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culture sector, which has hitherto devoted little research to the subject in spite of its undisputed cultural significance.



Millie Taylor at the theatre (photo: Martin Nangle)

### ASCA PHD POSITION

ASCA invites applications for a PhD position at the Faculty of Humanities, tenable from 1 September 2021 (4 years, 1 FTE). The deadline for applications is 31 March 2021. The vacancy will be posted on the [vacancy site of the UvA](#) on 1 February 2021.

### NEW ASCA MEMBER: MILLIE TAYLOR

*Millie Taylor appointed professor by special appointment of the Musical (Joop van den Ende Chair)*  
Professor Millie Taylor has been appointed professor by special appointment of the Musical at the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Amsterdam (UvA), effective 1 November 2020. The chair was established on behalf of the VandenEnde Foundation, with the support of the Amsterdam University Fund. Taylor will be the first professor in the Netherlands in this field of study.

The establishment of the Joop van den Ende Special Chair in the Musical and the appointment of Millie Taylor to the chair will give a powerful boost to interdisciplinary research at the UvA into historical, current and future developments in musicals. The chair is not only a meaningful addition to existing education and research at the UvA's Department of Arts and Culture, but will also play a key role in bringing the study of Musicals to the attention of the Dutch arts and

Millie Taylor began her career as a freelance musical director and for almost twenty years toured Britain and Europe with a variety of musicals including *West Side Story*, *Rocky Horror Show*, *Little Shop of Horrors* and *Sweeney Todd*. Following her transfer to academia, she became the UK's first professor of Musical Theatre. Her main research interests are in the interactions between music, sound and drama in theatre with a particular focus on musical theatre dramaturgies and the development of new writing

As a UvA professor, Taylor will carry out research into the social and historical context of musicals, composition, lyrics, the materiality of performance practices and their institutional and cultural conditions, with a focus primarily on the Netherlands in an international context. She will also contribute to study programmes in the field of musical theatre in the form of BA and MA modules, and supervise students working on their MA and PhD theses.

### About Millie Taylor

Taylor obtained her PhD in Drama and Music from Exeter University in 2001, following which she was, consecutively, a senior lecturer in Performing Arts, a reader in Performing Arts, and a professor of Musical Theatre, all at the University of Winchester.

She is the author, co-author or editor of seven books – including *Theatre Music and Sound at the RSC: Macbeth to*

*Matilda and Musical Theatre, Realism and Entertainment* – and two edited collections, as well as numerous articles, chapters and reviews. She serves on editorial boards for three academic journals and is a regular reviewer on the BBC Radio 4 arts programme *Front Row*. She is also the founder and current chairperson of the British Musical Theatre Research Institute (BMTRI).

#### NEW ASCA PHD CANDIDATES

Since October 2020 11 new PhD candidates joined ASCA. Very warm welcome to all of you:

##### **Giulia Bellinetti**

##### ***Call to Arms: Art Institutions in the Age of Ecological Emergency***

*Supervisors: Jeff Diamanti, Esther Peeren*

The project investigates the epistemic function of art institutions in the age of environmental emergency. To this end, the research explores the political ecologies of public art institutions in relation to knowledge, environmental concept work, and interdisciplinary forms of collaboration. In particular, I note how the discourse of ‘crisis’ gets mediated by artistic media and form, altering in turn the ‘authoritarian neutrality’ long presumed by public art institutions in the global north, and more precisely in Western Europe. Facing the current environmental emergency, institutions such as museums, galleries and art spaces have the opportunity to become political and epistemological spaces, where the potential transformative power of their communities can unfold. Informed by the work of Karin Knorr-Cetina and Donna Haraway, the project will study the epistemological cultures and the processes of knowledge production within art institutions and if – as well as how – these can evolve in the age of environmental emergency. The position of the theoretical work of art in relation to ‘ecological sensibilities’ will be a further object of analysis. Based on the theoretical contributions of Walter Benjamin and Jacques Rancière, I will examine a selection of art practices engaging with the current ecological regime shift. A special focus will concern art practices which address concept of ecological responsibility within the institutional art system. The objective will be to investigate the emergence of new ‘instituent practices’ as defined by Gerald Raunig, where trans-disciplinary and participatory processes of knowledge production can open up alternative scenarios to the current model of growth.

##### **Georgios Douliakos, *Mediating Justice: Politics, Media, Theatre and Law in the Golden Dawn Trial***

*Supervisors: Maria Boletsi, Yasco Horsman*

This study focuses on the relation between the law, theatricality, and the media. The proposed research project will study how the trial of the Greek neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn was disseminated and received by the public in Greece since its beginning in 2015. Aiming to disseminate a trial that could not be witnessed first-

hand, as the public was not allowed entry in the courtroom, grassroots organizations kept posting the proceedings online in real time, creating what I will call a virtual theatre that started to function as ‘supplement’ to the original trial. At the same time, artists set up parallel theatrical performances of the trial in a physical yet fictionalized theatrical scene that renegotiated the ways the actual trial brought together issues of mediativity, justice and theatricality, trauma and healing. This project will scrutinize the mediations involved in the trial’s dissemination and in its artistic restagings by utilizing concepts and theoretical tools from cultural analysis, performance studies, and critical legal studies. To that end, I will study the trial’s reception by the public as well as the participation of the audience in the trial’s virtual theatre in order to probe and chart the social along with the cultural impact of the trial.

