

# Territories

Land/Water 2017 Symposium



**Thursday 22 and Friday 23 June 2017**

**Jill Craigie Cinema**

**Roland Levinsky Building**

**Plymouth University**

*Image: Last water war, ruins of future,  
series of photographs of the archeological site of Girsu (Telloh), Iraq, 2016.*

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# Territories

## Land/Water 2017 Symposium

### SCHEDULE

Thursday 22 June

**1.00pm – 1.30pm Registration**

Elizabeth Chapman-Lane

Ground floor, RLB, by entrance to Jill Craigie Cinema

**1.30pm – 1.40pm**

**Welcome**

Heidi Morstang and Kayla Parker

**1.40pm – 2.30pm**

**Session 1. Barbara Bosworth**

Chair: Jem Southam

*The Meadow: A Revery*

**2.30pm – 3.20pm**

**Session 2. Dominica Williamson and John Martin**

Chair: Kayla Parker

*Tagscape: Can we help give a voice to communities in the shaping of intangible character zones through the collection of perceptual data?*

**3.20pm – 3.50pm**

**Break** *tea/coffee and biscuits*

Ground floor, outside Jill Craigie Cinema, Roland Levinsky Building

**3.50pm – 4.40pm**

**Session 3. Susan Trangmar** Chair: Liz Nicol

*Territories of Remembrance*

**4.40 pm – 5.10 Drinks reception**

Ground floor, outside Jill Craigie Cinema, Roland Levinsky Building

**5.10pm – 5.40pm**

**Film screening 'UNFOUND' by Susan Trangmar (20 mins)**

**Friday 23 June**

**10.00 – 10.05**

**Day 2 Welcome**

Heidi Morstang

**10.05am – 10.50am**

**Session 4. Emeric Lhuisset** Chair: Liz Wells

*Look on a territory, the issue of conflict*

**10.50am – 11.10am**

**Session 5. Fedra Dekeyser**

Chair Heidi Morstang

*Unearth: visual strategies to reveal and regenerate hidden stories*

**11.10am – 11.30am**

**Session 6. Claudia Pils**

Chair Heidi Morstang

*Indeterminacies: Engaging with Borders and Boundaries  
through off- and online photographic images*

**11.30am – 11.50am**

**Break tea/coffee and biscuits**

Ground floor, outside Jill Craigie Cinema, Roland Levinsky Building

**11.50am – 12.30pm**

**Session 7. Carole Baker**

Chair Kayla Parker

*The Smell of the Other: An Exploration of Non-Human Territories*

**12.30 pm– 2.00pm**

**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.

**2.00pm – 3.00pm**

**Session 8. Tom Cox**

Chair Jem Southam

*21st Century Yokel*

**3.00pm – 3.30pm**

Summary by Liz Wells, Jem Southam, Kayla Parker

**3.30 pm**

**Finish**

## **Territories**

### **Land/Water 2017 Symposium**

This two-day symposium will offer an insight into artistic practices that engage with concepts of territories within contemporary culture.

Possession is a necessary condition when space is framed as 'territory', whereas landscape may be considered in purely aesthetic terms. When landscape is territory, we can think of a 'territorial gaze', a possessive look of privilege, of ownership, of control, with an implied need to defend or conquer that bounded space. Territory, therefore, is always political, a situation of power relations.

Territorial claims are the source of multiple conflicts globally in the twenty-first century and the cause of population displacement, exacerbated by environmental and climatic challenges: rivalries over national and intra-state boundaries are a major cause of disputes; minorities within a nation or sovereign state may stake claims for independence, against the wishes of the controlling power; at a local level, issues of territorial ownership occur amongst neighbours, between humans and non-human animals, and within and across species. The edgelands that may exist between the lines that mark territorial spaces are also of interest, as these create a liminal zone within borders, offering potentialities for exploration and hybridity.

In choosing this theme for our 2017 Land/Water and the Visual Arts symposium, we offer a critical space for sharing perspectives and experiences as creative practitioners and interdisciplinary researchers, in order to explore notions of 'territories' and what this might mean for us.

### Wi-Fi access

Delegates have guest access to Plymouth University Wi-Fi on the symposium days 22 and 23 June:

Login to **Eduroam**

Username: **visitor011**

Password: **raTt{2rx**i

### 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 food hall** 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** exhibition of graduating students' work is in the Crosspoint area outside Jill Craigie Cinema 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 1.00pm to 3.00pm on Wednesday and Saturday.

# **Territories**

**Land/Water 2017 Symposium**

## Speakers

### Emeric Lhussiet

*Look on a territory, the issue of conflict*

Since men cultivate the land, rivalries over water are a source of disputes. This concept is expressed directly in the English language, "rivalry" from the Latin *rivalis*, means "the one who uses the same river as the other."

