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The light of the world enters through our eyes, but we are far from fully understanding the factors that determine how our visual images are synthesized in our brains. Our field of vision does not correspond to physical space. It is only in union with the other senses that we transform visual perception into meaningful sight, at once a representation of the world and a mode of being in it.

In the Western tradition, sight is considered the superior sense. Seeing and knowing are often synonymous; darkness is associated with ignorance. But does sight alone provide us with a true picture of the world? Is seeing not always in thrall to idols and illusions that lead us astray? Can we distinguish truth and deception with certainty in the act of seeing? Is blindness – physiological or metaphorical – not at times a prerequisite for seeing properly, while in other cases it is precisely the naked eye that allows us to apprehend the emperor's new clothes for what they are? Or does the ubiquity of images not impel us to overvalue the visual? Do we not need a critique of visual reason to understand that what we see is less a reflection of the world than of our beliefs about it?

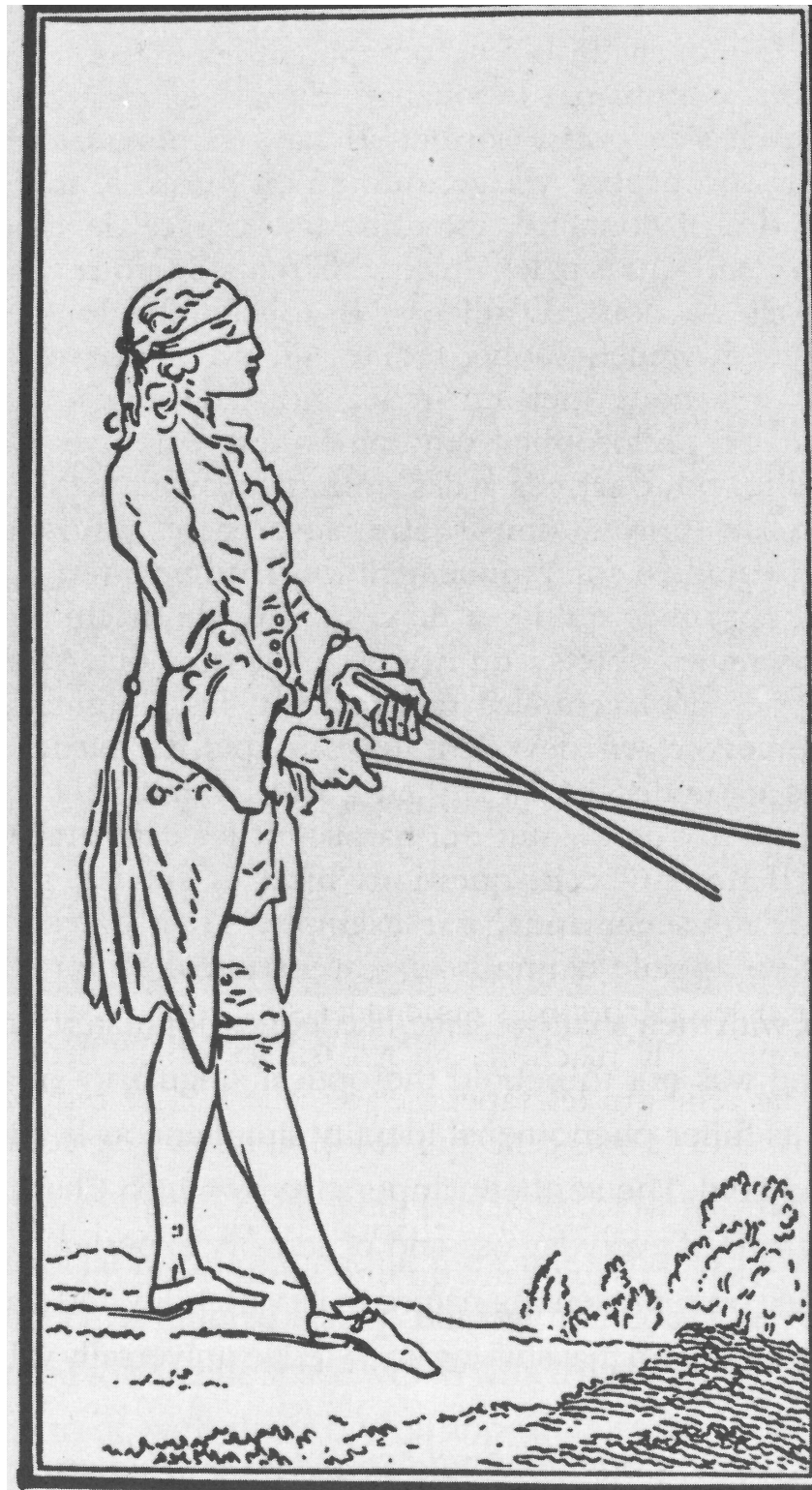


Illustration from René Descartes: *La Dioptrique* (1724)

