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# Journeys and Transmission

Parker, Kayla

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Land/Water and the Visual Arts research group

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# Journeys and Transmission

Land/Water 2016 Symposium



**Thursday 16 and Friday 17 June 2016  
Plymouth University**

*Image: The Lawes of The Marches video still, 2014; Katie Davies*

# Journeys and Transmission

## Land/Water 2016 Symposium

### SCHEDULE

#### Day 1 Thursday 16 June

##### Plymouth University, Roland Levinsky Building

- 1.00pm – 2.00pm**      **Registration**  
Ground floor, outside RLB Lecture Theatre 2 **Rebekah Cunningham**
- 2.00pm – 3.20pm**      **Session 1.** Welcome, followed by **Paul Whitty** and **Marcus Vergette**  
RLB Lecture Theatre 2 Chair **Polly Macpherson**
- 3.20pm – 3.40pm**      **Break** *tea/coffee and biscuits provided, included in delegate fee*  
Ground floor, outside RLB Lecture Theatre 2
- 3.40pm – 5.00pm**      **Session 2. Nicola Brandt**  
RLB Lecture Theatre 2 Chair **Kayla Parker**
- 5.00pm – 6.00pm**      **Break**
- 6.00pm – 7.00pm**      **Guided walking tour led by Phil Smith**  
*Optional activity, included in delegate fee*
- 7.00pm – 9.00pm**      **Evening meal** at The Mission bar and restaurant  
*Optional - delegates are welcome to join the symposium speakers and conference organisers for the meal, but need to pay for themselves.*  
*Sir John Hawkins Square, Palace Street, Plymouth, PL1 2AY;*  
*tel: (01752) 229955*

#### Day 2 Friday 17 June

##### Plymouth University, Roland Levinsky Building

- 10.00am – 11.20pm**      **Session 3. Katie Davies** and **Nicky Thompson**  
RLB Lecture Theatre 2 Chair **Inés Rae**
- 11.20pm – 11.40pm**      **Break** *tea/coffee and biscuits provided, included in delegate fee*  
Ground floor, outside RLB Lecture Theatre 2
- 11.40am – 1.00pm**      **Session 4. Nicos Philippou** and **Moyra Stewart**  
RLB Lecture Theatre 2 Chair **Carole Baker**
- 1.00pm – 2.15pm**      **Lunch** *provided with tea/coffee, included in delegate fee*  
Scott Building room 102  
**Portfolio Viewing** informal networking session  
Scott Building room 114 – *opposite room 102*  
Delegates share their work, including: William Arnold, Nicola Brandt, Vanessa Daws, Laura Denning, Katie Lowe, Stuart Moore, Carly Sellers, and Tony Stayte
- 2.15pm – 3.30pm**      **Session 5. Susan Collins**  
RLB Lecture Theatre 2 Chair **Liz Wells**
- 3.30pm – 4.00pm**      **Plenary** *follows on*  
RLB Lecture Theatre 2 Chair **Liz Wells**

# Journeys and Transmission

## Land/Water 2016 Symposium

### INFO

#### Theme

*Journeys and Transmission* explores contemporary concerns about our relationship to the world, following the journeys we make as artists and researchers to acquire knowledge and to share an understanding of what it is to be human in the post-industrial era of an increasingly globalized and networked twenty first century. These journeys may be personal – understood as a changing consciousness or a sense of identity and selfhood, or an altered subjective space; conceptual – manifested as a paradigm shift within a philosophical framework or ‘thinking outside the box’; or geographic – driven by social, economic or political imperatives.

Using an engaged, critical lens, we consider the ways in which creative practitioners respond to the land and the waters that flow through it, translating sensory or digital data into material forms. In addition, we are interested in the manner in which information is conveyed/transmitted across time and place – from one generation of people to another, questioning the appropriation of the past as evidence for the writing of history in relation to its use as the source of stories in the present.

Also of relevance are the ways in which ideas are conveyed between practices, or are reshaped in the transmission from one medium to another, or through combination, creating new hybrid forms that extend aesthetic appreciation and cultural critique into new areas.

