

## INTERNATIONAL CRAL GRADUATE STUDENT SEMINAR: RESEARCH IN THE ARTS

This seminar, created in 2007 by graduate students of the CRAL (Centre for Research on Arts and Language - EHESS/CNRS), is part of the centre's collective activities and aims to foster interdisciplinary research on artistic practices. Far from favouring a unique field of studies, we encourage the representation of all the arts and seek to provide a space of discussion between interlocutors from different institutions.

Each two-hour session will include two thirty-minute presentations, followed by a debate of an equivalent duration, guided by an invited discussant. The participants can present their research topics (as a whole or with emphasis on a specific question), and the difficulties, methodology, and results of their research.

This year, the seminar will be organised in **four study tracks** (find detailed description below):

Track I. Literature and urban practices (p. 2)

Track II. Visual Anthropology and Visual History (p. 3)

Track III. Music and World Cultural Heritage (p. 4)

Track IV. Aesthetics and the Cinematic Dispositive (p. 5)

Therefore, we invite PhD Candidates of the CRAL and from other institutions to submit their proposals for the **2015-2016** academic year. We also encourage proposals from artists and those involved in art-based research, enrolled in an art school or without an institutional affiliation.

**Proposals** must include: title, abstract (**300 words** max.), name of the research supervisor, university affiliation, and a phone number where we can reach you. We accept proposals in **French and English**.

Please send proposals by e-mail before **7 October 2015** to the contact address given for each track. A response will be transmitted during the month of October. For any additional questions please write to [doctorants.arts.cral@gmail.com](mailto:doctorants.arts.cral@gmail.com)

The seminar will take place from **December 2015 to June 2016, every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month from 5 pm to 7 pm**. It will be held at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS): 96-105 Bd Raspail, 75006, Paris.

### ORGANIZATION

♦ Literature and urban practices: Clara Zgola, *PhD Candidate* (EHESS/CRAL - University of Warsaw); Constance Barbaresco, *PhD Candidate* (EHESS/CRAL).

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♦ Visual Anthropology and Visual History: Fatima Aziz, *PhD Candidate* (EHESS/CRAL-CEHTA); Jonathan Larcher, *PhD Candidate* (EHESS/CRAL); Noémie Oxley, *PhD Candidate* (EHESS/CRAL - Goldsmiths University). CONTACT: [noemieoxley@yahoo.com](mailto:noemieoxley@yahoo.com)

♦ Music and World Cultural Heritage: Elsa Broclain *PhD Candidate* (EHESS/CRAL).

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♦ Aesthetics and the Cinematic Dispositive: Alo Paistik, *PhD Candidate* (EHESS/CRAL).

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♦ Seminar Organizer: Violeta Nigro Giunta, *PhD Candidate* (EHESS/CRAL).

WEBSITE: <http://www.ehess.fr/fr/enseignement/enseignements/2015/ue/1115/>

## *Track I. Literature and urban practices*

Emerging from an inter-disciplinary approach including urban, cultural and literary studies, this track proposes two sets of problems to examine the possible relationships between literature and urban practices: to analyse the representations of the ways to inhabit a given city, in literary works; to question up to what extent the ways of being of an author in the urban environment become the cornerstone of his literary creation, while taking part of the urban culture of their cities.

The main focus will be devoted to how literature highlights different forms of life, to the characteristics of the places inhabited by the characters of the studied works. We propose to detach ourselves from the history of representations, with the objective of searching for traces (scattered in the works) of diverse ways of occupying and appropriating the urban space. This implies considering how literature seizes citizens devoid of public services; questioning what structures urbanity, in a context where the development of the peripheries is considered as the symbol of an urban crisis.

From this starting point, different possible readings will be put forward, such as: the role of mobilities in the ordinary life of the protagonists (what types of migration emerge? Do they take place daily or occasionally? What are the trajectories traced by the protagonists and why do they move? What means of transport do they use - trains, trams, walking - and to what extent do these influence their apprehension of the urban space?); the relationship they establish with their urban environment (the city architecture, urban housing, forms of sociability); the difficulties in appropriating the urban space; the perceptions that characters have of where they live and of where they would desire to live; the tension - or balance - between identity and territorial belonging; the way in which the environment affects behaviour, the gestures, and the language employed by the characters.

