MOUNTAINS & CINEMA

Department of American Studies, University of Innsbruck

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Abstracts & Speaker Biographies

OCTOBER 14 to 17, 2021

KEYNOTE LECTURES

Keynote Lecture I, Thursday, October 14, - 17:30 (HS 4, Geiwi)

Outlaw Mountains: Landscape and Genre
Tom Gunning, University of Chicago

I intend to deal with three films, Victor Sjostrom's *The Outlaw and his Wife* (1917), Raoul Walsh's *High Sierra* (1940) and Andre De Toth's *The Day of the Outlaw* (1959) all of which deal with character who use mountains as a way to live outside the Law. The mythical nature of mountains, their relation to space and time (both altitude and climate) intertwine with plots that deal with both passion and contradictions of social control.

Keynote Lecture II, Friday, October 15, 16:00- 17:30 (HS 4, Geiwi)

Mountains and Other Inconveniences
Jennifer Fay, Vanderbilt University

One of the more perverse turns in America's nuclear program was a proposal to use nuclear explosions not to bomb enemy populations, but to target the earth itself as the obstacle to human flourishing. "Plowshare" (1958-1973), championed by Edward Teller, would renovate the planet using nuclear explosions for "geographical engineering," such as instant harbors, cross-continental canals, redirected rivers, and mountain passes large enough to accommodate a super-highway-- all created at a fraction of the time and cost of conventional methods. When asked to clarify the scope of the program, Teller famously quipped: "If your mountain is not in the right place, drop us a card." Mountains, in Teller's engineering fantasy, were just another feature of our "slightly flawed" planet. Cinema promulgated the Plowshare program, which was never implemented beyond the test-site. Films made by the Atomic Energy Commission envision all topography as useable spaces; the once-sublime images of natural inaccessibility are turned into logistical problems that nuclear explosions could solve. Cinema framed non-auratic "nature" as the stuff that gets in the way.

This talk explores a post-World War II aesthetic sensibility epitomized by the Plowshare nuclear program and its cinematic promotion in a period that accelerated the processes we associate with the Anthropocene. What are the aesthetic features of a slight flaw, especially when it comes to mountains on film? Drawing on Marjorie Hope Nicholson's 1959 book *Mountain Gloom and Mountain Glory* and the more recent study *Wasteland: A History* by Vittoria De Palma, I consider how mountains fit into a new operational and aesthetic regime: from the theological category of seventeenth century evil, to the Romantic aesthetics of the sublime, mountains, by mid-century, are subsumed into the banality of inconvenience and subjected to the flattening ontology of cinema.

Keynote Lecture III, Saturday, October 16, 14:30- 16:30 (Seegrube, Baumannstube)

A Glacial Pace? Mountain Cinema and the Imagination of Climate Change
Alexa Weik von Mossner, University of Klagenfurt

Mountain ecologies are among the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. In her talk, Weik von Mossner will consider two documentaries that narrate the changing climate through the lens of disappearing glaciers, Jeff Orlowski's *Chasing Ice* (USA 2012) and Hannes Lang's *Peak* (Germany & Italy 2011). Both films aim to make climate change visceral for viewers, but their visual and narrative strategies could hardly be more different. *Chasing Ice* follows National Geographic photographer James Balog on his personal quest to capture the disappearance of the Artic glaciers in spectacular images and racing time-lapse photography. *Peak* also includes stunning shots of artificial snow weaving through barren mountain landscapes, but it is a quiet and contemplative film that explores the emotional and material effects of the changing climate on the local population in the Alps. Where Orlowski speeds things up to raise alarm, Lang does the opposite, slowing the pace literally to a standstill and arresting the viewer's gaze on the faces of individual people and their relationship to the mountains through culture, labor, and leisure. Drawing on the results of an empirical reception study, Weik von Mossner discusses the effects of these strategies on audiences in Austria and Germany, drawing conclusions about their narrative impact.

PARALLEL PANELS

Panel: Redirecting Mountain Cinema I (HS 4, Geiwi)
Chairs: Kamaal Haque (Dickinson College) and Sandra Tausel (University of Innsbruck)

Queer Mountains and Nature Porn: The Shamelessness of the *Heimatfilm*
Ralph J. Poole (University of Salzburg)

The *Heimatfilm* seems to be a genre excelling in shame: repressed sexuality, conservative gender politics, traditional rural ethics. My claim, however, is that in its blatant propaganda of such traditionalism, the *Heimatfilm* actually discloses a dislocated shamelessness. What cannot be shown in humans is transferred onto the natural realm: especially the Alpine landscape is highly eroticized in its rugged grandiosity and the animals are free to frolic whereas the humans are reduced to watching only. This formula, especially prominent in Austria's surprise postwar hit *Echo der Berge* (1954), has been taken up and transformed in later versions of the *Heimatfilm* such as the tourist sex comedies of the 1960s. While here, human sexual activity thematically has moved center front, suggesting a new era of shame unleashed, the formula remains the same: the pull of the home-longing and its inherent nature-bound traditionalism stays as strong as ever and the propagated exuberant sensuality is one that is deeply – and only – linked to nature proper, shaming all 'unnatural' sexual activity. And yet, as heteronormative as the *Heimatfilm* propounds to be, placing spectacular men in spectacular landscapes has also provided ample opportunities for queer potential. The range of such potential for the queerly inclined viewer like myself reaches from enjoying the rollicking of male rivalries to the shameless campiness of narcissists, from being disturbed by the shaming of gay outsiders to reveling in orgiastic nature homo porn, the latter ultimately getting rid of the last vestiges of restrictive civilizing shame.

A Scandinavian precursor of Arnold Fanck? Rune Carlsten's *Et farlig frieri* (1919)
Andrei Rogatchevski (University of Norway) and Åsne Ø. Høgetveit (University of Norway)

The location for Swedish director Rune Carlsten's film adaptation of Norwegian author Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson's short story *Et farlig frieri* (1856) is the steep slopes connecting the Hardanger fjord with the alpine mountain plateau Hardangervidda in Norway. The story is a democratized version of a universally familiar tale about a knight liberating a princess from a castle tower. The steep landscape is used to highlight both physical and metaphorical (spiritual) ascent/descent throughout the film. The film reaches its apex when the hero of the story, Tore, climbs a mountain to reach his beloved, Aslaug – proving his worth in the eyes of Aslaug's father.

The film makes for an interesting analysis of gender, spaces and hierarchies. We base our analysis on the concept of the moral vertical (a belief in female superiority accentuated via the textual and visual representations of women who are positioned somewhere high above; for details, see Høgetveit 2019). Drawing on works by Gaston Bachelard, and Iurii Lotman, among others, verticality is read as a metaphor for moral hierarchies in particular. The men in both the story and the film – suitors and family members – struggle in the steep landscape as their moral standards are tested. Aslaug seems to move effortlessly up the mountain, as if she naturally belongs there, thereby manifesting her moral superiority through her upward movement and spatial location on top of things, as it were.

Although Carlsten's film does not have snow or ice scenes in it, it can be considered a predecessor of Arnold Fanck's mountain films, such as *Der heilige Berg* (1926) and *Die weisse Hölle vom Piz Palü* (1929, co-directed with G W Pabst), given its focus on the strong link between men's attempts to impress a woman and a mountainous location in which such attempts take place. The paper examines the likelihood of Fanck's awareness of Carlsten's feature.

Festival Obscura: Gender, Race, Class in Festival-Driven Mountaineering Documentaries
Julie Rak (University of Alberta)

The gender, race and class issues in mountaineering films shown at major mountain film festivals around the world have been understudied. There are several reasons for this. As Scott MacDonald has pointed out, film criticism and theory has mostly avoided thinking about nature documentaries and adventure films featuring the natural world, in part because they are clearly not part of auteur cinema and its aesthetics (2016). The same holds true for mountaineering film (and book) festivals: only Susan Frohlick has examined their gender politics (2005), and treatments of film and book festivals do not focus on mountains or mountaineering as a rule (Driscoll and Squires 2020; Armstrong 2021; Peirano 2020). And yet, mountaineering films and the festivals where they are shown are highly popular around the world and influence how mountain places are understood and consumed virtually, giving rise to a cottage industry in creating documentary-style films about mountain places, which feature their own grammar of adventure discourse, breathtaking scenery and mountain places.

In this paper, I examine the politics of mountaineering short films which feature gender, class and race issues, particularly films which are part of the festival circuit. In the recent films *Concepcíon* (2019), *Refuge* (2019), *Cholitas* (2019) and *Pretty Strong: Fernanda* (2020), it is possible to see the tensions between feminist and anti-racist representations of women, especially women of colour, and the discourse of adventure that fuels fantasies of consumption and escape which are central to the mountain festival experience.

Panel: Screening Himalaya (HS 5, Geiwi)
Chairs: Eva Binder (University of Innsbruck) and Michael Docherty (University of Innsbruck)

Movies Mapping Mountains: Cartography of the Himalayas in Documentary and Fiction Film
Erwin Feyersinger (University of Tübingen)

Maps appear briefly but prominently in many documentary and fiction films. Visually and semiotically distinct from the rest of the film, they are often foregrounded and fulfill various narrative and rhetorical functions. This paper discusses how cartographical representations of the Himalayan mountains offer condensed insights into the underlying ideologies of the films they are featured in.

Visually, mountain systems consist of a few highly salient features such as famous peaks or ridges and mostly of non-distinct features, at least to a layperson. Maps can be used to highlight important areas and spatial relations such as specific routes and the obstacles along the way, often foreshadowing major plot points of the film. However, maps communicate more than topographical and spatiotemporal information.

