

^{17h} **Wednesday**
17 February
Blandine Joret

Film Language: A Matter of Form

In the conclusion to his seminal essay on the ontology of film, André Bazin writes, “*on the other hand*, cinema is also a language” (1958). Given his insistence on cinema’s immediate access to reality, this recourse to language raises the question whether this late admission should be understood as a reversal of the position he had defended throughout his essay.

Taking Bazin’s prescient views from the 1950s on three-dimensional cinema as its starting point, Joret, in this lecture proposes that Bazin’s acknowledgement of film as language, ultimately, surpasses the traditional distinction of content over form. If realism is often understood as the polar opposite of formalism, the “imaginary image” of 3-D cinema, as Bazin termed it, offers a synthesis of these two diverging views. Looking at recent 3-D films, such as *Adieu au langage* (Godard, 2014), *Every Thing Will Be Fine* (Wenders, 2015) and *Love* (Noe, 2015), the talk will elaborate on the possibilities of a “realist grammar” in cinema.

Dr. Blandine Joret received her PhD with highest honors (ASCA, 2015). Her dissertation was entitled Today, Icarus: On the persistence of André Bazin’s myth of total cinema. Currently, she works as an assistant professor at the department of Media Studies in Amsterdam.

Lectures in **Media / Art / Politics**

Every 3rd Wednesday of the month at 17h in Leiden
Universiteit Leiden / Lipsius 011

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LUCAS
LEIDEN UNIVERSITY CENTRE FOR THE ARTS IN SOCIETY

 NICA | Netherlands Institute
for Cultural Analysis

^{17h} **Wednesday**
16 December

Lara Mazurski

Disidentification & Feminist Performance Art

In this talk, Dr Lara Mazurski (AUC & ASCA) will address dominant and minority constructions of identity within feminist performance art. The talk focuses on the ways in which one can embrace and also reject hegemonic imaginings of identity, pointing to a middle ground in which an individual can take on an identity and reveal its complex construction.

In the West, when we think of veiled Muslim women our imaginings have often emerged as a result of mediatized texts and images that are about Islam. In these representations we are offered particular views of how we are to think of Muslim women, to represent them, and as a result we are often limited by a particular vision of them – that is Orientalistic. This talk reflects on the ways that performance art can help viewers to negotiate dominant and minority constructions of ethnic identity and offer other possibilities for transformation.

To explore these issues further I draw from the body of work on disidentification within queer theory such as José Esteban Muñoz's *Disidentifications* (1999) and Eve Sedgwick's *Epistemology of the Closet* (1990). Case studies will be drawn from Martha Rosler and Fouzia Najar.

*Lara Mazurski did her PhD project at the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis, entitled *Besieged By Burqas*. She currently is affiliated to Amsterdam University College, and the department of Literary Studies in Amsterdam. Her research interests include queer theory, immigration, multiculturalism, Islam and women, gender, with objects taken from literature, theatre, film, contemporary art, and new media.*



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17h Wednesday
18 November

Marie Beauchamps

Affective Identities

Denaturalization and the Politics of Nationality in France

In this lecture, Marie Beauchamps will talk about denaturalization (i.e. the deprivation of citizenship) in the context of the politics of citizenship and nationality in France. Combining research insights from history, legal studies, security studies, and narratology, she demonstrates that the language of denaturalization shapes national identity as a form of formal legal attachment but also, and more counter-intuitively, as a mode of emotional belonging. As such, denaturalization operates as an instrumental frame to maintain and secure the national community.

Drawing on case studies from both World Wars, periods during which governments deployed denaturalization as a weapon against “threatening” subjects, she exposes how the language of denaturalization interweaves concerns about immigration and national security. It is this historical backdrop that helps us understand the political impact of denaturalization in contemporary counterterrorism politics, and what is at stake when borders and identities become political weapons.

Marie Beauchamps teaches at the Politics, Psychology, Law and Economics program at the University of Amsterdam as well as in the Literary Studies program. She recently defended a dissertation on denaturalization processes in France.