It was around 2600 BC in Mesopotamia (now Iraq) that took place the first known water war. The city-states of Umma and of Lagash (including Girsu its religious capital) fought for centuries over the exploitation of irrigation canals fed by the Tigris.

Power games between regional powers, the civil war in Syria, the presence of the Islamic State, which has made of control of dams a strategic objective, the control exerted upstream by Turkey on the flow of the Tigris and the Euphrates are all factors of instability and tension. Coupled with high population growth, the increasing scarcity of water resources in the region and global warming, they feed fears that a "new water war" would break out on the scene of the destruction of the ancient city of Girsu, which marked the end in 2350 BC of 300 years of water war.

With a series of photographs taken in Iraq on the archaeological site of Girsu, the artist Emeric Lhussiet is aiming to question us about a future through the ruin, this architectural object sculpted by time, at crossroads between past, present and future, and intangible evidence of the ephemeral and fragile nature of all human civilization.

Born in 1983, Emeric Lhussiet grew up in a Paris suburb.

He graduated in arts (Ecole des Beaux-Arts de Paris - Ensba) and in geopolitics (University Panthéon-Sorbonne / Ecole Normale Supérieure d'Ulm - Center for geostrategy).

His works has been shown in numerous exhibitions around the world for example Tate Modern, London; Museum Folkwang, Essen; Institut du monde arabe in Paris; Musée du Louvre Lens; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Rencontres d'Arles; Sursock Museum, Beirut; and CRAC Languedoc-Roussillon.

In 2011, he won the Paris Jeunes Talents Award. More recently, he was nominated for the Coal award (2016), the Magnum Foundation Emergency Fund Award (2015), the Niépce Award (2015), the Leica Oskar Barnack Award (2014) as well as the HSBC Award for Photography (2014).

He books are published by André Frère Editions and Paradox (Ydoc), *Maydan – Hundred portraits* (2014) and *Last water war* (2016).

His work is present in numerous private collections as well as those of the Stedelijk Museum and of the Musée Nicéphore Niepce.

In addition to his art practice, he teaches at the Institute of Political Studies of Paris (Sciences Po) about *contemporary art & geopolitics*.



**Carole Baker**

***The Smell of the Other: An Exploration of Non-Human Territories***

I discuss a recent photographic work entitled *The Smell of the Other*, which explores the stray dogs of Cyprus. By setting a diverse selection of visual and textual representations in dialectical opposition the domestic dog is positioned as a site of conflicting representations. I examine the relationship of these hybrid beings to notions of home and territory.

A polyvocal approach, whereby a number of distinct streams of discourse run in parallel, provides an imaginative space where notions of identity and representation, belonging and dispossession can emerge and be subject to scrutiny. This approach leads, I propose, to a re-evaluation of our understanding of, and relationship with, nonhuman animals, particularly in relation to the politics of marginalisation and otherness, notions informed by Feminism and Postcolonialism, Contemporary theory suggests that we live in a time of greater empathy toward the nonhuman; an 'ethical turn', when humans are beginning to recognise their limitations. By comprehending the world from the perspective of the Other the human is de-centred and de-stabilized. To be dumb... is not to be lacking in language, but to have an alternate means of apprehending the other and the world."<sup>1</sup>

Dr Carole Baker is an academic and photographer whose writings and photographic work explore the representation of non-human animals. Between 1995 and 2000 her doctoral research explored animal representation and her work toured extensively in the UK, US and Japan.

During a recent Residency at Nicosia Municipal Arts Centre, she adopted a critical realist stance in response to the dog control scheme operating in Cyprus, and produced photographic work in dog rescue shelters around the island. This was followed by a conference paper at a conference organized by the International Centre for Photography Theory in Nicosia in 2016.

**Barbara Bosworth**

'The Meadow: A Revery'

Emily Dickinson wrote that all it takes to make a prairie is 'one clover, and a bee. / And revery' It turns out that to know a prairie (or meadow) is a bit more complicated, as photographer Barbara Bosworth and writer Margot Anne Kelley have discovered. For more than a decade, Bosworth and Kelley have meandered in, studied and photographed a single meadow in Carlisle, Massachusetts. In addition to their own investigations, they have invited botanists, entomologists, naturalists and historians to consider the meadow with them. Also included are historic maps of the property dating to the 1800s,

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<sup>1</sup> Weill, K *Thinking Animals: Why Animal Studies Now*, 2012 p87.

and a transcription of notes from a former owner whose family has continuously documented plant and bird life in the meadow from 1931 until the 1960s.

In her talk Bosworth reads excerpts from Kelley's text, and discusses their collaboration and her photographs of this place.

