**CRISES OF DEMOCRACY**

**Friday, May 17 - Saturday, May 18**

**Reid Hall**

Organized by

María González Pendás and Whitney Laemmli

Sponsored by

**Society of Fellows and the Heyman Center in the Humanities**

**Institute for Ideas and Imagination**

**Columbia University**

In our current moment, democracy seems to be in crisis: as a practice, a set of institutions, and an ideal. The tempo and tone of news cycles, the perceived volatility of the rule of law, and the pervasiveness of legalized zones of lawlessness only increase our anxiety about the state of democracy across the world.  While certainly not immune to such anxieties, scholars and artists operate in a distinct space (and at an alternative pace) from which to analyze and speculate about democracy, its crises and absences, and about the technologies, places, and means through which democracy has historically been negotiated.

Drawing from alumni members of the Columbia Society of Fellows in the Humanities and in conversation with the Fellows of the Institute for Ideas & Imagination, this workshop investigates the relationship between democracy and crisis as it has been explored within the humanities and the arts. Fellows from across fields, institutions, and cohorts will present work on the ways in which ideals and practices of democracy have been debated in theory, probed historically, and produced and contested culturally. Is “crisis” endemic to democracy: a constitutive problem with the demos, with the enemies of democracy, or with the operations of democracy itself? How do the humanities and the arts render democracy and its crises visible? How do they reveal the contemporaneity of historical crises and the historicity of contemporary anxieties?

**FRIDAY, May 17**

**9:00-9:30am Coffee, Welcome, and Introduction**

Murad Idris, Department of Politics, University of Virginia

**RESEARCH**

**9:30-10:20am LIMITS**

Ilana Feldman, Department of Anthropology, George Washington University

“Untimely Optimism?: Recognition, Redress, and the Limits of the International in Palestinian Experience”

Andrew Zimmerman, Department of History, George Washington University

“Jacobinism, Totalitarianism, Populism: Democracy and the

Demonologies of Liberalism”

Chair: Elsa Dorlin, Department of Political Science, Vincennes/St. Denis Paris 8

University/Institute for Ideas and Imagination

**10:20-11:10am RESOURCES**

Hagar Kotef, Department of Politics and International Studies, SOAS, University of London

“Normalities of Apartheid: Food and Colonization in Israel/Palestine”

Reinhold Martin, Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation,

Columbia University

“Oil, Paper, Fire: The *Demos* of the Winds.”

Chair: Eileen Gilooly, Executive Director, Society of Fellows and Heyman Center

for the Humanities, Columbia University

**11:10-11:30am BREAK**

**11:30am-12:10pm EXPERTS**

John Tresch, Art, Science, and Folk Practice, The Warburg Institute

“The Shock of the Demos, 1830-1848”

Maria Gonzalez Pendas, Society of Fellows, Columbia University

“Public Experts: Architecture and Amnesia in Post-Fascist Spain”

Chair: Murad Idris, Department of Politics, University of Virginia

**12:10-1:00pm MEDIA**

Whitney Laemmli, Society of Fellows, Columbia University

“Dancing, Databases, Democracy”

Will Slauter, Université Paris Diderot

“Controlling News, Past and Present”

Chair: TBD

**LUNCH 1:oo-2:30pm**

**CONVERSATIONS ON THE HUMANITIES, POLITICS, AND THE ARTS**

**2:30-3:30pm**

In Conversation: **Emeka Ogboh** (Sound Artist, Institute for Ideas and

Imagination) and **Tina Campt** (Departments of Africana and Women’s Gender and Sexuality Studies, Barnard College, Institute for Ideas and Imagination)

**3:30-4:00pm Break**

**4:00-5:00pm**

In Conversation: **Mickalene Thomas** (Visual Artist) and **Josef Sorett**

(Departments of Religion and African-American Studies, Columbia University

**Reception Dinner to Follow**

**SATURDAY, May 18 (CLOSED TO PUBLIC)**

**10:00am -12:00pm BREAKFAST RECAP**