It will finally involve studying the role of ways of inhabiting and apprehending the city of emblematic authors who also contributed to the construction of an urban imaginary that is changing. This track is also interested in research that explores the writing of the city as the personal experience and life of the writer (physically, aesthetically and politically), bearing witness to his immersion or commitment to the environment.

We therefore propose to consider, among others, the following topics: urban atmospheres (sound, olfactory, visual) which the authors are inspired in for their work; trajectories, routes, and itineraries that are theirs, and more specifically the ways in which they address and attend places (for example through misappropriation, squatting, or participant observation); and their relationship with the writing processes and the formal constraints they encounter. Because it would seem that the topography and stories of its spaces manifest themselves irreducibly in different ways, depending on the chosen means of transport (the bike, the motorbike, the bus, the train, all solicit different degrees of attention and specific temporalities) and especially depending on the walking style (this is why it is important to identify the different rhythms and attitudes such as strolling, rambling, walking, hiking, wandering or drifting) adopted by each author, whose artistic approach will be our object of study.

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## *Track II. Visual Anthropology and Visual History*

This axe concerns students and young scholars whose research focuses on the image, its uses and practices, and its place within a History of representations and visual forms, and which explore, at least partially, questions relevant to visual anthropology and visual history. It aims to create an exchange through in-depth study of on-going works. Along with a plurality of approaches, methods and objects, sessions will be designed to encourage dialogue between two aspects of these disciplines: an anthropology and history of images, and a visual anthropology defined by an ethnographic practice of the image.

Indeed, as the visual ethnographer cannot afford to ignore the visual cultures and the imaginary practices of his interlocutors, similarly, the anthropologist or the historian studying these visual cultures and imaginary practices cannot take the risk to ignore the work of the visual ethnographer, his objects, and his methods to understand and recount the culture of his filmed subjects.

From the *production of images to their usages in social life*, sessions will favour a cross-disciplinary approach, involving anthropology, iconology, art history, visual studies, or film studies. Proposals should clearly fall within one of the following themes.

The first theme, “*Working the image*”, concerns primarily filmmakers, video artists and visual artists without an institutional affiliation. Participants can present their work, in relation to documentary cinema and the cinematic avant-garde. Proposals may focus on installations, “film essays” and new forms that re-invest existing filmic and photographic materials, and should bring a reflexive approach upon their work, questioning and analysing the image through their production. They could also examine the new filming devices and technologies through which filmmakers and video artists convey their experience.

The second theme concerns young scholars producing images as part of their on going studies.. Within the particular visual apparatus defining “*Visual Ethnography*”, the proposals should focus on the challenges faced during filming: the social relationships established between the filmmaker and his subjects of study – filmed or not – necessary to the construction of the film,, the possible manipulations exerted by the person filming upon the filmed subject and vice-versa, etc. Proposals could also focus on the intersections between the images made by the ethnographer, the digital sociability and the visual cultures of his interlocutors. Finally, from a historical and political perspective, the presentations could explore the visual cultures produced by anthropologists and visual anthropologists.

The third theme, *Exposed people: using the image of the other and of the Self*”, encourages proposals analysing filming techniques and figurative methods used by filmmakers and photographers to capture the other without recognising his alterity. Using an historical or ethnographic perspective, papers on colonial, fascist and totalitarian visual regimes or on media representations of political conflicts (wars, violence) will be examined. We are also particularly interested in papers exploring current *indigenous media forms*, and indigenous media produced within the context of militancy and political struggles.

Finally, under the theme “*Popular imagery*”, we call for proposals focusing on the uses of popular visual forms. Participants could examine the links between family and social memories (in family photos, films or videos), but also the mediations of affects and the construction of a shared narrative through the use of images on online social networks.

