



The British Society for LITERATURE and SCIENCE

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BSLS WINTER SYMPOSIUM **THE SUBTERRANEAN ANTHROPOCENE:** **EXCAVATION, EXTRACTING, UNCOVERING** **FROM CLASSICAL TO CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE** **12 NOVEMBER 2022**

The BSLS Winter Symposium 2022 opened at 9.30 a.m. with a welcome address and opening remarks recapping the society's recent activities and the background of this year's conference, *The Subterranean Anthropocene: Excavation, Extracting, Uncovering*. In accordance with the society's focus on the intersections of science and literature, this symposium explored the multifaceted meanings and contexts of mining and extracting throughout several centuries of literature, from oil drilling to nuclear warfare to grave robbing. The extensive range of research focuses at this conference expanded the boundaries of how we approach excavation, locating it in varied contexts including ecocriticism, modernism, and the Gothic.

Panel 1: Plunging Beneath the Surface primarily examined ecocritical depictions of the subterranean. Jade Correge's paper 'Delving into the Underwater world: Evolution, Geology and Ecocriticism in Charles

Kingsley's *The Water Babies* (1863)' explored the resonances of evolutionary theory in the Victorian children's novel by developing a Darwinian geological analysis investigating the historicization of the novel's underwater 'rockscapes.' Athira Unni's paper 'The Subaquatic Feminist Utopia in Manjula Padmanabhan's *The Island of Lost Girls*' examined the novel's presentation of egalitarianism within the context of a subaquatic feminist utopia. Finally, Bushra Mahzabeen presented 'Instability of the Offshore and Invisibility of the Oil Work', a paper which investigated the depiction of instability and personal trauma among offshore North Sea oil workers in B. D. McKay's novel *Drilling, Killing, Love, Drugs & Mud*.

The following panel, Panel 4: Dirty Wars centred on controversies or schisms within ecocritical discourse. Isobel Cook explored anti-nuclear activist and writer Pat Arrowsmith's ecocritical poetic perspective, discussing her preoccupation with shelter and investigating her scepticism toward the discourse of nuclear defence by focusing on the thematic intersections of her activism and her poetry. Lizzie Hibbert's paper "'From furious haste to geological calm": Encounters with Deep Time in Narratives of the Western Front' examined the disorientating temporal experience caused by the early twentieth-century extension of the earth's geological age in British prose narratives of the First World War, centring on Richard Aldington's novel *Death of a Hero*

The BSLS promotes interdisciplinary research into the relationship between science and literature in all periods.

Winter 2023 Newsletter

(1929) and Edmund Blunden's memoir *Undertones of War* (1928). To conclude, Amal Al Rowisan's paper 'Denise Levertov's "A Tree Telling of Orpheus": A Narrative of Roots Extraction and Evolving Consciousness' explored the contradiction and dualism presented by a human/ nonhuman unity and recognition of the consciousness of the tree in Denise Levertov's Vietnam War-era poem 'A Tree Telling of Orpheus.'

Panel 5: Six Feet Under: Death and the Subterranean examined representations of death within subterranean literature across time. Laura Brook's paper "'Coffin'd bones, and funeral stole': Keats's Isabella and the Politics of Bodysnatching' examined the context of Keats's training as a physician that influenced the representation of death in his poem 'Isabella', and how the portrayal of burial and disinterment reflect shifting power dynamics as Keats transitioned from a doctor into a poet. Dorka Tamás's paper 'The Anthropogenic "Unearthing" of Sylvia Plath: From Burials to Roots' interrogated the understudied subterranean imagery in Plath's poetry, applying the influence of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* to Plath's depiction of the subterranean anthropocene through roots, trees, burials and bones. Lastly, Adele Guyton's 'The Execution of the Earth: Extraction on a Living Planet' explored Benson Herbert's short story 'The Earth Will Die' and its portrayal of sentient stars and planets where a group of refugees from Earth create a new community on a dead planet.