Speakers

Peter Bexte, Cologne

Selected Blindness, or How to Look at Trees and Paintings with Denis Diderot

The expression *blind spot* has had a remarkable career in 20th-century philosophy. It emerged from a longer history of ideas, discussed with particular enthusiasm during the Enlightenment, about the relationship between blindness and sight. Few were more actively interested in this relationship than Denis Diderot, who devoted an entire work to the subject – the celebrated *Lettre sur les aveugles* – and questioned his own visual experiences in various experiments. What does it mean to speak of *seeing a tree*? Why don't we notice the movements of our eyelids? What happens when we look at paintings with a telescope? The presentation will discuss some long-lasting effects of these seemingly simple questions.

Peter Bexte, Professor of Aesthetics at the Academy of Media Arts Cologne since 2008, studies the relationships between image, medium, and perception. His works include *Wo immer vom Sehen die Rede ist ... da ist ein Blinder nicht fern* (2013) and "Sicht und Einsicht: Zum Topos des blinden Mathematikers," in *Mathesis & Graphé: Leonard Euler und die Entfaltung der Wissenssysteme*, ed. Horst Bredekamp and Wladimir Velminski (2009). He has edited the volumes *Denis Diderot: Schriften zur Kunst* (2005); and *Blinde Seher: Wahrnehmung von Wahrnehmung in der Kunst des 17. Jahrhunderts* (1999).

Christian Breuer, Berlin

“Und wo blicke können tödten...” Der Malocchio als begehrllicher Augen/Blick

What makes the eye into the paradigmatic transmitter of evil, envy, malevolence, disease, and many other types of ills? Why is it so susceptible to the uncanny and repressed? In discussing these questions, the presentation argues that the evil eye is no mere superstitious practice. The various phenomena of looking it comprises fall under a cultural technology that can be discussed in rational terms. The talk begins by examining *malocchio* in the southern Italian context from phenomenological and psychoanalytic vantage points. Various literary texts relate the evil eye to forms of looking whose basic function is one of desire. What *malocchio* shows most of all is the meaning of other people's glances – glances that help constitute our self-image while simultaneously threatening it.

Christian Breuer began to think about the evil eye in 1994, shortly after he earned a degree from the University of Vienna, with concentrations in theater studies, philosophy, musicology, and sociology – and stays in Palermo and New York. He completed his Ph.D. in 2014 under the guidance of Thomas Macho at the Humboldt University's Institut für Kulturwissenschaft. He lives in Berlin, where he works as a freelance translator – his resume includes texts by Benvenuto, Fachinelli, Esposito, and Vattimo – and as a musician.

Mazviita Chirimuuta, Pittsburgh

Color in the Scientific Image

Do colors exist or are they merely an illusion? The posing of color as a challenge to our habitual belief in the reality of the visual world is commonly thought to go back to the scientific revolution of the 17th century. Between the wars of the last century historians and philosophers like Burt, Husserl, and Whitehead gave us highly influential narratives in which the mathematized and mechanical physical sciences of Galileo and Newton (among others) formed a new metaphysical picture that stripped colors away from objective nature. In this talk I reconsider that narrative, suggesting that the puzzle of fitting color into the scientific image really took shape in the 19th century, with the appearance of a mechanistic science of the brain and nervous system. In 1872 the pioneering neurophysiologist Emil du Bois Reymond lectured on the “limits of our knowledge of nature.” He described the impossibility of a scientific understanding of conscious experience, a subject that philosophers of mind still grapple with today. As I argue, the questioning of the reality of color is one road to this infamous explanatory gap. In the 19th century – a great age for unificatory projects in the natural sciences – the methodological concerns of neurophysiologists became yoked to the conception of mind that we rely on to account for visual experience. As a result, color and the brain came to be seen as mutually inexplicable.

