In 2017 Lucy van der Wiel's dissertation *Freezing Fertility: Oocyte Cryopreservation and the Gender Politics of Ageing* was awarded the prize, as well as Eva Meijer's 2018 dissertation *The Political Voice of Animals*.

**TJALLING VALDÉS OLMOS IN PHD COUNCIL**

Tjalling Valdés Olmos is the successor of Alex Thinius in the PhD Council of the Faculty of Humanities. Tjalling is one of three PhD researchers in the ERC project led by Esther Peeren. His project analyses Rural Imaginations in the US. Tjalling is also, together with Inez van der Scheer, coordinating the Unthinking CPC: Colonialism, Patriarchy, and Capitalism Research Group (see below). In the PhD Council, Tjalling represents ASCA’s PhD researchers. Also in the PhD Council is Divya Nadkarni, representing self-funded PhD researchers. Please contact them if you want the Faculty to address certain issues.

**EVENTS**

**ASCA BORREL: SAVE THE DATE**

The upcoming ASCA Summer Borrel is scheduled for 6 June 2019 from 18:00-20:00 hrs. Presentation of the 2019 ASCA Awards will take place during the borrel. Save the date!

**ASCA PHD SKILLS SEMINAR**

*The Academic Job Market and Publishing*

Organized by Esther Peeren and Jaap Kooijman, Universiteitstheater, kamer 1.01A, 2 May 2019, 16:00 - 18:00 hrs.

Where should (and shouldn't) I publish my research? How long does it take for a publication to come out? How do I write a book proposal? How do I get an academic job or postdoc position in the Netherlands or abroad? What other careers are open to me with a PhD? The annual ASCA PhD skills seminar, organized by Esther Peeren and Jaap Kooijman, and featuring two ASCA alumni who will share their experiences on the job market, is designed to supplement the training offered by the Graduate School of Humanities by providing answers to these questions and more, specifically tailored to ASCA PhD candidates. To register, send an email to asca-fgw@uva.nl.

---

**PRAEMIUM ERASMIANUM FOR EVA REIJMAN**

For the third time in a row an ASCA dissertation has been awarded the Praemium Erasmianum. This year Eva Reijman won this prestigious prize for her dissertation *Deliberative Political Campaigns: Democracy, Autonomy and Persuasion*. The distinctive scientific merit and originality of her dissertation lie in its analysis not only of the best theory of democracy, but also in combining these theoretical considerations with an equally profound analysis of the role, the possibilities and the limits of political campaigning. Thus, Reijman’s dissertation is an excellent contribution to the philosophical debates on theories of democracy, as well as to the evaluation of methods in political campaigning, a field in society which is becoming ever more pertinent under the increasing influence of, for example, digital techniques of micro-targeting voters.
CARILLONS: MUSICAL HERITAGE OF THE LOW COUNTRIES

Presentation by Luc Rombouts (University Carillonneur, Leuven) in the Aurality Seminar organized by Barbara Titus. Location: University Library, Belle van Zylenzaal. Belle van Zylenzaal, University Library | 2 May 2019, 16:00 - 18:00 hrs.

For many centuries, tower bells served as voices of local authorities and structured the daily life of citizens in Europe. Some 500 years ago, people in the Low Countries transformed functional tower bells into musical instruments. This innovation was the first ‘music in the cloud’ – one may call it an alpha version of Spotify. Surprisingly, carillon music didn’t die out after the radio, CD’s and the internet arrived in order to offer a cheaper technology of bringing music to large audiences.

Today, the carillon is still a genuine part of the soundscape of the cities in Belgium and the Netherlands, and the carillon culture is gaining importance, as is demonstrated by the recognition by UNESCO of the carillon culture in Belgium. However, keeping this sonic heritage alive remains a challenge. How do carillonneurs manage in keeping their messages relevant? How can the old social medium of the carillon connect with the social media of today? How can the carillon contribute to the experience of time and space in the city? And is this geographically embedded musical culture transferable to other regions in Europe and beyond?

Luc Rombouts is city carillonneur of Tienen (Belgium) and university carillonneur of Leuven (Belgium), where he plays the carillons of the University Library and the Great Beguinage. He has given recitals in Europe and in the USA and has performed during festivals and congresses.

He wrote an award-winning book on carillon history, entitled Zingend bron. 500 jaar beiaardmuziek in de Oude en de Nieuwe Wereld (Davidsfonds, 2010). This book was published in English in 2014 under the title Singing Bronze. A History of Carillon Music (Leuven University Press / Cornell University Press). In 2016 he obtained a PhD degree cum laude from the University of Utrecht on a thesis about the origin of the carillon. Luc coordinated the project that led in 2014 to the recognition of the Belgian carillon culture as a best safeguarding practice in intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO.

A DATE WITH DESTINY

Racial Capitalism and the Beginnings of the Anthropocene

Session #6 of Race in Film and Philosophy | BG1 0.16, Turfdraagsterpad 9 | May 3, 15.00 - 18.00 hrs.

In this seminar we will discuss some key ways the Anthropocene is inextricably racial. The capitalist system requires racializing populations and environments from early modernity to the present and into the future. The focus will be on investigating whether it makes sense to take the European discovery of the Americas and the genocide against its original inhabitants as threshold of a new geological epoch. Comparing the radicalization of Marx in the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari with some recent work in critical race studies, we will suggest that though colonization and slavery were essential for modern globalization to emerge, capital could only embark on its self-perpetuating trajectory through the industrial revolution and mass consumption.

Readings:

Optional watching (a quick mainstream intro if you’re totally new to the Anthropocene concept)

The Smithsonian, “What is the Anthropocene?” (surprising erratum – If modern humans evolved some 200,000 years ago that’s only 0.00004% of Earth’s history not 0.01%).

