sruti Bala

stanley brouwn's (1935-2017) strategies of negation played with the values underlying traditional art historical discourse. His oeuvre hasn't really been studied yet. In order to understand the work in which the presence and absence of the artist takes center stage, this dissertation asks how we might interpret stanley brouwn's oeuvre using methodologies that transcend traditional art historical discourse? By unpacking the work of brouwn from these different angles, I aim to demonstrate that the traditional art historical approach to the monograph, combined with other methodologies, can be used to interpret complex, fluid, critical and subversive artistic practices. The traditional art historical approach alone is not sufficient: it must be both supplemented and negated.

Skinner Myers, Black Star: Race, Representation, & the need for Intransigence against the Despotism of Anti-Blackness over Black Hollywood Cinema

Supervisors: Pei-Sze Chow, Patricia Pisters

Black Star analyzes the "idea of blackness" in the world and how there are two separate paths "Black Cinema" can take: "that which 'awakens' the spectator by taking him along the path of progress, and that which 'lulls him to sleep' by making him sluggish and escape from reality by merely entertaining him." (Gladstone L. Yearwood) The dissertation posits that Hollywood Cinema, which it designates as a "Colonizing Cinema", has demanded, "Black Cinema" to perform with a minstrel mask and explicit blackface that grants a partial humanization of the "idea of blackness".

Grâce Ndjako, Black Disruption, White Reinforcement

Supervisors: Yolande Jansen, Michiel Leezenberg

This project examines how 'Black critique' of coloniality has dealt and can deal with the 'closing' responses with which it is often met by 'white critique'. It studies how Black critique, such as for example Patrice Lumumba's famous anti-colonial speech from [30 June 1960, Kinshasa] at the day of independence in

Congo, has been received in a number of different white and Black contexts across Africa, Europa and the Americas. The project specifically focuses on how Black critique of 'closing' white responses has been formulated so far and how it could be further articulated. Black critique has often been delved into by anti-colonial thinkers, but there hasn't been a systematic study of it yet. The project thus studies the racial dynamics between the sustained critiques of coloniality in Africana philosophy and the white reception of these critiques. In the concluding chapter of *Les damnés de la terre*, Frantz Fanon sets out the parameters of Black critique. He argues that the colonized should make a clean break with Europe to be able to think anew and urges the colonized to rethink the human, to invent, to discover and to look outside of Europe. Negating the negation of colonialism for there to be a possibility of the new.

Eke Reberger, *AI in het ontwerponderwijs: een kritische oriëntatie (AI in Design Education: A Critical Investigation)*

Supervisors: Geert Lovink, Sebastian Olma

In toenemende mate wordt gebruik gemaakt van artificiële intelligentie in diverse producten. Dit heeft verschillende ethische, ecologische, maatschappelijke en sociale consequenties waarnaar recent veel onderzoek is gedaan. Ontwerpers die aan producten met artificiële intelligentie werken zouden nu en in de toekomst met deze consequenties rekening moeten houden. Een brede kritische oriëntatie ontbreekt echter vooralsnog binnen dergelijke ontwerpprojecten. In dit onderzoek wordt een actueel kritisch referentiekader voor ontwerpers ontwikkeld. Daarnaast worden verdere mogelijkheden voor het versterken van de kritische oriëntatie op artificiële intelligentie binnen ontwerpprojecten in het ontwerponderwijs in Nederland onderzocht.

Joris Roelofs, *Improvising Free Spirits: The Aesthetics of Unpredictability in the Thought of Arendt and Nietzsche*

Supervisors: Walter van de Leur, Thomas Nys

This research project examines the philosophical and political dimension of improvisation, by drawing from the thought of Nietzsche and Arendt and from the existing body of improvisation studies. Remaining faithful to Arendt's hermeneutical phenomenology, I aim at understanding improvisation by studying various interpretations and experiences of improvisation. By examining how improvisation in the performing arts and rhetoric has historically been experienced in the political sphere, this study will provide a deeper understanding of the political dimension of improvisation. Analogously, it can provide a more profound understanding of the improvisational/ performative dimension of Arendt's concept of politics. Drawing from Nietzsche's experience

as an improviser, his interpretation of artistic and everyday improvisation, and his critique of the work-concept, I will show how improvisation and philosophy are intertwined, both being critical practices demanding a constant renewal and examination of what is given.

