

Neobaroque tendencies in contemporary culture

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This research project ambitions to analyze how the 'baroque' manifests itself in another guise—as neo-baroque—in contemporary culture and entertainment media: in contemporary arts (both time-based and visual) and in popular culture, such as the theme park attractions, in the illusionistic displays of digital media, television series and cinema with its special effects spectacles or in computer games. Candidates are firmly encouraged to propose a specific research corpus relevant to this research question.

Historically the term Baroque was predominantly used to characterize the 'degenerative' and 'bad' art of the preceding period. Baroque art was rejected as irregular, bizarre, spectacular and excessive. Publications on the neo-baroque in 1980-90, such as Buci-Glucksmann's *Neo-Baroque* (1986), Calabrese's *L'età neobarocca* (1987), Deleuze's *Le pli: Leibniz et le baroque* (1988) and more recently the work of Angela Ndaliansis (*Neo-Baroque Aesthetics and Contemporary Entertainment* 2004) or the research group *Neo-Baroque: transcultural and transhistorical efficiencies of the Baroque paradigm* convincingly point to the question whether the baroque is really a transhistorical phenomenon, and why the most recent 'baroque' sensitivity - related to the problematic of postmodernism - should be redefined as neo-baroque.

This research project starts from the assumption that the baroque should not be limited to a specific historical era and tradition, but that it should be considered as a transhistorical artistic culture or sensitivity that reappears throughout history in times or moments of transition and crisis (be it mostly in peripheral practices which generally escape the process of cultural canonization). The central question of this research project is thus whether we can apply the baroque artistic regime, with its foregrounding of the spectacular, eccentricity, poly-interpretability, multi-perspectivism, theatricality, transformations, or processes of degeneration as a heuristic, theoretical and historiographical category to analyze contemporary artistic developments within their specific scientific, intellectual and foremost technological context.

In very general terms, this project explores the possible interference (and tensions) between a (neo)baroque artistic practice and its epistemological, scientific and technological context by focusing on a case-study, which is to be proposed by the candidate him- or herself. The project could entail a phenomenological analysis of the baroque viewing experience in contemporary culture (e.g. the position of the spectator, the idea of immersion), a more formalist analysis of a specific corpus, or a contextual analysis of a specific – historical or contemporary - baroque or neobaroque artistic regime.

Students with an MA degree in history, art history, media studies, cultural studies, film studies, theatre studies, literary studies, or aesthetics may apply to this project.

How to apply

There are two ways to apply for our Graduate School:

1. You can send us your (brief) ideas for a PhD project together with a CV. Send them directly to a proposed supervisor (for an overview of senior staff, click [here](#)) or to the [programme officer](#). Your ideas should be in line with the research themes which you can find on this website. As a result, you may receive an invitation to work with the supervisor you proposed or selected by us, to work on an application. Please send us your proposal and your CV not later than **Friday 5 March 2010**
2. You can express your interest in one of the research suggestions which can be found on this website ([research suggestions](#)) by submitting a CV to the [programme officer](#). As a result, you may receive an invitation to work with a supervisor on an application. Please send us your CV not later than **Friday 5 March 2010**.

Final applications have to be submitted not later than **Friday 7 May 2010**. A complete application consists of a research proposal, a CV, a list of marks of both bachelor and master studies and two recent essays. You have to use the application form which you can find [here](#). There are **five** positions available.

Procedure and planning:

- ⇒ Not later than 5 March 2010: express your interest in our Graduate School by sending us your CV;
- ⇒ Not later than 7 May 2010: submit your application;
- ⇒ June 2010: a selection of applicants will be invited to present the proposal for a selection committee;
- ⇒ Before 1 July 2010: the selection committee will reach a decision. Selection will be based on the CV and skills of the candidate, the quality of the proposal and the presentation;
- ⇒ Between 1 September 2010 and 1 January 2011: start of the project.