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^{17h} **Wednesday**
20 May
Joost de Bloois

Precarious Pedagogies Politicizing the Humanities

In this talk, Dr. Joost de Bloois (UvA) will address new ways of politicizing the humanities in the context of contemporary capitalism. Today, the humanities find themselves in a precarious position within the new 'cognitive capitalism' that puts 'knowledge production' at the heart of the economy. At the same time, the humanities are in an equally precarious position within neoliberal forms of policy-making and management. De Bloois asks how, within such a context, the legacy of critical theory can be safeguarded? What remains of the democratic potential of the humanities? What kinds of pedagogies are needed to repoliticize the humanities today? De Bloois will take contemporary theories of 'precarity' within the humanities as possible ways of addressing these issues.

Dr. Joost de Bloois is Assistant Professor at the Department of Comparative Literature and Cultural Analysis at the University of Amsterdam. He has published widely on the nexus between culture and politics, in particular on precarity and cultural production.

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17^h Wednesday
15 April
Aylin Kuryel

Image Acts and Visual Communities Contemporary Nationalism in Turkey

In this talk cultural analyst and visual artist Aylin Kuryel will talk about her work on the image politics of nationalist practices in everyday life in contemporary Turkey by tracking the way images of the nation travel through a variety of fields. She departs from the idea that images provide an especially productive ground to analyze the contested and negotiated dynamics of national identity (re)production and community (de)formation in everyday life. Her focus is less on the history of official nationalist imagery production by the state, and more on the reproduction of nationalist imagery in everyday life, by the people themselves, who do not only look at, but also look with images.

Through a variety of objects, such as commodities, masks, tattoos, advertisements, films, apparitions, monuments and artworks, she explores how images act both to draw borders around communities and to provide the means to challenge these borders. As part of her work, she completed a 30-minutes documentary, *Image Acts*, which also focuses on diverse performances of national identity in everyday life.

Dr. Aylin Kuryel is cultural theorist and visual artist. She defended her PhD at the University of Amsterdam early 2015.



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^{17h} **Wednesday**
18 March
Charlie Hebdo

What Was Charlie Hebdo? **Roundtable discussion**

For the March session we are organizing a roundtable discussion in which our speakers will contemplate the questions: "What was Charlie Hebdo?" and "How should/can/do we respond to an event like this as scholars in the Humanities?" This session is organized in collaboration with the ASCA research group "New Political Ecologies: Globalization, Sustainability, Precarity" and is deliberately set up as a cautious prequel to a two-day workshop organized in Amsterdam on May 21-22 entitled "Global Grief and Local Iconoclasm: What in God's name happened in January 2015?"

Confirmed speakers for the roundtable discussion in Leiden are: Dr. Joost de Bloois (UvA), Dr. Maria Boletsi (Leiden), Dr. Yasco Horsman (Leiden), and Prof. dr. Yolande Jansen (UvA). The discussion will be moderated by Dr. Pepita Hesselberth. For more information, see our website.

Please note that registration for this event is required. To register, please see: www.hum.leiden.edu/lucas/news-events/lectures-media-arts-politics.html. The number of places is limited

Lectures in **Media / Art / Politics**

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^{17h} **Wednesday**
18 February
Eliza Steinbock

Vital Art: Transgender Portraiture as Visual Activism

The Transgender Murder Monitoring Project's tracking of news reports in 60 countries provides statistical evidence of endemic discrimination, including an alarming number of minors killed. A large-scale survey by Trans Media Watch shows that the lack of ethical media coverage given to transgender lives and deaths can directly contribute to hostilities. Quantitative approaches to studying transphobic violence are important responses to signaling the extent of the problem. However, they are unable to provide the necessary insight into the qualitative experiences of lived or mediated stigma. In this talk, Eliza Steinbock presents us her Veni-awarded project on "Vital Art." The goal of this project is to produce three key studies of transgender visual activism that address experiences of stigma and critique mass media portrayals. Located in visual studies and using theories of gender and representation, this study is the first to create an interpretative framework for a socially embedded analysis of transgender cultural productions. It concentrates on contemporary visual art portraits because the genre of portraiture foregrounds a subject's personal experience and seeks to establish identity visually, hence it is a privileged form for addressing stigmatized identities. The methodology is concept-based: it uses the interdisciplinary category of "portraiture" to bridge different objects of study: artistic portraits, media representations, and ethnographic studies of artists. The overall objective is to investigate how and to what effect these forms of portraiture yield archives of transgender experience.

