

# Trans Humanities

Summer School 2021

## Materialities & Subjectivities

Accounting for Complicated and Complicating  
Entanglements in the Humanities



## PROGRAM SUMMER SCHOOL 2021

### MORNING LECTURE SESSIONS

There will be three morning sessions, each consisting of a keynote lecture of 50 minutes followed by a response of 10 minutes. After the coffee break, we will have a discussion on the issues that were raised in the lecture, response and required readings. The discussions are moderated by the respective respondent. The abstracts of our three guest lecturers are to be found on the blog: <http://blog.wbkolleg.unibe.ch/>

#### Tuesday

**Speaker: Caroline van Eck; Respondent: Eugenie Brinkema**



### *Materiality is the Name of a Problem*

Two major developments have shaped the humanities since the 1980s: the material turn and the renewal of interest in human-thing entanglement. The latter had been a central issue, under the various headings of persuasion, fetishism or *Einführung*, in many disciplines that study human culture, from rhetoric to anthropology, and from aesthetics to psychology, but the emergence of formalism and iconography as dominating paradigms in art history, and behaviourism in psychology, in the early 20th century had driven human-thing entanglement out of academia and into popular culture or psychopathology. In the context of the material turn human-thing entanglement is now often considered a feature of the materiality of objects: of their power to act on humans, their capacity to exercise agency.

These developments have led to a complete rethinking of the study of human culture, both artefactual and visual. But they also raise at least two pressing questions: how to theorize what happens between humans and objects in situations of human-thing entanglement; and how to contextualize it, historically and culturally?

Coming to these questions as an art historian makes it possible on one side to draw on a very old and rich tradition of thought on what makes human viewers become entangled with art works as if they are the living beings they represent, both in terms of design or style and by way of theorizing: the complex tradition of *Einführung*/empathy is a case in point. On the other side, one of the challenges posed by the arrival of the material turn, with its concepts and methods taken largely from the social sciences and archaeology, is how to calibrate historical views and theories with the insights of present-day anthropology or psychology; and conversely, how to historicize these present-day theories and concepts of agency, materiality, or human-thing entanglement.

In my lecture I will consider, starting from Alfred's Gell's *Art and Agency*, various historical theories developed to account for what we now call human-thing entanglement, to investigate the historical and methodological challenges outlined here. The historical focus will be on the rich source material provided by accounts of sculpture-viewing and restoration in Paris and Rome c. 1800.

**Caroline van Eck** studied art history at the Ecole du Louvre in Paris, and classics and philosophy at Leiden University. In 1994 she obtained her PhD in aesthetics (cum laude) at the University of Amsterdam. She has taught at the Universities of Amsterdam, Groningen and Leiden, where she was appointed Professor of Art and Architectural History in 2006. She has been a Visiting Fellow at the Warburg Institute and the Paul Mellon Centre for British Art at Yale University, and a Visiting Professor in Ghent, Yale and York. In September 2016 she took up her appointment as Professor of Art History at Cambridge, and in 2017 she gave the Slade Lectures in Oxford on Piranesi's late candelabra: "The Material Presence of Absent Antiquities: Collecting Excessive Objects and the Revival of the Past". Her main research interests are art and architectural history and theory of the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century; classical reception; the anthropology of art; Giovanni Battista Piranesi, Gottfried Semper and Aby Warburg. Recent publications include *Classical Rhetoric and the Arts in Early Modern Europe* (2007); *Art, Agency and Living Presence. From the Animated Image to the Excessive Object* (2015); "Art Works that Refuse to Behave: Agency, Excess and Material Presence in Canova and Manet", (2015); "The Hôtel de Beauharnais in Paris: Egypt, Rome, and the dynamics of cultural transformation" (2016); "The Primal Scene of Architecture: Gottfried Semper and Alfred Gell on the Origins of Art, Style and Agency" (2017), and *Restoring Antiquity in a Globalizing World: Piranesi's Late Work and the Genesis of the Empire Style* (2019).

