

Profiles

An overview of the speakers, with the abstracts of their papers.

Angela Benza

Angela Benza studied History of Art and English Literature at the University of Lausanne, Switzerland. She is presently a teaching assistant at the University of Geneva. After a MA-thesis on the country-house portrait in eighteenth-century British landscape painting, she is currently working on late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century English portraiture. Her Ph.D. thesis focuses on the definition, form and function of Elizabethan and Jacobean allegorical portraits.

“I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman”: Age and Death in Elizabeth I’s late representations

When it comes to the image of monarchy, death is a very complex and ambiguous concept. Dealing with death in the sphere of the monarch’s representation implies that one must always distinguish between the monarch’s mortal body and his political one. The former is bound to decay whereas the later is meant to express eternal posterity. The theory of the Two Bodies of the king, as developed by Kantorowicz and Marin, is essential to understand how court societies and their artists used to conceive death socially, politically and spiritually. For this symposium on the cultural meaning of the end of life, I would like to focus on the representations of a monarch’s relationship to death in Sixteenth Century England. More specifically, I would like to investigate how artists were dealing with the representation of age, decay and death in relation to royal portraiture at that time. For this purpose, I shall concentrate mainly on three artistic moments of Queen Elizabeth I’s late reign. First, I will be interested in the constitution of what we could call the Mask of youth by miniaturist Nicholas Hilliard, in order to idealise and hide the effect of time on the Queen’s face. Secondly, I wish to consider Queen Elizabeth’s effigy at Westminster Abbey, which stands as a substitute for the Queen’s body beyond death, an eternal body devoted to her posterity. Finally, I would like to analyse a posthumous representation of Elizabeth I as a melancholic figure in her last years surrounded by the personifications of Time and Death. This late portrait creates somehow a hiatus in the building of the monarch’s political and immortal image. Here we are facing the human being behind the monarchical persona and its functions. Why does one choose to depict posthumously the monarch’s fragility approaching death, somehow taking off the masks afterwards? How do we make sense of such representation in the traditional scheme of royal portraiture in Renaissance England? These are all questions I intend to raise for this conference.

Anu Salmela

Anu Salmela is currently working on her PhD in Cultural History at the University of Turku (Finland). Her dissertation concerns female suicides in late 19th- and early 20th-century Finland. The focus is on the ways in which female suicide was represented, understood, and explained in Finland between the years of 1869–1910. The question is analysed in the context of Lutheranism, science (esp. medicine), and lower courts. The study is multidisciplinary; it lies at the intersections of cultural history, gender history, gender studies, and class studies.

Lethal Emotions: Shaken Emotions and Female Suicides in Late 19th Century Finland

In late 19th century Finland, assumptions about the motives behind suicides were gendered: female suicides were connected with shaken emotions, caused by love or marital problems, whereas male suicides were more likely explicated according to reasons considered rational, such as economic troubles. As such, suicide explanations were constructed in accordance with the idea of feminine irrationality and emotionality, and masculine rationality. Until 1894, when suicide was finally decriminalised, these explanations were recorded in courts investigating suspicious deaths.

The paper casts light on to the gendered nature of suicide explanations by focussing on female suicide motives heard in Finnish lower courts in the late 19th century. Special attention is given to explanations tied to emotionality: such as the notion of a shaken woman who kills herself in a fit of emotion. What kind of image of womanhood did the court records produce and under what conditions were those records produced? Given that most court cases were concerned with suicides

committed by lower-class women, the relationship between social class and the assumed motive is also discussed. Did class influence the way in which suicide was interpreted, and if so, how?

In the presentation, the motives heard in courtrooms are not regarded as the "real" causes of suicides, but rather as attempts to try to understand suicide. Thus, the motives say more about public assumptions of suicide motives and socially shared meanings attached to suicides than they do about the actual causes of individual suicides.

The presentation is based on the PhD dissertation I am currently working on, in which I explore the attitudes toward women's suicides in late 19th and early 20th century Finland.

Cheryl Palyu

Cheryl Palyu is a current graduate student at the University of North Texas pursuing a Master of Arts in Art History. Her research focuses on the art of South Asia, particularly that of India. Her interest centers on the Mughal dynasty and the coalescence of art, religion, and identity, specifically she is interested in the effect of Sufism, concepts of identity and the practice of memory in the paintings commissioned by the Mughal emperor Jahangir. Cheryl is also interested in representations of death and dying through depictions of the body, such as decapitation and emaciated forms. She has presented papers both regionally and internationally on a variety of topics, from Judy Chicago's *Birth Garments* to Gandhara emaciated Buddhist sculpture.

Contextualizing Dying Inayat Khan: Nature and Mortality in the Jahangir-nama

Representations of deaths or dying are rare within the Mughal miniature painting oeuvre. Two images known as *Dying Inayat Khan* stand apart, and have held a precarious position within the tradition of Mughal miniature paintings. The 1618 preparatory drawing and finished painting depict Inayat Khan as a dying man, whose likeness was taken after being summoned to the court of Jahangir. While these images have been included in many volumes about Mughal painting, scholars have failed to explain how they fit within the tradition of Mughal miniature painting and why Jahangir would order the creation of the image. Through an analysis of Jahangir based on his memoirs, the *Jahangir-nama*, *Dying Inayat Khan* can be better understood. Scholars have studied the images of and writings on plants and animals in the memoir as nature studies. Jahangir was a keen observer of the world around him and diligently recorded odd occurrences in nature. The emperors' writings also included matters of the state such as accounts of tributes paid, royal celebrations and deaths at court. The portrait of Inayat Khan is different when compared to the other death accounts because it more closely reflects Jahangir's study of animals than his eulogy of the dead. In this paper, I contend that the images titled *Dying Inayat Khan* allowed Jahangir to contemplate his own mortality through the death of a close court official. Like the nature studies and experimentation conducted by the emperor on animals, Inayat Khan's death was another unique event to be recorded by Jahangir. In this paper, I draw parallels between the nature studies and the veristic portrait of Inayat Khan, as well as draw upon Sufist ideas about sainthood, the body, and death in order to contextualize these artworks within the larger project of the *Jahangir-nama*.

Christina Steffen

Christina Steffen studied English Literature and Art History at the University of Bern, where she completed her Master degree in 2012. Nineteenth century literature and its involvement with contemporary medicine form the core of her research interests. In her M.A. Thesis, she concentrated on the literary and artistic conceptualisation of the pathological female body. She is currently developing ideas for a PhD project and teaching a course on the Gothic in Victorian Literature.

Eroticising Death: The Female Vampire in Bram Stoker's Dracula

The figure of the female vampire in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, published in 1897, is not described as a monstrous abnormality. To the contrary, when the band of male heroes break into Lucy Westenra's tomb and open her coffin in order to ascertain her vampiric transformation, they are fascinated by the "death-beauty" of her (un)dead body (Stoker 256) (1). The eroticisation of death and especially the female corpse is a phenomenon that becomes increasingly pronounced in Victorian literary culture. In this paper I argue that this is closely connected to Victorian medicine and its use of the female body as the site of scientific exploration. Since visual observation was understood as the primary tool with which scientific truth could be produced, the voyeuristic aspects inherent in looking at the nude female

body, made passive by death, could be framed as a scientific necessity (Jordanova 91) (2). Although the artworks aimed at providing a scientifically correct view of the female body, they incorporate gender stereotypes as well as sexual elements, which ultimately transforms the originally scientific objects into erotic fantasies. Therefore, medicine succeeded in circumventing the taboo associated with portraying death, the female body and sexuality. By looking at nineteenth century medical art and its key characteristics, I want to examine how these images resurface in Stoker's text.(3) In Dracula vampirism is constructed as a medical condition, which legitimises the detailed description of the female body. The female vampires emerging in the text adhere to a medically determined definition of femininity that intimately – even dangerously – merges death, erotic charms and perverted sexual appetites.

1. Stoker, Bram. Dracula. London: Penguin Popular Classics, 1994.
2. Jordanova, Ludmilla. Sexual Visions. Wisconsin: Wisconsin University Press, 1989.
3. The term 'medical art' is used to describe artworks that were either designed for a scientific purpose such as anatomical Venuses or medical illustrations as well as Victorian 'high art' depicting medical scenes, for example dissections. But the term also encompasses the general artistic tendency of depicting unconscious or dead females, insufficiently clad, pale and weak who voluntarily offer up their eroticised bodies to (male) scrutiny.

Deborah Levy and Antoine Wang

Deborah Levy and Antoine Wang studied architecture at ISACF La Cambre in Brussels and are currently developing their respective thesis subject both looking at architecture through the lens of aesthetics. Concurrently to their personal career path, they created in 2011 with four other architects a collective called orthodoxe which explores architecture as a cultural practice rooted in history, theory and criticism. Within this framework they are currently broadcasting a radio show about architecture, taking part in the third edition of the exhibition (Re) Nouveau Plaisirs d'Architecture in Brussels and taking on the scientific direction of the second volume of the collection « Architectures Wallonie-Bruxelles Inventaires # 1 Inventories ».

Modern Architecture and the death

In Ornament und Verbrechen (1910) Adolf Loos defined the house as architecture and distinguished it from the tombs and monuments which he placed in the domain of arts. When confronted to the Modernist's ideals of functionalism and hygienism, this kind of program indeed sets a fundamental problem to the way architecture tries to define itself at that time. How could death and memory find their place into a radically rational way of thinking?

The Woodland Cemetery (1935-1940) realized by Gunnar Asplund and Sigurd Lewerentz is a particularly interesting case to consider in the attempt to resolve this antagonism. Our proposal exposes how this project rationalize the cemetery of the XIXth century without excluding the metaphysical dimension usually specific to this kind of places. The two architects shape the landscape - a dimension of architecture largely neglected by the Modernists - in order to create an environment within which man is directly confronted to an expression of nature that transcends the Beautiful and excludes any rational apprehension of the world. By materializing the inexpressible, the Woodland Cemetery allows a reification of the experience of death and bereavement.

Based on this hypothesis, our lecture will propose a reading of this project using the lenses of the aesthetical categories of the Sublime and the Unheimlich in order to understand how this particular architecture answers to the matter of death and how it responds to the ontological crisis of the discipline towards art and society. We will expose how Asplund and Lewerentz, using a language passed by the firsts Moderns (Boullée, Ledoux, Lequeu), used geometry, signs and materials in order to compose an architecture capable of expressing the inexpressible and therefore offering a new shape to death.

Dennis Vanden Auweele

Dennis Vanden Auweele is a Ph. D. Fellow of the Research Foundation – Flandres associated to the Centre for Metaphysics and Philosophy of Culture of the Institute of Philosophy, KU Leuven (Belgium). His research interests are history of philosophy (Kant and the 19th century), philosophy of religion and ethics. His doctoral dissertation, preliminarily entitled 'The Horror of Existence. Pessimism in Kant and Schopenhauer', focuses on, on the one hand, detailing any pessimism relating

to the natural abilities of the human agent in Kant and Schopenhauer and, on the other hand, tracing this pessimism back to certain furtive religious presuppositions in Kant and Schopenhauer.

Schopenhauer and the Problem of Suicide

According to Schopenhauer, human beings have nothing to rationally fear of death and nevertheless they seem to fear nothing more than death. Obviously, Schopenhauer's assessment is here not unique and is perfectly consistent within the larger, traditional attitude of Western philosophical culture towards death. Most philosophers and theologians argue that the human agent should be so enlightened that s/he recognizes death for what it is, and not fear it. When Schopenhauer continues however to suggest that suffering is the most essential characteristic of life, he seems to naturally position himself for a defense of suicide on philosophical grounds. Nevertheless, Schopenhauer argues that suicide is a cognitive mistake and could even be argued against on moral grounds. In my paper, I will explore the philosophical and psychological implications of Schopenhauer's dismissal of suicide. First, I will explore Schopenhauer's grounds for pushing suicide to the side. Second, I will show how Schopenhauer's arguments are rather weak, even counter-effective. Third, I will offer an explanation of why Schopenhauer remained awkwardly attached to dismissing suicide even though his entire philosophical discourse seems to propel him into the direction of promoting it. This paper will move beyond the exegetical description of Schopenhauer's philosophy so as to discover a general characteristic of the human agent's relationship towards ending one's own life. In a sense, there always remains a beneficial disposition towards existence that even the surliest pessimist (i.e. Schopenhauer) cannot escape. This could explain why human agents tend to react equivocally and uneasily whenever anyone calls death a 'good', even when all characteristics of a good life are lacking in a human being. This beneficial disposition to any and all life is difficult to univocally determine, but must be taken into account for any and all reflections on end-life situations.

