You are cordially invited to the following seminar Monday, 8 March from 12:15 – 13:15hrs, ONLINE via ZOOM

Emmanuel Alloa
Professor of Philosophy, University of Fribourg

Emmanuel Alloa is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Fribourg where he holds a Chair in Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art. He has been an Invited Visiting Professor and Fellow at various universities, including Columbia University, Lyon III, Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, Universität Wien, Belo Horizonte and UC Berkeley. Among his most recent monographs: Resistance of the Sensible World (Fordham University Press, 2017), Partages de la perspective (Fayard, 2020) and Looking Through Images (Columbia UP 2021), as well as a dozen (co)edited volumes, including Transparency, Subjectivity, Society: Critical Perspectives (Palgrave, 2018) and Dynamis of the Image: Moving Images in a Global World (De Gruyter 2020). An Associate Curator for the Exhibition “Le supermarché des images” at the Jeu de Paume Paris in 2021, he was “Thinker in Residence” at the Royal Belgian Academy for Arts and Sciences for the topic The Limits of Transparency. In Fall 2021, he taught a course on “Transparency Society” at the SEPS as Invited Guest Professor.

Transparency, privacy commons and civil inattention

Mass surveillance has stirred serious concerns about contemporary societies sleepwalking into a post-privacy age. The article offers a critical account of hegemonic privacy arguments: beyond apparent oppositions, these predominantly rest on a ‘proprietary model’ harking back to individual liberalism since Locke: privacy is considered as something proper to an individual. The right to privacy thus entails the right to refuse access to one’s personal estate. As opposed to this currently dominant model, the article outlines an alternative ‘subtractive model’, where privacy allows being withdrawn from external evaluation. By reconstructing the idea of ‘privatio’ in Roman law, it argues for the need for spaces where one can resist the imperative to identification. By outlining why privacy is not a matter of personal property, but of common relevance, the article links the need for non-judgmental, experimental spaces to the concept of civil inattention.