Diegetic maps, for example, are often less important for the orientation of the audience than for the characterization of the setting and especially of the characters that interact with them, as they are material objects with a specific design and purpose. Adventurers can be seen devising and explaining plans and thus demonstrating their alleged expertise. More importantly, their use of maps exposes the colonial, capitalist, and ecological exploitation of a romanticized wilderness. In mountain movies, maps often become a tool for taming and conquering a specific terra incognita and a symptom for the individualistic and nationalistic hubris of the mountaineers.

The paper focuses on diegetic maps in films such as the short documentary *Wings Over Everest* (1934, Geoffrey Barkas & Ivor Montagu), the feature-length documentary *The Man Who Skied Down Everest* (1975, Bruce Nyznik & Lawrence Schiller), or the fiction film *Everest* (2015, Baltasar Kormákur).

On the Roof of the World: The German-Soviet Alai-Pamir Expedition in 1928. Between Alpinism and political appropriation – walking a tightrope
Kurt Scharr (University of Innsbruck)

German-Soviet (Russian) relations reached a low point following the end of the First World War and the earlier peace negotiations resulting in the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. At the same time, both states found themselves in a largely isolated position on the international political stage in the early 1920s. Germany was widely regarded as a warmonger and the main culprit for the First World War, whereas

the nascent Soviet Union had broken with all conventions following the revolution and the ensuing civil war, earning it the image of the spectre of bourgeois ideas of society and state in the 'West'. The German and Austrian Alpine Association (D.u.Oe.A.V.), on the other hand, had already ventured into central Asia with its first foreign expedition in 1913 and gained important experience. Yet, at the end of the 1920s, the political situation again seemed to favour cooperation between the two countries, supported by the D.u.Oe.A.V.. Under the leadership of Willy Rickmer Rickmers, the Alpine Club organised the first German-Soviet Alai-Pamir expedition in 1928. Both the Soviet Academy of Sciences and the *Notgemeinschaft der Deutschen Wissenschaft* (Emergency Association of German Science)—later called the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* (German Research Foundation)—were significantly involved. Although the Alpine Club maintained its tightrope walk between science and politics, it also promoted remarkable scientific achievements. This contribution attempts to analyse the expedition in its contemporary context and focuses on the resulting expedition film and its fate.

Climbing the Mountain, Elevating the Nation – The "Golden Age of Himalayan Climbing" on Film
Harald Höbusch (University of Kentucky)

Between 1950 and 1954, the first half of what Maurice Isserman and Stewart Weaver have termed "the golden age of Himalayan climbing" (295), four of the fourteen hitherto unscaled 8,000-meter peaks were climbed in quick succession – Annapurna (8,091 m / 26,545 ft) in 1950, Mount Everest (8,848.86 m / 29,032 ft) and Nanga Parbat (8,126 m / 26,660 ft) in 1953, and K2 (8,611 m / 28,251 ft) in 1954 – by French, British, German, and Italian mountaineering expeditions respectively. Occurring during a period of political, economic, and psychological reconstruction in the aftermath of World War II, these expeditions, as Isserman and Weaver further point out, were of "national importance" (276), covered extensively in the media and "followed by the general public with an interest second only to soccer" (234). In short, they provided these four nations, as the American climber Charles Houston observed in connection with the Italian K2 expedition, "a great shot in the arm at a very necessary time" (qtd. in Isserman and Weaver 318). In my presentation, I will explore how one medium in particular, the expedition film, inscribed the exploits of the successful mountaineers into the German and Italian imagination via two widely screened documentaries *Nanga Parbat* 1953 (Hans Ertl, 1953), and *Italia K2* (Marcello Baldi, 1955), and, more importantly, how, each in their own way, these documentaries contributed to the reconstruction of German and Italian self-understanding and self-image in the trying decade after World War II.

Parallel Panel Session II, Friday, October 15, 9:30- 11:00

Panel: Deep Time & Eternal Ice (HS 4, Geiwi)
Chairs: Daniel Reynolds (Emory University) and Camila Torres Carrillo (University of Innsbruck)

Streams of Deep Time: Glaciers and the Media Imaginary of the Alpine High Mountains
Dominik Schrey (University of Passau)

The late Thomas Elsaesser (2018) proposed to understand glaciers (as well as permafrost, bogs, and amber) as "natural 'media' of historical topographies" and as the rightful ancestors of analog recording media that, in this perspective, are finally liberated from being forced into the genealogy of symbolic notation systems. While Elsaesser is primarily interested in the aspect of arbitrary conservation of frozen objects, for the early glaciologists of the 19th century, the moving ice formations were not so much recording as writing media. Louis Agassiz (1841) compared their geomorphological traces in the furrowed valleys of the European Alps to an often used lithography stone. James Forbes (1900 [1843]) considered them to be chroniclers that actively register the earth's history in real-time like an "endless scroll, a stream of time, upon whose stainless ground is engraven the succession of events, whose dates far transcend the memory of living man." In my talk, I will thus argue that the Alpine glaciers are a crucial element of the proto-cinematic imaginary of the 19th century. In a similar fashion as the Alpine mountains were reinvented as the romanticized Other of industrialized Europe, glaciology provided a new framework for understanding slowness in a time that is often described as being obsessed with the notion of acceleration (Koepnick 2014).

Building on this observation, I will discuss how the epistemic practices of surveying glaciers have repeatedly redefined concepts of speed and time. In 1891, when photographic processes had already penetrated deep into the micro-temporal dimension of the "tenth of a second," Étienne-Jules Marey proposed his method of chronophotography to render visible those processes of geological "deep time" that are beyond the threshold of the human sensory apparatus: "One cannot rule out the hope that one day we will be able to follow the slow changes in the position of glaciers and the geological transformations of the surface of entire countries with the help of pictures taken in very long spaces in between." Unbeknownst to Marey, at that time, a team of geodesists had already begun working on realizing that hope. They combined the topographical method of photogrammetry with chronophotography (though without using the latter term). This spatiotemporal combination provides the basis for those time-lapse videos of thawing ice that are essential to another, more recent shift in perspective, effectively recasting the word "'glacial'—once a dead metaphor for 'slow'—as a rousing, iconic image of unacceptably fast loss." (Nixon 2011)

The World's a Mountain: Alpine Re-Configurations and Synthetic Mountains in *Snowpiercer* (2013)
Benita Lehmann

Bong Joon-ho's *Snowpiercer* (2013) envisions a dystopian reality of the climate crisis in which the efforts of human action against global warming cause an ice age trapping the survivors on a train that perpetually circumnavigates the planet. The film creates a disastrous geomorphic image of the future – a condensed vision of the world as we know it – set on a train as a microcosm of social, moral, and economic densities.

This paper examines *Snowpiercer's* cinematic mountains with regards to the effects of the technological development of nature and the exploitation of the earth. It hopes to demonstrate how digitally constructed mountains contrast with the claustrophobic confinement of humanity on the train. By focusing on the intricate connections and relationships that emanate from cinematic mountains and the entanglements between "nature" and "culture" as well as "technology" and "civilization" which the film elucidates, this paper explores notions of (im)mobility and the ways in which the film contributes to a shift in cultural imaginations of mountains as national symbols towards mountains as transnational entities.

Examining the entanglements between mountains, technology, and civilization, their networks of production, distribution, and reception, this paper intends to show that in *Snowpiercer* mountains are transnational entities that both produce and exist in networks. Finally, as mountains in *Snowpiercer* are mainly digitally constructed, this paper also addresses the potential effects of the re-introduction of synthetic mountains into the landscape.

The Temporality of Sci-Fi Mountains
Johannes Vith (University of Innsbruck)

In light of global warming, the West has become increasingly aware of its impact on the Earth. The concept of the 'Anthropocene,' the epoch of human influence, has come to signify the end of tolerable living conditions for humans. As the awareness of humanity's impact increases, so does the understanding of the temporal dimension of anthropocenic problems. Humanity's nearing end contrasts with the geological concept of 'deep time.' While the formation of our continents, mountains, valleys, etc. has taken millions of years, humanity has only existed for a comparably short period of time.

This paper examines how contemporary science fiction films remediate deep time. In the dystopian visions of Bong Joon-ho's *Snowpiercer* (2013), where humanity's attempts to avert climate change have resulted in a new Ice Age, and Christopher Nolan's *Interstellar* (2014), where a neo-agrarian society struggles to fight the large-scale atmospheric changes caused by blight, deep time is dramatically accelerated. In reality, both processes would take thousands, if not millions of years. I will argue that *Snowpiercer* provides us with a proto-Marxist remediation of deep time that frames geological changes as agent-driven revolution. The eponymous train almost resembles a perpetuum mobile travelling through ice and desert, similar to the Earth's warm and cold periods. In a similar vein, *Snowpiercer* shows us a constant repetition of Marxist revolutions that are crucial for humanity's survival. By contrast, *Interstellar* offers a psychoanalytic remediation of deep time

that operates with temporal (counter-)transferences. Everything in the life of the protagonist's daughter goes back to changing time scales and her father's interference during her childhood. Analyzing the anthropocenic reframings of (post-)Marxist and psychoanalytical conceptions not only helps us to better understand the eco-critical challenges contemporary science fiction films face, but also sheds light on the stakes of theorizing media in the age of the Anthropocene.

