

QUESTIONING AESTHETICS SYMPOSIUM: ART RESEARCH & AESTHETICS

La Virreina Centre de la Imatge
Barcelona, June 20-21, 2017

PROGRAM & BIOS

Tuesday, June 20, 2017

9:00 AM—Introductions:

Jèssica Jaques, Philosophy, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Gerard Vilar, Philosophy, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Michael Kelly, Philosophy, UNC Charlotte & Transdisciplinary Aesthetics Foundation

9:30 AM—11:30 AM

Moderator: **Jèssica Jaques**

Speakers:

Constanza Mendoza, Artist, Berlin:

“Art Research, or How Not To Be An Artist”

Anita Seppä, Professor of History and Theory of Art, University of the Arts, Helsinki:

“Vorwärts with the Fluid Weapons: Artistic Research as the New Avantgarde?”

Lara Baladi, Artist, Cairo: and Program in Art, Culture and Technology, MIT:

“History, Archiving, & Art”

11:45 AM—1:45 PM

Moderator: **Luís Guerra**, Artist & Philosopher, Barcelona

Speakers:

Laura Benítez Valero, independent researcher & curator, Barcelona:

“Aesthetics of Immanence: Diffractive Research and Ontological Indeterminacy”

Henk Slager, Dean & Professor of Artistic Research, HKU Utrecht University of the Arts:

“Reclaiming Aesthetics”

Juliane Rebentisch, Professor & Vice-President, Hochschule für Gestaltung, Offenbach:

“Artistic Research and Aesthetic Autonomy”

1:45 PM—3:15 PM – Lunch

3:30 PM—5:30 PM

Moderator: **Tere Badia**, Director, Hanger Centre for Visual Art, Barcelona

Speakers:

Alex Arteaga, Department of Auditory Architecture, Berlin University of the Arts:

“Understanding: On the Cognitive Function of Aesthetic Practices”

Theresa Schubert, Artist, Berlin:

“Matter as Constitutive Matter—Making Art with the Living”

Mika Elo, Artist & Professor Artistic Research, University of the Arts, Helsinki:

“Artistic Research Syndrome”

Wednesday, June 21, 2017

9:30 AM—11:30 AM

Moderator: **Gerard Vilar**

Speakers:

Susanna Hertrich, Artist, Basel & Berlin

“Altering Perceptions”

Dieter Mersch, Zurich University of the Arts:

“Art and Reflexivity”

Tracie Costantino, Rhode Island School of Design

“Aesthetic Reflection and Research in Art and Design”

11:45 AM—1:45 PM

Moderator: **Pol Capdevila**, Ecology, University of Barcelona

Speakers:

Aslı Çavuşoğlu, Artist, Istanbul:

“A Proposition: Reconciliation through Plant/Insect Encounters”

Juan Canela, Curator, Barcelona:

“Spells, Lectures, Stones and Storms: The Place of Research in a Curatorial Project Related with Magic, Ritual, and Nature”

Sarah Cunningham, Arts Research Institute, Virginia Commonwealth University:

“Questioning Impact: Arts Research, Social Fabric, and Public Policy”

1:45 PM—3:15 PM -- Lunch

3:30 PM—5:30 PM

Roundtable

Moderators: **Jèssica Jaques, Michael Kelly, Gerard Vilar**

Speakers: **All Symposium Participants**

BIOS

Alex Arteaga's research integrates aesthetic and philosophical practices relating to aesthetics, the emergence of sense, meaning and knowledge and the relationships between aurality, architecture and the environment through phenomenological and enactivist approaches. He studied piano, music theory, composition, electroacoustic music and architecture in Berlin and Barcelona, and received a PhD in philosophy from the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. After being an academic researcher at the Collegium for the Advanced Study of Picture Act and Embodiment at the Humboldt University he developed his own research projects at the Berlin University of the Arts among which *Architecture of Embodiment* as Einstein Junior Fellow. He currently heads the Auditory Architecture Research Unit and the Department of Auditory Architecture in the MA Sound Studies and Sonic Arts at the Berlin University of the Arts, is professor for contemporary philosophy and artistic research at the Research Master in Art and Design at EINA / Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, and an editorial board member of the *Journal for Artistic Research*.

