
LONDON CONFERENCE IN CRITICAL THOUGHT PROGRAMME

29th & 30th June 2018, University of Westminster

Long Programme

University of Westminster
309 Regent Street
London
W1B 2HW

<http://londoncritical.org/>
inquiries@londoncritical.org
#LCCT2018

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INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS

First of all, welcome! We very much welcome you to the London Conference in Critical Thought 2018. The following document outlines some key information that you may find useful. For general inquiries you can come and talk to members of the organising collective at the **Boardroom (Room 117)** or, before the conference, contact the LCCT organising collective at inquiries@londoncritical.org

Registration and Information

All participants are asked to register online at the Eventbrite link below, however we also ask that you to check in at the registration desk to confirm your arrival at the conference. The registration desks (where you can pick up your programmes and get general information) will be located in the **Boardroom (Room 117)** at **309 Regent Street, London, W1B 2HW**. This is also the location of our publisher stalls, where you can peruse and purchase books directly from the publishers, (and where the book launch and reception will be located on the Friday evening).

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/london-conference-in-critical-thought-2018-tickets-44217198832>

Location

The conference will take place at the **University of Westminster, Regent Street Campus (309 Regent Street, London, W1B 2HW)**. The registration desk, refreshments and book fair will be located in the main Boardroom of the building, and panels will take place in different rooms in the same building (please check the programme for room numbers). The main entrance to the building is from Regent Street. Please find below the map of the campus and information on how to get there: <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/about-us/our-locations/maps-and-directions/regent-street>

Information regarding building accessibility can be found at the link below, and please feel free to contact us at inquiries@londoncritical.org if you have any questions or concerns. <https://www.disabledgo.com/access-guide/university-of-westminster/309-regent-street>

WI-FI

There are several Wi-Fi networks available at Westminster, most significantly **Eduroam**. Eduroam logon usernames must include @[. .].ac.uk to work, and most academics with UK university emails will have access. There will also be a Westminster Guest access available for the conference. You will need to select the network **UoW-Visitor** and register in order to access it.

Recording

We endeavour to make audio and/or video recordings of previous conference sessions available where possible on our website, but being recorded is completely optional. We won't make any recordings available without the explicit permission of the person being recorded, nor will we make any discussions available without the explicit permission of all persons involved in that discussion.

Funding

The conference is free to attend for all, run by volunteers, and supported each year by different academic institutions who provide rooms and resources. Unfortunately, the LCCT cannot provide funds to support those travelling to the conference with limited or no institutional support.

Volunteering

The LCCT is organised and run on a completely volunteer basis by a bunch of academics from different institutions, disciplines, et cetera. To keep the conference vibrant and sustainable, we work to encourage new people to get involved, from organising logistics and debating how to frame the call for papers, to attending the desks at the event itself! We will be contacting participants after the conference to discuss plans for organising next year's conference, though if you would like to get involved sooner please do get in touch to find out about opportunities to assist with this year's event.

Location and Eating

As we do not provide lunch, participants will need to organise their own sustenance. Coffee will be available at the café at the conference building, but there are also coffee shops around the area. Being at the very core of London, there are a number of cafés, pubs and restaurants a few minutes' walking-distance from the conference venue.

Socialising

On Friday evening, we will have the conference reception in the Boardroom of the Regent building. We will also announce a pub location for all those keen to continue the conversations on Saturday night after the end of the conference.

The London Journal of Critical Thought

The London Journal of Critical Thought (LJCT) is a new open access and peer-reviewed academic journal that will publish 'collections' of short pieces that emerge in conversation from participation in the London Conference of Critical Thought (LCCT). The LJCT is distinct from a traditional proceedings journal in that the pieces are not framed as stand-alone work, but rather a part of a particular collection. We do not consider individual papers for publication but rather proposed complete collections. Further information on the journal can be found here: <http://londoncritical.org/journal>

CONFERENCE STREAMS

Art and Automation

Michael Haworth

Capital, Event, and Agency
(1968-2018)

Guillaume Collett

Disruptions, Interventions
and Liminalities: Critical
Performative Pedagogies

Lee Campbell

Infrastructure, “Infrapolitics”
and Experimentation

Matt Mahon

Politics of/in the
Anthropocene

David Chandler and Harshavardhan Bhat

Resistant Bodies: On
resistance and its corporeal
challenges

Brigitta Keintzel and Sophie Uitz

Taking Positions

Jaakko Karhunen and Jussi Palmusaari

The Politics of Truth

Chris Henry

Thinking Affect and
Postcoloniality Together

Meyda Yeğenoğlu

Writing to Think

Joseph Doubtfire, Sarah Horton, Judith
Stewart, James Quinn

OVERVIEW

Friday 29th June

Registration	– 9:00-9:30
Parallel Sessions 1	– 9:30-11:00
Taking Positions 3	
Resistant Bodies: On Resistance and its Corporeal Challenges 1	
Disruptions, Interventions and Liminalities: Critical Performative Pedagogies 1	
Politics of/in the Anthropocene 1	
Break	– 11:00-11:30
Parallel Sessions 2	– 11:30-13:00
Taking Positions 2	
Resistant Bodies: On Resistance and its Corporeal Challenges 2	
Disruptions, Interventions and Liminalities: Critical Performative Pedagogies 2	
Politics of/in the Anthropocene Workshop 1	
Lunch	– 13:00-14:00
Parallel Sessions 3	– 14:00-15:30
Taking Positions 1	
The Politics of Truth 1	
Capital, Event and Agency 1	
Art and Automation 1	
Break	– 15:30-16:00
Parallel Sessions 4	– 16:00-17:30
Art and Automation 2	
Infrastructure, Infrapolitics, Experimentation 1	
Capital, Event and Agency 2	
Politics of/in the Anthropocene 2	

Saturday 30th June

Registration	— 9:00-9:30
Parallel Sessions 1	— 9:30-11:00
Capital, Event and Agency 3	
Writing to Think 1	
Politics of/in the Anthropocene Workshop	
Infrastructure, Infrapolitics, Experimentation 2	
Break	— 11:00-11:30
Parallel Sessions 2	— 11:30-13:00
Capital, Event and Agency 4	
Writing to Think 2	
Disruptions, Interventions and Liminalities: Critical Performative Pedagogies 3	
Politics of/in the Anthropocene 4	
Lunch	— 13:00-14:00
Parallel Sessions 3	— 14:00-15:30
The Politics of Truth 2	
Disruptions, Interventions and Liminalities: Critical Performative Pedagogies 4	
Thinking Affect and Postcoloniality Together 2	
Break	— 15:30-16:00
Parallel Sessions 4	— 16:00-17:30
The Politics of Truth 3	
Disruptions, Interventions and Liminalities: Critical Performative Pedagogies 5	
Thinking Affect and Postcoloniality Together 1	
Post-Conference Drinks	

Overview Tables

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9:00-9:30	Registration - Boardroom 117			
9:30-11:00	Taking Positions 3	Resistant Bodies: On Resistance and its Corporeal Challenges 1	Disruptions, Interventions and Liminalities: Critical Performative Pedagogies 1	Politics of/in the Anthropocene 1
11:00-11:30	Break			
11:30-13:00	Taking Positions 2	Resistant Bodies: On Resistance and its Corporeal Challenges 2	Disruptions, Interventions and Liminalities: Critical Performative Pedagogies 2	Politics of/in the Anthropocene Workshop 1
13:00-14:00	Lunch			
14:00-15:30	Taking Positions 1	The Politics of Truth 1	Capital, Event and Agency 1	Art and Automation 1
15:30-16:00	Break			
16:00-17:30	Art and Automation 2	Infrastructure, Infrapolitics, Experimentation 1	Capital, Event and Agency 2	Politics of/in the Anthropocene 2
17:30 -	Reception and Book Launch - Boardroom 117			
SATURDAY	ROOM 351	ROOM 155	ROOM 251	ROOM 152-153
9:00-9:30	Registration - Boardroom 117			
9:30-11:00	Capital, Event and Agency 3	Writing to Think 1	Infrastructure, Infrapolitics, Experimentation 2	Politics of/in the Anthropocene Workshop 2
11:00-11:30	Break			
11:30-13:00	Capital, Event and Agency 4	Writing to Think 2	Disruptions, Interventions and Liminalities: Critical Performative Pedagogies 3	Politics of/in the Anthropocene 4
13:00-14:00	Lunch			
14:00-15:30		The Politics of Truth 2	Disruptions, Interventions and Liminalities: Critical Performative Pedagogies 4	Thinking Affect and Postcoloniality Together 2
15:30-16:00	Break			
16:00-17:30		The Politics of Truth 3	Disruptions, Interventions and Liminalities: Critical Performative Pedagogies 5	Thinking Affect and Postcoloniality Together 1
17:30 -	Post-Conference Drinks			

FRIDAY 29TH JUNE

Registration – 9:00-9:30

Parallel Sessions 1 – 9:30-11:00

Taking Positions 3 - Positioning Subversion

The Experience of the "No-Parts" and Critical Theory in the Context of Postdemocracy

Giovanni Campailla

Many scholars stress that we live in a 'postdemocratic era'. But postdemocracy is not a state in which the conflictual-democratic politics is definitively finished. Rather, as Rancière maintains, postdemocracy is the 'paradox that, in the name of democracy, emphasizes the consensual practice of effacing the forms of democratic action' (Rancière 1995, 101-102). Such a 'practice of effacing' aims to create a 'part that has no part'. The 'no-parts' propose alternative social and political norms, but they are perceived as unable to be a political subject. They are able to speak, but the 'recognition order' does not hear them: they are 'muted' (Spivak 1988). If postdemocracy recognises the conflictual-democratic experience of the 'no-parts' as incapable of normative thinking, how can a critical theory avoid this 'epistemic injustice' (Fricker 2007)?

This question claims a reflection on the epistemology of a contemporary critical theory. The paper suggests that a viable way is the methodology 'from below' proposed by E.P. Thompson and extended by Rancière's Proletarian Nights, Linbaugh and Rediker's The Many-Headed Hydra, and others. Such a methodology allows to catch the (past or present) experiences of exclusion from a shared moral capacity and to create their polemical staging. By this approach an epistemological shift is requested. In order to be informed by these experiences, a critical theory should not be confined to measuring the distance between agreed norms of justice and an unjust social reality. A critical theory of postdemocracy should not define the criteria of democracy, but should be concerned with the 'perceptibility' of experiences of the 'no-parts' in the context of postdemocracy.

The Agency in Crime: A Feminist Perspective

Amélie Bescont

If more and more attention is currently dedicated to the issue of female violence in academia, the topic still seems to raise significant dilemmas. One of those revolves around the scope's indeterminacy of the concept of agency. The feminist difficulty to acknowledge women's ability to act violently, culminates in front of female criminal deeds. Whereas specific forms of violent behaviours are depicted as carrying transformative potentialities, others seem to fall from of the agency spectrum. Feminist scholars are thus inclined to stress the corporeal agency of women trained in self-defense (Burrow, 2009) or the citizenship's benefits of their introduction in military contingents (Cardi & Pruvost, 2012). Yet most of them still fail to recognize the empowering effects of female offensive deeds.

Drawing on the Foucauldian approach of abnormality, I firstly intend to depict the specific subjectivation patterns shaping the apprehension of female offenders (Foucault, 1975), in order to underline the sexual politics which initially frames this denial of agency (Butler, 2006). I will then show how it can be prejudicial for feminist's deconstructionist purposes to rely on these patterns, as it reifies differentialist assumptions.

Specific transgressive deeds do indeed challenge the gender frames of action, redefining women's relationship to social and legal norms, as well as the social expectations that encapsulate their experiences. As the feminist philosopher Elsa Dorlin lastly pointed out referring to Franz Fanon's philosophy of violence, such deeds can moreover become transformatory for subaltern subjectivities and lead to their repoliticization (Dorlin, 2017). Addressing women's agency in crime and violence seems thus to be critical for contemporary Feminist Thinking.

Freedom and Norm Proliferation

Tom Trevatt

What do we mean when we ask contemporary art to engage in processes of systemic political transformation today?

If we were to understand the current political sequence as the concurrent emergence of, on the one hand, neo-fascisms that, according to Brown (2017), drape themselves in the constitutional freedoms at the heart of the ideology of neoliberalism and, on the other, the virtuous exemplification that holds as punitively normative the concept of goodness as a form of investibility (as drawn from Foucault's (2011) concept of human capital), then we must account for the modes of politicality at the heart of contemporary cultural phenomena as they appear to us today. Insofar as art understands its political role as a construction of freedom, there is an imperative to reimagine how that freedom is articulated, given its troubling relation to the demands made by figures on the alt-right/light to uphold certain individual "freedoms" in the face of the counter movement's insistence on virtuous behaviour. As the real threat of a return to fascisms emerges from a discourse centred around liberty, how does art countenance the expression of individualism inherent in its generic contemporaneity? How can we think political transformation when the language of contemporary art is ideologically coherent with the language employed by a libertarian strand of political imaginary that emerges from neoliberalism?

My contention with this paper is that the only freedom worth fighting for is universal; that battles over various kinds of individual freedoms are inherently tyrannical, waged as they are on an illiberal, unequal field that legitimates privilege through the myth of meritocracy and liberal equality. Precisely, this field occludes the structural oppressions at play through the narrativisation of "freedom" – a central axiom of neoliberalism. In this paper, I will take seriously claims from Eldar-Vass (2010) and Sunstein (1995) to produce a theory of normativity as a mode of structural transformation in light of the problematic conception of freedom that Brown identifies.

