

# EXPERIENCING ENVIRONMENTS

International Institute of Applied Aesthetics  
XVI International Summer Conference  
**Experiencing Environments**  
**Human Perspectives in the Changing World**

University of Helsinki, Lahti, June 10–12, 2025  
with a pre-event in Helsinki, June 9, 2025  
[www.iiaacongress.fi](http://www.iiaacongress.fi)







The International Institute of Applied Aesthetics (IIAA) will hold its 16th Summer Congress in the City of Lahti from June 10–12, 2025. The theme is “Experiencing Environments – Human Perspectives in the Changing World.” The congress takes place at the Lahti Campus of the LAB University of Applied Sciences (Mukkulankatu 19, Lahti) and its Auditorium 1 together with seminar rooms A122 and A116. The restaurant Isku Center serves lunch in the same building on the ground floor.

[www.iiaacongress.fi](http://www.iiaacongress.fi)  
@KSEI\_IIAA  
#IIAA2025

This booklet consists of the conference programme, abstracts, and bios of the conference participants.

All times in the programme are in East European Summer Time (Helsinki, EEST, UTC +3).

Booklet design: Vilja Kirk





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# Experiencing Environments — Human Perspectives in the Changing World

## The Concept

Human habitats are of very different kinds; they vary from vast megalopolises to isolated wilderness areas. The ways we encounter environments also vary a great deal, for example, depending on our personal and cultural backgrounds. Yet, whatever the physical, social, cultural, or digital environment might be, we humans encounter it, first and foremost, with our senses. We see, hear, smell, taste, and touch, and in this way, are engaged with the environment. Clearly, we also try to make sense of our perceptions, place our perceptions into a conceptual setting of some kind, and orient ourselves with the environment. What is the role of aesthetic experiences and aesthetic values in all this?

In the foreseeable future, human living conditions are expected to undergo radical changes due to global warming and technological developments, and there are bound to be dramatic environmental changes. Are there certain interpretive strategies that help us to navigate the complexities of the world? How are we to cope within the constantly changing living conditions? Whether there are any universally human ways to be in the world is an issue that many philosophers have explored. However, to

understand the complexity of these questions, a multidisciplinary approach is needed. Both empirical studies and conceptual analysis can throw light on the ways that humans experience the world and live in it.

The International Institute of Applied Aesthetics (IIAA) organizes its 16th International Summer Conference with the title “Experiencing Environments – Human Perspectives in the Changing World.” With this three-day conference, the aim of the IIAA is to bring together scholars from different fields and backgrounds to discuss the experiential side of human existence in relation to the multiplicity of living environments and conditions. The committee of the IIAA’s XVI summer conference welcomes the conference participants to the discussion, Lahti and Finland.

The Conference Committee:  
Arto Haapala,  
Fotini Vassiliou,  
Harri Mäcklin and  
Noora-Helena Korpelainen





# Monday, June 9th

## THINK CORNER EVENT

### Experiencing Environments — Discussing Environmental Aesthetics with Ted Toadvine and Madalina Diaconu

Time: Monday, June 9, 2025, 17–19  
Venue: Think Corner, Yliopistonkatu 4, HELSINKI

Link to live stream:

<https://tiedekulmamedia.helsinki.fi/fi/web/tiedekulma/player/webcast?eventId=351350601>

The International Institute of Applied Aesthetics (IIAA) organizes a pre-event to XVI international summer conference entitled “Experiencing Environments – Human Perspectives in the Changing World” in Helsinki, on the University of Helsinki Think Corner stage, on Monday, June 9, at 5 pm. The event is free and open for all and can be followed remotely. With organizing the Think Corner Event, the IIAA welcomes the broad audience to the discussion about environmental experiences, human perspectives in the changing world, and the role of aesthetic values.

The event brings together in a dialogue Nancy Tuana Director of the Rock Ethics Institute and Professor of Philosophy **Ted Toadvine** (Pennsylvania State University) and philosopher **Madalina Diaconu**, who is Dozentin at the Department of Philosophy and the Department

of Intercultural Philosophy of Religion of the University of Vienna. The discussion is facilitated by philosopher **Sanna Lehtinen** who is the Senior University Lecturer in History and Theory of Contemporary Art at the Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture (AaltoARTS) and a Docent in Aesthetics at the University of Helsinki. Professor of Aesthetics **Arto Haapala**, from the University of Helsinki and the International Institute of Applied Aesthetics, will open the event.

The IIAA organizes the event in collaboration with the University of Helsinki and its Lahti University Campus, the Helsinki Institute of Sustainability Science (HELSUS), and the Finnish Society for Aesthetics.





# PROGRAMME



# Tuesday 10th



09:00

Congress venue opens

09:30-  
10:00

Opening words:

**Arto Haapala** (IIAA) & **Minna-Maija Salomaa** (Lahti University Campus)

10:00-  
11:00

KEYNOTE

**Jeff Malpas** (University of Tasmania), Online

Spirits of Place – Horror, enchantment, and the eeriness of landscape

*Chair: Arto Haapala*

11:15-  
12:15

SESSION 1, *Chair: Harri Mäcklin*

**Kira Meyer:** A methodology for substantiating eudaimonic values - Strengthening German ecophenomenology

**Alonzo Heino:** Art and Its Ideals – Exploring the Environmental Implications of Mastery, Perfection, and Genius

Lunch break

SESSION 2, *Chair: Matti Tainio*

**Anna Talasniemi:** Multisensory and embodied aesthetics of sauna

**Alessandra Randazzo:** Dealing with changing environments through improvised dance practices

13:15-  
14:45

SESSION 3, *Chair: Fotini Vassiliou*

**Julia Rosalinda de Boer:** The unity of traditional and everyday aesthetics in Calvin Seerveld's theory of allusivity

**Jonathan Maskit:** A Hybrid Differential Aesthetics

**Mark Windsor:** Collingwood's Everyday Aesthetics

Break

SESSION 4, *Chair: Noora-Helena Korpelainen*

**Franlu Vulliermet:** Experiencing the Environment: An Indigenous Perspective from the Amazon Rainforest

**Anastasia Klug:** Aesthetics of waste

**Corinna Casi:** From 'Nature' to 'Land': A Multispecies Perspective in a Changing World

15:00-  
16:00

SESSION 5, *Chair: Alonzo Heino*

**Jasper van Buuren:** Physical Activity and the Experience of Beauty, Value, and Meaning in Nature

**Alex Arteaga:** Aesthetic sense-making. The aesthetic enaction of environments within unpredictably changing worlds

Break

SESSION 6, *Chair: Zoltán Somhegyi*

**Virpi Kaukio:** Paradox of Banský Museum. The role of the museum in the debate on social change from an aesthetic perspective

**Sanna Karimäki-Nuutinen:** Sketches of Interspecies Cultural Policies – Perspectives from Contemporary Art

16:30-  
18:00

KEYNOTE

Panel on Arnold Berleant's work

Panelists: **Fotini Vassiliou**, **Max Ryyänen**, **Harri Mäcklin**, and **Arnold Berleant** (online)

*Chair: Arto Haapala*

19:00

The City of Lahti reception at the Lahti Town Hall



# Wednesday 11th



09:00

Congress venue opens

09:30-  
10:30

## KEYNOTE

**Madalina Diaconu** (University of Vienna)

Living in Tune with the Seasons? Attunement, adjustment, and engagement in the experience of seasonality

*Chair: Harri Mäcklin*

10:45-  
12:15

SESSION 7, *Chair: Corinna Casi*

**Tuulikki Halla:** Experiencing the forest - embodied narratives of Finnish forest professionals

**Laura Aimo:** Feeling Closer To Each Other. An Art-Based Environmental Education from Maria Lai's "Binding to the Mountain" (1981)

**Karoliina Lummaa:** Witnessing change – sensing agency?

SESSION 8, *Chair: Arto Haapala*

**Elena Romagnoli:** Can we experience landscapes without images? From picturesque to a performative approach

**David Flood:** Empathy and Landscape

**Guðbjörg R. Jóhannesdóttir & Edda R. H. Waage:** From vision to relation: Developing methods for integrating aesthetic value in land use decision-making

Lunch break

13:15-  
14:45

SESSION 9, *Chair: Virpi Kaukio*

**Anne Thompson:** Aesthetic Character of Landscape: A Cognitive Account

**Kerem Ozan Bayraktar:** The Ecological Aesthetics of Unintentional Ponds in Abandoned Construction Sites

**Matti Tainio:** Encountering artefacts in Natural Environments. Deliberations about the effect of the human infrastructure in "pristine" nature

SESSION 10, *Chair: Harri Mäcklin*

**Zoltán Somhegyi:** Aesthetic Alterations of the Ruined Environment - What Can the History of Artistic Renderings of Natural Disasters Teach Us?

**Jussi Pentikäinen:** The Harmony of the Senses Expressed in Poetry – The Case of Coleridge's "Eolian Harp"

**Anna-Kaisa Koski:** Enchantment of the Ordinary – Aesthetics of The Intangible Experience of Energy in Modern and Contemporary Art

SESSION 11, *Chair: Fotini Vassiliou*

**Oiva Kuisma:** Great City in the Eyes of a Great Philosopher: Plato's Judgment of the Aesthetic Glory of Classical Athens

**Noora-Helena Korpelainen:** Aesthetic Sensibility as a Capability – A Vehicle to Support When Promoting Socially Just Sustainability Transitions  
**Johannes Müller-Salo:** Urban Stances. Everyday Experiences and Interactions in the City

Break

15:15-  
16:15

SESSION 12, *Chair: Fotini Vassiliou*

**Mao Matsuyama:** Recognizing Making - Rethinking DIY and Redecoration

**Anu Besson:** Wandering, finding, making, being

SESSION 13, *Chair: Elena Romagnoli*

**Stafford Davis:** The Significance of Negative Aesthetics in Dewey's "Anesthetic" Experience

**Laura Fumagalli:** Perception, Knowledge, and Climate Change

16:30-  
18:00

PANEL SESSION 1: **Public Space**  
*Chair: Arto Haapala*

**Maiju Suomi:** Aesthetic experience of a space as a catalyst for environmental discourse and change – a case study

**Satu Parjanen & Anne Pässilä:** The purposes of art in public space

**Eeva Aarrevaara et al.:** Integration of public art in public urban spaces – cooperation of artists and urban planners

PANEL SESSION 2: **Ways of encountering, being and caring in nature**  
*Chairs: Schuurman & Laurén*

**Nora Schuurman:** Emotional experiences of multispecies encounters in forests

**Tiina Seppä, Juhana Venäläinen & Kirsi Laurén:** Care of duckboards: mutual encounters in mires

**Taru Peltola:** Reparative encounters in hydrosocial worlds

PANEL SESSION 3: **Experiencing Atmospheres**  
*Chair: Alberto Voltolini*

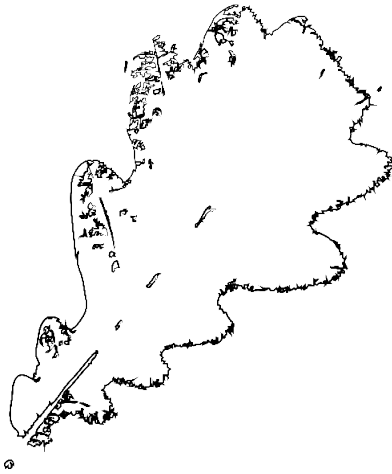
**Elisabetta Sacchi, Anja Novak, and Alberto Voltolini**



# Thursday 12th

09:00	Congress venue opens	
10:00-11:00	<p>SESSION 17, Chair: <i>Noora-Helena Korpelainen</i></p> <p><b>Riikka Latva-Somppi et al.:</b> Situated Sensing: How different disciplinary backgrounds impact experiencing water environments?</p> <p><b>Anish Mishra:</b> Chipko and Ecological Aesthetics: Environmental Movements as Sources of Alternative Epistemologies</p> <p>Break</p>	<p>SESSION 18, Chair: <i>Harri Mäcklin</i></p> <p><b>Maddalena Borsato:</b> Inhabiting Saccarophilic Environments – How Sweetness Shapes Our Everyday</p> <p><b>Yujia Song:</b> In touch with Nature</p>
11:15-12:15	<p>SESSION 19, Chair: <i>Arto Haapala</i></p> <p><b>Nin Kirkham:</b> Psychedelic re-enchantment: Psychedelic experiences, the sublime, and the environmental virtues</p> <p><b>Valeria Costanza D'Agata:</b> Experiencing the texture of the world: an aesthetic insight on people with neurodiversity</p> <p>Lunch break</p>	<p>SESSION 20, Chair: <i>Fotini Vassiliou</i></p> <p><b>Mami Aota:</b> Aesthetic Experience of the Temporary in Urban Life</p> <p><b>Una Thorlaksdottir:</b> Placed experiences and aesthetic understandings</p>
13:30-14:30	<p>KEYNOTE</p> <p><b>Ted Toadvine</b> (Pennsylvania State University), Online</p> <p>The Temporal Sublime: Aesthetic Encounters with Human Extinction</p> <p>Chair: <i>Fotini Vassiliou</i></p>	
14:30	Conference closing	





# KEYNOTES



## JEFF MALPAS

### Spirits of Place

—Horror, enchantment, and the eeriness of landscape

Tuesday, June 10, 10 AM, Online

There is something strange about horror – it both repels and attracts us. This idea appears in various places: in the discussion of religion, for instance, in the work of Rudolf Otto, where it is identified as evident in the experience of the numinous and, in film criticism, in Noel Carroll's treatment of cinematic and literary horror. I want to connect both Otto's and Carroll's discussions to the eeriness or uncanniness, also both repulsive and attracting, that arises in the experience of place and landscape. Central to my argument is the idea that horror's conjoining of repulsion and attraction is founded in our essential embeddedness in place – an embeddedness that is sometimes manifest in a form of melancholia (most obvious in the experience of nostalgia), but which can also carry over into a horror from which we are nevertheless unable to turn away. What is at issue here is a very particular form of 'environmental experience' that provides clues to the very nature of such experience and its own sense of the eerie or uncanny. Beginning with Otto and Carroll, the discussion will draw on Robert Macfarlane's work, as well as Arthur Machan, Otto Bollnow, Sigmund Freud, and Ernst Jentsch.

**Jeff Malpas** is Emeritus Distinguished Professor at the University of Tasmania, and Honorary Professor at the University of Queensland as well as Latrobe University. He is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Humanities and a Distinguished Fellow of the Australian Association of Humboldt Fellows. Trained as a philosopher and historian, he publishes on a wide range of topics in philosophy as well as other disciplines, including architecture, art, and geography. His most recent book is *In the Brightness of Place* (SUNY, 2023).





## Panel on Arnold Berleant's Work

Tuesday, June 10, 4:30 PM

**Arnold Berleant**, Ph.D. (DFA (hon.)) is Professor of Philosophy (Emeritus) at Long Island University, where he taught from 1962 to 1992. He has also taught at The University of Louisville, The University of Buffalo, Sarah Lawrence College, The New School for Social Research, Hofstra University, and San Diego State College. His first four books, *The Aesthetic Field*, *A Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience* (1970), *Art and Engagement* (1991), *The Aesthetics of Environment* (1992), and *Living in the Landscape: Toward an Aesthetics of Environment* (1997) and numerous papers defined the parameters and direction of his work. Berleant has developed a field theory of aesthetics in which the main factors—creation, appreciation, performance, and object, whether of art or environment, are interdependent and inseparable, bound up in a perceptual process of aesthetic engagement. He developed this further in five additional volumes, the latest, *The Social Aesthetics of Human Environments: Critical Themes*, appearing a year ago.

Berleant is Past President of the International Association for Aesthetics, which he also served as its Secretary-General. He has been Secretary-Treasurer of the American Society for Aesthetics as well as President of the International Advisory Committee of the Finland-based International Institute of Applied

Aesthetics. Berleant is the founding editor of the online journal *Contemporary Aesthetics* and has lectured widely. His work has been translated into many languages, including Chinese editions of many of his books. He lives in the U.S. in Castine, Maine in a landscape very much like that of Finland.

**Arnold Berleant** will give commenting words to the panel remotely.

**Arto Haapala**, chair,  
University of Helsinki  
**Fotini Vassiliou**  
University of Athens



**Max Ryyänen**,  
Aalto University  
**Harri Mäcklin**,  
University of Helsinki



**Arto Haapala** received his Ph.D. in Philosophy at Birkbeck College, University of London, and his M.A. in Aesthetics at the University of Helsinki. He has been Professor of Aesthetics at the University of Helsinki since 1995. He has been a visiting Professor at Temple University, Philadelphia, Lancaster University, UK, Universities of Murcia and Málaga, Spain, University of Palermo, Italy, and a visiting researcher at Universities of Freiburg and Bochum, Germany. He has done research in different problems in aesthetics, particularly in ontology and interpretation, as well as in environmental aesthetics, and Martin Heidegger's philosophy. His most recent interests are in the aesthetics of everyday environments and urban aesthetics. In 2010 he founded a journal entitled *Aesthetic Pathways* together with Gerald Cipriani, and the journal was relaunched in 2014 under the title *Journal of Aesthetics and Phenomenology*.

**Fotini Vassiliou** is Assistant Professor in Phenomenology at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. Her primary interests lie in 19th and 20th century Continental Philosophy, especially in the phenomenological and existential traditions. Her research concentrates on two main strands, namely Philosophy of Perception and Phenomenological Aesthetics, as they relate to the themes of embodiment, lifeworld primordially, and conceptuality. The question that principally animates and unifies her work concerns the determinants of our primordial being-in-the-world in its perceptual, axiological, and praxial dimensions.

