



5th LUCAS GRADUATE CONFERENCE

ANIMALS: THEORY, PRACTICE, REPRESENTATION

APRIL 4-5 2019 LEIDEN UNIVERSITY

DAY 1: 4 April 2019

Time	Location: Rijksmuseum Boerhaave
8.45-9.30	Registration/Coffee
9.30-10:00	Welcome and Opening Remarks LUCAS, Boerhaave Museum and LUCAS graduate conference committee
10.00-11.00	Keynote Lecture Tobias Linné (Lund University)
11.00 – 12.00	Panel 1: Living with Animals 'Conserving Cows': Reimagining Cattle from Actual Animals to Mythical Beings in South Asia- Varsha Patel Here doggy! It's prayer time - Efi Mosseri
12.00-13.30	Lunch Break
13.30-15.00	Panel 2: Collecting Between 'naturalia' and 'artificialia': the transformative nature of decorative Nautilus shells and early modern collecting - Melinda Susanto Catching squirrels - Maria Aresin From birds to pictures: How to transfer knowledge in a 16th-century natural history treatise - Christine Kleiter
15.00-15.30	Coffee Break
15.30-17.00	Panel 3: Environment A tale of humans, insects and the world we share - Agnès Villette The roots of environmentalism: Economics and ecological considerations in Dutch debates concerning overfishing during the 19th century - Robbert J. Striekwold The fate of the Nazi cows: Post-Rewilding under neo-liberal capitalism - Tess Josien Post
19.00	Dinner at the Pannenkoekenhuys

DAY 2: 5 April 2019

Time	Location: Room 1.01, P.J. Veth building, Leiden University
9.30-10.00	Welcoming coffee
10.00 – 11.00	Keynote Lecture Robert Felfe (Mainz University)
11.00 – 12.00	Panel 4: Captivity & Domestication Stories of a trans-species ecology: Narrated farm animals as key concerns and challenges in the 21st century - Liza Bauer The design of the encounter - Giovanni Bellotti
12.00-13.30	Lunch Break
13.30-15.00	Panel 5: Medical Sciences “Bodies of knowledge”: Representing humans and animals in laboratory literature - Shannon Lambert Zoonosis as metaphor - Daisy Lafarge Negotiating human-animal boundaries: A perspective on the German-language field of Animal Psychology, 1870-1930 - Maike Riedinger
15.00-15.30	Coffee break
15.30-17.00	Panel 6: Symbolic & Representation Exotic and wondrous animals at the imperial court of Qing China (1700–1800) - Arina Mikhalevskaya The humanity of hawks: Human-avian relations and the representation of birds of prey in medieval Scandinavia - Kathryn A. Haley-Halinski Acquaintances with ‘the animal’: Cute, loveable, edible - Mare Groen
17.00-18.30	Discussion
18.30	Drinks at the Faculty Club