The following is an excerpt from Kelley's text '*Wanderlust: Introduction*':

*When we invite folks to come walk the meadow with us, we usually start by explaining that we are doing a project about this place, that we want to enrich our vision with theirs, that we are interested in how art and science invigorate each other, that we wonder how different people experience the 'same' place. Natural history, thick description, deep looking, field work, citizen science - depending upon the discipline of our guests, they're different names for what we're doing.*

*Fueled by the sense that knowledge sharpens seeing, we return to the meadow again and again, accompanied by amateurs and professionals who are generous in sharing their interests, their passions. Each walk is different - the people, the place, the smells and sights of the season, what we are looking for, looking at. But to my surprise, before or during or after every walk, the same question arises: 'But, wait a second - this place doesn't belong to either of you?*

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*We answer the question really being asked: No, neither of us owns this land. If folks are still curious, we explain the complicated patchwork of ownership - the mix of private owners, and easements, and local and national conservators who all have a stake in these acres' fate. The assortment is unusually complex here, revealing various ways humans have devised a sense of stewardship. But even such sincere stewardship doesn't quite address the matter of belonging.*

### **Tom Cox**

*21st Century Yokel*

Tom Cox will explore the way we can be tied inescapably to landscape, whether we like it or not, often through our family and our past, retelling stories from his new book, *21st Century Yokel*, about his walking adventures in Devon, Norfolk, Suffolk, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire - including encounters with wildlife, and thoughts about the philosophy of walking. He will also talk about the creation of the book - which is his attempt to make something that's "more than a nature book," with social history, family memoir and humour being all in the mix too - and about the ways we are tied to landscape through our relatives and ancestors.

Tom Cox is the author of nine books, including the Sunday Times top ten bestseller *The Good, The Bad And The Furry* and *Bring Me The Head Of Sergio Garcia*, his account of his year as Britain's most inept golf professional, which was longlisted for the William Hill Sports Book Of The Year Award in 2007. Tom lives in Devon and writes about - amongst many other subjects - nature, folklore, music and books on his voluntary subscription website, having quit writing for traditional media outlets entirely in 2015. He also hosts a monthly radio show on the experimental rural radio station Soundart and does live rural storytelling tours around the UK. His new book *21st Century Yokel* is published by Unbound in October.

### **Fedra Dekeyser**

*Unearth: visual strategies to reveal and regenerate hidden stories*

My presentation reflects on how histories are visually shaped in our personal and collective memory. I investigate in which ways photography can act as a constructor of memory, while being as deceitful and malleable as history itself.

My research focusses on one remote Belgian territory: The East Cantons, home to my ancestors. Landlocked between Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, its surface was shaped throughout history by repeatedly shifting borders and is marked by a tumultuous past, saturated with history on its soil. Investigating archival and oral recollections of historical change in this area, *Unearth* questions the hidden histories of this particular geography.

As I explore the many ways of perceiving this land which are substantial in shaping its identity, I seek for stories that offer intersections of such different perspectives. Through photography I test and reflect on methods of (re)creating narratives, questioning the potency and limitations of the medium. I aim to build up a collection of images which might reveal or regenerate fading histories, while openly inserting elements of deception in order to avoid a biased interpretation by the viewer.

The endlessly changing construction, representation and preservation of history become visible. As it becomes more difficult to interpret its histories, yet another unstable past arises.

Fedra Dekeyser lives and works in Brussels, Belgium. She received a Master's Degree in Photography from the Sint-Lukas Higher Institute for Art and Design in Brussels. After finishing her studies, she presented work at small shows across Belgium. In recent years, however, she mainly focussed on the development of the ongoing series *Unearth*. This research spans a Belgian region, the East Cantons. Through historical and personal research notions of place, memory and identity are questioned.

As a postgraduate researcher, Fedra is part of the Land / Water and the Visual Arts research group.

## **Claudia Pils**

*Indeterminacies: Engaging with Borders and Boundaries through off- and online photographic images*

In response to Brexit and my change of an EU worker in the UK to a guest worker I decided to explore the Austrian borders and their online representations and how this online search might intersect with the ever shifting boundaries in the practice of my everyday life. For this I worked with over 550 gleaned files from the Internet and material that I had gathered over the period of 8 months on my iPhone and iPad. This initially emotive response to the outcome of 23<sup>rd</sup> of June referendum led to further pieces where I started to engage with the various aspects of migration and displacement that relate to politics of borders and boundaries in general and to my own identity as a Pan-European in particular.

In this presentation I will specifically reflect on the work T(here) that I undertook December 2016/January 2017. In this dimensional photographic collage I engage with the visual online representation of Austrian Hungarian borders and facets of the economic migration from this border region that since 28 August 1921 is called the Burgenland. In particular, I will explore how off- and online photographic images can be de- and re-contextualized within timelines and geographies.