##### **Julia Ferloni « *Barvalo* ». *Designing an Exhibition on and with Roma Communities in a French National Museum***

*Supervisors: Emilie Sitzia, Margriet Schavemaker, Huub van Baar*

In 2023, *Barvalo1* will be held at the Museum of Civilizations of Europe and the Mediterranean (Mucem), in Marseille, South of France. This exhibition, focused on Romani cultures and professions, is designed in collaboration with Rom, Sinti, Gitano, Manouche and French Traveller representatives from France and across Europe. By inviting Romani personalities to join in the creative process, this project does not simply aim, given the participatory trend in museums, at engaging in an “ethical washing” with communities treated at best with exoticism and at worst with racism. Its objective is rather to embrace a plurality of opinions and voices and mobilise a wide range of expertise on the subject.

How to implement a collaboration on a delicate and potentially explosive subject—especially considering the French context where communitarianism and ethnicity issues are always suspicious—within an institution which is already experienced in participatory projects but not with ethnic issues? Which methodology to use? What ethical and theoretical framework to adopt? How a community, in serious need of political recognition but that should also reject the museum as an embodiment of a state and a dominant culture viewed with distrust by the majority of its representatives, be treated representationally and museologically? How to establish a creative dynamic with people having different political and social objectives for, visions of, and stakes in this exhibition? It is these crucial questions that the PhD will endeavour to address.

##### **Paul P.-H.(Po-Hsun) Hung, *Architectural Public Sphere in Heritage Boom: from Hermeneutics to the Japanese Renunciation Theory of ‘Dan-Sha-Ri’***

*Supervisors: David Duindam, Kati Rottger*

Since the 1970s, the phenomenon of 'heritage boom' has gradually expanded all over the world. In Taiwan, with its post-colonial situation, the number of heritages sites is increasing despite a nebulous notion of heritage, resulting in many controversial or disused official built heritages. Therefore, this research aims to examine the relationship between heritage, modernity and coloniality, and develop a mechanism to clarify the meaning of heritage. Finally, a possible solution will be proposed to deal with the issue of the heritage boom. Originating from the West, the concept of heritage is underpinned by an abstract expert system, hampering the direct interaction between people and buildings as a result. I first adopt hermeneutics to restore the instinctive perception of buildings. Second, through the mechanism of the public museum, an 'architectural public sphere'(APS) is formed, where the public can experience the building in question. On top of that, whether the building should be called heritage, in what sense it is heritage, and how to use it as heritage are discussed or debated. Here, the concept of heritage can be redefined, and the public hence shares the right to confer or even withdraw the title of heritage. To the latter, a Japanese theory of 'Dan-Sha-Ri' (断捨離) is useful. It advocates that making a decision of renunciation is not only critical to improving human abilities but an opportunity to restore an appropriate relationship between our senses and the environment. Consequently, the combination of APS and Dan-Sha-Ri will reasonably reduce the number of heritage sites and have a positive influence on participatory democracy.

**Emilija Jokubauskaitė, *The Platformization of the Global Sex Industry***

*Thomas Poell, Olav Velthuis*

My research project studies online webcam sex platforms such as Chaturbate, Bongacams, Cam4, Streamate etc. to inquire into competition among and within such platforms. It draws inspiration from platform studies, algorithm studies and software studies as well as socioeconomic inquiries into platform competition. Looking at camming platforms as multisided markets, the study aims identify their key constituents in order to untangle resulting interactions and market relations. Doing so it aspires to bring a critical view towards the business models in place and what roles the key actors play. Via a combination of digital methods and ethnographic research, it will look at how competition is embedded into webcam sex platforms as well as how the different constituents negotiate with the platform mechanisms in place.

**Francine Maessen, *Identiteit en de representatie van trauma in het literaire oeuvre van Breyten Breytenbach***

*Supervisors: Margriet van de Waal, Astrid van Weyenberg*

This research will focus on the influence of Breyten Breytenbach's ideas about the construction of identity on the representation of trauma. I will discuss his literary work from 1975 until 2007. These

poststructuralist, postmodernist and postcolonialist ideas problematize a more traditional use of trauma theory and thus call for further investigation. To better understand how Breytenbach's (de)construction of identity influences the representation of trauma in his literary work, the large influence of Zen Buddhism and the ideas of scholars and philosophers as Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari and Édouard Glissant on his own theories about identity will be analysed. An interdisciplinary, pluralist and context-sensitive approach will be applied. By getting a better understanding of the representation of trauma in the work of Breyten Breytenbach, tools will be developed to use on other posttransitional and postcolonialist authors as well. This research is expected to be finished within four years from its start, and during its course several articles on the research will be published.

**Lennart Ritz, *Klangspuren aus dem Pazifik. Klangepistemologien im Berliner Phonogramm-Archiv.***

*Supervisors: Barbara Titus, Julia Kursell, Birgit Abels*

In his PhD project, Lennart Ritz will examine (audio-)collections of the Berlin Phonogramm-Archiv from former German colonies in the pacific in regard to epistemologies of sound. Since the invention of the phonograph in late 19th century, it became possible for German missionaries, anthropologists and other researchers to record music in the south sea colonies. Those recordings were then shipped to the Berlin Phonogramm-Archiv, where they were utilized by musicologists and anthropologists. What kind of epistemologies of (recorded) sound constituted through these colonial utilizations?

