

Nieuwsbrief 290 December 2025

Dissertation Defense: Daan Roovers	1
Dissertation Defense: Linda Kopitz	1
ASCA Summit Postponed	2
We have decided to postpone the previously announced ASCA Summit and drinks scheduled for December 2 to next semester. A new date will be announced at a later moment. In the meantime, we wish you all the best for the upcoming December season.	2
New ASCA Reading Group Carceral Studies Amsterdam	2
The Queerness of Babies: A Queer Theory of Drives?	2
Capitalism 2.0: Political Economy in Contemporary Critical Theory	3
ASCA Theory Seminar - Rethinking Consumption	3
ASCA Writing Café	3
All Computers Are Broken	4
Jane Austen in the World at 250	4
Algorithmic Management and Workplace Power Dynamics	4
Stories from Tomorrow: Sinophone Imaginations of Resilient Futures	5
Climate Imaginaries: performing thinking with land and weather	5
Theory of Water	6
Maroon Cosmopolitics	6
Showerheads, Coffee Machines and the Everyday Political Geographies of the Green Backlash	8
Digital Simulation of Work	8
Hands-on Zotero Tutorial	8
Visualizing Film History	9
Seeing Like a Platform	9
Supply Chain Criticism seminar	10
Screening: Muman Minggil	10
"What of the Future?": Affect, Media, and the Desire for Foreknowledge	10
Influencer Creep	11
Imagination, Territory and Colonialism	11
Critical AI seminar series: Vector Media	12
Why Stereotypes Persist: Causal Generalizations and Their Resistance to Counterexamples	12
Call for Papers: The Future of Film Programming	12
Call for Papers: Connecting Trans and Critical Animal Studies in an Age of Authoritarianism	13
Call for Papers: Rethinking Colonial Dynamics in the Balkans and Post-Socialist Societies	13
Call for Papers: (OUTER) SPACE(S)	14
Call for Papers: Digital Subjectivities	15
Call for Papers: Feedback Loop	15
Call for Applications: Black Feminist Summer School	16
ICI Fellowships 2026-28 - AutoReduction	16

DISSERTATION DEFENSE: DAAN ROOVERS

Critical Publicity and its Epistemic Challenges; A Philosophical Approach to Public Opinion Formation in a Post-Digital Public Sphere | Supervisors: Yolande Jansen, Markus Stauff | Wednesday 3 December 2025, 14:00 hrs. | Aula Universiteit van Amsterdam.

In her dissertation, Roovers explores the epistemic challenges to public opinion formation in an era where social media and digital platforms dominate public debate. Are the classic normative requirements of the *critical public sphere* - as conceived by thinkers like Habermas in the 1960s - still applicable in today's fragmented online world, or do they need to be rethought?



Roovers introduces the concept of *throughput legitimacy*: what matters is not only who participates (*input*) or the outcomes of public debate (*output*), but above all *how* public discussions unfold: the machinery of publicity. How is the confrontation between different viewpoints organised? How are information and expertise processed in the debate? And how is the problem definition shaped?

Through three examples - the role of influencers during the COVID-19 pandemic, activist movements around climate change, and investigative journalism networks such as Bellingcat - Roovers shows how new forms of publicity, when open, critical, and transparent, can strengthen a resilient, inclusive, and reflective public sphere.

DISSERTATION DEFENSE: LINDA KOPITZ



Atmosphere/Amsterdam: Architectural Media and the Urban (Re)imagination of Nature | Supervisors: Markus Stauff, Maryn Wilkinson, 5 December 2025, Aula, 14.00 hrs

In the summer of 2020, the city of Amsterdam published the Amsterdam Green Infrastructure Vision 2050: A Liveable City for People, Plants, and Animals as part of the larger (re)positioning of Amsterdam as a 'sustainable' city. Conceptualizing the term architectural media, this dissertation positions mediations of architecture as a key site of place-making and meaning-making, particularly in processes of urban transformation. From drawings and sketches of initial designs via virtual renderings and animations to photographs and videos to the construction itself, architecture can be understood as an inherently mediated process – and yet, these media are rarely approached as a site of negotiation. In the context of the 'sustainable' city, this dissertation argues, architectural media are (re)imagining urban nature(s), (re)constructing urban future(s) and (re)producing urban atmosphere(s). The individual chapters move through the architectural process to underline how becoming 'sustainable' and making a 'sustainable' city are entangled processes of imagination and realization.

ASCA SUMMIT POSTPONED

We have decided to postpone the previously announced ASCA Summit and drinks scheduled for December 2 to next semester. A new date will be announced at a later moment. In the meantime, we wish you all the best for the upcoming December season.

NEW ASCA READING GROUP CARCERAL STUDIES AMSTERDAM

This research group studies the cultural situatedness and (re)production of carceral settings. Referring to settings of confinement, we take the carceral to be a dominant result (both an effect and an affect) of contemporary surveillance and abandonment regimes and the group seeks to develop interdisciplinary methods aimed at deconstructing contemporary carceral structures.

The concept of the carceral is intended to critically study five interrelated areas of contemporary experience:

- material sites and spaces of incarceration and confinement (colonially rooted architectures of confinement like prisons, reform schools, detention centers, camps);
- the cultural objects emanating from or featuring these settings (ranging from literature, philosophy, political discourse, film, popular culture, photography, memoirs and art installations);
- feelings and experiences resulting from confinement proper but also from entrapment, that is, the lack of mobility that results from being subjected to social sorting, visibility that translates into risk in everyday life and the reduced access to services or care

structures under current regimes of neoliberal abandonment;

- the connective tissue of punitivity that subfuses chains of disciplinary mechanisms, (scientific) discourses and (surveillance) technologies (data collection, ID documentation) in contexts of border control and deportation, but also (mental) health care settings or plantation logics;
- the cultural impact of artistic and metaphoric strategies referring to the prison or prisonlike situations that help (for better and worse) to spread and/or deconstruct rusted notions of carceral thinking (in culture, policy, reformist and abolitionist discourses).

We are a Humanities-oriented research group building on the interdisciplinary study of prisons, border control and surveillance seeking to gain insight into carcerality as a contemporary cultural phenomenon requiring a Humanities based approach. We focus on how aesthetics give insight into and deconstruct carceral meanings, stereotypes, mechanisms and assumptions that circulate socially. We are open to both historical and contemporary analysis and interested in comparative approaches across periods, geographical contexts and cultures. We enthusiastically extend the warmest possible invitation to scholars from any discipline.

We aim to meet 4 to 6 times a year to discuss recent developments in academic literature pertaining to the carceral, host guest speakers, prepare conference participation or workshop writing by our members. Due to the international nature of our group, all our meetings are either hybrid or online.

If you'd like to join, please drop a line to Hanneke Stuit: h.h.stuit@uva.nl.

THE QUEERNESS OF BABIES: A QUEER THEORY OF DRIVES?

panel + workshop organized by the Queer Analysis research group with psychoanalyst Marie Couvert | Tuesday, Dec. 2, 2025: 15h15-19:00 | University of Amsterdam, Room: REC A2.10

In light of the Special Issue on The Queerness of Babies of the *Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society* journal, co-edited by Misha Kavka and Diego Smerene, the Queer Analysis research group welcomes psychoanalyst Marie Couvert, one of the contributors to the Special Issue and a leading theorist on the clinic of babies, for a workshop on the theory of drives (from Freud to Lacan and beyond). The workshop will be preceded by a panel with Couvert, Kavka, Smerene, and respondent Samuel Ludmila Feline Constantin (PhD candidate on the Trans-Sexualities & Psychoanalysis project at the UvA), where we will stage an encounter of Queer

Theory and Trans Theory with Psychoanalysis through the figure of the baby.

Suggested Readings (required for students seeking credit)

Marie Couvert, "The Baby and The Drive in the Face of Queer Theory"

Marie Couvert, Chapter 2: "The Theory of Drives: A Lacanian Reading of the Concept of Drive" in *The Baby and the Drives*

Diego Semerene, "Travesti Baby"

Sigmund Freud, "The Instincts and Their Vicissitudes" (1915), Standard Edition 14, pp. 118-130.

https://web.english.upenn.edu/~cavitch/pdf-library/Freud_Instincts.pdf

Sigmund Freud, "Note on the Child" published in *Other Writings*

<https://lacancircle.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Note-on-the-Child.pdf>

This is an in-person event. No streaming and no recording. To receive the readings that aren't linked please email d.semerene@uva.nl

CAPITALISM 2.0: POLITICAL ECONOMY IN CONTEMPORARY CRITICAL THEORY

Reading Group organized by Marc Farrant, Ben Moore and Steyn Berghs | third session 2 December 2025, UB D 2.08 (Ruyszaal).

