

Nieuwsbrief 251

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DISSERTATION DEFENSE: MARLOES GEBOERS

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

Supervisors: Richard Rogers, Sabine Niederer | Agnietenkapel | 21 April 13:00 hrs.

Images of distant suffering depict people whose hardships the observers do not share or experience directly. As such images circulate, social media grant them a visuality that reflects the attention economy governing this space. Social media make these images—depicting suffering, protest, the hardship of revolution—part of their ‘metrified machinery’, designed to commodify and standardize sociality into countable clicks, likes, and views. The thesis titled *The*

social visuality of distant suffering investigates how the prominent affective affordances of social platforms—hashtags, buttons, and image-based posts—and their use practices shape the visuality of distant suffering. The research consists of case studies into Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, and contributes to the theorization of social media photography and distant suffering, while taking on a critical approach toward platform affordances. Methodologically, the studies demonstrate new protocols for analyzing networked visual content. The findings shed light on how the commercial ranking mechanisms of platforms perpetuate power asymmetries, standardize complex sociality at the expense of particular emotional expressions, and move profound critical voices out of sight.

ERC CONSOLIDATOR FOR TOMMY TSE

China Fashion Power: Fashioning Power through South-South Interaction: Re-thinking Creativity, Authenticity, Cultural Mediation and Consumer Agency along China-Africa Fashion Value Chains

Tse’s project will investigate how, in the context of the Belt and Road Initiative, China’s global power is manifested, negotiated and resisted in people’s daily life in a South-South setting using fashion as an exemplary case. Fashion is recognised as a significant economic force globally and one of the most poignant indicators of cross-cultural exchange. By critically examining China-Africa networks of fashion production, trade and consumption using a multi-disciplinary, multi-method, multi-sited, and multi-scalar approach, this project will theorise how fashion is created, circulated, valued, and consumed in and through Global Souths Value Chains (Guangdong-Nairobi-Maputo), dissecting complex dynamics and expressions of power.

MIEKE BAL INVITED PROFESSOR AT THE COLLÈGE DE FRANCE

We are proud to announce that Mieke Bal, ASCA’s Founding Director, has been invited as professor at the Collège de France in 2022-2023. In this very prestigious position she will study the Invention of Europe through Languages and Cultures.

INAUGURAL LECTURE NICHOLAS TILL

Opera in the Age of Environmental Emergency
Aula | 20 April 16:30 hrs.

Nick Till is the Pierre Audi Professor by Special Appointment for Opera and Music Theatre. In his inaugural lecture, he will discuss how opera and music theatre can respond to the threads posed by the climate crisis.

3 RIS FELLOWSHIPS FOR ASCA MEMBERS

The following ASCA members received a Faculty RIS (Research Innovation and Sustainability) Fellowship to prepare for a NWO or ERC Grant: Irene Villaescusa Ilan, Marc Tuters, and Asli Özgen.

NEW ASCA RESEARCH GROUP: QUEER ANALYSIS RESEARCH UNIT

Organizers: Misha Kavka and Diego Semerene

Queer Analysis is a research unit dedicated to investigating queer objects, subjects, encounters and practices as they contribute to and resonate with contemporary culture. Tracing our roots to the intersection of queer theory and psychoanalysis alongside the intensification of LGBTQ+ activism since the 1990s, we embrace various understandings of 'queer' to open up analysis of the conditions for living out non-normative genders and sexualities today.

In particular, we pursue a core interest in the question of desire – its theories, mediations and symptoms as testaments to the destabilizing effects and affects of the technological zeitgeist. We understand psychoanalysis to be the language we have for approaching desire rigorously and take queerness to be a generative mode of building, engaging, enacting, creating and consuming cultures. What do queer subjects want and what is wanted of queerness? How are such desires created, mobilized, sustained and stilled? By practicing 'queer analysis', our aim is to seek out (in)appropriate modes of analysis for studying the question of desire through a queer/ing lens.

Queer Analysis aims to forge a creative space where scholars drawn to psychoanalytic and queer theory' logics and methods can do work. We believe in their imbrication and in the urgency of their interpellation in order to think through the questions of our time. While our framework is psychoanalytic, we are interested in a range of interdisciplinary discourses and practices that can enter into conversation with psychoanalysis in their approach to desiring practices and media technologies. With an eye to elucidating, mapping and innovating (in)appropriate methodologies, the Queer Analysis research unit will begin by tethering our work to the following axes:

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

We invite interdisciplinary scholars, analysts and graduate students interested in the engagement of

gender and sexuality studies through a queer theoretical and/or psychoanalytic perspective to join us for lectures, reading groups, workshops, symposia, and tutorials.

If you would like to join the research group please contact Prof. dr. Misha Kavka (m.kavka@uva.nl) and dr. Diego Semerene (d.semerene@uva.nl)

NEW PHD CANDIDATES

Since last Summer the following PhD candidates joined ASCA. Welcome!

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

Supervisors: Yolande Jansen, Sarah Bracke

In cases of eliminatory injustice such as settler-colonialism, the dominant settler group adopts a "logic of elimination," overwhelming disenfranchisement of the indigenous group through sustained and extreme violence, established power structures and relations, racist laws, as well as dehumanization (or what I call, relative humanization). Consequently, an almost irreconcilable dichotomy separates the collective identities of the oppressors and the oppressed, both constituted by oppression. Humans in either group often develop an exclusive sense of group subjectivity, suppressing or marginalizing individual identity, to the extent that whatever is common, presently or potentially, between subjects across the oppression dichotomy line may be ignored, marginalized, or simply forgotten.

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

For decolonization to be most just and ethical, and therefore sustainable, must include a process of ethical de-dichotomization of the conflictual identities, for otherwise the process may descend to a "tribal" zero-sum war against the generalized other—everyone who shares the main identity attributes of the other—irrespective of the undoing of system of colonial subjugation and domination on the ground.

Turkuaz Benlioglu, *Walter Benjamin's atmospheric hermeneutics*

Supervisors: Ben Moore, Monique Roelofs

This research will embrace an intertextual approach which attends to various thematic and stylistic links between Benjamin's writings, his diverse sources of influence, patterns of verbal imagery, and eccentric reevaluation of existing concepts, and situates Benjamin in the larger context of a history of ideas.

Cas Bezemer, *Inscribing Sonic Space between Body and Ether: Epistemological Modalities of Media, Embodiment and Speculation in the Art of Ryoji Ikeda*
Supervisors: Barbara Titus, Julia Kursell

Inscribing Sonic Space is critical research project that investigates the expressive role of space for three prevalent sonic epistemologies. This project embarks from the notion that sound, the space it resounds in, and the epistemological mechanism by which we make sense of sound, are relative and therefore co-determinative to one another. Space thus codifies our understanding of sound, as different sonic epistemologies allow space to behave differently. A spatial approach may therefore give valuable insight into the limitations, affordances, partiality, and stakes of sonic modes of knowing.