#### Wifi access

Delegates have guest access to Plymouth University wifi on the symposium days 16 and 17 June:

Login to **Eduroam**

Username: **visitor004**

Password: **segme&8atiOn**

#### Eating and drinking

There are several cafés on the university campus, the closest of which is the **RLB terrace café** on the first floor of the Roland Levinsky Building – open from 8.30am to 4.00pm serving hot breakfasts and lunches, plus a selection of salads, sandwiches, wraps, hot and cold drinks. Eat in or takeaway.

Nearby coffee shops and bars include the **Caffeine Club**, open 24 hours for food and drinks – less than 5 mins walk away at 46 Tavistock Place, across North Hill and on the corner opposite the College of Art. There’s also **The Roundabout pub** and the **PL4 café bar club** close by.

**M&S café and foodhall** are a 3 minute walk away in the Drake Circus shopping mall, opposite the main university entrance. The store is open from 8.00am to 8.00pm on Thursday and 8.00am to 6.00pm on Friday.

The social enterprise pub **Bread and Roses** is a 7 minute walk from the campus at 62 Ebrington Street.

#### Places to visit

The Plymouth University **Arts Degree Show HOT '16** exhibition of graduating students’ work is in the Crosspoint area outside Lecture Theatre 2 and other locations in the Roland Levinsky Building, including the Peninsula Arts Gallery, and in the Scott Building next door.

**Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery**, and **The Gallery** at Plymouth College of Art are over the road across North Hill.

**Plymouth Arts Centre** is a 10 minute walk away at 38 Looe Street, Plymouth PL4 0EB, tel: (01752) 206114. Galleries and box office open Tuesday to Saturday from 1.00pm to 8.30pm, the café bar is open Tuesday to Saturday 5.00pm to 9.00pm and also 1.00pm to 3.00pm on Wednesday and Saturday.

# Journeys and Transmission

## Land/Water 2016 Symposium

### SESSIONS

#### Day 1 Thursday 16 June

#### **Roland Levinsky Building**

#### **Session 1. 2.00pm – 3.20pm** Welcome, followed by **Paul Whitty** and **Marcus Vergette**

RLB Lecture Theatre 2 Chair **Polly Macpherson**

2.00pm Kayla Parker

2.10pm Paul Whitty

2.40pm Marcus Vergette

3.00pm Q+A discussion

#### **Exhausted by Place**

**Paul Whitty, Oxford Brookes University**

*Make an effort to exhaust the subject, even if that seems grotesque, or pointless, or stupid. You still haven't looked at anything, you've merely picked out what you've long ago picked out.* (Georges Perec; *Species of Spaces*; 1974)



This presentation explores a variety of attempts and failures to exhaust place and features documentation of several large fields on the boundary between Netherexex and Brampford Speke in Devon. It will feature recordings of trees, grass, soil, fences, riverbeds and sheets of glass.

Paul Whitty is a Composer, Sound Artist, and Director of the Sonic Art Research Unit (SARU) at Oxford Brookes University. He is a co-founder of audiograft the Oxford based festival of Experimental Composition and Sound Art. He is interested in site and the provenance of sound materials.

*Image: 31.01.2013 The River Exe, Brampford Speke, Devon; Paul Whitty*

**Time and Tide Bells**  
**Marcus Vergette**



I have installed a bell played by the movement of the waves at the high tide mark at a number of diverse sites around the country, from urban centres to open stretches of coastline. As sea levels rise as an effect of climate change, the periods of bell strikes will become more frequent, and as the bells become submerged in the rising waters the pitch will vary.

Marcus Vergette is an interdisciplinary artist working as a bell-maker who is producing critically acclaimed work across the UK and Europe. He has exhibited in the Venice Guggenheim, and is many public and private collections. He has made public sculpture in Belgium, Hungary, Armenia, Czech Republic, U.S.A., and the U.K. He concentrates on large-scale site-specific installations.

