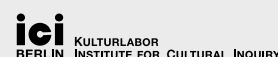


How, why, and with what epistemic implications is history divided into temporal segments? Periodizations — whether in the form of epochs, ages, turning points, or more heroic ‘eras’ — belong to the most fundamental and at the same time most frequently contested historiographical operations in literary, art, and media studies. They structure time and allow for ‘significant’ markers, enable narrative schemes, stabilize institutions and epistemologies, and in this way, they also shape concepts of the future and of expected caesuras. They serve as enduring reminders to recognize patterns, which may dissolve or persist when new ones are discovered. In recent years, a renewed problematization has emerged in the form of re-periodizations, de-periodizations, or comparative and global perspectives and other temporalities. Yet these approaches cannot escape the legacy of periodization; rather, they are often blind to its recursive and pattern forming operations.

Tom McCarthy is a novelist whose work has been translated into more than twenty languages and adapted for cinema, theatre and radio. His first novel, *Remainder*, won the 2008 Believer Book Award; his third, *C*, was a 2010 Booker Prize finalist, as was his fourth, *Satin Island*, in 2015. In 2013, he was awarded the inaugural Windham-Campbell Prize for fiction. McCarthy is also author of the study *Tintin and the Secret of Literature*, and of the essay collection *Typewriters, Bombs, Jellyfish*. His new novel, *The Rhyl Poster*, will be published in October 2026.

Inke Arns is a curator and Director of HMKV Hartware MedienKunstVerein in Dortmund, Germany. Since 1993, she has worked as an independent curator, writer, and theorist specializing in media art and net cultures at Kunsthalle Wien (Vienna), the Pavilion of the Republic of Kosovo, the 59th Biennale di Venezia (Venice), BOZAR (Brussels), La Gaité Lyrique (Paris), Muzeum Sztuki (Łódź), Haus der Kulturen der Welt (Berlin), Kunsthal Charlottenborg (Copenhagen), and Jeu de Paume (Paris). Her latest exhibition is *Robotron. Working Class and Intelligentsia* (2025-26).



With
Tom McCarthy
Inke Arns

Moderated by
Lea Pao

PERIODIZATIONS

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Image credit: Claudia Poppel