Mazviita Chirimuuta is an assistant professor of history and philosophy of science at the University of Pittsburgh. She received her Ph.D. in vision science from the University of Cambridge in 2004, and is the author of *Outside Colour: Perceptual Science and the Puzzle of Colour in Philosophy* (2015).

Joann and Arielle Eckstut, New York

The Secret Language of Color

Why is the sky blue, the grass green, the rose red? Most of us have no idea, nor are we aware that color pervades all aspects of life, from the subatomic realm and the natural world to human culture and psychology. We visit color past and present, revealing along the way myriad surprising facets of color in both the natural and man-made worlds. Color colors nearly every aspect of our universe: from why and how we see color to the nature of rainbows; from why red is universally the first color named after black and white to why grass really does appear greener on the other side of the fence; from why purple is associated with royalty to how Starbucks got in trouble for using bugs to color its strawberry frappuccinos.

Joann Eckstut, through her firm THE ROOMWORKS, provides color and materials consultation and interior design for a wide range of projects, from private residences to large-scale urban environments, where her goal is to implement each client's design vision. She is one of eight designers chosen by the Color Association of The United States to create the yearly interior/environmental forecast that is bought by major industries to understand color innovation. She has written three books: *Room Redux: The Home Decorating Workbook* (1999); *The Color Palette Primer: A Guide to Choosing Ideal Color Combinations For Your Home* (2005); *The Secret Language of Color: Science, Nature, History, Culture, Beauty of Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, & Violet* (2013; German: *Die geheimnisvolle Sprache der Farben: Rot, Orange, Gelb, Grün, Blau, Violett*, 2014).

Arielle Eckstut is the author of nine books including *The Secret Language of Color: Science, Nature, History, Culture, Beauty of Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, & Violet*, which she co-wrote with her mother, Joann. She is the co-founder of The Book Doctors, a company dedicated to helping writers successfully publish their books, and of the brand LittleMissMatched, whose stores can be found all over the United States. Eckstut is also on the Children's Committee of the Color Association of the United States.

Wolfgang Einhäuser-Treyer, Chemnitz

The Illusion of Visual Perception

To our introspection the visual world seems to be of high resolution, homogeneously colorful, and stable. Only when viewing visual illusions or in case of disease do we occasionally realize that our brain has to infer the properties of the outside world from the information arriving at our retina and that it is usually extremely efficient in doing so. The talk covers some classic and some recent examples to show how – sometimes surprising – visual effects provide insight into the operation of the human visual system and will also discuss some of the physiological foundations of these processes.

Wolfgang Einhäuser-Treyer studied physics at the University of Heidelberg and the ETH Zurich. After earning his Ph.D. from the ETH, in 2004, he served as visiting researcher at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena. In 2012–2013 he was co-organizer of the research group Competition and Priority Control in Mind and Brain at the Center for Interdisciplinary Research at the University of Bielefeld. In 2015 he was made Professor of Physics of Cognitive Processes at Technische Universität Chemnitz. Before that, he served as assistant professor of neurophysics at the University of Marburg.

Peter Lamont, Edinburgh

Misdirection: When the Audience Looks but Does Not See

For centuries, we have looked at magic, and failed to see what is going on. The methods of conjurors have been exposed, and the psychological techniques have been explained. In the process, we have come to look at magic in a different way, yet still we fail to see what is going on. The magician continues to show us things that appear to be impossible. In this talk, I reveal some of the ways in which we have looked at magic, and some of the things we have failed to see.

Programm

Donnerstag, 15.12.2016

18.45

Eröffnung

I. Auftakt: Irritationen des Auges

19.00 – 21.00

Alexander Strahl, Salzburg

Das betrogene Auge. Sinnestäuschungen von der Physik bis zur Kunst

Peter Lamont, Edinburgh

Misdirection. When the Audience Looks but Does Not See

Freitag, 16.12.2016

II. Sehen und mentales Bild

10.00–12.00

Wolfgang Einhäuser-Treyer, Chemnitz

Die Illusion visueller Wahrnehmung

Mazviita Chirimuuta, Pittsburgh

Colour in the Scientific Image

Nicholas Mirzoeff, New York

How To See The World. Visual Activism in Dangerous Time

17.30–18.30

Dr. Christa Pfafferott, Hamburg

Der panoptische Blick. Macht und Ohnmacht in der forensischen Psychiatrie (mit Ausschnitten aus dem Film Andere Welt)

