



International Conference Varieties of Realism: aesthetics, politics, and philosophy

**DEM'ARTS Project, Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University,
La Maison Française of NYU and NYU Liberal Studies**

April 27 and 28, 2026

La Maison Française of NYU and NYU Liberal Studies

One of the most disputed questions regarding the politics of our times focuses on the questions of 'truth', 'facts', 'objectivity' and the NYU Liberal Studies challenge that a multitude of social and political forces present to the stability of these concepts in myriad ways, all within a novel media ecology. The question of 'what is possible?' for instance, often engenders the claim of 'realism' as a challenge to political projects perceived to be fantastic or utopian. But in aesthetics, the question registers in a different, though related, fashion with respect to the history of plastic arts. An issue that has only intensified with the introduction of accelerated forms of technology highlighting the contrast between the 'virtual' and the 'real'. In philosophy the history of the question of reality and realism is as old as the practice itself in terms of the world we live in, the language we use to describe it, and how we understand ourselves and our individual experience. This conference gathers an interdisciplinary group of scholars to rethink the question of realism in light of these various perspectives.

Organized by:

Sandra Laugier, Brendan Hogan, Azadeh Nilchiani, Yann Toma

Speakers

Jocelyn Benoist (University Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne), Andrew Brandel (University of Chicago), Juliet Floyd (Boston University), Jeroen Gerrits (SUNY-Binghamton), Brendan Hogan (NYU), Sandra Laugier (University Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne), Azadeh Nilchiani (University Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne), Richard Shusterman (Florida Atlantic University), Martin Shuster (University of North Carolina at Charlotte), Yann Toma (University Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne), Hent de Vries (NYU), Zed Adams (The New School for Social Research) and Nat Hansen (University of Reading), Tatsiana Zhurauliova (University Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne).

Practical information

10:00am - 6:00pm

April 27th

Location: NYU Maison Française

16 Washington Mews (at University Place), New York, NY, 10003

April 28th

Location: NYU Liberal Studies

6th floor, 726 Broadway, New York, NY 10003



La Maison Française
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

Varieties of Realism: aesthetics, politics, and philosophy

April 27th, 2026

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5 Washington Mews, New York, NY, 10003

Coffee: 9:30 am-10:00

Introduction 10:00-10:15

10:15 -11:55 am

Real Time and Real Sonic Environment

Azadeh Nilchiani, University Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne

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Sur-realist Musing: Zürn and the Philosophical Turn to Literature

Andrew Brandel, University of Chicago

12:00-12:50: pm

From Langer to Greenberg to Cavell: Pragmatism, Symbolism, Modernism

Juliet Floyd, Boston University

Lunch 12:50-2:15

2:15-3:55pm

Realism and Strangeness, or: Politics of the Impossible

Hent de Vries, NYU

What's New in Neo-Realism? Time and the Ordinary in De Sica's *Umberto D* (1952).

Jeroen Gerrits, SUNY-Binghamton

3:55- 4:45

**Artistic energy, realism and diversity: a dialogue beyond the boundaries of life,
between democracy and art.**

Yann Toma, University Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne

Tuesday April 28th

**Location: NYU Liberal Studies, Conference Room B, 726 Broadway, New York, NY
10003
6th Floor**

Coffee 9:30 -10:00am

10:00 am Welcome, Dean Bruce Grant , Liberal Studies

10:15-11:55

Revisiting Horkheimer and Adorno on Antisemitism: The Centrality of Kant's Schematism

Martin Shuster, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Oscillate less wildly: the ideal, the real and the utopian imagination

Brendan Hogan, NYU

12:00-12:50 pm

Spilling the Beans: on Making Truth

Jocelyn Benoist, University Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne

Lunch 12:50-2:00 pm at Liberal Studies

2:00 pm – 3:40 pm

Art is not a game

Zed Adams, The New School for Social research and Nat Hansen, University of Reading

Severance: Toward the Realism of the Divided Self

Tatsiana Zhurauliova, University Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne

3:45pm- 5:20 pm

Ordinary Aesthetics and Realism

Sandra Laugier University Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne

Realism and the Feeling of Truth: Affect and Authenticity in Pragmatism and Aesthetic Experience

Richard Shusterman, Florida Atlantic University