

# POETRY OF THE REAL

Lecture Series / Study Program  
October – December 2018



**1**  
Eric Ellingsen, St. Louis (USA)

October  
23<sup>rd</sup>  
5:15 – 6:45 p.m.

Eric Ellingsen, *Fighting Ceremony*, JAN MEDA, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 2011, photo. Courtesy the Artist

**2**

Wolf von Kries, *The Gathering*, 2015, steel, ppp-rope, placyterium bifurcatum, set of combs, size and dimension variable. Courtesy the Artist

Wolf von Kries, Berlin

October  
30<sup>th</sup>  
5:15 – 6:45 p.m.



**3**

Nina Canell, *Brief Syllable (Skewed)*, 2018, underwater power cable, 35 x 30 cm (diameter)  
Courtesy Galerie Barbara Wien, Daniel Marzona, Mendes Wood (Fotografie: Sebastian Stadler)

Nina Canell, Berlin / Växjö

October  
31<sup>st</sup>  
6:30 – 7:30 p.m. \*



**4**

Pakui Hardware,  
Vilnius / Berlin

November  
20<sup>th</sup>  
5:15 – 6:45 p.m.



Pakui Hardware, *On Demand*, 2017, heat-treated plexiglass, stainless steel columns, plexiglass profiles with pvc film held by clamps containing water colored with sky blue edible pigment, uv prints on pvc pentaprint film attached to tripods with spring clamps, ceramics, silicone, size and dimensions variable. Courtesy the Artists, EXILE

**5**

Karmen Franinović, Zurich

November  
27<sup>th</sup>  
6:15 – 7:45 p.m.

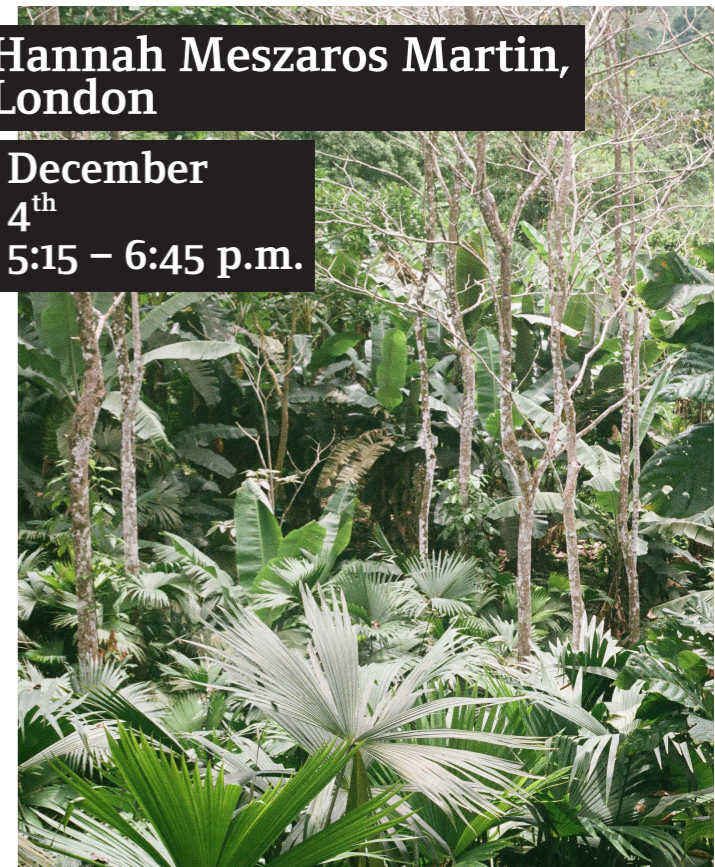


Karmen Franinović, *Electric Animal Plant*, 2017, Palm House in Old Botanical Garden, Zurich, project picture. Courtesy Enactive Environments Lab

**6**

Hannah Meszaros Martin,  
London

December  
4<sup>th</sup>  
5:15 – 6:45 p.m.



