

**Program**

**Other Worlds –**

**Octopuses in Interdisciplinary Perspective**

**A Virtual Conference**

**30/31 October 2020**

## Day 1, 30 October

(All Times: CET)

18:30-19:00 **Welcome: Organizing Committee**

19:00-19:45 **1st Section: Bodily Configurations**

“Altered Ways of Being”, Burton Nitta, London, UK

“From Form to Formlessness”, Patricia Ribault, Humboldt University, Berlin, GER

Alexander Ziegler, University of Bonn, GER (*tbc*)

19:45-20:15 **Discussion 1**

20:15-20:30 *Break*

20:30-21:30 **2nd Section: Alternating Encounters**

“The Giant Squid: The Creation of Monster”, Otto Latva, University of Turku, FIN

“The Decline and Fall of Evelyn Waugh's Octopuses”, Toby Juliff, University of Tasmania, AUS

“What Lies at the Heart”, Rachel Bailey, University of Tasmania, AUS

“‘I’d like to be under the sea’: In Search for Octopus Soundscapes”, Martin Ullrich, Nuremberg University of Music, GER

21:30-22:00 **Discussion 2**

22:00-22:10 *Break*

22:10-22:40 **Keynote: “What is the World Like for an Octopus?”** Jennifer Mather, University of Lethbridge, AB, CAN

22:40-23:30 **Podium Discussion**, Jennifer Mather, Jayson Semmens (University of Tasmania, AUS), Sidney Carls-Diamante (University of Konstanz, GER)

## Day 2, 31 October

(All Times: CET)

### 18:30-19:30 **3rd Section: Living With**

“Visiting Octopus: Seeing Through Glass Clearly”,  
Hörner/Antlfinger, artist collective, Cologne, GER

“Thriving in Context: The Octopus World”, Chelsea Harry,  
Southern Connecticut State University, New Haven, CT, USA

Clip from Movie: “Oh Brother Octopus”, Florian Kuhnert,  
Acadmy of Media Arts Cologne, GER

“Octopuses and Other Sea Beings in Brazilian Literature:  
Animal Agency in João Guimarães Rosa's *Aquário (Nápoles)*”,  
Ana Carolina Torquato, FAE Centro Universitário, Curitiba,  
BRA

### 19:30-20:00 **Discussion 3**

20:00-20:10 *Break*

### 20:10-21:10 **4th Section: Motives of Alterity**

“Cephalization”, NEOZOON, Berlin, Dresden, GER

“Searching for Octopuses in the Amazon”, Mike Singe,  
Hobart, AUS

“*feeler*: Octopus Motherhood and Meat”, mOwson &  
MOWson, Melbourne, AUS

“Towards an animal-inclusive ethics/aesthetics of alterity, via  
Peter Godfrey-Smith's *Other Minds*”, Christie Oliver-Hobley,  
University of Sheffield, UK

### 21:10-21:40 **Discussion 4**

21:40-22:00 *Break*

22:00-22:30 **Performance Lecture: “Ten Tickles (my fancy)”**, Madison  
Bycroft, Marseille, FRA

22:30-23:00 **Closing Remarks**

**1<sup>st</sup> Section:**

**Bodily Configurations**

## **Altered Ways of Being**

*Michael Burton & Michiko Nitta, London, UK*

### **Abstract**

See with the skin, smell with suckers, change colour for social interactions and sense the world with a brain distributed across the body. These octopus abilities shape a mind that is possibly one of the most different non-human forms of intelligence to our own. The octopus inspires us to explore altered ways of being in the world and to gain insights into the relationship between the body and mind.

The development of the work took us on a journey through wide-ranging sources. These include an encounter with a common octopus called Pumpkin, Peter Godfrey-Smith's book *Other Minds*, coaching practices, folklore and neuroscience. In response, we built devices to adapt our bodies and extend the mind. In doing so, we discover a veil of reality similar to the aquarium glass where we first met the octopus. We ask:

By attempting to feel and experience the octopus, can we gain insights into our mind? If we change our body with technology, how might our mind and perception of reality also change?

