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working context /
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main areas of research
and/or interest

Professor of Modern Culture
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Performance Studies

abstract

Coming Before ~~Art at the End of the World~~

Denise Ferreira da Silva has said that “knowing and studying [Blackness] announces the End of the World as we know it.” The world as we know it is an ongoing world structured by colonial-capitalism, antiblackness, heteropatriarchy and other linked forms of systemic violence that privilege “growth” over sustainability. Some of those structures are scenic. At the end of the world, and of “worlding” and “worldviews,” may be other ways of being with, living among, gesturing forth intrainanimate relations – other genres of human than homo-economicus and other, more-than-human ways of knowing and being: geologic, molecular, aquatic, intervallactic, decolonial.

This talk thinks about modes of ~~art, theatre, media~~ gesturing that come after or, relatedly, “come before” the world of Man, to borrow from Rizvana Bradley’s *Anteaesthetics: Black Aesthesis and the Critique of Form*. Among works that may participate in the thought that prompts this talk are Arthur Jaffa’s *AGHDRA*, Alberta Whittle’s *What is a Better Life*, Suzan-Lori Parks’s *Death of the Last Black Man in the Whole Entire World*, Dionne Brand’s *Salvage: Readings from the Wreck*, and Alexis Pauline Gumbs’s *Undrowned*.



Mateusz

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Jagiellonian University in
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main areas of research
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performativity, critical
Anthropocene studies,
environmental humanities

abstract

Between Grounding and Re-Wilding. Spoiling the Anthropocene Ontology in Upper Silesia and the Ruhr

Since the 2010s, we have witnessed a proliferation of cultural (re)presentations, often at the intersection of the arts, sciences and activism, conceived as a critical response to the Anthropocene in the wake of the 2008 Great Recession which foregrounded interconnections between the climate crisis and global socio-economic injustices (Nixon 2014). Thus, the cultural (re)presentations often interrupt the dominant ontologies of the Anthropocene premised upon the concept of entanglement. Inspired by today's natural sciences, these ontologies posit that the world does not consist of discrete subjects and objects acting in a cause-and-effect relationship, but rather emerge from an entanglement of human and more-than-human existence (Barad 2009; Haraway 2016; Morton 2015). However, those ontologies turn a blind eye on exclusions and frictions inextricably linked to entanglement.

This paper looks closely into selected examples of cultural (re)presentations of post-extractive landscapes in the Upper Silesia and the Ruhr to argue that they spoil those ontological propositions by situating these landscapes in the region's legacy of Capitalist and Socialist fast and slow violence (Christian and Dowler 2019; Nixon 2010), the exploitation of human and more-than-human bodies and ecocide (Nijakowski 2022; Tomczok 2022). Thus, they often rewire the ontologies towards activist, sometimes militant actions towards social and ecological justice. These practices show that each entanglement always entails an 'ethics of exclusion' (Haifa Giraud 2019), which (un)intentionally leaves some humans and more-than-humans out of the entanglement for specific (eco)political reasons.

By comparing selected contemporary arts and sciences projects engaged in post-extractive landscapes in Upper Silesia and the Ruhr, the paper identifies two distinct tactics of spoiling the Anthropocene ontology. Projects in Upper Silesia will be examined to show a tactic provisionally termed grounding. They situate the local stories of social exclusion and violence site-specifically in existing landscapes and, often by working with local communities, instigate social change. Projects engaged with the Ruhr will be scrutinised to foreground how they spoil the Anthropocene ontologies through a tactic of re-wilding. Their primary aim is to challenge the intensive processes of heritagization initiated in the 1990s (Berger and Wicke 2017), whereby local post-extractive landscapes have been turned into cultural parks and sites of remembrance, in order to reveal the subversive potential of those landscapes.



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Carl von Ossietzky
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Queer Studies, Visual
Cultural Studies, Affect
Studies, the Garden

abstract

Queer ecologies. On more-than-human and affective-performative artistic strategies in the garden.

My contribution is dedicated to the queer ecologies in the garden. The starting point is Hieronymus Bosch's "Garten der Lüste" (1490-1500). My talk is following non-heteronormative forms of life and offering companionship in the sense of Donna Haraway to human-nature structures. Furthermore, my talk pursues the following key questions: What role do visual strategies play in art when it comes to questioning and reshaping dominant narratives about nature and humans? To what extent can the artistic visual language be described as a practice of queering that thwarts hegemonic (hetero) normativity or power/knowledge regimes? Furthermore: Can the artistic strategies be read as a design that shapes relations of conviviality and the solidarization of human and more-than-human entities?