Hannah Meszaros Martin, *The Forest / Farm of Javier Sánchez from the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó*, 2014, La Unión, Colombia. Courtesy Hannah Meszaros Martin

All lectures are open to the public and take place in building D (studio-kino / groundfloor). Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz, Hochschule für Gestaltung und Kunst, Freilager Platz 1, 4002 Basel

\* Excursion to Kunstmuseum, Sankt Gallen, Artist Talk with Nina Canell

# POETRY OF THE REAL

## Lecture Series / Study Program October – December 2018

**Poetry of the Real** – this title has been used in different contexts within the academy. My understanding of the poetological turn – and this is also the basis of the lecture series is not only language-oriented but also emphasizes artistic practice as a poetological process. Following the poetological turn, the aim of the lectures is to show how artists/designers transform archival orders of knowledge and their modes of representation by negotiating different disciplines (historical, cultural, poetological, geological) at the same time. How do artists/designers translate information into other media and material modes of presentation and negotiate them in the sense of artistic narratives? I think it could be exciting to learn more about these cross connections and how they are developed by artists/designers. The emphasis here lies mainly on identifying new constellations of meaning. Considering the wide range of methods, contexts and disciplines artists/designers have been working with, it would be fascinating to gain insight into their practices. By that I also mean their working strategies, their conceptualizations of their work, in particular, the role played by research in this development and finally how they deal with this data in conceptualizing their work. I think this is especially interesting because of the trans-disciplinary approach it entails. How to negotiate different disciplines (ecological, economical, historical, cultural, biological etc) at the same time? What must artist/designers do differently in order to participate in the world of research? How can they broaden their definitions of materials, contexts, subjects and themes? How can they develop their curiosity about scientific and technological research and acquire the skills and knowledge that will allow them to have an impact in these areas? And not least what about the special affinities with certain philosophical or literary approaches?

**Prof. Dr. Melanie Franke, Head of Study–Program: *Poetry of the Real***

**PhD candidates: Michaela Büsse, Felipe Castelblanco, Tena Kelemen, Joseph Popper, Kambiz Shafeei, Karolina Sobeca**

# 1

**October 23<sup>rd</sup>  
5:15 – 6:45 p.m.**

**Eric Ellingsen** is an artist, landscape architect, writer and educator. His work entangles social engagement, public space, mapping, language, sound, perception, walking, new and old media, citizen based design and alternative pedagogical platforms. Eric is an Assistant Professor in Landscape Architecture at Washington University, St Louis. He established Species of Space in 2009. From 2009-2014, Eric co-directed the Institut für Raumexperimente, Olafur Eliasson, Universität der Künste, Berlin.

***basket of vegetables with a redheaded doll of a leek laid across it***  
**DIALOGUE OF DOING (and the FABRICATORS OF THE ATTACHMENT)**

*The Dialogue of Doing* is a method of artistic and design research whose articulation does not require the artist or designer to know how to say something before doing it. A *Dialogue of Doing* materializes the imagination in real-time through experience and experimentation. Constraint based processes are engaged that allow a particular place and people-based dynamics to emerge. Scientific intuition is cultivated. Presuppositions are suspended. Affective labor becomes transparent so as not to exploit and instrumentalize participants and partners. A *Space of Trust* develops. Critical praxis evolves. Shared stories are entangled and materialize as precise spatial narratives and alternative micro-democracies. The *Dialogue of Doing* is a learning method based on (a) observation (b) experimentation (c) selection (d) measure and (e) translation. Non-predetermined objectives, goals and aims emerge. Prescribed pedagogical magnets attracting outcomes that shoe-horn process towards predefined corralled 'results' are rejected. The result, as Sherlock Holmes says of good detectives, is that the facts are made to fit to the crimes, rather than making crimes fit to the known facts (bad detective)

# 2

**October 30<sup>th</sup>  
5:15 – 6:45 p.m.**

**Wolf von Kries** often makes subtle interventions in everyday routines and ordinary objects to suggest alternative ways to read our environment. More concerned with generating a shift of perception rather than actual physical transformations, his research based practice has evolved over the years to encompass walking, gathering and (re)interpreting or juxtaposing his finds with phenomena of seemingly unrelated fields and disciplines. To this end, research residencies all over the world have become an integral part of his working practice. He has exhibited widely, including: NBK Berlin; Museo El Eco in Mexico City; CEEAC Strasbourg; Centre d'Art contemporain La Ferme du Buisson Marne La Vallée; Simultanhalle, Cologne; Espace Ricard, Paris; Kunsthalle Schirn, Frankfurt; Kunsthalle Exnergasse, Vienna and Tate Modern, London.

