

GSAH | Interdisciplinary Cultural Studies
Reading course

Beyond Line and Circle: Modes and Models of Temporality

Dr. Toni Hildebrandt

Institute of Art History, University of Bern

28 February and 18 March 2024, 2.15pm - 6.00pm



Beyond Line and Circle: Modes and Models of Temporality

Dr. Toni Hildebrandt, University of Bern

Date/time/room

28 February , 2:15pm-
6.00pm, Seminarraum 128,
Mittelstrasse 43

18 March 2024, 2:15pm-
6.00pm, Seminarraum 228,
Mittelstrasse 43

Language

Depending on participants
english or german

2 ECTS

Pflicht- oder Wahlpflicht-
bereich ICS / Wahlpflicht-
bereich GS, SLS, SINTA

Registration:

via KSL und E-Mail to
michael.togqweiler@unibe.ch

The philosophy of time can be told as a story of two models: line and circle. On the one hand, the notion of the succession of past, present, and future, the linearity of eschatological narratives of the end, and the utopian idea of progress; on the other, the circular movement of the days and seasons, the eternal-return-of-the-same, and circulation in the economy. Since early capitalism, the clock has united these two models: the circle in its appearance and functionality, but also the idea of determining time as an exact time, acting according to it, and thus "linearly pursuing" a goal in its directionality and use.

The first seminar will introduce these two hegemonical models of time – circle and line – and subject them to a consciousness-raising critique. In contrast, we will discuss time models that consciously break with the idea of linear or circular time; focusing on Walter Benjamin's "now time" ("Jetztzeit", *kairos*), Jacques Derrida's theory of a "hauntological" experience of time in aporias and paradoxes and Paul B. Preciado's intersectional trans-perspective on a present in and of transition.

In the second seminar we will explore these different time models in the arts. Examples include Marguerite Duras' construction of aporetic time experiences in film and literature, the difference between world-historical "absolute" and an everyday "imaginative time" proposed by architect Arata Isozaki, or the proper time stored in artifacts, the "shape of time" (Kubler) of material culture.



After receiving his PhD in Art History at the University of Basel in 2014, for which he received the “Wolfgang-Ratjen award”, Toni Hildebrandt has been working at the Department of Modern and Contemporary Art History at University of Bern since 2014. He was a guest lecturer at University of Basel, the University of the Arts in Bern, the FHNW Academy of Art and Design in Basel and New York University, and he held fellowships at the Istituto Svizzero in Rome (2013-2017), the Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte in Munich (2019) and the Walter Benjamin Kolleg (2020/21) at University of Bern.

Possible Readings:

Benjamin, Walter: The Arcades Project, Harvard: Belknap Press, 2002.

Derrida, Jacques: Given Time: I. Counterfeit Money, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1991.

Isozaki, Arata, “On Ruins”, in: Lotus International 93 (1997), pp. 34–42.

Kubler, George: The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962.

Preciado, Paul B.: Dysphoria mundi, Paris: Grasset, 2022.

Stravrinaki, Maria: Transfixed by Prehistory: An Inquiry into Modern Art and Time, New York: Zone Books, 2022.

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