The symposium concluded with a workshop and a keynote lecture for all participants. Aimed largely at early career researchers, the 90-minute workshop was hosted by the editors of *Palgrave Studies in Literature, Science and Medicine* and focused on the process of proposing a book project to the series. The workshop covered topics including an overview of the proposal process, advice on pitching book proposals to the editors, and an opportunity to ask questions or workshop elements of proposals in progress. Dr Ella Mershon of Newcastle University ended the conference with the keynote lecture 'Fossil Fuels and "Fossil Forms": Geology as Extraction in Charlotte Smith's *Beachy Head*', which centred on geologic formations in the Romantic poet's long blank verse poem.

—Eliza Browning

DELVING DEEPER INTO THE SUBTERRANEAN ANTHROPOCENE

Have we forgotten earth from below? In unearthing humanity's entanglement with the underground, the British Society for Literature and Science's (BSLS) 2022 Winter Symposium considered this enticing question. *The Subterranean Anthropocene: Excavation, Extracting, Uncovering from Classical to Contemporary Literature* offered a one-day virtual event

on 12th November 2022, co-organised by Joan Passey, Emily Rowe, and Billie Gavurin. The symposium brought together over 20 speakers across eight sessions to delve deeper into subterranean anxieties presented at the intersections between literature and science.

Following opening remarks from Emily Rowe, the day commenced with a series of parallel panels, each focusing on different features unearthed by subterranean worlds. For instance, Panel 2: Dirty Politics saw underground spaces in literature reflect their epoch's socio-political landscapes, such as Jenny Harper's (University of Reading) paper which explored the interactions of ecology and socialism in a 'biospheric egalitarianism'. Furthermore, Richard Fallon (University of Birmingham) considered how Edgar Rice Burroughs's pulp fiction engaged with the 'hollow earth' theory to raise questions about the nature of reality. Joan Passey's (University of Bristol) paper illustrated how the Gothic offered more than a superficial staging of subterranean spaces, expressing the pain and suffering experienced by nineteenth-century Cornish mining communities.

Meanwhile, in Panel 3: Terra Terror, panellists explored how the subterranean can become a source of horror. Kerry Gorrill (Manchester Metropolitan University) commenced the panel by investigating how the underground spaces in Mark Z. Danielewski's *House of Leaves* become sites of Gothic terror and excess. Peter Adkins's (University of Edinburgh) paper on Vita Sackville-West's *Twelve Days in Persia* demonstrated how early twentieth-century fiction depicted oil production with horror and fascination in an apocalyptic conception of the natural imbalances caused by these expanding industries.

Panel 6: Mining for Meaning developed these considerations, examining how subterranean terrors reflected on the literature that produced them. For example, Daniel Abdalla's (University of Liverpool) paper raised questions of canonicity to the environmental humanities with playwright Elizabeth Robins. Harriet Thompson (King's College London) considered how fiction by Charles Dickens voiced concerns about the railway's socio-environmental impact. Lastly, Indigo Gray (University of Sheffield) examined coal's haunting presence in Emile Zola's *Germinal*, weaving fictional networks of fuel, labour, and colonialism. Collectively, these panels showcased the potential for subterranean spaces to uncover forgotten knowledge, hidden fears, and new belief systems.

The symposium also featured a 90-minute workshop with Palgrave Studies in Literature, Science and Medicine editors, inviting delegates to consider proposing their research as book projects. Panellists Prof. Sharon Ruston (Lancaster University), Prof. Jessica Howell (Texas A&M University), and Prof. Alice Jenkins (University of Glasgow) offered practical advice to help those at all stages of developing a book

proposal. The practical workshop elements, inviting participation and questions from delegates, added to this event's insightful advice and engaging format.

Dr Ella Mershon's (Newcastle University) keynote concluded the symposium, titled 'Fossil Fuels and "Fossil Forms": Geology as Extraction in Charlotte Smith's *Beachy Head*'. Reading Smith's poem through an ecological extraction lens, Mershon explored how the poem's messy form performs stratigraphic poetics, mining the inorganic materials beneath the speaker's feet. In excavating the cliff's sedimentary layers, this keynote recuperated the poem's fossil forms, as Mershon showed how eighteenth-century definitions of fossils encompassed a range of organic and inorganic objects. However, the keynote also considered how oblique references and embedded citations in Smith's poetry connected to the colonial oppression of diamond miners and pearl divers,

inviting a re-evaluation of *Beachy Head*'s fossilised economy.

