

**Nieuwsbrief 259**  
**February 2023**

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**DISSERTATION DEFENSE: PABLO MURUZABAL LAMBERTI**

*Befriending the Ears - The Transformative Power of Listening* | 2 February 2023, 10:00 hrs, Agnietenkapel.  
*Supervisors: Josef Früchtl, A. Schinkel, C. van der Veen*



In Greek and Roman antiquity, philosophical discourse was meant to form one's character according to the ideals of a certain school of thought. Oral teaching, and therefore, listening, was seen as the most appropriate

vehicle for encouraging practitioners to transform themselves over time. Philosophy was meant to pass through the hearing into the soul.

In this dissertation, Pablo Muruzabal Lamberti seeks to contribute to the creation of an overview of the history of philosophy on listening in Western thought, a subject which to this day has received scant attention. In addition, his aim is to revitalise some of the existential dimensions of spiritual listening for us today and provide orientation for present-day Philosophy as a Way of Life (PWL) practices.

**DISSERTATION DEFENSE: ÇIĞDEM BUĞDAYCI GÜRSOY**

*Recapitulating Love: Modernity, Secularity, and Sufism in Turkey* | Supervisors: Yolande Jansen, Toni Pape, Brian Silverstein | 20 February 2023, 14:00 hrs, Agnietenkapel



This dissertation argues that the notion of love in Turkey refers not merely to an emotion but rather to reason, rationality, and a scientific mindset. It is situated among a plethora of interconnected fields, from culture to politics, and is woven into questions of national identity. It focuses on an eclectic range of examples, including modernist literature, a cartoon, and popular contemporary television series, all of which address *ashk* from various discursive perspectives. This emphasis on love, *ashk* in Turkish, is derived from its ambivalent meaning in that it both refers to romantic and Sufi love. Using Michel Foucault's genealogical method, I draw a genealogy of love in Turkey by situating *ashk* at the intersection of modernization, secularism, gender, and Islam. Although *ashk* signifies an epistemological break with

the Ottoman Islamic past, primarily in republican discourse, I argue that the Sufi concept of love persists in secularized Turkey in diverse forms. Throughout my analysis, love, with its ambivalence, both complies with and resists secularization, highlighting the crucial role of emotions, culture, and traditions in the making of an alternative modernity.

#### **OSL AWARD FOR ANDRÉS IBARRA**

Andrés Ibarra Cordero was awarded the first prize for his PhD thesis *No Progress: Queer Chronotopes in Late Twentieth Century Fiction* by the Netherlands Research School for Literary Studies. Congratulations!

#### **BOOK TALK: 'TAXIS VS UBER'; A CONVERSATION WITH JUAN DEL NIDO**

Juan Del Nido, author of *'Taxis vs Uber: Courts, Markets, and Technology in Buenos Aires'*, discusses his book with Niels van Doorn and Valentina Carraro. | 2 February, 16:00-18:00 hrs. Roeterseiland Campus (E0.22) Organized by Global Digital Cultures and [Platform Labor](#).

At this event, we will have [Niels van Doorn](#) and [Valentina Carraro](#) in conversation with Juan Del Nido, author of the book "[Taxis Vs. Uber: Courts, Markets, and Technology in Buenos Aires](#)".

Uber's April 2016 launch in Buenos Aires plunged the Argentine capital into a frenzied hysteria that engulfed courts of law, taxi drivers, bureaucrats, the press, the general public, and Argentina's president himself. Economist and anthropologist Juan Del Nido, who had arrived in the city six months earlier to research the taxi industry, suddenly found himself documenting the unprecedented upheaval in real time. *Taxis vs. Uber* examines the ensuing conflict from the perspective of the city's globalist, culturally liberal middle class, showing how notions like monopoly, efficiency, innovation, competition, and freedom fueled claims that were often exaggerated, inconsistent, unverifiable, or plainly false, but that shaped the experience of the conflict such that taxi drivers' stakes in it were no longer merely disputed but progressively written off, pathologized, and explained away.

This first book-length study of the lead-up to and immediate aftermath of the arrival of a major platform economy to a metropolitan capital considers how the clash between Uber and the traditional taxi industry played out in courtrooms, in the press, and on the street. Looking to court cases, the politics of taxi licenses, social media campaigns, telecommunications infrastructure, public protests, and Uber's own promotional materials, del Nido examines the emergence of "post-political reasoning": an increasingly common way in which societies neutralize disagreement, shaping how we understand what we can even legitimately argue about and how.

**Juan Del Nido** is Research Associate at the University of Cambridge's Max Cam Centre for Ethics, Economy and Social Change. Originally trained as an economist, he worked as a political consultant in Buenos Aires

before turning to social anthropology to study political and economic reasoning and the ethics of new technologies.

His work has been awarded the Royal Anthropological Institute's Sutasoma Award for Research of Outstanding Merit and has been published by Economic Anthropology, The Cambridge Journal of Anthropology, The Anthropology of Work Review, and Hipertextos. He has produced policy recommendations for the Argentine Congress and the British Parliament and written opinion columns for Argentina's national daily La Nacion. His book *Taxis vs. Uber: Courts, Markets and Technology in Buenos Aires*, (Stanford U. Press, 2021) examining the conflict around Uber's arrival in Argentina was awarded the Carol R. Ember Book Prize by the Society for Anthropological Sciences.

**Dr. Valentina Carraro** is Assistant Professor at the Department of Human Geography, Planning and International Development Studies of the University of Amsterdam. She is part of the Political and Economic Geographies programme group within the Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research. Her research connects digital and political geography with political ecology perspectives, examining how geospatial technologies reconfigure the built and social environment, and intervene on political processes. She is the author of *Jerusalem Online: Critical Cartography for the Digital Age* (Palgrave-MacMillan, 2021).