***Catch of the Day***

For his lecture at FHNW he will present and discuss some of his latest works and the methodologies he uses in developing new projects. Starting with a thorough analysis of the strategies and conditions applied on his artist book M, *Notes on the Meander*, von Kries will discuss the aesthetic potential in looking at any given phenomenon through the lenses and techniques of different and unrelated scientific disciplines and fields of study. To this end he goes on to analyze the relevance and employment of chance not only in artistic practices but as an evolutionary tool for the production of meaning in general.

# 3

**October 31<sup>st</sup>  
6:30 – 7:30 p.m.**

**Nina Canell** lives and works in Berlin. She has participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions at venues including the Nordic Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, the Museo Tamayo in Mexico City, Moderna Museet in Stockholm, the Hamburger Bahnhof in Berlin, and the Douglas Hyde Gallery in Dublin.

***Reflexologies***

She has created new works specifically for the exhibition Reflexologies at the Kunstmuseum St. Gallen such as the work presented in the foyer, *Brief Syllable (Skewed)*, a part of an underwater cable. The slightly compressed diagonal cross-section cut diagonally at one end, it reveals a cleverly organized graphic arrangement of metal conducting elements, insulating material and reinforcements enclosed in a corrosion-resistant sheath. These are remnants of deep-sea cables that were laid underwater and used to transmit data or electricity. Devoid of their original purpose, they symbolize the transfer of inconceivable amounts of information over large distances.

# 4

**November 20<sup>th</sup>  
5:15 – 6:45 p.m.**

**Pakui Hardware** is a name given to a collaboration between Ugnius Gelguda and Neringa erniauskaitė set up in 2014. The artists are based between Vilnius and Berlin. The duo's work spans the relationship between materiality, technology and economy, particularly on how technology is shaping the current economy and physical reality itself, including the human body. Their recent exhibitions include *Low Form*, MAXXI, Rome; *The Return of Sweetness*, Tenderpixel (solo), London; *Solar Bodies*, Musée d'Orsay, Paris; *Give up the Ghost*, 13th Baltic Triennial, Contemporary Art Centre, Vilnius; *Somewhere in between*, Bozar, Brussels; *Vanilla Eyes*, mumok (solo), Vienna, and *Ungestalt*, Kunsthalle Basel. Upcoming institutional exhibitions include Bielefelder Kunstverein (solo), Bielefeld, Germany; Museum der bildenden Künste (solo), Leipzig, Germany and Center for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw.

***On Redrawing the Limits of Imagination***

The performative lecture involves intermingling bacterial bodies, capital, indeterminacy and synthetic biology in one complex bio-technical assemblage. Synthetic biology claims to be able to create life from scratch. Such a claim immediately challenges the established notions between "natural" and "artificial", between given and man-made. By opening up the possibility of designing nature, this new type of biology not only fires the imaginations (and also reveals their limitations) of artists, designers, philosophers and even theologians, but also poses a question – how to make this additional human penetration in the environment less anthropocentric? Perhaps it could be done by decoupling synthetic biology and the Promethean project of capitalism? Theorist Luciana Parisi offers us a tool for dismantling this relationship – indeterminacy. Indeterminacy, unpredictability, contingency are the features of matter that synthetic biology embraces and that escape the computational rational logic of capital. Indeterminacy also points us back to the imagination: are we ready to design the given?

# 5

**November 27<sup>th</sup>  
6:15 – 7:45 p.m.**

**Karmen Franinović** is a practice-based researcher moved by the desire to explore transformative, dynamic and ephemeral processes, be it a soundscape, a building, an act of creation, a learning process, a sculpture or a material. Focusing on non-verbal and spatial interaction, she has worked on the design of large scale public buildings, created participatory urban environments, developed active materials and sonic sculptures, haptic floor tiles and wearables for movement rehabilitation. Karmen holds the Laurea degree in architecture from Venice University, a Master's from the Interaction Design Institute Ivrea and a PhD in Art and Media from Plymouth University. She is Professor of Interaction Design at Zurich University of the Arts and the co-founder of Zero-Th studios. Challenging the established interaction paradigms, Karmen's previous research proposed a novel *enactive* approach to urban and sonic interaction, which she is currently extending to her work with active materials.