Arun Saldanha is Associate Professor at the Department of Geography, Environment and Society at the University of Minnesota. He is author of Space After Deleuze (Bloombury 2017) and Psychedelic White: Goa Trance and the Viscosity of Race (Minnesota 2007), and co-editor of Deleuze and Race (Edinburgh 2013), and Sexual Difference Between Psychoanalysis and Vitalism (Routledge 2013), and Geographies of Race and Food: Fields Bodies Markets (Ashgate 2013). As NWO-funded Visiting Scholar at the Institute for Cultural Inquiry at Utrecht University he is working on a theoretical book blending geohumanities, Marxism, and evolutionary theory to rethink race as planetary process. Arun organized a symposium called “Prince from Minneapolis” last year and is preparing an edited collection on the event.

RADICAL FORMALISM AND THE PROBLEM OF HORROR

Masterclass and workshop with Eugenie Brinkema | Potgieterzaal, University Library, 10 May 2019, 15:00 - 18:00 hrs.

Professor Brinkema’s talk, entitled “The Violence of Fascination: Martyrs, Torture and Form,” focuses on Pascal Laugier’s 2008 new-extremist horror film Martyrs, arguing that the film generates a formal violence that is coextensive with the very aesthetic fascinations that structure it, rendering an account of violence that is monstrative and creative, cinematically
demonstrating not the violation of body but the impersonal, non-embodied violence of a fascination with formal possibility, one shared by horror and metaphysical philosophy. Her workshop will explore issues of radical formalism, ethics, violence, and negative affect in film and critical theory.

Eugenie Brinkema is Associate Professor of Contemporary Literature and Media at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and currently a fellow in Media Studies at the University of Amsterdam. Her research in film and media studies focuses on violence, affect, sexuality, aesthetics, and ethics in texts ranging from the horror film to gonzo pornography, from structuralist film to the visual and temporal forms of terrorism. Her articles have appeared in the journals Angelaki, Camera Obscura, Criticism, differences, Discourse, film-philosophy, The Journal of Speculative Philosophy, qui parle, and World Picture. Recent work includes articles on irrumation and the interrogatory in violent pornography and the formal affectivity of no longer being loved in Blue is the Warmest Color. Her first book, *The Forms of the Affects*, was published with Duke University Press in 2014.

All are welcome. To receive workshop reading, please email: a.m.geil@uva.nl

**CLIMATE REALISM - AESTHETICS AND POLITICS OF CLIMATE**

*Panel and screening at the Goethe Institute Amsterdam, Herengracht 470 | 10 May 2019 | 15:00 - 18:00 hrs.*

Climate Realism is an ongoing research project consisting of international colloquiums, conference panels, and both a forthcoming journal issue of *Resilience* (2020) and book on Routledge (2019). The concept names the challenge of representing and conceptualizing climate in the era of climate change. Climate has traditionally referenced the weather it gathers, the mood it creates, and the settings it casts. In the era of the Anthropocene – the contemporary epoch in which geologic conditions and processes are overwhelmingly shaped by human activity – climate indexes not only atmospheric forces but the whole of human history: the fuels we use, the lifestyles we cultivate, the industrial infrastructures and supply chains we build, and the possible futures we may encounter. In other words, with every weather event, we have become acutely aware that the forces indexed by climate are as much social, cultural, and economic as they are environmental, natural, and physical. By starting with this fundamental insight, this book intervenes in the well-established political and scientific discourses of climate change by catalyzing and consolidating the emerging aesthetic and conceptual project of mediating the various forces embedded in climate.

Climate Realism is an occasion to rethink the aesthetics and politics of climate in its myriad forms; to capture climates capacity to express embedded histories; to map the formal strategies of representation that have turned climate into cultural content; and to index embodied currents of past and future climates. How is realism – in both the aesthetic history of representation and the philosophical tradition that underwrites it – transformed by contending with our new experience of climate in the Anthropocene? What, if anything, separates first and second nature in an age contoured by climate crisis, and what does this mean for a history of philosophy premised on their difference? In order to temper climate change – to apprehend its complexity, to address its short- and long-term consequences, to mitigate its many sources – Climate Realism boldly claims we must develop new aesthetic theories and projects.

Amanda Boetzkes is Associate Professor of Contemporary Art History and Theory at the University of Guelph. Her research and publications focus on the intersection of visual and creative practices with the biological sciences (particularly ecology and neurology). Her first book, *The Ethics of Earth Art* (University of Minnesota Press, 2010), considers the development of the earth art movement, focusing on how ecology transitioned from a scientific discourse to a domain of ethical and aesthetic concern. She is co-editor, with Aron Vinegar, of *Heidegger and the Work of Art History* (Ashgate Press, 2014). She is completing a book entitled *Contemporary Art and the Drive to Waste*, which examines the interplay between the aesthetics of contemporary art, global systems of energy-use, and the life cycle of garbage. Boetzkes has published in the journals *Postmodern Culture*, *Art History*, *Reconstruction – Studies in Contemporary Culture*, *RACAR* and *Antennae – The Journal of Nature and Visual Culture* and *Eflux*. Her upcoming book project, *Ecologicity: Vision and Art for A World to Come*, analyses the aesthetic and perceptual dimensions of imagining the ecological condition. She is currently a Carson Fellow at the Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society in Munich, Germany.