This involves linking queer and post-humanist approaches that deconstruct the binary of human and world and formulate a plea for more-than-human relationships. The focus here is on various artistic positions such as Hieronymus Bosch or the contemporary artist Gauri Gill and on reading together in the in-between. Particular attention will be paid to the significance of new "places of the communal" in cultural practices, which redefine not only the concept of space but also that of (human and more-than-human) community.



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ETH - Zurich

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Comparative Literature
Performance Studies,
Visual Culture

abstract

Shamanism on the crossroads of other humanism.

The aim of this presentation is to situate the material contribution of shamanism on the field of images, visual culture, and performance studies. Instead of exploring the context of healing rituals, the use of substances, the focus here will be on the figurations of images as ritual remains, taking from it the energy – in terms of action of forces, ἐνέργεια – and dynamics – its figural potency δύναμις (Aristote, *Metaphysics*, IX) – which images ties a series of relations with myths, gods, spirits, the dead, meteorological phenomena, plants, objects, and artefacts (Viveiros de Castro, 2014). Since the Humanism has its Western origins on the Christian tradition, this project has a starting point the hypothesis that colonized, enslaved African peoples in Americas, and decimated Amerindian cultures produced epistemologies that combines spiritual and natural forces. Through the figuration of shamanic rituals one can reframe humanism through ethnobotanics and entnoastronomy, which corroborates to replace the historical dimension of Amerindian representation in Western images. This proposal keeps the necessity to put in dialogue archives, methodologies, indigenous verbal vocal and visual arts. In fields such as Comparative Literature, Art History, Film, Media and Performance Studies, shamanism can be kept as a multiple points of view of space and time.



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Institute for Theatre Studies,
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Theatre and Political
Theory
Aesthetics of Infrastructure
Theatre and Law

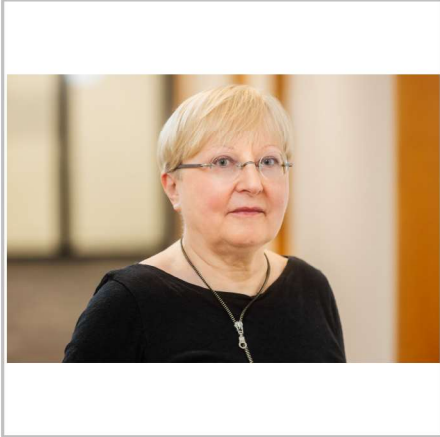
abstract

The Nambikwara Case

In 1980, the Fourth Russell Tribunal in Rotterdam sat in judgement of violations of what was then called „the Rights of the Indians of the Americas“. The First Russell Tribunal chaired by Jean-Paul Sartre was evoked in London 1966 and Stockholm 1967 to judge the United States' violations of human rights during the Vietnam war and issued the verdict of „genocide“. The Fourth Tribunal with Indigenous activist Mário Juruna as a president heard cases on expropriation, land grabbing, and environmental degradation in Latin America often related to infrastructure projects like hydroelectric dams or military projects like missile bases. The land in question has usually been stolen from the settlements of Indigenous peoples and quilombos.

In my talk, I want to focus on the particular case of the Nambikwara whose territory in what is now called northern Mato Grosso was to be (and has been) dismembered by the construction of the B-364 federal highway. Despite their very humble way of life, the Nambikwara made a kind of career in continental European theorizing. Lévi-Strauss lived with them for a while and recorded his experience in *Tristes Tropiques*; Jacques Derrida used the „writing lesson“ described by Lévi-Strauss as some kind of founding scene for deconstructive critique. No representative of the Nambikwara appeared in front of the tribunal; ethnographer Vincent Carelli and two other white people spoke on behalf of them raising several epistemic problems that Carelli immediately addressed when he took the stage. The hearing obviously is a scene: and evidently, it also is an anthropo-scene since only human beings appeared on it. However, the questions addressed here go far beyond the mere issues of the „anthropos“. More precisely, the tribunal puts into question the fundamental role of law in colonizing spaces, transforming landscapes and coding goods of the earth as private property and capital.

The Nambikwara case in front of the Fourth Russell Tribunal is an example of the strange European mixture of violence, extractivism, idealization, othering, and displacement that the Indigenous cultures of the Americas have encountered.



