

Constellations for futures

Stories on ecology, kinship, and sciences

02.12–04.12.21

EN

La Loge

Kluisstraat 86 – rue de l'Ermitage
B-1050 Brussels

With the participation of Chanelle Adams, Ursula Biemann, Jennifer Gabrys, Mira Hirtz, Katharina Hoppe, Fallon Mayanja, Ben Rivers, Adam Searle and Jonathon Turnbull, Swoosh Lieu, and Diana Toucedo.

Goethe-Institut Brussels and La Loge present ***Constellations for futures***, a three-day discursive program of lectures, film screenings, and artistic performances at the intersection of ecology, community, and science.

This multidisciplinary programme—which interweaves science and fictional narratives, real and speculative facts—questions the meaning and consequences of current crises in order to examine inequalities and to think differently about relations between humans and non-humans. Researchers and invited artists will examine the viability and impact of scientific and technological experiments on the environment which has been shaped by a history of domination as well as by economic and social realities. The hypotheses presented in the varying practices will draw up new constellations and spaces for listening to and for sharing current thoughts, all in favour of new kinships, alliances and communities.

Constellations for futures follows up on the comprehensive discussion regarding the impact of the pandemic and a series of events developed by La Loge and the Goethe-Institut in 2021. At La Loge, **A Common Breath** (10.03 – 03.04) raised ecological questions and confronted issues on dehierarchization, while **Reclaiming Places** (01.05 – 03.07) focused on inhabited spaces and indigenous rights by fusing arts and theoretical reflections. These encounters pleaded in favour of non-hierarchical relationships and a collective consciousness in order to think of alternative ways of living together and modes of action. With the project **Lockdown Lessons**, the Goethe-Institut has clearly stated that we are still fully experiencing the pandemic. Scientists are invited to play a role in explaining the changes and providing impulses for new thinking. In dialogue with science, the project aims to learn from this period in a cooperative way, to identify social challenges, and to develop ideas for the future.

Together, Goethe-Institut and La Loge continue to question and explore these challenging times, both on an ecological and social level.

PROGRAMME

CAMILLE & ULYSSE

02.12.21

19:00 – 21:00

Screening of a new film by **Diana Toucedo**, *Camille & Ulysse*, 2021
Followed by a discussion between director **Diana Toucedo** (online) and researcher **Katharina Hoppe**.

19:00

Welcome and introduction to the programme

19:10

Screening of *Camille & Ulysse*

46min, DCP 2K Dolby 5.1, English & French, Spain & France, 2021

Courtesy of the artist and Fabbula

The philosophers Vinciane Despret and Donna Haraway combine their voices in this audio-visual piece by filmmaker Diana Toucedo, based on two of their fabulations: Haraway's *The Camille Stories*, and *Autobiographie d'un poulpe*, by Despret.

In an indefinite future, Camille and Ulysse tell the interwoven stories of the first generation of their communities of humans and non-humans: the *communities of compost*. Camille is associated symbolically with monarch

butterflies, whose migration routes and habitats in the US, Mexico, and Canada are under threat. Ulysse, like all the other Ulysses in the community, experiments with the possibility of living in the presence of the extinct octopus by learning the animal's highly unique gestures, language and forms of sensitivity.

Framed as an oral tale and a correspondence between the two narrators and their stories, the film follows the ways of living and dying among communities on a damaged planet and their growing proficiency in a new field of scientific knowledge: *terolinguistics*, or the study of animal languages. The narrators, in harmony with their partners in symbiosis, become increasingly aware of the potential for growth inherent to the tentacular and metamorphic beings.

This encounter was captured by the filmmaker Diana Toucedo, whose work includes *Trinta lumes* (2018). With a gaze attuned to the mysteries of the natural world, the blurred limits between what we know and what we intuit, Toucedo joins Haraway and Despret in the construction of this narrative voyage made up of multiple intersecting lines—a playful web where speculative fiction and experimental essay merge as symbionts.

20:00 – 20:15

Presentation by **Katharina Hoppe**

20:15 – 20:45

Conversation between **Diana Toucedo** and **Katharina Hoppe**

21:00

Open discussion and drinks

BIOGRAPHIES

Katharina Hoppe is a researcher and teacher living in Frankfurt am Main. Her work focuses on sociological, political, and feminist theory as well as the sociology of social inequality, especially gender relations, and intersectional perspectives on ecological crises. She is a research Post-Doc at the Institute for Sociology at the Goethe University in Frankfurt. She recently published a complete presentation of the works of Donna Haraway and a systematization of her multi-layered concepts (*Die Kraft der Revision. Epistemologie, Politik und Ethik bei Donna Haraway*, Campus Verlag, 2021).

