

21-24/06/2017 UNIVERSITY OF BASEL

11th Conference of the European Society for Literature, Science and the Arts

ETOPATHIES

Programme



11th Conference of the European Society for Literature, Science and the Arts (SLSAeu)

Theme: Empathies

Host: University of Basel, Switzerland

Dates: 21-24/06/2017, pre-conference workshops on 20/06/2017

Contact: slsa-eu@unibas.ch

Site Chairs: Manuela Rossini (President SLSAeu) and Markus Wild (Professor of Philosophy)

Programme & Organisation Committee (in alphabetical order):

Ridvan Askin (American Literature), Anne-Sophie Bories (French Literature), Urs Breitenstein (Aeneas Sylvius Foundation), Franziska Gygax (American Literature), Marco Caracciolo (English Literature; Literary Theory), Daniela Keller (English Literature), Hugues Marchal (French Literature), Chris Mueller (CompLit; Critical Theory), Shirley Mueller (Biology; Science Editing), Seline Reinhardt (Religious Studies, MDPI), Manuela Rossini (Vice Rectorate for Research), Susanne Schmetkamp (Philosophy), Julia Wentzlaff (assistant to chairs, booklet design); Markus Wild (Philosophy), Andrea Zimmermann (Gender Studies).

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About SLSAeu (101)

WELCOME!

Welcome to EMPATHIES: The 11th Conference of the SLSAeu!

For a number of years now, empathy has been a central topic of public and academic debate and research. It is the subject of artistic, moral, and psychological reflections and commands interest from the humanities and hard sciences alike, often being a driving motor of knowledge production.

It is time to take stock and consider the heterogeneity and complexity of empathy, the values different societies and cultures have attached to it, and the various approaches that frame its investigations.

The SLSAeu Conference 2017 EMPATHIES at the University of Basel provides a cross-disciplinary platform for the interrelated subthemes: (1) Empathy, Morality, Ethics; (2) Empathy, Narrative, Imagination; (3) Empathy and the Nonhuman; (4) Collective Empathy.

On behalf of SLSAeu, we wish you many empathic encounters over the next few days!

Yours,

SLSAeu Core Team

Franziska Gyga, Hugues Marchal, Manuela Rossini, Julia Wentzlaff, Markus Wild

Keynote Speakers

Jean Decety



Jean Decety is a neuroscientist specializing in developmental, affective and social neuroscience. His research focuses on the cognitive and neurobiological mechanisms underpinning social cognition, particularly emotion, empathy, moral reasoning, altruism, pro-social behaviour, and more generally interpersonal processes. He is the Irving B. Harris Distinguished Service Professor at the University of Chicago, Co-director of the Brain Research Imaging Center at UChicago Medicine, Head of the Social Cognitive Neuroscience Laboratory and Director of the Child NeuroSuite at UChicago.

Jesse Prinz



Jesse Prinz is a Distinguished Professor of Philosophy at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York as well as a Research Professor in the Chapel Hill Philosophy Department. He is one of the most important philosophers of mind, having made a name for himself in the field of empirically informed philosophy. "Empirically informed philosophy" is one of the most significant developments of recent years and of great importance for our understanding of the area where philosophy and empirical sciences intersect.

Jackie Leach Scully



Jackie Leach Scully held research fellowships in oncology and neurobiology at research institutes in Switzerland, before helping to establish the first interdisciplinary unit for bioethics at the University of Basel. In 2008 she joined PEALS (the Policy, Ethics and Life Sciences Research Centre) as Director of Research and is now its Executive Director. Her research interests are in the regulation of genetic and reproductive medicine, and in the more general areas of bioethics, disability, the social construction of moral issues, and in feminist and psychoanalytic approaches to understanding moral processes.

Reading / Talk: Denise Riley



Denise Riley is active across the full range of poetic life - poet, essayist, teacher, editor, researcher - and beyond, with her interests extending to politics, history, philosophy, feminist theory and visual art. She lectures at the University of East Anglia in several of these areas, and is attached to the European Graduate School. Her visiting positions have included A.D. White Professor at Cornell University in the USA, Writer in Residence at the Tate Gallery in London, and Visiting Fellow at Birkbeck College in the University of London.

Special Guests of Workshops

Four workshops for doctoral and postdoctoral researchers will take place on 20 June:

- The Cultural Politics of Empathy
- Narrative Empathy
- Empathy, Animals, Film
- Empathy and Ethics at the End of Life: Perspectives from the Medical Humanities

Cultural Politics: Carolyn Pedwell



Carolyn Pedwell joined the University of Kent in 2014 where she is Director of Studies for Cultural Studies and Media as well as joint Head of Internationalisation at the School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research. She recently completed an AHRC Fellowship on the links between transnational politics and the 'turn to affect', which led to the publication of 'Affective Relations: The Transnational Politics of Empathy' (2014). Other research interests: embodiment and embodied practices; theories of habit and habituation; digital culture and sociality; transnational and cross-cultural theory and methods; feminist, postcolonial and queer theory.

Cultural Politics: Chris Weedon



Chris Weedon, professor emerita, former chair of Critical Theory, Cultural Studies and Women's Studies at Cardiff University. Her books include 'Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory' (1987) and 'Feminism, Theory and the Politics of Difference' (1999), 'Identity and Culture: Narratives of Difference and Belonging' (2004), and 'Gender, Feminism and Fiction in Germany 1840-1914' (2007). She has also edited 'Die Frau in der DDR: An Anthology of Women's Writing from the German Democratic Republic' (1988), and 'Postwar Women's Writing in German: Feminist Critical Approaches' (1997), and co-edited 'Gendering Border Studies' (2010).

Animals: Lori Gruen



Lori Gruen, professor and chair of philosophy, professor of environmental studies, and professor of feminist, gender and sexuality studies, is the author of a new book, 'Entangled Empathy: An Alternative Ethic for Our Relationships' with Animals. In this book, she argues that rather than focusing on animal rights, we ought to work to make our relationships with animals right by empathetically responding to their needs, interests, desires, vulnerabilities, hopes and unique perspectives. Pointing out that we are already entangled in complex and life-altering relationships with other animals, Gruen guides readers through a new way of thinking about and practicing animal ethics.

Narrative Empathy: Fritz Breithaupt



Fritz Breithaupt is a professor of Germanic Studies, adjunct professor in Comparative Literature, and affiliated professor of Cognitive Science at Indiana University. His latest books provide humanities responses to work in cognitive science, addressing issues of empathy, narrative thinking, and moral reasoning. For example, he suggests that human empathy typically involves three (and not two) people. By training, he is a comparatist. Currently, he is writing a book on the connection of narrative thinking and moral reasoning, as well as an English follow-up to his German work on empathy (Kulturen der Empathie), 'The Dark Sides of Empathy'. Just out with Suhrkamp: 'Die dunklen Seiten der Empathie'.

Medical Humanities: Ivan Callus



Ivan Callus is Professor of English at the University of Malta. He is the founding co-editor of CounterText: A Journal for the Study of the Post-Literary, launched with Edinburgh University Press in 2015. The journal's focus is on literature's evolving identities and its directions in contemporary culture, a focus that complements his commitment to posthumanism: he is co-editor of the Critical Posthumanisms book series with Brill and co-director of the Critical Posthumanism Network. He is also a member of the Humanities and Medical Science Programme at Malta.

Medical Humanities: Anne Hudson Jones



Anne Hudson Jones is Professor and Harris L. Kempner Chair in the Humanities in Medicine, in the Institute for the Medical Humanities (IMH) and the Department of Preventive Medicine and Community Health of The University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) at Galveston, where she is also on the faculty of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. She served for eight years as Director of the IMH Medical Humanities Graduate Program, which offers the only Ph.D. in Medical Humanities in the United States. She is a founding editor of the journal Literature and Medicine.

Medical Humanities: Marion Coutts



Marion Coutts is an artist and writer. She works with a range of material forms: found objects, digital video, film, drawing, sound, text and photography. Her first book, 'The Iceberg', won the Wellcome Book Prize 2015. She is currently a Senior Lecturer on BA Fine Art and History of Art at Goldsmiths College, University of London. She writes occasionally on Art for Intelligent Life and has been invited to speak on panels that explore topics like medicine and disorders of the self alongside oncologists, biochemists, neurosurgeons and poets.

Medical Humanities: Seamus O'Mahony



Seamus O'Mahony is a consultant gastroenterologist at Cork University Hospital. His academic interest is in the Medical Humanities and has published widely in this area. His book 'The Way We Die Now' is a plea for dealing more humanely with the very natural process of death, calling for a demedicalisation of death and dying. He is associate editor for Medical Humanities of the Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, and is a regular contributor to the Dublin Review of Books.

Programme Overview

PRE-CONFERENCE: TUESDAY, 20 JUNE 2017 - PAGES 20-21

- 09.00-18.00 Workshops
>W1: The Politics of Empathy
Room: S01 at Rosshofgasse (Schnitz)
>W2: Empathy, Animals, Films
Room: Forum at Rheinsprung 11
>W3: Narrative Empathy
Room: 11 at English Department, Nadelberg 6
>W4: Empathy and Ethics at the End of Life: Perspectives from the Medical Humanities
Room: 13 at English Department, Nadelberg 6
18.30-19.00 Evening Performance by HORA at English Dep., Ground Floor
19.00 Food and Drinks at English Department

CONFERENCE OPENING: WEDNESDAY, 21 JUNE 2017 - PAGE 22

- 16.15-16.45 Aula: Welcome Speeches by Ed Constable & Manuela Rossini
16.45-17.30 Aula: Opening Keynote by Markus Wild: Empathies and Perspectives
17.30-18.00 Aula: Copenhagen 17/18 by Louise Whitely and Jens Hauser: From Bacterial Empathy to Greenness Studies
18.00-20.30 Foyer: Welcome Apéro Riche (food and drinks)

THURSDAY, 22 JUNE 2017 - PAGES 23-49

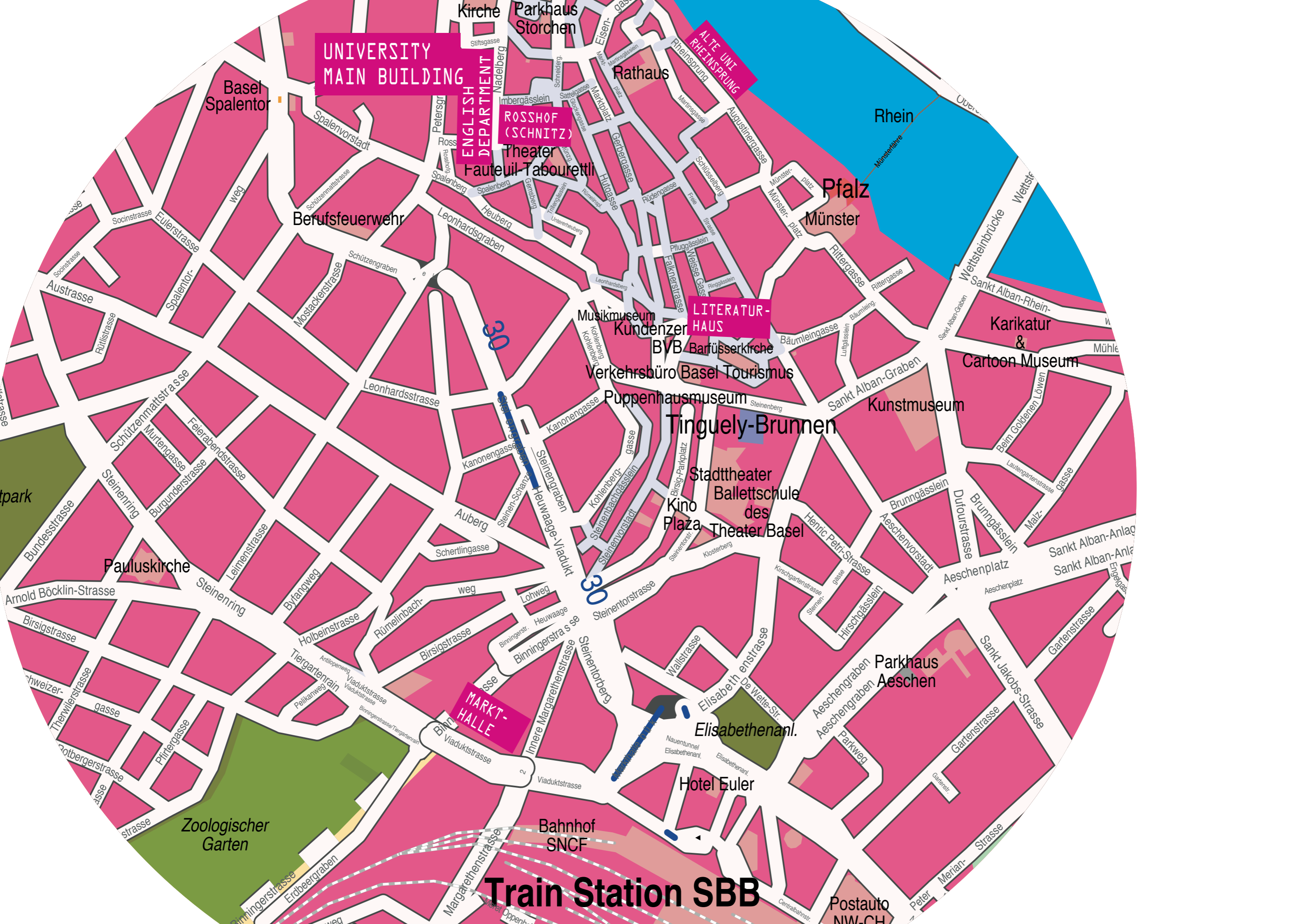
- 09.00-10.30 Aula: Keynote by Jean Decety / Responses by Alexander Grob and Hugues Marchal
11.00-13.00 Half-plenary Roundtables:
>117: Elemental Empathy (Biology / Literature)
>120: Narrative Empathy (Literature / Philosophy)
14.00-16.00 Parallel Sessions:
>114: Virtual Empathy
>115: (Against) Empathy in the Clinic (Medicine / Lit.)
>117: Violence / War / Power
>119: Ecologies
>120: Theatre
16.30-18.30 Parallel Sessions:
>114: Irigaray
>115: Art / Theory & Practice
>116: Empathy and Children / Teenagers
>117: 19th and 20th Century (Lit. / Philosophy)
>120: Animal Empathy
19.30-21.00 Reading: Denise Riley at „Literaturhaus“
Moderator: Franziska Gyax

FRIDAY, 23 JUNE 2017 - PAGES 50-75

- 08.00-08.45 115: Meeting of the General Assembly SLSAeu
09.00-10.30 Aula: Keynote by Jesse Prinz: On the Genealogy of Empathy / Responses by Nicola Gess and Lori Gruen
11.00-13.00 Parallel Sessions:
>114: Poetry
>115: Nonhuman Art
>116: Face of Terror (Media Studies)
>117: Intercultural and Nonverbal Communication
>119: Modernist (Woolf, Benjamin)
14.00-16.00 Parallel Sessions:
>114: Literary Form
>115: Pathographies
>116: Empathy and Reading / Writing (Freud, Benjamin, Art)
>117: Caring for the Nonhuman
>118: Shakespeare & Joyce
16.30-18.30 Pre-organised Panels:
>115: Empathic Self-Control (Literature, Cognitive Studies)
>116: Artists in the Hospital Zone (Nursing Science)
>117: Assembling Empathy as a Collective Process
19.30 Conference Dinner at „Markthalle“
20.30 „Pinnacle“ an Interactive Opera by J. Kiss & G. Edwards

SATURDAY, 24 JUNE 2017 - PAGES 76-99

- 09.00-10.30 Aula: Keynote by Jackie Leach Scully: Other People's Lives: Empathy, Ethics and Epistemic Justice
Responses by Catherine Mills and Carolyn Pedwell
11.00-13.00 Half-plenary Roundtables:
>001: Entanglements
>102: Nonhuman Agents (Robotics / Film / Cultural Studies)
14.00-16.00 Parallel Paper Sessions:
>114: Bioethics (Abortion, Animal Experimentation)
>116: Violence
>117: Neuropsychology & Literature
>119: Kinaesthetics (Dance / Theatre)
16.30-18.30 Parallel Paper or Round Table Sessions
>114: Medical Education
>115: Science / Fiction
>116: Trauma and History
>117: Critical Posthumanism Network: Empathy for the Posthuman?
>119: Otherness (Literature)



**UNIVERSITY
MAIN BUILDING**

**ENGLISH
DEPARTMENT**

**ROSSHOF
(SCHNITZ)**

**LITERATUR-
HAUS**

**MARKT-
HALLE**

Train Station SBB

Basel
Spalentor

Berufsfirewehr

Theater
Fauteuil-Tabouretli

Rathaus

Pfalz
Münster

Rhein

Musikmuseum
Kundenzer

BVB Barfüsserkirche

Verkehrsbüro Basel Tourismus

Puppenhausmuseum

Tinguely-Brunnen

Kunstmuseum

Cartoon Museum

Karikatur
&

Stadttheater

Ballettschule
des
Theater Basel

Kino
Plaza

Pauluskirche

Parkhaus
Aeschen

Hotel Euler

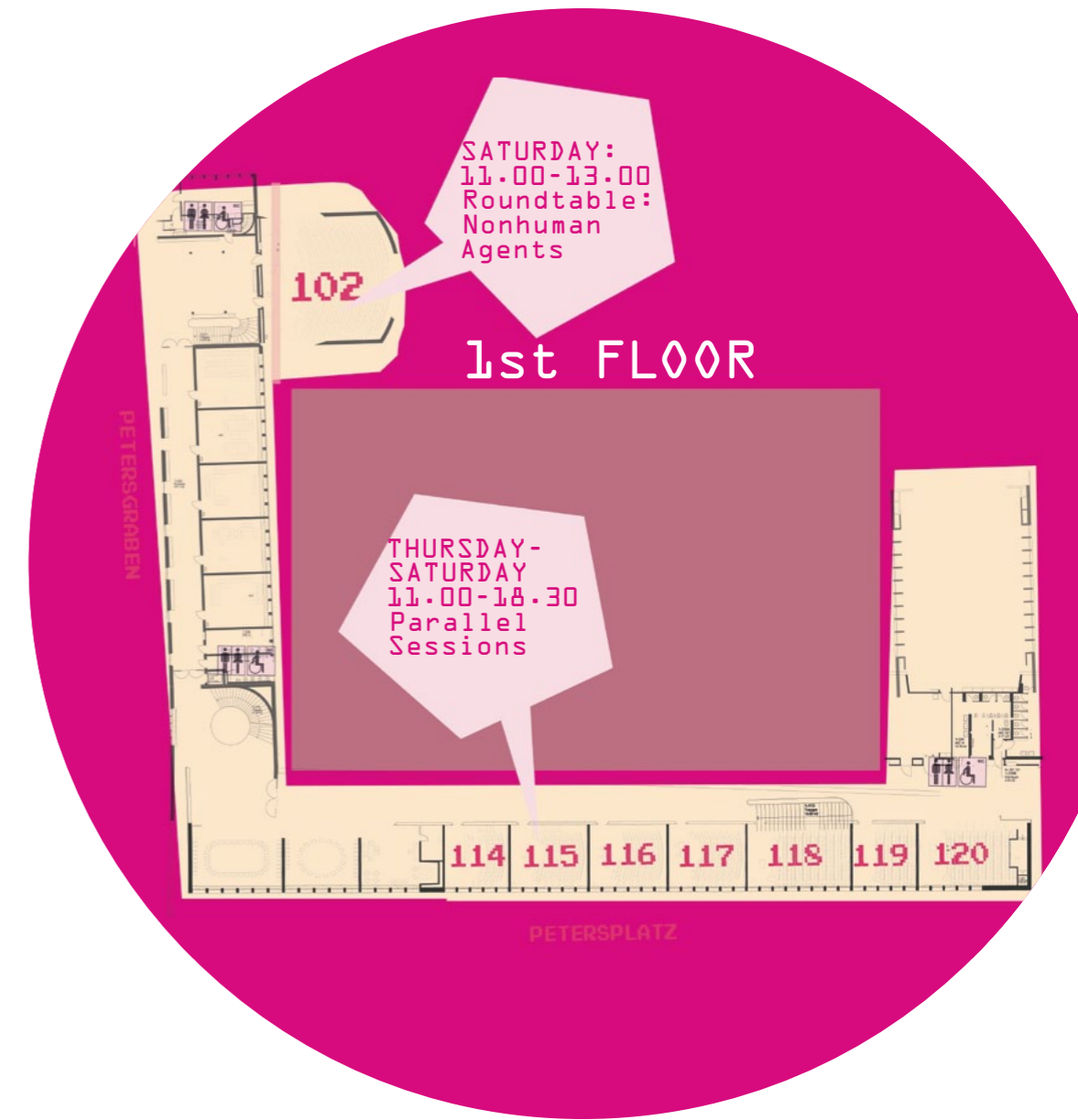
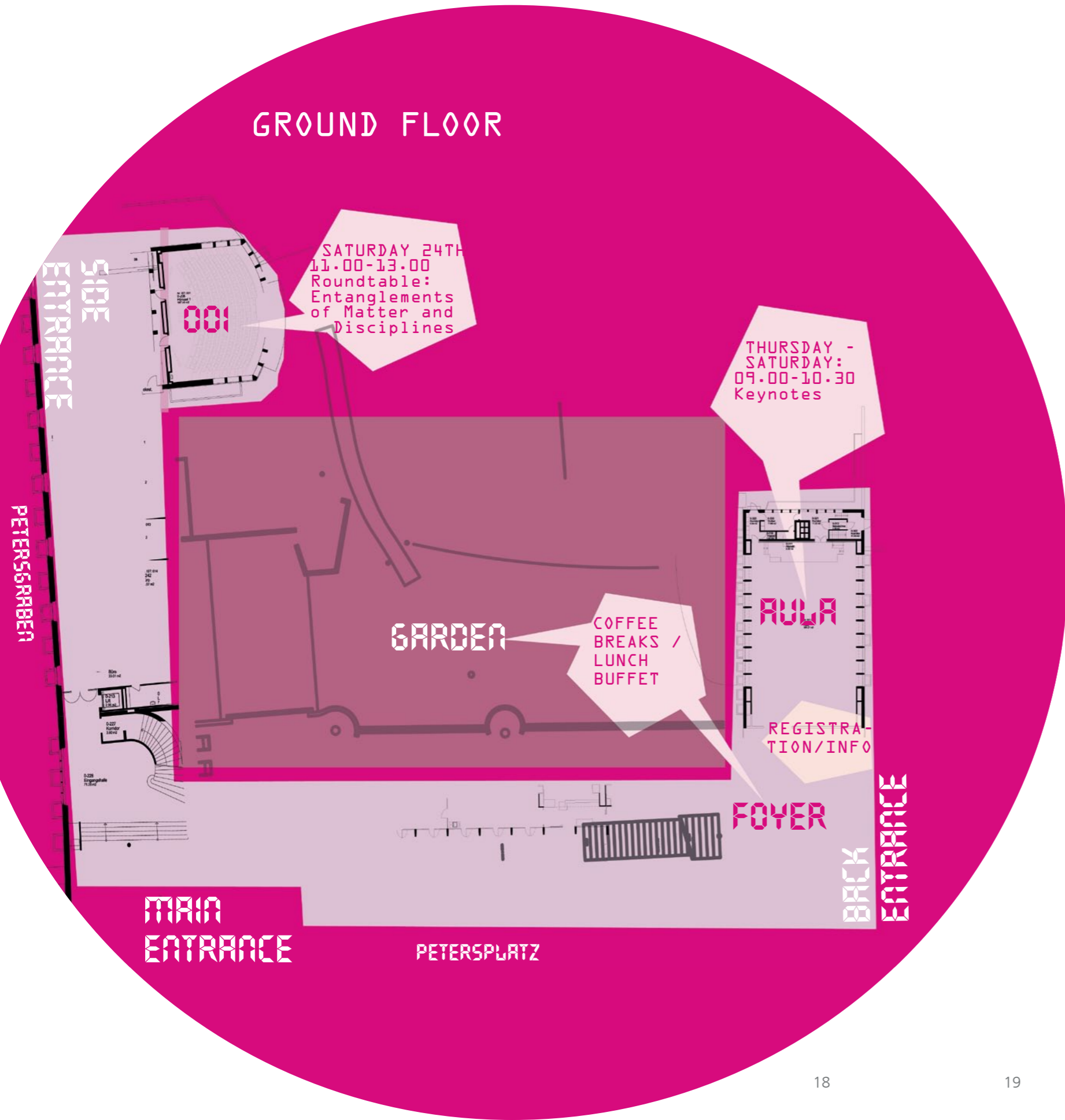
Bahnhof
SNCF

Postauto
NW-CH

30

30

MAP OF MAIN BUILDING / Petersplatz 1



PRE-CONFERENCE: TUESDAY, 20 JUNE 2017

For the workshop descriptions and programmes, see website.

