Conference Programme (Long)

London Conference in Critical Thought 2022

Friday 8th and Saturday 9th July 2022

School of Law, Birkbeck College
University of London
Malet Street, London, WC1E 7HX

Please note this is a draft programme subject to change

London Conference in Critical Thought 2022

The LCCT is back for 2022. First established in 2011, the London Conference in Critical Thought (LCCT) is a free, inter-institutional, interdisciplinary conference in critical thought that takes place annually in institutions across London. It is envisaged as a space for those who share theoretical approaches and interests but who may find themselves at the margins of their academic department or discipline.

LCCT follows a non-hierarchical and decentralised model of organisation that undoes conventional academic distinctions between plenary lectures and break-out sessions, aiming instead to create opportunities for intellectual critical exchange regardless of participants' disciplinary field, institutional affiliation, or seniority. Following this decentralised, 'margins-at-the-centre' logic, LCCT has no overarching or predetermined theme. Each year the conference's intellectual content and academic tone are set by thematic streams that are conceived, proposed and curated by a group of stream organisers. Each stream generates its own intellectual rationale and Call for Presentations, with conference participants responding to the accepted stream proposals.

In addition to the stream organisers, the conference is volunteer run by the London Critical Collective, this year Chris Henry, Craig Lundy, Matt Mahon, Victoria Ridler, Tom Trevatt, and Samuel Wilson. The Collective is grateful for the support of the School of Law at Birkbeck College for hosting the LCCT 2022.

Conference Streams

Art Practice and Critical Pedagogy
Paul Stewart

Autotheory: Criticism and Practice
Becky McLaughlin & Eric Daffron

Common Ground:
Between Geology & Art
Kelcy Davenport & Sarah Strachan

Counter- and Critical-
Infrastructures
Luke Collison

The 'Employability' Agenda in
Higher Education
Ricky Gee

The End of Biopolitics?
Hye Yun Kang

Extra-Institutionality
and the Political
George Lynch, Hatty Nestor & Rosie Woodhouse

From Socially Engaged Art to
Socially Engaged Humanities
Ewelina Chwiejda

Hair Club
Kelly Lloyd, Michal Lynn Shumate &
Suzanne Gold

The Measurement and
Surveillance of Practice
Tania de St Croix

Misunderstandings and
In/Justice
Anna Waldenström,

Kate Astall, Marigó Oulis &
Shailesh Kumar

Negativity in Contemporary
Continental Thought
Evrim Bayindir

Social Media Empires
Christine Goding-Doty

Sticky Matters
Harshavardhan Bhat & Rowan Lear

To Be Monstrous
Katharina Donn

Contents

Information for Participants

Registration and Information

All participants are asked to register online, however we also ask that you to check in at the registration desk to confirm your arrival at the conference. The registration desk can be found in rooms G13/G14 in the main Malet Street building – entrance from Torrington Square.

Online Registration

Location

The conference will be held in the 'Main' Birkeck building on Malet Street. Please note that the entrance is from Torrington Square:

Torrington Square,
Bloomsbury, London,
WC1E 7JL (Google Maps)

Further information, including travelling to Birkbeck, can be found here:
https://www.bbk.ac.uk/maps

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! If you would like to get involved please do get in touch to find out about opportunities to assist.

Location and Eating

Coffee/tea will be provided near the Registration Desk, but participants will need to organise their own food. 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 the Friday evening we will have the conference reception / book launch event in the Registration Desk area. We will also announce a pub location for all those keen to continue the conversations on Saturday night after the end of the conference.

Overview

8th July	Room 1	Room 2	Room 3	Room 4
9:00-9:30	*Registration*			
9:30-11:00	Autotheory 1	Hair Club 1	Negativity 1	Measurement/Surveillance of Practice 1
11:00-11:30	*Break*			
11:30-13:00	Sticky Matters 1	Critical Employability 1	Negativity 2	Art Practice and Critical Pedagogy 1
13:00-14:00	*Break*			
14:00-15:30	Extra-Institutionality 1	Misunderstandings and In/Justice 1	From Socially Engaged Art to Humanities 1	Counter and Critical Infrastructures 1
15:30-16:00	*Break*			
16:00-17:30	Autotheory 2 (PERFORMANCE)	Measurement/Surveillance of Practice 2	To Be Monstrous 1	Art Practice and Critical Pedagogy 2
17:30	*Drinks Reception and Book/Exhibition Launch ('After Progress')*			

9th July	Room 1	Room 2	Room 3	Room 4	Room 5
9:00-9:30	*Registration*				
9:30-11:00	Sticky Matters 2	Negativity 3	From Socially Engaged Art to Humanities 2	Measurement/Surveillance of Practice 3 (PARTICIPATORY DIALOGUE)	Extra-Institutionality 2
11:00-11:30	*Break*				
11:30-13:00	Critical Employability 2	Common ground	Art Practice and Critical Pedagogy 3	Counter and Critical Infrastructures 2	The End of Biopolitics 1
13:00-14:00	*Lunch Break*				
14:00-15:30	Sticky Matters 3 (WORKSHOP)	To Be Monstrous 2	Misunderstandings and In/Justice 2	Social Media Empires	The End of Biopolitics 2
15:30-16:00	*Break*				
16:00-17:30	Art Practice and Critical Pedagogy 4	Hair Club 2 (COMMUNITY DISCUSSION)	Negativity 4	Measurement/Surveillance of Practice 4 (joint panel with SME)	Autotheory 3
17:30	*Post-Conference Drinks Location TBC*				

Friday 8th July

9:00-9:30 – Registration

9:30-11:00 – Parallel Sessions 1

Room 1 – Autotheory 1

Join the Movement When you Feel Ready

Sophie Chapman

A live reading and performance of my text 'join the movement when you feel ready'. Written during a residency in 2018 that was the culmination of both a long period of research which involved travelling around the UK to meet with women holding space in different ways for their communities - and - recently coming to terms with and coming out as gay. It weaves together questions around what it means to be a body in relation to others, politically and personally, and the parts where that causes friction up between. Using citations from queer and feminist literature as well as songs that resonated during the period to draw out affective and knotty coagulations on moving, spatial justice, and to what extent you can shape the world you are in and know your own personhood. Repetitions, time folds and the voice sounding these internal webs into external stickiness mixed with the affective quality of the sung voice and physical movement, aiming to draw people into the words and out again into their own personal reflections and ruminations.

This work then influenced a set of clay and bronze objects - 'sympoetic tools' - part of a wider work with my then collaborator Kerri Jefferis called 'guttural living' that we used during workshops with others to draw out these questions through movement. Also using the highlighted words as a score for this work 'edge gestures'. So I'd be interested in a conversation too around the way autotheory can springboard other things through the act of score making etc. to bring liveness into text back out to liveness and so on as dialogical/pedagogical tools also.

Auto-Parts: Performance Vehicles & Encounter Driven Practices

Adam Denton

> *Trusting the search, the open-ended, suddenly upended, careering off the road, an encounter, intra-conurbational movement, underset, being on and of the move. A parked car leaks heavy metals into the pavement.*

Auto-Parts deploys a method that is an attempt to be the (en)counter-measure of the unforeseeable in its own production. Through an *essaying* approach that is foundational and fluid, the methodology has been most recently explored and developed by the author, myself, through conference presentations at the Punk Scholars (Newcastle 2019), Urban Assemblage (London 2021) and Together/Apart (Toronto 2021).

For LCCT, *Auto-Parts* will be executed in a live composed, *noisessay* making context, that re-posits situated and captured live action in a theoretical framework: aiming towards the generative and mutating. Drawing on sonic practices, both locational and itinerant, the 'touring artist' is cast as (re)searcher at large and engages with the problematics that this self-casting comprises. The method seeks to implement 'noise that disturbs it's own production' (Mattin 2017) and ask:

who can move? who can't?
who's missing?
How does a 'we' get to where we share, where *auto* approaches become collective concerns: a gathering up, on and of the road?

To (en)counter the financially driven, sorting machines of the expanding and contracting contemporary city, where the majority of this work takes place, *we* attempt to get to know, through doing, the composition, decomposition and re-composition of places of action and as AbdouMalik Simone defines – *the extensions of the urban* (2021).

Bridges, Sequences, Peel-offs: Equipment of the Body's Reasoning

Marjana Krajac

In March 2016 I spent a week in Maribor, observing ballet rehearsals at the Slovene National Theatre. To reach the theatre, I had to walk the bridge over a monumental river Drava where I had my first encounter with some kind of an anxious dread and a corporeal paralysis while going across: the structure is about to collapse. There was absolutely no reason for my corporeal distress—polite traffic of walkers and cars posed no immediate danger, and the walk should have been picturesque and lovely. And yet, I was almost fainting. To keep walking, I fixed my gaze on the pavement and slowed my breath. Once on the other side I crashed at the park bench. What did just happen? I had no usable conclusion.

In *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*, Heidegger suggests that "the bridge does not first come to a location to stand in it; rather, a location comes into existence only by virtue of the bridge." A collapse that I was dreadfully counting on is not (in absolute terms) incorrect as there is truly *nothing there* prior to me emerging to myself as constitutive of *equipment* of the bridge that then equips *me* in return. In other words, my dread is not my body's inadequacy to come to terms with its environment. On the contrary, it's my body *coming to terms* with it while operating from a place of *a body*. In this paper, therefore, I argue that the body belongs to such multispectral equipment and is intelligible only with environments that it moves and equips. My aim is to give several accounts of the suggestion while exploring its autotheoretic potential.

Room 2 – Hair Club 1: Hair Salon

Zalumma Agra, the 'Star of the East': a controversial micro-history of representation

Ginevra Ludovici

At the end of the 19th century, a young woman named Zalumma Agra ('Star of the East') started to gain popularity in the United States. Her fame was mainly due to the promotion activity carried out by American circus businessman Phineas Taylor Barnum, who marketed her and other so-called 'Circassian beauties' as symbols of racial purity.

By assembling popular scientific theories with fictional facts, Barnum created a false but extremely appealing narrative for the thousands of visitors who came to see his shows at the American Museum in New York. He deliberately used the traumatic history of Circassia, a contested zone in the Northern Caucasic region, to convey a story of poverty, illiteracy, harem life, and heroic rescue from slavery. Circassian women were indeed showcased as examples of rare beauty that some educated Western men saved from a life of oblivion and violence. Such cultural appropriation performed by Barnum was a refined engineering work, which was well-fitting with the stream of cultural commentaries about Circassians provided by many European and American literature authors throughout the 18th and 19th centuries.

However, the Circassians that Barnum exhibited were not speaking their native language or look like the Circassian women of that time – a fact visible especially in their big curly hairstyle. The contribution sheds light on the representation of 'Circassian beauties' by exploring how they became an invented trope of circus spectacle and how this construed narrative developed over time in the visual sphere, through the specific micro-history of Zalumma Agra.

Wigging out and De-Dragging
Matthew de Kersaint Giraudeau, Tammy Reynolds and Midgette Bardot

In Ariel Osterweis's writing on the American choreographer Trajal Harrell's work *Twenty Looks or Paris is Burning at the Judson Church (XL)* (2012), she coins the term 'de-drag(ging)' to describe the way Harrell tones down and decelerates, slows and mutes movements taken from voguing and the earlier Harlem Ballroom scene as well as disrobing the moves of their traditional costume of feminine drag. Osterweis then describes how Harrell 're-drags' the moves in the garb of performance art and modern dance (blank face, black shirt and trousers), and other 'looks' such as 'West Coast Preppy School Boy'. The implication in Harrell's work, and in theoretical works like Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990) is that all clothing can be understood as gendered costume or drag, and by de-dragging the choreography of (black, queer) voguing, he makes clear that the (white, cis, hetro) choreography of the artists and dancers associated with the Judson Memorial Church were also performing their identities along with their dance moves.

In this performed lecture with video, I will talk with the live artist Tammy Reynolds about my use of 'de-dragging' in my practice based research. Reflecting on a large-scale performance to camera installation I made with the performance artist Daniel Oliver and the live artist and drag artist Tammy Reynolds, I will focus in on two short performance videos involving Tammy's collection of wigs that they normally use for their drag act.

In all the other videos, Tammy and Daniel are 'de-dragged' and 're-dragged' - deprived of their usual costumes and forced to wear a different costume. But, in these videos, Tammy, Daniel and I wear, play with and de/re-appropriate Tammy's super fem wigs as live art props, twisting the gender-play of drag into blank ironic anti-comic performances.

Me and Tammy will try to work out what it means to do what we did, in relation to their comic drag practice and my comic performance art practice.

Untitled paper
Sophie Mak-Schram

In 2018, I made a video work called Tools of the Talking Trade. Based on six weeks spent at a hairdressers in Liverpool, the video imagines the hairdresser of the future guiding you through the do's and don't's of speaking in virtual tongues.

The hair salon, as a technology-free space that is characterised by conversation, was a place where I wanted to explore the slippage between work and leisure through communication styles in each. I was thinking about how platforms such as Slack encourage us to speak in digital forms that draw from our leisure or connective instincts, and capitalise on that to keep us working, particularly through the illusionary emancipator of the smartphone.

Tools of the Talking Trade speculates about the future of digital communication, and the increasingly blurry distinction between work and leisure that digital communication facilitates. Siri, Alexa and your conversationally-adept hairdresser merge, talking you through a metaphorical haircut that teaches you how to digitally communicate for this future.

I'm now thinking about this work (a 18 minute video) in relation to how hair salons function as paradoxical sites of community: how one person's leisure communication is facilitated by the other's trained chat-as-labour. I'd like to bring this into discussion via a screening, with a possible simultaneous performance, in which people join me - as your future hairdresser - to receive a hair-chat around the work of conversation in community practices and the political valence of hair as a mediator of these paid-for conversations.

Room 3 – Negativity in Contemporary Continental Thought 1: Irigaray and the East

Irigaray's feminised negative: from repression to affirmative production
Camilla Pitton

The work of Luce Irigaray has been primarily interpreted as the elaboration of a complete, although not necessarily consistent, philosophy of (sexual) difference. While the notion of negativity continues to be considered an important element in Irigaray's critical examination of patriarchal conceptions of difference, the (feminine) negative has rarely been deemed a productive or even significant component of her positive propositions. The aim of this paper is to demonstrate, firstly, that an original conception of negativity, which differentiates itself from the notions problematised, emerges from Irigaray's writings; and, secondly, that a specific interpretation of Irigarayan negativity allows us to articulate the possibility of the transcendence of the negative.

Keeping with these objectives, this paper will begin by examining Irigaray's critique of the Freudian and Heideggerian articulations of negativity. Looking at Irigaray's interpretation of Freud and Heidegger will allow me to score into specificity Irigaray's own alternative acceptation of the negative: neither a relative negativity (non-being) nor an absolute one (nothingness), but a feminised indefiniteness formulated in, and yet repressed by, traditional conceptions of negativity. It will be, however, only by reading Irigaray's negativity through Sandoval's notion of a diverse 'oppositional consciousness', that it will become possible to understand how this indefiniteness can become productive: in operationalising its always intrinsic plurality, resulting from the differential roles it serves, (feminine) negativity can differentiate itself from the other it is traditionally made into. It will be, accordingly, advanced that Irigaray's work allows us to think through the affirmative side of the negative.