Graeme Macdonald is Associate Professor at the University of Warwick, and teaches on the English and Comparative Literary Studies program. MA (Jt Hons in Literature and Sociology) Aberdeen; PhD (Glasgow); (PGCHE) Warwick. He recently edited a new edition of John McGrath’s play The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black, Black Oil (2015) and is currently preparing a monograph, Petrofiction – Oil and World Literature. He is a member of WreC (Warwick Research Collective), whose members work on new ways to think about World Literature/Literature in the World. They have published a co-written monograph on peripheral modernism and world literature: *Combined and Uneven Development – Toward a New Theory of World Literature* (Liverpool University Press, 2015). He is at present co-investigator on the RSE Research Network, Connecting with a Low Carbon Scotland (2016-18).
Michelle Ty received her PhD in Critical Theory and English Literature from the University of California at Berkeley. She currently holds a position as an assistant professor of English at Clemson University. She is currently a fellow at the Institute for Cultural Inquiry in Berlin. And she has hopes of starting a free university that would offer refuge and resistance to various forms of (epistemic) violence. Her writing abides with what has been made to reside in silence. She works primarily on modernist literature and visual art; continental philosophy; and critical theory, and is particularly interested in how the latter offers resources for contemporary political thought.

Currently, she is completing a monograph about Walter Benjamin and his discontents with anthroponarcissism. Alongside this project, recent writings have worked toward an understanding of ‘receptivity’ and the discursive formation of race—from Kant to Fanon and through the ongoing refugee crisis. She has published essays about photography and the geopolitics of waste, Beckett’s telesvisual works, the peculiar fictions that prop up the institution of financial derivatives, and the persistence of philosophical and literary genres of realism in contemporary rhetorics of climate disaster.

The speakers all have forthcoming essays in Climate Realism (Routledge 2019). The panel will be followed by a screening of Shezad Dawood’s ongoing film cycle, Leviathan, and a roundtable discussion with Dawood and the panellists on the politics and aesthetics of climate.

Shezad Dawood works across disciplines film, painting, neon, sculpture and more recently virtual reality to deconstruct systems of image, language, site and narrative. Using the editing process as a method to explore both meanings and forms, his practice often involves collaboration and knowledge exchange, mapping across geographic borders and communities. Through a fascination with the esoteric, otherness and science-fiction, Dawood interweaves histories, realities and symbolism to create richly layered artworks.

Goethe-Institut Niederlande i.s.m. de Universiteit van Amsterdam, Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis and the Netherlands Institute for Cultural Analysis.

**AUDIO PRESERVATION, INTERACTIVE ART, TECHNOCULTURE**

*Research presentation by Federica Bressan (Ghent University - [http://research.federicabressan.com](http://research.federicabressan.com)) in the Moving Images: Preservation, Curation, Exhibition Research Group. Turfdraagsterpad 9 (1012 XT Amsterdam), room 1.14 | Friday 10 May 2019 | 14:30-17:00 hrs.***

A critical overview of 10 years of research work between technology and culture: Audio preservation, Interactive art, and Technoculture.

Physiological computing applied to the arts is a new genre of scholarship and practice focusing on the senses, art, design, and new technologies. My current work (Fulbright grant, 2020) consists in building the first digital archive to store information about sensory mapping strategies (e.g., heartbeat to sound, or brain waves to sound and lights) and the technology (sensors) used. This archive ideally contains information about two parallel timelines, showing the co-evolution of technology and culture. This co-evolution is something that I have been increasingly interested in, and that motivated me to start the podcast show Technoculture in late 2018 (available on iTunes, Spotify, and all major podcast platforms). The work on physiological computing applied to the arts builds on my previous experience with modelling interaction in installation art settings (Marie Curie grant, 2017-2019). During my presentation I will put these topics in the context of my academic work during the past 10 years, discussing its multidisciplinary aspects, and potential future evolutions.

- Bressan, F. Extract from the Fulbright grant application (unpublished), 2019.

Federica Bressan (1981) is a Fulbright scholar and Marie Curie alumna. She holds an MD in Musicology and a PhD in Computer Science. Currently she is a postdoc researcher at Ghent University, Belgium. From 2012 to 2016 she held a postdoc research position at the Department of Information Engineering, University of Padova, Italy, where she coordinated the laboratory for sound preservation and restoration. The vision underlying her research concerns the implications of the co-evolution of technology and culture. Her main expertise is in the field of multimedia preservation, with a special attention for audio and interactivity.

**THE EMPTY ROOM (A NOVEL)**

*Reading and Conversation with Sadia Abbas*

In this event, Sadia Abbas, scholar, critic and novelist, will read from, and discuss, her debut novel. The event will be moderated by Maria Boelstei. Doelenzaal, University Library (Singel,425) | 14 May 2019, 20:00 hrs.

In 1970s Karachi, where violence and political and social uncertainty are on the rise, a talented painter, Tahira, tries to hold her life together as it shatters around her. Her marriage is quickly revealed to be a trap from which there appears no escape. Accustomed to the company of her brother Waseem and friends, Andaleep and Safdar, who are activists, writers and thinkers, Tahira struggles to adapt to her new world of stifling conformity and fight for her identity as a woman and an artist. Tragedy strikes when her brother and friends are caught up in the cynically repressive regime. Faced with loss and injustice, she
embarks upon a series of paintings entitled ‘The Empty Room’, filling the blank canvases with vivid colour and light.

The Empty Room is an important addition to contemporary Pakistani literature, a moving portrait of life in Karachi at a pivotal moment in the nation’s history, and a powerful meditation on art and the dilemmas faced by women who must find their own creative path in hostile conditions.

Sadia Abbas grew up in Karachi and Singapore and now spends a great deal of time in a village on the island of Lesvos. She received her Ph.D. from Brown University and is associate professor in the English department at Rutgers-Newark. She specializes in postcolonial literature and theory, the culture and politics of Islam in modernity, early modern English literature, especially the literature of religious strife, and the history of twentieth-century criticism. She is the author of At Freedom’s Limits: Islam and the Postcolonial Predicament (co-winner of the MLA first book prize) and numerous essays on subjects ranging from Renaissance poetics to the Greek crisis to contemporary theorizations of Muslim female agency. She is currently working on a book on Greece and the idea of Europe, a second novel and co-producing a book on Shahzia Sikander’s work with Jan Howard for the RISD museum. The Empty Room is her first novel.

