Centre for the GeoHumanities

Newsletter No. 12
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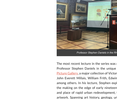
Welcome to the twelfth edition of the Centre for the GeoHumanities newsletter. We aim to get in touch with all members of the CGH and if you have news you would like to share or would like your work featured, please contact us at geohumanities@rhul.ac.uk if you have news you would like to share or would like your work featured.

Royal Holloway University of London

Centre for the GeoHumanities

Cosgrove Lecture

We are delighted to announce a new David C. Cosgrove Lecture Series – webinars and in-person, including recordings of the past lectures.



Professor Maureen Donkin at the RGS, Photo Elizabeth Donkin

The most recent lecture in the series was delivered on 5 June 2022 by Professor Stephen Daniels to the campus setting of Royal Holloway in Egham Centre, a major collection of American art featuring paintings by Jules Everett Millais, William Frith, Edwin Landseer and John Linnell, among others. In his lecture, Stephen explained ways of landscapes in the Hudson Valley, the Catskills and Adirondacks, and the ideas and ideals of a rapid urban industrialisation, through the lens of Lowell's artwork. Spanning art history, geology, urban geography and imperial history, the lecture explored the ideologies of the American landscape and materialities of landscape making, as well as reflecting on the place of art in geographical enquiry.

A complete list of the previous Cosgrove Lectures is available on the Centre website: audio and visual recordings can be accessed for most of them. Go to www.cgh.ac.uk/events/

Upcoming Events

Uprooted

12 Sept – 23 Dec 2022 Royal Holloway Gardens, Kew

A new exhibition at RBG Kew which reveals archival stories of Force-conservation, has been co-curated by RHUL Techne students Christina Hourigan (Royal Holloway) and Heather Craddock (Roehampton).

Explore the histories of deforestation and tree planting through Kew archive materials, museum objects, and artworks, in the new exhibition Uprooted: Exploring Migration through Botanical Gardens. Follow a decoder ring, the local guide from New Zealand, the Jamaican psychic tree, and Sri Lanka's alumna – this exhibition examines our arboreal entanglements, and the ways in which colonialism, capitalism, and the narrative additions Force-conservation from the colonial beginnings in the nineteenth century to Kew's global conservation work today.

Kew Library Reading Room, Herbarium Building, Kew Green. 12 Sept – 23 Nov 2022. Tuesday-Thursday, 10am-4pm. Free admission, no booking required. Visitors will need to enter at the Herbarium Building off Kew Green and you will be directed to the reading room on the first floor. Entry to Kew Gardens not required.

For further information about Uprooted, click here.

London Group of Historical Geographers

Fortnightly from 10th October | Secure House

The **London Group of Historical Geographers**, co-convened by Felix Driver and Innes Bigelow with Mike Ogborn (QMUL), convenes a fortnightly seminar series. Hosted by the Centre for Metropolitan History, Secure House (Victoria St, Pimlico) and Zoom, the seminars may be attended online and most in-person, through a simple booking system. Dates for the diary are 10th and 24th October, 7th and 21st November and 5th December. Full details will be circulated in the autumn term.

10th October: Further details and how to book, click here.

Research Highlights

Listening across fault lines: Stories of oceanic life

Boy at Ulawa on an Iron Stone Bilong, Tetile Iwalaqwan ca. 1 October 2 Nov. Photo Elizabeth Mellowship

In June Anne Karingal introduced their collaborative artistic research work 'Listening across Fraultlines: Stories of Oceanic Life'. The Project seeks across fractures the testimonies of the child, and silences who are lost to the ocean. Anne, Tetile Iwalaqwan, Elizabeth Mellowship, Jessica Hutchings, Jonathan Kelly, Lisa Kelly, Lisa Kelly, Lisa Kelly, Lisa Kelly, Nene Gunew, as they consider the importance of listening in a region where the ocean is a site of colonial violence, exploitation and the enduring legacies of European colonialism.

The series aims: What does it mean to listen across the fault lines of lands, oceans, spirits and ancestries – what is Ulawa is called 'sweet water'? How can we listen across the fault lines of colonial violence, nurturing communality and belonging, navigating conflict and tensions, and remembering and asserting identity.

While many reports about the Pacific focus on violences in archipelagos at the frontlines of climate catastrophe, what goes unheard are the stories of resilience, joy, and hope. Tetile Iwalaqwan, Elizabeth Mellowship, the words of Teresita Cruzan, Lisa Kelly, Phillip, and Simone, she is what we are invited to hear. Comparing field recordings of Ulaw reefs in Vanuatu, Tetile Iwalaqwan, Elizabeth Mellowship, Lisa Kelly, Lisa Kelly, Tamara Clarke of Tern Island, with a course analog the atmospheres of oceanic life, the audience is offered insight into the truths & values these recordings hold. See an interview with Anne & Elizabeth here.

