

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM 20-21 MAY 2019



“The Great Environmental Switch”: Ecology, Technology, and Thinking

Department of Culture and Aesthetics



Stockholm
University



Electric charging in Malacca, Malaysia. Photo: xicro / Mostphotos

Introduction

Ecology has become one of the most important concepts in the humanities as well as in the social and natural sciences. No longer limited to a traditional notion of nature and natural environments, the concept of ecology is now also applied with a wider scope, investigating, for example, technological environments and media ecologies, as well as ecologies of perception and cognition. This conceptual expansion of ecology reflects the profound overlapping of natural and technological elements constituting contemporary environments. The current situation of environmentality demands that we go beyond the specificity of any particular ecology: a general thinking of ecology which may also entail an ecological transformation of thought itself is required.

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Programme

20 May

09:00-09:05 Introduction

9:05-10:20

Erich Hörl: “Environmentalitarian Time: Temporality and Modes of Worlding under the Technoecological Condition”

10:20-10:30 Break

10:30-11:30

Jesper Olsson: “Shifting Scales, Posthuman Figures: ‘Ecologization’ in Contemporary Poetry”

Solveig Daugaard: “Media Ecologies of Literature in the Digital Age: New Interfaces and Alternative Infrastructures”

Per Israelson: “The Last Days: Haunted Futures in the Age of Media Franchising”

11:30-11:40 Break

11:40-12:20

Piotr Wajda: “From Texan Barrens to Nordic Forests. The Ecologic Shift in Depictions of a Conflict Between Human and Nature in New North European Horror Films.”

Jonas Andersson Schwarz: “If You Tolerate This Your Children Will Be Next: Rethinking the Ecological Role of Media Systems”

12:30-13:30 Lunch

13:30-14:30

Christian Schwinghammer: “Eco-relationality and the Aesthetico-political Question. Towards a Critical Worldmaking under Technological Conditions”

Kim Skjoldager-Nielsen & Daria Skjoldager-Nielsen: “Overflow Feedback in Hotel Pro Forma’s NeoArctic”

Aljoscha Weskott & Ute Kalender: “Towards an Understanding of Experimental Ethics in Media Ecology: Updating Susan Sontag’s Concept of an ‘Ecology of Images’”

14:30-15:00 Break

15:00-16:00

Kari Ekman: "Shooting or protecting? Interpretations of Wilderness in Novels Taking Place in Svalbard for Young Adults"

Milan Stürmer: "Cheap Future: Political Economy after the Great Environmental Switch"

Joakim Wrethed: "The Anti-Ecology of Nietzschean Aesthetics in Tom McCarthy's *Satin Island*"

21 May

10:00-11:00

Agnieszka Kiejziewicz: "From the Perspective of a Bird. Rei Hayama's Experimental Films and Ecological Turn in Japanese Audiovisual Art"

Vendela Grundell: "Connect, Spread, Change: Questions about Normality in an Ecology of Disability Art Exhibitions"

Gregers Andersen: "Rethinking the Machinocene. A Critique of Planetary Computerisation"

11:00-11:20 Break

11:20-12:20

Yannick Schütte: "Response-ability: (Re-)acting within Patterns of Unintentional Coordination"

Niklas Egberts: "Techno-ecological Storytelling in Ian Cheng's *Emissaries*"

Bethany Berard: "Photography and the Production of Visual Ecologies of Information"

12:30-13:30 Lunch

13:30-14:30

Gianfranco Selgas: "Ecological Contiguities: Post-anthropocentric Speculations in Contemporary Latin American Verbal and Visual Arts"

Heidrun Führer: "Football as Performative Intermediality"

Stefano Mazzilli-Daechsel: "The Maker Movement and the Problematic of General Ecology"

14:30-15:00 Break

15:00-15:40

Jakob Claus: "Ecologisation and the Notion of Scale"

Karolina Sobecka: "Geoengineering Experiments as Socio-technical Rehearsals"

15:45-16:15 Closing remarks by **Erich Hörl**

Abstracts

“Shifting Scales, Posthuman Figures: ‘Ecologization’ in Contemporary Poetry”

This paper will look into some recent attempts in poetry to explore new modes of reception and new environmental imaginaries in which the entanglements of human and more-than-human are investigated in various ways. Operating on different scales – from the bacterial to the planetary and post – such questions have also informed the materials, forms, and methods used. Thus, while Adam Dickinson scrutinizes the infrastructure of his body in a language modulated by science, Ranjit Bhatnagar trawls the web for iambic pentameters with the help of an algorithm; J. D. Carpenter excavates the archive and library for an exploration of oceanic history, while Nasser Hussain shapes his global poetry by the way of three-letter airport codes. Common to such works is that they confront us with other ways of writing and reading, seeing and listening than those offered by established poetic models and, even, default epistemic models of subject-and-object or sender-and-receiver. Instead they gather aesthetic form and force through the combination of different semiotics, materialities, and temporalities, and through the exploration of distributed agencies. In this they, often, operate from within a history of cyberneticization – e.g. in the intermediation of human language and machinic code – and can, through this embeddedness and passage, offer a critical take on our “environmental culture of control” (Hörl). Moreover, in their specific poetic configurations of language, codes, images, they imagine modes of being in the world that takes the post- or more-than-human as an inescapable and necessary starting point.

Jesper Olsson

Jesper Olsson is Professor at the Department of Culture and Communication, Linköping University, where he leads the research group *Literature, Media History, and Information Cultures* (LMI) and is the program director of the research program *The Seed Box: A Mistra-Formas Environmental Humanities Collaboratory* (www.theseedbox.se). His own research focuses on literature, art, and media history. He co-edited *A Cultural History of the Nordic Avant-Garde 1950–1975* (2016), with Tania Ørum, and his latest publications are the digital book (ed.), *[b]A[/b]rchive Book Conference: Representations and Reconfigurations of the Digital in Swedish Literature 1950–2010* [*i*] (www.reprecdigit.se) (2018) and *Spaceship, Time Machine. Öyvind Fahlström’s Ade-Ledic-Nander* (2017). He is also a literary critic in the daily Svenska Dagbladet and one of the founders of the art-literature-theory journal *OEI*.