Panel: Mountains and Transcultural Trauma (HS 5, Geiwi)
Chairs: Matthias Mösch (University of Innsbruck) and Ingie Zakaria (University of Innsbruck)

Documenting transnational Alps: THE MILKY WAY (Italy 2020), Luigi D'Alife) *(Provisional title)*
Sabine Schrader (University of Innsbruck)

On the one hand the western Alps between Italy and France have connected different peoples and cultures for thousands of years and on the other hand they are one of the most important migratory routes. If in the 20th century it was Italians who sought their fortune on the other side of the border, in the last few decades it was first the refugees from the Balkan War and then African migrants who crossed the border. At the same time "The Milky Way", right on the border between Claviere (IT) and Montgenèvre (FR), is a famous ski area.
The homonymous documentary attempts to show precisely this diversity of the Occitan Alps in a choral way using different techniques and styles. The story of the Italian migration of the 1950s, for example, is staged as an animated graphic novel. In my lecture I will show how the film, thanks to its intermedial poetics of landscape and migration, attempts a re-mapping of the Occitan Alps.

"Enslaved by the Mountain:" Trauma and Fragmentation in Ketan Metha's *Manjhi*
Christoph Singer (Universität Innsbruck)

Ketan Metha's 2015 film *Manjhi: The Mountain Man* tells the story of Dashrath Manjhi, a Dalit from a small village in Bihar, India. A deadly mountain blocks the villagers' access to the nearest town resulting in the death of the protagonist's wife Phaguniya. To cope with the trauma of his loss, Manjhi spends 22 years to cut a road through the nameless mountain.

In this paper, I will discuss Metha's film – which is based on real events – as a trauma-narrative. Here the mountain symbolizes the protagonist's grief and becomes a spatial signifier for India's traumatic, post-colonial upheavals. Ketan Metha refuses to transform this tale of man versus mountain into a heroic bio-pic. Rather, *Manjhi* is a trauma-narrative which depicts dissolving identities, cultural fragmentations and social disruptions. Metha does so by counter-acting genre-conventions and blurring narrative voices.

At the film's centre, however, remains the nameless mountain, which Metha represents as a suture between the past and the present, loss and acceptance, exclusion and inclusion and which connects old and new India. Consequently, I will read this cinematic mountain as a "site of transcultural identity formation, where ambiguous identity, fragmentation of identity and hybridity reside" (Reisenberger 2006, 134).

Transcultural negotiations of mountain aesthetics in *Tiger Zinda Hai*
Sophia Mehrbrey (University of Passau)

Tiger Zinda Hai (2017) is a controversial Bollywood action thriller banned in Pakistan for showing demeaning content. After an ISC attack on a hospital in Tikrit, Iraq, the terrorists hold the Indian and Pakistani nurses of the hospital as hostages. Their governments respectively send a secret agent to free the women. The two turn out to be the transnational couple Tiger (Indian) and Zoya (Pakistani): eight years after the adventures of a previous film (*Ek Tha Tiger*, 2012), the viewers discover that the two secret agents, officially declared dead, started a peaceful married life in the Austrian Alps, where the first 20 minutes of the film take place, building an essential counterpoint to the upcoming action. Thus this paper investigates the transcultural symbolics of the Austrian Alps in *Tiger Zinda Hai* between traditional Bollywood aesthetics and the reinvestigation of Austrian perspectives.

The representation of the mountains in *Tiger Zinda Hai* is less controversial than unconventional for a Bollywood movie. Dancing scenes in Bollywood often create imaginary geography (Pestal 2007) of

romantic relationships based on a mythological tradition of symbols such as wind, sunsets, and mountains (Dwyer 2002). They thus introduce a narrative break, an escape to a virtual dreamworld out of time and space, exploring "cognitive maps" of emotional homelands (Mikunda 2002). Due to the political tensions in Kashmir, Bollywood productions started to shoot in other mountain areas, like the Swiss or Austrian Alps.

Tiger Zinda Hay, however, points out a self-reflexive dimension of its mountain idyll, as the scenes shot in the Austrian Alps aren't unrelated dance scenes set in an imaginary mountain landscape but form a closed micronarrative within the intradiegetic reality, referring to aesthetics of the *Heimatfilm*. Indians perceive the Alps as a "Disneyland of love" (Kabir 2007). In fact, the harmonious relationship of Tiger and Zoya living in the Austrian Alps – emphasized by a hyperbolic love sequence that tries to catch up with traditional Bollywood mountain aesthetics - represents a counterpoint to their cultural rivalry, as one is Indian and the other Pakistani. Within the framework of international political cooperation, this micronarrative articulates transcultural negotiations of gender relations, family bonds, and existential threat while simultaneously proposing the possibility to rediscover the construction of an emotional alpine Landscape through the eyes of Bollywood filmmakers.

Parallel Panel Session III, Friday, October 15, 11:30- 13:00

Panel: Mountain Gloom (HS 4, Geiwi)
Chairs: Sascha Pöhlmann (University of Innsbruck) and Åsne Ø. Høgetveit (University of Norway)

Horror and Mountains
Michael Fuchs (University of Oldenburg)

Surprisingly few horror movies are set in the mountains; and even fewer emphasize the planetary or cosmological horrors that mountains may produce in humans. After all, mountains (quite literally) dwarf human beings and emphasize the insignificance of individual human lives on a planetary scale. At the same time, many mountain films have the making of horror narratives—a group of people ventures into an isolated and hostile environment beset by various dangers. Party members often succumb to horrifying deaths or barely survive, injured and/or disfigured and traumatized. However, these films are usually not referred to as "horror"—they are "survival thrillers," "adventures," or, simply, "dramas." Indeed, horror films set in mountains add monsters to the mix. For example, in the American horror film *Frozen* (2010), in which three students are stranded in a skiing resort, the horror is embodied by a pack of wolves; the Norwegian horror film *Fritt Vilt* (Cold Prey, 2006) relies on the slasher formula; and the Austrian sf/horror hybrid *Blutgletscher* (Blood Glacier, 2013) might use its setting in the Alps to highlight the environmental horrors connected to the climate crisis, but draws most of its horror from the mutants which are created by a microorganism that emerges from thawing permafrost. Accordingly, my presentation will discuss the use in horror aesthetics in recent mountain films and the role of mountains in horror movies. In so doing, I will try to answer the question why the inhuman and practically unanthropomorphizable mountains apparently make for unsatisfactory monsters.

When Glaciers Bleed – Renegotiating 1980s B-Horror for the 21st Century
Maximilian Schweigl

"On the mountain no one can hear you scream" is the evocative tagline featured in the trailer for the 2013 Austrian horror film *Blood Glacier*. Set on a remote research station in the Alps beset by a prehistoric mutagen released from melting glaciers, the film features a tagline that is by far not the only reference to the popular Alien franchise and its own catchphrase "in space, no one can hear you scream" and goes on to indicate that *Blood Glacier* owes its style to a tradition of body and hybrid horror that stretches back not only to modern classics such as Ridley Scott's *Alien* and Jon Carpenter's *The Thing* but also to a plethora of 1980s low budget creature features. And even though *Blood Glacier* facilitates the trappings of American B-movie horror entertainment with visceral gore and abhorrent rubber monsters, this paper illustrates how a horror paradigm shift can be observed in the film's usage of the cinematic mountain. While both *The Thing* and *Alien* utilize

mountains and mountain imagery, the underlying horror is informed by human ecology, whereby mountains become spaces of human exploitation of humans, embodied in the emergence of murderous hybrid monsters. The horror of *Blood Glacier*, instead, sees the network between mountain and man shifting away from the fear of human's exploitation around or within a mountain, toward the mountain itself becoming the source of fear. Although the film continues a tradition of making use of mutant hybrid monsters to great effect, they emerge not as a result of humans asserting their power onto the material condition of the mountain and instead due to the mountain's changed conditions that result from climate change and now assert power over humans. Therefore, by engaging in an ecocritical analysis of *Blood Glacier* we can not only observe distinct developments taking place within the history of the cinematic horror genre, but we can also gain insight into the fear we feel in the face of the mountain and the way this fear evolves in the wake of the encroaching Anthropocene.

"Home Sweet Home": Re-Negotiating Wilderness and Civilization in Log Cabin Horror Films
Robert Winkler (University of Salzburg)

It is 1981 and Sam Raimi's film *The Evil Dead* confronts its audience with sheer horror, infesting a bunch of young, good-looking adolescents in a remote log cabin in the woods of a mountain. Raimi's cult classic spawned two sequels and has turned the log cabin in the mountains into an often employed yet de-historicized trope of the horror film genre, signifiying a terrifying return of repressed wilderness. One year before the release of *The Evil Dead*, a series of volcanic eruptions on Mount St. Helens in Skamania County, Washington, had confronted American society with an actually deadly return of mountain wilderness – killing 57 people in one of the most serious volcanic eruptions in U.S. history.

As early as 1967, Roderick Frazier Nash laid bare the ever-changing historical re-negotiation of wilderness and civilization in and for the American mind and pointed towards the role of emotions in the concomitant evolution of environmentalism. Since its inception in the 1990s, ecocritical scholarship, in turn, has broadened its initial focus on a thematic reevaluation of nature writing to investigate with narratological tools the emotionalizing strategies of texts dealing with nature (James 2015). In her pioneering work on affective econarratology, Alexa Weik von Mossner explores "the role played by embodied simulation and related mirroring responses in readers' emotional engagement with environmental narrative" (2016: 534; cf. 2017, 2020).