You can sign up for this event for free through SPUI25. If you register for the program we count on your presence. If you are unable to attend, please let us know via spui25@uva.nl | T: +31 (0)20 525 8142.

HOW TO DO A CINEMA OF BIOPOLITICS: NOTES ON THE “GREEK WEIRD WAVE”
Lecture by Prof. Dimitris Papanikolaou, Oxford University, organized by Maria Boletsi
P.C. Hoofthuis (Spuistraat 134), Amsterdam, room 1.05, 15 May 2019, 15:30 hrs.

With the international success of the films of Yorgos Lanthimos and other members of his generation of filmmakers, Greek cinema has re-entered the international market and the conceptual map of World Cinema. In this lecture Dimitris Papanikolaou goes back to those recent Greek films that have been collectively described as the “Greek Weird Wave”, and discusses the reasons for their success. Instead of answering the question ‘what kind of cinema has “the Greek crisis” produced’, this lecture proposes instead of reflecting on the complex ways in which narrative world cinema today (and Greek cinema in particular) engages with the contemporary moment, and its political, social and economic challenges.

Papanikolaou proposes to see the Weird Wave as a powerful example of a contemporary “Cinema of Biopolitics”. Balancing between (and often intertwining) modes of allegory and realism, this is a cinema that reflects on the management of groups of people and the bodies of individuals, while being equally sensitive to forms of resistance, noise, unease and subversion. Assessed from this perspective the films of Lanthimos, Tsangari, Tzoumerkas, Economidis, Koutras et al., show more clearly their position in a (bio)politicized culture. Not only when they merge micro-stories of precarity, control and resistance with subtle references to the macro-histories of uneven growth, exploitation, disinvestment, austerity and revolt. But also by turning their focus on the body as a site of discipline, desire and resistance.

About the speaker:
Dimitris Papanikolaou is Associate Professor of Modern Greek at the University of Oxford. He has written the monographs: Singing Poets: Literature and Popular Music in France and Greece (Legenda, 2007), “Those people made like me”: C.P.Cavafy and the poetics of sexuality (Patakis, 2014, in Greek) and There is something about the family: Nation, desire and kinship in a time of crisis (Patakis, 2018, in Greek). His editorial work includes the special issues of the Journal of Modern Greek Media and Culture on Cavafy Pop (2015) and New Queer Greece (2018), as well as the new edition of the collected works of author Costas Taktis in Greek. He is currently writing Greek Weird Wave: A Cinema of Biopolitics for Edinburgh University Press.

URBAN CRISIS-SCAPES: ON WALKS AND RUINS
Workshop organized by Eva Fotiadi and Maria Boletsi, in collaboration with Ipek Celik (Koç University), Amsterdam, 15-17 May 2019. Program now available on asca.uva.nl.

The workshop will focus on city-scapes that have recently been radically reconfigured through pervasive frameworks of crisis – financial, political, humanitarian etc. We want to explore alternative experiences of urban space, new artistic imaginaries, and innovative cultural initiatives emerging from such urban crisis-scapes by centring on two distinct but interrelated thematic lines: Ruins and Walks.

On 15 May, from 19:30 - 21:00, there is a Film Program curated by Geli Mademli at OT301, Overtoom 301. A compilation of shorts from the recent Greek film production reveals the agency of urban landscapes and human geographies that resist the obvious taxonomies of crisis, and invites the viewers to wander through newly established archaeological sites, preserving alternative narratives for future presents.

16 May: Ruins (day one)
Speakers: Sadia Abbas (Rutgers University), Ipek Celik-Rappas (Koç University), László Muntean (Radboud University of Groningen), Dimitris Papanikolaou (Oxford University), Dimitris Plantzos
Recent crisis-frameworks have produced new material ruins and transformed the functions of past ruins. The workshop will explore the new meanings and the socio-political and affective functions of ruins in crisis-scapes, as well as figurations of such ruins in cinema and art: ruins that range from monuments or antiquities to vestiges of disaffected zones such as derelict factories, deserted buildings, and abandoned construction sites. Images of ruins often exemplify the material consequences of crisis. But ruins are not only markers of decay and desolation. They often become the ‘canvas’ for creative projects and artistic interventions (e.g., through street art) that mobilize ruins to articulate alternative modes of being in a present of crisis and of envisioning the future. Ruins may thus be involved in subaltern narratives, suppressed histories or radical imaginaries that challenge crisis as “judgment of failure.” But they can also become commercialized and fetishized (e.g., in crisis-tourism or ‘ruin porn’) or revamped as fashionable objects. In cities with a dominant presence of ancient and historical ruins – such as Athens or Istanbul – new ruins interact with ruins of the past, reconfiguring the traditional functions of the latter. New artistic and cinematic languages seek innovative ways to explore the relation of material ruins and precarious subjects afflicted by crisis. What new meanings and operations do ancient and modern ruins assume against the backdrop of pervasive crises? Can ruins and their cinematic, literary or artistic figurations contribute to alternative narratives of modernity, the nation, crisis and futurity?

 Speakers:
Angeliki Avgitidou (University of Western Macedonia), Efi Gianmetopoulou (University of Amsterdam), Sigrid Merx (Utrecht University), Asli Ozgen-Tuncer (University of Amsterdam), Kathrin Wildner (HafenCity University Hamburg).