Resistant Bodies: On Resistance and its Corporeal Challenges 1

Tahrir and the Senses of Resistance through the Fetish of Exposure

Shaimaa Abdelkarim

This paper explores the subjects of resistance through understanding resistance firstly as an act of bodily exposure to the legal normative order; and secondly as an act of exposure to the forces of resistance in a relation of being-together. It situates the subjects of resistance in a conflicting, regenerative relation to the normative order through the object of resistance, the street as a space of resisting, specifically Tahrir square. During the 2011 Egyptian uprisings, Tahrir square was filled with different identities that in their everyday living relate to Tahrir square as a bureaucratic hub, Mogamaa' El Tahrir (where all official papers are issued in a chaotic manner). But within the 2011 uprising, Tahrir square was occupied by the forces of resistance anticipating the departure of Mubarak regime. In this interaction with Tahrir, the subjects of resistance are not only interpellated by the legal regime to form her legal subjectivity (and dictates limitations on her actions; but also, it creates the possibilities of resistance in order to make the conditions

of life more 'livable'. Through oscillating from occupying the street as a space of resistance and an object of state-control, the subject's body is 'performative' and 'relational' towards the normative order. But again, she is dependent on the infrastructure of the normative when she resists.. This plays on Derrida's notion of iterability in which the condition of repetition is the condition of deviations from the normative order. This entails a form of 'belief' that the normative order can support its subjects when they resist; support needs to be anterior to the normative order. Yet, the subjects of Tahrir momentarily defied their bodily commitments to the regime by occupying the square (not just exposing themselves to the normative order but asserting their existence) as if Mubarak was ousted the moment the chants started; they are the same subjects that continue to adhere to bureaucracy of Mogamaa' El Tahrir today.

Resistance and the "Suffering Body" in Egypt

Mohamed El-Shewy

Since the uprising that began in 2011, and the resulting violent crackdown by the state, the figure of the 'martyr' has entered strongly into Egypt's public discourse. Martyrs have been an important trope around which acts of remembrance have revolved. This paper is interested in examining the figure of the 'martyr' as a way of exploring the relationship between resistance and the body. I understand martyrdom to be a kind of speech act through which the suffering body communicates collectively experienced injustices to a wider group of audiences. The implication here is that it is not only the healthy body that can resist. Resistance then is not only taking action, for example, by congregating in a public space or marching in protests. Rather, through remembrance and mourning that makes pain relatable to society as a whole, the suffering body can also perform an act of agency and resistance. Agency is then not taken by a one body alone, but in a Butlerian sense happens 'between' bodies. Drawing on the case of Egypt, this paper will therefore argue that the body is more than a mere physical frame, but is inseparable from culture and society. The interaction between the living and dead body through mourning or artistic representation, therefore, has the potential to reconfigure the social and political life of a community.

The Body Boundary as Permeable Membrane: The Anti-Resistant Body

Maud Whatley

The body boundary is a site of potential; or, to quote Christine Battersby, an 'event horizon'. In this paper I use contemporary visual art and literary examples to suggest that the boundary should be considered as a permeable membrane. A porous, metaphysical globule. To invoke a membrane in this context is to draw upon the material, visceral qualities of mucal pliability which accompany the definition of a biological film or barrier. This membrane as body boundary has scope to encompass both psychic and physical experiences of individual subjectivities. To reconfigure the body boundary as a permeable membrane is to acknowledge that nothing is interior or exterior to the body, but simply positioned in a relationship of fluxus with the event horizon. The abject, the 'other', is destabilized. Intestines still squirm and slither in hollowed out abdominal orifices and bulge rudely with the detritus of consumption but so does this whole definition of the body boundary.

Jean-Luc Nancy articulates that to be in-between is the essential experience of existence: 'It is a matter of the space in between, without which no reality can take place and without which, accordingly, no reality is real without a connection to some other reality from which it is separated by the interval that distinguishes them and that links them to each other according to the very pulsation of their common nonorigin'. To understand the body boundary as corporeally sticky but metaphysically and fantastically expansive is to acknowledge this pulsating potential. Battersby's event horizon expresses a sense of distant, exotic potential. The body boundary as permeable membrane is an active entity. Rather than passively leaking its internal forces or absorbing external ones which probe its borders, the permeable body boundary seeks actively to penetrate and be penetrated. To inhale and expel. The permeable body boundary is unfixed, drawing in and drinking from every distinguishing interval between formulations of matter in order to fill up and satisfy or empty and renew subjective mitochondrial envelopes of experiential hunger.

Disruptions, Interventions and Liminalities: Critical Performative Pedagogies 1

On Using "Foul" Language in a University Classroom

Paul Antick

In my first year photography theory classes, students consider the ways in which different types or categories of photographic image are staged through the conventionalised selection and combination of photographic elements. As part of this, students consider how the introduction of 'foul' or transgressive elements, ones that don't obviously belong to the genre (documentary, for example) with which a specific image is nominally identified, not only troubles the value or identity of the image itself, and that which is represented by it, but also potentially produces a state of productive uncertainty in the viewer. Using this as a model, I invite students to consider the ways in which the lecture itself, as well as the identity of the lecturer, and by implication that of the students, is also in part constituted through a set of formal techniques, which, if staged correctly, can invest in the lecture and the lecturer the same reassuring aura of legitimacy and authority that the presence of certain visual signifiers bring to a photograph. This paper considers the uses of 'foul' (i.e. transgressive) language by a lecturer in the university classroom, including the risks this sometimes involves. In particular the ways in which, by making explicit what is and is not conventionally permissible in a lecture, the occasional use of 'foul language can usefully draw attention to the relationship that exists between the uses of specific linguistic registers and the production (and deconstruction) of notions of 'legitimacy' and 'trust' in the context of a university classroom.

Bitter Lucky Dip

Claire Makhoul Carter

Bitter Lucky Dip is a performance lecture exploring the emotional connotations of the word bitter. This performance lecture engages and unpacks critical pedagogic methodologies in art practice to highlight power relations in framing bitter as an undesirable.

Bitter Lucky Dip takes closer look at the production, legitimation and circulation of the word bitter and how its use constructs particular forms of knowledge and experience.

Henry A. Giroux reminds us in his essay *Teacher Education and the Politics of Engagement* 1986 that 'language does not merely reflect reality but plays an active role in constructing it... to mark the boundaries of permissible discourse'.

Bitter is often regarded as undesirable in Western food industries and a negative embedded within knowledge. Carter became concerned with historical and sociopolitical attitudes to the word bitter while writing a script for DEMO KHAT [i] a performance event that employed critical pedagogic methodologies to explore the sociopolitics of chewing bitter leaves. DEMO KHAT was performed three times before the UK government banned chewing khat in June 2014. An article appeared in the New Scientist in 2015 Bitter Truth: How we're making fruit and veg less healthy. It explained how debittering processes reduce foods nutritional value. Companies use the processes of debittering to remove 'undesirable bitter compounds and to improve the quality of the product'.

In English the word bitter is used to describe the intrinsic quality of a character disposition with negative connotations of harmfulness and persistence.

Carter reimagines bitter as a complex vital character within a critical pedagogic art practice with aspects necessary for generating a radical democratic space, where emancipatory learning is possible.

The Matter of Art & Design Research

Christabel Harley

My ethnographic study of practice as research explores the heuristic possibilities of the research process. My case study is a design brief on MA Graphic Communication Design at Central St Martins in which experienced designers encounter unfamiliar texts and practices, extrapolate the methods therein and translate them into their design brief. Through interviews with students and close study of their design outcomes, I interrogate the knowledges that are activated by experimental exchanges in such creative scenarios by taking seriously the sensations, matters and forces at play in the learning experience. I will trace the journeys that making takes ideas on; bringing into view the power of new configurations between concepts and means, that might otherwise be too quickly shucked off when such experiments are generalised.

I approach this task by writing about the student work sympathetically, with what Experience Bryon calls an 'active aesthetic' to better describe the researching, problem solving, making and discussing that is involved; to see each process in relation to the others without separating and abstracting them. This is intended to illuminate the material processes of generating ideas and understandings by creating a fuller picture of the space where subject and object emerge. To this end I will test out the generative possibilities of theories of performativity (Butler), ecologies (Haraway), and translation (Benjamin) for attempting to understand and support the student work.

We Interrupt this Broadcast: Tactics of Disruption as Provocative Pedagogy

Lee Campbell

Employing disruptions, interventions and liminalities as pedagogic provocations in my teaching practice, I have frequently implemented interruption into learning activity design.

Artists associated with the historical art movements Dadaism and Futurism often sought to provoke by employing interruption. For example, the Futurists used extreme methods of disruption to shock their audiences. By gluing audience members to their seats and purposefully selling the same ticket to more than one person, Futurists enhanced the theatrical experience of their performances by creating planned yet still genuine and spontaneous interruptions from their audiences. As an artist/provocateur, I define my practice as playing with the parameters of contemporary art practice by focusing on the performative and can be characterised as participative art performance that, in the spirit of Dadaism and Futurism, heavily deploys interruptive processes to provoke.

This paper contributes to new knowledge in art pedagogy relating to the possibilities of employing interruption as a pedagogic tool, as well as power dynamics in post-studio environments (Buren, 1979). A three-part framework: Anticipation, Action and Analysis, is employed to critically evaluate and reflect upon an example of pedagogic interruption, first trialled at Loughborough University in 2015 with subsequent iterations at Central Saint Martins and University of Lincoln. Reflective writing produced by students helps evaluate the outcomes, and the related work of other tutors at CSM is also drawn upon with specific emphasis on the exchange of power relation.

Politics of/in the Anthropocene 1 - After the Human

Dronology: Becoming Alien

Louis Armand

Insofar as humanity dreams of life after death, the “drone” is the as-yet primitive technological image of that afterlife. Like the Panopticon, the drone is a metaphor. It is the prototype of an ideal proxy by which the “human condition” transcends its worldly embodiment into a cosmic internet-of-things: a distributed architecture of autopoietic, kinetic agency. Thought that moves itself. Yet it’s precisely for this reason that what calls itself post-humanism is really a more profound humanism, even if articulated in radically dialectical forms. It is a meta-humanism, wherein the prestige of what is conserved as species-unique has been traded for the prestige of species-transcendence: the (supposed) “uniquely human” capacity to manufacture universalities – artificial intelligence, cybernetic machines, synthetic DNA. In other words, to project, by way of abstraction, an all-too humanistic teleology upon the domain of evolution itself & thus secure a future against human obsolescence. This is the more precise understanding of the Anthropocene as technocapital singularity. Yet if the Anthropocene is to AI as the oxygenation event was to biology, does the human algorithm represent a “logic capture” of post-world evolutionary futures (Fukuyamaesque dronology) or the contrary? Or does the real politics of this no-futurism reside in a radical ambivalence, of both/neither, in which the supersession of the human is (paradoxically) its own precondition – as a kind of magical, negentropic hypercommodity – since it’s only in the shadow of such technocapital singularities that species-corporatisation of this type obtains (the false “solidarity” of pronouns), belying what amounts to a “collective” will-to-alienation.

Totalising actors in the Anthropocene: UN peacebuilding and the civil society in the Magic Mountain

Ignasi Torrent

This article analyses how the United Nations (UN) peacebuilding apparatus behaves as a pole of resistance against the ontological turn towards a new understanding of ‘the real’ that the Anthropocene age has brought to surface. It seeks to explore how new approaches to ‘the real’ as a complex entanglement of human and non-human interactions are resisted by totalising actors such as the UN, which persist in turning ‘the real’ into modern and binary wholeness. Playing with Thomas Mann’s masterpiece *The Magic Mountain*, it attempts to develop a process of reflection upon policy intervention practices to question the UN endeavour in trying to engage local civil society in peacebuilding settings. It is argued that the highly institutionalized nature of the UN peacebuilding machinery on one hand, and the ontological limitations of the UN self-understanding of civil society on the other, result in a totalising struggle against the complex entangled nature of the civil society, ‘the real’. By rethinking the clash between UN peacebuilding endeavours and ‘the real’, the article ultimately sheds light on the unmet problem-solving logic in the current context of the Anthropocene.

A Fire-Ape Manifesto

Sophie Barr

Human ecologist Andreas Malm (2015) criticises narratives that situate ‘man’s’ harnessing of fire as the origin of our fossil fuel economy and thus the Anthropocene. He rejects Mark Lynas’s (The God Species) articulation of man as ‘fire-ape’ (or Homo-pyrophilus) and our apparently inevitable progression towards the Anthropocene. For Malm, it is neither human nature or all ‘mankind’ who is responsible for this crisis. In my work as an artist/researcher I am interested in rehabilitating the fire-ape as a figure that troubles this linear narrative towards a fossil economy. I propose that a re-articulation of the fire-ape as feminine and/or queer might better reflect Braidotti’s (2013) posthuman “multiple belongings” rather than a unitary subject position. This version of the fire-ape has the potential to trouble the inevitability of linear progress towards a fossil economy and suggest ways of doing, being making and imagining in the crises.

The manifesto as a written form has a long and varied history in both art and politics. They can be both serious and amusing, dangerous and humorous. For LCCT 2018 I propose to present a manifesto in the form of an illustrated performative lecture. My Fire-Ape Manifesto is a riff on Haraway’s Cyborg Manifesto (1984). Like the cyborg the fire-ape connects animal (ape) and technology (fire making), but, in the context of discourses of the Anthropocene she also encourages us to think outside human temporality and spatiality. This manifesto sets out, speculates on and suggests ways of doing, being, making and imagining the world in the Anthropocene from the perspective of the fire-ape.

Break – 11:00-11:30

Parallel Sessions 2 – 11:30-13:00

Taking Positions 2 - On Materialised Positions

Militant Reasoning: Internal Coloniality and the Abolition of Liberal Reason

James Trafford

Many have argued that liberal democracies externalise forms of reasoning, norms, and identity positions to prop up a specific set of reasoning practices as if they are universal. In the context of contemporary coloniality, these take on a greater urgency in relation to racialized violence. By considering coloniality not as an event, but as a series of ongoing social relations, decolonial theorists have argued that racialized power is constitutive of reason, and so standard politics of recognition and inclusivity will have little effect. The decolonial antidote focuses on local knowledges and situated practices, to construct new ways of thinking that are de-linked from a colonial epistémé. Here, I suggest that this can lead to the hypostatisation of lived experience as a supposed reservoir of knowledge capable of forming “truth” that is uncontaminated by power. Instead of accepting the dichotomy of universal reason and situated power, I argue that the construction of reason itself is a result of social practices and mechanisms of power. Approaches to universal reason, or recent social manifestations, require the externalisation of power from reason, but as such are not capable of grounding reason at all. This makes way for an account of normative spaces as rooted in specific structures of power, which our reasoning practices sanction, actualise, and alter. I end by sketching how this sheds light on liberal reason in the context of ongoing coloniality, and particularly how liberal reasonableness is a form of normative violence operating through mechanisms of attunement. As such, a decolonising reasoning is necessarily a militant reasoning; a practice directed towards fundamentally reshaping the structures and frameworks through which we understand the world.