With analysis of Ryoji Ikeda's AV-artworks as an experimental constant, this project proceeds with three incommensurate epistemological frames that conceptualise alternate subject positions in sonic space. (Re)iterating Ikeda's 'objects' anew at every turn, each reflects its framework's unique focus; to find its affordances reflected in the spatial timbre of the epistemological site. Ultimately, the project investigates whether these affordances can be construed as critical benchmarks that augment the formal accountability of sonic epistemologies.

Jetske Brouwer, *Caring and Uncaring in the Age of Climate Breakdown*

Supervisors: Yolande Jansen, Jana Cattien

Taking an interdisciplinary humanities perspective, I aim to work towards an ecofeminist, decolonial concept of care. Countering Modern imaginations of progress that have resulted in today's climate change and massive extractivism, ecofeminists have proposed care ethics as an alternative approach of 'organising, living and worldmaking'. My project engages with ecofeminist conceptualisations of care, entering both decolonial and posthuman perspectives to the equation. It aims to bring together different strands of critical thought that are often conceptualised and materialised separately: on the one hand intellectual traditions situated within the (environmental) humanities, and on the other hand traditions from postcolonial studies.

Jack Dignam, *The Essay as a Dialectic of Enthusiasm & Cynicism – A Means to Re-imagine Cultural Critique Today*

Supervisor: Stefan Niklas, Monique Roelofs

There is an innate antagonism between enthusiasm and cynicism for critical thought. Typically, we understand

enthusiasm to imply absorption, interaction and closeness, while cynicism is thought to imply rationality, distance and a bird's eye perspective. In this PhD, I intend to study this antagonism and what it means for criticism, and critical theory more generally, today. I do so with Georg Simmel, Walter Benjamin and Theodor Adorno as my chief guiding theorists, presenting their work on aesthetics and metaphysics as a potential synthesis of such an antagonism which realises itself through their 'joint' theory and actual practice of the essay as a genre. After presenting a theory of the essay with the aid of Simmel, Benjamin, Adorno and some interlocking theorists, then, I turn to the work of prominent essayists of the late twentieth century and early twenty first century whose work can be read in light of this theory, namely Roland Barthes, Joan Didion, Rebecca Solnit and Mark Grief, thereby providing a more coherent view of the essay as a genre altogether. The guiding questions of the work are as follows, then: What are the critical implications for understanding the essay as an amalgam of enthusiasm and cynicism? What can, potentially, be socially, politically and aesthetically achieved, in understanding the essay as a tool for critical theorists today in light of such a dialectic? How can the legacy of these early contributors to critical theory be recast and best harnessed in light of the oppression faced by the most marginalised within our world today?

Yorgos Karagiannopoulos, *Social Movements and the Discovery of Social Reality*

Supervisors: Mari Mikkola, Daniel Loick

Despite long methodological discussions, it is still unclear what kind of knowledge is possible or how it is acquired in social sciences. Perhaps the reason why we remain in muddy waters is, or so I believe, that the entities researched by the social disciplines appear to be elusive – and along with it so will be any corresponding knowledge. One does not see states, classes, or money but simply buildings, individuals and paper. The fact that social entities elude our observatory access to them, may give the impression that such entities are non-real. However, I think we must resist this "anti-realist" result. While unobservable, social entities have an unquestionable causal effect on everyday life. From the individual's inability to change prices as per will, to the social impact of certain institutions to mental states, social entities are real enough. Nevertheless, the elusive nature of social entities renders them difficult to track. Things are even worse when the inherent difficulty in their comprehension is exploited by groups that have an interest in distorting reality (e.g., ideology).

While social groups may distort social reality, they are simultaneously bestowed with the epistemic duty of demystifying it. Perhaps in contrast to physical sciences, social sciences cannot adhere to an unbiased, "neutral" standpoint through which they shall claim objective knowledge. The problem for the realist is, therefore, to obtain knowledge through a "biased"

standpoint. For that, the thesis aims to argue, it is the job of social movements to disentangle ideology and discover social entities and their mechanisms.

Dieuwertje Luitse, *Data Bodies*

Supervisors: Tobias Blanke, Thomas Poell

This project investigates the construction of ‘data bodies’ by empirically mapping how the information of medical patients is being collected, stored, classified and disseminated through AI modelling by applications for health decision-making under development at the UvA’s Medical Faculty. It seeks to do so by scrutinizing data collection and ‘algorithmic techniques’ for classification specific to these AI systems and how these processes are influenced by the politics and values their technical logics entail. Building on this analysis, I examine how the practices and experiences of medical professionals, patients, and their relationships are affected by AI use in clinical environments through interviews. By doing so, the project seeks to address recent concerns over social impact of AI use in healthcare, and how it meets the ethical principles in health decision-making surrounding patient care (e.g., autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, and justice).

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

Supervisors: Monique Roelofs, Sudha Rajagopalan

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

Grâce Ndjako, *Black disruption, white reinforcement*

Supervisors: Yolande Jansen, Michiel Leezenberg

With this research I will examine the responses to Black people’s anticolonial critique. I want to explore to what extent liberalism is inherently racialized, as opposed to

Charles Mills’ claim in ‘Black rights/ white wrongs’ that liberalism is shaped by race but only contingently so. And I will examine in which ways this racialized aspect reinforces itself whenever Black people offer critique from an anti-colonial perspective.

Anunaya Rajhans, *Meme Culture and the crisis of meaning in Indian public discourse*

Supervisors: Marc Tuters, Thomas Poell

Question: What is the impact of meme culture – online communities, their memes and practices – on the nature of public discourse in India? The project proposes to create a first-of-its-kind account of meme culture in India. The study aims to survey the everyday internet practices of individuals and online communities, to try to understand their growing socio-political influence and cultural capital (Nissenbaum et al. 2017). By looking at memes as mirrors of socio-cultural formations, the idea is to develop a thorough understanding of individual motivations, desires and the shared creative energies that form these communities within the given context. This frame of reference of memes as mirrors will form the theoretical foundation of the project (Shifman 2014). It will be employed to develop a richer, more granular understanding of the online cultural divide and memetic war for ideological supremacy in contemporary India. Moreover, the project will explore the consequences for individuals’ and communities’ ability to make meaning amidst an overall sense of ironic uncertainty leading to tribalistic fragmentations within the platform society (Van Dijck et al. 2018). Meme cultures are singularly effective in fomenting narratives and precipitating unique epistemological formations beyond the idea of truth as a simple straightforward category. This shift in the public discourse will be studied alongside the rise of populism and mainstreaming of far-right tendencies in Indian society at large. Finally, building on this analysis, the project will evaluate existing counter-narratives, proposing alternative definitions and practices of digital activism and digital literacy in the shifting sands of Indian internet culture at large.