Since the 2008 financial crash there has been a veritable explosion of publishing in the area of political economy, with writers from various disciplinary backgrounds contributing to an ongoing discourse that seeks to reframe our present beyond the capitalist realism of a neoliberal age; an age defined by a "disenchantment of the political by the economic". With the second Trump victory in 2024, the post-crash zombified murmuring of progressive neoliberalism has finally ceased. In this new multi-polar, populist and authoritarian world, what comes after neoliberal capitalism? It has perhaps never been more central to the work of critique to question rentier and extractivist forms of economic exploitation, not least since economist thinking threatens the university itself as an institution, but also that such thinking has never been more central to the ethnonationalist projects that are a hallmark of the postliberal era of the 2020s. This group will explore contemporary theoretical takes on this question, investigating the various labels posed as alternatives for refiguring the present, some of which include: Technofeudalism, Neofeudalism, Cybernetic Capitalism, Postcapitalism, Vulture Capitalism, Too Late Capitalism, Technocapitalism, New Capitalism, Platform Capitalism. This group will also explore classical texts to open up the background to these recent regroupings and reformulations, for example Marx, but

also the work of neoclassical economists and self-styled neoliberals (Hayek, Friedman).

To obtain the readings and join the mailing list, please write to b.p.moore@uva.nl and m.w.farrant@uva.nl.

ASCA THEORY SEMINAR - RETHINKING CONSUMPTION

Third session of the ASCA Theory Seminar - What's at Stake? The Importance of Research with guest participant Tommy Tse on Rethinking Consumption. The session will be organized and chaired by Carina Nasser. | December 3rd, 15:00-17:30 hrs., OMHP room C117.

- Baudrillard, Jean. *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures*. London: Sage, 1998. First published in French, 1970. Chapter 5, "Towards a Theory of Consumption." <https://sk.sagepub.com/book/mono/the-consumer-society-myths-and-structures-revised-edition/toc>
- Ritzer, George. *Enchanting a Disenchanted World: Continuity and Change in the Cathedrals of Consumption*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2009. Chapter 3, "Social Theory and the New Means of Consumption." <https://sk.sagepub.com/book/mono/enchanting-a-disenchanted-world-3e/chpt/social-theory-the-new-means-consumption>
- Tse, Tommy, and Johanna von Pezold. "Memories Reminisced, Reconciled, Renewed: Hong Kong Male Consumers' Wardrobes and Their Search for a Congruent Self." *Journal of Consumer Culture* 23, no. 4 (2023): 841–859. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14695405221149098>
- Tse, Tommy, Yin Zhang, and Nanne van Noord. "China as Data Coloniser? Rethinking Cultural Production, Cultural Mediation, and Consumer Agency on Kenyan and Chinese E-Commerce Platforms." *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13678779241292077>

ASCA WRITING CAFÉ

You are all invited to join the ASCA Writing Café, every Wednesday from 9:00-17:00 hrs. An informal and supportive space dedicated to advancing your dissertation progress. Work alongside fellow PhD and postdoc researchers, share insights, and pursue your writing goals in a focused and friendly environment. | Organized by Shekoufeh Behbehani, Luc Marraffa, and Joe van der Eerden. | All sessions will take place in PCH.

03/12: 09.00-13.00 - room 5.37, 13.00-17.00 - room 0.05
 10/12 : 9.00-17.00 - room 6.21
 17/12: 9.00-17.00 - room 1.14

ALL COMPUTERS ARE BROKEN

Rethinking the Technosphere along the Lines of Repair and Maintenance Work | The UvA Green Office's Critical Sustainabilities Lecture Series Green Office x Soapbox lecture by Juli Laczko, Wednesday December 3rd @ 15:30, PCH 1.05

This presentation presents broken world thinking, the connecting tissue of the different themes Laczkó has been artistically working with lately.

The world is always breaking; it's in its nature to break. Broken world thinking asserts that breakdown, dissolution, and change, rather than innovation, development, or design as conventionally practiced and thought about are the key themes and problems facing new media and technology scholarship today. "All Computers Are Broken" is an invitation to think about crisis and technological objects from this unusual perspective.

Laczko will also present her newest work, *Solar Crawlers*, little off-grid robots made of scavenged electronics and wood: <https://laczkojuli.net/solar-crawlers/>.

Juli Laczkó is an intermedia artist engaged with critical research in visual arts and digital culture. She holds a practice-based doctoral degree from the Hungarian University of Fine Arts for her research on visual art and hacker culture. A monograph based on her doctoral dissertation titled *The Art of Hacking: Strategic Interactions between Hacker Culture and Visual Arts* was published in 2021. Her practice is informed by critical making, social divides, anti-patriarchal, feminist and post-Anthropocentric perspectives, articulating intermediality in space. Works of her hybrid practice of the material and the digital appeared internationally from Leipzig, Vienna, Budapest, Zagreb, Bratislava to Istanbul and the Nevada Desert in collective- and solo exhibitions. She lives in Amsterdam and teaches at the Image and Media Technology program at the Hogeschool voor de Kunsten Utrecht. (2024)

JANE AUSTEN IN THE WORLD AT 250

Online symposium, 4 December 2025, 14:00 -17:30 | Organized by Barnita Bagchi b.bagchi@uva.nl and Rosalind Powell r.powell@uva.nl. [Register here](#)

As we celebrate the 250th birth anniversary of Jane Austen on 16 December this year, this online symposium brings together speakers from India, the Netherlands, the UK, and the USA to consider what it means to read and respond to Austen's works in the twenty-first century and as part of the past, present, and future of world literatures in English. Papers and a closing roundtable discussion will address Austen and the eighteenth-century novel, adaptations of her work in different medial and geographical contexts, Austen

in the classroom, the postcolonial Austen, Austen and family dynamics, and Austen and sexuality.

Programme

14:00 Dr Caroline Gonda (St Catharine's College, University of Cambridge): *Strangers at Home: Austen's Uncomfortable Families*

Prof. Jodi Wyatt (Xavier University, Cincinnati): *Jane Austen and the Female Quixote*

15:15 Dr Sarottama Majumdar (Sarsuna College, University of Calcutta): *"Those Pricey Thakur Girls": Re-imagining Pride and Prejudice in Subcontinental Asia Today*

Dr Roselinde Supheert (Utrecht University): *How to Deal with Mr Darcy Going Swimming and Other Instances of Creative License*

16:30 Roundtable: *Austen Now*

Dr Caroline Gonda, Professor Jodi Wyatt, Dr Sarottama Majumdar, Dr Roselinde Supheert, Prof. Barnita Bagchi, and Dr Ben Moore.

ALGORITHMIC MANAGEMENT AND WORKPLACE POWER DYNAMICS

On Thursday 4th of December, the RPA Global Digital Cultures will be organising a Masterclass open to ReMa students, PhD candidates, and academic staff with Dr. Tiago Alexandre Ferraz Viera (European University Institute). Deadline for applications is 3 December, 5pm. | 4 December 2025, 15:00 -17:00, [BG 1](#) Room 0.13

AI is transforming the world and, with it, its underlying power dynamics. The world of work is no exception. Rather than the often-hyped prospect of large-scale job destruction, one of the most pervasive transformations unfolds through the deployment of algorithmic management tools, that is, AI-powered digital systems that mediate, monitor, and evaluate labour. In this Masterclass, Tiago Vieira will draw on his own empirical research to illuminate the complex and sometimes contradictory ways in which algorithmic management is reshaping managerial control and the lived experience of workers. Spanning contexts from food delivery platforms to conventional organisational settings, Vieira examines how algorithmic systems reconfigure the practices of surveillance, discipline, and evaluation, often deepening asymmetries of power between employers and workers. Yet this process is not merely coercive. By embedding control within data-driven metrics, gamified interfaces, and performance feedback loops, algorithmic management fosters new forms of normative control, self-discipline and intensification, and even self-exploitation. Workers increasingly internalise the imperatives of efficiency and optimisation, aligning their conduct with opaque algorithmic logics that both constrain and enable agency. By analysing these dynamics, the Masterclass invites participants to reconsider long-standing debates

about control, resistance, and consent in the increasingly algorithmic workplace. It argues that algorithmic management represents not only a technological innovation but also a profound reconfiguration of managerial power and the moral economy of work in the age of AI, one that even the most pro-worker laws have been unable to deter.