This paper operates within the framework of affective econarratology in order to shed light on the re-negotiations of wilderness and civilization in *log cabin horror films*. Three outstanding examples of the generic blend of mountain cinema and horror film will thereby be close read as well as historicized in order to address the following research questions: First, what cinematic techniques are employed in these films to evoke viewers' "emotional engagement with environmental narrative." Second, how to situate this kind of emotional engagement with wilderness and civilization within the particular historical zeitgeist itself preoccupied with re-negotiating the apparent dichotomy of nature and culture.

Panel: Festivals and Other Playgrounds (HS 5, Geiwi)
Chairs: Erwin Feyersinger (University of Tübingen) and Dominik Schrey (University of Passau/ IFK Vienna)

Film Festivals: Creators of "Mountain Film" Canons
Susann Winsel (University of Leipzig)

In 1952 the first Mountain Film Festival took place in Trento, Italy. Originated in the social environment of the Italian Alpine Club it became an event where alpinism and the creation of mountain culture intersected (Cecchin 2001). Over decades directors, mountaineers and "mountain enthusiasts" would meet and watch a variety of films, which were competing for awards. In the year of 1976 the idea of a shared cinematic mountain (adventure) experience was transferred to Banff (Canada) and so was the hope of establishing a "mountain culture" driven by movies, exchange and later literature. Both festivals are still important dates in the festival circuit of mountain cinema, next to the innumerable festivals and film tours which followed worldwide.

My research interest is centered on the audiovisual climbing culture. Since the very first edition in Trento, films show people performing climbs. In doing so the festivals and films play an important role for understanding the audiovisual history of climbing itself (apart from the "Bergfilm Genre" ibid. Rentschler 1990, Kiefer 1997; Rapp 1997; Martin 2017 still rarely researched: Gilchrist 2007, Chares 2019; Mantovani 2020).

In my talk I would like to discuss the idea that "Mountain Film Festivals" generate their own point of view (canon) concerning what is to be called a mountain film. I follow the ideas of Francesco Di Chiara und Valentina Re (2011) and the findings of festival scholars (De Valck 2007, De Valck and Soeteman 2010). They suggest that by researching film festivals the dominance of film historical classifications can be challenged or – less provoking – enriched. This kind of approach helps to contextualize aesthetic and narrative conventions in the way mountains are depictured by stakeholders of different social areas (e. g. sports, science or art) and may influence each other. Furthermore, the social function of the festivals for climbing and mountain culture will be explored. The talk takes festival catalogues as sources into account. Thereby prior self-images can be reconstructed as well as debates and changing regulations which impacted the development of so-called "climbing films".

Sensing the Mountains: Ecologies of a GroPro Cinema
Karina Kirsten (University of Marburg)

The GoPro Camera is a type of wearable technology that has become widely known for enabling first-person views of athletic feats such as skiing, surfing, base-jumping, or more recently, hiking & flying. GoPro models are easily wearable on the human body or installable on other sporting equipment or moving vehicles. Once the object is attached, its camera can deliver high performance images thanks to their built-in stability and fixed wide-angle lenses. This type of wearable technology has recently been subject to a number of studies conducted in ethnography, geography, social science, and media studies. These studies draw attention to the in motion and in situ quality of the images. Bégin (2016), for example, speaks of a GoPro mobilography when describing the media practice of an amateur cinema that celebrates perceiving the world with "eyes in your body." Whereas Sumartojo and Pink (2017) emphasize the capacity of GoPro recordings to constitute a particular video trace that enables a process of reflection and new knowledge-making. Although both perception and reflection are not new in cinema history, small and portable devices such as the GoPro Camera give rise to a sensitivity towards environmental, sensory, and affective configurations that are built in situ and mediated in motion. By considering hike & fly videos that are conducted with a GoPro camera and uploaded on YouTube, this paper will show how the portability of the device molds itself into the chain of rising sensibilities and 'records' an experience that 'caught on the fly' allows us to gain new knowledge about the way we see, sense, and (re-)shape the mountains.

"Geological Platforms, Embodied Infrastructures: On the Mountains in *Death Stranding*"
Daniel Reynolds (Emory University)

At the geographical and narrative center of the videogame *Death Stranding* lies a vast mountain range. The game is set in the wake of a cataclysm that has disrupted distribution and communications channels. The player-controlled character, Sam Bridges, is a porter who carries goods and messages across rough, desolate terrain. Along the way, he builds infrastructure like roads, bridges, and a communications network. Shouldering heavy, unstable loads, Sam will fall if players do not pay careful attention to the relationship among his body, the cargo, and the ground beneath his feet. From moment to moment, the gameplay foregrounds embodied challenges— balance, proprioception, endurance—while the larger-scale challenges involve traversing and modifying the landscape.

In a long central section of the gameplay, Sam must carry cargo into the farthest reaches of the mountains, visiting outposts and research stations. In the mountains, the game's challenges intensify. The ground is steeper here than anywhere else in the game, the snow is slippery, and there are fewer other people around to offer help or hope.

This paper argues that Sam's journey through the mountains establishes an embodied infrastructure—a human strand that connects various places, people, and experiences, not only through the structures that Sam builds, but through the very bodily effort he exerts as he makes his way from location to location. The mountain region in the game offers particular challenges, but also unique affordances, and both are crucial to the connections and meanings Sam establishes in the region. Through structures that he builds and tools that he uses, Sam gradually brings his bodily abilities into accordance with the topographical specificities of the mountains.

The relationship that Sam forges with the region exemplifies how contingent the nominal boundaries among places, bodies, and technologies actually are. *Death Stranding* is thus exemplary of videogames' ability to blur theoretical boundaries—between computation and representation, user and game, body and environment. This becomes possible because of the central role that mountains play in the game's thematic, interactive, and narrative development.

Parallel Panel Session IV, Friday, October 15, 14:00-15:30

Panel: Ethics & Athletics (HS 4, Geiwi)
Chairs: Cornelia Klecker (University of Innsbruck) and Sophia Mehrbrey (Saarland University)

»Filming Filming and Climbing Techniques – The Male Gaze in *Free Solo* (2018)«
Martin Sexl (Innsbruck University)

Free Solo (Directors: Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi & Jimmy Chin, USA 2018) won the Oscar for Best Documentary Feature. It documents the first free solo ascent of the extremely difficult and more than 3.000 feet high wall of El Capitan in Yosemite (California) by the US-American professional climber Alex Honnold, who climbed the wall without any protection, an undertaking that far exceeds previous free solo ascents in terms of danger, difficulty, and length. Some of the climbing passages were close to the limit of what the best climbers are able to master even in short and not dangerous rock climbs. Any false move would have meant certain death.

Interwoven with the climb itself, the film also documents the climber's biography as well as the technical, interpersonal, and moral challenges of filming, making it a film about filming as well. However, making viewers aware of the process of filming does not at all reveal the fact that *Free Solo*, just like every documentary film, co-constructs the filmed phenomenon. On the contrary, by showing the documenting technique, the myth (in the sense of Roland Barthes) of the authentic, natural and independent as well as physically and mentally potent subject, who faces a challenge 'naked' and overcomes it with precise, rational and persistent planning and preparation, is even reinforced.

The paper will show how the film stages the myth of the 'naked superhero' and how stereotypical ideas of the relationship between men and women as well as between man, nature and technology are reproduced.

Skiing at the End of Nature: Ruben Östlund's *Force Majeure* (2014)
Caroline Schaumann, Emory University

In *The End of Ice* (2019), Dahr Jamail cautions "A child born today will see an Everest largely free of glaciers within her lifetime" (6) urging us to come to terms with guilt and grief in order to acknowledge the loss of our planet as we know it. Melting ice caps and retreating glaciers have become icons of global warming that highlight both the destructive power of humans and our vulnerability and incapacity to live with the destructive changes we have produced. As Christophe Bonneuil and Jean-Baptiste Fressoz conclude in *The Shock of the Anthropocene*: "Far from the glorious advent of an 'Age of Man,' the Anthropocene thus rather attests to our striking impotence" (24).
My presentation seeks to tease out the tension between visions of grandiosity and their futility by investigating how Ruben Östlund's *Turist* (2014, *Force Majeure*) models—with humorous absurdity—disorientation and vulnerability in the Anthropocene, and underscores the need for new modes of defining nature and our participation in it. In the midst of a deserted ski resort in the French Alps

with artificial snow, posh lodgings, high-end equipment, and convenient infrastructure, the protagonists experience the volatility of both natural forces and human emotions in the form of an avalanche and an equally destructive crisis in their marriage. Östlund engages traditions of the German mountain film and the disaster movie to show how these violent disturbances disrupt a seemingly controlled and perfected environment, triggering a range of (ineffective) human coping strategies. The larger force majeure of climate change goes unmentioned in the film but remains the elephant in the room, as it is an equally incalculable combination of man-made and natural forces that leads to helplessness, guilt, shame, and disillusion—like the avalanche itself. In various thought experiments, *Force Majeure* thus throws into question modern definitions of human control, exclusivity, masculine prowess, the meaning of family and friends, and the restorative power of nature, and invites us to reassess the very traditions and genres in which we narrate nature.