#### Required reading:

Eck, Caroline van, Miguel John Versluys, and Pieter ter Keurs. "The Biography of Cultures: Style, Objects and Agency: Proposal for an Interdisciplinary Approach." *Les Cahiers de l'École Du Louvre*, no. 7 (October 1, 2015).  
Eck, Caroline van. "'Du lebst und thust mir nichts': Fear, Empathy and Protection." In *Aby Warburg und die Natur: Epistemik, Ästhetik, Kulturtheorie*, edited by Frank Fehrenbach and Cornelia Zumbusch, 91–102. Berlin/Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2018.  
Gell, Alfred. "The Problem Defined: The Need for an Anthropology of Art." In *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory*, 1–11. Oxford/New York: Clarendon Press, 1998

#### Wednesday

Speaker: Eugenie Brinkema; Respondent: Christian J. Emden



### Formal Material and the Feel of Violence

How does the material of aesthetic form relate to the things, objects, and vibrant matter at the heart of the various material turns at work in the contemporary humanities? If the latter was an effort to move past the "all structure and no stuff" attributed to the linguistic turn, how might a resolutely radical conception of form reintroduce the problem of materiality in dialogue with formalism instead of opposed to it? This talk departs from the premise that both titular terms of the summer school—materiality and subjectivity—are best reapproached through a reading strategy that regards both as, principally, questions of form. This is illustrated by putting the materiality of the body and the limits of subjectivity to the test at an extreme site: an occasion of great violence. A reading of the 2007 French horror film *À l'intérieur* in relation to its navigation of seemingly disparate realms—the formal material of tempo, pacing, and rhythm, and a critical interest in the disenfranchised subjects of the Parisian banlieues—will suggest how the material of form opens up novel questions of subjective life under conditions of exclusion and restraint, questions that do not return us to a naive view of subjectivity but that expose subject positions as themselves basic formal material for the state.

**Eugenie Brinkema** is Associate Professor of Contemporary Literature and Media at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Her research focuses on violence, affect, sexuality, aesthetics, and ethics in texts ranging from the horror film to gonzo pornography, from structuralist film to the visual and temporal forms of terrorism. Her articles have appeared in the journals *Angelaki*, *Camera Obscura*, *Criticism*, *differences*, *Discourse*, *film-philosophy*, *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, *qui parle*, and *World Picture*. Her first book, *The Forms of the Affects*, was published with Duke University Press in 2014. Her second book, *Life-Destroying Diagrams*, explores radical formalism's relationship to horror and love, and will be coming out in November of this year (2021), also with Duke.

#### Required reading:

Balibar, Étienne. "Uprisings in the Banlieues." *Constellations* 14, no. 1 (2007): 47–71.  
Brinkema, Eugenie. "Form." In *A Concise Companion to Visual Culture*, edited by A. Joan Saab, Aubrey Anable and Catherine Zuromskis, 259–75. Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2020.

#### Recommended reading:

Brinkema, Eugenie. "(Nearly) Nothing to Express: Horror: Some Tread: A Toroid." In *How to Do Things with Affects: Affective Triggers in Aesthetic Forms and Cultural Practices*, edited by Ernst van Alphen and Tomáš Jirsa, 82–99. *Thamyris*, Intersecting, volume 34. Leiden/Boston: Brill Rodopi, 2019.

#### Thursday

Speaker: Christian J. Emden; Respondent: Caroline van Eck



### New Materialism and/as Political Theory

The lecture will probe the relationship between "new materialism" and political theory, asking whether new materialism can justifiably be regarded as political theory.

While the current "material turn" in the humanities and some of the social sciences can take many forms in different disciplines, from literary theory and gender studies to sociology and law, the theoretical framework of this "material turn" rests on a number of ontological claims about matter, objecthood, life, agency, and the status of the non-human that are central to what is commonly described as "new materialism." These ontological claims—as they come to the fore in "agential realism," "speculative realism," "object-oriented ontology," "posthumanism," or "vital materialism"—almost always entail specific ethical or substantive political commitments to egalitarian principles of justice, to radical democracy, and to a strong environmentalism. The emergence of new materialism, then, is also a direct response to some of the most obvious political and social issues of the present from social inequality and political disenfranchisement to racism and climate change. Although new materialism, broadly speaking, is not a homogeneous theoretical movement, the work of Bruno Latour, Timothy Morton, Karen Barad, Rosi Braidotti, or Jane Bennett, among others, provide obvious examples for these ethical and political commitments. The latter seek to correct the primacy of the human, and of normative reason, as it has been central to modern political thought since the Enlightenment by extending the "social" to include non-human actors and actants. New materialism's attempt to de-emphasize the human, and thus human subjectivity, paradoxically includes an emancipatory project for the human world that surprisingly overlaps with central positions in contemporary critical theory (e.g. Rainer Forst, Axel Honneth, Nancy Fraser).