On the 'outburst' of Oriental Spirit
Joff Bradley

My intervention comes after I recently listened to a 2019 Genron talk by cultural theorist Azuma Hiroki, Tokyo University emeritus professor Ishida Hidetaka, and Yuk Hui, the Hong Kong philosopher of technology. The title is: Is a Post-European Philosophy of/in Technology possible? They discuss for several hours the question of the overcoming of modernity in Asian philosophy. They discuss the question and possibility of a post-European philosophy, invoking both the Kyoto School philosophies of Nishida and Nishitani and the neo-Confucianism of Mou Zongsan (1909-1995). This is to apparently oppose the dominant European philosophies of technology (nihilism, spirit, cybernetics) and indeed Yuk Hui looks to the Heidegger-Kyoto School relation for inspiration to think beyond nihilism. They discuss how to overcome Western philosophy, how to turn to the East, how to orient to the East, how to develop a new form of Asian philosophy at the end of a form of Western metaphysics. I worry that they are speaking of the spirit which goes down *darkly* in the *evening-land* and rises *brightly* in the East, in the land of the Rising Sun. This would be a category mistake as Greece is the Orient for Heidegger.

Morning-land is the Orient, it is Greece. And more than this, Greece is also occidental. It partakes of the destiny and spirit of the *darkening* Evening-land of Europe. The Greeks are both the wellspring of the Orient and the *beginning* of European spirit. Following Kostas Axelos and contra Yuk Hui, and noting "an outburst of thought" in the East, I want to show that Occidental spirit still lingers while technology takes on different forms. I shall show by this inverting the Japanese concept of 和魂洋才(*wakon yōsai /*Japanese spirit and Western technology). By rendering the slogan 洋魂和才(*yōkon wasai /*Western spirit and Japanese technology) we shall see how the Occidental spirit lingers despite the re-orientation of technology and nihilism at the end of metaphysics.

Room 4 – Measurement and Surveillance of Practice 1: Resisting Commodification and Coloniality in Evaluation

"We are mess and strange" – measuring (with) human beings

Dave Close

"We are mess and strange; we are goths and emos, rats, sloths, and raccoons; we are change"
This is how young people described Hot Chocolate Trust, a youth work charity in Dundee. Our organization's funding hinges on that last word. Our practice, and our effectiveness, requires taking seriously all the words.

There is a gulf between the life experiences of young people at Hot Chocolate and the people who have the money we need. Another chasm stretches between the complexity of the youth work we develop with those young people and the abstractions underpinning most grant-making and commissioning.

Impact measurement has grown up against a background of a societal crisis of trust, hamstrung by these and other challenges. Too many commissioning and funding processes feel like games, rituals, or self-aware dramas, tacitly agreeing to suspend disbelief.

Fourteen years ago Hot Chocolate Trust resolved to reclaim monitoring and evaluation: to re-form it within our youth work practice and our values. This presentation will be a snapshot of some of the monitoring and evaluation approaches and tools developed since which, among other qualities:

- Serve young people first, then youth workers, the learning organization, and finally funders.
- Put trust and relationship at the core.
- Prioritize meaning-making between young people and youth workers, not managers and funders.
- Deal in incomplete and experiential knowledges not specious badges of rigour.
- Use both narratives and numbers.
- Keep an eye on whose story this is.
- Can be used by others.

Exploring Coloniality in Evaluating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Southern Africa

Nancy Breton, Chipo Nkhata, and Claire Coultas

Since the enactment of the CEDAW treaty in 1979, there has been a global push to conceptualize and implement mechanisms that empower and liberate women – particularly in the global South. The South African Development Community (SADC) region encompasses various countries with high rates of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), which prompted a diverse set of interventions to mitigate the issue. While these responses are a result of radical movements demanding change, the intervention space is too often limited to conventional approaches. This inspires the authors to question how sexual violence is being problematized

and how this construction is feeding into the design and implementation of the interventions. This paper presents a collection of SGBV interventions located in the SADC region to examine the discourses and tools driving implementation and evaluation. Even as these programs and policies claim to be transformative and community-centered, a closer look can reveal otherwise. Such indications are seen when looking at how survivors vs. perpetrators (oftentimes, women vs. men) are positioned; the types of research/intervention designs that dominate the sphere, and how these approaches are justified; how success is measured; and who is included and excluded throughout intervention implementation. These understandings contextualize how knowledge is being re/produced and the extent to which transformative change can take place.

Measurement and surveillance: spaces for resistance?

Tania De St Croix

Evaluation must be holistically rooted in the needs and realities of practice, rather than being predicated on measurement and surveillance. Dominant accountability mechanisms reinforce incongruent measurement tropes, and shape practice in a neoliberal image (Ball, 2003). Instead, we argue that evaluation must be based on an anti-oppressive approach that creates the conditions for flourishing.

These reflections are based on our three year qualitative study 'Rethinking impact, evaluation and accountability in youth work' (ESRC ES/R004773), which investigated how impact measurement tools and processes are experienced and enacted by young people and practitioners. We focus on 'open youth work', a practice of informal education that takes place in youth clubs, community settings, and on the streets.

In this presentation, we will argue that open youth work practice is distorted by inappropriate monitoring, evaluation, and accountability techniques and that these imposed methods neither capture nor reflect the depth of youth work as a practice, or fully illustrate its impact on the lives of young people. Drawing on participant observation in eight youth work settings, alongside interviews and focus groups with 143 young people, youth workers and managers, we argue that youth work is rich in 'everyday and remarkable' examples of impact. The need to re-imagine evaluative methods and processes that are anti-racist, anti-oppressive and democratic presents a challenge for youth workers and researchers. This opens a space for dialogue and exchange of ideas between youth work practice and creative, ethical methodologies that may nurture more innovative, sympathetic and grassroots narratives of practice.

11:00-11:30 – Break

11:30-13:00 – Parallel Sessions 2

Room 1 – Sticky Matters 1: Secretion

Biocœnose

Juliette Pénélope Pépin

TBC

Trans*formative H2Ontolgoies: Theorizing on Non-Binary Gender Embodying

Ier Vermeulen and Nina Friedman

This project considers what the material matter of water, specifically its morphological, relational, and archival properties, might offer up and for non-binary embodying. Our shared confrontations with gender and sentiments of exhaustion open ways for possible imaginings of personal practices of gender embodying and further, of potential entry points for relating to one an-other. In section i. we question the body, its situatedness and relationality to/with/through ontological configurations of be(com)ing through water's fluidity. Section ii. troubles these ontological configurations, first by attending to the condensation of 'non-binary' as an identity category, then by proposing a non-hegemonic methodological entry point, which we call H2Ontology. Throughout this project we mobilize poetics in an effort to activate this fluid figuration. In an affirmative and affective move, we invite the listener to imagine the words shared like water—moving, at times rushing gushing roaring, others morphing, trans*forming always already in constant processes of becoming.

The texture of air

Matthias Kispert

Breath is liminal, changeable. Breathing opens the body to its surroundings, manifests the ways in which bodies are never closed or self-contained. Breathing has no teleology, instead thrives on repetition, continuous renewal. Through it, bodies absorb oxygen, smells, toxins; microorganisms spread, interdependencies are lived, bonds nurtured as well as repulsion provoked. Breathing is both involuntary and subject to conscious control, can be experienced variously as inarticulate or expressive, and connects thought, the body and its environs once the inhaled air is expelled in the shape of language.

The texture of air explores the intersections of breathing, language and bodies being-in-common with a collective voice performance. Participants are given a text score split into four alternating voices which contains simple performance instructions and a libretto through which breath and air become both subject and material of performance. This enables participation without prior musical knowledge or need for a rehearsal. Distributed across the space in four groups, bodies launch words across the expanse in the manner of balls being thrown in a game. Words are stretched, repeated, sentence fragments exchanged, the interpretation of the score worked out in the moment, collectively in a performance in which pre-determined structure alternates with spontaneous chaos.

Room 2 – The 'Employability' Agenda in Higher Education: Critical Employability 1

Exploring critical pedagogy within a Careers & Employability workshop programme at King's College London

Laura Oxley and Andrea Cox

There are significant structural and intersectional inequalities present in the labour market into which students graduate. These are manifestly clear to many careers practitioners (and students) but often feel occluded in practice by the institutional drive towards neoliberal concepts of 'employability'. To what extent can we manifest forms of critical pedagogy when we are also complicit in this institutional drive?

Our paper looks at a project run by the Careers & Employability team at King's College London to explore the potential for developing critical pedagogy alongside the development of individual 'employability.' Drawing on the Critical Pedagogy framework drawn together by Johnson and Morris (2010), we present the ways in which we are aiming to integrate principles of social justice and equity, praxis and a collective focus into our central workshop programme,

#MyNextSteps. This is a series of six extra-curricular online workshops run by a team of Careers Consultants, accessible to all 45,000+ students and recent graduates of King's College London.

Each workshop has the potential to allow participants to develop their own individual 'employability' in accordance with neoliberal tenets, but we also aim to draw together elements of critical pedagogy in order to subvert these tenets and promote more cooperative analysis of the status quo and sharing of knowledge and power. Working with a cross-institutional group of Careers practitioners committed to social justice, we are exploring the boundaries of our current activities and the ways in which action research and student co-creation can be harnessed towards a critically informed pedagogy.

Reference: Laura Johnson & Paul Morris (2010) Towards a framework for critical citizenship education, The Curriculum Journal, 21:1, 77-96, DOI: 10.1080/09585170903560444

The 'Employability' Agenda in Higher Education: Dangers and Opportunities for Critical Pedagogy Today

Anastasia Fjodorova

My PhD research examines how photography undergraduate degrees have been impacted by the overall marketisation of UK higher education. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with lecturers, course leaders, students, and graduates. Discussions around employability are paramount to this research. In this paper, I examine the tensions experienced by academics teaching on undergraduate photography degrees as they attempt to navigate the terrain of neo-liberal metrics and the employability agenda. Conversations with my participants yielded complex and at times contradictory attitudes towards the employability agenda within HE as it pertains to photography.

One participant stated that employability had always been "at the heart" of their degree course, while another described how the employability aspect was "taken for granted" within photography under the assumption that the skills learned on the degree would always be in demand as there are "lots of different jobs involved." While discussing graduates, a course leader reflected that "you can see how their desires don't fit with what the government want graduates to do, which is to get a certain level of job that has a certain level of income that pay back their student loan."

Photography as a profession is versatile and relevant to a wide range of industries. Photography degrees should survive attacks on arts education, because of their versatility. In some sense these degrees are inherently employability focused. However, what kind of photography will be allowed to be taught? Will it be the kind that is vocationally and commercially focused, lacking any critical depth?

Dangers and Opportunities for Critical Pedagogy Today

Sharon Hutchings

Working towards social justice and social change with the local community in Nottingham is the goal of our service-learning modules. It involves students working in partnership with our not-for-profit community on pressing issues determined by the community. These pressing issues are not inconsequential. Nottingham is ranked as the 11th most deprived district in England out of 317 (ONS 2019). Whilst beautifully diverse, culturally and historically rich, life for many in Nottingham is precarious, we want to work in solidarity with our community. So, our critical service=learning is shaped by the local political, social and economic context and we work hard to avoid being social justice dreamers. To that end we suggest situating service learning within the disciplinary home of public sociology brings a 'legitimate and longstanding academic space

from which to foster a meaningful praxis of theory and practice' (Butin 2006:57). But, since we began service learning in 2013 we've had to resist the employability agenda driving our practice and values. Students are now viewed as 'professional entrepreneurs and budding customers' rather than as agents of social change but we want to disrupt this neo-liberal vision. (Giroux 2014) We suggest therefore that public sociology gives a legitimate and historically informed disciplinary space to work towards social justice and social change and so set out to share our service learning practices and research. By acknowledging Butin's (2006) standpoint that critical service learning is best realised within a disciplinary home rather than institutionalised by the university we seek to challenge the HE neo-liberal agenda.

Room 3 – Negativity in Contemporary Continental Thought 2: Post-Continental Thought

The Unlife of Thought and the Subjectless Process of Naturphilosophie
Louis Morelle

Thinking, as an activity partaken in by living beings, oscillates between a genetic dependency to its organic conditions, and a claim to an autonomy beyond the dictates of life. Philosophical idealism (from Plato and Plotinus onwards through Fichte), in trying to render the operation of thinking intelligible via a metaphysical grounding, entails an homology between the structure of thinking and processuality as such, from which tendentially results their equivocation : life as a materialization of idealities, and thought, the highest expression of vitality.

To assert the primacy of either side, « thought » or « life », is to posit one as conditioned, and the other as unconditioned, i.e. as self-legislating. This elevation to the rank of *causa sui*, of prime Legislator, of thought or life (respectively through universal intelligibility and universal productivity), suffuses being with affirmation, whilst itself remaining sovereignly obscure.

Naturphilosophie, programmatically formalized by Schelling, furthered by Bergson, Whitehead or Deleuze, heightens this aporia : identifying thought as the provisory end-product of the recursive development of a pre-organic Nature characterized as autonomous and self-altering, it results in a collapse of thought with life, submitting both to the unconditional power of a process devoid of anything remotely recognizable as human. This is made acute in the contemporary opposition between anti-vitalist neorationalism (Brassier, Negarestani), and post-Landian libidinal materialism, which we propose be read as mirror attempts to depotentiate the life-thought duet through either *artificalization* or *thanatropization*.

On Homo ex Machina: Non-Philosophy and the Critique of Bio-Political Parallelism
Jeremy Smith

This talk focuses on the singular importance of the essay, "*Homo ex machina*," by François Laruelle and highlights the necessity as to why future readers of non-philosophy should engage the work. Published originally in *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'Étranger* from 1980 and republished in *Le nouvel esprit technologique* from 2020, Laruelle's essay frames what he considers to be the intensification of man's and life's inseparability from the machine of power that couples both as becoming the *a priori* of history known as bio-political parallelism. Life is a break and continuity with power, and power is a break and continuity with life. Western philosophy has no other means but to think life and its essence through this amphibology that both unites and distinguishes the substance and modes in one specific continuum that constitutes the "superior form of racism" where we inevitably become "our own guinea pigs" (Nietzsche, *The Gay Science* 319). What Laruelle describes in this 1980 piece is the bio-politics of the future, not an

intellectual barbarism as in Henry or a society of control as in Deleuze, but a *Cratesis universalis* as a universal form of mastery and control where "humans" receive their essence through and for the State-machine. This talk will ask the pertinent question as to whether this future has come about not just in thought but in reality, and the importance of this work situated in terms of non-philosophy's inventive approach towards a non-humanist constant or thought adequate for generic humanity.

On the Self-Annihilation of Nihilism

Evrim Bayındır

This presentation argues that the emergence of post-Deleuzian negativities, whose diverse examples are found in the accelerationist, speculative realist, neo-rationalist, and afro-pessimist literature, marks the inception of the self-annihilation of nihilism, the autonomy of which Deleuze postulated as the precise way in which nihilism will collapse. However, we cannot notice the existence of this event without having an adequate conception of autonomy. We can find such a conception within the negativist turn, which can be conceived of as a series of experiments with autonomization. My focal point will be Ray Brassier, whose speculative realist equation of nihilism with the fully autonomous or non-correlational real represents the high point of the negativist turn. By situating his announcement of the death of thinking as a continuation of the death of God and the human, I want to show that autonomy must be thought of not as the future trauma of the death of thinking, but as the non-trauma of the self-annihilation of nihilism that is currently happening.