### **Biography**

Based in London, UK, Burton Nitta is a transdisciplinary art and design studio collaborating with scientists to investigate new technologies in the field of evolutionary future research. Their recent work "New Organs of Creation" (2019), developed in collaboration with scientists at Kings College London, presents a hypothetical development of the human larynx (voice box), using tissue engineering to extend the ability of the voice as a transformational instrument. Their projects such as "Algaculture" (2010), "Instruments of the Afterlife" (2015) and "Landscape Within" (2016) are exhibited and performed internationally, most recently at CID Hornu/Centre Pompidou Paris (2020/2019), Vienna Biennale for Change MAK (2019–24), and Science Gallery London (2019).

## From Form to Formlessness: The Strategy of the Octopus

Patricia Ribault, Weißensee Academy of Art Berlin, GER

### Abstract

It is well known that the octopus is a master of deception: they can adopt the form of a stone, for example, to hide from irksome sights. But they are not simply content with being invisible and watching their surroundings through a watchful eye. They are also masters of metamorphosis, heroes of metis, capable of inhabiting the place, form and color of a sea snake, a scorpionfish or a turbot so effectively, that we almost forget their usual appearance.

In the end, they are polupaipalos – tricksters, convertible, complex, slippery. Nature has furnished octopuses ideally for this role: without bones or cartilage, five hundred million neurons along each of their eight arms. In short, the literally bodyless octopus is made for polymorphism.

What, then, can octopuses teach us about the art of camouflage? Maybe, that appearance and disappearance are primarily a question of form, body, flesh – form in the sense of Merleau-Ponty, as he described it in his work note: „A form that descends from polymorphism, places us completely outside any philosophy of subject and object“ (*The Visible and the Invisible*).

### Biography

Patricia Ribault started her career in design, ceramics and glassblowing and her research interests cover the fields of design, craft, art, body, work, technology, industry. Since 2011 she has also been leading a master's seminar at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux Arts in Paris. At Weißensee Academy of Arts, she strengthens teaching and research as professor for “Performative Design Research” in the Department of Theory and History. Before this, she was Junior Professor for History and Theory of Gestaltung at the Institute for Cultural History and Theory at Humboldt-University Berlin, where she was involved in the Cluster of Excellence “Image Knowledge Gestaltung”, the forerunner of “Matters of Activity”, for which she is also a Principal Investigator.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Section:**

### **Alternating Encounters**

## **The Giant Squid: The Creation of Monster**

*Otto Latva, University of Turku, FIN*

### **Abstract**

My presentation focuses on the monsterization process of a deep-sea dwelling animal, the giant squid. Today, the giant squid is usually understood as an animal that has evoked terror in humankind since the dawn of history and that the tales of these deep-sea monsters spread to the public domain from seafaring tales. In this presentation, I am going to demonstrate that this understanding is fallacious. I have studied the written and illustrated sources based on encounters and sightings of giant-sized squid such as diaries, letters, newspapers, published books, and logbooks of whaling vessels and other ships, and wrote a PhD thesis on the subject. At the moment, I am revising a book about the monsterization of the giant squid. The key results of my study is that squid defined today as belonging to the giant squid species were not widely understood as frightening and ugly animals in transatlantic culture until the last decades of the nineteenth century. Furthermore, the monsterization did not originate in seafaring tales, but the context of natural history. Although the enlightenment scholars wanted to remove all the unexplained and strange from nature, their studies created new monstrosities, from which the giant squid is an excellent example.

### **Biography**

Otto Latva is a historian, who works as a head of research in the sea and maritime research unit at the University of Turku, Finland. He is specialized in human-animal studies and the historical perceptions of the sea environment. Latva has studied especially how humans have monsterized non-human nature and how they have exploited it. He has written various research and popular articles as well as a book about these themes. Latva's PhD-thesis examined the monsterization of the giant squid in transatlantic culture from the 1760s to the 1890s.