Meital Raz, *The Museum as a Lab: Environmental Exhibitions in Israel 1967-1994*

Supervisors: Margriet Schavemaker, Noa Roei

This study aims at examining the distinct characteristics of environmental practices in Israel between 1967 and 1994 in the context of exhibition history. Environmental practices had penetrated the Israeli art scene as early as the late 1960s, and had played a central role in the formation of new artistic forms and modes of expression. This research project discusses the global and local influences, as well as the towering figures, who were engaged in environmental art between the late 1960s and the early 1990s.

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

Supervisors: Walter van de Leur, Thomas Nys

In this research project, I want to make a case for improvisation, by 1. showing how the concepts of Nietzsche and Arendt on action and freedom parallel improvisational practice 2. showing how improvisation as an open, critical practice is inextricably intertwined with other practices like philosophy and politics. Not unlike Arendt's attempt to recuperate the pre-philosophical concept of freedom, I aim at recuperating the pre-Romantic concept of improvisation. Thus, I challenge the distortions of improvisation as "doing whatever" (lacking, discipline, planning, and rationality), "making do" (the capacity to creatively overcome an unexpected obstacles), and "creatio ex nihilo" (a Romantic, mystified view of improvisation as autonomous creativity). Instead, I hope to provide a more worldly and political concept of improvisation as being an aspect of the broader human condition (Lewis and Piekut 2016). Improvisation is a peculiar kind of creativity that builds on existing ideas and that, by re-performing those ideas, has transformative potential and may generate the unexpected. Improvisation is thus closely related to Arendt's and Nietzsche's performative concepts of action and freedom.

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

Supervisors: Joost de Bloois, Patricia Pisters

The proposed research project is meant as a contribution to the nascent field of the psychedelic humanities (Langlitz 2019, Roberts 2017) and will be guided by the question "how can psychedelics expand our sense of political possibility?". While my Research Master's thesis set a preliminary formal frame to study this question, I aim to develop its investigations further by framing them through sociologist Hartmut Rosa's concept of "resonance" (2019) and by deepening my historical analysis into the discourses, practices, and collectives that can give us insight into the relation between psychedelics and politics. The contemporary relevance of this topic is a matter not only of the rapid emergence and growth of the "renaissance" of psychedelic research (Pollan 2018). Foremost, this relevance is given by the three current crises - of mental health, democracy, and of the environment - which Rosa conceptualizes as overridden by a crisis of resonance. The promise is that, following my argument that psychedelics are powerful resonance tools, their potential might be addressed to these issues. I will engage directly with current psychedelic research in their therapeutic application, with cultural critic Mark Fisher's conceptual pair "capitalist realism"/"acid communism", and with critical posthumanism. These engagements also advance Rosa's work by providing it with a strong experiential tool, a focus on a particular

historical timeline, and with a new ontological and ethical perspective, respectively. Altogether, this project aims to give a nuanced and grounded vision of how psychedelics can be practically deployed to expand our sense of possibility towards desirable futures.

Sydney Schelvis, *Dancing and Displacement: Embodied reverberations of gentrification in Amsterdam*

Supervisors: Oliver Seibt, Julia Kursell

At first sight, the distribution of clubs on the city's periphery seems to be the result of the gentrification's centrifugal force. However, clubs' capability to attract large crowds to previously unpopular parts of town may itself play a role in the process of gentrification. To investigate the relation of electronic dance music to gentrification, I analyse how its diverging sounds incite dancers to move, and how these sounds' allure moves dancers around town. By mapping how the sounds of electronic dance music move through Amsterdam, I aim to reveal previously concealed patterns of distribution of cultural and financial capital.

Jingyi Wan, *Obsessed with "the West": Xeniteia and Imperialisms in Contemporary East Asian Literature, Films and Television*

Supervisors: Ansgar Mohnkern, Esther Peeren

The conceptualization of the central issue of my project as the obsession with "the West" builds on and modifies Roland Barthes's theoretical formulation of the impulse of Xeniteia as a sense of disjunction from one's surrounding reality that oscillates between "unreality" - an optimistic renunciation of reality "in the name of a fantasy" - and "dereality" - a total dis-investment in the reality in the vicinity without any expectation of substitution or compensation. It can be generally grasped as an impulse to take flight which takes the double form of an oppressive sense of ennui and an active compulsion to get away whenever a structure is taking hold (Barthes 124-128). East Asians' modern obsession with "the West", is close to the impulse of Xeniteia, as "the West" has long operated in the modern East Asian imagination as an "othered" and "othering" model-fantasy. Yet, I would like to add an element to Barthes's formulation to conceptualize this obsession: a destructive desire to smash the fantasy out of unrequited longing for becoming the fantasy. By looking at cultural imaginations (literature, films, and television), I would like to navigate, first, how East Asian subjects navigate the three modes of obsession (infatuation, ennui, and destruction); second, what embodied forms their affective navigation of different situations take; third, how these navigations are related to social relations, geopolitics and capitalist development; finally, what potentially more enabling relationality between East Asia and "the West", or among different cultures in East Asia, these cultural imaginations point to.

CONTAGION

Fourth session of the ASCA Film and Philosophy Seminar 2021-2022: Aesthetics of Contingency | Organizers: Monique Roelofs, Sudeep Dasgupta and Patricia Pisters | Coordinators: Pinar Türer and Tessa de Vet | 15.00 – 18.00, 7 April 2022 | Location: Buzzhouse (BG5)

In this seminar, we will investigate the relation of aesthetics broadly, including media practices and objects, to different perspectives on contingency. These include ongoing dynamics of coloniality and racial and anti-migrant violence; changing climate conditions; the pressures and surprises of the Covid pandemic; a growing distrust in government, healthcare, journalism and science; questions of futurity. We will focus our readings each session around four themes: lightness, uncertainty, opacity and contamination.

After having engaged with questions of beauty and lightness, opacity, uncertainty and ambiguity, in this last session we are focusing on the concept of contagion in relation to the aesthetics of contingency.

Readings:

- Darius Lerup, 'Contagion and the Ethics of Difference', *World Picture II* (summer 2016), 1-21.
- Jernej Markelj, 'Infected/Affected: Theorizing Affective Contagion with Deleuze,' *Maska*, vol. 36, no. 205-206 (December 2021), 57-69.
- Teresa Rizzo, 'Cinematic Assemblages: An Ethological Approach to Film Viewing.' In: *Deleuze and Film: A Feminist Introduction*. Continuum, 2012, 57-79.
- Extra/optional: Luciana Parisi, 'Introduction' & 'Biodigital Sex'. In: *Abstract Sex: Philosophy, Bio-Technology and the Mutation of Desire*. Continuum, 2004, 1-5 & 127-169.