"Media Ecologies of Literature in the Digital Age: New Interfaces and Alternative Infrastructures"

As the technological conditions for production, distribution and reading of literature have changed, the notion of literature as a print based, autonomous, and individually authored form of cultural expression that has been foundational to modern literary scholarship is becoming insufficient. As a consequence, the scholarly and critical discourse on literature is currently haunted by dystopian descriptions of literature as a fundamentally declining cultural form. While such claims make sense within a traditional textualist framework, this paper suggests that they may be transgressed if we ecologize our thinking about literature. This involves understanding literature as embedded in a media ecology including not just the linguistically based artwork, but also the plural agents involved in its production, distribution and reception, the multiple technological platforms through which it materializes, and the environment it affects and is affected by. From such a perspective, contemporary literature has the potential to become politically engaged and politically relevant not primarily through the language of the individual, engaged author writing a sincere, political and/or critical work, but whenever it engages in an activation of collective structures that are made accessible by the existence of networked computers, personalized technologies and digital images, but are just as likely to materialize through interfaces resembling those of print culture. Dwelling on two examples of recent, alternative publishing communities with political and/or transformative ambitions (Commune Editions (USA) and Laboratory of Aesthetics and Ecology (DK)) I will suggest that an ecological approach is more able to address and understand the political, social and affective investments of contemporary literature, and the responses they generate, as these are often realized, not as much in the content and form of the individual literary work as at the level of the infrastructure for production, distribution and consumption of literature.

Solveig Daugaard

Solveig Daugaard is a PhD in Literature, Media History and Information Cultures from the University of Linköping, Sweden. Her research field is modernist and contemporary American poetry and contemporary Scandinavian literature and media theory. She is currently working as a postdoctoral researcher affiliated with the School of Arts and Communications, Malmö University. Her research and literary criticism has appeared in a number of journals and papers in Denmark and Sweden, and her dissertation *Collaborating with Gertrude Stein. Media ecologies, reception, poetics* (2018) is under revision and forthcoming from the University of Alabama Press (2019).

"The Last Days: Haunted Futures in the Age of Media Franchising"

This paper investigates the ethical and political function of dystopian YA-fiction. Using Mark Fisher's critique of capitalist temporality and Donna Haraway's posthumanist and ecological concepts of *sympoiesis*, I will offer a critique of the anthropocentric and neoliberal tendencies prevalent in much contemporary dystopian YA-fiction. Particular attention will be paid to the marketing strategies of media franchising, following Derek Johnson's seminal work on media franchises.

Dystopian fiction has been one of the strongest trends in YA-fiction over the last decade. The success of Susanne Collin's *The Hunger Games* (2008), and the ensuing media franchise, has been instrumental in this development, in terms of both narrative and franchising strategies. Dystopian YA-fiction here emerges in a precarious political tension. On the one hand thematizing and narrating a resistance against the catastrophic environmental effects of capitalism; on the other hand being an integral part of the very culture industry that supports capitalist ideology.

This tension is perhaps particularly evident in the way franchised dystopias employ the collaborative platforms of transmedia storytelling, in effect co-opting the "collective intelligence" Henry Jenkins prescribes as the critical and emancipatory potential of convergence culture. Presenting political agency as a central theme, dystopian YA-fiction nevertheless produces a notion of the future as devoid of any alternative to the liberal-humanist version of freedom and subjectivity, in essence, a future already haunted by the capitalist present.

However, one alternative (at least) to capitalist dystopia does seem to emerge: a posthumanist future. And, as this paper will show, it is precisely by factoring the cybernetic feedback structures of media franchising that this non-capitalist political agency can be formulated: namely what I will describe as an ecological agency. Analyzing the media-ecological aesthetics of Scott Westerfeld's *The Last Days* (2006), and its companion book *Peeps* (2005); I will show how this political agency can inform the function of dystopian YA-fiction, forcing a reconfiguration of the theoretical apparatus, in which a posthumanist conceptuality replaces a traditional, humanist conceptuality. Only by this move does it become possible to properly assess the political and ethical impact of dystopian YA-fiction, and its media franchises.

Per Israelsson

Per Israelsson defended his PhD thesis *Ecologies of the Imagination: theorizing the participatory aesthetics of the fantastic* at the Department of Culture and Aesthetics, Stockholm University, in 2017. He has written extensively on the literature of the fantastic, children's literature and comics, as a researcher, and as a critic.

Currently he is working on a postdoctoral project at the Department of Culture and Aesthetics, Stockholm University. The project – Postdigital comics: participation and materiality in contemporary Swedish comic book culture – investigates the impact of digitalization on the production, dissemination and aesthetics of Swedish comics.

Per Israelsson's research interests are comics studies, media ecology, posthumanist philosophy and the participatory aesthetics of the fantastic.

"From Texan Barrens to Nordic Forests. The Ecologic Shift in Depictions of a Conflict Between Human and Nature in New North European Horror Films."

Depictions of Nordic nature and landscape play significant role in the Northern European cinematography. In many film genres from different epochs appearing on the Nordic ground, the landscape represented harmony and transferred positive values, while cities were often portrayed as dangerous places, in opposition to traditional values. Moreover, the depictions of nature represented protagonist's state of mind (e.g., bucolic surrounding remained of the character's inner calm). Nevertheless, this convention was reverted by authors of the horror films, creating pictures heavily influenced by American horror cinema. One of the most exploited patterns in such films as *Evil Dead* (1981) or *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1974) was a conflict between a human and nature. According to that, the importance of a landscape depiction was transferred into Nordic filmmaking, greatly inspired by American genre patterns. For instance, most of the horrors produced in Norway since the premiere of *Dark Wood* in 2003 were set in rural or wild areas. However, despite the strong influence of American cinema on Nordic filmmakers, European directors tend to be focused on the inability of men to understand of the natural environment, rather than emphasizing the conflict between a man and nature – in this way, developing and transgressing genre patterns. To be able to focus on the novelty of the described phenomenon, in the proposed presentation I will base on the films produced in Nordic countries during the 21st century. During my presentation, I will compare images of nature in American horror films from the 1970s and 80s (the most significant times for the development of genre schemes on the West) with the similar depictions that can be found in new Nordic horrors. Through emphasizing the symbolic role of flora and fauna in recently produced Nordic horrors, I will point out the influences coming from American classic productions, their metamorphosis on the Nordic ground, and the results of their appearance. One of the main points of my presentation will be the analysis of the the reasons of a narrative shift in depictions of a protagonist's struggle in the wilderness – related to social changes and the expectations of the audience.

Piotr Wajda

Mgr Piotr Wajda – a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Gdansk, Poland. Currently, he writes a thesis dedicated to modern Scandinavian horror movies. In his research, he tries to explore ground of genre cinema and exploitation films, which are often overlooked by film studies. He wrote his Master thesis about poetics of giallo films. In 2016 he became a co-founder of Unit of Production Studies and New Film History in University of Gdansk. During years 2010-2012 he took part in film lectures with screenwriting specialization in Warsaw.