Overall, the success of *The Subterranean Anthropocene* symposium lies in its unearthing of new environmental perspectives through interdisciplinary connections. The virtual event enabled an accessible experience and international collaborations between delegates. With literature at its centre, every speaker excavated new meanings from scientific theories and popular imaginings in underground landscapes. As such, the 2022 Winter Symposium from BSLS offers a starting point for further expeditions into this subterranean unknown, challenging anthropocentric perspectives in the environmental humanities and uncovering rich avenues of further study.

—Ruth-Anne Walbank

DUE TO CHANGES IN PUBLISHING PRACTICES,
THE BSLS IS ATTEMPTING TO THINK THROUGH NEW APPROACHES
TO OUR REVIEWS. TO INFORM THOSE CHANGES, PLEASE SHARE YOUR
THOUGHTS ON WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE THE REVIEWS TO BE AND DO.

E-mail jennihalpin@gmail.com with responses

BSLS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE POSITIONS

We are seeking to fill a number of impending vacancies at the April Annual General Meeting, including:

- Member at Large
- Overseas Representative (North America)

Any member of the BSLS is eligible to be nominated for (and serve in) an open post, except that it is expected that overseas representatives will generally be based in the regions they represent. All openings are open to nominations. The chair will happily have exploratory discussions with interested members.

Any member can propose themselves or someone else. Each proposed candidate will also need two nominations from members of the BSLS, and these proposals and nominations should be sent to the chair, Jenni Halpin (jennihalpin@gmail.com), and to the secretary, Laura Ludtke (lludtke@gmail.com). Expressions of interest and proposals should be received by Friday 31 March.

4. OFFICERS

4.5 The membership of the Executive Committee shall be determined by elections held at the annual general meeting of the society. Members wishing to stand for election should be nominated by two members of the society before the start of the AGM. Where there is more than one candidate for any post, election shall be held by a ballot on the basis of a single transferable vote.

4.6 Members of the Executive Committee shall serve three-year terms of office.

BSLS POSTGRADUATE AND EARLY CAREER CONFERENCE FUND

FEELING IN THE LONG NINETEENTH CENTURY CONFERENCE FOR THE JOURNAL *ROMANCE, REVOLUTION AND REFORM* 13-14 JANUARY, TRINITY COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE

This conference has been fantastic for progressing my thinking on the blush and involuntary bodily response. I presented my first thoughts on how to analyse the blush in Keats's poetry, drawing on research in London libraries, particularly at Kings College London and the Wellcome Trust, for which I had financial assistance from the British Society for Literature and Science. I thought about Keats's poem *Endymion; a Poetic Romance* and how the two lovers of this poem have the power to manifest each other's bodies' sexuality by interpreting blushes and other involuntary responses. Themes running through the conference were nineteenth-century distinctions between sensation and perception, volition and passivity, the way medical and literary texts provide counter narratives to each other, and imperialist agendas lurking behind representations of strong feelings. The latter theme was particularly helpful for kickstarting my thinking on how I might treat questions of race in the study of the blush, and I was fascinated to see these issues being related to the study of insect emotions!

—Merrilees Roberts



PhD Awarded

Jade Hinchliffe

Social Sorting and Twenty-First-Century Global Dystopian Fiction

This thesis is the first examination of the portrayal of surveillance in dystopian fiction set in, and written by authors from, the global south. The analysis of contemporary dystopian novels reveals that the identity of the characters and socio-political factors related to the setting both have a significant impact on how the characters are monitored and categorised by surveillance systems.

Sociology, University of Hull, UK



LITERATURE AND SCIENCE EVENTS

SCIENCE, STORYTELLING, AND PREHISTORY OXFORD UNIVERSITY MUSEUM, DECEMBER 2022

Painstaking research in genetics, archaeology and palaeontology has transformed what we know about prehistory over the last twenty years. Since the turn of the century at least four previously unknown species of extinct human have been discovered, while a continuous flow of new fossils, especially from China, have overturned what we thought we knew about the dinosaurs. When science is changing so fast, how can stories help us to reimagine past worlds? In December, BSLs members John Holmes and Will Tattersdill from the [Literature and Science Lab](#) at the University of Birmingham brought together scientists, writers, and scholars for two public events at the Oxford University Museum of Natural History to explore how storytelling, fiction, and fantasy are fundamental to how we reconstruct prehistoric worlds.