If you want to join the seminar and receive the readings, please email: asca.filmphilosophy@gmail.com

GENRE AND THE HISTORICAL PRESENT

American Culture at the End of Growth

Guest Lecture by Sean O'Brien (University College Dublin) organized by Ben Moore | PCH 104 | 7 April 17:00-18:30 hrs.

At the January 2020 meeting of the American Economic Association, a "depressing consensus prevailed" amongst delegates: "the developed world is stuck with low growth...for years to come" (Greene 2020). Despite unprecedented stimulus packages, GDP growth across the advanced capitalist core had failed to recover from the Global Financial Crisis of 2008 even before the shock of the COVID-19 pandemic decimated the world market. This talk explores how post-2008 American literary texts and popular media trace the origins of this low-growth economy, or what macroeconomists call "secular stagnation," to changes in real estate and energy policies in the late twentieth century. The theory of secular (or long-term) stagnation was originally proposed by the Keynesian economist Alvin E. Hansen during the Great Depression to account for persistent

low growth and "weak and anaemic" (1939: 4) recoveries. Largely forgotten during the post-war boom, economists have recently revived this "macroeconomic heresy" (Backhouse and Boianovsky 2016) to explain the unusually sluggish performance of the global economy since the 2008 financial crisis.

The onset of secular stagnation brings into sharp relief the limits of capitalist expansion and growth – dynamics that underwrite not just capital accumulation but cultural representation, too, which has long been a site of identification and critical engagement with the developmental logics of capitalist modernity. How have writers and filmmakers sought to represent a moment in which stagnant economic growth threatens to erode the social forms that constitute our lifeworld? Approaching this question through the lens of genre, this talk examines historicist and investigative modes of narration in Thomas Pynchon's detective novel, *Inherent Vice* (2009), and J.C. Chandor's crime drama film, *A Most Violent Year* (2015). These contemporary neo-noir narratives use the conventions of crime fiction to uncover the origins of US decline. Where Pynchon mourns the golden years of American capitalism that died with the 60s counterculture, giving way to the boom-and-bust cycle of speculative development projects, Chandor links the petroleum-fueled rise of the FIRE sector at the outset of the Reagan era to the decline of the organized labour movement in the US. Bookending the transitional years of the 1970s, these narratives work as periodizing models that frame the 2008 subprime mortgage crisis and the current "energy impasse" (Szeman 2019) as products of what Robert Brenner (2006) has described as the late-twentieth-century transition from long boom to long downturn.

Sean O'Brien is a Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellow in the School of English, Drama and Film at University College Dublin. He was previously Lecturer in Modern and Contemporary Literature at Birkbeck, University of London. His research has been published in *Cultural Critique*, *Discourse*, *Science Fiction Studies*, *Crossings* and *Bloomsbury's Companion to Marx*. He is co-editor of 'Demos: We Have Never Been Democratic', a special issue of the visual culture journal *Public*. His criticism has also appeared in *GUTS Magazine*, *The Capilano Review*, *Vector* and *The Los Angeles Review of Books*. Current research projects include a monograph, *Representing Precarity: American Literature and Culture from Boom to Crisis*, a collaborative book, *Anti-Social Reproduction*, and a postdoctoral research project, "World-System Failure: Secular Stagnation and Post-2008 American Culture."

ASCA PHD DRINKS

All ASCA PhD candidates are invited to join for Drinks in De Jaren (Nieuwe Doelenstraat 20, 1012 CP Amsterdam) on 7 April 18:00 hrs.

This is a recurring event every first Thursday of the month. For the first half of 2022, the dates are: February

3rd, March 3rd, April 7th, May 5th. In June, we will meet on the second Thursday of the month: June 9th. There will be a break in July and August. First two drinks are on ASCA. Contact: Nadica Denić: n.denic@uva.nl

DIGITAL SOCIETIES AND THE IDEAL OF TRANSPARENCY

Online via Zoom PEPTalk #13 | 7 April, 12:00 hrs. | The Platform for the Ethics and Politics of Technology organises a PEPTalk on Digital societies and the ideal of transparency, featuring Lea Watzinger. The PEPTalk starts at 12:00 PM (UTC+1), and will be moderated by Eva Groen-Reijman. For the Zoom link, please send an email to pept@uva.nl.

Transparency is a key concept for digital societies in the 21st century. It is often considered as something clearly good. But is this the case? In this talk Lea Watzinger conceptualizes transparency as a complex and normatively ambivalent political ideal between openness, control and surveillance. Transparency is demanded in many contexts – and digital practices make it a particularly connectable concept on both an institutional and an individual level. Whistleblowers or activists for instance claim for transparency and openness as democratic and societal goals, which is fair enough. At the same time, popular self-tracking technologies make individuals become transparent and give up their privacy. Individual transparency thus is strongly connected to surveillance which is problematic from a democratic perspective.

Altogether, we can see that transparency is a more complex concept than we might believe and we will understand why this is the case.

Lea Watzinger is a researcher at the International Center for Ethics in the Sciences and Humanities at Tübingen University. She works on philosophical issues of privacy, digitalization, democracy, and AI. In her dissertation at Passau University she discussed transparency from the perspectives of political philosophy as well as media ethics. She studied political science, sociology, law, and philosophy in Munich, Rennes, and Quito.

Eva Groen-Reijman currently works as a postdoc on democratic theory and political microtargeting in the NWO funded interdisciplinary project *Safeguarding Democratic Values In Digital Political Practices*. She received her PhD (cum laude) for her thesis *Deliberative Political Campaigns* at ASCA.

ARTIST TALK ON THE ECOLOGY OF FORM

ASCA Political Ecologies Seminar with Marissa Lee Benedict, David Rueter, and Daniel de Paula | April 8th, 1-3pm | Location: Potgieterzaal UB | Contact j.diamanti@uva.nl to sign up

In this talk, artists Marissa Lee Benedict, David Rueter, and Daniel de Paula will present their collaborative work *deposition* (2018 - present), discussing the modes of figuration and description that constituted and reconstituted dynamics between the various actors and

elements of the work, including hosting institutions and participants, over the past three years. What follows is a brief description of the project:

On occasion of *Though it's dark, still I sing*, the 34th Bienal de São Paulo, *deposition*, a collaboration between artists Daniel de Paula, Marissa Lee Benedict, and David Rueter, was installed at Oscar Niemeyer's Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion. The work centers around the displacement, exhibition, and reprogramming of a large-scale corn trading pit, salvaged from the grain room of the Chicago Board of Trade. Reinstalled at the heart of the modernist pavilion originally constructed to house agro-industrial fairs, the seven-tiered octagonal trading pit—a discarded embodiment of financial-capital and liberal-economic ideology made obsolete by its own logics of abstraction and acceleration—is repurposed to host the exhibition's public program. Directed by contractual frameworks established by the artists, the work deposes the complex network of relations manifested in the floor, from material and immaterial transactions that externalize the weight of commodity production and circulation through speculation, to the perpetuating violent power-dynamics that shape global-space.