Emily Knight

Emily Knight studied History of Art and Visual Culture at the University of Oxford, where she completed her Master's degree in 2012. Her Master's dissertation focused on portraiture and death masks in the late eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries in Britain. She currently works in a paintings conservation and restoration studio and is developing ideas for a PhD project on self-portraiture in eighteenth-century British art.

Casting Presence: The Death Mask of Sir Thomas Lawrence

When Sir Thomas Lawrence died in 1730, plaster casts were made of his face and right hand. The death mask was placed inside a wooden box with a lid that contained a mezzotint of the artist in life, his paintbrush, chalk and pencils, and a lock of his hair. This curious collection of objects formed a temporal bridge from past to present, operating as a site of remembrance that surpassed mere physical description. The experience of lifting the lid and the traces of life to reveal the death mask concealed beneath, presented the viewer with the absolute and unalterable finality of death.

But how did this object so lacking in life function as anything more than a weak referent to the absent body? Surely the hard, white materiality of the death mask prevented any real engagement with it, stripping the viewer of any true sense of the deceased in life.

Lawrence's death mask in this regard exceeds its limitations by marking his existence through trace, touch and abject remains with the addition of actual remnants of his body and the tools of his trade. Does Lawrence's death mask therefore, mark the point at which commemoration and deified celebration made way for a more encompassing and personal memorial on the brink of the Victorian Age? In this paper, I will discuss this key moment in early nineteenth century visual culture, before photography emerged as the predominant mode of automatic reproduction. I will consider how this process of remembrance created an experience of death that was both haptic and optic, exact and emotional, thereby revealing the contemporary fascination with mankind's inevitable end.

Eran Laish

Eran Laish is a PhD candidate at the department of comparative religion, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Completed his Bachelor degree cognitive science, and afterwards he began his studies for Master degree in religious studies with an emphasis on contemplative traditions from east and west alike. His thesis was written under the supervision of Dr. Yael Ben-Tor on the theme of the relations

between liberated and worldly existence within the Tibetan Buddhist tradition of "The Great Perfection". His PhD dissertation is a continuation of this exploration as it focuses on the relations between view and praxis, including these practices that concern the event and the process of death, within the same tradition. His main emphasis is on the phenomenological dimensions of theory and praxis, which reveal a novel vision of human existence.

A Gate for Liberation: On the dynamic meanings of Death within Tibetan Buddhism

Death as a central existential event holds a special place within the Buddhist culture as it is one of the main motivations for attaining liberation from cyclic existence, as well as the gate through which complete freedom is realized. Due to its centrality, different aspects of the phenomenon of death were described extensively throughout various Buddhist traditions, most notably in the different Tibetan traditions in which a detailed elaboration of the multiple dimensions of death can be found. Within the Tibetan traditions the existential climax of death received a pivotal importance, due to its being a fundamental motivating force for transforming one's present life and, simultaneously, a gate for introducing the primordial nature of one's own mind. Hence, the integration of death into daily life was acknowledged as a crucial step for ascertaining noble life, which culminates in release from the various misperceptions concerning the essential nature of life and death.

The old tradition of Tibetan Buddhism (Tib. rNying-ma) has utilized the phenomenon of death for achieving various goals, such as changing the attitude of the seeking mind, motivating the mind of the practitioner, and, finally, attaining liberation within the phases of death itself. These shifting goals have found a clear expression in the varying descriptions of death, as well as the changing attitudes towards it. From perceiving it as external phenomenon that marks the end of personal life and the collapse of human desires, through its detailed phenomenological description up to its introduction as revealing authentic Being, death remained in the center of this Buddhist tradition. Thus, a concise description of the main modes of perceiving death within this tradition, which is the aim of the proposed paper, can shed unique light on the rich array of existential meanings that are revealed through and within the event of death.

Fabien Lacouture

Fabian Lacouture currently works as a teaching assistant at the Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne university and is writing his PhD about « Children history and representation from the XIVth to the XVIth century in Northern and Central Italy » with history of art Professor Nadeije Laneyrie-Dagen. Fabian worked before as an undergraduated student on related topics : « Children representation in Venetian Paintings during the XVIth century » (supervised by Professor Nadeije Laneyrie-Dagen) and « Images of women between public and private spaces in Venetian painting during the XVIth century » (supervised by professor Anna Bellavitis). The conclusions of this research about women in Venice will be published this January 2013 in the journal CLIO. All his researches have been in the crossroads of history of art, modern history and anthropology.

Back from the dead: The Meanings of Child Resurrections in Trecento Italian Altarpieces

The life of children was fragile and tenuous in Italy during the Trecento. According to population studies, in Florence between 1300 and 1550, around 20% of children died before reaching the age of three, and 30% before the age of ten. Since the 1970s, historians have integrated the child throughout the spectrum of their subjects of study, and they have made numerous inquiries which confirmed the very high infant mortality rate in Italy at the end of the Middle-Ages and at the beginning of Renaissance.

Depicted in several works, in this case altarpieces and ex-votos dedicated to saints whose miracles included the resurrection of one or several children, death, as violent as it was, was always followed by the resurrection of the child by the saint to whom the altarpiece was dedicated. This plastic resurrection aimed to chase out the evil eye, to show Death he could be transcended, and to keep him from approaching. On a more pragmatic basis, these representations of death also had a pedagogical purpose for the parents. Indeed, a lot of educators warned parents and wet-nurses against household accidents. Falls from balconies, suffocation, animal bites, figure among the daily dangers painted in a very violent and crude way on the wooden panels. Showing – or reminding – that a violent death of their child could ensue from a moment of carelessness was a way to see to it that this kind of incident would never happen, or never again. That's why I would like to show in this lecture, from some

historical analyses but above all through a detailed study of these paintings, how Italian cities tried to prevent – via a pedagogical message – or even transcend – via the prophylactic qualities of images – the statistically likely death of their offspring.

Golie Talaie

Golie Talaie combines insights and working methods from her background as a visual artist with those of her training as an academic. Having "death and visual culture" as her main topic of interest, she addresses the complex relationship between photography, death and memory through interdisciplinary research, bringing together the approaches of the Media Studies and those of Sociology and Anthropology. In continuation of her research on post-mortem and funeral imagery, which she has been working on in the last few years, she will be starting her PhD candidature at Griffith University in Australia in 2013.

When the Private Dead Go Public: The Move of Funerary Photographs from the Private Site of Family to the Public Domain of Media.

Considering funerary photographs as part of the larger body of family photography, despite their seemingly contradictory content, in this paper I aim to discuss the public meaning of these images as they leave their familial circuits and domestic space of viewing and enter the mass media's space of display and circulation. I will try to argue that when intimate images of the deceased loved ones and vulnerable moments of the bereaved are viewed by a larger public in the media, especially on the Internet, this shift will effect both the public as well as the images.

Although knowing the person photographed is essential in understanding the funerary images, as it is in the broader context of family photography, by moving from the private realm of family to public spaces of the media they lose a large part, if not all, of their original meaning and become free-floating images, fragile and open to scrutiny, interpretation and even dislike or rejection.

Building on the recent studies about the increasing intimate state of contemporary public spaces of the media (Chow, Luckhurst, Matthews), I will demonstrate how images of distant death and suffering have given room to depiction of close and recognizable death. Examples of intimate images of the dead and funerals both in newspapers and on television as those shared through websites such as flickr and Youtube show not only how these images make recognition and identification possible with the unknown others, but also how these sites become platforms for communication and discussion about such significant topics as death, loss and grief.

Gregor Baszak

Gregor Baszak is currently pursuing his master's degree in American Studies at Johannes Gutenberg-University in Mainz, Germany. He completed his undergraduate degree in American Studies, and minored in Film Studies, also in Mainz. In 2011-12 he was enrolled as a visiting graduate student at the English department of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His main research interests lie in Marxist philosophy, and the history of thought and literature from the 18th century to the present. Gregor is also a member of the Platypus Affiliated Society, an international Marxist political organization devoted to "hosting the conversation on the Left".

Fear of Death After the Antimodern Turn: Don DeLillo's White Noise, Cosmopolis, and Falling Man

Novelist Don DeLillo is often termed to be a "postmodern" writer. However, what his main characters really experience is existential despair caused by the alienating characteristics of late capitalism. White Noise is a prime example of this recurrent trope. Jack Gladney, a professor of "Hitler Studies" at a liberal arts college, and his current wife Babette both suffer from acute fear of death, and take drastic medical measures to overcome this fear. The form and content of this and DeLillo's other novels express symptoms of an epistemic shift in the second half of the 20th century, often termed "postmodern". A closer look at the social and historical background of this turn reveals, however, that "postmodernity" really is a wrong label. Jack's professorship in "Hitler Studies" is particularly telling. Just as cultural studies generally examine small items as supposedly representative of society at large, so does Jack treat Hitler rather as a kind of celebrity instead of the leading figure of a bourgeois society turned barbaric.

Here, we are faced with the changed understanding of the cultural meaning of death in our present. Whereas in premodern times, death would be regarded as the celestial extension of a limited earthly

lifespan and true freedom was only to be expected in God's kingdom, so did the rise of bourgeois society emphasize the individual's time on earth as crucial. What our "postmodern" culture more generally, and the characters in the novels of Don DeLillo more specifically indicate, is rather a dangerously antimodern regression within our collective conscious. To give meaning to our limited time on earth again, would be to fight back the returning forces of barbarism.

Hélène Vu Thanh

Hélène Vu Thanh is a teaching assistant at the University of Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense. She defended her thesis on the catholic missions to Japan in the 16th and 17th centuries at Paris IV Sorbonne University (in November 2012). Her research focuses on conversion methods developed by the missionaries, the reception of Catholicism by the Japanese as well as the circulation of knowledge between Japan and Europe.

From accommodation to intransigence: Jesuit missionaries and Japanese funeral rites (16th-17th centuries)

Jesuit missionaries landed in Japan in 1549, six years after the country was discovered by Portuguese merchants. In a very short time, they succeeded in converting part of the Japanese population, especially in the southern regions. Despite this relative success, the constitution of a Japanese Christianity was faced with many difficulties: one of them was the confrontation with Japanese funeral rites and Buddhist doctrines, which had a very different take on death and the after life. The main problem lay with the rites themselves: their cultural and social importance was obvious, and the people seemed deeply attached to traditional ceremonies. The question was whether to preserve part of the Buddhist rites, so as not to challenge Japanese customs too recklessly, and whether some of those rites could be adapted, and how. Such questioning meant understanding precisely what Japanese rites were about: pure Buddhism, or mere expression of local traditions? Missionaries found funeral rites to be a very difficult issue for, as their centrality in Japanese society left little room for the introduction of Christian rites. At first, the missionaries preserved part of the Japanese funeral rites, and adapted them so as to bring them in line with Christian orthodoxy. But around the turn of the 17th century, the Jesuits decided to clearly separate Christian rites from Buddhist ones, so as to distinguish clearly the two radically different understandings of death and the after life.

Imma Ramos

Imma Ramos completed her BA and MPhil in the History of Art at Cambridge University. Her PhD research explores the importance of art, ritual, myth, sacred geography and iconography in places of worship consecrated to the Hindu goddess Shakti, known as Shakti Pithas: Kalighat and Tarapith in West Bengal and Kamakhya in Assam. These are three of many temple complexes which were built on sites where parts of the goddess's body fell, scattered across the subcontinent.