“If You Tolerate This Your Children Will Be Next: Rethinking the Ecological Role of Media Systems”

In previous work, I have explored the digital media ecology as an Umwelt. This way of conceiving of the digital milieu is similar to the theory of affordances.

Following up on this ontological perspective, I would consider systems theory and the way it conceives of the media ecology as a set of interrelated social systems. Systems theory could be posed as a pertinent response to contemporary debates between correlationists and speculative realists (cf. Zahavi 2016). According to Luhmann (1989), human beings form part of the environment, while social systems consist only of communications. Systems are both conceptually closed and open vis-à-vis their environment. Because the environment cannot communicate directly with us, we interpret its change into our system of communications and adapt to it; Luhmann labels this as *resonance*.

Consequently, in societal systems, the environment routinely becomes observed as an externality. Systems assign metrics that they construct, e.g. in order to manage estimated damages to this environment. We find this in metrological systems for energy consumption, CO2 equivalents, etc. Unlike the exchanges within functional systems that are constituted in and of their metrological artefacts (the monetary system; citizenship; voting tallies within the parliamentary system; etc.), these valuations would not be considered as inherent to the system-environment interaction itself, but constructed as part of observatory practices inherent to the system in question.

Minute changes in any functional system can engender cascading effects in other systems. Historically, human desire has shifted in form and capacity throughout the ages, affecting our systems and environments. Here, I will address the media as a system – something that Luhmann (1989) omits – and its status as a system for large-scale cognitive modulation, largely financed by advertising. Taking tobacco, drug, alcohol, and gambling advertising as a starting point, I will discuss the notion of nudging human desire by way of differentiating exposure to advertising and propaganda, something which can in turn be governed through differentiated advertising taxes/levies.

Is it apt to consider differentiated taxes/levies for different types of advertising, i.e. in order to lessen the demand for meat consumption, fossil fuel, toxic and/or addictive substances – and for whom would such a system of governance be apt? Or would such a system be unworkable, due to political factors (inherent authoritarian/undemocratic factors) or due to sheer implausibility/unworkability (prohibitive calculation costs, transnational restrictions, i.e. incompatibility with EU law, etc.)?

Jonas Andersson

Jonas Andersson Schwarz is Senior Lecturer / Associate Professor in Media & Communications Studies, Södertörn University, with a research interest in how everyday life and social structures are affected by increasing digitization. He primarily studies digital platforms and their role as structural phenomena, particularly in terms of their role for civil society, epistemology, and the datadriven media economy.

”Eco-relationality and the Aesthetico-political Question. Towards a Critical Worldmaking under Technological Conditions”

The general-ecological thought is based on a relational concept of world and earth. Its relational ontology embraces the contemporary co-existence of different processes, dynamics and entities as it is foregrounded by contemporary networked and sensory environments, while also highlighting the emergence of a techno-material sensory continuum that precedes human sensation but nevertheless affects human sensations and perceptions. The contribution takes part in current discussions about a general-ecological relationality while underlining significant political aspects of the technological upheavals emerging with the development of new aesthetico-political control mechanisms. To this end, the contribution confronts the general-ecological concept of relationality which emphasizes – as Vicki Kirby points out in regards to Karen Barad's *intra-action* – that “there is no distance or space in between things” (*Matter out of Place: 'New Materialism' in Review*, 16) with Derrida's figure of relationality: In his version of a ‘relationality without relationality’ difference (*différance*) inscribes an interruptive spacing in any relation. These two notions of relationality not only position themselves differently between an ontology of abundance and an ontology of lack but, building on this, also have diverging politico-strategic trajectories. While the former relies on constitutive sensory participation of humans in techno-ecological environments, the Derridean concept of relationality allows deepening what Erich Hörl calls “participations without participation” (*A Thousand Ecologies: The Process of Cyberneticization and General Ecology*, 129). The contribution intends to explore the philosophico-political potential of Derrida's thought for a general-ecological concept of relationality. The aim is to develop a form of participation that stresses the overlapping between a techno-material sensory continuum and humans – also in its frictions and tensions – in order to open up possibilities for a distancing ‘senseability’ as a necessary aspect for critical worldmaking under technological conditions.

Christian Schwinghammer

Christian Schwinghammer, PhD Student exploring the relationship between ontology and the political/politics under technological conditions, Research Group SENSING: The Knowledge of Sensitive Media (University of Potsdam, University of Applied Sciences Potsdam (FHP), Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF, ZeM – Brandenburg Centre for Media Studies), c.schwinghammer@sensing-media.de.

“Overflow Feedback in Hotel Pro Forma’s NeoArctic”

The Anthropocene is rapidly gaining recognition as a new epoch in Earth’s history, in which Man is changing the environment and the biosphere (Steffen et.al. 2011). Danish Hotel Pro Forma explores how to aesthetically shape the ecological impact on human existence by creating theatre ecology in the visual opera-performance *NeoArctic* (2016). As spectator one is left with the notion of human activities having caused what we would call an “overflow feedback”: Digital visuals of plastic oceans, dust storms, tsunamis, charts of worldwide temperature rises, etc. are front-projected onto a huge horizontal backdrop spanning the width of the stage to create – in a very concrete sense – an overflow of the choir-performers on stage; mostly dressed in white they almost disappear in the picture or become ghostly shadows. Simultaneously, the spectator experiences an overflow of sensual input mirroring the immensity of grasping the complex processes of change. There is a formidable beauty to the vistas that invite an acceptance of the inevitable disaster. Yet, human prevalence might be hinted at by a flowing together of past and future in the costume design, at once that of ancient Inuits and high-tech survival gear, and the insistent presence of performers seemingly resisting the overflow throughout the performance. Theoretically the paper draws on theatre ecology (Kershaw 2009), post-dramatic theatre (Lehman 1999), the experience of beauty (Jørgensen 2006; 2014), eco-aesthetics (Milles 2014), and psychology of climate change (Stoknes 2015). Considering intention and reception, the responses to climate change that the aesthetics may instigate are discussed.

Daria Skjoldager-Nielsen

Daria Skjoldager-Nielsen is a PhD candidate in theatre studies, Stockholm University, working on a project about audience development in public theatres. She is vice-chairwoman of the Rococo Foundation researching cultural institutions’ management and performance. Her research interests lie in audience development, the theatrical event, new approaches to marketing and theatre, and cultural policy.