Room 4 – Art Practice and Critical Pedagogy 1: The Undercommons: Wilderness and Alternative Strategies

Occupying the school: learning otherwise

Sophie Mak-Schram

In the contemporary moment that followed the Bologna Accord, the continued proliferation of artistic projects that call themselves 'academies', 'universities' and 'schools' collides - and risks converging - with arts and education funding cuts and a neoliberal emphasis on education as a solution, and thereby policy priority, for societal issues across Europe.

Reading the radicality or radical potential of the current ways in which art practices engage with critical pedagogy, requires a careful consideration of the whys and ways they use specific education terms and formats. What draws so many artists to use terms such as schools, and in what ways do these terms become repurposed, subverted or questioned through their usage? And, how might these projects, as para, proxy or pseudo-institutions, accidentally-incidentally become shell companies for neoliberal educational policies?

'School' is at once term, format, ideology or metaphor. Drawing on Tom Holert's thinking around epistemic politics (Knowledge Beside Itself) and Fred Moten and Stefano Harney's conception of study as something you do with other people (The Undercommons), this paper proposes to trace these projects' relations to the terms and formats they proclaim, occupy and (potentially) subvert in order to think with, and make legible, different modalities of learning. Art, as much as education, is structured through institutions, ideologies and pedagogies which re-subsume alternatives into their frame. Engaging with the modalities of learning, that projects such as School of the Damned, Free Home University and Dark Studies instigate, is an effort to draw out a collection of strategies and propositions that might resist their subsumption back into the very systems they seek to alt- from.

Relaying Lures: Language in Artistic Research

Anouk Hoogendoorn

This performance lecture puts forward a pedagogical project that explores words and ways that do not register in typical parameters of language and experience through the question: *How to care for an event?*Events are understood in a Whiteheadian sense, as a production of novelty that transforms the potential into the actual (Modes of Thought, 1968). This underscores Whitehead's approach to experience which allows for thinking relationality from the conditions for coming-together. This therefore also considers the expressions that do not find their way in typical parameters of experience.

Care is here understood as the ethics of relations. This is explored through the concepts of study (Moten & Harney), sociality (Ferreira da Silva), neuroqueerness (Yergeau) in the context of the position of language in the field of artistic research. This performance lecture aims to explore the difference between the lure of gifting a name and the possible reduction or violence by this very capture. How to think with both the necessity of articulating in the sense of relaying or setting out a lure for thought-thinking while not letting those fall back into a reduction of experience? How to craft conditions for the qualities of variation in the world to be felt, tending and tuning to those differences that do not register in typical parameters of what counts, of what is counted?

Amateurs Forever

Sophie Chapman

As an artist for the last 6 years I've worked as part of a duo with Kerri Jefferis. Together we initiated a load of different projects that, broadly, brought different people together around a shared interest or question, creating different experimental propositions, tools and infrastructures to allow for certain atmospheres and conversations to unfold that would then produce different combos of knowledge and shared understanding across theory as well as lived experience. The documentation and detritus of which - we would then shape into other artworks to share or use as workshop tools again there after. See website for specifics.

I am also a facilitator for the alternative artists development programme Into The Wild. Using Jack Halberstam's / Moten and Harney's conceptions of wildness in relation to a politics of education that supports freedom and cooperation over capital and domination.

I'd like to use this experience to lead a presentation and discussion about the potential of temporary autonomous zones and how affective these spaces can be, really, in changing the status quo. I imagine this including the limitations of preaching to the converted, where the stuff resides after the fact, and how it can be sustained financially as funding for such endeavours continues to shrink/exploit ideas of 'under represented voices' etc. as well as critical thinking about that fucking mad fizzy good feeling you get from being in a room full of other weirdos being weird in their weirdness alongside you but not necessarily the same kind of weirdo as you. And how important it's been in this work, in order to buck that horrible engagement person participant/teacher pupil relationship - to feel always like an amateur forever, too.

13:00-14:00 – Lunch Break (food not provided)

14:00-15:30 – Parallel Sessions 3

Room 1 – Extra-Institutionality 1: Subcultures in and Against Institutionality

Objects, Memory and Sonic Space in the Gallery: A Discussion of Ashley Holmes' Distend

Zoe Pettavel

This presentation will explore the relationship between Distend by Ashley Holmes and the institutional gallery space in which it was presented. Working with an understanding of galleries (along with museums and heritage industries at large) as reliant on an inherent anti-blackness in order to exist, it will argue that Distend – by simultaneously drawing attention to and refusing a synthesis between memory and artefact – forces the gallery space into ontological insecurity. In this way, Distend presents new configurations of memorialisation and knowledge transmission possible in an exhibition format.

Drawing on the practice of dub as both a musical tradition and philosophy, as well as writings by Cédric Fauq, the essay will understand *Distend* as a sonic space devised through, rather than as a production of, blackness. Detailing first the coloniality of museum and gallery establishments, and their treatment of memory, history, and objects, the presentation will move on to an analysis of the fragmentary and continually-in-process character of Holmes' sound piece, as a refusal of this 'museumifying' ideology and practice. The soundscape is then drawn into dialectic with the physical sculptures of which *Distend* is also comprised, revealing an identification with Moten's talking objects, and thus a transformative aural-visual relationship that is neither representational or abstract.

Drawing these together, *Distend* can be understood to occupy the lacuna that Stuart Hall opens up between 'art and wider social [history]', and compares to the 'displacement', 'elisions [and] incompleteness of meaning' of Freud's concept of dream-work.

This Game is Not for Us: the Extrapolitical Status of Russian Metal in the Late Soviet Period

Dawn Hazle

Censorship and intolerance of unofficial culture in Soviet Russia at the time of metal music's emergence in the late 1970s relegated the scene largely to underground performance and media and any official performances were so stripped of meaning as to almost break the metal 'code'. Metal's own (Western-Anglophone-centric) code appears to be all about transgression and 'taking a stand', but there is very little political action in metal music; rather, it is all talk and no deeds, with lyrics implicit or explicit in how wrong the world is but no (achievable) method for change. Early Russian metal suffered from intense scrutiny and so heavy metaphor was preferred, since lists were circulated of banned performers and even erstwhile officially-recognised groups were being forcibly disbanded. Scene members lived outside the external system, in the same way as their rock forebears, simply existing in the Soviet sphere rather than actively upholding or opposing the system.

In this paper, I will discuss metal music's impotence in the face of political opposition. I will also explain how Russian rock and metal musicians, as well as large youth communities, existed outside of official Soviet society and the benefits and challenges this posed, as well as their fate when the Soviet Union collapsed. Finally, I will look at some of the popular early Russian metal bands from Gorbachev's reforms of perestroika and glasnost which took hold from 1986 through to the 2010s and their differing political statuses.

Room 2 – Misunderstanding and In/Justice 1: Not Being Heard

Feminist movements in postcolonial societies: Paradoxes and contradictions of Aurat March (Women March) in Pakistan

Zulfiqar Ali

Feminists in post-colonial societies like Pakistan face theoretical challenges. The word "postcolonialism," for example, was introduced to draw attention to the underlying forms of domination that go unnoticed because they are purportedly formed through (Eurocentric) dominant discourses and sciences. Dominant discourses are so overwhelming that even postcolonial feminists can speak only through them; hence postcolonial feminists (subaltern) cannot speak in their voice. Since feminism has intellectual origins in such a discourse, a feminist fight against patriarchy in postcolonial cultures is seen as enslaving women to intellectual imperialism. A concept of 'double colonization' was created to better illustrate that a postcolonial woman is marginalized not just by the male but also by prevailing imperial skewed discourses. Several feminists have claimed that women in postcolonial cultures must reclaim their original identities either through pre-colonial language or appropriate not rather than relying on imperial conceptual categories to represent themselves and their fights.

In Pakistan, every year on women's day (8 March) an Aurat March (AM) is celebrated which has become a symbol of Pakistani women's resistance against repression. This study claims that the speeches, banners, slogans, and symbols during the AM are mostly drawn on dominant imperial discourses such as liberalism and individualism, demonstrating that women's oppression in Pakistan is generally conceived in what feminists called Eurocentric terms. It also claims that Pakistan's feminist struggle is becoming a self-defeating exercise as it has isolated itself, because of its overly liberal posture, from the majority of women who are conservative and face patriarchal domination at home and work. The impending collapse of Pakistan's feminist struggle reminds us of communitarianism and conservatism's theory that social change should be slow and confirmatory, not confrontational, to society's structure. To reconnect themselves to the oppressed woman in Pakistan, feminist movements must re-draw the narrative on Pakistani society's fundamental norms that feminist movements in Pakistan ignore altogether.

Misunderstandings and In/Justice: the Special Law and Sexual Violence against Children in India

Shailesh Kumar

This paper will talk about the way the law on child sexual violence in India was conceptualised, how is it being implemented, and the contradictions that lie within the law that aspires to protect children from sexual violence and to act in their best interests. I discuss how a child sexual violence survivor has been constructed as a legal subject. On one hand, while I examine the legal misunderstandings that prevailed in treating the child survivor at par with an adult survivor during a criminal trial, at the same time, I critique the political misunderstanding that has led to the criminalisation of all child-child and adult-child sexual activities.

The paper will present empirical findings on the perceptions and experiences of the court personnel dealing with the child sexual violence cases on the so called 'love affairs' cases. I explore if the legal and procedural reforms born out of the feminist movements, contained in the special law- POCSO, i.e., the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences, have led to injustices in the way this law deals with 'love affairs' cases. By examining those findings, I demonstrate how the reforms fail to secure justice for the child survivors as their sexual autonomy is jeopardised. Further, at the same time, the law also pathologises them, and they become judged and objectified by the police, the judiciary, and the 'parallel judges' of the medical profession (Monk, 2009).

Untitled Paper

In a clarifying note in Freud's 1919 essay "The Uncanny [Unheimliche]," he argues that ego-psychology, when contending with the split ego that for them is to be made whole again, claims the faculty of self-criticism is responsible for this split. The contemporary phenomenon of auto-critique, I argue, flips this around but operates on the same assumptions as ego-psychology. The way in which the self-critical faculty undermines the ego is celebrated, but we ought to be wary of this since, as Freud says, it is the "derivatives of what is repressed [in the speaker's unconscious that] are the things reprehended by the ego-criticizing faculty." So for instance, the invocation of bias or privilege as inherent to the ego as such will be seen as an easy way of disavowing what is only a manageable derivative of the repressed of the political situation. This derivative is a nebulous blend of predisposition, power, and advantage arranged in a way that can be overcome through critical reflexivity. It is a favored approach today to the alternative of confronting the contradiction between the statement and the enunciating subject, which would not only preclude the subject from speaking as an "I" re-constituted through the use of the reified auto-critical faculty in opposition to the ego, but would also call into question the structural class interests that underly the institutionalization of postmodern reflexivity into the corporate, NGO, non-profit, and online activist worlds.

Room 3 – From Socially Engaged Art to Socially Engaged Humanities 1

Ethical and methodological challenges of a "pilot" workshop on Cultural Heritage

Inês Costa

Within the framework of the Ph.D. project *Cultural Heritage & Human Rights: Ibero-American Experiences in the 2000s*, we developed a "pilot" workshop devoted to Portuguese and Brazilian contested assets (Huis et al., 2019; Mäkinen, 2019; Proglio, 2019; Silverman, 2011). The experience took place in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto ([FLUP], Portugal) in December 2021. It counted with the participation of 14 students from the master's degree in Art History, Heritage, and Visual Culture. The initiative consisted of filing a consent form, answering a questionnaire about a specific cultural asset, and intervening in a photograph about that same heritage site. The main goal of the activity was to understand how different individuals interpret assets linked to colonialism and dictatorship. What values, meanings, and narratives do they attribute to them? What do they think about the preservation, communication, and interpretation of these monuments? The test was also a way to assess if the workshop could be applied beyond Academia, giving us the possibility of identifying its limitations and how to surpass them. Based on the outcomes of the exercise, we will present and debate the theoretical, methodological, and ethical questions that need to be revised if and before we apply the project on a bigger scale. Besides, we hope to widen the discussion about the pros and cons of art-based research methods and promote creative ways to produce and share knowledge with civil society (Costa & Villar, 2021; Goldbard & Matarasso, 2021; Persinger & Rejaie, 2021).

East-Central Europe: An alternative evolution of socially engaged art and its contested legacy

Beáta Hock

This presentation catapults the audience to East-Central Europe in the early years of the post-socialist transformation to foreground an alternative evolution of socially engaged art practice. Here, a peculiar network of Centres for Contemporary Art introduced and virtually institutionalised socially engaged public art in a social context in which, in previous decades,

critical or engaged social commentary was expressly not solicited from representatives of the art world. The network of these Centres was brought to life and sponsored by the philanthropic billionaire George Soros as part of his mission to facilitate the transition from socialism to capitalism, from totalitarian political regimes to democracies. His imposition and the emergence of new cultural infrastructures have been both welcomed and challenged by regional and, to some degree, international art critics and researchers. While some extraordinary socially engaged art projects grew out of the initiatives of the twenty SCCAs (Soros Centres of Contemporary Art), critical voices pointed to a sort of cultural imperialism implicit in "importing" and implementing this genre in what has been perceived a top-down manner. Like other branches of the regional Soros Foundations, the SCCAs moulded a new post-socialist intellectual elite that readily aligned with neoliberal operational principles.

This critique was, however, largely suspended in the wake of recent illiberal attacks on Soros and his initiatives. In this situation, the ethical dilemma arises how to sustain earlier left-leaning critical stances without being conflated with right-wing conservative agendas. Disentangling the two strands of criticism is another issue the proposed talk aspires to accomplish.

Room 4 – Counter and Critical Infrastructures 1: Politics and Theory of Infrastructure

A world of protocols: shaping and policing the population through law-like devices

Enrico Gargiulo

Protocols are law-like devices which regulate delicate and strategic fields of social and private life. Being flexible and in a certain sense informal tools of government, they are an important institutional infrastructure, particularly suitable to managing situations of emergency and crisis. It is for good reason that protocols are massively employed in governing policy fields within which vague and ambiguous notions such as security, public order, public health and hygiene play a major role in legitimising public decisions.

This proposal deals with the production of protocols and the consequences of their use. Particular attention is paid to the role of professional experts who materially draw up protocols. Within fields of public policy which are characterised by structural uncertainty and where, consequently, decisions have to be taken by considering the individual specific circumstances rather than general principles, protocols on the one hand permit the delegation of strategic decisions to technical figures, preserving political actors from critique and partially removing their responsibility; and, on the other hand, they leave a wider range of action to street-level operators. The paper therefore faces issues such as the implications of discretion and discretionary power, both from the perspective of those who design protocols and of those who apply them, and the relation between technical and political aspects of public decisions, which in turn raises questions of democracy and legitimation.

Infrastructures of democracy: rebuilding democratic grounds

Catherine Koekoek

This contribution argues that an infrastructural approach to democratic theory allows us to (re)build democratic futures in a time when anti-democratic movements are on the rise. These post-truth populist movements appropriate democratic language and present themselves as defending democracy, while simultaneously undermining democratic institutions. But instead of critiquing these claims by arguing that they are untrue or irrational (as many liberal political philosophers do), I propose it is more fruitful to focus on rebuilding democratic infrastructures.