*Image: Time and Tide Bell, Trinity Bout Wharf, London; Marcus Vergette*

**Session 2. 3.40pm – 5.00pm Nicola Brandt**

RLB Lecture Theatre 2 Chair **Kayla Parker**

3.40pm Nicola Brandt

4.40pm Q+A discussion

**A Distance Within: Power and Representation in Innovative Documentary Practices**

**Nicola Brandt, Ruskin School of Art, Oxford**

Nicola Brandt weaves together divergent genres including landscape, documentary realism, scripted and found stories. In her recent work, Brandt travels through deceitfully beautiful, derelict landscapes in Namibia that contain places of historical violence. The artist, as a Namibian of German-English origins, critically reflects on the difficult issues of power and representation as they pertain to her own artistic practice. She asks what role and what right does she have to engage with these complex legacies of colonialism and how can innovative documentary practices address some of these issues.

Nicola Brandt is a Namibian multimedia artist. Brandt's works are characterised by their enquiry into temporality, chance, and issues of (post-)colonial memory and representation.





*Image: Spectre, 2013; Nicola Brandt*

**Guided walking tour 6.00pm – 7.00pm**

**Phil Smith, Plymouth University**

Delegates who have booked for the tour, please meet promptly at 5.55pm outside Lecture Theatre 2 in the Roland Levinsky Building. Please wear clothing and footwear suitable for the weather that evening!



A performative, mis-guided walk in which I will attempt to unpick a route from previous researches in this part of Plymouth, compare the heights of spires, apologise to delegates from the International Forum on Guided Tours to the wrong restaurant, and put the role of ‘journeying’ at the mercy (I first mistyped “jerky”)

Phil Smith is a performance-maker, writer and ambulatory researcher, specialising in performances related to site-specificity, mythogeographies and counter-tourism. His publications include 'On Walking' (2014) and 'Mythogeography' (2010).

*Image: Phil Smith, 'Signs & Wonders', Lancaster; credit: Ian Hughes*

## **Day 2 Friday 17 June**

### **Roland Levinsky Building**

#### **Session 3. 10.00am – 11.20pm Katie Davies and Nicky Thompson**

RLB Lecture Theatre 2 Chair **Inés Rae**

10.00am Katie Davies

10.30am Nicky Thompson

11.00am Q+A discussion

#### **Reclaiming The Un-signified Space as a Place to Think**

**Katie Davies, Fine Art Course Leader, The University of Gloucestershire**



Considering the border as a process of enactment, reconceiving state spatiality as a temporal intervention, *The Lawes of the Marches*, 2014, observes how and why these borders are acted out in the public sphere and why they not only sustain the fabric of the everyday, but also the writing of histories and the shaping of Empires.

Katie Davies is a video and installation artist exploring communal rituals, secular performances and the effect of contemporary bordering practices on the every day.

*Image: The Lawes of The Marches video still, 2014; Katie Davies*

#### **Transmitting Identity of Moretonhampstead**

**Nicky Thompson, Exeter College**

Using a Victorian process of wet collodion and a large format camera, to capture portraits from Moretonhampstead, the images reveal identities and raise issues about networks in the community, questioning the real time it takes to make these images within the fast moving world of modern technology.

I am an artist who uses experimental Photography to explore my ideas, mainly concerning growth, change and imperfection.





*Image: Jo Butler – Actress, wet collodion on glass, 2015; Nicky Thompson*

**Session 4. 11.40am – 1.00pm Nicos Philippou and Moyra Stewart**

RLB Lecture Theatre 2 Chair **Carole Baker**

11.40am Nicos Philippou

12.10pm Moyra Stewart

12.40pm Q+A discussion

## Sharqi

Nicos Philippou, University of Nicosia



Sharqi, Arabic for Sirocco, consists of 27 instant photographs of a Cypriot landscape that has been visually silenced: a dry, arid landscape, almost post-apocalyptic, filled with cactuses, reptiles, palm trees, red lakes, but also man-made industrial and mining remnants, as well as decorative artifacts like fake moufflons, eagles and classic columns. Sirocco, which often covers Cyprus with dust from the Sahara, is here used as a metaphor for regional cultural currents enriching Cypriot culture eternally.