Lara Baladi is an Egyptian-Lebanese multidisciplinary artist. In her investigations into myths, archives, personal histories and socio-political narratives, she makes use of a wide range of mediums—photography, video, sound, and new technologies to create immersive multimedia installations, architectural spaces, collages, sculptures, tapestries and perfume. She is on the Board of Directors of the Townhouse Gallery of Contemporary Art in Egypt and the Arab Image foundation in Lebanon since the 1990s. In 2006, she founded the artist residency Fenenin el Rehal (Nomadic Artists) in Egypt's White Desert. During the 2011 Egyptian revolution and its aftermath, she co-founded two media initiatives, Tahrir Cinema and Radio Tahrir. Currently, she is working on a transmedia, interactive timeline of the Egyptian revolution. She publishes and exhibits worldwide and is part of private and institutional collections, and won the first prize at the 2008/09 Cairo International Contemporary Art Biennale. Since 2014, Baladi has been a Fellow at MIT's Open Documentary Lab. In 2015-16, she was the Ida Ely Rubin Artist in Residence at MIT's Centre for Art, Science and Technology. Since 2015, She has been a Lecturer in MIT's Program in Art, Culture and Technology.

Aslı Çavuşoğlu: lives and works in Istanbul. She received her BA in Cinema-TV at the Marmara University, Istanbul, TR. Recent solo shows include *Red / Red*, MATHAF Arab Museum of Modern Art, Qatar (2016); *The Stones Talk*, ARTER, Istanbul, (2013); *Murder in Three Acts*, Delfina Foundation, London (2013). Recent group shows include *Colori*, Castello di Rivoli, Torino (2017); *Manifesta11, What Do People Do For Money*, Zurich (2016); *Saltwater*, 14th Istanbul Biennial; *Surround Audience*, New Museum, NYC (2015); *The Crime Was Almost Perfect*, Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam (2014); *Signs Taken in Wonder* at MAK Museum in Vienna (2013); *Performa 11*, NYC (2011).

Juan Canela lives and works as an independent curator and writer in Barcelona. He is co-founder of *BAR project*, and a member of the Programs Committee at HANGAR, Barcelona. Recently, he was curator of *Opening* section at ARCO Madrid (2016-17); *Something halfway between the typical atmosphere I breathe and the tip of my reality* at Tabacalera Madrid, with Stefanie Hessler (2017); *The world preserves the memory of all past traces. CV Collection* at Centro de Arte Alcobendas, Madrid (2016); *Jazmín López: A noir, E blanc, I rouge, U vert, O bleu*, at UTEC for Revolver Galería, Lima (2016); and *Why not here?*, workshop and public program at SOMA

Mexico with *BAR project* (2016). He was one of the speakers at *Surrounding Education* (2015), a two-day program focusing on education and pedagogy meeting artistic and curatorial fields at De Appel Art Center, Amsterdam. He is working now in *Cale, cale, cale! Caale!!!*, a project questioning the place of magic, ritual, and the irrational in relation to nature for Tabakalera San Sebastián (2017); *Irene Kopelman: On glaciers and avalanches*, at CRAC Alsace (2017); *Rometti/Costales* solo show at CA2M Madrid (2018); he prepares with Angel Calvo the publication *Curadora/Comisaria* for Paper collection in Consonni Bilbao. He writes for *A*Desk*, *Dardo*, *Art-Agenda*, *Terremoto Magazine*, and *Mousse*.

Tracie Costantino is the Associate Provost and Dean of Faculty at the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD). She earned her undergraduate degree in art history and Italian studies at Boston College, and her master's degree in art history from Brown University. She received her PhD in aesthetic education (curriculum and instruction) from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2005. In 2004 she joined the faculty of art education at The University of Georgia, where she later earned tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. At RISD she is responsible for academic program review and assessment, academic advising, faculty recruitment, and faculty development across the career span. Her research focuses on the nature of cognition in the arts, creativity, and the transformative potential of aesthetic experience as an educative event. Her interest in interdisciplinary curriculum and creative learning has been supported by two grants from the National Science Foundation. In addition to numerous published articles and book chapters, Costantino has co-edited two books with Boyd White (McGill University) on aesthetic education: *Essays on Aesthetic Education for the 21st Century* (Sense Publishers, 2010) and *Aesthetics, Empathy, and Education* (Peter Lang Publishers, 2013).

Sarah Cunningham is Executive Director for Research and Founding Director of the Arts Research Institute at Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts. She works with university, school, faculty, and student partners to expand VCU's presence as an international leader in arts research. Her team supports the artistic research of over 300 arts faculty in design, performing arts, and the visual arts. Nationally, Sarah serves as the Senior Strategy Advisor to the Alliance for Arts at Research Universities at the University of Michigan. She sits on the boards of the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP) and the National Guild for Community Arts Education. She is a formal arts education advisor to Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art and the Creative Youth Development National Partnership.