**Niels van Doorn** is Associate Professor of New Media and Digital Culture, in the Department of Media Studies at the University of Amsterdam. He is also the Principal Investigator of the Platform Labor research project.

The event will stage a lively discussion around the book and its themes, followed by audience Q&A. Drinks will be available afterwards. We look forward to seeing you!

#### **ASCA PHD DRINKS!**

All ASCA PhD candidates are invited to join for drinks in **Skek, Zeedijk 4-8, 1012 AX Amsterdam**. This is an informal recurring event every first Thursday of the month, starting at 18.00, with first two drinks on ASCA. It is not necessary to reserve a spot, just drop by! The dates for Spring 2023 are: March 2, April 6, May 4. Contact: Jasmijn Leeuwenkamp [j.leeuwenkamp@uva.nl](mailto:j.leeuwenkamp@uva.nl)

#### **ARTISTIC RESEARCH WITH ESTER EVA DAMEN AND NICOLA BARATTO & YANNIS MOURAVAS**

*ARRG Seminar in VoxPop BG3 | 3 February 2023, 13:00-16:00 hrs*

##### **Nicola Baratto & Yannis Mouravas**

Nicola Baratto (IT, 1989) & Yiannis Mouravas (GR, 1986) are an artist duo working with Archaeodreaming, a research-based artistic practice that questions the fluidity of history via exploring the intersections of archaeology, dreaming, and myth-making. The resulting narratives are told through mixed-media installations, including films, artist books, and

sculptures. We work with Archaeodreaming to craft new myths for the present, delving into history and our own dreams as archives for re-imagining the future. Through this experimental archaeology, investigate non-linear methods for narrating stories about historical artefacts, their materiality, symbolic function, and context of origin (or displacement). We have explored shipwrecks, relics, ruins, maps, and vessels as time capsules that can 'open' forgotten histories. Digging into these case studies we investigate how Archaeodreaming can become a method to contemplate something invisible and unknown and to engage with the processes of memory and (historical) imagination.

#### **Ester Eva Damen**

After the Rietveld Akademie and the Netherlands Film and TV Academy (screenplay & direction), Ester Eva Damen worked at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten and completed a master's degree in Artistic Research at the University of Amsterdam. The La Jetée Foundation, initiated by her, has been stimulating cross-over projects since 2007.

She writes freelance about film, made a number of short films including the 16mm b/w film 'Windhang' (1998), and wrote several drama scenarios for director Ineke Houtman, which were realized (within the NPS series 'Kort') 'Sahara' (2007). Ester Eva Damen's work can also be seen within a visual arts context, with collaboration between film, dance and new music as one of the common threads in her work. She regularly collaborates with choreographer Angela Köhnlein and composer Yannis Kyriakides and more recently with the dancers Ilana Reynolds and Sabrina Huth on their project You Are Here (2019). At the moment, she is completing her third short film with poet Tsead Bruinja based on his poem 'Hok fan Rou'.

#### **ASCA CITIES SEMINAR: MORE THAN HUMAN CITIES**

*Reading /Discussion Session | Location: room 0.16, Turfdraagsterpad 9, Amsterdam | 3 February, 2023, 15:00-17:00 hrs. Co-organized by Carolyn Birdsall, Riley Gold and Linda Kopitz. For more information and registration, please contact Linda Kopitz ([L.kopitz@uva.nl](mailto:L.kopitz@uva.nl)).*

The 2022-2023 ASCA Cities seminar will approach the city through a more-than-human lens. Taking up the theme of 'More-than-human Cities', we will explore the heterogeneous technological, social, and natural systems that mediate urban environments. From oceans and atmospheres to gardens and guard dogs, we will consider the complex entanglements between the human and non-human constitutive of city life—all without losing sight of the broad political stakes in such assemblages.

#### **CYBERFEMINISM INDEX (BOOK LAUNCH)**

Join us on February 8 (16:00-18:30) at Perdu, Amsterdam, for the launch of *Cyberfeminism Index*, a publication by Professor (Rutgers and Yale), designer, and researcher Mindy Seu. Organized by Natalia Sánchez-Querubín.

Join us on **February 8** (16:00-18:30) at **Perdu**, Amsterdam, for the launch of [Cyberfeminism Index](#), a publication by Professor (Rutgers and Yale), designer, and researcher [Mindy Seu](#). The book includes more than 700 short entries of radical techno-critical activism in a variety of media, including excerpts from academic articles and scholarly texts; descriptions of hackerspaces, digital rights activist groups, and bio-hackivism; and depictions of feminist net art and new media art.

The evening will feature a performative reading by Seu. Afterward, [Inte Gloerich](#), technology researcher interested in critical and feminist approaches to technology, will talk about how fin-tech and care may come together and the experimental publishing of the Feminist Finance Syllabus. [Ruben Pater](#), teaches graphic design and is author of CAPS LOCK. He will talk about how graphic design and capitalism have come to be inextricably linked. We conclude with a conversation between the speakers and drinks at the venue. Free of charge. Perdu, Kloveniersburgwal 86, Amsterdam. You can register here: <https://forms.office.com/e/8F2iNYIqiU>

The event is organized by New Media Studies at the University of Amsterdam.

#### **ASCA THEORY SEMINAR: FIELDWORK**

The upcoming session is organized by Lingyu Li and Lisa Schouten, | 9 February 2023, 15:00-17:30 | PCH room 5.60.