Speaking for/through the "Young Girl": A Dialogical Exploration of Gender and Positionality in Tiqqun's and de Beauvoir's Texts

Alkisti Efthymiou; Athina Papanagiotou

In 1999, the Situationist-inspired collective Tiqqun publish *Preliminary Materials for a Theory of the Young-Girl*, a textual bricolage of political statements which polemically criticize capitalist “society of the Spectacle” through what for the author(s) consists its model citizen: the Young-Girl. Fifty years back, *The Second Sex* by Simone de Beauvoir is published, discussing the treatment of women throughout history and devoting a whole section on “The Young Girl” and the norms in which she is confined.

These two cases provide a fertile ground for investigating the tensions and contradictions between abstract, theoretical constructions—like that of the Young Girl—and theory’s political positioning. The purpose of this article is to highlight the political reverberations that revolve mainly around the decision of Tiqqun—a political collective and an anonymous-”incorporeal” author—and Simone de Beauvoir—an outspoken feminist activist and social theorist—to speak through/for the young girl. Starting from a feminist-queer point of view and talking as somatic readers of both works, we will problematise their choice of a name that refers to a gendered matter.

Tiqqun explicitly deny the gendered dimension of their young girl, while de Beauvoir explicitly highlights it. What are the presuppositions behind such a concealment or exposure? Is an already traumatised identity the appropriate metaphor for a polemic critique and what does it tell us about the presumed “neutrality” of theory? Does this metaphor—signifying and referring to gendered bodies—attribute the Young Girl with essentialist qualities, even without intention? Does the exposed or hidden position of the author differentiate the answer to the above questions by creating dissimilar situated discourses, as Harraway puts it? Finally, what sort of politics do these texts legitimise and how is this legitimisation rationalised in the texts?

Making Political Ontology Political

Tom Henderson

Recent post-foundational approaches to political ontology have variously brought together deconstructive, psychoanalytic and phenomenological ideas to argue that it is the very groundlessness of our existence that provides the grounds for any politics. In this paper I will argue that, while such an approach rightly sets out to undermine the politically deadening epistemologies of traditional political science (empiricism) and political philosophy (idealism), it can easily slip into a depoliticised mode itself. By openly or tacitly attempting to derive a particular politics from their conception of ‘the political’, recent political thinkers as diverse as Connolly, Mouffe, Laclau, Nancy, Badiou and Žižek often appear to disregard the challenges of concrete politics. Whether via ethical apriorism, unattainable criteria of political authenticity or fantasies of apocalyptic rupture or pacific universal consensus, their ontological thought appears largely disembodied, even politically evacuated. Against these tendencies, I will argue that it is only by paying attention to the phenomenological, embodied experience of politics that knowledge claims about the groundlessness of existence qua ‘the political’ can be made. Politics here is understood minimally to refer to the numerous contingent and partial groundings and un-groundings that take place through the conflict between different collectivities on the sedimented terrain of social life. By following the emphases of Schmitt, Arendt and Merleau-Ponty on the experience and interpretation of concrete political situations, I will propose an orientation for theorising political ontology that might keep it from succumbing to the depoliticising epistemological abstraction it was supposed to overcome.

Resistant Bodies: On Resistance and its Corporeal Challenges 2

Resistant Bodies and Xenophobic Power: The Refugee, the Queer, and the Xenos

Jouai Emmanuel

The figures of the refugee and the queer are often used as archetypes of resistance to power. Quite problematically, they are sometimes romanticised to such an extent that what becomes analytical tools carries no memory of the persecution and concomitant suffering the bodies yet endure. The treatments that actual refugees must currently face along their exile and the success met by Robin Campillo's film *Beats Per Minute* which stages Act Up France activists in the 1990's invite us to reconsider two phenomena at work when a refugee's or a queer's body resists: remembrance and reiteration. Their singular experiences cite every refugee's and queer's body, the violence they confront, and their repeated responses to it. From individual stories (re)told by the asylum seekers to organisational rules in Act Up France, the paper will articulate those practices as resistant.

Questioning the relevance of the opposition action/reaction when it comes to resistance, the paper will also cover the ways the refugee and the queer relate to power relations. Living memories of resistance, they are also the targets of the strategies and tactics of what I call a xenophobic power. Terrorised by those witnesses of contingent and relational experiences and, at the same time, of an endless repetition of violence, power persecutes and silences them as xenos. Embodying both "the host" and "the guest" in the hospitality tradition, the xenos is a paradigmatic subject of resistance.

Resistance to body trauma in a phenomenology of non-violence

Mylene Botbol Baum

My paper will aim at demonstrating the meaning of philosophy of resistance, from Rosenzweig to Levinas and Walter Benjamin, and then Foucault or Judith Butler is linked to a philosophy of non-violence associated to a memory of trauma that is bodily inscribed

I will question how memory is inscribed, not only in the body self-representation, but how it connects to collective memory, to be transformed in a discourse as process of self and collective resistance/resilience to violence. I will argue that this transformation constitutes the narrative of the 20th century paradigm of the Shoah (Levinas, Lyotard). I will then confront the reasons why it is challenged today by a conflict of narratives about what agency is.

I will in a third moment question the power of non-violence to counter the idea of violence as motor of history in Walter Benjamin and Fanon, to propose and renew the discourse of non-violence as resistance relying on contemporary modes of corporeal resistance interrogating passivity (Levinas, Foucault, Butler, Žižek).

Resistant Bodies: On Resistance and its Corporeal Challenges

Brigitta Keintzel

Disruptions, Interventions and Liminalities: Critical Performative Pedagogies 2

The Power of Play: Ensemble Pedagogy, Playfulness and the Creation of "3rd Spaces" in Education

Jennifer Kitchen

'Ensemble pedagogy' is an approach to teaching grounded in progressive education and collaborative theatre traditions. (Monk et al. 2011) My Ph.D. research utilises socio-cultural theories of play, in particular notions of 'dark play' (Schechner 1993) to explore the power of this approach.

Through case studies of UK schools participating the Shakespeare Schools Foundation festival, I utilised critical social and discourse theories to explore how playfulness functions within ensemble pedagogy. Data analysis demonstrated playfulness was a central discursive device through which participants undertook reflexive identity work; challenged normative regulations of the classroom; and ultimately created liminal '3rd spaces' (Thomson et al. 2012) in which new creative, educational and social possibilities opened up.

In this paper I therefore argue a focus on playful discourse within ensemble pedagogy, and other performative education traditions, radically reasserts the social justice power of these approaches. I in particular consider the implications of collaborative playfulness as an act of critical pedagogy; and suggest a recognition of the power of play could empower educators to work with learners in ways which support: learner autonomy, resistance to oppressive power structures, and egalitarian cooperation at a time of global conflict and individualistic neo-liberal values.

Playing with Plurality

Mark James Hamilton

This paper reviews the use of role playing as a way to help students develop understandings of their own individuality. I discuss my independent university's first year common module called Global Perspectives. Now in its third year, the module seeks to foster plurality; it is a performative implementation of Regent's liberal values as a British HEI. It invites cohorts of approximately eighty percent international students to explore the particular potency of their diverse study context through a range of interpersonal interactive activities. Our students have lived in a wide range of situations, with contrasting social norms, governmental orders and freedoms of expression.

Part of the module explores the nine characteristics protected by UK law — which include religion and belief, sex and sexuality. Students are asked to enact or narrate figures different to themselves, in relation to this list. They are, however, often cautious about defining themselves in relation to these characteristics. Similarly, when we later complete a United Nations role play simulation, students' can be hesitant to share personal perspectives on world affairs. I consider how the module team's proposal to enter a liminoid space — playing 'other' — intersects the everyday liminality implicit in a London student-life. Seeking to facilitate and not teach, how can the team best support the identity dysphoria, social realignment or cultural retreats our students experience? How can our scheduled provocations meet such private transformations? Does the module, perhaps, too crudely theatricalise the subtle recasting or reinforcing of self in which our students are engaged?

Creating Space for Informal Education in a Quantified World

Jaione Cerrato; Jon Halls

While the contemporary education system appears to be the ideal partner for the economic system, it underplays the potential of collective thinking. Despite Humanism's role in the enlightenment, championing freedom and action, we see how current modes of teaching submits to the narrative of contemporary capitalism. However, in the age of connectivity and information, this humanist spirit, in relation to freedom and action, is increasingly being directed towards collective efforts (ej.: Wikipedia).

In this way, the celebration of emancipatory thinking in the construction of contemporary collective visions acknowledges the existence of multiple truths and challenges the standardisation of truth held by the current education system.

By exploring multiplicity, it allows for the inclusion of experiential, collective and cooperative learning to broaden our horizons. While the collective efforts previously stated are privately driven ventures, the potential for collective space for educational purposes is yet to be fully realised. Thus, the collective embodiment aims for the input of different perceptions and projections of the world to allow space for generating possibilities.

As humans, we learn through experience and this should become an integral aspect to educational methodology. By exploring these ideas, we wish to define and expand on possible spaces for education through physical disruptions and interventions by the means of freedom of thinking and action. Through our emphasis towards collective learning and cooperative developments, we can begin healing the fragmentation of individualism inherent in contemporary modes of education.

Politics of/in the Anthropocene Workshop 1

Speculative Mindfulness: tools for the critique of the subject

Graham Jones

The growth of mindfulness practice in healthcare, education and business has popularised a powerful set of tools for the exploration of subjectivity. However, when divorced from the Buddhist metaphysics it was intended to provide insight into – of impermanence, causal non-linearity, and 'no-self' – it is rendered little more than a relaxation technique, robbed of its radical potential for decentering and deconstructing the liberal subject. This workshop aims to contribute to a re-radicalisation of secular mindfulness practice – a project suggested by Mark Fisher and Jeremy Gilbert – by utilising a speculative metaphysical framework derived from Deleuze and Guattari, particularly their engagement with Whitehead and Spinoza.

Participants will take part in short guided meditations based on common mindfulness techniques adapted to this framework. Through supplementing our rational engagement in speculative metaphysics with embodied practices like mindfulness, intellectual insights can be more directly integrated into our intuitive engagement with the world. Beyond the individual workshop, this opens up political potentials for wider public engagement in 'consciousness raising' projects that directly challenge processes of neoliberal capitalist subjectification.

Lunch – 13:00-14:00

Parallel Sessions 3 – 14:00-15:30

Taking Positions 1 - Critique of the Liberal Position

Feyerabend's (Post)humanistic Politics of Reason

Dorian Mączka

Problems of rationality, theory choice and method are chief topics in philosophy of science, while sociology of knowledge connects science, society and ideology – this division of metascientific labour is questioned by philosophers who argue that those two kinds of issues are inseparable. History of philosophy of science reveals that such division was never obvious. In my talk I will examine Paul Feyerabend's philosophy and show how it may be understood as an ethico-political project of politics of reason.

First, I will show that the tradition in which Feyerabend's philosophy was rooted had already challenged the aforementioned division. I will argue that both neopositivism and critical rationalism imply a distinct humanistic politics of reason. Within both these frameworks scientific rationality is conceived as a political tool, vital to realize the ideals and values of scientific humanism, e.g. individual freedom, secularity and autonomy of belief.

Second, I will present how Feyerabend himself tackled together the issues of politics and theory of knowledge. In his early works he had suggested that antidogmatism in epistemology will result in antidogmatism in ethics and politics. Later he engaged in historical inquiry and questioned the primacy of method, which led him to a critique of the political power of scientific reason. By discussing three key ideas of his late philosophy: (1) primacy of practice, (2) epistemic and metaphysical interactionism and (3) decolonization of knowledge, I will show how Feyerabend's thought is a step beyond the politics of reason associated with scientific humanism.

A Discourse Theoretical Approach to Integrate Religiously Reasoned Demandings into Political Deliberation in Contrast to Liberal Political Philosophy

Michael Roseneck

Exclusivists assume that religion should be refrained from deliberation because political norms imply coercion which is only democratically justified if can be accepted by all, whereas religious reasons seem to base on subjective revelations. Because of epistemological and normative criticism the inclusive translation paradigm gained dominance in liberal approaches to public religions: "[I]n due process" religious citizens are called upon to find a secular justification that is equivalent to the religious. This model however remains speculative because it is to that effect eclipical how translations should empirically look like. Therefore I would like to defend a discourse ethical approach which can be a realistic and normative solution to integrate religion. In contrast to Rawls I would like to defend that justificatory reasons are always entangled in lifeworld narratives. Because of this it is impossible to simply translate them. Facing the question of generalization, those narratives of justification should not be perceived as opaque und purely subjective but, as research in the areas of philosophy and sociology of religion shows, we can identify reasonable ideas and intuitions in them. In this sense, religious convictions do not have to be problematic for the public discourse in principle but can entail ethical positions which are convincing beyond the border of those who believe in them.

Hobbes's Ecclesiological Sociology

Luke Collison

In *De Cive* Hobbes identifies the scientific and ostensibly descriptive aims of the work. Referring to 'natural law', the eternal word of God, innate to man and synonymous with 'natural reason', he notes that it is 'that law, which in this whole book I have endeavoured to unfold.' This natural law, he continues, applies not only to individuals, and their personal qualities, but to peoples, nations and whole commonwealths. The scientific pretensions of Hobbes political treatises are seldom contested. The influence of Euclid's geometry and Galileo on his mode of argument and materialist aims are well documented. However, it is clear that Hobbes work is prescriptive as well as descriptive. While Hobbes is routinely dismissed for his authoritarian conclusions, in fact, his distaste for superstition and demand for a rational basis for political institutions resonates with the liberal paradigm of representative parliament operative today.