Mika Elo is professor in artistic research and the head of the doctoral program in fine arts at the University of the Arts Helsinki. His research interests include theory of photographic media, philosophical media theory, and epistemology of artistic research. He is participating in discussions in these areas in the capacity of curator, artist and researcher. In 2009-2011 he worked in the research project (figuresoftouch.com). In 2012-2013 he co-curated the Finnish exhibition *Falling Trees* at the Biennale Arte 2013 in Venice. Since 2010 he is also a member of the editorial board of JAR.

Susanna Hertrich is an interdisciplinary artist working at the intersection of art, technology, and science. Along with her artistic practice, she is a researcher at the Institute of Experimental Design and Media Cultures (ixdm) at the Academy of Art and Design in Basel FHNW, Switzerland. Her artistic research investigates extensions of the human senses and

the role of the physical body in relation to technology-driven environments. Her current research project, "Sensorium of Animals" (in collaboration with Dr. Shintaro Miyazaki), has been awarded a three-year research grant by the Swiss National Science Foundation. Her artworks are exhibited internationally at, among others, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin; CAFA Art Museum, Beijing; Marta Herford; FACT, Liverpool; and MAK, Vienna. In 2015, she was an artist-in-residence at "Villa Kamogawa" in Kyoto, by invitation from the Goethe Institute.

Constanza Mendoza, born in Chile now living in Berlin, is an artist, researcher, and designer, developing projects at the intersection of design/art/games. Her practice involves process-based approaches to increasing critical knowledge. Her research produces texts, images, and events with intersecting topics without academic restrictions or disciplinary boundaries. Her aim is to activate processes of increasing awareness, processes of becoming more subjective, and she understands inquiries into subjectivity as a way to study individuated, differentiated, and shared perceptions of reality. Exile and the subjective perception of time in particular have shaped her personality, approach, and the concepts that unify her work. Her recent works deal with economies of the desires ("The Displacement"), politics of perception and geometry ("Dance of Paradoxes), exile and memory ("Alma Project"), as well as architectures of necropolitics ("Unterstadt"). She co-initiated the research team, Laboratorio de Pensamiento Lúdico (Ludic Knowledge Laboratory). And currently she is developing "Extracted Bodies/Corporeal Grounds," investigating "extractivism" as both a dominant regime of value production and a lived corporeal ground with a group of artists/researchers. Recently, she coordinated the research project "Archives in Movement" at Hangar.org (2016).

Dieter Mersch, University of the Arts, Zürich, studied mathematics and philosophy at the Universities of Cologne and Bochum and made his dissertation on Umberto Eco at Technical University Darmstadt. 2004-13 he was a Full Professor of Media Theory, Director of the Department for 'Media and Arts' at the University of Potsdam and head of the PhD Training Program *Visibility and Visualisation: Thinking with Images*, and since 2013 he is director of the Institute for Critical Theory at Zurich University of the Arts, Switzerland. Main publications: *Was sich zeigt. Materialität, Präsenz, Ereignis*, München 2002, *Ereignis und Aura. Untersuchungen zur einer Ästhetik des Performativen*, Frankfurt/M 2002, *Medientheorien zur Einführung*, Hamburg 2006, *Posthermeneutik*, Berlin 2010, *Epistemologies of Aesthetics*, Zürich/Berlin 2015.

Juliane Rebentisch is Professor of Philosophy and Aesthetics at the University of Arts and Design in Offenbach/Main, where she also currently serves as vice president. In addition, she is a member of the Research Council of the Institute for Social Research (Frankfurt/Main) and acting president of the German Society of Aesthetics (2015-2018). Her main research areas are aesthetics, ethics, and political philosophy. Publications include: *Ästhetik der Installation* (Suhrkamp 2003)/ *Aesthetics of Installation Art* (Sternberg 2012); *Kreation und Depression. Freiheit im gegenwärtigen Kapitalismus* (co-ed. with Ch. Menke, Kadmos 2010); *Die Kunst der Freiheit. Zur Dialektik demokratischer Existenz* (Suhrkamp 2012/ *The Art of Freedom. On the Dialectics of Democratic Existence* (Polity 2016); *Theorien der Gegenwartskunst zur Einführung* (Junius 2013).