***The Joy of Not Knowing : With Active Materials***

How can we enable flows of matter and thought that escape solidification into fixed objects and concepts? How can we think materials actively and how can we engage with them in an active rather than controlling manner? Active materials, often labeled "smart", have been developed for purposes of efficiency and functionality. At *Enactive* Environments Lab, we search for new ways of thinking and creating with such materials. Enactive stands for an embodied and situated type of knowledge found both in hands-on research processes and in the interaction with physical worlds. Theories of enactive cognition show that the world helps guide or modulate action that, in turn, continuously results in the body realigning and remaking that world. Theoretically and practically, we aim to investigate enactive approaches beyond living and non-living dichotomies. We take active material processes outside scientific labs and into the hands of researchers. We embrace the disobedience of active matter and work with "errors", qualities which are undesired in engineering contexts. Through hands-on experiments, we follow what the materials propose conceptually and aesthetically instead of imposing ideas on matter. By opening up alternative paths for materials, we let them flow and leak into the world, affect our imagination and thought and intertwine with them in unexpected ways.

# 6

**December 4<sup>th</sup>  
5:15 – 6:45 p.m.**

**Hannah Meszaros Martin** is an artist, writer and currently a CHASE funded PhD candidate at the Center for Research Architecture. Her work focuses on non-human criminality and environmental violence in the context of the ongoing armed conflict in Colombia. She was a part of the Modelling Kivalina group which exhibited at the House of World Cultures (HKW), Berlin and of Forensic Architecture's exhibition and contributed to FORENSIS (Sternberg, 2014). She has exhibited solo work in Medellin, London and at the documenta(13). She has published with Open Democracy and Different Skies, a publication that she co-founded in 2012.

***Before and After Leaves***

This presentation will examine the antecedents of Colombia's fumigation campaign back to British colonial experimentation with herbicides and the defoliation strategies of the Cold War. There, not for the first time but certainly in a particularly acute way, the forest was constructed as an image, the canopy being understood as an image-surface that had, as it were, to be detached from the environment in order to reveal the enemy hiding underneath. This highly imagistic conception of nature is carried forward into the present Colombian context, but in a modified, twisted form. Now the plant – the leaf-surface – is itself the enemy. In the case of the US war on Vietnam, plant life was de facto co-criminalised by association with a human enemy, indeed with a political movement - that being Communism. In the Colombian case, the criminalisation of non-human life is formal, and thus the eradication appears to prioritise the plant; people are guilty by association with coca. However, it is worth remembering that eradication still takes place in the context of counterinsurgency warfare, such that the 'war on drugs' could be read as a stand-in for a war of political and environmental domination.

## Discussions & Colloquiums (Not open to the public)

**October 17<sup>th</sup>  
2:00 – 3:30 p.m. discussion**

**Prof. Dr. Melanie Franke**  
**Introducing Case Studies (drafting & conception study program)**

**October, 24<sup>th</sup>  
10:15 – 11:45 a.m. colloquium**  
**Guest: Eric Ellingsen**

**Presentation by PhD candidate Felipe Castelblanco**  
**2:00 – 3:30 p.m. discussion**  
**Case studies by Michaela Büsse, Kambiz Shafeei**

**October 31<sup>st</sup>  
10:15 – 11:45 a.m. colloquium**  
**Guest: Wolf von Kries**

**Presentation by PhD candidate Joseph Popper**  
**Approx 2:00 p.m. Excursion to Nina Canell, «Reflexologies», Kunstmuseum Sankt Gallen**

**November 22<sup>nd</sup>  
10:15 – 11:45 a.m. colloquium**  
**Presentation by PhD candidate Karolina Sobeca**

**2:00 – 3:30 p.m. discussion**  
**Case studies by Felipe Castelblanco, Tena Kelemen**

**November 28<sup>th</sup>  
10:15 – 11:45 a.m. colloquium**  
**Guest: Karmen Franinović**

**Presentation by PhD candidate Michaela Büsse**  
**2:00 – 3:30 p.m.**  
**Presentation by PhD candidate Tena Kelemen**

**December 5<sup>th</sup>  
10:15 – 11:45 a.m. colloquium**  
**Guest: Hannah Meszaros Martin**

**Presentation by PhD candidate Kambiz Shafeei**  
**2:00 – 3:30 p.m. discussion**  
**Case studies by Joseph Popper, Karolina Sobeca**

**All colloquiums take place in the meeting room on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor and all discussions take place in the meeting room on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor.**