Rooms: Rosshofgasse (Schnitz), Alte Universität (Rheinsprung 11), English Department (Nadelberg 6)

09.00-18.00 Interdisciplinary Workshops for Doctoral Candidates and Postdocs:

- >W1: The Politics of Empathy
- >W2: Empathy, Animals, Films
- >W3: Narrative Empathy
- >W4: Empathy and Ethics at the End of Life: Perspectives from the Medical Humanities

18.30-19.00 Evening Performance by HORA

19.00 Apéro Riche (food and drinks)



>W1: The Politics of Empathy

Convenors: Chris Müller & Andrea Zimmermann

Speakers: Carolyn Pedwell & Chris Weedon

Where: Room 01 / Rosshofgasse (Schnitz)

>W2: Empathy, Animals, Films

Convenors: Markus Wild & Friederike Zenker & Livia Boscardin

Speaker: Lori Gruen

Where: Forum / Rheinsprung

>W3: Narrative Empathy

Convenors: Marco Caracciolo & Hugues Marchal

Speaker: Fritz Breithaupt

Where: Room 11 / English Department / Nadelberg 6

>W4: Empathy and Ethics at the End of Life: Perspectives from the Medical Humanities

Convenors: Anna Eisner & Franziska Gygax & Manuela Rossini

Speakers: Ivan Callus & Marion Coutts & Anne Hudson Jones & Seamus O'Mahony

Where: Room 13 / English Department / Nadelberg 6

Evening Performance by HORA (www.hora.ch)



When: 18.30-19.00

Where: Main Hall, Ground Floor at Englisches Seminar, Nadelberg 6

With: Julia Häusermann (dance) & Remo Zarantonello (text)

Apéro Riche (food and drinks)

>Courtyard English Dep. / Nadelberg 6

CONFERENCE OPENING: WEDNESDAY, 21 JUNE 2017

Rooms: AULA, FOYER, Main Building / Petersgraben 1

16.15-16.45 Welcome Speeches by Ed Constable & Manuela Rossini
>Room: Aula / Main Building / Petersplatz 1

16.45-17.30 Opening Keynote by Markus Wild:
Empathies and Perspectives
>Room: Aula / Main Building / Petersplatz 1

17.30-18.00 Copenhagen 17/18 by Louise Whitely and Jens Hauser:
From Bacterial Empathy to Greenness
>Room: Aula / Main Building / Petersplatz 1

18.00-20.30 Welcome Apéro Riche (food and drinks)
>Room: Foyer / Main Building / Petersplatz 1

THURSDAY, 22 JUNE 2017

Rooms: Main Building / Petersgraben 1 / AULA, 114-118, 120

09.00-10.30 Aula: Keynote by Jean Decety / Responses by Alexander Grob and Hugues Marchal

>COFFEE BREAK IN THE FOYER<

11.00-13.00 Half-plenary Roundtables:
>117: Elemental Empathy (Biology / Literature)
Whiteley (Chair), Clarke, Volk, Thurtle
>120: Narrative Empathy (Literature / Philosophy)
Schmetkamp (Chair), Breithaupt, Blanchet, Caracciolo,
Szanto, Müller, Vendrell Ferran, Werner

>LUNCH BREAK IN THE FOYER<

14.00-16.00 Parallel Sessions:
>114: Virtual Empathy
Malinowska (Chair), Grandison/Jamieson, Moll, Foerster
>115: (Against) Empathy in the Clinic (Medicine / Lit.)
Wellbery (Chair), Huber/Porzi, Kiss A., Saraga, Snider
>117: Violence / War / Power
Veprinska (Chair), Bunout, Lifshay, Murphy K.
>119: Ecologies
NN (Chair), Ludwig, Barras, Rogers
>120: Theatre
Levin-Vorster (Chair), DiFranza, Geigerman D., Leberg

>COFFEE BREAK IN THE FOYER<

16.30-18.30 Parallel Sessions:
>114: Irigaray - Heil (Chair), Friis, Jarlsdotter, Dahiya
>115: Art - Theory & Practice
Hauser (Chair), Trentini, Zeitz, Neumeier
>116: Empathy and Children / Teenagers - Gasser (Chair),
Brockhoff, Edney, Taylor
>117: 19th and 20th Century (Lit. / Philosophy)
Baldacchino, Cui, Field, Lysik
>120: Animal Empathy - Grech (Chair), Böhm, Sturm, Murtagh

19.30-21.00 Reading: Denise Riley at „Literaturhaus“
Moderator: Franziska Gyax

KEYNOTE BY JEAN DECETY: 09.00-10.30

>ROOM: AULA, MAIN BUILDING

Responses by Alexander Grob and Hugues Marchal

The Complex Relation Between Empathy and Morality: A Lesson from Evolutionary Biology, Social Neuroscience and Psychopathy

Empathy, the ability to perceive and be sensitive to the emotional states of others, plays a fundamental role in interpersonal interactions. It motivates prosocial and caregiving behaviors, plays a role in inhibiting aggression, and facilitates cooperation between members of a similar social group. This is probably why empathy is often and wrongly confused with morality, which refers to prescriptive norms regarding how people should treat one another, including concepts of justice, fairness, and rights. Drawing on empirical research and theory from evolutionary biology, social neuroscience and behavioral economics, I will argue that our sensitivity to others' needs has been selected in the context of parental care and group living. One corollary of this evolutionary model is that empathy produces social preferences that can conflict with morality. This claim is supported by a wealth of empirical findings in neuroscience and behavioral economics documenting a complex and equivocal relation between empathy, morality and justice. Empathy alone is powerless in the face of rationalization and denial. It is reason that provides the push to widen the circle of empathy from the family and the tribe to humanity as a whole. But, pure reason does not guarantee respect and dignity for all.

HALF-PLenary ROUNDtable: 11.00-13.00

>ELEMENTAL EMPATHY >ROOM: 117

Louise Whiteley (Chair)
University of Copenhagen, Denmark

Participants: Bruce Clarke (Texas), Phillip Thurtle (Washington), Tyler Volk (New York)

Elemental Empathy

As of May 2017, the current issue of *Theory, Culture & Society* is a special number on "Geosocial Formations and the Anthropocene." The hybrid category of the "geosocial" names a version of what we are calling "elemental empathies" between material geological and biological formations and the conditions of human possibility. This panel explores multiple facets of elemental resonance among material, corporeal, and human ontologies. For Tyler Volk, "combogenesis" describes an elemental metapattern extending all the way from the emergence of attractive forces within the simplest physical particles to human cultural systems. François-Joseph Lapointe and Eric Baptiste challenge the notion of an impassable breach between human comprehension and the natures of other life forms, exploring as a limit case the being of a bacterium. Phillip Thurtle discusses geneticist Curt Stern 1954 article "Two or Three Bristles," which asked, how could identical genetic processes create organisms as different as flies and humans?

For answers, Stern turned to the elements: the key to differences in being between flies and humans, it turns out, is in their differing relationships to moisture. Finally, Bruce Clarke moves beyond an earlier focus on Gaia as "the sum of the biota" to view the interrelation of biotic with abiotic realms. Rather, all events within Gaia's geobiological bubble are submitted to systemic contingencies of coevolutionary couplings between matter and life. Considered "geosocially," from the Earth's perspective, human beings are fundamentally Gaian beings.

Tyler Volk / Biology
New York University, USA

Things, Relations, and Combogenesis

Empathy as a form of bonding is crucial to human social relations. Bonding as an elemental metapattern extends from human cultural systems all the way down and back to the emergence of attractive forces within the simplest physical particles. In this talk, I make a case for a logic that defines these fundamental levels as they are nested in things and their relations. In this logic, a rhythmic process I call combogenesis links the progression in time from simple to complex, as smaller things on each prior level combined and integrated into new, larger things on each next level (*Quarks to Culture*, Columbia UP, 2017). Key to this sequence are the innovative relations at each level, which enabled the new things to interact and create subsequent, additional levels. These levels are: the fundamental quanta, nucleons (protons, neutrons), atomic nuclei, atoms, molecules, prokaryotic cells, eukaryotic cells, complex multicellular organisms, animal social groups, tribal metagroups, agrovillages, and geopolitical states. A further case will be made for three basic dynamical realms: physical laws, biological evolution, cultural evolution. Two of these realms are "evolutionary," in that they operate with processes of propagation, variation, and selection. Thus it is possible to see human bonding relationships as rooted in shifts in types of bonding that went from physics and chemistry, to living things at various scales, and then into human cultures.

Phillip Thurtle / Comparative History of Ideas
University of Washington, USA

Liquid Love: Flies, Forms, Feelings and the Importance of Moisture

In a strange masterpiece of popular science, the 1954 article "Two or Three Bristles", the geneticist Curt Stern argues for the importance of "responsive genes". All parts of an animal have similar genes, contends Stern, yet these parts can look and act very differently. There must be something then that turns genes on and off at different times in the body; they must be regulated. Stern also carefully regulated his feelings toward the fruit flies that he studied so that he could make his argument. In his article, he strategically vacillates between identifying with their biological processes, common amongst all animals, and a fascination with their sleek alien forms. How could identical processes create organisms as different as flies and humans? What was the key to how the development of these bodies were regulated? In answering these questions, the geneticist turns to the elements before he turns to genetics. The key to the difference of how flies and humans inhabit the world is in their relationship to moisture. The small size of the flies means they need an exoskeleton to wall them off from the world to protect their moisture. The large size of humans, on the other hand, allowed them a responsiveness to the world ex-

pressed through moisture, as denoted by the sheen of liquid on one's lips or the tears in one's eyes. Stern's paper reminds 21st century scholars that not all geneticists were determinists and that something as insubstantial as liquid can link materials to forms in living things.

Bruce Clarke
Texas Tech University, USA

Gaian Being

Gaia theory can be further developed through a theory of cognitive systems that couples biological dynamics to non-biological modes of operation. This metabiotic description of Gaia's particular complexities moves beyond a sole focus on "the sum of the biota." With an eye on Darwin's own biotic bias, Lovelock has recently articulated this wider-angled vision of Gaia: "organisms and their environment form a coupled system . . . what evolved was this system, the one that we call Gaia. Organisms and their environment do not evolve separately." All events at or on Earth's surface are submitted to this fundamental Gaian contingency, what has recently been termed the "Gaian bottleneck" through which, to maintain its viability on any given planet, the continuation of life must pass. However, humanist scenarios of personal autonomy still resist this formulation of Gaian being, this logic of material contingencies, or, as we are calling them today, elemental empathies. Contrary to the holistic bent of much previous Gaia discourse, that logic does not state that all things planetary are "parts of one great whole," but rather, that the Gaian system is externally bounded, that is, operationally self-referential in the final instance, while internally differentiated all the way down. The discourse of autopoiesis in its full neocybernetic development, from which this formulation of differentiated self-reference derives, can help us to compose the recursive geobiological participation of selected Earthly and living elements in the coevolutionary coupling of matter and life.

HALF-PLenary Roundtable: >NARRATIVE EMPATHY >ROOM: 120

Susanne Schmetkamp (Chair)
Universität Basel

Participants: Robert Blanchet (Film Studies, Zurich), Fritz Breithaupt (Germanic Studies, Indiana University Bloomington), Marco Caracciolo (Comparative Literature, Freiburg), Jan Müller (Philosophy, Basel), Susanne Schmetkamp (Philosophy, Siegen/Basel), Thomas Szanto (Philosophy, Copenhagen), Christiana Werner (Philosophy, Göttingen).

Narrative Empathy

While there is still some controversy in the philosophy of mind and emotions over whether empathy implies a kind of theoretical inference, of imaginative simulation or of direct perception, recently especially phenomenological accounts have gained attention. They argue – with reference to historical phenomenologists and current theories of embodiment – that we have a direct, unmediated and experiential access to the mental states, especially emotions, of other

persons. We see „in“ the expressions of others what they experience. For this, face-to-face and intersubjective encounter is a necessary condition. However, this seems different regarding fictions such as narrative films or literature. Against that background several questions arise: 1. Is empathy with fictional characters an indirect, mediated process insofar as the characters do, in an important sense, not exist and are not present? 2. Is empathy with fictional characters therefore different from empathy with real persons? 3. Does imagination play a much more important role in such cases than in real life, or do these examples rather show that imagination is always an important part of the overall empathic experience? 4. Which function has imagination in the empathic process anyway? The roundtable discusses these and other questions with regard to different approaches of empathy and especially with regard to phenomenological accounts.

Robert Blanchet
University of Zurich, Switzerland

Empathy as the Opposite of Egocentrism: Why the Direct Perception Theory and the Replication Theory of Empathy Fail

Blanchet argues that it is sufficient for empathy to think about how an objective state of affairs, such as an earthquake in India, or the fact that my opponent in a football game has hurt his knee, affects the preferences of another as opposed to appraising this state of affairs from the point of view of how it affects my own preferences. Hence, according to my view, neither the direct perception of another person's expressions, nor my imagining of her experience in a first-person manner, are necessary for empathy.

Marco Caracciolo
University of Freiburg, Germany

Empathy as Co-Creation

Caracciolo's starting point will be that empathy for fictional characters is not fundamentally different from empathy for real individuals. However, because of the nature of fictional communication, and because of the specific strategies adopted by literary writers, literary fiction fosters empathy to a degree that is unlikely or uncommon in real-life interactions. Readers of fiction „co-create“ characters by drawing on their own past experiences.

Fritz Breithaupt
Indiana University Bloomington, USA

Sadistic Empathy: Character Exploitation and Narrative Empathy

In my contribution, I will focus on the narrative strategies that are well suited to evoke empathy. Narratives describe characters as having a specific purpose, specific emotions, and a clear direction of actions. Put differently, narratives make characters „readable“; narratives make the emotions by characters accessible since they reveal how their emotions are a response to their situation. This effect is especially true for negative situations that lead to especially strong emotions.

Ingrid Vendrell Ferran
University of Jena, Germany

„Is There a Puzzle of Fictional Empathy?

Empathy with a character differs from empathy with a real person in substantial aspects. These aspects concern the mode of givenness of the experience of the fictional character; the form in which we participate in his mental life; and the preservation of the ontological difference between the empathizer and the empathized. However, Vendrell Ferran will argue that we should not distinguish between real life empathy and empathy for fictional characters as two different phenomena.

Jan Müller
University of Basel, Switzerland

Imagining a Person

According to Müller, empathy with fictional persons is not radically different from empathy with other persons. Both involve imagination; but feeling with fictional persons more strongly requires imagination (as it requires an artistic medium: narration, depiction). In this, empathy with fictional persons a) shapes one's cognitive and emotive attitude to oneself and others; and b) it is, by way of exemplification, expressive (and revealing) of imagination's role in ordinary interpersonal conduct.

Christiana Werner
University of Göttingen, Germany

How can we perceive something that does not exist? Direct Social Perception (DSP) and Fictional Characters

Werner argues that fictionality or a supposed intimate relation between fiction and imagination are not the decisive features of literary fiction that are problematic for the DSP. What is problematic is the fact that we only learn about the target via linguistic representations. This, however, is also true whenever we empathize with a real target to which we only have access by means of written or spoken texts. Therefore, DSP has to deal with a lot more of problematic cases, namely all those cases of empathy where the empathizer only hears or reads about the target, whether the target is a fictional character or a real person.

Thomas Szanto
University of Copenhagen, Denmark

Imaginative Resistance and Empathy

How does the phenomenon of imaginative resistance modulate empathic understanding of fictional characters? Why are we seemingly better at empathizing with fictional characters who are saliently not depicted in a way that resembles any realistic scenario than with those realistically represented ones who blatantly violate some moral or social norms? Szanto argues that this asymmetry is primarily due to the fact that (fictional) imagination is always heavily socio-culturally mediated and indeed a form of what I call 'collective imagination'.

PARALLEL SESSIONS: 14.00-16.00
>VIRTUAL EMPATHY >ROOM: 114

Anna Malinowska (Chair)
University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland

Tanis Grandison & Kirstie Jamieson
Edinburgh Napier University, Scotland

Feeling Brexit: Digital Empathy and Imagined Communities

The UK now finds itself in the transition towards triggering Article 50, and an uncertain future where extra-territorial political assemblages are reconfiguring identities and lives. In the fall-out of the referendum that took place on 23 June 2016 the experience of feeling Brexit has taken place across social media where competing senses of loss and belonging are shared through empathetic gestures. To understand the sharing of feeling and its affective modalities (Slote 2007) this paper explores the Kübler-Ross model of grief (1969), which maintains that people experience grief through five stages: from denial to anger, to bargaining, to depression, and finally to acceptance. In an attempt to map the expression of grief that has arisen as a result of Brexit we conducted a visual and structural analysis of the memes, spaces and flows that have sustained distinct digital empathetic communities. Findings suggest that these imagined communities feel Brexit in performative processes of empathetic inter-subjective understanding.

By focusing upon the content of Twitter and Facebook from the 24 June when the Brexit referendum was announced, the aim is to understand how a grammar of digital empathetic gestures expresses emergent geopolitical identities and relationships. Feeling Brexit is the first stage of a wider research project that seeks to understand the shifting landscape of political identities and cosmopolitan values expressed through digital empathetic communities.

Ellen Moll
Michigan State University, USA

Social Media Activism: Empathies, Agencies, and Networked Knowledge Work

Scholars in remix studies, cyber feminism, and elsewhere have explored how knowledge emerges from the complex connectivities of networks rather than from objects or individuals (Rachel Falconer, Sadie Plant, e.g.). In this light, it is useful to consider how empathies might be imagined as a particular kind of political knowledge work, and thus explore how empathies show emergent properties as they arise through layered, complex, and entangled networks. This approach is particularly useful for analyzing social media activism surrounding gender, ethnicity, and LGBTQ+ identities. This paper applies feminist technoscience theorizations of agency and connectivity, particularly those found in the works of Chela Sandoval, Katie King, and Karen Barad, to an analysis of creative works by social media activists. Through this analysis, the paper demonstrates how narratives about the agencies of knowledge work help shape the emergence of empathies through social media activist networks, and through the broader digital, political and cultural networks of which these activisms are a part.

Desiree Foerster
University Potsdam, Germany

Affective Atmospheres and Hybrid Ecologies

In my proposed paper I want to present figurations of the human as a transspecies-identity, that (re-)connects with other species and spheres via technologies of sensation. In my research I investigate how art and speculative design develop a non-representative aesthetics of complex processes through integrating technological interfaces as epistemological objects. I examine their methods and works in order to address one of the central challenges of our age, the Anthropocene: how can we develop a sense of the immaterial, the not-yet visible processes and develop an environmental agency, that makes us experience ourselves as interconnected with other living and non-living elements in our shared environment? Given that we can hardly relate in an emotional way towards planetary events and their consequences, the contiguities of our daily and global actions become more and more unclear. One way to make planetary change perceivable as connected to our individual ways of life as well as global processes, might be in making crisis sensually and corporeal experienceable. This means to perceive ourselves as connected with machines, strata and spheres in multiple and ever changing ways. I will show how engaging with speculation can help to define possible scopes for action and to develop a new critical thinking of the human and his multi-species entanglements. I will examine artworks in connection with current research in cognitive science, in particular with recent discussions of human agency as world involving.

PARALLEL SESSIONS: 14.00-16.00
>(AGAINST) EMPATHY IN THE CLINIC
>ROOM: 115

Caroline Wellbery (Chair)
Georgetown University, USA

Medical Student' Empathy for Vulnerable Groups: Results from a Reflective Writing Assignment

In medical education, students are groomed to care for individual patients. However, multiple factors, including increasing population diversity and access to information about global problems, have put pressure on medical educators to broaden their lens. Recent emphasis on population health presents a challenge to students who profess to have entered medicine to 'help people.' This is because consciously or unconsciously, they have always applied that sense of helpfulness to individuals. While much has been written about individual empathy as an essential and driving element in clinical care, little is known about a more encompassing 'social' empathy in the medical setting. Drawing on the philosophical discourse on empathy, we conducted a mixed-methods study to help characterize features that might contribute to medical students'

social empathy. This presentation focuses on the qualitative aspects of this study, comprising an analysis of medical students' written reflections on what it means to care for patients who are members of marginalized social groups. Three findings emerged in the students' essays: individual empathy is foundational in developing social empathy; a sense of moral and/or civic duty is an important contributor to motivating care for vulnerable patients; and multiple curricular and institutional barriers stand in the way of cultivation of social empathy. These conclusions mesh in many ways with the work of previous scholars who have identified a continuum between individual empathy and moral action. In the medical setting, misplaced individual empathy at the expense of social empathy, about which some scholars have warned, may be less of a concern than working to provide meaningful actionable public health interventions that build on the clinical care of individuals.

Irmtraud Huber & Rouven Porz
Universität Bern & Inselspital Bern, Switzerland

Emphasis on Empathy: A Reconstructive ‚Zeitgeist‘ in Literature and Clinical Ethics Support

Clinical Ethics Support is a new specialized form of applied ethics in Western medicine. So far, it has been and continues widely to be governed by the medical ethics based so-called „four principles“ suggested by Tom L. Beauchamp and James F. Childress (starting in the late 1970s). These four principles of respect for autonomy, non-maleficence, beneficence, and justice, are used as guidelines in moral interventions and ethical counselling in hospitals and they often determine decision-making in severe clinical situations. Criticism has come primarily from the direction of feminist and care-oriented approaches to applied ethics, who insist on a stronger focus on context, relations, responsibility, social embedding and giving voice to the involved parties.

In our paper, we suggest a parallel between these positions in applied clinical ethics support and modernist and postmodernist aesthetics in literature. Moreover, we would like to suggest that in both fields, a third alternative can be seen to be emerging: a reconstructive approach that eschews guiding principles, but does maintain the possibility to develop ethically „correct“ decisions by emphasising intersubjective consensus on the basis of shared narratives. What can be called narrative clinical ethics fosters empathy by understanding the individual as being expressed in and shaped by narratives and by acknowledging that this is true for patients as well as health care professionals. Similarly, a reconstructive approach to literature explores empathy as a means to reconstruct and share meaning in and beyond narratives.

Alexander Kiss
University Hospital Basel, Switzerland

When Empathy Harms

In clinical medicine empathy is considered a positive issue, but sometimes empathy can do more harm than good. Physicians who are too empathic can have problems keeping their distance to the suffering and are in danger to have a burnout. Empathic behavior from physicians can also

seem inappropriate for patients who want to be treated differently. Teaching physicians to oscillate between proximity and distance with the patient could prevent burnout for physicians and could also improve communication with patients.

Michael Saraga
Lausanne University Hospital, Switzerland

Contrasting Empathy and Engagement: Insights from a Phenomenological Exploration of Clinical Practice

A phenomenological exploration of the nature of clinical practice in medicine led us to formulate that practice can be understood as an engagement-in-the-situation. We use Sartre's definition of a situation as inclusive of people and materialities: „things themselves, and myself among things“. We will discuss specific verbatim quotes from our study to illustrate how the discourse on empathy in medicine, because of its exclusive focus on the clinical relationship, misses the broader phenomenon of a practice situated in a complex socio-material context.

Alvin Snider
University of Iowa, USA

Empathy as Pathology

While the word „empathy“ generally carries positive valence - some ethicists see its presence lurking behind every moral act - political philosophers and legal theorists often come out against it. In 2016, Paul Bloom published a book-length case „Against Empathy“, treating it as a feel-good self-indulgence best discarded in favor of „rational compassion.“ Bloom critiques what some might call a „literary“ approach to suffering, an imaginative investment in people known to us or much like ourselves, at the expense of the anonymous suffering of untold millions. This paper makes an unrepentantly literary argument for sharing imaginatively in the affective experience of others, but works to give empathetic engagement a harder edge. Empathy figures in medical literature, too, as a poor substitute for curative agency. Studies of therapeutic responses to pain note a correlation between measures of empathy and the quantification of pain intensity. Some specialists worry that excessive empathy undercuts the accuracy of clinical assessments. An older tradition, going back to Galen, regards pain as a diagnostic tool, a sign to be read, and a patient's description of pain as data subject to interpretation. I take my lead from ancient and early modern writers, for whom „pity,“ „compassion,“ and „ruth“ imply a depth of understanding, distinct from mere sympathy. Empathic understanding necessarily entails disengagement and self-conscious resistance to overidentification. Just as a patient will want to avoid treatment by a physician overcome by emotion, our feeling for the suffering of others should arise from an understanding that conduces to (rather than substitutes for) effective action.

PARALLEL SESSIONS: 14.00-16.00 >VIOLENCE / WAR / POWER >ROOM: 117

Anna Veprinska (Chair)
York University

Estelle Bunout
Université de Lorraine, France

Translating the Enemy? German Expertise on Eastern Europe (1939-1972)

How does one know the enemy According to Christian Ingrao, the Nazi enemy science relies on the syllogism of the racial determinism, which is confirmed by the racial reading of the reality. Nevertheless, experts needed a minimum of empathy to understand the enemy, alongside their language skills. How to, in this context, understand the paradoxes of expertise consisting of understanding the enemy?

Following the paths of four German experts of Eastern Europe during WWII and its aftermaths in Western Germany, we want to ask how the expertise represented the otherness and translated the knowledge into political propositions.

The first duo of expertise practices is Fritz Arlt and Hildegard Schaefer: the first prepared handbooks for the German occupation administration in the General Government. The latter was working for the Office for publication in Dahlem (Berlin) that prepared maps on Eastern Europe and gathered information based on Soviet publications. Their expertise consisted of an instrumental knowledge of the enemy.

The second duo consists of Eberhardt Schulz and Gotthold Rhode, both experts in Western Germany, accompanying the discussion around the Ostpolitik, leading to the recognition of the post-war borders in Eastern Europe. They put forward the need to understand and recognise the East to ensure national security.

How did they deal with their ambiguous position as translators of the enemy's views? How does the experience of violence impact their practices? How did the empathy for the position of the enemy become a central argument of the German expertise on the East?