For more information and to register contact: Noelle Richardson at gdc@uva.nl

STORIES FROM TOMORROW: SINOPHONE

IMAGINATIONS OF RESILIENT FUTURES

Organizers: Jori Snels, Jeroen de Kloet, Emily Shin-Jie Lee, Jiyoung Kim When: 4 December 2025, 15:00-19:00 | Where: Framer Framed, Oranje-Vrijstaatkade 71, Amsterdam | Contact info organizers (for registration for the event): j.li9@uva.nl | Registration deadline: 25 November

What futures are left for us in times of multiple crises? In a time when the future is slowly cancelled, as Mark Fisher told us, is there any hope beyond capitalist realism? What futures can we imagine if we look beyond the European perspective? With China as a new global power, how does it imagine the future? Aside from official imaginations of the so-called China Dream, art and culture prove an important terrain to imagine different futures. The increased popularity of science fiction, such as *the Three-Body Problem*, as well as the proliferation of digital art in which alternative futures are imagined, attest to this. But beyond mainland China, Sinophone works of video art also imagine different futures and probe their intersections with pasts and presents. What can we learn from the futures they produce? Do they point at a more resilient, more sustainable, more inclusive future? This workshop screens key works of Sinophone video art by artists Li Yi-Fan, aaajiao, Fei Yining, He Zike, and Chen Yin-Ju, which all imagine different futures. The screenings are accompanied by Q&As with artists aaajiao and Li Yi-Fan, and introductions by dr. Evelyn Wan and dr. Jori Snels.

The workshop is organised in collaboration with the ERC project “Resilient Cultures – Music, Art, and Cinema in Mainland China and Hong Kong” (RESCUE, ERC grant agreement no. 101097553.), Framer Framed, the Netherlands Institute for Cultural Analysis (NICA) and the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA).

Event Programme

15:00 PM – 15:15 PM Opening by Jori Snels.

15:15 PM – 16:15 PM

Short film screenings with introductions by dr. Evelyn Wan

Fei Yining, *The Moonshore II*, 2023 (13 min.)

He Zike, *Random Access*, 2023 (15 min.)

Chen Yin-Ju, *Somewhere Beyond Right and Wrong, There Is a Garden. I Will Meet you There*, 2023 (16 min.)

16:15 PM – 16:45 PM Break

16:45 PM – 17:45 PM

Screening and Q&A with Li Yi-Fan.

Li Yi-Fan, *howdoyouturnthison*, 2021 (18 min.)

17:45 PM – 18:00 PM Break.

18:00 PM – 19:00 PM

Screening and Q&A with aaajiao.

aaajiao, *Minority Algorithm*, 2023-2024 (18 min.)

[Registration](#)

CLIMATE IMAGINARIES: PERFORMING THINKING WITH LAND AND WEATHER

You are warmly invited to the second season of the Climate Imaginaries seminar series co-curated by AHK artist-in-residence Agat Sharma together with Laura Cull Ó Maoilearca (ASCA). Climate Imaginaries seminar II: Thursday 4th December, 4-6pm, White Studio 2.09, DAS, Overhoeksplein 2 (2nd floor). With Leanne Betasamosake Simpson on storytelling, land and song. [Registration](#)

The series is informed by and runs alongside the theatre-based research project *Staging Extreme Weather* which Agat is leading at the Academy of Theatre & Dance (ATD) from October-January 2026 in which several UvA students are also involved. The seminars are an ongoing initiative of Laura’s special chair which aims to strengthen connections and exchange between AHK and UvA particularly on the topic of arts and climate justice. Participants in the seminars are also invited to join a public sharing of the practical research in January (see details below).

Leanne Betasamosake Simpson is a renowned Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg musician, writer and academic, who has been widely recognized as one of the most compelling Indigenous voices of her generation. Her work breaks open the boundaries between story and song—bringing audiences into a rich and layered world of sound, light, and sovereign creativity.

Working for two decades as an independent scholar using Nishnaabeg intellectual practices, Leanne has lectured and taught extensively at universities across Canada, the United States, Australia, New Zealand and Europe and has over twenty years’ experience with Indigenous land based education. She holds a PhD from the University of Manitoba and is a member of Alderville First Nation.

Leanne is the author of eight books, including *A Short History of the Blockade* and the novel *Noopiming: The Cure for White Ladies* which was short listed for the Governor General’s Literary Award for fiction and the Dublin Literary Prize. Her collaboration with Robyn Maynard, *Rehearsals for Living* is a National Best Seller and was short listed for the Governor General’s Literary Award for non-fiction. Leanne is also a musician. Her

latest release *Theory of Ice* was named to the Polaris Prize short list, and she is the 2021 winner of the Prism Prize's Willie Dunn Award. Leanne's new work, *Theory of Water* was short-listed for the Hilary Weston Writers' Trust Prize for non-fiction.

THEORY OF WATER

RPA Decolonial Futures Workshop & Roundtable | Leanne Betasamosake Simpson. On Friday 5th December (15:30-17:30) Leanne Betasamosake Simpson will engage in conversation on her recent book *Theory of Water* (2025) with UvA scholars John Taukave, Nawal Mustafa, and Said Ortega Rosales followed by a discussion with the workshop participants. | 5 December 2025, 15:30 -17:30 | Humanities Labs | F0.01 [Bushuis/Oost-Indisch Huis](#)

Following her keynote at the [RPA Decolonial Futures Annual Lecture 2025](#), in this roundtable and workshop, Leanne Betasamosake Simpson will engage in conversation on her recent book *Theory of Water* (2025) with UvA scholars John Taukave, Nawal Mustafa, and Said Ortega Rosales and workshop participants. *Theory of Water* is a genre-bending exploration of that most elemental force- water- through Indigenous storytelling, personal memory, and the work of influential artists and writers. For many years, Simpson took solace in skiing- in all kinds of weather, on all kinds of snow across all kinds of terrain, often following the trail beside a beloved creek near her home. Recently, as she skied on this path against the backdrop of uncertainty, environmental devastation, rising authoritarianism and ongoing social injustice, her mind turned to the water in the creek and an elemental question: What might it mean to truly listen to water? To know water? To exist with and alongside water? So began a quest to understand her people's historical, cultural, and ongoing interactions with water in all its forms (ice, snow, rain, perspiration, breath). Pulling together these threads, Simpson began to see how a "Theory of Water" might suggest a radical rethinking of relationships between beings and forces in the world today. In this inventive work, Simpson draws on Nishnaabeg origin stories while artfully weaving the work of influential writers and artists alongside her personal memories and experience- and in doing so, reimagines water as a catalyst for radical transformation, capable of birthing a new world. *Theory of Water* is a resonant exploration of an intricate, multi-layered relationship with the most abundant element on our planet- one that, as Simpson eloquently shows, is shaping our present even as it demands a radical rethinking of how we might achieve a just future.

Dr. Nawal Mustafa is Assistant Professor in Black Studies, Critical Race Studies, and Indigenous Studies within the Cultural Studies department at the

University of Amsterdam. Her work explores the intersections of law, colonialism, slavery, and the regulation of intimacy. Mr. Dr. Mustafa completed her PhD at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, focusing on migration and the historical regulation of interracialised intimacy in the UK following World War II. After her PhD, she worked as a postdoctoral researcher examining the legal history of slavery within the Dutch empire. Next to her academic roles, Mr. Dr. Mustafa also serves as a strategic legal advisor at PILP, a human rights law firm and NGO based in Amsterdam and has received a Black Achievement Award for her contributions to education and science (2025).

Saïd Rosales (they/them) works as a PhD in the Synthetic Organic Chemistry department at the Universiteit van Amsterdam (UvA). Their chemical research focuses on organic liquids capable of storing hydrogen (in the context of the so-called "Energy Transition"). In an attempt to cope with the contradictions of hegemonic technofix paradigms and their (neo)colonial habits, Saïd's practice outside of the lab draws tools from other materialisms and undisciplined explorations to reckon with the complexity and entanglements of chemical research amidst planetary crises. Imagining a horizon of energy autonomy and self-determination, they currently pursue an (al)chemical spell to turn hydrogen into a jaguar.

John Taukave hails from the villages of Motusa, Ituti'u and Pephaua, Malha'a on the island of Rotuma in Fiji. His work focuses on promoting Indigenous epistemology, reconnecting oceanic identities and climate advocacy in the arts. Interweaving both the arts and academic scholarship together has been a key tenet of his work. He has also provided technical and research support on climate policies and negotiations for the Micronesian Center for Sustainable Transport (MCST) and Pacific (6PAC+) delegations at the International Maritime Organization (IMO). John has also been a performing artist with Rako Pasefika, a Rotuman and Pacific Performing Arts company based in Fiji for 15 years and has extensive experience in Oceanic and Rotuman Performance. He continues to advocate for cultural, traditional and indigenous preservation and conservation of Pacific heritage, stories and identity through the Performing arts with applied experiences in cultural research and academia. John is currently pursuing his Doctoral studies at the University of Amsterdam.

MAROON COSMOPOLITICS

Workshop organized by Halbe Kuipers with Prof. Dr. Olivia Maria Gomes da Cunha, Museu Nacional, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, and filmmakers Tolin Alexander, Lonnie van Brummelen, and Siebren de Haan |

Monday 8th of December, 14:00-17:00 (+ screening in the evening) OMHP D 1.18B.