How can we understand these democratic infrastructures, and their potential for democratic, rather than anti-democratic, articulation of struggle? I explore the relation between material democratic spaces (e.g. feminist bookshops; community centres) and the formation of publics and counterpublics by placing the pragmatic new-materialist work of Marres (2005, 2012) in conversation with contemporary critical/democratic theorists (Loick 2021; Honig 2021). Marres argues that publics gather around material issues. Politics consists in taking these issues to the spaces where they can be articulated. Democracy is then not a static architecture of various layers of representation, but changes through the articulation of issues by multiple publics. But how do we know if issue-articulation happens in a democratic, not an anti-democratic way? Building upon Marres' understanding of issue-publics, I analyse the development and disappearance of community centres in Rotterdam-Zuid (NL), between 1945 and now, as parts of a democratic infrastructure allowing people to articulate issues in a democratic way. Focusing on concrete democratic infrastructures helps understand how institutions and counter-publics/infrastructures practically depend on and presuppose each other.

The tragedy of Almaty: the changing role of public and private spaces in a post-Soviet city

Samuel O'Connor Perks and Huw du Boulay

The January 2022 protests in Almaty, Kazakhstan brought to light wider contestations within the country's infrastructure. Building from anger over rising fuel prices to wider civic discontent over the state's leadership, the events show the effect of rentier capitalism on the local economy. The burning of Almaty City Hall symbolised the changing role of the city's fabric: it was firstly the local Communist party headquarters in Soviet times, before becoming the local Akimat (Mayor's) office on independence. Its location on Republic Square also encapsulates the re-appropriation of this architectural infrastructure: from a site of military spectacle that also hosted the Jeltoqsan (December) protests in 1986. Furthermore, the evolution of the Soviet Mikroraions (Micro-districts) to post-independence gated communities shows a change of emphasis from public to private spaces. How do these phenomena encapsulate broader social, political and economic antagonisms within Kazakhstan and broader post-Soviet history of the neglect and privatisation of post-war architecture? How does this act of dissent (the negation of a public symbolic space) contest both pre-independent infrastructure in a former colony and contemporaneous neo-liberal economic policy? How do these changes enable us to relate or think of other possible forms of infrastructure (housing, transport, and labour) in post-1991 Kazakhstan? This video-talk will draw on an interdisciplinary framework integrating Philosophy, Architectural Theory, History, and Politics combined with footage shot by the researchers to interrogate some of these questions.

15:30-16:00 – Break

16:00-17:30 – Parallel Sessions 4

Room 1 – Autotheory 2 (Performance)

PERFORMANCE: 'Another Shore': Mourning Roland Barthes in the Year of Pandemic and Protest

Eric Daffron and Becky McLaughlin

We propose a performance of an excerpt from our play, now under review at *PAJ*. This three-act dialogue pays homage to Roland Barthes on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of his death. Stationed on "another shore," a phrase from his *Mourning Diary*, B and E, lifelong friends,

inhabit a psychical rather than a physical space. There they meditate on events from pandemic and protest to obsession and nudity through the lens of Barthes, Cixous, Freud, and other thinkers. Over the course of their conversation, they talk to themselves and practice ESP, interrupt and wrestle with each other, laugh and drink.

Following a brief introduction, which will outline the play's context and autotheoretical stakes, we will perform for approximately one hour. The play features two main characters, B and E, played by us. In addition, Vince Carr will play the MC and other minor roles while providing tech support. Minimally, the play requires two desks, two chairs, books and pens, a computer with projector, and a screen, but it would be ideal if a piano, an easel, and a turntable were available. The play includes three brief intermissions, or "intermezzos," that invite the audience to participate in a round of Exquisite Corpse and engage in other short activities stemming from the play's themes. After the performance, we will entertain questions and comments. We anticipate the session lasting an hour and a half.

Room 2 – Measurement and Surveillance of Practice 2: Questioning the Measurement and Surveillance of Practice

What do you do when you measure something?

Teresa Numerico

When we adopt a method of measure we must define a unit of measurement, which needs to be clearly stated to be usable and meaningful. The general thought about measurement is that it does not imply any implicit or explicit interpretation and that it is more objective than any other form of evaluation because it is critically homogeneous, and it offers a smooth representation of the phenomenon that it is supposed to measure.

Using commodified means to evaluate people, create clusters in which they are catalogued and describe events in which people take part as a sign of their habits or dependencies is now common in all digital marketing and in representations of social science phenomena. This process, however, raises many ethical and political problems.

The problem on which I will focus my attention in this talk is the flawed assumption, from an epistemological point of view, that measurement does not imply judgement and interpretation. I will show that this is not true: we must admit that quantification and its related methods represent phenomena under observation through a qualitative and subjective judgement. As in all representation approaches, in order to make such a judgement, we are obliged to fix boundaries, extract proxies, implement correlations and produce forecasts on the probability of future events. All these activities preface and presuppose hypotheses that, implicitly, are inevitable and mandatory for the accomplishment of the task of making sense of the external world. However, in terms of the assumptions and confabulatory behaviours they require, numbers are not different from any other symbolic representation.

If we acknowledge that this is the case, we can critique the rhetorical superiority attributed to processes of measurement in relation to other representation methods that do not exclusively imply quantification.

Can the University Save Itself?

Ranier Carlo V. Abengana

To ask whether the university can save itself primarily implies that the institution is in crisis. If we agree, it is worth arguing that the plight of the contemporary university, at least from one

perspective, is neatly summarized by the title of a book of Benjamin Ginsberg: *The Fall of the Faculty*. Such fall is a consequence of what he calls the "rise of the all-administrative university." Numerous similar analyses point to regimes of audit, measurement, and surveillance, as well as "tyranny of metrics" (Jerry Muller) and universities of excellence (Bill Readings). To suggest that this created a cult of hyperproductivity is to make yet another contested assertion, for after all, it is argued that productivity is the sign of scholarship. To dwell in these debates runs the risk of failing to understand the significant increase in academic burnout, the rise of 'quit lit,' the emerging phenomena of 'anti-work' and 'the professor is out' (Karen Kelsky), all of which point to the reality of the problems brought about by higher education's obsession with productivity, as well as the emergence of the "Gig Academy" (Adriana Kezar, Daniel Scott, and Tom DePaola) and the adjunctification of labour in the neoliberal university. While these maladies have been extensively studied, attempts to understand why many reforms eventually fail seem like a venture that scholars of critical university studies timidly engage with. I endeavour to address this gap by presenting the university as a social system, through which we could comprehend its autopoietic nature. While the contemporary university has been declared to be radically 'open,' I shall argue, following the fundamental tenets of autopoiesis theory, that universities have remained *operationally closed*. Such openness may thus be viewed as an ideological illusion, that is, a false openness which is conditioned by the very paradigm that ensures the persistence of the status quo.

The Disappearance of Loss and Grief with the Virtual School Assemblage: How Measurement Disenfranchises Affect

Hannah Bowden and Ian McGimpsey

Virtual Schools exist to 'improve the attainment and progress of looked after children' (NAVSH, 2019:40). This paper explores how Virtual Schools systematically restrict the appearance of loss and grief in educational relations, containing such affectivities within the individualised subject of care. Drawing on ethnographic data of a Virtual School in England, collected over seven months as part of an Economic and Social Research Council funded thesis, we explore the Virtual School assemblage as composed of relations among the human and non-human including young people in local authority care, educational 'experts', policy, processes of commissioning, and money, and functioning in conjunction with the neoliberal schooling machine. This machine provides the Virtual School with its primary principle of organisation and its mobilising desire for 'value' and 'return on investment', placing emphasis on "impact" on longer term 'outcomes' (McGimpsey, 2017:71). Such emphasis results in the articulation of the "looked-after" young person through a series of 'intellectual technologies', including trauma-informed practice, attachment theory and outcomes, which render painful affectivities 'amenable to inscription and calculation' (Rose and Miller, 1990:1). In this way, we argue the Virtual School assemblage acquires a regulatory function, articulating/positioning the subject of care as 'neurologically damaged' (McGimpsey et al., 2016) and 'impossible learner' (Youdell, 2011; Bradbury, 2013). Such subjection, we argue, disenfranchises (Doka, 1989) young peoples' feelings of loss and grief, denying them the power to shape their educational relations according to their needs.

Room 3 – To Be Monstrous 1: Embracing the Monstrous

Disruptive Physicalities: Assimilation vs. Abjection in Trans Embodiment

Cody Cat

I will be exploring the monstrosification of the trans body as the abject body: the feeling of one's body being abject (i.e. the offending body parts are felt to be dissociated and often undergo banishment), but also the casting out of the trans body from the larger social body; the broader

social abjection. For this I will draw from Kristeva's work on abjection and Stryker's 1994 paper, My Words to Victor Frankenstein, as it criticises the social construction of what is feared and othered, and use Anne Fausto-Sterling's work to interrogate the concept of intersex bodies that exist in the otherworldly inbetween, both incidentally and through deliberate changes. I will also talk about my own experience of feeling misplaced inside my body and rejected from the collective body, and my journey to embracing this abjection and drawing power from being a hypervisible other, particularly arguing for disruptive physicalities and destructive emotions as valuable and potentially constructive. I will also engage with the work of creatives on instagram @queerquechua and @cyberpunkecology who post about their journeys through surgery, their colonised bodies, and the relation of human bodies to animality and the land, as this connects to physical and mental transmogrification and the non-human other. I will give a 20 minute presentation, then end on a short spoken word poem.

Heavy Metal and Extimate Monstrosity

David Burke

Monsters are neither fully internal nor external; they are rather *extimate*, emanating simultaneously from the world and the dark recesses of our (un)thought. Heavy metal reveals this extimacy in its elaboration of monstrosity; some artists reconfigure the whole of society and history into their most monstrous forms (Dee 2009; Moore 2009), while others focus thematically on personal monstrosity, criminality and abjection (Kahn-Harris 2007). Others still focus on the experience of becoming-monster, often in bodily terms (Norman 2019; Bogue 2004). For heavy metal, there are monsters within and without, showing that the Other is "something strange to me, although it is at the heart of me" (Lacan 1992). Building on Overell's (2021) discussion of "voicing the Real" in heavy metal, I will combine presentation with performance to map monstrosity onto the human body (my own). This will involve a partially screamed/sung delivery of the presentation alongside other heavy metal performance techniques.

I intend to show not that humanity needs to become-monstrous in order to survive itself, but rather that we *always-already* were monsters in (and to) ourselves. This monstrosity is continually recognised by heavy metal, despite the highly mundane lives of most of its lower-middle class fans (Brown 2016), which would indeed confirm the monstrosity of the current social order (Land 1994). Rather than leading to despair, however, heavy metal not only offers catharsis to its listeners (Baker and Brown 2016) but also allows us to accept and harness our own monstrosity against other monsters, be they institutions, bodies or relationships.

Room 4 – Art Practice and Critical Pedagogy 2: Art and Action: Pedagogic Practice and Performativity

Thresholds in the Moment; Liminal Locations

Catherine Ross

This presentation outlines my art-based investigation into liminality and describes a series of sound walks from my PhD by Fine Art Practice at Oxford Brookes University. Liminality is an indicator of all transformations, spatio-temporal, psychological and cognitive (Turner 1967). The talk introduces multiple liminal loci as a trigger for psycho-physical entry to the liminal zone through a series of sound walks (Debord 1956; Garrett 2015; Pink 2010). Sound is the most affective of the senses and therefore a powerful tool in eliciting liminality (Garrett 2015). My sound walks focus is walking as a perceptual research activity. Initially there is a Q&A. This is followed by a ten-minute group walk through a liminal space (a tunnel, subway, bridge, or flyover) at a liminal time (noon or twilight). Simultaneously hearing a binaural recording (of another liminal space/time) on headphones on a mobile phone. With an on-site, reflective

discussion on how combining visual, sound, and mobile methods impact on individuals' interpretations of the spatial experience. In conjunction an online version follows the same format. Objectives are

- To use walking and concurrent listening to generate an understanding of liminality
- To create environmental immersion by blending the visual, auditory, motile, and static (Pink 2010)
- To empower the individual in a mobile, collective experience
- To promote self-awareness through embodied, place-based mobility

The presentation closes by offering guidance for multi loci interventions that seek to invoke a sense of liminality.

From alternative education to collapsing institution: Reflections on multiple MFAs

Ellen King

Having completed the alternative self-organised postgraduate program known as the School of the Damned in 2018, I've been reflecting on how that experience has influenced my current engagement with the MFA in Fine Art at Goldsmiths College (from which SotD was spawned by disaffected dropouts). There are multiple threads I'd like to draw on, most significantly the ongoing strikes that have inspired much self-organisation amongst the current cohort, including multiple exhibitions, a residency involving approximately 40 students, and a zine attempting to address concerns and confusion around the purpose of the strikes. Other considerations include the changing student demographic post-Brexit, and the impact of the pandemic and so-called 'blended learning'. I hope to include contributions from my peers on the course, as well as other SotD alumni who also experienced a 'conventional' MA/MFA afterwards. Finally I'd like to develop some ideas around possible futures for art education, and to think about why – despite my anger at the management and frustration at having to pay so much for a course that feels like it barely exists – committing to this MFA feels like one of the best decisions I have made.

Delight in disruption: reflections on the pedagogic practice of multi-disciplinary artist, Sally Madge.

Judy Thomas

This presentation reflects on the shifting boundaries of art and life and the pedagogic practice of, multi-disciplinary artist, Sally Madge.

Presenting Madge's practice as an ongoing cultural relay, which continues, consciously and unconsciously, through those who knew and worked with her; this dissolves definitions and challenges conventions through experimental processes, rule breaking and critical enquiry.

Projecting belief and equality, Madge modelled authentic and progressive teaching practices; her approaches were contemporary, political, lived and experiential. Promoting ideas of resistance, liberation, growth, and change (Freire, 1972/2000; Boal, 1993), she instinctively made connections through improvisation, problem solving and collaboration; using inter-disciplinary methodologies to test, question, reflect, provoke, and alter perceptions, this supported idea and material exploration, using responsive, physical, unpredictable encounters and moments of engagement.

Madge naturally devised welcoming, accepting, and collaborative spaces, taking delight in disruption. Reversing roles and complicating notions of provenance and ownership, she successfully facilitated and made room for others to enter into open exchanges of ideas and practices through messy play and imaginary spaces of intrigue, innovation, and possibility. She

invited others into spaces of game play and imaginary worlds. As an agitator, she encouraged activism, applying and fostering bravery.

The paper aims to share insight into Madge's practice and suggests there is a lot to learn by promoting approaches that encourage a *do first, think later* attitude, and by embracing unknown outcomes with curiosity, a sense of possibility, and humour.