The texts to be read are:

- Artwell Nhemachena, Nelson Mlambo, and Maria Kaundjua, "The notion of the "field" and the practices of researching and writing Africa: towards decolonial praxis." *Africology: The Journal of Pan African Studies* 9.7 (2016): 15-36.
- Gökçe Günel, Saiba Varma, and Chika Watanabe, "A manifesto for patchwork ethnography." *Society for Cultural Anthropology*, 9 June 2020.
- Nicolas Langlitz, "If only there was a Department of Fieldwork in Philosophy." *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 11.2 (2021): 748-753.

#### **REIMAGINING THE PAST, ENVISIONING THE FUTURE, FROM A NEW CENTER**

*Lecture by Mark J. Butler in the Amsterdam Lecture series organized by Oliver Seibt, Ian Pocervina, and Sydney Schelvis | February 9th, 15:30-17:00 in University Theatre 3.01.*

This lecture contextualizes my intellectual vision for the professorship in Popular Music Studies at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and situates my primary current research project: a new edition of my monograph *Unlocking the Groove: Rhythm, Meter, and Musical Design in Electronic Dance Music* (Indiana University Press, 2006).

I began my role as Chair of Popular Music Studies at HU in October 2021. In the first part of my talk, I will describe where I'm coming from as a scholar and how I



see myself fitting in to and contributing to the landscape of popular music studies in Germany and in Europe more broadly. In particular, the Pop Music Chair will become the home base of a new Center for the Analysis of Contemporary Popular Music. The principal goals of the Center will be the cultivation and dissemination, through research and training, of an interdisciplinary analytical methodology for popular music. This will be based on methods developed in my previous research, with added emergent emphases on (a) sound and materiality, particularly the interfaces and instruments through which popular music is envisioned and created, and (b) the bodily knowledge and practices through which it is performed and experienced. The primary musical styles emphasized at the Center for the Analysis of Contemporary Popular Music will be electronic dance and club music, other groove-based styles (e.g., rap), popular music with prominent digital and/or electronic components, and videogame music. Overall, the Center will foreground culturally situated close readings of contemporary, groove-based styles, while also loosely continuing the tradition of the Forschungszentrum Populäre Musik that previously existed at HU.

In the second section of my talk I will describe my current major research project, in which I am revisiting and revising my book *Unlocking the Groove* for a new edition to be published by Oxford University Press. Having recently begun a year-long sabbatical devoted to this project, I am presently in the thick of it. For those not familiar with the text, I will briefly describe its contents and orientation. I will then outline my priorities for the new edition. In the context of this lecture, this will provide an opportunity for metatheoretical reflection on the state of popular music studies and dance music research today and, in comparison, as they existed in 2006 when the text was first published.

### PROSTHETIC SPECIES: SECURITY DOGS AND THE MORE-THAN-HUMAN SENSING OF URBAN DANGER

ASCA Cities talk - Rivke Jaffe (University of Amsterdam),  
Date: Friday 10 February, 2023, 3pm-5pm | Location: room  
0.16 (E-lab), Turfdraagsterpad 9 (BG1)

To register:

Focusing on human-dog relations, this article develops a more-than-human approach to the sensing of urban insecurity. Extending work on the embodied, sensory dimension of fear and other security affects, it centers the role of non-human, canine bodies in processes of risk assessment. Drawing on research in Kingston, Jamaica, I explore how a range of city-dwellers learn to sense danger with and through security dogs. How do those who live and work in the city construct and experience its threats through attunement to their dogs' olfactory, auditory and visual acuity? And how does this interspecies sensing of urban danger co-produce and configure distributions of urban safety and

precarity? In this context, I suggest, dogs are not only a companion species but also a "prosthetic species", animals that enhance and extend the limits of the human senses, enabling a more-than-human knowledge of what threats look, sound and smell like. I discuss such practices of interspecies sensing and their effects, concentrating on the identification of criminal, political and spiritual forms of danger. Together, such instances of interspecies sensing can provide new insights into the everyday perception, construction and negotiation of fearful cityscapes.

**Rivke Jaffe** is Professor of Urban Geography at the University of Amsterdam. Connecting geography, anthropology and cultural studies, her research focuses primarily on intersections of the urban and the political. She is specifically interested in how urban inequalities are mediated, reproduced and transformed in more-than-human ways, by nonhuman entities from digital technologies to animals. Her current work studies security dogs in Kingston, Jamaica.

#### Preparatory reading

- de Bondt, Herre, and Rivke Jaffe. "Rats and Sewers: Urban Modernity Beyond the Human." *Roadsides* 8 (2022): 65-71. <https://doi.org/10.26034/roadsides-202200810>.

- Barua, Maan, and Anindya Sinha. "Cultivated, Feral, Wild: The Urban as an Ecological Formation." *Urban Geography* (2022): 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02723638.2022.2055924>.

#### EASTSPAINERS #3: MUSIC

The February edition of Eastspainers is devoted to music and sound. We welcome three internationally renowned musicians with a special interest in new or, as they themselves call it, 'unheard' music. | 15 February 2023, 17:00-18:30 | VoxPop BG3.

Cellist Maya Fridman, percussionist Konstantyn Napolov, and pianist Hanna Shybayeva are based in The Netherlands, but each of them has close personal and biographic ties with Central and Eastern Europe as well. For Fridman and Shybaeva, the Russian war in Ukraine and recent repressions in Belarus also prompted musical initiatives aimed at fundraising.

Among other topics, we discuss Shybayeva's *Music for Belarus* concerts and Fridman's *Benefit concerts for Ukraine* – musical events that attracted broad public attention and generated hundreds of thousands of Euros of support for victims of war and repression. We not only talk *about* music, however: the musicians also perform recent work live.