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working context /
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Performativity Studies at the
Jagiellonian University

main areas of research
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performativity theories,
speculative and decolonial
studies, stories of sciences

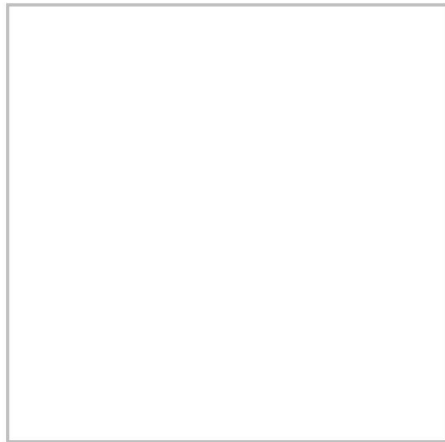
abstract

After the Blue Marble: A Transscalar Scene of the Earth as Seen from Cosmos

The OED lists several meanings of the noun "scene", among others "a view or picture of a place, event, or activity" (a street scene) and "a particular area of activity and all the people or things connected with it" (a political scene) which are of importance for the present paper. With these two different meanings in mind, I ask the fundamental question of whether and in what way a shift from the already well-known name "the Anthropocene" to a more speculative term "the Anthroposcene" will change our understanding of our time and relationalities with and to the Earth and the cosmos. To tentatively answer this question, the paper starts with a critical perspective on the recent emergence of Earth System Science (ESS) with its ambition to fully explain the Earth's interacting physical, chemical, and biological processes. In this perspective, it will, then, take a closer look at three chosen experimental film essays, partly documentary, partly speculatively fabulated which were shown at the 14th Shanghai Biennale "Cosmos Cinema" (2023-2024). All three of them use temporal and geographical zooms, shifts and overlays to traverse geology, (self)ethnography and astronomy to demonstrate that in order to make local sense of place and circumstances within the cosmos means other than science and technology can be employed.

In her *Nonhuman Photography* (2017), Joanna Zylińska refers to the famous "Blue Marble"—the picture of Earth, taken during the Apollo 17 mission in 1972, which allowed humanity to see our planet and itself from the outside for the first time. Soon, however, the picture turned into "a familiar device for creating an illusion of telluric unity (aka 'globalisation)". As Zylińska demonstrates, not a single astronaut actually saw the Earth depicted as the "Blue Marble". Based on raw data from a space camera the image of the Earth in vivid colors was rendered and adapted to subjugate "the nonhuman eye of the space camera to the visual mastery of the human". From today's perspective, it is even more visible how at that moment the Earth was constituted as a graspable object. However, it was on this illusion of telluric unity that not only the so-called Gaian science but also the ESS was premised. Rather than to dismantle the illusion, the examples I refer to use the "Blue Marble" picture of the Earth as a hands-on scene to demonstrate that Western sciences are a colonizing force which out-scales and marginalizes other modes of inquiry into human entanglements with nature and the cosmos.

Whereas *The Bicyclist Who Fell into a Time Cone* (2023) by the New Delhi-based Raqs Media Collective employs an optical phenomenon of parallax to launch a historical inquiry and philosophical speculation into an exemplary year of 1980, Julieta Aranda's video trilogy *Steeling One's Own Corpse (An Alternative Set of Footholds for an Ascent into the Dark)* (2014-2023) and Fern Silva's feature-length film *Rock Bottom Riser* (2021) juxtapose scientific approaches to the notions of space, gravity, and intergalactic communication with the stargazing indigenous community in Mexico and native Hawaiian art of navigation by starlight respectively. In each of these examples the scientific and technological progress which offered us a (illusory) possibility of seeing the Earth as a graspable object is subverted and used as a scene on which we locally make sense of place and circumstances within the cosmos. Only then does the relationship between the imaginary of the cosmos and terrestrial systems of governance and knowledge—constitutive for the Anthroposcene—becomes visible.



Dorota

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working context /
institutional links

Institute of Polish Culture,
University of Warsaw

main areas of research
and/or interest

performance studies;
non-representational theory;
theater and art history

abstract

Wild Scene. Andris Eglitis' Savvala as more than human experience

In my presentation I will discuss the Savvala (The Wild) project by Latvian artist Andris Eglitis. The artist changed his land - vast terrain with forest and lakes in the middle of Latvia - into a scene for art. Without building anything more than a basic shelter and without intervening into the forest which grows in its undisturbed manner, Eglitis invites artists to work there and with this place. The artworks stay in the forest and on the site not really exhibited, although possible to see when making an effort to trek without path into unregulated, wild forest. I'm interested in events like sudden and total burning of one of the wooden structures at Savvala - what kind of experience it makes and what kind of scene it forms? I will be referring to non-representational theory to grasp the agency of art in the forest, non-invited viewers and non-human actors. As Nigel Thrift states non-representational theory asks three main questions: about the divide between theoretical and practical work "by ceding certain theoretical conundrums to practice", about "construction of new matterings" and about "conditionings that make up most of what it is to be human" (Thrift 2008, 22). Following those questions I would like to reflect on the paradoxical scene of non-representational and its possible connection to the obscene that for Jack Halberstam is deeply connected to the Wild and wildness (Halberstam 2020).