**Erin Russell, *"Fissured" body/minds: Disability theory and a discourse of deformity in H.D.***

*Supervisors: Rudolph Glitz and Carrol Clarkson*

If H.D.'s feminist and queer themes constitute terrain that has been well examined, this project will engage the criticism done thus far by "cripping the reading" as per queer disability theorist Robert McRuer's formulation. A recurring metaphor in H.D.'s oeuvre is of bodies that are cut, deformed, hulled out, conflated, hybridized, and dismembered. This dissertation asks the question: how might her handling of these tropes be contextualized against the modernist/early postmodern backdrop in which she worked? Carrying this further, how might her initial ableism be troubled in light of her writings about her own waning health, her institutionalizations, and her work with Freud, as well as a wider context of soldiers returning injured from war? The goal of this disability studies research project is one of shedding new light on how the modernists conceived of questions of embodiment and impairment more widely though an examination of H.D., herself an icon of queer and feminist modernism.

**Hanne Stegeman, *The Platformization of the Global Sex Industry***

*Thomas Poell, Olav Velthuis*

In this PhD project I aim to investigate the working conditions and regulations of the online sex work industry in the Netherlands, US and Romania. The project examines the risks and benefits (the pleasures and harms) performers are confronted with in this platformized industry. In doing so it explores performers' perspectives on their labour, their (online) working environments and their rights. Various tactics within the online sex work industry are investigated, as well as external factors' influence on profits.

**Franziska Westhäuser, *Passport Stories: Passport Regimes and (Narratological) Forms of Worldmaking in the Global South and Beyond***

*Supervisors: Yolande Jansen, Hanneke Stuit*

This project proposes a novel reading of passports (and the passport regimes that go with it) as a cultural object employed in narratives invested in identity-, meaning- and life-making in the globalised present. It argues that passports play an essential role in narrating and understanding concepts such as origin, belonging and identity in an inter-connected world in which these notions are frequently subjugated to debate. Engaging both narratology and affect theory, this project offers an understanding of passports which incorporates both its structural influence and the affectively charged perception of it. For its objects of study, the project focuses on narratives of the social and cultural imaginary and reads passport stories from the Global South in comparison to narratives from the Global North in order to get as comprehensive as possible understanding of the passport's mode of employment as a narratological tool. Doing so, this project also tackles and challenges the perceived naturalness of the passport as a marker for inclusive- and exclusiveness as well as for ideas such as legitimate access to a territory or the group of people it encloses. Employing an interdisciplinary approach which is distinctively rooted in the humanities, the here proposed reading of the passport allows for an understanding of the passport which goes beyond its mere technicalities as a (internationally) legal institution and identifies their narratological and affective basis.

**Wang-Yun Yen, *New Archival Site between Film and Installation: Experimental Documentary, Archive Medium and Museums***

*Supervisors: Giovanna Fossati, Annet Dekker*

Within the media culture today, it appears that the museums have become important venues for the projection and exhibition of moving-image works realized in the documentary modes. The filmmakers often conceive their projects in forms of film and installation. While the medium, or the relationship between mediums, has always been of great significance in the praxis of experimental filmmaking,

the documentary installations make futile such clear-cut distinction between the experimental and the documentary.

With the experimental documentary, then, this project shall be considering less an up-to-date hybridity (which might reinforce consciously or not their distinction which cannot bear much theoretical weight) than a discursive space of in-between that could enrich our critical understanding of the contemporary filmmaking, archival and curatorial practices which, from the media historical point of view, have been inextricably linked with each other. Since the documentary films and installations are projected and exhibited in crossinstitutional contexts, the roles of curators and archivists are worth exploring for a finely tuned picture of the experimentation in question. More specifically, I try to read this collaboration and the consequent transition from one medium to another as the encounter between a documentary impulse and an archival one. Hence this project will deploy an analytical approach that cuts across three aspects with regard to the experimental documentary: the functions of institutional and cultural spaces, the changing notion of moving-image work and film-related technical media.

**SACRIFICIAL PARTISANSHIP**

*"For with mere life, the rule of law over the living ceases" – sacrificial partisanship*

*Presentation by Banu Bargu, Santa Cruz, in the Critique(s) of Violence seminar organized by Daniel Loick. Registration: please contact Daniel at [d.loick@uva.nl](mailto:d.loick@uva.nl) | February 4th, 2021, 18.00 h*

Banu Bargu is Associate Professor of History of Consciousness at the University of California at Santa Cruz. Her research focuses on the uses of the body in political and social struggles both as an object and as a subject of violence directed at itself. Drawing on different examples from around the world, she examines the implications corporeal politics holds for modern conceptions of agency, citizenship, and democracy. She is currently a member at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey. Among her many publications is *Starve and Immolate: The Politics of Human Weapons* (Columbia University Press, 2014).

**WAS SOVIET TELEVISION A PUBLIC SPHERE?**

*Lecture by Bohdan Shumylovych in the 'New Histories of Public Spheres and Public Actions' Zoom lecture series organized by Alexander Etkind (EUI - Department of History and Civilization) & Ellen Rutten (University of Amsterdam) February 5, 16.00-18.00pm*

[click here to register](#)

In the late 1950s, Isaiah Berlin famously distinguished positive (the capacity to act upon one's free will) and negative (freedom from external restraint) liberty. Some scholars observed that this positive freedom was associated with a socialist regime, under which the state acted upon citizens in order not to produce personal liberties but to make a 'collective individual' of the

imagined future. So, if we employ similar views to analyze Soviet public space or public sphere, we may find such spaces nurturing positive liberties of the new Soviet man, and we can also find multiple restrictions (censorship, violence, and various modes of suppressing a person) that acted against negative liberty. For researchers, therefore, underground publishing in the USSR would signify the existence of public space (negative liberty), while television would have a position within a space of state ideology (positive liberty). When writing about television as a public sphere (in the West) Peter Dahlgren meant the practice of journalism, which was aimed to produce various democratic opinions among the public. Indeed, there was almost no so-called free journalism in the USSR. However retaining binary positions (positive-negative) removes from the focus the potential of the Soviet audience to interpret or resist official messages, and to construct its own meanings. During the presentation, we will try to go beyond such binaries and offer the view of Soviet television as a hybrid public sphere.