'The Ecstasy of Death: Tantric Ritual and Visuality at Bengal's Tarapith Temple'

This paper will take a fresh look at the ways in which the many facets of death have been articulated and conceptualised in Tantric ritual and iconography at one of the most notorious pilgrimage sites in India: Tarapith in West Bengal. The significance of death imagery in Tantric practice derives from a doctrinal emphasis on the individual's realisation of his own mortality and the transience of all material things. The fierce Tara murti (divinely embodied icon) which is worshipped at the site is depicted holding a severed head and garlanded with a necklace of skulls. Her mouth is smeared with red sindoor (vermilion) paste in a manner resembling blood, and she has a long protruding tongue. This is taken even further by sadhakas (religious practitioners) at Tarapith who, seeking to tap the creative spiritual power of the goddess, frequently seat themselves on or near to five human skulls (panca-mundi- asana) in the cremation ground. Meditation while seated on a recently dead human corpse is also practised, as is animal sacrifice. The khadga (ritual decapitation sword) used at Tarapith has a curved blade commonly seen in images of Tara, where it symbolizes the destruction of ignorance and death of the ego. The most famous Tantric practitioner at the site was the 19th century 'mad saint' Bamakhepa, whose descriptive visions of Tara will be examined in terms of how far they have informed her iconography, and vice versa. It is said that while performing his sadhana in the cremation ground that he was granted a vision of Tara in her capacity as benign creatress and ferocious destroyer: dancing upon a burning corpse, he saw a 'demoness' with long teeth and fiery eyes, wearing a tiger skin and snake ornaments. She then took him to her breast, echoing another form of Tara presented to devotees

at Tarapith: inside the fierce murti is a relic which is only brought out for viewing once a day. This is a rough, uncarved stone which is believed to represent Tara in the form of a mother, breastfeeding the god Shiva. Tara is thus the very principle of life: she gives it, but also takes it away in an endless cycle of creation and destruction.

Ina Otte

Ina Otte studied Sociology at the University of Bielefeld, Germany. She started her work as a PhD-student at the Institute of Biomedical Ethics, University of Basel, Switzerland in May 2012. Her doctoral thesis focuses on the role of general practitioners in palliative care settings and is part of a bigger project funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation.

Dying with dignity – the Role of General Practitioners

Authors: Ina Otte, Corinna Jung

Institute of Bio- and Medical Ethics, University of Basle, Switzerland

Introduction: Nowadays prosperity and modern medicine have led to increasing life expectancies and an aging society. The demographic development with an increase of very aged people will lead to a greater number of patients needing palliative and end-of-life care. Over 80% of patients die after a period of chronic or incurable disease. These patients face complex care situations, when palliative care becomes predominant. Patients' multi-morbidity, frailty, disabilities, dependency and the management of complex medical, social and financial conditions are big challenges for community-based care. Gaps in these conditions have an important impact on the quality of a national health care system and – even more important - on patients and their autonomy. General practitioners have a key role in end of life scenarios. Their knowledge of the palliative care system (financing, treatment options, availability of palliative care services etc.) provides the basis for patients to be (or not to be) in the position to choose autonomously in matters of end-of-life decision making. At the moment not only the quality of care but therefore also the possibility to die with dignity varies depending on region, disease pattern, coordination of different palliative services and attending practitioner. Our Swiss-wide study shows the different aspects and wishes of patients (place of death, role of spirituality etc.) that must be considered when administering palliative care.

Methods: We collect different types of data to show different pathways of patients needing palliative care. A survey with bereaved relatives that cared for a patient will show the perspective of how they perceived the end-of-life phase. 30 semi-structured interviews with GPs and focus groups with experts are conducted to show gaps and barriers experts are facing while administering palliative care.

Results: First results are currently analysed and will be presented at the conference.

Ingrida Bakutyte

Ingrida Bakutyte obtained a Bachelor's degree in French Philology at Vytautas Magnus University in Lithuania in 2002. She holds a Master's degree in French language and culture from Leiden University (2009). Currently Ingrida is a PhD student at Leiden University. The main research topic focuses on the reception of French literature in Lithuania in the context of national identity.

Reincarnation in Baltic folklore

This proposal aims to analyze Baltic (Lithuanian and Latvian) folklore in the perspective of death and afterlife. One of the most interesting elements of death in Baltic folk tales, songs, myths and legends is reincarnation which surprised the first missionaries and annalist of Teutonic Order and which incited the curiosity of later researchers. One of them was a Lithuanian - French poet and diplomat Oscar Milosz who translated and published Lithuanian folk tales in French. He was trying to prove that the origins of Indo- Europeans were in the Baltic Sea region and not in Asia. In Lithuanian folk tales he searched for such elements as human transformation into birds, animals or trees after death to confirm his suggestion that Lithuanian mythology surprisingly reminds the Indian mythology. According to him, in a folk tale one returns to the unlimited time of the primordial being where individual existence is endless.

Another passionate researcher who published several books about Balts and their folk art was a Lithuanian – American archeologist Marija Gimbutas, interested in Baltic mythology and Proto- Indo-European origins. She mentions a significant number of folk arts where one may find that after death,

when the soul leaves the body, it reincarnates into trees, flowers, animals or birds. Sometimes it would issue directly from the mouth in the shape of a butterfly, a bee, a mouse, a toad, a snake, or grow out of the mouth of a young girl in the shape of a lily. Young single people after death were dressed as for their wedding. It was believed that unmarried and childless deceased could not disappear. She or he was supposed to reincarnate into a tree, a plant, a bird, an animal and even into a future baby. When living in a different shape, the deceased must leave descendants after him. This paper would present the particularities of Baltic perception of reincarnation with various examples from different sorts of folk arts. Nowadays, the belief in reincarnation is particularly high in the Baltic countries, with Lithuania having the highest figure for the whole of Europe, 44%¹. Is this the same belief coming from ancestors' times or is it a new and "modern" understanding of reincarnation? What is the role of folk arts in the formation of such a perception?

1. "Popular psychology, belief in life after death and reincarnation in the Nordic countries, Western and Eastern Europe", *Nordic Psychology*, 2006, 58 (2) 171-180.

Isabelle Van den Broeke

Isabelle Van den Broeke is a doctoral candidate in Art History at the University of Ghent, currently completing her thesis on late 18th century proto-cinema and graphic arts with a particular focus on Goya, Blake and the phantasmagoria. Isabelle also works for a Brussels-based exhibition design firm.

The phantasmagoria as a visual research model in the analysis of (cinemato)graphic art and its materialisation of the modern haunted vision on death and temporality.

Enlightenment ends the medieval tradition in which death is a familiar presence in everyday life. For the sake of disenchantment the idea of a supernatural world of spirits is eliminated and the dead are hidden from sight in closed coffins and cemeteries outside the city. But wherever religion or superstition have been defeated new forms of magic take their place. The confronting physical presence of corpses during the violent revolutions and the metaphysical omnipresence of death in a secularized fear of the inevitable end of life transform death in a haunting entity (hauntology). In the dialectics of early modernity around 1800 death hovers ambiguously between presence and absence, visibility and invisibility or reality and imagination.

A late 18th century optical entertainment, the phantasmagoria show, visualizes these uncanny dualities of the modern death concept. The spectacle's most famous haunterpreneur Etienne-Gaspard Robertson brings famous revolutionaries, gothic novel creatures and the loved ones of his spectators to life in the form of filmic appearances. An illusionary projection technique makes still or dead images move, renders the invisible visible and blurs the boundaries between reality and fiction. The phantasmagoria prefigures the haunting ability of film to capture the modern dialectics of life and death. This technical and philosophical framework of the moving image is discussed in Laura Mulvey's influential publication *Death 24x a second*.

This late 18th century phantasmagoric spectacle encounters a huge success all over Europe. Its spectral techniques (transparency, movement, stillness, light, shadow,...) inspire early modern artists such as Goya, Blake or Fuseli. A phantasmagoria based analysis of their fantastic art labels their work as proto-cinematographic and grasps their artistic treatment of the modern haunted vision on death and temporality.

Jadwiga Kamola

Jadwiga Kamola studied History of Art and English at the universities in Freiburg, Dublin and Berlin (Freie Universität), where she received her Magister degree. In 2011 she joined the Cluster of Excellence "Asia and Europe in a Global Context" at Heidelberg University as a doctoral student. Her scholarly interests range from images of illness and death with the focus on materiality (paint and flesh) and aesthetics of reception; seeing and knowing, the interface of art and medicine and global entanglements in art.

STERILE DEATHS IN „LIFE AFTER DEATH“

Dying as Observed in Contemporary Popular Photography

This talk addresses a recent exhibition of photographs "Life after Death" ("Noch mal Leben – vor dem Tod. Eine Fotoausstellung über das Sterben") by the German photographer Walter Schels and the

journalist Beate Lakotta displayed between 2003 and 2012 at several museums, art galleries and churches in Europe and Israel. The 45 black and white photographs show patients of a variety of ages beyond recovery from hospices in Germany (see images 1-3). Each patient is depicted in two huge portraits (60 x 70 cm); frontally facing the beholder before his death on the left and immediately after the death as sleeping cadaver on the right. The images are accompanied by a brief narrative on the patient's life.

This talk critically analyses the before and after format applied to depict death in the photographs by juxtaposing three photographs of the series to Géricault's drowned and guillotined heads (1819-20), medical illustrations (19 th c.) and contemporary make-over images. I claim that rather than elucidating death the photographs obfuscate the process of dying and privilege the sight of a sterile and beautiful body. The photographs refrain from showing the open mouthed agony as defamed by Lessing or the disgusting and plethoric body as suggested by Bakhtin. Instead, dying remains hidden in the gap in between the images.

In a further step this talk discusses the dialectics of seeing and not seeing as related to knowing and not knowing and locates the photographs in the context of the portrait of the one-eyed King Antigonos (382 –301 BC) painted by Apelles. The portrait concealed the king's defect and therewith followed the rhetorical term of dissimulatio, the withholding of knowledge. In the light of an aging society with death remaining on the margins, Walter Schels's photographs serve as a moral and didactic memento mori. But despite their initial intention they withhold the knowledge of dying and exacerbate the fear of death.

Jessica Adach

With a background in History and Contemporary Studies (Dalhousie/University of King's College) and a M.A. in European Studies (University of Guelph), Jessica Adach is now pursuing a degree in the Human Rights and Genocide Studies program through Kingston University London. She has recently completed her first semester in Berlin, and will continue to study in Warsaw and Siena later this year. Jessica has participated in several conferences across Canada on the topic of women's rights and roles in Berlin during World War Two, and is now working on a project surrounding children's experiences in Nazi Occupied Poland. She is excited to be returning to Leiden for her second conference here.

Lost Children: Cultural Genocide and the Lebensborn Program in Poland

„History is filled with bloody battles, acts of cruelty, and broken promises. [...] Why is genocide so different? The crucial difference lies within the minds of those who commit genocide. They seek to destroy not just people [...] but entire cultures.“¹

Genocide is commonly defined as the mass murder of a specific group; yet as Brendan January explains, the aim is often to obliterate more than life. My paper looks at the cultural genocide Nazis undertook in Poland during World War II, focussing specifically on the trafficking of children deemed acceptable for „Germanization,“ referred to as the Lebensborn Program.

The Nazis seized power of Poland in 1939, using it for German expansion, devoid of Polish heritage. Street signs changed from Polish to German, speaking Polish was forbidden, and an estimated 250,000 children who had „Aryan“ features were „Germanized.“² These genocidal aspects were to contribute to an extinction of Polish culture, including wiping out children's pasts by forging new German identities. Folke Heinecke discovered he was kidnapped as a child: „I was declared to be capable of being Germanised and was shipped back to the Fatherland. [...] I was just without roots and it was these roots that caused me to spend over 30 years of my life looking for secrets of the past.“³

Cultural genocide is the „purposeful destructive targeting of out-group cultures so as to destroy or weaken them in the process of conquest or domination.“⁴ While this may not include loss of physical life, the loss of elements that define one's life are massacred.

1. Brendan January, pg 6. Genocide: Modern Crimes Against Humanity. Twenty-first Century Books: Minneapolis, 2007.

2. Stolen Children,“ Gitta Sereny, The Jewish Virtual Library. November, 1999. Accessed November 3, 2012. <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/Holocaust/children.html>
3. Man Kidnapped by SS discovers true identity,“ Foreign Correspondent, The Daily Telegraph. January 6, 2009. Accessed October 23, 2012. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/germany/4142453/Man-kidnapped-by-SS-discovers-true-identity.html#>
4. Lawrence Davidson, pg. 1. Cultural Genocide. Rutgers University Press: New Jersey, 2012.