John Holmes recreating J. R. R. Tolkien's lecture on dragons at Oxford University Museum of Natural History



*'On Hobbits and Hominins' panel
Rebecca Wragg Sykes, John Holmes and
Tom Higham at Oxford University
Museum of Natural History (with an
Iguanodon)*

When a new species of tiny human called *Homo floresiensis* was discovered on the island of Flores in Indonesia in 2003, it immediately became known 'the hobbit'. For 'On Hobbits and Hominins' on 6 December 2022, John interviewed the palaeoanthropologists and writers Rebecca Wragg Sykes and Tom Higham to discuss the role of the imagination in the science of human prehistory. Becky spoke about how novels such as William Golding's *The Inheritors* and Jean M. Auel's *The Clan of the Cave Bear* fuelled her interest in the lives of Neanderthals, while Tom explained how J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle-earth helps us to imagine the world between 200,000 and 50,000 years ago, when modern humans shared the world with 'hobbits' and many other different kinds of people. Stories like these help scientists to communicate with a wider public, but they can also anticipate the findings of science itself and even suggest new hypotheses about how different species interacted in the deep past.

Tolkien is not only relevant to how we think about human evolution. In 'On Dragons and Dinosaurs', John recreated for the first time Tolkien's lecture on dragons, originally given at the museum in Oxford on New Year's Day, 1938. The museum still has the slides from the original lecture, including some made from Tolkien's own drawings alongside early twentieth-century illustrations of dinosaurs and other ancient reptiles. These were projected from a magic lantern, just as they were over eighty years ago. After the lecture, Will chaired a panel of experts to respond to Tolkien's thoughts on the relationship between the dinosaurs reconstructed by scientists and the dragons of old legend. The fantasy

novelist Sir Philip Pullman was joined by the palaeontologists Elsa Panciroli and Thomas Halliday and Birmingham student Humma Mouzam, who is currently completing her PhD on dragons in medieval literature. The evening included displays of ancient bestiaries, dinosaur jawbones, seahorses in jars, and a dragon-slaying sword. Both events closed with book-signings and enthusiastic one-to-one conversations with all the academics, authors and scientists involved.

—John Holmes



'On Dinosaurs and Dragons' panel Elsa Panciroli, Phillip Pullman, Humma Mouzam, Thomas Halliday and Will Tattersdill

BIOCRITICISM

NEW ONLINE SEMINAR

This seminar will map out relations between the life sciences, critical theory, contemporary literature and the visual arts. Sessions will alternate between academic presentations and informal sessions exploring recent artistic work and research.

The proposed scope of biocriticism is:

- critical examination of artistic engagement with biological images, discourse and practices
- critical theory currently engaging with the concepts and discourse of the life sciences
- art as a space which engages critically with biological theory, technology and rhetoric

2023 PROGRAMME – “THROUGH THE MICROSCOPE”

- February 24th, 2 pm CET, online and in person (4 rue des Irlandais, Paris)
Communication scholar Professor Lisa B. Keränen (Colorado University) will discuss ‘Biocriticism as inventional practice: The case of global health security’. Her respondent will be Literature scholar Professor Catherine Bernard (Université Paris Cité).
- March 10th, 2 pm CET, online
Theatre director Frédérique Ait-Touati (CNRS) will discuss *La Trilogie Terrestre* (created with Bruno Latour).
- April 21st, 2 pm CET, online
Professor François-Joseph Lapointe (Université de Montréal) will discuss microbiology in his artistic practice.
- May 12th, 2 pm CET, online
Artist-designer Marie-Sarah Adénis will discuss microbiology in her artistic practice.
- June 9th, 2 pm CET, online
Literature scholar Dr Lara Choksey (University College London) will discuss epigenetics, poetics, and atmosphere.