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working context /
institutional links

Professor of Film Studies
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main areas of research
and/or interest

theory and aesthetics of the
moving image; interrelations
between the visual and
performative arts

abstract

(Im)provisional Scenes: Pasolini's "Appunti"

Pier Paolo Pasolini's "Appunti per un'Orestiade Africana" (1970)—one of five episodes of the otherwise unrealized project "Appunti per un Poema sul Terzo Mondo"—presents itself as the notes to a film yet to be made, taken with the camera during preparational filming in different African countries. The talk explores how the "scene" as a theatrical concept is established in Pasolini's film to imagine the possibility of a new political and social commonality on the decolonial ground of the Africas. The sense of the (im)provisional ("appunti") will be framed from the perspective of the "scene", on which analogies between ancient Greece and modern Africa are explored while at the same time reflecting on the flaws of staging Aeschylus' "Oresteia" in Africa. This is done in scenes of encounter between humans, animals, spirits, and landscapes, each of which displaces the notion of the "scenery" as the representation of a surrounding on a theatre stage or film set. Instead, the African landscapes insist on situating the project, questioning its assumptions and presuppositions. While much has been written and said about the universalizing and patronizing forces and their critical reflection in Pasolini's film, the talk will follow the invitation of the conference to investigate these scenes as "anthropo-scenes" of entanglement in relation to colonial and decolonial politics.



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working context /
institutional links

University of Glasgow

main areas of research
and/or interest

Black geographies, Black
social and political thought,
African politics

abstract

Geographies of the Black Weird: Race and the Uncanny in the Anthropocene

Our current age, the Anthropocene, has been described as an era of “global weirding”, one in which peculiarity, disorientation, and dislocation are increasingly prevalent, and old certainties are eroded. For many critical scholars, this weirdness is to be embraced as an opportunity to become differently, as we entangle ourselves in nature and form new, uncanny alliances with the natural world. In contemporary critical discussions, the weird is generally understood as an affirmative force, one that fosters relations, generativity and creativity. However, through engaging with work on Black geographies, Black aesthetics, and the Black Weird, this paper will explore the complex relationship between weirdness and Blackness, suggesting that it opens up new perspectives for critique in the Anthropocene, rather than simply affirming new ways of being in relation. The argument examines recent geographical work on the “New Weird”, which highlights the role of Blackness in this literature as a symbol of alterity and dread, a form of negation that should be feared. Secondly, the argument will address conceptions of Black weirdness as a hauntological space which exposes the exhaustion of modernist futures. Finally, it will explore the concept of the Black Weird, which reverses the narrative, understanding Whiteness as a form of the uncanny. Ultimately these questions allow us to think about the weird as a framing to think through questions of subjectivity, humanity, and politics in the era of the Anthropocene.



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main areas of research
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theory and aesthetics of performing arts;
the intervening performativity of smell;
performing politics in times of
(democratic); traces of the tragic in
contemporary theatre and performance.

abstract

Performing in the Face of Extinction On the Ethics and Aesthetics of Inter-Species Drag

Occasionally, "Writing the Anthropocene" (Boes/Marshall 2013) also brings forth success stories. By 2020, efforts had succeeded in increasing the population of the critically endangered whooping crane from only 15 individuals in 1941 to 850. A pivotal component contributing to this achievement is the technique of costume-rearing, which relies on the dynamic interaction between captive juvenile birds and human caretakers: Dressed up in crane-like costumes that completely obscure their human gender, performers enact the role of adult whooping cranes, imparting crucial social and survival skills to the young birds through the principle of mimesis. The approach has played an elemental role in prompting migratory behavior in whooping cranes towards their native habitats, thereby bolstering the species' long-term survival prospects and significantly contributing to the overall success of the reintroduction of these "non-human people" (Morton 2017).

Critically engaging with Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing's notion of "arts of living on a damaged planet," (2017) my lecture aims to explore the speculative potential of inter-species drag in non-artistic contexts. I strive to delve the aesthetic and ethical dimensions of the supposedly "all-too-human" techniques of mimesis and othering used to preserve one of the world's most endangered birds with an emphasis on raising questions rather than providing definitive answers. Is it justified to rear individual animals in captivity for the survival of a species? How do the efforts to encourage whooping cranes to migrate to their "natural" habitat in Texas relate to attempts of violently preventing humans from immigrating there? And is it justified, against this backdrop, to conceptualize the performative techniques of costume rearing with the term 'ethical drag'?