On the one hand, contemporary political theory, rooted in a specific understanding of human subjectivity and reason, will do well in reflecting on the material conditions for the possibility of justice, power, equality, and democracy, for instance, by extending its conception of the social. On the other hand, new materialism's emphasis on the non-human is grounded in a flat ontology that resists the ethical and political positions it ostensibly seeks to advance. It is precisely because of this flat ontology that new materialism cannot show why, or how, its ethical and political demands should be more normatively binding, or more legitimate, than any other ethical or political claims. Perhaps, then, new materialism fails as political theory, even though it is able to enrich the perspective of political theory.

**Christian J. Emden** is the Frances Moody Newman Professor and professor of German intellectual history and political thought at Rice University. He is the founding director of Rice's Program in Politics, Law & Social Thought and currently serves as chair of the Department of Modern and Classical Literatures and Cultures. Emden's current work is mainly concerned with varieties of political realism, especially as they focus on the relationship between active political citizenship and the constitutional demands of the modern state. A second line of inquiry is concerned with the emergence of normativity and the conditions of normative order. This approach links discussions in philosophical naturalism and new materialism to central issues in political theory and the history of political thought. He is currently finishing a longer book project on philosophical nihilism in modern European political thought from the eighteenth century to the present, *In a Meaningless World: Philosophical Nihilism and Political Thought, 1750-1960*. A second book project, *Hannah Arendt, Political Theory, and American Empire*, is focused on the writings of Hannah Arendt as a public intellectual in the context of American political life during the 1950s and 1960s. Emden is one of the chief editors of the journal *Nietzsche-Studien* and he is also on the editorial board of the *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*. Previously, he was on the editorial boards of the *Zeitschrift für Kulturphilosophie* and *Modern Intellectual History*.

#### Required reading:

Bennett, Jane. *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*, preface & 94-109. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010.  
Coole, Diana, and Samantha Frost. "Introducing the New Materialisms." In *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics*, edited by Diana Coole and Samantha Frost, 1–43. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013.  
Emden, Christian J. "Normativity Matters: Philosophical Naturalism and Political Theory." In *The New Politics of Materialism: History, Philosophy, Science*, edited by Sarah Ellen Zweig and John H. Zammito, 270–300. London/New York: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2017.

## PARALLEL SESSIONS

The parallel sessions will address the inputs given by the participants. There will be a project-based session (Tuesday afternoon), a text-based session (Thursday afternoon) and an problem-based session (Friday morning). Each participant will have to give an input to all three sessions in the following way:

1. Project-based session on Tuesday: present your own project (10 minutes or less).
2. Text-based session on Thursday: give an input on the reading you were asked to prepare (10 minutes or less).
3. Problem-based session on Friday: present your "tough-nut-to-crack" (5 minutes or less).

Please connect all three inputs to the theme of the respective panel and the overall theme of the Summer School, and make it accessible to an interdisciplinary audience.

For each panel of parallel sessions I & II additional (non mandatory!) reading is recommended. These are texts that participants might also want to discuss on the blog after the Summer School. You are welcome to suggest further texts to be included in our reader. All texts are available on the password protected area within our blog (reader in alphabetical order):

[http://blog.wbkolleg.unibe.ch/?page\\_id=8726](http://blog.wbkolleg.unibe.ch/?page_id=8726)

The password is: **TransHumanities2021**

## Tuesday

### Parallel Sessions I (project-/problem-based)

The doctoral and postdoctoral participants will present their own projects (10 minutes max.). Each presentation will be followed by a discussion (15 minutes max.). Please connect the presentation of your project to our common theme of "Materialities & Subjectivities" and, ideally, to the titles of the respective sessions. Furthermore, try to make your input as accessible to an interdisciplinary audience as possible.

In advance, please read the abstracts of your fellow participants on the blog :

[http://blog.wbkolleg.unibe.ch/?page\\_id=8550](http://blog.wbkolleg.unibe.ch/?page_id=8550)