Nicos Philippou is a photographer with a strong interest in the Cypriot vernacular, topography and material culture. He is currently lecturing at the Communications Department of the University of Nicosia.

*Image: Untitled, from the series Sharqi; Nicos Philippou*

## Embracing Wilderness: Pathways to Tranquility

### **Moyra Stewart**

The mystery of wilderness inspires my art practice and is central to my personal growth. In our digital age, the work of artists informs more people than ever before, enlarging their experience of wild places. Does this increased traffic degrade the sites and our experience of them? If so, what can artists do?



Moyra lived in Canada for 17 years before returning to Scotland where she helped birth 'The Steeple' arts facility and the studio from where she restarted her ceramic practice.

*Image: Large Vessel by Moyra Stewart; credit: Shannon Tofts*

**Session 5. 2.15pm – 3.30pm Susan Collins**

RLB Lecture Theatre 2 Chair **Liz Wells**

2.15pm Susan Collins

3.15pm Q+A discussion

**Transporting Skies**

**Susan Collins, Slade School of Fine Art, University College London**

From *Transporting Skies* (2002) which relayed sky live, in real-time, between Penzance and Sheffield, to more recent pixel-by-pixel transmissions from remote locations including *Fenlandia* (2004), *Seascape* (2009) and the current work *Wembury & Woolacombe* (2015/16); the presentation will discuss the process of developing a number of works which each in different ways rely on an 'open system' or structure for their realisation.

The lecture will explore issues raised by the works including the relationship between time, landscape and technology, and reflect on what it means practically and materially to locate and then record these images, and transport them across space and time.



Susan Collins works across public, gallery and online spaces employing transmission, networking and time as primary materials. Key works include the BAFTA nominated *Tate in Space*, Tate Online (2002); live pixel-by-pixel transmissions from remote locations including *Fenlandia* (2004), *Seascape* (2009) and *Wembury & Woolacombe* (2015/16); *Love Brid* (2009), a short film for Animate Projects and *Brighter Later* (2013), a site specific light installation for the Radcliffe Observatory, Oxford driven by live weather data.

Susan Collins is currently Slade Professor and Director of the Slade School of Fine Art, UCL where she established the Slade Centre for Electronic Media in Fine Art (SCEMFA) in 1995.

*Image: Wembury & Woolacombe installation, January 2016; Susan Collins*

**Plenary 3.30pm – 4.00pm** discussion follows on  
RLB Lecture Theatre 2 Chair **Liz Wells**

### **Land/Water and the Visual Arts**

The Land/Water and the Visual Arts research group at Plymouth University Land/Water includes artists, writers and curators who interrogate nature and culture, aesthetics and representation, questioning imagery and practices relating to land, landscape and place.

<http://www.landwater-research.co.uk>

### **Acknowledgements**

Thanks to all the Land/Water 2016 symposium speakers and colleagues at Plymouth University for their generous support, particularly Carole Baker, David Chandler, Rebekah Cunningham, Anya Lewin, Polly Macpherson, Claire Masters, Heidi Morstang, Liz Nicol, Inés Rae, Simon Standing, and Liz Wells, and Moving Image Arts (MIA) Research at Plymouth University.

**Kayla Parker**

June 2016

# Journeys and Transmission

## Land/Water 2016 Symposium

### TEAM

The Land/Water 2016 symposium organisers at Plymouth University are Kayla Parker and Polly Macpherson, with Carole Baker; Rebekah Cunningham is the conference administrator; our conference assistant is Claire Masters; with the assistance of Land/Water and the Visual Arts research group members Heidi Morstang, Inés Rae, and Liz Wells.

#### **Dr Carole Baker, Lecturer in Photography**

Carole's photographic practice concerns our relationship to nature and the land, with a particular interest in the interrelationship between the human and the non-human. Her current project is based in Cyprus, and focuses on the island's stray dogs and the people who care for these 'unwanted' animals.