'I should really be completely alone in the world': Ethics, Aesthetics and the Figure of the Athlete in Documentary Films of Mountain Sports
Jon Hughes (Royal Holloway, University of London)

Documentary filmmakers are almost always obliged to navigate 'the tension between artistic ambition and the responsibilities that attend working with real lives' (Pratap Rughani, 2013). In the case of documentaries recording life-and-death situations of any kind this tension can become a double-bind. In this paper I will reflect on the negotiation of ethical imperative and aesthetic dimension in documentary films concerned with mountain sports. Such sports see athletes performing in the most unforgiving of natural environments, and in so doing putting themselves at extreme personal risk. The ongoing debates around the ethics and principles of participation in 'dangerous' sports/pastimes such as mountaineering are further complicated through the act of spectatorship. For the filmmaker, the decision to film the performance in the first place, and the subsequent shaping of a film narrative around it, raise difficult questions around responsibility, both to the subject of the film and to the projected audience. I will take as my case studies two documentary films focused on extreme athletic performance and risk in mountain settings – Werner Herzog's *Die große Ekstase des Bildschnitzers Steiner* (1974), about the Swiss ski-jumper Walter Steiner, and Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi and Jimmy Chin's *Free Solo* (2018), about the American climber Alex Honnold's 2017 free ascent of El Capitan in Yosemite, California. I will examine the explicit reflection on and practical application of ethics within the films. Drawing on the work of Emmanuel Lévinas, I will argue that the films depend on a form of relational ethics requiring of the viewer an empathic engagement and trust in the subjects of the films, both of whom express a paradoxical desire to be 'alone' even while performing for an audience.

Panel: Moving / Mining / Resourcing (HS 5, Geiwi)
Chairs: Michael Fuchs (University of Oldenburg) and Robert Winkler (University of Salzburg)

Who Mines the Vibranium? *Black Panther* (2018), Racial Capitalism, and the Limits of Representation
Camila Torres Carrillo

Nearly four years after its premiere, Ryan Coogler's *Black Panther* (2018) remains one of Marvel and Disney's most popular films. It is the highest-grossing solo superhero movie and the twelfth highest-grossing film of all time—behind blockbusters such as James Cameron's *Avatar* (2009), which had a much smaller impact on popular culture. Featuring a primarily Black cast, *Black Panther* speaks to a deeply-felt yearning for Black representation in cinema, and it spotlights characters that feel authentic due to their experiences of dispossession, violence, and post-colonial rootlessness as well as characters that satisfy a desire for a world in which a group of racialized peoples are not exploited for their labor but respected and valued for their contributions. However, *Black Panther* goes about establishing these emotional connections by investing in audiences' affinity with the Wakandan aristocracy, which mirrors real-life neoliberal discourses that deem any gain in racial diversity, even if it is limited to the top of society, as progress for all. Such discourses are generally used to obfuscate the relationship between race and class, especially as regards Black people, whose structural location within capitalism is at the bottom of the labor hierarchy. As a result, *Black Panther* obscures the people who would more readily invite identification with most viewers: the miners who extract the vibranium that makes Wakandan technology possible. However, if *Black*

Panther renders Wakandan miners imperceptible, their absence becomes manifest through the ubiquity of the metal that underpins their society as well as the elite's monopoly on its most powerful applications. Furthermore, the divide between the aristocracy and the working class, as (dis-)embodied by the absent miners, echoes in the way T'Challa and his social circle perceive and behave toward women and non-Wakandans, and it serves as an important reminder of the limits of representation.

Screening Men Moving Mountains. Man's Victory over Nature in Mining Films from the 1950s
Isis Luxenburger (Saarland University, University of Trier, University of Montreal)

In mining, the term 'mountain' not only refers to the geological formation but also to the deaf rock extracted as a byproduct. Hence, the expression of 'moving mountains' is often used to describe the miners' work—surpassing its colloquial use as a metaphor for impressive accomplishments. While, in mining, the expression of 'moving mountains' becomes literal, materializing in an actual and visible mountain movement, mining companies have metaphorically moved mountains in order to mediate their accomplishments on the big screen—at the cinema.

Two examples of industrial films from both sides of the Atlantic that show that the actual process of moving mountains and are forced to move mountains as the act of filming in a hostile work environment itself represented a major hurdle, will be investigated in more detail. Walford Hewitson's documentary film ROAD OF IRON (CA 1955) is one of many films based on material filmed over the course of several years, in which a mining territory in Northern Quebec/Labrador was rendered accessible by railroad. The cinematic large-scale mediation of the project led by the *Iron Ore Company of Canada* was closely linked to its realization and planned from the start. Consequently, the entanglement of cinema and mountains was an important feather in the cap of this long-term project from the very beginning. The behind-the-scenes documentary feature QUAND LA MINE DEVIENT STUDIO (FR 1958) was broadcast as a part of the cinema magazine program of the mining company *Charbonnages de France*. It documents the technical and logistical expenses the company had to shoulder in order to film a new machine in the mine. In order to realize this project of filming in CinemaScope and color in such a dangerous underground setting, the mine had to be turned into a film studio, thus interweaving cinema and moving mountains.

"Building a Better Mountain?" Necrotic Land Development and New/Post-West(ern) scholarship in Taylor Sheridan's *Yellowstone*
Stefan "Steve" Rabitsch (University of Warsaw/University of Graz)

The Intermountain West features prominently in Taylor Sheridan's cinematic and televisual oeuvre not only visually, but also as property, a resource, an investment, and as a site of identity and belonging. Early in the third season of Paramount's hit television show *Yellowstone* (2018–), Roarke Morris (Josh Holloway) becomes the latest in a string of agents of big capital to descend on the eponymous valley, an arguably pristine mountain habitat. He explains his investment firm's rationale for Aspenizing and building an airport in what William Travis has identified as an already rapidly "gentrified range" (2007, 155). Not only is the hedge fund manager proposing to build a "better," i.e., more accessible and thus more profitable mountain, he also speaks to broader changes in land development and land use in what has been tracking as the nation's fastest-growing region since the late 1990s. Likely the preeminent cinematic and televisual storyteller of the West today, Sheridan remediates knowledge about a region that one would not necessarily expect to find in popular culture formats. The West we enter through his work is the West of New/Post-West(ern) scholarship in that it is "a peopled, cultured, playful, ugly West" (Taylor, 2004, 155).

Consequently, this paper will read *and* explicate New/Post-West(ern) scholarship through a corpus of pertinent examples drawn from the series along two intersecting trails: i) landed complexities and ii) postcolonial voices. The Alpine habitat of *Yellowstone* serves as a synecdochical space, i.e., a stand-in for complex economic processes—the necrotic logic that entangles two "competing capitalisms that commodify nature in incompatible ways" (Walker, 2003, 17)—which have been affecting the entire region. More specifically, the paper will map how the series critiques two key development zones—resort zones and the gentrified range (Travis, 33)—and their effects on the

ecological and the socio-cultural lifeworlds in the Intermountain West while also making serious efforts to give space and time to "land back" voices.

Parallel Panel Session V, Saturday, October 16, 10:00- 11:30

Panel: Redirecting Mountain Cinema II (HS 4, Geiwi)
Chairs: Ralph J. Poole (University of Salzburg) and Christoph Singer (University of Innsbruck)

Siegfried Kracauer's mountain film idea – critical tourism and political contexts
Viola Rühse (Danube University Krems)

In the research field of mountains and cinema, Siegfried Kracauer is well-known as a critic of the mountain films of Arnold Fanck, Luis Trenker, and Leni Riefenstahl from the 1920s and 1930s. In his much-discussed book *From Caligari to Hitler* (1947), he drew attention to their "heroic idealism" and anti-rationalist tendencies that could be ideologically appropriated by the National Socialists. Less known is that Kracauer himself wrote a mountain film idea in the first year of his French exile in October 1933. The film idea is based on the French novel *Tartarin sur les Alpes* (1885) by Alphonse Daudet. The protagonist is a French Alpine club president who wants to gain new merits in Switzerland for his re-election. The story is very suitable for an unusual and humorous mountain film. Tourism criticism, slapstick, and sensational film tricks can be combined. Also, Tartarin is a well-liked anti-hero figure. Thus, the film idea differs from the popular German mountain films, in which heroism and sacrifice are central themes.

Unfortunately, Kracauer's film idea was not realized and forgotten for a long time. Only in recent years has it been addressed in a very few research contributions. To complement these, Kracauer's critical travel feuilletons will be considered for the analysis of the film idea. Comparisons with texts on mountain tourism or mountain films by other authors will also be taken into account. The political and transnational aspects of Kracauer's film idea will also be analyzed. Such a film and cultural-historical study of Kracauer's mountain film idea is an important complement to the examination of his reviews and film books. It draws attention to Kracauer's very multi-layered engagement with mountain films. It may not make his position in *From Caligari to Hitler* more convincing, but at least it is more understandable.

An Austrian in Hollywood Makes a Mountain Film: Fred Zinnemann's *Five Days One Summer*
Kamaal Haque (Dickinson College)

Fred Zinnemann (1907-1997) was born in what is today Poland and grew up in Vienna, where he and Billy Wilder went to school together. After film studies in Paris, Zinnemann already emigrated to the United States in 1929, becoming one of a group of Austrian and German emigres based there during the 1930s and beyond - a group which included not only his childhood friend Wilder, but also such luminaries as Fritz Lang, Robert Siodmark and Edgar Ulmer. Likely best-known for his Oscar winning direction of *From Here to Eternity* (1953) and *A Man for All Seasons* (1966), Zinnemann is also well-known for his class western *High Noon* (1952). It comes as a surprise for many viewers to learn that his final film, *Five Days One Summer* (1982) is a mountain film set in Switzerland in 1932.