LOCATIONS

Rijksmuseum Boerhaave

Address: Lange Sint Agnietstraat 10, 2312 WC, Leiden

Participants' Dinner Restaurant: Pannenkoekenhuis de Schaapsbel

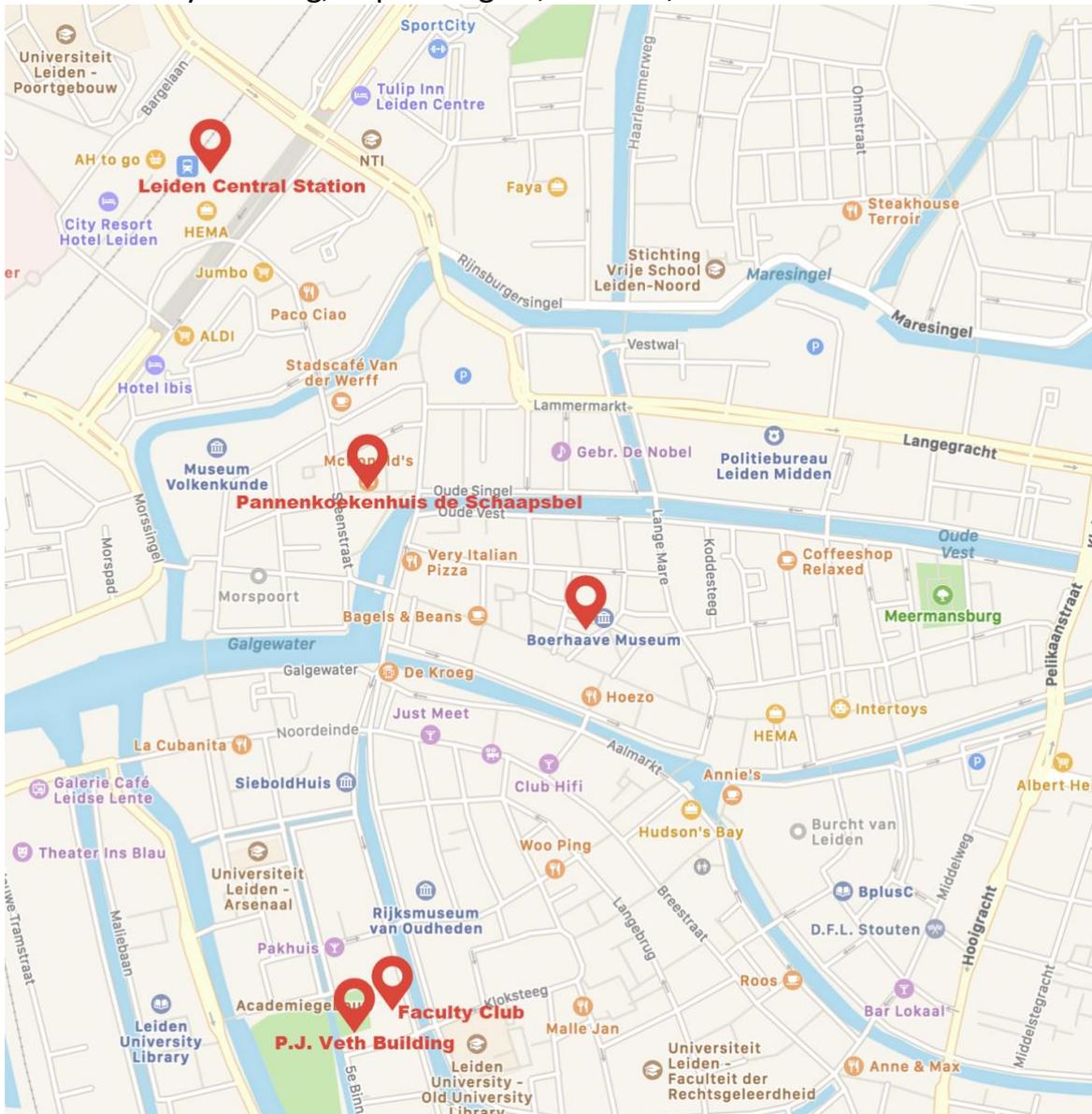
Address: Beestenmarkt 7, 2312 CC, Leiden

P.J. Veth Building Room 1.01, University of Leiden

Address: Nonnensteeg 3, 2311 VJ, Leiden

Faculty Club

Address: Academy building, Rapenburg 73, 2311 GJ, Leiden



KEYNOTE SPEECHES

Prof. Dr. Robert Felfe (Mainz University)

Animals: Agents of the Visual Field

Abstract

Among the many works of art in which animals figure as principal or ancillary subjects of the pictorial representation sometimes these non-human beings also take a more or less outspoken and active part in the visual organization of the image. The paper will focus on such cases in Western art from late medieval times up to the 18th century. The range of examples will include on the one hand the installation of animals as figures of transmission – sometimes transgression – between the pictorial space and the world outside of the picture. This can be evoked simply by their physical and sensitive presence, and a specific option here is their inclusion as a substitute-“Rückenfigur” for instance. In other examples animals act as inner-pictorial beholders or even as witnesses of the scenery, they are part of. Maybe it is time to think about something like “absorption” here? – On the other hand animals can also provoke an awareness of the fundamental limitations of the visual field. When they disappear in the middle of a painting for instance, it seems these creatures question our desire to take the image as a reliable representation and maybe they fundamentally question our sense of seeing at all.

Looking at a few significant examples for such forms of animal activity my paper will discuss what happens if animals explicitly step into the role of agents of our access into images or of its critical reflection. – And what does this imply in terms of pictorial strategies and aesthetic categories that we – of course – are used to understand as cultural conventions more or less autonomous from any resonances from or into the non-human world?

Biography

Prof. Dr. Robert Felfe is professor of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century art history at the University of Hamburg where he is also a member of the Naturbilder/Images of Nature research group and co-editor of the book series with the same title. His research is focused on the connectivity between art and natural sciences in Early Modern times. This includes topics such as the three realms of nature in the history of collecting, the concept of ‘ludi naturae’ and the history of the interpretation of fossils. Specific emphasis in these widespread research areas is placed on the use of images and on specific art practices as for instance casting from life, drawing ‘near het leven’, printmaking and related theoretical reflections.

Dr. Tobias Linné (Lund University)

The Dark Side of Dairy: Colonialism, Violence, and White Power

Abstract

Milk is one of the most widely consumed substances on the planet. The Oxford English Dictionary defines it as a fluid produced by “female mammals [...] for the nourishment of their young, and taken from cows, sheep, etc., as an article of the human diet.” Put differently, the dominant definition of milk is bound up in human-animal relations and the human use of other species.