Marissa Lee Benedict is a visual artist, writer, and researcher. Considering subjects that range from technologies of water management to the laying of fiber optic cable, her work draws on traditions of American land art to investigate the architectures and conditions of global space. She has a master's in sculpture from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and she was awarded a Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant. Benedict has exhibited at venues such as The Arts Club of Chicago; The Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago; 68 Projects in Berlin; Contemporary Art Brussels; and the Transit Screening Lounge for The US Pavilion as part of the 2018 Venice Architecture Biennial (in collaboration with David Rueter). She has participated in numerous national and international residencies, including Artport Tel Aviv, the Center for Land Use Interpretation (CLUI) Desert Research Center, and the Van Eyck Academie (Maastricht, NL).

Daniel de Paula is a Brazilian visual artist and researcher working between São Paulo and Amsterdam. His work reflects on historical objects, forms, and materials that reveal geographical space as the reproduction of dynamics of power. de Paula was awarded the Mondriaan Funds Proven Talent Award in 2020. He holds a bachelor's in fine arts from Fundação Armando Alvares Penteado, and studied in the Human Geography masters program at the University of São Paulo. He has exhibited widely including institutions such as: The Arts Club of Chicago; Kunsthal, Gent; Museu de Arte Moderna (MASP), São Paulo; Padiglione d'Arte Contemporanea (PAC), Milan; and Museu de Arte Contemporânea (MAC), São Paulo. He was a 2018-19 artist-in-residence at the Jan Van Eyck Academie (Maastricht, NL). His work is represented by Galeria Jaqueline Martins and Francesca Minini Gallery. He has

been reviewed in *Artforum*, *Flash Art*, *Mousse Magazine*, *Folha de São Paulo*, and *Het Parool*.

David Rueter is a visual artist, programmer, and former Assistant Professor in Art and Technology at the University of Oregon. Employing video, custom electronics, software, cartography, drawing, and performance, Rueter's experiments and interventions summon the contingency of established technical regimes and their philosophical counterparts, tracing suppressed narratives and opening cracks for radical imagination. A graduate of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's graduate program in art and technology studies, Rueter has exhibited at venues such as the The Arts Club of Chicago, 68 Projects in Berlin; Contemporary Art Brussels; the Museum of Contemporary Photography (Chicago, IL); and the Transit Screening Lounge in The US Pavilion as part of the 2018 Venice Architecture Biennial (in collaboration with Marissa Lee Benedict).

JERUSALEM ONLINE

Critical Cartography for the Digital Age

Friday 8 April, 2022; 3-5pm, online | Guest lecture by Valentina Carraro (UvA) in the ASCA Cities Seminar *Unfolding the Socially-Distanced City* | Co-organized by Carolyn Birdsall, Jelke Bosma and Tânia Cardoso. For more information and registration, please contact Jelke Bosma (j.r.bosma@uva.nl).

In this seminar, I present some reflections on my past research into the politics of web-maps in/of Jerusalem, and on a more recent project looking at platform-mediated tourism in the West Bank. An important theme to these investigations is that geospatial technologies are part of the apparatus that enables Israel's colonial control over Palestine. From this perspective, there exist striking parallels between traditional cartographic representations and new forms of digital mappings. On this basis, I argue that critical cartography can make an important contribution to the scholarship on digital geography and, in particular, platform urbanism. In a context of rapid technological change, a critical cartography perspective foregrounds the continuities between historical maps and smart technologies and platforms, notably their material and discursive role in supporting colonialism. In concluding, I draw out the research's relevance to other cities and localities, during and beyond the pandemic.

Valentina Carraro is an assistant professor at the Department of Human Geography, Planning and International Development of the University of Amsterdam. Her research explores how digital technologies intervene on the built environment and on socio-political relations. Her book, *Jerusalem Online: Critical Cartography for the Digital Age*, was published in 2021 by Palgrave Macmillan. For more information see <https://vcarraro.com/>

Reading preparation:

-Carraro, Valentina. "A Critical Cartography of Sensors and Algorithms." *Jerusalem Online: Critical*

Cartography for the Digital Age. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021. 23-41.

-Sadowski, Jathan. "Cyberspace and Cityscapes: On the Emergence of Platform Urbanism." *Urban Geography* 41.3 (2020): 448-

452. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02723638.2020.1721055>.

-Tawil-Souri, Helga, and Miriyam Aouragh. "Intifada 3.0? Cyber Colonialism and Palestinian

Resistance." *The Arab Studies Journal* 22.1 (2014): 102-133. www.jstor.org/stable/24877901.

UNSOCIABLE: ANTAGONISM AND ABSTRACTION IN CONTEMPORARY FEMINIZED POETRY

Lecture and masterclass by Dr. Amy De'Ath in the *Externalities of Value Series* organized by Daniel de Zeeuw and Jan Overwijk | 8 April, 15:30 - 18:00, OMHP A0.08

Since 2017 Amy De'Ath has been a Lecturer in Contemporary Literature and Culture at King's College London. Her book manuscript, *Unsociable: Antagonism and Abstraction in Contemporary Feminized Poetry* argues that feminized poetry is not only sensitive to capitalism's processual remakings of gendered and racial difference, but to its concurrent need to make that movement appear natural. She proposes a new reading method: one that, in attending to questions of gender as social form, reveals a series of techniques and strategies that feminized poets have been using to write about what fails to be recognized as 'social' at all. This method is enabled by new readings of Marx that show how, as value moves through the world acquiring and shedding various forms—labour, commodities, money, for example—the value-form is not any particular thing but an expression of a relation between things.

<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/people/dr-amy-death>

IN-SIGHT.IT KICK-OFF EVENT

Come join us for an exciting afternoon thinking together about standards, values and citizen participation! When:

April 12th 14.00 - 17.30 + drinks

Where: NEN, Vlinderweg 6, Delft

As the pandemic restrictions are easing, we can finally get together in person again! We are very happy to announce that the (belated) kickoff event for our [IN-SIGHT project](#) is scheduled for April 12th starting at 14.00. We would like to extend a warm invitation to join us at the NEN headquarters in Delft to introducing you to our innovative interdisciplinary research group investigating how public values, IT standards and governance intersect. The program will consist of a keynote address (TBA, but some good names are in the air), an introduction by Stefania Milan and Paul Groth and a more interactive part with Niels ten Oever and Effy Xue Li and Jeroen de Vos.