Adam Lifshey
Georgetown University, USA

Empathy and Brutality: The Savagery of Compassion in Pai Hsien-yung's Taipei People

Taipei People, a renowned collection of short fiction by Pai Hsien-yung, focuses on individuals who fled from mainland China to Taiwan during the chaotic end of the Chinese civil war. They try in Taipei to re-enact the memories of their mainland lives as best they can, in a struggle against profound loss with which the author is profoundly empathetic. He relays with compassion and artistic refinement how his protagonists try desperately in Taipei to reside mentally amid a different geography, a different society, a different moment in time. But what about the native Taiwanese who suffered from the arrival of the mainlanders? Does the author extend his

great capacity for empathy to this oppressed majority?

The answer is no. Pai represents the native Taiwanese as grotesque wenches marked by animistic tendencies. They appear as uncivilized barbarians who lead to madness and death. They thus contrast sharply with the mainlander protagonists of Taipei People who form their ruling class. Pai's nuanced empathy for the mainlanders, accompanied by his skillful depiction of their devastated psyches, is matched by his brutalization of the native Taiwanese.

My paper will explore this empathetic tension in Taipei People in which compassion for one group of defeated individuals rests upon savage sentiments directed at another. This dynamic raises larger questions of whether empathy can ever be felt and narrated unto itself, or whether it is always premised, explicitly or implicitly, on affective alienations of one kind or another.

Kieran Murphy

University of Colorado-Boulder, USA

Science and Empathy in early Haitian Theatre

How does one empathize with the postcolonial subject? For self-emancipated Haitian slaves, this question was particularly pressing in the wake of their successful insurrection against French colonial rule or what is now known as the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804). They had just achieved their independence through a violent conflict that had culminated with their resounding victory against the formidable army that Napoleon had dispatched to re-enslave them. However, the young Caribbean nation became the victim of international coldshouldering motivated by French resentment and wide-spread racism. As citizens of the first black republic, Haitians were aware that their existence and economic development depended on European and American recognition, which they actively sought throughout the nineteenth century. My paper explores how early Haitian playwrights and intellectuals such as Juste Chanlatte attempted to gain this recognition by critically engaging with the scientific and ideological foundations supporting the international bias toward Haiti. I argue that these little-known Haitian thinkers produced insightful critiques of European science and, in turn, pioneered a new kind of empathy that crossed racial division.

PARALLEL SESSIONS: 14.00-16.00

>ECOLOGIES >ROOM: 119

NN (Chair)

Samuel Ludwig

Université Haute-Alsace, France

Animism and the Limits of Projection

I would like to present animism as an approach based on empathy in the sense that it projects an animate nature into the univers you can only have empathy with something that is alive. Though many kinds of Western philosophy have of course looked down on animism as naive, childish

and primitive, we do find Western approaches that are in many ways compatible with animistic premises and contrast in their views from „hard“ objectivist epistemologies. I will argue that animism is in many ways a necessary and enabling projection into and about the universe and its entities that makes empathy in the sense of sameness (or at least similarity? compatibility?) a possibility. My examples will be from literature, from ethnography and cognitive psychology. In this line of argumentation empathy cannot exist without the attribution of animation—a fact which has all kinds of theoretical and ideological consequences. Empathy then becomes a necessary projection that understanding cannot do without. Like animism, this projection may fail because it is merely a projected attribution, but that risk has to be taken in order to bond with a live universe. In that sense animism can make an important contribution to a non-objectivistic epistemology and to issues of power and respect in interaction and communication.

Arnaud Barras

University of Geneva, Switzerland

„We Shall Be Whole“: Empathic Relationality in David Malouf's ‚An Imaginary Life‘

In An Imaginary Life, first published in 1978, the acclaimed Australian writer David Malouf tells the story of the poet Ovid during his exile in Tomis, a village on the fringe of the Roman Empire, on the edge of the Black Sea. Through Ovid's meditations, I argue, Malouf lays the foundations of a form of empathy in which poetic language serves to lay bare the ontological connections between the self and the beings, entities and phenomena that make up the self's environment. In a remarkable poetic style, the text presents how the Poet, confronted with an unfamiliar sociocultural and material environment, begins searching for a new conception of what it means to dwell on earth. Ovid's exile becomes a quest for what I call „empathic relationality,“ which is about enmeshing the body with its environment by „driv[ing] out [one's] own self and let the universe in“ (Malouf 92). Seen in this light, the story of the Poet becomes an intellectual journey towards epistemic and cognitive metamorphosis, towards a cross-cultural conception of the relationship between self and place through empathy. In this paper, I will discuss key passages that stage the Poet's encounter with alterity and dramatize the intellectual transformation that ensues, and I will demonstrate that Malouf's elaborate use of language can enable us to rethink notions of relationality and ecocentrism as forms of non-human empathy.

Work cited: Malouf, David. An Imaginary Life. Vintage, 1999.

Janine Rogers

Mount Allison University, Canada

Signifying Monkeys: Historicist Primate Symbolism, Evolution] Empathy in the Natural History Museum

Many European and North American natural history museums, originally built during the nineteenth and early-twentieth century, are architecturally historicist (i.e. neo-Gothic) and employ medieval aesthetic strategies in their decorations and displays. Although sites of contemporary scientific outreach and education, these museums use representations of non-human primates that have an important interpretive heritage that reaches back medieval scholastic theories of mind and medieval ideas of ethics, including empathy. In the margins of medieval manuscripts, monkeys are frequently depicted with mirrors and books, functioning as symbols ontological

and epistemological anxiety. While prompting a range of emotional responses, there is no question that in their mirroring symbolism, medieval marginal „babewyns“ (the Middle English word for marginal figures generally, related to „baboons“) were empathetic figures for human anxieties about identity and interpretation. They ask us to interrogate our connections to the natural world, especially our empathy for the non-human, and to consider our connections to marginal spaces and hybrid beings. Historicist architecture in modern natural history museums borrowed heavily from medieval depictions of monkeys, and when that historical interpretation intersected with evolutionary theory in the 19thC, the symbolic function of monkeys as intermediary agents between the human and animal world intensified. Monkeys represented not just knowledge in general, but scientific knowledge in particular; today, these museums still use primate symbols to explain evolution and to develop empathy-based ethics around subjects such as climate change and conservation.

PARALLEL SESSIONS: 14.00-16.00 >THEATRE >ROOM: 120

Ruth Levin-Vorster (Chair)
Independent

Breaking Down the Intersubjective Space to Understand Failures of Empathy: Using the #FeesMustFall (#FMF) Movement in South Africa as a Case Study

The interpersonal paradigm within South African society has been thoroughly challenged during the past two years. Students at universities across South Africa have launched the country into awareness about institutionalized racism and the need to decolonise university spaces and curriculum as well as the right to free education. The #FeesMustFall (#FMF) Movement is in its second year of campaigning for these demands to be met.

The diverse responses to this protest have shed light on the fragile interpersonal paradigm of South Africans and the long road still needed to unpack and undo the devastation caused by Apartheid. In this paper I will use the #FMF movement as a case study to illustrate the impact of lived experience on empathy and to argue that it can be a great inhibitor to understanding alternate perspectives. I posit that owing to the intercorporeal nature of relationships embodied processes are needed to expand our perspectives and cultivate empathy.

This paper argues that a critical component of South Africa's social psyche is being ignored, namely the very high levels of trauma in our society. What is proposed is the need to understand the challenges that our intersubjective spaces face through this lens with regard to cultivating empathy.

Laban, Merleau-Ponty & De Certeau inform my understanding of the multiple layers of lived experience that interweave within any given space, providing insight into the complex domain of intersubjectivity. The field of interpersonal neurobiology and in particular the research of Daniel Siegel and Vittoria Gallese frame these perspectives.

Lisa DiFranza
Independent (The Living News Project), USA

The Living News Project: Homeless in America

THE LIVING NEWS PROJECT is inspired by the 1930's Federal Theater Project's "Living Newspapers." The Project took form in Chicago where artists, journalists, students and homeless men, women and children, created a theater piece called SHELTER /CHICAGO which propelled us all to walk in each other's shoes. The project was supported by the City, produced at the Chicago Cultural Center and aired on CAN-TV Chicago. This panel would grapple with theater as an empathetic, activist and communitarian art.

David Geigermann
Independent

The Journey of Actors Towards Empathy

Most improvisational theatre exercises (Meisner, 1987; Spolin, 1963) require actors to listen to each other and let what the other person said and did affect their response on stage. For example, in the exercises created by Sanford Meisner, the first rule is that actors must listen closely to what they hear their scene partner say so that they can repeat it back, before they may say something themselves. In my paper, I present an analysis of the work of Meisner, Spolin, and personal accounts of six actors who have undergone improvisational training. Actors find it surprisingly difficult, and it takes months of practice to follow the rules of improvisational theatre consistently. Taking on the challenge, they realize they are strong enough to survive being affected by others, and a certain courage starts to form. They gradually become more and more empathetic: they can listen just a little longer than before, let the message resonate, and respond after having understood the other person. In my research and analysis, I focus on the following themes: a) the relationship between courage and empathy, b) the personal struggles one faces as they become more empathetic, and c) the effect smartphones, messaging, and social media has on empathy today.

Dan Leberg
University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Empathy and Screen Acting: An Ethnographic Approach

This presentation uses my recent ethnographic interviews with Canadian screen actors to analyze how creative training and the industrial logistics of film production enable the performing actor to solicit empathetic bonds with the camera, as a surrogate for an anticipated audience.

The rhetoric of "connecting" permeates realist screen actors' descriptions of their work. These connections fall into three complimentary and overlapping categories: the actor's intrasubjective connection to her character; the verisimilar intersubjective connections among actors-as-characters; and the performative connection between the actor and the camera. These connections also satisfy Amy Coplan's criteria for empathetic relationships, thereby positioning realist screen acting as the strategic solicitation of empathetic connections.

Screen acting's performative connection is fundamentally different than that of live theatre.

James Naremore argues that the camera overwrites the actor and thereby negates screen acting. My interviews, however, reveal that many actors consider the camera to be an enabling co-collaborator of performances, rather than an impediment. The actor's process of becoming "comfortable" with the camera, and thereby consider it a collaborator, often includes imposing a benign metaphor on the camera, such as "my best friend". These metaphors connect the actor to the camera as a tool that makes screen performance techniques legible, priming the actor to sustain a consistent bodymind alignment that accommodates disjointed actions like eye-line matches and reaction shots.

Ultimately, I present a new critical framework for studying screen performances by reframing screen acting as a bodymind realignment primed for empathy within the creative and industrial affordances of film production.

PARALLEL SESSIONS: 16.30-18.30
>IRIGARAY >ROOM: 114

Johanna Heil (Chair)
Marburg University, Germany

Choreographing Empathies through Elemental Passions

Luce Irigaray's poetic engagement with sexual difference in *Elemental Passions* works through the possibility of communication and contact between differently sexed minds and bodies, that is, it implicitly discusses the notion of empathy between the sexes. Empathy emphasizes the divisions between individuals, the separation that empathy bridges without erasing. The challenge of establishing connections between sexed bodies without obscuring their difference and specificity is central to Irigaray's feminist project.

This paper takes Irigaray's text as an inspiration to think through the configurations or "choreographies of sex/gender" proposed by the critical dance scholar Susan Leigh Foster, and focuses specifically on the corporeal materiality of bodies that move, connect, and empathize. For Foster, choreography constitutes a more useful concept than performance for negotiating the relationship between the corporeal materiality and the social constructedness of sex and gender. I find Foster's work on choreography and her related concept of "kinesthetic empathy" helpful for thinking through the prescribed, inscribed, and improvised movements that generate empathetic connections between the sexes. Reading Irigaray's *Elemental Passions* vis-à-vis Foster's work on the political and affective implications of movement in "Choreographies of Gender" and *Choreographing Empathies*, I will investigate the lyrical corporeality that moves me in Irigaray's text.

Elisabeth Friis
Lund University, Sweden

Are the Facts of Life Lemon on the Oyster? Irigaray's Critique of the Ethics of Reversibility

Irigaray's experimental work *Elemental Passions* [*Passions élémentaires*:1982] has been read as a critical rewriting of the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty. To Irigaray the reversibility of the chiasmus is incompatible with a radical philosophy of sexual difference: The subject and object simply cannot swap positions without there being a remainder. There is always what Cecilia Sjöholm has described as "an engulfing, eating aspect" of the chiasmus, founded in the asymmetrical relation between I and You, and if we are to form relations based on real empathy, we have to be apprehensive of this, and stress the dangers of this "engulfing" (if not cannibalistic) aspect of empathic (perhaps even of love-based) interaction – for instance regarding our empathic interaction with other species.

Taking Irigaray's sexuated version of the chiasmus as my cue, I will discuss a striking chiasmus from Clarice Lispector's novel *Água viva* where the "I" of the novel considers the ethics of consuming oysters by putting herself in the place of the open, raw, and living oyster. The text reverses the relationship between human and oyster, and Lispector's image becomes formidable indeed: the bared body of the writing woman becomes a defenceless, soft, and sensitive muscle mass, on which lemon is squeezed. But is the effect of this chiasmic image a strong feeling of empathy towards the lemon-infused oyster that is about to be eaten alive? Does Lispector's chiasmus work against or does it support Irigaray's insistence on the irreducibility of difference? And can Irigaray's philosophy of the ethics of sexual difference perhaps help us ask the right questions when it comes to the ethics of interspecies (and of course also interhuman) relations?

Jenny Jarlsdotter Wikström
Umeå University, Sweden

Phytophilia and Empathy in the Stream of Life

In this paper, Irigaray's *Elemental Passions* [*Passions élémentaires*:1982] is used as a tool for understanding plant-others in Clarice Lispector's novel-cum-manifesto *Água Viva* (1973), a work of fiction that decenters the human in exploring the limits of the "I" as well as the more-than-human relations that make the "I" possible. Vegetal beings, from cut roses to orchids, co-star in the novel, which poses intricate questions regarding human indebtedness to plant life, but also regarding how plants respond to that debt in their own way. In the works of both authors, seeing and touching are vital means of understanding difference as a concept. However, the question of the role of empathy remains. Is empathy necessary for understanding (sexed) difference, or is the concept too fraught with anthropocentric notions of intentionality to be of any use when it comes to plants.

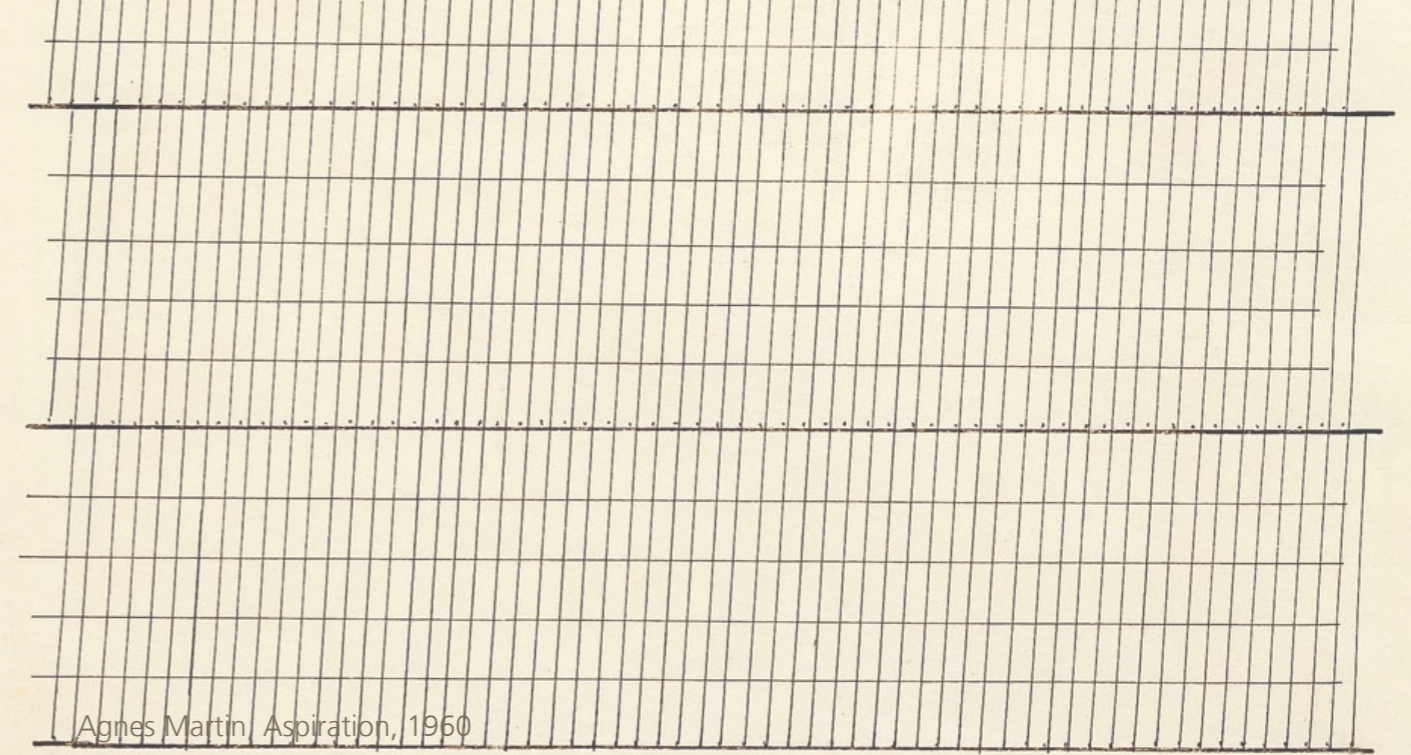
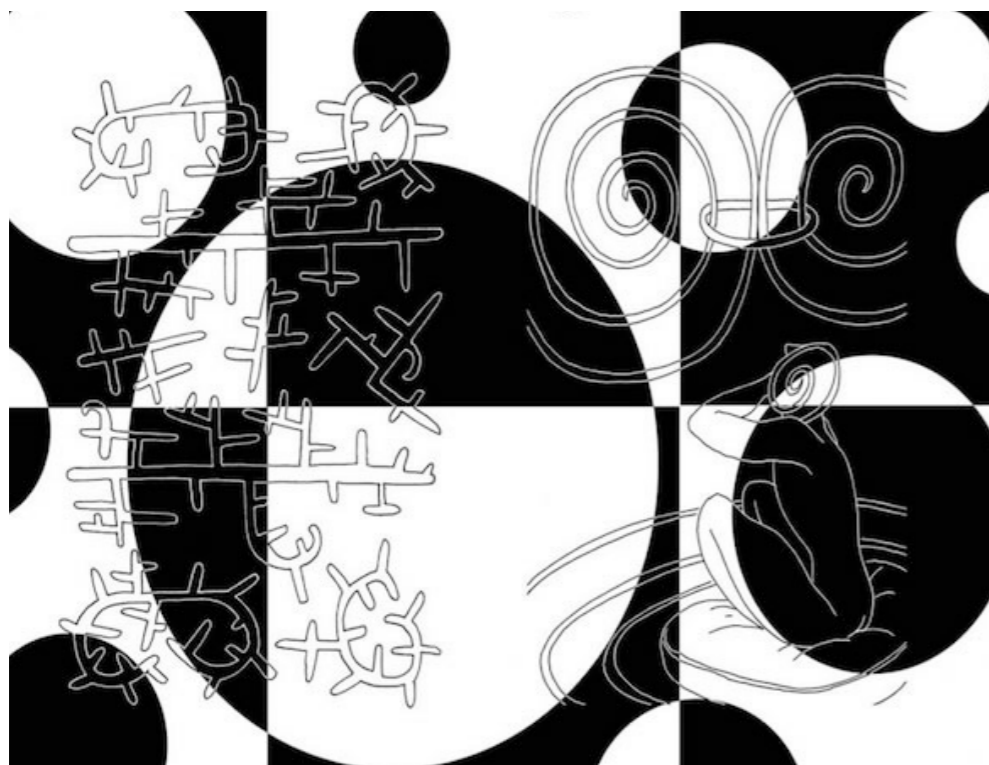
Arguably a key thinker for an affirmative ethics of difference, Irigaray provides possible ways of responding to the nonhuman, which, in turn, aid in understanding why Lispector allows plants to grow around, and within, the protagonist's sexed body in *Água Viva*.

If, as I argue, both Lispector and Irigaray are phytophiles – lovers of plants – what does that entail, with regards to empathy, responsiveness, and responsibility towards that what is different? To answer that question I read Irigaray and Lispector alongside contemporary thinkers on post-human phenomenology, plant-selves, and the more-than-human, e.g. Michael Marder, Jane Bennett, and Astrida Neimanis.

Annu Dahiya
Duke University, USA

Beyond Auto-Genesis: Irigaray's Recasting of Place, Time, and Origin

This paper experiments with how Luce Irigaray's rethinking of "place," "time," and "origin" work with contemporary scientific research on the origins of life on Earth. For Irigaray, the acknowledgement of sexual difference as an ontological force of our world fundamentally recasts how we understand space, place, time, and true becoming (which is not a repetitive reproduction of the same but a process that can engender the new). She also argues that all modes of knowledge—including science – can be remade in light of sexual difference. This paper explores how Irigarayan "origin" coalesces with "origin" in scientific research regarding the origins of life. If Irigaray allows and urges us to move beyond the patriarchal fantasy of auto-genesis— "Man" wanting to give birth to himself—how do her ideas allow us to rethink the questions of origins and becoming in relation to the evolution of life? Though "origin" is a problematic concept that can be tied to phallogocentric logic and desires, I argue that Irigaray destabilizes phallogocentric ideations of the concept. The evolutionary forces of life, once begun, have proliferated themselves into countless (extant and extinct) species. This paper asks how "empathy," especially its usual human emotional connotation, needs to be rethought in order to think about the immense biochemical and genetic mergers that have occurred in the history of life. I complicate the relationship between "empathy," "self," and "other" through Irigaray's ontology of touch—which can help us rethink not only "origin" but also evolutionary "becoming."



PARALLEL SESSIONS: 14.00-16.00
>ART - THEORY & PRACTICE >ROOM: 115

Jens Hauser (Chair)
University of Bochum, Germany

Bruno Trentini
University of Lorraine, France

Dissolving Humanity: Empathy Derailed by Representation

When Lipps used Vischer's concept of „empathy“, he wanted to describe the human propensity on involving the attribution of emotions to an object, which is totally devoided of emotion. This faculty provides insight into the continuity between (i) the common „identifying with others“, (ii) the scenic or literary identifying with a character and, (iii) in plastic art, the identifying to an anthropomorphic object.

In this context, the human empathy is considered as a given underlying the aesthetic experience. Empathy can also be considered by artists as a plastic and deformable material, as Diderot did in Jacques the Fatalist. Then, empathy is disrupted by the tensions between the knowledge of non-humanity of the artistic object and the feeling of humanity that it inspires. The artists do not have to particularly push the spectator to this humanization of objects: The transfiguration of an object into an alter ego seems to be an intrinsic property of human cognition. Thus, it is not surprising that, on the contrary, some artists try to reverse this tendency, pushing viewers to see humans as objects.

The aim of this contribution is to highlight the aesthetic specificity of this empathic reversal. In fact, the works of art trying to reverse empathy confront an almost natural cognitive tenden-

cy. In other words, contrary to the classic illusion bringing knowledge and feeling face to face by the artistic transfiguration, the dissolving humanity induces a cognitive roughness between two embodied tendencies dealing with feelings.

Anne Zeitz
Université Rennes 2, France

Empathy and Apathy in Contemporary Narratives in High-Tech Welfare

Machine vision and (semi-)automated technologies tend to objectify potential targets in contemporary methods of warfare. Authors like Paul Virilio and more recently Grégoire Chamayou have shown that it is easier to overcome one's inhibitions to kill if the enemy is not face-to-face but thousands of miles away and visible only on screens. High-tech warfare in this way tends to suspend feelings of empathy and favors „preemptive actions“ – as coined by Pasi Väliäho. The Israeli artist Omer Fast deals with these technologies and the ambiguities of contemporary warfare. He shows the contradictory feelings and behaviours arising on contemporary battlefields – the term of the battlefield itself being put into question by war fought at distance. In his video works „Five Thousand Feet Is the Best“ and „Continuity“ he confronts the spectator with the point of view of the American soldier and of the drone pilot as well as of their families. Omer Fast subtly creates narratives and translates behaviours of callousness and apathy into everyday experiences. He manages to superimpose the spaces of war onto the American suburban landscape. This paper deals with Fast's work and other artistic practices trying to sensitize the spectator to the impact of modern methods and technologies of warfare at distance on the body and on the mind of those targeted and those targeting. In this paper I also question journalistic tactics and artistic practices seeking to produce empathy concerning the horrors of contemporary warfare in a time of hyper-visibility.

Juliane Neumeier
Justus Liebig University Giessen, Germany

Empathy with Fiction

Reading a novel can be a very emotional experience. This is especially the case when recipients are able to empathize with the fictional characters involved. A systematic understanding of how the distinctive features of the novel contribute to this kind of empathy is still lacking. This paper will add to a more comprehensive understanding of empathetic engagement with novels by analyzing the textual mechanisms at play from the perspective of narrative theory. In this respect, the fictional character of the novel is of particular relevance. Text inherent and paratextual features of fictional literature as well as readers' expectations on fictional texts have to be considered. The most important questions that arise are: What are the characteristics of empathy with fiction? How does fictionality affect the empathetic potential of novels? In order to answer the former question, existing theories concerning the origins and the quality of emotional involvement with fiction will be reviewed and critically discussed in this paper. As for the latter question, by way of analyzing textual characteristics exclusive to fictional literature from a narratological point of view, this paper will shed light on their potential to generate empathetic responses.