Diana Toucedo is a filmmaker and film editor living in Barcelona. She has edited twenty feature films to date, including the documentary *All the night long* directed by Isaki Lacuesta. Her first feature length film *Thirty Souls* premiered at Panorama Berlinale 2018. She directed *Camille & Ulysse*, a documentary film with Donna Haraway and Vinciane Despret for CCCB/Pompidou, and she is now developing her next projects, *Puerto Deseado* and *La cinquième corde/The fifth string*. In addition, she teaches in the Postgraduate programme in audiovisual editing at Pompeu Fabra University, while pursuing a PhD.

NARRATIVES ABOUT EARTH

03.12.21

19:00 - 21:00

Screening of films by **Ben Rivers** (*Urth*) and **Ursula Biemann** (*Twenty One Percent*)

With interventions by **Jennifer Gabrys** (*Being Planetary as Praxis*), **Adam Searle** and **Jonathon Turnbull** (*Anthropause and Resurgent natures*).

Entitled *Narratives about Earth*, the second evening will critically reflect on the role and impact of scientific and technological experiments that underline the dominance and limits of the anthropocene. The works and discussions will also question how science and science fiction interact, in order to analyse how the latter can support the deployment of new scientific knowledge. In addition, we will see how ecological and social upheavals are driving new scientific experiments that are conducive to other models of co-existence with the environment.

19:00

Screening of *Urth* by **Ben Rivers**, 2016

20 minutes, Colour, Stereo, 16:9

Original format: 16mm film

Courtesy of the artist and LUX

The last woman on Earth. Filmed at Biosphere 2 in Arizona, *Urth* forms a cinematic meditation on ambitious experiments, constructed environments, and visions of the future. Writer Mark von Schlegell contributes a text that can be read as the final log instalments of a woman sealed inside an unforgiving environment. The film considers what an endeavour such as Biosphere 2 might mean today and in the near future, in terms of humankind's relationship with the natural world.

19:20

Talk by **Adam Searle** and **Jonathon Turnbull**

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr Adam Searle and Jonathon Turnbull have been working collaboratively with Professor Jamie Lorimer and Professor Bill Adams on various projects that examine how human-nature relations have been reconfigured during the *Anthropause*. Beginning with a theoretical exploration of narratives of nature's resurgence in locked-down cities, they have gone on to empirically investigate the role played by digital technologies and online nature groups in facilitating convivial human-nature relations, most notably through an ethnography of the *Self-Isolating Bird Club*. They have also conducted extensive fieldwork on how people's relationships with local green spaces have been affected by the pandemic.

20:00

Screening of *Twenty One Percent* by **Ursula Biemann**, 2016

18 minutes, Colour, Stereo

Courtesy of the artist

In this small pocket of atmospheric chemistry, flying and thinking beings emerge as the result of high oxygen levels in the air which is owed to earth's forest and plant cover. In the midst of the oxygenic forest, a science-fictional performer manipulates a multitude of ingredients—minerals, forest fruits, liquids and substances—some of which are recognized as potential human foods, others not. Ranging in scale from the cosmos to the kitchen, the video undertakes an empirical inquiry into the capacity of chemical elements.

The video foregrounds the materialities and processes by which human and other organic bodies are kept alive, intensifying the relations to the subtle, multiple, living world. This happens in full awareness of the fact that it is the chemical composition of the universe that constitutes materiality on earth. Tinkering with the chemical composition of the atmosphere not only impacts the climate on Earth, it directly affects our capacity to think which originally enabled the conception of technologies that changed planetary chemistry.

Twenty One Percent is a collaboration with Swiss performance artist Mo Diener.

20:20

Talk by **Jennifer Gabrys**

Jennifer Gabrys will give a lecture that addresses the topic of the planetary and outlines "Planetary as Praxis", a concept that informs the ethos of her research group.

21:00 Open discussion and drinks

BIOGRAPHIES

Ursula Biemann is an artist, author, and video essayist. Her artistic practice is strongly research-oriented and involves fieldwork in remote locations from Greenland to Amazonia, where she investigates climate change and the ecologies of oil, ice, forests, and water. In her multi-layered videos, the artist interweaves vast cinematic landscapes with documentary footage, SF poetry, and academic findings to narrate a changing planetary reality. Biemann's pluralistic practice spans a range of media including experimental video, interview, text, performance, photography, cartography, props, and materials, which converge in formalized spatial installations. Recent field trips have taken her to the Amazonian rainforest and the Arctic region where she engages the larger temporalities of climate change with the project *Forest Law, Deep Weather, Subatlantic and Acoustic Ocean*, amplifying current

discussions around ecology, multispecies communication, and videographic worldmaking. The main protagonist in these recent narratives, and particularly in her latest work *Forest Mind*, is the figure of the indigenous scientist who emerges from a shared history of colonialism and modern science.