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### *Track III. Music and World Cultural Heritage*

In current research in social sciences, the issue of “cultural heritage” and the institutionalisation of a world heritage process represent a growing field of study, as evidenced by the dynamism of the academic production on the subject (ever growing conferences, books, issues of journals, seminars, etc.) during the last decade. The aim of this track is to offer a space for further reflection on the relationship between music and world cultural heritage, through an interdisciplinary dialogue, aimed at students of all disciplines involved in this topic. Are there specific issues to the process turning musical practice into cultural heritage?

We encourage proposals that put theoretical approaches as well as practices regarding the heritage industry into perspective. This could be achieved by encouraging a dialogue between on going research interested in cultural management, the conservation and recognition of musics that have been declared world cultural heritage or are about to, but also to understand the social processes of manufacture of musical heritage and construction of a link to the past, to memory.

The signing of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2006 has introduced new ways of manufacturing and conceiving heritage, influencing in a more or less direct way the practice of musical traditions eligible for such labelling. Whether they originate from the political sphere or from a community of practitioners, the actions of promotion and safeguarding generate discourses and practices that reconfigure the relationships between music, identities and territories. On the one hand, we encourage proposals that examine the impacts of the transformation of musical practices into potential intangible heritage, and the question of controlling resources (economic, territorial, symbolic) that arises from the heritage label in relation to the development of tourism. On the other hand, we are interested in the set of tools that are mobilized for safeguarding, such as the practice of inventory, and its relevance to reflect orally transmitted practices, ephemeral performances, which risk being diminished, or even denaturalized through the exercise of enumerating data hierarchically. How can we make an inventory of practices that are, above all, creative ways of music making?

Finally, proposals could examine the alternative ways to do and say heritage, anti-heritage practices mobilized by “dominated” actors, using the heritage industry speech to challenge the imposition of a normative model derived from international institutions of cultural safeguarding such as the UNESCO. We are particularly interested on the exchanges between different actors that contribute to the process of heritage activation, that explain their own logic and analyse the potential confrontations between what the carriers of musical traditions consider necessary to transmit and save, the state representations of heritage, and the international judgments.

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#### *Track IV. Aesthetics and the Cinematic Dispositive*

The point of departure serving the discussions of this track lies at the intersection of aesthetic enquiry and the spectatorial engagement with various cinematic phenomena.

Since the end of the nineteenth century, we have been increasingly surrounded by devices and localized systems, that is, dispositives that draw the spectator into a particular relationship with visual or audio-visual content. Cinema, television, and portable devices, designed to fit into our lives at different junctures and to offer different levels of immersion, engage one or more of our perceptual faculties. The modalities of that engagement are, beyond the characteristics of a particular dispositive, shaped, among others, by cognitive, psychological, physiological, situational, and cultural factors.

The modalities of that engagement offer a particularly rich terrain for an enquiry of interest to contemporary aesthetics. We are in constant interaction with perceived and conceived reality, being shaped by it, and in turn, shaping it. The cognitive and emotive interest that we manifest towards audio-visual artefacts, for instance films, being part of that reality and facilitated by diverse cinematographic dispositives, is especially salient among the various interactive systems designed by and for humans.

The aim of this track is to examine the spectator's engagement with diverse dispositives and devices (from various forms of cinematic phenomena to portable and virtual reality (VR) devices) whose primary intention is to present moving images. We are interested in the modalities of the cognitive, perceptual, and experiential aspects of the relationship between the spectator/subject and systems designed to convey audio-visual artefacts (*e.g.* cinema) or to facilitate interaction with such artefacts (*e.g.* VR headsets). How does the spectator model or conceptualize certain aspects of their experience? Through which modalities do different dispositives provoke various emotive states? How does the spectator negotiate different levels of immersion between different dispositives? How do the physical (*e.g.* spatial, temporal) characteristics of the dispositive impinge on spectator's experience...?

Informed by the aforementioned directions, we welcome proposals reflecting various research forms and methodologies: philosophical enquiries, historical studies, outlines of cognitive models, case studies pertaining to specific spectatorial practices...

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