## **The Decline and Fall of Evelyn Waugh's Octopuses**

*Toby Juliff, University of Tasmania, Hobart, AUS*

### **Abstract**

There are many octopuses in the literary world of English novelist Evelyn Waugh (1903-66). From the monstrous metaphor of Empire inherited from the late 19th Century, through to *The Octopus and England* (1928) critique of sprawling suburban architecture inherited from his friend Clough Williams. In Waugh's novel though there are other octopuses – living creatures in varying states of entrapment and wildness. In Waugh, the octopus shifts from allegory to animal throughout a series of novels that recuperates the sentience and intelligence of the cephalopod, albeit within a highly conservative frame. This paper traces Waugh's fascination with the octopus beyond metaphor and allegory, and attempts to locate the narrative of the caged octopuses that so often appear in his novels.

### **Biography**

Toby Juliff is lecturer in Critical Practices and coordinator of the Fine Arts Honors program at the University of Tasmania. From 2012 to 2017 he was lecturer in Critical and Theoretical Studies at the University of Melbourne. A curator, historian and artist, Toby has published widely on modern sculpture, contemporary video and heritage studies. Recent essays explore the histories of British Art in New York (ANZJA), confessional video art (Journal of Visual Practices) and the interface of participatory art and cultural heritage (Emotion, Affective Practices and the Past in the Present). Recently curated exhibitions include Gothic pathologies, quarantines, and creative explorations of fear and transmission (Plimssoll Gallery). He lives and works in Hobart.

## **What Lies at the Heart**

*Rachel Bailey, University of Tasmania, Hobart, AUS*

### **Abstract**

Rachel Bailey takes up the challenge to respond to the famous 1814 woodblock-print by the Japanese artist Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849) that depicts a sexual encounter between two octopuses and a female diver, popularly known in English as the “Dream of the Fisherman’s Wife”. The image is as shockingly repulsive as it is arousing, with its reprehensible seduction and union across species boundaries and the stimulation of our imagination of the potentials of the multi-sensational caressing of an octopus’s touch. Bailey moves past its erotic allure by weaving a story that links the historical artwork with revenge porn, entwining the oppression of women and animals under patriarchy. Thereby, she challenges the world as it seems, and asks us to imagine a quite different one, a different truth, a different possible encounter with the octopuses that moves beyond coordinates of male human fantasies and expectations of appropriation and domination.

### **Bio**

Despite spending most of her life trying to scam more time to read, Rachel has written books that have hit bestseller lists, are published in over 26 countries, and have been translated into 16 Languages. She is primarily published in contemporary romance and romantic comedy, but is interested in the broad scope of genre fiction. She has completed degrees in both psychology and social work, and is currently undertaking a PhD at the University of Tasmania. Her research sits at the intersection of popular romance studies and literary animal studies, with a particular focus on dog characters in romance novels. Rachel is a past president of the Romance Writers of Australia, and lives with her own personal hero and six rescue dogs on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland.

## **“I’d Like to be Under the Sea”: In Search for Octopus Soundscapes**

*Martin Ullrich, Nuremberg University of Music, GER*

### **Abstract**

Octopus encounters in Western popular music of the 1960s: well-known is “Octopus’s Garden” (The Beatles, Abbey Road, 1969). Around the same time, “Cement Octopus” (Malvina Reynolds/Pete Seeger, God Bless The Grass, 1966) and “Octopus” (Van der Graaf Generator, Aerosol Grey Machine, 1969) feature very different cephalopods.

Meanwhile, Jean Painlevé’s 1967 film *Les amours de la pieuvre* (The Love Life of an Octopus) presents film music by Pierre Henry, a pioneer of musique concrète and early composer of electronic music. The near-alien otherness of octopuses that Peter Godfrey-Smith describes: here is its early audiovisual realization.