By analyzing the portrayal of human-animal relations in narratives concerning the production and consumption of dairy, this presentation address some of the more sinister sides of the use of dairy. What purposes have the keeping of bovines for milk served in the Western colonization of non-dairying cultures? How is the violence that animals in the dairy industry are subjected to linked to violence between humans? How did milk become a symbol of normative masculinity and white superiority? And how can it be possible to not only re-think, but also act differently as far as human-animal relations in dairy production/consumption is concerned?

Biography

Tobias Linné (tobias.linne@kom.lu.se) is an associate professor at Lund University in Sweden. His research interests are in the field of critical animal studies and the intersections of critical animal studies with sociology, media studies and gender studies. In 2016 he co-founded the Lund University Critical Animal Studies Network, dedicated to education, research and activism within critical animal studies. He has published several articles that explore the social, cultural, linguistic, and political aspects of dairy and plant milk production and consumption.

PARTICIPANTS

Panel 1: Living with Animals

Varsha Patel

‘Conserving Cows’: Reimagining Cattle from Actual Animals to Mythical Beings in South Asia

Abstract

The cow is sacred in India. These symbols of light and auspiciousness sprinkle Indian history and politics. Popular culture valorizes the motherly attributes of cows. People and vehicles make way for them on city streets. However, the discrepancy between these ideal images of worshipped cattle and the lives of actual living bulls and cows is also, well known. Drawing upon secondary literature, fieldwork and an analysis of digital media in 2019, this paper discusses two different visions of ‘conserving the cow’ from the perspective of those who adore and worship cattle. In doing so, it presents the analysis of two protagonists on the causes for the discrepancy between ‘the Ideal’ and the ‘actual’ condition of cattle and the possible solutions that they foresee for bridging the gap. The first protagonist is Mahatma Gandhi, a leader and friend of cattle who wrote, ‘how to serve the cow’ in 1954. He shifted the focus away from merely protecting cows from slaughter. He defines cows broadly to include marginalized groups of humans whose conditions he writes, were akin to those of the starving animals in early twentieth century colonial India. The second protagonist is a prominent Hindu religious organization that is currently spearheading a ‘cow resurgence movement’ in 2018. This organization aspires to create ‘a world in which cows will sustain and nurture us’. They imagine a common future with a variety of cattle products that decenter the importance of milk in economic relations between humans and cattle. Tracing the wider shift from ‘beyond cow protection’ and towards ‘breed conservation’, this paper examines different, coexisting aspects of cattle—mothers, destitute creatures, economically productive co-workers.

Biography

Varsha Patel is a Research Assistant and PhD student at the chair for Social and Cultural History, Human Animal Studies, University of Kassel. Her PhD project, a social history of human cattle relations in Bangalore, South India examines the changing relationships between different breeds and sexes of cattle and of different social groups of humans in Bangalore South India between 1900 and 2019. Varsha is trained in interdisciplinary social sciences. She is designing and teaching seminars titled ‘Wildlife and power in colonial and post colonial India’, ‘Indian ocean histories’ and ‘Nature, science and empire in colonial India’

Efi Mosseri

Here doggy! It's prayer time

Abstract

The human- canine relationship has developed during the 13th century, as dogs started to play a vital role in domestic life. The keeping of animals as companions, especially dogs, became a popular practice among nobles in the 14th century. Contrary to hunting or working dogs, they were given a name and had privileges within their owners' households. Thus for example, they were allowed to enter the intimate private chambers and, as Kathleen Walker-Meikle demonstrated, served as companions rather than attendants. By virtue of their special status, they even accompanied their owners to church, despite the condemnation of this phenomenon by church officials. This, I argue, reflects a special relation that was established during the 14th century between man, animals and the divine during prayer activity.

In my paper I will demonstrate this triangular connection between God, man and dog as it appears in a book of hours known as Margaret's Hours (c. 1320, 155x110mm) belonging to an anonymous 14th century secular lady. A framed miniature in this devotional manuscript presents the lady in prayer next to a dog and a collared bird. As I will show, the presence of a dog figure next to the praying book-owner appears in various illustrations, and can demonstrate the participation of both the lady and the dog in prayer.

Biography

Efi Mosseri is a graduate student in the Art History department at Tel Aviv University, Israel. She is writing her dissertation on 'A prayer with my doggie: The triangular relationship between God, man and dog in 14th century Margaret's Hours' under the supervision of Dr. Tamar Cholcman. Her thesis focuses on the depiction of dogs as companions in 14th century devotional manuscripts, in the light of changes in human-canine relationship at this period.