III. Politik und Ethik des Sehens

12.15–13.15

Dr. Christian Breuer, Berlin

„Und wo blicke können tödten ...“

Der Malocchio als begehrlicher Augen/Blick

19.00

Ausstellungseröffnung

Sehen ist was anderes

Fotografien von Claudio Lange, Berlin

15.00–17.00

Dr. Martin Schaad, Potsdam

WYSIWYG – Bildproduktion im Politischen

Samstag, 17. Dezember

IV. Lucem Post Nubila Reddit?

Von Licht und Blindheit in der Aufklärung

10.00–11.30

Kate E. Tunstall, Oxford

*Blindness and Enlightenment. A Con-
versation*

Peter Bexte, Köln

*Selected Blindness, or How to Look
at Trees and Paintings with Denis
Diderot*

V. Blindheit

12.00–13.00

Dr. Siegfried Saerberg, Wiehl

*Nachtwanderungen in den lichten
Landen. Eine blinde Ethnographie
alltäglichen Sehens*

VI. Exponierender/Exponierter Blick

15.00–16.00

Karlheinz Lüdeking, Berlin

*„Blick“, „Fleck“ und „Schirm“ (erläu-
tert anhand eines Gemäldes aus
dem Besitz von Lacan)*

VII. Farbenlehren

16.00–17.30

Joann and Arielle Eckstut, New York

The Secret Language of Color

Peter Lamont is a senior lecturer at the University of Edinburgh. He is a past winner of the Jeremiah Dalziel Prize for British History, a former Arts and Humanities Research Council Fellow in the Creative and Performing Arts, and a past Secretary of the British Psychological Society (History and Philosophy of Psychology Section). He is also a former professional magician, an Associate of the Inner Magic Circle, and a Past President of the Edinburgh Magic Circle. He has published extensively on the history and psychology of magic and the paranormal. His most recent book, *Extraordinary Beliefs: A Historical Approach to a Psychological Problem*, was published by Cambridge University Press in 2013.

Claudio Lange, Berlin

Sehen ist was anderes: Fotoarbeiten zur Tagung

My photographs show two ways of looking differently: what one can see differently from a certain vantage point, in water puddles, say; and what a human eye cannot see without a camera – in this case, the usually inconspicuous and short-lived yet image-worthy reflections in water. Probably extraterrestrial in origin, capable of almost anything, even giving off a smell, water is the means of life and the main component of the human body. The exhibition provides new perspectives on this mysterious, multivalent element – free and refreshing, modest, singing, burrowing and accommodating, salty, sulfurous or fresh-tasting, gently illuminating, transformative, moveable, humorous and obedient, icy and wet, steaming and obscuring, violent, straightened, or distilled, reflective and transparent.

Claudio Lange, born in Santiago de Chile in 1944, moved to Germany in 1963, where he later studied religion at the Freie Universität Berlin, completing a dissertation on colonialism and Bartolomé de Las Casas in 1972. He returned to Chile one year later only to take flight

in 1974, and was forbidden to return until receiving amnesty nine years later. Since 1975 he has worked as a freelance artist in Berlin and Andalusia. His art has been shown at many international exhibitions and he has published numerous books and films.

Karlheinz Lüdeking, Berlin

“Blick”, “Fleck” und “Schirm” (erläutert anhand eines Gemäldes aus dem Besitz von Lacan)

The terms *Blick* (look), *Fleck* (spot), and *Schirm* (screen) play a central role in Lacan’s thinking on the problem of seeing and being seen. Drawing from Caillois, Merleau-Ponty, and Sartre, Lacan dwelled extensively on these topics in a 1964 seminar. Nine years later the text of the seminar appeared under the title *Les quatre concepts fondamentaux de la psychanalyse*. This has since become one of Lacan’s best known works. What is not so well known is that a painting acquired by Lacan in 1955 seems to have been predestined to provoke an analysis of the subject’s entanglement in the complex structures of the visual. The talk reads the painting as a paradigmatic example of Lacan’s visual theory.