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
<p><b>Moderator:</b> Eugenie Brinkema</p> <p><b>Participants:</b> Adrien Bordone Andrea Bordoli Virginia Holzer Irmtraud Huber Guðrun í Jákupsstovu Andrina Jörg Jonathan Sarfin Sandro Weilenmann</p>	<p><b>Moderator:</b> Christian J. Emden</p> <p><b>Participants:</b> Tatsiana Artsimovich Olivia Biber Fabienne Blaser Gai Farchi Maaïke Hommes Irina Raskin Dorothee Baumann</p>	<p><b>Moderator:</b> Caroline van Eck</p> <p><b>Participants:</b> Catalina Agudin Hanna Baro Yorick Berta Tina Braun Zainabu Jallo Saskia Quené Bitten Stetter Malaika Sutter</p>
<p><b>2.00 – 3.50 pm</b> <b>Panel 1: Matter and Mediation</b></p> <p><b>Project presentation:</b> Adrien Bordone Andrea Bordoli Andrina Jörg Sandro Weilenmann</p>	<p><b>2.00 – 3.50 pm</b> <b>Panel 1: Shadows of Modernity</b></p> <p><b>Project presentation:</b> Olivia Biber Tatsiana Artsimovich Dorothee Baumann</p>	<p><b>2.00 – 3.50 pm</b> <b>Panel 1: Entangled Histories</b></p> <p><b>Project presentation:</b> Saskia Quené Zainabu Jallo Catalina Agudin Malaika Sutter</p>
<p>Recommended reading: <i>Brinkema 2019, 2020a; Flusser 2014; Lehmann 2012, 2015; Sontag 1977</i></p>	<p>Recommended reading: <i>Emden 2017; Deleuze 1988; Latour 1993; Trentman 2009; Vázquez 2020</i></p>	<p>Recommended reading: <i>Boscagli 2014; (van) Eck 2015, 2018; Henare 2003; Ingold 2007, 2012; Povinelli 1995; Prown 1982; Weinryb 2013</i></p>
--- Coffee Break ---		
<p><b>4.15 – 5.00 pm</b> <b>Panel 2: Formalist readings</b></p> <p><b>Project presentation:</b> Irmtraud Huber Jonathan Sarfin</p>	<p><b>4.15 – 5.00 pm</b> <b>Panel 2: Those darn Hairy Binaries I – Body vs. Mind/Human vs. Non-Human</b></p> <p><b>Project presentation:</b> Maaïke Hommes Gai Farchi</p>	<p><b>4.15 – 5.00 pm</b> <b>Panel 2: Living matter</b></p> <p><b>Project presentation:</b> Hanna Baro Yorick Berta</p>
<p>Recommended reading: <i>Brinkema 2020; Levine 2015; Sontag 2001</i></p>	<p>Recommended reading: <i>Barad 2007; Braidotti/Hlavajova 2018; Butler 2011; Esposito 2015; Haraway 2016; Serres 2018</i></p>	<p>Recommended reading: <i>Barad 2007, 2018; Boscagli 2014; DeSilvey 2006; Ingold 2007; Schleifer 2009; Weinryb 2013; Winnicott 1953</i></p>
<p><b>5.15 – 6.00 pm</b> <b>Panel 3: The Forms of Violence</b></p> <p><b>Project presentation:</b> Virginia Holzer Guðrun í Jákupsstovu</p>	<p><b>5.15 – 6.00 pm</b> <b>Panel 3: Those darn Hairy Binaries II – Human vs. NonHuman/ Nature vs. Culture</b></p> <p><b>Project presentation:</b> Irina Raskin Fabienne Blaser</p>	<p><b>5.15 – 6.00 pm</b> <b>Panel 3: Matters of Dying</b></p> <p><b>Project presentation:</b> Bitten Stetter Tina Braun</p>
<p>Recommended reading: <i>Banwell 2015; Brinkema 2019; 2020 a/b; Butler 2011; Esposito 2015; Haraway 2016; Serres 2018</i></p>	<p>Recommended reading: <i>Braidotti/Hlavajova 2018; Deleuze 1988; Haraway 2016; Latour 1993</i></p>	<p>Recommended reading: <i>Banwell 2015; Brinkema 2019, 2020 a/b; Butler 2011; Esposito 2015; Haraway 2016; Serres 2018; Lange Berndt 2015</i></p>