Ouejdane Sabbah, *Cultural Platform labor at the Global Margins: A study of Gendered and Classed North-African YouTubers.*

Supervisors: Thomas Poell, Misha Kavka

This Ph.D. research aims to investigate how gendered, working-class, racialized, creators from low- and middle-income countries, negotiate, re-appropriate, or resist platform governance. Specifically, the research project looks at gendered North African Vloggers and their digital practices on YouTube. In doing so, it aims to take this opportunity for theory building i.e. enriching theories of precarity by repositioning the debate at the global margins. Even though the content creators operate within a global Infrastructuralized platform, they are shaped and governed by socioeconomic factors that are regionally situated and can clash with universal platform governance. These factors re-create a new layer of precarity, predominantly economic and social, which moves away from how the previous versions of precarity i.e. unpaid labor for the sake of glamour, have been theorized in high-income countries. Simply put, this Ph.D. project would center on the material experience of gendered and classed YouTubers from North Africa and let them talk back to theories developed in the Global North.

Mateo Sanchez Petrement, *Re-politicizing Psychedelics: Phenomenologies of Resonance Towards Acid Communist Futures*

Supervisors: Joost de Bloois, Patricia Pisters

The proposed research project is meant as a contribution to the nascent field of the psychedelic humanities (Langlitz 2019, Roberts 2017) and will be guided by the question “how can psychedelics expand our sense of political possibility?”. While my Research Master’s thesis set a preliminary formal frame to study this question, I aim to develop its investigations further by framing them through sociologist Hartmut Rosa’s concept of “resonance” (2019) and by deepening my historical analysis into the discourses, practices, and collectives that can give us insight into the relation between psychedelics and politics. The contemporary relevance of this topic is a matter not only of the rapid emergence and growth of the “renaissance” of psychedelic research (Pollan 2018). Foremost, this relevance is given by the three current crises - of mental health, democracy, and of the environment - which Rosa conceptualizes as underridden by a crisis of resonance. The promise is that, following my argument that psychedelics are powerful resonance tools, their potential might be addressed to these issues. I

will engage directly with current psychedelic research in their therapeutic application, with cultural critic Mark Fisher's conceptual pair "capitalist realism"/"acid communism", and with critical posthumanism. These engagements also advance Rosa's work by providing it with a strong experiential tool, a focus on a particular historical timeline, and with a new ontological and ethical perspective, respectively. Altogether, this project aims to give a nuanced and grounded vision of how psychedelics can be practically deployed to expand our sense of possibility towards desirable futures.

Jialing Song, *Gendering Digital Cultural Production in the Chinese Platform Economy*

Supervisors: Jeroen de Kloet, Tommy Tse

RED is a Chinese social media platform with near 90% of users being female, which was initially designed for middle-class women within a frame of globalized consumer culture and plays a prominent role in surging iterative waves of prevailing beauty standards and normative femininities. Centering on the political economy and the user's practices of RED, this project specifically focuses on the imbricate gender power relations of its platform ecosystem, aiming to understand the formation of gendered subjects vis-à-vis digital cultural production, as well as in what ways they participate in, interact with, and navigate the system of the Chinese platform economy.

Oscar Talbot, *Towards Abolitionist Ecologies: Abolishing Eco-Carcerality*

Supervisors: Daniel Loick, Marija Cetinic

In the IPCC's stark latest report on the mitigation of climate change the UN stated that major obstacles to accelerated mitigation of climate collapse are 'to a large degree rooted in the underlying structural features of societies. As a result, transforming those underlying structures can help to remove those obstacles.' (IPCC, 2022, p.655) These obstacles act not merely to prevent mitigation through governmental policy, but also to suppress the possibility of 'external social movements' such as Extinction Rebellion from mobilising (Temper et al., 2020). The confluence of anti-democratic policies which have a suppressant effect on protest, the immediate necessity for systematic climate justice, and the need to rethink the institutions of society in a radical way has created an urgent series of questions which have yet to be answered, or indeed posed. The next day, groups of activists organised around the world, including a group of scientists in LA who glued themselves to a Chase Bank to protest the bank's investments in fossil fuels. The result was an almost immediate influx of police in full riot gear, batons at the ready to quell the dissent (Mcfall-Johnsen, 2022). This thesis will seek to mobilise the abolitionist tradition to demonstrate

how restructuring society along ecological imperatives is as much a question of revolutionising democratic structures as it is of extricating ourselves from unsustainable patterns of production and consumption. Using an abolitionist philosophical and political approach, it will show that abolishing carbon-based politics and achieving climate justice requires us to rethink not only our approach to climate, but equally our approach to justice.