Panel 2: Collecting

Melinda Susanto

Between 'naturalia' and 'artificialia': the transformative nature of decorative Nautilus shells and early modern collecting

Abstract

Imagine a delicately carved and decorated Nautilus shell in a collector's cabinet – once part of a marine creature, it became transformed into an aesthetic object for display. How did this transformation occur, and what did such a Nautilus shell signify for its audience then? This paper begins with a case study of a seventeenth-century Nautilus shell in the collection of the Natural History Museum London, attributed to Jan Belkien, an artisan in the Netherlands. It traces the journey of a Nautilus shell from its point of origin and posits its plausible reception as an object of display, situated within the scientific and visual discourses of the early modern Netherlands. Such a Nautilus shell would have been associated with the sea and travels, reflecting its 'exotic' origins. A decorative Nautilus shell would also have been valued as a representation of epistemic ambiguity, an object oscillating between 'naturalia' (natural wonders) and 'artificialia' (man-made creations). This ambiguity would have resonated with the perceived transformative biology of marine creatures. This paper looks into the early modern fascination with molluscs and shells, analysing how decorative Nautilus shells became imbued with value as objects of knowledge, and thus became coveted as part of early modern collecting culture.

Biography

Melinda Susanto is an MA History student at Leiden University, where she is exploring research on natural histories of the Southeast Asian region. Before arriving in Leiden, she worked as an assistant curator at the National Gallery Singapore. She holds a BA in Art History and Curatorship from the Australian National University and an MA in the History of Art from the Courtauld Institute of Art. Her research interests include intersections between art and sciences, the role of print culture, and the networks of knowledge and artistic exchanges between Europe and Asia from the 17th to the 19th century.

Maria Aresin

Catching squirrels

Abstract

From the Middle Ages until the 19th century squirrels were popular pets especially for woman and children. In order to keep them, they first needed to be caught and tamed. This 20-minutes paper aims to shed light on the practice of squirrel keeping by explaining strategies of catching and taming squirrels by means of hunting treatises such as the *Livres du Roy Modus* from the 14th century. Herein three types of squirrel traps and hunting methods are explained in lengthy passages and illustrated by small miniatures. The instructions given do serve not only to catch squirrels for pet keeping, but also to control overpopulation. The texts will be compared to images of squirrel catching from the Middle Ages to the Early Modern times. After catching the squirrel, the small creature needed to be tamed to become a suitable pet. Natural history treatises such as Conrad Gessner's *Thierbuch* do provide information about rather unrealistic taming methods, which should be discussed in the second part of the presentation. As beloved pets, squirrels were kept in small cages and huts in the household and mostly in the chamber of their holders. The final part of the presentation will be dedicated to these material items – such as cages, huts, leashes and collars – related to squirrel keeping, that are documented in surviving objects, portrait paintings and other imagery.

Biography

Maria Aresin studied art history, philosophy and religious science in Leipzig, Heidelberg, Siena and Frankfurt Main. She graduated in art history from the University of Frankfurt Main in 2014 with a Master thesis on a today lost painting cycle for the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* in Venice. Her dissertation project examines the Iconography of the Four Ages of Man (1497-1836) under the supervision of Hans Aurenhammer and Alessandro Nova. She has been working as a graduate assistant at the *Kunsthistorisches Institut* in Florenz and was a PhD-fellow of the *Gerda Henkel Stiftung* at the *Kunsthistorisches Institut* in Florenz until 2018. Currently she is working as curatorial assistant at the *Bavarian National Museum* in Munich. Her on-going post-doc projects are focusing on *Palma il Giovane's* drawings as well as squirrels in art.

Christine Kleiter

From birds to pictures: How to transfer knowledge in a 16th-century natural history treatise

Abstract

In 1555, the French naturalist Pierre Belon published an example of one of the first illustrated volumes on birds in print. The title, "L'histoire de la nature des oyseaux, avec leurs descriptions, & naïfs portraits retirez du naturel," already hints at the scientific pretext for juxtaposing text and accompanying woodcuts: In fact, the French adjective "naïf" in its 16th-century use means "not artificial" and suggests the author's attempt to create "objective" representations of avian subjects.

This presentation will shed light on the process of creating the woodcuts and put Belon's illustrations within the larger context of bird representations. Found in illustrated printed books and other artforms of the period, these produced images were highly influenced by external factors such as taxidermic objects or other illustrative material. As one can deduce from his descriptions, Belon used bird carcasses or the first fragile examples of embalmed animals as study objects and probably as models for the woodcuts. Following Belon's own treatise, he uses a method of mummification during which the entrails are removed and the cavity is stuffed. I question this practice in regard to its consequences on the illustrative process and for the involved stake holders, such as naturalists and artists, who dealt with the dead specimen and/or the embalmed animals. In some cases, only fragmentary parts — beaks or feathers — of exotic birds reached Europe and this led to fragmentary and sometimes highly imaginative images, another phenomenon that I will address in this paper.