**SCHEDULE BERNESE SUMMER SCHOOL 2021**  
 MATERIALITIES & SUBJECTIVITIES (SEPTEMBER 6 - 10)

	Time	Monday, September 6	Tuesday, September 7	Wednesday, September 8	Thursday, September 9	Friday, September 10
Morning	09.00 – 09.10 am		Introduction/Chair: <i>Project Team</i>	Introduction/Chair: <i>Project Team</i>	Introduction/Chair: <i>Project Team</i>	Parallel Session III: Problem-based  Group 1: <i>Krass</i>  Group 2: <i>Seehafer</i>  Group 3: <i>Toggweiler</i>  Break
	09.10 – 10.00 am		Lecture: <i>van Eck</i>	Lecture: <i>Brinkema</i>	Lecture: <i>Emden</i>	
	10.00 – 10.15 am		Response: <i>Brinkema</i>	Response: <i>Emden</i>	Response: <i>van Eck</i>	
	10.15 – 10.45 am		Break	Break	Break	
	10.45 am – 12.15 pm		Discussion Moderation: <i>Brinkema</i>	Discussion Moderation: <i>Emden</i>	Discussion Moderation: <i>van Eck</i>	
Lunch	12.30 – 2.00 pm					
Afternoon	2.00 – 6.00 pm	3.30 – 4.45 pm Reception  <i>Seehafer</i>	Parallel Session I: Project -based  Group 1: <i>Brinkema</i>  Group 2: <i>Emden</i>  Group 3: <i>van Eck</i>	Afternoon Trip (optional)	Parallel Session II: Text-based  Room 1: <i>Huber</i>  Room 2: <i>Quené</i>  Room 3: <i>Toggweiler / Seehafer</i>	Plenary Session: Taking Stock, Looking Ahead
		5.00 – 7.30 pm Welcome / Introduction / Poster Exhibition				
	6.00 – 7.00 pm	<i>Krass / Toggweiler / Seehafer</i>				4.00 – 5.00 pm Drinks and Farewell
Dinner				Special Dinner		
Evening			Movie (optional)		Movie (optional)	Departure (or Saturday)



**Parallel Sessions II (text-based)**

At the beginning of each panel, the panel's required reading (which *all* participants are expected to have read and prepared beforehand) is introduced and critically commented by the participants who selected the text (10 minutes or less). This is then followed by a discussion based on the short inputs of selected participants. All participants are asked to join the discussion. Discussion inputs might consist of one or more short critical questions and/or comments related to a text or to a specific passage in the text (if you want, also in regard to your work), in order to enable closer reading and get discussions started. Please submit your input to [toggweiler@wbkolleg.unibe.ch](mailto:toggweiler@wbkolleg.unibe.ch) no later than by Monday, September 6, so that the moderators can structure the sessions a bit.

Room 1 Moderation: Irmtraud Huber	Room 2 Moderation: Saskia Quené	Room 3 Moderation: Mike Toggweiler / Michèle Seehafer
<p><b>2.00 – 3.15 pm</b> <b>Panel 1: Between and Beyond the Material and the Conceptual</b></p> <p>Required Reading: <b>Barad 2007</b> Introduction: Irmtraud Huber Discussion Inputs: Adrien Bordone, Irina Raskin, Sandro Weilenmann</p> <p><b>Participants:</b> Tatsiana Artsimovich Dorothee Baumann Olivia Biber Adrien Bordone Maaïke Hommes Irina Raskin Malaika Sutter Sandro Weilenmann</p> <p><i>Eugenie Brinkema</i> <i>Daria Steiner</i></p>	<p><b>2.00 – 3.15 pm</b> <b>Panel 2: Transitional, Mutable, Decaying