Joanna Krawczyk-Coltekin

Joanna Krawczyk-Coltekin is an art historian whose main area of interest is the late medieval iconography. She did her masters at the Lodz University, Poland. Currently, she is working on her PhD thesis in the OGC, University of Utrecht, under supervision of prof. Jeroen Stumpel. In the past, she has worked on relationship of body and identity, the art of the Old Masters and their modern artistic interpretations. Her current project is on the Medieval iconography of angels carrying souls of the individuals to the Hereafter. In this research, she employs an art historical analysis with a broad view on changes in medieval eschatology and religious beliefs of the Last Things.

The angels ascending the souls of the dead in the medieval art.

Since Johan Huizinga's "Autumn of the Middle Ages" the most common assumption concerning the medieval death and dying was that medieval man was occupied with the macabre and infused with fear of a morbid death. Indeed, this kind of attitude can be found in several examples, especially from the visual arts, such as the transi tomb, danse macabre, memento mori – all of them being images with a very negative impact.

But upon a closer look at the medieval iconography and the literary sources we discover a completely different world, world filled with hope and trust, world of a "positive" (as opposed to the "negative" macabre category) face of death and dying. This world is shown in countless examples of the ascensions of the souls of the dead, carried by the angels to the Hereafter. Moreover, considering the frequency of occurrence and types of media used (from the tomb sculpture, through manuscript illuminations of various quality, to expensive panel paintings), it is possible to suggest that this was a common way in which medieval man imagined – or expected – the end of his life.

A careful study of the images of angels carrying souls, it becomes clear that the appearance of this representations and certain changes the image underwent during medieval times are closely related with changes in religious doctrine and practice of the time (such as those implied by the 4th Lateran Council) and eschatology in particular (for example inventions of Purgatory or the Individual Judgement). These fascinating changes include as well a shift in the types of representation of the dead being carried. Starting from the saintly souls of the earlier centuries, towards the middle ages and especially the end of the Medieval time, we find more and more souls of the "regular" man ascending to the Celestial Realm. Therefore we discover a unknown, "positive" face of medieval death. The proposed paper is based on my PhD research, which I expect to complete in the year 2013.

Jostein Hølland

Jostein Hølland: BA in History of Ideas from the University of Oslo; Research MA in Literary Studies from the University of Leiden. Main academic interest lies in the study of cultural and aesthetic artifacts from the point of view that they reproduce and/or create particular political circumstances; circumstances that supplement their aesthetic or "cultural" pretexts.

The accidental encounter as an end to narrative; a reading of D.A.F. de Sade's murder of Justine
By the internal logic of the Sadean narrative, the death of Justine marks the moment of a long awaited conclusion to Sade's attempt at creating, through means of narrative, a social and political sphere in which transgression (of norms and customs) has established itself as the new guidelines of social interaction. While it might be objected that Sade only achieves this in his own novelistic world, it could be argued that his writings foresee a world in which they (the writings) could be written and printed without fear of censorship or reactions by the penal system. As such, Sade's writings invite modern society, and they should be understood as an early example of the sacrifice of socially cohesive narratives on the altar of free market capitalism.

From this conceptualization, the character of Justine, who challenges the Sadean libertine's attempt at constructing a politics from the theoretical tenets of "Sadist" philosophy, becomes a strangely schizophrenic figure. On the one hand she represents traditional society: her body must be harnessed, overcome and left behind for the libertine project to be a success; on the other hand she transgresses the transgressor: by forcing the narrative into a deadlock where it must kill her in order to reach its conclusion, she becomes a premise of the narrative that on the surface seems intent on effecting her abandonment. By finalizing and objectifying their theoretical grounding, the libertines bastardize the notion of transgression, Justine capitalizes on this situation and becomes the unwelcome hero of a story that sought the exclusion of her ethical position. Borrowing Louis Althusser's materialist methodology (extrapolated from his "materialism of the encounter") together with analytic interpellations from Gilles Deleuze and Georges Bataille, this paper will advance a reading of Sade's murder of Justine that emphasizes the disruptive quality of her death in regards to the narrative itself. Moreover, it will attempt to formulate a position from which death, either self-inflicted or inflicted by a politically hegemonic power, can be understood both in its accidental and in its structural, or structure-reliant, aspects.

The paper is in part based on my MA- thesis, "The Sadean Bildungsplot: Victimization and the Politics of Reason", delivered at the University of Leiden.

Krien Clevis

Krien Clevis (Goirle, the Netherlands 1960) studied at the Academy of Visual Arts in Maastricht and the Jan van Eyck Academy, Maastricht (1979-1986). In 2004, for the Royal Dutch Institute in Rome, she organized the project The Eternal Body, which has been on view in Rome (Villa Massimo, Deutsche Akademie) and Utrecht (University Museum and Museum Catharijneconvent). (with catalog) As curator/organizer and participant she was involved in CO-OPs. Exploring new territories in art and science, a project initiated by the Dutch Science Foundation (NWO) that in 2007 was realized in various cities in the Netherlands (with catalog/ www.coops.nl). In 2009 she curated and organized the exhibition and interdisciplinary manifestation Ophelia. Sehnsucht, melancholia and desire for death in the Museum of Modern Art from Arnhem (with catalog/ www.ophelia.nl). For the archaeological museum of the University of Amsterdam, the Allard Pierson Museum, she prepared a photo installation Life of Death Street within the exhibition 'Etrusken' (October 2011-March 2012). In the Royal Dutch Institute in Rome, where she is a doctoral fellow since 2009, there is a permanent photo installation. Krien Clevis is working towards a PhD at the Academy of Arts of Leiden University (expected doctorate degree on October 2013), and is a member of the research centre 'Autonomy and the public sphere in the Arts' of Zuyd University, Maastricht. She lives and works in Amsterdam.

Towards the final place?

Tombs from Antiquity seem to have a claim to eternity, but they, too, can be ephemeral, subject to being 'overwritten'. New layers of time and space may erode the memory of ancient places, thus giving rise to new places. In this continuum of change, of living and dying, eternal places are contested and anchored within a much larger whole. There is no final place.

Every era relies on new means to create and imagine sites for keeping the memory of the dead alive. Places have an atmospheric quality and an indefinite, intrinsic meaning that anchors them in their particular environment. The spirit of place is rendered concrete through sightlines that organize a place and link it to other places. The sightlines of classical Roman atrium houses happen to be congruent with those of Etruscan tombs. If architectonic sightlines have meaning in the social and hierarchical use of houses, thresholds on these sightlines mark transitions from one space to the next, as liminal spaces towards another world. Over time, however, the perfect house in life as well as death is bound to be overwritten by new layers of time and space. All places that we give some temporary use have had some other use before or belonged to someone else, each new user adding a new meaning. Places change because they are constantly overwritten and recreated, which also applies to the memory of these places. Over time, private sites of memory become sites of collective memory. We cross a final threshold at the end of our earthly life, without knowing where it will lead us. This not-knowing involves a deeply productive paradox, making life for the next generation livable, as in a self-enclosed system, whereby life simultaneously incorporates death as its counterpart. If death merely exists in the mind of the living, does this imply that life is equally a product of our imagination? As photographer/

researcher I try to create new sightlines, so to speak, by using contemporary means and my own, autobiographical ‘sightlines’, which in turn allow me to overwrite existing (memories of) places.

Leen Van Brussel

Leen Van Brussel is a researcher at the Centre for Media and Culture, Vrije Universiteit Brussel. Funded by the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO-Vlaanderen), she works on a doctoral thesis about the discursive constructions and representations of the medicalized death in Belgium.

The articulation of autonomy and dignity in contemporary debates on the end-of-life: theoretical perspectives, media constructions and audiences’ receptions.

Death is often regarded as the ultimate biological essentialism, which often results in a privileging of realist and materialist approaches on death and dying, leaving little space for constructivist and idealist approaches (Carpentier & Van Brussel, 2012). Starting from a social constructivist ontology, this paper deploys the discourse theory of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe to argue that contemporary debates on the end-of-life are centered around two key signifiers; autonomy and dignity. Rather than being fully fixed and stable, however, both signifiers are contingent and carry a variety of meanings within different discursive projects. The aims of this paper are threefold. First, this paper distinguishes the varieties of autonomy and dignity by re-interpreting theoretical perspectives in a discourse-theoretical fashion. Second, starting from a perspective on mass media as sites of meaning production and contestation, this paper studies the articulation of autonomy and dignity in the coverage on the end-of-life in a combination of Belgian mainstream and specialized (medical) media. Third, this paper analyses audiences’ responses to the dominant and counter-dominant articulations found in the Belgian media coverage. By means of a discourse-theoretical analysis, this study exposes in the media coverage a dominant – yet contested – articulation of the theoretical variant of rational-personal autonomy and of dignity in terms of self-identity, which results in limited visibility of alternative articulations focusing on care and dependency. In interpreting media representations, audiences draw from their own – discursively shaped – experiences and attitudes to identify or de-identify themselves with particular media articulations, which results in the presence of a variety of reception frames, going from a dominant reading frame to a radically oppositional reading frame to interpret and evaluate media articulations of autonomy and dignity.

Lindsay Penner

Lindsay Penner is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Greek and Roman Studies at the University of Calgary, in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, and expects to defend her dissertation, which deals with the commemorative habits of the slaves and freed slaves of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, in the middle of 2013. Her research focuses on Latin epigraphy in general, with particular emphasis on the lives of slaves, freed slaves, and women, as well as on occupations and household organization in the Roman world.

Commemorative Habits of the Slaves and Freed Slaves of the Roman Imperial Household

The first five emperors of Rome belonged to the Julio-Claudian dynasty (r. 27 B.C.E. – 68 C.E.), and the slaves and freed slaves of those emperors and their family members have left extensive records of their names, occupations, and relationships in their funerary inscriptions. Some of their practices reflect the general commemorative trends found among their contemporaries outside the Imperial household, while others are unique to this newly-formed social class. In order to understand the commemorative practices and epigraphic habits of the early Imperial household, I have conducted an extensive statistical analysis of over 1,300 inscriptions naming slaves and freed slaves of the Julio-Claudians, with approximately 1,800 individuals represented within my sample.

In some instances, the social and commemorative practices of Imperial slaves and freed slaves mirror those of their counterparts outside the Imperial household: individuals tend to marry those of the same legal status as themselves, there is an emphasis on familial relationships and on the commemoration of young children, and the epitaphs themselves use the same overall format and epigraphic formulae. In other cases, however, the differences are stark, marking Imperial slaves and freed slaves as a separate social class with their own social customs, their own collective identity, and their own cultural concepts regarding the commemoration of their dead and the type of information that ought to be included in a funerary inscription. These differences extend from naming conventions to occupational titles, from marriage patterns to burial locations, and they clearly separate Imperial slaves and freed slaves from

their non-Imperial counterparts as a distinct social group, one whose connection to the emperor and his family provided a considerable degree of social – if not legal – status to Imperial slaves and freed slaves as well as their spouses, children, and their own slaves and freed slaves in turn.

Luca Pitteloud

Luca Pitteloud studied philosophy and journalism at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland and at Trinity College, Dublin. His MA-thesis is entitled : “Éléments pour une lecture rationnelle du mythe d’Er de Platon” (2006). His Ph.D deals with the separation between Forms and particulars in Plato’s metaphysics. During his graduate studies, he undertook different academic stays : in 2009 at the Graduiertenschule für antike Philosophie (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin), in 2010 at the Université de Paris I (Panthéon-Sorbonne), in 2011 at Yale University in New Haven (Connecticut) and in 2012 at UC, Berkeley (California). He is currently working on a French translation of Aristotle’s *Peri Ideôn*.

Lucretius on Death: “Death is Nothing to Us” Revisited

In this paper I want to examine how Epicurus’ famous argument against the fear of death (Death is nothing to us, since when we are, death has not come, and when death has come, we are not) is endorsed by Lucretius in his poem *De Rerum Natura*. I shall argue that in Book III, 830-930, Lucretius proposes his own version of Epicurus’ argument, a revisited version which takes into consideration the tragic aspect of death. When claiming that death is nothing to us, Epicurus did not face with its tragic dimension. In this way, a strict materialistic and atomistic approach on death is missing the existential part of the problem. This is what happens with Epicurus’ argument, an argument which would appear to be an alternative among others to dissolve the fear of death by facing our mortal finitude. We shall see that Lucretius’ interpretation of this argument is not merely a reprise but revision of it. This revision is undertaken through the use of poetic images in order to express the tragic dimension of death. A pure rational argument fails to describe this dimension.