[Only limited seats available, --> sign up here <<--](#)

Please note that regulations might change: though we expect to be able to host the event in-person, we are considering back-up options as we go.

We're very thankful the event will be hosted by NEN,

the largest Dutch standard setting body and our partner in the project.

Standardization describes and unifies a set of criteria, often of a technical nature, the associated practices and methods enabling the interoperability of networks and datasets. Standards mediate societal life, thus our ability to enact citizenship and enjoy human rights in the digital age. Straddling computer science, sociology, law, and media studies, the IN-SIGHT project investigates standard making in relation to democratic values and practices. It asks how the public sphere is governed today through the standardization of the digital and how to support societal values in the creation of standards. To know more visit <https://in-sight.it/>

BALANCING AND LIMITING THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY

Presentation by Laurin Berresheim (PhD ASCA/Ethics) in the Philosophy and Public Affairs Seminar | Venue: Faculty Room at the UvA Philosophy Department
Time: 16:00 – 18:00. Contact: Daniel Loick & Thomas Nys.

DRAMATIC WOMEN

Programme SPUI25, a symposium organised by dr. Laurens De Vos (UvA) supported by ASCA | 13 April 20:00-21:30.

On the occasion of the publication of his latest book, *Dramatische Vrouwen. Een geschiedenis langs iconische theaterpersonages* (Vrijdag), author Laurens De Vos organises an evening centred on the diverse aspects of women onstage. In which way are female characters in theatre plays a reflection of the position of women in society? Do characters such as Medea, Hedda Gabler or Winnie in Beckett's *Happy Days* present us with a woman who conforms to the expectations and norms of society, or who on the contrary takes up arms against a patriarchal system? If so, what does this rebellion look like? How were these women received by the spectators at the time, and what can they tell us about the position of women in our days? Can we discern an ideological development in what it means to be woman between Medea and Hedda Gabler, in the span of 2300 years?

After a presentation by **Laurens De Vos** (UvA) on fictional female characters onstage and a presentation by **Olga van Marion** (University of Leiden) on the first actresses in 17th century Amsterdam, we have a panel discussion with two actresses, a director and a reviewer.

- 1) How did the actresses **Marlies Heuer** and **Nanette Edens** experience performing Medea, Hedda Gabler or Winnie? Do they approach these characters from a female or rather a universally human perspective? Do they witness a development towards more sustaining female roles in contemporary theatre? And is gender neutrality in film and theatre awards something desirable?
- 2) In times of #metoo and women emancipation, how does director **Nina Spijkers** deal with a canon that consists largely of male leading roles and that

features women in supporting roles, or as a mere archetype?

- 3) How does reviewer **Herien Wensink** (*de Volkskrant*) see these characters? Are they representative of their time, and why do they still appeal to a contemporary audience in 2022? How have different directors in the past represented these women?

During the discussion questions from the audience will be welcomed.

CRITICAL HEALTH HUMANITIES

On Thursday April 21, 15 to 17 hrs., there will be a general meeting of the ASCA research group Critical Health Humanities, at room 5.25 at the PC Hoofthuis. The meeting consists of two informal presentations on recent projects of group members and a general discussion on selected reading materials. In the first hour, Hester Hockin-Boyers, lecturer at the School of History, Culture and Communication at Erasmus University Rotterdam, will present on media practices by female weightlifters in recovery from eating disorders; then, UvA visiting researcher Lasse Raaby Gammelgaard, associate professor at Aarhus University, will talk about his research projects on the relation between mental health, narrativity and fiction. The second hour is devoted to an open discussion on selected reading materials (to be confirmed). Interested UvA researchers are welcome to attend (but please do sign up in advance). Please email Gaston.Franssen@uva.nl to sign up or for any questions.

WE HAVE NEVER HAD SEX

Public Lecture and seminar by Dr. Oxana Timofeeva (she/her), April 21, 2022 | Seminar, 13-15h, PCH 3.08 | Public Lecture, 17-18:30h, PCH 1.04

Oxana Timofeeva is Sc.D., Professor at "Stasis" Center for Philosophy at the European University at St. Petersburg, leading researcher at Tyumen State University, member of the artistic collective "Chto Delat?" ("What is to be done?"), deputy editor of the journal "Stasis", and the author of books *Solar Politics* (Polity 2022), *How to Love a Homeland* (Kayfa ta, 2020), *History of Animals* (Bloomsbury, 2018; Jan van Eyck, 2012), *Introduction to the Erotic Philosophy of Georges Bataille* (2009), and other writings.

ECOCENTRIC RECIPROCITIES: VALUING MORE-THAN-HUMAN LANDSCAPES

Workshop and Conference hosted by ASCA Political Ecologies | April 25-26, 2022 (location: 25th @ Universiteitstheater 3.01 | 26th @ Doelenzaal, University Library UB) | To attend contact Jeff Diamanti.

The ASCA Political Ecologies seminar welcomes a two-day conference on "Ecocentric Reciprocities." Participants draw on Indigenous ontologies, new materialism, and ecocentric epistemologies to rethink more-than-human landscapes as entities with intrinsic value and rights, kin with reciprocal relations with local communities, and political leaders of local movements

for collective ethics and environmental justice. We challenge instrumentalist perspectives whereby other-than-human lives and non-living earth features are valued solely because they serve the needs and desires of humans. We critique the dehumanization of the earth provoked by distinctions between life/nonlife, culture/nature, normalized by neoliberal capitalist extractivism and settler colonialism, which promote human exceptionalism and environmental devastation. Using interdisciplinary and intersectional methods and theory, we restore the integrity of subjectivity, corporeality, territoriality, and rights of the earth and those who engage its intrinsic value by drawing on political ecology, earth jurisprudence, environmental humanities, and critical Indigenous studies. The workshop lays the groundwork for an edited volume which will provide an antidote to the colonial Anthropocene and biopolitics by centering on ecocentric reciprocities.

Speakers include:

- Mihnea Tanasescu // Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB)
- Daphina Misiedjan // International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) of Erasmus University Rotterdam.
- Stine Kroijer // University of Copenhagen
- Cymene Howe // Rice University
- Rutgerd Boelens // University of Wageningen
- Ana Mariella Bacigalupo // NIAS
- Mareike Winchell // University of Chicago
- Bruce Mannheim // University of Michigan
- Guillermo Salas // Universidad Católica del Perú
- Jeff Diamanti // University of Amsterdam
- Gerard Verschoor // Wageningen University

WALKING AS RESEARCH PRACTICE

Session 1 (Monday 25 April 2022, 2hrs meeting, 17:00 – 19:00 seminar) | Guest Lecture – Dr Christian Ernsten
If you would like to join the research group network please contact Tânia, t.a.cardoso@uva.nl.