**Harri Mäcklin**, PhD, is a Docent of Aesthetics at the University of Helsinki. His research interests include phenomenological and hermeneutic aesthetics and the history of modern German and French aesthetics. His work has especially focused on immersive experiences and immersive art, and he has published articles on classic figures in phenomenological aesthetics, such as Mikel Dufrenne, Martin Heidegger, and Roman Ingarden. He is also a co-editor-in-chief of *Journal of Aesthetics and Phenomenology* and an art critic at the Finnish newspaper Helsingin Sanomat.

**Max Ryyänen** is Principal Lecturer in Theory of Visual Culture at Aalto University Finland, and adjunct professor at the universities of Helsinki, Jyväskylä, and Eastern Finland. His latest books are *Bodily Engagements with Film, Images, and Technology: Somavision* (Routledge, 2022), which deals with the role of vision and bodily reactions in e.g. cinema and contemporary art, and *Realism, Myth, and the Vernacular in Pasolini's Film and Philosophy* (Palgrave, 2024), which provides an analysis of Pier Paolo Pasolini's life work from the perspective of philosophical aesthetics. Ryyänen is also co-editor of e.g. *Aesthetics Across the Disciplines* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2023, with Zoltán Somhegyi), *The Changing Meaning of Kitsch* (Palgrave, 2023, with Paco Barragán), and *Cultural Approaches to Disgust and the Visceral* (with Susanne Ylönen and Heidi Kosonen, Routledge 2022) – three books, which are attempts to shed light on the role and nature of aesthetics in the contemporary world. For more, see homepage: <http://maxryynanen.net>.





## MADALINA DIACONU

Living in Tune with the Seasons? Attunement, adjustment, and engagement in the experience of seasonality

Wednesday, June 11, 9:30 AM

The succession of seasons has for centuries provided a rich source of artistic and literary inspiration, and its spatiotemporal patterns epitomize the complexity of environmental interconnectedness. Nevertheless, the Stoic principle of living in accordance with nature (including its seasonal cycles) has nowadays ironically survived only in form of seasonal holidays, seasonal tunes, and further similar clichés. After highlighting philosophical aspects of seasonality, from rhythmicity to analogies with the stages of life, the talk discusses three dimensions of living “in tune with the seasons”: involuntary emotional contagion, practical and rational adaptation, and finally ecological commitment in an age of disquieting seasonal disruption.

**Madalina Diaconu** studied Philosophy and Theology, holds two PhD degrees from the University of Bucharest and the University of Vienna, as well as the *venia legendi* for Philosophy from the latter, and is Dozentin at the Department of Philosophy and the Department of Intercultural Philosophy of Religion

of the University of Vienna. She is member of the editorial boards of *Contemporary Aesthetics*, *Studia Phaenomenologica* and *polylog. Zeitschrift für interkulturelles Philosophieren*. She authored eleven monographs and (co)edited several books on Kierkegaard, Heidegger, the ontology of art, the phenomenology of the senses, the aesthetics of touch, smell and taste, urban sensescapes, environmental ethics, the phenomenology of place, environment and atmosphere, the philosophy of animality, etc. Her main publications are *Tasten, Riechen, Schmecken. Eine Ästhetik der anästhesierten Sinne* (2005, 2020), *Sinnesraum Stadt. Eine multisensorische Anthropologie* (2012), *Phänomenologie der Sinne* (Reclam 2013) and *Aesthetics of Weather* (Bloomsbury 2024). She co-curated in 2021 the exhibition “Olfactor. Scent is Present” at the Städtische Galerie Bremen and is currently editing the issue 25 of *Studia Phaenomenologica* on “Eco-Phenomenology”.



## TED TOADVINE

### The Temporal Sublime: Aesthetic Encounters with Human Extinction

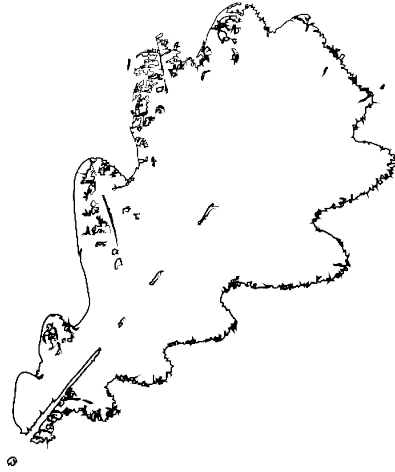
Thursday, June 12, 1:30 PM, ONLINE

When John McPhee coined the expression “deep time” in 1980, he alleged that geological scales of time are incomprehensible to human experience: “The human mind may not have evolved enough to be able to comprehend deep time. It may only be able to measure it” (*Basin and Range*, 127). Echoing this claim a decade later, Stephen Jay Gould described deep time as “so alien that we can really only comprehend it as a metaphor,” and “so outside our ordinary experience that it remains a major stumbling block to our understanding” (*Time’s Arrow, Time’s Cycle*, 2-3). Subsequently, the assumption that deep time is alien and inaccessible to human experience, even though it can be investigated scientifically, has typically been taken at face value. In fact, Dipesh Chakrabarty suggests that this very temporal myopia is the root cause of the so-called Anthropocene, which for him is characterized by the breaching or collapse of two “calendars” that had hitherto remained distinct, that of human history, on the one hand, and of evolutionary and geological time, on the other. Despite its commonsense appeal, this attempt to divide time into distinct “human” and “deep” calendars, and to limit human experience to the former, misunderstands both sides of this divide. Human temporal experience is not comprised of one sole clock or calendar that can be juxtaposed with “deep” time, since we are entangled in a multiplicity of overlapping and intersecting temporal events at all scales: cosmic, geological, zoogenetic, anthropological, historical, intergenerational, and personal. Furthermore, “deep” scales of times are not, first and foremost, a matter of scientific measurement, but rather of experience, and aesthetic experience in particular. This is most apparent in encounters with the deep

past, through fossils and geological formations, that evoke the temporal sublime. The far future also has sublime dimensions that motivate popular fantasies of the end of the world and, increasingly, anxieties over eventual human extinction. Here I consider how a phenomenology of deep time, and of the temporal sublime in particular, discloses the Earth’s asubjective memory. I contrast this with the fantasies of human eternalism promoted by longtermists and the Effective Altruism movement. In conversation with artists whose works disclose our entanglements in temporal plexity, I make the case for a deep temporal justice that respects geo-materiality, the evolution of life, and the mortality of our species.

**Ted Toadvine** is Professor of Philosophy and Nancy Tuana Director of the Rock Ethics Institute at The Pennsylvania State University. He specializes in environmental philosophy and contemporary European philosophy, with a focus on phenomenology, post-structuralism, and deconstruction. He has published widely on topics including animality, biodiversity, climate change, embodiment, environmental aesthetics, intersubjectivity, ontology, philosophical method, and temporality. He is author of *The Memory of the World: Deep Time, Animality, and Eschatology* (Minnesota, 2024) and *Merleau-Ponty’s Philosophy of Nature* (Northwestern, 2010), and has edited numerous titles, including *Encyclopedia of Phenomenology* (Springer, 2020), *The Merleau-Ponty Reader* (Northwestern, 2007), and *Eco-Phenomenology: Back to the Earth Itself* (SUNY, 2003). Toadvine is former editor-in-chief of the journal *Environmental Philosophy* (2007–2023) and co-editor of the journal *Chiasmi International* (2011–2023). Currently, he co-directs the Contributions to Phenomenology book series with Springer.





# ABSTRACTS AND BIOS

Tuesday



## KIRA MEYER

### A methodology for substantiating eudaimonic values Strengthening German ecophenomenology

In environmental ethics aesthetic experiences and values can be seen as an important part of eudaimonic values of nature. Such values constitute a third value category beside instrumental value and inherent moral value. Eudaimonic values refer to meaningful experiences with the more-than-human nature and the manifold ways in which nature belongs to the good life of human beings. They include aesthetic experiences and values, but also leisure, recreation, belonging, place making, listening, restoring, transformation and spiritual awe. We understand “relational values” which have been currently being discussed more frequently as another term for the eudaimonic values, while the latter has the advantage of stating more clearly what differentiates them from the two value categories mentioned before. But what is the best method for revealing the multiple aspects of eudaimonic values of nature? We will argue eudaimonic values can be best explained and analyzed by the phenomenological method. We identify a blind spot in the debates in ecophenomenology: German ecophenomenology as developed by Gernot Böhme has not found much attention in international debates. Böhme’s approach has the advantage over much-received approaches like that of David Abram that Böhme manages to

eliminate traditional dualisms like perception/thought, body/mind, human/nature and offers a rich vocabulary and different theoretical conceptions to describe our experiences in and with nature. Böhme’s approach has deep roots in German phenomenology (as Hermann Schmitz). We lay down Böhme’s approach, highlight certain shortcomings while showing that and how these can be remedied. In a third step, we will sketch the claimed potential of the ecophenomenological method by applying it to negative and positive aesthetic experiences in the age of the ecological crisis, especially climate change.

**Kira Meyer** is a research associate at the Philosophical Department of Kiel University. In her dissertation she develops a conception of sustainable freedom which takes seriously the idea of human beings as corporeal beings. Previously, she was a research associate at the Department of Philosophy of the University of Hamburg and did her MPhil in Hamburg. Her areas of specialization are eco-phenomenology, environmental ethics, philosophy of nature, theories of sustainability and the concept of political freedom.



## ALONZO HEINO

### Art and Its Ideals—Exploring the Environmental Implications of Mastery, Perfection, and Genius

It is through the arts – understood broadly as encompassing various skillful activities in the realms of the fine arts, crafts and technology alike – that humans alter themselves and their surroundings. A fine artist, athlete, craftsman, or engineer comes to the scene and once their work is done, some transformation has taken place – either in human nature, surrounding nature, or perhaps both. In these processes, so I argue, our ideas about nature and the vocation of humans in relation to it become concrete acts. It is against this backdrop that I wish to explore what kinds of implications regarding the human–nature relationship might lie hidden in the different kinds of ideals attached to art. I will particularly focus on the ideals of mastery, perfection, and genius. While mastery and perfection can be highly motivating and useful goals in propelling the pedagogical journey of someone looking to become really good in their chosen art, I will argue that these ideals can also easily furnish notions of perfect control: that humans can become absolute masters of themselves and their surroundings. Such an attitude goes comfortably together with a mechanistic view of nature which accents the predictability and potential controllability of both human and surrounding

nature. In contrast, the ideal of genius highlights the significance of the unforeseen, the unpredictable, the uncontrollable. Focusing on the early German romantics, I will argue that their conception of genius as the intersection of deliberate human effort and the overwhelming force of an organically conceived nature might, surprisingly, offer a fruitful avenue for environmental thought. Instead of valorizing exceptional individuals, the ideal of genius could perhaps contribute to a less hubristic understanding of human action in relation to nature.

**Alonzo Heino** is a doctoral student of aesthetics at the University of Helsinki. Heino is working on their dissertation on the phenomenon of *techne* and its relation to nature. Heino's interests include 18th and 19th century German philosophy, ancient philosophy (particularly Stoicism and Neoplatonism), 20th century esoteric and spiritual thought, and contemporary philosophy. Heino is also the co-editor-in-chief of *Mustekala*, an online art-research and criticism magazine. Additionally, Heino plays and composes music, and is an avid Lego-enthusiast.





## ANNA TALASNIEMI

### Multisensory and embodied aesthetics of sauna

Despite its central and self-evident role in Finnish everyday life, contemporary research on sauna culture and experience remains surprisingly limited. This presentation explores the Finnish sauna as both an aesthetic practice and environment, drawing on findings from my doctoral research. I examine how people describe their sauna experiences, and the diverse range of activities associated with sauna culture, encompassing material, social, and sensory environments. Central to my analysis is the recognition of the sauna as multisensory and corporeal. Within the sauna, individuals encounter an internal landscape that transcends the boundaries of physical space, fostering connections across different temporal and spatial dimensions, as articulated by Laura Seesmeri (2018). The sauna is connected to various social, cultural, and natural rhythms; its communal aspect offers a distinct social aesthetics where sauna is seen as an egalitarian space for conversation. Sauna is also seen as a place of care, relaxation, and regeneration. I frame my analysis within the context of everyday aesthetics. Feelings of security, familiarity, and continuity-the everyday nature of sauna-are central to its aesthetics. However, the sauna also transcends the everyday. In this way, the sauna, as an aesthetic practice and environment, shares important similarities with everyday cultural heritage. Intangible heritage (as

sauna) often reflects practices rooted in repetition and continuity, embodying an aesthetic defined by familiarity and security. At the same time, it includes elements that transcend the mundane, blending the ordinary with the extraordinary. #sauna #multisensory #everyday-aesthetics #culturalheritage

**Anna Talasniemi**, MA (Comparative Religion, Art Education), is a Finnish professional and influencer in the field of arts, culture, and foundations. She is currently a PhD candidate in Art Education at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland, focusing on contemporary sauna culture. Her dissertation, *Sauna Dialogues: Sauna as a Site for Making Heritage Futures*, critically examines Finnish sauna culture using a methodology rooted in dialogical aesthetics and futures studies. Talasniemi was the Executive Director of Kone Foundation for nearly a decade, leading one of Finland's largest private grant-making organisations supporting the arts and academic research. She is also a co-founder of the Seurasau-na project, which aims to establish a new public sauna in the Seurasaari folk park in Helsinki. Additionally, she has studied traditional sauna healing practices. In spring 2025, Talasniemi is a visiting scholar in the Museum and Exhibition Studies program at the University of Illinois Chicago, where she continues her research on the role of heritage spaces as sites for dialogue, imagination, and social transformation. <https://fi.linkedin.com/in/anna-talasniemi>



## ALESSANDRA RANDAZZO

### Dealing with changing environments through improvised dance practices

In the context of a world permanently changing—which only permanence is its impermanence paradoxically, and in the context of a world being more and more complex to grasp, can artistic practices enable to develop tools in order to propose alternative paths, despite the shifting ground, the unknown and the unpredictability of the environment's parameters? In this regard, the practice of improvisation in the arts has always been considered as an alternative path to traditional arts. Moreover, its main characteristic is to create thanks to, rather than despite, the changing and unpredictable dimensions of a situation. Putting oneself in a situation of improvisation involves indeed navigating deliberately and constantly in changing environments, i.e., in precarious situations, and in real time, without any anticipation or preconceived decision and choice. In artistic improvisation, because such a situation of precariousness is deliberate, it means improvisers don't only "react" to precariousness, they "choose" to deal with it and to start from an "epistemic paradox" where they both know and do not know (Bertinetto, 2016). In this context, precariousness is not an obstacle to achieved pieces of work, it is a "condition" to create (Gault, 2021); it is what one could call an "enabling constraint" (Manning, 2013). By way of consequence, if improvisers learn to navigate through impermanence and unpredictability, notably by acquiring tools from their

experiences, can some of these tools become pointers for everyday life and throw a bridge between art and life? This communication proposes from a philosophical and phenomenological point of view to focus on improvised dance practices and to explore some concepts derived from these practices, such as: precariousness, "pathicity" as a mode of sensing (Straus, 1992), survival, collective creativity.

**Alessandra Randazzo** is currently finishing her PhD thesis at the University Côte d'Azur (Nice, France), and in the Center of research on history of ideas (CRHI, Centre de Recherches en Histoire des Idées, UPR 4318). Her research, under the supervision of Professor Grégori Jean, studies philosophically what is at stake individually and collectively in the improvised gesture in dance. Alongside research, she is a part-time lecturer in philosophy at the University Côte d'Azur. As part of her research, she has taken part in many scientific events and artistic workshops in France and abroad, and she has published several articles, among which: "Dialogue autour de l'improvisation: pratiques et théorie d'une nouvelle forme d'intersubjectivité. Entretien avec David Zambrano" (co-written with the international dancer David Zambrano, for the review *Recherches en danse*, issue 12, 2023), and "La contingence issue de la nécessité et la nécessité issue de la contingence dans les pratiques improvisées en danse" (published in the international review *Studi di estetica*, issue 30, 2024).



## JULIA ROSALINDA DE BOER

### The unity of traditional and everyday aesthetics in Calvin Seerveld's theory of allusivity

This paper will discuss whether the phenomena examined by traditional aesthetics and everyday aesthetics can be said to share a unifying characteristic. Differing approaches include Arto Haapala's suggestion that the everyday is marked by 'familiarity' rather than 'strangeness' (or Adam Andrzejewski's extension of these poles of familiarity to 'predictability' and 'unpredictability'.) Similarly, there is Yuriko Saito's description of the everyday as 'cared-for'. Contrastingly, Jane Forsey has insisted the everyday can remain subsumed under dependent beauty and that Kantian aesthetics is still the best basis for a comprehensive aesthetics because it retains a framework for aesthetic judgment. These conceptualizations will be put into conversation with the reflective aesthetics of Calvin Seerveld, an philosopher in the tradition of modal ontology started by 20th Century Dutch Continental thinker Herman Dooyeweerd. Seerveld's contention is that both intentional art-activity and everyday aesthetics share in a unifying modality of 'nuancefulness' or a perceived fullness of meaning. Seerveld was clear in his conviction that his description of the aesthetic retained what of Kantian aesthetics was most useful (including a reimagining of the requirement of 'universality') without repeating the need for a singular and culture specific category like 'beauty'. He conceived of the aesthetic as a function of

human subjectivity, a capacity for aestheticizing our cultural environment imaginatively or allusively. Seerveld's aesthetics emerge from an existing systematic ontology of the 'modes' of human subjectivity, which will be briefly outlined and positively compared to Haapala's description of four modalities which coalesce in aesthetic experiences, as well as Katya Mandoki's matrixes of the juridical, religious, and familial et. alt.