Kim Skjoldager-Nielsen

Kim Skjoldager-Nielsen obtained his PhD in theatre studies from Stockholm University in 2018 with the thesis *Over the Threshold, Into the World: Experiences of Transcendence in the Context of Staged Events*. With International Federation for Theatre Research (IFTR) he is an elected ExComm member and founding member of the working group Performance, Spirituality and Religion, as well as founding co-editor of the e-journal *PRS – Performance, Religion and Spirituality*. He is a member of the Performance Studies international (PSi) working group Performance and Science and a participant in the Performance Studies Space Programme (PSSP). His research interests are performative aesthetics, spirituality, ecology, science exposition, and contemporary staged events.

"Towards an Understanding of Experimental Ethics in Media Ecology: Updating Susan Sontag's Concept of an 'Ecology of Images'"

This paper discusses the fragile status of media ethics using the capacity of digital image assemblages as an example. Against the thesis that the concept of media ecology alone is a genuinely ethical concept that aims at the common shaping of media environments, the paper argues that ethics is not to be understood as an attitude or ethical consciousness, but derives from concrete practices. Thus at the same time an anti-normative, neoliberal relativism is rejected if we understand the question of the political as experimental ethics. Media ecologies are then political landscapes and not ideological infrastructures; in these media-ecological assemblages there are always possibilities of experimental modes of existence beyond the functionalities of control societies (Cf. Guattari 2016). The premise of our argument is Marshall McLuhan's media-ecological insight that technical-media infrastructures are to be understood as a network of conditions (McLuhan 1995). We would like to understand digital images as image assemblages (Deleuze and Guattari 1987): They can never be immobilized, never individualized and are in permanent transformation. These image technologies traverse people and cultures, exploiting them as sources of information and meaningful intersections in the sense of an economized and security-controlled population policy. (Cf. Deleuze 1993).

At the same time, persons model themselves affectively and perceptively through their application of technology and may under certain circumstances integrate themselves euphorically into a media-ecological assemblage. The idea of grasping images as part of larger contexts is not new. An "ecology of images" is already emphatically demanded by Susan Sontag (Sontag 2010), although for her an "ecology of images" is an ecosystem to be regulated, into which ethical intervention should be taken in order to separate "good" from "bad" images. We want to update this concept, later revised by Sontag and want to point out that an "ecology of images", which is not a natural system of order and more than just prostheses leads us to understand it "as ontology, as that which precedes every setting, whether political, social or economic" (Angerer 2017). This onto-technological condition attributed to the visual world will have to be questioned, as will its political status. We want to examine the activity and potentiality of digital images and their contribution to the generation of modes of subjectivation.

This includes understanding the sensory digital image machines as affective environments. Such a perspective implies a networking of social processes with the world of images, be it in the mode of control, of opening access, of connection. Therefore an "ecology of images" is to be analyzed in terms of its political power. If digital images become increasingly intertwined with personal existences, then these image machines can be used for a variety of purposes. For refugees the smartphone and for queer movements like "Otherkins" digital image assemblages promise ways into a better life or into new gender and body identities. These political practices fathom the complexity of digital media environments that contain both subversive appropriation possibilities and normative control functions.

Aljoscha Weskott

Dr. Aljoscha Weskott is a media, cultural and film scholar. He received his doctorate in cinematic visual space at the Institute for Art and Cultural Studies of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and in a core chapter of his dissertation dealt with digital images and digital image machines in the age of post cinematography. At the Institute for Aesthetic Theory of the Merz Akademie Stuttgart he gave seminars on affect and image theories, Aby Warburg or Bruno Latour. His decolonial film *Sunny Land* questioned roblematicizations of apartheid and postpartum in South Africa and ran in the Forum section of the Berlinale. From April 1, he will be working at the Institute for Art and Art Theory at the University of Cologne.

Ute Kalender

Dr. Ute Kalender is a sociologist, cultural scientist and ethnologist. Her latest technographic research project investigated digitization in big data centers. She works as a research assistant at the Charité Universitätsmedizin Berlin and is currently preparing a research project on decolonial, xenofeminist and queer-crip perspectives on digitization and digital media.

Dr. Ute Kalender and Dr. Aljoscha Weskott are currently preparing a new research project on interventions in digitization from queer feminism, disability movement and postmigrant activism.

“Shooting or protecting? Interpretations of Wilderness in Novels Taking Place in Svalbard for Young Adults”

Starting with *Tre pojkar på Spetsbergen* (Three boys in Spitsbergen, Ludvig Munsterhjelm, 1931) this paper discusses five Scandinavian novels for young adults and the story they tell about Svalbard during the 20th century. From start, the Arctic environment is described as a special place for earning lots of money by hunting. But at the same time the demanding nature creates strong individuals, in Munsterhjelm's book “Boys become men”, in the 1950s girls become strong women in books by Estrid Ott. By using the expressions narrative geography and storytelling it becomes clearer how environmental thinking has influenced our expectations on Svalbard during the last years – and changed them. Some elements are the same through the whole period: Scurvy, Guns & Glaciers. But the killing of polar bears is in modern novels something that should be avoided. Instead, watching the effects of climate change has become an essential part of the story told to tourists, successful to an extent that in itself is a threat towards the vulnerable wildlife. Finally this paper pays attention to the “switch” we are witnessing right now in the Svalbard-story: the discussions in media of limiting the climate-change-tourism because of the climate change.

Kari Haarder Ekman

Kari Haarder Ekman has a PhD in Literature (2010) from the Department of Culture and Aesthetics, Stockholm University. Her present project includes ecocritical discussions of literature about Swedish Sápmi 1900-1922 written by scientists and others for tourists. In this project on wilderness perceptions she has published several texts, focusing mostly on non-fictional authors like Emilie Demant Hatt, Otto Sjögren, Axel Hamberg and Bengt Berg. Recently “Scandinavian Wilderness and Violence. Two Women travelling in Sápmi 1907-1916” was published in *Nordic Narratives of Nature and the Environment. Ecocritical Approaches to Northern European Literatures and Cultures* (2018). Other research areas are: Svalbard literature, “Slow Violence” and Scandinavian wilderness, cultural Scandinavism.

"Cheap Future: Political Economy after the Great Environmental Switch"

During a public discussion with Jason W. Moore on the topic of *World-Ecology, General Ecology and Cybernetization* Erich Hörl replied to Moore's notion of Four Cheaps (food, labourpower, energy and raw materials) by enquiring about a potential fifth Cheap, which he termed Cheap Data (Hörl and Moore, 2016, n.p.). Hörl thereby drew attention to what he has elsewhere called the "neocybernetic facts of our present, which generally ought to be described in terms of an explosion of environmental agency" (Hörl, 2017, p. 9).