In admitting lucidly the anguish that the thought of death produces on human beings, Lucretius goes beyond Epicurus’ argument and develop a vision about death which will not only be expressed through philosophy but also through poetry. With the help of poetic devices, Lucretius can provide a vivid description of death which is also, at the same time, closer to the existential fear that seems to characterize many human beings. Through the reading of Lucretius’ version of Epicurus’s argument, I want to show how Lucretius proposes a dark and tragic evocation of death, a description which differs from Epicurus’ serenity towards death.

Marjolein Platjee

Marjolein Platjee completed her Bachelor in English Language and Culture (2010) and her Research Master Literary Studies (2012) at the University of Amsterdam. She is currently a first year PhD student with the Amsterdam School of Cultural Analysis, also at the University of Amsterdam. Having developed a considerable interest in death and the afterlife in the Victorian era, Marjolein’s research centers on the ways in which death is denied in British Victorian novels. Her present paper is based on part of her MA thesis “Denying Death: Beautifying the Dead or Dying Body in British Victorian Novels and Paintings”, a topic which will play a prominent part in her dissertation.

Hiding Death in Plain Sight: The Denial of Death in Victorian Fiction and Painting

Since the publication of *The Hour of Our Death* in 1981, in which Philippe Ariès terms the Victorian era “the age of the beautiful death,” we have seen extensive research on the beautification of the female dying or dead body; critics typically explain this phenomenon as the fetishistic desire of the male spectator to render the female body as passive so as to cleanse it of the threat of castration. The beautification of the male dying or dead body, however, has surprisingly received little to no attention in scholarly work. Using novels such as Ellen Wood’s *The Heir of Redclyffe* and Mary Elizabeth Braddon’s *The Doctor’s Wife*, as well as paintings by Edward Burne Jones and Robert Hughes, I will introduce examples of the beautification of the dying or dead male body into the existing discourse and offer an explanation as to why the Victorians beautified their deaths in literature and painting, which accounts for the presence of both female and male bodies.

Drawing on Mikhail Bakhtin’s theory of the chronotope, I will argue that the beautification of the dying or dead body was an attempt by Victorian artists to deny death. Due to the religious uncertainty characteristic of the greater part of this era, death came to be regarded as an ungraspable, transitional

chronotope characterized by untemporality and non-space. In portraying the body of the sick or deceased as beautiful, artists and writers tried to arrest the move towards the death chronotope by infesting the body with time and space. For, as beauty is inherently related to the here and now, something which is beautiful cannot be dying. As I explain, the artists attempted to hide death in plain sight.

Marko Stamenkovic

Marko Stamenkovic (1977) is a curator and art historian born and raised in the south of Serbia. He is a member of IKT – the International Association of Curators of Contemporary Art.

After graduating with a B.A. in Art History from the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Philosophy, History of Modern Art Department ("Theory of Gaze and Reading of the Image", 2003), he received his M.A. degree in Cultural Policy and Cultural Management (UNESCO Chair) from the University of Arts in Belgrade - Interdisciplinary Studies accredited by the University Lyon 2 ("Status of Curatorial Practices in Post-socialist Conditions", 2005). Since 2011 he has been based in Belgium as a PhD student at the University of Ghent (Center for Ethics and Value Inquiry, Department of Philosophy and Moral Sciences, Faculty of Arts and Philosophy). His doctoral project is titled: "Suicide Cultures. Theories and Practices of Radical Withdrawal – A Transnational Cultural and Media Paradigm (2001–2011)". It puts into focus the changing nature, dramatic actuality and expanded, bio-ethical and visual meaning of suicidal phenomena as symptoms of global media culture in the first decade of the 21st century (or the '9/11' decade).

THE END OF LIFE CONTROVERSIES: IMAGES OF DEATH - ICONS OF THE FUTURE Physician-assisted Suicide, Documentary Filmmaking, and Public Attention

Throughout history, the question of suicide has remained the subject of plurality par excellence in terms of being permeated by diversity of views that have kept provoking not only public attention but also heated public debates. Throughout the twentieth century, the particular issue of assisted-suicide and euthanasia has grown in the sense of expanding such pluralism further, especially after "the watershed event" in 1984 when the Netherlands became the first Western country having legal sanction to some forms of assisted suicide and euthanasia thanks to the Dutch Supreme Court's decision to permit them in the groundbreaking Schoonheim case (Smies 2003, Paterson 2008). The contemporary public debate in that regard is ethical, legal and institutional inasmuch as it questions the moral, administrative, and political status of assisted suicide and euthanasia in a very intense, mediated and - last but not least - controversial manner.

This paper focuses on vision and visibility of the practice of physician-assisted suicide by examining the representation of death in contexts of our times where this practice is legally impermissible in comparison to contexts where it is legally permissible, especially for foreign citizens. Being the only country in the world allowing such a practice to non-residents, Switzerland has been in the public spotlight for decades. Complementary to the current debates surrounding the subject, but also outside of strictly medical, legal and ethical perspectives in the existent scholarly body of writing, my paper targets the aspects of visual communication in the atmosphere out of which the polemics around end-of-life decision making continue to emerge. I intend therefore to "read" images of suicide (i) as materialized in a very concrete situation of one person's final phase of the end-of-life decision making process and its outcome, and (ii) as experienced through documentary film format available over mass media. My special point of interest here revolves around the status of images of selected individuals (Michèle Causse and Craig Ewert). By allowing themselves to be filmed for general audience in the final phase of their lives before undertaking physician-assisted suicide procedures (including the very moment of their actual deaths), they took part in historical transformation of suicidal subjectivities that, I believe, occurs in the materiality of image-making itself, marked by the shift from video-recorded private memorials into publicly exposed - yet still controversial - identities of public icons.

Marlène Delsouiller

Associated researcher IHRiS (CNRS-Lille 3)

PhD History of art directed by Christian HECK (Lille University): The Medieval Iconography of the Dry Tree

Publications: "Les arbres sans feuilles du bois des suicidés dans les manuscrits enluminés des XIVe et XVe siècles de la Divine Comédie", dans 132e congrès national des sociétés historiques et

scientifiques, Arles, 2007, Imaginer et représenter l'au-delà, dir. par Pierre-Yves le Pogam, Arles, 2007, Paris, CTHS, 2010, p. 108-117 (édition électronique).- "Images de l'arbre sans feuilles des cathédrales de Tolède et de Barcelone (XIVe-XVe siècle)", dans L'Arbre au Moyen Age, Actes du colloque de Bordeaux, 2008, dir. par Valérie Fasseur, Danièle James-Raoul et Jean-René Valette, Paris, Presses Universitaires de Paris-Sorbonne, 2010 (Culture et civilisation médiévales 49).- Preparation: paper for CTHS Rennes April 2013

The medieval iconography of Adam's death

XIVth-XVth century

The iconography of the death of the first man Adam appeared early in the Middle Ages and continued throughout the period. The theme is crucial, it is not just about the death of one man, but mankind, as Paul the Apostle states it clearly : « Death reigned from Adam » (Romans V, 14-21). The object of our study is to analyse the images of the XIVth and XVth centuries in order to highlight what they show on this theme, how they illustrate it, in which contexts and according which evolution.

The death of Adam is linked with the original sin where death is already present on the images : having disobeyed, Adam is expelled from the Earthly Paradise (spiritual death). This marks for him the beginning of a life of hard labour on earth which ends in death (physical death). A few rare images show the old Adam dying, Adam dead and Adam like a transi of the end of the Middle Ages. These images illustrate the famous Legend of the wood of the Cross. Other images, more numerous, link the death of the first Adam and that of the second Adam, Jesus-Christ. We will study the images of the Crucifixion with include Adam's bones at the foot of the Cross. The variations in this iconography we will be examined, the idea being that Jesus was crucified on the very place where Adam is buried (Golgotha meaning « the mount of the skull »).

Adam's death is followed by his resurrection in Christ. Adam having repented is forgiven and pull out from limbo. There is a wealth of images on this subject. They convey a wonderful message of hope for mankind. Indeed, they show that just like the first parent, a penitent man can hope a new life in God.

Michiel Verheij

Leiden University

Death by Representation: Mimesis Between Murder and Immortality in Edgar Allan Poe's 'The Oval Portrait'

At the beginning of the short story 'The Oval Portrait' by Edgar Allan Poe, a wounded traveler takes refuge in a deserted castle in the Apennines. While reclining in one of the rooms, he becomes fascinated by an extremely lifelike portrait of a young girl that is hanging on the wall. In a little book found on his pillow he reads the history of the painting's creation. The portrait depicts the bride of the artist. This painter was so obsessed by the pursuit of artistic perfection, that he failed to notice how his model withered away in the process of painting. With every brushstroke, her vital powers faded away from her body. When the artist finally finished his painting, he screamed in excitement: "This is indeed Life itself!"-- only to find that his wife had died.

In this paper I will not focus on the representation of death, but, instead, consider the idea of representation conceived of as a form of death. Poe's story can easily be read as an allegory of artistic creation and its ambiguous relationship with living reality. While the girl in the story is, in a sense, immortalized within the timeless painting, thus being lifted from the transitory realm of human mortality, at the same time this process entails her actual death. Artistic representation, the tale seems to suggest, by its nature implies the destruction of the very reality it depicts. What we end up with is an inversion of the famous story of Pygmalion: instead of an inert artwork becoming a living girl, here we witness the transformation of a living girl into a static work of art.

In my paper, I will relate this thought to the perennial debate about the nature of mimesis. From Plato onwards, philosophers and scholars have discussed the status of artistic representation and its relation to the living reality that surrounds us. Poe's story offers us a remarkable window from which to consider Plato's infamous criticism of poetry, as well as Baudrillard's theory of the simulacrum. It will be argued that the tale provides a vivid demonstration of Baudrillard's notion of simulation, whereby

the model is replaced by the image, reality giving way to 'hyperreality'. 'The Oval Portrait' dramatically confronts us with the murderous capacity inherent in the principle of representation.

Natashe Lemos Dekker

Natashe Lemos Dekker has recently graduated from the Research Masters 'Gender and Ethnicity' and the Academic Masters 'Cultural anthropology: Multiculturalism in a comparative perspective', both at the University of Utrecht, the Netherlands. She has carried out field research among women whose family members disappeared during the Argentine dictatorship. Her research focuses on grief and mourning, continuing bonds, gender and political action.

Bereavement in the political realm: Women's collective action in Argentina

In this paper I want to discuss how bereavement can initiate forms of politicization and collective action. I will take research on women who have lost family members during the Argentine dictatorship as a case study to analyse which role mourning and grief play in the becoming collectively active. During the 'Dirty War' that took place in Argentina from 1976 until 1983 approximately 30,000 people disappeared. Here, women's common experience of suffering and mourning were crucial to their mobilization as a response to a government of injustice and violence. By addressing these women's narratives I study the complexity of bereavement in social and political realms. Dennis Klass (2006: 843) argues that "cultural / political narratives are woven into individual grief narratives and if we do not include community, cultural, and political narratives in our understanding we are in danger building bereavement theory that applies to only a small portion of one population in one historical time". In this line, this project seeks to contribute to a comprehensive reading of the cultural, social and political dimensions of bereavement processes. I discuss the intertwinement between the personal, the process of bereavement, and the political, undertaking action in a collectivity, and illustrate how both spheres are not always clear-cut. Furthermore, I address how the absence of the body of the disappeared influences the process of bereavement and political action. Perceiving the body can be experienced as a confrontation with death and plays a key role in coming to terms with its certainty (Valentine 2010). In the Argentine case death often remained uncertain since most of the bodies were never found and women state that what they experience is not death per se, but loss.

