

SEASIDE ARTS AND LOW-TROPHIC IMAGINARIES



30th September-1st October 2021,
Ornö, Stockholm Archipelago, Sweden, and online

State of the Art Network is a Nordic-Baltic transdisciplinary network of artists, practitioners, researchers, and organizations who have come together to discuss the role, responsibility, and potential of art and culture in the Anthropocene. State of the Art Network is coordinated by the Bioart Society and supported by Nordic Culture Point, Nordic Culture Fund, and A. P. Møller Foundation.

Website: <https://bioartsociety.fi/projects/state-of-the-art-network>
#stateoftheartnetwork #nordiskkulturkontakt



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All through the extended history of Earth, the coastline has been a zone of unrest, where waves and tides have forged life and land on this planet. Oceanic algae, once terraforming the Earth into a breathable planet, still produce most of our oxygen. Today, beaches and oceans are haunted by plastic waste, eutrophication and diminishing biological diversity. Kelp forests and mussel beds (and all the other species that depend on them) are receding with the warming waters of climate change. Yet, as also remarked by late marine biologist Rachel Carson, the edge of the sea remains a strange and beautiful place. We think it is a sanctuary for co-creation and worldly re-imaginings. The marine wrack zone, a boundary area between sea and land, hosts low-trophic species, like mussels and seaweeds, and it harbours marine hope. Like the common bladder wrack in the Baltic Sea, it mitigates the eutrophication of the sea and provides shelter for all kinds of creatures and creativities.

The State of the Art Network (SOTAN) mid-term event SEASIDE ARTS and LOW TROPHIC IMAGINARIES, hosted by The Posthumanities Hub, welcomes artistic and scientific entanglements with the environmental humanities to the seaside. This workshop invites salinity to brackish times by bringing together environmental engineers (like bladder wrack), sea garden activists, artists, feminist blue humanities scholars, marine biologists and those with local know-how for a situated encounter by the edge of the sea. The aim of the event is to re-tool our oceanic imaginary with insights and creative suggestions for how humans can be a more caring and attentive ecological force for multispecies futures by the edge of the Baltic Sea.

· State of the Art Network (SOTAN), initiated and headed by Bioart Society/SOLU in Finland, is a Nordic-Baltic transdisciplinary network of artists, practitioners, researchers, and organisations who have come together to discuss the role, responsibility, and potential of art and culture in the Anthropocene. By developing creative practices, transdisciplinary collaborations, and public engagement, the network aims to create resilience and concrete actions for living the change in culture, economy, and environment, and to find concrete hands-on methods to deal with the Anthropocene and environmental crisis. The network wants to strengthen competencies in remote hosting and participation as well as practical sustainability, which will be applied in the production of the activities and throughout the network: <https://bioartsociety.fi/projects/state-of-the-art-network>

· The Posthumanities Hub, partner and co-pi of SOTAN, is a longstanding feminist research group and multi-university platform for more-than-human humanities. It brings art and science to the humanities, and transformational insights to the people. In the interface of Swedish-international networking, the Hub has pioneered feminist cyborg studies, technohumanities, medical humanities, environmental humanities and recently taken a turn towards the marine fringes. Fostering doctoral careers, academic activism and societal commitment, the Hub has recently spawned two sub-groups, one of them is The Eco-and Bioart Lab. <https://posthumanitieshub.net/>



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REMOTE PARTICIPATION PROGRAMME (ALL TIMES INDICATED IN CEST)

30TH SEPTEMBER (THURSDAY)

14:00 – 14:30 – Welcome & presentation of the programme of the mid-term meeting SEASIDE ARTS AND LOW-TROPHIC IMAGINARIES.

14:30 – 16:00 – Performance/panel “Seaside Arts”:

- Andy Best and Merja Puustinen (University of the Arts, Helsinki, FI), "Imagining Godzilla, Feeling the Waves"
- Jessie Peterson (SLU, SE), "Seeking an Algal Perspective: Exploring “harmful” algae through an interview with Nodularia spumigena"
- Caroline Elgh Klinborg (Bonniers Konsthall/LiU, SE), "Sharing the Seaside: contemporary art, science fiction and oceanic humanities as a way to reimagine the world"

16:00 – 16:30 – Break

16:30 – 17:30 – SOTAN mid-term meeting (internal SOTAN event)

17:30 – 18:00 – Break

18:00 – 19:30 – KEYNOTE 1: Stacy Alaimo (University of Oregon), “From Seaside to Abyss: Deep Sea Creatures and Low Trophic Imaginaries” + discussion.