Previous exhibitions include *A Thousand Hounds*, which toured venues across the United States of America, in addition to the publication from Taschen Verlag.

#### **Rebekah Cunningham, Assistant Administrator (Faculty of Arts and Humanities):**

Rebekah has been working with the symposium organisers as the administrator for the event, assisting with the logistical side of its organisation.

#### **Polly Macpherson, Associate Professor in Design and Award Leader for Designer Maker**

Polly is an artist/maker of objects, educator and researcher whose interests align with research thinking about archaeology, materiality, place and space with additional categories of Mapping, Journey and Movement; exploring the different ways in which these themes can be presented, organized and structured.

As a visual cartographer and maker she is interested in materials, in making 'things', in how 'things' are made and in how 'things' could/can be made/used to enhance and or change perceptions in or of environments and situations.

#### **Claire Masters, Land/Water and the Visual Arts Intern 2015-16**

My photographic work is a particular assemblage of managed and wild landscapes, with particular emphasis placed upon wilderness. Over the last three years my photographic and research based work has attempted to look at ways in which humanity interacts and understands the natural and man-made world. My work aims to challenge the well-established placement of the sublime and also explore the complexities of wilderness questioning if a 'true' wilderness still exists.

#### **Heidi Morstang, Lecturer in Photography**

Heidi Morstang is an artist working with moving image, photography and experimental documentary film. She works internationally through collaborations with historians and scientists. Her films have been screened at several international film festivals and her photographic works have been exhibited widely since 1995, and is represented in several private and public collections. She lectures in photography at Plymouth University, UK, where she co-convenes Land/Water and the Visual Arts Research Group.

#### **Dr Kayla Parker, Lecturer in Media Arts and convener of Moving Image Arts (MIA) Research**

Artist film-maker whose research interests centre around subjectivity and place, embodiment and technological mediation, from feminist perspectives, with an interest in the interface between still and moving image, and expanded cinema. The recipient of many awards, her films are shown worldwide across public, gallery and online spaces.

Publications include the extended essay 'Blobs in tartan colours: Margaret Tait's *Painted Eightsome*' in *Frames Cinema Journal* (2014), and the chapter 'Jamming the machine: the personal-political in Annabel Nicolson's *Reel Time*' in the edited volume *The Arts and Popular Culture in History* (2013).

#### **Inés Rae, Lecturer in Media Arts**

Trained in Fine Art, Rae's work uses photography and text to explore representation, femininity, consumer culture and the everyday. Her research aims to analyse the labour of femininity in a



contemporary photographic culture where this still remains largely invisible. Rae's research often uses a model of image-making which is largely dialogic and interactive in its involvement of participants. Central to this is the relationship between photographer and subject.

Recent publications include *Kurl up n Dye*, a monograph published by Wild Pansy Press with an introduction by Simon Grennan and incorporating photographs and typography investigating the vernacular in British high street culture.

**Liz Wells, Professor in Photographic Culture**

Liz writes and lectures on photographic practices. Publications include *Land Matters: landscape photography, culture and identity* (2011). She edited *Photography: A Critical Introduction* (2015 5th ed.), *The Photography Reader* (2003, new ed., 2017) and co-edits *photographies* journal. Recent exhibitions as curator include: *Light Touch*, (Baltimore, 2014); *Sense of Place, European Landscape Photography* (Brussels, 2012), and *Landscapes of Exploration, British art from Antarctica* (Plymouth, 2012; Cambridge, 2013; Bournemouth, 2015).

**Contact**

Rebekah Cunningham [rebekah.cunningham@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:rebekah.cunningham@plymouth.ac.uk)

Kayla Parker [kayla.parker@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:kayla.parker@plymouth.ac.uk)

Polly Macpherson [P.L.Macpherson@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:P.L.Macpherson@plymouth.ac.uk)

**Plymouth University**

Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Drake Circus, Plymouth PL4 8AA

<https://www.plymouth.ac.uk>

**RESEARCH  
WITH  
PLYMOUTH  
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*Land  
Water*



and the visual arts