Claudia Pils is a MPhil/PhD candidate in Land/Water and receives research funding from Plymouth University and The 3d3 Center for Doctoral Training Programme. The focus of her practice research is on *'Photography and its Contribution to the Understanding of Digital Porosity'*. She undertook an MA in Photography and Urban Cultures at Goldsmiths, University of London (2013) and her thesis was on *'Children and Urban Space'* (distinction).

Claudia Pils has been exhibiting widely, both nationally and internationally. She has undertaken residencies in New York, Rome and Victoria Baths in Manchester, and has experience working with both public and private commissions. To date, she has been awarded two major fellowships (Arts Council Austria, City of Bremen), the Prize for Visual Art of Upper Austria, a Research Fellowship at Southampton Institute and numerous assistance and travel grants.

Her work has been documented in five solo catalogues and has been purchased by renowned collections such as the Kestner Gesellschaft Hannover, DZBank and the Museum of Modern Art in Vienna.

**Susan Trangmar**

*Territories of Remembrance*

This presentation arises from the making of a commissioned film

'UNFOUND', marking the centenary anniversary of the Battle of the Somme, 2016<sup>2</sup>.

'Territories of Remembrance' revisits the 'steps' in the process of making the artwork, as a twofold process between word and image. It expands upon the ideas arising from the initial research and practice, mapping out a series of discrete, but interwoven paths through the juxtaposition of differing media, temporalities and modes of address. The memorial site as institutionalised object of remembrance, the visual production of place as a framed territory of cultural significance, and the act of inscription as part of a memorializing process subject to the erasure of time, are refracted through this assembly of text and image. In so doing, I suggest that processes of memorialisation are continually subject to interruption, flux and transformation. The presentation concludes that it is through the material act of re-inscription, the force of the 'cut' as the opening up of language to question, that another kind of understanding of memorialisation might operate.

**Dominica Williamson and John Martin**

*Tagscape: Can we help give a voice to communities in the shaping of intangible character zones through the collection of perceptual data?*

The non-indigenous forest fringe in the UK is causing debate; indigenous trees are in the offing so as to soften its edges. Should new pathways highlight non-and indigenous forest zones? The coral reef in the West Indian Ocean is still getting blasted and illegally fished. Marine Voluntary Zones are part of the answer but does the community see themselves as sitting within or outside of these zones?

Dominica Williamson and Dr. John Martin ask: Can artists and scientists co-work to help involve the community deal with such problems in a way that involves sensory co-creation? They will do this by presenting elements of their project TAGSCAPE - they will walk you through parts of forests; climbing and making zones, and will then take you to boated pathways.

Dominica Williamson works in the field of interdisciplinary design and new materialism. Currently she is working with Plymouth Marine Laboratory on a project called Coral Communities. Recently she was awarded a Leverhulme Trust Artist in Residence with Plymouth University where, with Geographer Dr.

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<sup>2</sup> Diaphane.org. The sound and image recordings for the film 'UNFOUND' were made during site visits to the area between July and November 2016, dates which mark the commencement and cessation of the battle in 1916.

John Martin, she is mapping and drawing the lived sensory experience of landscape. Last year they exhibited co-created work, entitled 'The Living Room', at The Royal Geographic Society's Annual International Conference.

Williamson's self-initiated and client projects deal with the political and technical nature of open data, in particular ethnographic coding, flora data and computer code.

**Dr John Martin**

On completion of his PhD in the area of Knowledge based Systems for environmental assessment at Durham University, John joined Hyder Consulting as a Geoenvironmental Engineer. He provided technical support for a number of large scale EU redevelopment projects.

Since joining Plymouth University, John has utilised his knowledge of GIS, data capture and mapping methodologies to develop a research interest in Landscape/Seascape Character Assessment and monitoring. John has worked very closely with local AONBs on a number of LCA/SCA monitoring projects; these have included compiling suitable methodologies to aid management plans and long term monitoring. He has also been involved in the development of ubiquitous technologies for landscape management and planning.

## **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.plymouth.ac.uk/landwater/research>

## **Acknowledgements**

Thanks to all the Land/Water 2017 symposium speakers and colleagues at Plymouth University for their generous support.

**Kayla Parker and Heidi Morstang**

June 2017

## **Territories**

**Land/Water 2017 Symposium**



The Land/Water 2016 symposium organisers at Plymouth University are Kayla Parker and Heidi Morstang; Libby Chapman-Lane is the symposium administrator; and our symposium assistant is Claire Masters.

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**RESEARCH  
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*Land  
Water*



and the visual arts