1ST OCTOBER (FRIDAY)

14.00 – 16:00 – Panel “Sea Gardens: for Multispecies Commons and Futures”– zoom/filming:

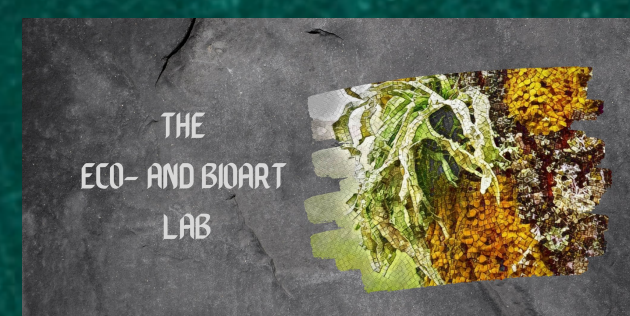
- (P)Art of the biomass - Janna Holmstedt & Malin Lobell, "The Sea Garden – Travelogue from a Collaborative Journey"
- Cecilia Wibjörn (The Archipelago Foundation/Skärgårdsstiftelsen), "The First Small Steps of Water Management in Nature Reserves"
- Maria Bodin (Gothenburg University), "A Blue Community Garden – the Future Pantry?"
- Lena Kautsky (Stockholm University Baltic Sea Centre), "Fucus Forests as Indicator of Baltic Sea Conditions – Past, Present and Future"

16:00 – 17:00 – Break

17:00 – 18:30 – KEYNOTE 2: Anne-Marie Melster (ARTPORT), “WE ARE OCEAN: A global program linking the arts, sciences and education for ocean protection accompanying the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development” + discussion.

18:30 – 18:45 – Break

18:45 – 19:30 – SOTAN: closing discussion (internal SOTAN event).



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SPEAKERS' BIOS

STACY ALAIMO is Professor of English and Core Faculty Member in Environmental Studies at the University of Oregon. She is the author of *Undomesticated Ground: Recasting Nature as Feminist Space*; *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self*; and *Exposed: Environmental Politics and Pleasures in Posthuman Times*. She co-edited *Material Feminisms* and edited *Matter*. She is currently writing *Deep Blue Ecologies: Science, Aesthetics, and the Creatures of the Abyss* and co-editing a book series at Duke called "Elements."

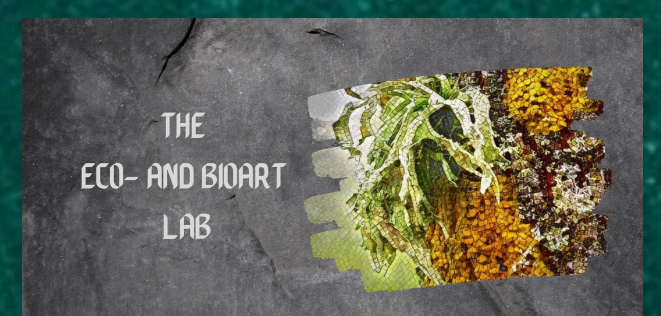
ANDY BEST and MERJA PUUSTINEN are artists with international careers encompassing sculpture, performance, media, net, and bio-art. Merja Puustinen is an artist, cultural commentator, producer and researcher. She is a PhD candidate at the Academy of Fine Arts, University of the Arts, Helsinki. Andy Best is an experienced curator, producer and educator, and is Professor of Sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts, University of the Arts, Helsinki, and a PhD candidate in the Department of Media at Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture.

Andy and Merja were amongst the World's first online artists, and during the 1990's created beautiful, provocative multiuser 3D worlds on the internet. They developed a web-based 3D multiuser community platform as well as virtual pet and e-learning applications for mobile phones. Now they focus on developing playful, physically engaging installations and public art works. They have founded Espoo Kunsthalle, an initiative to bring critically engaged art to suburban areas, and the IMAGINING GODZILLA artistic residency network platform, using artistic methods to investigate the environmental challenges facing the Baltic Sea.

Web: <http://andyandmerja.com> and <http://imagininggodzilla.fi>.

MARIA BODIN, Gothenburg University stationed at Tjärnö Marine Laboratory. Since childhood, she has been fascinated by the sea, with everything from whales to algae. She has worked as a marine biologist for about 20 years with varying tasks – from musicals, projects such as *Scary Seafood*, and a pilot study on Sweden's first marine allotments – and it never stops fascinating her. <https://www.gu.se/havet/kunskap-om-havet/maten-och-havet/marina-kolonilotter-odling-under-ytan>

CAROLINE ELGH is a curator and prospective PhD student in Gender studies at Linköping University. Her curatorial work explores interdisciplinary processes and collaborations across the fields of contemporary art, science fiction, ecology, technology and feminism. As curator at Bonniers Konsthall in Stockholm she has been working with artists from the globe over; recent exhibitions including *Cosmological Arrows. Journeys Through Inner and Outer Space* and *New Materialism*.