Shiyi Zhu, *Modern Self and Modern Horror: Post-Impressionist Aesthetics in Virginia Woolf and Eileen Chang*

Supervisors: Emilie Sitzia, Nicholas Carr, Rachel Esner

Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) and Eileen Chang (1920-1995), the well-known feminist in Chinese literary history, are both credited with domesticating the literary world. While many scholarly works have been written on their cross-cultural consonance in stylistic experiments, feminist reflections, and emotional expressions, few have noticed their shared relationship with modernist art. Tracing the relationship between literary and art history through essays (such as Woolf's "Pictures" and Chang's "On Paintings") and examining the use of artistic forms in their novels and short stories (such as Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, "Solid Objects", Chang's *The Golden Cangue* and "Dream of Genius"), this project examines the relationship between Post-Impressionistic aesthetics and feminism in Virginia Woolf and Eileen Chang. Focusing on their depictions of domestic space, this research argues that both Virginia Woolf and Eileen Chang received Post-Impressionism as a rejection of the realist mode of representation. Both writers have used unusual colors, geometric designs, distinctive brush strokes, and distorted shapes to aestheticize and de-sexualize the female figures and domestic space. Virginia Woolf makes the aestheticized images and spaces pure formal elements for artistic expression, rejecting the established gender norms in Victorian society and exploring alternative forms of creativity. Eileen Chang, by contrast, transforms the concrete characters and spaces into an incarnation of horror and decadence, resisting the artificial beauty of traditional Chinese domestic life while using the aestheticization of horror as a means of articulating the suppressing gender ideologies.

New staff members (7)



Alessandra Benedicty-Kokken

As of August 2022, Alessandra Benedicty-Kokken is University Docent at the University of Amsterdam at the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis, and was formerly Research Coordinator and Senior Researcher at the [Research Center for Material Culture](#) at the Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen in the Netherlands. Formerly, she was Associate Professor at the City College of New York and The Graduate Center (CUNY) in both Interdisciplinary Studies and French. Her full-volume publications are: *Spirit Possession in French, Haitian, and Vodou Thought: An Intellectual History* (2015); the co-edited “Revisiting Marie Vieux Chauvet,” a special issue of *Yale French Studies* (2016), and also the co-edited *The Haiti Exception: Anthropology and the Predicament of Narrative* (2016). She is a Review Editor for the [Journal of Haitian Studies](#) and selection committee member of Villa Albertine’s Translation Fund & Prizes.



Gulzaar Barn

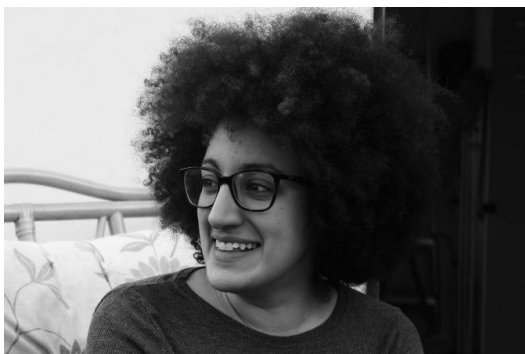
Prior to joining UvA, Gulzaar Barn held positions at Utrecht University, King’s College London, and the University of Birmingham. Gulzaar works predominately on matters related to practical ethics and political philosophy, and is interested in context-sensitive ethical inquiry. Her publication and public

engagement activities include work on labor transactions and exploitation, assisted reproductive services, genetic enhancement, and punishment and its justifications.



