



Marcin Dudek, *Interpersonal Stress Crowd Turbulence*, 2016-ongoing, video. Copyright Marcin Dudek, courtesy Edel Assanti.

**Der Forschungsschwerpunkt der Historisch-Kulturwissenschaftlichen Fakultät
„Visuelle Kulturgeschichte – Kulturen und Medien des Visuellen“**

lädt ein zum Vortrag von

Prof. Sarah Wilson

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Crowds, Power, and the Rape of the Masses

**Donnerstag, 30. November 2017 um 18 Uhr
Institut für Kunstgeschichte, Campus, Hof 9, Seminarraum 1**

Within the art world orgy of Frieze-week London, two shows spoke to me most powerfully about art and crisis: Marcin Dudek's *Steps and Marches*, (Edel Assanti gallery) and *Melancholia, a Seebald story*, (Kings' College, Inigo Rooms).

Dudek's video, *Interpersonal stress crowd turbulence*, evoked the long story of crowds, ephemeral violence, political uprising and change; *Melancholia*, the dreadful contemplation of aftermath, the impossible dialectic of reconstruction and mourning.

With our democracies at the mercy of the 'black box algorithms' the rise of jingoism and racism reveal atavistic, animal fears. It seems timely to look back to the theoreticians of crowds and power from Jules Romains, and Georges Sorel, to Walter Benjamin, Elias Canetti or George-Didi-Huberman's *Uprisings*. Above all Serge Chakotin's *Rape of the Masses. The Psychology of Totalitarian propaganda*, first published in 1939 and its reappearance in England and Russia today speaks to the present. 'In the description of the disaster lies the possibility of overcoming it'. Are W. G. Seebald's words too optimistic for our times?

SARAH WILSON is a specialist on the School of Paris and postwar European art, extending to Franco-Soviet relations, Narrative Figuration and global conceptualisms. She supervises research on contemporary Russian, Eastern European and also Chinese art. In 2015 she was co-curator of 'Asia Time: 1st Asian Biennale / 5th Guangzhou Triennale' (Guangzhou, China).