Workshop: Maroon Cosmopolitics through the works of prof. dr. Olivia Maria Gomes da Cunha and filmmakers Alexander, van Brummelen, and de Haan. This workshop is part of the Cosmologies workgroup (see: <https://asca.uva.nl/programme/seminars/cosmologies/cosmologies.html>).

In this workshop, we will explore Maroon cosmopolitics through the work of Prof. Dr. Olivia Maria Gomes da Cunha in conjunction with the filmic works of filmmakers Tolin Alexander, Lonnie van Brummelen, and Siebren de Haan.

The Maroon, as descendants from peoples forcibly brought from the African continent by Dutch, English, Spanish and Portuguese Atlantic slave traders to work in the plantation systems of the Americas, and who resisted the violence of slavery by rebelling and escaping, find themselves at the intersections of ancestral ways of living and modern, colonial impositions. In this workshop, we specifically focus on the “singularity of the settlements, the centrality of kinship in their social structure, the omnipresence of the ancestors, and the richness of Maroon cosmology, languages and arts,” but also on “the rapid transformations that were already changing their ways of life” (da Cunha 2018). In what ways has “the environmental damage caused in traditional Maroon territories by the effects of the Plantationocene and the material vestiges of colonial and racial violence left by capitalism” changed these ways of life, and what modes of resistance do they offer? (da Cunha, 2024)

From an anthropological point of view, Prof. Dr. da Cunha’s work explores and scrutinizes the limits of the discipline’s epistemological orientation. In the studies of Maroon populations settled in the forests and cities of Suriname and French Guiana, da Cunha’s work traces different “relationships in which humans and more-than-humans interact in composing body and earth through refractive and diffractive effects,” which might be understood as resisting the modern, cosmopolitan outlook of the discipline as well as the many problems it propagates. The cosmopolitical question is how to understand Maroon cosmologies on their own terms.

From a filmic point of view, the work of Alexander, van Brummelen, and de Haan expresses the pluriversal existence of the Surinam Maroon populations, as well as the struggles with the modern cosmology’s imposition. After *Stones Have Laws* (2018), which takes us into the heart of Suriname’s rain forest to show the life of a Maroon community, their most recent film *Monikondee* (2025), shows how economic interests have encroached upon these lands. Both films concern these ways of living and their cosmologies as much as

it concerns the vital question of what it is to film these and how.

For the workshop, several readings are assigned as well as a viewing of Alexander, van Brummelen, and de Haan’s *Stones Have Laws* (2018). During the workshop, Prof. Dr. da Cunha will give a short talk on Maroon cosmopolitics and its concerns, after which we will have an open conversation with Prof. Dr. da Cunha and filmmakers Alexander, van Brummelen, and de Haan and all participants.

Readings:

Da Cunha, Olivia Maria Gomes, ed. “Introduction: Exploring Maroon Worlds on The Move.” In *Maroon Cosmopolitics: Personhood, Creativity and Incorporation*. Studies in Global Slavery, volume 6. Brill, 2019, pp. 1-32.

Da Cunha, Olivia Maria Gomes. “The Earth Is Sweet. On Cottica Ndyuka (De)Compositions.” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 66, no. 2 (2024): 242–66.

Van Brummelen, Lonnie, and Siebren de Haan. “‘Something Is There’: Filmmaking in Multiple Realities.” *World Records Journal* 1 (2018). <https://worldrecordsjournal.org/something-is-there-filmmaking-in-multiple-realities/>.

Van Brummelen, Lonnie, Siebren de Haan, and Tolin Alexander. “Monikondee: Interview with Directors.” Interview by Jason Fox. 2025. <https://vriza.org/en/monikondee-interview-with-directors/>.

Students can get 1 ECTS for actively participating. For ECTS, students are required to do the readings, prepare questions for the workshop, and participate.

To register, email: h.h.kuipers@uva.nl

After the workshop a screening of *Monikondee* will take place at filmtheater De Uitkijk at 21:00, with Q&A. Student participants can get a ticket for the screening.

Olivia Maria Gomes da Cunha is Associate Professor of Anthropology at the Museu Nacional, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. Her research focuses the production of textual and visual artefacts, archives, and modernist ethnographies. She also has been carrying on research on the Cottica Ndyuka in Eastern Suriname.

Lonnie van Brummelen and **Siebren de Haan** have worked together as an artist and filmmaker duo since 2002. Their films explore how political, economic, and technological forces shape the lived realities of local communities and the environments on which they depend. Moving between art, documentary, and collective research, their practice is grounded in collaboration and reciprocity.

Since 2014, they have created three participatory documentaries: *Episode of the Sea* (2014), with the fishing community of Urk; *Stones Have Laws* (2018), with Maroon communities along the Suriname River; and *Monikondee* (2025), with Maroon and Indigenous

communities in the border region between Suriname and French Guiana. They co-directed the latter two films with Surinamese theatre maker Tolin Alexander.

Tolin Alexander is a writer, theatre maker, and performer of Maroon descent. His work focuses on intercultural and community-based theatre and is strongly influenced by Augusto Boal's Forum Theatre. In addition to his collaborations on *Stones Have Laws* and *Monikondee*, he recently curated the exhibition *The Surinamese Forest* at the Naturalis Biodiversity Center in Leiden.

SHOWERHEADS, COFFEE MACHINES AND THE EVERYDAY POLITICAL GEOGRAPHIES OF THE GREEN BACKLASH

Lecture by Dr Ed Atkins (University of Bristol) organized by the ARTES Sustainability and Disruption cluster coordinators. Monday December 8, 13.00-15.00 Location: Bushuis E1.01E

In April 2025, President Donald J. Trump repealed water efficiency standards on showerheads, framing them as part of "the left's war on water pressure." Such a move reflects an increasingly familiar tactic: right-wing politicians presenting climate and environmental policy as an 'elite' pushing down on the everyday lives of 'normal' people. In this paper, I work to illuminate how anti-climate politics increasingly takes root in the everyday and the mundane, with household objects becoming key symbols of resistance to climate policy today. Showerheads are not unique. Paper straws, gas stoves, lightbulbs - all have been recast as symbols of a broader 'green backlash'. In grounding this 'backlash' within both the broader rise in reactionary politics and how climate action might change everyday lives, mobilities, and rhythms, I seek to outline how everyday annoyances take on new political life. In doing so, I position contemporary environmentalism as not merely a witness to backlash but as entangled in its contradictions

Ed Atkins is an Associate Professor in Political Geography at the University of Bristol. His work moves in two ways. First, he explores the green backlash to understand how right-wing populist movements are seeking to slow decarbonisation and climate action. Second, he works with communities and policymakers to ensure that energy transitions are inclusive and just. This work currently focuses on climate action as a process of economic restructuring, affecting work and workers across industries and geographies in the UK. His book *A Just Energy Transition: Getting Decarbonisation Right in a Time of Crisis* was published in 2023

The event is hosted by the ARTES Sustainability and Disruption cluster (for more information, please contact

a.j.telford@uva.nl). Tea and coffee will be provided; please remember to bring your own cup.

DIGITAL SIMULATION OF WORK

From training technology to the imagined future of actual workplaces via television

Guilherme Machado is guest in the Useful Television Standing Seminar (organized by Anne-Katrin Weber, University of Lausanne, and Markus Stauff, University of Amsterdam) on 9 December 2025, 17h CET

Since spring 2023, *The Useful Television Standing Seminar* (organized by Anne-Katrin Weber, University of Lausanne, and Markus Stauff, University of Amsterdam) aims to facilitate the exchange between scholars interested in television's application as a useful tool, rather than a mass medium. The examples range from military and industrial applications of television technology to its operational use in medicine, science, or sports. We partly build on older debates in film studies (e.g. non-theatrical cinema; useful film) and want to bring television into this debate. Looking at useful television requires to broaden and to complicate our understanding of what media do and how they do it. Additionally, it contributes to an alternative genealogy of "digital media". The seminar organizes two or three meetings per semester for which we invite guest speakers, discuss the participants' work in progress or new and old publications that seem of relevance. For online participation, please register here: <https://forms.office.com/e/wiRndwb1eQ>

Guilherme Machado is a Junior Lecturer and postdoc researcher at the University of Lausanne's department of Film History and Aesthetics. His research deals with the visual culture of labor and the epistemological implications of visual technologies used to control the production and circulation of labor-related knowledges. He co-edited a volume on [Tacit Cinematic Knowledge. Approaches and Practices](#) and published on the role of media in vocational training.