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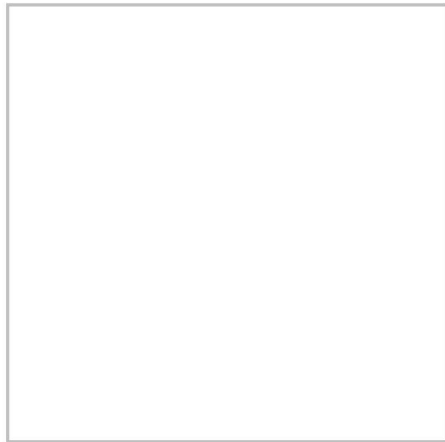
main areas of research
and/or interest

Media Theory, Media Ecology,
Feminist New Media Art, New
Materialism

abstract

Composting (in and against) the Anthropocene

Composting is a material practice of attention and care whereby biological waste is transformed into nutrient-rich soil. Donna Haraway prominently adopts the concept of compost as a thinking technology and material metaphor to call for new posthumus stories, in which humans and non-humans become aware of their deep entanglement with the earth's soil. Contemporary artists seek for such stories. Building on Haraway's thinking, they relate to the fact that "it matters what compostables make compost". By making ,mad gardeners', ,earthworms' and other kins to the protagonists of their Post-Anthroposcences, these artists compost anthropocentric epistemologies and ontologies in various aesthetic ways. Taking Haraway's compostist, worm-like, tentacular thinking as a starting point, my talk will draw on audiovisual and performative works (including Eglė Budvytytė, KOMA & Ko and Jenna Sutela) to show the extent to which art can mobilize such a way of thinking with the earth. From such a perspective, the earth, the humus, the hot pile itself becomes active and a doing. I want to show that the artistic realization of that thinking with the living/dead soil opens up other perspectives of the world as a more-than-human becoming-with



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working context /
institutional links

Jagiellonian University

main areas of research
and/or interest

Speculative Fabulations on
Environmental Catastrophes

abstract

Scenes of Transscalar Commonality in Acid Forest (dir. Rugilė Barzdžiukaitė, Dovydas Korba 2018)

Devastated natural landscapes, a token of human exploitation of natural resources in the “patchy Anthropocene”, provide a challenge to the scientifically informed practices of knowing the environment through technological scaling procedures. After all, these wastelands, despite their toxicity, harbor new forms of (alter)life that come into being as a result of interactions between local, endemic organisms with reactive, often poisonous substances that operate on various spatial and temporal scales. Therefore, comprehending these environments—their complicated past(s) and the relationships between their biotic inhabitants and highly reactive abiotic factors—may offer insight into ways in which life-forms remain and survive in hostile conditions. At the same time these idiosyncratic environments seem to be non-scalable and thus require for their comprehension new situated ways of knowing that could bring out their local specificity.

In my paper I take up this issue using as an example a performative documentary *Acid Forest* (dir. Rugilė Barzdžiukaitė, Dovydas Korba 2018). In my reading I follow Max Liboiron’s argument that in order to understand how different forms of (alter)life survive in these toxic wastelands we need to redefine scale itself and see that is not about relative size, but rather about relationships that matter in a specific context. However, the performative documentary that I take a look at does more than that: it manifestly de-centers human perspective, by introducing points of view located on non-human scales. Bardziukaite and Korba created a particular filming dispositive to register scenes of commonality across scales between beings of various kinds, biotic and not. From cameras mounted high in the trees they filmed from two angles a wooden observational platform mounted just off a busy walking trail, which in the film turned into a stage on which a series of scenes takes place. Each features a different group of visitors, mostly just tourists from abroad, trying to make sense of the view from the platform. What stands out quite manifestly is the situated character of their knowledge, inseparable from their superstitions, prejudices and attitudes towards the birds and even proposing solutions to the problem, including just shooting the birds, easy targets on bare trees. Bardziukaite and Korba’s film can therefore be read as a lesson on the specificity of relationships across scales in a given context manifestly de-center human perspective, by introducing points of view located on non-human scales. The film also suggests that there is a relationship between scaling procedures and the violent measures of regulating the environment according to human needs and values.



