The Surrealists “discovered” Native American “art” in the early 1920s. They soon became collectors of Native ritual objects acquired from tribal art dealers in Europe and bought many pieces from antiquarians when in exile in the U.S. during WWII. Some members of the surrealist circle collected in the field. Kurt Seligmann and Wolfgang Paalen visited the Northwest Coast in 1938 and 1939 respectively. André Breton went to the Southwest in 1945 and obtained Hopi katsinam. Mauzé critically examines their ambiguous collecting behavior and their distant relationships to Native people grounded in so-called “Surrealist colonialism.”

Marie Mauzé is a CNRS senior researcher. She has conducted fieldwork among the Kwakwaka’wakw and in other First Nations in British Columbia since 1980. In 2003, she facilitated the repatriation of a Kwakwaka’wakw headdress from the estate of André Breton.

Thursday, November 2, 2017 at 1:00 pm
Young Research Library
Library Presentation Room 11348

Background image: “Le messager des trois pôles” by Wolfgang Paalen, 1949