[Register here](#)



(Photo: Brendon Heist)

### Maya Fridman

Maya Fridman was born in Moscow in 1989 and has been playing the cello since she was six. Her search for new music and experiments led her to Amsterdam, where she graduated cum laude at the Conservatory in 2016. Fridman is known for her passionate performances with a unique mix of styles and genres. Her concerts carry a deeper philosophy and theme, and her recorded works focus on the development of contemporary music for cello and voice. In 2019, Maya won the coveted Dutch Classical Talent Award. For season 2020/2021, she was Artist in Residence at TivoliVredenburg. Currently, she is pursuing a PhD trajectory at Leiden University researching ways of integrating ritual experience in performance practice.

### Konstantyn Napolov

Konstantyn Napolov is an outstanding percussionist, an impassioned pioneer and promoter of new music. He closely cooperates with leading composers. Educated in Kyiv, The Hague, Strasbourg, and at prestigious US institutions, he has studied with the world's greatest musicians and been awarded many prizes. Still, he is constantly in search of new and unheard sounds. In performances throughout Europe and beyond, as a soloist and in various ensembles, he plays repertoire and instruments from all over the world and the entire music history.

### GDC RESEARCH SEMINAR SERIES

Taking place in the Anthropology Common Room, REC 5.12 | 17 February 2023, 15:00-17:00 hrs.

Global Digital Cultures offers regular research seminars in which work-in-progress papers from junior and senior researchers at the UvA are discussed. The monthly GDC research seminars are aimed at discussing work-in-progress on global digital cultures. During each of these seminars, we will discuss two draft texts, seeking to include a dialogue between senior and junior scholars. As usual, we will discuss two work-in-progress texts by UvA colleagues.

#### [RSVP here](#)

These sessions feature research on global digital cultures from a wide variety of scholarly disciplines, theoretical perspectives, and methodological approaches. During each of these events, we will discuss two draft texts, seeking to include a mix of senior and junior scholars.

For our upcoming GDC Seminar on **February 17, from 15:00 - 17:00** we will discuss works in progress by Andreas Baur and Paula Helm. This will take place in REC B5.12 ([Common Room Anthropology](#)).

#### [Andreas Baur](#)

"Gaia-X: Governing European Digital Sovereignty in the Cloud"

This paper analyses the specific and so far unmatched governance structure and practices of Gaia-X. Gaia-X is an initiative to create a European cloud ecosystem aiming at boosting digital innovation while securing Europe's sovereignty in a global IT infrastructure.

Although its clear political objective is to balance the power of non-European cloud providers and strengthen European digital sovereignty, the initiative invited all big American (and Chinese) cloud providers such as Amazon Web Services, Microsoft and Huawei into the project. The initiative aims at providing a platform of interoperable and approved services obeying to Gaia-X standards and European regulation. Questions addressed in the paper are: why is Europe governing their cloud sovereignty in that unusual way? How is the initiative organised? How are non-European providers integrated, what problems arise and how successful is this? Analysing Gaia-X helps to understand a new model of governance that shows a hybrid merging of political regulation, self-regulation, and technological regulation, contributing to the literature of platform governance but also to studies of European technology regulation.

#### [Paula Helm](#)

"Leveraging or Exploiting? Breaking the cycle of neocolonial exploitation and paternalism in data-driven North-South partnerships."

The extractive logic of Big Data-driven technology and knowledge production has raised serious concerns. In recent years, attention has increasingly turned to the consequences for countries and communities in the Global South. This critique has thus far focused primarily on private sector activities. In this paper, however, we argue that publicly funded processes of knowledge and technology production must also be scrutinized through the lens of a neocolonial critique. To this end, we analyse the dynamics of collaboration in an EU-funded research and innovation project that is collecting data for the development of a "diversity-aware digital platform." The project includes pilot sites in China, Denmark, Germany, the United Kingdom, India, Italy, Mexico, Mongolia, and Paraguay. We present the experiences at four of the pilot sites, reflecting on the initial conception of the project, the challenges, ambiguities, and missed opportunities, as well as our progress and results to date. We then analyse the different experiences in comparison. As a result of our analysis, we identify some key actions needed to counter the prevailing logics of data colonialism and Eurocentrism. These, we argue, are rooted not only in historically entrenched structures of inequality, but also in the requirements of rapid upscaling that dominate recent innovation cultures and funding structures.

If you would like to attend the seminar series, you can RSVP using the link above.

Following your registration, you will receive information about the event location and participating scholars. You will also receive an e-mail with a link to download the texts. We would like to ask you to read these texts in advance to ensure a smooth and rich discussion and to kindly refrain from sharing them publicly, as they include work in progress.

The discussion will be followed by drinks!

If you have any questions, drop us an e-mail at [gdc@uva.nl](mailto:gdc@uva.nl).

### WALKING AS RESEARCH PRACTICE (WARP)

ASCA Research Group/Seminar organized by Tânia Cardoso, and Alice Twemlow | *The Walking as Research Practice (WARP) Research Group will return in the second semester of the academic year 2022/2023. We will continue our discussion on ways of walking as practices of research in a range of disciplines and across discipline boundaries.* | First session: 20 February 2023

Whether we are engaged in site-specific or virtual wanderings, feminist *flâneries* or digital *dérives*, and whether we prioritize listening or looking, day or night, urban or rural, pre-planning or play, being alone or walking *with*, through walking practices we can transform ourselves, what we make and the landscapes/environments we traverse. As a research method, walking can be used to perform and/or document in creative ways the act of walking, the path, the environment, or the events unfolding during this practice.