Liliana

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working context /
institutional links

main areas of research
and/or interest

University of Kassel,
documenta Institut

abstract

"Water Weavers and Decolonial Liquid Cartographies"

The paper discusses artistic engagements with bodies of water, in particular rivers and the Caribbean Ocean, to propose that emerging textile art uses weaving practices to resist colonial hegemonic visualities. It explores how these engagements with historical fluvial and oceanic imaginaries promote decolonial liquid cartographies, understanding these engagements with colonial fluvial and oceanic maps as part of a "metatextile" formation, that is, a "textile discourse" that exposes fissures of colonial-extractive practices (Weddigen 2010). The paper responds to the recent curatorial interest in water and weaving as a means of critiquing these practices, such as the exhibition *Waterweavers*, curated by José Roca with Alejandro Martín (2015). By discussing the artistic work of Colombian Susana Mejía and Guadeloupean Minnia Biabiany, the paper aims to highlight collaborative art practice with local communities as a means of reflecting the social fabric and autochthonous knowledge, where weaving being a performative practice of cultural memory (Taylor 2003). This foregrounds weaving practices as alternate, decolonial and collective constructions of space. Ultimately, it aims to elaborate a critical genealogy of weaving as a cultural metaphor of textuality/narrativity that opens up a new analytical terrain for rethinking coloniality/modernity as a conceptual approach to the notion of Anthropo(s)cene.



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working context /
institutional links

Prof. Dr. Institute for Media
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Bochum

main areas of research
and/or interest

Theory, history and aesthetics
of visual documentary forms

abstract

Death ships. The dark side of the oceanic turn

“Humans live their lives and build their institutions on dry land,” philosopher Hans Blumenberg states in the first sentence of his book *Shipwreck with Spectator*. Nevertheless, people go to sea and thereby violate the anthropological limits that are set to their existence. In media studies, which has undergone an oceanic turn in recent years, this philosophical perspective on humans as “trespassers” has been reversed. Now it is the ship on which we experience the radical dependence of human civilization on technology: “On a ship, existence and technology are one. “Your being depends radically on the craft,” is how John Durham Peters expresses the new conceptual role of ships as “archi-media” and seafaring as the paradigm of a liquid anthropocene. From the sea we can better observe on how many institutions, techniques and artificial arrangements our existence depends. Since ancient times, political life has been explained using the model of the ship. My paper will deal with one of the most important sea novels of the 20th century – B. Traven's *The Death Ship. The Story of an American Sailor* (1926/1934) – as an opportunity to relate this concept to a political situation in which the ship for those who live and work on it has become a hostile environment. Instead of providing the entire range of means and techniques with which humans can survive, the ship has turned into a death zone: the final refuge for the “people of the stateless” (Hannah Arendt) who are denied the opportunity to lead a civil life on the ‘solid’ land (terra firma).



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working context /
institutional links

academy of fine arts leipzig
(hgb leipzig)

main areas of research
and/or interest

digital blackface, affect and
racial capitalism, queer ai
in/as art

abstract

the anthropo(s)cenes of digital blackface

Digital Blackface is a scene of subjection (Hartman): Particularly with regard to reaction images that are offered platform-side as reaction formulas for standardized emotional expression in the form of the visualization of Black facial expressions and gestures in memes and gifs, I understand Digital Blackface as a colonial racist scene that binds subjection to the extraction of affect. However, digital blackface in the course of a popular boom in the distribution and circulation of emotive formulas of Blackness is also a scene of subjugation, which I understand in the larger complex of land grabbing, resource extraction and the associated differential effects of violence. On the one hand, I would like to examine this connection with a view to the history of minstrelsy in the USA. On the other hand, the historicization of Blackface as a scene of anthropocene - anthropo(s)cene - will serve me to focus on the radical indeterminacies (Cesaire) that make mimicry intelligible as polyphony. At the time when the category of human (Wynter) has also been defined on the basis of Minstrelsy, the polyphonic structure of human, machine, land and forest (especially cork oak and rubber tree) raises the question of a future that is our present, in which Digital Blackface can emerge as a technology of Black worldmaking.



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Prof. Dr. at Institute for
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main areas of research
and/or interest

Visual Cultures, Queer and Gender
Studies, Decolonial Theories, Mediated
Landscapes, Infrastructures of
Extraction, Speculative Fiction

abstract

desert scenes: transformative practices in colonial extractive zones

In this presentation, I want to reflect on forms of gathering (or what Fred Moten understands “as contest matter, to linger in the break”) in relation to the Namibian landscape which, in the aftermath of German colonialism and the genocide against the OvaHerero and Nama, can be understood as a space of death, as what Jill H. Casid, in her discussion of the Anthropocene as a landscape of genocide, calls a necrocene. I want to focus on gatherings in the context of a site-specific workshop titled ‘Spaces, Traces, Practices of Memorialisation’ in Lüderitz in 2023 to which we invited artists, activists, and academics from Namibia, Germany as well as the UK. During the workshop, we activated specific sites of colonial and genocidal violence like Kolmanskop (an abandoned, once prosperous town that is now a symbol of the diamond boom and bust), the former concentration camp on Shark Island, and the railway tracks outside Lüderitz (along which unmarked mass graves have been found) through performances, practices of attunement and what Stefano Harney might call “speculative practice”. In this presentation, I want to focus on Nesindano Namises’ performative intervention in Kolmanskop and on a spiritual practice of attunement by Visolela Namises on Shark Island and explore how these two practices/performances enabled a more-than-human relationality across time to emerge.