The research group '[Walking as Research Practice](#)' explores walking practices in a range of disciplines and across discipline boundaries.

Dr Christian Ernsten is Assistant Professor in Heritage Studies in the Department of History of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Maastricht University. He is affiliated with the Maastricht Centre for Arts and Culture, Conservation, and Heritage (MACCH). He regularly conducts walking seminars and explores walking as an embodied methodology in relation to post-colonial heritage.

SOUND ARCHIVING AND CURATION AS COLONIAL, ANTI-COLONIAL AND POSTCOLONIAL PRACTICES

At the next Vossius Seminar Barbara Titus and Rui Vilela will present their research, they both touch on practices of sound archiving and curation as colonial, anti-colonial and postcolonial endeavours. Barbara Titus will give the talk "Sounding Out the Jaap Kunst Collection" and Rui Vilela

"Bissau Resending: The Western Humanist Listens" | 25 April 4 – 6 pm. | Doelenzaal, University Library.

The session covers two individually conceived presentations that both touch on practices of sound archiving and curation as colonial, anti-colonial and postcolonial endeavours. The papers, given by Barbara Titus and Rui Vilela, cover divergent locations (Indonesia and Guinea-Bissau) in overlapping eras (the mid-twentieth century) when political decolonisation in many parts of the world also profoundly affected humanities scholarship. With a specific focus on sound and listening, both papers aim to probe what we do today – as scholars, artists, curators and cultural diplomats – with the sonic, visual and textual archived legacies that remain foundational to current scholarly practices, methods and approaches. The session will be rounded off by a commentary from Remco Raben.

Barbara Titus (Associate Professor of Cultural Musicology, UvA)

Sounding Out the Jaap Kunst Collection

With the Jaap Kunst Collection, the University of Amsterdam houses one of the foundational ethnomusicological collections of the world. Jaap Kunst (1891-1960) recorded a wealth of Indonesian musics between 1919 and 1934. In the 1950s, he also coined the notion of an "ethno-musicology" that was adopted in the entire Anglophone academic world as a articulated and established scholarly discipline. The Collection – more than 300 sound items (digitised wax cylinders), ca. 10,000 letters (40,000 pages) of (scholarly) correspondence, photographs of numerous music, dance and theatre practices, music transcriptions and publication manuscripts – reflects the "salvage ethnology" that featured early ethnomusicological practice: capture the music before it gets extinct. In Kunst's time, his approach interrogated the supremacist aesthetic values of comparative musicology that qualified European music as the unquestioned pinnacle of human civilisation. At the same time, his methods of recording and archiving vindicated the societal organisation of the Dutch East Indies colonial empire in his notion of an abstracted static and discrete "ethnos", assuming strict separations between recordist and recorded.

Thus, we can regard his Collection as an emblematic colonial sound archive that shows the complexities of colonial relationships. In this paper I propose to listen to, rather than read, these colonial relationships, not only in Kunst's archived sound material, but also between the lines of his written publications. I do this by elaborating on a research project that I coordinate with meLê yamomo, entitled *Decolonizing Southeast Asian Sound Archives* (DeCoSEAS). This project aims to explore the critical and hermeneutic agency of listening – to archived voices, to multiple voices at once, and to those voices that did not make it into historiographies, often written in colonial languages by a colonial elite.

Rui Vilela (ASCA PhD candidate)

Bissau Resending: The Western Humanist Listens

In 1950, Aimé Césaire excoriated the western humanist in a pivotal essay of anticolonial literature: *Discourse on Colonialism*. Three decades later, Edward Said examines the historical transfer of theories and ideas in *Travelling Theory*: an originally liberating theory degrades from involved militancy to politically committed scholarship, and loses immediate force. Between these essays' publishing dates, the independence struggles against European colonial rule led to the decolonisation of Africa. In Guinea-Bissau, the Liberation Movement (1963-1974) was led by the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde. Its broadcaster – Rádio Libertação – bequeathed a sound archive constituted amidst processes of nation building, against the backdrop of a profound social, political, and economic restructuring. In the manner of Said's borrowed theories, anticolonial texts as those by Amílcar Cabral, the Cape Verdean-born party's general secretary, and leader of the Bissau-Guinean Liberation Movement, have been read as foundational to postcolonial studies and decoloniality. In this sense, it can be said that theories and practices that came to constitute the anticolonial archive laid the groundwork for radical changes in western humanities. Yet, Césaire forecasts Europe's last attempt to prevent its own demise by taking up the role of cultural and political galvaniser at its fringes. Re-reading these essays today complicates ongoing decolonial endeavours or, in Said's words, when travelling theories gain a status of authority, they can betray critical consciousness. The Bissau-Guinean sound archive points to networked broadcasting practices and listening routines as political enterprises and, thus, it contrasts with centralising northern histories of sound archiving. Although a lettered listening heeds to the contending forces capable of decolonising western humanities, the anticolonial sound archive remains chiefly a profuse source of sonic agency.

SABOTAGE AND FLOW

ASCA Political Ecologies Seminar Public Lecture and Masterclass // April 29th | Masterclass: 10-12pm (Fred Carter) Lecture: 3-5pm (Alexandra Campbell) Dr Alexandra Campbell, 'Disrupting Flow: Infrastructure, Sabotage and Hydraulic Power' | Belle van Zuylen, UB Singel 425

Drawing on recent formulations of sabotage as a structural feature of capitalist organisations of power (Barney 2016; Diamanti & Simpson 2018), this talk examines the formal capacities of 'flow' and 'friction' as central to capitalism's internal logics. The energetic flows of capitalism – in which social metabolisms are channelled towards the accumulation of surplus value – are ensured by a hydraulic imaginary through which material forms of turbulence and friction are tamed according to an infrastructural impetus to 'secure flow' (Bridge 2018). If this ideology of flow depends on evacuating the material and discursive conditions for its interruption or refusal, then to what extent does reading flows in relation to sabotage logics expose the

circulation of energy and capital as vulnerable to disruption? By configuring hydraulic infrastructure as a 'medium of political action' (Barney 2016), this paper reads modes of withdrawal, disruption, and blockage as aesthetically and politically generative acts that work to redirect and redistribute the organisation of both power and meaning.