**Julia de Boer** is a Ph.D. Candidate in Philosophy, enrolled in a cotutelle between the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto and Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Her work sits primarily at the intersection of aesthetics and the philosophy of language. Julia's dissertation argues for a multivalent understanding of semiotics which does not exclude genre, musicality, sound symbolism, gesture, and other properly aesthetic considerations often eclipsed in the philosophy of language and in vogue methods of linguistic analysis. In order to argue these topics, her dissertation sets up a multi-way exchange between the modal ontological theory of Herman Dooyeweerd and other Continental theorists of language (including Owen Barfield, Johann Herder, Martin Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Charles Taylor) on topics of metaphor, semantics, and linguisticity.





## JONATHAN MASKIT A Hybrid Differential Aesthetics

Environmental, everyday, and urban aesthetics present us with a methodological challenge. How do environments, dinner parties, or cities, constitute “objects”? And given how engaged, rather than contemplative, experiences of them are, should we still talk of “subjects”? Following Bruno Latour, who rejects talk of “subjects” and “objects” in philosophy of science and technology, I propose an alternative model for aesthetics. Latour discusses human beings (and by implication some animals) as actors. He further discusses what he terms “actants”: beings (“natural” or artifactual) which are incapable of acting on their own, but can, when combined with an actor, form a hybrid agent with greater powers than either has independently. For example, a person-bicycle hybrid agent can move far more quickly than either could on their own. Doing so, however, requires something more: a network of paths, spare parts, repair people, etc. All aspects of this scenario—bicycle, person, and network—are, taken separately, only partial and incapable of doing much of anything. What of aesthetics à la Latour? Aesthetic encounters, as forms of acting (feeling, speaking, etc.) happen, too, in this sort of hybrid way. An actant, e.g., an artwork, or complex of actors and actants, e.g., an environment, hybridizes with an actor in the context of relevant networks, e.g., a gallery-city network or paths-hiking boots network, to make possible experiences, utterances, even texts and conference presentations, that would otherwise have been impossible.

To complicate matters further, in the wake of

feminist, Black, and other critical aesthetics, it is no longer tenable to presume any sort of universality on the actor side. Aesthetics thus requires careful analysis of which type of actor is encountering which sorts of actants under which conditions.

**Jonathan Maskit** is Associate Professor of Philosophy and Sustainability & Environmental Studies at Denison University (USA). He is the author of *Bicycle in Bloomsbury* Press’s *Object Lessons* series (2024) as well as numerous articles and book chapters on environmental, urban, and everyday aesthetics as well as environmental philosophy. He has published on urban transportation, the aesthetics of postindustrial sites, aesthetics and consumption, and consumption and desire, as well as on continental philosophy and the environment and continental and analytic approaches to environmental aesthetics. He co-edited a special issue of *Environmental Ethics* on Steven Vogel’s work (including Maskit’s paper “Was Environmental Ethics a Mistake?”) and has edited a special issue of *the Journal of Aesthetics and Phenomenology* on urban aesthetics. He has been a visiting scholar at Goethe University—Frankfurt and Potsdam University (both Germany) as well as the Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium). He has presented invited talks at multiple conferences as well as at more than two dozen colleges and universities. His work is regularly referenced not only by philosophers, but also architects and landscape architects, urban and environmental planners, historians of technology, restoration ecologists, geographers, political theorists, anthropologists, environmental literary theorists, and scholars studying transportation and tourism.



## MARK WINDSOR

### Collingwood's Everyday Aesthetics

Writers on everyday aesthetics frequently take inspiration from one major work in the history of aesthetics: John Dewey's *Art as Experience*. My aim in this paper is to show that there is a much more fruitful source of inspiration for thinking about everyday aesthetics that has been overlooked by writers in the field: R. G. Collingwood's *Principles of Art*. I aim to show that Collingwood's theory, unlike Dewey's, provides resources for answering two fundamental questions concerning the nature of aesthetic value in everyday life, namely, what makes it aesthetic and what makes it value. Aesthetic value, for Collingwood, is the value of expressing one's emotions. What is distinctive about the expression of emotion is that it takes place at an imaginative level of conscious activity: by imaginatively synthesising the crude sensuous and affective building-blocks of experiences in relation to each other and oneself, one gains an understanding of one's experiences in their individuality. Whereas Dewey restricts aesthetic experiences to those that have formal features of unity and consummation, Collingwood's way of demarcating aesthetic experiences is perfectly suited to accommodate the full range of aesthetic experiences in everyday life. Not all experiences, on his account, are aesthetic; but anything that can be experienced can become an aesthetic experience by being expressed. This same experiential understanding that demarcates some experiences as aesthetic is

some experiences as aesthetic is also just what makes them valuable. Aesthetic value, on Collingwood's account, is a distinctively experiential kind of cognitive value: the value of imaginatively understanding one's experiences in their individuality. Unlike Dewey's theory, Collingwood's account of the cognitive source of aesthetic value can explain how unpleasant experiences can be aesthetically rewarding in a way that does not rely on the mysterious notion of experiences that are not pleasurable but are nevertheless valuable 'for their own sakes'.

**Mark Windsor** is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Post-doctoral Fellow at the Department of Philosophy at Uppsala University. He is leading a two-year, EU-funded project entitled 'Everyday Aesthetic Value' that aims to develop an innovative approach to understanding the nature of aesthetic value by prioritising everyday aesthetic experiences. He is an Associate Editor of *Estetika* and a Trustee of the British Society of Aesthetics.



## FRANLU VULLIERMET

### Experiencing the Environment: An Indigenous Perspective from the Amazon Rainforest

In recent years, with the traditional Western school of thought's failure to address environmental issues, many have turned to indigenous knowledge and practices as possible alternatives for a sustainable future. Most of this interest lies in the fact that these populations have what seems to be a "closer relationship" with nature or their environment. They are traditionally defined as being nonanthropocentric and where humans are entangled with nature, emphasizing the critical importance the former has for the latter. This paper is based on research conducted during the summer of 2023, during which the author spent several weeks living in different Kichwa communities in the Ecuadorian part of the Amazon rainforest. This paper focuses on two aspects of how the Kichwa experience their environment. The first one shows that the crucial notion of "Buen Vivir," the good life, is far from being anthropocentric as the central element is actually the people and the community. Nevertheless, nature is a fundamental underlying aspect supporting the possibility of Buen Vivir and life in the rainforest, which has emerged through the author's observations. The second aspect focuses

on understanding Kichwa's perception of pollution. Their understanding is a very practical one that they understand through its consequences and their impact on their life. Expounding on this perspective, the author argues that pollution is no more, no less solastalgia: the concrete lived experience of having the environment leaving you.

**Franlu Vulliermet** is a Doctoral Researcher at the University of Antwerp working on a normative account of environmental relationships in the context of pollution and epigenetics. His research engages with a variety of schools of thoughts including Non-Western perspectives and for which he lived with indigenous populations in the Ecuadorian Rainforest. He teaches courses on environmental justice and Japanese philosophy. Prior to this, he was a research associate at INSEAD and Harvard Business School.





## ANASTASIA KLUG

### Aesthetics of Waste

From microplastic in our plates to nuclear waste in the ground, the huge amounts of waste we live with are a direct consequence of the economic model of overproduction. Waste, or trash, can be either reused through recycling or as source of energy, but if these options are not possible, it is merely eliminated by fire or abandoned, causing pollution, diseases and destroying ecosystems. When some materials continue to be used, for example through recycling or upcycling, they are not considered as trash, but as resources absorbed by the production-consumption flows. Thus, things are only trash to the extent that we define them as such: it is a matter of perception. But are we able to see it? A phenomenological approach shows that as soon as it is in the bin, we do as if it had magically disappeared. It belongs to our immediate environment, we all produce it, but we avoid frontal confrontation. Moreover, people in contact with waste by profession, by necessity or by neurotic condition, suffer from social rejection and prejudices. Trash is a human invention (nature doesn't produce any) and needs to be explored anthropologically. In this presentation I will delineate what could be aesthetics of waste, as part of an ontology of waste, which encompasses an aesthetical point of view, an economical point of view, that explores the question of production and resourc-

tion and resources, a social point of view, as the contact with waste is a stigma excluding those who wear it, and finally a metaphorical point of view. The goal of this ontology of waste is to cast a new light on some environmental and social issues, in order to promote a solution-oriented debate.

**Anastasia Klug** did her bachelor's and master's degrees in philosophy in Lyon, first at the Lycée du Parc in a preparatory class, then at the University Jean Moulin. She did her doctoral research in Berlin with Olaf L. Müller (Humboldt University) and Mai Lequan (Lyon) as supervisors. She wrote her PhD about Goethe's aesthetics of colours, with a focus on the question how sensations conveyed by perception can turn into higher insights and produce an aesthetical experience that might be communicable. Moving from a historical to a contemporary approach of aesthetics and integrating a decidedly psychoanalytical point of view into her conceptual toolbox, she is working on a book project about the category of the repressed, the aesthetics of waste being part of it. Her doctoral thesis will be published by Brill-Mentis in spring 2025 with the title *In Goethes Auge. Wahrnehmung, Ontologie und Ästhetik der Farben*, with a foreword by Violetta L. Waibel (Vienna).



## CORINNA CASI

### From 'Nature' to 'Land': A Multispecies Perspective in a Changing World

This presentation revolves around the criticism of the notion of nature, and the proposal of using the concept of 'land' –such as urban and agricultural- as starting notion within the philosophical field of environmental ethics. According to the Indigenous environmental philosopher Kyle Whyte (2024), the idea of 'nature' is a colonial one, meaning that it was brought about by the European conquistadores and had no presence in the Indigenous cultures of the American continent. It was understood as wild and pristine nature, where the Indigenous people have lived, in opposition to the urban life identified as place of culture. Environmental ethics was, for some time, absorbed in reflecting upon wilderness and in preserving it (Cronon 1995). In such consideration of wilderness, human intervention was not judged in a positive way but rather seen as invasive, corrosive of its 'authenticity' (Elliot 1982). This approach also caused geographical dualism and an anti-urban/anti-social environmental ethics (Kortetmäki 2023). Moreover, non-Western and ecofeminist perspectives to environmental ethics have criticized the wilderness focus and the idea of culture/nature dualism, as a Western idealization that neglects non-Western and non-white perspectives (Gomez-Pompa & Kaus 1992; Guha 1989). The main focus on land reflects primarily the need to address the magnitude of biodiversity's loss and to better represent the cohabitation of multispecies (hu-

the cohabitation of multispecies (human and non-human) in environmental ethics. Also land use practices happen in the present time, have short-term impacts and manifest in particular local contexts with place-specific concerns.

**Corinna Casi**, (MA, PhD) is a Postdoctoral researcher in Environmental Ethics, affiliated with the University of Jyväskylä in the COHAB project (ERC funding) about multispecies cohabitation as well as at the University of Lapland, within the ValueBioMat interdisciplinary project on bioplastics founded by the Research Council of Finland. She defended her Doctoral thesis in May 2024 at the University of Helsinki, (Finland). Her Doctoral research focussed on decolonizing environmental discourses promoting non-economic values of nature such as ecological, aesthetic, moral values as well as Indigenous views of nature within a value pluralism framework. She is a member of HELSUS (Helsinki Institute of Sustainability Science). Since 2022, she is a Board member of YHYS (The Finnish Society for Environmental Social Science). In September 2019, she received the Vonne Lund Prize as young researcher for her article where she identifies the Sami Indigenous traditional ecological knowledge as practical wisdom and as a sustainability virtue. The prize was awarded by EurSafe, the European Society for Agriculture and Food Ethics. She was a visiting lecturer at the University of Palermo (Italy) in 2018 and at the University of Iceland in Reykjavik (Iceland) in 2013. In addition, she has worked at the Italian Embassy in Helsinki (2007–2009).



## JASPER VAN BUUREN

### Physical Activity and the Experience of Beauty, Value, and Meaning in Nature

Ever since Arnold Berleant's *The Aesthetics of Environment*, most scholars in environmental aesthetics agree that we don't experience the landscape as a two-dimensional scene but rather as a three-dimensional space that we're a part of and engage with. It's also widely accepted that engagement happens through all the senses, and that the experience is not limited to the perception of beauty. When we focus on the natural environment, as I do in my presentation, we can add to these insights that nature can become to us a "source of meaning" (Charles Taylor). But how do we realize aesthetic openness so that nature can indeed become a source of beauty, value, and meaning? Connecting with recent thought in the philosophy of nature sports, I argue that physical activity (hiking, climbing, swimming, etc.) deserves a special place in our thinking about engaging with nature. Not only does physical activity allow us to actively explore the surroundings; it also transforms the body, opening it up—opening us up—to the landscape. Drawing on Helmuth Plessner's philosophical anthropology, I make a phenomenological distinction between three levels of embodied openness. The vegetative level pertains to the exchange of substances and energy with

the environment—as happens, for instance, in sweating. The second level of our relationship to the environment is the animal level. This refers to the exchange of forces between us and nature, such as our muscular force and the resistance and gravity which belong to nature. During physical activity, the body opens itself to its surroundings on both the vegetative and the animal level. Openness on these two basic levels prepares (or contributes to) an openness we realize on the third, personal level, i.e., an integrated openness to the beauty, value, and meaningfulness of nature.

**Jasper van Buuren** is an independent philosopher based in the Netherlands with publications in the fields of phenomenology, philosophical anthropology, and the philosophy of the good life. He obtained his master's degree in philosophy in Amsterdam and Leuven. After several visiting studentships in the United States he received his PhD in philosophy in Potsdam, Germany. Van Buuren published his dissertation as *Body and Reality* and now works on his second book titled *Philosophy of the Outdoors: Physical Activity and the Experience of Meaning in Nature*.





## ALEX ARTEAGA

### Aesthetic sense-making. The aesthetic enaction of environments within unpredictably changing worlds

This paper will elaborate on the hypothesis that “aesthetic sense-making” is a variety of cognition that enables to deal efficaciously with radically, quickly, multidimensionality and unpredictable changing worlds. As an specification of the enactivist concept of cognition as sense-making—i.e., as the coemergence of selves and worlds out of the continuous interaction of embodied autonomous systems with their environments—aesthetic sense-making will be outlined as a modulation of the emerging flow of sense through a specific form of action: “aesthetic action”. This form of action is enabled by an intensification of the performance of sensorimotor and emotional skills and a temporary neutralization of skills of knowledge-based logical reasoning, target-oriented and willbased action. The performance of this disposition of skills induces a transformation of the domain of interaction characterized by a non-hierarchical and intensified distribution of the agencies involved in the process of sense-making. Specific forms of awareness and reflection that can be developed within this setting—“aesthetic awareness” and “aesthetic reflection”—allow the aesthetic practitioner to sense the changes of the environment while they are occurring and spontaneously transform itself accordingly. Consequently, the intertwinement of “aesthetic action”, “aesthetic awareness” and “aesthetic reflection” focussed on the continuous and transformative coemergence of selves and worlds can be understood as a highly efficacious alternative to the traditional concept of “adaptation”. Within this conceptual framework, this paper will draw as well on insights accomplished within two

artistic research projects: “the Sense of Common Self”—devoted to investigating emergent forms of collectivity though “aesthetic practices of reflective co-involvement” organized within collective and experimental research frameworks—and “Contingent Agencies”—focussed on inquiring into the emergence of atmospheres.

**Alex Arteaga** is a non-disciplinary artist researcher who combines and hybridizes aesthetic, phenomenological and enactivist research practices through an inquiry into embodiments, environments and entanglements of aesthetics and epistemologies. He studied music and architecture in Barcelona and Berlin and received a PhD in philosophy at the Humboldt University Berlin. After studying music, organized sound and architecture, he received a PhD in philosophy at the Humboldt University Berlin. Arteaga is the author of *Transient Senses* (2016), editor of *Architectures of Embodiment* (2020) and co-editor of *Architecture without walls* (2016) *Aurality and Environment* (2017), *Contingent Agencies. Inquiring the emergence of atmospheres* (2025), and the book series *Choreography as Conditioning* (2018–2019). He is currently pursuing his research at the University of the Arts Helsinki as an adjunct professor and develops long-term artistic research projects such as *Architecture of Embodiment* ([www.architecture-embodiment.org](http://www.architecture-embodiment.org)), *Contingent Agencies* (<https://contingentagencies.uni-ak.ac.at/>), and *The Sense of Common Self* (<https://www.un-arts.fi/en/projects/the-sense-of-common-self/>).



## VIRPI KAUKIO

### Paradox of Banksy Museum. The role of the museum in the debate on social change from an aesthetic perspective

There are no confirmed Banksy's in Lisbon streets. Frankly, it is difficult to associate Lisbon with the kind of social debates that Banksy comments on in his street art. However, there is a Museu Banksy in Lisbon and according to its agenda, it aims to bring the Banksy's message to a wider audience, especially in cities where his work has not yet appeared. The setting contains interesting tensions and raises questions. One of them concerns of the relationship between street art and institutions such as museums. In his work, Banksy has criticized the commercialism and power of institutions. Yet in a way, the Banksy Museum can be seen as a continuation of the satirical and provocative line of its subject. The exhibition contextualizes Banksy's work and thus provides the kind of information that museums have come to expect. But, on the other hand, Banksy's satire is turned towards the artist himself, for example, when visitors must exit through a gift shop, a reference to Banksy's documentary film (2010). Museums have a role to play in preserving and displaying authentic things. The presentation of site-specific and temporary street art in a museum thus creates a peculiar paradox not only in terms of the critical positions mentioned above, but also in terms of aesthetic experience.

In my presentation, I will explore the Banksy Museum as an aesthetic experience where authenticity, presence and the sensory, informational and contextual dimensions are intertwined. I ask, from the perspective of aesthetic experience, what is the role of the museum in the social debate that Banksy's art is having in his communities and environments?

