

The Department of French Studies and the Centre for Research in the Visual Cultures of the French-Speaking World (CRIVCOF) welcome you to a talk by:

Nina Lübbren:

**‘The Corpse, the Candle and the
Toppled Chair: Painted Murders in
Nineteenth-Century Europe’**

**Monday 3 December, 4.00-5.30 pm, in Room A7
(Samuel Alexander Building)**



Georges Rochegrosse, *The Assassination of Caesar* (1887)

Abstract:

Blood, gore and sensationalism dominated the late nineteenth-century Salons and academic art exhibitions of Europe - or so some critics would have us believe. This paper examines paintings of assassinated politicians, murdered citizens and dying duellists and traces their shared visual language of crime and forensic investigation. We tend to see death and the aftermath of killing rather than the actual killing itself. Action is displaced onto inanimate objects that are strewn about the scene of violence. Toppled chairs, snuffed candles and discarded daggers invite viewers to piece together the story of what has taken place. This paper draws on reception theory, narratology, contemporary reviews and close visual analyses to read afresh the bourgeois Salon sensations of the nineteenth century.

Nina Lübbren is Deputy Head of English, Communication, Film and Media at Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge. She is the author of *Rural Artists' Colonies in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, co-editor of *Visual Culture and Tourism*, and has published essays on visual narrative in nineteenth-century painting.