Balázs Boross

Balázs Boross has recently been appointed as Assistant Professor in Gender, Health and Cross-Media at the Media Studies Department. Working at the intersection of critical cultural studies and media anthropology, his research focuses on processes of normalization and the shifting visibility of marginalized identities in contemporary television and cross-media culture. His previous work on reality TV participants, disability representations and the mediatization of coming out had been published in *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, *Media, Culture & Society*, *Television & New Media*, and *Critical Studies in Television*. His current project examines the mediatization and the gendered politics of assisted reproductive technologies.



Sarah Budasz

Sarah Budasz is an Assistant Professor in Decolonial Literatures and Cultures: French in the School of Modern Foreign Languages and Cultures. After a PhD at Durham University, she previously worked as a lecturer in French at Aberystwyth University. Her recently completed PhD examined the reception of Classical culture in French 19th Century travel writing about the 'Orient'. She is currently working on publications related to nationalist travel writing in Greece, race and classical scholarship, Egyptian dancers as well as Roman models in narratives of the Haitian revolution. Her future projects include a special issue of *Dix-Neuf* on "Press and the French Empire" as well as research on ancient myths in 19th and 20th narratives of emancipation from slavery.



Salvatore Giusto

Salvatore Giusto is a Ph.D. in socio-cultural anthropology (University of Toronto, 2019) currently working as a Marie Curie Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Amsterdam. His research work reflects a sustained interest in how state-regulated and organized-crime-managed modalities of media productions and circulation respectively operate within European contexts connoted by historical conditions of capitalist and crypto-colonial exploitation such as the southern regions of the Italian peninsula, as well as the pivotal role that such forms of social (mass-)mediation play within current subaltern politics on a transnational scale. Salvatore's scholarly activities are complemented by his parallel work as a literary author (2000, *Ritzomena: cose che danzano*), documentary film-maker (2014, *Good Time for a Change*), digital magazine editor (2021, www.deephinterland.it), as well as his burning passion for "old school" horror movies, horse riding, and home-made Sicilian cuisine."



Matthias de Groof

Matthias De Groof is a professor in film studies and visual cultures at the University of Antwerp and a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Postdoctoral Fellow at the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA) of the University of Amsterdam (UvA) and the Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München. He is interested in aesthetics as politics of forms and practices that contribute to the restoration of broken worldviews. Matthias has held fellowship appointments at the New York University's Tisch School of the Arts as a Fulbright scholar; at the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies with Kone Foundation; at University of Bayreuth's Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence; and at the Waseda University in Tokyo. His works include an edited book on *Lumumba in the Arts* (Leuven University Press) which reached a

list of the top-100 "books to escape the news" (LitHub) and the award winning films *Under The White Mask* (2020), *Palimpsest of the Africa Museum* (2019), *Lobi Kuna* (2018), *Diorama* (2018) and *Jerusalem, the Adulterous Wife* (2008) among others.



Sanjukta Sunderason

Sanjukta Sunderason is a historian of 20th-century aesthetics, working on the interfaces of visual art, (left-wing/socialist) political thought, and historical transition during 20th-century decolonization in South Asia and across transnational formations in the Global South. She is the author of [*Partisan Aesthetics: Modern Art and India's Long Decolonization* \(Stanford University Press, 2020\)](#) and co-editor (with Lotte Hoek, University of Edinburgh) of [*Forms of the Left in Postcolonial South Asia: Aesthetics, Networks, and Connected Histories* \(Bloomsbury, 2021\)](#). Her writings have appeared across multiple peer-reviewed journals including *Third Text*, *British Art Studies*, *South Asian Studies*, etc. She is currently working on a second monograph on transnational conceptualizations of art and liberation across 20th-century decolonization, thinking from the locational scales of South Asia. Before joining the University of Amsterdam in 2021, Sanjukta taught at Leiden University for more than eight years at the Leiden Institute for Area Studies. At UvA, she is Assistant Professor (UD1) in Art History at the Department of Arts and Culture, and co-coordinator in ongoing and upcoming collectives at UvA like *Global Trajectories of Thought and Memory* and *Decolonial Futures*. She lectures and supervises broadly across themes of aesthetics and decolonization, global modernisms, trans-disciplinary cultural theory, postcolonial and decolonial thought.

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