

Rules of Engagement (New York, 5-7 Sep 05)

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Rules of Engagement

Science and art conference

5 –7 September 2005

University of York

www.rulesofengagement.org.uk

Art and science each hold the allure of a powerful cultural 'other'.

Artists wish to appropriate science, scientists to harness art, for the benefit of their own practices. To what extent can this desire be collaborative or mutually beneficial? This provocative conference – a melting pot of talks, events, performances and debate – challenges the serene vision of art and science as a warm, fuzzy continuum and asks instead what really happens when different perspectives, expectations, interests and languages converge. When artists are natural transgressors and scientists trained to be cautious, are there risks as well as benefits? What happens when science is taken out of the lab, away from its safety procedures and cultural assumptions? Do artists have any responsibility towards scientific data, how it is manipulated and presented? In its interplay with science, is art contributing to knowledge, creating meaning or on a quest to change the world? In this collision of politics, ethics and imagination – spanning ecology, bioscience and deep space – what are the Rules of Engagement?

Artist Andrew Stones engages with the untidy, everyday collisions of art, science, nature and technology, and a concern with how knowledge, history, authority and power become linked and politicised. As NESTA Fellow 2001–04, he visited scientific establishments such as Arecibo Radio Observatory, Big Bear Solar Observatory and CERN, forming the focus of exhibitions including Atlas (London and Copenhagen, 2004).

www.brighter.org

Dr Lloyd Anderson is Director of Science at the British Council. Earlier this year he launched ZeroCarbonCity, a global British Council campaign to stimulate debate around climate change and the energy challenges facing the world's greatest cities, emphasising mitigation, adaptation, and practical measures that we can adopt in the face of these realities.

www.britishcouncil.org

Oron Catts is an artist and Artistic Director of SymbioticA, a research laboratory in the School of Anatomy and Human Biology at The University of Western Australia that enables artists to engage in wet biology practices for the artistic exploration of scientific knowledge. He has grown pigs' wings and semi-living worry dolls as part of the Tissue Culture and Art project, questioning a future immersed in new biological technologies.
www.symbiotica.uwa.edu.au

Nicola Triscott is Director of The Arts Catalyst, which for 12 years has promoted cooperation between the arts and sciences and expanded new territories for artistic practice. It aims to extend and activate a fundamental shift in the relationship between art and science and its perception by the public. Current concerns focus on biotechnology, ecology, remote environments, space, astrophysics and micro- and hyper-gravity research.
www.artscatalyst.org

Cape Farewell, led by artist David Buckland, brings together scientists, educationalists and artists to address and raise awareness about climate change. Sailing to the Arctic via a previously icebound route, a series of expeditions explore the very seas that can help us understand how the planet is warming, to what degree changing weather patterns could affect our urban lives, and the possibilities for positive change.
www.capefarewell.com

Lise Autogena and Josh Portway are probably best known for their Black Shoals Stock Market Planetarium shown at Tate Britain (2001). With a live feed from the world's stock markets, stars in a planetarium representing companies moved into constellations, clusters and galaxies, reflecting movements on the markets and causing an artificial evolutionary process. This has generated other works including The Most Blue Skies project.
www.blackshoals.net

New York artist Brandon Ballengee is as much scientist as artist. He combines a fascination with fish and amphibians with techniques of fine art imaging and strategies of environmental activism. His current project will generate scientific data on amphibian decline and deformities across the UK and develop his performative research investigations and visual artworks, as he wades through some of Yorkshire's ponds.
www.greenmuseum.org/ballengee

The work of American bio-artist Adam Zaretsky includes studying how E.Coli bacteria respond to being played Engelbert Humperdinck's Greatest Hits. Whilst humour remains a mainstay in Zaretsky's artwork and scientific practice, his endeavours are grounded in a serious and complex understanding of biological and genetic issues that are very much a part

of contemporary society.
www.emutagen.com

Having worked with scientists and rats at the University of Oxford and the National Institute for Medical Research, artist Lucy Kimbell will give her performance lecture *One Night With Rats in the Service of Art*. The lecture raises ethical questions about the use of animals in science and art, as well as presenting a humorous narrative as Kimbell contemplates the role of rats in contemporary society.
www.lucykimbell.com

Simon Gould is a freelance curator, specialising in interdisciplinary art projects. He has been resident curator at the National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR) in North London since 2003, organising artist residencies, talks, exhibitions, publications and other interventions. Other curatorial projects include *State of Mind* at the LSE (London, 2005), *DMZ Media Arts Festival* (London, 2003) and *About Belief* at the South London Gallery (2002).
<http://art.nimr.mrc.ac.uk>

Ian Hunter is Project Director and lead artist of Littoral, a nonprofit arts trust pioneering the role of the arts in response to social, environmental, and economic change. As part of Littoral's New Fields, he is developing a long-term project with the Agriculture and Rural Strategy Group at the Central Science Laboratories in York, exploring how artists and designers can contribute to research into non-food fibre crops and alternative land use.
www.littoral.org.uk www.csl.gov.uk

Artist Jo Joelson of London Fieldworks was Arts Council England/AHRC Art and Science Fellow in 2004 with the Radio and Space Plasma Physics Group at the University of Leicester. Darren Wright is a physicist in this group, which is at the forefront of research into the interaction of planetary environments with the solar wind. London Fieldworks' *Little Earth* inquires how the data of natural phenomena is interpreted and made manifest in both art and science.
www.londonfieldworks.com www.ion.le.ac.uk