17:30 – Drinks Reception and Book/Exhibition Launch:
***After Progress*, edited and curated by Martin Savransky & Craig Lundy**

Saturday 9th July

9:00-9:30 – Registration

9:30-11:00 – Parallel Sessions 1

Room 1 – Sticky Matters 2: Sediment

Mat[t]er

William Jamieson

I would very much like to participate in Sticky Matters. I propose to read a short story that I wrote for my PhD thesis based on my research on land reclamation in Singapore and sand mining in Cambodia entitled 'Mat[t]er'. Based on fieldwork and interviews with both anti-sand mining activists and villagers affected by this process, this short story attempts to register the construction of sand as a singular and destructive resource out of the confines of a mangrove river system - the events and disturbances are registered typographically through stripping the punctuation back to the bare period, and perform the shifting of sand as it is produced as a resource on a massive scale, devastating ecologies and livelihoods. This then shifts towards how the village experiences the movement of this sand elsewhere in the gestation of land in Singapore. The short story, with its unconventional format, probes the ecological and geopolitical stickiness of sand as a resource that is the singular product of countless entangeld processes. I have attached the short story so you have a better idea of what I intend to tribute - I would be flexible to read a shorter extract if that would suit the format of Sticky Matters better.

HOLD! Refold: Materialising, re-encountering and moving-with trauma
Roshana Rubin Mayhew

This proposal centres around 4'45", hold (2022) a performance installation that weighs up a 46kg body of clay, primes it with a looped track of a staged collective argument, and is wrestled-with, no holds barred, reshaping it into sculptural form. This practice-led research investigates the grasp-ability of trauma through strategies of transposing, remixing, and encountering its materials. It approaches trauma not as something that can be reversed or repaired, underpinned by Lyotard's 'libidinal skin' (1974), to read the encounters from which it emerges as segments or investments that cannot be unfolded or uninvested. Instead, a process of materialising and performatively re-encountering explores a refolding. Working with a body of clay proposes a grasping that positions sensual physicality as essential to comprehension. It begins to explore not just how trauma is materialised but how it sits and sticks in and to our hands and bodies – its weight, size, surface, texture. The power-play involved draws from Freeman's reparative writings on sadomasochism in which, through re-encountering historical abuses, the materials of a traumatic past are remixed to open new potentialities for being and knowing (2010). This begins to explore a queer, material-temporal movement capable of generating greater ability to get a hold on, take ownership of, articulate, and move-with trauma. The aim is to investigate how the re-encounter can become a reparative moment of emergence, in which what-has-happened is at once folded into present experience, set into motion, and thickened by what-is-happening, thus opening greater potential for what-could-happen.

Cracking Binaries, Attuning to Ice

Anastasia (a) Khodyreva

In Cracking Binaries, Attuning to Ice, Anastasia (A) Khodyreva will perform an exercise in attunement to ice as a companion of non-binary bodies. The contribution engages with bodies of creek ice and A's autoethnographic, conceptual, critical and artistic dwelling-with them, more specifically, with cracking as a political process or a "political mattering" (Neimanis 2013). Might an ice crack embody something that is likely not to fit in dominant languages and is felt/lived as something that should not be defined but cannot be left complete unsaid? And if so, what might this be?

Materially, the contribution engages with A's autophenomenographic insights in non-binary being and their April 2022, in TUO TUO Arts, Finland. Theoretically, the contribution emerges in the intersection of feminist new materialist philosophy and imaginaries of the world (Lykke, 2018; 2022), hydrofeminism (Neimanis 2012, 2017) and feminist theories of embodiment.

Room 2 – Negativity in Contemporary Continental Thought 3: Politics and Deterritorialisation

Negative Freedom and the Working Class Subject

Cynthia Cruz

Presented with the (non) choice of either assimilating into bourgeois society and, thus, annihilating herself, the working class subject may choose, instead, to engage in an act of negative freedom. Such acts of negative freedom, though they may appear on the surface to be idiotic and/or passive, offer an alternative choice. By engaging in an act of negative freedom, the working class subject destroys all possibility of rehabilitation, thus, determining her fate. The mere act alone provides a means by which to mark the outer limits of what she is willing to tolerate or engage in. Through the act of negative freedom, the subject is altered: she is changed as she passes through the act. Furthermore, before she engages in the act, she does not know what will happen to her. She is, in other words, stepping into the abyss. In this paper, I will explore the concept of negative freedom in relation to the working class subject: how engaging in such an act marks her fate, separating her from bourgeois society while, at the same time, setting her free.

Dead Metals, Conjunction of Deterritorialisation Processes, Absolute Deterritorialisation. Machinic Phylum as a Hollowing Out/Ungrounding of Vitalism in Guattari/Deleuze and Guattari.

Radek Przedpelski

Guattari/Deleuze and Guattari have been construed as vitalists, whereby vitalism is (1) understood as positing a mysterious life force and chiefly modelled on the living organism (this definition is put forward by Thomas Nail and Cary Wolfe); (2) associated with a stuffy immanentism that leaves no room for the contingencies of the outside (Frédéric Neyrat); (3) associated with affirmative connectivism modelled on the figure of the nomad. My presentation seeks to counter these claims. Taking the notion of the machinic phylum as my departure point, I am going to enlist ATP's "Nomadology" as well as Guattari's writings from the 1970s to demonstrate that the machinic phylum does not affirm the above senses of vitalism but rather is already its deterritorialisation, a hollowing-out/ungrounding which pragmatically (ab)uses Leroi-Gourhan's Milieu et techniques rather than a misreading of Simondonian general allagmatic (as Daniela Voss suggests). I am going to discuss this renewed understanding of the machinic phylum under three rubrics: (1) dead metals, (2) neither production nor overcoding but a "conjunction of deterritorialisation processes," (3) chaosmic earth as the horizon of absolute deterritorialisation.

Antinomian Negativity? Rejection of the Law and Spectral Norms

Jakub Kowalewski

I will consider two problems with the antinomian rejection of the law. 1) Antinomianism is purely negative – its goal is nihilistic, because it *only* aims to destroy the order made possible by law. 2) Even if antinomianism has a positive content, it is self-undermining – negating the law presupposes a biding legal order, and so, an antinomian action, paradoxically, affirms the power of the law. In order to explore these problems, I will turn to two historical examples of antinomian movements: Sabbatianism and anarchism. Although the spiritualism and naturalism of the two groups seems initially to be at odds, they do in fact share an ontological belief in normative values which are neither fully present nor completely absent. Borrowing the term "spectre" from Derrida, I will refer to these quasi-present antinomian values as spectral norms. Spectral norms furnish positive contents antagonistic to the law, which, because they can be ontologically differentiated from any given legal system, don't affirm the power of the law. Thus, antinomianism is not purely negative, nor is it self-undermining.

Room 3 – From Socially Engaged Art to Socially Engaged Humanities 2

Viceversa Love. Double process of participation: from community-based performative project to long term commitment with a community

Emanuele Meschini

The paper want to explore the complex relationship between academic research and artistic practice in community based project and how engagement could be ethically implemented and nourished when the project is over. Through this paper I would like to describe the research I have developed during my PhD with the football community of Sacca Fisola. From 2017 to 2019 I have involved the kids (8-10 years) from the local football academy Sacca Fisola - an artificial island in the lagoon of Venice - in two projects in which football was used as a way to reflect upon the public spaces restrictions in a city such Venice affected by the overturism issue.This extractive model of tourism as heavily changed the shape of the city influencing the way in which the Venetians perceive the space. Following this scheme, in a city with poor green areas, the use public areas as play ground is forbidden and children who are over 12 years of age are not allowed to play in public spaces. The core of my research thus followed this line of the "play in public space" using public performance and video to analyze its limit and its possibility. I developed this research along with a group ok kids from the football academy working on the idea of football-theater (calcio teatro). In 2019 - when my Phd was almost over - the Sacca Fisola Academy ask me to became the trainer of the kids squad. Form that moment till the championship suspension cause of Covid19 pandemic, I've trained those kids responding to logic that doesn't belong to academia. Adding my personal experience to the formal analysis of the artistic projects and their reception, I would like to offer a reflection on the change of role as methodology of giving-back, a way to overcome the issue of the final outcome in participatory/community project and the possibility of nourishing the relationships.

Cruising as a method for art research. Practice-led research on phantasmagorical installations as spaces for queer circulation of affects

Emmanuel Guillaud

The proposed talk is based on an open, frank presentation of a PhD research on a particular form of socially engaged art. Focus will be on what research means for artists. Format will be immersive.

Semio-capitalism recycles signs, enlists affects, inhibits the subversive part of engaged, dissonant or queer arts. What strategies can help making the political significance of art operative?
The hypothesis of my doctoral research is that installations made of projected images contain singularities that are particularly relevant to this objective.

Although these installations represent an important part of contemporary artistic production, they remain a form that theory fails to name. By reconceptualising them as phantasmagorias and establishing connections between archaeology of devices and queer art strategies, the research seeks to evidence how phantasmagorias can favour a queer circulation of affects, constitute spaces where ethics of permanent deviation prevail.

The talk will address the research itself as much as its tools and methods:
- what research means for an artist who used to be self taught?
- how derailing off track (from dark phantasmagoria to darker cruising spaces) may lead to the right track
- cruising as as a method
- the role of art practice within the research
- the context of RADIAN, a practice led PhD program cofunded by 3 art schools and 3 universities.

If possible, I would like to propose a performative format in which both I and the audience are immersed inside projected images. This requires at least one videoprojector and ideally 3 (tbd).

Room 4 – Measurement and Surveillance of Practice 3

PARTICIPATORY DIALOGUE: 'Measuring impact' as a lived dilemma in youth work: escaping polarities through dialogue
Graeme Tiffany, Aston Wood, Ffion Chambers and Tania de St Croix

Youth work is a 'lived dilemma', such are the myriad (often competing) claims as to young people's needs and how they should best be met. If youth workers do not respect the autonomy and agency of young people in spaces where young people choose to be (as distinct from compulsory contexts like school) they will, quite simply, have no one to work with.
In recent times the most significant lived dilemma emerges from the almost ubiquitous demand that youth workers 'measure impact'. Critics say that it is impossible to 'measure' values, yet the demand persists. Faced with the need to find resources, most practitioners take the money and provide 'evidence' as best they can. Some experience this as harmful, to themselves as workers, but more profoundly to young people, fearing new practices degrade voluntary association and democratic principles to such a degree that this is 'no longer youth work'.
Typically, these choices are cast as polarities, you are either 'for' or 'against' impact measurement. This dialogical workshop seeks to escape from this polarity. What would a philosopher say? What would an academic researcher say? What would someone managing youth work – living this dilemma and trying to do their best for young people - say? Three short provocations will be followed by a dialogue, first between the three, then with the audience. Fusing measurement and value is a major challenge, one that may well be impossible, yet they can be in dialogue with one another. We hope you will join us.

Room 5 – Extrainstitutionality and the Political 2: The Role of Form in Political Imaginaries

The Aesthetic Logic of Prefigurative Politics

J.A. Koster

The extra-institutional fetish of the contemporary anti-capitalist Left can be traced back to the political legacy of the 1960s New Left. It is with the New Left that the understanding of what it is to act politically begins to shift in ways that continue to inform the present. We see this for instance in the continued search for new revolutionary subjects (often resulting in a fetishization of the "Other"), the shrinking away from a critique of society as a whole in favour of activism around a multitude of issues, and the assertion of alternative lifestyles as a possible form of dissent. Each tendency is marked by the abandonment of negativity, or, as it is often put, the attempt to move "beyond critique." This new form of politics can be broadly categorized as "prefigurative." Prefigurative politics has become the "dominant orientation" in social movements despite its distinctively *political* shortcomings (Yates 2021, 1040). In this paper I argue that a proper understanding of prefigurative politics requires recourse to the aesthetic. Prefiguration aestheticizes politics in at least three ways. First, it collapses the distinction between the social and the political, conceiving of politics no longer as a movement *towards* autonomy but as the enactment of autonomy in the here and now. Second and concomitantly, politics becomes the enactment of an ostensibly autonomous social form, thereby recovering the idea of beauty as the figuration of autonomy. Third, prefigurative politics is aesthetic in its structure, often manifesting as highly theatrical performances geared to a specific audience. This paper thus argues that prefigurative politics is a form of social action with an aesthetic rationale. The aim of this practice is not to bring about social change but to demonstrate the *possibility* of change by performing a utopian alternative.

Jou-naissance – or escaping the oppressive syntax of the status quo via methods of Surrealist resistance

Jess Mezo

The issue of pure internality is one that has featured heavily in political thinking over the last few decades, as philosophers and researchers grappled with the question of whether it is possible to break out the field of immanence, and if so, how and for how long? From Žižek's lack of optimism to Marcuse's belief in the forces of art and creativity and Baudrillard's fatal strategies, the fantasy of the 'outside' captivated the political imagination; and yet, practical techniques of the self aimed at 'coding one out' of the oppressive syntax of the status quo in ways that do not lead to isolation or complete disengagement from the social realm remained few and far between.

My research focuses on methods of Surrealist resistance, with special regard to jouissance (or pleasure derived from participation in an activity or substance), in order to propose one such technique: that of jou-naissance. While acknowledging that our relationship with 'externality' has remained largely theoretical until now, and that overarching, non-violent systemic change will most likely be hard to achieve, I posit that the techné of jou-naissance opens the door to both individual and collective transformation via the interplay between the Death Drive (insofar as the modern subject is ready and willing to abolish itself in order to bring about systemic change), joy as resistance (via participation in creative ventures, parody, and play), and interactions with the pre-symbolic, pre-figurative realm, which are anticipated to encourage identity acquisition via positiva, and engender both individual and collective 'rebirth'.

11:00-11:30 – Break

11:30-13:00 – Parallel Sessions 2

Room 1 – The 'Employability' Agenda in Higher Education: Critical Employability 2

Critical 'employability' via dialogue: the inclusion of multiple perspectives and voices

Ricky Gee

Post-industrialisation has seen the continual marketisation and massification of Higher Education (HE). In this environment HE policy has recently centred its focus on employability to address concerns of the 'value' of a degree in the precarious 21st century labour market. The common pedagogical reaction to policy is to fill the curriculum with 'work like' experiences, simulations and opportunities for student self-reflection. Whilst potentially useful for a student's career development such activity tends to concentrate on the agency of the student with little consideration of social assemblages. Without such considerations students may well be ill prepared to navigate the competitive labour market and positioned to blame themselves for their private troubles without acknowledging public issues (Mills, 1959). This paper reflects upon a critical pedagogical approach within a post 1992 undergraduate sociology course. The module is informed via a critical career studies approach, that reconfigures the student from individual 'mover' into the position of 'career researcher' (see Gee, 2017, 2022; McCash, 2006). Such research involves an engagement with career development and social theory coupled with engagement with outside partners - including alumni, employers, union representatives and community organisations focusing on 'fair pay'. The research project enables critical perspectives upon individual and collective career development with an emphasis on solidarity and social justice. The presentation provides student reflective accounts to illustrate the penetrative learning that took place to inform the literature, policy and practice.

Assessment populism and students as critics

Kathryn Telling

One trend in higher education has been a drift toward assessment models, such as portfolios, presentations and reports (often produced collaboratively in student teams), which are said to mimic the 'real world' of work. Such assessment modes are thought to develop enduring work-relevant competences, like team-working and communication to different audiences, which go beyond specific skills required for any particular job (Savery, 2015) This change can be experienced by university teachers as an indication of the marketisation of education, in which students have lost their intrinsic love of learning, and have instead become instrumental consumers. But what do students have to say about it?