We invite everyone interested in walking practices as research to join us for group discussions, a close reading of texts, guest lectures and walking expeditions to rethink the dynamics between critical walking methodologies and the disciplines with which they are involved.

Please save these dates for the upcoming sessions (locations and specifics to be announced soon):

Mon, February 20, 2023, 17:00-19:00: Practice sharing, close reading of texts and discussion session

Mon, March 20, 2023, 17:00-19:00: Writing and walking session

Mon, April 17, 2023, 17:00-19:00: Guest lecture / guided walk

Mon, June 12, 2023, 17:00-19:00: Guest lecture / guided walk

Please join us by sending an email to: [t.a.cardoso@uva.nl](mailto:t.a.cardoso@uva.nl)

### NEW FACULTY INITIATIVE: HISTORICAL LITERATURES LUNCH

23 February 2023, 13:00-14:00 hrs. | PCH 2.14

A new network and research seminar series kicks off on February 23rd: the Historical Literatures Lunch. Welcoming scholars interested in textual cultures up through the early 20th century, HLL will provide an informal space to share recent work, try out new ideas, or discuss a (literary) text in a low-stakes, interdisciplinary environment. We're also interested in sharing best pedagogical practices, approaches to publication, and other relevant topics

Seminars will occur monthly from 13-14:00. Our first lunch will have Simon Leese discussing his research on Arabic letter writing and literary sociability between India and the Middle East in the nineteenth century, followed by a brainstorming session on HLL's agenda for the coming months. If you're interested in joining

the network and/or attending the initial session, please contact the organizing committee - prof. dr. Feike Dietz (Dutch), dr. Kristine Johanson (English), and dr. Simon Leese (Arabic).

### ON SHAKESPEARE, NOSTALGIA, & DESIRING THE FUTURE

Festive book launch for *Shakespeare's Golden Ages: Resisting Nostalgia in Elizabethan Drama* by Kristine Johanson | 23 February, 17:30 | PCH 104.

Followed by: Reception at 18.30 in the Leeuwenkuil coffee corner in PCH

This short talk on Shakespeare's suspicion of nostalgia takes as its starting point the idea of a golden age. Via Ovid and the Elizabethan spin machine of iconography and court poetry, I then discuss the political significance of the Golden Age during the first decade of Shakespeare's career. Finally, I turn to desire, that essential element of nostalgia and discourses of the idealized past. Examining Shakespeare's plays, I show how he stages desire's power to transform perceived past loss into future revolution.

Dr. **Kristine Johanson** is a senior lecturer in English Renaissance Literature and Culture at the University of Amsterdam.

### SOLIDARITY & BENEFIT CONCERT FOR UKRAINE

[Aula - Lutherse kerk](#) | 24 February 2023, 20:00 hrs.

On 24 February, 2022, Russia initiated a full-fledged invasion of Ukraine causing death and suffering to millions of Ukrainian citizens. With a benefit concert on 24 February 2023 featuring various Ukrainian musicians, including the SonCe Trio, percussionist Konstantyn Napolov, singer Maryana Golovchenko and young students from the Davidsbündler Music Academy, we contribute to the Ukrainian fight for freedom, sustained solidarity for Ukrainian people, and stand together against injustice. The evening is organised by the University of Amsterdam, Davidsbündler Music Academy, University of Europe and the Ukrainian Embassy of the Netherlands, with the support of TRIDA Foundation and Alumni Association AUV.

### CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS 5.0: SWAMPED!

#### Muddied Environments and the Ecology of Being Bugged Down. Soapbox Journal for Cultural Analysis

For the upcoming issue of Soapbox, a graduate peer-reviewed journal for cultural analysis, we invite young researchers and established scholars alike to submit academic essays or creative works that critically engage with the theme of *swamped*. We are inviting extended proposals (500-1000 words) that follow consistent and complete formatting and referencing style to be submitted to [submissions@soapboxjournal.net](mailto:submissions@soapboxjournal.net) by **February 21st, 2023**.

While it may first be thought of as a space of stagnation, the swamp is also a transition zone. A space in which water and land merge, swamps have long represented

an area in which the earth resists being controlled, and have functioned as areas of resistance in many Indigenous epistemes and folklores. Swamps, then, are areas that resist human control, and epitomise agency of the natural world, doing so too on a conceptual level (Wilson 1). At the same time, it has been co-opted semantically, as the term “swamped” has become associated with systems, both of society and signification, that are overwhelmed -whether in terms of a job market being swamped, or in the politically loaded draining of “the swamp” as a network of corruption. Where the former strand of signification uses the swamp to highlight agency, the latter points out a lack of it. As a result, swamps have become spaces of contestation and transition both as physical environments, and as linguistic ones. How do these strands of meaning diverge, and where do they come together?

Swamps as they exist in cultural imagination(s). Swamps speak to the imagination. They feature prominently in folklore and provide fertile soil for myriad mythical creatures: from the nine-headed hydra in ancient Greek mythology, to the South-African *grootlang*, to the numerous global configurations of the will-o'-wisp. These narratives largely hinge on the swamp's liminal positioning that makes it hard to traverse, inhabit, or otherwise tame. To this day, when swamps are featured in pop-culture, they are often mythologized to house the monstrous or, at the very least, the off-beat (e.g. Shrek, or the Man-Thing in Marvel comics, or the entire cast of characters in Karen Russell's *Swamplandia!*).

