

END OF THE SEA?

ART AND SCIENCE FOR MULTISPECIES FUTURES

WORKSHOP

13th December 2021, 13:15-17:00
Online



**The workshop has been generously supported by The Seed Box
and Åke Wiberg Foundation.**



THE **SEEDBOX**

li.u LINKÖPING
UNIVERSITY



END OF THE SEA?

ART AND SCIENCE FOR MULTISPECIES FUTURES

As the planet's largest ecosystem, oceans and seas stabilise climate, produce oxygen, store CO₂ and host unfathomable multitudes of creatures at a deep-time scale. In recent decades, scientific assessments have indicated that marine environments are seriously degraded to the detriment of most near-future human and nonhuman communities. This matters to us, too. Climate change, environmental destruction and diminishing biological diversity form the key pillars of the present more-than-human crisis of planetary proportions. This calls for our attention and for responses from the more-than-human humanities.

Still, a lot remains unknown at the levels of oceanic shallow waters, its depths and along coastlines. Western cultural imaginaries picture the ocean and the sea as those which wash away, neutralise, conceal and hide in their limitless volume 'under the surface.' The ocean and the sea are culturally marked as the spaces of 'forgetting': out of sight, out of mind.

'End of the Sea? Art and Science for Multispecies Futures' workshop, hosted by The Eco- and Bioart Lab and The Posthumanities Hub, aims to bring together artists, researchers, writers and other practitioners, who – through their critical and creative, inter- and transdisciplinary practices – explore the boundary areas of the coastline and the estuary, and their accompanying cultural and scientific meanings. The workshop will zoom in on the wrack zone – particularly in the context of the Baltic Sea – with its low-trophic communities of algae, mussels and other species not only as key actors in the polluted, warming waters of climate change, but also as catalysts for new co-creations, collaborations, creativities and environmental imaginaries. What happens at (before? after?) the end of the sea? How can humans be a more caring and attentive ecological force for multispecies futures by the edge of the sea? Join us on 13th December to find out!

The workshop has been generously supported by The Seed Box and Åke Wiberg Foundation (for 'Havshumaniora').

The Eco- and Bioart Lab connects artists, artistic researchers and other practitioners, as well as doctoral students whose practice and research focus on art and the environment in their broadest understanding. EBL opens up a transdisciplinary space, where artistic practice converges with philosophy, cultural theory, art studies, visual culture, queer death studies and posthumanities in synergy and as equally legitimate voices.

The Posthumanities Hub is a research group and a multi-university platform for postdisciplinary and more-than-human humanities, for philosophy, arts and sciences informed by advanced cultural critique and creativity. In our research, we specialise in the more-than-human condition and inventive feminist materialist approaches to it. We work to meet up with pressing societal challenges, across the natureculture divide and target specific cases. Curiously, creatively and critically.

REGISTRATION: In order to take part in the event, please register by sending an email to the.posthumanities.hub@gmail.com by 10th December 2021 at noon (CET) the latest.

The Zoom links will be sent to you on 12th December in the evening.



END OF THE SEA?

ARTS AND SCIENCE FOR MULTISPECIES FUTURES

13TH DECEMBER 2021, 13:15 – 17:00

PROGRAMME

13:15 – 13:30 – INTRODUCTION and Introduction of the Panellists in Panel I

13:30 – 14:50 – PANEL I

13:30 – 13:45 – Fiona Hillary, *Reverberating Futures*

13:45 – 14:00 – Natalie Lowrey & mirko nikolić, “Out of our depths”: Deep sea mining is (not!) climate action

14:00 – 14:15 – FRAUD, *Décollagen: Commercial Extinction*

14:15 – 14:30 – Lena Tasse, *A Baltic Community of People and Mussels*

14:30 – 14:50 – Discussion

14:50 – 15:05 – Coffee/snack break

15:05 – 15:10 – Introduction of the Panellists in Panel II

15:10 – 16:30 – Panel II

15:10 – 15:25 – Julia Lohmann, *Algae as an agent of change*

15:25 – 15:40 – Sarah Blissett, *Seaweed Soup and Iodine Imaginaries*

15:40–15:55 – Ase Brunborg Lie, *Intersecting Waterbodies: Diving into the deep sea*

15:55–16:10 – Nina Lykke, *Contemplating diatom-human-relations as entrance to an ethics of planetary companionship*