Bohdan Shumylovych obtained a master's degree in modern history from the Central European University (Budapest, Hungary, 2004-2005), and in 2020 he has received a Ph.D. from the European University Institute in Florence. He has worked with the archive of the Faculty of Visual Arts at George Washington University, Washington (USA) and the archive of Open Society Institute ([www.osaarchivum.org](http://www.osaarchivum.org)), in Budapest. At the Center for Urban History (L'viv) he coordinates the Public history program, gives lectures, participates in the development of the Centre's thematic exhibitions, and carries out research. The main focus of his work is media history in East-Central Europe and the Soviet Union, as well as media arts, visual studies, urban spatial practices, and urban creativity.

### ENGAGING WITH ONLINE SEX WORK

*Online Seminar, 10 February, 17:00-18:00 hrs.*

Many concepts 'meet' each other in the practices of online sex work; physical & digital, pleasure & power, intimacy & publicness, body & labour. Not to forget how gender, race, class, ethnicity, and sexuality intersect in this type of work. How can we engage in meaningful ways with these complexities and entangled realities? Artist and communication scholar Antonia Hernandez and writer, researcher, activist, and porn performer Lorelei Lee will discuss how art, writing, and play might provide methods for engagement with the multifaceted nature of online sex work.

**Chair:** [Hanne Stegeman](#), Ph.D. student in the Markets, Morals, and Mass Intimacy project (NWO).

#### **Speakers:**

**Lorelei Lee** (they/she) is a writer, porn performer, sex worker activist, organizer, juris doctor, Justice Catalyst Fellow, co-founder of the Disabled Sex Workers Coalition, and researcher with Hacking//Hustling.

Their writing appears in *n+1*, *The Establishment*, *\$pread*, *Denver Quarterly*, *The Feminist Porn Book*, *Coming Out Like a Porn Star*, *We Too*, *Hustling Verse*, and elsewhere. Their book, 'Anything of Value,' looking at sex work through legal history, memoir, and cultural criticism, is anticipated from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt in 2023. <https://twitter.com/MissLoreleiLee>

**Antonia Hernández** is a communication studies scholar at Concordia University Montreal and artist who has engaged with the complexity of online sex work both scholarly writing and artistic projects. Through the artwork and research project 'Maintenance Pornography / Sexcams in a Dollhouse', she investigated platforms, value creation, and the domestic in online sex work. <https://www.antoniahernandez.com/> | [Register now](#)

### COVID-19 AND EUROPE'S TECHNOLOGICAL BORDERS

*PEPTalk #2: 11 February 12:00-13:00 hrs*

Border control in Europe is carried out with a variety of technologies to control the mobility of people. The issuing of passports, travel documents, visa applications and asylum requests requires databases, fingerprints, and various surveillance tools. How do Covid-19 policies affect people's travel in and to Europe? One of the initial responses to Covid-19 consisted of the closing of the external borders of the Schengen Zone and the introduction of travel restrictions in the Schengen countries. Since then, corona tests and contact tracking and tracing apps have been developed. Currently, the introduction of 'vaccine passports' is being discussed. How do the different technologies affect various sorts of travelers and migrants? What are the possible long-term consequences of Covid-19 regulations for Europe's technological border control?

On 11 February, 2021, we will discuss these issues in our PEPTalk with **Annalisa Pelizza** and **Rocco Bellanova**. The conversation is moderated by **Huub Dijkstra**. If you want to join, please register via [pept@uva.nl](mailto:pept@uva.nl) and you will receive the Zoom link by email.

[Register via pept@uva.nl](#)

**Annalisa Pelizza** is Professor of Science and Technology Studies at the University of Bologna. Her research focuses on the sociotechnical aspects of data infrastructures, including ontologies and interoperability. She is the principal investigator of the ERC project *Processing Citizenship* on the digital registration of migrants as co-production of citizens, territory and Europe. Her recent publications include "'No Disease for the Others": How COVID-19 data can enact new and old alterities"', in *Big Data and Society*; and 'Processing Alterity, Enacting Europe. Migrant registration and identification as co-construction of individuals and polities', in *Science, Technology and Human Values*.

**Rocco Bellanova** is researcher at the University of Amsterdam, and affiliated to the ERC project *Follow* on the tracing of the networks of terrorism financing. His

research focuses on European data-driven security practices and data protection. His recent publications include 'Controlling the Schengen Information System (SIS II): The Infrastructural Politics of Fragility and Maintenance', in *Geopolitics, together with Georgios Glouftsiou* and 'The algorithmic regulation of security: An infrastructural perspective' in *Regulation & Governance*, with Marieke de Goede.