Please contact Liliane Campos for information and links: liliane.campos@sorbonne-nouvelle.fr

DAVY NOTEBOOKS PROJECT

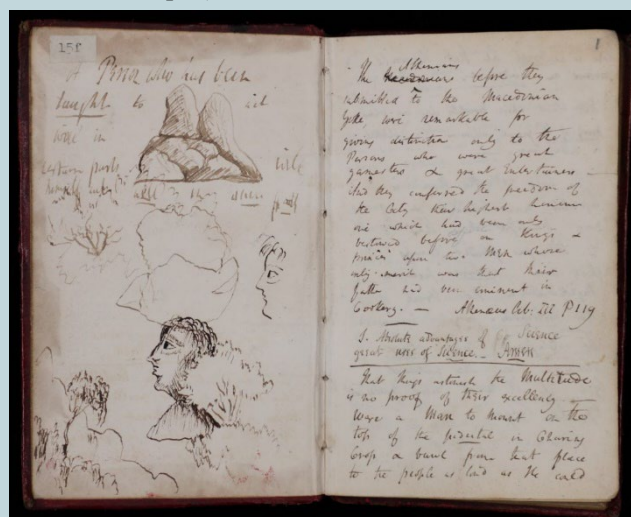
The Davy Notebooks Project, which launched in 2021, is now approaching the 80% transcription completion mark. Many thanks to all who’ve submitted transcriptions on our Zooniverse project

(<https://www.zooniverse.org/projects/humphrydavy/davy-notebooks-project>) and to all who’ve participated in transcribe-a-thon events, such as the one we held at the BSLs Conference in 2022, where we managed to transcribe more than half of one of Davy’s lecture notebooks. If you’ve not transcribed for a while, we’d love to see you on the project again—come back to help us get over the line!

We look forward to welcoming delegates to our conference, ‘Science and/or Poetry: Interdisciplinarity in Notebooks’, at Lancaster University on 26-27 July 2023. Our keynote speakers are now confirmed as Dr Dahlia Porter and Dr Gregory Tate. Full details of the conference are available at: <https://wp.lancs.ac.uk/davynotebooks/conference/>.

We’ll also be holding a hybrid transcribe-a-thon event at the Morrab Library, in Davy’s native Penzance, on Saturday 11 February 2023, 1pm to 4pm. It would be great to see as many BSLs members there, either in-person or virtually, as possible. Full details of the transcribe-a-thon are available at: <https://morrablibrary.org.uk/event/humphry-davy-notebooks-transcribe-a-thon-at-morrab-library/>.

Any queries related to the above, or related to the Davy Notebooks Project generally, may be directed to davynotebooks@lancaster.ac.uk.



Front endpaper and p. 1 of Davy notebook RI MS HD/15/F (c. 1805), courtesy of the Royal Institution of Great Britain.

—The Davy Notebooks Project Team
wp.lancs.ac.uk/davynotebooks
Lancaster University

CALLS

CFP: DISRUPTIVE IMAGINATIONS JOINT ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF SFRA AND GfF TU DRESDEN, GERMANY, 15-19 AUGUST 2023

ABSTRACTS DUE DATE: 1 MARCH 2023

This conference will merge the annual meetings of the Science Fiction Research Association (SFRA) and the German Association for Research in the Fantastic (GfF). With some overlap in membership and a shared interest and mission, we believe that a joint conference offers great potential for dynamic exchange, constructive discussions, and new insights and perspectives. This expanded focus on science fiction and the fantastic (SFF) allows for a consideration of a wide range of genres and forms that include science fiction, fantasy, horror, and the weird. For more information on the respective associations, please see below. We are excited to welcome you all to Dresden in August 2023!

SFF have the power to disrupt entrenched narratives and worldmaking practices. Whether in the form of hard science fiction, utopian speculation, high fantasy or supernatural horror, SFF is fundamentally anchored in imaginations of disruption—a tear in the fabric of reality, an estrangement of the senses, a break with the known world, or a transgression of boundaries. The conference theme ‘Disruptive Imaginations’ invites participants to engage with disruption as a variegated paradigm of the SFF imagination. As a mode of disturbance or interruption, a disruption implies that habitual patterns of perceiving, inhabiting, and ordering the world are unsettled, giving way to uncertainty and the unknown. It can occur at scales that range from the micrological to the cosmic. At the precarious threshold between chaos and order, a disruption carries the potential for transformative system change and can produce a shift in hegemonic articulations of ‘the im/possible.’ See the conference website for the full CFP:

<https://disruptiveimagination.com/>.

