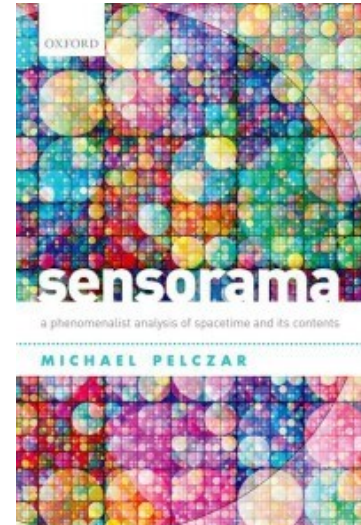
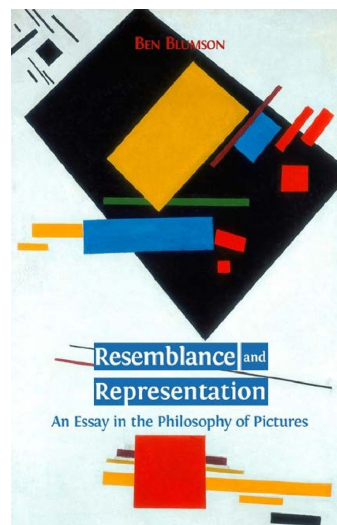
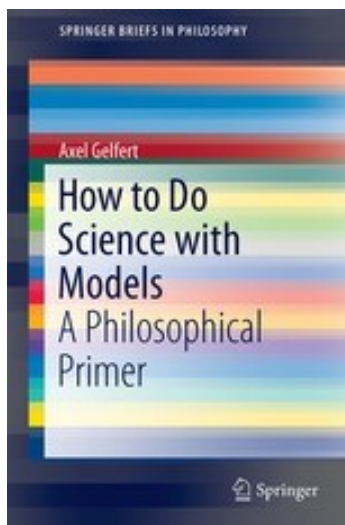


# Philosophy Bookshare

**FASS Research Division & NUS  
Department of Philosophy**

Featuring Axel Gelfert, Ben Blumson, and  
Michael Pelczar



FASS RD Seminar Room, Thursday, 7 April 2016  
1-2pm

# [Introduction]

**FASS Bookshare** celebrates and showcases books authored by faculty members who have dedicated years of research into their publications.

In previous editions **Bookshare** has highlighted '*Books with an Asian Focus*', '*Books by our Young Scholars*', '*Asian mobility, power, and representation*', '*India and Indians*', '*Books on Asian Nations in the Discipline of Political Science*', and '*Development, Migration, and Protest in Asia*'. This special seventh edition of **Bookshare** focuses on recent single-authored *Books on Philosophy*. Today three faculty members will share their research experiences and motivations, they are:

Dr. Axel Gelfert

Dr. Ben Blumson

Dr. Michael Pelczar

Please read on for more information about their books.

## How to Do Science with Models: A Philosophical Primer

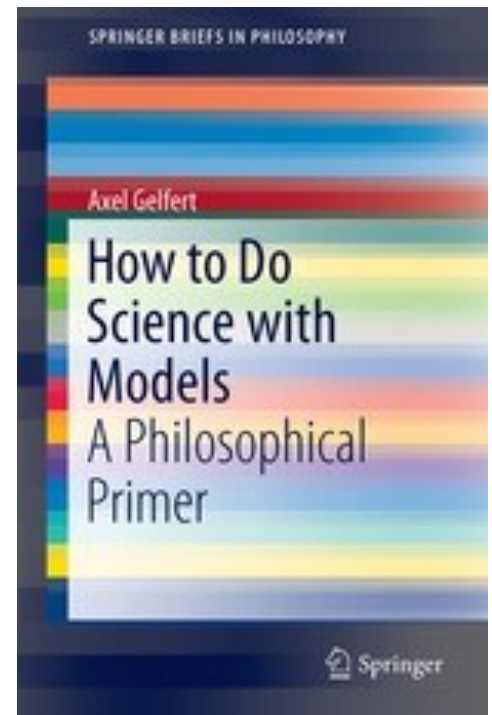
*Springer*

**Dr. Axel Gelfert**

Associate Professor

**Department of Philosophy**

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Taking scientific practice as its starting point, this book charts the complex territory of models used in science. It examines what scientific models are and what their function is. Reliance on models is pervasive in science, and scientists often need to construct models in order to explain or predict anything of interest at all. The diversity of kinds of models one finds in science – ranging from toy models and scale models to theoretical and mathematical models – has attracted attention not only from scientists, but also from philosophers, sociologists, and historians of science. This has given rise to a wide variety of case studies that look at the different uses to which models have been put in specific scientific contexts. By exploring current debates on the use and building of models via cutting-edge examples drawn from physics and biology, the book provides broad insight into the methodology of modelling in the natural sciences. It pairs specific arguments with introductory material relating to the ontology and the function of models, and provides some historical context to the debates as well as a sketch of general positions in the philosophy of scientific models in the process.

**A**xel Gelfert joined the Philosophy Department in 2006 from Budapest, having previously completed a PhD in History and Philosophy of Science at the University of Cambridge. His undergraduate training was in Theoretical Physics (Dipl.Phys., Humboldt University, Berlin, 2000.) He is currently the Convenor of the Science, Technology and Society (STS) Minor programme. In addition, he is an Associate Fellow at Tembusu College and an Associate at NUS's Asia Research Institute (ARI).