**Huub Dijstelbloem** is Professor of Philosophy of Science and Politics at the University of Amsterdam and Senior Researcher at the Scientific Council for Government Policy in The Hague. Together with Beate Roessler, he is founder of the Platform for the Ethics and Politics of Technology. His current research concerns the politics of border control and long-term climate policy. His work has been published in *Nature*, *Security Dialogue*, *Geopolitics*, *Journal of Borderlands Studies*, *International Political Sociology*, *Sociology of Health and Illness* and *Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning*. His forthcoming book *Borders as Infrastructure: The Technopolitics of Border Control* will be published by the MIT Press. [PEPT website: uva.nl/pept](http://www.uva.nl/pept)

#### ASCA THEORY SEMINAR:

##### QUEERNESS/INTERSECTIONALITY

11 February 16:00-18:00 hrs. Contact: [asca-fgw@uva.nl](mailto:asca-fgw@uva.nl)

The upcoming session on the Theory Seminar will be on Queerness/Intersectionality. The session is organized by Alvaro Lopez, Pengnan Hu, and Shekoufeh Behbehani. We will be reading: Kara Keeling, *Queer Times*, *Black Futures* (selection) and Cho, Crenshaw and McCall, "Toward a Field of Intersectionality Studies".

##### LIVING IN THE PANDEMIC CITY

###### *Diverging emotional geographies of staying home*

Lecture by **Fenne Pinkster** (University of Amsterdam)

ASCA Cities seminar (Post)Pandemic Urbanism, Friday, 12 February 2021, 15:00-17:00, online (for registration, please send an email to [c.j.birdsall@uva.nl](mailto:c.j.birdsall@uva.nl))

The emergence of Covid-19 has dramatically rescaled every lives to our homes and its direct surroundings. For many, the first lockdown has meant an intense rediscovery of our homes as urban public space suddenly became a source of exposure and everyday routines in the city were disrupted due to closure of shops, restaurants and bars, cultural and educational institutions. To understand how the nuclearization of our lives to the home has led Amsterdammers to re-evaluate their living arrangements and sense of belonging in the city, we conducted a survey amongst Amsterdammers at the end of the first lockdown, followed by in-depth interviews with a sub-sample of respondents. Findings show that for some staying at home during the first lockdown has fostered a sense of privilege, while destabilizing others' feeling of home. In this workshop I will discuss these diverging experiences, exploring how the pandemic exposes existing inequalities in the city in the ability to make a

home for oneself and at the same time also transforms and reconfigures residents' sense of home.

**Fenne Pinkster** is Associate Professor Urban Geography, University of Amsterdam. Her research explores how residents experience, use and produce urban space, studying the different ways in which neighborhoods form meaningful places for residents (or not) and raising questions about place-based processes of in- and exclusion, feelings of belonging and loss, encounters with difference, and place-making and place-claiming. For more information, see: [www.uva.nl/en/profile/p/i/f.m.pinkster/f.m.pinkster.html](http://www.uva.nl/en/profile/p/i/f.m.pinkster/f.m.pinkster.html). For the semester 2 programme of the ASCA Cities seminar, see: [www.cities.humanities.uva.nl](http://www.cities.humanities.uva.nl)

#### TRANS\* AND PSYCHOANALYTIC PERSPECTIVES ON CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL ISSUES

New ASCA Reading group organized by Alvaro Lopez ([a.a.lopeznavarro@uva.nl](mailto:a.a.lopeznavarro@uva.nl)) and Mina Burnside ([theminahunt@gmail.com](mailto:theminahunt@gmail.com)). First session on 17 February 2021

The critical domain and scope of trans studies and psychoanalysis comprises a number of different—and sometimes diverging—fields of research, theoretical stances, and methodological approaches. From sexuality and embodiment to cultural manifestations, from social and political dynamics to intricate processes of subject formation, trans and psychoanalytic perspectives offer a critical tool to tackle the complexities of the contemporary context. Yet more often than not, these perspectives are perceived as detached from each other, or even oppositional and conflicting. However, unlikely as the trans-psychoanalysis pairing may sound, these perspectives have more in common than it would appear at first sight. Moreover, as recent approaches in trans studies and psychoanalysis attest to, their critical perspectives cross paths and enter into conversation with each other, enabling an insightful tool for assessment and analysis of the multiple transformations, situations, and pressing issues of the present moment.

The aim of this reading group is to approach recent works on trans studies and psychoanalysis as a means to open a space for a critical engagement with these perspectives and the insights they provide with regard to contemporary cultural issues: from transphobia and violence to life and livability in times of pandemic, from Black Lives Matter to new gender registration policies in the EU. For each of the group sessions, two texts/approaches will be selected in order to address a specific contemporary issue. Each of these texts/approaches will independently engage or combine trans and psychoanalytic perspectives capable of shedding light on the issue selected. During the first session, the issue addressed will be "trans (mis)representation in contemporary media." This issue will be addressed in light of Patricia Gherovici's introduction and first chapter for *Transgender Psychoanalysis* (2017), as well as Che Gossett's

"Blackness and the Trouble of Trans Visibility" in *Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility* (2017), edited by Reina Gossett, Eric A. Stanley, and Johanna Burton. Due to the current COVID-19 situation, the meeting for blocks 3 and 4 this year will take place on Zoom. The first session will take place on February 17, and the subsequent meetings will take place on March 17, April 14, May 12, and June 2.

We invite scholars, researchers, and graduate students interested in widening the academic and critical engagement with these perspectives and their critical tackling of contemporary issues and events. To join, please email the organizers Alvaro Lopez ([a.a.lopeznavarro@uva.nl](mailto:a.a.lopeznavarro@uva.nl)) and Mina Burnside ([theminahunt@gmail.com](mailto:theminahunt@gmail.com)).

### KETI KOTI DIALOGUE TABLE

In celebration of resistance fighter, activist and author Anton de Kom's birthday on February 22, 1898 and in recognition of his important thought, the Keti Koti Table foundation organizes a Keti Koti dialogue for white and black students. Anton de Kom has been the first to describe Surinamese history from an anti-colonial perspective in the seminal and critical book "We slaves of Surinam" (1934). On February 22, an online Keti Koti dialogue table will take place from 16.00 to 17.30 hours, for students and teachers of the UvA, VU and HvA.