PARALLEL SESSIONS: 16.30-18.30

>EMPATHY AND CHILDREN / TEENAGERS

>ROOM: 116

Brigitte Gasser (Chair)
Hochschule Luzern, Switzerland

Empathy

Applying empathy to media figures is an important prerequisite for media enjoyment. In real and fictional worlds, anyone who can not put oneself in the position of other persons and figures can not comprehend the actions and feelings of others. It takes empathy to be able to follow a medial story.

Consideration is given to the empathic skills and processes of children aged between 12 and 13 years in everyday life and during media usage. Empathy in everyday life means the empathy for ‚real‘ people. Empathy during media usage refers to fictional characters in books, movies and computer games. The results of a mixed methods study show that the children's empathy values in everyday life are related to their favorite media types. The higher the empathy values, the more pronounced is the preference for media, where empathic abilities are required to understand and enjoy the content. A contrasting picture is shown at lower empathy values. Here media is preferred, in which empathic abilities do not play a central role. It is assumed that children with high empathy strengthen their empathic abilities because of their media use. Children with deeper empathy, on the other hand, do not train their empathic skills because of their media use.

Bettina Brockerhoff-Macdonald
Laurentian University, Canada

Children and Empathy: A Narrative Study of How Children Relate to Characters in Novels

This paper will focus on how children actually relate to characters in books. The study is based upon recently completed research involving children and adults and whether or not they related to characters in the books that they had read. While secondary literature claims that children learn about their world and others by identifying with main characters and their actions, my research uncovered the children were more likely to identify with the secondary characters. The paper will explore the implications of this differing viewpoint.

Gemma Edney
University of Exeter, UK

Sounding Girl(y): Music and Empathy in Girlhood Film

Recently, it seems that girls are everywhere in popular culture: female music artists sing about the experience of being a „girl,“ media campaigns proclaim that „this girl can,“ the UN has created the „International Day of the Girl Child“ on October 11th, and films focusing on the

experience of girlhood are becoming more and more numerous. As a public, we have a fascination with girlhood experience that seems to only increase as the girl figure becomes more visible. How, then, do these media representations foster this fascination? In what ways are we, even if we do not identify ourselves as „girl“, invited to take part in, and therefore empathise with, the girlhood experience? This paper seeks to explore answers to these questions through the specific lens of film music.

Drawing on music theory originating in nineteenth-century composition practices that posits the idea of gendered musical forms, I argue that these conventions are passed down through generations of composition to become standards, thereby perpetuating stereotypes that certain music sounds more feminine than other music. When particularly „feminine“ music is used in film, then, we are automatically inclined to associate this music with female characters. In this paper, I explore how this „feminine“ music can then be modified to refer to specific experiences of femininity, including girlhood experience, and help to articulate the sensations of girlhood experienced by the characters on screen. By using music that sounds „girl(y)“, the spectator is invited to experience the feelings of the girl characters for themselves.

Rachel Emily Taylor
Sheffield Halam University, UK

Empathy and Over-Identification: An Artist Residency at the Foundling Museum

Children are often voice-less in the preservation of their history. This process is generally undertaken by adults on behalf of the children. Many scholars still fail to differentiate histories of 'children', which concern actual practices of young people, from histories of 'childhood' that are ideological concepts adults hold of children.

As part of an artist residency at the Foundling Museum, I led a series of workshops with children aged between 7-14 years old. The aim behind the sessions was to explore the contemporary child's empathetic connection to the historical foundling child. The sessions revealed the problematic nature of empathy, as it leads to an over-identification of the past.

Empathy may be "rhetorically productive not in spite of but because of the dangers that it is prone" (Lynch 1998: 7). In heritage practices, empathy should to be approached with critical awareness as it may re-establish what the visitor already believes so that the process becomes a rehearsal (Smith 2016: 12). Children have been regarded as passive in heritage-making (Smith 2013: 122), but this position must be questioned and undone. Through action – be it drama or art-making – the child questions and gains an understanding of the past, thus becoming active in the heritage process.

PARALLEL SESSIONS: 16.30-18.30
>19TH AND 20TH CT. (LIT./PHILO.)
>ROOM: 117

Marco Caracciolo (Chair)
University of Ghent, Belgium

Rachel Baldacchino
University of Leuven, Belgium

Being in Borders: Vernon Lee's Negative Empathy

Vernon Lee (1856-1935) was one of the first authors to mobilise a concept of empathy across disciplines and cultural platforms of the early twentieth century. By the outbreak of the First World War her contributions to the ongoing dialogue on empathy had been published in journals such as *La Revue Philosophique*, *Contemporary Review* and the *Fortnightly Review* and subject to the academic scrutiny of fellow psychologists. These essays were subsequently gathered in three major publications on the psychology of aesthetic perception: *Beauty and Ugliness* and other *Studies in Psychological Aesthetics* (1912), a collaboration with painter and sculptor Clementina Anstruther-Thomson, *The Beautiful: An Introduction to Psychological Aesthetics* (1913) and Lee's introductory essay to Anstruther-Thomson's *Art & Man* (1924). Critical readings of Lee's concept empathy engage with it as an experience of complete identification with animate or inanimate form (Martin 2013; Townley 2012; Morgan 2012; Burdett 2011; Fluhr 2006; Jahoda 2005; Beer 2003). I argue here that this is a misreading of Lee's concept of empathy and that rather than focusing on the experience of complete identification Lee's empathy is much more concerned with the experience of distance, loss, dissatisfaction and unease that to her is the base of all encounter with exteriority. In this paper I engage with selected essays from the three cited collections to build an argument for the ways in which Lee's discourse of empathy negotiates this experience of a 'negative empathy'. I read the selected texts against the theories of Theodor Lipps and Wilhelm Worringer to argue that this experience of a "negative empathy" has its own line of genealogical roots. I centre my paper around two questions: 1) What is it then that we miss about empathy when we ignore the "profound sense of unease" that is central to many discourses of empathy in the nineteenth century² and 2) How may the idea of empathy as inconceivable outside an experiential struggle at the boundaries of form nourish our ways of thinking about empathy today?

Wenjin Cui
University of New Hampshire, USA

The Negative Bond between Self and Other: Lu Xun and the Question of Empathy in Modern Chinese Culture

This paper explores the unique position Lu Xun (1881-1936), the most prominent cultural figure of modern China, establishes on the question of empathy. Focusing on some of Lu Xun's

key writings, I demonstrate how he questions the humanistic idea of empathy on the ground of the irreducible singularity of individual existence, and affirms the negative bond between self and other as a non-unifying form of communal sharing. In coming to terms with the finite existence of the living beings, I contend, Lu Xun formulates a form of ethics that simultaneously asserts the impossibility of empathy between singular existences and the non-empathetic sharing of the collective co-existence.

To further elucidate the broader implications of Lu Xun's questioning of empathy, I place it in the theoretical context of Jean-Luc Nancy and Roberto Esposito's re-thinking of community, as well as alongside Mizoguchi Yuzo's genealogical analysis of the Chinese notions of gong (the public) and si (the private). Lu Xun's affirmation of the negative bond between self and other, I propose, resonates with a significant trend of modern Western thought that attempts to move beyond the Cartesian notion of the enclosed subject to uphold the exteriority of the self. Meanwhile, while his Western counterparts asserts the constitutive void of existence against the metaphysical enclosure of being, Lu Xun emphasizes the non-identifiable relationship between self and other against what he perceives as a fundamental weakness of the Chinese culture, the relative lack of individual freedom in a less differentiated state of collectivity.

Marta Lysik
University of Wrocław, Poland

Writers' Empathy and Academics' Sympathy: J.M. Coetzee's Elisabeth Costello

Reading novels can be an exercise in empathy and identification, but what happens when the stories thematize empathy, e.g. passionate pleading for animal rights? The eponymous protagonist of J.M. Coetzee's novel, an aging and well-recognized writer Elisabeth Costello, travels extensively and gives lectures and talks, mostly in an academic context, on subjects pertaining to morality and ethics, including animal well-being, or more specifically, lack thereof. The novel addresses empathy and sympathy towards a very real issue, i.e. of animal welfare, also discussed in the academia nowadays, not only in courses on Animal Studies. Empathy is believed to be a sine qua non for writers. Without it compelling literature will not be created. The ability of a writer to feel what the characters feel make the readers feel it as well, and not just sympathize with them (Suzanne Keen's distinction of empathy vs. sympathy). The academics in that novel are sympathetic to various degrees towards the cause, but none of them is really engaged. This paper will examine how these two sentiments (empathy and sympathy) are negotiated throughout the novel.

Laura Field
American University, USA

Nietzsche on Empathy's Limits

Nietzsche is not known for his empathy, but nor would the former University of Basel professor have been surprised to see a European conference organized around the concept in 2017. Throughout works spanning the middle and late periods of his writing life, he comes back again and again to the theme of modern Mitleid, or pity/compassion, and offers a vociferous and at

times devastating attack on the concept and its power in our lives. As we work to understand the meaning and value of empathy today, it is worth attending to this most critical of critics. Why does Nietzsche focus so singularly on the „modern cult of pity and compassion“? Why does he take issue with something that we are often so eager to inculcate as the centerpiece of our ethical lives? In this paper I explore his several arguments against pity and compassion systematically, arguing that they are meant to have a special cumulative effect on his reader: the rhetorical excess is part of a calibrated effort to induce classical/tragic fear and pity. And so, while he scathingly critiques ordinary Mitleid, and the morality that it informs, he is also trying to recover a space for tragic pity within public culture. For Nietzsche, then, tragic pity has a special pedagogical role. Unlike a morality of compassion, a tragic morality does not seek to end suffering, but rather acknowledges that it is often through suffering that we grow and learn. For the conference, I am eager to consider the relevance of Nietzsche's discussion of Mitleid to contemporary understandings of empathy. Does shifting our focus to empathy help us to address Nietzsche's concerns?

PARALLEL SESSIONS: 16.30-18.30
>ANIMAL EMPATHY >ROOM: 120

Maria Grech (Chair)
University of Malta, Malta

Anthropomorphism as Empathy?

Recent studies in animal behaviour have suggested that the experience of empathy is not limited to human beings. Various species are said to share the same capacity for empathy that humans recognize in one another. Faced with the suffering of another, they appear to respond with kindness, compassion and altruism. One could argue that the attributing of such capacities and emotions to nonhuman species anthropomorphizes these animals. The rat does not necessarily respond compassionately or altruistically, it exhibits behaviours that we interpret as such through a human frame of reference. If empathy can be defined as the ability to understand and share the feelings of another. To place oneself in the position of another and see the world through their frames of reference. Then an anthropomorphic attributing of empathy to nonhuman animals might actually constitute an anti-empathetic gesture.

But perhaps a more productive way of thinking the relationship between human empathy and these animal behaviours is in terms of degrees of similarity and difference. Rather than being anti-empathetic, the attributing of empathy to the animal draws attention to a paradox inherent in the concept of empathy itself: placing oneself in the position of another necessarily also involves the recognition of oneself in this other. The anthropomorphic gesture may here be perceived not as a reversal of empathy, but as paradigmatic of it. One can only recognize empathy in the animal, because empathy hinges on a play of difference and sameness comparable to that between human and animal.

Alexandra Böhm
Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg, Germany

Empathic Encounters in Thomas Mann's Biography of a Dog: Zoology and Animal Psychology

Scholars on empathy in literary narratives like Suzanne Keen, Martha Nussbaum or Monika Fludernik agree to a large extent on the fact that producing empathy with the protagonists of a literary text depends strongly on formal strategies and narrative structures. Amongst the most prominent of those narrative techniques is the representation of a character's consciousness or point of view. That is to say an empathic reception of a literary text is largely motivated by the representation of a character's voice and perspective. But what about animal narratives, where animals are the main characters? Can animals achieve a voice of their own in literary texts? From an animal ethics perspective it is generally assumed that animals should be given a voice and not be regarded or treated as passive objects. How can literary narratives make 'the other' speak without assuming a paternalistic, anthropocentric superiority by speaking for the other? Giving animals a voice is especially interesting in the literary genre of animal (auto)biographies. I will therefore concentrate in my paper on a semi-fictional animal biography by Thomas Mann, „Bashan and I“ („Herr und Hund“), and its representation and enactment of animal subjectivity, agency and hence its potential for an empathic response. In this context the paper will look at the narrative techniques employed by Mann's text which enable (or hinder) empathy – a contemporaneous term coined in 1912 by Edward Titchener – with the portrayed live. „Bashan and I“ was published in 1919 and portrays the life of the author Mann and his dog Bashan in the post war suburbs of Munich. Interestingly Mann wrote his biography not only in temporal proximity to Titchener's work on empathy but also under the impression of the newly developed discipline of animal psychology with which he possibly came into contact through his neighbour Karl Gruber, who edited the journal Tierseele in 1913/14.

With regard to empathy in Thomas Mann's animal biography „Bashan and I“, in which the dog Bashan is the main protagonist, I will focus in my paper on two central concerns: 1) Does Mann's animal biography succeed in imparting Bashan the character of a subject which has its own voice and agency without assuming a paternalistic stance, and thus enable an empathic reception? 2) To what extent and (ethical) effect does the text put empathic encounters between humans and animals into scene? Based on the analysis of Mann's animal biography the paper will conclude with some general considerations on empathy, ethics, and giving voice to animals in literature.

Jules Sturm
University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Posthuman Ecologies of Sensation: Reproductive Imaginations in „With Animal“

In Carol Guess and Kelly Magee's collection of short stories („With Animal“ 2015), human parents of various sexes are pregnant with and give birth to animal babies; they hatch them, raise them, lick them, care for them, let them go, and thereby re-imagine their own desires and fears in the face of (un)controlled procreation. The queer human-animal imaginations of reproduction in these literary narratives urge us to scrutinize and re-imagine the "existentially disabled" (Shildrick 1997) reproductive subjects in the sphere of biomedicalized conceptions of life. Animality and disability are new concerns with respect to the reproductive body, which have

been explored in bioethical as well as critical posthuman theories. The task of this paper is to reshape traditional representations of the biomedicalized body by re-imagining bodily relations between parent and child. With the help of literary posthuman tales, I aim to identify alternative sensory ecologies for reproductive bodies which acknowledge forms of love and life that are often projected as "unlovable" or unlivable" in biomedical and bioethical discourse.

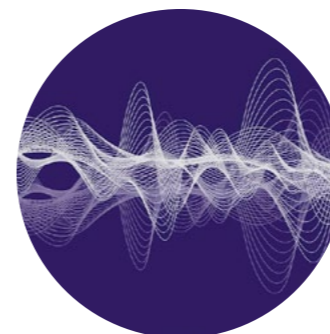
Expanding on "moral imagination" (J.L. Scully & C. Mackenzie 2007), which compels us to imaginatively 'put ourselves in the place of others', With Animal imagines maternal/parental empathies differently: it invites us to formulate an "aesthetics of sensation" (Hickey-Moody 2015) that allows us to conceptualize empathy as not only embodied and social, but also as an inventive projection. Under this premise, such posthuman-animal-reproductive imagination of empathy might allow us to differently love and let live so-called aberrant bodies, even within what Neimanis termed "a neoliberal, individualistic reproductive imaginary of commodification and amnesiac bioscientific progress" (Neimanis 2014).

Maryann Murtagh
Duke University, USA

Beyond Neocortical Quantification: Dispersing the privilege of the Human Brain-Organ in Mammalian Neuroscience through the Lived Worlds of Cetacea

In 2014, an article in "Frontiers in Neuroanatomy" stated that the longfin pilot whale has the largest number of neocortical neurons of any mammal—being roughly twice the size of humans. Though the study noted that the neural density of this dolphin species was lower than that of human brains, it nonetheless placed pressure on contemporary neuroscientific impulses that equate neocortex neuron quantity with intelligence. This paper displaces the neuroscientific desire to study the brain through a quantitative lens by exploring the relationship between organismal brain of a species in the context of the lived worlds of sea-mammalian species via the works of Jakob von Uexküll. As the one of the founders of ethology, the study of animal behavior, Uexküll's work stresses how a true animal biology cannot be reached if the perceptual and sensory umwelts of species are not understood. The paper highlights how a Uexküllian approach to the brain cannot divorce it from the rest of the organism's body and moreover to it highly specific ecological, sensory, and lived milieu. Mirroring how sea mammals are of intense neurological interest, this paper contributes to this research by investigating how Cetacean experience of space and time, such as that of blue whales, are experienced in a radically alternative way than that the lived time of the human species. It makes the claim that any animal—human or otherwise—can only be understood—through the whole of its bodily anatomy and physiology, and equally importantly, its ecological milieu.

Reading: Denise Riley



„Empathies: Say Something Back“

When: 19:30-21:00

Where: Literaturhaus Basel

Moderator: Franziska Gyax

FRIDAY, 23 JUNE 2017

Rooms: Main Building / Petersgraben 1 / 114-118, 120, Aula

08.00-08.45 115: Meeting of the General Assembly SLSAeu

09.00-10.30 Aula: Keynote by Jesse Prinz: On the Genealogy of Empathy / Responses by Nicola Gess and Lori Gruen

>COFFEE BREAK IN THE FOYER<

11.00-13.00 Parallel Sessions:

>114: Poetry

Marchal (Chair), Ma, Mafe, Pluciennik, Plumer

>115: Nonhuman Art

Müller (Chair), Deigaard, Johnson/Peterson, Meilvang

>116: Face of Terror (Media Studies)

Gfelsvik (Chair), Folkvord, Lourme, Outzen

>117: Intercultural and Nonverbal Communication

Malinowska (Chair), Ochsner, Jorgensen, Unur, Honorato

>119: Modernist - Woolf

Friis (Chair), Jukic, Knezevic, Pollentier

>LUNCH BREAK IN THE FOYER<

14.00-16.00 Parallel Sessions:

>114: Literary Form

Karl (Chair), Clare, Johansen, Tomsy

>115: Pathographies

Gygax (Chair), Hartmann, Matthews, Montalto

>116: Empathy and Reading / Writing (Freud, Benjamin, Art)

Askin (Chair), Corby, Jukic, Wood

>117: Caring for the Nonhuman

Rossini (Chair), Barcz, Borkfelt, Lauber, Ullrich

>118: Shakespeare & Joyce

Engler (Chair), Elliot, Pizzato, O'Connor, Márton

>COFFEE BREAK IN THE FOYER<

16.30-18.30 Pre-organised Panels:

>115: Empathic Self-Control (Literature, Cognitive Studies)

>116: Artists in the Hospital Zone (Nursing Science)

>117: Assembling Empathy as a Collective Process

19.30 Conference Dinner at „Markthalle“

20.30 „Pinnacle“ an interactive opera by J. Kiss & G. Edwards

KEYNOTE BY JESSE PRINZ: 09.00-10.30

>ROOM: AULA, MAIN BUILDING

Responses by Nicola Gess & Lori Gruen

On the Genealogy of Empathy

Nietzsche introduced the method of genealogy as a form of moral critique: by exposing the origins of our moral attitudes we might be unmasked as flawed or unpalatable. In a similar spirit, one might gain critical perspective on empathy by viewing it through a historical lens. There are many reasons to think that empathy has a dark side, leading to biases, oversights, and inadequate motivation. These concerns are briefly reviewed. Why, then, is empathy so popular? Here its origins are traced through a series of historical moments. The concept of empathy has roots in the earlier notion of sympathy, which once had a magical meaning associated with connections between things in nature. During the Reformation, however, it began play a role in the community-building rhetoric of Puritans and Presbyterians. This set the stage for sympathy's approbation by the Scottish moralists. In that context, its function relates to emerging ideas of the capitalist polis, directed primarily at middle-class fellowcitizens and potential trade partners (the poor and needy were mostly regarded with pity, not sympathy, and sometimes even contempt). Sympathy was recently transformed into an attitude that one can take towards those who are worse off. Reborn as empathy (a term with suspiciously aesthetic origins), the new construct has been put to work in the service of Liberalism at a moment when standard forms of social stratification are being challenged. Empathy is envisioned as a equalizer, but, with its ties to liberalism and capitalism, the equalization is asymmetric: those who are oppressed are seen as benefitting from the concern of the privileged, and those who are privileged gain moral credibility among their peers by claiming to empathize with denigrated outgroups. Like liberalism and capitalism, the logic of empathy is one that presents an egalitarian outlook while actually presupposing the superiority of the enlightened few.

PARALLEL SESSIONS: 11.00-13.00

>POETRY >ROOM: 114

Hugues Marchal (Chair)

University of Basel, Switzerland

Ming-Qian Ma

State University of New York at Buffalo, USA

De-Anthropomorphizing Language: Toward a „Non-Human“ Empathy in Contemporary Innovative Poetry

„If empathy is constructed and operated in/as language, is, then, a non-projectile, hence a non-human, empathy possible? In his exploration of the “relation” between “the way a poem is

made” and “the way the world makes itself,” Andrew Joron, the “metaphysicanelect of contemporary American poetry”, offers an answer in what he calls “deanthropomorphization of language.” To de-anthropomorphize language, as the poet makes it clear, is to “[force] language to fail” as an informing agent of intention, “to fall out of itself, to become something other than itself,” to become, that is, “the word of refusal, the sign of that which cannot be assimilated to the system.” Resonating with Michel Serres’s maverick philosophy, Joron’s de-anthropomorphization of language, as this paper is to argue, aims at one particular aspect of empathy as a language operation: its conceptual projection. Opting for an acceptance of the world in oceanic multiplicity in ceaseless fluctuation over some solid anchoring of small islands (Latour), Joron’s poetry thus articulates a Serresian philosophy in envisioning and experimenting an entirely different form of empathy. Non-projectile and, in this sense, non-human, it is an empathy which is situated linguistically within the world rather than against it, and which embraces the world rather than maps it. Empathy, as is thus envisioned in the works of Serres and experimented in the poetry of Joron, presents itself as an object ontology rather than an object-oriented one. It is an approach to the world “without concept” (Serres), thus meeting the world all the way rather than “halfway” (Barad).

Daniel Mafe

University of Queensland, Australia

Affecting Pontormo: Empathy Feelings Meaning in Poetry

For this presentation, I will explore how in poetry empathy works in the ‘gap’ between affect and discursive meaning. I will investigate this as a writer and reader, and the text I will focus on will be one of my own creative texts, Broken Perfect.

Broken Perfect is an extended poetry-text on the famous pioneering Italian mannerist artist Jacopo Carucci usually referred to as Pontormo (1494–1557). The text is in the first person with the occasional juxtaposition of critical and theoretical commentary. Pontormo was much criticised in Vasari’s famous Lives of the Artists as an eccentric, socially aloof failure, a figure who failed to live up to his potential. My text attempts to construct, through an act of empathetic imagination, the subjectivity of this singular artist. To do so contrasting literary strategies and rhetorical styles are employed. For example, words are at times dislocated from conventional use and so function as ‘raw material’ working on the ‘nervous’ system of the reader to generate image or emotional response through affect and empathy. In other words, these texts are written in a such way as to both short circuit discursive response and directly evoke scenes and emotional moments in the artist’s life for the reader. Despite this short circuit however the reader is, through these very self-same strategies, encouraged to a greater awareness of rhetorical representation. The writing’s very difference from conventional discourse encourages reflection on how representation through language occurs and functions as a meaning carrying device.

Jaroslav Pluciennik

University of Lodz, Poland

Various Styles of Translations of Psalms and Strategies of Prompting and Preventing Empathy

I compared several translations of Psalms into Polish with several translations into English and

two Swedish. I would like to describe two cases of Poetic Versions of the Book of Psalms by Jakub Lubelczyk (1530-1563) and Jan Kochanowski. One version has been created by one of the translators of the Brest Bible, a Protestant minister, who wanted to serve the Church and create hymns for singing congregations. The second version by one of the best Polish poets is acclaimed as congenial translation and paraphrase which is also claimed to be trans-denominational. I focus on the comparison between different versions comparing poetical invention of the poets with „literal” translations of theologically oriented versions of the Bible in Polish and English. When comparing the versions, I focus on translations of words referring to being poor, widowed and orphaned. I try to characterize different versions by a degree of emotional appeal to the readers. A good example of such comparisons is Psalm 82. Empathy of readers may be encouraged by the style of translations, which can be more or less emotional while referring to a body and expressive conceptual domains. I use cognitive semantics as a framework for my analysis. I try to provide a draft typology of various styles in translating the Psalms.

David Plumer

Western Illinois University, USA

The Curtain and the Veil: Loneliness and Doubt in Emily Dickinson’s Exploration of Individuality

Emily Dickinson’s explorations into the constructs of individual identity, often having a similar starting point as transcendentalist pioneers such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, diverges from her literary forbearers in two distinct areas, loneliness and doubt. One of the transcendental tenets that of humanity’s ability, through nature, to experience the ultimate universal interconnectedness of all things is challenged by Dickinson’s reticence to express that surety and an ever present doubt of the human capacity for this interaction. This apprehension is found both in not only her request for affirmation from Thomas Higginson with respect to the viability of her poetry, but also in what Shira Wolosky describes as the quality of Dickinson’s work that, seems to assert the power, completeness, and sufficiency of self yet, also questions, exposes, and subverts such assertions (Wolosky 134). Of particular importance to this discussion of Dickinson’s exploration of individuality as a construct will be the poems ‘on a columnar self’, ‘tried to think a lonelier thing’, and ‘the loneliness one dare not sound’. Using these works and others as guideposts towards an understanding of the poet’s description of individuality, along with a close reading of the opaqueness and economy of her word choice, the following paper will be an attempt to answer the questions: what was the most fundamentally indivisible part of one’s identity for Dickinson? And how does she challenge both the concept of individuality and the limitlessness of connection available through human perception?