Karlheinz Lüdeking, initially an educator at a Berlin secondary school, went on to study philosophy, art history, and German literature, earning his PhD in philosophy under the supervision of Ernst Tugendhat in 1985. After several temporary appointments, he received a tenured professorship in art history at the Art Academy of Nuremberg, where he also served as president from 1998 until 2001. In 2002 he spent half a year at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. In 2004 he moved to Berlin, where he has since taught art history and theory at the University of the Arts. He is the author of *Grenzen des Sichtbaren* (2006) and the co-editor of *Clement Greenberg: Die Essenz der Moderne / Ausgewählte Essays und Kritiken* (1997; expanded new edition, 2009) and *Analytische Philosophie der Kunst* (1988; expanded new edition, 1998). In 1997, he cofounded the German Society of Aesthetics.

Nicholas Mirzoeff, New York

How to See the World: Visual Activism in Dangerous Times

Since 2008, the world has changed in at least four registers. The human population is now mostly young (under 30), lives in cities and has some connection to the internet. The entire earth system has entered a new epoch of climate change. People have taken to creating visual images as a means to try and understand these changes, creating them in unprecedented numbers. Others have taken the interface of images and social life as a place to create change, which I call visual activism. In this presentation, I'll look at the selfie as a key index of the current anxiety. Then I'll consider the new ways of seeing that have been produced around Black Lives Matter and the new geological epoch caused by human activity that has been called the Anthropocene. In closing, I will ask how our institutions can respond to these challenges, from museums to universities.

Nicholas Mirzoeff works at the intersection of politics and (global/digital) visual culture in activism and scholarly investigation. He is a Professor in the Department of Media, Culture, and Communication, New York University. His most recent book, *How to See the World*, was published by Pelican in the UK (2015) and by Basic Books in the US (2016). It has been translated into seven languages and was a New Scientist Top Ten Book of the Year for 2015. Mirzoeff is considered one of the founders of the academic discipline of visual culture in books like *An Introduction to Visual Culture* (1999/2009) and *The Visual Culture Reader* (1998/2002/2012). Currently, he is working on a project entitled *The Space of Revolution #BlackLivesMatter* to be published as a free e-book by the Institute of Contemporary Arts, Miami. His book *The Right to Look: A Counter-history of Visuality* (2011; German: *Die multiple Sicht. Diaspora und visuelle Kultur*, 2012) won the Anne Friedberg Award for Innovative Scholarship from the Society of Cinema and Media Studies in 2013. Mirzoeff was Deputy Director of the International Association for

Visual Culture from 2011–2016. Since 2013, he has been Visiting Professor of Visual Culture at Middlesex University, London. A frequent blogger and writer, his work has appeared in the *New York Times*, the *Guardian*, *Time*, and *The New Republic*.

Christa Pfafferott, Hamburg

Der panoptische Blick: Macht und Ohnmacht in der forensischen Psychiatrie (mit Filmbeispielen)

“Please look at the blue light. Unfortunately, you could not be identified.” This line, spoken by a computer, begins the 80-minute film by Christa Pfafferott about power between caregivers and patients in a clinic for forensic psychiatry. Like her book on the panoptic gaze, *Der panoptische Blick* (2015), the film examines reciprocal power relations within institutions. Using examples from film and Foucault’s arguments about the panopticon, the talk identifies how power structures are constituted by panoptic space. The presentation also considers the camera and the potential of its preservation on film. As the documentary team becomes the object of the clinic’s surveillance cameras, the question arises: who is watching whom and how does the associated power form? The work uncovers how control and surveillance within a concentrated microcosm exemplify developments in the public sphere, where the significance of these mechanisms grows by the day.

Christa Pfafferott is a Hamburg-based writer and director. After training at the Henri Nannen School of Journalism, she earned a degree in documentary filmmaking at the Film Academy Baden-Württemberg. She then completed a Ph.D. in film studies at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste Hamburg on a government scholarship from the Cusanuswerk. Her film *Andere Welt* (SWR) was awarded the Marlies Hesse Prize of the Journalistinnenbund. Her dissertation appeared in 2015. She has written for *Die Zeit* and *Süddeutsche Zeitung*.

Magazin. Her documentaries have received multiple funding grants and prizes at film festivals. She is a member of the Bundesverband Regie (a Germany-wide association of directors) and the Gesellschaft für Medienwissenschaften (a society of media sciences).

Siegfried Saerberg, Wiehl

Nachtwanderungen in den lichten Landen: Eine blinde Ethnographie alltäglichen Sehens

Call this talk an expedition, an anthropology from another star that explores everyday life in the land of the light. It seeks to uncover the darkness in consciousness that brings with it other ways of seeing and breaks the self-evidence of light and the purported hopelessness of night. By shedding light on the follies of understanding and the wisdom of blindness, Saerberg interrogates the conditions of the possibility of the land of light in search of literal and figurative dark regions, where sight is senseless and blindness receives justice, where lemons bloom and one can hear the grass grow.