Anton De Kom (1898-1945)

In addition to being a writer, activist and nationalist, Anton de Kom was also both sent into exile by the Dutch colonial government and later imprisoned by the German occupier of the Netherlands during the Second World War. Just before the liberation, on April 24, 1945 he died in concentration camp Sandbostel. Last year, Anton de Kom has been included in the official Dutch historical canon and a motion to rehabilitate him has been submitted to the House of Representatives. The enduring relevance and importance of De Kom's book "We slaves of Surinam" has been highlighted by an essay to the new bestselling edition authored by Mitchell Esajas, initiator of Black Archives.

What is the Keti Koti dialogue table

The Keti Koti Table is a new tradition, initiated by Mercedes Zandwijken and Dr. Machiel Keestra <https://www.uva.nl/profiel/k/e/m.keestra/m.keestra.html?cb> in which, through the exchange of personal experiences, memories, and emotions, white and black (and all other shades of color) participants reflect upon the legacy of Dutch slavery and colonialism. By jointly discussing a Keti Koti theme and the associated 3 Keti Koti dialogue questions, the dialogue tableaux to raise awareness of the inner and social conflicts and blind spots arising from the complex historical and social backgrounds of the Dutch slavery and colonial past and help gaining new insights that lead to a society free from discrimination and racism.

Spread invitation

We would like to ask you to forward this invitation in order to inform your students in your network or educational institution about this student-specific Keti Koti dialogue. To that end we will send you a general invitation email on 4 February. It would be great if you could forward this invitation to students and other interested parties within your educational institution.

Brainstorm Theme

Since the Keti Koti Table aims to facilitate dialogues that are suitable to each specific context and audience, we would also like to consider your thoughts in the development of the dialogue theme for this Keti Koti Table. For this reason, we cordially invite you to a brainstorm zoom meeting on 3 February from 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm in order to jointly arrive at an appealing and representative dialogue theme. In addition to students, the following people were invited to this brainstorm; the Diversity Officers of the UVA, the VU, and HvA (Sesi), representatives of the Anton de Kom Foundation and of Humanity in Action.

For more information about the Keti Koti dialogue table visit our website (<http://www.ketikotitafel.nl/de-instructions.html>). We look forward to your response and hope to see you at the brainstorm meeting on 3 February, if you have any questions, please contact us at any time.

### SLAVERY, INDIGENOUS (DIS)POSSESSION AND THE GROTIAN IMAGINARY

*Rereading Hugo Grotius*

Lecture by Mikki Stelder, February 24, 2021 - 12:00pm (21:00 CET), UBC, Vancouver, BC, Canada



In this lecture, Dr. Stelder will present a postcolonial re-reading of Hugo Grotius' *Commentary on the Law of Prize and Booty* and *The Rights of War and Peace*, with a focus on how Grotius' construction of the "colonial difference" structures his legal writings on property, sovereignty, Indigenous (dis)possession and slavery. Honing in on Grotius' construction of colonial difference contradicts prevailing scholarship, which argues that Grotius perceived Indigenous peoples as free sovereigns and that he was critical of slavery. Stelder will show how his writings on Dutch colonial ventures in Southeast Asia must be situated within racial and imperial imaginaries and epistemologies circulating across oceans. Reading the Grotian imaginary through such a lens demands a deeper understanding of the influence of Grotian legal thinking on modern liberal humanisms and European and North

American legalities and epistemologies of slavery and (settler) colonialism. Furthermore, it will challenge the persistent myth of the Dutch as "innocent" and "reluctant imperialists."

Dr. Mikki Stelder is a postdoctoral fellow in Sociology (University of British Columbia) and Cultural Analysis (University of Amsterdam) whose current project *Maritime Imagination: A Cultural Oceanography of Dutch Empire, Slavery and Colonialism* is funded through a Marie Skłodowska Curie Global Fellowship from the European Commission. This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 838904. Dr. Stelder other work has appeared in *Radical History Review*, *Settler Colonial Studies* and the *Journal of Palestine Studies*.

Image: Activists changed the "O" of the logo of the United Dutch East India Company (VOC) on a statue of the VOC officer Jan Pieterszoon Coen (in Hoorn, Noord-Holland) into a hanging rope to highlight the VOC's role in the murder of Indigenous peoples in Southeast Asia.

## TOUCHED BODIES

### *The Performative Turn in Latin American art*

Mara Polgovsky Ezcurra (Birkbeck University of London, UK) is the first speaker in the online series [Politics and Performance](#) organized by Sruti Bala and Elize Mazadiego. Her presentation will be followed by a conversation with Kati Röttger (*Theatre Studies*), on 25 February at 16:00 hrs.

What is the role of pleasure and pain in the politics of art? In her lecture, Mara Polgovsky Ezcurra approaches this question as she examines the flourishing of live and intermedial performance in Latin America during times of authoritarianism and its significance during transitions to democracy.

Mara Polgovsky Ezcurra is a Lecturer in Contemporary Art at Birkbeck, University of London. Her research focuses on contemporary Latin American Art and Intellectual History, looking at the politics of aesthetics and changing ideas of "life", "agency" and "the body" in artistic practice. Her books include *Touched Bodies: The Performative Turn in Latin American Art* (Rutgers University Press, 2019), the forthcoming essay collection *Marcos Kurtycz: Corporeality Unbound* (Fauna-Jumex, 2019), and the edited volume *Sabotage Art: Politics and Iconoclasm in Contemporary Latin America*.