Initiatives that use walking as a medium – springing from art projects to architectural research and crisis-tourism – have become increasingly popular. Some walks aim to observe and reflect upon the transformed urban space: vacant housing and commercial spaces, the new homeless, waves of migrants and refugees or the graffiti on derelict buildings. Others show interest in forgotten layers of a city’s turbulent history, which re-emerge through such initiatives and assume new meanings and affective functions in a turbulent present. In other cases – as for example in Athens – guided tours are organized by homeless people or by theatre makers, who set up performative walks aiming to reconcile citizens with the new poor and with districts considered dangerous or ‘migrant ghettos.’ Many of these walks and tours could be considered as crisis voyeurism or as unsolicited quasi-anthropological inquiries that produce (new) social and cultural alterities. However, some of them can also be seen as attempts by locals to make sense of their own situation beyond dominant and over-mediatised crisis narratives. When artists adapt ethnographic methodologies in such initiatives, are they inescapably trapped in a “realist assumption” about the “Other” or in their own “presumptions of ethnographic authority” (Hal Foster)? Can such initiatives contribute to opening up alternative futures for cities in crisis and their inhabitants?

By thinking walks and ruins together, the workshop will address the following topics, among others:

• Walking as methodology in artistic, architectural, urbanist and other research;
• Revisiting “the artist as ethnographer” discourse;
• Tours around ancient, modern and contemporary historic sites and ruins and spaces of daily life; graffiti tours; “torture and freedom tours” (Documenta14 in collaboration with ASKI, Athens);
• New significations and functions of ancient and modern ruins against the backdrop of crises;
• Literary, photographic, cinematic and other representations of ruins and narratives of walking within crisis-scapes;
• Alternative uses of ruined, derelict, empty spaces and their relation to subjects who squat, reside and interact with such spaces;
• New collectivities and social practices emerging from walking and engaging with ruins;
• The role of ruins in shaping alternative narratives of modernity, the nation, crisis and futurity;
• The (ir)relevance of established theoretical approaches to walking as a cultural practice, from Benjamin’s flâneur to Michel de Certeau’s tactical consumer.

The workshop is open to scholars or artists interested in the topic. The workshop is already full for graduate students and Ph.D. candidates wishing to earn EC points, but anyone who wishes to attend (part of) the workshop (not for credit), can register by sending an email by 6 May 2019 to: m.boletsi@uva.nl and s.e.fotiadi@gmail.com. We will accept registrations for attending the workshop on a first-come-first-served basis, taking into account the seats available in the workshop venue, so don’t wait too long!

AFFECTIVE POLITICS IN CONTEMPORARY MEDIA
Double Book Launch with Eliza Steinbock, Toni Pape and Sudeep Dasgupta
Spui25, 16 May 2019, 20:00-21:30 hrs.

This Spui25 event, co-hosted by The Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis and Duke University Press, is a launch for two new books in media studies: Eliza Steinbock’s Shimmering Images: Trans Cinema, Embodiment, and the Aesthetics of Change and Toni

In contemporary media culture, public discourses run on feelings to a considerable degree. Such feelings, called “affects,” can be mobilised in a variety of ways, ranging from the fear of difference that fuels phobic discourses, to indignation that drives recent anti-establishment movements, to feelings of belonging and joy that animate new collectivist projects. Focusing on the political dimension of affect, this double book launch addresses the role of affect in two areas: Eliza Steinbock will present her work on trans cinema and how it uses affect to foreground the processual character of trans embodiment. How do the different structures of affect from genres like sci-fi (curiosity) and the trick film (surprise) allow for trans cinema to challenge how trans bodies are often portrayed as odd or shocking? Further, what can contemporary trans politics learn from these cinematic experiments with affects? Toni Pape will speak to the use of affect in media to shape our perception of the future: Do we think of the future as being full of potential or as dark and full of danger? And what difference does that make for our political culture?

Sudeep Dasgupta (University of Amsterdam) will moderate the event and reflect on both books’ topicality within queer media studies. This event will also feature short responses to *Shimmering Images* from Yasco Horsman (Film & Literary Studies, Leiden University) and to *Figures of Time* from Judith Keilbach (Media and Culture Studies, Utrecht University).

In *Shimmering Images* Eliza Steinbock traces how cinema offers alternative ways to understand gender transitions through a specific aesthetics of change. Drawing on Barthes’s idea of the “shimmer” and Foucault’s notion of sex as a mirage, the author shows how sex and gender can appear mirage-like on film, an effect they label shimming. Steinbock applies the concept of shimming—which delineates change in its emergent form as well as the qualities of transforming bodies, images, and affects—to analyses of films that span time and genre. These include examinations of the fantastic and phantasmagorical shimmerings of sex change in Georges Méliès’s nineteenth-century trick films and Lili Elbe’s 1931 autobiographical writings and photomontage in *Man into Woman*. Steinbock also explores more recent documentaries, science fiction, and pornographic and experimental films. Presenting a cinematic philosophy of transgender embodiment that demonstrates how shimming images mediate transitioning, Steinbock not only offers a corrective to the gender binary orientation of feminist film theory; they open up new means to understand trans ontologies and epistemologies as emergent, affective, and processual.

Sudeep Dasgupta is Assistant Professor of Media Studies at the University of Amsterdam. Focusing on television and video games, his research addresses the relation between aesthetics and politics. He is the author of the monograph *Figures of Time: Affect and the Television of Preemption* (Duke University Press, 2019). His current research project “The Aesthetics of Stealth” focuses on practices of disappearance in contemporary media. Parts of this project have appeared in *Feminist Media Studies* and *Critical Studies in Television*. Toni Pape is Assistant Professor of Media Studies at the University of Amsterdam. Focusing on television and video games, his research addresses the relation between aesthetics and politics. He is the author of the monograph *Figures of Time: Affect and the Television of Preemption* (Duke University Press, 2019). His current research project “The Aesthetics of Stealth” focuses on practices of disappearance in contemporary media. Parts of this project have appeared in *Feminist Media Studies* and *Critical Studies in Television*. Toni is a member of the editorial boards of *NECSUS: European Journal of Media Studies* and the 3Ecologies book series (Punctum).

