

# VISUAL STUDIES RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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SPRING 2026 EVENTS

## LECTURES



### Claiming Truth, Picturing Doubt: Navigating Scientific Authority Underwater

**Magdalena Grüner**

*Postdoctoral Fellow, USC Society of Fellows in the Humanities*

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 20**

**12:30-2:00pm PT**

**SOS 250**

Sponsored by the USC Department of Art History

As the members of the Bermuda Oceanographic Expeditions (1929-1940) descended into the deep sea with a diving device called the bathysphere, they were confronted with a dilemma: in abyssal darkness, human senses faltered, and vision ceased to be the paramount tool for accessing the world. This talk examines how scientists and artists alike grappled with the basic premises of knowledge production. By tracing the group's prolific image practices, it follows their efforts to picture elusive submerged realms amid a negotiation of mediacy, uncertainty, and the limits of empirical seeing.

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