David Cecchetto
York University, UK

Suidic Dreaming (I am written in a doom)

Listening is always muddy, but sometimes you have to get your ears dirty to tune into just what this means...or so the echo of my suidic dream told me one morning. And indeed, certain oto-acoustic emissions—certain sounds produced by my hearing that interacted with the “heard” acoustic world but which were not of either—once attuned me to what might be called a primary relationality of listening in general: sound particularizes in individual bodies such that it occupies the abstract space through which those bodies relate, which is to say the intervals, tempos, intensities, amplitudes, contours, and boundaries through which they become bodies in the first place. A sound makes no demands except to be heard, such that a muddy black box isn’t just a problem for communication, but is rather the problematic form of communication itself: the form through which an informatic paradigm wherein relations are mere connections—indifferent to their content, and qualitatively equivalent—is denaturalized. And from this denaturalization it becomes clear—clear as mud—that to listen is to attend to the effects of a reality the cause of which can never be singly determined, even as a coming together of more than one: the proverbial sound of one hand clapping isn’t the limit case of sound, but rather its basic enabling condition...providing that we accept that every singular hand is itself a multiplicity. A sound is less than the sum of its parts, but more so.

Lee Deigaard
(Independent)

Horses at the Museum

„Horses at the Museum“ is part of a long term ongoing multimedia art project investigating thresholds of shared experience, sensory processing and proprioception, and concepts of invitation, initiation, and trespass, empathetic awareness and imagination between horse human. Boundaries-- between species, between bodies in space, between incursion and permission, coercion and compliance, between inside and out-- define concepts of self and other, subject and audience and are often flexible and permeable. To try to know another, to imagine what he feels, what he knows (to practice empathy, intimacy) opens a vast frontier, connecting touch and proximity to emotional, inner landscapes. My work invites collaborations and explores aesthetic experiences for animals and novel engagements of their senses invoking sensory empathy and imaginative immersion into alternate POVs.

Garrett Johnson & Britta Joy Peterson (Chair)
Arizona State University & American University, USA

Sentient: Responsive Media, Movement and Experiment towards a Posthuman Experience

„This paper presents the theoretical considerations and development of an interdisciplinary, experimental, creative-practice project. The Sentient project blends collective practices in choreography, lighting, responsive media, and critical theory to problematize anthropocentric notions of mind, consciousness, and empathy. Taking shape in performances, workshops, and installations, our work finds motivations in some open questions: Is there an understanding of the world uncorrelated to human experience? How do we encounter or dwell with nonhumans? Under what conditions can we point to these encounters? How can creative practice in the responsive media environment frame these events? In a methodological register, how can we do theory through practice?

We draw on Cary Wolfe’s understanding of posthumanism as well as adjacent contributions, such as Ron Broglio’s notion of the surface encounter and Ian Bogost’s philosophical carpentry. Our methods reflect research culture at Critical Media Lab and the Critical Making Lab, the Lab for Critical Technics, as well as the work of Dunne and Raby, John Bowers, and Lauren Hayes. Our work is indebted to the experimental practices with responsive media from FOAM, the Topological Media Lab, and the Synthesis Center. Finally, Adrian Freed’s semblance typology of entrainments provides an important vocabulary for discussing our observations of human and non-human bodies.

Building on these frameworks, we describe our development of responsive media systems with choreographic experiments, and reflect on the relationships between humans and nonhumans which emerges through collaboration, coordination, and entrainment.

Emil Meilvang
University of Oslo, Norway

Amoebas, Vivisection, Life: How Early Scientific Microcinematography Reconfigured the Status of the Infinitesimally Living

Shortly after its conception, cinema was integrated into biological laboratories all across western Europe. Even though film never became the scientific tool it was made out to be at the time, it did provide images that helped biologists to fundamentally rethink the notions of life and the living on the plane of the miniscule, the microscopic and the visually hidden. As will be shown and analysed in an example of a microbiological vivisection of amoebas, carried out by the French Doctor Jean Comandon in the end of the 1930s and made possible by the time-lapsing potentials of cinema, the paper will flesh out how a pathologization, a making-ill of the amoeba paradoxically strengthened the empathetic and bodily ties between human, animal and the infinitesimally living. This will also provide us with a fruitful perspective on how certain types of scientific cinematography, and a broader spectrum of scientific visualization, had tremendous effects on certain strands of avant-garde aesthetics in the interwar period, thereby also bringing questions of life, animation and inter-biological empathy into the reflections on art.

PARALLEL SESSIONS: 11.00-13.00
>FACE OF TERROR (MEDIA STUDIES)
>ROOM: 116

Anne Gjelsvik (Chair)
Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway

Facing Trauma Cinematic Closeness and Ethical Encounters in *Of Gods and Men* and *Let them Come*

This paper will discuss two fiction films, both based on real events set during the Algerian war (1991-2002) Xavier Beauvois *Of Gods and Men* (2010) and Salem Brahim's *Let Them Come* (2015). Both films tell the stories about innocent people trapped in violent conflicts. I will in particular analyze the emotional impact of some of the most dramatic scenes in order to discuss what I will term as "ethical empathy". My aim is to investigate if, and how, cinema can create emotional insight in the situation of "the other" in times of terror, and in particular how the film medium can share the experience of traumatic events. I will argue that such films can have an impact in developing ethical consciousness, and I will base my discussion on perspectives on cinema, photography and empathy (Margrethe Bruun Vaage, Susan Sontag, Bela Balázs and Mikael Bakhtin).

Ingvild Folkvord
Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway

From Resonance to Empathy - Shaping Affective Modes through Voice

The problem of access to the other (self) was a problem faced by Husserl's original Cartesian take on the subject and in the phenomenological tradition, the direct or indirect access to the other was the focus of a deep reflection by M. Scheler (1913) on Lipps's concept of sympathy. This very tradition has been renewed today in developmental psychology, where the debate focuses on the difference between empathy and resonance. Drawing on frames developed by Beebe & Lachmann (2002, 2003) and D. Stern (1985, 2010) the paper seeks to point out how concepts such as "vitality affect contours", "affect attunement" and "bodily resonance" can be of relevance to contemporary fields where empathy is at work. The paper uses as its empirical example phenomena that we don't immediately think of as aesthetic: the experience of recorded voices as part of a court case, more specifically that of Anders Behring Breivik's after the terrorist attacks of 22. July 2011 in Norway. The overall claim of the paper is that this developmental framework can contribute to grounding the notion of empathy in a bodily experience that can then help investigate various institutional practices, one of which being the practice of law.

Nadège Lourme
Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway

Face-to-Face Encounters in Fiction Film

The face through evolution and culture has become the most distinctive sign of the presence of a subjectivity, the central locus of intersubjective perception and recognition and the center of bodily and oral communication. In being so, the face has also become the most expressive bodily part, i.e. the one that is most able to convey subtle large range of emotions, feelings and carnal significations.

Because experiencing other's emotions and feelings is essential to empathically engage with him or her, face-to-face encounters, i.e. encounters where perceivers meet each other through their faces, might potentially be the privileged site to empathetic interaction.

What about mediated faces? How we empathically respond to faces that appear in images? Moreover, how we empathize when experiencing mediated terrifying and terrified faciality?

This presentation will look closer to faces of terror that populate fictional moving images. By leaning on scenes from narrative moving pictures (*Taj Mahal* 2015 and *Homeland* 2011-), and drawing on contemporary neuroscience (Bruce, Young), embodied cognition (D'Aloia 2015, Lakoff Johnson 1999), phenomenology (Merleau-Ponty) and phenomenological film theory (Vivian Sobchack 1992, 2004), it will examine the empathic interaction of the spectator and the faces of perpetrators and victims of terror. Further, it will sketch how facial empathetic engagement can de-face the determination in which facial features rigidify themselves and therefore can blow up stereotypes and prejudices that each face is susceptible to be encapsulate within.

Mads Outzen
Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway

Documentary and Human Resiliency after Terror Attacks

In this paper I will discuss how cinema can partake in human resiliency after terror attacks. More specifically I will discuss this question based on the study of how are mediated faces portrayed and constructed in documentary films relating to victims of terrorist attacks. What significance do these mediations have for spectator experience and understanding of terror and its consequences and what role does empathy play for this understanding? I will base my discussion on contemporary documentaries where that portray and construct faces, and include testimonial footage as a central part of their material (about the terror attacks in Norway 2011 and 9/11). They deal with, represent and confront trauma, but more than that, they also attempt to go beyond tragedy, include some or other kind of process of recovery and healing, and they all show us human resiliency in action. Theoretically I draw on perspectives from documentary theory (Michal Renov 2003 and Joshua Hirsch 2004), and perspectives on trauma (Anne E Kaplan 2004 and Unni Langås 2015).

PARALLEL SESSIONS: 11.00-13.00
>INTERCULTURAL AND NONVERBAL COMMUNIC.
>ROOM: 117

Anna Malinowska (Chair)
University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland

Andrea Ochsner (Chair)
FHNW Basel, Switzerland

Intercultural Communication and Empathy

Since the affective turn took hold in the humanities and social sciences, intercultural competence and empathy have become two vital key concepts in communication and the study of meaning making processes in general. However, the two have rarely been investigated in conjunction.

The communicative strategies people use are shaped by conscious and unconscious cultural beliefs, norms, values and behaviours that are shared by those who have been socialized within the same cultural system. Acquiring intercultural competence involves the close study, understanding and experience of those cultural value systems used by cultural Others. Applying this knowledge in face-to-face interaction is a very complex matter; if we introduce the concept of empathy into the equation, it becomes even more complex. The negotiation between differing systems during communicative acts while at the same time showing empathic pro-social behaviour is hard to achieve. In our international and multicultural world, however, those obstacles tend to be overlooked, not least because they pose a hindrance to successful business transactions.

A single speech act can simultaneously convey several messages with various intentions. This is likewise true in terms of the encoding and decoding process. Meaning is constructed based on a selective reading of a speech act and may therefore foster expectations of empathic behaviour in the receiver even though the sender merely intended to express politeness.

From the vantage point of the psychology of communication and departing from the social constructivist premise that human relationships are constituted through communication, this paper argues that cultural difference and lack of (intercultural) communication skills create unintended empathic cues that lead to misunderstandings and thus become a stumbling block to successful interaction between parties from different cultural backgrounds.

Jonas Jorgensen
University of Copenhagen, Denmark

Soft Robot-Human Interaction and Empathetic Encounters

Within human-robot interaction (HRI) research one of the interests taken in empathy has been in the degree to which humans are able to empathize with robots. Key findings here have included that humans respond with physiological arousal when witnessing zoomorphic and anthropomorphic robots being hurt and that human likeness is one of the factors that play into

the amount of empathy triggered by a robot.

Given the ethical arguments recently presented for developing non-anthropomorphic and non-zoomorphic social and collaborative robots, this paper focuses on such robots whose bodies are constructed from elastic rubbers. Such robots fall within the category of soft robotics that has been on the rise in the past five years. Soft robots are simultaneously machine-like and bio-morphic. Their morphologies are often made up of simple geometrical shapes yet constructed from materials with an elastic modulus similar to that of biological tissue which affords them continuous movement and a body dynamics with an expressivity similar to that of human and non-human animals.

Drawing on HRI research, aesthetic theory and the author's own artistic research involving soft robots, this paper attempts to uncover central aspects of soft robot-human interaction. It further discusses whether empathy is a relevant category for conceptualizing the aesthetic responses of humans to soft robots. Invoking insights from posthumanist philosophy it argues that staying with empathy can be considered ethically and politically imperative.

Koray Unur
CIEE Istanbul Study Center, Turkey

Instructors Stories: A Study on Using Empathy in Intercultural Communication Course

In the field of intercultural learning, empathy has been used and discussed not only as a key concept, but also as a skill that one has to embody for intercultural competency. Deardorff and Arasaratnam posit empathy as a major component to their intercultural competency models.*

CIEE (Council on International Educational Exchange) is a non-profit study abroad provider based in US. Starting in 2014, CIEE began to offer in its various programs located in Africa, Europe, Far East Asia, Latin America, and Middle East, a course on intercultural learning „Intercultural Communication and Leadership“. As of fall 2016 it is being taught by 38 instructors whom are mostly host country nationals and empathy is one of the sessions of the course, and used extensively as a concept.

In this paper, I would like to concentrate on how instructors coming from various backgrounds (such as ethnicity, nationality, and academic background) define, generate meaning and facilitate a discussion on empathy and the links they make with life proper. The paper is particularly interested in how the understanding of the term at the intersection between social and political issues of the country or culture has been articulated. A survey and one on one interviews will be conducted to get a better understanding of how others define, perceive empathy and see the difference of perception in various settings.

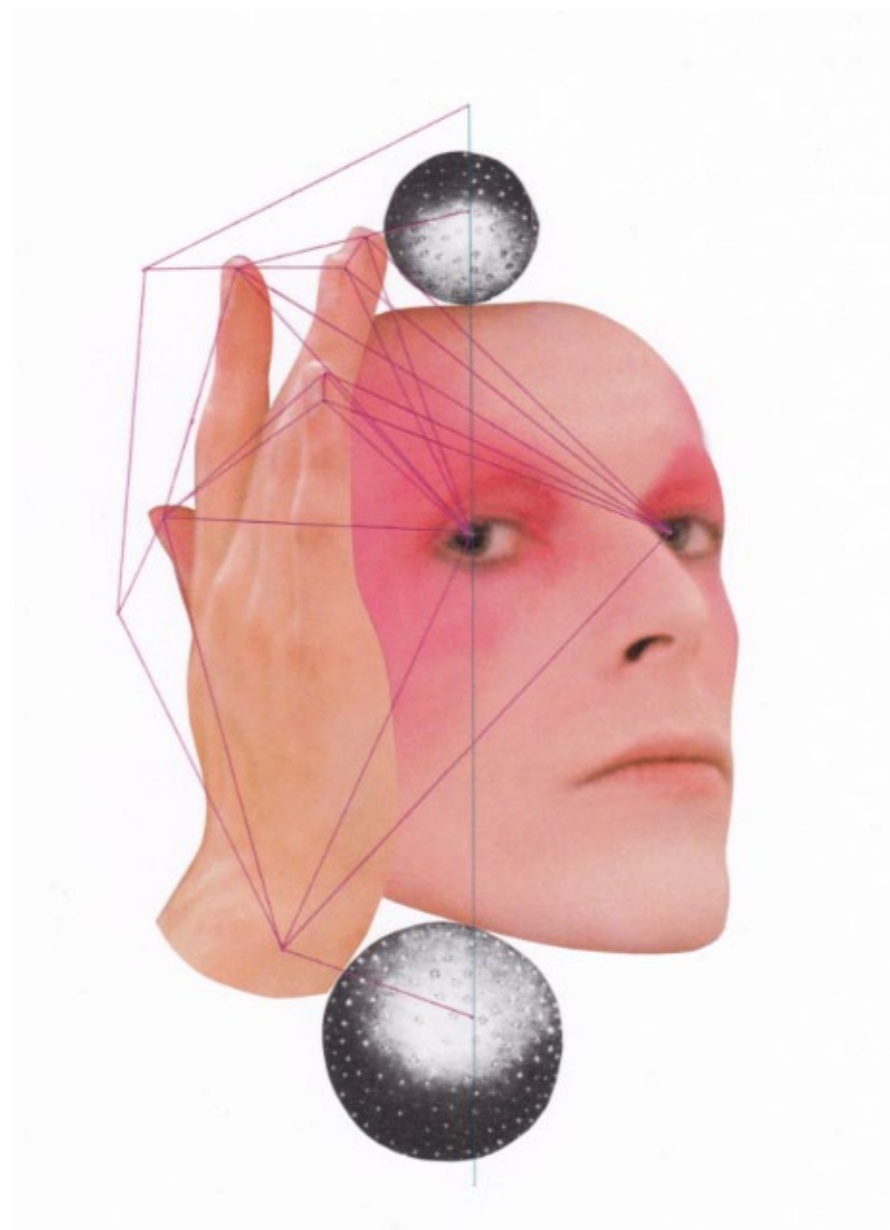
By doing this, I would like to understand what the commonalities, differences and nuances are in understanding empathy, what kind of memories one entails while explaining empathy. So that one can illustrate the diverse possible understanding of empathy, and its implications in intercultural learning.

*Spitzberg, Brian, Changnon, Gabrielle. „Conceptualizing intercultural competence“ in The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence, ed. By Darla K. Deardorff. SAGE Publications, (London, 2009).

„On my knees“: Positions of Empathy in Polarized Power Situations

Empathy defined as the possibility that one individual can be in tune with the thoughts, feelings or suffering of another subject (pathos) is a word originated from the Greek expression ‚empátheia‘ which curiously, in modern Greek, has lost its initial meaning as ‚extreme passion‘ becoming synonymous with the performance of an antagonist position.

This presentation intends to carry an interpretation of the non-verbal communication implicit in the gestures of kneeling and bowing as symbolic expressions of empathy. Such gestures have been associated with polarized power situations, where the individual who executes this symbolic non-verbal position is considered the part who is under the sphere of influence of the other part. The assumption here presented supports another reading, where the part that is under is actually the one supporting the polarized power situation and contributes mostly to the stability of the unit created by two individuals within a situation of equality.



Fehmi Baumbach, Coordinates, 2017
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Elisabeth Friis (Chair)
Lund University, Sweden

Monika Class
Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany

Empathic Pitfalls of Reading Fiction: Historical Case Study

This paper offers an investigation of the history of prose fiction and science, and recovers the perceived pitfalls of the empathic imagination while reading from a diachronic perspective. It aims to contribute to the integration of the cognitive studies (A.Jacobs) and historically sensitive models (Iser, Jauss) of aesthetic experience. The paper revisits the origins of the English novel and retraces the vain attempts (of novelists like Richardson, Fielding, and S. Johnson) to limit empathy to the emulation of moral paragons while medical practitioners like George Cheyne warned against any form of readerly arousal. It then turns to the 19th and early 20th century and focuses on two short stories, *The Lifted Veil*, written by George Eliot, and *An Unwritten Novel* by Virginia Woolf. Both narratives enter a dialogic relation with the extra-literary discourse of physiology: Eliot with Lewes' *Physiology of Common Life* (1859-60) and Woolf with Moore's 'Refutation of Idealism', *Mind* (1903). Latimer, in *Lifted Veil*, embodies the negative consequences of affective empathy: the experience of the emotions of others force themselves on and debilitate him fatally. In *Unwritten Novel*, the narrator's attempt to comprehend the emotion of the woman opposite her on the train is dismantled as a solipsistic imagination. In comparison to the 18th-century fiction, both Eliot's and Woolf's suggest a more refined spectrum of empathic pitfalls: Eliot associates with negative consequences of affective empathy with self loss whereas Woolf exposes those of cognitive empathy as a form of solipsism.

Borislav Knezevic
University of Zagreb, Croatia

Ordinary Minds: Narratives of Modernist Empathy

To describe what the specific subject matter of the (modern) novelist should be Virginia Woolf used the phrase "an ordinary mind on an ordinary day." Modernist literature still enjoys the reputation (not always undeservedly) of being elitist, high-brow and hermetic, while quite a few of its proponents actually argued for a very different understanding of the function of literature in modern society. This paper will address the question of representing ordinary minds in Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, both as an issue of social relations in the changing world of the early 20th century, as well as an issue of the literary representation of subjectivity. In particular, the novel will be discussed for its theme of class empathy, as a continuation of similar social concerns in the Victorian novel. For comparison, I will use Declan Kiberd's re-reading of Joyce's *Ulysses* as a text dealing with, in Kiberd's phrase, the "art of everyday life." The Woolf and Joyce novels are

structured by the assumption that literature should be about ordinary minds, which in turn raises the question of what constitutes the ordinary under the conditions of modernity. This paper will attempt to examine the interplay in these novels between the thematic concern with empathy as a feature of social relations and the textual (or more narrowly, narrative) concern with its own production of representation.

Caroline Pollentier
Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris, France

Telecommunications and Haptic Empathies in Virginia Woolf's Fiction

This paper seeks to consider the interrelated experiences of telephony, touch, and empathy as fictionalised by Virginia Woolf, showing how they mutually articulate paradoxical forms of connection and separation. Like touch that both connects and disconnects bodies, "the telephone line holds together what it separates" (Ronnell). Such duality shapes the intersubjective configurations sketched in Woolf's fiction. Unlike E. M. Forster, who diagnosed the decline of affective connections in technological modernity, Woolf tied the technological body to the possibility of mass-scale intimacies, thereby channelling the ethical potential of telecommunications. Through close readings of *Jacob's Room*, *Mrs Dalloway* and *The Waves*, I would like to measure the ethical impact of telecommunications in Woolf's haptic imagination, from her explicit use of telephones as narrative devices to her metaphorical depiction of haptic contacts between distant selves. To what extent do Woolfian telephones draw on and extend the sense of touch? How do such technologies of extended hapticity shape Woolf's ethics? Building on historical and poetic existing studies of telecommunications in Woolfian criticism (Whitworth, Marcus), this paper locates Woolfian empathy in the material structures of "the first media age" (Trotter), and thus retraces the emergence of an ethics of contact in the modernist period. Neither increasing nor decreasing the subject's ability to empathize, telecommunications as imagined by Woolf rather provide material templates for configuring the paradoxes of intersubjectivity, from the utopian possibility of "seeing [one's friends] by telephone" to that of "fusing [...] many lives into one" (Woolf). The proposed paper will successively focus on the ethics of haptic telecommunication in *Jacob's Room*, telephonic epiphanies in *Mrs Dalloway*, and the poetics of interrupted community in *The Waves*.

PARALLEL SESSIONS: 14.00-16.00

>LITERARY FORM >ROOM: 114

A. Karl (Chair) & R. Clare & E. Johansen & T. Tomsy
State U of NY-Brockport & Boise State U & Texas A&M U & U of Alberta

Empathy and Contemporary Literary Form / Affects and the Limits of Empathy / Failed Investments, Robust Portfolios, and the Impossibility of Empathy / Resisting Empathy: Hassan Blasim, the Iraq War, and the Spectacle of The Corpse Exhibition

Arguments for the political impact of culture tend to emphasize its production of expansive feelings of empathy, yet this work often relies on familiar formal patterns. But should we continue using a mix of „old“ appeals to empathy in „new“ forms and contexts and despite changing political and economic regimes? This panel explores the quandaries of empathy through its re-theorization in contemporary literary forms and suggests that literary forms reveal empathy as inextricable from and mutable in response to current political and economic rationalities.

The first two papers, Alissa Karl's (State University of New York-Brockport, USA) „Ali Smith and Empathy After the Subject“ and Ralph Clare's (Boise State University, USA) „Affect and the Limits of Empathy,“ examine how contemporary writers including Smith, David Foster Wallace, Claudia Rankine and Octavia Butler deploy literary form to generate new modes of empathy that exceed older models of the subject and intersubjective responsibility.

The second two papers, Emily Johansen's (Texas A&M University, USA) „Failed Investments, Robust Portfolios, and the Impossibility of Empathy“ and Terri Tomsy's (University of Alberta, Canada) „Resisting Empathy: Hassan Blasim, the Iraq War, and the Spectacle of The Corpse Exhibition“ document how recent works by Blasim and Hanya Yanagihara fail or refuse to establish empathy and solidarity in response to the violence of war and contemporary economic life.

Collectively, these papers emphasize the role of literary form in the generation of empathetic and anti-empathetic postures, and demonstrate the responsiveness of such form to contemporary political and economic traumas and precarity.

PARALLEL SESSIONS: 14.00-16.30

>PATHOGRAPHIES >ROOM: 115

Franziska Gyax (Chair)
University of Basel, Switzerland

Daria Hartmann
Albert-Ludwigs-Universität, Germany

Empathy and Illness in the Personal Essay

Illness narratives have broadly entered the literary scene. This paper investigates the connection between the subject matter of illness, its formal treatment and the reading expectation in the

genre of the personal essay. The essays „The White Album“ by Joan Didion and „The Crack-Up“ by F. Scott Fitzgerald treat an illness experience with the self-related writing and expressive possibilities of the personal essay. These two essays only stand for a number of writings which personally deal with illness. How do we assess these writings at the intersection of medicine and the arts? In literary theory, skepticism towards personal self-narration on illness might stem from hermeneutics of suspicion - assuming the „willingness to suspect“ and the „willingness to listen“. The counterbalancing function of both suspicion and listening reveals the true meaning of a text. However, this approach might dissolve the dimension of listening for the sake of rigorous critical distrust, in order to avoid a naive reading of the written experience. This especially applies to the literary production from illness experiences, where personal writing might be skeptically dismissed as victim art or misery memoirs. In the personal essay, the author, through a deeply private and personal probing in relation to illness, might elicit the reader’s understanding and empathic engagement. The hope of truthfulness in the writing should lead to a willingness to listen to the voice behind the written, and give way to more explorations of the self in writing.

