



# From Wave to Wave:

Aesthetic Figurations of *Neo-Japonisme* in the French Cinematic Avant-Garde - Far Away, So Close

**Anne-Gaëlle Saliot**

**December 18, 2025, 17:30-19:00**

**Room301, 3F, building 10, Sophia University**

**In person only**

**No registration required**

This talk reconsiders postwar French cinematic modernism through the lens of *neo-Japonisme*, not as thematic citation but as a structural and epistemic operation. While the influence of the French New Wave on Japanese directors like Ōshima, Imamura, and Yoshida is well known, the originary reverse trajectory remains underexplored. Drawing on Claire-Akiko Brisset's revaluation of *Japonisme* as a postwar aesthetic logic, and Gilles Deleuze's theorization of the time-image, this talk argues that Japanese cinema shaped the formal strategies of French filmmakers such as Alain Resnais, Jacques Rivette, Jean-Luc Godard, and Chris Marker. Rather than functioning as mere narrative setting, Japan emerges as a principle of estrangement and formal experimentation. Films like *Hiroshima mon amour*, *The Nun*, and *Sans Soleil* reveal how classical Japanese cinema - Mizoguchi, Ozu, Kurosawa - enabled the French avant-garde to rethink cinematic time, space, and subjectivity. Japan, in this view, becomes a generative structure that subtly displaces Eurocentrism and opens a path toward global *cinephilia*.



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**Anne-Gaëlle Saliot** is Associate Professor of Romance Studies with a secondary appointment in Art, Art History, and Visual Studies at Duke University, where she also directs the Center for French and Francophone Studies. She is the author of *The Drowned Muse* (Oxford University Press, 2015). Her second book, *Troubling Modernities. Godard, Rivette, Truffaut and the 19th Century*, examines the nineteenth century as a political unconscious of the French New Wave. She is also the co-editor of the Cahiers de la NRF dedicated to Philippe Forest. Her current research explores the reception of Japan in French theory, cinema, and dance since 1945. She has published widely on figures including Maurice Blanchot, Jean-Luc Godard, François Truffaut, Jacques Rivette, Alain Resnais, Maurice Pialat, Philippe Forest, Marguerite Duras, and contemporary dance. She has also created several performances combining literature and music for the Philharmonie de Paris; her most recent, *Duras Song*, premiered in June 2023.

This talk is organized by Hannah Holtzman (Assistant Professor, Sophia University).