In addition to housing imagined creatures, the swamp is also a famously rich archaeological site where we can find many well-preserved traces of past human life. Most notable are the so-called bog bodies, eerily intact corpses that date back as far as the Holocene. These findings add to the swamp's mythical appeal, but are also hypothesised to, in some cases, originate from it. A particularly large amount of bog bodies dating back to the iron age were found in Northern Europe, and the bulk of these corpses bear traces of ritualistic human sacrifice. This has led historians to believe that, at the time, the swamp was seen as a transition space, not just between land and water, but also as a gateway between different worlds (Randsborg).

So, the swamp is charged with a rich cultural history and subject to wide-ranging meaning-making practices. We invite you to delve further into this and open it up. What stories do we tell about swamps? Which narratives are remembered? And, what does that ultimately say about us?

The swamp as it appears in political rhetoric. Since its first use in 1881 by Helen Hunt Jackson in her polemical text, *A Century of Dishonor*, the concept of the swamp as an area to be overcome has resurfaced repeatedly as a powerful metaphor in the arena of political discussion and rhetoric (most often in the context of US federal politics). Arguing against the so-called ‘Indian

Appropriations Act’ of 1871, which rendered Indigenous peoples as wards of the state and, therefore, eligible for forcible relocation, Jackson argued that such panacean responses were immoral and did not address the needs and concerns, of Native peoples, nor did it strive towards the reparations that Indigenous nations deserved. Rather than debate the specifics of individual policy decisions, Jackson argued that ceasing to cheat, rob, break promises, and extending the protection of the law to the Indian's rights of property’ (342) would be the most appropriate first course of action. To illustrate this, Jackson presented the following scenario:

When pioneers in a new country find a tract of poisonous and swampy wilderness to be reclaimed, they do not withhold their hands from fire and axe till they see clearly which way roads should run, where good water will spring, and what crops will best grow on the redeemed land. They first clear the swamp. So with this poisonous and baffling part of the domain of our national affairs — let us first “clear the swamp”.

(341). This metaphorical call to clear, or to drain, the swamp was then exercised by socialist and left-leaning politicians and political commentators such as Winfield R. Gaylord and Victor L. Berger who petitioned for draining the swamp of capitalism (Gaylord 8, Berger 107). In 1966, civil rights activists A. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin employed the phrase in *A Freedom Budget for All Americans*, a policy proposal that, among other things, sought to eradicate poverty (14-15). Ronald Reagan's use of the phrase in 1982 when authorising the Grace Commission (which investigated inefficiency within the Federal Government), dragged the phrase across the political aisle. Where it had once illustrated a progressive politics, it henceforth became tethered to conceptions of government waste, cronyism and distrust in Capitol Hill, a claim bolstered by the fact of Washington, D.C.,'s construction on supposed marshlands between the Potomac and the Anacostia rivers. From Reagan's usage onwards, calls to drain the swamp were almost exclusively directed towards Washington, D.C., as a locus of political venality. The phrase's most recent, and perhaps most memorable, usage was by former President Donald Trump, who repeatedly uttered the phrase at rallies, during interviews, and in countless tweets.

The invocation and the power of this phrase can be seen across various areas of cultural and political discourse and analysis; its intent and meaning wavering from progressive to reactionary throughout its history. So begs the question, what does it mean to drain a swamp? Metaphorically speaking, what is the impact of identifying spaces as swamps to be drained? Who does the draining, or the promise of draining, serve? In reality, what are the implications of identifying and draining a swamp? Who does the draining itself? Think of the thousands of people displaced by Benito Mussolini's draining of the Pontine Marshes, and the many more thousands of workers who were subject to

backbreaking manual labour and exposure to malaria and disease (Snowden 155-6). What bubbles to the surface when we delve into the history, use, and the real-world implications of this charged phrase?

The affective experience of being swamped. But to be swamped is also to *feel* swamped; to be overwhelmed with work, a sensory overload, stress and clutter. Infrastructures can be swamped; systems too; and spaces can swamp you with stimuli. How does one endure a state of swampedness, feel one's way through it, resist it or find rest in it? Can objects or texts be swamped? To disconnect, go offline, turn to self-help books, and take time off work – all these are responses to feeling swamped. But then: who can afford to respond like this, and who is unable to withdraw? Or can information overload – to stay with the swamp – be creatively productive or critical?

This is the muddy matrix that feeling swamped opens in theory; a space of excessive encounter between ecologies and affects, where swamps become metaphors, and etaphors swamp.

Thought on the feeling of being swamped and its social-political relationalities are everywhere: from Jonathan Crary's *24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep* to Byung-Chul Han's *The Burnout Society* to Lauren Berlant's *Cruel Optimism*. So too the desire to escape overwhelm has recently been re-conceptualized in edited volumes like *Politics of Withdrawal*. But "swamp" as a metaphor has not yet passed the floodgates. We invite you to think with this swamp, feel through its conceptual implication.

We encourage submissions relating to the themes above, as well as, but not limited to, the following:

- Critical engagements with/investigations into environments that could be described as marshlands, wetlands, fens, bogs, moors, etc.
- Practices of re-wilding and re-swamping.
- Cultural ethnographies of muddied environments.
- Environmental humanities and ecocritical approaches to swamps.
- Investigations into swamps as liminal, transitional, or mutable sites.
- Swamps as sites of decay (e.g. die-off and algal bloom) and repair (e.g. as fertile sites of regeneration).
- Socio-cultural explorations of what it means to feel swamped, its implications, and who this affect can belong to.
- Socio-economic approaches investigating issues such as:
  - Who is relegated to the swamp?
  - Who has access to the swamp?
  - What are the social impacts of swamped environments on individuals and groups?
- Investigations of the function of swamps in political rhetoric.
- Pieces that investigate swamps as veiled, uncharted, or otherred locales or those that approach swamps as spaces to be traversed.