Graham Matthews
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Clinical Practice and the Ethics of Detached Concern in British Literature of the 1960s

This paper explores the cultural reception of the medical ethic of detached concern as represented in British literature of the 1960s. Empathy is a crucial aspect of effective medical care because it establishes trust between doctors and patients, promotes healing, and encourages patients to adhere to treatment regimes. However, daily exposure to the pain and suffering of others can lead to compassion fatigue, burnout, professional distress, and exhaustion. Accordingly medical practitioners such as Michael Balint, Rene Fox and Howard Lief, and C. D. Aring developed an emotionless conception of professional empathy: namely, detached concern, which equates the detachment required to dissect a cadaver to the stance needed to listen empathically without becoming emotionally involved. Whilst medical residencies emphasised the expectation that doctors would respond to suffering with detached concern, evidence from psychoneuroimmunology studies has since indicated that caregivers who assist in the healing process and feel empathy for their patients enhance rather than hamper their technical skill. Novels such as Stanley Winchester’s *The Practice* (1967) and *Men with Knives* (1968), Margaret Drabble’s *The Millstone* (1965), A. J. Cronin’s *A Pocketful of Rye* (1969), and James White’s *Star Surgeon* (1963) offer privileged insight into the values British physicians and patients attached to empathy in the 1960s. Did doctors exhibit the skills of human empathy and expend all possible efforts to achieve a cure or to ease incurable suffering? These texts lead readers to question whether empathy necessarily leads to ethical action and offer insight into the lived experience of doctor-patient relations during a period of radical change and innovation in healthcare practices.

Paolo Montalto
Independent (Azienda USL Toscana Centro), Italy

Book Review: *Crossing Paths* (Paolo Montalto)

„In spite of narratives’ spread in medicine only few examine transplants, perhaps due to difficulties to deal with the cruel crossing of paths: a life ends; another regains energy. anguish/des-

pair on the one hand, apprehension/joy on the other. *Crossing Paths*: a memoir book that recounts liver transplantation - also through patients’ words. Clinical real-life stories, where human side often overcome the scientific one. A doctor facing death: scientific rigour, but also sharing patient’s fears: not only physical proximity; it becomes empathy. “This book creates a connection” – Laura Mazzeri (transplanted patient, and author) wrote in her preface. “We’re all different but similar in sharing life’s vulnerability. A doctor and his patient: they’re mutually necessary [...] doctor deals with patient as a person, not only with his/her disease; the dialectical ethics between man and doctor are what makes a life and a job worth living.”

The cover’s a painting by artist-doctor B.Santucci: „“darkness goes up to the sky, crosses into light, and keeps living in it“”: gift of a gift.

The main theme’s the author’s fellowship at Royal Free Hospital in London. Two years, intensely lived, that enriched author’s cv, and completed him as a man, with his certainties, doubts, inner conflicts.

A period shared with colleagues of different countries, cultures, religions, but sharing the same passion; thanks to their mentor’s magnetism, they pursued the ideal of mutual respect, and of respect for others, and of friendship with no competition. This book also celebrates mentorship, and support a fellowship for young doctors.”

PARALLEL SESSIONS: 14.00-16.00
>EMPATHY AND READING / WRITING
>ROOM: 116

Ridvan Askin (Chair)
University of Basel

Vanessa Corby
York University, UK

Drawing and the Affirmation of Social Class in the Work of Sally Taylor

This paper employs the drawings of British artist Sally Taylor as provocation to the vilification of the working classes in the UK by the Left in the run up to and aftermath of Brexit. It is the outcome of a longstanding collaboration with Taylor which actively negotiates the legacies of social class both within the art world, its discourses and higher education. Over the past fifteen years drawing has come to inhabit a central role in contemporary art; a position that in many respects is indebted to the claim that to draw is to be human (Dexter, 2005). This concept of drawing’s universal appeal, even if only grounded in childhood experience, naturally fits the medium for greater social engagement with the arts; a privileged position from which to articulate radical alterity, dissent, desire, fear and disorder (Dexter 2005: 9). This paper, however, employs Taylor’s works of 2016 to illuminate the way that art historical and curatorial discourses about drawing remain deaf to the limits of this shared experience visávis class. It argues that the ae-

sthetic and materials of Taylor's work actively negotiate, transform and reveal the cultural politics of making art in the in Britain in the twenty-first century. The paper mobilises the writing of Zygmunt Bauman (1998) to illuminate the way in which the charge of racism has removed the Left's capacity for empathy, or in his words, moral responsibility for the poor and asks how might drawing intervene in the dehumanisation of this social other.

Tatjana Jukic
University of Zagreb, Croatia

Empathy En Route to Mourning in Early Benjamin

In „The Life of Students“, an essay he wrote in 1915, Walter Benjamin contrasts empathy (Einfühlung) with a more critical engagement of communal and political life in modernity. Empathy by this account would not properly engage political modernity; Ilit Ferber (2013) calls attention to this particular grouping in early Benjamin. In my presentation I begin with the proposition that the engagement thus contrasted with empathy betrays an affinity with Benjamin's ideation of mourning in *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, the suggestion being that empathy provides a backdrop against which mourning in Benjamin takes shape as a peculiar semiosis. Secondly, my argument is that mourning in early Benjamin, even as it professedly cancels empathy, caters to the same structure of subjectivity, so that mourning and empathy reinforce in fact the same modern subject. Finally, I will analyze how this subject – and Benjamin by extension – depends on reconstituting and normalizing melancholia, in the position where melancholia may herald a (political) theory of sympathy.

Lorraine Wood
University of Salford, UK

Dolly

This practice-based paper explores the life and experiences of Dolly Mountain, who spent 84 years in Lancaster Moor Asylum, in the North of England. In 1910, when she was aged 16, Dolly was admitted to the asylum after giving birth to an illegitimate child. It would appear that this social transgression was the sole reason for her admission to the asylum. She spent her entire adult life in Lancaster Moor, until her death at the age of 100. Empathy, narrative and imagination are central to this exploration, which seeks to reach back through time to illuminate this hidden life. Dolly's experience intersects individual biography with class and gender, and global events, including two World Wars. Via creative practices, including poetry, images and visual/concrete text, empathy is engaged to invite the reader to walk in Dolly's shoes. In creating impressions of a life that is culturally and historically distant from our own experiences, what kinds of empathy are required and how might creative techniques be employed to generate empathic responses in readers/viewers? This multi-media presentation uses the writing of Dolly's life as a case-study to trace the processes of narrative and imagination as a means of creating empathy in both writer and reader. These layers of empathy combine to offer ways into an experience that would otherwise be lost in a world where people like Dolly attracted little attention or empathy. The paper will offer readings and visual materials from the creative work in progress, with critical framings.

PARALLEL SESSIONS: 14.00-16.00 >CARING FOR THE NONHUMAN >ROOM: 117

Manuela Rossini (Chair)
University of Basel, Switzerland

Anna Barcz
Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland

Animals' Vulnerability during the Odra River Floods (1997/2010)

Nonhuman animals are much more vulnerable to river floods than humans, however major research addresses the issue of human vulnerability. It might consider not only the anthropocentric paradigm of social perception but also how the concepts of actors and agency are understood.

Recognising animals as passive actors, deprived of agency during the flood, results in human response of rescuing them. While saving animals suggests various approaches to them such as farming, domestication, or personal attachment, I would like to concentrate on animals' vulnerability by asking questions: what does belong to the image of their vulnerable condition? What kind of narration can influence empathy for them in the situation of coping with a severe catastrophe. And if perceiving vulnerability can be substituted with empathy?

Taking an example of Poland, Odra river floods in 1997 and 2010 were the most extended and destructive after the Second World War. Thus many accounts in media, reportage and literature were collected. Animals are very often portrayed there when they are being rescued, transported but also when they are abandoned: left on a roof or in a garden. The photographs, interviews, memories, notes in journals and newspapers evoke powerful emotions but usually they are presented without comments. Narrating empathy for animals is hidden behind human tragedies, damages and loss.

In my paper I am going to argue for treating empathy for animals as a way of developing strategy of resilience during the flood. Since animals are recognised as vulnerable actors, humans demonstrate resilience to flood by rescuing them.

Sune Borkfelt
Aarhus University, Denmark

Literary Empathy and the Animal: Exclusions, Misconceptions and Ways Forward

In general, research on the relationship between empathy and fiction tends to simply overlook or ignore nonhuman animals, and while there are a few important exceptions, these rely on particular conceptualizations of animals that make their claims of empathy for animal characters problematic in some respects. Most importantly, Suzanne Keen in both her seminal work *Empathy and the Novel* and later work on graphic narratives emphasizes the role of anthropomorphism for such empathy, which both limits her scope and ultimately threatens to undermine her arguments about empathy for nonhuman animals.

In this paper, I argue that approaches to literary empathy are lacking, insofar as they overlook, ignore or misconstrue the nonhuman, and that this causes problems not only for theories on relations to animals in fiction, but also for theories on empathy and literature more broadly. Including the nonhuman in considerations on literary empathy is important not just because such considerations reflect and mirror real-life instances of empathy, but also because theories made on a purely humanist or anthropocentric basis run the risk of exposing themselves to flaws in their arguments and of overlooking more far-reaching potential of the theories. Finally, I explore and suggest new ways of approaching the nonhuman animal in the context of literary empathy, using examples based on depictions of slaughter and abattoirs in literary fiction.

**Franziska Lauber /
(Independent)**

Empathy and Distance: ‚Wasteland‘

The starting point of the project «Wasteland» was the artwork I did in the Musée Jurassien des Arts in Moutier/Switzerland in 2015/16 entitled «On the Back of the Pig». The artwork contained about 200 kilos of colorful jelly gums in the form of different animal species, arranged carefully on the floor in the shape of an 8 x 5 meter long pig. Not only had I to deal with the ethical question of whether I should use material from nonhuman animals (and thus be complicit with the killing of pigs) in order to open up a discussion about animals and industry, but also with the problem of what to do with the jelly gums after the exhibition.

When uninstalling the artwork, the team and I used bin bags to store the jelly gums. In the process, we were transforming «production waste» into new «material» for art production and new meanings of „waste“.

«On the Back of the Pig» and «Wasteland» aim to question our ways to designate, «produce» and revalue waste, especially in the context of intensive animal farming where nonhuman beings are not considered as living beings with feelings, but simply as material, as raw resources from which one could make a profit. And how a new gaze on gelatin/waste could re-initiate empathy upon nonhuman sentient beings. Reflecting upon that industrial side product, the spectator looks literally at a gelatin wasteland in an art space. Why should this industry not reuse this «waste» for making other products? Is it a good thing to re-use the material for creating other products? Or should we rethink the entire, and often hidden, food chain production with its massive ethical and ecological issues?

**Jessica Ullrich,
Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany**

A Dog's Death: Video Art as Work of Mourning

I want to ask if film can be a way to cope with the loss of a nonhuman companion in empathic terms. For my research project I investigate several artist videos that can be considered as works of mourning over the death of a dog. I want to investigate how these artistic eulogies raise empathy (for the dead dog as well as for the surviving human), how they visualize the interconnectedness of all creaturely lives and how they bear witness to the singularity of lost canine lives.

**PARALLEL SESSIONS: 14.00-16.00
>SHAKESPEARE & JOYCE >ROOM: 118**

**Balz Engler (Chair)
University of Basel, Switzerland**

**Natalie Elliot
St. John's College Cambridge, UK**

The Weight of Pathos in Shakespeare's King Lear

One of the most profound and puzzling moments in Shakespeare's corpus appears in King Lear, when Edgar leads the blinded Gloucester to an imaginary Dover. In this pathos-filled scene, Edgar pretends to bring his father to the cliffs, where Gloucester believes he will fall to his death. Since Gloucester is not actually at Dover, he does not fall and die, but Edgar is able to convince Gloucester that he has fallen. The scene is puzzling because it shows that Gloucester is so ill-attuned to his spatial perceptions that he is unable to tell whether or not his body has fallen. Why is Gloucester unable to sense the weight of his own body?

In the past several years, scholars have begun to take note of Shakespeare's engagement with developments in early modern physics—these include the emergence of Lucretian atomism, developing theories of matter, and speculations about the nature of weight. In King Lear, Shakespeare juxtaposes a physical theory of weight that is at odds in with human perception, with a moral view weight that is metaphorical in character, and that relies on embodied experience for its meaning. By interpreting the scene at Dover, we see that Shakespeare is at pains to reconstitute moral language when scientific concepts call into question the ontological status of its metaphorical sources. In King Lear, Shakespeare uses moments of pathos to recalibrate moral weight when the concept of weight is destabilized. Shakespeare's recalibration through pathos is fertile for reflecting on the poetics of empathy.

**Mark Pizzato
University of North Carolina at Charlotte, USA**

Prompting and Reappraising Empathy with Hamlet Videos

Through an interdisciplinary approach, involving neuroscience and theatre, this project investigates possible shifts between left-cortical, right-cortical, and limbic networks while subjects watch different video versions of the ‚to be or not to be‘ speech in Shakespeare's Hamlet. It builds upon the theatre metaphors of psychologist Bernard Baars (which set up the global neuronal workspace theory of Stanislas Dehaene and Jean-Pierre Changeux), social neuroscience functions mapped by Matthew Lieberman, cultural applications of cortical lateralization research by psychiatrist Iain McGilchrist, and cognitive reappraisal experiments by neuroscientist Mario Beauregard. Also drawing on modern artistic practices and ancient theories of rasa and catharsis (emotional resonance yet distancing), theatrical elements of brain networks are modeled as theorized in the recent book, *Beast-people onscreen and in your brain* (2016), by the presenter, Mark Pizzato.

Theresa O'Connor
Skelling Foundation Dublin, Ireland

Rewiring the Brain for Peace: Paul Klee, Le Corbusier, Gide and the Architecture of Empathy in Joyce's Hamlet as Brain Atlas

„Dublire, per Neuropaths.“ (Joyce, Finnegans Wake)

It is by now a critical commonplace that Shakespeare's work serves in Finnegans Wake as a mould in which something is cast. This something, this study argues, is a sonic mousetrap, a plot to re-set modernity by re-wiring the brain for empathy. Anticipating the project of Bruno La Tour's "GLOBALE: Reset Modernity!", Joyce set out in a world on the brink of war to re-set modernity by re-setting the way we envisage home, identity and Sovereignty as an ear open to the Other: "In that european end meets Ind" (FW). The storytelling mechanism whereby this space without walls he describes as the describes as the "immarginable" (FW) is constructed anticipates to an extraordinary degree the argument made by contemporary neuroscientists on perspective taking and empathy. Joyce's work harnesses Shakespeare's Mousetrap Plot to a story of a weak "Neuropath" (FW) being switched on in a "chilled hamlet" (FW): a landscape/ mindscape governed by fear. Writing at a time of great crisis, he pictured the healing of the "chilled hamlet" of humanity as emerging from a collaborative art form. Even as it mocks the master builders of Western culture and their illusion of individual talent, he gives them a "booth." (FW). He then takes the "booth" "storywalking" (FW) through "superimposed claylayers" in a "storyaboot" (FW) that owes much to the chromatic philosophy of Klee.

Ágota Márton
University of Oxford, UK

Empathic Attention and Excessive Details: Ciaran Carson's and James Joyce's Encyclopaedic Fictions

This paper explores the ways in which Ciaran Carson reworks Joycean encyclopaedism through his interest in the possibilities of empathy as a form of attention. Carson admits his indebtedness to Joyce in his encyclopaedic reconstructions of the city, and several critics agree that both authors intend to „represent the city both comprehensively and in its infinite particularity“ (Alexander 2010). I argue that Carson scales down Joyce's encyclopaedism in order to connect formal techniques with an empathic awareness, exploring attentive mechanisms involved in extremely detailed narratives through descriptions of characters empathic experiences. As opposed to Joyce's encyclopaedism which builds horizontally to represent the sounds, events and thoughts of Dublin, Carson takes a vertical approach, selecting a piece of knowledge as the subject of his novel's comprehensiveness, and examining it in detail. Shamrock Tea, for example, miniaturizes Joycean encyclopaedism by its attention to Joyce's associative patterns, cross-references, and empathic selectivity. In the novel, the exquisite minuteness of van Eyck's Arnolfini Portrait becomes the canvas for a miniature Joycean modernism and the characters visual empathy. Shamrock Tea's characters become the figures of van Eyck's painting, thus the novel holds in tension aesthetic (projection into a work of art) and intersubjective empathy. Carson moves away from the monumentality, vastness, and capaciousness of encyclopaedism by focusing on the careful, receptive attention that empathic awareness entails. By looking at Carson's version of a miniature, empathic modernism, this paper gestures towards the larger question of how modernist forms of attention inform contemporary fiction.

PRE-ORGANISED PANELS: 16.30-18.30
>EMPATHIC SELF-CONTROL >ROOM: 115

Ellen McManus (Chair) & S. Bauer-Gatsos & A.R. Beharelle & D. Kidd & K. Lannon & A. Soutschek

Empathy and Self-Control in the Temporo-Parietal Junction and in the Structures of Narrative Fiction

This roundtable will explore the connections between empathy and self-control in human consciousness and in the structures of narrative fiction. The role of empathy in human behavior and in narrative fiction has been explored both fruitfully and controversially by cognitive scientists and literary scholars, working separately and together, for the last 30 years. The recent study by Soutschek et al., „Brain stimulation reveals crucial role of overcoming self-centeredness in self-control“ (2016), which finds a connection between our capacity for empathy and our capacity for self-control, adds a new layer of complexity to this conversation. Three cognitive scientists and three literary scholars will present their work and discuss with the audience what cognitive science has revealed about how empathy and self-control might be connected in the wiring of our brains and how this connection might be thematized, represented, and stylistically embodied in literary texts.

Ellen McManus, from Dominican University, will discuss how 21st century science fiction may explore human capacities and limitations for empathy with our Darwinian future selves, that is, our descendants, whose quality of life and very existence may depend on whether we are able to exercise empathic self-control today.

Sheila Bauer-Gatsos, from Dominican University, will provide a brief overview of the study of empathy in literary texts and then discuss her research on how empathy is engaged, confounded, and redirected in novels by 19th century women writers.

Anjali Raja Beharelle, from the University of Zurich, will provide a brief overview of cognitive studies of self-control and then describe her research on the neural connections and information processing mechanisms that are important for making better long-term dietary choices.

David Kidd, from The New School for Social Research and author of empirical studies of the effects of reading literary fiction on mentalizing (Kidd & Castano, 2013; Kidd & Castano, 2016) will give a brief overview of the history of cognitive studies of the readers of literary texts and then report on his most recent research about the effects of reading literary fiction on intention-based moral judgments.

Keegan Lannon, from Dominican University, will explore how minimalist fiction demands that readers more fully investigate narrative clues to determine characters intentions and emotional states, which in turn leads to a greater empathic experience.

Alexander Soutschek, from the University of Zurich, will discuss the study „Brain stimulation reveals crucial role of overcoming self-centeredness in self-control“ (2016) and the implications of its findings that exercising self-control may depend on whether we can have empathy for our future selves.

PRE-ORGANISED PANELS: 16.30-18.30
>ARTISTS IN THE HOSPITAL ZONE (NURSING/
PSYCH./ CREATIVE WRITING) >ROOM: 115

M. McAllister (Chair) & D. Lee Brien & B. Goodman & N. Demonte
From: CQU Australia & Plymouth U & Saint Xavier U

There is widespread concern generated from reports of failings in care within health, particularly in the ongoing health inequities, that leave populations marginalised and suffering. The facts of health and social inequalities as a public health issue underscores the need for empathy at community and population levels. Yet, pervasive and overlapping neo-liberalist and deficit-focused discourses have led health-care workers and their educators to concentrate their focus at the individual level. In this discourse a dualistic ontology prevails, where subject/object are seen as separate and not intertwined. Here the health care worker is not/never a patient, is not/never suffering, is not/never abnormal - the patient is - despite what visceral or moral intuitions might tell us. Instead of feeling connection, empathy and solidarity with groups' vulnerabilities or concerns, health care workers are set up to see themselves as separate and to unwittingly become complicit in the status quo. By only developing skills linked to technology and treatment, health workers are ill-equipped to participate in decisions to engender change and systemic reform with vulnerable communities in which they are, or will be engaged. To better equip health professionals, learners require new language and skills to contextualise and critique experiences with vulnerable people, including themselves. This roundtable workshop explores the potential, place and power of art in advancing this goal. As Maxine Greene, the artist and educator once said, „encounters with the arts can provide powerful opportunities for confronting the blandness of life and imagining a different world a more humane social order.“

Our round table invites discussion of completed, planned and envisioned projects that lead students/practitioners into explorations of health, suffering, isolation, and human need illuminated through the study of music, poetry, fiction and non-fiction, and the visual arts.

Guiding questions:

- What emotions are awakened in the use of these artistic forms that are required in health care practice?
- What alternative stories are conveyed through artistic modes?
- How can art be linked to action?

PRE-ORGANISED PANELS: 16.30-18.30
>ASSEMBLING EMPATHY AS COLLECTIVE
PROCESS >ROOM: 117

Assembling Empathy

Across distances and divides, empathy extends and gathers. It collects, collectivizes. Or it doesn't. Empathies can just as well dissipate, throw up new and old walls, reinforce the gulf between these particular feeling selves and those un-feel-able others. When and how should we consider the singular valences of empathy's movements, the material and incorporeal resources of its agency, its affective potentialities (and limits)? Even more precisely as the four papers on this panel will demonstrate: how should we come to understand the nature of various empathy-assemblages at this contemporary moment -- in the midst of recent breathtaking politicalpopulist upheavals such as Brexit and Trump [Ellis and Seigworth], in emerging forms of 'experience capitalism' [Sampson], in the context of mental health practices in the age of the digital [Tucker]. Working across different subject matter and diverse disciplinary practices, these presentations are united in their view that empathy must be thought in a manner that is radically relational / contextual and, perhaps foremost, that empathy has to be understood processually. Because empathy mediates, assembles, folds and feels/unfeels, stagnates, sometimes devours itself and its relations (and more), a process-orientation to empathy foregrounds time/tempo/rhythms, transition over place-position, shifting practices of memory and forgetting, the place of the more-than/other-than human, the evolution of technologies and techniques, the flows and poolings and oozings of affective belonging, the always unfinished affiliations of inside and outside. Processual approaches to empathy render its coming-intoand-out-of-formation as the most vital way to (paraphrasing this conference's CFP) take stock of its heterogeneity and complexity.

Gregory J. Seigworth (Chair)
Millersville University, USA

Intuition in a Time of Collective Empathic Machines

In an era of algorithmic prefigurings, fake news, filter bubbles, and continuous affect modulation, it can seem as if empathy – collective and otherwise – often arrives too late. In the United States, a key debate currently raging across the Left is over whether there has been sufficient empathy for the plight of Trump-supporting working- and middle class (most usually white) Americans from sparsely populated rural and ex-urban communities. The odd-shaped temporality of empathy shows up in the timelag of backward-glance hand-wringing & in the proleptic feeling-forward of scheme hatching. As Carolyn Pedwell notes, of all the emotions, empathy is the one most politically inclined to the 'promise of self and social transformation.' But what if the issue now is not quite empathy but something else? Namely, how to invent/deploy an aesthetics of collectivizing intuition that moves in front of those cultural/affective logics that give modulatory contour to the kind of swerve bodies take. Here I want to consider the role that might be played by a 'transversal' intuition (via Bergson, Berlant, Deleuze+Guattari, Whitehead, Williams),

not so much against collective empathy, but rather as a way to (ap)prehend the affections of bodies empathetically in pre- and mid-act, in their coming-into-form and not as always already situated/constituted.

Darren Ellis
University of East London, UK

Feeling the Other: Processes and Realities

Arlie Hochschild (2016) is concerned with the political divide in America. She asks the question, how can liberal Americans like herself, scale what she calls the empathy-wall to heal the political divide, by connecting with people on the right? The UK has a similar political division emanating from the EU in/out referendum. These splits are not simply based upon the politics of the right and left but complex assemblages that flow in and out of existence particularly through the Internet. Social-media is a key affective agent within this complex, enabling the processing of realities, producing collective empathies, apathies and fears. This paper will explore issues related to political divides, empathy-wall-scaling and associated affectsoozing from social media, via a process philosophy informed by Whitehead.

Tony Sampson
University of East London, UK

Collective Empathy, Tunnels and Folds

Sampson's paper explores collective empathy through the contrasting lenses of Metzinger's neurophenomenology and a Deleuze-Whiteheadian inspired neuropolitical assemblage theory. Whereas, on one hand, Metzinger's appeal to mirror neurons strangely supports a solipsistic tunnel vision of empathic relation, the assemblage brain, on the other, offers a radical relationality in which what is assumed to be inside is grasped in the folds of the outside. As follows, neurophenomenology commits to a kind of empathy in which the relation established with others is nothing more than a representation on the inside (Metzinger's cave brain). In contrast, in The Fold, the radical relation of empathy can help us to better understand (and possibly cope with) the emerging contexts and sensory environments of what this paper calls experience capitalism.

Ian Tucker
University of East London, UK

Digital Lines of Empathy: Social Media and Mental Distress

The digital is increasingly part of what makes us human (Horst & Miller, 2016). This is often seen as a threat, as if digital media are capable of shaping what we are and what we do. I seek to develop understanding of digital-human activity through the work of Ingold, who offers a process oriented concept of lines, rather than spaces, and Simondon, who theoretically articulates individual and collective activity, without prioritising human or technological. I will draw on an example from mental health communities, in which empathy is seen as central to the shared emotional work that underpins digital peer support. However, this is not just about empathy being shared between people, but rather as part of the lines of activity along which people move with social media.

CONFERENCE DINNER



We meet around 19.30 at Markthalle Basel

Wonderful world food (vegan/ vegetarian/ meat/ fish) - eat as much as you can.

At your own expenses, please pay your seat/food option online via the registration page. It would be nice to meet you there!

Before Dessert we encourage you to participate in the interactive opera PINNACLE, performed by two of our conference delegates from Canada...