To register, please contact Elize Mazadiego at [e.m.mazadiego@uva.nl](mailto:e.m.mazadiego@uva.nl).

## FROM CRISIS TO CRITIQUE:

### *Languages of Resistance, Transformation, and Futurity in Mediterranean Crisis-Scapes*

OSL/LUCAS Workshop, 4-5 March 2021 | Organizers: Maria Boletsi, Janna Houwen, Liesbeth Minnaard

With keynote lectures by Nicholas De Genova & Nilgün Bayraktar and a masterclass by Stijn De Cauwer

Today, the term *crisis* is often 'hijacked' by far-right, xenophobic, and anti-democratic agendas that shrink the space of political choice and the imagination of alternative futures. In this workshop we ask if there are ways to salvage *crisis* as a concept that can do the work of its cognate—*critique*—and participate in the articulation of alternative languages, literary narratives, and other modes of representation in visual, digital and social media, cinema, and art.

Our rethinking of *crisis* and *critique* will take shape through the prism of a region that has become the epicenter of various declared crises in recent years: the Mediterranean. By rethinking contemporary Mediterranean crisis-scapes, we will probe interconnections between new languages of resistance, protest, transformation, and futurity emerging primarily from literary, artistic, and other forms of cultural expression and political activism in the region, both in physical spaces and on the web. Aim of the workshop is to explore how we can move from *crisis* to *critique*; from *crisis* as a restrictive framework to *crisis* as a form of *critique* that triggers alternative interpretations of the present and mobilizes these as occasions for social and historical change in Mediterranean societies and beyond.

### Workshop Program

#### Thursday 4 March 2021

13.30: Checking in

13.45: Welcome and introduction

14.00 - 16.00: Panel discussion "From Crisis to Critique"

With contributors to the volume *Languages of Resistance, Transformation, and Futurity in Mediterranean Crisis-Scapes. From Crisis to Critique* (Palgrave, 2020):

- Ipek Çelik Rappas, Koç University, Istanbul & Diego Benegas Loyo, National University of General San Martín, Buenos Aires
- Geli Mademli, University of Amsterdam
- Liesbeth Minnaard, Leiden University
- Dimitris Papanikolaou, Oxford University

Chaired by Maria Boletsi (Leiden U & U of Amsterdam) and Janna Houwen (Leiden University)

16.00 – 17.00: Break

17.00 – 18.30: Keynote lecture by Nilgün Bayraktar (California College of the Arts, USA):

*Refugee Futurity: From Perpetual Crisis to Critical Dystopia in Contemporary Film and Video Art*

Respondent: Julian Ross, Leiden University

20.00: Film program organized in cooperation with Leiden Shorts

#### Friday 5 March 2021

14.00-16.00: Master Class for RMA & PhD students by Stijn De Cauwer, KU Leuven, Belgium

16.00 – 17.00: Break

17.00-18.30: Keynote lecture by Nicholas De Genova (University of Houston, USA)

The lectures and panel discussion are open to anyone who wishes to attend. ReMA/PhD students and OSL members should register via [this link](#). If you do not fall into either category, please register via [this link](#):

<https://www.eventbrite.nl/e/workshop-from-crisis-to-critique-registration-138179720263> Participation in the Master Class is restricted to Research MA students and PhD candidates, who can earn 1 or 2 EC credits by preparing, participating and contributing to the workshop (registration [through OSL](#)).

## BUILDING BRIDGES

### *Activists and Cultural Researchers in Conversation*

March 9th-12th, 2021 | An online workshop at the International Graduate Centre for the Study of Culture (GCSC) at Justus-Liebig-University Giessen. | Call for Participation

“Nothing in science has any value to society if it is not communicated.” Anne Roe, 1952

As posited by psychologist Anne Roe, the academic community needs to be conscious of their “social obligations.” From the outset and especially since Stuart Hall, critical cultural studies aspire to unearth the constructedness of cultural and social phenomena in order to expose power structures. Moreover, cultural studies informed researchers usually strive to share the findings they obtained with society, hoping to foster emancipatory endeavours.

But how does this aspiration translate into today’s German discourse and the situation of the study of culture in Germany? We are living in times of increasing awareness of the diversification of society and a growing reflection on structural relations of power. We are witnessing huge social and environmental challenges with a progressing sense of urgency, often accompanied by a heavily polarized audience – migration, climate change, and a global health crisis being only three pressing examples. Within academia, the study of culture analyzes these dynamics in its manifold research fields. It offers concepts and tools for critical investigations, produces studies and engages in scholarly debates, thereby discussing, for instance, de- and post-coloniality, gender issues, epistemic violence, migration and the Anthropocene. But how does this theoretical research relate to our social and political reality?

For more than a decade the International Graduate Centre for the Study of Culture (GCSC) at Justus-Liebig-University Giessen has been at the heart of the study of culture in Germany. That is why it is the right place to take the leap and address these pressing questions in the form of a transdisciplinary workshop.

We will investigate which models and concepts, originating in the study of culture, can be applied beyond the realms of academia and how the results of social and political involvement feed back into scholarly research. In doing so, we aim to rethink the (inter-)dependencies of academic discourse and society, and to find ways of how to better bridge the two in an attempted “two-way”-conversation. More specifically, we would like to address the following questions:

- How can critical thinking and critical humanities have a meaningful and sustainable impact on society

and politics?

