Abstracts:

Bas van Fraassen:

Empiricism: Voices from the Past

This lecture has two parts: a narrative and an argument. The narrative relates constructive empiricism to voices from outside philosophy, by physicists and philosophers in the late 19th and early 20th century. The argument, to meet certain challenges to constructive empiricism, is that scientific theories require coordination, experimental support, and empirical grounding, all of which is significantly different from confirmation.

Kyle Stanford:

Turtles All The Way Down: Constructively Interpreting Bas van Fraassen's *The Scientific Image*

Starting from the failures of other influential interpretations, I offer a constructive interpretation (sensu Dworkin) of van Fraassen's central arguments for Constructive Empiricism in *The Scientific Image.* On the constructive interpretation I propose, *The Scientific Image* is best seen as seeking to provide a similarly constructive interpretation of science itself. I go on to suggest that the interpretive tools put to work in van Fraassen's pioneering approach can be productively applied to much else in the philosophy of science, including how philosophers of science understand themselves and the aim of many of their own inquiries.

Hans Halvorson:

Title: Er musste das Wissen aufheben: van Fraassen on the priority of the manifest image

Abstract: Why do we do science? It is a question working scientists rarely pause to ask, and one that philosophy of science, in its more technical moods, has largely abandoned. Bas van Fraassen never abandoned it. What matters most about van Fraassen is not any particular view he defended — constructive empiricism, the semantic view, voluntarist epistemology — but the desire that drove him: to confront the human situation honestly, in the light of modern science. Wilfrid Sellars posed the problem. The "scientific image" and the "manifest image" of ourselves seem to compete, and the scientific one seems bound to win. Many of van Fraassen's contemporaries accepted that verdict, and let science crowd out the human subject. Van Fraassen would not. Setting his work alongside a neglected Danish tradition — Møller, Kierkegaard, Nielsen, Høffding, and Bohr — I argue that the trouble lies not in objectifying inquiry itself, which has made modern science possible, but in the demand that it be the only

legitimate way to know. He had to suspend knowledge, in Kant's phrase — not to diminish it, but to take it up into a human life.

Michela Massimi:

Models as inferential blueprints and windows on reality. Variations on a van Fraassen theme

In this talk I start with a retrospective on a philosophical theme to which Bas van Fraassen has profoundly contributed, namely the role of scientific models in representing reality. I will then present my own personal variations on this influential van Fraassean theme: a view of models as inferential blueprints as I articulated it in Massimi (2022, OUP). And I will briefly explain how this view impinges on debates about realism and perspectival pluralism in science.

James Ladyman

Science, Empiricism and Belief