**Cybernetic Cultures and Their Legacies with Bogna Konior**

ASA Women in Theory – Friday, 17 May, 15:00-17:00 hrs., PCH 5.25 (Spuistraat 134)

In this session, we will look at the ‘woman’ as a generic technological tool, starting with Sadie Plant’s writings on the cyberspace, to Amy Ireland’s and n1x’s recent work about artificial intelligence and accelerationism. The session is guest-curated by writer and researcher Bogna Konior (UvA Media Studies).
ASBESTOS TOWNS

ASCA Cities Public Talk by Dr. Arthur Rose (University of Bristol) | Friday, 17 May, 15.00 – 17.00 hrs., room 101A, Universiteitstheater (Nieuwe Doelenstraat 16-18)

In this talk, I want to introduce, by way of Patrick Chamoiseau’s Martiniquean epic, Texaco (1992), the ‘asbestos town’: an identification that allows us to consider how asbestos develops, through its involvement in habitation, a strange and complicated relation to community, ecology and environmental toxicity. ‘Asbestos town’ is a term that should be understood dialectically. While it might refer to communities from asbestos mining towns, it might also refer to communities whose involvement with asbestos is less obvious. In the first instance, these single resource towns often prefer decontamination procedures to the dissolution of the community: the needs of the community, to form itself as a community, are often balanced against the risks from asbestos. However, in contexts where asbestos is brought into the home in unexpected ways (either in the construction of the home or through unsuspecting work practices), there is frequently no immediate community with whom to develop meaningful solidarity. My talk turns around those ways in which “asbestos towns”, in this second, less obvious way, come to shape a particular consciousness of asbestos in the built environment. Since I am a literary scholar, my attention will often turn to works of fiction that consider asbestos in the home, whether as a construction material (as in Chamoiseau’s Texaco) or as a trace of work (Lionel Shriver’s So Much For That), to think about how asbestos features within homes (the asbestos heater in Samuel Beckett’s Murphy), of homes (asbestos roofs in Yvonne Vera’s Butterfly Burning and The Stone Virgins) and surrounding homes (the asbestos environment of Ken Yates’ Dust). But the consequence of these fictions permits a more general insight into the role asbestos plays in infrastructures across the built environment: a failed modernist project to protect individuals from harm in the home.

Readings:

Readings available by emailing: j.diamanti@uva.nl, c.j.Birdsall@uva.nl, a.s.Kalkman@uva.nl, or k.m.mika@uva.nl

UNTHINKING CPC: COLONIALISM, PATRIARCHY, AND CAPITALISM

Organizers: Inez Blanca van der Scheer & Tjalling R. Valdés Olmos. First session: 28 May, 15:00-17:00 hrs.

In this ASCA Reading Group we focus on readings from queer/feminists of colour and decolonial genealogies of thinking/theory, artistic practice, and activism to analyse and unthink CPC: Colonialism, Patriarchy, and Capitalism. CPC as a term was coined by Terra Critica’s Reading Room (see: http://terracritica.net/readingroom/), an Utrecht-based collective that has applied critical feminist approaches to analyse the ways in which colonialism, patriarchy, and capitalism are systemically interwoven.

We will start by exploring and discussing the work of Jamaican author and critic Sylvia Wynter. Her work questions the formation and possible undoing of a particular exclusionary human subject from a thorough understanding of the interrelated workings of colonialism, patriarchy, and capitalism. This will serve as a challenging and critical basis for the continuation of our seminars.

Future sessions will discuss a variety of different approaches to unthinking these interlinking systems of oppression, taking into account more poetic approaches (e.g. Edouard Glissant, Audre Lorde, Gloria Anzaldua, Saidiya Hartman) as well as for example developments in decolonial/critical race theory and posthumanisms/inhumanisms (e.g. Alexander Weheliye, Zakkiyah Iman Jackson, C. Riley Snorton, Juno Perrantes).

This seminar series aims to connect with local initiatives that deal with questions and experiences surrounding feminists and queers of colour communities, archives, spaces, art projects, and research.

The ‘Unthinking CPC’ Reading Group intends to meet on the last Tuesday of every month (except during summer semester) from 15:00 – 17:00. Our first session is scheduled for 28 May, 2019. To register please send an email to Inez van der Scheer i.b.vanderscheer@uva.nl and Tjalling Valdés Olmos t.r.valdesolmos@uva.nl.

HOW TO DO THINGS WITH AFFECT?

Workshop and book launch organized by Ernst van Alphen in Spui25 on 29 May 2019, 15:00-18:00 hrs.

In the last ten years affect has become an indispensable concept for cultural analysis. But this has also had its repercussions. Taking part in a roundtable discussion on the interaction between art and architecture in October 2012, American art historian Hal Foster made the following devastating remark: “When I hear the word affect I reach for my Taser. An unfair reflex, I know, but affect seems to me a prime medium of ideology today—an implanted emotionality that is worse—because more effective—than false consciousness” (Rose 208). His assessment draws attention not only to the so-called ‘affective turn’ that
has taken place, but also more importantly to the overuse and exhaustion of the term that has emerged in its wake. For when concepts become fashionable, they usually lose their meaning, impact and operationality. And although they may be used as buzzwords to promote the right discourse, from a conceptual point of view they lose their power. Instead of accepting this depletion of the term, in this workshop we prefer to critically assess the concept of affect in its many uses and give it back its critical edge. To do that, we must return to the originators and disseminators of the concept and see what motivated them to propose it. We will also propose a model that enables us to understand what distinguishes various theories from each other, since they focus on different phases in the affective process or emphasize the other results or objects that affects trigger. The workshop will end with the presentation of the edited volume How to do Things with Affect? Affective Triggers in Aesthetic Forms and Cultural Practices.