However, what are the actual soundscapes of octopuses? Turning from pop culture to science studies, one recognizes that the hearing ability (or presumed deafness) of octopuses has been debated for decades.

Perhaps most remarkable is the theoretical middle ground that connects music and octopuses. Johann Nikolaus Forkel (*A General History of Music*, 1788) compares the evolution of human arts and sciences to the octopus. Jakob von Uexküll exemplifies his musical terminology of ecological meaning by the contrapuntal relation of water and octopus. And Peter Godfrey-Smith describes the organization of the octopus mind as similar to a jazz band. When it comes to music and sound, the octopuses turn out to be true animots in Derrida’s sense.

### **Biography**

Martin Ullrich studied piano in Frankfurt and Berlin and music theory, also in Berlin. He received his PhD in musicology in 2005. His main research area is sound and music in the context of human-animal studies. He has presented and chaired at international conferences and has published on animal music and the relationship between animal sounds and human music. Ullrich has been professor for music theory at Berlin University of the Arts from 2005 and president of Nuremberg University of Music from 2009. Since 2017, he is professor for interdisciplinary musicology and human-animal studies at Nuremberg University of Music.

## **Keynote & Podium Discussion**

## **What is the World Like for an Octopus?**

*Jennifer Mather, University of Lethbridge, AB, CAN*

### **Abstract**

The world provides us with many sensory experiences, and we sometimes think that these are universal. But no, every species samples some modalities, dimensions and experiences, and octopuses' are somewhat different from ours. Octopus eyes and human eyes are structurally very similar, but the use of vision is not always parallel. We have colour vision, they see the plane of polarization of light. We self-monitor visually, they use visual information for camouflage matching. Both of us, though, navigate around our world with visual input. We have specialized perception of mechanical distortion of air through hearing, they have widespread monitoring of movement of denser water. We have limited and localized perception of chemical cues, whereas octopuses have precise chemical and touch perception in all of their hundreds of suckers. We are the same but different, and I will also show how these abilities are adapted to our particular environments.

### **Biography**

A fascination with seashore animals as a child led me to a focus on animal behaviour, a background in Biology and Psychology to center on the complex and versatile octopuses. Both wide observation of octopuses in the field and closely-focused investigation of particular problems in the lab are necessary to paint a complete picture, though I have been fascinated by the cognitive capacity of cephalopods, in areas such as problem solving, play and personalities. Lately, realizing that these intelligent animals are nonetheless poorly regarded and protected, I have begun to work in welfare and ethics.

## **Podium Discussion**

*Jennifer Mather, University of Lethbridge, AB, CAN*

*Jayson Semmens, University of Tasmania, Hobart, AUS*

Jayson Semmens is a marine biologist/ecologist at the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies, University of Tasmania. For nearly 30 years he has been researching cephalopods (octopus, squid and cuttlefish). Out of this fascination grew this collection of “artefacts”, often discovered on holidays overseas or given as gifts to him. Each one has a story and as he looks at them on his desk or at home, they remind him of the various stages of his career and his love and fascination for the group called head (ceph) foot (poda).

*Sidney Carls-Diamante, Universtiy of Konstanz, GER*

Sidney Carls-Diamante is a Zukunftskolleg Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Konstanz. A philosopher by training, she specializes in investigating underexplored topics in cognitive science that challenge common conceptions about the mind. Her research integrates empirical findings with philosophical insights, to generate novel perspectives on understanding the mind. Among her research projects is a series of papers on cognition and consciousness in octopuses, the subject of her doctoral thesis at the University of Auckland. In 2019, she was awarded the Werner Callebaut Prize for interdisciplinary research by the International Society for the History, Philosophy and Social Studies of Biology (ISHPSSB).

