



Suren Manvelyan

This seminar invites graduate students from all disciplines to look at modernity through the lens of vision. **Why has vision become such a key category for comprehending and critiquing social, political, and cultural developments that shape our world today?** We will place a particular emphasis on the agency of vision in theories of power and in ecological critiques of modernity. Modernity will emerge as a deeply conflicted episteme, entrenched in its dialectic of visual representation: promising absolute transparency and disembodied our relation to our environments ever more systematically. **We will work on practical and theoretical ways of responding to this challenge through an ecology of seeing: the combination of an aesthetics of bodily engagement and a politics of resistance to the visual totalization of life.**

In our discussions Wim Wenders will meet Yasujiro Ozu, Miguel Gomes Friedrich Murnau, and Werner Herzog Andrej Tarkovsky; we will visit Heidegger among the sculptors, Merleau-Ponty among the painters, Benjamin among the photographers, Foucault among the architects. Literary readings from Goethe, Hölderlin, Handke, Sebald.

**Film, Visual Culture, Performance Studies focus**  
**No German required, texts available in English & German**

German 8400 | Professor Bernhard Malkmus

## **Vision and Power in Modernity: Towards an Ecology of Seeing**

autumn 2013 | Tu 4-6.45pm