and Living Matter</b></p> <p>Required Reading: <b>Ingold 2012</b> Introduction: Hanna Baro Discussion Inputs: Yorick Berta, Andrea Bordoli, Zainabu Jallo, Bitten Stetter</p> <p><b>Participants:</b> Hanna Baro Yorick Berta Andrea Bordoli Tina Braun Zainabu Jallo Bitten Stetter</p> <p><i>Caroline van Eck</i> <i>Urte Krass</i></p>	<p><b>2.00 – 3.15 pm</b> <b>Panel 3: Ecologies of/that Matter</b></p> <p>Required Reading: <b>Oppermann 2018</b> Introduction: Fabienne Blaser Discussion Inputs: Guðrun í Jákupsstovu, Andrina Jörg</p> <p><b>Participants:</b> Catalina Agudin Fabienne Blaser Gai Farchi Virginia Holzer Guðrun í Jákupsstovu Andrina Jörg Jonathan Sarfin</p> <p><i>Christian J. Emden</i></p>
<p>Recommended reading: <i>Barad 2018; Grosz 2010; Levine 2015; Maniglier 2016; Prown 1982; Schleifer 2009; Skiveren 2020; Sontag 1977</i></p>	<p>Recommended reading: <i>Barad 2007, 2018; Boscagli 2014; DeSilvey 2006; Ingold 2007; Schleifer 2009; Weinryb 2013; Winnicott 1953</i></p>	<p>Recommended reading: <i>Alaimo 2016; Barad 2018; Bennett 2004, 2010; Ingold 2012; Haraway 2016; Latour 1993; Morton 2013; Oppermann 2019; Pinkus 2010; Povinelli 1995; Yusoff 2017</i></p>
--- Coffee Break ---		
<p><b>3.45 – 5.00 pm</b> <b>Panel 4: New Materialism – how does Matter matter?</b></p> <p>Required Reading: <b>Ahmed 2010</b> Introduction: Olivia Biber Discussion Inputs: Jonathan Sarfin, Gai Farchi, Dorothee Baumann</p> <p><b>Participants:</b> Oliver Aas Dorothee Baumann Yorick Berta Olivia Biber Andrea Bordoli Gai Farchi Guðrun í Jákupsstovu Jonathan Sarfin</p> <p><i>Christian J. Emden</i> <i>Daria Steiner</i></p>	<p><b>3.45 – 5.00 pm</b> <b>Panel 5: Theorizing Things and Artefacts</b></p> <p>Required Reading: <b>Brown 2001</b> Introduction: Malaika Sutter Discussion Inputs: Catalina Agudin, Tina Braun</p> <p><b>Participants:</b> Catalina Agudin Hanna Baro Adrien Bordone Tina Braun Zainabu Jallo Malaika Sutter</p> <p><i>Caroline van Eck</i> <i>Urte Krass</i></p>	<p><b>3.45 – 5.00 pm</b> <b>Panel 6: Of laboring, suffering, living, dying incandescent Bodies, Persons, Humans, Things</b></p> <p>Required Reading: <b>Serres 2018</b> Introduction: Tatsiana Artsimovich Discussion Inputs: Virginia Holzer, Maaïke Hommes, Bitten Stetter</p> <p><b>Participants:</b> Tatsiana Artsimovich Fabienne Blaser Virginia Holzer Maaïke Hommes Andrina Jörg Irina Raskin Bitten Stetter Sandro Weilenmann</p> <p><i>Eugenie Brinkema</i></p>
<p>Recommended reading: <i>Banwell 2015; Bennett 2004, 2010; Butler 2011; Coole/Frost 2013; Chukrov 2010; Esposito 2015; Grosz 2010; Haraway 2016; Hustvedt 2013; Hui 2015; Levine 2015; Povinelli 1995; Skiveren 2020</i></p>	<p>Recommended reading: <i>Bennett 2004; Boscagli 2014; Henare 2003; Ingold 2007, 2012; Lange Berndt 2015; Prown 1982; Trentman 2009</i></p>	<p>Recommended reading: <i>Ahmed 2010; Banwell 2015; Buse 2018; Butler 2011; Chukrov 2010; Esposito 2015; Grosz 2010; Haraway 2016; Hui 2015; Povinelli 1995</i></p>