**3<sup>rd</sup> Section:**  
**Living With**

## **VISITING OCTOPUS: Seeing Through Glass Clearly**

*Hörner/Antlfinger, Academy of Media Arts Cologne, GER*

### **Abstract**

In “Why look at Animals?” John Berger asked in his famous essay from 1977, in which he analysed the estrangement of humans and animals in the culture of capitalism. His criticism of the zoo as a place in which non-human animals are reduced to exhibition objects is still read and shared today. Interestingly, aquariums were, for a long time, exempt from this criticism. Even the early aquarists criticised zoos as prisons, but were at the same time convinced that the aquarium was something completely different – namely a part of the sea. In VISITING OCTOPUS we enter into contact with individual octopuses that live in environments designed and controlled by humans. In the sense of a multispecies ethnography we chronicle two interwoven narratives. Firstly, our own perception of the situation: the different actors, such as, for example, the glass, the architecture, the visitors. Secondly we attempt a change of perspective, by seeing the world through the eyes of the octopus. For this we experiment with methods of obtaining insight that create a connectedness; in particular we work with mental techniques of empathy such as those used by animal communicators and shamans.

### **Biography**

Ute Hörner and Mathias Antlfinger joined the Academy of Media Arts Cologne as professors for “Transmedial Spaces/Media Art” in 2009. Their installations, videos and sculptures deal with the relationships between humans, animals and machines and provide both: critical perspectives on changeable social constructs as well as utopian visions of fair interactions between these parties. Together with the grey parrots Clara and Karl they have been working as Interspecies Collaboration CMUK since 2014. Their works have been shown at international exhibitions and festivals, including CCA Tbilisi, ZKM | Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe, Shedhalle Zuerich, NMFA Taiwan, Ars Electronica Linz, Werkleitz Biennale Halle, Museum Ludwig Cologne, KAC Istanbul, and transmediale Berlin.

## **Thriving in Context: The Octopus World**

*Chelsea Harry, Southern Connecticut State University, New Haven, CT, USA*

### **Abstract**

According to ancient Greek philosopher, Aristotle, the appropriateness of an animal's environment—including not only the locale and resources, but also the existence of and company of others—is important for the animal's survival and essential for the animal's chance at thriving. In my presentation, I will consider the octopus world vis-a-vis Aristotle's biological sources, exploring the octopus world qua environment, and proposing that the octopus's environment is part of the octopus's identity and thus plays an inestimable part in its quality of life.

### **Biography**

Chelsea Harry is Professor of Philosophy at Southern Connecticut State University, USA and currently a visiting researcher at the University of Kassel. She works in the philosophy of nature with a particular interest in the relationship between theories of nature and concepts of time. Historically, she focuses on ancient Greek philosophy and late 18th-mid 19th century German philosophy. She is likewise interested in thinking about what kind of relationship we ought to have with the rest of nature now, in the 21st century.

## **Oh Brother Octopus**

*Florian Kuhnert, Academy of Media Arts Cologne, GER*

### **Abstract**

The sea nomads of Indonesia believe that with every newborn there is a twin brother in the form of an octopus. Rituals are carried out to appease the brother in the water and prevent misfortunes. When dishonor occurs, Jakarta is portrayed as the apocalyptic revenge of the brother octopus.

### **Biography**

Florian Kuhnert is a media artist and film director, who lives in Cologne. His work sits at the intersection of fine arts and hybrid filmmaking, drawing on methods of reenactment that blend documentary and fiction features. As part of making "Oh Brother Octopus", he lived and worked in Indonesia for one year. It premiered in the Berlinale Shorts Program in 2017 and won the German Short Film Prize. His first feature graduating film at the Academy of Media Arts Cologne, "Fortschritt im Tal der Ahnungslosen" (2016-2019), premiered in the Forum section of the Berlinale and 2019 won again the German Short Film prize.