16:10 – 16:30 – Discussion

16:30 – 17:00 – Closing Plenary

ABSTRACTS AND BIOS

PANEL I

Reverberating Futures

Abstract

I am interested in the abstraction of ordinary experiences that allow audiences to encounter the possibility of recuperation in the age of the Anthropocene (Haraway 2016). Learning to culture and live with bioluminescent dinoflagellates in the laboratory and the field allows me to consider them as companion species. My research involves documenting *Noctiluca Scintillans* and other dinoflagellates with image, sound and film. I draw attention to the affect of their bloom and what the blooms actually mean. Awe and wonder create an affective impact in the same way a siren lures a sailor to their demise. The shimmer of the bioluminescent glow lures us into the reality of

the impact of climate change. Thinking with the ‘shimmer of the biosphere’ (Bird Rose 2017), my work offers a reading of and for our times.

Bio:

Fiona Hillary is a Melbourne based artist and academic working in the public realm. Her passion lies in site specific practices and the human/non-human relationships that reveal themselves across time. Exploring scale through publicly shared moments of awe and wonder to more personal and intimate encounters; Fiona works with site, neon, sound, human and non-human companion species, her work focusses on temporary, fleeting encounters in and of the everyday. Web: <https://www.fionahillary.com/>

“Out of our depths”: Deep sea mining is (not!) climate action

Abstract:

Metal mining is indiscriminately proposed by the industry and the governments across the Global North as one of the main ways to go about reducing CO₂ emissions. As if the socio-environmental impacts of capitalist-colonial extractive operations across the land and water systems did not sufficiently plunge us into the climate crisis, as a proposed “solution,” “green mining” in the name of “renewable energy” plans to expand into the zones previously untouched by human hands and feet: the depths of the seas and the oceans.

Knowing that these sensitive ecosystems are largely unknown to the sciences, and equipped with hard evidence that oceans are crucial to the regulation of climate and life on Earth, as well as extremely vulnerable to the rising temperatures, the dangers of these mining operations are incommensurable. How do the policy-makers and the industry think of going about “[de]regulating the unknown”?

Instead of an alternative or transformation, deep sea mining ventures, led by venture capitalists and speculators, are rooted in colonial fantasies of domination and endless growth on the back of occupation and exploitation of another “Great Frontier.” In the face of this narrative and violent push, how do ‘we’ as ‘earth others’ – through science, creative practice and organising – enact concrete solidarity with the sea and ocean peoples, and aquatic creatures?

Bio:

Natalie Lowrey holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts and a Master of Human Rights and Democratisation. For 20-years Nat has been an organiser, communicator, campaigner, and advocate on human rights and global justice issues. Nat is passionate about the practice of allyship and collaborating with local communities and Indigenous Peoples who are resisting large scale extractive developments that threaten their lands, oceans, lives, and livelihoods. Nat is the Communications Coordinator for the Deep Sea Mining campaign (DSMC), who has been advocating and campaigning against the deep sea mining industry since 2011. Nat is also Coordinator at Aid/Watch (Australia), the only independent monitor of Australia’s international aid and development for the past three decades. Both DSMC and Aid/Watch are members of the Yes to Life No to Mining global network

mirko nikolić works with performance, writing and organising, in a postdisciplinary space between art, society and environmental humanities. The primary area of concern is a critical analysis and practice of climate and social justice in the areas of intense exploitation of ‘natural resources’. Mirko’s current research project – funded by Vetenskapsrådet and situated at the Institute of Culture & Society – is a practical investigation into a place-based poetics of solidarity with water and earth protectors in the semi-peripheries of North and South-East Europe. Web: <https://liu.se/en/employee/mirni99>

Décollagen: Commercial Extinction

Abstract:

What newer and subtler degrees of death and extinction are emerging under neoliberalism? Nationalistic and colonialist discourses have depicted the ocean as a non-place, a scene of the sublime, a dangerous-yet-necessary mode of transportation, or, perhaps more importantly as a non-exhaustible resource. With this in mind, FRAUD will explore the concept of commercial extinction through the Crangon crangon species (brown shrimp). They will consider the genealogy of exhaustion which collates phenomena such as social death in contemporary forms of life subjugation, and the economic collapse of certain species no longer profitable to harvest. Commercial extinction emerges thus as the paradox of both the exhaustion and the maintenance of certain forms of life.

Bio:

FRAUD (Audrey Samson and Francisco Gallardo) is a London-based duo of critical spatial practitioners which develop forms of art-led enquiry that examine financialisation through extractive practices and cultivate critical cosmogony building. Web: <https://fraud.la/>

A Baltic community of people and mussels

Abstract:

The Baltic Sea is severely eutrophicated. The solution, reduced external nutrient load, is technically straightforward but politically impossible. In this context, the idea of using mussel farming to remove nutrients from the sea was put forward and later financed by the EU regional development fund. The Baltic Blue Growth project created 6 mussel farms in 5 Baltic regions with little or no prior experience of sea-food farming.