In this paper, I draw on interviews with twenty-six students at a range of higher education institutions (HEIs) in England: old, post-war, modern and private. This formed part of a larger project examining the tensions, contradictions and problems associated with new, interdisciplinary degrees branded as 'liberal arts' in English HEIs.

There were, as we would expect, a range of attitudes toward assessment modes expressed. But, crucially, many students were suspicious of these attempts at 'authentic' assessment, and in different ways drew attention to the fact that education should not be mere workplace-mimicry. In particular, they felt keenly the tension between collaborative work as preparation for the workplace, and the highly individualist, competitive assessment which remains a mainstay of university education (McArthur, 2011). Thus, students themselves were already engaged in critique, outside of any conscious effort to develop critical consciousness.

Room 2 – Common Ground

Stones of plants – plants of stones. Geology and art encountered in Catarina Marto and Raquel Pedro's work

Vanessa Badagliacca

The exhibition "Planta Pedra" [Plant Stone] – held at Sociedade Nacional de Belas Artes, Lisbon between November and December 2020 – brought together a set of works that Catarina Marto and Raquel Pedro made between April 2019 and March 2020 during an artistic residency at the Geosciences Museums of the Instituto Superior Técnico (IST) in Lisbon. Presenting the encounter between pieces belonging to the Museum's collections in interaction with the collages, watercolours, drawings, and paintings produced in that context, Planta Pedra offered itself as a meeting place between art and science, between the present and a geological past before human presence on the planet, the Carbonic Period (-360 to -268 million years ago) marked by the appearance of forests and vegetation on the earth's surface, as witnessed by the stones that formed at that time and that have reached our days.

Starting from observation and experience with the museum's collections, with particular focus on the palaeobotany section – stones on which plants have left their characteristics imprinted – this exhibition (as the title indicates) seeked to overcome dualities and foster relationships of reciprocity. Stones that bear traces of plants and plants that have assumed the state of stone were on display. In the same way, the artist duo itself, in the joint practice it has been developing since 2012, challenged the concept of individual authorship, with works that result from the intervention of both, whether it is a material gesture by one that overlaps with that of the other, or a reflection verbalised by one and expressed visually by the other, as they seek to reflect on ecological and environmental issues calling into question the role of the human being.

In the course of this analytical reflection and sensorial observation, there was no lack of a certain irony, suggested by Ernest Fleury himself (researcher at the Instituto Superior Técnico in Lisbon between 1913 and 1948) who used to enrich his photographic accounts of the mapping of the mineral heritage in Portugal and in the former Portuguese colonies with some element that referred to the human scale. This relationship between the human and the non-human, and the very notion of scale, is revisited by the artists through a complete de-centring and reconfiguration of the human proportion. Starting from the current debates on the Anthropocene that warn about the impact of some human action and the extraction of fossil energies on the climate, the exhibition invited to reflect on the synergies between materials over time and to enchantment with life and geology.

Rewilding in a disenchanting world

Linde De Vroey

Rewilding has recently gained popularity in nature conservation, ecological philosophy, activism, art and a general subculture aiming for a 'cultural rewilding' of human life. This rewilding is seen by some activists, advocates and philosophers as a counter- movement to denounce aspects of modern civilization, like human alienation from nature, instrumental rationality and the domination of the natural world. At the other hand, rewilding is also criticized as just another revival of the romantic obsession with wilderness.

In this paper I show how the framework of disenchantment, elaborated in one of critical theory's foundational texts, the Dialectic of Enlightenment (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1944 and 1947) allows for a new assessment of (cultural) rewilding beyond a naïve optimism or easy criticism on its romantic legacy. I argue that rewilding, both ecological and cultural (through practices of art, literature and lifestyle), formulates philosophical and practical answers to some of the core problems of modernity identified in the Dialectic. Rewilding's premises like self-sustaining

nature and a diminution of human control might serve as counterweights for the Enlightened project of disenchantment and domination.

Far from being a naïve or neo-romantic attempt at 're-enchantment', rewilding thus might become a potential counter-narrative for the master-narrative of disenchanted modernity. By bridging between nature and culture, theory and practice, rewilding might even formulate very concrete suggestions to overcome this modern narrative.

Haunted Pasts and Possible Futures in Ecogeographical Short Fiction: Crisis and Chronotope

Paul Knowles

How can contemporary short story collections facilitate reflections on our relationship with landscapes and the nonhuman world?
In the introduction to Vesper Flights, Helen Macdonald states that: 'We need hard science to establish the rate and scale of these declines, but we need literature, too; we need to communicate what the losses mean'. This paper aims to demonstrate how applying an ecogeographical lens to the study of contemporary ecogeographical short story collections (where all the stories are set in one loci) leads to greater understanding for the need for harmonious relationships between the human world and the nonhuman world. I use the concept of 'ecogeographical' — as 'relating to both ecological and geographical aspects of the environment' — and apply it to Mikhail M. Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope. Bakhtin defines a chronotope as 'time space', which allows literary critics to analyse how the 'intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships' are 'artistically represented in literature'. Bakhtin goes on to state that in a chronotope, 'Time […] thickens […and] becomes artistically visible', and space becomes 'charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history'. By adding ecology and geography to time and space, I want to demonstrate how applying an ecogeographical, ecocritical lens to ecogeographical short story collections can help readers conceptualise and visualise the impact that human behaviour has had on past, present and possible futures of a landscape.

Reshaping relations in NK Jemisin's The Broken Earth Trilogy

Sonji Shah

I would like to explore the subjectification of the earth vis-à-vis the objectification of people in NK Jemisin's *The Broken Earth Trilogy* in order to re-imagine planetary ways of being in community. I take planetarity to mean not a subcategory of a globalised order, but in Spivak's sense, as a system of alterity that abolishes the current hierarchy of existing epistemologies. It requires a radical reconsidering of relations, describing the limits of understanding and otherness. Jemisin's novels take place in a world that goes through recurring apocalypse where geology is not a discipline of many, but rather a living principle, literally vital to the survival of earth's inhabitants. Society in the fictional land, the Stillness, relies on racialised oppression of orogenes, people who have an inherent connection with the earth and are made monstrous in the land's historical narrative which upholds the imperial centre. Jemisin's work plays with geological metaphors to question power structures amongst people and with the earth. Through that, the earth is revealed as affective, its sensibilities shaped historically by life on earth. The fear it evokes is projected subsequently onto the other, orogenes, who themselves are objectified, metaphorically and literally, to maintain a status quo. Drawing on Jane Bennet's work, I will argue that Jemisin's novels suggest impersonal affect to be a necessary dynamic to reshape relations towards planetary communities.

Room 3 – Art Practice and Critical Pegagogy 3: Critical Approaches to Art and Design Teaching: Protests from Inside the University

Dance Protest Pedagogy

Eva Recacha and Tom Hastings

Where does protest materialise in the context of dance education? How can students be empowered to respond to social issues through group work? This paper reports on a four-week undergraduate creative process at London Contemporary Dance School, led in early 2022 by Tom Hastings and the choreographer Eva Recacha. *Protest Project* explored the relationship between dance and protest through the integration of contextual resources and compositional methods, culminating in a sharing of three group performances. Galvanised by worldwide struggles in the current state of emergency, from Black Lives Matter to Climate Crisis, *Protest Project* responded to the work of dance scholars such as Susan Leigh Foster, Danielle Goldman, and Barbara Browning who have demonstrated the historically-specific relationship between direct action, tactics, training, and 'techniques of nonviolent protest'. What does it mean to devise work in a dance studio, a site that is continuous with the extra-protest 'training' sites of Martin Oppenheimer and George Lakey's 1965 *Manual for Direct Action*? Students assumed roles, tested out actions such as die-ins, and (in one instance) produced their own training manual. Delivered on behalf of the collective, this paper reflects on what worked, what didn't work, and what it means to do this work in a contemporary dance institution, itself an exclusionary social space; in the process, we share an archive of supporting documentation (rehearsal footage, meeting minutes, student voice) to further differentiate this pedagogical exploration from existing spaces of rehearsal for direct action in the present conjuncture.

How do Foundation level Art and Design students define creativity - a reflexive thematic analysis

Elain Robertson

As a complex multi-faceted phenomenon, creativity has been the subject of research and discourse dating back to the late 1800's. As a result, there are now numerous definitions and models, yet none have been universally accepted. This lack of consensus continues to be counterproductive from an educational perspective (Glaveanu, 2013) and many questions remain about how to achieve the development of creativity in students (Papaleontiou- Louca et al., 2014). In response to this, it is perhaps timely to consider how students themselves understand the concept of creativity and a critical point to exploring this currently lies with the students emerging from school-based curriculums in a post A-Level learning environment.

As part of a larger research project on creativity within a visual arts FE context, this pilot study specifically asks Foundation level Art and Design students to define their understanding of creativity and to identify how important creativity is to each of them under this definition. Questions currently abound around whether current education prepares students for a world yet to be imagined and the need to prioritise creative thought and creative action has never been more relevant. In order to achieve the educational goals of nurturing critically responsive, creative students, a starting point is to recognise where they are on the continuum of creativity development by identifying how they understand this phenomenon. Using reflexive thematic analysis, responses were analysed using both semantic and latent coding to explore patterns and variations in responses.

Drawing on ideas: diagramming to encourage critical engagement with texts and contexts in Higher Education

Adam Ramejkis and Laura Knight

We work on the Graduate Diploma Graphic Design course at Chelsea College of Arts, challenging learners to consider their motivations, purposes and aspirations as designers.

We recognise that (graphic) design is not just about design - it relates to sociology, philosophy, education, linguistics, communication, and a whole range of other fields of inquiry...

We encourage learners to engage with these fields, exploring - among others - rhetoric in persuasive communication, notions of critical consciousness, and the interplay between values and actions...

We open spaces - physical and (meta)cognitive - for critical and creative inquiry/ies, aiming for these to be experienced as open and non-hierarchical, with all ideas, interpretations, questions and uncertainties valued and valid.

We encourage diagramming as a way of engaging with unfamiliar and, at times, abstract texts and concepts. As diagramming is a familiar and comfortable form of expression, we have found this creates a 'safe space' where learners are in control of how/what they choose to express. We use these diagrams as a catalyst for shared dialogues about understanding, and applying, the concepts being explored.

In this short presentation, after a brief overview of our 'approach', we will share examples of learners' diagrams – and the contexts they relate to. We will showcase examples of how learners have independently developed 'diagramming' into an approach to critically engaging with other texts and concepts. We will also share some feedback from learners, reflecting on the impact this has had on their learning and critical understanding of design and related fields.

Room 4 – Counter and Critical Infrastructures 2: Infrastructural Practices

Three orientations for literature and logistics

Frankie Hines

If contemporary power and contemporary forms of resistance have converged around the opportunities offered by logistical systems—on the one hand, the "just-in-time" supply chain, the "logistics city", and all the machinery of the "logistics revolution" that has cemented its hold since the mid-twentieth century; on the other, the oft-seen and much-discussed impulse to blockade and circumvent those same flows—the significance of this conjuncture for literary studies has yet to be entirely appreciated. This paper will offer a metacritical conspectus of some of the ways literary studies has begun to respond to logistics, outlining and evaluating three orientations. First, the *logistics of literature*: the study of publishing, the book trade, bibliomigrancy and the paratext in motion. Second, the *literature of logistics*: the reading of texts that represent the supply chain and its violence, that deploy the "it-narrative" as a form of cognitive mapping. Third, the *counterlogistics of literature*: the consideration of texts that may in themselves possess a power to erect barricades or disrupt molar or molecular logistical flows. In each case, literary texts are read not simply for their engagement with the dominating logic of the market, but also for their embeddedness in the specific sociomaterial technologies of logistics. Working from these three orientations, the paper concludes by proposing an incipient fourth orientation: a *literature of counterlogistics*, in which political movements that have deployed counterlogistical repertoires are taken as sites of literary production.

The "infrastructural turn" in art: opportunities and contradictions

Jacob Koster

Since the mid-2000s socially engaged art has sought increasingly to go "beyond critique" (Fraser and Rothman 2017). Much contemporary artistic practice strives to make a practical contribution to the transformation of society rather than critique it from the sidelines. One of the ways in which this postcritical tendency manifests is as an engagement with social and institutional "infrastructure." A vocabulary has emerged to describe this form of para-institutional activity. It is referred to as "leveraging" (Sholette 2017), "institutional activism" (Degot 2015), "instituent practices" (Raunig 2006), "critical complicity" (Anagnost 2018), or indeed as the "infrastructural turn" (MTL Collective 2018). There are differences of emphasis. While "leveraging" and "critical complicity" refer to the use of existing institutions, "institutional activism" and "instituent practices" describe the effort to create counterinstitutions and alternative spaces. This paper proposes to look at the "infrastructural turn" in art through the lens of one of its practitioners. Dutch artist Renzo Martens has founded the Institute for Human Activities (IHA): an attempt to connect Congolese artists to Western markets, thus "leveraging" existing art-world infrastructure for the purposes of material redistribution. Interestingly, Martens used to be one of the foremost practitioners of Institutional Critique. In his film Episode 3: Enjoy Poverty he criticizes the position that the IHA would come to occupy many years later. Martens's artistic practice thus allows us to delve into the wider question of what motivates infrastructural concerns. The paper connects the infrastructural turn in art to the disenchantment with critique in the wider culture (as manifested by, for instance, ANT and the "new anarchism").

Abstract Things "Real Abstraction" & Infrastructure

Luke Collison

In an essay published in 1995 Geoffrey C. Bowker remarked casually that his own analysis of infrastructural space-time had "reproduced some key findings" from Alfred Sohn-Rethel's *Intellectual and Manual Labour*. Pre-dating the current revival of Sohn-Rethel's category "real abstraction", Bowker interestingly does not use this specific term, with which Sohn-Rethel has become synonymous. Prompted by this passing comment, my paper attempts to answer the question: is it possible to apply real abstraction to concrete infrastructures? While Sohn-Rethel himself appears to resist such an application, insisting at times on the non-materiality of abstraction and tying real abstraction to commodity exchange, his central account of the formal characteristics of real abstraction seem equally applicable to the concrete forms of utilities such as roads, water, electricity. If the provision of water via aqueduct in Ancient Rome was not determined by exchange relations, then is Sohn-Rethel's narrow account of the origins of real abstraction adequate?

In this paper, I reconstruct Sohn-Rethel's concept of real abstraction, attempting to free it from the exchange relation as such. Thus, like Alberto Toscano and others, I propose an extension of real abstraction beyond Sohn-Rethel's framework, in this case in order to utilise its radical rethinking of abstraction as a lens for theorising and hence understanding infrastructures and their activity in the world.

Room 5 – The End of Biopolitics 1

The End of Biopolitics? Health Security, Body, and Immunity

Shane Day

The COVID-19 pandemic is raging around the world. As of 17th March 2022, there have been approximately 466 million confirmed cases and 6.07 million deaths. However, different countries have different pandemic prevention patterns. In Taiwan, fewer than 22,000 people have been diagnosed, and there have been only 853 deaths from COVID-19. This study looks at the effects of Taiwan's COVID-19 vaccine biopower and vaccine use on power relations in society, to understand how the vaccine pandemic prevention system in Taiwan was established, and how did all sorts of problems arise. This study focuses on vaccine technology, and analyses the governance of vaccines, the political nature of vaccines, and their mutual relations under the current pandemic prevention model of Taiwan's political and medical systems. This paper also compares different models of pandemic prevention and governance between the East and the West for the COVID-19 pandemic, i.e. living with virus v.s. zero Covid approach, and its truth discourses, decentralised intervention strategies, and decentralised governance phenomena.

