



*The Center for Ethnography presents the Aesthetics and Cosmopolis Series – Part One*

This talk will examine if the expansion in the material conditions and subjective experience of culture in public spaces can be conceptualized as 'ambient participation'. Ambient participation refers to the participatory potential of public space, it has wider social implications which could be elaborated through a politics of culture and more specifically in this instance, the politics of cultural difference. The term ambience has been employed, descriptively, by media scholars to communicate how the designed interfaces of twenty-first century urbanism – ubiquitous media technologies, imperceptibly embedded into the physical environment (McCullough 2013; Papastergiadis et al 2016) – impact on subjective experience. Ambient conditions create new forms of embodiment, and alter the feedback between modes of awareness, information and environment. Ambience can also be used to map this terrain of urban infrastructure – 'digital cameras and iPhones, and urban informatics such as CCTV networks and e-Tags'. Of interest here is not only the subjective effects of these embedded technologies, but how they function as a layered, complex, and relational field of data (McQuire 2016; Jaaniste 2010; Arnold and Levit 2010).

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# CAPTURING AMBIENT PARTICIPATION: NETWORKED PUBLIC SPACES AND THE PROBLEM OF CULTURAL VALUE

With

## Nikos Papastergiadis

Director, Research Unit in Public Cultures  
Professor, School of Culture and Communication,  
University of Melbourne

**Tuesday, November 12, 2019**

**12:00 pm - 2:00 pm**

**SSPA – Room 2112**

**Light lunch for early arrivals**

Nikos Papastergiadis is the Chief Investigator on the ARC Discovery Project 'Precincts and cultural participation in networked public space'. Prior to joining the School of Culture and Communication, he was Deputy Director of the Australia Centre at the University of Melbourne, Head of the Centre for Ideas at the Victorian College of Arts, and lecturer in Sociology and recipient of the Simon Fellowship at the University of Manchester. He has been both co-editor and author of journal *Third Text* and his publications include *Modernity as Exile* (Manchester University Press 1993), *Dialogues in the Diaspora* (Rivers Oram 1998), *The Turbulence of Migration* (Polity Press 2000), *Metaphor and Tension* (Artspace 2004) *Spatial Aesthetics: Art Place and the Everyday* (Rivers Oram 2006), *Cosmopolitanism and Culture* (Polity Press 2012), *Ambient Perspectives* (2013) and *Ambient Screens* (2016). [\(Click for Nikos Papastergiadis' Website\)](#)