**Virpi Kaukio** is a PhD, Docent, Senior Researcher in environmental aesthetics, who in her PhD thesis (UEF 2013) examined the complex relationship between the environmental experiences offered by art and fiction and the environments experienced physically on site. After that Kaukio studied, for example, environmental aesthetics of smellscapes (personal grants 2016 and 2018); intangible cultural heritage and the changes in the use of mires and the cultural relationship with nature (Mire Trend research project, UEF, Kone Foundation, 2020–2023), as well as how the multi-modal and functional environment of the museum can provide a new space for publishing scientific research to a wider audience than the scientific community (The Museum as a Forum for Experiential Publishing of Research, UEF, Kone Foundation 2024–2025. <https://uefconnect.uef.fi/en/group/the-museum-as-a-forum-for-experiential-publishing-of-research/>)



# SANNA KARIMÄKI-NUUTINEN

## Sketches of Interspecies Cultural Policies

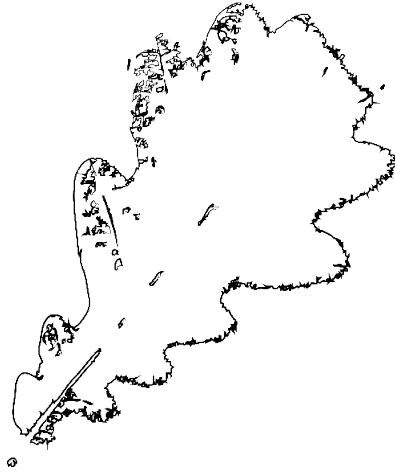
### Perspectives from Contemporary Art

A broad scientific consensus states that pursuing ecological sustainability is paramount: human life must fit within planetary boundaries. Hence, culture – perceived as art or as a way of life – must also take the support of ecological processes as its starting point. The human relationship with other species is one of the most critical questions: How can we live on this planet with others? The question shakes up our habitual human-centred culture and intertwines with several areas of human life, particularly food production issues and the animal industry. This paper presents findings based on my doctoral dissertation research and outlines the preliminary question sets for post-doctoral research. In the dissertation, I study the Finnish artistic group Gustafsson&Haapoja's solo show *Pigs* (2021) in Kunsthalle Seinäjoki, Finland, and the events and discourses around the exhibition. Consisting of three conceptual installations that discussed the ecological and ethical questions of pork production, the exhibition sparked heated debate through, for instance, provoking the neighbouring town of Kurikka to ban the exhibition from school adolescents. I explore the *Pigs* case in the context of sustainability transformation in the animal industry, focusing particularly on the agencies involved in the case in light of Bruno Latour's thinking. I explain how the case sheds light on the need to define interspecies agency and how the role of the art institution as a facilitator of critical

facilitator of critical debate helps us to chart a path towards a more sustainable culture. The political-ontological nature of the human-animal question is a key argument for why cultural policies must also take seriously the need to redefine the roles and agency of cultural and artistic institutions – and the different beings that relate to them.

**Sanna Karimäki-Nuutinen** is a doctoral researcher in cultural policy at the University of Jyväskylä and a freelance curator based in Seinäjoki, Finland. She is finishing her PhD thesis on contemporary art's societal agencies, especially in the climate crisis and animal production context. Between 2010 and 2024, she worked as the managing curator at Kunsthalle Seinäjoki. During that time, the institution moved to new premises and initiated a programme that draws from the rural context with perspectives from both the past and pressing future questions. Creating a new concept, Karimäki-Nuutinen and her team transformed Kunsthalle Seinäjoki into one of provincial Finland's most progressive contemporary art institutions. Karimäki-Nuutinen has an MA in arts management from Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences. In her practice, both as a researcher and a curator, she is interested in the transformative power of art and art institutions for sustainable culture. In 2025 she is acting as the head curator of Rauma Triennale 2025: Enchanting Effort.





# ABSTRACTS AND BIOS

Wednesday



## TUULIKKI HALLA Experiencing the forest —Embodied narratives of Finnish forest professionals

Natural resource professionals are often criticised for (over)exploiting nature and thus being partly responsible for the environmental crisis. When entering the field, individuals are socialised into the professional culture and its anthropocentric ideologies through which the professional community perceives nature and aims to maximise its economic benefits. Beyond these socially shared meanings, professional culture is intertwined with the life histories and practices through which individuals, as environmental beings, interact directly with the forest (Ingold, 2000; Milton, 1996, 2002). In this interaction, the forest affects individuals through various embodied experiences and sensations, and thus part of their meaning-makings originates from these personal sensations and perceptions (Halla et al., 2023). In my research, I have studied Finnish forest professionals and their relationship with the forest, focusing on their experiences and meaning making. I have conducted 37 interviews in the natural, cultural and social environments in which the interviewees live. In these interviews, I have applied a multidisciplinary embodied approach, inspired by phenomenology (Smith et al., 2022) and sociolinguistics (Busch, 2020; Sarhimaa, 2020), to encourage the interviewees to identify and express forest-related meanings that might otherwise be difficult to achieve through more conventional questions. In my presentation, I will introduce my findings, focusing in particular on how my interviewees perceived the forest as corporeal and aesthetic. I will also describe their embodied emotional

expressions of attachment to the forest, as well as more-than-human experiences when being and moving in the forest. I will also discuss how their aesthetic experiences of the various forests are situational and intertwined with memories and past experiences. I look forward to discussing possible controversies and ruptures between these embodied attachments and professional behaviour, which may indicate shifts from institutional forestry to more regenerative and relational approaches.

**Tuulikki Halla** is a project researcher in the Research Council of Finland's flagship programme UNITE, focusing on human-forest-machine interactions. She is also a doctoral researcher in the doctoral program in Science, Forestry and Technology at the University of Eastern Finland. Her doctoral research examines the human-forest relationships of Finnish forest professionals using a hermeneutic phenomenological approach. Within the UNITE team, she is also investigating people's forest experiences and preferences, testing location-based games as a research data collection method. Tuulikki is a co-founder of the international and interdisciplinary scientific online series "Coffee Talks Human-Forest Relationships", where researchers from different backgrounds present their work, discuss results and elaborate on future projects. She is also a co-founder of the Human-Forest Relationship Research Club, which aims to promote forest-related research in the broad field of humanities and to enhance the interaction between human-forest relationship research, forest sciences, practical forestry and forest use. The HFR Club was accepted as one of the scientific clubs of the Finnish Society of Forest Sciences in 2021



## LAURA AIMO Feeling Closer To Each Other. An Art-Based Environmental Education from Maria Lai's "Binding to the Mountain" (1981)

We are in a period marked by environmental and social catastrophes. Nature, which we have long presumed to dominate, shows us, on the one hand, its power, on the other, our being part of it. Yet we struggle to perceive this belonging amidst so many rapid changes and deep conflicts. How can art raise awareness of the exchange between organism and environment? How can aesthetic experience heal broken ties? The paper intends to answer these questions starting from Maria Lai's 'Binding to the Mountain', the world's first work of relational art (1981). When Ulassai's mayor commissioned Maria Lai with a war memorial, she resolutely refused and she proposed to create a monument for the living instead of the fallen, and to start listening to the people and the soul of the place. Specifically, the artist was fascinated by an old local legend about a little girl climbing to the mountain and fortuitously escaping a landslide by chasing a blue ribbon carried by the wind. Maria Lai, who considered the thread as a metaphor for art – useless and yet capable of saving – came up with the idea of physically tying every house in the village with each other with a thirty-kilometres-long sky blue ribbon which was then to be attached to the peak of the mountain overlooking the town. On September 8th, 1981, the whole Sardinian village participated in the project unveiling the network of complex relationships among people and honoring the mountain that represented both a shelter and a fatal threat. How have perceptions of self and environment among Ulassai's inhabitants and visitors changed since then? The paper discusses the features and the effects of this event and proposes aesthetic approaches – both theoretical and applied – to foster

a sense of continuum and care among all beings, human and nonhuman alike.

**Laura Aimo** is Research Fellow and Adjunct Professor in Aesthetics at the Faculty of Education at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan. She deals mainly with aesthetic education for children and adults, paying attention to the continuity between aesthetic experience and artistic experience, the relationship between theory and applied practice and non-European context and paradigms. She has dedicated specific studies to the conditions of possibility of aisthesis today (i.e. of intimate and free encounter, with self and other, which is as cognitively as it is emotionally connoted, but above all embodied) analysing key moments of existence (such as birth), experiences characterising the Homo species (such as the act of tracing or mathematics), physical and digital environments (from school to video game). Her latest books: *Un'idea di educazione estetica* ("An Idea of Aesthetic Education", written with Roberto Diodato, 2021) and *Utòpia. Elementi per un'educazione estetica: nascita e matematica* ("Utòpia. Elements for an Aesthetic Education: Birth and Mathematics", 2024). Her most recent articles in English: Aesthetic Appeal and Utility of Vedic Mathematics: An Introduction, in *Aisthesis*, 2023 (available at: <https://doi.org/10.36253/Aisthesis-14287>); What is My Value? Digital Questions in Aesthetic Education: The Case of Video Game, in *Itinera*, 2024 (available at: <https://riviste.unimi.it/index.php/itinera/article/view/27834/23339>).





## KAROLIINA LUMMAA

### Witnessing change—sensing agency?

Humans are eroding nature's carrying capacity and destroying nature at an accelerating rate, despite the warnings from scientists. At the same time, in environmental research and in contemporary art and philosophy related to the environment and nature, the functioning and agency of nature and the impact of natural environments and non-human beings on culture and human imagination and creativity are being explored in ever greater depth and with different conceptualisations. In our contemporary imaginaries of nature, loss and degradation are intersecting with provision, sustenance and vitality. In my presentation I will examine this seemingly contradictory conceptual frameworks and ask how conceptualisations of the agency, powers and effects of nature could or should be understood in relation to environmental change. Instead of a theoretical examination, I will approach my question from a data-oriented perspective, using examples of texts and works that address forest use, forest management, and/or the agency or functions of Finnish forests, selected from contemporary visual art and poetry, natural resource management documents and environmental research. Through brief analytical reviews of my data, I aim to demonstrate the imaginaries of changing and agential forest

nature, and further, to discuss the role of aesthetics in these imaginaries.

PhD **Karoliina Lummaa** is currently affiliated with the BIOS Research Unit, Helsinki, Finland. Lummaa's long-time research topics include nonhuman artistic agency and cultural dimensions of environmental change and sustainability transitions. Lummaa's background is in literary studies and her publications include monographs, articles and edited anthologies on Finnish literature, posthumanism and the environmental humanities.



## ELENA ROMAGNOLI

### Can we experience landscapes without images? From picturesque to a performative approach

With the emergence of aesthetics as a philosophical discipline, the beauty of nature was understood merely as a mirror of art, the more beautiful the closer it was to a painting. This was particularly evident in the concept of the “picturesque”, i.e. the aesthetic appreciation of places that resemble a picture. More recently, this notion has been radically criticized for conceiving nature as secondary to art, calling instead for an aesthetic approach to nature “as such”. However, the relationship between nature and images continues to be debated from different perspectives. My presentation will challenge the idea that nature can be experienced by completely excluding the mediation of images, without this implying a return to the primacy of images over nature. Indeed, what is problematic about the picturesque is not that our experience of nature is mediated by images, but rather that this relationship is one-sided, favouring images over nature. Drawing on Hans-Georg Gadamer, I will first emphasise that we need to move beyond the one-sided original-copy paradigm towards a biunivocal relationship. In the same way that we cannot make a blank slate of ourselves, likewise we cannot get rid of all images and experience nature in an unmediated and naïve way. I will then focus on photography, which plays a liminal role in the consideration of nature: it can appear as the realm of the picturesque,

but it also has the potential to critically engage with nature. I will follow Richard Shusterman’s proposal to reassess the status of photography from the figurative (focusing on the picture as an “object”) to the performative (focusing on the whole process of photography as an “activity”). The performative reassessment of pictures can contribute to highlight the ways in which we experience landscapes, challenging a presumed “neutral” approach, while also emphasising the productive role of images in the conservation of nature.

Dr. **Elena Romagnoli** is Junior Assistant Professor of Aesthetics at the University of Pisa. She received her PhD in Philosophy from the Scuola Normale Superiore of Pisa in 2020. She also obtained a DAAD Post-Doc fellowship at the University of Freiburg in 2021 and a Fritz Thyssen Post-Doc fellowship at the Freie University of Berlin in 2022. Her research focused on the aesthetics of German idealism, philosophical hermeneutics and pragmatist aesthetics. Her current interests include the attempt to rethink hermeneutics in a pragmatist direction, opening it to developments in Everyday Aesthetics and Landscape Aesthetics. Her publications on these topics include articles in national and international journals and the monographs *Ermeneutica e decostruzione. Il dialogo ininterrotto tra Gadamer e Derrida* (ETS, 2021) and *Oltre l’opera d’arte. L’estetica performativa di Gadamer tra idealismo e pragmatismo* (ETS, 2023).



## DAVID FLOOD

### Empathy and Landscape

The objective of this research is to explore the role of image-making practices in articulating and sharing concept of the landscape. It seeks to understand how our perceptions of the environments we inhabit are transformed into representations of landscapes and how these image-making practices shape our comprehension of them. Photography serves as a medium for interacting with the landscape, providing a platform for discussing both imagery and the processes of image creation in the context of landscapes. Our understanding of environments, encompassing the landscapes and locations within them, is often intensely personal, influenced by our aesthetic interactions with our surroundings through sensory experiences like sight, sound, smell, or touch. The notion of landscape can carry varied meanings for different groups, and empathy can facilitate mutual understanding of these diverse perspectives. Promoting empathy through educational approaches can create an atmosphere where we become critically conscious of our own views as well as those of others. The study emphasises a visual interaction with the environment using photography and the societal practices tied to image-making. The origin of the word “landscape” is rooted in visual engagement with our surroundings. Although its definition has broadened to include a multi-sensory perception of landscapes, the visual aspect remains

a primary mode of experiencing them. Participants in the study are encouraged to perceive the landscape as an embodied aesthetic experience, allowing them to draw meanings from it. The research delves into the formation of landscapes, both physically and conceptually, and examines methods for critically engaging with them as embodied aesthetic experiences.

**David Flood** is a doctoral researcher at the University of Helsinki’s Department of Geosciences and Geography researching the relationship between landscape, technology, and everyday visual cultures. The research examines the role of the smartphone camera in our everyday experiences of the landscapes we reside within. Through the everyday practices of making, sharing, and viewing images the research also looks at how both representational and non-representational aspects impact on our perception of landscape. David holds a post-graduate Master of Arts degree from Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology in Ireland where he investigated the role of digital imaging and place-making practices in the context of neoliberal governance. He is also an image-maker and community artist, mainly working in the medium of photography and his work centres around the role of images in relationships of power in society, often with a focus on landscape, the body and technology.





## EDDA R. H. WAAGE & GUÐBJÖRG R. JÓHANNESDÓTTIR

### From vision to relation: Developing methods for integrating aesthetic value in land use decision-making

Since 1999 landscape has been one of the evaluation criteria in the process of choosing sites for energy production and nature protection in Iceland; The Master Plan for Nature Protection and Energy Utilization. Early on it became clear that the value of landscape was difficult to integrate into the Master Plan's evolving methodology which was designed to deal with the objective and measurable criteria of the natural sciences. It was also clear that in the Icelandic context, the value of landscape was of great importance. The first steps in developing methodology for evaluating landscapes consisted in classification of Icelandic landscapes based on visual characteristics, which however did not address the importance of the value of experiencing landscape. In 2015 we became involved in this decision-making process when we were asked to develop methods that would allow for a broader approach to landscape evaluation taking into account more than the visual; the aesthetic, emotional and experiential values. In this paper we will describe the development of our methodology and the challenges we have faced in the process. Our aim has been to integrate qualitative data with theories of environmental aesthetics to shed light on the landscape qualities that contribute to different experiences of different landscape types. We will share some of the results of our studies and discuss how this type of data can provide insights into the variety of aesthetic

experiences found in different landscape types and how aesthetic experiences contribute to our well-being by supporting a more relational way of being in the world.

**Edda R. H. Waage** is a human geographer and an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Life- and Environmental Sciences, within the School of Engineering and Natural Sciences, at the University of Iceland. In her research she focuses on the meaning of the Icelandic landscape concept and its value for nature conservation. She explores landscape experiences through phenomenological and qualitative methodologies, and has worked on developing methods to integrate landscape values into land-use decision making, particularly in relation to energy production.

**Guðbjörg Rannveig Jóhannesdóttir** is a philosopher and an associate professor at Iceland University of the Arts' Department of Arts Education. Her research centers on environmental ethics, phenomenology and aesthetics, and she has published papers and book chapters on landscape and beauty, the meaning and values that are derived from aesthetic experiences of landscapes and the role of such values in environmental decision-making, as well as on embodied knowledge and its relation to the aesthetic dimension of experience. Her current research within phenomenology and aesthetics focuses on human-environment / body-landscape relations and processes, and their role in human thinking and understanding.



## ANNE THOMPSON

### Aesthetic Character of Landscape: A Cognitive Account

The aesthetic individuality of a particular place, the combination of distinctive aesthetic qualities that we engage with when we appreciate that environment and that environment alone, is what Emily Brady has referred to as the ‘aesthetic character’ of landscape (Brady, 2002). The term is useful in the practices and policies of conservation and managing landscape change, for it refers to a specific kind of value that is not commonly considered in this context, and it incorporates natural as well as cultural elements. Useful as the concept may be, Brady’s original account confronts some significant problems. I will argue that these problems result from the account’s non-cognitive nature (i.e. its exclusion of particular kinds of knowledge as something that can contribute to the aesthetic character of landscape). This paper presents two objections to the non-cognitive account of aesthetic character. First, there are simply cases in which certain kinds of knowledge do contribute to the aesthetic character of a landscape. Second, Brady’s account fails to offer clear guidance on how to determine which properties are relevant or irrelevant to aesthetic character. Following this, I construct a cognitive account of aesthetic character, which I believe is not vulnerable to these objections. This account can explain the cases that are problematic for the non-cognitivist, as well as distinguish between properties that are

aesthetically relevant and those that are not. As a result, it becomes easier to resolve conflict around what the aesthetic character of a place is, making the account I present much more functional in a practical context.