The project is supported by Vectors 2020 News Work Stimberate Corn grant sponsored BBC/AHS. The Bamber, Australia Council for the Arts and The Humphrey School of Public Affairs.

International Academic Mobilities

From April to September 2022, Marianna Lamego visited the Department of Geography, Royal Holloway, University of London, as part of the Master of Marianna research during this time year. Transnational Academic Mobility and Knowledge Networks: Geographical Research in Contemporary Portuguese Colonial Spaces. Marianna's research is a joint ethnography between researchers at Royal Holloway, Kingston University of London, and the Goda University of the Azores (UÉFA) interested in geographic mobility, gender and transnational ties from c.1950 to the present.

The project draws on Marianna's recent research on scientific conferences, internationalism and women geographers in twentieth-century Brazil, addressing (1) how transnational academic mobility and knowledge networks are shaped by gender, race, class and other practices are embedded in the international mobility of scholars; (2) to what extent gender has shaped transnational academic mobility and (3) how the geographical mobility of people, practices, concepts and technologies has impacted epistemic cultures/hierarchies and scales.

The Fellowship also contributes to collaboration with researchers in the Centre, Kingston University, Goda University of the Azores and Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil). Marianna is also based in artistic as RHUL and Rio, an RGS conference session on transnational academic mobility and a partnership agreement providing a framework for future collaboration between RHUL and GdAz.

Recent Activities

Science Through the Keyhole: Revealing Scientific Practices Through Workspaces

Attending participants at the first research meeting of the Science Through Keyhole Research Cluster, Photo Elizabeth Mellowship, April 2022

September saw the first workshop of the interdisciplinary RHRI funded research network 'Science Through the Keyhole' led by Dr Jane Desborough (PI, Science Museum) and Professor Innes M. Keighren (Co-I, Royal Holloway). Over the past two years, the network has brought academics, museum professionals and independent researchers to examine the significance of spaces in scientific practice and to discuss how the spatial practices of scientists have shaped the ways in which knowledge has been produced and disseminated.

The network involved three workshops between April and September, organised in conjunction with the Science Museum, the Cavendish Laboratory at the University of Cambridge, Royal Holloway Greenwich Observatory, and the Natural History Museum. Each workshop brought participants in collaborative 15-minute to small-group and roundtable discussions, the workshops involved a series of visits (including to the Construction site of the Ray Dolby Centre, the new home for the Cavendish Laboratory) and gallery tours of which different approaches to research scientific objects and workspaces were discussed and discussed.

The work of the network will continue beyond the formal end of the grant with a series of co-authored publications. The network's findings will also feed into the Science Museum's plans for the curation of its new Ray Dolby Centre, ensuring the knowledge effect of the Keyhole Meeting, assuming the Museum's 2023.

Connecting Mobilities - Workshop on Plant Mobilities

Attending participants at the Plant Mobilities

In July the Royal Holloway Centre for the GeoHumanities held a workshop on Plant Mobilities at Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, and hosted a delegation of researchers from the Academy of Mobility Humanities from Karlsruhe University, Germany.

The workshop, led by Dr Carolyn Cornish (Humanities Research Institute, Royal Holloway), Dr Jane Hill (Royal Holloway, Department of Geography) was one of the final events of a research partnership led by the CGH (with PI Mobs and co-investigators Carolina Cornish, Veronica Hull, Jane Hill, Innes Keighren, Mike Ogborn, Felix Driver, Lucy Kimbell, Lucy Kimbell, Royal Holloway, Kingston University, Lancaster University and Aberystwyth University, and funded by the GHRI grant Connecting Mobilities: Mobilities Research Network. The aim of the workshop, exhibiting experimenting and engaging mobilities for future. In supporting mobilities research in the arts and humanities this workshop, and the Plant Mobilities Research Network, the Centre for GeoHumanities in collaboration 15 Kew Gardens, and brought together academics accompanies this Mapp, 15 Visits and Exchanges, and travel and subsistence bursaries provided by Lancaster UK and South Korean researchers.

The Plant Mobilities workshop built on a key project theme (and under CGH focus on plant humanities of mobilities, mobilities, and explored the movement, exchange and circulation of botanic and plant materials, knowledge, practices, and ideas. Plant Mobilities, Kew, Kew Gardens, especially within collections and museum spaces and across jurisdictional networks. The day featured learn of collections at Kew Gardens, Kew Gardens, Kew Gardens, Kew Gardens, Kew Gardens, following day on campus to work on several publication projects, including a trilingual and collectively-written agenda setting volume on mobilities research in the arts and humanities.