Five Days One Summer tells the story of a Scottish couple mountain climbing in the Engadin. Climbing with a guide, they embark on a number of tours and the young woman falls in love with the handsome local. When the guide and the Scotsman go on a difficult tour, they have an improbable argument about Kate on top of the peak. On the descent, one of them is killed by rockfall, but the viewer does not immediately know who it is. Zinnemann said in interviews that his goal was to recreate the feeling of mountain climbing in the 1930s before the mountains became overrun with tourists.

Five Days One Summer thus presents us with a mountain film that has much in common with the genre of the classic German mountain film. Set in the 1930s, it features on-location shooting, long action sequences and an implausibly melodramatic plot. Yet, of course, by setting a film from 1982 fifty years in the past, this film differs from the contemporary Fanck movies. I will analyze *Five Days One Summer* as a latter-day mountain film meant to capture some of the original spirit of the genre,

but also adapted it for an American audience. Furthermore, this film provides one more example of the transatlantic influences of a generation of Hollywood emigres best-known for having influenced film noir. At the end of his career, Fred Zinnemann sought to recapture the sense of silence and freedom he had while climbing in the Alps and he used much of the by-then outdated visual and narrative language of the classic German mountain film to do so.

Visual and musical transculturality of the Alps. The case of the multiple version *Der Sohn der weißen Berge / Les Chevaliers de la Montagne* by Luis Trenker and Mario Bonnard
Maria Adorno (University of Köln) and Maria Fuchs (University of Freiburg)

The discovery of the Alps in the specific genre of the mountain film was originally a German cinematic answer to the Westerns from the USA in the late 1920s and brought a number of important personalities such as Arnold Fanck, Leni Riefenstahl and Luis Trenker onto the German film market. The mountain film "Der Sohn der weißen Berge" / "Les Chevaliers de la Montagne" by Luis Trenker and Mario Bonnard was co-produced as a German-French multiple version (MV) in 1930. This film represents the beginning of a longer series of "multiple" co-productions of Trenker's mountain films in the European context, in which the Alps always play a major role as a setting for transcultural communication.

During the highly innovative phase of the generalization of sound, MVs are meant to create the "same" film for each country interested in it, following different (trans)cultural adaptation strategies and techniques depending on the case. In order to make the versions successful in their respective contexts, each of them is shaped adapting elements such as the cast, the fictional nationalities, the music, the dialogues, the gestures. This lecture aims to approach the two film adaptations from a comparative, transcultural perspective. First, we will examine how this specific film genre and Trenker's persona are situated in both the German and French national contexts. Then, in order to highlight the specificities of the two versions, our comparative analysis focuses separately on the visual, musical, and textual levels. This allows us to highlight the transcultural character of the Alps both on the fictional level and on that of the production of these MVs. In our presentation, we argue that the Alps, due to their semantic openness, provide an ideal setting for transcultural communication and, at the same time, for the nationalization process essential to the MVs - as directly understood by Trenker, Bonnard, and by film producers Itala and Vandal & Delac. In other words, as a neutral territory at the crossroads of several countries and cultures, the Alpine environment proves through "The Son of the White Mountains" / "Les Chevaliers de la Montagne" to be a privileged territory for multiple cinematic cultural transfers.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Keynote Speakers

FAY, Jennifer (Vanderbilt University)

Jennifer Fay is Professor of Film and English at Vanderbilt University, where she is also Chair of the Cinema & Media Arts Department. She is the author of *Theaters of Occupation: Hollywood and the Re-education of Postwar Germany* (2008), *Inhospitable World: Cinema in the Time of the Anthropocene* (2018), and co-author of *Film Noir: Hard-Boiled Modernity and the Cultures of Globalization*.

GUNNING, Tom (University of Chicago)

Tom Gunning works on problems of film style and interpretation, film history and film culture. His published work (approximately one hundred publications) has concentrated on early cinema (from its origins to WW I) as well as on the culture of modernity from which cinema arose (relating it to still photography, stage melodrama, magic lantern shows, as well as wider cultural concerns such as the tracking of criminals, the World Expositions, and Spiritualism). His concept of the "cinema of attractions" has tried to relate the development of cinema to other forces than storytelling, such as new experiences of space and time in modernity, and an emerging modern visual culture. His book *D.W. Griffith and the Origins of American Narrative Film* traces the ways film style interacted with new economic structures in the early American film industry and with new tasks of storytelling. His forthcoming book on Fritz Lang deals with the systematic nature of the director's oeuvre and the processes of interpretation. He has written on the Avant-Garde film, both in its European pre-World War I manifestations and the American Avant-Garde film up to the present day. He has also written on genre in Hollywood cinema and on the relation between cinema and technology. The issues of film culture, the historical factors of exhibition and criticism and spectator's experience throughout film history are recurrent themes in his work.

WEIK von MOSSNER, Alexa (University of Klagenfurt)

Alexa Weik von Mossner is Associate Professor of American Studies at the University of Klagenfurt. After working for several years in the German film and television industry as production manager and later scriptwriter, she received her PhD at the University of California, San Diego, and her Habilitation at the University of Klagenfurt. Her research explores the theoretical and empirical intersections of cognitive psychology, affective narratology, and environmental literature and film. She is the author of *Cosmopolitan Minds: Literature, Emotion, and the Transnational Imagination* (U of Texas P, 2014) and *Affective Ecologies: Empathy, Emotion, and Environmental Narrative* (Ohio State UP, 2017), and the editor of *Moving Environments: Affect, Emotion, Ecology, and Film* (Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2014). She has been a fellow at the Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society in Munich, where she curated the Green Visions documentary film series from 2011-2014. She is currently a researcher on the project "Cinema and Environment: Affective Ecologies in the Anthropocene," and a contributor to a new interdisciplinary research field in the environmental humanities, empirical ecocriticism.

Panelists

ADORNO, Maria (University of Cologne)

Maria Adorno has a background in philosophy of cinema and a trinational Master degree in European Film Studies at the Universities of Lyon, Weimar and Utrecht. Since 2018 she is a PhD candidate in history of cinema at the University of Köln. Her project is structured as a "Doctor Europaeus" in cooperation with the Universities of Udine and of Lyon and under the co-supervision of J. Garncarz, L. Quaresima and M. Barnier. Her research focuses on the multiple versions of the early sound film history within the European context (see *Trajectoires|12*, 2019). She analyses the transcultural dimension of the multiple versions with a comparative approach to both trade press and films. She has given several talks in film and cultural studies in Europe, as well as at the "Dumbo

Film Festival" in Brooklyn. Also, she is event assistant at the "Karlsruhe Silent Film Festival" and contributor for the German website "Sinn und Cinema".

FEYERSINGER, Erwin (University of Tübingen)

Dr. Erwin Feyersinger works as a postdoctoral researcher in the Department of Media Studies and as the director of the Research Center for Animation and Emerging Media at the University of Tübingen. His research focuses on audiovisual media, especially on animation, live-action film, useful cinema, television, information visualization, and science communication. Current projects employ approaches from the digital humanities and production studies and combine theories of data visualizations, image schemata, and visual abstraction. He is initiator and coordinator of the interest group AG Animation (Gesellschaft für Medienwissenschaft).

FUCHS, Maria (University of Freiburg)

Maria Fuchs is an Erwin Schrödinger Fellow (postdoc) at the Center for Popular Culture and Music at the University of Freiburg and project leader of the FWF project "Soundscapes of 'Heimat': Musical Mapping in Heimat and Mountain Films (1930-1970)". She studied Musicology, Comparative Literature and Gender Studies at the University of Vienna and the Free University of Berlin. From 2012 to 2014, she held a doctoral fellowship from the University of Vienna and DAAD, with a study and research stay at the Department for Musicology and Media Studies at Humboldt University, Berlin. In 2015, she received her PhD at the University of Vienna with a thesis on the theory and practice of silent film music (Marburg: Schüren, 2017). From 2015 to 2020, she was a lecturer at the mdw – the University of Music and Performing Arts, Vienna and, in 2021, at the UdK – Berlin University of the Arts. She has given numerous lectures in the US and Europe.

FUCHS, Michael (University of Oldenburg)

Michael Fuchs is a postdoc in the project "Fiction Meets Science" at the University of Oldenburg. Michael is the co-editor of volumes such as *Fantastic Cities: American Urban Spaces in Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror* (UP Mississippi, 2022) and *Intermedia Games—Games Inter Media: Video Games and Intermediality* (Bloomsbury, 2019) and (co-)author of fifty-plus journal articles and book chapters which have appeared in venues such as *The Journal of Popular Culture*, the *Journal of Popular Television*, and the *European Journal of American Culture*. He is the managing editor of *JAAAS: Journal of the Austrian Association for American Studies*.

HAQUE, Kamaal (Dickinson College)

Kamaal Haque is associate professor of German at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania (USA). He earned his Ph.D. with a dissertation on space in Goethe's *West-östlicher Divan*. His research has most recently been on the Bergfilm as well as the literature of the German-speaking Alps. Past and upcoming essays have been on Luis Trenker, Arnold Fanck, the Heimatfilm and Franz Hohler. He is currently writing a monograph on the films of Luis Trenker, as well as co-editing both a journal article and book volume on mountain films.