„PINNACLE“ - AN INTERACTIVE OPERA

Performed by Geoffrey Edwards and Jocelyne Kiss, with the help of Juan Nino

A 30 minute interactive opera called „Pinnacle“ based on a science fiction scenario concerning people with radical differences and the struggle to find acceptance in the midst of intolerance. The opera consists of a combination of pre-recorded virtual elements combined with live vocal production and offers the audience the means to participate with their own voices in the denouement of the opera - the final scene plays out differently depending on the quality of the audience's participation. It is still a work-in-progress. The opera's libretto was constructed with a focus on difference, resonating with themes such as transgender acceptance, disability and mental illness. The presentation of this short opera allows us to engage with audiences in interesting ways to address issues of embodiment, empathy, health and difference.

SATURDAY, 24 JUNE 2017

Rooms: Main Building / Petersgraben 1 / 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 120, Aula

09.00-10.30 Aula: Keynote by Jackie Leach Scully:
Other People's Lives: Empathy, Ethics and Epistemic Justice
Responses by Catherine Mills and Carolyn Pedwell

>COFFEE BREAK IN THE FOYER<

11.00-13.00 Half-plenary Roundtables:
>001: Entanglements of Matter & Discipline
Zumbühl, Constable, Mecke, Heydenreich,
Schrader, Zinsstag, Hauser
>102: Nonhuman Agents (Robotics, Film, Cultural Studies)
Spagno, Whitney, Harasser, Herbrechter, Roxburgh, Sprang

>LUNCH BREAK IN THE FOYER<

14.00-16.00 Parallel Paper Sessions:
>114: Bioethics (Abortion, Animal Experimentation)
Stobie (Chair), Mills, O'Neill
>116: Violence - Blanchet (Chair) Vanderbeke,
Crane/Davies, Prieto/Calvo
>117: Neuropsychology & Literature
Marchal (Chair), Lovell, Otis, St-Ours, Patoine
>119: Kinaesthetics (Dance / Theatre)
Peterson (Chair), Jola, Klankert, Kiss J., Edwards

>COFFEE BREAK IN THE FOYER<

16.30-18.30 Parallel Paper or Round Table Sessions
>114: Medical Education
Betzler (Chair), Caleb/Cipriani, Hudson Jones, Hazizi
>115: Science / Fiction
Kirchhofer (Chair), Auguscik, Idema, McFarlane
>116: Trauma and History
Wiedmer (Chair), Platten, Shilliday, Veprinska, Newman
>117: Critical Posthumanism Network: Empathy for the Posthuman?
Rossini (Chair), Callus, Grech, Herbrechter, Mueller
>119: Otherness (Literature)
Suter (Chair), Bradstreet, Kuhn, Trejling, Shahabi

KEYNOTE BY JACKIE LEACH SCULLY: 09.00-10.30 >ROOM: AULA, MAIN BUILDING

Responses by Catherine Mills and Carolyn Pedwell

Other People's Lives: Empathy, Ethics and Epistemic Justice

Most of us aim to lead good lives. A big part of that is the sense that we are not only making the right decisions about ourselves, but also that we are treating others in a morally defensible way; if we are making decisions that affect unknown others, for example when developing policy, we want to be reasonably confident that those others would also find them morally defensible. In any given situation, how can we know what those others would want, or predict the kind of decisions they would make or would consider acceptable? "Do as you would be done by" might be a useful (and almost universal) guideline; but it presupposes that you and other people are pretty much interchangeable, or at least very similar in all significant features, otherwise how you want to be treated would be irrelevant to them. Similarly, if (as some people claim) moral impulses are based on some form of empathy, then ethical behaviour rests on different people sharing enough knowledge of each other's lives that empathy is possible at all. But how can we know that our empathy is based on accurate knowledge of others – that it is epistemically sound? In this talk, I want to consider some of these questions. I'll look at the extent to which it is possible to imaginatively project ourselves into others' lives in order to be able to empathise with them and the decisions they make. Taking the particular case of disability, I will examine what happens to empathy, and to ethical analysis, under conditions of epistemic injustice: that is, when people's own knowledge about their lives is ignored or rejected.

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Chair: Manuela Rossini (University of Basel, Switzerland)

Speakers: Dominik Zumbühl (Physics, University of Basel, Switzerland), Ed Constable (Chemistry, University of Basel, Switzerland), Klaus Mecke (Physics, ELINAS, University of Erlangen, Germany), Aura Heydenreich (Literature, ELINAS, University of Erlangen, Germany), Jakob Zinsstag (Medicine, University of Basel, Switzerland), Jens Hauser (Cultural Studies / Greenness Studies, University of Copenhagen, Denmark).

Entanglements of Matter and Disciplines

Having its roots in physics to describe the mutual influence of our universe's particles even across vast distances, entanglement is an appropriate metaphor for the co-constitution of supposedly separate identities through relationality and dynamic interactions (or "intra-actions" rather) between and within systems across spacetime. Self and other, human and nonhuman, nature and culture are interdependent agents rather than autonomous entities. By the same token, knowledge and meaning is co-produced by different academic and fields and expertise outside academia as well as by animals, machines and other nonhuman participants in a world-creating dance.

The roundtable enlists "entanglement" as a travelling or nomadic concept (Bal, Stengers) and starts from the premise that entanglements of matter and disciplines necessitate and create a 'fellow feeling' and almost 'telepathic' reaction to the other as being the same while also sharpening a sense of difference and acute awareness of the limits of 'true' understanding and empathy.

The roundtable chair will take her cue from the poem "Entanglement" by Jane Hirshfield (see next page). So might the other participants who will predominantly speak from their disciplinary perspective (physics, chemistry, literature, art, media, cultural studies) and individual standpoint, demonstrating how "entanglement" manifests itself in specific contexts, while at the same time letting themselves be entangled in the net of inter- and transdisciplinary exchange.



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"Entanglement" by Jane Hirshfield

A librarian in Calcutta and an entomologist in Prague
sign their moon-faced illicit emails,
"ton entanglée."

No one can explain it.
The strange charm between border collie and sheep,
leaf and wind, the two distant electrons.
There is, too, the matter of a horse race.
Each person shouts for his own horse louder,
confident in the rising din
past whip, past mud,
the horse will hear his own name in his own quickened ear.

Desire is different:
desire is the moment before the race is run.

Has an electron never refused
the invitation to change direction,
sent in no knowable envelope, with no knowable ring?

A story told often: after the lecture, the widow
insisting the universe rests on the back of a turtle.
And what, the physicist
asks, does the turtle rest on?

Very clever, young man, she replies, very clever,
but it's turtles all the way down.

And so a woman in Beijing buys for her love,
who practices turtle geometry in Boston, a metal trinket
from a night-market street stall.

On the back of a turtle, at rest on its shell,
a turtle.
Inside that green-painted shell, another, still smaller.

This continues for many turtles,
until finally, too small to see
or to lift up by its curious, preacherly head
a single un-green electron
waits the width of a world for some weightless message
sent into the din of existence for it alone.

Murmur of all that is claspable, clabberable, clamberable,
against all that is not:

You are there. I am here. I remember.

ROUNDTABLE: 11.00-13.00

>NONHUMAN AGENTS

>ROOM: 102

D. Spagno (Chair) & J. Whitney & K. Harasser & S. Herbrechter & N. Roxburgh & F. Sprang

Empathy and Non-Human Agents

Futurist author and computer scientist Ray Kurzweil predicts that Singularity—the idea that machines will achieve human consciousness—will be reached by 2029. We are currently living through a cultural transition that is rapidly anticipating this reality and the many expectations and anxieties attached to it. How we live, work, and relate to machines (and how machines relate to us) is being called into question across diverse fields of research. While all intertwined, the latter two-pronged concern is the focus of this roundtable event. The following themes and questions will be explored:

- (Trans/Para/Post)Humanism: What does it mean to be human in an age of conscious machines? What are the ethical concerns this brings up?
- Identities: How are markers of identity written onto nonhuman agents? What are the cultural and political implications of this?
- Economy and Design: What is the role of empathy in design and consumer/user demand?
- Representation and Creative Fictions: How do contemporary science fictions envision empathy in a future of AI? What do these stories reveal about our hopes and fears?

Dario Spagno (University of Basel) will chair a conversation around these topics with experts who will present 10 minutes on the following:

Karin Harrasser (Cultural Studies, University of Art and Design Linz): Empathy in physiological research and prosthetics.

Stefan Herbrechter (Cultural Theory, Coventry University): Robotics and care in the film *Robot and Frank*.

Natalie Roxburgh and Felix Sprang (English Literature, University of Siegen): The problem of the human/non-human binary in the film *Ex Machina*.

Jennifer Whitney (English Literature, Cardiff University): The role of race and gender in the Microsoft chat-bot Tay.

Supported by: Doctoral Programme “Recht im Wandel”, research group “Law and Robots”, University of Basel, <https://recht-im-wandel.ius.unibas.ch/de/technischer-wandel/law-and-robots/>

PARALLEL PAPER SESSIONS: 14.00-16.00

>BIOETHICS (ABORTION, ANIMAL EXPERIMENT.)

>ROOM: 114

Caitlin Stobie (Chair)
University of Leeds, UK

Representing Life, Death, and Abortion: Embodying Empathy and Ethics in Yvonne Vera’s *Butterfly Burning*

Written after the ‘birth’ of postcolonial Zimbabwe in 1980, but set in colonial Rhodesia during the 1940s, Yvonne Vera’s 1998 prize-winning novel *Butterfly Burning* tells the story of a rural woman who self-induces an abortion. She reaches this decision after realising that a pregnancy would threaten her studies, and potential career, in nursing. The text is littered with references to death: from workers who are killed in an oil explosion early in the narrative, to the protagonist’s decision to commit suicide in the closing chapter after she falls pregnant for a second time. This paper argues that the novel utilises natural elements to figure for ethical – and political – anxieties about terminating a potential life. Vera focuses on affect and agency as being intrinsically linked to interconnected material systems; creative forms which manifest in her work include human, animal, vegetal, elemental, or textual participants in ecosystems. For example, inorganic forces like lightning are imbued with the same level of autonomy as non/human animals. Instead of discussing reproduction in anthropocentric or hyper-medicalised terms, then, the novel approaches Karen Barad’s conception of the foetus as a phenomenon which includes the zygote, the maternal environment, and the broader ecologies in which both are situated (2007: 217). After contextualising my analysis with an overview of the roles that empathy and metonymy play in literary realism, I perform a close reading of the primary abortion scene, paying attention to how organic and inorganic forces serve as metonyms for affect. Next I utilise this postcolonial posthumanist methodology to analyse the protagonist’s second terminated pregnancy. The final chapter of the novel resonates with various earlier appearances of non/human subjectivities throughout the text. Analysing empathetic intra-actions between actants in the two abortion scenes, I conclude by considering postcolonial feminist representations of embodied exchanges and the ethics of ending lives.

Catherine Mills
Monash University, Australia

Seeing, Feeling, Doing: Mandatory Ultrasound Laws, Empathy and the Politics of Abortion

In recent years, a number of US states have adopted laws that require pregnant women to have an ultrasound examination, and be shown images of their fetus, prior to undergoing a pregnancy termination. While there is a growing critical literature on such laws, there has been little attempt in bioethics or philosophy to unpack one of the basic presumptions of them: that seeing

one's fetus changes the ways in which one might act in regards to it, including in terms of the (ethical) decision about whether to allow it to live or not. However, this presumption raises significant questions about the relation between visibility, emotion and ethics that feminist scholars of science and technology would do well to analyze.

I address these questions to yield insight into the role of emotion in ethics, particularly that of empathy, which seems to underlie mandatory ultrasound laws. In order to draw out the role of empathy in the ethics of abortion, I first consider the theory of maternal bonding and its use in mandatory ultrasound attempts to limit access to abortion. Second, I elaborate notions of maternal bonding in terms of recent philosophy of empathy, with particular reference to comments by moral sentimentalist, Michael Slote, on the relevance of empathy to the ethics of abortion. I argue that while it is not technically possible to empathize with a fetus, mandatory ultrasound laws nevertheless seek to elicit this empathic relation, while simultaneously suppressing empathy with pregnant women. The approach I develop ultimately gives rise to a new account of the politics of emotion in relation to abortion not in terms of grief and shame, but in those of a critical analysis of the (variable) mobilization of empathy and care.

Christopher O'Neill
University of Melbourne, Australia

The Double-Bind of the Blood-Signifier: On the Graphical Method, the Haemautograph, Vivisection, and Étienne-Jules Marey's Empathy for the Suffering Animal

A little studied aspect of Étienne-Jules Marey's graphical method is his use of other physiologist-experimenter's work in order to verify the results of his own work. In *La Méthode Graphique dans les Sciences Expérimentales*, Marey placed particular importance upon the traces produced by Leonard Landois' hæmautograph. This macabre apparatus involved the tying down of a large dog to a table. The dog would then have its tibial artery slit, with the resultant spray of blood caught upon an adjacent, mechanically rotated length of paper. The arc of the dying animal's exsanguinations appeared to follow the shape of the double-notched pulse tracing produced by the sphygmograph, Marey's pulse writing technology. As such, the experiment, in Marey's words, 'completely justified' his theory and practice.

The most consequential irony of this 'justification' is that Marey's graphical method was designed at least in part as a reaction to and a turning away from vivisectionist methods of analysis, which in Marey's own account were both unethical in the production of animal suffering, as well as unreliable in their status as scientific artefacts. In his exaltation of the hæmautograph we witness both his betrayal of this empathy for the suffering animal, as well as its quasi-transcendence; that a large dog, 'man's best friend', should be sacrificed upon the altar of the modern technoscientific method, in order to dissimulate as well as to exalt the violence that would so constitute it.



Etienne-Jules Marey (1830-1904),
Chronophotographie d'un Vol de Héron
© www.diptyqueparis-memento.com

Robert Blanchet (Chair)
University of Zurich, Switzerland

The Misunderstanding of Understanding: Empathizing with Film Characters on the Level of Action and Motivation

I will argue that when spectators say, or think, that they can understand a morally flawed character, such as Walter White from *Breaking Bad*, they are not referring to a simulatory process of mind reading, or shared emotions, as most contemporary theories of empathy would have it. Instead, I propose that what we mean when we use expressions like [?] I can understand that Walter lied to his family or its understandable that he went into drug trafficking is that the characters reasons for acting, at least in part, justify or excuse his action, while, all things considered, we remain critical of the action from our own point of view. However, to arrive at the acknowledgement that I, too, can accept at least some of the others reasons as good ones, I have to focus my attention on what drove him to act as he did in the first place, rather than just appraise that action from the point of view of how it affects my own concerns (my goals, my moral principles etc.). It is this seemingly trivial stepping out of my egocentric perspective on the world, and mental focusing on the other that makes the process of understanding an empathic act, according to my theory. Hence, I reject the view that empathy requires me to imagine something about myself. Secondly, I will show how this theory about empathy on the level of action and motivation can provide a partial solution to the sympathy for the devil paradox.

Dirk Vanderbeke
Friedrich-Schiller Universität Jena, Germany

Love your enemy: Unlikely empathy with the inhuman non-human in Michael Faber's *Under the Skin*

Empathy is generally understood to be a pro-social emotion and a significant aspect of social intelligence. It allows us to step into another person's shoes and to feel and share that person's emotions and perspective. As such, it is closely related to sympathy and compassion. This ability should guide us in our recognition of pro-social, anti-social or even sociopathic behaviour and, in consequence, in our emotional response the various possibilities of social interaction. As social beings, we should tend to feel drawn towards pro-sociality, altruism and reciprocity and averse to egotism, cruelty, atrocities and anti-sociality in general. This is not always the case. The fascination of evil is quite obviously a common human trait at least as long as we are not ourselves at the receiving end of violence and abuse. This fascination influences not only our interest in catastrophes, murder, violence and other unwelcome events, but also our appreciation of literature, movies and other media. Figures like Milton's Satan or Goethe's Mephistopheles have exerted a charismatic power over their readers, and so did later incarnations of evil like Dracula, Hannibal Lecter or Dexter. In particular, in recent TV series anti-social, violent or down-

right sadistic behaviour seems to have become socially acceptable, and it seems as if the producers and directors are conducting a large scale experiment to find out what kinds of barbarism the audiences will still accept in a charismatic protagonist. Michael Faber's novel *Under the Skin* and its film adaptation by Jonathan Glazer are extreme examples of our willingness to forgive and forget even the worst atrocities. The protagonist is an alien whose job it is to capture human males: the victims are then castrated, mutilated, fattened and processed as a delicacy for the social elite of the alien world. We really should not empathize and even less sympathize with this alien life form, but we do. My paper will explore the literary strategies that influence our responses to this monstrous behaviour, and also the cognitive mechanisms that may be involved in our momentary acceptance of the inhuman non-human.

Jonathan Crane and Christine Davis
University of North Carolina at Charlotte, USA

Little Monsters: Empathy, Narration and Violent Children

"On April 20, 1999, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold armed themselves with guns and explosives and walked into Columbine High School. They killed twelve students and a teacher and wounded twenty-four others, before taking their own lives. It was the worst school shooting in history" (Klebold, 2016, p. xix). It is safe to say that an expectant parent's narrative for her/his newborn child does not include future infamy as a mass murderer. Yet, some children do not grow from delightful cherubs to loving, tender teens and compassionate women and men. The best nurtured children can mature into vicious schoolyard bullies, household terrors, and wanton murderers. While it is easy to demonize children and incompetent parents when minors and young adults wreck havoc, we suggest the horror of uncontrolled mental breakdown and terror sprees authored by society's youngest and seemingly most vulnerable cannot be readily categorized with easy reference to bad seed and raising Cain. In this paper, we utilize an interdisciplinary medical humanities approach to juxtapose accounts of children with emotional and behavioral disturbances drawn from ethnographic research in mental health services for the young with fictional images of violent children in popular movies and books. In so doing, we problematize the question of empathy in imagining, representing, and understanding troubled children and their families, and discuss how cultural depictions of ungovernable children inform our shared experience of empathy and revulsion when our flesh fails us.

Moises Prieto and Luís M. Calvo Salgado
Humboldt-University of Berlin and University of Zurich

The Death and the Visual: Empathy and the Iconography 19th and 20th Century Political Assassinations

In general, the state aims at providing a positive image of its ruler, surrounded by glory and victory. But everything changes when he is defeated, taken sick or becomes the victim of an assassination attempt. Then, the state is forced to react and to reestablish its sovereignty and the current normal by diffusing images of a resumed equilibrium. In the case of political assassinations, this is performed by means of a triptych composed by the murder, the arrest or the trial,

and, finally, the punishment of the criminals.

In doing so, the state engages with an emotional community (Barbara Rosenwein), basically composed by its subjects. Emotions like sadness for the killed ruler, admiration for the state's efficiency and satisfaction for the author's execution become key elements of this particular state propaganda.

In our paper, we aim at studying the complex role of empathy in these representations. The complexity is manifold since the state purposes to inculcate empathy for the killed ruler but not for the executed assassin(s). Furthermore, while the 19th century is still under the influence of empathy rooted in Christianity, we assert that the 20th century manifests in some contexts a lack of it. For this purpose, we will use several famous assassination attempts from both centuries and analyze their iconographical representation within the historical context.

PARALLEL PAPER SESSIONS: 14.00-16.00 >NEUROPSYCHOLOGY & LITERATURE >ROOM:117

Hugues Marchal (Chair)
University of Basel, Switzerland

Sue Lovell
Griffith University, Australia

„We Shall Be Whole“: Empathic Relationality in David Malouf's ‚An Imaginary Life‘

In *An Imaginary Life*, first published in 1978, the acclaimed Australian writer David Malouf tells the story of the poet Ovid during his exile in Tomis, a village on the fringe of the Roman Empire, on the edge of the Black Sea. Through Ovid's meditations, I argue, Malouf lays the foundations of a form of empathy in which poetic language serves to lay bare the ontological connections between the self and the beings, entities and phenomena that make up the self's environment. In a remarkable poetic style, the text presents how the Poet, confronted with an unfamiliar sociocultural and material environment, begins searching for a new conception of what it means to dwell on earth. Ovid's exile becomes a quest for what I call „empathic relationality,“ which is about enmeshing the body with its environment by „driv[ing] out [one's] own self and let the universe in“ (Malouf 92). Seen in this light, the story of the Poet becomes an intellectual journey towards epistemic and cognitive metamorphosis, towards a cross-cultural conception of the relationship between self and place through empathy. In this paper, I will discuss key passages that stage the Poet's encounter with alterity and dramatize the intellectual transformation that ensues, and I will demonstrate that Malouf's elaborate use of language can enable us to rethink notions of relationality and ecocentrism as forms of non-human empathy.

Work cited: Malouf, David. *An Imaginary Life*. Vintage, 1999.

Laura Otis
Emory University, USA

Inviting Empathy Through Multi-Modal Sensory Descriptions

Empathy can emerge from simulated sensations just as emotion emerges from lived sensations. Because sensations rarely come in one modality, fiction-writers often lead readers to identify with characters by using language to evoke multi-modal simulations, for example, by cuing readers to imagine sight and touch simultaneously. In this presentation, I will discuss patterns I have observed in sensory descriptions from three contemporary American novels: Jim Grimsley's *Winter Birds*, Smith Henderson's *Fourth of July Creek*, and Daniel Woodrell's *Winter's Bone*. These patterns include tactics I have called the „juggling technique“ to begin scenes, and the „mirror neuron technique“ to encourage empathy with a character by having him or her imagine the sensations of a second character. The research on which this presentation is based was done to fulfill the requirements of an MFA program, and a second aim of this talk will be to compare the ways that creative writers and literary critics are taught to analyze literature. In examining the ways that three fine contemporary writers activate readers' imaginations, I will also consider how fiction-writers' and literary scholars' studies of literature can work synergistically to build knowledge of interest to neuroscientists. A central problem of systems neurophysiology is „the binding problem“, or how sensations combine to form lasting, dynamic multi-modal representations of objects. Fiction-writers adept at triggering several senses at once may offer insight into how „binding“ works.

Kathryn St-Ours
Goucher College, USA

How Mushy Are Musers?

Originally from Franche-Comté in France, Julien Gravelle studied philosophy and town and country development before moving to Canada in 2006. He now works there as a guide for adventure-seekers eager to explore the boreal forest of Quebec each winter. The means of transportation for these expeditions is the dog-powered sled. In 2014, Gravelle published an essay entitled *Musher*, which is a veritable gold mine for the discussion of empathies.

As a musher, Gravelle is responsible for caring for his dogs during the busy season, and then, in the off-season. Interactions with his animals are therefore a major subject of the book. On one hand, Gravelle's ability to „feel with“ them allows him to share their sense of excitement at the return of the winter, or to detect their rivalries as they vie for the lead position on the sled. On the other, the author questions his ability to empathize with these dogs, which are, after all, the product of natural selection within the indigenous cultures of northern Canada and not one of the many subspecies that coevolved with humans, and that underwent more profoundly the process of epigenesis.

From a scientific point of view, this paper will reference recent neurological research on mirror neurons. It will also rely on epigenetic research as far as the co-evolution of dogs and humans is concerned in Western cultures. This study will also be interested in art (here literature) as a means to increase empathy, provided that the reader enters into the text.

Pierre-Louis Patoine
Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris, France

Eating Dog, Feeling Concrete: Architectural Empathy in J.G. Ballard's High Rise

According to Guy Debord (1954), modernist architect Le Corbusier „aspires to eliminate the street“ through an urbanism that would „permanently isolate life in enclosed islands,“ ringing „the end of chance insurrections and encounters“ and leading to „automatic resignation.“ J. G. Ballard's High Rise (1975) is set in a 40-storey tower block, a „small vertical city“ straight out of a Le Corbusier sketchbook. Following Debord's oracular vision, its inhabitants turn their back on the street, and seclude themselves in their sleek, rectilinear concrete island. However, they are everything but resigned and no strangers to insurrections. Indeed, in Ballard's novel, the architectural modernist utopia paradoxically allows a return to tribal and hunter-gatherer configurations of desire and behaviour. In this presentation, I will explore the ways in which these configurations are brought about by an empathic merging of the inhabitants' body image and schema with the Brutalist volumes and shapes that surround them. Through recent findings in the neurology of sensorimotor empathy, we will evaluate to what extent this merging can be shared by the reader, who would then experience the modern re-elaboration of the human sensorium, and, through it, modes of embodied and distributed cognition that exhaust and resist the neoliberal styles of consciousness that High Rise dramatizes.

PARALLEL SESSIONS: 14.00-16.00
>KINAESTHETICS >ROOM: 119

Corinne Jola
Abertay University, Scotland

Empathy for Dance Audiences: The missing Role of the Narrative in Neuroscientific Research

Dance spectators can feel touched or moved by a performer even when they are literally sitting still and are not being physically touched. Across disciplines, this type of experience has been coined kinaesthetic empathy. Kinaesthetic empathy represents the ability to understand and share the feelings of the performer merely by observing their actions. The underlying cognitive and neuronal processes of kinaesthetic empathy have been studied extensively over the last twenty years. Thereby, novel non-invasive techniques showed spectators brains in action. As described by Daly, „dance, although it has a visual component, is fundamentally a kinesthetic art whose apperception is grounded not just in the eye but in the entire body“ (2002). This raises two issues: First, if dance is experienced in spectators' entire body, how much of kinaesthetic empathy can brain imaging studies reveal? Second, what are the specific circumstances under which dance is not just a visual (and ephemeral) art form and do current brain imaging studies acknowledge the conditions that actually allow kinaesthetic empathy to be experienced? The proposed contribution will present kinaesthetic empathy as a key concept in the interdisciplinary study of watching dance. Emphasis will be given to interdisciplinary research that acknowledges the presence of a narrative in dance spectating. The findings will be discussed in regards

to potential effects of a narrative on spectators' neuronal and embodied responses. Possible reasons for the missing role of the narrative in neuroscientific research on watching dance will be exemplified with the aim of identifying objectives for future research.