Speakers: Maria Boletsi, Eugenie Brinkema, Tomas Jirsa, Ernst van Alphen.

Reading:

FROM A MODEL OF PEACE TO A MODEL OF CONFLICT

The Effect of Architectural Modernization on the Syrian Urban and Social Make-up


Universiteitstheater, Nieuwe Doelenstraat 16, 11 June 2019, 16:00-18:00, followed by drinks

From a land called the “Cradle of Civilizations” to one that is now described as “apocalyptic” and “one of the most dangerous places on Earth”, Syria may have no more critical moment than the current crisis to reflect on what is taking it down this terrifyingly dark path. We resort to history in order to decipher the mysteries of the present, and there is no more honest and direct history than that of the built environment: a concrete object that tells the narratives not only of the winners, the wealthy and the powerful, but also of those who were brushed aside, cut apart and walked over. In her book The Battle for Home, Marwa Al-Sabouni argues that reversing the process which led to the loss of home and the loss of urban fabric is the foundation of reclaiming these as essential elements of recovery after war and destruction. In this talk she examines four areas of transformation where modern urban planning and architecture have left their marks on the Levantine city, to give a clearer understanding of the role of architecture in conflict and peace and how this could be used in the act of rebuilding.

Moderator: Esther Peeren, Professor of Cultural Analysis & Academic Director of the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis, University of Amsterdam

Respondent: Nermin Elsherif, PhD candidate, Amsterdam School for Heritage, Memory and Material Culture, University of Amsterdam

Organizers: ASCA & Prince Claus Fund

OTHER EVENTS

DECOMPOSITION AND DEFORMATION

Literature, Film, Philosophy

Double Lecture: Eugenie Brinkema (MIT) and Julius Greve (University of Oldenburg)

Lecture Series in Media | Arts | Politics. Convened by Pepita Hesselberth, Yasco Horsman (Film and Literary Studies, Leiden University), Monday May 6, 15.00-17.30, Eyckhof 1 / 003C / Leiden University

On Monday, 6 May, Professor Eugenie Brinkema of MIT and UvA and Dr. Julius Greve of the University of Oldenburg will present paired lectures—one focusing on literature and one focusing on film—exploring decomposition, decay, deformation, and plasticity in relation to torture, geotrauma, aesthetic form, and ethics.

Professor Brinkema’s lecture, “The Fascinations of Violence: Martyrs and the Ethics of Deformation,” focuses on Pascal Laugier’s 2008 new-extremist horror film Martyrs, arguing that the film generates a formal violence that is coextensive with the very aesthetic fascinations that structure it, rendering an account of violence that is monstrative and creative, cinematically demonstrating not the violation of body but the impersonal, non-embodied violence of a fascination with formal possibility, one shared by horror and metaphysical philosophy.

Dr. Greve’s lecture, “Geotrauma and Narrative Form: Decomposing Nature in Cormac McCarthy’s Early Fiction,” asks: How to rethink trauma in the context of today’s turn to the question concerning materiality in the humanities? What is the role of narrative form in the delineation of concepts of nature that resonate with, but are partially independent of, those forged in and by philosophical discourse? How to come to terms with the difference between decomposition as a literary theme, on the one hand, and decay as a process in and by fiction? Dr. Greve traces the concept of nature in the early work of American writer Cormac McCarthy, as it is construed by literary rather than philosophical means, rendering visible a transhistorical and transatlantic constellation, including schools of thought such as Schellingianism and speculative realism.

Eugenie Brinkema is Associate Professor of Contemporary Literature and Media at the
Massachusetts Institute of Technology and currently a fellow in Media Studies at the University of Amsterdam. Her research in film and media studies focuses on violence, affect, sexuality, aesthetics, and ethics in texts ranging from the horror film to gonzo pornography, from structuralist film to the visual and temporal forms of terrorism. Her articles have appeared in the journals Angelaki, Camera Obscura, Criticism, differences, Discourse, film-philosophy, The Journal of Speculative Philosophy, qui parle, and World Picture. Recent work includes articles on irremiation and the interrogatory in violent pornography and the formal affectivity of no longer being loved in Blue is the Warmest Color. Her first book, The Forms of the Affects, was published with Duke University Press in 2014.

Julius Greve is a lecturer and research associate at the Institute for English and American Studies, University of Oldenburg, Germany. He is the author of Shreds of Matter: Cormac McCarthy and the Concept of Nature (Dartmouth College Press, 2018), and of numerous articles on McCarthy, Mark Z. Danielewski, critical theory, and speculative realism. Greve has co-edited America and the Musical Unconscious (Atropos, 2015), Superpositions: Laruelle and the Humanities (Rowman & Littlefield International, 2017), and “Cormac McCarthy Between Worlds” (2017), a special issue of EJAS: European Journal of American Studies. He is currently working on two edited volumes that deal with weird fiction, media studies, and cultural ecology, and is working on a manuscript on the relation between modern poetics and ventriloquism.