We invite papers on all forms and genres of science fiction and the fantastic in relation to the paradigm of disruption, including but not limited to literature, music, film, games, design, and art. Presentations may be held either in English or German. We strive for a diversity of voices and perspectives from any and all disciplines and career stages. While papers on any subject in SFF are welcome, we especially encourage topics that resonate with the overall conference theme and that engage disruptive imaginations along axes that include but are not limited to:

- SFF imagination *under conditions of* disruption
- SFF imagination *against* disruption
- SFF imagination *in need of* disruption
- SFF imagination *as a force of* disruption
- SFF imagination *of* disruption

It is possible to submit proposals for individual presentations and preformed panels in English or German. Non-traditional formats (roundtable, artistic research, participatory formats, etc.) are welcome. For individual presentation, we ask for an abstract of 300 words and a short bio (150 words). For preformed panels we require a proposal (single file) that includes a 300 word summary of the panel topic, abstracts of 200 words for each contribution, and bio notes (150 words) for all participants. Please send all submissions to disruptive.imaginations@tu-dresden.de by **1 March 2023**. Options for limited hybrid participation will be available. More information will be supplied soon on our conference website www.disruptiveimagination.com.

Both organizations give out a limited number of travel grants to help students, PhD candidates and non-tenured participants with their expenses: SFRA members are eligible to apply for travel grants of up to \$500; the GfF offers four travel grants of €250 each, membership not required. Please indicate your interest upon submitting your abstract.

Organizing team:

Julia Gatermann

Moritz Ingwersen

(North American Literature and Critical Future Studies, TU Dresden)

CFP: THEATRE ABOUT SCIENCE: THEORY AND PRACTICE
9-11 NOVEMBER, UNIVERSITY OF COIMBRA, PORTUGAL
WWW.THEATREABOUTSCIENCE.COM

PROPOSAL DUE DATE: 15 MARCH 2023

Following the fantastic meeting that was held in 2021, we invite you to meet again in Coimbra for the Theatre About Science Conference 2023.

Recent publications, such as *The Cambridge Companion to Theatre and Science*¹ (2020), *Performance, Medicine and the Human*² (2020), *Science & Theatre: Communicating Science and Technology with Performing Arts*³ (2022), and announced forthcoming publications such as *Performing and Communicating Science*⁴ (2023) and *The Routledge Companion to Performance and Science*⁵ (2023), confirm a dynamic and diverse field of practice and study.

These works address a variety of perspectives on the theatre/performance and science intersections, such as geographies, histories, scientific disciplines and topics, audiences, participants, venues, formats, scientific approaches in theatre practice, displaying an intense practice and research in this field.

We welcome contributions ranging from the performing arts to the communication of science, and of diverse nature - from academic to practical research and performance. We also welcome contributions exploring connections of theatre with formal, natural, health and social sciences.

We encourage participants from all over the globe, with the aim of mapping and expanding the network of people working in this interdisciplinary field.

Confirmed keynote speakers:

- Catherine Courtet | Scientific manager in Social Sciences and Humanities Department, Agence nationale de la recherche. Responsible for the *Rencontres Recherche et Création* at the Festival d'Avignon. Recent Books include *Traversée des mondes* and *La mémoire du futur*.
- Emma Weitkamp | Professor of Science Communication and Co-Director of the Science Communication Unit at the University of the West of England. Recent books include *Science & Theatre* (co-authored with Carla Almeida) and *Creative Research Communication* (co-authored with Clare Wilkinson).
- Liliane Campos | Lecturer in English and Theatre studies at the Sorbonne Nouvelle, and fellow of the Institut Universitaire de France. Her research explores how art transforms the images and discourse of science. Books include *Sciences en scène dans le théâtre britannique contemporain* and *Life, Re-Scaled: The Biological Imagination in Twenty-First-Century Literature and Performance*.

You can find more detailed information, as well as submit your proposals, following the link www.theatreaboutscience.com.

Deadline for proposal submission: 15th March 2023.

¹Kirsten Shepherd-Barr (ed.); ²Alex Mermikides; ³Emma Weitkamp & Carla Almeida (eds.); ⁴Mário Montenegro, Fernando Matos Oliveira, Teresa Girão, Sara Amaral & Francisca Moreira (eds.); ⁵Paul Johnson, Simon Parry & Adele Senior (eds.).