Comma Press is an independent publishing collective established in 2002 by editor Ra Page, which holds short stories and literary writing informed by scientific thought close to its heart. In an attempt to turn the sci-fi relationship between literature and science on its head, for its newest book *Interpunct*, Comma has invited leading scientists and science writers to interpret and manifest their theories in fiction.
www.commapress.co.uk

Professor Dianna Bowles is Director of CNAP, the Centre for Novel

Agricultural Products, in the Department of Biology at the University of York. CNAP specialises in plant and microbial gene research, using biology to benefit society and to provide a sustainable future. Professor Bowles initiated the partnership with Arts Council England, Yorkshire to establish the 2004 Sense of Science artist residencies at CNAP.
www.cnap.org.uk

Composer and musician Andrew Cleaton, dancer and choreographer Lucy Cullingford, photographer Lizzie Coombes and Ruth Ben-Tovim, site-specific artist, spent six months at CNAP for the Sense of Science residencies. Working in collaboration with each other and with research scientists in the laboratories, their series of performative events explored the use and understanding of science, and perceptions about science and scientists.
www.senseofscience.org

Lizz Tuckerman uses her scientific background as Research Associate at the Centre for Stem Cell Biology at the University of Sheffield, to inform the concepts and processes in her artistic practice. Commissioned by Arts Council England, Yorkshire, her new work for the conference venue Fourth Most Common will refer to C (carbon) cycling, the system that sustains life on earth.

<http://mysite.wanadoo-members.co.uk/lizztuckerman>

Additional entertainment courtesy of Simon Thackray, The Shed In 1992, Simon Thackray created the cultural phenomenon that is The Shed. From the tiny village of Brawby on the edge of the North Yorkshire Moors, Thackray has created extraordinary events such as the world famous Yorkshire Pudding Boat Race and the North Yorkshire Elvis Bus Tour. The Fish and Chip Van Tour and Mrs Boyes' Bingo featuring Mark Sanders will feed and entertain on Tuesday evening.
www.theshed.co.uk

MONDAY 5 SEPTEMBER

12.30 REGISTRATION TEA & COFFEE

1.30 Welcome and introductions Rachel Chapman, Science and Art Coordinator, Arts Council England, Yorkshire Andy Carver, Executive Director, Arts Council England, Yorkshire Professor Dianna Bowles, Director, CNAP, Chair Professor Dianna Bowles

2.00 Lloyd Anderson

2.35 David Buckland, Cape Farewell

3.10 Discussion

3.20 TEA BREAK

3.50 Lise Autogena and Josh Portway

4.25 Simon Gould

5.00 Lucy Kimbell, performance lecture 'One night with rats in the service of art'

5.35 Discussion and comments from the Chair

6.00 CocktailsComma Press book launch 'Interpunct: Thought Experiments in Real Space' Opening of work by Lizz Tuckerman commissioned for the conference venue, introduced by Alison Andrews, Performing Arts Officer, Arts Council England, Yorkshire+ other events tbc

8.00 onwards DINNER

TUESDAY 6 SEPTEMBER

9.45 Introduction from the Chair Professor Andrew Webster, Director, Science and Technology Studies Unit, University of York

10.00 Brandon Ballengee

10.35 Ian Hunter, Littoral

11.10 Discussion

11.20 COFFEE BREAK

11.40 Oron Catts

12.15 Adam Zaretsky

12.50 Discussion

1.00 BUFFET LUNCH

2.00 Andrew Stones

2.35 Nicola Triscott

3.10 Jo Joelson and Darren Wright

3.45 Discussion

4.00 TEA BREAK

4.30-5.45 Break-out discussionsQuestions from panelists and from the floor (panelists tbc) Art, Landscape and the Environment Art, Biotechnology and Ethics or What Would Jesus Do? Interdisciplinary Collaborations: Who are they good for?

5.50-6.25 Ruth Ben-Tovim and Lizzie Coombes, performance lecture

6.25-6.35 Discussion and comments from the Chair

Approx 6.45 Coach into York city centre

7.00 onwards Drinks, dinner and events in York courtesy of Simon Thackray, The ShedThe Fish & Chip Van TourMrs Boyes' Bingo featuring Mark Sanders

WEDNESDAY 7 SEPTEMBER

10.00 WORKSHOPS/PERFORMANCES

Oron Catts & Adam Zaretsky Biotechworkshop Brandon Ballengee Fieldtrip exploring local ecology Andy Gracie (hostprods) BEAM robotworkshop Tbc Tbc

COFFEE

12.45 Brief round-up from workshopsClosing comments

1.15 BUFFET LUNCH AND CLOSE

2.30 – 4.30 Optional tour of CNAP labs and the Technology Facility

The conference will be of interest to artists, scientists, curators, organisations, educators and science communicators, whether already engaged in science and art practice, or wishing to pursue an active engagement.

Registration fee: £165 full, £75 concessions (to include refreshments, meals, accommodation and events) Programme may be subject to change.
www.rulesofengagement.org.uk

Reference:

CONF: Rules of Engagement (New York, 5-7 Sep 05). In: ArtHist.net, Jul 23, 2005 (accessed May 9, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/27401>>.