Tree Stories - Session at RGS Conference

Session organisers Caroline Cornish and Christina Hourigan with the curators

Christina Hourigan (Royal Holloway) and Caroline Cornish (Kew Gardens) co-convened a lively session on Tree Stories. Trees and the Anthropocene at the Royal Geographical Society with the Institute of Geographers on 1st September, sponsored by the Historical Geographies Research Group. There were two papers on subjects as diverse as tree ecology, the ecology of the Amazon, the ecology of the Amazon, tree landscapes, trees and national identity, urban trees, tree adoptions, tree biography and 'news trees'. Spread in the USA from seeds that were in Washington DC, the tree has been adopted by a Washington family and interdisciplinary with speakers from landscape architecture, English literature and the environmental humanities (including Sanja Sarnavka, curator of the collection of the Natural Curator Center in Knoxville, as well as a school group talk.

New CGH Steering Group Members

An 2023-4, we welcome two members of the Centre's Steering Group, drawn from the Music, English and Philosophy Departments at Royal Holloway. Both have been active members of the Centre's Steering Committee. Their participation in the life of the Centre reflects our continued commitment to interdisciplinary working and to effective communication across Schools. Welcome to Ruth, Tim and Daniel!

Ruth Leeson is Professor of Nineteenth-Century Fiction in the School of Humanities, and Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) in International at Royal Holloway. Her research ranges across nineteenth-century fiction, nineteenth-century art and exploration of the politics of place and mobility in nineteenth-century fiction. At the Centre, she has been active in working with artists and partners in the Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded project Ruth Leeson's Ruth Leeson's Ruth Leeson's

Kate Lewis Hood, Postdoctoral Fellow, RHUL

Dr Kate Lewis Hood is joining the Centre on an ESRC Postdoctoral Fellowship, with a project titled 'Overlapping currents: navigating (anti)colonial water geographies via geopoetics'. During this one-year fellowship, Kate will be preparing a monograph based on their PhD thesis, which considered how Black and Indigenous poetic work registers colonial processes of dispossession, extraction, and exhaustion in watery geographies in Turtle Island/North America and the Pacific islands, and configures other socio-ecological relations. Kate also plans to host an interdisciplinary reading and creative practice group on geopoetics and anti-colonial, feminist, and queer methodologies, and would love to be in conversation with anyone working on related topics or approaches.

Toby Butler, Reader in Geography, RHUL

Toby joined Royal Holloway in September 2022 to lead on a three-year AHRC funded research project entitled 'An Oral History of the Environmental Movement 1970 – 2020'. The main aim is to create a new archive of oral history interviews with environmental activists that will be part of the National Life Stories Collection at the British Library. Currently a seven-strong research team will be recording whole-life history interviews with 100 environmentalists across the UK. The British Library have a large collection of oral history recordings covering various sectors and industries, but the team have identified a significant gap that will now be filled. The project will produce a book with the edited highlights of the interviews, academic papers, podcasts and educational materials that will be developed in partnership with the Royal Geographical Society. Currently the project is in the interviewing phase and staff have undergone training in oral history interviewing technique, digital recording and summarising interviews to the standards required for cataloguing in the British Library.

In the past Toby has devised collaborative oral history projects in India, the USA, Wales and England and previously studied at Royal Holloway for his PhD in cultural geography that involved creating oral history audio trails along the river Thames with the Museum of London. He has directed BA and MA programmes and devised place-based trails around the Royal Docks and London parks. Toby directed Groundbreakers, a web-based guide and augmented-reality trail for the Queen Elizabeth Park in East London interpreting the past of the Olympic site. Prior to joining RHUL Toby undertook 57 interviews with museum founders for the Mapping Museums project at Birkbeck, University of London where he advises on digital education. He co-authored a book drawing on these recordings entitled Stories from Small Museums was recently published by Manchester University Press and favourably reviewed in the Oral History Journal.

Visiting Researchers

Judith Bastie is a doctoral student in philosophy at Université Paris-Cité, working on "An Archaeology of Plants", a thesis which deals with the history of knowledge of plants and questions of plant biopolitics. She is a visiting PhD researcher at Kingston University and Royal Holloway in 2023-2024, joining research initiatives on the philosophy of plants.

Mariana Lamego is Associate Professor of Human Geography at UERJ (State University of Rio de Janeiro), where she has been Head of the Human Geography Dept. Her research interests are in the history of quantitative geography, scientific conferences, gender and international mobility. She is also Editor in Chief of the journal Espaço e Cultura.

Previous Newsletters back to 2016 are archived and available here.

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