CFP: FORUM: UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
POSTGRADUATE JOURNAL OF CULTURE & THE ARTS
(ISSUE 34): TRANS-

FULL ARTICLE DUE DATE: 3 APRIL 2023

Trans- is powerful: attaching itself to concepts, it challenges supposedly settled knowledge about the world. In *FORUM*'s 34th issue, this destabilisation becomes central. We draw attention to the importance the prefix 'trans-' has acquired in recent decades as an index of movement, crossing, and shifting—and we are interested in your approaches to all that trans- has to offer, as both description and method: transnationality, translation, transdisciplinary, transgender...

bsls.ac.uk



Trans- constructs new epistemic trajectories. Translation Studies troubles canons, transdisciplinary fields expand our classrooms, and transnational narratives become powerful tools in questioning naturalised national confines. In this new space of trans-, paradoxical themes coexist in moments of ‘magical realism’, in the words of Marisa De Andrade.

Our intellectual promiscuity catches up to the art we study: the ‘scholarly’ fables of Jorge Luis Borges’ *Labyrinths* (1962); the mixed materials of Wangechi Mutu’s artworks; the musical wanderings of musicians such as Rina Sawayama; the tumults of expatriation as ranging from the epic sprawl of the *Odyssey* to the hard-won joys of *Erasmus in Gaza* (2021).

Finally, of course, trans- is best known in its coupling with and troubling of gender. Trans criticism such as C. Riley Snorton’s *Black on Both Sides* has drawn attention to the complex, racialised logics of trans exclusion, while trans liberation’s social possibilities shimmer through the photography of Juliana Huxtable.

We find that art and culture, in all their forms, expand and enhance our understanding of trans-.

The 34th issue of *FORUM* invites contributions across the arts and humanities that engage with the concept of ‘trans-’. Topics can include, but are not limited to:

- Transgender: Intersectional trans experiences; non-binary, intersex; trans inclusivity/exclusivity; trans feminism; trans critiques of queer theory.
- Translation: As collaborative practice; as empire-building/resisting; canons; sociology of translation; ethics and politics of translation.
- Transnational and transcultural: Borders, barriers, thresholds; nomadism; the ‘glocal’; multi- and cross-culturalism; migration and exile.
- Transcorporeality, transhumanism, etc.: Philosophies of material friction, flux, and fluidity.
- Transdisciplinary: Science and art; medical humanities; digital humanities; archival studies; new media studies (transmediality and intermediality); academic obstacles in interdisciplinary studies.

Send the full article by 3 April 2023 at <http://journals.ed.ac.uk/forum/about/submissions>. Suitable submissions will be subject to double-blind peer-review. For questions email Forum.Journal@ed.ac.uk.

N.B. We are usually only able to accept submissions from postgraduate students or from early career researchers within three years of having finished a postgraduate qualification.



FORUM

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POSTGRADUATE JOURNAL
OF CULTURE & THE ARTS

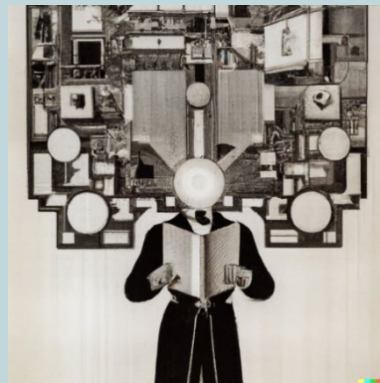
CFP: THE FUTURE OF INTELLIGENCE A MULTIDISCIPLINARY VERNON LEE CONFERENCE 8-10 SEPTEMBER 2023, FLORENCE, ITALY, AND ONLINE

ABSTRACT DUE DATE: 8 APRIL 2023

In her time, Vernon Lee’s (1856-1935) life across borders and her virtually unlimited thinking across disciplines, as well as her tackling fields traditionally reserved to men, were seen as ‘intellectual amateurishness’. But her multi-disciplinarity and her ability to cross boundaries place her in our days as a modern thinker and a precursor.

Proteus is the title given to Lee’s boundary crossing essay which forms a part of the extensive *To-Day and To-Morrow* series (Kegan Paul, Trench and Trubner, 1923-1932). Max Saunders explains that

The rationale for the *To-Day and To-Morrow* series was to combine the popularization of expert knowledge for the general reader with predictions about the future... [the] aim for the series was to facilitate intelligent debate by producing a co-ordinated act of comprehensive futurology; a kind of Mass Speculation, or Mass



vernon lee, *proteus*, the future of intelligence, 1925.