The dual, descriptive and prescriptive aspect is embodied in Hobbes treatment of practices. These 'actions' are universal 'signs of the mind' and are deployed by Hobbes in a manner foreshadowing the legitimating role of formality in representative politics today. While Schmitt, prompted by Strauss, blames Hobbes for inaugurating liberalism by opening up a gap between the 'inner' and 'outer' in political behaviour, I demonstrate a second precursor in Hobbes's theory of practice in in the intersection of Church and state in *De Cive*. I argue that Hobbes rearticulates Bodin's contrast between command and counsel in a way that enables a reformulation of the sovereign relation to religious institutions. By identifying a minimal set of invariant 'natural' practices, which include prayer, honour, worship, obedience and ceremony, Hobbes produces a general theory of religion suggestive of his later theoretical instrumentalisation of it as the 'seeds of religion'. More broadly the paper thus aims to contribute to the understanding of the history of a particular theory of 'formality' and its role in political legitimation.

The Politics of Truth 1 - Truth and Methodology

Japanese re-militarization through a rhizomatic lens

Yasmin Welsh

The proposed paper would employ the case of 'Japanese militarism' to contextualise the manner in which International Relations (IR) theories pragmatically justify oppositional conceptions of the same phenomena. Hence, neorealism and constructivism would be exemplified, to highlight how each constructs its own a priori assumptions by extrapolating identifiable case-factors and structuring these within theoretical hierarchies. Accordingly, the efficiency of structuralist epistemological systems as frameworks from which to extrapolate ontological truth-claims would be questioned, and the underlying understandings of 'theory' would be dissected.

Such a reflection would draw from Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's notion of multiplicity, to underline the narrativisation of IR. As such, the a-centered, immanent rhizomatic theory of multiplicities might be explored via the concept of a 'net of duality'. This form of critiquing hierarchical epistemological systems would benefit from its grounding in a 'concrete' IR case study (Japan's militarisation), to hopefully accentuate its practical expediency.

It would measure how arborescent models (neorealism and constructivism) mould their subjects into pre-conceived epistemological paradigms: making truth-claims within a theoretical vacuum, without recurrence to associated dynamisms. Consequently, such approaches would be considered as creating fractional understandings of Japan's military identity, which a rhizomatic method might counterbalance.

The concluding implication would, thus, advocate the imperative to recognise non-arborescent, 'post-modern' polyglot approaches to 'theory' – in order to engage with the conceptual open-endedness of IR, and to broaden the methodological lens through which truth-claims are conceived.

The Following is False: On Irony and the Spectrum of Truth

Jessica Samuel

I propose to write a paper on the position of irony within 'truth' and the agency/use of this within politics, building upon the research I did for a paper last year on the use of irony within art writing. Irony, more than being a literary device or trope, is now understood to encompass entire modes of being, ways of understanding the world and as an intangible thing that both requires being understood and being misunderstood in order to operate. Centred in all discourse of irony is an understanding of the Socratic ideology that there is impossibility in coinciding language with the human experience - that irony cannot uncover or appeal to a universal truth understanding, as such thing doesn't exist. Irony is integral to any discussions of post-truth language and society and raises questions such as:

- If it is accepted that there is a contingent nature to all truth claims, what agency can words hold in politics?
- It was said of art that it evades forms, structures and limitations of language in it's themes and content; as such calls for a accompanying text which does the same. Does this reflect in contemporary political discourse and what does this imply about language itself?
- Where does irony sit and function in a 'post-truth' world?

Capital, Event and Agency 1 - Digital Capital and Event Empathy in a Tungsten Carbide Stomach: Instrumentalising Outrage

Tristram Adams

The dominant form of human-based production in the West is no longer based on physical or land-based modes of labour – cyberspace is the terrain. We live in an emotive attention economy.

Such Labour is then exploited insidiously and on a grand scale via social media. These larger-than-state and state supported companies are the contemporary economic reincarnations of the East India Company.

These networks exploit the human requirement for ‘social’ interactions (or a cyber-surrogate) – simultaneously monetizing loneliness and relationships. Empathic reaction is also exploited.

The image of Alan Kurdi is a case in point. The image of a dead child on a beach shifted mainstream narratives concerning immigration from a utilitarian economic issue into a humanitarian question. An empathic reaction to the image led many Britons to action: supporting people in the camps. But this reaction was a fleeting form of ‘altruism’.

All the while advertising revenue was siphoned from the ‘social’ platforms the image was disseminated through. Collective agency and moral action was absorbed and appropriated by the “tungsten-carbide stomach that eats your words your images, critique, even hate are incorporated” (Lyotard)

Even if one ignores the Kantian critique of empathy as being a self-centered impetus for altruism (and therefore immoral and not rational), and accepts its practical potential for help, two issues arise. Firstly, that such charity is fickle and fleeting. Secondly, that the companies who provide platforms for empathic engagement and reaction are the only party whose profit remains after the flame of outrage and concern has died.

The Circulation of Capital: An Analysis Based on the NetEase Music App

Lei Ma

Based on Marxist theory of the circulation of capital, this thesis will focus on the analysis of the process of the purchase, production, and sales of the NetEase music app. In the first stage of the capital circulation, technology and capital together accelerated the process of the NetEase Music's acquisition of labor force and production materials. The technological framework of NetEase enables the users to create their own music list, write reviews, and set up their own archive of personal music, thus completing the purchase phase. In the second stage, the first users were further attracted by the free digital music and their sharing desire in social network. The app designers intend to create a false sense of pleasure to blur the boundary between labor and player, allowing users to perform digital work for the NetEase Music. Moreover, the use of default inequality agreements makes copyright possession legal. In this process, the NetEase music app as a production material and the user as a workforce together constitute the production capital and are used effectively. In this way, the process of production has been completed. The commodities engendered in this process, i.e. a large number of song lists, original works by musicians, and song reviews, were sold to Nongfu company (a Chinese company producing and selling bottled water), and moreover were also used in subway advertisements in Hangzhou and Beijing to enhance their brand awareness. As the song reviews were sold and advertisements were placed, the third phase, i.e. the sell-off phase is completed, realizing the surplus value created in the production process and making the first round of capital accumulation finished. To conclude, the launch of subway advertisements has promoted the brand awareness. Moreover, Nongfu's advertisement has won the emotional resonance of users which attracted more users to join the new round of capital circulation.

Art and Automation 1

Distracted Perception, Data Production, and Contemporary Experiences of Music as Time

Paul Rekret

Both academics and music critics have of late discerned a tendency towards a “chill” aesthetic in popular music. A mellowed edge is detected not only in pop but also recent predilections for ambient, fourth world and new age reissues or in current tastes for Balearic and tropical tropes in contemporary dance music. All in all, what Simon Reynolds called “digital maximalism” – a spasmodic intensity that dominated electronic and pop music for the past decade – seems to be displaced by a penchant for smooth, frictionless minimalism.

This is usually put down to music’s easy availability on streaming platforms. A boundless stream of sound is paralleled by perceptual drift tolerated by atmospheric or ambient sonic tropes. While different sonic grammars have long accentuated particular activities, whether workouts or cocktail parties, music now potentially accompanies every human activity without requiring any intervention from the listener. That is, the functionality of music streaming involves the supply of an algorithmically organised database of music. This implies its neither necessary to select the music nor to listen.

This paper seeks to situate this tendency in terms of experiences of time in contemporary capitalism. On the one hand, the contemporary tendency for unmooring of contemporary popular music from figure or history, the displacement of narrative by texture, and the emotional blankness all this entails, merely enables the continued production of user data with minimal friction. On the other hand, where production and consumption tend towards being indiscernible, so too does music as a distinct temporal intensity.

Corporeal automation in 'Technologies of Lived Abstraction: FUTURE PRESENT' (performance project)

Monica Tolia

As an artist and dance practitioner, my work deals with questions of how algorithmic processes are impacting the construction of our movement, choices and subjectivity. The research within my current project, Technologies of Lived Abstraction (working title), came about when surveying speculative research suggesting that dance choreography could be automated. I became curious about that proposition in relation to the application of choreography that exists within urbanism. When we enter into a conversation about what it is exactly that is being automated, we have to ask upon what desire (or data set) that was built. Algorithms and AI do not begin as autonomous, they rely on “data sets” (as humans rely on lived experience and education), to become autonomous. And the data set is typically the human subject, especially in dialogues about the creativity of AI. So I ask, to what degree are we automating ourselves? My work deals with the materiality of movement biodata, what is now called a “data self”, and how we (the physical subject and the data-self subject) are mutually constructed. This is deployed in my performances through projected light sculptures generated in realtime by the performers’ movements. The performers wear EMG sensors that communicate their biodata to the machine learning algorithm, and engage in a dialogical relationship between how the algorithm (represented by the interactive light form) interprets the performers actions, and how the subsequent movement of the light form influences the performers’ next movement. In this regard, the algorithm becomes a performative collaborator.

We are all Antigones Now: Affective Vulnerability, Cybernetic Capitalism, and Habitual Germination as Resistance

Mohammad-Ali Rahebi

We are all Antigones now: affective desubjectifications have become vulnerabilities, points where the core of the human-as-behavioral-bundle can be hacked into. In Cybernetic Capitalism affect is the most political aspect of human life as it provides a direct, fast, streamlined tool to bypassing the calcified habits that make up the mostly-bodily core of each person's identity: Captain America rules our hearts. In a world where subjectivity and has become an extremely fluid commodity, exo-somatized and marketed, non-conscious habits and bodily memories become the root of continuity and the sole means of identification (Cronenberg's History of Violence, where the identity of the protagonist is revealed in/by his body's fast reactions to a violent situation).

Taking its form from cybernetic technologies (e.g. current deep-learning neural network AIs like Google's DeepMind/AlphaGo), the Cybernetic Organon defines efficiency and intelligence in machinic terms of fluid specialization and de-specialization, rapid re-adaptation and constant re-training. Pitting the machine against the human for jobs, Cyber-Capitalism has come to evaluate both by the same criteria, demanding a form of Deleuzian "creativity" and radical becoming that is biologically impossible for the human organism. Habit-formation is a germination-process that in its irreversibility poses a barrier to the Cybernetic schema of flattening everything into a fully connected network. Thus it is the germinating, coagulating reality of biological habit formation that becomes the sole means of resistance: the human body in its plastic messiness cannot be streamlined and that is why now affective de-subjectification becomes the most critical weapon of Cyber-Capitalism.

Break — 15:30-16:00

Parallel Sessions 4 — 16:00-17:30

Art and Automation 2

Self-Synthesis and the Automatic: Technology and Artistry in Kant's Third Critique and McBurney's The Encounter

Cristopher Slover

This paper interrogates automation and repetition Simon McBurney's 2015 play The Encounter and Immanuel Kant's Critique of Judgment. I argue that, as performed in Mcburney's drama and implicitly asserted in Kant, the cultivation of the "automatic" is fundamental to the work of art. Thus, I claim that the work of art and the technological artifact share a radical identity that the artist can limitlessly exploit. To make this case, I analyze the idea of "free play" in Kant's definition of the judgment of taste. I argue that, while cognitive judgments employ concepts to compel the imagination according to rules—requiring a subjective intention to drive the process—judgments of taste are occasioned by the imagination's free and automated expansion. Thus, the sole task of Kant's "artistic genius" is to produce a determinate object that initiates the imagination into a limitless and automated self-synthesis that bursts the bonds of both the spectator's intention and the object's conceptual determination.

The task of the artist, I argue, is to produce that which is self-producing—automated. I then turn to *The Encounter* to provide an example of the relation between artistic and technological automation. McBurney's play is performed by both man and machine. McBurney shows us precisely how the staged devices work and sets them into recursive cycles. This occasions an imaginary self-synthesis that both complements and overwhelms the technological repetition. Ultimately, I use the play to argue that artistic and technological automation are impossible and yet interdependent aspects of the broad phenomenon of imaginary self-synthesis.

"Human art" and "Non-Human Art": Locating the Problem

Richard Stopford

The various scarcities of (human-) mindedness, labour, and culture, have all been indexed to human "art". As such, the possibility, and potential prevalence, of a "non-human art" threatens these economies of scarcity. Moreover, the various capital values that humans have historically (and traditionally) attached to them are thereby jeopardised. Human "creativity" and "artistic labour" may no longer be exceptional. Perhaps most importantly, art would no longer accrue value kinds for cultures that rely on the exceptionalism of art as such.

But before we can start balancing up what has been gained and lost by the emergence of a new modality of "art", we must have some idea of what "non-human art" is. It is true that there are technologies which produce, with some kind of "autonomy", artifactual entities which at least seem to resemble, in some way or other, human artefacts often referred to by the term "art". Yet it does not follow from this state of affairs that these "non-human artefacts" are "art" — only with a premise concerning both the nature and meaning of "art" does that follow. And it is only on the basis of such an identifying premise that the aforementioned economies are consequently affected. To determine what is at stake with "non-human art", I explore commitments about the metaphysics and semantics of "art", and how such commitments may pertain to "non-human art". Given such analysis, I suggest it is far from clear that the latter has any effects on former.

Programming the New

Michael Haworth

According to doxa dating back at least as far as Vasari's *Lives of the Artists* and continuing throughout the whole tradition of philosophical aesthetics, the creative process of the artist is thought to be antithetical to the programme, understood as the set of rules or instructions for the sequence of operations required to perform a particular task. The artist necessarily suspends and transforms the rules and procedures that they inherit rather than blindly following them in the manner of a machine. In this context, what are we to make of attempts in artificial intelligence research (particularly in the nascent sub-field known as computational creativity) to programme a machine capable of being considered the sole author of a work of art? As Jean-François Lyotard wrote, "Is it even consistent to claim to be programming an experience that defies, if not programming, then at least the programme – as does the vision of the [artist]?" This paper will map out the scope of the problems and think through some aspects of the philosophical difficulties involved in attributing creative responsibility to a machine, which have largely been ignored by the central protagonists involved in computational creativity research. In particular, I will argue that for a machine to be considered an author, rather than an instrument, it must be capable of being practically engaged in a material, intersubjective world that transcends it. Clearly, this is not something that can be confronted at the level of individual pieces of software.