Performative Dēmos in Pandemic: South Korea

Hey Yun Kang

This paper rethinks the people and state power during the Covid-19. South Korea provides an interesting point of departure. Along with Singapore and Taiwan, South Korea has been praised as a successful case in a number of policy papers and in the media. Yet, general concern about surveillance and social control intensified by technological tools have also been raised. These concerns highlight reservations about public participation in government efforts. The Western media, particularly in the U.S., have described the cooperative behaviors of Korean people as the "Asiatic" characteristic of "deference to authority." This description often stands out in contrast to defiant behaviors of people in the U.S. and (Western) Europe against government policies aimed at pandemic prevention. This frame shows us a contradiction between freedom and security, democratic and authoritarian practices, open and controlled societies, providing a perception as if we have a choice between these two. Rather than choosing, I suggest a new frame that illuminates the people as performative. This frame provides a different look of popular practices in South Korea as well as in the U.S. and others. It changes the view that describes the Korean people as an object of security apparatus and risk management of state power. Rather, the public debate on deciding a calculable measure of limiting freedom shows a performative moment.

13:00-14:00 – Lunch Break (food not provided)

14:00-15:30 – Parallel Sessions 3

Room 1 – Sticky Matters 3: Viscosity (Workshop)

WORKSHOP: Gooey Care

Becky Lyon with Amanda Rice and Rhona Eve Clews (Squishy Sessions)

Being "stuck" or a "sticky" situation ordinarily implies reaching an impasse or knot of complex difficulty, however how might we reclaim, reform or otherwise stay-with-the-goo as means of practising care?

Taking Audre Lorde's invitation to "consciously study how to be tender with each other until it becomes a habit" how might we tenderly-pulverise the rigid into something more yielding and pliable? Where the cap-het-pat privilege the ordered, boxed in, neat and classified how might thinking-with-goo sully the edges, seep through categories and otherwise agitate the crevices?

Over a 90 minute session we will explore mess-making-as-method, outsourcing thinking from the mind to the body and associated materials. Including:

- Opening with an embodied warm-up which resensitises us to our inner goo
- Dialoguing with sticky materials like dough to explore (or trouble) edges
- Developing codes and gestures for cultivating care-fullness through "gooey transmissions" with each other
- Bringing in critical theory on the subject including Melody Jue and Rafio Ruiz's "saturation epistemologies", Marina Warner's Quest for Ectoplasm, Deboleena Roy's Molecular Feminism with our hands in viscous matters and sludgy residues in the periphery
- Thinking what role materials could play in the project of cultivating care

Room 2 – To Be Monstrous 2: The Monster – Critical Approaches

Witches, Cyborgs, and the Dissociative Turn in Mainstream Feminism
Maddi Kurchik

This paper considers what I have identified as two key figures in the story of western feminism, the witch and the cyborg, and the emergence of a new, arguably dangerous ghostly figure. The witch was created, hunted, and killed during the transition from Feudalism to Capitalism (Federici, 2004). She is an artefact of an often-over-looked genocide in Europe, where women with expertise, or who spoke out against the men in their communities, were accused of evil black magic. And so, the witch represents the intertwined-ness of gender with capital. Unlike the witch, who emerged as an object of persecution, the cyborg was made in the midst of the optimistic tech utopianism of the dotcom era. The cyborg is a creature beyond gender; they are a creature set free from the hierarchies and systems of oppression of the past by technology (Haraway, 2006). The cyborg exists at the convergence of technology and gender, whereby technology is triumphant over gender. However, the cyborg represents a whimsical aspiration that has not, and will not, come to fruition. Patriarchal dominance persists.
The witch and the cyborg have both been conveniently co-opted by Neoliberal Feminism. Women and girls wear pink t-shirts exulting, "Yes, I am a Witch", and women who work in the technology sector believe their personal ambition and success is synonymous with the emancipation of women around the world. This paper explores how the witch and cyborg produced the girl boss, and how girl boss feminism is being replaced by a dissociative feminism (Clein, 2019; Peyser, 2022), producing a new creature who is not monstrous, but hollowed-out, soul-less, and indifferent: the ghost.

Inter"rupt"ing Routine: A Study of Female Subjectivity, Silence, and (Radical) Vegetal Futures
Sona Srivastava

When Yeong-hye, the protagonist of Han Kang's novel, *The Vegetarian*, makes a dietary choice independent of any prior discussion with her husband, and maternal family, everyone is taken by surprise. The choice of giving up meat and animal products (eggs and milk) induces much anxiety amongst her kin, who fail to rationalise her aberrant behaviour and see reason in her "dreams" – ultimately incarcerating her in a psychic hospital.

The disobedient act of giving up meat and ultimately food itself along with Yeong-hye's refusal to "speak" about this choice trigger the action in the novel since the act of eating with the family provides a ready setting in which "individual personalities develop, kinship obligations emerge, and the customs of the group are reinforced" (Fiddes). We routinely

use food to express relationships among ourselves and with our environment. The obtaining and consuming of food can be an eloquent statement of shared ideology.

Yeong-hye's refusal of meat, and her refusal to inhabit her "fleshly body" is seen as an "interruption" that puts the "orderly existence" of her husband in disorder.

These acts from the mouth – eating, and speaking form the crux of the paper and serve as the starting point to delineate how female subjectivity is informed by the absence or rather the presence of "silence", and how such radical acts serve to pronounce the underlying inequalities. What does Yeong-hye's "silence" tell us about our entangled, sticky living(s)? How is a womxn's "silence" construed as revolt or compliance with the "patriarchal norm"? What does Yeong-hye's becoming a tree tell us about our own existence within a patriarchal, and material world? How is this arboreal imagination a radical re-imagining of getting un-stuck from our material bodies? These are some of the questions that my paper will answer.

Grief is the Thing with Monsters? Traumatic Embodiment

Katharina Donn

This paper explores figurations of the monstrous through the lens of trauma studies. That the traumatized "body keeps the score" (Bessel van der Kolk 1995 (215) has been a key argument in the exploration of traumatic memory since late 19th century psychoanalysts began exploring the corporeal and psychosomatic symptoms of traumatic shock. Yet this engulfs the body in what Dori Laub saw as the "tyranny of the past" (Laub 1992b, 79) which makes it hard to live in the present and nigh-impossible to imagine a future. However, a future there has to be. I propose that the idea of monstrosity offers a way to acknowledge and imagine the human body to be vulnerable, grieving, and future-bound at the same time. Such potential has been inscribed into the monstrous since Bakhtin agued for the subversive power inherent in the grotesque. I will explore this in the context of 1920s surrealist artistic practice, focusing on the 'corps exquisite,' whose riotous vitality remained steeped in vulnerability. As bodies of grief, these monstrous formations' energy pulses towards life, though this might be a fractured life amidst death. But they find in their very vulnerability, in their deformity and injury, a way to imagine a human body that cannot be marshalled to the drums of war. What happens when we assume the vulnerable human body to be a chimera? How could stitched-together bodies help us to create an alternative blueprint for the human in times of breakdown?

Room 3 – Misunderstandings and In/Justice 2: Mistranslations: Misconceptions and Miscommunications

Misinterpretation as a Consequence of Law but not In/Justice

Marigó Oulis

Swedish law does not acknowledge unjust enrichment as a category of law. As a general rule, one cannot make a successful claim for unjust enrichment regardless of whether the claim is made in or out of contract. If a claim is not based on contract or on a wrongdoing (*delict*) it is likely not a claim that can render compensation.

Duncan Kennedy has once stated that unjust enrichment fulfils the same task in common law as *culpa in contrahendo* does in civil law namely as a means to overcome the difficulties of "making it into a category". In this case it bridges the gap between "contract" and "not contract". An acknowledgement of unjust enrichment as a stand-alone claim would inevitably strengthen ownership/property rights. Meanwhile, a lot of human interaction does not fit into the categories

of contract or wrongdoing and could use a third category. In such circumstances how can the best translation possible between reality and law be made and, perhaps more importantly, what do we do with whatever is left? What happens when we remain rigid in our view of the categories? Does not a hard division between concepts create injustices and misunderstandings? The translation of human interaction into law and to make it fit into the legal system seem to inevitably create injustices and misunderstandings. How do we deal with the consequences, and would an attempt to rectify the situation by the inclusion of a new category undo such misunderstandings? And finally – is the result more justice?

Concerns on (mis)understandings of English planning law, and exploring the alternative scope of a Bergsonian form of law

Myles Bartoli

In discussions of English planning policy, there are often calls for rationalised certainty, most recently seen with proposed zoning and design codes in the (now paused) 2020 Planning White Paper reforms. Also, in established contemporary theories of urban planning, ranging from Faludi's rational-comprehensive model, to Habermas' communicative rationality, there is the appeal to, often Kantian influenced, rational thought. However, English planning law is based on common law and discretion, and when critically seen against the attempts of systematised legal theory such as by Kelsen, Hart, Habermas, Rawls, and Dworkin, the planning legal system in practice does not readily map onto their Kantian inspired law and planning theories.

Expanding on Alexandre Lefebvre's critique of Hart's, Habermas', and Dworkin's Kantian influenced systems of law based on 'closed' understandings of time, this talk instead explores the scope of a Bergsonian form of law, based on an 'open' understanding of time as an alternative to understanding English planning law. I forward that a Bergsonian theory of law, holding an ontology of open, creative time, an appreciation of the generative aspect of law, and in which intuition plays a vital and methodological role for discerning and defining particular value and materiality needed for adjudication. I argue this not only maps more truly onto principles of English planning law than traditional attempts to provide rational justification and methodology, but also offer planners an ethical methodology for critical questioning and judgment to lead to more morally substantial justifications in planning adjudication.

Approximative Justice and Cross-border Evidence

Anna Waldenström

With inspiration from Lyotard's The Differend, evidence may be understood as a cognitive phrase which is subsumed under the law understood as a normative genre of discourse. Accordingly, judicial procedure may be understood as a phrase regimen regimenting the structure of the judicial fact-finding. When evidence is taken across borders the relativity of evidence causes disruptions in evidence's role in the formation of a just judgment. A comparative study of Swedish and French civil procedural fact-finding shows the impact of different forms of fact-finding regimentation on the sense of the evidence and thus its capacity to let the parties be heard and the judge to have knowledge of the case in cross-border civil procedure. This puts critical light on the EU ambitions to increase access to justice through tighter cooperation between the Member States in matters of cross-border taking of evidence. Can a conception of justice as approximative be a response to the indeterminacy of evidence and be seen to seek justice as a legal artistic arrangement of the constitutive parts of the case?

From Suspended Dialectics to Autopoiesis

Michael Badu

Writing during a period when faith in modernist architecture was in decline (1970s), Marxist Philosopher Massimo Cacciari recognised that progressive capacity of Modernism had been exhausted, and perhaps had never even been realised. Cacciari located the source of this 'crisis' in Hegel's dialectical theory of history in which, a 'World Spirit' 'sublates' thesis and antithesis; 'self-same' and 'other', ensuring perpetual human freedom and progress. Thus, Cacciari's solution was to search for and identify the architectural corollary of a 'suspended dialectics', in line with modern experience, dwelling on the 'Negative' to the exclusion of positivism and synthesis, in order to find a position from which to 'start again'.

Cacciari found this corollary in the early work of Adolf Loos, however, Cacciari's approach shared a deficiency with the Hegelian model, namely the silencing or ignoring of experiences and perspectives that lay on the margins, chiefly manifested by his complete exclusion from study, of the only avant-garde project designed for a person of colour, the Parisian villa designed by Loos for Josephine Baker in 1927.

Drawing on my current PhD research, my paper will discuss the ways in which Black scholars have extended the critique of Hegel by dwelling on the 'subjectivities of other', rather than those of 'self-same'. In this connection I will present Sylvia Wynter's theory of Autopoiesis (constructing one's own story, where it is not taken account of by Master narrative) and present a new reading of Adolf Loos' architectural work based on this premise.

Room 4 – Social Media Empires

Connectivity and Murderous Humanitarianism

Christine Goding-Doty

This paper interrogates how the digital functions as a new stage of coloniality, as another phase in the afterlife of empire. Coloniality describes the modes by which infrastructures and relationships of power born out of colonialism survive the moment of formal decolonization. This includes the political and economic policies of globalization, as well as "liberal initiatives of inclusion, among other forms of social, economic, and political control" (Maldonado-Torres). The absorptive power of liberal inclusion is present in the zeal for internet connectivity and its various justifications—as a democratizing force associated with the expansion of participatory media; and as a human right as Mark Zuckerberg claimed in Facebook's 2013 whitepaper. This paper reassesses the rise of participatory media, social media companies, and Facebook in particular as emblematic of digital coloniality. I read across Facebook's role in the Rohingya genocide of Myanmar, content moderation in the Philippines, and Mark Zuckerberg's personal expropriation of native land in Hawaii. In these examples, rather traditional techniques of colonial violence are hidden by PR narratives meant to renew belief in Facebook's humanitarianism. Rather than explaining these as unintended, aberrant consequences of Facebook's otherwise noble mission, by centralizing the concept of coloniality this paper shows that the notion of empire that emerges from European colonialism takes the form of technological adaptation.

Resonance! Not Redundancy – Against the Social Media Empire of Identity

Christoph Brunner

In recent years a resurgence of the term identity haunts social media platforms under the auspices of the Identitarian Movement (IM). The IM uses the conception of identity as part of their online media platforms' operationality, disseminating far right contents through apparently "cool" or "hip" interface designs and distinct aesthetics. As part of their media strategies, they disseminate signs, symbols and logos as identificatory markers while promoting identity as

something that is not fixed but in flux and that needs to be treated as a "dynamic reality." At the same time, their conceptual roots of identity (referring to Alain de Benoist and Henning Eichberg) are based on the assumption of terminal ethnic differences. The tension between an apparent fluidity and the requirement to maintain clear ethnic or racializing points of orientation align neatly with contemporary social media empires promoting infinite connectivity and a cult of the individual. While mainstream social media platforms increasingly ban right-wing content, the building of "alternative media platforms" is a crucial goal for transnational networks of the (new) right. This paper will engage some of these platforms along their individualizing aesthetics that replicate the quasi-colonial distribution of the sensible of mainstream social media while claiming "real freedom" of expression. I consider such an aesthetics as generative of sensory redundancy at the core of an individualizing operational logic of social media empires. In contrast, I will also explore practices and techniques foregrounding resonances of differences delinked from the apparatuses of aesthetic capture of redundant social media empires of identity.

Online Streaming as Culture Industry – Updating the Analysis for the 21st Century

Guilel Treibed

The pandemic has led many of us, intensely than ever before, into the more general process of the digitalization of our lives which has been going on for the last two decades. Whatever aspect of life resistant to the passage online was, for a time, simply suspended. In some instances, this process was reversed, but there are good reasons to doubt it can be forestalled much longer, covid or otherwise. What are the implications of such a process of digitalization on such a massive scale? The rise of an algorithmic society was made possible via the data produced and gathered through our mobile phones and laptops and their incessant use since the early 2000s. The pandemic gave it a 'booster shot'.

