

Sustainable Forms. Longevity in Cultural Production (Bern, 19–20 Jun 25)

University of Bern, Mittelstrasse 43, Room 124, Jun 19–20, 2025

Yvonne Schweizer

Workshop organized by: Sofie Behluli, Felix Lempp, Malika Maskarinec, Yvonne Schweizer.

Modernity is regularly associated with the ubiquity of ephemeral forms: briefly accessible and quickly consumed artifacts, media, and content. These media contribute to an unsustainable culture of waste that has only accelerated on account of the misconception that the digital sphere is immaterial. As we well know, these media practices come at the cost of the devastating depletion of natural and human resources.

Against this background, this workshop aims to consider what makes specific aesthetic forms sustainable. What properties or practices endow forms with either historical longevity, or with the ability to travel across and adapt to different media and media ecologies? Of interest are the ways in which sustainable forms relate to current discourses concerning environmental sustainability, cultural nostalgia, slow media, or technological innovation. The workshop brings together perspectives from architecture and art history, artistic research, media studies, and literary studies.

PROGRAM

Thursday, June 19

9.20-9.30 Nicolas Detering (University of Bern): Welcome

9.30-9.40 Malika Maskarinec (University of Bern): Introduction

9.40-10.30 Sofie Behluli & Gabriele Rippl (University of Bern): Ekphrasis as Sustainable Form

10.30-10.50 Coffee Break

10.50-11.40 Alexandra Kingston-Reese (University of York): Care as Social Poesis

11.40-12.30 Charlotte Matter (University of Basel): Withering Flowers. Maintenance and Precarity in Contemporary Art

12.30-14.10 Lunch Break

14.10-15.00 Estelle Blaschke (University of Basel): Fixing the Ephemeral. Contradictions of Sustainability in Photographic Media

15.00-15.50 Ofri Cnaani (TU Wien): Data Islands. The Aftermath of Cultural Data

15.50-16.10 Coffee Break

16.10-17.00 Viola Marchi (University of Bern): Life-Sustaining Forms and Phantasmagoric After-lives

Friday, June 20

9.20-9.30 Malika Maskarinec (University of Bern): Recap

9.30-10.20 Lucy Benjamin (University of Edinburgh): A Field Guide to Poem-Engineering. Sustaining Aesthetic Form at Little Sparta

10.20-10.40 Coffee Break

10.40-11.30 Antje Schmidt & Benedikt Stamm (University of Hamburg): Geology, Environment, History. Stratification in Contemporary Poetry

11.30-12.20 Yvonne Schweizer (University of Bern): The Dirty Cube. E-Waste and Curatorial Re-Use

12.20-14.00 Lunch Break

14.00-14.50 Felix Lempp (University of Bern): The Tragedy of the Anthropocene. On an Old Dramatic Form's New Productivity

No participation fee, no registration necessary.

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University of Bern, Walter Benjamin Kolleg (WBK)

Reference:

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