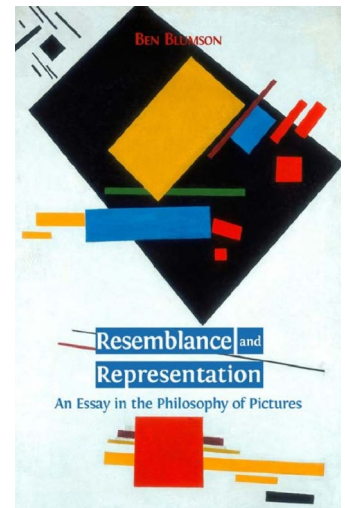
## Resemblance and Representation: An Essay in the Philosophy of Pictures

**Dr. Ben Blumson**

Assistant Professor

Department of Philosophy

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It's a platitude – which only a philosopher would dream of denying – that whereas words are connected to what they represent merely by arbitrary conventions, pictures are connected to what they represent by resemblance. The most important difference between my portrait and my name, for example, is that whereas my portrait and I are connected by my portrait's resemblance to me, my name and I are connected merely by an arbitrary convention. The first aim of this book is to defend this platitude from the apparently compelling objections raised against it, by analysing depiction in a way which reveals how it is mediated by resemblance.

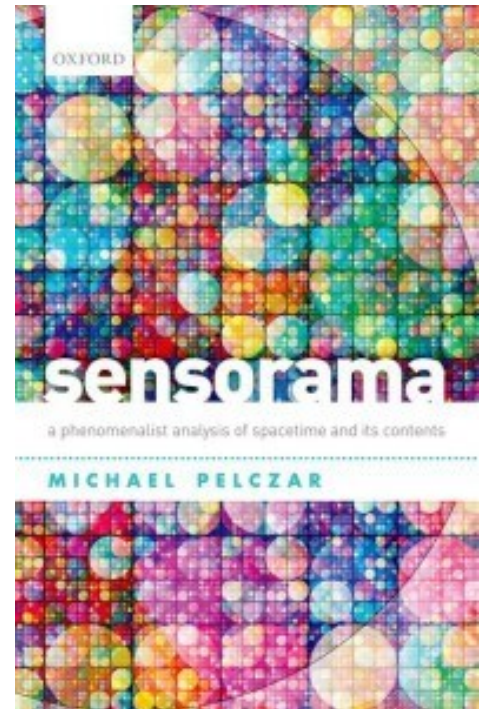
It's natural to contrast the platitude that depiction is mediated by resemblance, which emphasises the differences between depictive and descriptive representation, with an extremely close analogy between depiction and description, which emphasises the similarities between depictive and descriptive representation. Whereas the platitude emphasises that the connection between my portrait and me is natural in a way the connection between my name and me is not, the analogy emphasises the contingency of the connection between my portrait and me. Nevertheless, the second aim of this book is to defend an extremely close analogy between depiction and description.

The strategy of the book is to argue that the apparently compelling objections raised against the platitude that depiction is mediated by resemblance are manifestations of more general problems, which are familiar from the philosophy of language. These problems, it argues, can be resolved by answers analogous to their counterparts in the philosophy of language, without rejecting the platitude. So the combination of the platitude that depiction is mediated by resemblance with a close analogy between depiction and description turns out to be a compelling theory of depiction, which combines the virtues of common sense with the insights of its detractors.

**B**en Blumson joined the Philosophy Department at NUS in 2009, after a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Sydney and a PhD at the Australian National University. His interests are in metaphysics and the intersection of philosophy of language, mind, and art.

## Sensorama: A Phenomenalist Analysis of Spacetime and Its Contents

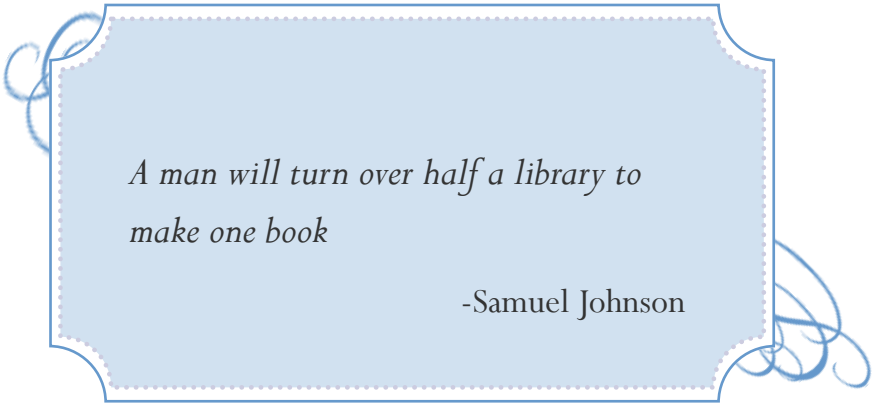
**Dr. Michael Pelczar**  
Associate Professor  
**Department of Philosophy**  
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Michael Pelczar presents an original account of space, time and conscious experience. How does the modern scientific conception of time constrain the project of assigning the mind its proper place in nature? On the scientific conception, it makes no sense to speak of the duration of a pain, or the simultaneity of sensations occurring in different parts of the brain. Such considerations led Henri Poincaré, one of the founders of the modern conception, to conclude that consciousness does not exist in spacetime, but serves as the basic material out of which we must create the physical world. The central claim of *Sensorama* is that Poincaré was substantially correct. The best way to reconcile the scientific conception of time with the evidence of introspection is through a phenomenalist metaphysic according to which consciousness exists in neither time nor space, but serves as a basis for the logical construction of spacetime and its contents.

**M**ichael Pelczar joined the Philosophy Department at NUS in 2001. Previously he taught at the University of Arizona in Tucson. He received his PhD from the University of Virginia and is originally from Chestertown, Maryland.





*A man will turn over half a library to  
make one book*

-Samuel Johnson

For future Bookshare information please contact:  
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With thanks to the authors



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