Tanja Klankert
University of Bern, Switzerland

Facing the actor: Phenomenological strategies of highlighting the limits of empathy in performance

Contemporary dance and performance thematises phenomena as empathy, emotional contagion or kinaesthesia. It focusses on non-verbal aspects and also illuminates the limits of empathy, for example in the works of Kris Verdonck. The performance installation ACTOR #1 by Verdonck confronts the spectator with his or her images and ideas of an actor. In theatre and dance, empathy plays an important role with regard to the relation between the actor, his or her role resp. character, and the spectator. According to theatre and dance theories the object of empathy is constituted by sensible intuition or other forms of representation as phantasy. A systematic approach to empathy can be found in the works of phenomenologists as Edith Stein, Edmund Husserl and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, where empathy is regarded as a basic form of intentionality which is directed at other perceptive subjects. The phenomenologists reject ideas of empathy as projections, inferential ascriptions or imaginative transformations. In his reflections about intersubjectivity, Husserl distinguishes empathy from perception of objects and from other forms of representation as image consciousness, phantasy and memory. The phenomenological approach, I will argue, offers a systematic view on artistic strategies of producing and preventing empathy. I will demonstrate this using examples by Verdonck. The artistic strategies also reveal the limits of the concept of empathy itself. When the spectator is confronted with his or her ideas of an actor and with an experience of otherness, the epistemological problem that underlies empathy is shifted to the ethical problem, how to encounter the other.

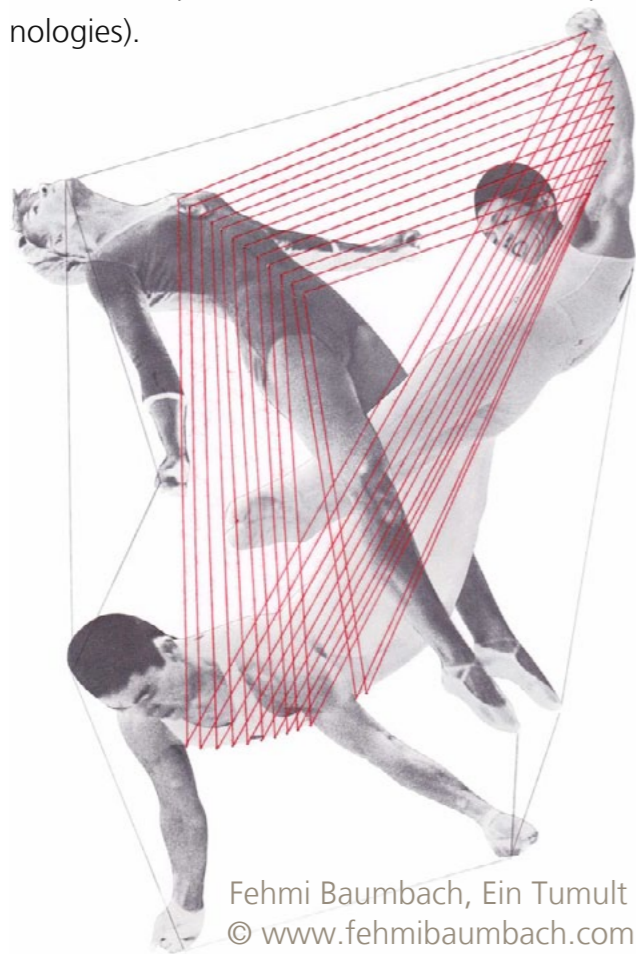
J. Kiss (Chair) & G. Edwards
Laval University

Empathy vs Sympathy to Promote Social Interaction through Collective Artistic Performance using Virtual Reality Devices

We engage in a discussion regarding the concept of empathy versus the concept of sympathy in the context of social interaction. We draw on examples from our research project "The First Book of Eng - participative opera, vast narrative and massively collective creation". Each member will orient the debate depending of their area of expertise : Literature, Geomatics, Design, Music, Dance, Arts and Technologies.

1. Collective Participative Opera to Promote Social Interaction: Empathy as a Promotion of Singularity by Geoffrey Edwards (Full Professor, Cognitive Geomatics, Laval University, Department of geomatics science, Centre interdisciplinaire de recherche en réadaptation et intégration sociale, CIRRS).

2. Aesthetic issues of Sympathy in performance context: Sympathy as a vector favoring the feeling of empathy? by Jocelyne Kiss (Associate professor, Faculty of Music, Laval University, Centre interdisciplinaire de recherche en réadaptation et intégration sociale, CIRRS: Arts and technologies).



Fehmi Baumbach, Ein Tumult der Romantik
© www.fehmibaumbach.com

PARALLEL SESSIONS: 16.30-18.30
>MEDICAL EDUCATION >ROOM: 114

Riana Betzler (Chair)
Konrad Lorenz Institute, Austria

Amanda Caleb & Joseph Cipriani
Misericordia University, USA

Affecting Empathy: The Use of Integrated Readings and Reflective Writings in an Introductory Medical Humanities Class

Humanists have argued repeatedly for the value of reading as a means of developing empathetic thinking. Recent studies have sought to validate these long-held beliefs: a 2013 study by Emanuele Castano and David Kidd suggested that participants who read literary fiction (as opposed to nonfiction) scored higher on a Theory of Mind test that determines the ability to relate to others (Castano and Kidd 2013). Such a comparative study reveals encouraging findings, but the subjectivity of text selection is problematic. A 2013 study from Emory University Center for

Neuropolicy indicated that novel reading could cause immediate neuroplastic changes indicating an increase in empathy (Berns et. al 2013). Such a study proves useful in considering physical brain changes but does not account for long-term effects. We are investigating the effects of combining theory, fiction, and discussion of ab/normality in a health care setting to enhance empathetic thinking in students. Our study aims to prove that integrative reading experiences can increase empathetic thinking immediately after the conclusion of the experience and will have lasting effects (even if diminished). Using pre- and post-tests (including at the conclusion of the lesson and one month out), we are studying changes in empathetic thinking (using the Empathy Quotient and reflective writing) in a class of Medical and Health Humanities majors and minors. The class is composed of students who intend to pursue careers in healthcare; as such, a study of empathetic thinking could prove useful in terms of how we educate such students.

Anne Hudson Jones
The University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB)

Hazizi

Anton Kirchhofer (Chair) & Anna Auguscik
University of Oldenburg, Germany

Empathy and the Scientist Reviewer: Critical Perspectives on Scientist Characters in Contemporary Fiction

This contribution undertakes an analysis of the discourse on empathy as it occurs in critical discussions and reviews of a specific set of novels. It is one of the hallmarks of contemporary science novels that they feature scientists as complex, round characters rather than as clichés and caricatures. As we have shown in various publications (Mosaic 4.2016, ZAA 2.2016), the ways in which these scientist characters are represented (and integrated into stories containing diverse plots, situations and institutional settings) appeared designed to allow the reader to empathize with the agents in a wide range of processes associated with science: their every-day routines, their goals and aspirations, their thoughts, feelings and perceptions, as well as the pressures, problems and conflicts these scientist characters are facing. Against this background, we will focus on the particular ways in which empathy is addressed or called upon in the reviews of these novels, and specifically in novels which have been reviewed both by literary reviewers and by scientist reviewers (and published in science journals such as *Nature*). How are the novels offerings and opening for empathic perspectives on the scientist characters recognized and evaluated in the discourse of the reviewers? What can this comparative analysis tell us about the deployment of empathy as a category in literary reviewing? And what light does it shed on frequently made claims about the enhanced insight into scientific concepts and practices afforded by empathy with scientist characters?

Tom Idema /
Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands

Stages of Transmutation: Environmental Posthumanism in Contemporary Science Fiction

Literature is often regarded as a window on the soul, allowing the reader to get a feeling for what it is like to be another person. Through narrative techniques, a literary text can allow the reader to occupy a character's mind, thus creating empathy, even if the actions of that character appall the reader. However, in an era of turbulent planetary change, this focus may give way to a preoccupation with the relations between humans and their nonhuman environments. I call this emergent perspective environmental posthumanism, differentiating it from the dominant, technology-oriented posthumanism. In this paper I develop the concept of environmental posthumanism with references to contemporary science fiction novels by Greg Bear, Octavia Butler, Philip K. Dick, and Kim Stanley Robinson in which the human species suddenly transforms in response to new environments. These novels envision the planet as an unstable stage for evolution, while representing the human body as a home for bacteria and viruses. This fascinating turn toward nonhuman insides and outsides is effectuated by drawing narrative tension from biological theories of interaction and emergence (e.g. symbiogenesis, epigenetics), problematizing

a tendency to compartmentalize life. Firstly, I will argue that through their substantial engagement with biology, these novels figure life as staged: an environmentally mediated, dramatic, phased event that enlists human and nonhuman actors. Secondly, I will argue that in turning nonhuman environments into agents or even quasi-characters, these novels imagine ways of feeling with the nonhuman world that are vital in an age of mounting environmental problems.

Anna McFarlane
University of Glasgow, Scotland

Nursing, Empathy, and Activism: Naomi Mitchison's Science Fiction and the Medical Humanities

The Scottish writer Naomi Mitchison lived to be a hundred years old and she took on many roles during her life: a nurse during WW1; a geneticist, working alongside her brother J.B.S. Haldane to find the first proof of genetic linkage in mammals; a Labour activist promoting reproductive rights; correspondent of Olaf Stapledon, H.G. Wells, and Aldous Huxley; and perhaps most importantly, a writer of historical fiction and science fiction. In this paper I draw on original research funded by a Wellcome Trust Small Grant Award to show how Mitchison's experience of voluntary nursing during WWI influenced her career, from the inter-species empathy of *Memoirs of a Spacewoman* (1962) to Mitchison's 'historical novel of [her] own time', *We Have Been Warned* (1935), a fascinating combination of science fiction, memoir, and fantasy which draws on Mitchison's nursing experience to portray empathy across class barriers. By analysing the empathy that Mitchison's nursing brings to her work I will engage with contemporary debates in the medical humanities, arguing for the inherent empathy of medical practice while celebrating the contribution of an important figure in the history of science fiction.

Biography: Anna McFarlane holds a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship at the University of Glasgow for a project entitled 'Products of Conception: Pregnancy in Science Fiction, 1968-2015'. She has worked on the Wellcome Trust-funded Science Fiction and the Medical Humanities project and researched Naomi Mitchison's science fiction in a project funded by a Wellcome Trust Small Grant Award. She holds a PhD from the University of St Andrews and her thesis concerned the role of gestalt psychology in William Gibson's science fiction novels. She is the features editor for *Vector: The Critical Journal of the British Science Fiction Association*, the editor of *Adam Roberts: Critical Essays* (Gylphi, 2016), and the reviews editor for *BMJ Medical Humanities*.

Caroline Wiedmer (Chair) & Rafaël Newman
Franklin University Switzerland & Author and Translator, Zurich

The Politics of Empathy

Our papers will explore the phenomenon of transferred, projected or expected empathy as a condition for refugees' acceptance into a host culture, and for that culture's reciprocal empathy with such refugees, with special regard for the contemporary Swiss situation, and will adduce examples from the legislative, social and cultural fronts to discuss empathy as a willed, meta-psychological act.

The Politics of Empathy: Receiving Refugees

Rafaël Newman will talk about "tolerance" as a historical imperative and the psychological, linguistic and ethical criteria used to "receive" asylum seekers as refugees: that is, as worthy of the empathy (and "reception" in the physical sense) of their prospective host community. He will offer examples from his own work with marginalised members of a western society and embed them in a theoretical context derived from such thinkers as Susan Neiman, Ian Buruma and Carolin Emcke.

The Politics of Empathy: Reading Refugees

Caroline Wiedmer will consider the role of story-telling in producing, or preventing the production of, the refugee as a proper recipient for empathy. Proceeding from insights gleaned from the Greek pavilion in this year's Venice Biennale, in which stories about the Hepatitis C bacterium intermix with Aeschylus' Suppliants to shape a blue print for the refugee narrative in Greece, she asks after its Swiss equivalent, paying attention to how the history of humanitarianism intermixes with more recent populist politics. She will argue in this context that Switzerland's contradictory history that has failed to produce anything akin to the clear moral compass produced by National Socialism in Germany.

David Platten
University of Leeds, UK

Empathy and Antipathy in True-Crime Writing

„In the emerging field of true crime, the literary imagination is constrained by the real-world scenario in which it is deployed. This is a literature with a profound ethical dimension, in that it will inevitably mark people who were involved in the event, or otherwise associated with it. Thus, in contrast to conventional literary fiction, where empathy with characters or situations may be solicited, true-crime writing is predicated upon sometimes overwhelming moods of empathy and antipathy. This paper will draw on recent scholarship to explore how this stock of feelings is channelled through two very different exemplars: Haruki Murakami's *Underground: The Tokyo Gas Attack and the Japanese Psyche* (1998); and Jean Rafferty's *Myra, Beyond Saddleworth* (2012). The first is the response of an internationally acclaimed Japanese writer to the 1995 sa-

rin gas attack on the Tokyo underground, perpetrated by members of the Aum cult. Ignoring media fascination with the cult, Murakami is interested in what the reactions of those affected say about the state of contemporary Japanese society. My second exemplar is an 'allohistory', a 'what if' fiction that imagines what the life of the notorious 'Moors Murderer' Myra Hindley might have been, had she been released from (and not died in) prison in 2002. In the context of a decades-long media campaign, during which the parents of the murdered children found themselves regularly under the spotlight, this first novel, published by an independent press, presupposes a significant degree of empathy between the author and a reviled public figure.

Molleen Shilliday
University of the Fraser, Canada

Canadian Literature and the Political and Cultural Currency of Empathy

The traumatic text relays the complexity of human reconnection. While the writer of a traumatic text underlines the need to speak for voices that have been disconnected from their culture or society, the reader of such texts acknowledges his responsibility towards these voices and attempts to establish a space in which he can empathize with them. The relationship between empathy and the traumatic text, however, is always aporetic and often deficient. Who does empathy serve when the reconnection is based on a reader-victim relationship that takes place in the aftermath, in the safe space of a literary work? Who does empathy serve when the voices come from history? Besides the act of „feeling with“ the characters, the reader of a traumatic-historical text has little or no negotiation to do with his or her own responsibility. One cannot stretch a hand to or open a pocketbook for the dead. This form of empathy breaks down the barriers of time and space, but remains bound to imaginative leaps and is wholly inseparable from the aesthetic. Contemporary texts that explore issues related to our current reality, such as modern-day slavery, human-trafficking, terrorism and refugee displacement, tend to have a more resistant readership than „popular“ past traumas, such as the Great War, World War Two or slavery. To what extent do readers recognize the political and cultural currency that empathy carries? I will explore this question through a Canadian lens and by analyzing trauma in several contemporary Canadian novels.

Anna Veprinska
York University, UK

„Captive Partnership“: Empathetic Dissonance in the Poetry of Oral Holocaust Testimonies

In a poem she reads during her oral testimony with the USC Shoah Foundation's Visual History Archive, Holocaust survivor Donia Clenman recounts the lack of empathy that her family extends toward her experiences of the Holocaust: „They love me deeply and tenderly yet would exorcise a part of me, dreading an eruption of memory no matter how oblique to force them into captive partnership.“ The dread and hostility that Clenman's family exhibits at the possibility of „captive partnership“ with Clenman's Holocaust experiences is also a dread and hostility against the „captive partnership“ of empathy. Empathy, the process of affectively and imaginatively projecting oneself into another's emotional or mental landscape, is denied to Donia.

Emerging from the research I conducted during my Fellowship at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, my paper examines the place of empathy in poetry written and read by survivors during oral Holocaust testimonies. I argue that this poetry both invites and rejects empathy in a re-

sponse I term empathetic dissonance. Empathetic dissonance reflects the survivors struggle with the role of empathy after the Holocaust. While empathy can bridge disparate experiences, empathy also has the potential to impose on another's affective stance. Saidiya V. Hartman argues that empathy creates a power relation, wherein the empathizer is a symbolically violent usurper of experience. In the context of the Holocaust, the symbolically violent possibilities of empathy may reaffirm the historical relations between victim and perpetrator. My paper prods the ethical limits of empathy and its ability to affect interpersonal understanding.

PARALLEL SESSIONS: 16.30-18.30
>CRITICAL POSTHUMANISM NETWORK:
EMPATHY FOR THE POSTHUMAN? >ROOM: 117

Manuela Rossini (Chair)
University of Basel, Switzerland

Critical Posthumanism Network

This roundtable is being organised by the „Critical Posthumanism Network (CPN) – an initiative that focuses on posthumanism's deep heritage, as well as its rich, varied and contested contexts in culture and thought. The transformative potential of the “posthuman” (as a figure, a fantasy, a “dispositif”) is undeniable. Technoscientific cultures, global economic challenges, looming environmental disaster, the spread of digitalisation, the rise of biomedicine and the erosion of traditional demarcations between human and nonhuman all call for alternative ways of thinking about humanity and its environments.

The current project of the CPN is to curate an online “Genealogy” of posthumanism and the posthuman. It is designed to be a multi-authored, growing online initiative that maps this quickly evolving field and responds to its expanding range of themes, outlooks and approaches.

With this endeavour in mind, the representatives of the CPN will each present their critical approach to posthumanism and the posthuman in general, and in relation to the conference theme in particular in order to give initial thoughts about how to frame a genealogy of “empathy”. The presentations and the following plenary discussion should then enable the panellists to produce a collective entry on “empathy” that also integrates the comments and suggestions from the audience.

The session will conclude with an invitation to contribute to the “Genealogy” and with a brief promotion of the Cambridge Companion to Literature and the Posthuman, with some of its authors being present.



criticalposthumanism.net

Stefan Herbrechter
University of Coventry, UK

---Because I care about Nonhumans...

What a (critical) posthumanist might say, when you ask them what their ethico-political motivation is behind their posthumanism, they might well say: because I really care about (the future of) the human... But they would probably add, that they also care about the nonhuman, if not even more so. These are clearly statements about empathy as much as they have to deal with a certain degree of (self-)denial. On the basis of a few examples, I'd therefore like to push these phrases, „caring about the human” and „caring about the nonhuman”, to some of their limits and explore in what sense they are contradictory or complementary.

Manja Grech
University of Malta, Malta

Empathy and Anthropomorphism

On the surface, empathy and anthropomorphism appear to be directly opposed to one another. In the experience of empathy one attempts to identify with another, while an act of anthropomorphism projects a human self onto a nonhuman other. Empathy appears to operate by affirming sameness, anthropomorphism by annulling difference. But a recent study on anthropomorphic thinking suggests that the cognitive mechanisms that underlie anthropomorphism are closely related to those associated with empathy. This paper discusses the relationship between anthropomorphism and empathy and explores the possible value of anthropomorphism for posthumanist thought.

The Musée de l'Homme is both sustained and unsettled by empathy. Through reference to the Museum's displays, its histories and its recent reorganisation, this presentation offers some reflections on how empathy works and doesn't, in theory and practice, when a museum's stock is humanity entire and when its rationale is thereby inevitably anthropocentric.

Chris Müller
Universities of Cardiff and Bristol, UK

In my paper, I take a step back onto Günther Anders's attempt to track the limits of 'our capacity to feel' in order to sketch out the stakes of a non-vitalist and thus also non-humanist perspective on empathy. To do so, I will briefly discuss the workings of what I call 'anaesthetic violence'. This form of violence operates beyond the realm of sensation and is amplified the more we delegate tasks onto complex technological object that can do for us what we would not possibly have the heart to do.

Call for Entries: Genealogy of the Posthuman

This call is ongoing, with no fixed end date.

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Suter (Chair)

Tom Bradstreet
Independent, UK and Sweden

Whose Metamorphosis is it Anyway? Kafka and the Limits of the Sympathetic Imagination

The titular transformation of Franz Kafka's „The Metamorphosis“ is ordinarily assumed to refer to Gregor Samsa's rebirth as an enormous insect. This paper begins by troubling that assumption, arguing that Kafka's story is in fact more thoroughly structured by a transformation undergone by Gregor's sister, Grete. As Gregor inches towards outright animalhood, Grete edges towards fully-fledged adulthood. These trajectories do not simply run in parallel, but are closely intertwined, even co-dependent; as Grete tries to help her brother retain his humanity, Gregor tries to help his sister retain her youth. Ultimately, however, these efforts are in vain. The respective metamorphoses of the Samsa children conclude simultaneously in a moment that marks the erection of a threshold between the human and the animal, sundering the siblings relationship along the faultline of the binary opposition between the two. As the gulf between these positions is opened, the easy, natural empathy of childhood gives way to reliance upon the sympathetic imagination, whose limits double as the boundaries of Grete's conceptual self-enclosure in opposition to her (br)other. In this way, The Metamorphosis can be read as a cautionary tale whose tragedy may be traced back to the persistence of the definite article: the the that precedes animal, and which banishes a (nonhuman) animal to the far side of an arbitrary distinction borne of an intransigent, perfectionist mode of thought.

Lina Kuhn

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA

Let Die: Zombie Empathies and Population Health in The Girl with All the Gifts

Traditional zombie narratives, increasingly popular in the 21st century as meditations on contagion fears, rarely focus on zombie subjectivity. M. R. Carey's novel *The Girl with All the Gifts*, however, revolves around complications accompanying the discovery of agency and emotion within a sub-section of zombies, or hungries. Specifically, the children of hungries retain their mental capabilities even while experiencing a compulsion to consume flesh. The novel swings between various narrative voices, including that of the hungry child Melanie, and of Dr. Caldwell, who represents humanity's last chance for discovering a cure to the hungries epidemic. Each character experiences varying degrees of empathy for those considered other to them, and the novel remains uniquely committed to portraying the nonhuman as well as human perspectives.

Drawing on biopolitical theories, my paper examines the novel's assessment of empathy's place in decisions surrounding population health. For instance, Dr. Caldwell, viewing Melanie's cohort as property, demonstrates a striking lack of empathy in considering the effects of medical experimentation on nonhumans. Melanie likewise suppresses empathy while making decisions about humanity's future. By including multiple empathetic accounts, *The Girl with All the Gifts* troubles the biopolitical goal of make live for desirable populations and let die for those deemed undesirable, as it becomes unclear which species, exactly, should be considered desirable. While Carey's novel suggests that prioritizing population health necessitates a removal of empathy, I analyze the parallels between the novel's species in order to illuminate the drawbacks of such objective approaches to the valuing of life.

Maria Trejling

Stockholm University, Sweden

Empathizing Through Fundamental Difference: An Exploration of Empathy with the Non-Human Other in D.H. Lawrence's „Fish“

Empathy can be seen as a merging of the self with the experience of another. However, when that Other is so radically different a true understanding is impossible, empathy must rather result from a humility at the face of one's own limited perspective. I will discuss this in conjunction with D.H. Lawrence's poem „Fish,“ in which the poetic „I“ attempts to explore the lives of fish, but repeatedly fails. This is because of the radical otherness of fish, but also because they exist outside the language he is trying to comprehend them through. At the same time, since the „I“ is a human and a poet, he cannot comprehend without words. He exists in language as fish do in water; they are both „things of one element,“ but their elements are fundamentally different. It is only once the „I“ understands that he can never understand fish that he can begin to empathize with them. Thus the poem illustrates how empathy with a radical Other presupposes a humble recognition of the limited viewpoint of the self. From such a perspective, empathy does not imply an attempt to adopt the feelings of an Other; instead it is created through an insight into the impossibility of ever being able to do so.

Travels in Multilingual Mental Spaces

The lifework of the Afghan intellectual Sayyid Bahal-Dn ! Majrh (b. 1928-d. 1988) entitled *Ego-Monster* is an allegorical understanding of the political history of modern Afghanistan. It is also a psycho-sociological fable of sorts, and probably the most significant work of philosophy produced in twentieth-century Afghanistan. It draws upon modern Western philosophy, classical Persian sufism, and Pashto poetry and folklore, to create a multilingual space in which the blindspots of each culture become visible. No longer are Persian and Pashto, and by extension, Afghan knowledge forms, subaltern; they are immediately conversant with English, French and German thought. In that space enters the *Midnight Traveler*, Majrh's ego personified, who discovers an egalitarian terrain of knowledge through the fissure between languages. When this mental space breaks down due to the internalized strains of the real-world, a refugee camp, like the one in which Majrh could have concluded *Ego-Monster* had he not been assassinated, materializes. Persisting in reality, for Majrh and the Traveler, and Majrh as the Traveler, requires a re-imagination of the Absolute, as selfish and indifferent, and fundamentally incapable of empathy. In his Absence, the hierarchy of knowledges is reconstituted, and Majrh is removed from the egalitarian terrain, which he has studied elsewhere as the collective unconscious of Afghanistan, accessible most directly in the Pashto oral tradition. In the wake of the Great Game and the Cold War, and since America's War on Terror, the Afghan literati continues to produce its identity and resist intellectual colonization by affirming its plural literary heritage.

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IT WOULD BE GREAT TO SEE YOU AGAIN IN COPENHAGEN
AT THE 2018 MEETING ON GREEN.