Jennifer Gabrys is Chair in Media, Culture and Environment in the Department of Sociology at the University of Cambridge. She leads the Planetary Praxis research group, and is Principal Investigator on the ERC-funded project, *Smart Forests: Transforming Environments into Social-Political Technologies*. She also leads Citizen Sense and AirKit, which are participatory and practice-based research projects funded by the ERC that address air pollution and citizen engagement. She writes on digital technologies, environments and social life, with recent publications including *How to Do Things with Sensors* (2019), and *Program Earth: Environmental Sensing Technology and the Making of a Computational Planet* (2016). Her newest book, *Citizens of Worlds: Open-Air Toolkits for Environmental Struggle*, is available on Manifold as an open-access publishing experiment. She also co-edits *Planetarities*, a short-monograph series published through Goldsmiths Press. Her work can be found at planetarypraxis.org and jennifergabrys.net.

Ben Rivers is an artist and experimental filmmaker based in London. His practice as a filmmaker treads a line between documentary and fiction. Often following and filming people who have in some way separated themselves from society, the raw film footage provides Rivers with a starting point for creating oblique narratives imagining alternative existences in marginal worlds. Rivers often employs analogue media and hand develops 16mm film, which shows the evidence of the elements it has been exposed to—the materiality of this medium forming part of the narrative.

Adam Searle is an environmental and cultural geographer whose research examines the relationships between humans, nonhumans, and technologies. His research background is in ecological and environmental sciences, however he became more interested in why ecologists were asking the questions they were asking rather than the production of scientific knowledge itself. His research spans disciplinary trends in cultural and environmental geography, science and technology studies, and the cognate social sciences and humanities. In 2021, he co-founded the Digital Ecologies research group. His work has been published in *Dialogues in Human Geography*, *Cultural Anthropology*, and *the Geographical Journal*. With Jonathon Turnbull and Bill Adams, he published on the political potentials of digital encounters with digitalised nonhuman life in the *Journal of Environmental Media*. He has recently been writing about the potentials of filmmaking as a geographical research technique to understand the lives and spaces of animals in the city.

Jonathon Turnbull is a cultural and environmental geographer based at the University of Cambridge. His PhD research concerns the return of nature to the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone in Ukraine, where he has been working for the last two years with scientists studying different aspects of the Zone's ecology,

especially dogs and wolves. Jonathon is a co-founder of the Digital Ecologies research group, and also carries out research into bovine geographies, more-than-human filmmaking, COVID-19 and nature, and a range of digitised human-animal relations.

CARING IS/IN THE FUTURE

04.12.21

14:00 - 18:00

Screening of **Swoosh Lieu's** film, *Caring for/from the Future*, a presentation by **Chanelle Adams**, and performances by **Mira Hirtz** and **Fallon Mayanja**.

Based on the narratives of the previous days, at the interaction between science and futurity, the third part of our programme looks at if and how we can create new spaces of awareness. In undetermined futures, at the junction between social experiments and fictional revolutions, scientific, sensitive, and poetic tools build new zones of care for inter-species and communal coexistence. The practices on display will offer the opportunity to experiment with other participatory forms of living collectively with change.

14:00

Presentation by **Chanelle Adams**

14:50

Screening of **Swoosh Lieu's** film, *Caring for/from the Future*

What if there was a care revolution that finally repealed inequality? What would our future look like? The feminist collective **Swoosh Lieu** imagines such a future where gender roles are broken, racist discrimination is a thing of the past, the world is decolonised and the revolution has ensured better and fairer working and living conditions, not only in the care sector, but also in public life.

15:15

Performative workshop with **Mira Hirtz**

Exploring notions of care: a performative workshop

What defines a caring body? How do we observe and embody care? We will experiment with gestures of care and notions of witnessing. Thus we shift our perception between ourselves, others, and other-than-human entities by simply focusing on the means that our sensing bodies offer: walking, standing, feeling, seeing, seeing again, touching, noticing. Might the focus on these everyday means create an ecology of awareness?

This workshop will serve as a performative intervention into the programme. No prior experience of movement or performance is needed, just bring your curiosity!

16:15

Break, tea time, and cakes

16:45

Performance by **Fallon Mayanja**

SENSING SATELLITE (2021) is inspired by Julius Eastman's original composition *The Holy Presence Of Joan D'Arc* which the artist confronts with Sophia Al-Maria's *Sad Sack: Collected Writing* and Malcolm Ferdinand's *A Decolonial Ecology*. This performance is a cross between fictional speculation and social experiment. It offers an intersection of possibilities for the composition of another world to come. This interstice unfolds primarily through sound: between poetic declamation, edits of political archives, and electronic music.