Biography

Christine Kleiter, M.A. studied Italian and German Literature and Linguistics, Art History and Business Studies at the universities of Augsburg, Bonn, Florence and Passau. In 2010 she received her B.A. from the universities of Bonn and Florence with a thesis in Historical Linguistics. In 2013 she received her M.A. from the University of Passau with a thesis in Art History, entitled "The elephant fountain by G.B. Vaccarini in Catania – on the political iconography of an animal in the Early Modern Period" (advisor Michael Thimann). In 2014, she started her PhD project at the university of Göttingen on Pierre Belon's "L'histoire de la nature des oyseaux" (advisors Michael Thimann, Karin Leonhard). At the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut (Department Gerhard Wolf), she worked as a Postgraduate Assistant from 2015 to 2018. Since October 2018 she holds a scholarship from the Cusanuswerk.

Panel 3: Environment

Agnès Villette

A tale of humans, insects and the world we share

Abstract

I would be really pleased to speak about a current artistic project which I will finish this coming summer. I am currently researching and photographing a photographic series on invasive insects in collaboration with 12 entomologists in several French scientific institutions. All the insects belong to the invasive alien species' list produced by the EU, implying severe legal and techno-surveillance control practices. I use the invasive insects to elaborate complex narratives touching on ecological balance, the fragility of eco-systems, the extension of new Asian trade routes, new interactions between alien insects and humans, fear of invasions and eco-politics. For each insects, I meet its known entomologist and carry lengthy interviews, touching on the biology of the insects, its history and the progress of current invasions. Insects' population has drastically decreased in the past decade. It is now known that 75% of insects have disappeared in the past 30 years. Deconstructing the traditional human approach of science imposed on nature, insects and their deregulated intrusion force scientists to rethink globalisation, climate change and commercial trade routes' consequences. Using algorithmic predictive models and speculative thinking, scientists develop fascinating strategies that underline eco-systems's resilience and ability to rebalance themselves in chaotic and unpredictable situations. Several new techno scientific researches engage innovative human /animal interactions, as explored in Dona Haraway and Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing's essays.

The visuals and the interviews will lead to a photographic essay publication.

Biography

Agnès Villette is a photograph, journalist and independent scholar based in London. She is also an educator in literature and has been teaching in France and the United Kingdom. She just finished a Master in Art Photography at UAL London. She is currently looking for an institution where to start her PhD in Nuclear Culture and Art. As a freelance journalist, she has been collaborating for Citizen K, Wedemain, Dust, Le Monde magazines for several years writing and photographing features on social issues, digital technology and environmental issues. She is working on a long time project on the nuclear landscape of the Norman peninsula. One of her project, Beta Bunker, is currently exhibited at Detroit Science gallery. After finishing the master, she has intervened in academic conferences, such as Birkbeck, London, Amsterdam Vrije University Amsterdam, or Turku University, Finland.

Robbert J. Striekwold

The roots of environmentalism: Economics and ecological considerations in Dutch debates concerning overfishing during the 19th century

Abstract

Fishing has long been an important sector of the Dutch economy, as it was for the other nations around the North Sea. It was, indeed, a source of national pride, especially the herring industry, and most governmental regulations during the 17th and 18th centuries were concerned with protecting it from foreign interference.

During the 19th century, increasing pressure on North Sea fish stocks gave birth to a more ecological approach to fishing, though the motivations behind it were almost exclusively economic: certain fishing techniques were to be prohibited because they were inefficient, certain species should be left alone while spawning to prevent the fishery from collapsing, and so on.

In this paper, I look at the way this ecological element entered discussions on policies concerning the Dutch herring, cod, and whale fisheries, especially during the 1850s, when the Dutch opted for an extensive (and economically quite successful) liberalisation of the sector. Despite some concerns about the possible depletion of fish stocks, these discussions focused on making Dutch fisheries more efficient.

It's only by the end of the 19th century that an environmental ethic began to sprout, for instance with the idea that making an overfished species go extinct may be bad in itself, not just because of the economic repercussions. But all the ingredients for this way of thinking were developed in the context of 19th century debates about efficiency.

Biography

Currently I'm a PhD student in the project "A New History of Fishes" at Leiden University and Naturalis Biodiversity Center, where I study 19th century Dutch fish collections and their histories. Before that I studied biology and history & philosophy of science (at Utrecht University and Karolinska Institute in Stockholm), both of which come together in this project, which combines a historical approach with elements from biology. I'm also curator of the palaeontological collection at a modest geological museum in Laren and, perhaps inevitably, became a rather avid natural history collector myself.