In tandem with Dr Campbell's talk, ASCA guest researcher Fred Carter will lead a masterclass on poetics and energy humanities, exploring the kinetics and materiality of linguistic form through the intersection of Marxist-feminist poetics, militant resistance to nuclear infrastructures, and materialist critiques of the 'work/energy' crisis in the late 1970s.

Readings

Brent Ryan Bellamy, Michael O'Driscoll, & Mark Simpson. 'Toward a Theory of Resource Aesthetics,' (2016). (16 pages, double-spaced)

Wendy Mulford. 'Notes on Writing: A Marxist-Feminist Viewpoint.' 1979. *On Gender and Writing*, (1983).

Midnight Notes Collective, 'No Future Notes: The Work/Energy Crisis & the Anti-Nuclear Movement,' (1979). (~9,000 words)

Liliane Lijn, 'Get Rid of Government Time,' (1962).

Letraset on painted metal oil drum, plastic, motor.

Words from a poem by Nazli Nour. (art object, 3 p.

Suggested:

Samuel Solomon. 'Forms of Reproduction in the Early Work of Wendy Mulford.' *Lyric Pedagogy and Marxist-Feminism: Social Reproduction and the Institutions of Poetry*, (2019).

Alexandra Campbell is Lecturer in English Literature at the University of Glasgow, specialising in poetry and environment. Her current research examines issues of energy, water, and marine justice as they manifest within contemporary poetry. Further to her work on hydro-imaginaries, she is increasingly fascinated by the emergent fields of Infrastructure Studies and Critical Future Studies, exploring the ways in which the poetics of infrastructure promise or prohibit certain ideas of the future. She has published articles on critical ocean studies, marine energy, and hydroculture and is currently working with Fred Carter on a new area of research that examines the tactics and terrains of insurgent ecologies. She is currently the co-editor of the international journal *Green Letters: Studies in Ecocriticism*.

Fred Carter currently holds a position as Saltire Emerging Researcher at the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis. He recently completed a doctoral thesis on linguistically innovative poetry, materialism, and critiques of the Anthropocene at the University of Edinburgh, where he co-convenes the Edinburgh Environmental Humanities Network. His postdoctoral research is situated at the intersection of Marxist literary criticism and environmental humanities, examining the emergence of innovative poetic forms against intersecting crises of energy, capital, and social reproduction after 1973. He is currently co-editing a

special issue of *Green Letters* on militant ecologies and collaborating with Alexandra Campbell on a project interrogating the poetics and terrains of struggle.

MIEKE BAL ON IMAGE THINKING

29 April | 10:00-12:00 hrs.

Mieke Bal will be in conversation with bachelor students from the department of art history, University of Copenhagen, on her new book *Image Thinking* – and with you, if you attend the meeting.

The students are visiting Amsterdam as part of their second-year course in “Art History 1400-1800” and “Introduction to Theory and Methodology”, led by Professor Maria Fabricius Hansen and part-time lecturer, curator at the SMK, Copenhagen (and a former PhD at ASCA) Henrik Holm. We would be happy to meet you too, and hear about your work at ASCA. It is our hope that the visit will bring the students an opportunity to sense a bit of the international, academic atmosphere of the wonderful place, and perhaps some of them will be affiliated to ASCA one day?

SUMMER SCHOOL: THE POLITICS OF DISABLEMENT

We would like to invite you to the Summer School The Politics of Disablement, which will take place on August 25 and 26, 2022. Organized by Alice Schippers, Sander Hilberink, Andries Hiskes | Venue: Universiteit voor Humanistiek, Utrecht

As the title indicates, in this summer school we will explore the relationship between disability and politics, through three topics: Citizenship, (New) Eugenics and Capacity and Representation. During this summer school we will work together in three half-days on and reflect on these themes on the basis of the research we do. In the fourth half of the second day, we will investigate the common threads and differences between these themes, with the aim of jointly arriving at new questions about the relationship between disability and politics for future research.

This summer school is aimed at (research) master's and PhD students, but is also open to other researchers who are interested in these subjects. There is room to work with a variety of formats: you can present a (research) paper, but we also welcome other formats like roundtables, workshops and so on. Mail your abstract, idea, or pitch to before April 5, 2022 to: angela.hanse@disabilitystudies.nl

SUMMER SCHOOL: THE ECOLOGICAL IMPERATIVE

Past and Contemporary Perspectives and Practices

Call for Applications Deadline: 24 April 2022 Inter- and Transdisciplinary International Summer School 2022 When: 12–16 September 2022 Where: Hotel Schloss Wartegg, Bodensee (Switzerland) Costs: 400 Swiss francs (travel and accommodation [double room] covered by organizer). | www.ecological-imperative.ch

The Summer School takes the notion of an “ecological imperative” of cultural products as its starting point. We ask how specific formats of intermedial cultural

production work to engender an ethical and political stance towards human resource management. A general ecological paradigm is part of a growing awareness of the image politics of climate change and the role of cultural sustainability, examined according to the principles of contemporary eco-aesthetics, literatures and new documentary ecologies, but also as revisions of premodern ecological potentials.

Recent approaches to ecological temporalities and spatialization have blurred the boundaries between human and non-human life worlds as well as material, technological, socio-cultural, local/global, literary, visual, auditive and virtual spheres. An intermedial blurring of boundaries between the material and conceptual opens up time and space for an “ecological imperative”, a promising heuristic device.

In face of an escalating environmental crisis, ecological imperatives have transformed the ways we perceive human interaction with the non-human environment and have nudged all disciplines towards an Environmental Humanities. A humanities-based ecological mode of thinking offers a complicating, connecting, vibrant, processual and open way to make sense of the world, undermining an all too monolithic conception of systems, structures, or fields.

And, by starting from a point of entanglement, we recognize that we researchers do not preexist our relationships with our research objects and subjects, colleagues or institutions. Drawing attention to past and present ecological relationships might help us position our research and its objects and subjects, as well as ourselves as researchers, and thus invite us to take an ethical and political stance in a time of planetary crisis. We are in need of critical (re)readings, new self-definitions, and inter- and transdisciplinary dialogue – in short, what an Environmental Humanities seeks to kindle.

The 2022 Summer School discusses present, past and future ecologies, both as research topics and as modes of thinking from historical, sociological, cultural, anthropological, philosophical, literary, and artistic perspectives. It reflects, particularly, on the temporalities and spatialization of material and media within which “ecological imperative(s)” are already inscribed.

JOIN AN NWO COMMITTEE

NWO is always looking for people to sit on the selection committees for its grant schemes. It can be useful to be on one of these committees as it gives insight into how the selection process works and how proposals are evaluated by researchers from different disciplines. For more information (in Dutch), see:

<https://www.nwo.nl/lid-woorden-van-een-beoordelingscommissie-jury>