Space in Mind



Historical & Contemporary Perspectives

McMaster University
Bertrand Russell Research Centre
November 13-14, 2026

The human ability to perceive spatial properties and think about space has been at the center of philosophical inquiry for more than 2000 years. It plays a pivotal role in the arguments of numerous influential figures, including Plato, Descartes, Berkeley, Kant, Helmholtz, James, and Russell. However, the interest in this topic has waned substantially in contemporary philosophy. Philosophers of psychology and cognitive scientists now do their work largely independently from historical scholarship on these important figures. To bridge this gap, the Bertrand Russell Research Centre at McMaster University is organizing a workshop entitled "Space in Mind: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives." The goal of the workshop is to bring about a dialogue between researchers interested in historical scholarship and those directly involved in contemporary debates, and to highlight insights of historical philosophers that can help us make progress on contemporary issues.

Friday, November 13

8:30	–	9:30	**Lisa Shabel,** Ohio State University
9:45	–	10:45	**Katherine Dunlop**, University of Texas, Austin
11:00	–	12:00	**Gary Hatfield**, University of Pennsylvania
1:00	–	2:00	**Sara Aronowitz**, University of Toronto
2:15	–	3:15	**Michael Rescorla**, University of California, Los Angeles
3:30	–	5:00*	**Elizabeth Spelke** (*keynote*)*, Harvard University

Saturday, November 14

8:30	–	9:30	**Alexandre Duval**, University de Moncton
9:45	–	10:45	**Alistair Isaac**, University of Edinburgh
11:00	–	12:00	**Richard Arthur**, McMaster University
1:00	–	2:00	**Alexander Klein**, McMaster University
2:15	—	3:15	**Tyke Nunez**, University of South Carolina
3:30	–	4:30	**Tyler Delmore**, York University

Location: University Hall 312

Keynote*: Togo Salmon Hall (TSH) 120,
followed by reception in TSH 118