**Anne Thompson** is currently in the first year of her PhD in philosophy at the University of Sheffield, where she is working on a White Rose College for the Arts and Humanities Collaborative Doctoral Award (WRoCAH CDA). Her partner in this project is the Peak District National Park Authority, for whom she aims to develop a framework to use in their practice and policy to monitor and communicate landscape change in the Peak District. She is also affiliated with the Grantham Centre for Sustainable Futures and the Centre for Engaged Philosophy at Sheffield University. She works mainly in analytic environmental aesthetics. Her research interests include landscape aesthetics and urban aesthetics, everyday aesthetics and philosophy of heritage and conservation. When not working on her main research project, she is interested in feminist aesthetics and topics such as respect and etiquette in the context of social justice.



## KEREM OZAN BAYRAKTAR

### The Ecological Aesthetics of Unintentional Ponds in Abandoned Construction Sites

In unfinished urban construction sites, ground-water and rainwater accumulate in excavated foundations, forming persistent, unintentional ponds. These sites, abandoned after construction halts, occupy an interstitial space between building site, urban wasteland, and habitat, disrupting conventional perceptions of urban nature as intentionally designed and maintained for specific purposes. Two such ponds in Istanbul, each with distinct characteristics and contexts, are compared to explore their aesthetic dimensions and the tension between perceived neglect and unexpected ecological activity. On-site observations documented fish, waterfowl, ruderal plants, and informal gardening practices, alongside a review of social media discussions. Public reactions in social media range from concerns about neglect and safety to surprise at their ecological and aesthetic value, highlighting the ponds' ambiguous status. The algorithmic mislabeling of one site as a 'lake' on Google Maps drew public attention and sparked diverse interpretations, reflecting the limitations of aesthetic categories rooted in order, intentionality, and human design. A non-teleological and non-equilibrium approach within ecological aesthetics offers a more relevant understanding of the aesthetic experience of sites shaped by interrupted develop-

ment, spontaneous ecological colonization, and conceptual ambiguity, transcending notions of balance and harmony.

**Kerem Ozan Bayraktar** is an artist and a faculty member at Sabancı University in Istanbul. His work bridges art, technology, and environmental studies. He investigates material transformations and ecological interactions, utilizing digital techniques, mixed-media installations, and field research, informed by materialist philosophy. Bayraktar holds MFA and DFA degrees from Marmara University, where he previously founded the Digital Media Lab. He was a recipient of the Fellowship for Situated Practice (BAK, 2022) and participated in the Berlin Senate Residency Program (ZK/U, 2019). His art has been featured in prominent exhibitions such as the Tokyo Biennale (2023) and the Busan Sea Art Festival (2021), and his publications include *Marmara* (2023) and *Spirits on the Ground* (2021). Bayraktar is represented by Sanatorium.





## MATTI TAINIO

### Encountering artefacts in Natural Environments. Deliberations about the effect of the human infrastructure

My paper focuses on the felt aesthetic quality of natural environments in the contexts of encountering various marks of human activity – especially artefacts – in the nature. Much of my current environment, Finnish Lapland, is considered as wilderness, but finding pristine nature here is practically impossible as the marks of human activity cannot be avoided. Even the furthest areas show traces of human activity and the sami population considers many distant areas their pasture. However, not all marks of human activity or artefacts in the nature have an equal impact to the felt quality of the natural environment. Some of them are more in accordance with the nature while some are opposed to it. The artefacts and structures existing in accordance with the environment do not normally disrupt the experience of the nature, but those opposing the environment can be troublesome even when they are distant or small in scale. My presentation commences from distinct cases to the more theoretical analysis of the interlocking of natural and human elements in an environment and the rationale of their effect on the felt aesthetic quality. After introducing the different types of artefacts encountered in natural environments, the presentation focuses on structures that are seemingly harmless, but actually create an unpredictable future for the environment and

its ecosystems. Moreover, I'll compare my understanding of the subject with other studies in environmental aesthetics and human structures. As theoretical foundation the presentation will employ Jukka Mikkonen's ideas about aesthetic appreciation of nature in a context where visions about its future are colored by worry and uncertainty and shadowed by the global environmental crisis in combination with Emily Brady's future aesthetics that is directed towards uncertainty induced by the environmental crisis.

**Matti Tainio** is a visual artist and researcher, working as a senior lecturer of fine arts at the University of Lapland. He is a Doctor of Art from Aalto University's School of Art, Design and Architecture. Tainio's research interest is generally focused on the aesthetic experience in various settings. His approach to the research in aesthetics can be described as applied aesthetics with a pragmatist perspective. Currently, Tainio is especially interested in the aesthetic experience of darkness. Tainio's work as an artist takes place in an interdisciplinary setting where it often intertwines with his research practice.



## ZOLTÁN SOMHEGYI Aesthetic Alterations of the Ruined Environment What Can the History of Artistic Renderings of Natural Disasters Teach Us?

The representation of natural disasters in visual arts is a special genre of images. Such renderings however do not constitute a homogenous iconographic category. First, because there are different forms of natural catastrophes. Second, because artists can experience disasters in different ways. Third, these images are dissimilar also because of the changing motivations behind their creation. Initially these representations were connected to religious beliefs and to the theological and teleological interpretations of the nature of the catastrophe. After that the explorative intentions and documentary aspects became stronger. Since the late 20th century we have, on the one hand, depictions of the effects of natural disasters that are strongly connected to the attempts of raising awareness and warning of the looming climate catastrophes still to come. On the other hand, art projects can also offer consolation and highlight new interpretations of the traumatic situations. Because of this complexity, I pursue an interdisciplinary survey, combining methodologies of art history and aesthetics. My intention is to understand better what, how and why has changed over the centuries in the artistic re-elaboration of the traumatic experience of natural catastrophes? Through this we can learn not only about the diverse experiences and changing modes of depicting the disaster in itself, but also we can gain more knowledge on the potentials of art itself: what the aesthetic elaboration is capable of when we need to come to terms with our ruined environment and ruined environmental culture? Such aesthetic analyses promise important insights. Not only for our historical curiosity, but foremost concerning our future in general and our environmen-

tal culture of the future in particular. The diverse renderings of natural catastrophes have never been only about catastrophes or only about art—it is about us, our environments, our experiencing of them and our existence within them.

**Zoltán Somhegyi** is an art historian with a Ph.D. in aesthetics and a Habilitation (*venia legendi*) in philosophy, and is associate professor of art history at the University of Szeged and at the Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary. As a researcher he is focusing on questions of the aesthetics of ruination and decay as well as environmental aesthetics and landscapes. He was the Secretary General (2016–2022) and he still is Website Editor of the International Association for Aesthetics (IAA), and he is the Deputy Secretary General of the International Council for Philosophy and Human Sciences (CIPSH) since 2023. He is a senior researcher in the project *Perspectives in Environmental Aesthetics* (2022–2025), and his current research project on *Art and Catastrophe—Challenging Aesthetics Around Environmental Destruction* is supported by the János Bolyai Research Scholarship of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences through a three-year grant (2024–2027). Among his recent books are *Reviewing the Past. The Presence of Ruins* (Rowman & Littlefield International, 2020); *Aesthetic Theory Across the Disciplines* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2023; co-edited with Max Ryyänen) and *The Routledge Companion to The Philosophy of Architectural Reconstruction* (Routledge, 2024; co-edited with Lisa Giombini). [www.zoltan-somhegyi.com](http://www.zoltan-somhegyi.com)



## JUSSI PENTIKÄINEN

### The Harmony of the Senses Expressed in Poetry —The Case of Coleridge’s “Eolian Harp”

One consequence of the development of empiricist philosophy and natural sciences in the 18th century was the growing interest in how our experience of the world is mediated by different senses. One issue raised was whether the senses worked in unison or whether, like Denis Diderot claims, a person is “divided into as many distinct and separate entities as he has senses.” In contrast to Diderot, later Romantic philosophy tended to deny this atomism of the senses. I argue that such tendency is evident in the arts as well, where the unity of the senses became a common theme. I choose as my example Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s poem “Eolian Harp” (1795/6) where this search for a unity is a major theme. Evoking the eponymous instrument – a string instrument “played” by the wind – Coleridge speaks of the “light in sound, a sound-like power in light.” The sought-after harmony of the senses was for Coleridge, as well as other Romantics, deeply intertwined with the larger question of the harmony between humanity and its natural environment. The threat of subjectivism and atomism of the senses posed by empiricism was counter-acted by an aesthetic experience of nature which could do justice to the multi-sensory reality of our relationships with the environment. But how does one evoke this multi-sensory experience in poetry where the medium is that of the

arbitrary signs of human language? I suggest that the arbitrariness of language invites several poets, Coleridge among them, to develop strategies which aim to bypass it and to raise the word to the level of a natural sign. Analysing these strategies in Coleridge and other Romantic poets allows me to suggest that poetry can aim to function as a language which retains a trace of the multi-sensory or “synaesthetic” experience of nature.

**Jussi Pentikäinen** is a doctoral researcher in aesthetics at the University of Helsinki. He is writing his thesis on Emmanuel Levinas’s philosophy of art. He is also interested in the philosophy of poetry.



# ANNA-KAISA KOSKI

## Enchantment of the Ordinary —Aesthetics of The Intangible Experience of Energy in Modern and Contemporary Art

Our lived environments – homes, urban and rural environments, as well as places considered as ‘nature’ and places considered as ‘resource’ – are in many ways shaped by energy systems. Yet, if one is placed far from the sites of fuel excavation, the way energy is embedded in the environments we live in could be described as “hidden in plain sight”. The everyday experience of pushing a button and starting an electrical appliance, or turning on the lights or air conditioning, is in practice very simple. Yet, in trying to explain how it actually works, or what is energy, one needs fairly complicated expert knowledge. As fossil fuels still remain the ordinary energy source for the world, the accelerating climate crisis haunts all energy questions. In this paper I consider how artworks can outline the elusive, intangible experience of energy and give an aesthetic form to it. Through the concept of enchantment, I consider the potential to connect the ordinary, or disenchanting, energy questions with the central sensibilities of art: wonder, imagination, and creation. I will delve into the works of Atsuko Tanaka, Grazia Varisco, and Ulla Wiggen of the 1950s and 60s, ranging from performance to kinetic art and painting. In juxtaposition I will analyze contemporary artworks of the 2020s by Elias Sime, Monira Al-Qadiri and Yuko Mohri.

The artworks elucidate that the aesthetics of energy are not confined to mere documentary representation and instructive illustrations of the complex technical-economical systems that dominate current understandings of energy. I argue, that approaching energy questions aesthetically, is one way to transport and entangle energy questions into cultural imagination, and making sense of our environments – areas where they have largely been absent.

**Anna-Kaisa Koski** conducts doctoral research on contemporary art and energy cultures at The Department of Music, Art and Culture Studies at the University of Jyväskylä.





## OIVA KUISMA

### Great City in the Eyes of a Great Philosopher: Plato's Judgment of the Aesthetic Glory of Classical Athens

Plato, living in post-Periclean Athens (427–347 BC), was undoubtedly well acquainted with the architectural and sculptural masterpieces of Acropolis and other areas of classical Athens. Likewise, he was well acquainted with the Panathenaic festival organised yearly in standard form and as a greater festival every fourth year (e.g., *Parmenides* 127a–b). Through a solemn procession heading to the Acropolis, religious rituals, and artistic activities the Panathenaic festival engaged people and kept them in experiential contact with their Hellenic culture and history. One might expect that Plato's dialogues, usually depicting philosophical discussions staged in various places of Athens, would as a matter of course contain references to the artistic masterpieces of Acropolis; at least, when artistic and related issues were being dealt with. This, however, is not the case. Instead of seeking recognition by praising Athenian achievements in Athens (cf. *Menexenus* 236a), or more particularly, instead of praising the glory of Acropolis, Plato's dialogues do not reveal real interest in it. In the dialogue *Gorgias* (502d–503d), Plato puts Socrates to claim that he does not know any one orator who would have benefited Athenian citizens by making them morally better. Another interlocutor of the dialogue, Callicles, suggests to him that Themistocles, Kimon, Miltiades, and Pericles

were such persons. Socrates does not agree since, in his view, those great statesmen were good at promoting their own and their supporters' purposes but not good at making people virtuous. Indirectly, Socrates' critical judgement of the great Athenian statesmen, Pericles in particular, is also a critical judgement of the monumental reconstruction and building projects carried out on the Acropolis in the leadership of Pericles. In this paper, I will discuss in more depth Plato's reasons and motives for his critical attitude toward the aesthetic glory of the city of Athens.

**Oiva Kuisma**, Ph.D., Docent, University of Helsinki. In his research and publications, Kuisma has focused on the history of (Western) philosophy and aesthetics. He has published studies on Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, Proclus, Hegel, and the history of aesthetics, especially the history of Finnish aesthetics. His latest publications deal with Yrjö Hirn's aesthetics (2023), classical influences in A. G. Baumgarten and Charles Batteux (2023), and Eino Kaila's aesthetic thought (2024). In a forthcoming paper, Kuisma discusses Proclus's view of Plato as an emulator of Homer.



# NOORA-HELENA KORPELAINEN

## Aesthetic Sensibility as a Capability

### —A Vehicle to Support When Promoting Socially Just Sustainability Transitions

In aesthetics' research, aesthetic sensibility is understood as a capability within the domain of aesthetic values, experiences, and judgement. It is nevertheless not clear why aesthetic sensibility should be understood as a capability instead of, for example, a skill, a taste, or a virtue. I defend understanding aesthetic sensibilities as capabilities by turning to Martha Nussbaum's Capabilities Approach and situating the discussion to the context of sustainability transformation through reflecting the responses to a survey on aesthetic values and global climate change conducted in the Lahti region in Finland. My speculation on aesthetic sensibilities' significance for sustainability transitions suggests that instead of aiming to change our aesthetic sensibilities we should aim to support actual opportunities to perceive their changing throughout our lives.

**Noora-Helena Korpelainen** (MA) is a grant-funded doctoral researcher in aesthetics at the University of Helsinki's doctoral programme in interdisciplinary environmental sciences (DENVI). Her research concerns the possibility of sustainable aesthetics and aims to bridge discussion between philosophical aesthetics and sustainability approaches. Currently, her research is supported by the Finnish Cultural Foundation. In addition, she works as an expert in the University of Helsinki's Lahti University Campus Coordination Unit where she coordinates the functions of the International Institute of Applied Aesthetics (IIAA).



## JOHANNES MÜLLER-SALO

### Urban Stances. Everyday Experiences and Interactions in the City

The paper develops the notion of urban stances as a philosophical concept for analyzing everyday experiences and interactions in urban environments. Following Quill Kukla's work in social philosophy and philosophy of the city, embodied stances are defined as "systematic collections of embodied, performed strategies for coping and coordinating with the world and the people in it." (Kukla 2018, 8). Adapting this conception to the urban realm, I will defend three claims. First, one's own biography, experiences and upbringing determine which urban stances one can acquire and to what extent one might acquire them. Among other things, this raises questions of justice: If mastering certain stances is a prerequisite for a good urban life, people seem to be entitled to receive public support in acquiring these stances. Second, the concept of urban stances is helpful in explaining why different people experience the same urban spaces very differently. Specific stances enable us to experience certain things and, at the same time, prevent other experiences. Third, stances can be a reasonable object of normative criticism. Some urban stances only work well for some people if, at the same time, other people get excluded from successful stance development. I will argue that these morally problematic stances are often stances

that fail to do justice to the specific character of urban life. To mention only one example: Cities are high-density places. Therefore, some space-consuming stances as certain forms of motorized individual traffic are inappropriate within the urban realm. The promotion of such stances will always be at the expense of the stances of other people, many of whom belong to vulnerable groups.

**Johannes Müller-Salo** works as a postdoc-researcher at the Institute of Philosophy at Leibniz University Hannover, Germany. His research is focused on questions in ethics, political philosophy, and philosophical aesthetics. Currently, he is preparing a book that addresses problems at the intersection of philosophy of the city, philosophy of everyday life and normative theories of the human good. Recent research papers include "Leading Good Digital Lives" (2025) and "Three Ways of Doing Philosophy of the City" (2023). In autumn 2025, his book on the history and philosophy of commuting will be published (in German language, publisher: Reclam).



## MAO MATSUYAMA

### Recognizing Making—Rethinking DIY and Redecoration

This research aims to explore DIY and redecorating as experiences in which ordinary residents, who are not professional architects, make their own living spaces and to consider this act through the ethical and aesthetic concept of “recognition”. Recognition was a theme discussed by J. G. Fichte and G. W. F. Hegel, and has been highlighted as a concept that reflects the relationship between human beings who respect each other’s personality. It has also become a crucial concept in addressing contemporary societal issues, such as multiculturalism and gender theory. On the other hand, German philosophers A. Honneth (1949-) and M. Seel (1954-) have proposed the idea of extending the concept of recognition beyond just humans and living beings to include all things in general. Honneth, drawing on developmental psychology and the philosophies of Heidegger and Dewey, argues for the importance of recognition prior to objective cognition, while Seel incorporates Kantian aesthetics and Adorno’s philosophy of contemplation to introduce a form of recognition that can coexist with neutral cognition. This presentation will examine the theoretical framework of this expanded notion of recognition and will focus on DIY and redecorating as concrete examples. If, as Yuriko Saito suggests, perceiving the environment and appreciating its beauty or lack thereof can be seen as the initial steps in world-making, then

DIY and redecoration, as more active interventions, can be viewed as opportunities for establishing active relationships of recognition.