Infrastructure, Infrapolitics, Experimentation 1 - Infrastructure and Political Strategy

The Human as Infrastructural "Problem"

David Young

1952, at the back of a pool hall in Santa Monica, California: a small collective of scientists at the little-known Systems Research Laboratory (SRL) staged an experiment with college students examining group learning in high-stress conditions. In a simulated Soviet surprise attack, the participants role-played the operation of an air defence command post, replete with makeshift computers, interceptor teams and real-time radar data. It was a relatively influential experiment, proceeding to inform the training regimes for the Semi-Automatic Ground Environment (SAGE), a network of digital computers built across the United States in the 1950s developed to provide early warning of a surprise Soviet aerial attack. Additionally, it allowed for a performance of a particular understanding of the human in complex systems: they were conceptualised not as overseers in control of their machines, but as constituent elements within a so-called human-machine "organism".

The SRL experiment is exemplary of a larger tendency amongst systems engineers to consider the human as a necessary yet not always desirable infrastructural resource, prone to unpredictable and illogical behaviour and contributing "noise" to vital information. Drawing on the SRL's administrative documents and reports, my paper inquires into how this proposition was cultivated, performed, and assessed within a laboratory environment. How might this understanding of the human as a vector of disorganisation resonate with the broader rationalities of the "war sciences"? What sort of infrastructures does the model of the "organism" anticipate?

"Universal Opportunities to make Faulty Decisions": The Saboteur as Infrastructural Political Agent

Matt Mahon

The concept of "infrastructure" has a long history in writing about political strategy, from its place as a missing third term in Marx's base/superstructure dichotomy (Guattari/Lyotard), James C Scott's "infrapolitics" as "weapons of the weak" and the OSS's *Simple Sabotage Field Manual* of 1944, through to David Harvey's call for a city-strike and Mackenzie Wark's evocation of the hacker class in his *Hacker Manifesto*.

It is clear that an understanding of what infrastructure means is always accompanied by the production of a political subject who can act on the infrastructure. But what are the conditions of possibility for asserting a political subject in this setting?

The figure of the saboteur and the unproductive worker figures heavily in the early imaginary of the infrastructural political subject. This paper will explore how that figure has developed given recent critical approaches to infrastructure which more closely resemble a rigorous micro-analysis of social assemblages (such as those of Sarah Ahmed's "killjoy" and "diversity worker" among others), rather than depending on a totalising model of the social.

In this paper I will explore the figure of the saboteur as infrastructural political subject, examining the conditions under which the "infrastructural" is conceptualised and asking whether the term is a useful tool for understanding the political.

Capital, Event and Agency 2 - The Event of '68

May '68 as Theoretical Event

Svenja Bromberg

In this paper, I don't want to develop another commemorative assessment of the merits and failures of May '68 in political terms. In fact, Alain Badiou's reading of May '68 as event in his strict conceptual understanding of the term does quite a good job of that, whilst it is also a very French account (see Badiou, *The Communist Hypothesis*, 2010, pp. 43). The truth that May '68 or the entire decade forced into being was for Badiou a truth about a new answer to the question 'What is politics?' that would come to simultaneously mark the end of the entire previous revolutionary sequence that started with 1917 (although this will be a point of debate). A break with classical Marxism in the very formulation of the process, aim and key concepts of emancipatory politics. The new, in '68 itself still a 'secret truth' is what Badiou comes to define as his own idea of communism: 'it is only within the universal [i.e. at a distance from established powers and our own desire for pointless destruction] that we can all live under the rule of equality.' (ibid., p.20, see also p.55).

This paper seeks to develop the significance of the 'secret truth' Badiou identifies in the language and symbols of May '68 with regard not to the impact it had or failed to have on the immediate political landscape, but on the way we today conceptualise or 'think' politics, particularly how we understand the link between everyday parliamentary politics, capitalism and emancipatory politics.

It is in the name of combatting the old statism and institutionalism of Stalinism and elements of Orthodox Marxism that Badiou and other prominent political theorists and philosophers of his generation forge a new alliance between philosophy and politics or more generally reclaim a new autonomy of politics or the political. Through the insistence on contingency (following Machiavelli, Althusser) and different concepts of matter and materialism (following Spinoza) this way of thinking politics has today become hegemonic in different forms (see Marchart, *Post-Foundational Political Thought*). But, and this is the main argument the paper will develop, this new way of thinking politics loses its main combatants with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Communist Parties in the West whereas the truly politically and socially destructive force - a rapidly expanding global neoliberal capitalism - remains banned to the sidelines to these post-Marxist theorisations. It is therefore time to learn the many important lessons from the political turn that May '68 brought about and move on beyond a fetishistic idealisation of the event (as theoretical concept and particular instance).

The Italian Paradox

Franco Manni

Almost all Italian intellectuals immediately fell in love with 1968. Only two great intellectuals opposed it, very different from each other, but both courageous and alien by fashion: Norberto Bobbio and Pierpaolo Pasolini. They found serious intellectual contradictions and moral distortions in the ideas and practices of 1968.

After 50 years since then, the great majority of 1968's young leaders are now at the top of power in Italian politics, economy and academia.

Having been in power for decades now, they should have at least partially realised their ideals. But paradoxically the opposite happened: the protest had begun in the university against the academic 'barons', and today the nepotist corruption in Italian academia has increased exponentially. The movement wanted to free the youths from the oppression of the family, but, while then the young people were soon at work and living on their own, today half of them are unemployed and stay at their parents house till late. The 1968's activists were pacifists and against the American war in Vietnam; but, while before 1968 the Italian Republic had never entered any war, afterwards she took part in four wars overseas. The movement was strongly antifascist, and today a fascist party is forming the new Italian government.

Why this (not yet acknowledged) failure? In this paper I will argue that it derives from the very fundamental ideas of that neo-Marxist movement. So, I will analyse: materialism, Machiavellism, romantic hedonism, anti-traditionalism, extremism, anti-authoritarianism and moral narcissism.

The Revolt of the Real: Badiou and Pasolini

Giovanbattista Tusa

The main idea of this paper was originally published in 2016 as an afterword for Badiou's Italian edition of *À la recherche du réel perdu* (Fayard, Paris 2015). In this book Badiou devotes a lengthy discussion of «The Ashes of Gramsci», a poem written in 1954 by Pier Paolo Pasolini. Commenting on Pasolini's poem, Badiou describes the contemporary western world as a world where «there is nothing but diversion. There is nothing but the concern to keep oneself as distant from reality as possible». Something that Pasolini will describe as «replacing life by survival», a non-life, or a pseudo-life able to do no more than continue the negative work of diversion.

In my paper I explore Badiou's strong relationship with Pasolini's work (in particular via the figure of Saint Paul, seen by Badiou as the figure itself of the militant), for his understanding of the 20th century, which he defined – in the historical seminar that Badiou gave at the College International de Philosophie of Paris, later published as *Le Siècle* – as the century of «the passion for the real». For Lacan the real as a category of the subject is to put the subject in tandem with something that exceeds its structural configuration in a linguistic network: it is that part of the subject that exceeds its own activity. In Badiou's subject the search for the real is process through which that subjective excess passes over from being a purely subjective principle into something that holds for a collective human situation in its totality, through the activity of a militant subject who is put in the service of something that exceeds all positive or representative value in the situation.

Politics of/in the Anthropocene 2 - Speculative Life

Geovirtual Spaces: Political Theory and Visuality in the Epoch of the Anthropocene

Mariska Versantvoort

In February 2013, NASA published a set of data visualisations representing the process of groundwater depletion in the Fertile Crescent as measured by their GRACE Tellus satellite between 2003 and 2009. With particular attention paid to the area of Northeast Syria, these images, alongside other data sets, entered an ongoing debate on the relation between climate change, conflict, migration and security. While scientists and academics still argue over whether or not the war in Syria was partly caused by anthropogenic climate change, the main stake of this debate resides in the fact that their postulations already inform policy-making processes of political institutions, such as the European Union. The case of Syria is thus interesting for it tentatively elaborates a speculative relationship between the physicality of the earth and the enactment of territorial rights that is animated by data visualisations derived from remote sensing technologies. Geovirtual Spaces explores this imbrication of climate modelling with normative theories regarding territorial rights. This is done through a discussion on the implications of remote sensing and data visualisation for one of the key premises of contemporary political theory, namely that 'only individual human beings are of nonderivative moral significance'. To this purpose, this paper draws from the fields of information science and speculative realism.

'Time that Precedes Us and Survives Us': Registering the Anthropocene in Late DeLillo

Thomas Travers

From *The Body Artist to Zero K*, Don DeLillo's post-*Underworld* novels develop a realism of contemporaneity that encodes the economic, social, political, and environment crises that have afflicted the United States in the twenty-first century. These 'late' novels demonstrate a marked departure from the sprawling 'capitalist epics' that had previously characterised DeLillo's work, and have been celebrated for their depiction of intimate, domestic settings, and the possibility of reconstituting the psychically wounded liberal subject. This paper will argue, however, that DeLillo's late novels are in fact engaged with, and responses to, the question of what happens to the novel once its enabling condition—modernity—collapses. With close reference to *Point Omega*, the paper will draw on Lukács's suggestion that the novel bifurcates into narratives of 'narrowing down'—stories that seek to escape from the 'largeness' of the world through flights into the private sphere—and narratives of 'polemical impossibility' that gesture towards the unrepresentable 'largeness' of the world of capital. I will contend that DeLillo occupies the genre of the restricted or modest bourgeois epic in order to more forcefully signal the impossibility of 'escape' from the horizon of climate change. Yet the emergence of the Anthropocene, and the climate as a planetary agent, disrupts the Lukácsian interpretation of history as an anthropomorphic mission—and the novel as its registering device. The presentation will consider whether it is possible for the novel to imagine 'history after Lukács'; that is, a history that is beyond or without the species.

The figure of the island in the Anthropocene

David Chandler and Jonathan Pugh

In recent decades, island studies scholars have done much to disrupt static notions of the island form, increasingly foregrounding how islands form part of complex networks of relations, assemblages and flows. In this paper, we shift the terms of debate more explicitly to relationality in the Anthropocene. We consider the implications and challenges that a wider set of debates, particularly surrounding island "resilience", concerning the Anthropocene in the social sciences and humanities pose for island studies.

Within the Anthropocene, Beyond Capitalocene, Towards the Ecocene

Joanna Boehnert

The global challenges of the Anthropocene demand shifts on an order of magnitude well beyond the trajectory of business-as-usual. Ecomodernists' fantasies of technological salvation are unhelpful when they sideline work undoing the assumptions that created the conditions of the Anthropocene in the first place. Erroneous ideas are embedded in the cultural fabric: the laws, policies and practices that determine how we live and act upon our surrounding lifeworld. The inevitable contradictions are increasingly dysfunctional. The Capitalocene concept (Moore 2014) more helpfully highlights the specific socio-political dynamics that propel environmental crises. Yet there are limitations to this critical approach. While defining the problem, it does less well envisioning viable alternatives. Ecological theorists Gregory Bateson and Felix Guattari offer a foundation for approaching these contradictions by thinking simultaneously about three interconnected domains: the self, the social and the ecological. Conjoining these three ecologies, this paper will describe the contours of an emergent 'Ecocene' (Boehnert 2018) as a generative alternative. Moving beyond the limitations of reductionist models of the human psyche and knowledge systems, design interventions must nurture relational perception and foster new sensibilities. As subjects opening inward, in participation with our surrounding lifeworlds, intersectional solidarity demands engaged encounters with oppressions that threaten collective futures. The Ecocene is a foundation for the redesign system structures that determine what is designed. Participant designers, well versed in ontological entanglements, are well poised to enable these emergent ways of seeing and knowing to make transitions to another world not only possible but desirable.

Reception & Book Launch — 17:30

SATURDAY 30TH JUNE

Registration – 9:00-9:30

Parallel Sessions 1 – 9:30-11:00

Capital, Event and Agency 3 - Antagonism and Violence in Marx

Workers and Capitalists: Two Different Worlds? Immanence and Antagonism in Marx's *Capital*

Daniel Fraser

The dialectical movement of the capital-labour relation is the motive force by which the capitalist mode of production is continually formed and re-formed. However, as a result of the complexities arising from Marx's conceptual arguments and their relation to the activity of human beings that both produces and is produced by them, many elements of this dynamic have remained obscured. This paper attempts to render explicit the relation of capital to labour that comprises the central movement of the capitalist mode of production and the problems for any political resistance this presents. The analysis will emphasise the importance of primitive accumulation as the ground upon which the capital-labour relation is founded and as a mode of violence which is continually reproduced within its motion as well as clarifying the complex interrelation of subjectivity and objectivity that inheres within the capital-labour relation. Subsequently, the paper will address the political import of this understanding of the class relation, turning to the two most prevalent currents of heterodox Marxism in the contemporary field, namely, the post-workerist autonomist tradition and the value-critique school, in order to demonstrate the centrality of the question of immanence and antagonism to contemporary critical field. Further, the paper will seek to argue that a thorough understanding of the capital-labour relation necessitates a critical theory of capital that both recognises the extent of capitalist subsumption and the failure of orthodox ideas of class consciousness and does not abandon a class analysis through misguided attempts to dissociate an exoteric/esoteric Marx.

Violence and Abstraction

Andrés Saenz De Sicilia

In capitalist societies, Marx argued, individuals are subject to the rule of abstractions rather than direct interpersonal domination as in previous epochs. This insight seems to be borne out in the increasingly central role played by abstractions in global social life and its conflicts. Might an analysis of capitalism as a system of 'abstract domination' hold the key to understanding violence today? Whilst offering important insights, I argue that abstraction-centric accounts of contemporary power leave many important questions unanswered. Namely, how to theorise those forms of violence that occur beyond production, and furthermore, how to integrate an understanding of this 'extra-economic' exercise of force with the analysis of capital accumulation.

Ironically, a theoretical sensitivity to the violence of abstraction is prone to the abstraction of violence, treating it as either a direct moment of, or contingent to, the reproduction of capital. By contrast, I argue that violence is central to and even constitutive of capitalist society, and yet at the same irreducible to the economic logic of accumulation. Violence traverses production and its outside, acting upon bodies in a manner often indifferent to the distinction, as is particularly evident in ‘underdeveloped’ regions of the globe. I illustrate the irreducibility of contemporary social violence to the abstract logic of capital with reference to Mexico, where drug cartels, government forces and corporations sustain and operate within a complex dynamic of violence and impunity. Whilst economic abstractions are central to this, they cannot adequately explain it and a more expansive analysis is demanded.