Tess Josien Post

The fate of the Nazi cows: Post-rewilding under neo-liberal capitalism

Abstract

The Dutch Oostvaardersplassen nature reserve has recently caused severe public unrest. Constructed as an experimental rewilding reserve, it is home to thousands of grazing herbivores, including Heck cattle; bovines created through back-breeding programs in the 1930's with support of the NSDAP, in order to recreate the wild aesthetics of the extinct Aurochs. Due to the brutally harsh winter many animals starved to death. Images of dying animals started to circulate in the media, and several groups, specifically from the animal agricultural sector, came to protest and started to feed the animals hay – an action that is immensely disruptive of natural processes. In September 2018, the decision was made to kill more than a thousand healthy stags and to sell this meat to butchers, disregarding the many animal-welfare organizations' warnings against such a highly aggressive and disruptive procedure.

Using concepts from critical animal studies such as Sara Salih's spectacles of suffering, I will conduct a discourse analysis of the aesthetics of wilderness underlying the public's engagement with this area, and its biopolitical implications. I aim to demonstrate how their apparent sympathetic engagement with post-rewilding issues upholds anthropocentric neo-liberal power hierarchies, enabling people to be superficially concerned with animal well-being without having to engage politically or with more fundamental ethical questions concerning their own consumption practices. I propose a post-humanist framework in order to dismantle exploitative relations to non-human animals.

Biography

Tess Josien Post (1995) is currently a Research Master's student in the program Comparative Literary Studies at Utrecht University. She finished her BA in Liberal Arts & Sciences at Amsterdam University College. Her academic interests include posthumanism, critical animal studies, postcolonial theory and critical theory.

Panel 4: Captivity & Domestication

Liza Bauer

Stories of a Trans-Species Ecology: Narrated Farm Animals as Key Concerns and Challenges in the 21st Century

Abstract

In his recent work *Narratology Beyond the Human* (2018) David Herman questions traditional human-centric conceptions of narrative and explores storytelling modes which respond to today's complex entanglement of human/nonhuman communities. This "trans-species ecology of selves," so Herman, calls for new ways of analysing how animal stories are both shaped by and can reshape cultural understandings of inter-species relationships and responsibilities (Herman 2018: 22). This paper applies this approach to the particularity of narrating the farm animal and argues for an urgent turn in 21st century literary studies to this underrepresented group. Countering phenomena such as their erasure from both every-day life and cultural discourse (Berger's 'animal-as-spectacle' (1980)), I seek innovative portrayals of farm animal agency beyond the Aesopian or Orwellian tradition which can help to re-establish an authentic relationship between humans and livestock. To exemplify this, I will examine how farm animals escape their conventional fates in recent productions and become active animal agents (cf. McHugh 2011: 171) through the lens of Margaret Atwood's human-pig hybrids called 'Pigoons' and Jane Smiley's massive hog named 'Earl Buzz'. These two rather diverging examples of how to narrate farm animals will be analysed in the light of their structural affordances portraying subjective experience across species lines. As opposed to more traditional, human-centric modes of narration, I will pursue what Susan McHugh labels a "narrative ethology" – a way of learning from animals ethically through creative engagements with narrative texts (2011: 217). This endeavour ultimately aims at underscoring the continuing relevance of literature in today's species discourse, while building upon the claim that narratives can alter our perspectives on the world around us (cf. Nussbaum 1990).

Berger, John (1980). "Why Look at Animals?" In: *About Looking*. Vintage: New York.

Herman, David (2018). *Storytelling Beyond the Human*. *Storytelling and Animal Life*. Oxford and New York: Oxford UP.

McHugh, Susan (2011). *Animal Stories*. *Narrating across Species Lines*. Minneapolis and London: U of Minnesota P.

Nussbaum, Martha (1990). *Love's Knowledge: Essays on Philosophy and Literature*. Oxford: Oxford UP.

Biography

Liza Bauer is a doctoral researcher at the International Graduate Centre of the Study of Culture (GCSC) and holds a PhD scholarship by the Justus-Liebig-University of Giessen. She began working on her dissertation entitled "Livestock and Literature: The Cultural and Ethical Work of Narrated Farm Animals in Contemporary Fiction" in October 2017. She received her BA from the university of Marburg and her MA from the university of Giessen with a thesis on the animal representation in William Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience*. Liza Bauer has spent a term at the university of Wolverhampton and is currently employed as the assistant to the coordinator of the International PhD programme "Literary and Cultural Studies" at the GCSC (IPP). She further functions as one of the speakers of the GCSC's Emerging Topic Research Group "Oikos" and holds a leading role in the section "Human-Animal Studies" of her university's graduate centre for social sciences.