Eliza Steinbock is Assistant Professor Film & Literary Studies, Leiden University, Center for the Arts in Society. She was awarded with an NWO VENI Grant for this project.

www.elizasteinbock.com.

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Speculation and the End of Fiction

Modernity's propensity for speculation is well established. It ranges from the artifices of the "as if", the thrills of imagining that everything that is might also be different, codified by Robert Musil as an inherent "sense of the possible," to the daring betting on the "what if," invoking better futures with an utopian spark or grim prospects to hedge oneself against. The twin inclinations to imagine the different and to project the future are the hinges of the modern imagination. In the early eighteenth century, three powerful media of speculation came into being almost at the same time: the calculus of probability, paper money, and literary fiction. In different ways, they enabled agencies of correlating what is and what is not - whether in terms of risk assessment, circulation of capital, or social self-fashioning. By the beginning of the 21st century, these media of speculation seem to have reached a point of excess. With big data, probabilistic speculation is about to accustom us to read "what if"-questions in an altogether indicative mode, just as big finance has succeeded to reverse the hierarchy between value assets and the media of liquid capital. This then raises the question of what happens to the third medium of speculation in our late modernity, that of fiction? In my talk, I will try and diagnose the fate of fiction in an age of hypertrophied speculation, how practices of fiction-making migrate, how the functions of fiction transform, and eventually how our present notion of fiction is due for a conceptual makeover.

Prof. Dr. Frederik Tygstrup is Head of Program of the Copenhagen Doctoral School of Cultural Studies, Department of Arts and Cultural Studies, at the University of Copenhagen.



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^{17h} **Wednesday**
19 November
Daan Rutten

The Ludification of Politics **Berlusconi, Putin and Fortuyn**

Theatrical politicians such as Silvio Berlusconi, Vladimir Putin and Pim Fortuyn seem to change the political order of modern democracy into merely a state of play. But if we take the main argument of 'play-studies' as serious as possible, namely that modern culture, including politics, is always already a game to be played, how are we able to understand, let alone judge politicians who act as players?

Daan Rutten (1981) is a cultural sociologist. He works as tutor and editor at Erasmus University. He wrote his PhD-thesis on Dutch literary writer and geographer Willem Frederik Hermans' and his complicity with cultural studies. Recently he also organized the conference 'Games of Late Modernity: Johan Huizinga's Homo Ludens'.

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Inheritance and Archives

Affective Economies in Postcommunism

The burgeoning research on the legacy of the former secret police from Central and Eastern Europe often creates the illusion that we are dealing with inert repositories of files that are disengaged from the affective environments that nurtured their production. The repositories of the communist secret services contain diverse materials whose production and circulation has been excised from public view and whose accumulation has been subtended by the principles of espionage. The impact of these records on the already fractured social environment of the postcommunist states grew to be considerable and in contemporary culture constantly meets affective response which in turn nurtures new waves of interest and new bouts of archival search.

In this talk Roxana Bedrule addresses the circuit of the social affects that have been stirred up throughout the past 25 years by this contentious legacy. Discussing two examples of public exhibitions featuring declassified photographic material from the archives, Bedrule highlights the ways in which those who access these “analogue” archives produce secret photographs anew by inventing protocols of use, through, first, the mining strategies they come up with; second, the ways they restrict access by producing and overwriting digital versions of the image; and third, the ways in which they arrange images in an exhibition or for recirculation.

Drawing on Spinoza’s theory of affects, read through Deleuze, Bedrule contemplates a possible theoretical route to help articulate a curatorial strategy for displaying the visual material that she came up with during her research in these archives for her PhD. The focus of this practical experiment is on what she calls a field of expectation that we are exposed to, and on the communicability of the archive, that Bedrule views as a process of solidifying affective presence through reconfiguring visual material.

Roxana Bedrule studied art history and cultural analysis at the University of Amsterdam, and she is currently pursuing a PhD in Cultural Studies at the University of Copenhagen. Her areas of interest are visual and media studies, cultural history, memory studies with a focus on concepts like archive, memory, inheritance, social imaginary. As a curator, she is fond of collaborative work at the interface of art / urban life / collective memory, her latest project being Hot and Cold. Revolution in the Present Tense (with curator Anna Harsanyi) a public art event scheduled to take place in Cluj and Timisoara (Romania) in December 2014.