HANDS-ON ZOTERO TUTORIAL

Tutorial offered by Niels ten Oever and Stefania Milan | 10 December 15:00 hrs. | Location OMHP room C 1.17

Event details of Hands-on Zotero Tutorial

- Open source management of references, papers, books, and notes

Have you always wanted to manage your papers, notes, and references and automatically create bibliographies? Or instantly change the citation and referencing style to match a journal's requirements? Look no further, this workshop is for you!

In this tutorial we will briefly explore Zotero and its main functionalities and then:

- Create a Zotero account at [zotero.org](https://www.zotero.org)
- Download and install the Zotero Standalone version

- Download and install the Zotero browser plugin (for Firefox, Chrome, Chromium, or Safari)
- Install the Zotero plugin for Word or Libre Office
- Bonus: install the Zotero app on your phone and/or tablet

Setting up all this can be tricky on your own, so we'll do it together and help each other out. After this session, your literature, reference, and note management will never be the same!

Please join us on December 10 at 15:00 and bring your phone, laptop, and a tablet if you have one!

VISUALIZING FILM HISTORY

Film Archives and Digital Scholarship

Book launch organized by the Research Group 'Moving Images: Preservation, Curation, Exhibition' led by Floris Paalman and Giovanna Fossati | *Visualizing Film History: Film Archives and Digital Scholarship* by Christian Olesen (University of Amsterdam) – published by Indiana University Press, 2025. | Wednesday, December 10, 2:30 – 4:00 PM CET. Location: Eye Filmmuseum Collection Centre, Asterweg 2, Amsterdam Entrance free | Registration: f.j.j.w.paalman@uva.nl

Program:

Presentation of the book by Christian Olesen.

Conversation about the book between the author, Floris Paalman (coordinator MA Preservation & Presentation of the Moving Image, UvA), and Anje Rossendell-Piper (student MA P&P, UvA; intern at Eye Filmmuseum).

General discussion.

About the book:

"Though many archival digital objects were not "born digital," film archives are now becoming important resources for digital scholarship as a consequence of digitization. Moreover, with advancements in digital research methods involving video annotation, visual analysis, and GIS affecting the way we look at archival films' material, stylistic histories and circulation, new research practices are more important than ever. *Visualizing Film History* is an accessible introduction to archive-based digital scholarship in film and media studies and beyond. With a combined focus on the history of film historiography, archiving, and recent digital scholarship—covering a period from the "first wave" of film archiving in the early 1900s to recent data art—this book proposes ways to work critically with digitized archives and research methods. Christian Olesen encourages a shift towards new critical practices in the field with an in-depth assessment of and critical approach to doing film historiography with the latest digital tools and digitized archives. Olesen argues that if students, scholars and archivists are to fully realize the potential of emerging digital tools and methodologies, they must critically consider the roles

that data analysis, visualization, interfaces and procedural human-machinery interactions play in producing knowledge in current film historical research. If we fail to do so, we risk losing our ability to critically navigate and renew contemporary research practices and evaluate the results of digital scholarship."

(<<https://iupress.org/9780253071835/visualizing-film-history/>>)

[Christian Gosvig Olesen](#) is Assistant Professor of Digital Media and Cultural Heritage at the Department of Media Studies at the University of Amsterdam. He teaches in the university's MA programs in Film Studies and Preservation and Presentation of the Moving Image and in the BA Media & Culture. He is the author of *Visualizing Film History: Film Archives and Digital Scholarship* (Indiana University Press, 2025), and has co-edited, with Sarah-Mai Dang and Tim van der Heijden, the volume *Doing Digital Film History – Concepts, Tools, Practices* (De Gruyter Brill, 2024).

SEEING LIKE A PLATFORM

On Wednesday 10 December (18:00-19:30), Petter Törnberg (Assistant Professor, Institute for Language, Logic and Computation, UvA) and Justus Uitermark (Professor of Urban Geography, Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, UvA) will launch their book '*Seeing Like a Platform: An Inquiry into the Condition of Digital Modernity*'. The launch will be followed by a reception. Location: [Terre Lente](#)

Power needs abstraction, to make the unwieldy complexity of the social world legible and manageable. The proposition at the heart of *Seeing Like a Platform* is that digital technology brings new metaphors through which power operates. While industrial modernity saw society as a machinery to be designed according to detailed blueprints, digital modernity views society as organic and alive, to be herded and nudged through digital infrastructures, AI, and algorithms.

Seeing Like a Platform explores the history, meaning, and far-reaching consequences of this epistemological shift. From social movements to Wikipedia, from digital platforms to city planning, from social science to media, society is being redefined by ideas from complexity science. While complexity offers a vision of a self-organized society freed from hierarchies and overbearing bureaucracies, it simultaneously enables new forms of domination and control.

Through theoretical reflections and case studies, *Seeing Like a Platform* offers an inquiry into digital modernity. Accessibly written and broad ranging, it is an essential reading for scholars, students, and practitioners in fields such as sociology, political science, urban studies, and technology studies. It will also interest anyone keen to understand the profound impact of digital

technologies on governance, social organization, and everyday life.

The discussant for the launch is Prof. Thomas Poell (Professor of Date, Culture & Institutions, Faculty of Humanities, UvA) and it will be moderated by Prof. Esther Weltevrede (Associate Professor of New Media and Digital Culture, Department of Media Studies, University of Amsterdam).

[RSVP here](#)

SUPPLY CHAIN CRITICISM SEMINAR

First meeting of the Supply Chain Criticism seminar organized by Jeff Diamanti, Mikki Stelder, and Asen Dimitrov | 11 December 2025, 12:00-15:00 | Contact: assend2@gmail.com to sign up for session and to inquire any ECTs for rMA students.

Every commodity imagines a supply chain and every struggle for justice and equality implicates the logistical spaces that quietly reproduce our historical conjuncture. How do we realign our critical vocabularies, attachments, and projects to the supply chains that shape the ongoing reproduction of uneven accumulation and dispossession? And what methods can we share to sharpen the emergence of logistical solidarities to come? This seminar consists of ongoing reading groups, skill shares, workshops, guest lectures, and field trips. rMA students seeking national research school credit can enrol for either 1ECT or 6ECTs

First meeting:

December 11 // Reading and introductions with guest workshop by ASEED on the logistical connection between Israel and Amsterdam. First meeting of the Supply Chain Criticism seminar involves a round of introductions to the seminar and a discussion of the special issue of *Environment and Planning D* on logistics (36.4 August 2018): <https://journals.sagepub.com/toc/epda/36/4> with focus on the introduction. We will also form research clusters and plan future field research as a group.

Contact assend2@gmail.com to sign up and for information about national research credits for rMA students across the Netherlands.

[Read more](#)

SCREENING: MUMAN MINGGIL

Documenting Audibilities x Auralities Seminar | Screening and Q&A Thursday 11 December 2025, 14:00-18:00, BuzzHouse (Humanities Venture Lab) OMHP E.103.

On December 11th, directors Mahardika Yudha and Yonri Revolt will join us for a Q&A session and a screening of their movie **Muman Minggil** (The Road to Ancestor Land-Jayapura, Papua, 2023). This unique documentary focuses on the work of anthropologist Arnold Ap, the museum where he worked and the music group Mambesak in Papua.

For approximately six years (1978-1984), Mambesak Group tried to find contextual methods for the Papuan people in carrying out works of cultural preservation, rediscovering ancestral values and knowledge which were increasingly lost amid colonialism and modernization. However, their work stopped after the death of Arnold Ap in 1984. Mambesak eventually disbanded and followed by a decline in cultural preservation activities in Papua. The film Muman Minggil attempts to collect and assemble fragments of information about the cultural working methods of Mambesak during their triumph. It interrogates how they contextualize ancestral values and knowledge into a contemporary artistic work which emplaces all stratum of Papuan society as part of their collective work.

Muman Minggil shows how art was used as a medium for education and activism in Papua in the 1970s and how relevant this is to the current state of society. A collaboration between the Yoikatra Collective in Timika and the Cenderawasih University Cultural Museum in Jayapura, the film is the inaugural feature in their broader series dedicated to documenting Papuan epistemologies and ancestral knowledge.

“WHAT OF THE FUTURE?”: AFFECT, MEDIA, AND THE DESIRE FOR FOREKNOWLEDGE

Master Class and English Department Lecture by Aleks Prigozhin organized by Michael Miller and Nicholas Carr | 11 December Masterclass: 13:00-15:00, Oudemanhuispoort C0.17 | Lecture: 17:00-18.30, P.C. Hoofthuis 3.01, Spuistraat 134 | Contact & registration: n.d.carr@uva.nl

These two events with Dr. Aleksandr Prigozhin focus on how media practices (including the arts and literary / cultural / critical theory) articulate ideas of the common life with the idea of the imminent future, as related objects of desire as well as critique. Starting from interdisciplinary readings of British modernist texts, our conversation will move into a more general discussion about the value of reading the intersections between affect, media, and form as we face highly uncertain futures. Interested graduate students and scholars from all fields are invited to take part.