Nawel Sebih

Nawel Sebih is a PhD student in Cinema studies at the University of Paris-Est. She received her M.A. in Cinema and Media studies from the University Sorbonne-Nouvelle where she wrote her master's thesis *The flow of light from the world above* under the direction of Jacques Aumont. She is currently searching for a specific definition of void in cinema. In 2012, she presented part of her work at the "3rd Annual International Conference on Visual and Performing Arts" (Athens, Greece) and at the conference "Cinema in the interstices" organized by the Alphaville Journal (Cork, Ireland). She also has participated at the French conference "Vertiges de la lumière" (Talence) and at the London Postgraduate French conference "Rémanence: présence/absence". One of her papers has recently been accepted by the at the "34th annual Southwest/Texas Popular Culture and American Culture Associations conference" which will be held in Albuquerque (NM, USA) next February. Nawel Sebih is a PhD student in Cinema studies at the University of Paris-Est. She received her M.A. in Cinema and Media studies from the University Sorbonne-Nouvelle where she wrote her master's thesis *The flow of light from the world above* under the direction of Jacques Aumont. She is currently searching for a specific definition of void in cinema. In 2012, she presented part of her work at the "3rd Annual International Conference on Visual and Performing Arts" (Athens, Greece) and at the conference "Cinema in the interstices" organized by the Alphaville Journal (Cork, Ireland). She also has participated at the French conference "Vertiges de la lumière" (Talence) and at the London Postgraduate French conference "Rémanence: présence/absence". One of her papers has recently been accepted by the at the "34th annual Southwest/Texas Popular Culture and American Culture Associations conference" which will be held in Albuquerque (NM, USA) next february.

Death, a light figure.

If the reflection of death has grown more complex over the last centuries thanks to medical progress, the philosophical answers, from Plato to Jankelevitch, remain the same: metempsychosis, migration of the soul, after-life, nothingness.... And death still is what transforms every man on earth into a passive subject, a disabled victim of a sentence he cannot control. Death is what turns the being into the non-being, and the presence into absence. Then, how can the cinema show this non-existence on screen?

How can this absence be represented through a visual medium? If cinema, which captures time's duration, can show someone dying or even stages it, death might seem to be the limit of illusion. Indeed, death is never visible as such; it is only perceptible via external signs to which death cannot be reduced. In this sense, therefore, the concept of death is based on a similar concept of invisibility to the one which composed the relation between vision and light. As the eye does not see literally the light but only the world enlightened by the beams of the sun, we do not see, so to speak, death. We only see a human being who is dying; we just observe the traces and effects of death on a body. This correlation between light and death is clearly shown in Ingmar Bergman's movie, *Cries and Whispers*. This film tells the tragic story of three women waiting for a fourth woman to die although she doesn't want to. In this film, the Swedish filmmaker seems to have found an abstract way of expressing death through light. The aim of our paper is to analyze the relations between light and death in the movie *Cries and Whispers*, to understand how light can help not only to define death but also to express the experience of dying.

Nur Soliman

Nur Soliman recently graduated from the American University of Kuwait with a BA in English Language & Literature (summa cum laude), and is planning on pursuing a post-graduate degree in literature and cultural studies. Nur is a cultural affairs assistant at the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait; previously, she was a writing consultant at her alma mater and a curatorial assistant for the al-Sabah Collection of Islamic Art. Nur is interested in the way the arts and various disciplines overlap, and the place of interior spaces, death, and the exile in literature, art, and film. The paper she will be presenting is based on her senior thesis which focused on the power of spatial rhetoric in Tolstoy's novella (1886) and a painting by Zhukovsky.

Revelations of Life and Death: Spatial Analysis of Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*

In late nineteenth century Russia, artists and authors expressed an anxiety about the authenticity of bourgeois life and that of the more natural, spiritually fulfilling life. The suspicion of falsehoods manifests itself in the description of 'gilded' interiors of homes, especially in contrast with the natural, outside world, as the immaterial becomes concealed by the material. This concealment of nature, and consequently death, causes an anxiety for Tolstoy in *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*. Freud describes this behavior as a modern mechanism for coping with mortality, evading man's natural fear of death by reappropriating it to something distant and unreal, which makes phenomena like death uncannily to encounter.

Much of the criticism and scholarship on *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* begins around the 1960s, with some scholars studying the psychology behind death and illness in the novella, and others on the philosophical or ethical dilemmas of the protagonist. Scholars have also been interested in the autobiographical inspiration behind the work, as well as its influence on other writers and artists, including novelists and film-makers. Other works have tied the narrative of death and salvation from falsehood with linguistic or structural aspects of the novella, including metaphor and other figures of speech.

I hope to examine the representation of interior spaces in the novel, as described in great detail by Tolstoy, and how they reflect the tension that arises due to the concealment of death and natural phenomena, and how the disclosure of death leads to transformations not only to the way the protagonist views and interacts with his home, but how it leads to a change in his experience of living, and dying, and how Tolstoy employs space and the interior as one of the metaphors to reflect that journey.

Olaf Recktenwald

Olaf Recktenwald is a doctoral researcher in history and theory of architecture at McGill University. He received his Master of Philosophy from the University of Cambridge, his Master of Architecture from Yale University, and his Bachelor of Architecture from Rice University. His recent presentations include "Delivery from Quiescence: Nineteenth-Century Reinterpretations of the Rococo" (NCSA Conference, 2013), "Emanant Ornament in the Bavarian Rocaille" (Martlet Symposium, Cornell University, 2012), and "The Emergence of Ornament: Winckelmann and the Rocaille" (MWASECS Conference, 2012). His research interests include sixteenth- to eighteenth-century imaginary architecture, related theoretical treatises and embodiment in building. He is currently organizing the

annual McGill History and Theory of Architecture Lecture Series which he founded while serving as president of the Graduate Architecture Students' Association.

Discrete Bodies: Hans Holbein the Younger's The Body of the Dead Christ in the Tomb

Olaf Recktenwald Hans Holbein the Younger's The Body of the Dead Christ in the Tomb of 1520-22 presents the image of a decomposing body of Jesus in elevation. His body gets represented here as something different from the soul for the first time: the soul immortal, the body subject to putrefaction.

Prior to the issuance of Pope Leo X's Bull in 1513, the soul was not officially perceived as being separate from the body. Afterlife occurred, yet did so in conjunction with the body. Thus if a human body were to be destroyed, as in a war, this reductive act would represent a profound dilemma. The Apostolici Regiminis Bull, however, stressed both the immortality and the uniqueness of the soul for each person. The soul still remained everywhere in the body though and not just in the pineal gland as René Descartes would later theorize.

Drawing from the Bible, and specifically from the verses "He who hates his soul (anima) in this world preserves it for eternal life" (Jn 12:25) and "... do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul" (Mt 10:28), this papal doctrine motioned toward an evolving understanding of the body as a problematic entity. In preceding eras the body of Christ was not a complication with respect to resurrection and was often depicted sensuously. Not until the time of this Bull and its conceptual connection to Descartes's subsequent writings would such a difficulty arise. This paper investigates the parallels between Holbein's representation of a slightly decaying and horizontal Christ and the 1513 Papal Bull in relation to an understanding of how the human soul is philosophically emerging from being intrinsically embedded in a body.

Roger Mas Soler

Roger Mas has been a high school Philosophy teacher since 2003. He obtained his Degree in Philosophy with distinction from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (2002). Later on, he studied a Master's Degree in Writing for Television and Cinema (2008) and another one in Contemporary Philosophy (2012), both of them also at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. The master's thesis of the second one is titled Melancholia: 'Angst' and 'Sein zum Tode'. Kierkegaard, Heidegger and Lars von Trier, which will be the basis of his conference. He has recently started his PhD research, which – extending both the reach of the master's thesis and the theoretical framework– aims to interpret apocalyptic and postapocalyptic cinema using existentialist's theories about anguish. His final purpose is to provide conceptual tools that allow us to comprehend through apocalyptic cinema the relationship between existential anguish and our conception of death.

Death, Anguish and Lars von Trier's Melancholia

The complete title of my paper is Melancholia: Angst and Being-toward-death. Lars von Trier, Kierkegaard and Heidegger. As the name suggests, it is a study of Trier's latest film from the point of view of the philosophies of Kierkegaard and Heidegger. More specifically, I give a detailed account of the cinematic techniques used in the film to transmit the anguish experience in its anthropological reading. For this purpose, I have drawn up a theoretical framework which, mixing Kierkegaard and Heidegger's theories on anguish with cinematographic studies, allows us to reinterpret the cultural meaning of death from an aesthetic and anthropological point of view. Therefore, this is an interdisciplinary research that embraces philosophy and cinematography. My final aim is to provide conceptual tools that allow us to comprehend through apocalyptic cinema the relationship between existential anguish and our conception of death. I am committed to the idea that the strongest point of my investigation lies in the main hypothesis I intend to prove: I maintain that Melancholia indicates us that, like in Kierkegaard's anguish, what we experience when we face the imminence of catastrophe is a mix of attraction and repulsion. In other words, in contrast to popular belief, the proximity of the void not only terrifies us, but awakes desire –a desire, incidentally, which can be compared to the one described by Edgar Allan Poe in The Imp of the Perverse and with Lovecraft's cosmic dread. As such, simply put, I start from the conviction that, if we want to understand ourselves properly –considering that death is a defining factor in the explorations of our subjectivity– we must demonstrate and analyse the attraction that we feel about the constant (and inevitable) presence of death –despite our attempts to hide it.

Roy Vilozny

Dr. Roy Vilozny gained his Bachelor's degree in Arabic Language and Literature and Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. His Master's thesis, supervised by Prof. Etan Kohlberg, dealt with the Shiite cycle of life, from before creation to the end of days. His doctoral dissertation investigates Shiite thought and Imamite theology of the 9th to 11th Centuries AD. His supervisor was Prof. Meir Bar-Asher of the Hebrew University. During his doctoral studies, Vilozny spent time as a research fellow at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes in Paris, at the Albert Ludwigs Universität in Freiburg and at the Freie Universität in Berlin. At present, besides editing his dissertation for publication in book form, he is conducting research towards a far-reaching project on mythic ideas in Shiite literature. This project aims to deepen our understanding of Shiite faith while at the same time interrogating fundamental, universal questions of cosmology and cosmogony from a Shiite point of view.

Death in Medieval Shiite Thought

There is nothing sectarian or particularly Shiite about death; it is the fate of every living creature and the inevitable last stage of life in this world. In the Islamic world, for both Sunni and Shiite, death is a necessary step on one's way to becoming a martyr, or Shahid. In my talk I will try to demonstrate how this universal fate is described very much from the Shiite point of view in several medieval sources from the 9th – 11th centuries AD, making death one of the most significant characteristics of the Shiite faith.

I will focus on two recurring and related themes in Shiite literature: first, when he dies, the Shiite believer is filled with joy; and second, every Shiite believer dies as a martyr (Shahid). I will therefore look at death in Shiite belief from two different perspectives: emotional – how the dying believer feels at the moment of death, and legal – whether the dying person should be regarded as a martyr.

Death in Islam, of course, is a step in the direction of the Afterlife and traditions dealing with it clearly hint at events taking place beyond this world. But focus on the believer's feelings at the moment of death seems to be a doctrinal attempt to resolve the difficulties involved in facing one's death, before turning to an eschatology in which all difficulties will be swept away to be replaced by a new, true order.

Sabina Tanovic

Sabina Tanovic (M.Sc.) was born in Sarajevo. She actively engaged with issues concerning commemoration of the war period in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992 – 1996) with a focus on the siege of Sarajevo and gross human rights violation in the area of Prijedor. She graduated on a memorial project for the Tunnel (2006) at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Sarajevo and further obtained a master's degree with a project entitled Memorial for the Siege of Sarajevo (2010) at Delft University of Technology (TU-Delft). At the moment, Sabina is a PhD candidate at TU-Delft, Institute of History of Art, Architecture and Urbanism with a thesis 'Memory in Architecture: Memorial architecture with the focus on recent memorial articulations and their origins'.

Contemporary memorial architecture and prospect of the afterlife

Due to the whole spectrum of traumatic events that have been recognized in the course of the last two centuries, in particular after the two world wars, contemporary commemorative architecture has, by a common consent, faced a new spectrum of demands designers have to grapple with, producing often irresolvable problems. Many scholars address issues of contemporary memory mania resulting in the prolific field of memory studies whereas only few focus on the actual representations of death in contemporary society. Memorial architecture, today, consolidates a number of different architectural forms, at times without clear distinction between them, such as monuments, memorials, memorial museums, memorial landscapes and cemeteries. However, all these design forms in the end have to deal with the individual death, even if they commemorate mass atrocity.

