

American Studies Research Colloquium Guest Lectures Summer 2024

Ondřej Váša
Charles University Prague

28 May 2024, 6 pm (c.t.), Casino CAS 1.801

»Aligned With the Cosmic Crime: Black Holes as the Metonymic Objects of American Sci-fi«



“Black holes have burst onto the scene as cosmic criminals who are not only unholy, but who have managed to challenge holiness itself. This is the image coined by American science fiction of the 1970s. The question is: how do these fictional black holes bend not only space-time, but also the legitimacy of our own presence in the universe? The lecture will first take us among the major American science fiction authors, whose selected passages we will read together and contextualize within the Euro-Atlantic literary and philosophical tradition. Then we will move on to contemporary American authors who have metabolized this imagination into a peculiar nihilistic offshoot of so-called speculative realism. And we shall see that and how the black holes of the literary-philosophical imagination uprooted the solar metaphors of excellence, communion, and life, and replaced them by the metonymies of borderline excess, inhumanity, and death. And how they made our thinking into something of a ‘suicide pact’.”

Ondřej Váša is an assistant professor at the Faculty of Humanities of Charles University in Prague (Department of Theory of Art and Artworks).



Institut für England- und Amerikastudien, Abteilung Amerikanistik
Veranstaltungen sind universitätsöffentlich und beginnen um 18 Uhr c.t.
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