HÖBUSCH, Harald (University of Kentucky)

Harald Höbusch is Professor of German Studies and Associate Chair of the Department of Modern and Classical Languages, Literatures and Cultures at the University of Kentucky. He also serves as editor of *Colloquia Germanica*, an international, peer-reviewed journal in the field of German literary and cultural studies. His research broadly focuses on German literature and culture of the first half of the twentieth century; he is particularly interested in the various representations in print, film, and audio of German, but increasingly also of French, Italian, and British expeditions during the "Golden Age" of Himalaya mountaineering (1920s – 1950s). He is the author of two books – *"Mountain of Destiny" – Nanga Parbat and Its Path into the German Imagination* (Camden House, 2016) and *Thomas Mann: Kunst, Kritik, Politik 1893-1913* (Francke, 2000) – and numerous articles on German Himalaya mountaineering. He also contributed to the 2015 BBC production titled "Battle for the Himalayas: The Fight to Film Everest." His most recent publication is a translation (with introduction and notes) of Chapter 13 of German mountaineer and filmmaker Hans Ertl's book *My*

Wild Thirties, in a volume titled *Mountains and the German Mind: Translations from Gessner to Messner,* edited by Sean M. Ireton and Caroline Schaumann.

HØGETVEIT, Åsne Ø. (University of Norway)

Åsne Ø. Høgetveit is a Senior Academic Librarian at UiT The Arctic University of Norway (UiT NAU). She received her Ph.D. from UiT NAU with her thesis *The Moral Vertical in Russian Cinema: Female Pilots, Flight Attendants, Cosmonauts and Aliens* in 2019, In which the moral superiority of female characters in thirty-two Soviet and Russian films is analysed using spatial theories of verticality. Her published articles include «Memory of a soldier» (2016, full text in Norwegian only), analysing female soldiers in Russian and Soviet cinema; an article on Larisa Shepit´ko's film Kryl´ia (Wings), entitled "And up she went – the moral vertical in Wings"(2017), and an article in a special issue on women and technology in Digital Icons, entitled "Female Aliens in (Post)-Soviet Sci-Fi Cinema: Technology, Sacrifice and Morality Feminism" (2018).

HUGHES, Jon (Royal Holloway, University of London)

Jon Hughes is Reader in German and Cultural Studies with a particular research interest in the cultural history of German and Austrian sport and leisure. Hughes was lead editor for the volume *Austria and the Alps* (*Austrian Studies*, 2010). Recent publications include my monograph *Max Schmeling and the Making of a National Hero in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Palgrave, 2017).

KIRSTEN, Karina (University of Marburg)

Karina Kirsten holds a PhD in Media Studies from Philipps-Universität Marburg. She studied Film and Media Studies in Marburg and Paris. From 2012 to 2014, she was editor of the journal MEDIENwissenschaft: Rezensionen | Reviews, and then a research associate and lecturer in Media Studies at Philipps-Universität Marburg. In January 2021, she started working as coordinator at the CRC "Media of Cooperation". Her research in Media Studies includes genre criticism, media convergence, and mobile media. With a focus on inter- and transmedia dynamics in film, television, and new media, she explores the history of film genres and associated promotional media. She is currently investigating the use of digital media technologies in alpine sport activities and the way in which these technologies effect the perception of the Alps and the understanding of alpine space and mobility. Recent publications entail *Genresignaturen im Spiegel ihrer Zeit. Eine genretheoretische Untersuchung von Psycho, Psycho II-IV und Bates Motel aus diskurshistorischer Perspektive* (Springer 2021, forthcoming) and „A New Genre Arena? Questions of Genre in the Digital Age of Promotional Media" (in *Genre and Media*, ed. by Ivo Ritzer, Palgrave 2021, forthcoming)

LEHMANN, Benita (University of Innsbruck)

Benita Lehmann holds a B.A. in Literary, Cultural and Media Studies from the University of Siegen and spent a semester abroad at University College Dublin. In 2013, she graduated from the University of Innsbruck with an MA in Media Studies. Affiliated with the FWF-funded research project *Delocating Mountains: Cinematic Landscapes and the Alpine Model* at the University of Innsbruck, she is currently writing her dissertation about alpine media networks in and of mountain cinema during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Drawing on media ecology and archeology as well as network aesthetics, she examines the density of mountains in film culture and explores the intersections, divergences, and hidden networks which inform our encounters with mountains. She is a recipient the University of Innsbruck's junior researcher scholarship and a member of the doctoral program *Borders, Border Displacements, and Border Transgressions in Language, Literature, and Media* at the University of Innsbruck.

LUXENBURGER, Isis (Saarland University, University of Trier, University of Montreal)

Isis Luxenburger, M.A., Bachelor's degree in Translation, Language and Cultural Studies (French, English) and Master's degree in Translation Studies (French, English), is a doctoral researcher in the International Research Training Group "Diversity. Mediating Difference in Transcultural Spaces" at Saarland University, the University of Trier and the University of Montreal. Her research interests

include the cultural studies of (industrial) films and, in general, investigating research subjects rooted in other disciplines – especially Film Studies, Computer Gaming Studies and Translation Studies – from a Cultural Studies perspective. She is currently working on her interdisciplinary dissertation project on the mediation of industrial culture in films and documentaries in the Canadian province of Quebec and the Greater Region Saar-Lor-Lux.

MEHRBREY, Sophia (Saarland University)

Sophia Mehrbrey studied *European Studies* (B.A.) at the University of Passau. After completing a Master's degree in *Lettres Modernes* at the University of Rouen with a thesis on the representation of Russia in 18th century French writings, she took up a position there as a research assistant in 2014. In 2019, she received her PhD under Prof. Dr. Claudine Poulouin (title of the thesis: *Figures d'enfance - la représentation de l'enfant dans la littérature française des XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*). Since October 2019, she has been working as a postdoctoral researcher at the Research Training Group "European Dream Cultures" at Saarland University. Her current research investigates intermedial representations of the Alps and the negotiations of transcultural alpine identity processes.

POOLE, Ralph J. (University of Salzburg)

Ralph J. Poole is an American-German researcher who teaches as Professor of American Studies at the University of Salzburg, Austria. He taught at the University of Munich, Germany, at Fatih University in Istanbul, Turkey, and was a research scholar at CUNY's Center for Advanced Studies in Theater Arts in Manhattan. His publications include a study on the Avant-Garde tradition in American theatre, a book on satirical and autoethnographical "cannibal" texts, a collection of essays on "dangerous masculinities", and another collection on "queer Turkey" (forthcoming). He is currently researching the Austrian *Heimatfilm* from a transnational perspective and collaborating with Annette Keck from the LMU, Munich, Germany. His research interests include gender and queer studies, popular culture, and transnational American studies.

RABITSCH, Stefan (University of Warsaw/ University of Graz)

Stefan "Steve" Rabitsch currently serves as visiting professor in American Studies (ZIP programme, EU excellence initiative) with the American Studies Center at the University of Warsaw and is an affiliated postdoctoral scholar with the Center for Inter-American Studies at the University of Graz. A self-declared "Academic Trekkie," he is the author of *Star Trek and the British Age of Sail* (McFarland 2019), co-editor of *Set Phasers to Teach! Star Trek in Research and Teaching* (Springer 2018), and co-editor of the forthcoming *Routledge Handbook to Star Trek*. His professorial thesis project, i.e., his second monograph—*"A Cowboy Needs A Hat": A Cultural History of Cowboy Hats*—not only received the 2019 Fulbright Visiting Scholar Grant in American Studies, which allowed him to work at the Center for the Study of the American West (West Texas A&M University), and the 2020/21 Henry Belin du Pont fellowship by the Hagley Museum and Library, but it has also been awarded a book contract from the University of Oklahoma Press.

RAK, Julie (University of Alberta)

Julie Rak is Professor and Henry Marshall Tory Chair in the Department of English and Film Studies at the University of Alberta, Canada. Julie's awards include the Killam Annual Professorship (2017-2018) and the Hogan Prize (2017). Her books include *False Summit: Gender in Mountaineering Nonfiction* (2021), *Boom! Manufacturing Memoir for the Popular Market* (2013) and *Negotiated Memory: Doukhobor Autobiographical Discourse* (2004). She is the editor of the "Identities" volume of the *Oxford Encyclopedia of Literary Theory* (2020) and the collection *Autobiography in Canada* (2005). She has co-edited with Anna Poletti *Identity Technologies: Constructing the Self Online* (2014). With Keavy Martin she edited the reissue of Inuk author Mini Aodla Freeman's landmark memoir, *Life Among the Qallunaat* (2014). With Jeremy Popkin, she edited a collection of Philippe Lejeune's essays translated into English, *On Diary* (2009) and she co-edited *Mountain Masculinity: the Writings of Nello "Tex" Vernon-Wood, 1911-1938* (2008). With Bill Mullen, she edited a cluster of essays for *Biography* on the idea of academic freedom (2020). Her latest collection, edited with Hannah McGregor and Erin Wunker, is the activist anthology *Refuse: CanLit in Ruins* (2018).

REYNOLDS, Daniel (Emory University)

Daniel Reynolds is an associate professor of film and media at Emory University. He is the author of *Media in Mind* (Oxford University Press, 2019) and articles in *Journal of Cinema and Media Studies*, *Film Quarterly*, *Game Studies*, and *Fibreculture Journal*, and he is currently working on a book about exploration in virtual worlds.

ROGATCHEVSKI, Andrei (University of Norway)

Andrei Rogatchevski is Professor in Russian Literature and Culture at UiT The Arctic University of Norway. He has taught or held research posts at a number of universities in Europe and beyond, most notably at Glasgow, Helsinki and Uppsala. Among the publications he has (co-)authored and (co-)edited are: *Filming the Unfilmable: Casper Wrede's "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich"* (2010; 2nd enlarged ed. 2014), a special issue of *Science Fiction Film and Television* (no. 2, 2015) entitled *Filming the Strugatskiis*; and a special issue of *Nordlit* (no. 45, 2020) entitled *Svalbard Studies*.