Writing to Think 1 How Does Literature Think?

Prathna Lor

The proposition of such a question—how does literature think?—seemingly restages literature as an object of critical inquiry. However, considering literature as thinking also permits literature the status as not only something that thinks, but as that which has the power to enact its thinking upon us. It is on this premise—the in-distinction between literature as an object and as a method of inquiry—on which I ground this paper. Turning to Canadian feminist “Fiction/theory” and New Narrative genealogies—networks of writers who purposefully sought the breakdown between literary theory and writing through experimental form—this paper proposes to renew and illuminate such narrative concerns as they bear upon reading, writing, and thinking today. Through intuitive and aleatory meditations, and in conversation with growing attention to contemporary autotheory, this paper specifically considers the work of Gail Scott and Renee Gladman, as they explore the breach and impasses of language (and the concomitant impasses of reading) as that which allows for communal creativity. For both writers, writing circulates in economies of trauma that speak through breach yet are not reducible to trauma. In other words, the heuristics of the hermeneutics of reading often fail when employed toward such texts because the very processes of writing eschew a hidden kernel of absolute meaning. Rather, it is the divisiveness of the traumatic event, which creates a sundered subject, which becomes formalized as an impasse in reading and writing. And it is reading this writing which becomes communally creative.

Chasing Sympoiesis: Embodiment, Language and Performative Drawing

Dejan Mrdja; Katharina Donn

How can we re-think thought without reverting to modes of dominance, mastery and logocentrism? How can the embodied experience of performative drawing revitalize the practice of concept-driven academic writing?

"Chasing Sympoiesis" establishes and enacts a dialogue between performative drawing and literary theory and practice. Driven by the shared desire to explore different modes of knowing and inhabiting the world, this collaboration entwines practices of mark-making with both poetic and critical writing. In response to concepts such as Donna Haraway's cat's cradles or Gilles Deleuze's rhizomes, we develop modes of thinking, reading and writing that are immanent and collaborative. The sounds, rhythmic visual patterns and bodily interactions emerging from Dejan Mrdja's drawing performances unsettle the structure of theory-based argumentation in Katharina Donn's work in trauma studies, inspiring a reciprocal pattern of thought and performance. Understood as an instance of "sympoiesis" (Donna Haraway in response to M.Beth Dempster), this process of creating as thinking exposes the interconnectedness of our being in language, body, and non-organic matter. Its poiesis entwines language with the non-linguistic signification of mark-making and sound; yet this is symbiotic rather than individualized, and occurs in the spaces in between bodies, different artistic or critical practices, human and non-human matter.

Thematically, our presentation will focus on trauma, an experience that challenges the limits of thought, experience and language alike. The repetitive rhythms of mark-making and the looped sound structures thus created offer new patterns for re-thinking trauma's temporality, memory, and corporeality.

Politics as Pretext: What are the Recognizable Critical Functions of Text in Contemporary Art?

Nicola Guastamacchia

Writing and, more generally, the use of text as a visual, conceptual or political element played a pivotal role in the history of the avant-garde. Present in pre-war avant-gardes' prints and manifestos as much as in pop art advertising appropriations, text is also the place where art, poetry and politics fused in the conceptual practices of the Sixties inspired by the "linguistic turn" in anglophone philosophy.

Today, artworks often employ text within practices engaging with documentation, video and installation, where critical writing also appears as one of the constitutive elements. In the present landscape of systemic social crisis, the significant presence of textual elements in art raises issues of translation, of the traceability of linguistic (and artistic) traditions, and of audiences' identification.

Mapping and understanding the linguistic, digital and political ambivalences underlying these uses of text is not only a way to rethink the relation between politics and different moments of the history of the avant-garde but also a strategy to conceive contemporary artworks beyond their narrower institutional conditions of possibility.

Drawing from Walter Benjamin's idea of the modern transition from epic narratives, to the novel, to information in *The Storyteller* (1936) the paper will explore how artistic uses of words, maxims and stories give voice to structural social and political urgencies of our time. Investigating the space of text in contemporary art, in fact, provides a unique critical and narrative frame to preserve and recount individual and collective identities in our times of radical multiculturalism, rising xenophobia and de-humanised digital communications media.

Infrastructure, Infrapolitics, Experimentation 2 - Infrastructure and Method

Gabriel Tarde and the Infrastructure of Contagion

Maria Dada

In the books *The Laws of Imitation* and—the not yet translated into English—*Psychologie Économique* the sociologist Gabriel Tarde discusses the way in which concepts and ideas move through various communication infrastructure, railroads, telecommunication ports and more recently—before Tarde’s time—the internet.

In *Psychologie Économique* in particular Tarde highlight the role the market economy plays in the spread of concepts, beliefs and desires. He develops an economic theory that builds less on neoliberal ideas around the supposed natural law of supply and demand and more on uncovering the desires that underpin the demands. The result is both a renewal of political economy, one with less emphasis on competition and price, a political economy seeped in habits, customs and institutions. In outlining this new political economy Tarde reemphasises the role of infrastructure in the spread of ideas around price setting, tariffs and the creation of monopolies.

This paper would like to delve further into Tarde’s ideas around the relationship between concept contagion and infrastructure in order to determine role digital infrastructure plays in the spread of concepts online.

These concerns are especially potent at a time when digital infrastructure appears to further disseminate our ideas, where concepts remain desperate and disconnected, where there is little commonality between desires. And yet Tarde’s theories are prescient when it comes to the world of online memes, retweets and viral videos. How do Tarde’s theories of contagion operate in a world where we continue to invent and imitate in silos and marketing bubbles?

The Radio Question

Sam McAuliffe

In his ‘*Reverie and Radio*’ (1951), Gaston Bachelard suggests that the technological medium in question has not only given rise to a new institution of speech but a “new reality” for the subject of this speech: on account of the potentially universal extension of its network and the synchronic nature of its dispatch, the discursive dimension radio cultivates has established a new polis, the space of which he will call the “logosphere.” At the same time, radio is for Bachelard capable of offering a new schematization of individuated experience - “Radio really does represent the total, daily realization of the human psyche” – above all, because it is a device that can facilitate “reverie,” freeing the unconscious of the strictures in which it is customarily bound.

In ‘*The Radio Voice*,’ on the contrary, Adorno understands this same cluster of functions and attributes belonging to radio as a more refined means of subjugation: for him radio distributes speech hierarchically, it cultivates a voice that cannot be conversed with, that must ultimately be submitted to, compromising the listener’s autonomy: “The supremacy of authoritarian central institutions over the privacy of the citizens is not only promoted by radio: it is in part the historical presupposition of the existence of radio as well. The radio voice is the executor, the agency of those authorities.”

This paper will stage a confrontation between these divergent interpretations of radio and the politics of speech implied in each case. It will do so with a third text in mind, Brecht’s ‘*Radio as a Means of Communication*,’ which suggests that the functions ascribable to this particular technology are not once and for all set, but can themselves be re-determined, with a view to intervening in reality itself.

Politics of/in the Anthropocene Workshop 2

Surrender Control: An experimental exploration into worldfulness

David Gibson

Approaching Ian Bogost's *Play Anything* using improvisational methodologies, games and exercises. The aim is to de-centre the selfish mode of thinking, accept limitations and purposely imposed boundaries with new attitudes, pay foolish attention with a childish prowess and tinker with environments in surprising ways, and encourage a simple sense of play in the world of things.

Break — 11:00-11:30

Parallel Sessions 2 – 11:30-13:00

Capital, Event and Agency 4 - Post-Capitalism and the Event in Deleuze and Guattari

The Ambiguity of *Anti-Oedipus*: What Lies Beyond the Post-Capitalist Event?

Ed Thornton

The purpose of this paper is to highlight a specific ambiguity in Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* concerning the nature of post-capitalism. The paper will include three sections.

First, I will analyze Deleuze and Guattari's claim that capitalism is a *generalized* process of decoding and deterritorialization, while the anti-capitalist revolution is a process of *absolute* decoding and deterritorialization. I will show what Deleuze and Guattari mean when they claim that capitalism internalizes its own limits, and I will take contemporary 'shock politics' as one example of this.

Second, I will outline four possible Deleuzoguattarian ways of understanding post-capitalism: namely Spinozist joy, absolute Zombification, communism of the multitude (in the style of Hardt and Negri), and Dark Enlightenment (in the style of Nick Land). Here I will argue that all four of these positions are technically compatible with what Deleuze and Guattari say in *Anti-Oedipus*.

Finally, in the third section, I will offer one method for resolving the ambiguity that exists between these four readings by turning to Deleuze and Guattari's comments in *A Thousand Plateaus*. Here Deleuze and Guattari specify the particular dangers that accompany deterritorialization and show, for example, how to differentiate between a full BwO and a cancerous BwO.

My hope is that this paper will help to clarify some of the dangers that accompany a simple affirmation of the politics contained in *Anti-Oedipus*. I hope also that my analysis might go some way towards showing which forms of anti-capitalist struggle will be the most productive.

Post-Structuralism and the Event of 1968

Guillaume Collett

This paper frames French post-structuralism as a theoretical response to a generalised crisis of capitalism and capitalist governmentality in the late-1960s. In particular, the paper explores the parallels between the rejection of the category of structure at that time and the demise of Western social democratic institutions. Focusing on the work of Deleuze and Guattari, I will show how the same theoretical gesture leading them to reject structure can be found in their theorisations concerning capitalism, which I will show anticipated contemporary neoliberal forms of power. In particular, I will demonstrate how the category of event mutates in their work from a more or less ahistorical and largely apolitical entity wedded to structure, to an entity whose embodiment determines political action and which is presupposed by every social field and mode of thought. It will be argued that this new conception of the event in their work should be contextualised in the post-war mutation of capitalism and capitalist governmentality, and I will show how their post-68 theorisation of the event can help us understand this mutation. This will lead me to highlight the close ties between their conceptualisation of the event and Foucault's notion of *dispositifs* or apparatuses of power/knowledge/subjectivation, as well as the manner in which their work arguably surpasses Foucault's with regard to understanding contemporary neoliberalism.

Writing to Think 2

Tropes of a Palm

Stefanie Rau

Tropes of a Palm departs from looking at the artwork '0° Latitude', an installation of two artificial palm trees commissioned by and for the German Federal Intelligence Service, located at the rear of its new headquarters in the center of Berlin.

In an explorative essay I am aiming to unfold the multiple relations hidden behind, within and underneath the image of these specific palm trees, its contexts as well as its symbolic qualities. The palm tree consequently becomes an associative tool that is used in order to critically reflect and think with and think through, with the intention of offering different understandings of the artwork, acknowledging its setting and its broader cultural, political and historical implications.

It's Just a Draft: On the Messy, the Unfinished, and the Speculative in Writing

Joseph Doubtfire

Language, and by extension writing, are used in conjunction with art to explain, decipher and decode. With the move of art education to be increasingly in line with academic practice, the written work undertaken by art students is measured and governed by expectations of being refined, finished, and persuasive. Practice is often an altogether messier endeavour than writing that meets these expectations would have you believe. Considering the relationship between writing and practice, *It's Just a Draft* proposes the relevance of writing that falls short of academic expectations: the messy, the unfinished and the speculative. The paper focuses on various aspects of written practice, namely: process, and the notion of embracing all stages of writing in the finished article; drafts, the idea of writing and rewriting/ thinking and rethinking text as a continuous and developmental cycle; and style, more specifically what constitutes an academic voice. The paper reflects somewhat on its own implication in relation to these ideas, being paradoxically more formulaic than the sort of writing it discusses.

Disruptions, Interventions and Liminalities: Critical Performative Pedagogies 3

Art and Commitment: Performing Critical Pedagogy as an Art Methodology

Paul Stewart

The paper is influenced by Chantal Mouffe's agonistic model of democratic politics and Jacques Rancière's notion of commitment. He observes, "An artist can be committed, but what is that to say the artwork is committed? (...) This does not mean art is apolitical it means aesthetics has its own politics." This is applied to the understanding that critical pedagogy is a commitment to involvement and that for a performance of pedagogy as an art practice to work in this manner, it has to be committed not to the production of an art work (object, space, performance) but to an involvement or immersion in something active rather than passive. I define commitment in this form of practice as so, "The commitment of the individual to their practice is not important; it is the collective commitment to an involvement that is crucial. The development of spaces to think differently can allow for a community of learners to emerge from the malaise of noise that is capitalism." My art practice is through building a collectively authored performance. The group define our working method through five aspects of critical pedagogy to form a collective. We build a geodesic dome, bamboo structure, then look at different ways of reading and editing a performance score through movement, karaoke, a synth and materials.

The Artifacts of Memory

Monica Marroquín-Almanza

For more than fifty years Colombia has experienced an armed social conflict that has left hundreds of thousands dead and millions of victims of different forms of violence. There have been many attempts to get out of the conflict, including a peace agreement with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC in Spanish), but the armed conflict remains. It seems that decades of this kind of conflict have contributed to its naturalization and legitimation in a large part of society. In this context, an educational need emerges around the importance of stopping the armed conflict, repairing the damage caused, and preventing it from being repeated.

Keeping these objectives in mind, I designed a course for undergraduate students at Universidad de los Andes, in Colombia, in which we studied the foundations of the pedagogy of memory as well as we experienced some of its pedagogical uses around peacebuilding. It means that we did exercises of personal, collective and historical memories on the violence, the repairing practices and the mechanisms of peaceful coexistence in the conflict.

These memory exercises are very powerful because they allow linking the body, emotions and reason to the educational process through the construction of artifacts of personal and collective memory, as well as to analyze and deliberate on the meanings given to different artifacts of memory that circulate in the public sphere. The latter includes identifying the ethical-political uses and abuses that can be committed.

What can Embodied Creativity Training do for Law and Business Students?

Nese Ceren Tosun

Law & Business training focuses on enabling students in juggling jargons, and adopting professional and *serious* personas. In this presentation, based on the experiences of teaching creative criticality to second year Law and Business Students at Warwick Business School, I'd like to share how an open-space, embodied creativity training via playful and critical body, space and emotion awareness can benefit the students, increasing their sense of well-being, confidence as well as versatility and improvisational skills.