**Mao Matsuyama** is an associate professor at the Department of Architecture, Faculty of Design, Okayama Prefectural University. Her research focuses on the relationship between human beings and human-made things, from daily tools to the vast scenery of the urban environment. Her recent papers are “Aesthetic Evaluation of the Atmosphere in Everyday Environments — A Case Study in Ashiyahama Seaside Town, Japan” (*Contemporary Aesthetics*, 2024) and “Aesthetic Range of Martin Seel’s Concept of Aesthetic Recognition” (*the Japanese Journal of Aesthetics*, 2020). Matsuyama received her masters degree from Hokkaido University, where she studied natural science, aesthetics, and art theory. She worked as a curator for the Hokkaido Museum of Modern Art from 2011 to 2020 and as a research associate for Mukogawa Institute of Esthetics in Everyday-life (Mukogawa Women’s University) from 2020 to 2024. She is currently writing her doctoral dissertation at Kyoto University and has been a member of the Kobe Institute for Atmospheric Studies since 2022.





## ANU BESSON

### Wandering, finding, making, being

Since the industrial revolution and the parallel, accelerating global urbanisation, a paradoxical double shift has occurred. Now, our species as a collective impacts the environment more than ever before. Individual consumption opportunities have exponentially expanded thanks to the global markets and the internet. But, in certain ways, possibilities to interact with physical environments have become more restricted due to privatisation, commercialisation and lack of access to commons and natural spaces. For example, free roaming and the ability to utilise (near)free resources such as natural materials are typically limited in urban areas. Simultaneously, hand-making skills are slowly and globally eroding due to the perceived lack of need for this traditional know-how. Reflecting on empirical data I have collected among expatriate Finns, I explore these changes affecting people's capabilities and capacities to interact meaningfully and creatively with their environments, and how in the contemporary urban world opportunities for this are becoming rarer. Previously, urban foraging has been studied from the perspectives of food security, traditional/indigenous food and medicinal cultures, and supplementing livelihood. However, my interview data shows that the right to roam and freedom to collect (near-free) materials for household purposes and handcrafting are experienced as intrinsically valuable for supporting creative expression and self- and cultural identity. They also sup-

port a sense of belonging to a group or place. I explore how creative use of found resources in the everyday offers a sense of 'competent agency', an ability to directly utilise, influence or interact with one's environment. Such being-in-the-world is experienced as a healthy counterbalance to screen-based or consumerist activities and the somewhat uncontrollable life outside of the home. Examining these activities as aesthetic practices highlights the intrinsic, existential relevance of making, doing and undergoing: aesthetic practices become intimately interwoven, even inseparable from practitioners' identity and worldview.

**Anu Besson**, PhD, is a Finnish-Australian urban studies scholar based in Perth, Western Australia. Currently she explores the concept of aesthetic practices as a member of a group research project led by Pauline von Bonsdorff and funded by the Kone Foundation. The term focuses on the meaning and effect of action, everyday creativity and aesthetic expression in human life. Besson is particularly interested in interactivity, including the ability to meaningfully and responsibly utilise affordances in the environment, as a key element of an experience of 'good life'. She aims to bridge empirical and theoretical elements in the fields of environmental and everyday aesthetics. Previously she has examined critically environmental preference studies, or how research methods may produce biased answers as to what kinds of environments are valued over others and why.



## STAFFORD DAVIS

### The Significance of Negative Aesthetics in Dewey's "Anesthetic" Experience

In his work on aesthetics, John Dewey categorizes human experience into two categories: An experience that is meaningful, he refers to as "an experience," and an experience that is dull, he terms, "anesthetic." Regarding the former, these experiences can and often do have aesthetic qualities that contribute to their profundity. An experience is characterized by a sense of cohesive episodes tied together emotionally or intellectually that amounts to a singular, memorable occasion. There is a sense of "doing" and "undergoing" that specifically make these types of experiences creative, aesthetic, and active. In contrast, Dewey denies an anesthetic experience of any kind of significance and describes them as not profound, passive, unthematic, and anodyne. In this paper, I will argue against this anesthetic characterization by adopting the original Greek meaning of aesthetics as sensory perception (aisthetós) and emphasize the anesthetic's negative aesthetic qualities. While anesthetic experiences do fit into Dewey's narrow description, they also exceed these boundaries when considering their potential negativity without becoming an experience. I will argue for this negative significance in two ways: First, anesthetic experiences can serve as an impetus for change. Disconnected and banal experiences such as the drudgery of a disliked job or the thankless obligations that Dewey mentions can be illuminated when

considering their negative aesthetic effects. Second, perceiving anesthetic experience as merely routine or boring can potentially mask and normalize the damaging reality of an individual or communal predicament. Subtle forms of covert violence such as monotonous noise, the overabundance of processed food or unavailability of nutrition in food deserts, pollution, and the multi-sensory assault of seductive advertising can be realized for what they are by calling attention to their negative aesthetic effects. This paper will counter and argue for an expansion of Dewey's anesthetic experiences via their significant negative aesthetic value.

My name is **Stafford Davis** and I am a PhD candidate and instructor in Philosophy at Fordham University. My philosophical interests are: aesthetics, philosophy of art, and philosophy of language. Outside of school I enjoy walking around New York City, hiking outside of the city, playing music, photography, and reading.



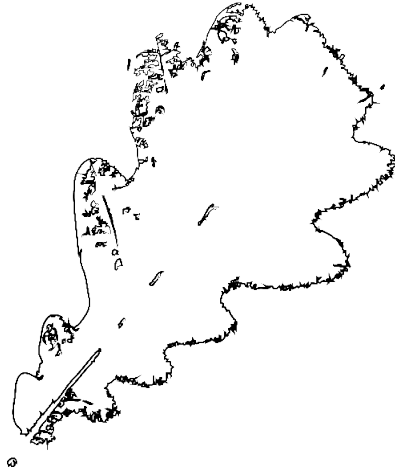
## LAURA FUMAGALLI

### Perception, Knowledge, and Climate

In recent literature on Environmental Aesthetics, there has been some work on the impact of Global Climate Change (GCC) on the aesthetic experience of nature. Within the general acknowledgment that GCC requires a new set of conditions for the aesthetic experience of nature, the debate touched upon various topics including the relationship between aesthetics and ethics, the need to account for the large-scale perspective and the temporal displacement of GCC, as well as the irreversibility of some of the predicted changes, to develop negative aesthetic categories and Future or Intergenerational Aesthetics. In this paper, I consider in particular a less explored topic, that is, how we should understand the impact of the awareness of anthropogenic responsibility in GCC on the aesthetic experience of current environments. Some scholars have argued that GCC has a disruptive effect on the aesthetic experience of current natural environments: I here focus, in particular, on the friction between perception and knowledge in light of the awareness of the anthropogenic nature of GCC. In the first part of the paper, I examine some traits of the aesthetic experience of natural environments that arise from the unique nature of GCC. These traits include the large-scale temporal and spatial dimension of GCC, the non-natural origin of some seemingly natural events or phenomena, and the disori-

enting narratives of different effects of GCC. In the second part, I show how these traits create tension between what we perceive and what we know. The anthropogenic cause of GCC is, in fact, undetectable through perception, and yet it seems to heavily influence how we judge “nature” aesthetically and morally. Finally, I suggest that the awareness of the anthropogenic nature of GCC calls for a different understanding of the role of perception in the aesthetics of nature.

**Laura Fumagalli** is a PhD candidate in Environmental Aesthetics at Augsburg University and LMU Munich, Germany. Her research focuses on negative environmental aesthetics, addressing the concepts of ugliness and disgust in particular, in light of climate change and environmental crises in general. Her work has connections to environmental ethics and the philosophy of environmental art. Before joining her doctoral program, she worked as an assistant in a contemporary art gallery in London (UK) and a literary museum in Italy. Previously, she completed an M.A. (2020) in Philosophy and Aesthetics and a B.A. (2017) in Philosophy at the Catholic University of Milan (Italy) and an M.Sc. in Philosophy at the University of Edinburgh (UK) (2018).



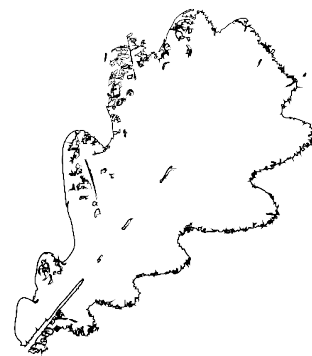
# PANEL SESSIONS





MAIJU SUOMI: Aesthetic experience of a space as a catalyst for environmental discourse and change - a practice-led study

This practice-led study explores the multisensory embodied experience of space as a catalyst for expanding the current environmental discourse and creating cultural change. The prevailing Western human-exceptionalist values lead to regarding non-human animals, plants, natural processes, and living environments as mere resources for human wellbeing and the accumulation of wealth. This attitude lies at the basis of extractive and exploitative modern construction culture. Yet, in the field of architecture, sustainability discourse focuses on technoscientific solutions to environmental problems. Communication of worldviews and values through the aesthetic experience is left aside. How could sensorial experience of space support questioning the prevailing human-exceptionalist values? Moreover, if architecture was built on concepts of entanglement and care, what would it feel like? In this paper, agency of aesthetic experience is explored through the case of Alusta Pavilion, a temporary space for multispecies encounters and environmental discourse in the centre of Helsinki, Finland. In this paper the pavilion's visitors' experiences are contrasted with the aims of the designers and the environmental philosophy shaping their practice. Alusta pavilion was designed as a space for encountering the more than human world in urban space, to re-establish our sensuous connection to other species and our shared environment. Unlike today's cities built solely for humans, Alusta was designed to create well-being for humans and non-humans, with a focus on pollinating insects. The aesthetic experience of the space became a vehicle for communicating our entangled existence with the more than human world and fostering sensibility towards the alternate ways of being



## PANEL 1: PUBLIC SPACE

Maiju Suomi,  
Satu Parjanen & Anne Pässilä,  
Eeva Aarrevaara

alive of the non-human. Changeability was woven into the aesthetic texture of the pavilion through sharing creative agency with non-human forces. Life sustaining natural processes, cyclic rhythms and non-human temporalities were made accessible for human.

SATU PARJANEN & ANNE PÄSSILÄ: The purposes of art in public space

Art in public spaces is becoming a significant form of urban planning because public art serves various purposes in urban environments. Art and artistic planning are understood to enhance the quality of the built environment and to increase interest and demand in both new and redeveloped areas. By beautifying the environment, public art creates a more pleasant and inviting atmosphere for people. In this study, we are interested in how public art programs and experts in public art define the purposes of public art and how public art can be implemented to meet these purposes. The data is collected as part of the ongoing project called "Urban planning and art — Multidisciplinary process expertise in the collaboration of public art and urban planning". The data collection included nineteen public art programs and nine semi-structured interviews. The interviewees included people who have experience and knowledge about public art processes such as architects, artists, researchers, and project managers. According to the results, public art has multiple purposes like aesthetic, economic, communicative, social, and cultural. Public art can enhance environment and transform public spaces into visually engaging areas. It strengthens local identity and creates added value for residents and tourists. Thus, it stimulates economic and social development. Placed in public sites, public art is there for everyone, thus highlighting a democratic aspect in the society. For art to respond to these

purposes, the design and implementation of public art requires multidisciplinary collaboration, attention to the ecological, economic, and social aspects of sustainability, the involvement of professional artists in the process, and the use of multi-channel communication. A positive attitude towards public art among people enables bringing art into public spaces, but the sufficiency of resources in the current economic situation is seen as a risk.

**EEVA AARREVAARA ET AL.:** Integration of public art in public urban spaces – cooperation of artists and urban planners

Integration of public art with the built environment has become more usual in the urban context. This is evidenced by different types of art, such as environmental art, art integrated with buildings or art in public spaces. Urban planning is the main process involved in managing changes of land use and spatial structure. If the goal of planning is to improve the aesthetic quality of the urban environment, the opportunities offered through public art are crucial. If we aim to avoid the traditional position of art as separate objects placed in public places, we need to integrate the work of artists more closely into urban planning processes. The main challenge is how to identify and describe the process of an artist and the process of urban planning to be able to increase interaction between the two in critical points of practice. In the multidisciplinary training course for professional artists and urban planners these challenges were discussed from various perspectives and demonstrated by excursions to urban areas with different types of art integration. Students of the pilot course worked together in groups to prepare environmental analyses and art concepts for chosen urban areas. Simultaneously, they practiced multidisciplinary discussion and understanding of the key concepts of the other's professional language. Benchmarking of international examples, like the art programme in Calgary has inspired an understanding of future opportunities to integrate art with the built environment and landscapes. The findings of the pilot project highlight the importance of describing verbally the different characteristics of work processes in the art field, as well as those in urban planning. The work of an artist is usually a highly individual process that is hard to characterize precisely, while urban planning is usually based on teamwork in which the planner might be the team leader, but at the same time interacting with other professionals and different stakeholders, including citizens.



**Maiju Suomi** is an architect (MSc), a doctoral researcher and an educator at Aalto University working in the field of environmental architecture. In her practice-led research she explores how moving beyond a human-exceptionalist worldview affects architectural practice and aesthetics. In her interdisciplinary practice she uses theory as a catalyst to transform spatial practice. With an aim to bridge nature and culture through the creation of multisensory spatial experiences, she combines approaches from art, architecture and activism. Her award-winning projects include KKYC Youth Centre, Phnom Penh, Cambodia designed with participatory methods (Komitu Architects) and Alusta Pavilion for Multispecies Encounters, Helsinki, Finland (Suomi/Koivisto Architects). In 2025, together with architect Elina Koivisto she is invited to the 19th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, curated by Carlo Ratti. Furthermore, in summer 2025, together with IC-98 artist duo, they will unveil an installation at Concentrico Festival in Logroño, Spain, exploring themes of rest, renewal, and dreaming.

**Satu Parjanen** D.Sc. (Tech.) is a Senior Researcher at LUT University, School of Engineering Science, Department of Industrial Engineering and Management. She has a background with degrees in Social Sciences and a doctoral degree in Industrial Engineering and Management. Her doctoral dissertation (2012) focused on collective creativity and brokerage functions in practice-based innovation. Recently, she has also studied various innovation methods enhancing creativity and innovativeness in practice-based innovation, including art-based methods and gamification. Additionally, her research interests focus on socially sustainable innovation processes and social innovation ecosystems in the context of urban development. Currently, she works on a project called "Urban Planning and Art - Multidisciplinary Process Expertise in the Collaboration of Public Art and Urban Planning," which aims to identify and anticipate competence needs related to integrating art in public and built environments.

**Anne Pässilä** PhD, MA, drama & community educator and a Senior Researcher in the School of Engineering and Science at Lappeenranta-Lahti University of Technology (LUT), Finland and Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Chester, UK since 2013 as well as Honor-ary Fellow of the University of Liverpool, department of Continuing Education, 2024–2027, UK. Her research focuses on the formation of polyphonic spaces of knowledge construction. She also explores the role, dynamics and impact of creative, participatory and art-based methods in the development of social innovations and the agency.



**Eeva Aarrevaara** is a Finnish architect and Doctor of Science in Architecture from HUT, currently known as Aalto University. She has practical experience from urban and rural planning as well as building design. Since 2003 she has worked as a principal lecturer in Lahti University of Applied Sciences (now LAB University of Applied Sciences) in environmental and urban planning. Since 2018 she has contributed to Erasmus Mundus Master Programme MUrCS (Master in Urban Climate and Sustainability) as an academic coordinator and teacher. She has participated both regional and international research projects dealing with rural localities, cultural heritage, urban development, green infrastructure and circular economy in communities. In the project Multidisciplinary process expertise in the collaboration of public art and urban planning she has contributed to the cooperation with LAB colleagues from urban planning and art education.



## PANEL 2: WAYS OF ENCOUNTERING, BEING AND CARING IN NATURE

Nora Schuurman, Kirsi Laurén, & Taru Peltola

This panel examines human encounters with non-human nature in forest, mire and water environments. These encounters, both embodied and digital, often have aesthetic as well as interspecies dimensions. They are explored through human experiences, senses, affects and memories. Sensing the bodies and living materiality of other beings and elements have consequences for the ways in which nature, other species and environments are understood, appreciated and cared for. Emotions and practices of caring bring together environmental concern, fear and grief over the loss of nature and a motivation for conservation. Witnessing environmental change through sensing the fragility of nature and other species is an affective experience that leads to rising awareness of global crises. Stories and images of what is encountered are shared in different ways, including on the social media. The panel discusses these shifting and increasingly important relationships between humans and the environment.

We address these questions from different perspectives. Moving in natural environments that are shared with other species evokes emotions including awe, joy, love, fear and disgust.

When such encounters occur on an everyday basis, the spaces and environments where they are situated in may be felt as multispecies homes. Today, visiting and moving around in nature, it is common for people to carry digital devices such as mobile phones and flying drones. These enable aesthetic attention to be drawn to the different elements and details of nature, illustrating contemporary approaches to nature. Environmental degradation calls for reparative actions entailing the creation of novel more-than-human worlds. Such restorative encounters induce hope and optimism yet demand ethical consideration about how much intervention is necessary and desirable. The research we present increases understanding of the essence of nature and its importance and value in the world we live in.





**Kirsi Laurén** (PhD, Title of Docent) works as a Senior Lecturer of Cultural Heritage, University of Oulu, the Research Unit of History, Culture and Communication Studies. She is part of the international DigiFREN research project (University of Eastern Finland) which investigates the digital aestheticization of fragile environments. Laurén specializes in environmental humanities, narrative studies, oral history studies, and cultural heritage studies.

