

Naturally Hypernatural V (Graz, 17–19 Oct 19)

Graz, University of Graz, Oct 17–19, 2019

Registration deadline: Oct 17, 2019

Mag. Ursula Winkler

Naturally Hypernatural V - Questioning the Non-Human Other: Political Potentials of Living Beings in Art

International Conference at the University of Graz

Naturally Hypernatural V - Questioning the Non-Human Other: Political Potentials of Living Beings in Art is an International Conference taking place in Graz, Austria from October 17 through the 19th. It addresses the concept of “agency” as it pertains to plants and animals in contemporary art and theory. In New York City in 2018 Anker and Flach hosted a three-day International Conference entitled *The Hothouse Archives: Plants, Pods and Panama Red*, bringing into focus the revolutionary potential of plants within a political context. The plant, it was noted in many of the presentations, became a stand-in for migration practices and ethnic divisions. The next conference in Graz *Questioning the Non-Human Other: Political Potentials of Living Beings in Art* builds on these findings and expands the field by including diverse non-human life forms such as animals, animal-like and vegetative creatures. As characteristics of current times, dichotomies concerning hierarchies and categorizations of nature and culture underline the special position and power of humans within this system. Current theoretical and artistic discourses, however, have been seeking access to the world independently of man by focusing on the non-human other, which in the course of demarcation also forms the (human) own. This changed perspective, which is explicitly perceptible in contemporary art, confronts us with current moral and ethical questions. While concepts such as those of the Anthropocene are increasingly focusing on humans—emphasizing their serious impact on the environment—philosophical—concepts such as Speculative Realism and Object-Oriented Philosophy turn against this centering on the human and seek an independent approach to the world. Consequently, living beings that exist independently of humans move into focus. The criticisms of humanism are formulated in post-humanism and post-anthropocentrism and call into question the field of living beings. This international conference examines the historical, philosophical and scientific findings that generate and expedite this changing approach. It asks in what way other perspectives are manifest in contemporary art and to what extent artistic works function as media of this reorientation in society. It further raises the question to what extent a critique of human centering can be expressed in art at all, if it is still people who make art? In other words, how exactly does the detachment from a human-centered thinking succeed and in what ways do artists cope with this issue? Do artists develop a special approach that enables non-human life forms like plants, insects or animals to have an impact? The conference unites renowned artists with researchers in the fields of art history/ art science, philosophy, anthropology, biology, human-animal studies and media theory, in order to gain a deeper unders-

tanding of the current trends in art and culture. By linking the latter to current theoretical discourses, it explicitly addresses a general public as well.

PROGRAM

Thursday, October 17, 2019

2:30pm – 3:00pm Conference Registration

3:00pm – 3:15pm Introduction: Sabine Flach & Suzanne Anker

3:15pm – 3:30pm Welcoming speech Rectorate of the Karl-Franzens University of Graz

3:30pm – 3:45pm Welcoming speech Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities: Univ.-Prof. Dr. phil. Michael Walter

4:00pm – 6:00pm Panel I: Animals and the Ethics of Art

Moderator: Kristopher Holland

Gabriela Kompatscher: Literary Animal Studies as an Ethical Catalyst

Jessica Ullrich: Animal Agency as Artistic Authorship

Gary Sherman: Heads and/or Tails

7:00pm – 8:00pm Artist Talk: Suzanne Anker in conversation with Sabine Flach at Galerie Schnitzler & Lindsberger

8:00pm – 9:00pm Reception: Wine and Cheese

Friday, October 18, 2019

09:30am – 11:30am Panel II: Shifting to Non-Human Aesthetics

Moderator: Klaus Rieser

Nassim W. Balestrini: Ursus Sapiens and Homo Polaris? Cross-Species Representation in Climate Change Theater

Kristopher Holland: Viscous, Molten, and Phased: Undergoing/Overcoming Nature as Object with Non-Human Aesthetics, Hyper-Objects, and Art

Sabine Flach: Ashamed at/of being ashamed. L'animal que donc je suis – Pierre Huyghe and Jacques Derrida (more to follow)

11:30am – 1:00pm Lunch

1:00pm – 3:00pm Panel III: The Turning: Soil, Plants and Human Imagination

Moderator: Susanne Rieser

Chonja Lee: Revolutionary Flowers. Sex and Politics in early modern Dance

Teresa Castro: Film and that “butterfly wing-dust of wonder”

Sabine Nessel: How to Live Together: Posthuman Intimacy and Socialization

3:00pm – 3:30pm Coffee Break

3:30pm – 5:30pm Panel IV: ‘Theatrum Botanicum’: The Human-Plant Exchanges

Moderator: Sabine Flach

Hanne Loreck: Critical Knowledge Practices from the Margins: Plants and the Like

Jonathan Cane: The Politics of Palm Trees in South African Contemporary Art

Anne-Grit Becker: Oiticica’s Open Condition

Karoline Walter: Tue Greenfort – Questioning Dichotomies

6:00pm – 7:00pm Screening: Frank Gillette

Introduction by DJ Hellerman, Curator Everson Museum of Art at Künstlerhaus Graz

Saturday, October 19, 2019

09:30am – 11:30am Panel V: Quasi Objects

Moderator: Anne-Grit Becker

Mathias Kessler: Nowhere to Be Found

Hannes Rickli: Quasi-Objects: Nature as Infrastructure and Medium of Its Own Observation

Natasha Christopher: Soil. To speak about non-human is to measure against human

Margit Stadlober: Tiny Plants (?) with big Effect in the Danube Style

11:30am – 12:30pm Lunch

12:30pm - 2:30pm Panel VI: Counter-paths: Artistic Flurries for Non-Human Art

Moderator: Sabine Flach

Valerie Varga: Remembering the future. Mariko Mori’s art in the context of metamodernism

Stefanie Schiefermair: Appropriation and Alienation of Landscapes. Positions of Contemporary Art in Postcolonial Context

Janine Wagner: On the Vivification of a Digital Character

Elisabeth Rainer: Eco-Logic: Wheatfield - A Confrontation

Anja Lindbichler: Relation between Ecology and Art

Beata Fenyvesi: Scientific Nature? Matter and Visuality in the works of Suzanne Anker

2:30pm – 2:45pm Coffee break

2:45pm – 4:45pm Panel VII: Beyond Nature: Artistic Transmutations

Moderator: Gary Sherman

Thomas Schmickl: Repairing broken ecosystems with robotic surrogates

Anita Haxhija: Tomás Saraceno's Webs for Better Futures

Günter Seyfried: Return to Dilmun

DJ Hellerman: The Angel and The Machine

4:45pm – 5:15pm Closing Remarks: Sabine Flach & Suzanne Anker

Reference:

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