NEW MEDIA DRAMATURGIES

Performing Matter and the Ecological Question

Master Class offered by the Centre for the Humanities and the Transmission in Motion research group (https://transmissioninmotion.sites.uu.nl/) at Utrecht University, in collaboration with NICA and SPRING Performing Arts Festival. 20 May 2018, 10.30-15.00 hrs, Het Huis (Boorstraat 107, Utrecht)

In this masterclass, Prof. Peter Eckersall (CUNY, New York) will consider the theory and practice of new media dramaturgy. As developed his recent book (co-authored with Edward Scheer and Helena Grehan), new media dramaturgy (NMD) considers the rise of new materialism in theatre and performance. It examines how live performance has been transforming – compositionally and aesthetically – by a renewed attention to material objects, atmospheres and affective states, all broadly defined as new media. In light of the on-going need for the arts to address climate and ecological crisis, NMD is an approach that calls for considering the performative sensibilities of objects and materials in connection with thinking informed by eco-criticism and writings on the Anthropocene. It is intended to be both theoretical and activating, hence, the focus on dramaturgy as a creative process that is between thinking and doing. The masterclass will include an introductory lecture and then branch into discussion and the workshopping of ideas and responses.

Credits: RMA Students can acquire 1 EC if they actively participate in the masterclass, complete the readings and write a blogpost (750-1000 words) about the subject of the masterclass.

Registration: Please send an email to nica-fgw@uva.nl, including your affiliation (RMA/PhD Programme).

Readings:


Peter Eckersall is Professor of Theatre Studies in the PhD Program in Theatre and Performance at the Graduate Center, CUNY and Honorary Professorial Fellow in the Department of Culture and Communication, University of Melbourne. His research interests include Japanese performance, dramaturgy and theatre and politics. His recent publications include: The Routledge Companion to Theatre and Politics, co-edited with Helena Grehan (Routledge, 2019), New Media Dramaturgy: Performance, Media and New-materialism, co-authored with Helena Grehan and Ed Scheer, (Palgrave 2017) and The Dumb Type Reader, coedited with Edward Scheer and Shintarō Fujii (Museum Tusculanum Press, 2017). He has worked as a dramaturg for more than 20 years and is the co-founder of the Not Yet It’s Difficult performance group based in Melbourne.

WHAT IS DISTINCT ABOUT GERMAN VISUAL HISTORY AND THEORY?

Lecture by Charlotte Klonk, Professor of Art and New Media, Humboldt University, Berlin. Thursday, 23 May 2019, 16.00-17.30 hrs., Doelenzaal, Universiteitsbibliotheek Singel, followed by drinks

In this talk, I will consider German visual history and theory and ask if the debate provides a distinct set of questions that distinguishes it from other methods in art history. Using the reception of J.M.W. Turner’s work in the 1970s as a foil, I will ponder the possibility of a new approach that departs from dominant interpretations of the second half of the twentieth century such as iconology and social art history.

This lecture is organised and supported by the Art History Department thanks to temporary staff leaving us at the end of this academic year, as well as by the Amsterdam School for Heritage, Memory and Material Culture, in order to support methodological discussion within its community. Charlotte Klonk will contribute to a conference on colour in exhibition spaces at the Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem, the following day.
CALL FOR PAPERS

MEMORY, WORD AND IMAGE: W.G. SEBALD’S ARTISTIC LEGACIES

Call for Papers Amsterdam School for Heritage, Memory and Material Culture, 12-14 December 2019, University of Amsterdam

Artists tend to work across disciplines and “art cannot be disciplined” (Hito Steyerl). Taking the case of W.G. Sebald’s interdisciplinary word and image practice on memory and presences of (migratory) lives as touchstone for our discussions, this conference seeks to foster academic, professional, artistic and public scholarship by exploring cutting-edge interdisciplinary research, findings, techniques, practices and theoretical advances in the areas of memory, word and image. Which role do art and literature play in this regard? The conference turns to a fascinating author, whose work resonates with questions of memory, interdisciplinarity and related artistic practice. Sebald was engaged with the “enigmatic difference” between material truth and historic truth that Jacques Derrida notes in Archive Fever. His literary prose, which exists in the interspace of poetry, novel, essay, (auto)biography, Shoah memorial and travelogue, and contains meticulous reflections on non-human entities and natural phenomena. Sebald’s writing generates peculiar relationships between the world of words, objects and the world of images, manifested in his specific practice of embedding images into the text. It is not surprising that artists have been among his most prolific interpreters. Sebald’s work serves as a model for current “writing with images” (Elkins) and interdisciplinary projects on the present-day aftermath of wars, as well as today’s plight of migrants and refugees. Exhibitions gathering Sebald’s artistic legacies multiply issues of memory and heritage relevant to this conference theme.

The conference invites scholars, artists and other practitioners with a stake in these questions to present papers, posters or workshops, which critically analyse these issues and especially consider the role of interdisciplinarity in their case studies. Topics include, but are not limited to considering memory and interdisciplinarity in relation to:

• art’s responses to literature
• politics of memory, identity and cultural
• imagination
• writing with images
• migration and borders
• museums and (literary) exhibitions
• politics of intervention and resistance
• narratives
• artistic, writerly and scholarly strategies to
• deal with post-war realities

Confirmed keynote speakers:
Prof. Dr. James Elkins (Chicago)
Prof. Dr. Hilde Van Gelder (Leuven)
Tacita Dean’s work on Sebald will be screened.

Convened by:
Prof. Dr. Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, AHM / Art History, University of Amsterdam
Prof. Dr. Leonida Kovač, Academy of Fine Art, University of Zagreb.
Dr. Ihab Saloul, AHM, University of Amsterdam
Dr. Ilse van Rijn, Sandberg Instituut, Amsterdam

This is the first in a series of AHM conferences on Memory and Interdisciplinarity. www.ahm.uva.nl

Please send abstracts (250 words max), including a short bio (150 words max), by 1 June 2019 to AHMsebaldconference2019@gmail.com