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LENA KAUTSKY, Stockholm University Baltic Sea Centre. Lena started her PhD in 1970, investigating a small polluted bay of the Baltic Sea. After her PhD she found out that she can't leave the marine environment! Too many questions waiting to be solved. Through the past 30 years, her focus has been on factors affecting the bladderwrack forests and lately on how climate change may change its distribution. <https://tangbloggen.com>

<http://www.su.se/cmlink/stockholms-universitet-naturvetenskapliga-fakulteten/stockholms-universitets-%C3%B6stersj%C3%B6centrum-nod/stockholm-university-baltic-sea-centre>

ANNE-MARIE MELSTER, Co-Founder & Executive Director ARTPORT_making waves, is an art curator, writer and advisor focusing on social and environmental issues. She creates interdisciplinary projects which search for environmental and social solutions. She has curated numerous international art projects in collaboration with renowned institutions, organisations and governments worldwide, also for several UN Climate Change Conferences, always responding to the need to develop them in a sustainable way. Her current WE ARE OCEAN Global Program stimulates youth empowerment and public engagement through contemporary art, sciences and informal education.

(P)ART OF THE BIOMASS is an artist and research collective initiated by JANNA HOLMSTEDT and MALIN LOBELL and run together with KARIN WEGSJÖ, Sweden. Through combining their skills as artists, gardeners, researchers and filmmakers, they engage in exploratory work where multispecies relations as well as environmental care and attention can be cultivated. Critical, creative and collaborative processes where you get your hands dirty are at the heart of their genre disobedient practices. Ongoing works include The Sea Garden; Gipsön – Plaster Island; Four Sisters for Planthropocene; and the art and research project Humus economicus. Web: <http://partofthebiomass.se/>

JESSE D. PETERSON is a postdoctoral researcher at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences in Uppsala, Sweden. He researches how people ascribe value, meaning, and purpose to environmental phenomena. His work discusses marine pollution, conservation, digital technologies, and death and has appeared in peer-reviewed journals, edited collections, literary magazines, and museum exhibits, such as Green Letters, The Discourses of Environmental Collapse, Geohumanities, Terrain.org, saltfront and more. He completed his PhD with a focus on environmental humanities in 2020 at KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden.

Orcid ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0634-8839>

CECILIA WIBJÖRN, The Archipelago Foundation/Skärgårdsstiftelsen. Cecilia started out as a biology student for Aunt Bladder Wrack, aka. Lena Kautsky. She has been diving in the Baltic Sea for over 20 years. Since 1995 she has been employed at the Archipelago Foundation, and in recent years she has worked with external project funding connected to water and sustainability. <https://skargardsstiftelsen.se/om-skargardsstiftelsen/projekt/skydd-under-ytan/>



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CURATORS OF THE EVENT – THE POSTHUMANITIES HUB TEAM:

MARIETTA RADOMSKA, PhD, is an Assistant Professor in Environmental Humanities at Linköping University (Unit Gender Studies), SE; director of The Eco- and Bioart Lab and Network; co-director of The Posthumanities Hub; and co-founder of Queer Death Studies Network. She works at the intersection of the posthumanities, environmental humanities, continental philosophy, feminist theory, queer death studies, visual culture and contemporary art; and has published in Australian Feminist Studies; Somatechnics; Women, Gender & Research, Artnodes, Environment and Planning E, among others. Web: www.mariettaradomska.com

CECILIA ÅSBERG, Prof. Dr. Chair of Gender, Nature, Culture at Linköping University. Founder and Director of The Posthumanities Hub (www.posthumanitieshub.net); Fellow of the Rachel Carson Centre at Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich and the Royal Swedish Colloquia. Recent publications: “Environmental violence and postnatural oceans”. 2021. With Marietta Radomska. In Gender, Violence and Affect. Eds. M. Husso, et al. Palgrave; “A Sea Change in the Environmental Humanities” (2020) in Ecocene: Cappadocia Journal of Environmental Humanities (OA). Personal web: <http://ceciliaasberg.net/>

JANNA HOLMSTED, PhD, is a transdisciplinary artist and environmental humanities researcher. She is co-founder of the art collective (P)Art of the Biomass, and initiator of the art and research project Humus economicus at National Historical Museums, Sweden, that focuses on radically altered human-soil relations and soil as multispecies activity zone. She works across various media, in collaborative processes, and with a particular interest in listening and storying as situated practices. Dolphins, maize, earthworms, and bladderwrack have all been important companion species on explorative journeys that seek to allow for less anthropocentric worldings to emerge. Web: <http://jannaholmstedt.com>

THE POSTHUMANITIES HUB <http://posthumanitieshub.net/>

THE ECO- AND BIOART LAB <http://liu.se/en/research/the-eco-and-bioart-lab>

The event is documented by KARIN WEGSJÖ, to whom we would like to extend our thanks.

We would also like to thank our funders: Nordic Culture Point, Nordic Culture Fund, and A. P. Møller Foundation; fellow SOTAN partner organisations; and Department of Thematic Studies, Linköping University, for their financial, organisational and administrative support.



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PREPARATION: TRACING ADAPTAION

Two options:

- (1) If you are close to the sea/coastline: go for a stroll along the coast and look for a rare version of bladder wrack that seems to have adapted to environmental changes and spawn during the autumn
- (2) If you are located far from a coastline, try to look for traces of shores and sea at your location, by engaging in a kind of deep time exercise/walk.



Photo: Marietta Radomska



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