Leon

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institutional links

Assistant Professor at the
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main areas of research
and/or interest

Performance politics, Spatial
arts, Decolonization,
Dramaturgy, working
methods, Deconstruction

abstract

Wandering Through the Ruins of the Capitalocene: Landscapes, Lieux de Memoire and the Remains of the Future

Piles of rubble, winding towers, overgrown tracks, rusting loading stations – the legacies of (post-) industrial infrastructures and the respective wastelands show particularly that landscapes have always been structures influenced by humans, but are also interrelated with more-than-human actors such as fungal webs or pigeon populations. Accordingly, this lecture offers a twofold insight into a broader notion of landscapes. It starts with an autoethnographic description about wandering through the coastal industrial city of Chimbote and about experiencing the city's very distinctive smell – coming from the (toxic) smoke of fish meal production. This approach is compared with explorations of the former industrial zone of Ruhr-Area, undertaken together with students in two seminars in the last years.

Following up on these reflections, the presentation argues that former production zones are regions where so-called 'places of memory' can often be found or identified: symbolic crystallization points of collective memory that can be of a material or immaterial nature – from buildings and monuments to concepts and designations to literary and artistic works. Focusing on the experience of wandering through Chimbote and Ruhr-Area, the contribution reflects on what has often been ignored in European modernism and its art: The legacies and partly hidden remnants of colonial history, the extraction of resources and the violence of exploited and destroyed bodies.

To this end, the approach of wandering, roaming, and getting lost is explained as an aesthetic-political strategy. In artistic research as well as in anthropological studies, walking through landscapes and surroundings has become a focal point for examining the modes of possibilities to newly inhabit a ruined planet. The lecture indeed also centers on dealing with surroundings but asks furthermore what resists even an allegedly post-teleological mode of thought: What remains after the promise of a future beyond the alleged 'end of the future'?



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pronouns (optional)

working context /
institutional links

Post Doc in Applied Theatre
Studies at Justus-Liebig-
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main areas of research
and/or interest

choreography, performance,
dramaturgy, collaborative working
methods, New Materialism,
Gender Studies, Political Theory

abstract

The Political Imaginary Beyond the Resource (Working Title)

In my lecture I will propose a speculative redefinition of the geochronological epoch of the Anthropocene inspired by the writings of Dipesh Chakrabarty and Ailton Krenak. What if this epoch is about the cultivation of human care (extending beyond the relationships of human beings) in order to overcome the dominant narrative of globalisation?

Referring to Stefanie Wenner's „Widerrede gegen die Logik der Ressource (im Kontext von Theater)“ that includes a manifesto for a planetary theatre, I will ponder about the potential of planetary thinking (Hanusch/Leggewie/Meyer), and how it manifests in recent performances. "There must no longer be an economic basis for telling stories of people only about people in enclosed spaces", Stefanie Wenner claims and asks for the end of the "theatre of aboutness". In her opinion, theatre historically contributed to the impoverishment of the generation of relations of kinship – by reducing them to exclusively human relations. The exploitation of earthly resources plays a decisive role in eco-politics – both in fossil capitalism and in the "green" alternatives to it, as the energy transition increases the demand for natural resources and rare earth elements. However, extractivist working methods also exist in the field of art. In her new book *Das Leben der Kunst. Transversale Linien der Sorge* Bojana Kunst writes about "the crisis of the sustainability of life" and how the arts partially contribute to this crisis. She comes to a similar conclusion as Wenner: That the ways of producing and sharing, the institutions and the forms of coming together would have to change.

How can artists escape the hegemonic extractivist modus operandi and enable encounters beyond the logic of the resource? And how can new ways of coming together and of sharing look like? Planetary or planet-centred ways of thinking (Zalasiewicz) do not only focus on human concerns but rather on entangled webs of life. Planetary performances invent and/or cultivate sympoietic practices or interwoven configurations with reciprocal relations, they respond to places and later leave them behind as enriched ecologies. Spivak has tried to induce a shift from globalisation which is linked to a colonial, imperial and capitalist drive to a planetary responsibility. Chakrabarty has also distinguished between the globe (and the corresponding narrative of globalization) and the planet (or earth system). Whereas the globe is a humanocentric construction according to him, planetary thinking inevitably involves a decentering of the human.