In this presentation, I aim to rescue the analysis of the industry culture offered by Adorno and Horkheimer, and later Marcuse, to show that our predicament, specifically in the aftermath of covid, is a dire one. If there are any winners from the pandemic, online streaming platforms such as Netflix, Amazon Prime or Disney Plus would surely be among them. However, these streaming platforms are not just another way of watching television. They are a whole new way of entertainment. Given that they produce and offer what is being already watched, they contribute to social fragmentation and social bubbles.

Moreover, though much less apparent than classical television channels, they have an ideology that regulates the availability of programs and, in the case of Netflix, is incessantly repeated in endless shows. In the paper, I suggest that we must re-activate and re-use the analysis of the culture industry following the early Frankfurt School thinkers no matter what the pessimistic conclusion may be. Individually tailored entertainment curated (so to speak) by the powerful algorithms of these streaming services and the constant availability of their on-demand programs is creating a culture industry on scales that Adorno, Horkheimer, or Marcuse did not even imagine in their worst nightmares.

Room 5 – The End of Biopolitics 2

Sounding Incarceration: Decolonising Biopolitical Musics

Erin Johnson-Williams

My historical research largely focuses on the imperial legacies of British music education, and how colonial forms of sonic discipline – such as the imposition of English-language hymnody in South African concentration camps, for example – enacted forms of what I call 'audible

biopolitical control'. Drawing on late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century British theories of biopolitical surveillance, concentration, and racial degeneration, I examine how during the South African War (1899–1902) the British colonial concentration camp became a heightened site of spaces of enforced 'sonic congregating' as a way to negotiate new imperial, carceral technologies that administered the life and death of colonised subjects. Colonial singing, in this context, thus became a sonic means of responding to, reinforcing, and resisting new, racialised forms of mass incarceration, through its ability to mediate trauma within spaces of biopolitical containment.

In bringing this historical context into dialogue with the present – and, indeed, with the possibility of 'The End of Biopolitics', I am interested in how the imperial legacies of western music as a form of 'biopolitical control' persist across postcolonial musical practices, both in Britain and South Africa. Neo-imperial forms of music-making, such as the enduring presence of choirs and orchestras in school education, for example, risk enacting anachronistic forms of biopolitical surveillance of the 'disciplined / colonised body' today. Decolonising the historical legacies of sonic biopolitics for the present will place the 'freedom' of the living, musical body within current discourses about musical authority and mental health, safety and security.

When the State Plays God: A Typology of Theopower in Prison
Shirley Le Penne

Life sentence is a form a death sentence – a form of dying without death, until the very end. But what if the state changed its mind? What happens when a death sentence is commuted into a life sentence, a life sentence overridden into a death sentence, and either sentence overturned, resulting in release? What effect does the move from one form of sentencing to another have on inmates' experiences of life and death? And what does it tell us on the state's own conception of life and death in prison and its role in their management?

While life and death sentences have been subject to extensive research, not much has been said about the transitory moves between life and death that some inmates experience over the course of their imprisonment. This paper offers a typology of the various ways life and death come at play within the realm of incarceration. Theoretically, I move from Foucault's biopower and Mbembe's necropower to another conception of power, that I coin theopower. Not merely focusing on the state's regulation of life (Foucault), nor on the state's power over one's death (Mbembe), theopower aims at depicting the state's terminal prerogatives over the in-betweenness of life and death and the afterlife. Empirically, capturing the lives of those living on the edge, I use the concepts on life and death sentence, civil and social death, virtual sentencing, and solitary confinement, to show how the state "plays God" by institutionalizing life and death punishments.

15:30-16:00 – Break

16:00-17:30 – Parallel Sessions 4

Room 1 – Art Practice and Critical Pedagogy 4

Sweet Maria Monument; Anti-performance, collective care and performativity
Raju Rage

This anti/performance occurred in December 2018 at the Kochi- Muziris Biennale, with three artists Aryakrishnan (Aryan), Gee Semmalar and Raju Rage. Sweet Maria monument was in

fact not a monument in the conventional sense of the word, it was an anti-monument - a reclamation of the fullness of our lives from the everyday necropolitics that condemns our bodies as disposable - as not yet dead/not deserving of life.

Our 'performance' was part of our femmage to Sweet Maria and there were many others - as transgender and queer artists but also friends in this exchange, we decided that instead of doing a conventional performance, we would centre – three transnational South Asian trans and gender non-conforming people across caste sharing acts of collective care and conversation about what it means to be queer and trans in our contexts, within India but also within the diaspora. This did not however, come with any representational claims to the experience of being trans/queer. We wanted to explore queerness "as the possibility of producing new meanings and new communities. It is a term which could mobilise differences, rather than sameness".

Metamorphic Pods, Wrappers As floor Art: Performance, Transformation and Knowledge Transfer Through a Site Specific Interactive Art Installation in The Grafton Shopping Centre, Cambridge

Mary-Jane Montgomerie-House

Metamorphic Pods, Wrappers As floor Art : Performance, Transformation and Knowledge Transfer Through a Site Specific Interactive Art Installation in The Grafton Shopping Centre, Cambridge is one outcome from my practice based PhD research from a set of seven Installations, which interconnect through non verbal visual narratives. A wrapper cloth is a two yard rectangular piece of cloth which is wrapped around the body and worn as part of a fashion ensemble.

This **temporal** Installation navigated **hybrid sustainable** wrapper cloths through participatory interactive performative interplay with a **plurality** of outcomes. In simplistic terms wrapper cloths convey **"colourful stories ".** Wrapper cloths are material agents which metamorphose through their multifunctional physicality and communicate through their embodied materiality histories, a pluralistic plethora of multi metaphors. The Installation site, a vacant shop, private, empty space with no material commodities transformed into a communal, interactive, **social engagement** hub with creative play, art making and theatrical role play. Initial participatory enquiry, with resistance, changed into participation with mindfulness and **holistic well being**. This presentation explores how Wrappers, go through a process of performative **transformation** from fashion body cloths into **verbal floor art** with **political** and **cultural ideologies** interconnected with **identity.** Learning as an all **inclusive** social collective in a non traditional/**non hierarchical** setting was a point of reference resulting in **knowledge transfer**. Crossing boundaries by deliberate acquisition of a non typical yet intentional **"site specific"** space and **rejuvenation** are also discussed, including, the exploration of narratives as 'non verbal' communication within the hybrid sustainable wrapper cloths.

Room 2 – Hair Club 2

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION: HAIR CLUB leads a community discussion with the presenters from Panel 1 and all attending participants.

Room 3 – Negativity in Contemporary Continental Thought 4: Power

Foucault on Negativity, Violence and Myth

Barry Stocker

One way in which negativity as embodied suffering appears in Foucault is through punishment, whether in the horror of the execution of Damiens that opens *Discipline and Punish*, or the non-spectacular disciplining of the body in the prison. This contrast can be followed in Foucault, back to the way he thinks of madness in relation to Nietzschean theory of tragedy in *History of Madness*, or followed forward in the place compelled veridical speech has in later lectures. The transition from an antique tragic understanding of madness to an understanding of madness as unreason, anticipates the transition from spectacular to disciplinary punishment. It can also be seen in the ancient Athenian transition from a mythical understanding of justice to a a focus on veridical speech. In all cases, there is a rationalistic negation of mythical violence. The spectacular violence of public execution, the awareness of madness as a form of reason outside normal experience, the idea of divine intervention in trial by contest in archaic Greece are all examples of mythical forces negating normal experience of the conscious world. Disciplinarity, biopolitics, legal and psychiatric veridical speech are all forms of negation of myth and of the body. The body, and mind, are subjected to more internal negation compare with the external nature of violence in the mythically oriented world. This is combined with themes of self-care, aesthetics of existence, singularity. and the modern as subjective, in Foucault which offer possible alternatives to negativity.

The subject of psychoanalysis against the pressure of positivity

Krzysztof Świrek

According to well-known argumentation of Michel Foucault, power should be understood not as restrictive and negative, but rather as enabling and productive. It is especially true in the case of neoliberal power, which seeks to mold subjects that are innovative, resilient and able to cope with various kinds of stress-inducing environments. Neoliberal power tends to treat negativity (all forms of suffering and 'maladjustment') as a kind of error that signals a neglect on the part of the subject: if the subject suffers, it has clearly neglected some sort of care for self. Coaching and therapy works to provide the neoliberal subject with resilience.

Against this form of coercion, psychoanalysis offers a model of subjectivity that is centered around negativity and introduces negativity as a heart of subjective experience. We 'are' subjects as long as we can discern certain spheres that doesn't work in our adjustment to social life. Those difficult experiences are coded in psychoanalytic language as the privileged areas of subjectivity against the ideological subjectivity of rational economic agents. Drawing on psychoanalytic theory (and not on therapeutic practice), this paper aims at presenting how alienation (negativity and suffering found in subjective experience) can deliver the subject form the stranglehold of neoliberal positivity.

The aim of this paper is to show that Foucault's positive theory of power and psychoanalytic negative theory of the subject doesn't have to be treated as exclusionary – in fact, the latter is able to show interesting possibilities of resistance to the former.

Room 4 – Measurement and Surveillance of Practice 4 / Joint panel with Social Media Empires

The Panopticon Reinvented: Resisting Digital Surveillance through an Anti-Colonial Lens

Anthony Longo

Digital surveillance has become an inherent means of modern society's institutions to perform their tasks. The quantity in which people can be and are being traces by surveillance technologies today is certainly a realization of digital technology. The question remains however if, besides

these quantitative differences between analogue and digital forms of surveillance, the nature and function of surveillance themselves have fundamentally changed due to the rise of digital and social media. Many academics have turned to Michel Foucault's analysis of disciplinary power in modern society to examine the transformations that digital technology might or might not have caused for the nature of surveillance. His concept of 'panopticism', which is central to his *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of Prison* (1977), has been a widely adopted starting point for such inquiries. One aspect that Foucault himself and subsequently contemporary scholars have overlooked is that the panopticon was a colonial invention. In this paper, I will show the relevance of bringing in a colonial perspective to understanding how surveillance has changed in the digital age. To do so, I will bring in the concept of 'data colonialism' complemented with a Foucauldian analysis of the repressive and productive aspects of algorithmic power. Based on a reflection on the relationship and tensions between power, visibility and resistance in Foucault's work, I end with an analysis of the possibilities and limits of resistance in the contemporary surveillance age.

Become Indecipherable

Nine Yamamoto-Masson

In this performance-lecture on the poetics of disappearance in response to disciplining tech-mediated state surveillance, I take inspiration from the animal world, quantum nanotechnology, and antifascist rebels worldwide.

In cultures that privilege the visual, vision and visibility have currency as metaphors for political existence and social dynamics, as modalities of being that can be affirming and liberatory, or oppressive. As modalities of existence in society, the variable spectrum of visibility and invisibility is an effect of oppressive social hierarchies with material/ising effects on those being seen (or not) and those watching. After having been mechanised, vision has become militarised and weaponised. Data-based panopticism is deployed to discipline and interpellate those within its digital field of data-fed computer "vision" and jurisdiction. Edouard Glissant's demand for the right to opacity remains very powerful, also in the context of the data-driven panopticon and necropolitical technologies of subjugation for those who tend to be oversurveilled, victims of stalking, pressured to remain visible for fear of being criminalised. Existence in "dead angles" or "dead zones" as an intentional resistant strategy can mean freedom or subjugation. We demand, we take the right to be indecipherable.

This (hybrid?) presentation is based on my academic research, art practice based on artistic research as methodology and format, and personal experience, including various mutual aid organising and fiEld rEseArCh I conducted in NYC during the 2020 Black liberation abolitionist uprising (I ended up becoming a target of state surveillance myself, like many others close to the vigils and protests)

Room 5 – Autotheory 3

Genre Anxiety: Why form is doing such heavy lifting in early 21st century cultural conversations

Libby King

Narrative forms are always in flux and responding to concerns resonating at the time. While blended genres have a long history, the early 21st century has seen a flourishing in both the creation and popularity of blended forms. From autotheory, fictocriticism, autofiction, autoethnography, and experimental memoir, the proliferation of terms to describe these forms can feel as numerous as the texts themselves.

This presentation/workshop will unpack why blended literatures have emerged as such powerful storytelling tools for this moment. It will highlight examples of how blended genres intrinsically redefine the boundaries of some of the most important conversations of the new century, including the moving lines between: representation/appropriation; lived experience/institutional expertise; omniscient observers/narcissistic participants; facts/fictions; authenticity/deception; and public/private spaces.

Examples will be drawn from Maggie Nelson, Karl Ove Knausgård, Billy-Ray Belcourt, Amitiv Ghosh, and Shelia Heti to show how form in the early 21st century is as important as content to the meaning communicated and why creating genre anxiety is such an effective cultural intervention for this moment.

Meaning in Meaninglessness – Analysing the Ethics of Camus' Absurd in the Field of Autotheory

Audrick D'Mello

Albert Camus is one of the most representative figures of the philosophy of the "absurd" or "absurdism", which believes that life has no meaning and that human beings exist in a purposeless, chaotic universe, that simply exists and is indifferent to people's lives. Like Sisyphus from Greek mythology, we are forever carrying that existential boulder, all the while knowing that it is doomed to go downhill, rendering our life's work meaningless. Our condition might be tragic, but Camus considered that this exact condition hides a blessing in disguise: life does not have a meaning, but we are free to attribute it any meaning we want, and this spills over into the integration of the personal with the theoretical as well. The paper explores the ethics of Camus' Absurd in the field of Autotheory. It begins by analysing how Camus came about with his idea of morality as a way of understanding reality around him. It then dissects his interpretation of Ethics in all its ambiguity, subjectivity, and contradiction to established thought of his time. It finally tries to comprehend his style of thinking in the context of theory and its critical reflection on the self.

Autotheory's wilderness: an exploration of parrhesiastic landscapes

Maria Gil Ulldemolins and Kris Pint

For Foucault, parrhesia, the ancient Greek form of truth-speaking, is relational. This relationality exists between one and others, as well as within oneself: in order to establish any 'truth', parrhesia demands to self-examine and align one's discourse (logos), with one's way of living (bios). For this presentation, we propose a creative-critical collaboration that links autotheoretical and parrhesiastic practices.

On the one hand, we understand the bios not as a singular way of life, but as a set of kinships, obligations, relations, and vicinities – including the unconscious of the pulsional body, as well as the interaction with others, and the more-than-human. On the other hand, we rely on a polyphonic, transdisciplinary logos, a source of experimental techniques and devices that shatter the fallacy of an authentic, isolated, transparent discourse on oneself. We want to combine these in an exploration of an imaginary of 'wilderness'. Not as a posthuman fantasy, but as a subjectivizing atlas of one's inner and outer landscapes.

We will exchange and experiment with our own bios, and also borrow from a vast array of sources: from mystics, to the Romantics, to contemporary ecological thinking, and post-apocalyptic science fiction. We do not consider autotheory as merely a contemporary symptom of what Foucault called the 'confessing animal'. To us, it can be a generative tool for exploration

and acknowledgement of multiplicities, inside and outside; and a form of resistance to encroaching pressures that domesticate, deplete or gentrify our inner worlds.

17:30 – Post-Conference Drinks at Local Pub (location TBC)