**Parallel Sessions III (problem-based)**

The doctoral and postdoctoral students are expected to present their “tough-nut-to-crack” (5 minutes or less). Again, please connect this input to our common theme of “Materialities & Subjectivities” and, ideally, to the titles of the respective sessions. Please try to make your input as accessible to an interdisciplinary audience as possible.

Each of the two panels starts out with the participants presenting their tough-nuts to the whole group. These tough-nuts will then be tackled in a ‘speed dating’ manner: each presenter of a tough-nut gets a table, while the others split into groups and move from table to table after about 15 minutes of discussion. This way, each participant gets to discuss their tough-nut for about an hour and with changing groups. At the end of the morning, we will open up the discussion again and try to identify one or two “macro-tough-nuts” – key problems that are especially relevant to the topic of our Summer School, and which will be discussed in the last plenary session on Friday afternoon.

Group 1: <i>The Power of Transformation?</i>	Group 2: <i>From the Concept of Materiality to specific Materials and back</i>	Group 3: <i>Between the Material and Immaterial</i>
<p><b>Moderator:</b> Urte Krass</p> <p><b>Participants:</b> Catalina Agudin Dorothee Baumann Yorick Berta Tina Braun Zainabu Jallo Andrina Jörg Irina Raskin Bitten Stetter</p> <p><i>Christian J. Emden</i></p>	<p><b>Moderator:</b> Michèle Seehafer</p> <p><b>Participants:</b> Tatsiana Artsimovich Hanna Baro Olivia Biber Fabienne Blaser Jonathan Sarfin Malaika Sutter</p> <p><i>Caroline van Eck</i></p>	<p><b>Moderator:</b> Mike Toggweiler</p> <p><b>Participants:</b> Andrea Bordoli Adrien Bordone Gai Farchi Virginia Holzer Maaïke Hommes Irmtraud Huber Guðrun í Jákupsstovu Sandro Weilenmann</p> <p><i>Eugenie Brinkema</i></p>
<p><b>09.00 – 10.15 am</b> <b>Panel 1: How to put into Action the Transformative Power of Art and Science?</b></p> <p><b>Tough-nuts-to-crack:</b> Andrina Jörg Yorick Berta Tina Braun Bitten Stetter</p>	<p><b>09.00 – 10.15 am</b> <b>Panel 1: How to historicize/regionalize contemporary/global Theories and Concepts of Materiality and vice versa?</b></p> <p><b>Tough-nuts-to-crack:</b> Tatsiana Artsimovich Olivia Biber Fabienne Blaser Saskia Quené</p>	<p><b>09.00 – 10.15 am</b> <b>Panel 1: How to get from the Discursive to the Material? Or quite the other Way round? Or can We at all?</b></p> <p><b>Tough-nuts-to-crack:</b> Andrea Bordoli Gai Farchi Maaïke Hommes Guðrun í Jákupsstovu</p>
--- Coffee Break ---		
<p><b>10.45 – 12.00 am</b> <b>Panel 2: How to navigate the Subjects and Objects of my Research between socio-political Relevance, Commodification and Power Asymmetries?</b></p> <p><b>Tough-nuts-to-crack:</b> Catalina Agudin Dorothee Baumann Zainabu Jallo Irina Raskin</p>	<p><b>10.45 – 12.00 am</b> <b>Panel 2: How to fix/specify/localize the General/Global/Fluid and vice versa?</b></p> <p><b>Tough-nuts-to-crack:</b> Hanna Baro Jonathan Sarfin Malaika Sutter</p>	<p><b>10.45 – 12.00 am</b> <b>Panel 2: How to capture “Intra-Actions” in complex Immaterial-Material Entanglements?</b></p> <p><b>Tough-nuts-to-crack:</b> Adrien Bordone Virginia Holzer Irmtraud Huber Sandro Weilenmann</p>
<p><b>12.00 – 12.30 pm</b> <b>Evaluation and Formulation of a “Macro-tough-nut”</b></p>	<p><b>12.00 – 12.30 pm</b> <b>Evaluation and Formulation of a “Macro-tough-nut”</b></p>	<p><b>12.00 – 12.30 pm</b> <b>Evaluation and Formulation of a “Macro-tough-nut”</b></p>

## PLENARY SESSIONS

### Monday

#### 5.00 – 7.30 pm: Welcome, Introduction and Poster Exhibition

Moderators: Project Team

Monday afternoon will be dedicated to a short welcome and introduction of all participants. In order to familiarize ourselves with each other we will tour the poster exhibition, which will be installed by the project team prior to your arrival.

### Friday

#### 2.00 – 3.30 pm: Plenary Session: Taking Stock, Looking Ahead

Moderators: Project Team

Interactive discussions based on the results of the morning sessions.

#### 3.30 – 4.00 pm: Evaluation and Good-Bye

Moderators: Project Team



Ballenberg open-air museum

## SUPPORTING PROGRAM

### Monday

#### 3.30 – 4.45 pm: Reception

We look forward to welcoming you at the Hotel Alpha Soleil in Kandersteg (<https://www.alfasoleil.ch/>). The travel information – i.e. the train connections and directions from Berne to Kandersteg, as well as information on the shuttle service from the station in Kandersteg to the hotel – have been provided in a separate letter.

### Tuesday & Thursday

#### Movie

After dinner, you are invited to join us for a film screening (for those who want). There will be a selection of about ten films to choose from.

### Wednesday

#### 12.15 – : Afternoon Trip

The optional trip to the Ballenberg open-air museum aims at getting a glimpse of the 'authentic' Switzerland, apart from its conference rooms that is. The museum displays traditional buildings and architecture from all over the country. Located near Brienz, Canton of Bern, Ballenberg has over 100 original buildings that have been transported from their original sites. It is a Swiss heritage site of national significance. In addition to the main attraction of the buildings themselves, some of the industrial and crafting buildings still operate to give demonstrations of traditional rural crafts, techniques and cheesemaking. Therefore, we consider the trip as an enriching addition to the theme of our Summer School. Lunch will be provided as lunch bags prepared by the Seminarhotel. Alternatively you can also use the day to visit Thun, go hiking to the nearby mountain lake in Kandersteg, prepare for the second half of the week, etc. We will then have a special «Swiss» dinner for everyone back at the hotel.

### Friday

#### 4.00 – 5.00 pm: Drinks and Farewell

Those whose travel arrangements do not allow to leave on Friday evening are welcome to stay for another night and use the time for further discussion, planning future events – or simply for having a chat over a glass of wine or two.