Incorporation of such a student and body-centred pedagogy, where possible also responds to the many challenges posed especially to international universities with students from various ethnic, religious and linguistic backgrounds, endowed with diverse moral, affective, body languages and learning styles.

Based on the deployment of a mixture of actors training, mindfulness exercises and some CILM specific exercises I designed and experimented with during the past five years, I'd like to argue that the above mentioned differences can be negotiated and accommodated, and students can be encouraged to take authority of their learning journeys. If they were to be enabled by similar performative pedagogical encounters across disciplines and years, they would not just be the critical and creative professionals of the future, but also better dwellers in their institutional or national homes.

Politics of/in the Anthropocene 4 - Anthropocene Bodies

How Everything Turns Away - Affective Encounters with the Anthropocene Through Visual Art

Minna Rainio

My presentation investigates how visual art and artistic practice can address the social, economic and ecological impacts of climate change and asks what kind of new experiential and multisensory knowledge and understanding art can create about climate change and its interconnections with capitalism and global inequality.

Processes related to climate change are often invisible and slow and may feel distant or difficult to understand or relate to. Although we have seen the news reports and know that the climate is changing, it may feel abstract and unreal. For instance, the damage to the oceans is in most cases invisible to the human eyes, yet the devastating consequences are already taking place under the surface of the ocean. Creating affective encounters with environmental issues through art can evoke environmental consciousness in an emotional level. In my presentation I discuss and show images from the moving image installation *How Everything Turns Away* (Rainio & Roberts 2014) that deals with climate change and the oceans. The installation creates a contradiction between different representational methods: bewildering and even shocking statistical facts about the effects of climate change to oceans are juxtaposed with beautiful panoramic seascapes and music that emphasises the viewer's role as spectators. The installation constructs a different kind of emotional and multisensory connection with the topic than a sole scientific report or statistical information alone could offer.

Central to my research is to ask how art can create spaces for political and ethical thinking and experiences. I consider the artworks as a research-based theoretical essays in audiovisual and spatial form as they deal with the research questions and themes through the mediums of moving image, sound, and space. The artistic element brings a visceral, multisensory experience into the research and knowledge production.

"Pregnancy is a wilderness of being": Dystopic Maternities in the Anthropocene

Héloïse Thomas

In Louise Erdrich's *Future Home of the Living God*, the laws of physics have gone haywire and evolution has started moving backward. The U.S. government begins rounding up and monitoring pregnant women, as it slips into theocratic totalitarianism. Lidia Yuknavitch's *The Book of Joan* describes a post-apocalyptic world where changes in the climate and the solar system, coupled with incessant warfare over resources, have accelerated environmental devastation, and caused devolution in human bodies. While Erdrich and Yuknavitch diverge in the way they address the apocalyptic events, they both craft narratives that locate the issue of maternity, reproductive rights, and bodily autonomy within the particular political context of the Anthropocene. In both instances, maternity becomes a tool to wield different kinds of power and to shape different political visions in a world that is on the cusp of radical transformation.

I will examine the political structures that oversee and shape maternity in these novels in order to better understand the relationship between representations of the apocalypse, the Anthropocene, and maternity. I will posit that, within an apocalyptic context, conventional representations of the female body (which associate it to motherhood, fertility, and the natural world), are being disrupted by queer and decolonial narratives of the Anthropocene. In short, maternity, in Anthropocenic contexts, allows us to identify the imaginaries defining the power structures at play, and gestures at new imaginaries that notably center queer, indigenous, and non-normative political visions.

Over Skies of Extraction

Harshavardhan Bhat

The title of this essay is an anecdotal play on Marques's (2017) remark that "what we cannot possibly yet see is how the sky has a forest on its back" (pg. 418) opening up the possibility for air worlds to be the true material worlds of *surface*. In this essay, I propose that the skies above zones of extraction are also extractive worlds - as substances of economic value are mined and skimmed from the earth to be displaced for the design of urban materialities. The fragments of explosion and combustion transform the air above the extractive site - just as the materials transform the surface of human habitats and infrastructures (Murphy, 2017). As a cumulative liquid act, these surfaces extract from the sky, it's air - denying the air it's vegetation and extracting to air - the aerosols of *surface* (Deleuze). Using notes from fly-ash coal cartographies from India, I use this essay to argue that the excitability (Barard, 2003 ; Myers, 2015) of toxic aerosols co-produce (Seshan, 2017) the sky just as they co-produce the surfaces of urban flow - from surface to dust and material to sky. [194 words]

Lunch — 13:00-14:00

Parallel Sessions 3 – 14:00-15:30

The Politics of Truth 2 - The Appeal of Truth and the Desire to be Truthful

Beautiful lies: Creative Licence and the Attachment to 'Untruth' in Literature and Criticism

Simon Lee-Price

Why do we stubbornly cling to untruths? What makes us resist with all our might the pull of the truth? Truth is not only a matter of facts but also a matter of feelings – and misconceptions, misinterpretations and mistaken beliefs can form the basis of personal identity and strongly held convictions. Untruth can be enabling and fecund. The truth, in contrast, is often disappointing, anticlimactic, reductive – 'more prosaic' as the saying goes. This presentation will discuss two literary texts, 'The Sandman' (1817) by E.T.A. Hoffmann and *Catcher in the Rye* (1951) by J.D. Salinger, to illustrate psychic attachment to unenlightened world views and the productive potential of 'misreading' or 'misinterpretation'. I will also refer to Freud's famous case history 'The Wolf Man' (1918), in which the primal scene figures both as the repressed truth and 'something quotidian, banal', in contrast to the patient's flourishing symptoms (translations) that constitute his subjectivity. Lest we should think it is only disturbed fictional characters and Freud's neurotics who resist the plain truth, I will examine Marshall Berman's extensive and creative use of a (mis)translated phrase from the Communist Manifesto (1844), 'all that is solid melts into air'. To render Marx fit for his influential work of cultural criticism, Berman must adopt a stance toward truth and its cognates, such as fidelity, faithfulness, veracity, authenticity, accuracy, precision, legitimacy and originality, which can be said to fall short of enlightenment ideals. This essay concludes by asking whether the truth is always worth fighting for.

Badiou and Truthful Politics: The Egalitarian Axiom and Subjective Fidelity

Pierre Parrouffe

Alain Badiou occupies a unique position within contemporary French philosophy. At a time when many of his peers have embraced relativism and abandoned the promises of grand narratives, Badiou has remained consistently dedicated to the category of truth and the idea of communism. In his work, truth is nonetheless knocked off its philosophical pedestal as it merely occurs in the domains of Art, Love, Politics, and Science by means of an event. In this context, philosophy is at the service of eventual truths that condition its practice. Truths themselves are underpinned by axioms and depend on faithful subjects who are willing to retrace the legacy of an event that has already faded. The point where the concepts of axiom, truth, and subjective fidelity intersect is arguably the most relevant aspect of Badiou's work for political thought. In his philosophy, equality is the axiom of politics, the subject a militant, and political truth bears the name of communism. Beyond such apparent straightforwardness, the interaction of these three concepts remains extremely complex. An unlikely companion in deciphering the political relevance of this conceptual triad is St Paul. From the centrality of faith to what Badiou refers to as the 'Christ-event' (1997); St Paul's legacy casts a strong light on the temporality, radicality, and subjective dimension of Badiou's thought. In this context, the political relevance of Badiou's consideration of truth as a process is best understood as a secularisation of Pauline thought.

The Truthful Portrait

Aurélie Debaene

This art philosophical paper explores why the act of posing is feared to obscure the sitter's authentic self in portraiture, and how it interferes in different ways than we might readily assume. With this goal in mind, I look at the problem of using authenticity as a concept initially, and further pinpoint that this anxiety towards the perceived artificiality of the pose stems from an inherent, underlying conviction that we are able to uncover a personal truth. The first part of the argument relies on defending that the pose is in fact necessary, at times *imposed* through the artist's registration, and worked into an artefact. I defend that the act of posing constitutes a performative event, which is where the 'authentic self' issue arises between this performance of self when posing for a portrait firstly, and the portrait's expected reveal of something true about its sitter, secondly. With the help of Bernard Williams's notions of truth, more specifically regarding truthfulness and virtue, I argue that the truthful portrait instead shifts the focus from a rigid depiction of self, to accurately and sincerely depicting *credible* aspects of the sitter in flux. The pose then no longer risks artificiality or more extremely, deception, but instead becomes a crucial, supporting tool in the creative process of a portrait, which convinces the spectator that they witness a truthful portrayal.

Disruptions, Interventions and Liminalities: Critical Performative Pedagogies 4

How Performing Arts will Integrate Mind, Body and Soul

Francesca Antonacci

Performing arts deal with the tension that exists within ourselves between mind, body and soul. These disciplines are precisely defined by a structured context, where a symbols system enables signs of transformation in human education process (Mezirow, 1991, 2009), in order to overcoming oneself constraints.

The gestures, as a sign system, convey certain meanings.

In the performing arts each gesture belongs to a specific *liturgy* dealing with the daily sense of time and becomes an instrument changing rhythm in the flow of time (Jousse, 1974).

In fact, performance is a sign system which regulates time, prevents its destructive and wasteful face (Durand, 1999).

The performative *training* (Stanislavskij, 2009; Grotowski, 1968; Barba, 2003) apply the same code of Eastern ways of self-transformation (Yoga, Martial arts) leading to perfection. It also belongs to the western ancient disciplines of spiritual education (such as Pythagoreanism), but we seem to have forgotten them.

Training in performing arts requires us to monitor our behavior, expand awareness while reaching new levels of intuition and discourse involving body, mind and soul. This is in order to fully experience every moment of life and overcome our egos.

We need to reevaluate the importance of training as a ritual process because it provide an harmonious link between individuals and their history, freedom and rules, and between matter and soul.

These practices kept alive a spiritualized materialism in order to promote a reconciliation between materialism and spirituality by applying ancient methodologies that managed to retain their original message in spite of current standardization.

Idyll and scandal – sight-specific history-education with tools of performing-arts

Birte Brudermann

Idyll and scandal are sight-specific history-educational workshops which include recording voice and sounds, improvising theatrical scenes and combining those elements to short animation-films.

Workshop Nr.1 takes place inside a railway-station with cubistic murals, which is situated next to the Robert-Musil-Museum for contemporary literature. In this workshop, visual art and literature (by Ingeborg Bachmann) evoke a confrontation with the 1950ies and the (post-war)-societies' desire of creating idylls in order to repress dwelled conflicts.

The same way as the frescos provoked a scandal, in 1956, by demanding breaking up habitual traditions, our students are asked to re-question consisting values and create critical points of views in order to understand history beyond facts.

Workshop Nr.2 takes place in a Roman-Catholic convent (build in 1153) where students and monks get into a dialogical exchange about hedonism versus spirituality. Furthermore the students explore spaces of the monastery - sacral spaces, monk-cells, the attic, the gardens, etc.

In Workshop Nr.1 the students choose one of the scenes pictured in the murals, in Workshop Nr.2 they choose a space in the convent and describe why they identify themselves with the scene/space. Once having found their personal associations, the students receive information about the historical (theoretical) background of the sights.

Having explored the spaces, investigated and reflected, the students are asked to improvise theatrical scenes by experimenting in a playful way - this is the complimentary workshop-part to the intellectual analysis which happened in the sessions before.

Sound-recordings and performative scenes are combined to become an animation-film.

Liminalities of Critical Performative Pedagogies in Capitalism

Ana Milovanović

The self-management socialism which was the norm in Yugoslavia was led by Karl Marx' motto: "be critical of everything," and was naturally applied to pedagogy.

I was a beginner in socialism and I was starting my teaching in this same political system, specifically within The Puppet Workshop at Teacher Education Faculty at Belgrade. This course was freely chosen by students. Their lessons gained them no marks and consequently there was no hierarchy. I continue to apply CP for my main subjects: drama art, culture of speech, children's literature and puppetry in the new conditions of the primordial accumulation of capital in Serbia. Nowadays, I find this very difficult.

The main reason is the radically changed power relation between student and teacher, which is now based on money-related polices: exam results, credits, marks, competition and so on. It is no longer based on the deeply human need to express oneself as creative being, and to learn as much and as better as possible.

I have some positive uses of performative teaching and learning and cases of good practice– exam students always pass at the children's hospital playing puppet performances, students participating in the improvement of the Faculty curriculum, and in the critique of the NHC of Serbia, as in ecological care (making puppets by packaging materials). But now performance art shows less effectively in pedagogy than under socialism (as the recent research results show a very low level of political interest among young Serbs).

But, students work on their abilities, creativities and cherish traditions, which is very important in this post-human and globalised world.

Thinking Affect and Postcoloniality Together 2 - Feminist Perspectives on Affect and Relationality

Rethinking the Ethics of Freedom Beyond Decision

Sreenaji Banerjee

This paper aims to analyse an event of religious conversion and inter-faith marriage which took place in India in early 2016 and demonstrate the ways in which both the postcolonial Indian state as well as the left-liberal and feminist intelligentsia informed by the tenets of postcolonial theory were unable to read affect in the gestures of a 24 year old Hindu girl called Akhila Ashokan and her 'desire' to firstly convert to Islam and adopt a Muslim name (Hadiya) and secondly to marry a Muslim man. The poverty of the 'national imagination' was such that the Muslim woman's articulation of such desire was conceived as either a self-sovereign, informed, educated decision based on identity (by the Indian feminist and left-liberals) or false-consciousness (by the Indian judiciary). The Indian courts constituted her act of Islamic conversion as a *symptom* of Stockholm Syndrome. The paper will argue how this very inability to recognise affect when confronted by it, and forcibly convert it into the language of decisionism or nativism, marked by the evolutionist Hegelian discourse of 'world-history' and 'world-religion', lead to an acute epistemic violence. The Indian state became actively involved in the ethno-nationalist and historicist project of secularising the non-secular. However, Hadiya's final testimony to the Supreme Court of India, read through the prism of affect theory, exhibited a significant relationship with the political philosopher Mahatma Gandhi's notion of 'habit', beyond the 'full presence' of the afore-mentioned self-sufficient *mature* subject of identity politics. Along with this, Michel Foucault's essay 'What is Enlightenment' will be explored to show how what Hadiya defined in the court as 'freedom' (to marry and convert) came very close to what Foucault, drawing from Immanuel Kant, calls 'indispensable asceticism' or an 'attitude of modernity', where the subject is, at the same time, a creator as well as an object ('machine') of her own moral actions. In this novel definition of freedom, Hadiya takes her *critique* away from the regime of reason and capability, and impels us to engage in an inquiry into the 'conditions of possibility' (Butler 2013) that made her judgment (on conversion to Islam) possible, akin to the Gandhian/Foucauldian method of 'truth-telling'. Finally, Hadiya's politico-aesthetic judgement will be read as coming closest to what Gayatri Spivak drawing from Lyotard denotes as the realm of the 'différend', where freedom not only comes away from the nationalist/liberal framework of decision or choice but also ceases to predicate itself on what Foucault delineates as late-Christianity's 'subject-of-consciousness'.