BIOGRAPHIES

Chanelle Adams is a multidisciplinary essayist, researcher, and translator. She completed a B.A. in Science and Technology Studies at Brown University with a focus on history of science and medical anthropology. In 2017, she was awarded a Franco-American Fulbright grant to research Madagascar plant medicine in the French colonial archives. During her time in Marseille, she completed a M.A. in Social Sciences at the Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales. She is currently enrolled at the University of Lausanne in the Political Ecology doctoral programme.

Mira Hirtz is a performance artist, art mediator, and art theorist basing her work on somatic practices. She explores the value of creativity for human beings and ecologies in many different formats such as workshops, performances, video pieces and texts. She graduated from the MFA Creative Practice at TL Conservatoire London and from the MA art research at University of Art and Design Karlsruhe, where she presently teaches performative research. Furthermore she worked as an art mediator at documenta14, co-curated the program series "How do we care?" at Badischer Kunstverein 2020 and took part in Bruno Latour's research seminar leading up the "Critical Zones" exhibition at ZKM Karlsruhe for which she is developing performative art meditation. She co-founded the Initiative for Applied Melancholy whose current project *ANTHROPOS EX* (<https://anthropos-ex.com/>) is researching the theatre of the Anthropocene.

Swoosh Lieu is a queer feminist collective (Rosa Wernecke, Katharina Pelosi, and Johanna Castell) creating at the interface of theatre, performance, and visual arts. The collective was founded in 2009 at the Institute for Applied Theater Studies in Giessen and has been working continuously in different constellations and collaborations ever since. The collective creates temporary spaces and images in real time, and at the same time thematizes their production. Through this form of performative practice, they open the space of the theatre for socio-political analogies, which, however, are always negotiated and made tangible with its means. Performances have taken place at the Dance Platform at Kampnagel in Hamburg, at the Stückemarkt

of the Berliner Theatertreffen, and at the Impulse und Politik im Freie Theater festival. *The projects Who Cares?! (2018) and Who Moves?! (2019)* were produced as radio plays in collaboration with NDR, *Who Cares?!* was nominated for the Juliane Bartel Media Prize in 2018.

Artist whose work deals with sound and performance. **Fallon Mayanja** explores listening practices as well as electronic possibilities, in order to broaden the perceptions of the public and the listeners. Fallon's work, which is oriented towards sound tangibility and political pedagogy, questions existing forms of communication and seeks alternative practices of reception and interaction, through sound and voice. Fallon seeks to discover areas of contact between the body - sound, sound - society and their communication by studying sound forms as sensory activation and narrative devices. Primarily using electronics and technology as tools to share, connect, feel and listen, artistic production leads to an analysis of the audible and the inaudible, the unspoken and the unspeakable, and the tangible and the unspeakable, of the sensitive, inside and outside sound. Fallon Mayanja's performances have been presented: at BétonSalon - Paris (2018), at The Place and CUNTemporary - London (2019), at Creamcake - Berlin (2019), at FRAC Lorraine (2021) or at ForumArteBraga (2021). The artist has also participated in group exhibitions in Europe and internationally: in Lisbon (2020), Mexico City (2019), Thessaloniki (2019) and Berlin (2020).

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Events will take place in person at La Loge (Brussels) and will be broadcasted via live streaming on the following platforms:

www.la-loge.be/broadcasts

www.goethe.de/en/kul/ges/eu2/ldl/wis.html

Access

Price: 3 euros

Reservation via www.la-loge.be

Presentation of a CST is obligatory

For more information: info@la-loge.be

La Loge

Rue de l'hermitage 86

1050 Brussels

www.la-loge.be

Online screening

04.12.21 - 10.12.21

The videos shown during the programme will also be available to stream from December 4th to 10th on La Loge's digital platform.

Bar

An area with drinks and snacks where we can freely continue discussions will be open every day on the second floor at La Loge.

This programme was developed in partnership with the **Goethe-Institut Brussels**.

Goethe-Institut Brussels

Rue Belliard / Belliardstraat 58

1000 Brussels

Lockdown Lessons

<https://www.goethe.de/en/kul/ges/eu2/ldl/wis.html>

The Goethe-Institut is the cultural institution of the Federal Republic of Germany and represents it worldwide. Through its presence in Brussels, it makes a major contribution to strengthening the European integration process and conveying Europe's cultural diversity at political and strategic level. Its cultural, information and education programmes in Belgium promote exchange and cultural participation as well as interest in the German language.

Team

Coordination : Anne Kurr, Antoinette Jattiot

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La Loge is a privately initiated non-profit association founded by architect Philippe Rotthier. La Loge is supported by Philippe Rotthier Foundation, the Flemish Government, the Flemish Community Commission (Vlaamse Gemeenschapscommissie - VGC) and First Sight, La Loge's community of engaged individuals and organizations. La Loge receives additional support from the Municipality of Ixelles..