- How to design, shape and communicate research to make a meaningful contribution to society?
- How to open up research and instigate a continuous dialogue with social and political actors?
- How to engage with public discourse in a fruitful way, to maintain academic independence while not being absorbed in one’s efficacy by the status quo?
- How can the experience of practical engagement feed back into and reshape the academic study of culture?
- As scholars of the study of culture, what kind of responsibilities do we bear, inside and outside of academia?

Looking beyond scholarship and academia, the workshop aims to foster a dialogue between scholars and organizations working on the interface of the study of culture and social practice, academic discourse and political action.

Application: The GCSC invites the opening up of new perspectives for the study of culture and inspires new opportunities for how our field of research as well as our individual projects can reach a broader public audience. Finally, we want to provoke a change in society, outside the university and beyond doing a PhD. The workshop addresses early career researchers who situate their research in the wider field of the study of culture, and who are interested in engaging in a discussion with activists, consultants and policy makers. Please apply by Friday, March 5th, 2020 to [building.bridges.GCSC@gmail.com](mailto:building.bridges.GCSC@gmail.com). Places will be limited. We would also like to encourage you to tell us about your interests and why you would like to discuss with us the questions and issues we raised above.

The workshop will take place online over several days. Beginning on March 9 at 10:00 and ending on March 12 at 10:00 with a plenary discussion. Discussion languages will be English and German.

Contact: [Ruben.pfizenmaier@gcsc.uni-giessen.de](mailto:Ruben.pfizenmaier@gcsc.uni-giessen.de), [laura.borchert@gcsc.uni-giessen.de](mailto:laura.borchert@gcsc.uni-giessen.de) and [stellamaria.frei@gcsc.uni-giessen.de](mailto:stellamaria.frei@gcsc.uni-giessen.de)

Further Information: <https://bit.ly/39jNRO5>

## SCHOOL OF CRITICISM AND THEORY 2021

Summer Session 2021: June 14–July 23 at Cornell University | Directed by Hent de Vries

Since its inception in 1976, the School of Criticism and Theory has been devoted to intensive intellectual inquiry and the vigorous exchange of ideas, cultivating a space where courageous discussion and innovative academic exploration can thrive. To this end, SCT brings together a diverse group of scholars from around the world, addressing an ever-expanding arrangement of cultural, political, and social movements, theoretical axes and intersecting debates across the humanities and social sciences. From interdisciplinary scholarship that enables new knowledge, to collaborative conversation that yields new questions, SCT strives to respond to the complex and urgent struggles of our times with intellectual rigor and resilience.

In an intensive six-week course of study, faculty members, graduate students, and independent scholars explore recent developments in critical theory. The multi-layered dialogue that results, among both faculty and participants, is one of the hallmarks of SCT's culture. Participants work with the SCT's core faculty of distinguished scholars and theorists in one of four six-week seminars. Each faculty member offers, in addition, a public lecture and a colloquium (based on an original paper) which are attended by the entire group. The program also includes mini-seminars taught by scholars who visit for shorter periods. Finally, throughout the six weeks, distinguished theorists visit as lecturers. In addition, Cornell offers participants the resources of one of the great research libraries in the United States.

Major Seminars

**Matthew Engelke—Magic**

Professor of Religion and Director of the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life, Columbia University

**Caroline Levine—Formalist Methods, Political Consequences**

David and Kathleen Ryan Professor of the Humanities and Picket Family Chair of the English Department, Cornell University

**Marina Rustow—Epistemology of the Archive and the Practice of Archival History**

Professor of Near Eastern Studies and History, Khedouri A. Zilkha Professor of Jewish Civilization in the Near East, Director of the Geniza Lab and Director of the Near East Program, Princeton University

**George Yancy—Whiteness and the Phenomenology of Racial Embodiment**

The Samuel Candler Dobbs Professor of Philosophy at Emory University; Montgomery Fellow, Dartmouth College

Mini Seminars

**Karen Barad—Infinity, Nothingness, and the Un/doing of Self**

Professor of Feminist Studies, Philosophy, and History of Consciousness, University of California, Santa Cruz

**José Casanova—Global Religious and Secular Dynamics**

Emeritus Professor of Sociology, Theology and Religious Studies and Senior Fellow, Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, Georgetown University

**Béatrice Longuenesse—Conflicting logics of the mind. Lessons from Kant and Freud**

Julius Silver, Roslyn S. Silver and Enid Silver Winslow Professor of Philosophy, New York University

**Tomoko Masuzawa—Re-Orienting the West**

Professor Emerita of Comparative Literature and History, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor  
Public Lectures include:

**Anita Allen—Facing Black Faces: Race and Representation**

In the era of Facial Recognition Technology

Vice Provost for Faculty and Professor of Law, University of Pennsylvania

**Heather Love—From the Outside Looking In**

Associate Professor of English, University of Pennsylvania

**Carolyn Rouse—Revisiting the Case Against Reparation**

Professor and Chair of Anthropology, Princeton University

**Haiping Yan—Other Cosmopolitans, China and Beyond**

Professor of Cross-Cultural Studies and Chair of the Department of

Foreign Languages and Literatures, Tsinghua University, Beijing, China

The online application deadline is February 1, 2021.

Prospective participants must indicate on the online application which one of the six-week courses they wish to attend in order of preference. All participants are enrolled in each of the mini-seminars. Tuition for the 2021 session is \$3,000. Applicants may compete for tuition scholarships and are also encouraged to seek funding from their home institutions.

Contact: [www.sct.cornell.edu](http://www.sct.cornell.edu) | [sctcornell@cornell.edu](mailto:sctcornell@cornell.edu)

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