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MÜNCHEN

DEPARTMENT KUNSTWISSENSCHAFTEN



# ELITE ART, POPULISM & THE FATE OF CRITICISM

## by Julian Stallabrass

on 21/10/22, 4 p.m., room B 201

This talk is related to Professor Stallabrass' current project on the relations of cultural and political populism. As in politics, there has been a large realignment of contemporary art in which much 'populist' work has come to the fore in a strange alignment of popular tastes and those of billionaire art buyers: think of the branded works of Hirst, Murakami, Koons, Wool and many others. Some of the same forces underlie both—the long-term crisis in capitalism, the overweening power of the super-rich, and the transformative power of social media. The success of street art in the art market, after decades of clashing values and mutual hostility, is one register of this development. Professor Stallabrass will contrast market art versus biennial art, and pliant, promotional art criticism versus a resurgent and critical art writing. While in many ways these are opposed, there are also links between them: where do the two meet? In the market-friendly political art work, and also in the art writer as an extraordinary performer, a celebrity brand out of which criticism emanates.

About the speaker:

Julian Stallabrass is a writer, photographer and curator. He is the author of *Killing for Show: Photography, War and the Media in Vietnam and Iraq*, Rowman and Littlefield, 2020; *A Very Short Introduction to Contemporary Art*, updated edition, Oxford University Press 2020; *Internet Art: The Online Clash Between Culture and Commerce*, Tate Publishing, London 2003; *Paris Pictured*, Royal Academy of Arts, London 2002; and *High Art Lite: British Art in the 1990s*, Verso, London 1999. He is also the editor of *Documentary*, in the MIT/ Whitechapel Documents of Contemporary Art series; and *Memory of Fire: Images of War and the War of Images*, Photoworks, Brighton 2013. He has made online TV programmes about aspects of modern and contemporary art for Tariq Ali TV in the series 'Rear Window'. He is currently working on a book about cultural and political populism.