In the graduate masterclass we will read the Introduction and Chapter 5 of Dr. Prigozhin's forthcoming book, *Modernism, Media, and the Politics of Common Life* (Johns Hopkins University Press 2025). The book explores how modernist fiction responded to its changing media environment in the early twentieth century. Modernist writers used diverse forms of media, broadly conceived—from print, architecture, and radio to soil and infrastructure—as metaphors for the contradictions of common life, while highlighting both the promises and failures of media modernity. Modernist texts like Mrs. Dalloway, *The Secret Agent*,

and *Party Going* grapple with the challenges of mass democracy, imperial decline, and the growing ubiquity of media communication, while offering a nuanced vision of the difficulties of mediated human connection. This masterclass will be followed by a lecture, open to the public, titled “What of the Future?": Affect, Media, and the Desire for Foreknowledge.” The talk analyzes the rise of mass newspaper astrology, and the reactions to it by progressive intellectuals, as related responses to uncertain times. In the late interwar period of the 1930s—as now—massive changes in media, economy, and politics generated a broadly shared anxiety about the imminent future. A popular expression of this anxiety was an interest in astrology and fortune-telling, which reached new heights in this period with the birth and proliferation of the weekly star-chart column. In responding to this phenomenon and to the underlying anxiety about where history was going, progressive intellectuals like Charles Madge and Tom Harrison, Walter Benjamin, and Georg Lukács reckoned with the rise of fascism and with the problem of (the desire for) foresight that is a component of modernity as much as of the “archaic” or superstitious belief that modernity was supposed to have overcome. Inadvertently, they also give rise to a tradition of affective historicism that continues to this day in the works of Lauren Berlant, Jonathan Flatley, and others. The talk is particularly interested in the arguments made in the 1930s—and now—on behalf of the arts as offering unique insight into what is just around the bend—the imminent, near future.

Lecture: “What of the Future?": Affect, Media, and the Desire for Foreknowledge

Thursday, 11 December—17:00-18.30, P.C. Hoofthuis 3.01, Spuistraat 134

The talk analyzes the rise of mass newspaper astrology, and the reactions to it by progressive intellectuals, as related responses to uncertain times. In the late interwar period of the 1930s—as now—massive changes in media, economy, and politics generated a broadly shared anxiety about the imminent future. A popular expression of this anxiety was an interest in astrology and fortune-telling, which reached new heights in this period with the birth and proliferation of the weekly star-chart column. In responding to this phenomenon and to the underlying anxiety about where history was going, progressive intellectuals like Charles Madge and Tom Harrison, Walter Benjamin, and Georg Lukács reckoned with the rise of fascism and with the problem of (the desire for) foresight that is a component of modernity as much as of the “archaic” or superstitious belief that modernity was supposed to have overcome. Inadvertently, they also give rise to a tradition of affective historicism that continues to this day in the works of Lauren Berlant, Jonathan Flatley, and others.

The talk is particularly interested in the arguments made in the 1930s—and now—on behalf of the arts as offering unique insight into what is just around the bend—the imminent, near future.

Dr. Aleks Prigozhin researches the media imaginaries, affective structures, and materialities that underlie artistic remediations of history in 20th century literature and culture in English and Russian. He is the author of *Modernism, Media, and the Politics of Common Life* (Johns Hopkins UP 2025), and his work has appeared or is forthcoming in *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction, Twentieth-Century Literature and Modern Fiction Studies*. He has taught English and Comparative Literature at Utrecht University and the University of Denver, and is currently an Affiliated Scholar at the Institute for Cultural Inquiry (ICON) at Utrecht University.

INFLUENCER CREEP

***How Optimisation, Authenticity and Self-Branding Transform Creative Culture* by Sophie Bishop**

Sophie Bishop will discuss her new book 'Influencer Creep: How Optimization, Authenticity and Self-Branding Transform Creative Culture'. | 16 December 2025, 16:30 - 18:00, [BG 1](#) Room 0.16 [RSVP here](#)

Sophie Bishop's book *Influencer Creep: How Optimization, Authenticity and Self-Branding Transform Creative Culture* (University of California Press) will be released on 28 October, 2025. The book draws from in-depth ethnography and interviews with influencers and professional artists. Bishop argues that looking to the shifts within influencer culture can help us understand contemporary changes to labor conditions, compensation and representation within creative industries. Taking seriously the motivations that drive more and more people into the contest for online visibility, *Influencer Creep* documents a creative workforce nervously conforming to the monopoly power of social media platforms—and occasionally resisting it. Early praise for the book includes “those in the art world will find plenty to chew on” (Publishers Weekly) and “both a page turner and thorough academic study” (Professor Thomas Poell, UvA).

IMAGINATION, TERRITORY AND COLONIALISM

You are warmly invited to the second season of the *Climate Imaginaries* seminar series co-curated by AHK artist-in-residence Agat Sharma together with Laura Cull Ó Maoilearca (ASCA) | *Climate Imaginaries seminar III: Monday 12th January, 4-6pm* | With Timoteus Anggawan Kusno on imagination, territory and colonialism | OMHP room C 023

The series is informed by and runs alongside the theatre-based research project *Staging Extreme Weather* which Agat is leading at the Academy of Theatre & Dance (ATD) from October-January 2026 in

which several UvA students are also involved. The seminars are an ongoing initiative of Laura's special chair which aims to strengthen connections and exchange between AHK and UvA particularly on the topic of arts and climate justice.

Timoteus Anggawan Kusno (ASCA) is a multi-disciplinary artist, researcher, and filmmaker whose practice encompasses installations, drawings, moving images, and institutional projects. His work critically examines the intersections of fiction and history, imagination and memory, as well as the enduring legacies of colonialism and authoritarian power. By employing a meta-fictional approach, Kusno interrogates the mechanisms of historical narrative construction, reflecting on the role of media, the significance of editing, and the underlying structures of production. Through this lens, he investigates how historical narratives are shaped by power, ideology, and systems of ignorance. Beyond his artistic and cinematic practice, Kusno has been developing the *Centre for Tanah Runcuk Studies* since 2013—an experimental art project structured as a fictional institution that examines the imaginary reconstruction of a lost territory in the Dutch East Indies. This project exemplifies his broader intellectual engagement with historiographical critique and the intersections of art, fiction, and power. He currently lives and works between Amsterdam (Netherlands) and Yogyakarta (Indonesia).

CRITICAL AI SEMINAR SERIES: VECTOR MEDIA

The Critical AI Seminar series, organized by Anna Schjøtt Hansen, Tobias Blanke, and Dieuwertje Luitse | Invited talk by Fabian Offert on 'Vector Media' | January 13, 5:30-7 PM (CEST), online Registration [here](#)

This talk presents a new history and theory of the vector space in contemporary artificial intelligence systems. I will argue that the inevitable bias of such systems lies not only in what they represent, but in the logic of representation itself. Their internal ideologies are often not directly visible in their generated outputs or even their training data, the focus of almost all existing work. Instead, they emerge from how the model organizes and transforms information within itself. While previous media technologies created new formats or imitated existing ones, deep neural networks instead seek to dissolve prior media into a universal space of commensurability: the vector space. Cultural objects, once specific to a medium, are rendered fungible; commodities in a new neural economy, expressed only in terms of their neural exchange value.

[Fabian Offert](#) is Assistant Professor for the History and Theory of the Digital Humanities and Director of the Center for the Humanities and Machine Learning (HUML) at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

His research focuses on the epistemology, aesthetics, and politics of artificial intelligence. His most recent book project, *Vector Media* (Meson Press/University of Minnesota Press) writes a new historical epistemology of artificial intelligence, asking how machine learning models represent culture and what is at stake when they do. Before joining the faculty at UCSB, Fabian was Postdoctoral Researcher in the German Research Foundation's Priority Program 'The Digital Image' and Assistant Curator at ZKM | Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe.

WHY STEREOTYPES PERSIST: CAUSAL GENERALIZATIONS AND THEIR RESISTANCE TO COUNTEREXAMPLES

Philosophy and Public Affairs | Speaker: Giulia Napolitano (EUR) (Paper co-authored with Olivier Lemeire) | Commentator: Tom Schoonen (UvA) | Chair: Tijn Smits (UvA) | 14 January, 15:30 - 17:00, Faculteitskamer II (Oude Turfmarkt 145) & Zoom

People often maintain stereotypes despite obvious counterexamples. Several philosophers have recently argued that this persistence is due to stereotypes being statistical rather than universal generalizations and therefore compatible with counterexamples. In this paper, we argue that this is not the only reason why stereotypes are so persistent. Many stereotypes also involve causal-explanatory beliefs of the following type: 'There is a causal property P entangled with social category K that causes F when it operates without interference'. Such causal-explanatory beliefs allow for counterexamples because they entail generalizations that are limited in scope; they purport to describe only those members of a social group K in which the presumed causal property P operates without interference. Our analysis provides a more complete account of why stereotypes are so persistent, why they are morally objectionable, and why addressing them effectively requires more than simply pointing out exceptions.