**Taru Peltola** is Professor of Naturecultures Studies at the University of Eastern Finland, Department of Geographical and Historical Studies, and Senior Research Scientist at the Finnish Environment Institute, Societal Change Unit. Her work focuses on human-material-nature relations in sustainability transformations. She is currently developing care-informed thinking in the context of hydrosocial communities, plastics and extended lifetimes of everyday goods.

**Nora Schuurman** (PhD, Title of Docent) is an animal and cultural geographer, and Senior Researcher at the University of Turku. She specializes in human-animal relations from a spatial viewpoint, particularly within equestrian and pet cultures. Recently, she has studied e.g. interspecies care, animal rescue and rehoming, animal agency, and death. Her current research focuses on human-forest relations and multispecies homes as well as on changing conceptions of animal pain.



## PANEL 3: EXPERIENCING ATMOSPHERES

Alberto Voltolini, Elisabetta Sacchi, and Anja Novak

If atmospheres are not mental states, notably kinds of moods, but, albeit complex, objective properties, i.e., properties of objects in the world, then, depending on what kind of such properties they are metaphysically, one can provide a different account of the epistemological problem of how one can grasp them. In this respect, there are two main approaches, which both maintain that atmospheres are expressive properties. First, according to Vendrell-Ferran (2022), they are expressive affective properties. As such, they must be grasped by feelings. However, this approach raises the problem that it is not necessarily the case that we are moved by atmospheres (Hulmi 2022, De Monticelli-Forlé 2024). We can indeed be mood-indifferent to atmospheres. Second, according to Wollheim (1987), qua expressive properties atmospheres are apprehended perceptually. Indeed, one can grasp atmospheres immediately, in a fast way, by being struck by them, hence without inference. So, it is merely seemingly the case that, qua expressive properties, they are imbued with emotions (Smortchova 2017). In this panel, we want to explore the epistemological topic again, by addressing it both from a philosophical and an art-historical point of view, by involving both philosophers (Elisabetta Sacchi, Alberto Voltolini) and art historians (Anja Novak).

For **Anja Novak**, the experience of atmosphere clearly involves affect, but the exact relationship between the two concepts remains vague (Brown et al. 2019; Anderson 2014). The concept of ‘atmosphere’ is hardly used within art historical research. Therefore, Novak proposes to explore the difference between certain well-known conceptualizations of affect, which are more common in the field (Rampley 2021), and the type of emotionality involved in atmospheric experience. Using several case studies, Novak will investigate how visual art can increase awareness of how atmospheric experi-

ences unfold, what kind of emotionality is involved, and how these affects relate to the atmospheric experience as such.

For **Elisabetta Sacchi**, although it is undoubtedly true that in grasping an atmosphere we are (often) affected and moved by how things appear to us, this is not sufficient to qualify the apprehension in question as essentially affective. Our affective reaction actually presupposes our grasping atmospheres and this grasping has a perceptual nature, albeit sui generis. Though perceivable, atmospheres require the experiencers to develop some kind of “atmospheric competence” that allows them to better attune to the aura that things can radiate. For such an attunement to occur, a fundamental role is played by the subject’s exercise of a peculiar type of non-focal attention that can be qualified as diffuse (Prettyman 2022). This type of attention, by enabling the subject to attend to something (an object, a scene) taken as a whole, makes it possible to grasp global properties that would not emerge if the subject were focused on local and detailed properties of objects or scenes.

For **Alberto Voltolini**, in conformity with (Smortchova 2017), atmospheres are not emotionally-involving expressive properties. Instead, they are a kind of objective yet relational properties, enjoyable by different objects yet involving both an experiencing subject and an environment as its poles; notably, a kind of grouping properties, properties for an array to be arranged along a certain polar direction under a certain dimension, which are holistic properties that require a perceptually-based form of attention (Stokes 2018) for their grasping; thus, Wollheim’s (1987) intuition as regards their perceivability is basically correct.

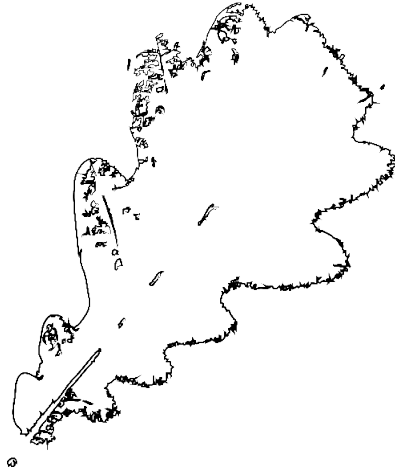


**Anja Novak** is Assistant Professor of Contemporary Art at the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and a researcher at the Amsterdam School for Heritage, Memory, and Material Culture. Her research focuses on art that operates at the intersection of various disciplines, such as the visual arts, performance, architecture, landscape design, and heritage. As an expert on land art in the Netherlands, she is interested in the geographical situatedness of art and in the changing connections between artworks and sites. Another focus of her research is the way in which artworks trigger affective responses, in particular atmospheric experiences, and how art can afford an engagement with traumatic histories. Anchored in art history, her research is also connected to affect theory, environmental humanities and ecological-enactive cognitive science. Relevant publications include “Precarious ground. An experiential approach to Land art in Flevoland” (*Netherlands yearbook for history of art*, 2023), “Engaging with art skillfully. First steps towards an ecological-enactive account of the experience of art” (co-authored with Geerteke van Lierop and Erik Rietveld, *Adaptive Behavior*, 2022), and “Affective Spaces: Experiencing Atmosphere in the Visual Arts” (*Archimaera*, 2019).

**Elisabetta Sacchi** is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy of San Raffaele University in Milan where she teaches Philosophy of language and Philosophy of perception. She is an Associate PI of two ongoing research projects: PRIN Project “Higher-order Perceivable Properties (HOPP)” and PRIN PNRR Project “Atmospheres (ATMOS): What They Are and How They Are Grasped”. Her research interests are in the philosophy of perception (the content and phenomenology of perceptual experiences; Rich vs. Sparse account of the content of perception; the nature of our grasping of atmospheres), philosophy of mind (theories of intentionality, the relationship between intentionality and consciousness; the mark of the mental; cognitive phenomenology and sensory phenomenology), theories of content (both at the level of language and at the level of thought). Relevant recent publications include: (2025). The representational and phenomenal richness of perceptual experience. *Theoria. An International Journal for Theory, History*

*and Foundations of Science*, 39(3), 289-314 (/doi.org/10.1387/theoria.25523); (2024) Is Psychologism Unavoidable in a Phenomenologically Adequate Account of Mental Content. *Argumenta* 9(2) 317-336 (DOI 10.14275/2465-2334/202200); (2021) Is so called Phenomenal Intentionality Real Intentionality?. *AXIOMATHES*. (DOI: 10.1007/s10516-021-09549-4); (2018). Modes of presentation and ways of appearing: a critical revision of Evans’s account. *PHENOMENOLOGY AND MIND*, vol. 14, p. 188-202, ISSN: 2280-7853; (2017) with A. Voltolini Against phenomenological externalism. *CRÍTICA*, vol. 49, ISSN: 0011-1503; (2016) with A. Voltolini Another argument for Cognitive phenomenology. *RIVISTA INTERNAZIONALE DI FILOSOFIA E PSICOLOGIA*, vol. 7, p. 256-263, ISSN: 2039-4667, doi: 10.4453/rifp.2016.0025.

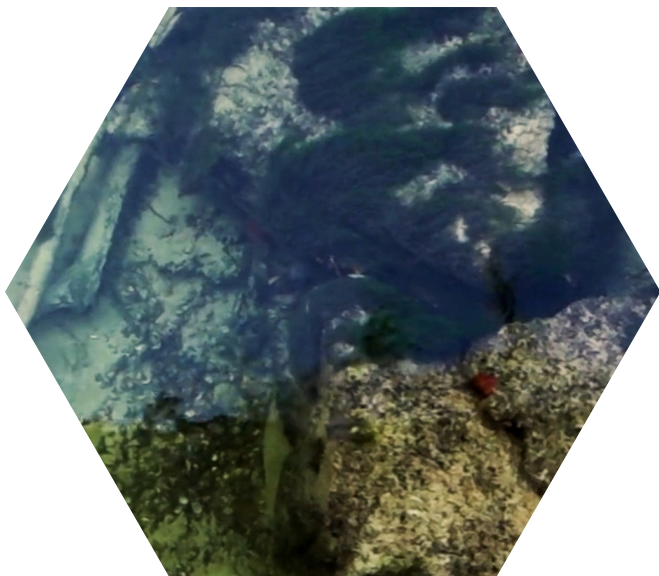
**Alberto Voltolini** (PhD Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa 1989) is a philosopher of language and mind whose works have focused mainly on intentionality, depiction and fiction, perception, and Wittgenstein. He is currently Professor in Philosophy of Mind at the University of Turin (Italy), President of the Italian Society for Analytic Philosophy, and member of the Academy of Sciences, Turin. He has got scholarships at the Universities of Geneva and Sussex. He has been visiting professor at the Universities of California, Riverside (1998), Australian National University, Canberra (2007), Barcelona (2010), London (2015), Auckland (2007, 2018), Antwerp (2019). He has been a member of the Steering Committee of the European Society for Analytic Philosophy (2002-2008), of the Board of the European Society for Philosophy and Psychology (2009-2012), and of the International Society for Fiction and Fictionality Studies (2018-2023). His publications include *How Ficta Follow Fiction* (Springer, 2006), as well as the “Fictional Entities” and the “Fiction” entries (with F. Kroon) of the *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, *A Syncretistic Theory of Depiction* (Palgrave, 2015), *Down But Not Out* (Springer, 2022), *Intentionality as Constitution* (Routledge, 2024).



# ABSTRACTS AND BIOS

Thursday





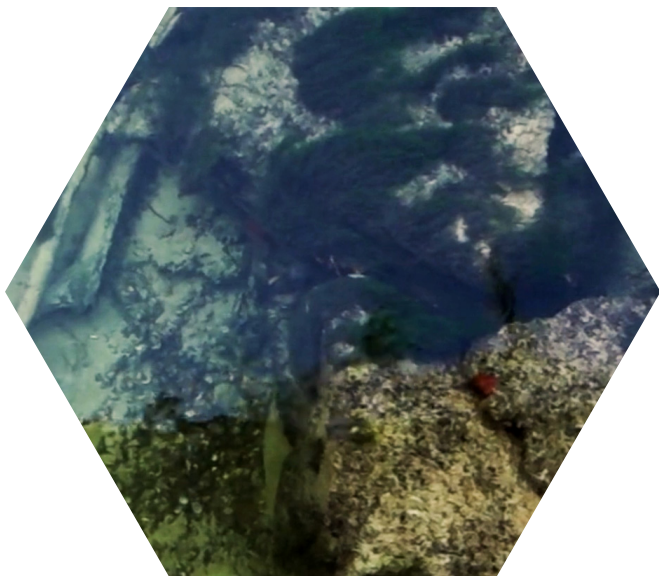
**RIIKKA LATVA-SOMPPI et al.**

## Situated Sensing: How different disciplinary backgrounds impact experiencing water environments?

Ethical considerations are crucial in fostering responsible action and decision-making in the ongoing environmental crisis. Science has provided hard facts about the changes in the environment for decades. However, emotions and real-life experiences are said to be stronger catalysts for transformation than scientific facts alone. Such experiences are embodied and aesthetic. These experiences rarely appear only in the context of the time and place but are grounded on life-experiences, professional expertise, previous encounters with and understanding of the world. This study inspects how different disciplinary backgrounds of science and art practitioners impact the way in which they perceive the environment. The study takes place in the context of the transdisciplinary research project *Unfolding Sense of Water: care across boundaries*. This project aims to create a novel boundary concept *Sense of Water* that acknowledges personal experiences and emotions as integral constituents of one's relationship with water and potential contributors to collective care for water. The research group consists of researchers from various disciplines, such as human geography, environmental governance, environmental policy, ecology, landscape architecture, rural sociology, sustainability science, craft, and design. The transdisciplinary methodology of the project extends the knowledge creation grounded on the varied epistemes to the subjective experiences of the researchers. To do

so, art-based approaches are applied. One such approach is a method of walking named *environmental flaneuring*, in which the researchers are encouraged to attend to their sensual experience of the environment. During the different phases of the research four walks in diverse water environments were conducted. After flaneuring, written and oral reflections were shared and analysed. This study revisits the reflections underpinning the narrated experiences to the disciplinary backgrounds of the practitioners. Following the intrinsic feminist concept of situated knowledge, we reflect on the situatedness of the sensational and emotional experiences in particular environments.

Artist-researcher **Riikka Latva-Somppi** employs co-action, exhibitions and other artistic methods as means for research and action in dealing with environmental and ecological issues. She is currently working as a researcher in the Finnish Environment Institute SYKE engaged with the transdisciplinary project *Unfolding Sense of Water: Care across boundaries* that aims to reveal diverse relations to water and their connection to the care of water. Her forthcoming doctoral thesis for Aalto University's Design department explores craft practitioner's material sensitivity and its potential in the ecological discourse in the context of soil studies and ceramic art. Her practice-led research builds on her thirty years of expertise in the artworld as a curator, awarded artist and educator. Her artworks can be found in several collections and have been exhibited widely internationally.



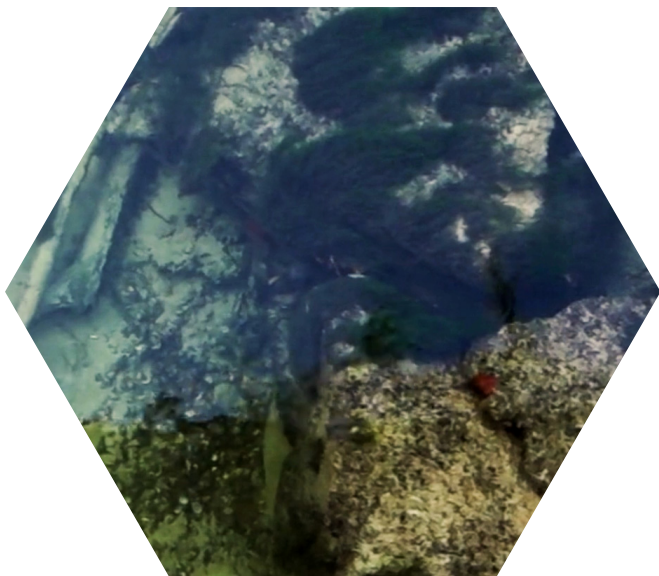
## ANISH MISHRA

### Chipko and Ecological Aesthetics: Environmental Movements as Sources of Alternative Epistemologies

The Chipko movement in India in the 1970's was a landmark instance of environmental action, where the locals of an Uttarakhand village in the lower Himalayas hugged trees to stop their felling. Prominent environmental activist and thinker Vandana Shiva was a volunteer in this movement, and has since proposed a strong ecofeminist reading of it while pointing to the knowledge structures responsible for this conservation movement. Ecological Aesthetics as a field has taken 'ecological knowledge' of some form as key to passing valid aesthetic judgements within nature. Taking Shiva's positioning of various environmental movements as grounded in alternate epistemologies, I argue for the perspective of knowledges embedded in the criticality of local thinking to count as 'ecological knowledge'. The attunement of these communities within environments, embodied in their ways of being in such spaces, asks us to re-examine the nature of knowledge key to any ecoaesthetic framework. This presentation highlights two reasons for how an accounting of these perspectives enriches the field when considering contemporary environmental problems and the planetary crises, while being weary of proposing an overly essentialist reading. First, ecoaesthetics can be argued to be grappling with knowledge structures characterised by the biases of modernity shaped in a colonial, capitalist and patriarchal world. Accounting for

alternative epistemologies poses a fundamental question to possible biases in that 'knowledge' which shapes valid aesthetic judgement. Second, studying the epistemic implications of the Chipko movement helps shape an approach towards Indian Ecoaesthetics informed by both aesthetic theory as well as environmental movements. It proposes a relationship between theory and practice which is non-linear, non-dual, and inter-penetrative. This presentation concludes by positioning itself within the debate of what constitutes ecological knowledge in cognitive positions, by placing the emergence of such knowledge in engaged praxis.

**Anish Mishra** is pursuing a PhD in Humanities (Philosophy and Religion) in the Division of Humanities, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST). He is specializing in the field of Environmental and Ecological Aesthetics, and is interested in taking a comparative, collaborative and applied approach to his work grounded in decolonial praxis. His research adds an Indian Aesthetic and Buddhist Environmental perspective to these fields while accommodating for a multitude of epistemologies, and focuses on problematizing anthropocentric climate change through it. Anish also has a personal love for trees and especially those in 'urban' spaces, forever in awe of the transformative effects they have on everything around them.



