Christopher Fynsk, Maurice Blanchot Chair, Professor of Philosophy, and Dean of the Division of Philosophy, Art & Critical Thought at The European Graduate School / EGS.

BIOGRAPHY

Christopher Fynsk's (b. 1952) academic profile includes extensive administrative experience (he has served as Chair, Head of School, Dean and Trustee) and high academic achievement through articles, translations, and books treating topics in modern Continental philosophy and literature. He has held academic positions in North America, France, and the UK (Scotland), and has 15 years of experience at the European Graduate School. He is best known for his writings on Martin Heidegger and Maurice Blanchot, but has also made significant contributions in the area of philosophy of language and to questions relating to the politics of philosophy (and its institutions). He is also actively involved in philosophy of education, and currently writes on the topic of rhythm.

Christopher Fynsk received his doctorate from the Department of Romance Studies at Johns Hopkins University in 1981, following a Diplôme d'Etudes Avancées in Philosophy from the University of Strasbourg. He also received an MA in English from the University of California, Irvine, in 1976, and an MA in French at Johns Hopkins University in 1979. He taught at the University of Strasbourg from 1985 to 1987, and from 1981 to 2004 he worked as Professor of Comparative Literature and Philosophy, Co-Director of the Philosophy, Literature and the Theory of Criticism Program and as Chair of Department of Comparative Literature at State University of New York at Binghamton. From 1995-1997 Chris Fynsk was the Chair of the Modern Language Association, Division of Philosophical Approaches to Literature. In 2004 he moved to the University of Aberdeen to join the faculty of the School of Language and Literature, and formed the Centre for Modern Thought.

In his critical writings, which breach the barriers separating philosophy, literary theory, and art criticism, Christopher Fynsk is deeply engaged with the question of the possibility of language and how the human relation to Being is sketched out through literary and philosophical texts and art works. In *Infant Figures*, he follows a path to the realm of this question through a dialogical meditation on two texts, one by Maurice Blanchot and one by Jacques Lacan, which confront the limits of language in saying the death of a child. In the text, which is partitioned into three suggestively aligned parts in the manner similar to a Francis Bacon triptych, Christopher Fynsk follows an inquiry of the material limits of symbolic representation. The inquiry is called by 'the exigency of the figure', a primal exposure of the human being antecedent to speech and memory which opens it to the possibility of language. In order to risk the entry into this problematic, he finds it necessary to adopt an unconventional method which navigates 'between discursive orders' in a way

which is theoretically akin to the methods of psychoanalysis.

Christopher Fynsk is the author of a forthcoming book on Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe's *Phrase* (SUNY Press). He is also the author of *Last Steps: Maurice Blanchot's Exilic Writing*, *The Claim of Language: A Case for the Humanities* (2004), *Infant Figures: The Death of the Infans and Other Scenes of Origin* (2000), *Language and Relation: …that there is language* (1996), and *Heidegger: Thought and Historicity* (1986). He has contributed the following chapters to books: "El uso de la tierra." in: Antonio Casado de Rocha (Translator) and Félix Duque (Editor). *Heidegger y el arte de verdad.* (Catedra Jorge Oteiza, 2005), "The Place of the Friend in Hölderlin's Later Hymns." in: Friedrich Hölderlins (Translator), Christophe Jamme and Anja Lemke (Editors). *Es bleibet aber eine Spur/ Doch eines Wortes": Zur späten Hymnik und Tragödientheorie.* (Wilhelm Fink Verlag. 2004), "Derrida's Engagements: Philosophy in the Performative." in: Tom Cohen (Editor). *Derrida and the Humanities.* (Cambridge University Press. 2001), "William Haver. 'Iconographies of Silence'." in: Salvatore Puglia (ed). *Via dalle immagini/Leaving Pictures.* (Edizioni Menabo. Salerno, 1999), "What Remains at a Crucifixion." in: Sue Golding (ed). *The Eight Technologies of Otherness.* (Routledge. 1997), "Foreword." in: George Quasha (ed). *The Station Hill Blanchot Reader.* (Station Hill Press. 1999), "Reading the *Poetics* after the Remarks." in: Aris Fioretos (Editor). *The Firm Letter.* (Stanford University Press. 1998), "Crossing the Threshold." in: Carolyn Bailey Gill (ed). *Maurice Blanchot: The Demand of Writing.* (Routledge. 1996), "Experiences of Finitude (Preface)." in: Jean-Luc Nancy. *The Inoperative Community.* (University Of Minnesota Press. June 1991), "Community and the Limits of Theory." in: *Community at Loose Ends.* (University of Minnesota Press. 1991), "Poetic Relation: Celan's 'Bremen Address'." in: Haskell M. Block (Editor). *The Poetry of Paul Celan.* (Peter Lang. 1991), "Poetic Relation: Celan's 'Bremen Address'." in: Aris Fioretos (Editor). *Word Traces.* (Johns Hopkins University Press. 1994), "The Choice of Deconstruction." in: *The Textual Sublime: Deconstruction and its Differences.* (SUNY Press. 1989), "Finitude de la Dichtung." in: Jean-François Courtine (ed). *Les Cahiers de l'Herne.* (Editions de l'Herne. 1989) and "Activitè philosophique et pratique politique; Ouverture du sèminaire sur le politique." in: *Les fins de l'homme; A partir du travail de Jacques Derrida.* (Editions Galilèe). In 1996, he edited Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe's *Typography.*