CALL FOR PAPERS: THE FUTURE OF FILM PROGRAMMING

The open call for proposals for the Eye International Conference 2026 has been announced. The deadline for submissions is 14 December 2025. The conference takes place from 31 May – 1 June 2026 at Eye Filmmuseum in Amsterdam.

The theme of this year's conference is "The Future of Film Programming", with a specific focus on how film programming, film heritage, and collections connect to respond to changing technological, political and socioeconomic landscapes. The programme committee invites contributions from a wide array of researchers

and professionals across various affiliations, career stages, and geographies. We particularly welcome critical perspectives that bridge different fields.

Find the full open call and more information on www.eyefilm.nl/conference2026. If you have any questions, please email to conference@eyefilm.nl.

CALL FOR PAPERS: CONNECTING TRANS AND CRITICAL ANIMAL STUDIES IN AN AGE OF AUTHORITARIANISM

Organized by Valerie Sofie Tollhopf and Eva Meijer

13 April, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam | Deadline abstracts: January 15th, 2026

This symposium aims to investigate connections, overlaps and tensions between critical animal studies and trans studies.

Currently, there is some engagement with animal studies and posthumanism from a trans studies perspective, and there is some acknowledgement of trans studies from a critical animal studies perspective. However, critical animal studies' engagement with trans studies remains scarce and at times theoretically shallow, in that it draws on trans studies discourses in a tendentially superficial way. Trans studies' discussion of nonhuman animals does not always conceptualize their position in critical (political) terms.

With this symposium we aim to foster a dialogue between trans studies and critical animal studies. This is beneficial for both fields: CAS can gain important perspectives on a so far under-theorised axis of domination (one that plays an important role in current processes of fascisation and must thus be part of comprehensive political analyses). Trans studies can expand on its current involvement with animal studies, adding a more critical stance towards human-animal relationships and an all too peaceful notion of 'entanglement', which considers the material conditions of animal struggles.

We also aim to conceptualize and foster political solidarity. In the current age of authoritarianism, both trans studies and critical animal studies are under threat. Furthermore, under the rise of right-wing extremism trans people worldwide are increasingly met with hostility and violence. While not obscuring the differences, better understanding processes of othering and objectification can help shed light and fight the oppression of both groups.

We invite abstracts for 20 minute presentations on the following and related themes:

- Animalization, dehumanization & (racialized) transness
- New materialist and other (e.g. historical) materialist approaches to trans and critical animal studies

- Decolonial and Indigenous approaches to trans and critical animal studies
- Gender nonconforming nonhuman animals, gendering nonhuman animals, multispecies trans solidarity
- Queer and trans ecology approaches
- Trans studies and critical animal studies from a social movement perspective
- Considering trans people and animals jointly in the current political climate (e.g. further exploration of notions like "soy boy" as fascist imaginary of racial and gendered degeneracy, tied to the consumption of plant-based protein)
- Historical perspectives on trans-animal topics - e.g. animal experimentation in endocrinology, the interconnected emergence of the taxonomies of race, species, and gender
- Relations of trans people and nonhuman animals to capitalist relations, to production and reproduction; commonalities and (substantial) structural differences; potential modes of alliance
- Anthropodecentering trans studies: What is at stake by including critical engagement with animals in the field? What are potential objections to the conjunction?
- Total liberation approaches / anarchist perspectives on the connection between trans and critical animal studies
- Trans-exclusive genealogies of critical animal studies via ecofeminism & how to engage with that
- Queering and transing critical animal studies
- Joy, possibility, fluidity, utopia: How to live differently with ourselves and others.

In addition to academic presentations, we also invite artists, activists and organizers to send proposals for presentations. Please note that there is no financial support available for showing art works or performances. The deadline for abstracts is January 15th 2026. You can send your abstract of max. 300 words to transanimalstudies@gmail.com. This is an in person event and there is no opportunity to present or attend online.

CALL FOR PAPERS: RETHINKING COLONIAL DYNAMICS IN THE BALKANS AND POST-SOCIALIST SOCIETIES

Decolonization in Theory and Practice

Organizers: Katerina Kallivrousi, PhD candidate at ASCA, University of Amsterdam; Prof. Dr. Maria Boletsi, University of Amsterdam and Leiden University; Dr. Eva Fotiadi, Avans Center of Applied Research for Art, Design and Technology | 21 and 22 May 2026, UvA

In an era of multiple ongoing globalized crises, it is crucial to examine how systems of oppression and extractivism intersect with different manifestations of

(neo-)colonial dynamics, as many of those systems are rooted in “modernity/ coloniality” and capitalism (Mignolo 2007). For this two-day conference, we wish to focus on colonial dynamics developed in the Balkan region and in Post-Socialist societies. In recent years, scholarship engaging with the particularities of colonialism in the above-mentioned areas has been expanding. Yet to speak about colonial dynamics in these areas still remains a highly contested topic due to the divergent ways in which colonial power has been exercised in those regions, which often do not include practices traditionally associated with colonialism, such as land occupation.

Sharad Chari and Katherine Verdery (2009) have traced similarities between postsocialist and postcolonial societies in aspects that include control over “sovereign states”, organization of empires, racism and classification processes. Following their approach, such comparisons can play a pivotal role in enriching the ways in which we rethink and find alternatives to current struggles that result from capitalism, (neo-)colonialism and their intersections.

Another perspective that places Greece and, more generally, the Balkan region in dialogue with decolonial approaches comes from Dušan I. Bjelić. According to Calotychos, Bjelić follows the Black Marxist tradition, in order to argue for the birth of colonial projects, enslavement and racialization processes in the Balkans and Eastern Mediterranean already in medieval times (Bjelić 2023; 2025, Calotychos 2023). At the same time, Greece's complex, “crypto-colonial” relationship with the West, which was exemplified during the so-called “Greek crisis” (2009-2018), provokes us to further investigate forms of coloniality in the case of Greece in relation to other countries, which in some cases have experienced non-traditional colonial forms of control (Herzfeld 2002; Bjelić 2023; 2025; *dēcolonize hellás* 2023).

While considering the specificities and unique characteristics of colonial manifestations in the Balkans and postsocialist societies, the conference aims to facilitate transcolonial dialogues. We seek to contribute to the development of theoretical frameworks, practices and vocabularies that forge alliances and encourage productive conversations from North to South, from West to East, as well as beyond these binary conceptualizations.

Dr. Penelope Papailias (University of Thessaly, Volos, Greece) will deliver a keynote lecture and give a workshop as part of the conference.

More speakers will be announced on a later date.

We invite researchers and scholars from all career stages (including MA students and PhD candidates) to submit an abstract of their proposed paper (up to 300

words) and a short bio (up to 150 words) by 18 January 2026.

We welcome proposals from researchers working in Art History, Cultural Analysis, Cultural Studies, Film Studies, Literary Studies, Anthropology, History, and any other field across the humanities and social sciences. Early-career researchers are especially encouraged to apply.

Topics for paper proposals could include, but are not limited to:

- Historical and contemporary forms of (neo-)colonial dynamics in the Balkans and/or post-socialist societies
- Intersections of capitalism, extractivism, and “modernity/coloniality” in the region
- Comparative analyses of post-socialist and postcolonial contexts
- Medieval and early modern genealogies of coloniality, enslavement, and racialization in the Balkans and Eastern Mediterranean
- “Crypto-colonial” relationships between Balkan states and Western Europe, including case studies such as the Greek financial crisis
- Racialization processes, Black Marxist approaches, and alternative genealogies of colonial projects in Southeastern Europe
- Transcolonial dialogues across South–North and East–West axes
- Decolonial frameworks, methods, and vocabularies relevant to the Balkans and post-socialist contexts
- Artistic, cultural, or media representations that negotiate or challenge colonial and decolonial narratives around the Balkans and Eastern Mediterranean
- Case studies highlighting grassroots, activist, or community-based efforts toward decolonization
- Intersections of nationalism, identity formation, and coloniality in the Balkans and post-socialist societies

Please send your abstract and short bio to the following email address:

RethinkingColonialDynamics@gmail.com.

All submissions will be reviewed by the three conference organizers. Applicants will be notified of the results in February 2026.

The conference is generously supported by NICA and ASCA. It is embedded in the activities of the ASCA research group “Crisis, Critique and Futurity” <https://asca.uva.nl/content/research-groups/crisis/crisis.html>

CALL FOR PAPERS: (OUTER) SPACE(S)

Collectief van Kunstlicht.