## MADDALENA BORSATO

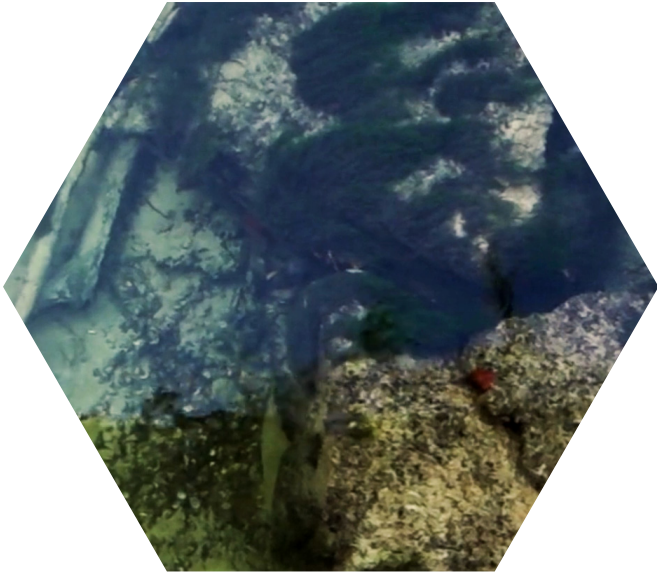
### Inhabiting Saccharophilic Environments —How Sweetness Shapes Our Everyday

This paper revolves around the phenomenon that I term pervasive sugarization. With this expression, I aim to convey how contemporary globalized society is increasingly attuned to and reliant on easily accessible and ubiquitous sweetness. This is favored by the subtle yet powerful omnipresence of added sugars in a substantial portion of our dietary intake, particularly within the realm of processed foods that have assumed a predominant role as one of the world's primary sources of sustenance. In contemporary, Western-driven milieus, we thus inhabit highly saccharophilic environments, with sugar-laden industrial foods being more economical than fresh products like fruits and vegetables. Sugars emerge as the most cost-effective means of psychological reward, contributing to the development of addiction and manifesting in consumption patterns and habituation. The mode and threshold of perception for sweetness have thus changed, contributing to a general flattening of taste that accentuates its invasiveness. Building on these assumptions, I argue that pervasive sugarization can be comprehended as the gustatory face of the broader phenomenon of aestheticization, where everything, even the most basic needs, must possess and indeed does possess aesthetic value, responding to a persistent hedonistic interest. The connection

between sweetness and pleasure is deeply ingrained both from a biological evolutionary and cultural standpoint, with sweetness traditionally regarded as the primal vehicle for sensuous enjoyment. Thus, just as what we perceive around us should be aesthetically pleasing, the palatability of what we consume must correspondingly be sweeter. As a result, we are witnessing a sweetening of experience, rendered 'palatable' in every sense: beyond the immediate gratification of taste, sweetness becomes a common mode of experiencing, serving as a viscous and sticky substrate for a globalized and atmospheric sense of beauty.

**Maddalena Borsato** is post-doctoral Research Fellow in Aesthetics at the University of Gastronomic Sciences of Pollenzo (Italy). From July 2022 to December 2023, she held a post-doctoral research position at Ritsumeikan University in Kyoto (Japan). Her research interests encompass gustatory and everyday aesthetics, philosophy of food, eating disorders, and the intersection of cooking and pastry with art and design. On these topics, she is the author of various articles and of one monograph. She has been a pastry chef since 2014 and actively participates in various projects—such as workshops and food design initiatives—that promote the role of food as a tool for communication and empowerment.





## YUJIA SONG

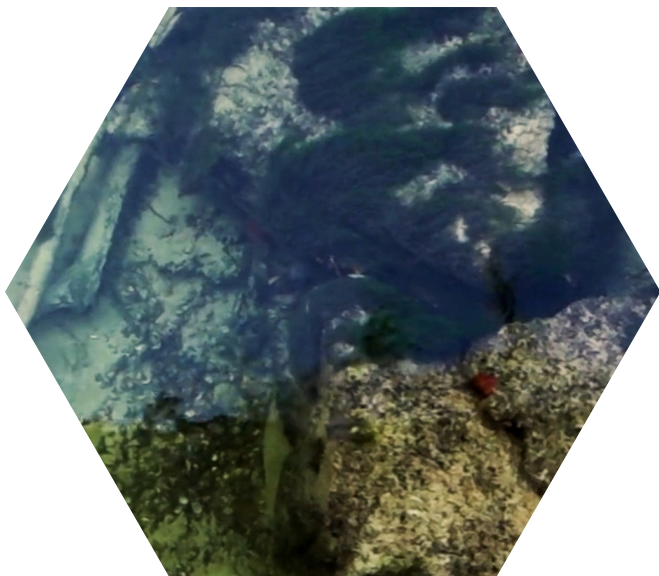
### In touch with Nature

Despite the growing recognition among philosophers that multisensory engagement is preferable to a vision-centered approach in our appreciation of nature, the role of touch remains largely overlooked. Drawing on nature writing, phenomenology, and the Chinese aesthetic tradition, this paper explores the distinctive role touch plays in our aesthetic experience of the objects, atmospheres, and relationships in nature. I argue that touch not only enriches our sensory perception of all that makes up nature, but also grounds a profound sense of connectedness that goes to the heart of nature's unique aesthetic appeal. In addition to actual touch, possibilities of touch are key to nature appreciation as well. The availability of any tactile possibilities is a precondition for experiencing the materiality of nature. Tactile possibilities permeate our visual perception -- we can see the hardness of the tree trunk, the fragility of the butterfly, the fluffy coat of new snow over the bush -- and auditory experience -- we can hear the force of the wind or the lightness of raindrops. They also often directly constitute our experience of nature as, say, "out of reach" or "extending its arms out to us." Our longing to be in touch with nature is most clearly seen in cases where touch is prohibited or limited. Precisely because we are fundamentally part of nature, I contend that our own

embodied presence, which touch entails and emphasizes, supports proper appreciation of nature rather than corrupts it. Through it we establish a relationship with nature at once intimate and precarious and come to appreciate nature in its "natural" qualities, such as its magnitude, force/fragility, change/permanence, indifference/vulnerability to us. This paper is then as much an invitation to reconsider what it means to appreciate nature as nature as it is vindication of the weighty contribution touch makes to this experience.

**Yujia Song** is an associate professor of philosophy at Salisbury University. Her research explores the connections between the ethical, intellectual, and aesthetic dimensions of our lives. She has published on empathy, open-mindedness, play, scientific inquiry, and food aesthetics, and is working on a project on the nature and value of appreciation in the context of interpersonal relationships.



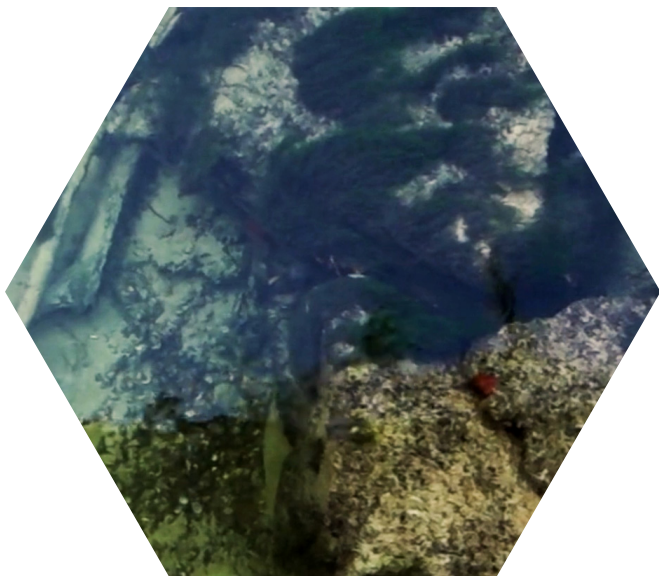


## NIN KIRKHAM

### Psychedelic re-enchantment: Psychedelic experiences, the sublime, and the environmental virtues

Research into the effects of psychedelic experiences on human subjects is flourishing at the same time that we are seeing increasing evidence of the crucial importance to human wellbeing of a sustained connection with nature. While much of the focus of the contemporary ‘psychedelic renaissance’ has been on mental health interventions, many subjects have reported that transcendent psychedelic experiences had lasting positive effects on their relationship to the natural world. And it seems that the capacity of psychedelics to durably increase these feelings of connection to the natural world—to re-enchant nature—is attested by participants in recent clinical trials even when the substances have been administered in an indoor setting with no explicit intention to increase such feelings. Referring to both qualitative and quantitative evidence, I will show that psychedelic experiences offer us a safe and effective method for re-engaging people with the natural world. I argue that the controlled and intentional use of classic psychedelic substances such as LSD and psilocybin can facilitate intense aesthetic experiences of awe and of the sublime, which can thereby rapidly catalyse the development of environmental consciousness and environmental ethics in individuals.

**Nin Kirkham** is the Deputy Head of School of Humanities at the University of Western Australia. Her research is on issues in applied ethics, especially environmental virtue ethics and the concepts of nature and naturalness as they are employed in debates in environmental ethics, bioethics and technology. More recently she has been working with a colleague Dr Chris Letheby on the role of psychedelic experiences in the development of environmental virtues. Their current collaboration focuses on the development of a virtue based integrative account of psychedelic moral enhancement. She currently teaches in the areas of critical thinking, continental philosophy, and ethics. Nin also has extensive experience teaching professional ethics and critical thinking into disciplines outside philosophy, including engineering, business and science. She is involved in the promotion and support of philosophy in schools, and philosophy in the community. <https://research-repository.uwa.edu.au/en/persons/nin-kirkham>



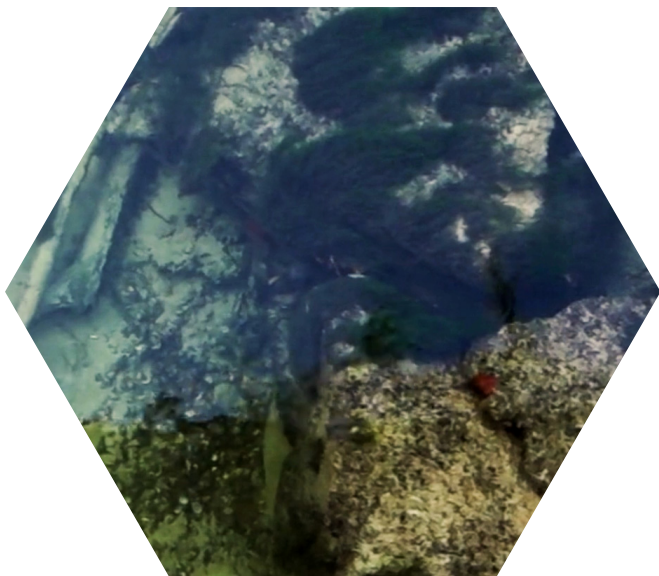
## VALERIA COSTANZA D'AGATA

### Experiencing the texture of the world: an aesthetic insight on people with neurodiversity

The interaction of body and environment has engaged theoretical biology all through the twentieth century, searching in action and perception circuits for the way bodies establish a balance with the environment (Uexküll 1933). It is sometimes an anti-logical relation in which acting and being acted intertwine, and the conditions of vulnerability, the experience of limitation release a surge of creative energy aimed at building a new identity and establishing a new equilibrium (Weizsäcker 1947). At times, the external changes have a profound bearing on the individual and on the way s/he perceives her/himself, especially when the boundaries between the self and the other vanish and one feels in a constant intercourse with every element in the environment, in a sort of presentational immediacy where any change completely redefines one's self-perception. Attention is not focused on external objects, but on the relations in the field preceding the emerging multiplicity, the dance with-in-towards-around the environment in its blooming (Manning, Massumi 2014). A correspondence is established which grounds and precedes any distinction between subject and object, a haptic mode (Perullo 2022) of perception which primarily seizes the relationship, making action impossible, lost in the indistinctness of self and other-than-self. This particularly happens to people with ASD, who experience the texture of the world and establish an inter-affective resonance with the environment, a kind of empathy that makes no distinction between organic and inorganic elements (entertainment), emphasizing the immediacy of the reciprocal

relation. In such a perspective aesthetics as aesthesiology cannot overlook those atmospheric ways of being-in-the-world (Böhme 2016, Griffero 2017), attentive to that expressive potential in which subject and world meeting together constantly redefine themselves, suggesting other ways to navigate the environment.

**Valeria Costanza D'Agata** is a researcher in Aesthetics at the Department of Cognitive, Psychological, Pedagogical Sciences and Cultural Studies (COSPECS) at the University of Messina, where she teaches Aesthetics, Aesthetics of Landscape, Neuroaesthetics of Arts and Media, Phenomenology of Arts, PDF and PEI Life Project Design, and Models of Quality of Life. She obtained her Ph.D. in Aesthetics and Theory of Arts and the title of Doctor Europaeus at the University of Palermo, in co-tutorship with the University of Potsdam, where she earned the title of Doctor Philosophiae. She is a member of the Italian Society of Aesthetics (SIE), the Aesthetics Network in Sicily (RES), and the scientific committee of several top-tier academic journals, as well as research groups on aesthetics and morphology. She has been a speaker at national and international conferences on topics such as aesthetics, morphology, philosophy of medicine, and philosophical anthropology. Her current research interests and publications focus on aesthetics and neurodiversity, empathy, and the performing arts. [vcdagata@unime.it](mailto:vcdagata@unime.it)



## MAMI AOTA

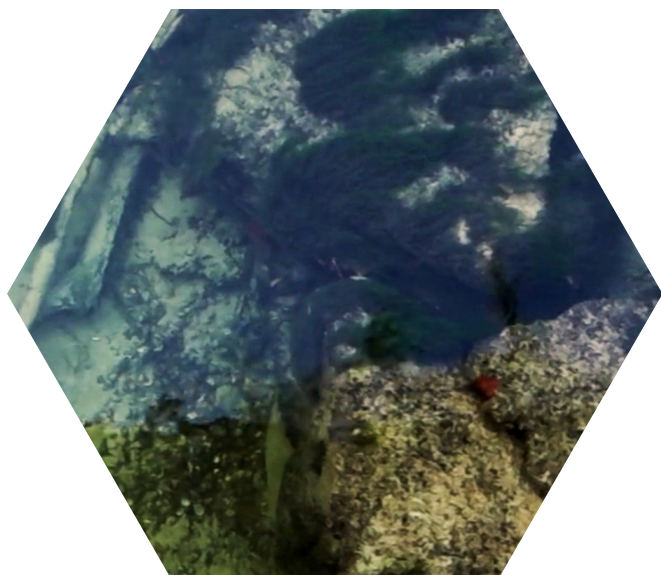
### Aesthetic Experience of the Temporary in Urban Life

This presentation explores the aesthetic experience of strangeness evoked by “the temporary” in urban spaces. As Arto Haapala says, city life is filled not only with familiarity but also strangeness. We constantly encounter new buildings and neighborhoods. These changes contribute to our sense of strangeness. People have been discussing urban changes as a matter of city planning which aims to long-lasting transformation of cities. However, temporary interventions, such as tactical urbanism and art projects, have received more attention recently. What kind of strangeness do these temporary changes bring to urban life? This presentation will examine the significance of “the temporary” by looking at its unique temporality. For this purpose, I will focus on the presentness of cities. We often focus on the future of cities because the capitalist logic of unbounded growth is a condition of the existence of cities. At the same time, urban planners try to preserve the past—rehabilitating historical buildings, for example—for a reflective counterbalance to rapid redevelopment. However, we—cities and inhabitants—live in the present. I will argue that temporary interventions emphasize the city’s presentness, which cannot be subsumed in either the future or the past. Using some examples and referring mainly to John Dewey’s philosophy of experience, I will show that temporary ele-

ments do not just add something new to urban life. They also challenge and transform our familiarity with cities, offering us a new perspective on urban life. It means that the temporary, a variation of strangeness, can reshape our relationships with everyday environments. The temporary can offer us a way to live differently while staying in the same city. It suggests us the possibility to experience ‘the possible present’ that is not same as the current one. We can change our urban life not in the future but now.

**Mami AOTA** is a full-time lecturer in Gunma Prefectural Women’s University (Japan). She got her PhD degree in 2018 at University of Tokyo. Her research fields are environmental aesthetics and everyday aesthetics. She currently focuses on everyday aesthetic experience of city dwellers. She has published two books and many papers in Japanese. She has also published some papers in English. Here are her principle works in English: “Past-Oriented and Future-Oriented Frames of Familiarity: Aesthetic Experience in Everyday Environments”, in *Contemporary Aesthetics* 22 (2024); “Environmental Humanities and Aesthetics” in Max Ryyänen and Zoltán Somhegyi (eds.) *Aesthetic Theory Across the Disciplines*, Rowman & Littlefield (2023); “As Beautiful as an Artwork!: Reconsidering Artistic and Natural Beauty”, *Culture and Dialogue* 5 (1) (2017).





## UNA THORLAKSDOTTIR

### Placed experiences and aesthetic understandings

Are we being respectful when we stand before a place as a tourist and appreciate its visual beauty? Where are we really placed when we find ourselves somewhere with or through technology? What does it take to actually “be there” and be so in a respectful way? I find that Jeff Malpas’ philosophy and his concept of triangulation as well as Yuriko Saito’s notion of understanding nature’s “own story” are relevant to answer these questions, which I will illustrate in connection to the case example of Stuðlagil in the East of Iceland. In my talk I will ask what it means a) to be a part of a place, b) to experience a place, and c) whether one can be said to have ethical obligations towards places. This moral requirement could perhaps be called environmental awareness but I argue that concepts such as attunement and care are also important in this context. I will argue, in response to a), b), and c) that we indeed are placed subjects that are simultaneously parts of a world as well as experiencing the world as if experienced “from the outside”. When we do, the place we are appreciating might in some sense be thought of as a moral subject if we extend the notion of morality a bit. Aesthetic appreciation of places can be considered disrespectful, sometimes due to the place’s entanglement in (human) local history but other times only due to the place’s own (biological, geological etc.) history and intrinsic value.

Aesthetic understandings, a term I will invent and use in the talk, always are connected to our understanding of the world and what it means to be human. I argue that aesthetic sensitivity is crucially connected to environmental awareness and the potential of respecting and caring for the world we find ourselves in.

**Una Thorlaksdottir** is a philosophy teacher in Reykjavík. She has an MA in Aesthetics and a BA in philosophy from Uppsala University. Among her research interests are aesthetic value, the ethics of nature and place and phenomenology of sound and music. In addition to teaching philosophy, she works as a research assistant at the University of Iceland. She is a guest editor for this year’s special issue of the *Nordic Journal of Aesthetics* following the annual conference held in Reykjavik last year.



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