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17^h Wednesday
17 September
Thijs Witty

Spatialized Essays

On learning how to live without speculation

It is tempting to thematize the semblances between the essay form and the modes of speculation that predominate in current configurations of capital. Much like the post-fordist arrangement of time and perception, which captures languages and bodies in precarious circuits of accumulation and speculation, the essay seems mainly a dispersing and drifting form whose principles of operation are uncertainty and randomness; much like the essay's sensitivity to the hypermobile flutterings of the mind and the concomitant sensation of all things' transience, so speculation provides no ground whatsoever as it leaps into the abysses that are called 'risk ventures' in business jargon; finally, both speculation and essaying seem to flourish most in times of generalized crisis. What the fragment was for modernity, Jean-Francois Lyotard already suggested, so the essay becomes for post-modernity.

Yet, to presume without serious reservations such kinships between the essay and speculation, runs the risk of missing the anti-speculative elements in the essay's long and varied histories. Thijs Witty shall discuss a few of such antimonies between essays and speculation by placing particular emphasis on the traces of skepticism that are still ingrained in more relevant practices of the essay form/mode. This inquiry is then furthered by an analysis of several video essays - an emergent genre of bottom-up interrogative and critical film production - that claim their essayistic form against the speculations that capital wages against ways of living: Hito Steyerl's *Lovely Andrea* (2007) and *October* (2004), and Allan Sekula's *The Forgotten Space* (2010).

Thijs Witty is a funded PhD candidate at the University of Amsterdam, department of Cultural Analysis, under the supervision of prof. dr. Mireille Rosello and dr. Marie-Aude Baronian. He is affiliated with the departments of Media studies and Comparative literature.

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Lectures in Media / Art / Politics

A monthly series of talks on the changing function of media, art, and literature in our increasingly globalized and media-saturated world. Speakers from various academic backgrounds and in different stages of their career reflect on the diverging ways in which contemporary technological and social developments are challenging and transforming the cultural and political conditions of our current existence. Each lecture focuses on the inextricable intertwinement of art, literature, media and politics in the phenomena that are discussed.

Time / place:

Every 3rd Wednesday of the month at 17h in Leiden

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Dates for 2014 / 2015:

17 September, 15 October, 19 November, 17 December,

18 February, 18 March, 15 April, 20 May.

Lectures in Media Art Politics Presents

21 May 2014, 17h

The Paradox of Liveness

A Lecture by

KARIN VAN ES

Research Developer at Utrecht Data School and
Affiliate researcher at Utrecht University

Liveness has been a persistent and much-debated concept in media studies. It has long been associated with broadcast media, and television in particular. However, the emergence of social media, following the dot-com bubble bust, has brought new forms of liveness into effect. These challenge common assumptions about and perspectives on liveness, which fail to capture those new forms, provoking a revisiting of the concept as such.

In this talk Karin Van Es presents a more comprehensive understanding of what liveness is, and, perhaps even more pertinently, clarifies the stakes surrounding the category of the 'live' that critically engages with questions of user-participation and media power.

LOCATION: 148

Wednesday, April 16th, 2014

17-18:15

**Becoming Shameless: shame, shamelessness and
the embarrassments of post-ideological
subjectivity**

A Lecture by

NIALL MARTIN,
University of Amsterdam

This talk examines the generalized imperative to '*become shameless*' within communicative capitalism, and argues that the *shamelessness* is emerging as the organizing principle of a post-ideological affective cartography.

It focuses on the ways in which the economic and political demands that we become shameless in order to fulfill our potential as neoliberal subjects relate to the increasing use of shame and shamelessness to frame and produce cultural conflict: the way that is, that affect replaces ideology as the producer of difference.

To explore these issues this talk will draw on the burgeoning body of work on shame within queer theory such as Jennifer Biddle's 'Shame' (1997) and Dina Georgis's 'Thinking Past Pride' (2013). Case studies will be drawn mainly from British and Dutch popular culture.

LOCATION: LIPISUS 227