We invite extended proposals (500-1000 words) to be submitted to

**submissions@soapboxjournal.net** by **February 21st 2023**. Following conditional

acceptance, an initial draft version (3000 words) will be due two weeks after receiving the acceptance email. The editing process will take place throughout Spring/Summer 2023. If you have any questions regarding your submission, do not hesitate to contact us at [info@soapboxjournal.net](mailto:info@soapboxjournal.net). Editing and peer review guidelines will be sent to authors individually upon acceptance of their submission. For full submission guidelines, see our website.

Guidelines for creative submissions are more flexible and can be finished works, but please keep in mind spatial limitations: there is usually room for one longer or two shorter pieces in the print version. A sense of the formatting possibilities can be garnered from previous issues (open-access pdf versions are available on our website).

We also accept submissions for our website all year round. We encourage a variety of styles and formats, including short-form essays (around 2000 words), reviews, experimental writing and multimedia. These can engage with the theme of the upcoming issue but are not limited to it. Please get in touch to pitch new ideas or existing projects that you would like to have published by reading our submission guidelines and filling in the form.

#### **CALL FOR RESEARCH: AMSTERDAM:**

##### **RECONSIDERING THE TRANSNATIONAL**

*Stedelijk Studies Journal #14: Amsterdam: Reconsidering the Transnational* | Submission deadline: February 20, 2023

The post-1945 artistic ecosystem of Amsterdam has often been characterized by its diverse international perspectives facilitated through Dutch institutions. In recent years, the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam has expanded its global purview through new acquisitions, thematic exhibitions, and cross-institutional initiatives primarily focused on the Global South. Between 2013 and 2015, the programme "Global Collaborations" established networks between the Stedelijk and what it referred to as "upcoming" Global South regions.

Presently, "Everyday, Someday and Other Stories: Collection 1950-1980" is narrating "different stories from diverse perspectives" via a more global presentation of the permanent collection. The museum's interest in the international is nothing new, as attested by exhibitions from the late 1980s and early 1990s that coincided with the fall of Communism and the very condition of "globalization". Wim Beeren's "U-ABC: schilderijen, beelden, fotografie uit Uruguay, Argentinië, Brazilië, Chili" served as one of several institutional affirmations (by way of a contemporary art exhibition) of the new democracies in the Southern Cone. 1991's "Wanderlieder," which commingled thirteen Eastern and West European artists, anticipated the end of the U.S.S.R. by eight days.



For Issue 14 of the *Stedelijk Studies Journal* we aim to critically reframe discussions on global art and the “transnational” with the question: what might a decolonized understanding of transnational and transcultural Amsterdam, and the Netherlands more broadly, look like?

Such a framework and critical orientation might attend to how the art world’s contemporary embrace of the global has been part and parcel of neoliberal extraction, via foreign capital, as much as it has drawn more attention to collaborations across borders that have advanced modern and contemporary art experimentation. Yet it also opens up the possibility of drawing attention to long-neglected histories in parallel with developments in art or design, such as decolonization and independence movements in Indonesia, Suriname and the Antilles. Among others, one thinks of the self-taught artist Oey Tjeng Sit, Stanley Broun or Armand Baag, who arrived to the Netherlands in 1961 and was instrumental in the establishment of Maysa Foundation and Srefidensie Gallery (1971) as key sites supporting Caribbean artists in Amsterdam. In the present, contemporary artist collectives use the possibilities of intersectional environments or virtual platforms to indicate new avenues of global engagement.

In our call for research, we invite proposals that examine artists, collectives, exhibitions, and spaces (independent and institutional) that reconsider the transnational histories and present nows of art in Amsterdam and the Netherlands. We seek ideas that address the complex, alternative, artistic and curatorial experiments that concentrate on a diverse range of practitioners in the post-1945 and contemporary era, many of who hailed from countries in the Global South and outside of Europe. Complementing previous issues of *Stedelijk Studies Journal* on global art history and museum practice such as #01 “Collecting Geographies: Global Programming and Museums of Modern Art,” #06 “The Borders of Europe,” and #09 “Modernism in Migration,” Issue 14 will ask how might artistic-research and emerging scholarship further complicate our very notion of the transnational as an art-historical paradigm and/or method—and, indeed, “Dutch” as a stable signifier of national identity for cultural practitioners?

*Stedelijk Studies* invites proposals that examine artists, collectives, spaces (independent and institutional) and exhibitions that were formative to this history of art in Amsterdam and the Netherlands.

Topics could include, but are not limited to:

International, transnational and/or itinerant artists who were decisive to Amsterdam and/or the Netherlands from 1945 to the present.

Alternative, independent or institutional art spaces, associations and networks working across artistic and political solidarity with the Netherlands.

Transnational and international exhibition histories in Dutch museums and art spaces

Institutional and state-funded initiatives (for example, Dutch Visual Arts Program, Jan van Eyck Academie, De Appel) that abet international artistic activity in the Netherlands.

New conceptualizations and forms of transnationalism in Dutch collections or across other contexts

Processes of artistic decolonization and migration from former Dutch colonies

Historic and present practices of artistic mobilization around sexuality and gender

Transnational, exilic or diasporic experiences of artists in the Netherlands from the former colonies or other locations in the Global South

Process

All accepted submissions are subject to scholarly or artistic peer review, and all contributors must be open to receive such feedback and work collaboratively toward a final version.

As a way to open up the peer-reviewed process further we will compensate published submissions with a fee of 400 EUR (excl. VAT).