Bio:

Lena Tasse is a biologist and a senior research coordinator at Linköping University. She has worked with projects related to sustainable development and eutrophication both in the Baltic and in the freshwater lake Roxen.

PANEL II

Algae as an agent of change

Abstract:

Algae gives us hope. Hope that we can move on from an extractive to a regenerative mindset. That we find a better way of being in this world. In this presentation I will share insights of my 15 year artistic journey with algae as an agent for change in which I explore algae as a material, as a method and as a muse.

Bio:

German-born artist/designer/researcher **Julia Lohmann** investigates and critiques the ethical and material value systems underpinning our relationship with flora and fauna.

Lohmann is a Professor of Practice in Contemporary Design at Aalto University, Helsinki, where she also lives. In her practice and teaching she promotes an empathic, more than human-centric mindset and views design as a way of connecting knowing, caring and acting across disciplines and different levels of complexity. Web: www.julialohmann.co.uk

Seaweed Soup and Iodine Imaginaries

Abstract:

Exploring materialities and metaphors of cooking-with seaweed, this presentation will touch on digestive flows arising from the intertidal zone to consider how, and in what ways, the end/s of the sea can extend from one watery body to another. Tracing stories of foraging for razor clams, soup-making with Sargassum and weather-forecasting with Bladderwrack, this lecture reimagines trans-corporeal encounters with iodine as potential pathways for elemental interconnection across time scales.

Bio:

Sarah Blissett is a multidisciplinary artist and researcher. She holds a PhD in Performance Studies from the University of Roehampton and her research explores how artistic practice can reimagine the role that entangled algae-human agencies play in changing ecologies. Recent projects include: How Nature Builds with Modern Art Oxford (2019-present), Kelp Curing at LIAF Kelp Congress (2019), Lichen Life with MAO (2018), Recipes for Earthly Survival at Whitstable Biennale (2017). Web: <https://www.sarahblissett.net/>

Intersected Waterbodies – diving into the deep-sea

Abstract

Intersected Waterbodies is an artistic research project that reflects on the deep-sea seabed. The multi-media artwork, exhibited at Meta.Morf Biennale X in 2020, takes Trondheim as its reference point with its long history of digging deep into the landscape. Many actors, including the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) in Trondheim, are exploring potential extractions below the seabed to, allegedly, create an ethical and sustainable technological future. But can a truly just future rise from excavating this unfamiliar, unique ecology? What are we uncovering from this place that possibly gave rise to all life on earth?

Bio

Through their work, **Ase Brunborg Lie** (NO) examines how to create in the Anthropocene, with its accompanying philosophical and ethical questions, as well as for possible futures. They point out blind spots in social and built structures and propose new alternatives for co-existence to the human-centric/exceptional. Lie holds an MA in scenography from the Norwegian Theatre Academy (HiØ) and a BA from Trondheim Academy of Fine Art (NTNU). Web: <http://annececilielie.com/>

Contemplating diatom-human-relations as entrance to an ethics of planetary companionship

Abstract

The paper focuses on diatoms, a micro-algae, living in oceans, estuaries and soils all over the world. Diatoms produce 20-25% of the planet's oxygen, but, according to a recent NASA report (Rousseaux and Watson 2015) diatom populations are today showing worrying tendencies to dwindle, in particular in the Northern hemisphere. I frame my discussion of diatoms through Haraway's concept of companionship, addressing mutually enriching animal-human relations, based on response-ability, the ability to respond in situated, sensitive, and ethically responsible ways. I will ask what it entails to begin to care about diatoms as planetary companions.

Bio:

Nina Lykke, Prof. Em., Dr. Phil. Linköping University, Sweden, and Adjunct Professor, Aarhus University, Denmark. She has participated in the building of Feminist Studies in Scandinavia and Europe more broadly since the 1970s, and recently co-founded an international network for Queer Death Studies. She is also a poet and writer. Her monographs include: *Cosmodolphins* (2000), *Feminist Studies* (2010), and *Vibrant Death* (2022). Personal website: www.ninalykke.net



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Check our websites:

The Eco- and Bioart Lab: <https://liu.se/en/research/the-eco-and-bioart-lab>

The Posthumanities Hub: <https://posthumanitieshub.net/>