In an ongoing research project ("The Becoming Ecological of Artistic Work") Maximilian Haas and me are investigating how artistic modes of working (in the field of choreography and performance) (could) become more ecological and what this would mean. In a series of conversations we have been and are discussing these questions with artists who are concerned with socio-material interventions and sympoietic experiments, eco-aesthetics, and more-than-human dramaturgies. In the frame of my lecture, I will present three artistic approaches from the pool of experimental practices that we have analyzed in our research project: *Social Body Apothecary* (artistic research as socio-ecological practice) by Shelley Etkin, Kitti Acosta-Zsiga and Siegmund Zacharias (since 2021); the performance *Embodying Bodies* by Fabrice Mazliah (2023); and the durational walking project *Fermate: A Landscape Play* by Stefanie Wenner (since August 2020).

International Conference
transforming anthropo(s)cene



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working context /
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landscape dramaturgy,
working conditions and class
issues in the cultural field

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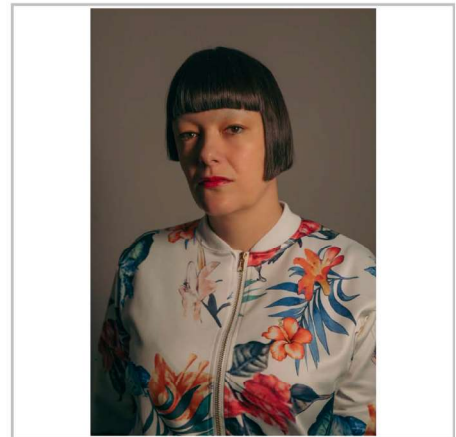
pronouns (optional)

working context /
institutional links

cinema, visual arts, Berlin
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landscape cinema, slow
cinema, feminist storytelling,
social choreography,



abstract on the next page



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artistic research-based, Carl
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visual culture studies, (trans-)
generational memory,
horizontal art history

abstract

How can a landscape speak? A conversation on landscape dramaturgy and eco-feminist storytelling

How can a landscape speak?

It's like wondering whether the grass, the crickets,
or the pond are only a backdrop of events,
or whether they are participants of events,
with their shadows, depths, sounds,
waiting to become the narrators?

Ana Vujanović

For some time now, post-humanist and new-materialist theoretical as well as artistic approaches have been challenging Western and modernist systems of thought that rely on binary relationships such as subject/object, nature/culture, body/mind as well as plant/human. One of the center goals of many ecofeminist works is the reinterpretation of the position of the human alongside the recognition and responsibility for the extracted, damaged and thereby wounded earth with perspectives from eco-feminism, hydro-feminism, and more-than-human anthropology. Marta Popivoda (filmmaker, artist, and researcher, Berlin) and Ana Vujanović's (performance theorist, Berlin University of the Arts Berlin / Amsterdam University of the Arts) transdisciplinary research on the material and structural exploitation of women* and of nature, the relationship between ecosystems and humans, and the memory of landscapes has found its expression in artworks such as the video installation *Moss Does It Better* (an eco-feminist meditation) (12th Berlin Biennale, 2022). It is a work in which moss, stones and trees take the stage and that experiments with the "radical slowing down of movement and time" (Salti 2022). A strong focus of their research and practice is to explore radical slowness as a resistance to the capitalist acceleration of time, as well as its connection to discarded socialist ideas. With something like that in mind, Ana Vujanović has observed a vibrant new tendency in dance, performing arts and film that she calls "landscape dramaturgy." This concept is anchored in works such as *Moss Does It Better* (an eco-feminist meditation), *Landscapes of Resistance* (a film by Marta Popivoda, 2021) and *Freedom Landscapes* (a cinematic performance by Vujanović and Popivoda, 2018), and is significantly influenced by slow cinema, the contrasting restlessness in the post-digital sphere, Occupy movements, the wave of dance and performance in the museum, as well as by ecofeminism and feminist ways of storytelling political Herstories. In conversation with moderator Ulrike Gerhardt (visual studies scholar and curator, Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg), Vujanović and Popivoda will discuss landscape dramaturgy's concept as a model for "being in your time" as well as "making a time yours" (Vujanović, 2022) and as a political practice of life, artmaking and being in nature.

References:

Rasha Salti, „Moss Does It Better (an eco-feminist meditation) (2022)“ by Marta Popivoda and Ana Vujanović, in: 12th Berlin Biennale, URL: <https://12.berlinbiennale.de/artists/marta-popivoda-ana-vujanovic/>, latest access: May 31, 2024.

Ana Vujanović, "Landscapes of Resistance: Time and Temporality of Feminist Storytelling", in: *Senses of Cinema*, Issue 103, 2022, URL: https://www.academia.edu/99109389/Landscapes_of_Resistance_Time_and_Temporality_of_Feminist_Storytelling, latest access: May 31, 2024.