By focusing on precisely the contemporary technoecological condition, Hörl's work highlights how, through the great environmental switch, the "Capital-Form of environmentality [has become] the most advanced form of capitalism" (Hörl, 2018, p. 163), and expresses the desideratum that an analysis of the environmentalitarian Capital-Form presents the culmination of "[o]ur critical task today" (ibid.). This paper will argue that we cannot treat the notion of Cheap Data as a simple addition to Moore's Four Cheaps, but rather use it as a way to readdress the question of political economy itself. After the great environmental switch, we cannot rely on a political economy rooted in postrevolutionary modernity (see Mann, 2017, esp. p. 164-165), since the age of environmentalization is partly marked by precisely the "becoming-problematic of modern cosmology" itself (Hörl, 2017, p. 27). Rather, asking the question of the Capital-Form of Environmentality means being attentive to the "fundamentally different value [that is assigned] to the question of relation" through the ecological image of thought (ibid., p. 7). In the contemporary issue of debt and indebtedness, which this paper will further explore, this new relationality – which carries the movement of becoming-environmental – appears as an explicitly political-economical question. General ecology points us towards the necessity of rethinking debt as such a relation.

Milan Stürmer

Milan Stürmer is a research associate at the DFG-project Media and Participation where he works in the subproject "Elements of a Critical Theory of Media and Participation" focusing on the economic elements of participation. Having studied Film Studies and Media and Cultural Studies followed by a MA in Kulturwissenschaften, he is currently pursuing his PhD at the Institute of Culture and Aesthetics of Digital Media at Leuphana University, Lüneburg, with the working title "Debt as Relation – The Transformation of the Capital-Form in the Context of the History of Rationality" (Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Erich Hörl).

His research interests include the history of economics, anthropology, general ecology, media theory and the philosophy of technology. Recent publications include the review „Medienökologien fürs Anthropozän“, *Zeitschrift für Medienwissenschaft* 14 (2017, with Isabell Schrickel) as well as the translation of Timothy Morton: „Dunkle Ökologie. Für eine Logik zukünftiger Koexistenz“, in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für Medienphilosophie* 4 (2018).

"The Anti-Ecology of Nietzschean Aesthetics in Tom McCarthy's *Satin Island*"

Satin Island (2015) contains a number of Tom McCarthy's already established and interrelated fictional characteristics. Excessive recycling (borrowing or stealing), intertextual and allusional frenzy, monomaniacal preoccupation with seemingly trivial details, fascination with the material and technological aspects of human culture, problematisation of traditional dichotomisation of human vs. non-human, detached and unempathic protagonist, a distinctly imaginative and associative narration—which makes itself manifest primarily as cerebral (hence the affective indifference)—and last but not least an obsession with patterns and pattern analogies. One such pattern is the conspicuous theme of oil spills in the narrative. In taking on the regularity of configurations, the spills become aestheticised as black artworks, "the oil-flower unfurling its petals, the dark water swelling and cresting" (13). Oil spills are in a traditional environmentalist discourse seen as adequate punishments for human hubris. According to this moral logic, the human greed for energy backlashes and spreads death on coastlines and on 'innocent' animal and vegetational life. However, in McCarthy's twisted fictional world, the spills become manifestations of a full-blown Nietzschean aesthetics that overrides all values, so that aestheticised reality becomes everything beyond and above any apocalyptic or utopian human telos. The ultimate level of (post)humanity is the revelation of a dehumanised and autonomous aesthetics of the world itself. Basically, McCarthy's novel tries out the idea of the beauty of destruction as a maximation of the anthropocene. In addition, the narrative dramatises the impossibility of such an event, since it suggests that this would entail human extinction and therefore there can be no conceivable recording of the accomplishment. This paper analyses pattern, matter and surface aesthetics in *Satin Island* as a provocative comment on more ethically oriented environmentalist stances.

Joakim Wrethed

Associate Professor Joakim Wrethed has hitherto mainly worked in Irish Studies but he also explores the contemporary novel in English more generally without any primary emphasis on national boundaries. The current research project involves the function of technology in select contemporary novels. Phenomenology, postmodernism, aesthetics and theology are overarching topics of his scholarly work. Some of the more recent publications have been on Tom McCarthy and the posthuman *zeitgeist*.

”From the Perspective of a Bird. Rei Hayama’s Experimental Films and Ecological Turn in Japanese Audiovisual Art”

Rei Hayama, a young filmmaker and performer, produced over twenty short audiovisual experiments – awarded both in Japan and abroad. Her pictures are focused on exploring the connections between nature and human beings, with the emphasis on the mutual influence, depicted with the use of experimental aesthetics and the newest audiovisual technologies. Hayama treats the observed natural phenomena as her “organic material” which can be transformed in the film post-production process, however with the preservation of its original context. The polemics with the activity of humans, who seem not to appreciate and understand nature fully, remains the core concept of Hayama’s art. Moreover, her “scenography” is almost all natural, even intact by human hands, and has no commercial value (similarly to land art projects of Dennis Oppenheim). Also, Hayama rejects the way of perceiving nature as the background to humans’ activities, giving it autonomy to produce own “gaze” and look back at the observer.

The aim of the proposed presentation is to analyze the ecological turn in Japanese experimental film after the year 2000, using Hayama’s films as the examples of the change. Previously, Japanese experimental filmmakers (e.g., Takahiko Imura or Toshio Matsumoto) tended to focus on political and social issues, referring to nature only occasionally. When the eventful times of avant-garde activities ended, the new contemporary Japanese artists started looking for new objectives – choosing discourse on the role of nature as one of them. During the presentation, I am going to discuss the reasons and results of the increasing interest in ecology themes on the ground of Japanese experimental film. Furthermore, I plan to present the aesthetics accompanying the depictions of nature, as well as the technologies used to capture the film material in the natural environment.

Agnieszka Kiejziewicz

Mgr Agnieszka Kiejziewicz – a Ph.D. student at Jagiellonian University, Institute of Audiovisual Arts. Her research interests revolve around Japanese film and other visual arts. Currently, she is researching on the avant-garde and independent films, searching for the new and less known achievements of the young filmmakers after the year 2000. She is also focused on the Japanese culture and such issues as depictions of shinto religion in film or Japanese independent music. Recently, she has published her monography on Japanese cyberpunk cinema (*Japonski cyberpunk. Od awangardowych transgresji do kina popularnego* [Japanese cyberpunk. From Avant-garde Transgressions to Popular Cinema], Kirin 2018). She is also a co-editor of *MASKA. Anthropology Sociology Culture* journal and film educator.