Submission

Please send abstracts and artistic proposals (max. 300 words and optionally max. 5 images) and CV (merged in one PDF file) to [stedelijkstudies \[at\] stedelijk.nl](mailto:stedelijkstudies[at]stedelijk.nl) by February 20, 2023.

The complete CFR is available at this link:

<https://stedelijkstudies.com/call-for-research-stedelijk-studies-14/>

## CALL FOR PAPERS: POLITICAL BY NATURE

### *Reconsidering Politics Through the Lens of the Anthropocene*

2023 Cambridge University Graduate Conference in Political Thought and Intellectual History | 20 June

Nature is a familiar category of political analysis, established in the canonical literature by Aristotle’s claims that “man is by nature a political animal” and that “the city is one of those things that is by nature”. A number of political theories have understood nature as generative of political life. Ibn Khaldun framed the development of human society as an escape from the difficult existence that ‘natural’ man had endured in the wilderness.

Between the development of a Roman law theory that established nature and the city as distinct realms of jurisprudence, the scientific revolution, and the emergence of social contract theory, many traditions sought to establish a sharp boundary between the natural and the political. But another set of ideas, ranging from Confucianism as it developed in early China, and later Physiocracy and social Darwinism, sought to extend the empire of nature over society and govern the human world by natural laws.

‘Nature’ has thus come to occupy many, frequently conflicting, positions in political thought. The natural environment is understood variously as a neutral field providing the backdrop against which human affairs take place, as the malleable object of human action, or

as the terrifying antithesis of culture, order, and civilisation.

Today, circumstances demand that we rethink 'nature' and its many roles in political thought and intellectual history. Anthropogenic climate change, human-made microplastics found in even the most remote places, and mass species extinction mean that nature can no longer be understood as unaffected by human activities. It is now evident that nature has been and continues to be transformed so profoundly and completely that the traces of human impact have become a constitutive part of it. And by focusing our attention on the vast epochs of geological time, the Anthropocene also encourages us to reconsider the traditional temporalities of political thought and its history. All of this points to new ways of thinking about the relationship between political thought and nature.

The 2023 Cambridge Graduate Conference in Political Thought is therefore inviting abstracts that explore the relationship between political thought and the natural environment. Proposals may wish to consider, but should not feel limited to, the following themes:

- The role of nature in underpinning or authorising political ideas
- The implications of the Anthropocene for political thought
- Nature, gender and feminism
- Breaking with existing paradigms about nature
- The relationship between the socialised and naturalised human, as exemplified in tensions between mind and body
- Thinking about the natural environment and urban space
- The history of nature, environment, and related concepts
- The role of science and epistemological questions in determining understandings of nature and politics
- Non-western approaches to the relation between political thought and nature
- Ways in which the Anthropocene problematises the traditional temporalities of political thought
- Methodological considerations for (the history of) political thought in the Anthropocene: including, but not restricted to, the possible role of science fiction, theology, and the limits of reason

To apply, please send an abstract of no more than 300 words to [chptconference@gmail.com](mailto:chptconference@gmail.com) by 29 March 2023. Successful applicants will be informed no later than 19 April. The conference will be held on 20 June. The keynote speech will be given by Professor Dipesh Chakrabarty.

#### CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS: WAR, CONFLICT AND THE CITY

In fall 2023, **Amsterdam Museum** will launch the biannual online open access, peer reviewed research journal **Amsterdam Museum Journal (AMJ)**. With this journal, Amsterdam Museum sets out to connect

scholars across disciplines and domains on specific topics and themes.

The complexity of the themes on which we center requires a polyphonic approach; not one voice can, or indeed should, tell the whole story. As such, rather than disciplinary, AMJ is thematically oriented.

The first edition of the journal will be themed: *'War, Conflict and the City'* (published fall 2023). As the city museum of Amsterdam, we want to respond to the (public) call on (cultural) institutions to take responsibility and academically explore the effects war and conflict have. We welcome both qualitative and quantitative research contributions that focus on the dynamics, (social) mechanics and impact of war and conflict in urban spaces. We accept contributions from different academic disciplines and from authors in various stages of their academic careers (including junior researchers, such as Master- and PhD students).

Contribution types vary from (short) essays and empirical papers to participation in round table discussions and object analyses. The abstract submission deadline is the **1<sup>st</sup> of March 2023, 5 PM CET**.

#### CALL FOR PAPERS: TROUBLING UNIVERSALISMS

##### Deadline for paper proposals, February 24th

*Politics and Aesthetics in Critical Theory Symposium 2023 | University of Amsterdam, June 9-10 2023 | <https://aihr.uva.nl/content/news/2022/11/troubling-universalisms>*

The main part of the symposium will take place on 10 June. On 9 June, there will be a masterclass and keynote lecture by Kandice Chuh, Professor of English, American Studies, and Critical Social Psychology at CUNY, and author of *The Difference Aesthetics Makes: On the Humanities "After Man"* (2019).

To submit a proposal to present at the symposium, please send a document including your name, institutional affiliation (if applicable), a short bio, and an abstract of max. 350 words to [b.p.moore@uva.nl](mailto:b.p.moore@uva.nl), [m.w.farrant@uva.nl](mailto:m.w.farrant@uva.nl), and [s.bergs@uu.nl](mailto:s.bergs@uu.nl) by **February 24, 2023**, at the latest. Papers should be up to 20 minutes in length.

If you wish to join the masterclass with Kandice Chuh without presenting, please email Ben Moore at [b.p.moore@uva.nl](mailto:b.p.moore@uva.nl). 1EC is available via NICA for rMA and PhD students who attend the masterclass and lecture. Participation by others is also welcome.