“Are you ready to venture to outer space?” Join Kunstlicht’s odyssey to outer space, and contribute to the first issue of 2026: (OUTER) SPACE(S), VOL. 47 1/2.

We invite contributions in the form of academic articles, reviews, interviews, visual essays, poems, and any other form that is fitting for the theme and the journal-form. We encourage contributors from all stages of their (research) practice to respond to the call for papers. Deadline: December 7, 2025.

Both history and mainstream science fiction have formed our perspective on outer space. In a time where space travel and space tourism have become increasingly viable, how do contemporary artists imagine and engage with the concept of outer space? How does outer space function as an alternative solution for terrestrial issues? For this issue, we invite contributions that critically engage with the notion of outer space as an artistic, cultural, political, speculative and philosophical notion. We are interested in how outer space – in all its facets – is addressed, debated, and imagined outside and beyond the dominant narratives and hegemonic histories of science fiction, space travel, and other space-related entities. We are curious about how outer space, including viewing ourselves from the outside in, the longing for escape and the actualisation of alternative futures on other planets, and contemporary science fiction, has produced genres, tropes, artistic strategies and other forms of critical engagement with our earthly existence. And perhaps more importantly: what stories have been untold, unimagined, or even hidden away? "

<https://tijdschriftkunstlicht.nl/call-for-papers-outer-spaces-kunstlicht-vol-47-no-1-2/>

CALL FOR PAPERS: DIGITAL SUBJECTIVITIES

Culture, Experience, and Knowledge Production, Freie Universität Berlin on May 21-22, 2026. The deadline for submissions is **31st December 2025**.

The conference will explore the impact of digital technologies on subjective experience, knowledge production, culture, and politics.

We welcome contributions from early-career researchers, including doctoral students and postdoctoral scholars, from a variety of disciplines.

Digital technologies have become integral to our everyday lives, fundamentally reconfiguring how the self is conceptualized and lived. This conference will address how the proliferation of these technologies plays out at the level of culture, research, and everyday experiences.

Topics of interest include, but are not limited to:

- Theorising the digital subject
- Collective solidarities and political organisation on online platforms
- Academic knowledge production and the impact of digital technologies
- Immersive experiences of digital technologies
- Labour, lethargy, and ludic capitalism

- Representations of digital technologies in contemporary culture (film, TV, literature)

- Video games and play

- Sonic renderings of the digital realm

Submission Guidelines: Please submit abstracts of up to 350 words and a short biography (up to 100 words) to: digital-subjectivities@fu-berlin.de

The deadline for submissions is 31st December 2025.

For any questions, please contact the organizing committee at the same email address.

CALL FOR PAPERS: FEEDBACK LOOP

Feedback Loops is a month-long critical writing and reflection workshop that explores how we listen, think, and compose text through speech and sound.

Led by artist and (ASCA) researcher [Martina Raponi](#) (also known as noiserr), the workshop offers access to the Sonic Acts Biennial 2026 programme – including exhibitions, concerts, and talks – which will serve as the basis for discussion. Over the sessions, participants will develop interpretive and analytical approaches to performance, theory, and transdisciplinary art. Open to MA, rMA, and PhD students, recent graduates, established and aspiring curators, journalists, artists, and radio-makers, *Feedback Loops* reimagines art criticism through reparative, poetic thinking and dialogue.

In *Research Is Ceremony*, scholar Shawn Wilson writes: 'Emotionless, passionless, abstract, intellectual research is a goddamn lie; it does not exist.' Echoing this conviction, *Feedback Loops* questions the myth of objectivity – the idea that critique must be detached. Instead, it turns toward methods that foreground feeling, resonance, and embodied encounter, listening for where thinking meets the senses.

The process culminates at Echobox Radio, where the group gathers at the studio to share their recordings and reflections. Guest facilitator [Cara Mayer](#) – a seasoned radio-maker, audio-essayist, and DJ – will introduce techniques for shaping material for the broadcast, transforming written insight into audible form. Through this, *Feedback Loops* rethinks criticism off the page. The resulting audio essays will weave together spoken word, recordings, and music – embracing non-linear, affective, and associative modes of reasoning through sound. Building on Sonic Acts' decade-long tradition of critical writing workshops, *Feedback Loops* extends this lineage into new terrains of listening, language, and transmission.

To join the workshop, submit your application before Wednesday 10 December, 23:59 CET via the Google form link below. We will contact the accepted participants in January 2026.

Read more: <https://2026.sonicacts.com/news/open-call-feedback-loops-workshop>

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: BLACK FEMINIST SUMMER SCHOOL

This Black Feminist Summer School, supported by the Amsterdam Research Centre for Migration and the Amsterdam Centre for Gender & Sexuality at UvA, creates space outside the university campus for collective theory building and in-depth reading that contextualises Black death and Black aliveness, as they shape Black experience on a global scale. Together, participants will wrestle with the complexities and possibilities that arise from Afro-pessimist and other Black Studies' readings of Black death and Black exile from the human. At the same time, the insistences found in work that attends to Black life and the im/possibilities of Black aliveness will also orient our discussion and queries.

At root, this Black Feminist Summer School encourages participants to occupy and examine the tensions, rebellions, fatigue, fantasies, hopelessness, and potentialities that the theme of "Black Death/Black Aliveness" inspires us to contend with.

We welcome applications from students, early career scholars, activists, artists, and organisers who have particular interest, lived experience and politics grounded in Blackness.

[Apply here by January 7, 2026](#)

Agenda: We will convene for five days to engage with invited speakers who work within or between the themes of Black death and Black aliveness as scholars, practitioners, and community intellectuals. In the mornings, the speaker will give a lecture, followed by a seminar where participants will have the opportunity to engage the speaker and each other in discussion and reflection. The afternoons are dedicated to cultural activities in Amsterdam (e.g. exhibitions, local archives, and performances).

Speakers (artists, activists, and scholars): Myriam Diatta, Yancé-Myah Antonio Harrison, Julian Isenia, Camille Sapara Barton, Annie Olaloku-Teriba, Jan Mendes.

Deadline for Applications: January 7, 2026 23.59 CET

Notification of Acceptance: February 4, 2026

Participation Fee: €300 (includes daily: lectures, cultural activities, lunch, coffee/tea)

Location: Amsterdam (specific locations TBA)

Scholarships: The Black Feminist Summer School provides 3 scholarships to cover course fees for Black trans women in the Netherlands. If you'd like to apply for one of these scholarships, please respond to the final question in the form.

Please blackfeministsummerschool@outlook.com with any questions.

ICI FELLOWSHIPS 2026–28 - AUTOREDUCTION

The ICI Berlin announces 12 post-doctoral fellowships for the ICI Focus 'AutoReduction' of the ICI Core Project 'Reduction'! Application deadline: 5 January 2026, 14:00 (CET)

'Shock and awe' is typically a state of reduced capacity to act, move, or resist. Under very special conditions it can be experienced as vitalizing, but in the current conjuncture, it is most readily associated with military or terrorist strategies directed at foreign enemies or, more startingly, turned inward in the hands of disaster capitalism and aspiring autocrats. The effect of dumbfounding paralysis is even more potent with actions that appear themselves self-destructive: when subjects wilfully demolish what used to secure their prestige and power; when rising authoritarian regimes are supported in anticipatory obedience; or when climate change seems to be deliberately accelerated through arms and technology races. How can one not feel utterly disoriented, when it seems as if the world is so clearly oriented towards its own destruction?

There is certainly much to be said for focusing on the ongoing devastation of large parts of humanity, rather than remaining dumbstruck by the prospect of an all-encompassing apocalypse. Yet, it seems equally important to challenge the apparent self-evidence of a rationality based on competitive self-assertion, and to allow for forms of critique that show the manifold ways in which such rationality can become self-defeating. Can one make productive the paradox of such a critique, which does not take an external position and instead proceeds from within, seeking to make the paradigm of self-assertion implode into more benign forms of autoreduction such as self-restraint and self-questioning? To what extent might stupefaction in the face of frenetic destruction also have to do with the possibility of recognizing in it a self-destructiveness that is turned outward and in its denunciation a conservative trope of patronizing normalization?

Inviting projects from all disciplines and fields, the 2026–28 focus 'AutoReduction' is interested in a critical exploration of processes and narratives countering the apparently inevitable primacy of self-conservation and growth. It addresses both reductions that could be said to happen by themselves — automatically, as it were, unwittingly for systemic or mythical reasons — and those in which subjects actively reduce themselves. What is the role of scale; of materiality and phantasy; of class and privilege; and how does it get racialized, gendered, and sexualized?

Please read the full announcement on www.ici-berlin.org/fellowships-announcement