This paper will look at the way some of the architects and designers use the language of known historical examples in order to create commemorative spaces that, among other purposes, communicate today's image of the End of Life. The question is how rites and rituals, focused on the idea of the afterlife, expressed in the architecture of past cultures and periods inform memorial design

in the contemporary, highly individualized western society, notwithstanding pitfalls that can occur along the way?

Hence, I argue that architects of contemporary memorial designs, often faced with the impossibility to represent death, search for references in funerary art of ancient cultures and other historical periods. Finally, it is inviting to look back into historical artifacts of funerary art and architecture in order to understand development of commemorative architectural representations of contemporary moment and perceptions of the End of Life.

Sandra Karlsson

Classical Archaeology & Ancient History PhD-project: Conceptualizing death in Hellenistic funerary art Department of Historical studies, University of Gothenburg

MOURNING IN HELLENISTIC FUNERARY ART

My paper will consider the emotional content in Hellenistic funerary art, as exemplified by a large number of second century BCE funerary reliefs from Smyrna and Kyzikos in western Asia Minor. More specifically my aim is to examine the pictorial semiotics of mourning and grief, as expressed through the individual figures' gestures, postures, gaze etc. In addition to body language, attributes and garments will be considered as well. When discussing responses to death, I will mostly deal with the notion of grief as a (lasting) sentimental loss or a separation from an irreplaceable beloved being. This does not mean that I presuppose that the appearance of grief and lament in the imagery necessarily means that the survivors by definition were immensely grief-stricken, indeed it is fully possible that token of affection and expressions of despair only were routine or that the survivors just happened to choose a tombstone in stock. Why, as Max Gluckman asked, "if burial customs are simply cathartic emotional props for the bereaved, are unloved parents buried with as much ceremony as loved ones"? Hence, my paper will not only examine the actual pictorial expressions of grief in the sepulchral art of Smyrna and Kyzikos, but I will also consider to what extent (and if at all) it is possible to generalise about the emotional reactions of the living to death.

Sara Polak

Sara Polak is PhD researcher at LUCAS in the field of American studies (cultural memory with a dash of cultural analysis) and lecturer in the English Literature department at Leiden University, teaching (mainly) contemporary American Literature. Her research project focuses on the development of Franklin D. Roosevelt's image as a cultural icon in American memory, through the study of widely disseminated cultural artefacts: novels, popular biographies, films, documentaries, museums and memorials.

Sara previously taught at the American History Department of the University of Amsterdam, and studied English Literature at Cambridge University and Literary Studies and psychology at the University of Amsterdam. She is particularly interested in the processes underlying cultural and personal memory, historiography and storytelling. These processes become especially active and relevant near the end of life – which is why Sara still greatly profits from her previous career as funeral director and writer of life narratives for/with (elderly) clients.

Ruling From The Grave: How Franklin Roosevelt Continues to Influence Representations of His Death

Elisabeth Shoumatoff, she grabbed a brush
Dipped it in water and began to paint
She looked at Pres and began to think
She never painted a picture for him at night
And she knew that the President didn't look right
The time of day was twelve o'clock
Tell me that Elisabeth had to stop
Great God almighty, she started too late
That is why that they called that unfinished portrait
A little bit later, about one-thirty
Had a cerebral hemorrhage, and the world looked muddy
They called Atlanta, Washington too

Just like zigzag lightning the call went through
Called long distance to notify the wife
Doctor Bruenn said he died at three thirty-five
And great God almighty, wasn't no bell to tone
But in less than thirty minutes the world was in mourn
(Otis Jackson, "Tell Me Why You Like Roosevelt, 1946)

As the blues lyrics above exemplify the kind of representation of Franklin Roosevelt's decease in the night of 12 April 1945 which has featured often and in great detail in culture products portraying FDR and his presidency. Roosevelt himself was actively involved in steering public representations of his person. Indeed the song describes how FDR died during a sitting for a portrait by Shoumatoff. The unfinished status of this portrait mirrors the sense of unexpectedness and unfinishedness that was predominant among the American public around the time of his death. With hindsight it is clear that Roosevelt's death was less of a surprise than it seemed at the time. There is good reason to assume that the overwhelming public experience of sudden bereavement was in part orchestrated by Roosevelt and his advisors.

Sarah Iepson

Sarah Iepson is a PhD Candidate of Art History at Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Sarah began her study in Art History as an undergraduate at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. After completing her B.A., she began graduate study at Temple University, where she received a Master's Degree in Art History in 2000. Sarah is currently completing work on her dissertation project entitled, "Postmortem Relationships: Death and the Child in Antebellum American Visual Culture," with an expected graduation date of May 2013. Sarah received several awards for her dissertation work including the Eakins Prize in American Art History from Temple University, a presentation award at the Cleveland Graduate Symposium, and a Research Fellowship at Winterthur Museum in Delaware. In addition to her graduate work, Sarah is an Assistant Professor of Art History, Humanities, and Honors at the Community College of Philadelphia.
Poignant Corporeality: Affect and Posthumous Photographs of Children in Nineteenth Century American Culture

The daguerreotype case opens to reveal a black and white portrait of a young girl dressed in a white gown and cap lying upon a cushion; her eyes are closed as if in sleep and her cheeks are tinted a soft rose as if flushed. Embraced by the red velvet case lining, a soft curl falls upon her forehead and her arms disappear under a sheet pulled up towards her chest. While the initial glimpse presents the viewer with a sweet and sleeping angelic figure, the continued gaze informs one that the girl is no longer living, but has succumbed to the finality of death.

This paper elucidates the specific interplay and interaction that the observer, particularly the surviving relation, has with the posthumous photograph of a child in nineteenth century antebellum American culture. The communication between seer and seen is described here through the concept of "affect:" the "visceral forces ... other than conscious knowing... that can serve to drive us toward movement, toward thought and extension." It is the capacity for the photograph and the observer to engage in a discourse of action that creates the intense emotional and physiological encounter and physical memory. Akin to what science refers to as muscle memory, this paper claims that parents perceive the image as allowing continued physical interaction with their deceased child. They are able to rekindle muscle memories of holding or touching their child as a sensorial product of holding or touching the photograph of the child. In viewing the work as a significant manifestation of the body with which one can continue to interact and engage, this paper argues that nineteenth century posthumous photographs of children become more than simple memento mori ritual objects and are elevated to powerful signifiers of physical presence and engagement beyond death.

Shawna Vesco

Shawna Vesco is currently a Ph.D. Candidate in the Literature Department at the University of California, Santa Cruz. She enjoys acephalic fascist subjectivity, Soviet futurism, and Andalusian poetry. Her research interests include Twentieth-Century literary, philosophical, cultural & political movements, Literary Communism, and Alt-Modernism.

Death and écriture in Blanchot and Tom McCarthy

In *Writing of the Disaster*, Blanchot notes that "Human weakness...penetrates us on account of our belonging at every instant to the immemorial past of our death--on account of our being indestructible because always and infinitely destroyed. The infinite of our destruction, this is the measure of passivity"(*). There is an idea of contingency introduced here through weakness and its various forms or modes--exhaustion, passivity, drunkenness, or illness. What is always at stake with the non-movement of passivity in Blanchot's thought is precisely the interruption that it brings--an interruption that disturbs the movement of thought toward totality, toward "ends" and toward "totalized operations." In terms of our "indestructibility" because of our "always and infinitely" being destroyed: in weakness, as in death which is the epitome of un-power, man is stripped of the ability to say "I." Death, as that which is necessary and random escapes all experience and all thought--it is that which happens to no one and everyone. The non-relation of the "I" to death is mirrored against the experience of strangeness in writing and in the encounter with *autrui*. For Blanchot, death as "already-there" and "still to come" vacates the present in its adherence to the eternal return. Without present and without presence, death opens to the outside beyond experience. In excess of representation, death and writing gesture to a remainder, a non-present Remainder.

This paper not only invokes Blanchot and his musings on death and writing (*écriture*), but it also presents the delightful and delightfully British novelist Tom McCarthy as an important interlocutor. McCarthy's novels *Remainder* and *C*, avoid a gratuitously philosophical engagement with continental philosophy and instead propose *écriture* as a space to address these questions of alienation, inauthenticity, memory, eternal return, and death.

(*)"La faiblesse humaine que même le malheur ne divulgue pas, ce qui nous transit du fait qu'à chaque instant nous appartenons au passé immémorial de notre mort - par là indestructibles en tant que toujours et infiniment détruit

Shumay Lin

Shumay Lin is currently MA student in French at the National Central University, Taiwan, after acquiring her BA degree in Foreign Languages and Literatures at the National Taiwan University. Her master thesis focuses on death and mourning in the new millennium Québécois cinema. Since 2010, she has traveled to Montreal for three times, first as a grantee for the Quebec Studies Program at McGill University, second as an exchange student in Department of Cinema Studies at University of Montreal, and third as conference participant.

Mourning in our Land: Cinematic Mourning and its Potentiality in 2000s Québécois Films

In the civilizing process, issues concerning death have gradually been tabooed, whereas with the advent of modernization, mourning has also transformed from a collective practice to an individual act. In the Québécois cinema during the past decade, the repressed private practice of mourning has mushroomed on-screen, bringing death to the public sphere. Through analyzing the cinematic representation of mourning in 2000s films as *Trois temps après la mort d'Anna* (2010) and *Route 132* (2010), we would see that, despite their essential connotation as melancholy and pain, death and mourning could exercise a potential active passivity that converges the past, the present, and the future. Moreover, as Daniel Sibony would have it, identity should not be defined by certain objects or places, but rather, it should pass from *avoir* (to have) to *être* (to be). In previous Québécois film studies that favored the global society approach, cinematic death was usually interpreted as merely an allegory of nationalist discourse, while the *paysage* (scenery) as allegory of the patriotic meaning for *pays* (country). Through observations on films and cinéastes, this research demonstrates that the grandiose landscape in the cinematic mourning undergoes great transformation. In such light, we distance ourselves from the ethnic survival crisis interpretation that prevailed the québécois society since the British Conquest in 1760, while excavating its alleviating effect to modern symptoms of *déracinement*, *désordre*, and temporal chaos by acknowledging the Quebec in the global context. Through analyzing the cinematic mourning, our attempt would thus be to explore its potentiality in the reintegration of individual and collective identity in this era.

Sofia Mazar

Sofia Mazar is a doctoral student in Musicology department and an assistant of a professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Sofia is a member of the teacher's staff of the Music & Dance Academy of Jerusalem since 1997, where she directs opera activities and coaches singers. Since 2011 Sofia serves as a vocal coach in the New Israeli Opera. Sofia's principal research interests include

nineteen-century Italian and French opera. Since 2005 Sofia served as the musical director of the project of the Italian operas organized by the Hebrew University and the Italian consulate. Since 2009 she is serving as the Musical Director of the Opera project organized by the Ministry of Education and Jerusalem Music Academy. Sofia is a recipient of the fellowship of Sara Jane Lifson Endowment Fund in Music (2008), the fellowships of Musicology's department (2007, 2009, and 2011), the fellowship of project "Italian Romantic Opera as the Interdisciplinary Medium"(2010).. In 2012 Sofia was granted the Europe Forum's award for researching Italian Opera of Ottocento.

Meaning of Death in Italian Opera Seria of Ottocento

‘..it’s the thought of death that helps people to live’ (Umberto Saba)

In the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century opera seria concern of decorum was the reason that tragic endings were avoided. Rossini's *Tancredi* (1813) marks a crucial turning point since the composer provided two alternative conclusions, one tragic and the other *lieto fine*. The Moor and Desdemona walked hand in hand in certain revivals of Rossini's *Otello*(1816). *Tragédie* became a melodrama eroico. Rossini produced art that was the expression of Restoration society in which people wanted to be lulled into forgetting the problem of the world.