Giovanni Bellotti

The design of the encounter

Abstract

Through the lenses of design and architecture, this research investigates and re-interprets three elements through which nature has been institutionalized: the cage, the zoo, and the national park, acting on (and evoking) the domestic, the civic, and the territorial scales. The project argues that these spatial models are in crisis. The project of domestication, purpose of the cage, has been executed on a global scale, and there is, in this sense, not much left to domesticate. Zoos are developing increasingly complex effects to simulate immersion in a “natural” world, one where humans are guests, a world which, however, exists more as a fantasy than a reality. National parks, especially in the US, rely both legally and culturally on a problematic definition of “wilderness”, which sees humans as “disturbance”, values their absence, and ultimately fosters a confusing sense of guilt and distance from the environment.

The proposal is developed as a research through design, where the archetype of the cage is not intended as a simple space of confinement, but as a mediative object, a man-made intermediary designed to cover the distance and occupy a middle ground between humans and other animals. Cages are filled with matter, life, dirt, and are often models of more complex systems (ecosystems, ideas of nature), but are also metaphors for constraints, desires, and fears: through the cage, design and architecture can question the space between domesticator and domesticated, owner and pet, pet and pest, interior and exterior, scaled model and reality, instrument and ornament. Focusing on birds, animals which, more than any other, have been vectors of metaphors, and that along humans, are the greatest force behind the globalization of nature, this research investigates and proposes new objects, places, and definitions that can emerge from the crisis of current models, and shape new spaces of encounter between species.

Biography

Giovanni Bellotti is an architect and researcher based in Rotterdam (NL) and Cambridge (US). He holds a Master's degree in Architecture from the IUAV University of Venice (2012), and a Master of Science in Architecture and Urbanism from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (2018), where his work was recently awarded the prize for best thesis in architecture studies. He is a Fulbright fellow (2016) and Miguel Vinciguerra fund recipient, his work has been exhibited at the MAXXI Museum in Rome, Rotterdam's Kunsthaal, the Asian Culture Center in Guangju, and published on printed and digital magazines (among others, Archdaily, Harvard Design Magazine, Lobby Magazine, AD - architectural design magazine). Giovanni has worked as a researcher for The Why Factory at TU Delft and the Leventhal Center for Advanced Urbanism at MIT, and practiced within various Dutch and international firms. He is currently a partner in the Rotterdam based firm Studio Ossidiana.

Panel 5: Medical Sciences

Shannon Lambert

“Bodies of knowledge”: Representing humans and animals in laboratory literature

Abstract

In “Who—or What—are the Rats (and Mice) in the Laboratory” Lynda Birke asks “What does [the] rodent tell us about the practices of science? And what can we learn from these meanings about human relationships to animals?” (2003, 208). Like Birke, I use rodents as a starting point to probe these questions and, more specifically, to explore the absences and ambiguities of human and nonhuman bodies in medical science. Rather than approaching these issues ethnographically (as Birke does), in this paper, I proceed through literature. Often, science is expected to be impassive, removed, and objective. A number of scientific disciplines encourage objectivity through “disembodiment.” In the writing of reports, for example, scientists’ actions are replaced with passive grammatical constructions and in both writing and practice animal bodies undergo a transformation from “naturalistic” to data-related “analytic” bodies (Michael Lynch, 1988). Further, animal bodies disappear in their role as human surrogates and in their division into particular genetic codes. In literary depictions of science, however, the “naturalistic” bodies of humans and rodents proliferate. Using literary texts alongside popular scientific writing and the corporeal philosophical ideas of Ann-Marie Mol, Ralpa Acampora, and Stacy Alaimo, I will argue that the “absence” of bodies in laboratories is not a “physical” absence but, rather, a philosophical one created by the blurring of human-animal boundaries in transcorporeal meetings (Alaimo, 2010).

Biography

Shannon Lambert is a PhD researcher at Ghent University, Belgium. She is a member of the ERC-funded project “Narrating the Mesh” (NARMESH) led by Prof. Marco Caracciolo. Shannon received her Master of Philosophy (Language and Literature) from the University of Adelaide. Her Master’s thesis investigates how Deleuzian and post-Deleuzian theories of humans and animals can be used to create non-anthropocentric readings of early modern texts. For her PhD within the NARMESH project, Shannon explores embodiment, empathy, and affect in contemporary “laboratory literature” (fiction that centres on a scientist or group of scientists in a realistic setting). Her project title is: “Scientific bodies of work”: Embodied experiments in contemporary “lab lit.”

