Art, Activism and Ecological Extraction (online/London, 13-14 Mar 24)

Online / The Building Centre, London, Mar 13–14, 2024
www.paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk/whats-on/forthcoming/extractivismactivism_conference

Alice Read, London

Extractivism/Activism: Art, Activism and Ecological Extraction.
A collaboration between the Climate & Colonialism research project at the Paul Mellon Centre and Autograph ABP.

The arts have long been concerned with highlighting the ongoing histories of resource extraction and its repercussions. This symposium asks: what next? By bringing together researchers, artists, designers and activists from a range of backgrounds, this event will consider local projects in intersectional, granular detail, to collectively re-evaluate the relationship between the arts, extraction and activism, both historically and in the present.

The two days are framed around three broad themes: Colonial and extractive histories, Reparative and fragile ecologies, Environmental justice and legal rights.

Confirmed speakers and participants include: Ignacio Acosta, Mónica Alcázar-Duarte, Tobah Auckland-Peck, Eline Benjaminsen, Nancy Demerdash, Radha D'Souza, Francisco Gallardo, Hit Man Gurung,Sasha Huber, Elias Kimaiyo, Syowia Kyambi, Adrian Lahoud, Godofredo Pereira, Marie Petersmann, Julian Posada, Sheelasha Rajbhandari, Gabriela Saenger Silva, Sakiya, Audrey Samson, Marie Smith, Jonas Staal, Gerald Torres,Wilfred Ukpong, Rahul Ranjan and others.
The symposium is convened by Sria Chatterjee (Paul Mellon Centre), Mark Sealy (Autograph) and Bindi Vora (Autograph).

Accessibility information
The Building Centre's accessibility information can be found here:
https://www.buildingcentre.co.uk/about/plan-your-visit

Programme

13 March 2024
10–10.30am Registration and coffee
10:30–10.45am Welcome and introductions with Sria Chatterjee (Paul Mellon Centre)

LOCATING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE
Chair: Ravi Agarwal (artist, writer, curator and environmental campaigner)

10.45–10.55am Sheelasha Rajbhandari (artist and curator), “Untamable Dankini”
10.55–11.05am HitMan Gurung (artist and curator), “What Do the Spirits of These Lands, Rivers, Forests Whisper in Our Ears?”
11.05–11.15am Syowia Kyambi (artist and curator), “Split Bananas and Magical Spaces”
11.15–11.30am Sahar Qawasmi (Sakiya), Title TBC
11.30–11.50am Q&A
11.50am–12.15pm Coffee break (provided)

IMAGING EXTRACTION
Chair: Sria Chatterjee (Paul Mellon Centre)

12.15–12.25pm Tobah Aukland-Peck (CUNY Graduate Center), “‘See Britain First on Shell’: Modernism, Imperialism and the British Petroleum Industry”
12.25–12.35pm Nancy Demerdash (Albion College), “Fuelling Foment: (Counter)colonial Histories of Phosphate Extraction in Tunisia”
12.35–12.45pm FRAUD, Audrey Samson and Francisco Gallardo (artist duo), “Undergrounding the Critical Mineral”
12.45–12.55pm Crystal Bennes (visual artist), “Phosphate Mines and Resistance Gardens in Western Sahara”
12.55–1.15pm Q&A
1.15–2.30pm Lunch break

REPAIR/REPARATIONS
2.30–2.50pm Gerald Torres (Yale University), Title TBC (online)
2.50–3.00pm Q&A
3.00–3.15pm Sasha Huber (visual artist researcher), performative lecture, “Reparative Interventions: Renegotiating Archive, Memory and Place”
3.15–3.30pm Adrian Lahoud (Royal College of Art), “Ngurrara II”
3.30–3.45pm Q&A
3.45–4.15pm Comfort break

ECOLOGY POLITICS
Chair: Mark Sealy (Autograph)

4.15–4.30pm Wilfred Ukpong (interdisciplinary artist, practice-based researcher – Blazing Century Studios), “Blazing Century 1: Working at the Intersection of Extractive Capitalism/Visual Activism”
4.30–4.50pm Mark Sealy and Wilfred Ukpong in conversation
4.50–5pm Closing remarks
5–6pm Drinks reception at Building Centre
14 March 2024
10.30–11am Registration and coffee
11–11.10am Welcome and introductions with Bindi Vora (Autograph)

FOREST RIGHTS
Chair: Bindi Vora (Autograph)

11.10–11.25am Eline Benjaminsen (artist) and Elias Kimaiyo (land rights activist), Title TBC

11.25–11.35am Rahul Ranjan (University of Edinburgh), “Forests of Memory: Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Claim Making in India”
11.35–11.45am Q&A
11.45am–12noon Comfort break

ANCESTRAL FUTURES
Chair: Nina Kolowratnik (Ghent University)

12noon–12.20pm Ignacio Acosta (Royal College of Art / Uppsala University), film screening and discussion of “From Mars to Venus: Activism of the Future”
12.20–12.30pm Godofredo Pereira (Royal College of Art), “The Puna Is Not a Triangle: Militant Research and Anti-extractivism”
12.30–12.40pm Gabriela Saenger Silva (Liverpool John Moores University), “Art As Catalyst: Exploring the Fragility and Activism Through ‘We Live Like Trees Inside the Footsteps of our Ancestors’”
12.40–1pm Q&A
1–2.30pm Lunch break

LITIGATION / CLIMATE CRIMES
Chair: Jelena Sofronijevic (producer, writer and researcher)

2.30–2.40pm Marie Petersmann (London School of Economics), “Black Ecofeminism in Court: Litigating for Climate Justice and Reparations”
2.40–2.55pm Radha D’Souza (lawyer, academic, writer and activist) and Jonas Staal (artist and propaganda researcher), “Legal Imaginaries Beyond Extraction: Court for Intergenerational Climate Crimes”
2.55–3.15pm Q&A
3.15–3.25pm Marie Smith (visual artist/Kingston University), “The Wanderer” (performance)
3.25–3.40pm Comfort break

DATA ECOLOGIES
Chair: Stephanie Hankey (Tactical Technology Collective)

3.40–3.50pm Mónica Alcázar-Duarte (artist), film screening of “U K'ux Kaj / Heart of Sky, Mayan God of Storms”
3.50–4pm Respondent: Julian Posada (Yale University)
4–4.15pm Mónica Alcázar-Duarte and Julian Posada in conversation
4.15–4.30pm Final remarks
6–9pm OPTIONAL: Self-led visit to Autograph to view Wilfred Ukpong: Future-Cosmos/Niger-Delta and Mónica Alcázar-Duarte: Digital Clouds Don’t Carry Rain. There will be a fifteen-minute introduction to the exhibition by Autograph staff at 6.30pm

Reference:
CONF: Art, Activism and Ecological Extraction (online/London, 13-14 Mar 24). In: ArtHist.net, Feb 19, 2024 (accessed Nov 9, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/41259>.