"Connect, Spread, Change: Questions about Normality in an Ecology of Disability Art Exhibitions"

This paper presents a case study from an ongoing project on photography and visual impairment, which elucidates an under-researched material from an unusual perspective. The case comprises representations of and by individuals defined as disabled in key international exhibitions from the last twenty years. During this time, the work of artists living with disability gains recognition as art rather than therapy, while activist initiatives use art to reclaim the term disability in order to stress its inherent value. A focus on curatorial strategies of selection and framing captures a dynamics between individuals and institutions, at a crucial juncture when they negotiate notions of normality through public confrontation.

The aim is to demonstrate premises, manifestations and consequences of these exhibitions as they raise questions about normality by connecting people with diverse abilities, spreading a non-normative agenda and changing limiting definitions. In the process, they create tactical interventions into a socio-digital system pervaded by ableism. The main argument is that these interventions matter as an eco-logical operation. They draw on public resources to transform public prejudice, using their position within the ecology of ableist discourse to establish an alternative ecology. They reveal their ecological connectedness to ableism by means of production and display that rely on this connectedness. Through the exhibition format, the participants address the discourses that situate them.

The case study combines media theory on technological dependence and disruption, disability studies on normativity and variation, and art historical image analysis informed by semiotics and phenomenology. This approach applies the concept of ecology in relation to several conference themes, analyzing how images mirror and generate social perceptions in technologically mediated environments – for in-stance, technical glitches reveal ecological qualities as productive disruptions within a system. The paper thus opens up questions about normality beyond disability art, towards the world-making aspects of ecology.

Vendela Grundell

Vendela Grundell is a postdoctoral researcher with a PhD in Art History at the Department of Culture and Aesthetics at Stockholm University. She is a visiting fellow at the Department of Media, Communications and Cultural Studies at Goldsmiths, University of London, with her project "Seeing Differently / Seeing Difference: Emancipation and Aesthetics in Photography by the Visually Impaired" (2018-2019). Since 2012, she teaches art history with a focus on visual technologies and digital cultures while maintaining her profession as a photographer and writer.

Her academic publications include “Navigating Darkness: A Photographic Response to Visual Impairment” in *Liminalities* (2018), *Flow and Friction: On the Tactical Potential of Interfacing with Glitch Art* (2016) and a chapter in *Art and Photography in Media Environments* (2016), with forthcoming essays in the peer-reviewed journal *Media Theory* and the anthology *Error, Ambiguity, Creativity: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*.

"Rethinking the Machinocene. A Critique of Planetary Computerisation"

Drawing on the thinking of French philosopher and psychiatrist Felix Guattari this paper will frame the Anthropocene as "the age of planetary computerisation". It will claim that this term bestows Guattari's thinking with a critical ability to both grasp and challenge the present as an age in which the personal computer not only further empowers the globalization of capitalism (or what Guattari calls "Integrated World Capitalism"), but also appears as a geological force i.e. as one of the main drivers of the ecological devastation now confronting humanity. At the same time the paper will point to what it takes to be an overly optimistic perspective on the subversive potential of machines in Guattari's thinking. It will claim that Guattari's machinic ecology can, in the light of the present geophysical destruction empowered by the personal computer, only be salvaged if read as an appeal for a cautious Prometheanism. A reading, which surprisingly places Guattari's ecology more in conjunction with a Latourian way of thinking than with the new post-Marxist trend of Accelerationism.

Gregers Andersen

Dr. Gregers Andersen is postdoctoral researcher in environmental humanities at the Department of English, Stockholm University. He has published articles in several international journals (e.g. *ISLE*, *Symploke*, *The Journal of Popular Culture*, and *Deleuze Studies*) on how literature, films, cultural theory and philosophy can shed light upon human and non-human conditions in the Anthropocene.

“Response-ability: (Re-)acting within Patterns of Unintentional Coordination”

After the dismantlement of promethean dreams of mastery, the new technoecological paradigm poses the question of power once more. Being situated in highly entangled environments which are as natural as they are technological, how do agents intra-act or suffer intra-action? How are they affected and to what extent can they be the origin of affect? The ever-more complex interplay between action and passion in spheres of distributed cognition (Hayles) demands the harvesting of a *response-ability* (Barad) which embraces mere contingency and the virtual. Following this description I want to propose that *agency* is not to be conceived of as the power of an autonomous, isolated entity. Rather it needs to be thought of as a reconfiguration of the power of entangled temporal and material modes. This calls for a relational thinking of the ontology of power, that recognizes both the metaphysical potential and the material dimensions – as well as its interdependencies of mattering – which allow for an event (*événement*) to happen. Departing from this at root spinozist notion of power, I want to show the multiplicity of agents at play, such as the virtuals of possible futures (and pasts) as well as the material conditions and their narratives in order to show that „hidden behind the discrete and independent objects of the sense world is an entangled realm, in which the simple notions of identity and locality no longer apply.“¹ Such a proposition lays bare that „responsibility is not an obligation that the subject chooses but rather an incarnate relation that precedes the intentionality of consciousness. [...] It is a relation always already integral to the world's ongoing intra-active becoming and not-becoming.“² Therefore the search for *agency* and *response-ability* needs to be aware of these existing prehensions and embrace the touch of otherness in order to develop strategies of mattering.

Yannick Schütte

After finishing his Bachelor of Cultural Science, Digital Media and Information Technology at Leuphana Universität Lüneburg, Yannick Schütte is currently doing his masters of European Media Studies at University of Potsdam. His research focuses on the intersection of philosophy of technology, philosophy of science. Currently he investigates the semiotics of landscapes within the context of climate change research. Recent publications are: *Richtungslose Relationen: Über die Beziehung von Mensch und technischem Objekt*, in Schütte, Y. (et al.) *Mensch und Welt im Zeichen der Digitalisierung*, Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2019.

"Techno-ecological Storytelling in Ian Cheng's Emissaries"

My proposal suggests to investigate the potential of computer-simulations as a means of ecological storytelling. In order to do this, I will take a closer look at Ian Cheng's *Emissaries* (2015-2017), a contemporary artwork. *Emissaries* is a trilogy of computer simulations aiming to tell a story about the evolution of cognition. The story takes the viewer from the emergence of consciousness in an archaic collective to an Artificial Intelligence that is conducting experiments with human life and eventually leads him into a dystopic vision of the future in which the AI has merged with matter and has created a biosynthetic species serving as a planetary immune system.