Siegfried Saerberg studied sociology, philosophy, political science, history, law, and ethnology in Cologne, Constance, and Dortmund. In addition to his work as a university lecturer, he is a curator, a sound artist, a writer, a reciter, and an artistic director. His projects include “Art Blind,” an exhibition for the Blinde und Kunst Association (2013), the cultural project Inklus:city, for the IBK in Remscheid (2016), and education consulting for the Bundeskunsthalle Bonn.

Martin Schaad, Potsdam

WYSIWYG – Bildproduktion im Politischen

On Sunday, January 11, 2015, more than forty heads of state from around the world marched arm in arm for almost 307 meters along Boulevard Voltaire in Paris. It was a display of solidarity with France, one of many unity marches across the nation after the terrorist attacks on the satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* and a kosher supermarket. The talk looks at some examples from the flood of images precipitated by the event. What were the circumstances under which the visual communication of these subcutaneous, emotional, political, and diplomatic messages took place? Why did these images appear in the media and not others?

Martin Schaad is deputy director of the Einstein Forum. He studied history, economics, and philosophy at the University of Stirling and completed his Ph.D. in modern history at St Antony's College, Oxford. He also holds an MBA from Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh. Alongside many essays on contemporary subjects, he is the author of the books *Bullying Bonn: Anglo-German Diplomacy on European Integration, 1955–61* (2000), *“Dann geh doch rüber”: Über die Mauer in den Osten* (2009), and *Die fabelhaften Bekenntnisse des Genossen Alfred Kurella* (2014).

Alexander Strahl, Salzburg

Das betrogene Auge: Sinnestäuschungen von der Physik bis zur Kunst

For most people, seeing is the primary sense. Around 60 per cent of environmental experience enters our brains through our eyes. But between the moment photons enter the optic nerve and an image appears in our consciousness are multiple neural processes. Is the result a representation of the external world or a construct? The talk provides an answer to this question by taking a journey through the

world of optical illusions, from physics to psychology and art. In doing so, it identifies specific processes that alter and modify the images we see.

Alexander Strahl studied physics with a minor in philosophy at the Technische Universität Braunschweig. In 2006 he completed his Ph.D. in physics. From 2008 to 2014 he served as lecturer at the Institute for Natural Sciences Education at the Technische Universität Braunschweig. Since 2014 he has been an assistant professor at the School of Education at the University of Salzburg, where he directs the working group on physics education. He has written numerous essays and is co-author of *Fachdidaktik der Naturwissenschaften unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Physik* (2014) and the *Neues Handbuch zur Philosophie* (2005). In 2016 he coedited *Naturwissenschaften vermitteln: Von der frühen Kindheit bis zum Lehrerberuf*.

Kate E. Tunstall, Oxford

Blindness and Enlightenment: A Conversation

My presentation draws on some of the material explored in my book, *Blindness and Enlightenment* (2011), which focuses on the recourse to the figure of the man born blind in philosophical and literary writing in French in the early modern and Enlightenment periods, from Montaigne to Diderot, via Descartes, Gassendi, and La Mothe Le Vayer. I'll also seek to go beyond that material by briefly discussing blindness and blind women in Godard's *JLG/JLG* (1994).

Kate E. Tunstall is Clarendon Associate Professor of French at the University of Oxford and a tutorial fellow at Worcester College. She writes mainly about the literature, aesthetics, art and philosophy of 18th-century France, Diderot in particular. She has also written about the 19th-century novel and silent film. She is the author of *Blindness and Enlightenment: An Essay* (2011); she edited the volume *Self-Evi-*

dent Truths? Human Rights and the Enlightenment (The Oxford Amnesty Lectures, 2012); and (with Caroline Warman) she translated the multi-media edition of *Diderot's 'Rameau's Nephew'* (2014, 2nd ed. 2016), which won the British Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies Prize for Digital Resources. She and Katie Scott (of the Courtauld Institute) have just published a new translation of Diderot's *Regrets sur ma vieille robe de chambre* in the latest issue of the *Oxford Art Journal* (2016).



René Magritte: *Le Blanc-seing* (1965)