In the late 1820s under the influence of Greek revival and of romanticism, which in Italy was driven by the spirit of *Risorgimento* and by the free expression of emotion, the perception of death in Italian opera has changed. In operas written in this period in Italy, occupied by Bourbons in the South and the Habsburgs in the North, and already fanned by revolutionary Napoleonic era one views the conception of liberation through death. Love stories almost invariably resulted in death even if the public was shocked from such dark ending, from *Norma* and *Lucia* through *Rigoletto*, *Il trovatore*, and *La forza del destino*,. In Italian opera from the 1850s love triumphs over death which becomes the aspiration of human existence. Lovers are eternally united in death, such as in the case of *Leonora* and *Manrico*, *Aida* and *Radames*. From the 1890s Italian romanticism took the form of a search for truth. The concern for redemption –through-death has not changed in Italian opera, but experience of Death on the opera stage that had been of somewhat lofty emotion has changed and became part of real life, such as in Puccini's *La bohème*.

In the proposed paper I would depict the following principles:

1. the meaning of death in Italian opera is deeply bound up with the time and in complex ways is an expression of its society.
2. The conception of death was derived from its perception as an audible and a visual symbol of the cultural, political and aesthetic ideas. It would be necessary to recapture historical details that can allude to how the perception of death followed developments in religion, changes of habits and mental attitudes that functioned within Italian opera seria of Ottocento, from *Tancredi*,through Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* to *Il trovatore*, *Aida* of Verdi and *La Bohème*.

Sotiria Kordi

Sotiria Kordi is a PhD Candidate in the School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies with a concentration in Byzantine Art at the University of Leeds. Her research interests focus on the experience of sacred space as an artistic installation in Byzantium. More specifically, her work examines ways of looking at and relating to space through painting, architecture and the liturgy.

Re-presenting the absent, The presence-absence dualism in the paintings of the Chora chapel

Chora is a Byzantine monastery situated in Istanbul and its present form is a result of a construction phase dating ca. 1316-1321. In this paper I will be looking at the funerary chapel of the monastery, decorated with frescoes dating 1320-1321. Through a communicative reading that focuses on the interaction between Imaged and beholder, I will demonstrate the role of painting in re- presenting the deceased holy persons inside the space of the chapel.

The paintings of the chapel are imbued with a type of pictorial rhythm, used in order to help uniting image and viewer. It is created by two distinct, interdependent systems of axes - internal and external - that emanate from the painting surface and move outwards in the direction of the beholder, thus

adding a third dimension to the image. In this way, the Imaged enters the physical space of the beholder, uniting with them and inviting them into a corporeal interaction 'here and now'.

Thus, the holy persons, who are eternally present in heaven, become temporarily present on earth when the beholder, with their gaze, activates the interactional qualities of the image and establishes a relationship with the Imaged. The presence-absence dualism inherent in icons is abolished through the use of pictorial rhythm and in its place, another notion is projected, that of the 'in Christ presence' of the holy persons. The holy persons depicted inside the chapel are present and at the same time they are not, they are visible but at the same time they are also invisible, they are of the present but they are also of the past; they are present 'in Christ', as members of a living Christian community. They exist and operate in two realms, embodying in this way an ongoing dialogue between life and death. Sotiria Kordi PhD Candidate

Svetlana Makeyeva

Svetlana Makeyeva is an American Studies PhD student and a course instructor at the Dortmund University of Technology. Svetlana obtained her B.A. from the American University-Central Asia in 2006, and M.A. from the Heidelberg Center for American Studies in 2007. In 2008, Svetlana joined the American Studies Department. Her PhD dissertation is about digital nomads in the U.S.

The Near Death Experiences of Thumbtack Jack and Hate: the Aesthetics of Death Matches in Pro Wrestling

Professional wrestling (pro wrestling, for short) is a collaborative form of fine art. In this research, I approach death match wrestling as a separate performance genre in pro wrestling. In the cases selected for this research, I argue that professional death match wrestlers are involved in the unique cultural production that meets specific standards of physical appearance and excellency in performance. Death match wrestling reaches for a particular audience by offering a variety of ideas about near death experiences. I will reflect on how the aesthetics of death match wrestling is in many respects similar to the aesthetics of the contemporary horror fiction. I will introduce Thumbtack Jack (TJ) and Hate, two characters (in pro wrestling referred to as 'gimmicks'), created by German professional death match wrestlers Alexander Bedranowsky and Peter Wiechers. By providing analysis of the two deathmatches, I will address the aesthetics of this marginalized (also referred to as 'underground' and 'ultra violent') entertainment genre in pro wrestling in Germany.

Thijs Porck

Thijs (Matthijs Hendrik) Porck (born 1984) studied medieval history and English language and culture at Leiden University. Currently, he works as a Ph.D.-student/lecturer for Leiden University, studying the perception of old age in Anglo-Saxon England and teaching Old English, Middle English and the history of the English language. Previous publications include articles on Beowulf, medieval chronicles and J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit*.

“Leeve mooder, leet me in” – Attitudes towards Old Age and Death in Medieval English Literature

In 2010, a Dutch civil action group called 'Uit vrije wil' (Out of Free Will) petitioned the legalisation of assisted suicide for all people over seventy. The life of elderly people in present-day society, they argued, is often characterised by social and mental suffering as well as by the deterioration of physical capacities. For this reason, the group supports the rights of those elderly with a heartfelt and enduring desire to end their lives. Is this death wish of elderly people a recent phenomenon? This paper will show that the roots of the idea that death may be a fate preferable to old age are already found in the literature of the Anglo-Saxons (750-1066). Moreover, the paper reveals that an old person's desire for death was a widespread theme in the English literature of the later medieval period, including Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and the York mystery plays. As such, this paper addresses two issues that are often ignored or overlooked in scholarly discussions of death: the possible desirability of death and the intimate relationship between death and old age. In addition, the paper provides a necessary modification of the image of the Anglo-Saxon period as a "golden age for the elderly", as proposed in a recent study by Crawford (2007).

Veronika Tocha

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Berlin University of the Arts; holder of a state scholarship 2008-2010; studies of Art Education and German Literature and Language in Weimar, Jena and Dublin, and of Art History and French in Freiburg 2000-2007; wide range of practical experiences in the fields of museum, gallery and educational work.

"More than meets the Eye" – Notes on the Iconography of the Corpse in the Bathtub

Starting from my PhD research on Thomas Demand and the special kind of 'crime scene' the German contemporary artist depicts, my paper analyses the aesthetics of crime scene photography between art and criminology with particular regard to its narrativity. By dealing with both artistic and criminalistic pictures I intend to explore the borderline between "those images that are aesthetic statements masquerading as evidence and those that are forensic images masquerading as art."¹ At the same time I aim to sketch out a possible 'iconography' of the corpse in the bathtub.

To do so the paper roughly pursues the history of the crime scene photograph as a recording device and predestined criminalistic means as well as the history of the crime scene as a more and more popular artistic subject. Thereby the various interdependencies between both can be revealed, and the revaluation and re-contextualisation of criminalistic photographs, their aestheticization and musealization can be discussed. Furthermore, the paper points out the high narrative potential of crime scene photographs: they involve the viewer in a process of mentally (re-)constructing the previous events so that he or she takes over the role of the investigator. But whereas the latter has to solve the case and provide definite explanation and conclusion, the former is free to reach across and beyond the actual event in searching for meaning by speculation and imagination. Against this background, crime scene photographs can be regarded as special cases of pictorial narrations featuring a narrative turning point: while the one narration unfolds, the other has come to an end at the crime scene. Since this closing of the story line corresponds with the traditional topos of the amortisation of the living through the camera the crime scene photograph implicates a twofold stopping of time, a twofold anticipation of death.

1. J. Ellroy and T. B. Wride (Ed.), Introduction, in: *Scene of the Crime: Photographs from the LAPD Archive*, Los Angeles 2004, pp. 18-23, p. 21.

Wouter Schrover

Wouter Schrover (1985) obtained a Bachelor's degree in Literary Studies from Leiden University in 2006. After finishing an MA in Literature at VU University Amsterdam in 2008, he worked for a health insurance company and was an academic trainee at the Medical Humanities department of VU University Medical Center. Since 2010 he has been a PhD-student at VU University's Dutch department, working on a project concerning the representation of euthanasia and assisted suicide in literature and film.

In Control or Out of Control? The Representation of Euthanasia in SIMON and Amsterdam

In the Dutch feature film *SIMON* (Eddy Terstall, 2004) and Ian McEwan's novel *Amsterdam* (1998) euthanasia is performed. In *SIMON*, euthanasia is represented as being an integral part of a secular society in which self-determination is considered as the highest value. On the contrary, euthanasia is shown to be a practice that is an example of a society that is out of control in Amsterdam. In the proposed contribution, it is argued how the representation of the city of Amsterdam (as *pars pro toto* for the Netherlands) and the representation of dying interact in *SIMON* and *Amsterdam*, and what this makes clear about the way these works relate to current debates on end-of-life care. Using narratology, it is demonstrated that the two works complement each other in their treatment of the two basic philosophical tenets of euthanasia, namely autonomy and mercy. In this way, it is shown that *SIMON* and *Amsterdam* shouldn't be thought of as works offering a 'realistic' representation of Dutch society and the role of euthanasia in it. Instead, they can be regarded as works holding different attitudes towards the so-called slippery slope-argument.

Yves Van Damme

(2004) Bachelor in Computer Science.

(2008) Medieval History at the University of Ghent. (Masterthesis about attitudes towards death amongst the "disciples" of Ruusbroec.)

(2010) Scientific researcher at the University of Antwerp (Research into economic history, accountancy in the Early Modern Period.)

(2011-present) Researcher and Phd-Student at Leiden University (Part of the European Marie Curie-project: Mobility of ideas and transmission of texts). I'm focussing on 14th century religious and mystic literature in the vernacular.)

In between Groenendaal's hope and Deventer's fear. Attitudes towards death in the 14th century religious literature of the Low Countries.

This paper will discuss the way in which the most important authors of the monastery of Groenendaal (Jan van Ruusbroec, Jan van Leeuwen and Jan van Schoonhoven) are dealing with the end of life and the hereafter. For investigating the written representation of death it is worthwhile for many reasons to focus on Groenendaal. In particular the close but also very complex connection of the monastery to the Modern Devotion (founded by Geert Grote at Deventer) is of special importance. At the end of the 14th century this religious movement took over Groenendaal's role as light bearer of religious reform in the Low Countries and developed a profound interest in the culture of death.¹ Subsequently their members were supposed to reflect constantly upon their mortality and had to live according to the awareness that every moment could be their last.

Considering the intellectual influence Groenendaal had on the Modern Devotion (through the reverence of Ruusbroec and Groenendaal as a model for the reform of a monastery), the question could be raised whether this preoccupation with death, as it is typical for the Modern Devotion, could already be attested in the work of Ruusbroec and his disciples. An assumption that would contradict the expectations of scholarship as researchers hitherto stressed the big intellectual difference between both religious centers. Ruusbroec's mysticism of love is indeed very diverse from the anxiety of death in the Modern Devotion. However, my analyses of the work of Jan van Leeuwen and Jan van Schoonhoven (both disciples of Ruusbroec) showed indeed a preoccupation with the end of life, and especially a fear of the sudden death.

The attestation of this early anxiety of death is not only important for the research into the relations between Groenendaal and the Modern Devotion, as it can also be connected to the more general theories concerning the culture of dying (as they were developed by Ariès, Vovelle en Binski²), and can be linked in particular to the question of causality between the different processes (demographic, social and cultural) which were shaping the ever changing attitudes towards death.

1. Particularly Leendert Breure did pioneering research and showed that the members of the *Devotio Moderna* had a profound interest in the end of life and coping with death: L. Breure, *Doodsbeleving en Levenshouding, Een historisch-psychologische studie betreffende de Moderne Devotie in het IJsselgebied in de veertiende en vijftiende eeuw* (Hilversum: Verloren 1987). For a recent account on the Modern Devotion and their attitudes towards death, see: B. Diemel and J. Deploige, *United or bound by death? A case-study on group identity and textual communities within the Devotio Moderna*, in: *Revue d' Histoire Ecclesiastique*, 105:2 (2010), pp. 346- 380.

2. Ph. Ariès, *L'homme devant la mort, Seuil, Parijs, 1977*; M. Vovelle, *La mort et l'Occident de 1300 à nos jours* (Parijs: Gallimard, 1983) and P. Binski, *Medieval death, ritual and representation* (London: British Museum Press, 1996).