RÜHSE, Viola (Danube University Krems)

Viola Rühse works as the head of the Center for Image Science and study course director at the Danube University Krems in Austria. Among other things, she supervises the Master's program in Image Science and certified programs in Photography and Digital Collection Management. Previously, she coordinated an FWF research project. She studied History of Art and German Language and Literature at the universities of Hamburg and Vienna. She received her PhD with a dissertation on Siegfried Kracauer's film writings (De Gruyter will publish it in autumn 2021). Her current main topics of research in addition to film theory and film history are modern and contemporary art and critical theory. She also works as an artist/photographer and contributed to international exhibitions. One of her critical essays was granted the Bazon Brock Essay Award.

SCHARR, Kurt (University of Innsbruck)

Kurt Scharr, born in 1970, studied Geography and History at Innsbruck University as well as Russian language. After his PhD in 2001, which focused on the history of settlements in the Eastern Alps (Ötztaler Gebirgsraum), he completed several stays as a researcher and academic teacher abroad (Russia, Ukraine, Romania) and finished his habilitation (Dr. habil) in 2010. Till 2011 he worked as an assistant at the Institute of Geography in Innsbruck. From 2012 to 2015, he had a research project on the Greek-Oriental Religious Fund of Bukovina at the Austrian Academy of Sciences. Since October 2016, he has been Professor of Austrian History at the University of Innsbruck.

SCHAUMANN, Caroline (Emory University)

Caroline Schaumann is Professor and Chairperson of German Studies at Emory University and affiliated faculty with Film Studies and the Sustainability Minor. Her teaching and research interests include ecocriticism and the environmental humanities, cultural histories of exploration and mountaineering, Alexander von Humboldt, and the Anthropocene. She co-edited the anthologies *Heights of Reflection: Mountains in the German Imagination from the Middle Ages to the Twenty-First Century* (Camden House, 2012) with Sean Ireton and *German Ecocriticism in the Anthropocene* with Heather Sullivan (Palgrave, 2017). Last year, she published *Peak Pursuits: The Emergence of Mountaineering in the Nineteenth Century* (Yale University Press, 2020), a monograph on the cultural history of mountaineering that sheds light on culturally constructed notions of wilderness, masculinity, and national identity. In addition, she co-edited with Sean Ireton the anthology *Mountains and the German Mind: Translations from Gessner to Messner, 1541-2009* (Camden House, 2020) introducing and translating key text from the German cultural history of alpinism. In collaboration with the "Delocating Mountains" project at Innsbruck, Schaumann is currently working on the reframing of mountains in contemporary film.

SCHRADER, Sabine (University of Innsbruck)

Sabine Schrader is professor of Romance literature and cultural studies at the University of Innsbruck. Her publications in film studies include the following books and special issues: "Si gira!" - Literature

and Film in Italy's Silent Film Era (in German, Winter 2007); Agency and Invective in Contemporary Italian Migration Narratives: Cinema and Literature = Phin 20 2020 (in German/Italian ed. with E. Tiller); Beyond Capitals. Urban Texts of Romania (in German ed. with S. Lange ,V&R 2019); TV glocal. European Television Series and Transnational Quality Formats (in German ed. with D. Winkler, Schüren 2014); The Cinemas of Italian Migration: European and Transatlantic Narratives (ed. with D. Winkler, Cambridge Scholars Publishing 2013, with D. Winkler); *Intermediality and Media Reflexivity in Italian Cinema of Migration = Special Issue Studies in European Cinema* in print (ed. with S. Lange) and other essays on French and Italian transnational and queer cinema.

SCHREY, Dominik (University of Passau)

Dominik Schrey is a lecturer in digital media culture at the University of Passau, Germany, and, for the winter term 2021/22, a Research Fellow at the IFK International Research Center for Cultural Studies | University of Art and Design Linz in Vienna. Prior to that, he worked as a postdoc at the University of Freiburg and the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology. In fall 2011, he was a Visiting Fellow in the PhD Program in Film and Visual Studies at Harvard University. In 2017, his dissertation *Analoge Nostalgie in der digitalen Medienkultur* (Analog Nostalgia in Digital Media Culture) was published by Kulturverlag Kadmos in Berlin. His current research focuses on media ecology, media history and digital infrastructures. Parallel to his project "Alpine Topographies of Loss" presented here, he is working on a media history of "Smart Street Furniture."

SCHWEIGL, Maximilian (University of Innsbruck)

Maximilian Schweigl graduated as Mag. phil in English, History, and Education at the University of Innsbruck in November 2020. He attended formal education from 2000 to 2012 and graduated from grammar school in 2012. Over the next year, he worked in community service before he enrolled in a teacher's training programme at the University of Innsbruck in 2013. Since 2017 he has been an active member of the English department drama group 'Renegade Actors Innsbruck', where he is known for his frequent portrayal of villainous roles. During the summer term of 2019 he went on a research stay on the Orkney Islands, Scotland, to conduct research for his diploma thesis on the Viking heritage of the archipelago. After finishing his teacher's degree, he entered a doctoral programme at the Department for American Studies and is currently writing his dissertation on mountains in horror films. His research interests lie in horror film as well as history and heritage studies.

SEXL, Martin (University of Innsbruck)

Martin Sexl studied Comparative Literature and German Philology in Innsbruck, worked for several years as a bookseller, received his doctorate in 1995 and habilitated in 2002 with the study *Literatur und Erfahrung. Ästhetische Erfahrung als Reflexionsinstanz von Alltags- und Berufswissen*. His research interests include literary theory, relationships between literature and (professional and everyday) life worlds, contemporary art, photography, and film.
Books: *Sprachlose Erfahrung? Michael Polanyis Erkenntnismodell und die Literaturwissenschaften* (1995); *Literatur und Erfahrung. Ästhetische Erfahrung als Reflexionsinstanz von Alltags- und Berufswissen. Eine empirische Studie* (2003); *Sophokles, Shakespeare und Tolstoi im Krankenhaus. Krankenpflegerinnen lesen literarische Texte* (2006); *Hotel Jugoslavija. Die literarische und mediale Wahrnehmung der Balkankonflikte* (with Arno Gisinger, 2008); *Zoran Konstantinović im Gespräch. Literatur – Wissenschaft – Gesellschaft – Politik* (2009); *Imagined Wars. Mediale Rekonstruktionen des Krieges* (with Arno Gisinger, 2010); *»The Artist Is Not There« – Jon Törklánsson im Gespräch mit Martin Sexl* (2018); *Versuch über Kunst und Literatur in Zeiten des imaginären Kapitalismus* (2020).

SINGER, Christoph (University of Innsbruck)

Christoph Singer is Professor for British and Anglophone Cultural Studies in the Department of British Literary and Cultural Studies at the University of Innsbruck, Austria. He has published anthologies on intersections of Middlebrow & Modernism, the iconography of Dante & Milton and on spaces of Well-Being. His PhD-thesis explored shorelines as liminal spaces, and he has published on the legacies of the Partition of India. His second book discusses the temporality of narratives in times of

crisis, particularly the experience of existential waiting. Christoph Singer is also one of the series editors of the recently established book-series Narratives and Mental Health (Brill).

TORRES CARILLO, Camila (University of Innsbruck)

Born in Managua, Nicaragua, Camila Torres Carrillo moved to Austria in 2012, where she attended the University of Innsbruck and obtained a Master's degree in English and American Studies after writing her thesis on the controlling image of the Mammy in American popular fiction authored by white women. Her interests include gender studies, popular culture, and racial and social justice. Camila currently works as a translator and proofreader but appears to have garnered enough goodwill during her time as a student assistant at the Department of American Studies to warrant an invitation to this conference.

VITH, Johannes (University of Innsbruck)

Johannes Vith is a PhD candidate and university assistant at the Department of American Studies at the University of Innsbruck. His research interests are rooted in the fields of film studies, science fiction, and mountain film. His dissertation project, *Cinematic Mountains Out Of Space*, focuses on the intersection of these fields and explores the changing conceptions of extraterrestrial mountains in science fiction film. Johannes holds an MA in English, Geography, and Education from the University of Innsbruck, and taught as a Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant at the Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, from August 2019 to May 2020.

WINKLER, Robert A. (University of Salzburg)

Robert A. Winkler is currently a postdoc at the Paris Lodron University of Salzburg in Austria. He received his Ph.D. from the International Graduate Centre for the Study of Culture (GCSC) at Justus Liebig University Giessen in 2019 with a dissertation on race and gender in hardcore punk (*Generation Reagan Youth: Representing and Resisting White Neoliberal Forms of Life in the U.S. Hardcore Punk Scene (1979-1999)*. Trier: WVT, 2021). Robert published widely on topics as diverse as hardcore punk; whiteness; or the philosophy of Martin Heidegger and co-edited the volume *Futures Worth Preserving: Cultural Constructions of Nostalgia and Sustainability* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2019).

WINSEL, Susann (University of Leipzig)

Susann Winsel is a research assistant at the University of Leipzig. She has studied culture, history and political science in Leipzig and Zurich. Her ongoing PhD project focuses on revisiting a climbing history based on audiovisual materials which were selected for Mountain Film Festivals and Tours. Working title: "VorBilder - A Visual (Body) History of Rock climbing from the 1950s until today." Winsler's general interests include history and film, visual studies, cultural and social theory, body history and theory, history of knowledge, and society and war.