## **Octopuses and Other Sea Beings in Brazilian Literature: Animal Agency in João Guimarães Rosa's *Aquário (Nápoles)***

Ana Carolina Torquato, FAE Centro Universitário, Curitiba, BRA

### **Abstract**

In this presentation, I focus on the analysis of animal agency in the 1970-short story "Aquário (Nápoles)" (Aquarium (Naples)) by Brazilian writer João Guimarães Rosa. In this story, the narrator describes a moment observing one octopus in an aquarium in the city of Naples, specifically: how the animal acts after being poked by one of the guards. I propose an analysis of the octopus' agency as a captive animal towards its environment and the other beings; I do so considering the concept of agency as a "relational field" as stated by Carter and Charles in "Animals, agency and resistance"<sup>1</sup>, as well as other works on the field, such as Helen Steward<sup>2</sup>.

### **Biography**

Ana Carolina Torquato is an animal and literary studies scholar working on animals in Brazilian literature. Her PhD thesis presents a history of Brazilian literature through the lens of animal studies under the title *Animal Representation in Brazilian Literature: From Ecological Imperialism to Animals as Agents*. The thesis identifies seven recurrent themes in Brazilian literature: colonised animals, idealised animals, national animals, animalised humans, domestic animals, animals as subjects, and animals as agents. Each piece is exemplified and analysed with selected literary texts that portray animals and animality in these situations. The research is the result of a collaboration between Torquato, the Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut zu Berlin, and the University of Potsdam, Germany.

---

<sup>1</sup> Bob Carter and Nicki Charles, "Animals, Agency, and Resistance", *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 43, no. 3 (2013): 322–340.

<sup>2</sup> Helen Steward, *A Metaphysics of Freedom*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

## **4<sup>th</sup> Section:**

### **Motives of Alterity**

## **Cephalization**

*Neozoon, Berlin, Dresden, Paris, GER, FRA*

### **Abstract**

NEOZOON's lecture focus will be their artistic film work and the investigation of speciesism BY using social media and pop cultural elements. For Okto-Lab, the Collective developed the 2-channel installation CEPHALIZATION, which deals with human octopods that consume themselves while telling disparaging jokes. The aim is always the modification of established visual patterns and the opening of new visual possibilities. De- and recontextualization of Found Footage and Youtube material is a recurring element in the work of NEOZOON, so the lecture will also be presented with different film clips of the last 10 years.

### **Biography**

NEOZOON is a female art collective founded in Berlin and Paris in 2009. The artistic work of the group is based on the principle of collage and examines sociological questions dealing with speciesism in the anthropocene. In their videos, the de- and recontextualization of found footage/YouTube material is a recurring element. Their work features in international film festivals and exhibitions, most recently at the 2020 HMKV Dortmund, at Deutsches Hygiene-Museum Dresden, at the 2019 Kurzfilmfestival Winterthur, at ISFF Oberhausen, at TechnoCare Vienna, and at IFFR Rotterdam.

## **Looking at Octopus in the Amazon**

*Mike Singe, Hobart, AUS*

### **Abstract**

I would like you to imagine a future world where octopus, tired of waiting for humans to gain the intellect to effectively communicate with other species of animals, have developed a language simple enough for humans to recognise and understand, a form of mental telepathy. What would it be like to have a conversation with an octopus and what would they want to know? What if, assisted by human technology, they were able to search the internet? What if they Googled the word 'octopus'? How would we rationally explain many of the search results? What if some of these search results led directly to Amazon.com. In my nightmares this is how I imagine the conversation might go.

### **Biography**

Born in Perth Western Australia, Mike Singe received a Bachelor of Fine Art from Curtin University in 1990 and established a profile within the Perth art community before moving to Tasmania in 2009. His work is represented in major institutions including the Art Gallery of Western Australia, Murdoch University, Curtin University and the Kerry Stokes Collection. In 2009 he was awarded an Australian Postgraduate Award to undertake a Master of Fine Arts at the Tasmanian School of Art. The focus of this research, completed in 2011, into the shifting human behaviour and cultural systems in response to the climate change debate continues to inform his practice. Singe's recent work expands upon this research through a focus on air as a material for investigation, particularly air in relation to human (animal) respiration.