Image generated by Sally Blackburn-Daniels using DALL-E at

<https://labs.openai.com/e/hzAzfzVRdJKb0bakABzljQjG>
[accessed 5 January 2023]

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Future Observation. (Max Saunders, *Imagined Futures; Writing, Science, and Modernity in the To-Day and To-Morrow Book Series, 1923-1932* (Oxford UP, 2019), p. 5.)

Lee's essay reiterated the predictions and hopes of earlier volumes (reevaluation of sexual morality, ovarian transplants, 'facilitations for changing one's sex', the modification of the family unit, the alteration of 'tenure and conception of property', the abolition of 'indissoluble marriage', inheritance, and the family unit) and speculates upon the facility that enables, and facilitates, these speculations: intelligence.

This conference aims to think about Lee's life and works in ways that are responsive, playful, and multidisciplinary. We would particularly welcome discussions of:

- psychology, psychiatry, neurology, and mental health
- genetics, eugenics and evolutionary science
- philosophy, ethics, and morality
- sociology and geography
- memory studies
- musicology and sound studies
- art and aesthetics

- dance, theatre, and performance
- environment and ecology
- race and colonialism
- sex and gender studies
- human and animal rights
- pacifism, anti-violence, anti-nationalism
- physics, chemistry, and hard science
- development and education
- Lee's interdisciplinary networks
- Artificial Intelligence
- Intelligence and empathy

We would also like to hear the ways in which Lee's works predict tomorrow's events and trends, and postulate or enable the development of healthy, sustainable futures. We also welcome submission of artworks, creative pieces, performances, and work in non-traditional formats.

Please submit abstracts of no more than 300 words and a short bio to the organising committee email thefutureofintelligence2023@gmail.com by April 8, 2023.

CFP: TRANSLATIONS 2023
CONFERENCE FOR THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF LITERATURE AND ENVIRONMENT, UK AND IRELAND (ASLE-UKI)
29 AUGUST 2023, ONLINE
30 AUGUST – 1 SEPTEMBER 2023, UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL

ABSTRACT DUE DATE: 1 JUNE 2023

The 2023 conference for the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment, UK and Ireland (ASLE-UKI) will be hosted by the [Literature and Science Hub](#) at the University of Liverpool, 29 August to 1 September. ASLE-UKI welcomes participation from scholars, readers, and creative practitioners interested in the relationships between literatures, environments and cultures – past, present, or future – from anywhere in the world.

The theme of the 2023 conference is 'Transitions'. Keynote speakers include: Brycchan Carey, Nandini Das, Caroline Edwards, Graeme MacDonald, Chris Pak, and Craig Santos Perez.

Visit the conference website for more detail at <https://asle.org.uk/events/liverpool-2023/>.

The BSLS Newsletter is published quarterly in February, May, August, and November, with submissions deadlines typically the last Friday of the preceding month.

Editor: Jenni Halpin

BRITISH SOCIETY FOR LITERATURE AND SCIENCE CONFERENCE 2023

EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY
13TH TO 15TH APRIL 2023

The eighteenth annual conference of the British Society for Literature and Science will be held at Edinburgh Napier University, Thursday 13 April - Saturday 15 April 2023.

Confirmed keynote speakers: Professor Laurence Talairach (University of Toulouse Jean Jaurès) and Professor John Holmes (University of Birmingham).

The conference will be held in-person and will have capacity for online attendance.

BSLS Membership: conference delegates will need to register or renew as members of the BSLS (annual membership: £25 waged/ £10 unwaged).

Please address queries to Dr Emily Alder at bsls2023@napier.ac.uk.

FUTURE BSLS CONFERENCES

BSLS 18, EDINBURGH NAPIER, 13-15 APRIL 2023

BSLS 19, BIRMINGHAM, APRIL 2024, JOINTLY WITH CoSciLit

The Society eagerly invites conversations with members interested in hosting upcoming annual conferences. Please contact the chair, Jenni Halpin (jennihalpin@gmail.com).