Theresa Schubert is an artist and researcher in the intersection of art and science. She investigates the role of creativity and collaboration from a posthuman perspective. Her work combines audiovisual and hybrid media to conceptual and immersive installations or works on paper whereas she treats nature's phenomena not only as inspiration but as a material and

critical process. By means of transdisciplinary methods, such as the re-enactment of scientific experiments, biohacking, theoretical analysis and collaborative practices, her works deal with themes of self-organization, interspecies communication and morphology of forms. Her work has been exhibited internationally: Ars Electronica, Linz, Art Laboratory Berlin, KW Institute for Contemporary Art Berlin, ARGE Kultur Salzburg, Newcastle Region Art Gallery, Electro Fringe Festival Australia, Istanbul Biennial, European Media Art Festival and KIBLA Maribor. Recently, the journals "Antennae", "Wired" and "Art in Berlin" have reported on her work. In 2015, she published the book "Experiencing the Unconventional. Science in Art". In 2016, she curated the interdisciplinary event "Inoculum—Connecting the Other" bringing together artists and scientists to discuss and exhibit novel research about media and materiality.

Anita Seppä is Professor of History and Theory of Art at the Academy of Fine Arts of the University of the Arts Helsinki. Earlier, she held a position as Professor of Artistic Research at the Academy of Fine Arts, and as Professor of Visual Culture Studies at the University of Arts and Design (now part of the Aalto University). She received her PhD. in Philosophical Aesthetics at the University of Helsinki. Presently, she also holds the posts of Adjunct Professor in Aesthetics (University of Helsinki) and Art Pedagogy (University of Jyväskylä). She has published several text books, academic articles, and collections of articles both in Finland and internationally. Also, she is the commissioner of the University of the Arts Helsinki's joint international debut, the Research Pavilion in Venice (2015 and 2017).

Henk Slager is Dean of the Utrecht Graduate School of Visual Art and Design (MaHKU), where he has made contributions to the debate on the role of research in visual art and contributed to the launching of productions such as the yearly Dutch Artistic Research Event (DARE) and the publication of the biannual MaHKUzine, *Journal of Artistic Research*. Departing from a similar focus on research, he has also (co-) produced various curatorial projects, a.o. *Flash Cube* (Leeum, Seoul, 2007), *Translocalmotion* (7th Shanghai Biennale 2008), *Nameless Science* (Apex Art, New York, 2009), *As the Academy Turns* (Collaborative project Manifesta, 2010), *Tamara Kvesitadze: Any-medium-whatever* (Georgian Pavilion, Venice Biennale, 2011), *TAR – Temporary Autonomous Research* (Amsterdam Pavilion, Shanghai Biennale 2012), *Doing Research* (DOCUMENTA 13, 2012), *Offside Effect* (1st Tbilisi Triennial, 2012), *Joyful Wisdom* (Parallel Project, Istanbul Biennial, 2013), *Modernity 3.0* (80 WSE Gallery NYU New York, 2014), *Aesthetic Jam* (Parallel Project Taipei Biennial) and *Experimentality* (1st Research Pavilion, Venice Biennale, 2015).

Laura Benítez Valero is an independent researcher and curator based in Barcelona. She holds a PhD in Philosophy, Autonomous University of Barcelona, specialized in Bioart within the area of *Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art*, as well as a Master in *Contemporary Philosophy* and a Master in *Aesthetics and Theory of Contemporary Art*. Over the past six years she has worked as a teaching fellow and researcher, being a member of various R & D projects. She is a member of the teaching staff at EHEA official master's *Research master in Art and Design (EINA UNIVersity of Design)*, collaborative member of the teaching staff of Aesthetics (Autonomous University of Barcelona) and has been a guest researcher at the Ars Electronica Archive and at the Museum of Contemporary Art of Barcelona. She also works as independent curator and is a member of the collective Leland Palmer, with whom she has developed exhibitions and research projects, the last one focused on censorship in contemporary art practices in the "post"-dictatorial Spanish context. Currently, she is developing a research project on bio-

resistance and bio-hacking, and has curated a seminar entitled *Bio-resistance, Transversality and Emancipation* on contestational practises and bio-hacking (MACBA, December 2015) and *Bioart. The Human Condition in the Contemporary Art* as part of public programs of +HUMANS exhibition (CCCB 2016). Her research is focused on contestational practices and theories, where ethics, identity, gender, subjectivity, or politics (among others) are understood as not pre-determined but always changing and unfolding—considering that critical thinking-action helps to reveal, or at list to remember, the artificial boundaries that we forgot we invented it.