All seminars in Semester 1, 2017 will run 
**4:00-5:30 in the Schaeffer Seminar room 210** (next door to Schaeffer Library) 
RC Mills Building (A26).

**Thursday 23 March**

Dr Ann Stephen Senior Curator 
University Art Gallery and Art Collections  
(Sydney University Museums) 

From Post-Colonialism to Global Contemporaneity… What has changed for art and art history?

Today the cartography of modernism and contemporary art is being redrawn as part of a global art economy. I will trace key concepts like ‘primitivism’ and ‘periphery’ in Australian art and art history through the twentieth century to now, to assess the ‘global’ turn in art history. I will pose the question as to whether a ‘decolonized’ art history can translate non-western values and expose the contradictions and antagonisms of a globalized world?

**Thursday 6 April**

Dr Giorgia Alù Department of Italian Studies  
(University of Sydney) 

Order, otherness and modernity in a photographic shot: Italians abroad and the Great War.

This paper explores the meaning of photographic portraits of WWI migrant soldiers, in terms of the tensions that emerge from their visual codes. By analysing photographs of Italian migrants who either joined Italy’s army or enrolled in their adopted country’s army, the paper discusses aspects of the parallel language of war and migration photography, and the extent to which the subject’s displacement and individuality might emerge from the surface imagery of photography and modernity.

**Thursday 27 April**

Dr Alex Howard Visiting Research Fellow, SLAM  
(University of Sydney) 

A Terrible and Magnificent Peace: Space, Time, and the Cinema of Olivier Assayas

Olivier Assayas has always been clear about the debt his work owes to 1968. We get a sense of this in *After May* (2012). What we don’t get is a clearly articulated sense of the manner in which Assayas’s work engages with the ideas of one of the figures associated with that time: Guy Debord. “Ultimately,” Assayas notes, “what Debord says is that the reality of oppression—of the power within modern society—is invisible and unformulated. It’s a way of understanding the world and not putting politics where movies usually put them. [...] The issue of politics—meaning politics in art—is a way of understanding the subtext of society. It’s about having real life characters having to deal with those invisible forces and being determined by them.” Taking this statement as a point of departure, I consider what Assayas tells us about the modern world, whilst paying attention to issues of spatiality and temporality.
Thursday 11 May

Paper One
Bingqing Wei PhD candidate
(Department of Art History)

Mirrored Agents: Mirrors and Optical Devices in Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Chinese Visual Culture

The presentation explores the artistic and social functions of optical devices, such as mirrors, peep-boxes, telescopes and microscopes in Chinese visual culture between the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The presentation examines the development of science and Chinese understandings of science on the basis of visual materials and reports associated with optical devices.

Paper Two
Minerva Inwald PhD candidate
(Department of History)

Describing the Spirit through Form: Interpreting the Chinese Painting Tradition during the Late Cultural Revolution

During the later years of the Cultural Revolution there was a state-sponsored revival of guohua (Chinese-style painting) in the People’s Republic of China. Observing the demand that artists “use the past to serve the present,” guohua painters applied brush and ink techniques to the depiction of socialist themes, and wrote articles explaining how artistic methods and concepts from the Chinese painting tradition could be adapted to serve China’s revolutionary artistic culture. This paper will examine how artists interpreted the Chinese painting tradition through formulas for socialist artistic production, considering how this might have, in turn, modified the boundaries of socialist realism.

Thursday 25 May

Dr Rebecca Johinke Department of English
(University of Sydney)

Take a walk on the wild side: punk music walking tours in New York City

Walking tours on the streets of cities like New York offer music fans the opportunity to tread in the footsteps of their punk rock idols. Music lovers seek a tourist experience that constructs intra and inter-personal authenticity as a ‘true fan’ as they seek to see for themselves where their idols lived, worked, recorded, and performed in New York City. Music walking tours are situated as a form of embodied music tourism or psycho-geographic practice as they connect fans with the soundscape and the cityscape. When fans document their walking experience, they contribute to a history of music culture and to the practice of music tourism as an embodied social practice. This paper engages with cultural tourism, visual culture (street art, graffiti, memorials) and new ways to think about authenticity, nostalgia and narratives of place in the Web 2.0 era.

Thursday June 8

Dr Anna Lawrenson & Dr Chiara O’Reilly
Museum and Heritage Studies
(University of Sydney)

The Rise of Blockbuster Exhibitions in Australia

The Blockbuster is now a dominant part of the exhibition calendar for most large-scale metropolitan and, increasingly, regional institutions across Australia. This paper considers some of the historical antecedents to these exhibitions in Australia as a means of unpacking why the blockbuster has now become such a core part of museum and gallery business. How has this reliance on blockbusters changed the cultural experience in Australia and what does it mean for the future of museums?