Disincorporation, Gender-Fluidity and the Metamorphic Self

David Murray

The hegemonic strategy of the business-class distinguishes itself against pre-capitalist modes of management in its astonishing ability to incorporate, neutralise, domesticate dissent.

The body has always been central to the Imaginary of surplus-extraction. The 19th C factory owner candidly referred to his workers as 'hands'. With the accelerating process of 'info-tation' the imaginary body has metamorphosed into a negative signifier. Wage-workers are now 'partners', 'colleagues', 'associates'. The process of surplus-extraction is masqued under the categories of values, community, sustainability. The body itself, in the Political Imaginary, has become dematerialised.

The denaturalisation of gender-identities was central to the critical analytics of post-war feminism. De Beauvoir's remark that 'One is not born, but rather becomes, woman' was a revolutionary insight. Its putative extension in Donna Haraway's dematerialising posture of 'one is not born an organism' is its 'hyper-radicalisation' (Lukacs, excoriating Nietzsche). Here, as ever, postmodernism banalises and 'incorporates' critical thought..

Postmodernism's imaginary liquidation of corporeality into discourse reaches its parodic apotheosis in the work of Judith Butler. *Gender Trouble*'s conformism is shown in its pathetic claim that agency is, and can be, nothing but variations within a process of repetition.

The commonsense of 'altsex' subcultures (LGBTQ, poly, kink) is that gender ID is a matter of self-definition. This is the *reductio ad absurdum* in everyday life of social-constructivism. It is the lived experience of 'all that is solid melts into air'. It is the embracing of the Hegemony's construction of the self as monadic, immaterial, unincorporated.

Blurred Lines: Relational Affectivity in Spinoza and the Expansion of the Boundaries of Self

Maria Elaina Gauthiermamari

Because Spinoza's ontology radically asserts the relational and causally determined nature of the cosmos, he can challenge the definition of the atomistic, self-sufficient subject. A Spinozistic individual is intrinsically relational and the degree of its body's complexity is directly proportional to its affective power, not in spite of its delimitations, but because of them. Spinoza is adamant that individual power, including the power of human individuals, is embodied; the more a body can be affected in various ways, the more it can affect in return. Consequently, the very idea of the self must defy the opaque divide between ourselves and otherness and the opposition between the one and the many in order to affirm the complex and dynamic reality of relational identity. What I want to do here is showcase how a feminist interpretation of Spinoza's affective individual yields a critical framework through which individual and collective power and freedom can be understood.

I will start this paper by exposing and explaining how Spinoza chooses to articulate freedom as different degrees of becoming active in a determined world. This notion of activity is able to capture both individual striving and environmental and social conditioning without pitting them against each other. Because of its affective nature, the human individual becomes itself by being part of the world, not by separating itself from it. I will then go on to explore how placing affectivity at the centre of human freedom has important consequences for notions of collective action.

Break — 15:30-16:00

Parallel Sessions 4 – 16:00-17:30

The Politics of Truth 3 - The Uses and Abuses of Truth in Governance

Memory, Counter-Memory and Resistance: Notes on the Truth Committee on Public Debt

Josh Bowsher

In 2015, the SYRIZA government in Greece sought to challenge the imposition of austerity by its creditors. As part of this strategy, SYRIZA formed the Truth Committee on Public Debt (TCPD), a commission of enquiry designed to investigate the truth of Greece's sovereign debt and develop legal arguments concerning the cancellation of debt. Although the Committee was ultimately dissolved before it could finish its work, it managed to publish a preliminary report which strongly challenged the economic, legal, and political arguments made by Greece's creditors.

This paper is concerned with thinking through the value of the TCPD project and its use of interrelated concepts of 'truth' and 'memory-making' not only to challenge Greece's creditors but the broader context of financialised neoliberalism. Maurizio Lazzarato has famously shown that financialised neoliberalism operates through a mnemotechnics of debt, a project of memory, that constrains future possibilities for human action and social organisation within neoliberal rationalities by making us 'guilty' for our debts. Developing this theoretical framework in the Greek context, the paper argues that the TCPD deserves critical attention because it responded to the mnemotechnics of debt with its own project of counter-memory. The paper argues that this project reversed the mnemotechnics debt by constructing a 'truth' in which the Greek people were not guilty but innocent. In doing so, it attempted to 're-open' future possibilities and create space for alternative, egalitarian futures to emerge. Concluding with a brief discussion of the failures of the SYRIZA project, the paper reflects on the value of the TCPD as a strategy of resistance that could be developed by others in future.

That's Classified: Transparency and Bureaucratic Desire in an Age of Terror

Russell Bentley

Truth in politics, I argue here, is a function of the state's capacity to keep secrets and, thus, truth in politics is always an act of truth-making, not reality-disclosure. The paper critically examines the power to make and keep secrets in politics as a bureaucratic function of the state (recognised at least since Weber) and, thus, understanding truth-making means understanding transparency as a bureaucratic outcome. I frame this discussion by acknowledging the oft-repeated thought that we live in an "age of terror". Since the terrorist attacks on Washington, DC and New York, threats to national security have driven a wide band of public policy decisions. This has mainly been a feature of US politics, but the hegemonic reach of the United States has allowed it to impose a security mentality on its allies and on others. This mentality is maintained by near-constant threat perception and manifests itself as chronically elevated levels of fear and suspicion. These, in turn, drive more secrecy in government as more governmental action responds to perceived threats. This also drives a bureaucratic desire to conceal or to clothe in obscurity all that is and can be related to national security. Where bureaucracy has always been secretive, the new bureaucratic desire insatiably looks for more and more to classify. The paper first examines the daily politics of transparency as a construction of the truth. In the second part, I examine more fully the bureaucratic desire to conceal and how this desire practically expresses itself in information classification. I conclude that in the age of terror, a politics of truth is a chimera.

Democracy, Truth and the Post-Factual Age. The Other Side of the Populism-Technocracy Divide

The idea of a coming 'Post-Truth Era' stresses how Western democracies are increasingly caught in divide between technocracy and populism. There is, however, a mismatch in attention payed to each pole. Populism is considered a threat to truth and to the democratic regime, while technocracy is narrowly described as an administrative glitch or political problem at most. Accordingly, much stress is put on the supposed absence of truth from public debate, while little attention is payed to the actual role truth is supposed to play in politics. To address this issue, in my paper I explore the concept of truth as it is used in discourses about populism and argue that the current critique of a coming post-factual age is based on a concept of truth that entails a technocratic understanding of government:

1. I discuss 'technocracy' as a possibility implicit in mass-democracy by drawing on the Dewey-Lippmann debate. Herein, I argue that 'technocracy' stems from an understanding of truth, which judges political opinions and decisions only by their epistemic value.
2. Drawing on Arendt's work on politics and truth, I criticize the technocratic understanding, arguing that opinion is never reduceable to its epistemic value as its purpose is not to express how the world is, but rather how to change it.
3. I suggest that precisely the role of opinion is missed in recent discourse on populism and technocracy. By only stressing the lack of truth, recent talk about a post-factual age risks encouraging a populism-technocracy divide, leaving little room for political opinion.

Disruptions, Interventions and Liminalities: Critical Performative Pedagogies 5

Utilizing Performative Teaching within the Induction Unit as a Social Tool Capable of Aiding Participation and Retention

Nigel Grimmer

Within Induction projects I employ elements of performative teaching and learning to unite the student cohort through social interaction.

At the beginning of my teaching career I was tasked with eradicating bullying within the student cohort at levels 5 and 6. Upon investigation it was found the student body was fragmented. It appeared that the skills-focused Induction had ostracized many students.

Creating photographic typologies of people performing identical tasks is a major component of my art practice. Although these projects stem from researching the nuclear family album all my sitters are photographed alone, allowing anyone to participate. These portraits visually unite the participants, rendering their strange performances normal.

Students each created their own class typology, negotiating roles of model and photographer. The only rules: everyone must be included; their names must be incorporated and learned. The typologies were then presented as posters, remaining for the term as class portraits.

On occasion I have also furthered participatory practice by creating my own typology of the class, sometimes to introduce my practice, particular photographic equipment or to address a concern I have with the class dynamic.

These projects have naturally developed over eight years. Some of my typologies became performative projects in their own right with students exploring their city or reacting to institutional space together. My paper will plot the evolution of four of these projects and how they have aided retention and inclusion within the department, incorporating images of student outcomes and the work of key inspirational practitioners.

Feminist Interventions and Performative Pedagogy in Acting

Lisa Peck

Elyse Pineau (2002) positions Critical Performative Pedagogy (CPP) in the field of Performance Studies and reinforces the binary between actor training and performance when she states that acting is concerned with mimesis as opposed to kinesis. This reduces notions of acting to a style and misses the opportunity to mine acting pedagogy for its transformative potential. Mia Perry and Carmen Medina (2011) point to the ways that acting is a holistic learning experience which is simultaneously performative and embodied. The actor develops awareness of the social body (outer action), whilst simultaneously attending to the life body (inner action). Our understanding of performative pedagogy is enriched through the emancipatory double learning in acting. Recent feminist theory fights matter with matter to recognise the body as both inscribed and inscribing, producing a vital materialism (Braidotti, 1994). From this position, and looking to the work of women practitioners, I propose a Critical Acting Pedagogy (CAP) where the actor becomes a cultural agent. My research draws on five years of fieldwork in the UK training ground, observing the pedagogy in studios and rehearsal rooms of six trainers and directors, including Katie Mitchell and Emma Rice. I apply a triangulated action research approach between the actor, the teacher/director and myself as observer, using a seven-point structure for observation, which focuses on the learning exchange. From this, an alternative to the traditional male dominated and hierarchical pedagogies of acting emerges that re-positions constructs of power and pleasure.

Using a Performative Approach to Textual Analysis

Gavin Baker

This paper will discuss a performative approach to teaching textual analysis on a Musical Theatre course. Students work in investigative teams analysing texts, exploring the context, and finally performing their work. The essence of this approach is the dialogical intra and inter-action between the teams and the tutor. This continuing dialogue stimulates exploration, learning and reflection. The nature of the interaction with the tutor evolves throughout the process as the tutor empowers the groups to work confidently and autonomously.

This critical approach begins by focussing on the performative power of the text while examining the rhetorical context and textual features, driving the action towards a performable goal. These performatives are then contextualised within the greater context of the world today. In this approach, students first investigate their “accepted” context, before being tasked with creating their “new” context, aligning the text with the present, associating it with the realm in which they live. Through the dialogical process of discovery, they explore alternatives to casting, gender, society, and place. The approach then returns to the performative function of the text, focussing on the performability of their analysis. Students’ evidence their work by the staging and presentation of it as a performance.

Thinking Affect and Postcoloniality Together 1 - Race, Coloniality and Embodiment

Fanon's Decolonial Account of Alienation: Conceptual Subversions

Mariana Teixeira

Frantz Fanon established in *Black Skin, White Masks* a highly original dialogue between Left- Hegelianism and psychoanalysis. He formulates a notion of *alienation* according to which the colonial subject is socialized from a very young age in a world where the white man is the model of identification of everything that is good, pure, and active, while the black man is the “phobogenic object,” the object of fear and disgust that is the negative counterpart to the formation of the ego-ideal. But although “the Antillean has the same collective unconsciousness as the European,” he does not know that he is black until he comes in contact with the white man. It is only when the black man from the colonies goes to mainland France, for example, that he realizes that he is seen as black. The ensuing internalization by the black man of himself as the *phobogenic object* leads to the pathological situation in which he distrusts, unconsciously, what is black in him, and therefore “the totality of [his] being.” In a tragic irony, “After having been a slave to the white man, he enslaves himself.”

Fanon thereby dislocates both psychoanalysis (Freud, Lacan, Guex) and Left-Hegelianism (Marx, Kojève, Sartre) in order to build a critical theoretical framework able to account for the colonial situation. In this paper, I shall explore the conceptual shifts – or subversions – involved in this innovative notion of alienation, which remains and relevant to this day.

Postcoloniality and the Affects of English Landscape Belonging

Ben Pitcher

Racialized ideas about national/natural belonging are not only articulated through symbolic claims on ‘the countryside’, but also through habitual, embodied practices where nature is physically occupied, walked through, trampled upon and breathed in. The experience of national belonging is co-produced in the sympathetic interaction between landscapes, minds and bodies. While a strategy that contests or displaces racialized nationalism can make a case for the legitimate presence of racialized minorities in the English landscape, it does not in itself work on capacities for and dispositions to feelings of connection, attachment and belonging to the natural landscape.

This paper considers an alternative strategic intervention, and asks whether, rather than ‘disproving’ primordality, it might instead be possible to contest it. Specifically, it asks whether it might be possible to appropriate the synaesthetic affects of primordial nationalist claims, harnessing them to different (postnational, transnational, global) formations of nature. Rather than turn away from rich nationalist tropes of belonging to nature, can we instead tap their affective power? Can they be unpicked, reworked, recomposed? Rather than abandon them to racists and nationalists, can we steal and repurpose their beauty?

I will suggest that a consideration of embodied practices can give us some new ways of thinking about postcolonial landscape belonging and the ecology of race.

Post-Conference Drinks

Venue to be announced