## ***feeler: Octopus Motherhood and Meat***

*lynn mowson & Bruce Mowson, Melbourne, AUS*

### **Abstract**

The artwork *feeler* forms part of mOwson&MOwson's ongoing artistic research into motherhood and the reproductive manipulation and control of non-human life forms. An iteration of the work is currently in the exhibition *Octopus Encounters: An Immersive Library of Octopus Encounters* at GLASMOOG.

This paper will show and discuss the research and making of *feeler*. A work created in response to the current scientific research into octopus reproduction driven by the meat industry, the consumption of octopuses, the particularities of octopus motherhood and the rise of zoonotic pathogens.

### **Biography**

The sculptor Lynn Mowson and sound/installation artist Bruce Mowson comprise the artist collective mOwson&MOwson. They live and work in Melbourne. Combining their specific artistic backgrounds, their mutual practice is driven by the entangled relationships between human and nonhuman animals, in particular agricultural animals and those animals we consume. Their first project *speaking meat* remains a work in progress, presenting three "cuts of meat," modelled in wax, that produced three different bovine voices/personalities in conversation. It was initially shown at the exhibition "Why Listen to Animals?" in Melbourne in 2016. Lynn Mowson is currently vice-chair of The Australasian Animal Studies Association.

## **Towards and Animal-Inclusive Ethics/Aesthetics of Alterity, via Peter Godfrey-Smith's *Other Minds***

*Christie Oliver-Hobley, University of Sheffield, UK*

### **Abstract**

This paper argues against empathy, and in favour of alterity as a basis for an animal-inclusive ethics. Taking up the conception of empathy posited by Elisa Aaltola's *Varieties of Empathy*, I put it to the test with the ultimate limit case: the octopus. If, as Aaltola contends, we can feel-with a nonhuman animal through our shared embodiedness, what of our ability to empathise with a being whose morphology is so different from that of the normative human? Empathy runs aground in the face of such radical otherness. Turning to Peter Godfrey-Smith's *Other Minds*, I suggest that alterity can offer an alternative to this misdirected empathy. Drawing also on Yuriko Saito's argument in *Everyday Aesthetics* that aesthetic appreciations of biodiversity can foster concern for the environment, I argue that alterity might leverage concern for nonhumans, based not on their perceived similarity to the human, but on a celebration of their difference.

### **Biography**

Christie is a PhD candidate in English Literature at the University of Sheffield. He researches contemporary artists and writers who imagine what it might be like to be other animals. His work encompasses a broad range of genres and cultural modes, including literature, nonfiction, film and performance art. His analyses of these diverse texts draw on scientific insights into animal consciousness, and upon philosophical thinking on animals, over the past century or so. Christie completed his BA in English at the University of Leeds (2011-14) and his MPhil in English Studies at the University of Cambridge (2015-16).

## **Performance Lecture**

## **Ten Tickles (my fancy)**

*Madison Bycroft, Marseille, FRA*

### **Abstract**

*tbc*

### **Biography**

Born in Adelaide/Kaurna Yarta, Australia, Madison Bycroft are currently based between Marseille and Rotterdam. Often working with cross-disciplinary teams in performance, video and sculpture, Bycroft explore the idea of ‘pathos’ — the activity and/or passivity of affect. They practice an associative methodology, where solidarities or empathies can work beyond easily articulated relationships across the material, theoretical, sonic or intuited. In 2019, they have been shortlisted for the Future Generation Art Prize (Pinchuk Art Foundation, Kiev) and their work has been recognized internationally by residencies and exhibitions, including at Palais De Tokyo Paris, ACCA Melbourne (2020), the 58th Venice Biennale (2019), Les Atelier de Rennes (2018) and Sharjah Biennale Beirut (2017).