The simulations draw from Agent-Based-Modelling Simulations, Complex Adaptive

Systems studies and are built with the game design engine Unity. A particular category of agent, the so-called Emissary, has the capacity to carry out narrative goals. Besides the narration itself, Cheng refers to a variety of sources that deal with questions about the evolution of cognition, most importantly Julian Jaynes' *The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind* (1976) and Iain McGilchrist's *The Master and his Emissary* (2009). Other knowledge areas include improvisational theatre, military strategy and self-help literature.

Emissaries constitute virtual ecosystems which confront the viewer with complexity, chaos, phenomena of emergence and accelerated processes of evolution. It is an ecology of artificial intelligence in itself and in this sense prefigures ecosystems in which the most dominant factors have become technological. It exhibits a culture of sense bound to meaning and representation as well as a techno-ecological culture of sense bound to relation (Erich Hörl: *The Artificial Intelligence of Sense: The History of Sense and Technology After Jean-Luc Nancy* (By Way of Gilbert Simondon), 2013).

Niklas Egberts

Niklas Egberts is currently pursuing his Master's degree in Cultural Studies at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, writing his thesis about Ian Cheng's *Emissaries*. He is the co-founder the *texture*, a Berlin-based collective hosting events about cultural theory, media philosophy and ecology (www.texture.works).

“Photography and the Production of Visual Ecologies of Information”

In the 1800’s snowflakes were thought to be perfectly symmetrical; they are not, as Wilson Bentley demonstrated through microphotography in 1885 (Bentley, 1922; Daston & Galison, 2007). In 1965 the first photographs of Mars were sent to Earth, and the popular imagination of Mars as a planet like Earth, with lakes, valleys, mountains was quickly shattered. The photographs showed that Mars looked more like the Moon than the Earth, seemingly dead and full of moon-like craters (Ezell & Ezell, 1984).

Photographs are powerful sites of information about our world. But, curiously, “whenever we begin to talk about photography outside the art historical frame of reference, it’s as if the conversation just dies. We don’t know what to say, or how to proceed” (Costello in Elkins 2007, p.199). Despite the pervasive use of photography as an informative and communicative medium, conceptualizing it as such is missing from the history of media and communication scholarship (Henning, 2018; Natale, 2018). Historically, photographs as objects of study were legitimated through aesthetics, and thus photographs were theorized through the language of art history (Batchen, 2000; Lister, 2016). This paper locates photography within media history to ask how photographs came to be important sources of public information, and question if photography has transformed the way we define, think about, and use ‘information’. Using the case studies outlined above, this paper traces moments where photographs have been used as a way of producing “objective” information about the world. These case studies point to moments where photographs of objects or phenomena, historically unable to be seen in detail by the naked eye, challenged how they had been conceptualized and visualized in the public imagination prior to this photographic evidence, locating photography as a central technology to creating our informational environment.

Bethany Berard

Bethany Berard is a PhD Candidate in Communication and Media Studies in the School of Journalism and Communication at Carleton University. Broadly, her work integrates visual culture and media theory. Current projects connect histories of photography and information theory towards an informational account of photography, as well as a project on the role of images in building and breaking public trust. She is a Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada Doctoral Fellow, and the Assistant Editor of the *Canadian Journal of Communication*.

“Ecological Contiguities: Post-anthropocentric Speculations in Contemporary Latin American Verbal and Visual Arts”

The conjuncture of a prospective post-anthropocentric time and our sociotechnological condition solicit new forms of acting, seeing, listening, and saying *beyond the human* in order to experience the world. In this paper, I am interested in placing myself in this context to dwell on what I will define as *ecological contiguities* of the human, animal, and material, analyzed in a specific corpus of contemporary Latin American verbal and visual arts. The poetry-photography collection *Lo precario* (2016), by Chilean Cecilia Vicuña, the novel *Lecciones para una liebre muerta* (2005), by Mexican-Peruvian Mario Bellatin, and the film *No intenso agora* (2016), by Brazilian João Moreira Salles, put into question, both formally and thematically speaking, modernity’s conceptual polarities—e.g. nature/culture, human/non-human, form/matter, mind/body—as forms of distributions of the sensible in the horizon of *natureculture* (Rancière 2000; Haraway 2016; Fernández Bravo *et al.* 2018). In the transfers and movements between spatial-temporal-matter borders drawn from the written word/visual image and its poetic unspecificity, I will identify new forms of contiguity (Giorgi 2014) that disrupt these traditional dichotomies. In that regard, I am interested in analyzing the corpus from an ecological understanding of aesthetic participation (Israelson 2017). More specifically, my analysis proposes a speculative reading (Mackay *et al.*, 2014) under the theoretical prism of ecocriticism, post-humanism, and new materialisms (O’ Sullivan 2001; Bennet 2010), in order to interact with the corpus as a material-discursive entanglement. I will contend that such a theoretical approach to these Latin American cultural artifacts is useful to rethink the ontology and epistemology of a radical deterritorialization of modernity as non-modernity (Hörl 2017). Finally, I will conclude my presentation arguing that a reading along these lines allows reconsidering the political and aesthetic dimension of contemporary Latin American cultural production in the post-anthropocentric discussion.

Gianfranco Selgas

Gianfranco Selgas is a PhD student in Spanish, specializing in Latin American Culture and Literature, at Stockholm University. His research project examines political and aesthetic features that have to do with tensions between culture, materialism, and nature, in a corpus of contemporary Latin American verbal and visual arts. He is assistant editor of *Iberoamericana – Nordic Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*.

“Football as Performative Intermediality”

A football game can be considered to be an intermedial performance, an aesthetic function or a narrative sequence of events (plot) surrounded by and expanded with other stories of male heroes and economical fraud. This study aims at unfolding the performativity of football games in terms of site-specific agential rhetoric and within an aesthetic that draws from concepts of the mediatized spectacle as a mass cultural form of a Total Work of Art (Roberts). Integrating actor network theory (Latour), multimodal intermediality (Elleström) and intra-active performativity (Barad) the study tries to study the game with help of situated media techno-ecology (Hörl).