## TransHumanities 2019-2022

*TransHumanities* is a platform for dialogue between the disciplines of the Humanities, between the Humanities and other scientific cultures, between science and art, theory and practice, academia and society; and between individual and participatory, analytical and committed research. *TransHumanities* serves to establish and cultivate discourses, initiatives and ideas that transcend institutional, socio-cultural, regional, linguistic and disciplinary barriers.

### Summer School 2021: Materialities & Subjectivities - Accounting for Complicated and Complicating Entanglements in the Humanities

Since the 1990s, the humanities' interest in material and materiality has been growing steadily. A material turn has been called out in order to coin a programmatic shift away from social constructivism and a text-heavy linguistic turn, which was criticized for maintaining modern and humanist binaries such as matter/subject, or nature/culture.

Feminist new materialists advocated for embracing the vitality of matter as it encompasses humans and non-humans alike (e.g. Donna Haraway, Karen Barad, Jane Bennett). The latter's rejection of anthropocentrism aligns feminist new materialism both with speculative realism (e.g. Quentin Meillassoux), a branch in philosophy that demanded a recognition of an autonomous reality that is independent of man and their consciousness, and with Actor Network Theory (ANT) (e.g. Bruno Latour), which positions humans as one actor amongst other "actants" who collectively form networks with particular capacities. And in regard to the emergence of New Media, media theorists such as Friedrich Kittler made a case for considering technology as essentially autonomous, leaving the human and written history behind.

While some matter-oriented approaches might have overstated the power of matter and technology by seemingly asserting and sometimes celebrating its primacy and self-sufficient agency (e.g. Kittler's polemic "driving the human out of the humanities"), for most of them (as well as this summer school), a return to matter does not mean to discount subjective, conceptual/ideal, discursive, or socio-cultural constructions of gender, class or race. The concepts that interest us consider how material objects, bodies, spaces, media stores and tools, technology, conditions are entangled with discourses and subjectivities, and how agency is co-produced—always infected by power modalities.

A mode of thinking through the intersections of (non)human life (bodies, animals, viruses, etc.), inorganic matter (particles, stone, waste, medial tools, technology, infrastructure, etc.), environmental phenomena (climate, streams, pollution, etc.) and socio-cultural or subjective/sensitive constructions puts forward a complicating, connecting, vibrant, processual, transmedial and open way to conceptualize the world, undermining an all too monolithic conception of systems, structures, fields, disciplines, and research objects. It allows us to think from transitions and beyond borders.

The summer school of 2021 analyzes and discusses present and past material and conceptual entanglements both as research topics and as a mode of thinking from (art)historical, literary, sociological, cultural, philosophical, archaeological, intermedial and artistic perspectives. It addresses the following questions a.o.:

- What do we really mean, when working with broad concepts such as "materiality" and "subjectivity"? How might a post-millennial (digital) approach differ from older conceptions?
- Since a shift towards the material might decentralize and destabilize the human subject and turns towards non-human performativity, while being a conceptual device nonetheless, how can we reasonably reconcile the material and conceptual/ideal, body/matter and sign/text, or, if necessary redefine it?
- Since thinking in entanglements is fundamentally about potentially limitless spatio-temporal relationality ("fields of force and flows of material", as Tim Ingold stated)—how can we still reasonably delimit our research, keep it focused and avoid arbitrariness?
- In what ways might performative, experiential, artistic or sensorial methodologies and methods help us to study entanglements of materialities and subjectivities? How can we, for example, account for sensual, aesthetic and performative aspects of material culture in our own research output—in text, visual, auditive, or intermedial forms?

For further information please visit the Summer School Blog: <http://blog.wbkolleg.unibe.ch>

## Participants Summer School 2021

### Guest Lecturers:

Prof. Dr. Eugenie Brinkema, Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Prof. Dr. Christian J. Emden, Rice University  
Prof. Dr. Caroline van Eck, University of Cambridge

### Postdoctoral and PhD Scholars:

Catalina Agudin MA, University of Bern  
Tatsiana Artsimovich MA, Justus-Liebig-University Gießen  
Hanna Baro MA, University of Siegen  
Dorothee Elisa Baumann MA, University of Bern  
Yorick Josua Berta MA, University for Art and Design Linz  
Olivia Biber MA, University of Bern  
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### Guest:

Dr. Daria Steiner, Graduate Centre for the Study of Culture Gießen (Partner)



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