Why football? I take football games as a case to explore the emergent crossdisciplinary field of intermedial studies drawing their cases from art or from multimodal “qualified media products” (Elleström) by applying a phenomenology and semiotic onto what is called the three “basic media” of text, image sound (Lund). I argue that football games exemplify problematic presumptions such as the divides of live/nature and culture/technology), the neutral givens of time and space and Huizinga’s closed “magic circle” separating the world of the game from the external world. Other problems come up when asking: What “narrative”, representation or “message” does a football game provide? Who or what acts in this collaborative performance of a rule-guided game according to what kind of rhetoric? How does the unpredictable complexity of time and space articulate in the intra-action and flow of human and non-human forces in its situated “con-text” entangled with the environment, affect, emotions and the system logic of a football game (Lefebvre; Fischer-Lichte)? How do we negotiate the difference between live performance of a football game and its disseminated form as mass media product, framed on technical devices like a computer or a TV-screen?

Heidrun Führer

Heidrun Führer is Associate Professor in Intermedial Studies in the department of Arts and Cultural Sciences. She studied German Literature, and Classic Philology in Germany (Braunschweig, Hamburg, and Munich). In Sweden, she wrote her thesis at the University in Lund on a baroque Jesuit Drama, written in Latin. Since 2003, she teaches different courses in the field of Intermediality in Lund and published articles about intermediality in and outside the field of literature. Recently, she published several articles concerning the concept of ekphrasis. Her current research focusses on the intermediality of site-specific performance.

"The Maker Movement and the Problematic of General Ecology"

The maker movement consists of people collaborating in digital and physical spaces to design and make their own electronics. It is a highly technological and relational phenomenon, self-described as a global network of local makerspaces aimed at democratizing access to technology. Based on my doctoral research of several European makerspaces, this paper discusses the role of the maker movement in what Erich Hörl calls 'the problematic of general ecology.' A clear product of our current techno-ecological conditions, the maker movement also responds to the problem of proletarianization raised by Bernard Stiegler. Whereas Stiegler defines proletarianization as a loss of human knowledge and skill to technology, I understand proletarianization to be a diminished ability to formulate political and social problems that can be attributed to a pervasive technological illiteracy in our societies. Proletarianization thus conceptualized impedes the development and spread of techno-ecological thought. The maker movement provides elements of a solution to this predicament by fostering a critical and active relationship to technology that encourages people to move beyond their familiar roles of consumers and users, and better understand the technological conditions under which they act and live. Still, I argue that the movement has yet to fully address the problem of proletarianization and move toward a techno-ecological mode of thinking.

Stefano Mazzilli-Daechsel

Stefano Mazzilli-Daechsel holds a joint-PhD from the University of Kent and Universität Hamburg. His work explores the political and philosophical implications of the maker movement and new technologies.

“Ecologisation and the Notion of Scale”

In recent discourses concerning the environmental switch, an ecology of thinking and the reemerging discussion on the Gaia-Hypothesis contrasting the Anthropocene discourse there seems to be an asymmetrical mediation between different analytical, narrative and discursive layers. The intertwining of ‚quasi-universal‘ approaches like the general ecology or a seemingly unified becoming-environmental of technology are harshly contrasted with rather specific perspectives on ‚other‘ forms of life. While on one the hand the implications of a „technoecological condition“ (Hörl) are broadly diversified and merge trajectories like cybernetics, certain concepts of life and symbiosis, technological networks, technocapitalist power relations and media theories, these theories are on the other hand often asymmetrically informed by detailed knowledge of local practices and specific context-depending questions. In contrast, Anna Tsing convincingly deals with this leap in her book „The Mushroom at the End of the World“ by introducing the notion of nonscalability. She argues that the aspect of scale is often underestimated in various discourses around capitalist modernity and the Anthropocene and elaborates that there is a „historically significant link between conceptualizing and making the world: the naturalization of expansion as the way for humans to inhabit the earth“ (Tsing). In my contribution I want to question the somehow blurry discontinuity of different layers of ecologisation by referring to Tsing’s theory of nonscalability. As it is not per se a mode of judgment or critique but more a „design feature“, a question of modes of being in the world and worldmaking my hypothesis would be that the perspective of nonscalability provides a basis for the mediation between planetary scale theoretical concepts and hyperspecific forms of live. Finally I will suggest that this concept allows for specific analysis and criticism of today’s ecological hypothesis and might provide the tool for the „critical description of relational encounters across difference“ (Tsing).

Jakob Claus

After studying cultural and media sciences at Leuphana University in Lüneburg, Jakob Claus is currently at Humboldt University of Berlin finishing his masters in culture sciences. His current research focuses on the philosophy of technology, modes of subjectivity and the technoecological condition, which he works on in various formats. After a stay at Goldsmiths University of London and first publications, he currently runs a space for scientific, theoretical and artistic research related to these topics (www.texture.works).

“Geoengineering Experiments as Socio-technical Rehearsals”

This paper demonstrates what we are calling a Socio-Technical Rehearsal – a method for examining how scientific experiments constitute mechanisms of ‘steering’ of emerging technologies, and how the organization of mediation can be operationalized towards certain futures. A three-act teleplay, depicting a story of an aborted 2012 geoengineering experiment, is written by an artist, and then continuously amended, annotated and split into new narratives by people portrayed in it, as well as people external to it. The original events are mediated and remediated through forms of re-search, re-narrativizing and re-representation. The multiplying narratives contradict, contaminate and react to each other. Each way of telling the story is anticipatory, predisposing one to particular projection of the future dependent on the model derived from the past. Each narrative presents one version of a fragmented and limited understanding of the situation. Through the iterations of scripting, rehearsing, performing and revising; assumptions about the technological management of the environment are probed and ruptured in new ways. The circuitous communication process is always anticipatory, steering the narrative turns toward utopian or dystopian futures as possible worlds proliferate. Our cybernetic and cyberneticizing method exposes the process of knowledge circulation and the ways that narratives are naturalized into a common understanding of “geoengineering.” We hope to expose the multiple narratives of geoengineering – what it is, what it is for and how it re-mediate and modulates existing material ensembles and epistemological frameworks. We ask – how is the process of mediation integral in the normalization of ‘fringe’ scientific ideas, such as geoengineering proposals, within mainstream science?

Karolina Sobecka

Karolina Sobecka is an artist, designer and researcher, examining social arrangements that exploit, resist or accommodate technological change. Sobecka’s work has been shown internationally, including at the Victoria & Albert Museum, The National Art Museum of China, MoMa Film, ZKM and Marfa Dialogues, and has received numerous awards, including from Creative Capital, NYFA and Princess Grace Foundation. Sobecka has taught at SAIC, RISD, and NYU, and is currently a doctoral researcher at the Institute for Aesthetic Practice and Theory, HGK in Basel.