Daisy Lafarge

Zoonosis as metaphor

Abstract

In Susan Sontag's classic polemic, *Illness as Metaphor* (1978), she lambasts both the metaphorical use of illness to describe political or social disquiet, and the metaphorical—mostly militaristic— language applied to illness itself. Just over a decade later, during the AIDS pandemic, this text was followed by *AIDS and its Metaphors* (1989). Since the turn of the millennium, fear of future pandemics has shifted from AIDS and the diseases Sontag describes in *Illness as Metaphor*, towards the threat of emerging zoonoses (that is, diseases passed from animals to humans).

Today, zoonoses account for 75% of all emerging infectious diseases. Although this term is not in common parlance, public paranoia is easily stirred with headlines concerning diseases such as Bird Flu, Swine Flu and Monkey Pox. But what, we might ask—following Sontag—are zoonoses' metaphors? And what narratives do they suggest?

Grounded in my fieldwork shadowing vets and social scientists studying zoonoses in Tanzania and elsewhere, my paper will explore these questions. Zoonosis as Metaphor will expand on the contradiction inherent in the word 'zoonosis', a term that can only function if humans are considered separate from other(ed) animals, yet also a term that problematises this divide by evidencing its transgression at microbial levels. Zoonoses tell the story of interspecies entanglement, and also, I will argue – with recourse to etymology, narrative and anecdotes from the history of infectious diseases – document an anxiety of becoming animal that is at the root of anthropic exceptionalism.

Biography

Daisy Lafarge is a writer, artist and editor, working across poetry, fiction, criticism, theory and visual art. In 2017, she received an Eric Gregory Award from the Society of Authors and her poetry pamphlet *understudies for air* was published by Sad Press, later selected as a book of the year by *The White Review* and *The Poetry School*. She was recently runner-up in the 2018 Edwin Morgan Poetry Award. Daisy is an editor at MAP (a commissioning and publishing project for artist-led production based in Glasgow) and a PhD candidate at the University of Glasgow, working as a writer alongside an interdisciplinary team of vets and social scientists studying zoonoses in rural farming communities in northern Tanzania. <https://daisy-lafarge.net>

Maike Riedinger

Negotiating human-animal boundaries: A perspective on the German-language field of Animal Psychology, 1870-1930

Abstract

The negotiation of human-animal boundaries is a decisive aspect of human history. Attempts to define the human as a category are often based on a distinction between humans and other animals. This process entails defining animals as others. The paper that I am going to present aims to answer the question of how this interrelation in defining categories was also influential for the German-language field of Animal Psychology around 1900.

Spanning examinations of the mentality of apes, studies in entomology and investigations of the knock-speaking animals— divergent ways of studying animal behavior and its relation to the animal mind were crucial for Animal Psychology. Most researchers of that time agreed on the impossibility of access to the animal mind and tried to find their way around this assumed challenge. The suggested relation of the investigated animal or animal species to the human played a significant role in search for an adequate scientific approach. Among other aspects, analogy and comparison (implicitly) influenced methods as did language and argumentation. Crossing an implicit human-animal border in a study led to discussions of anthropomorphism and potentially to its disqualification as a scientific approach. Based on an examination of studies in Animal Psychology the paper seeks to answer the questions of which human-animal relations were scientifically accepted and which criteria led to the acceptance of a certain approach.

By answering these questions, the paper aims at examining implications of scientific knowledge production and the images of animals drawn by Animal Psychology. Thereby it tries to contribute to an understanding of historical human-animal relations.

Biography

Maike Riedinger is currently a doctoral student in social and cultural history focusing on the history of the Human-Animal Relationships at the University of Kassel, Germany. Her thesis focuses on the field of animal psychology in Germany around 1900, a field which led to the study of the animal mind as it is currently practiced in cognitive ethology. She graduated in social work, sociology and psychoanalysis at Goethe University, Germany, studying mainly the social construction of deviance as presented in labeling theory and psychoanalytic theories derived from Freudian Psychoanalysis. Additionally, she is regularly hosting workshops in schools dealing with animals in agriculture and their wider embedding in environment and economy.

Panel 6: Symbolic & Representation

Arina Mikhalevskaya

Exotic and wondrous animals at the imperial court of Qing China (1700–1800)

Abstract

Exotic animals and other natural wonders have been increasingly popular as objects of study among social and intellectual historians of Europe but are conspicuously absent from scholarship in Chinese history. In fact, the field of animal history is next to nonexistent in what concerns pre-modern China. This paper will aim to contribute to breaching this gap by looking at the ways animals and birds from Southeast and Central Asia were obtained, kept, exhibited and otherwise employed by the Manchu imperial court during the Qing dynasty (1644–1911). The study will explore a wide range of textual and visual sources in order to look at the ways the ownership and display of exotic animals in front of domestic and foreign audiences helped to visualize and imagine Qing sovereignty as an all-encompassing universal rule of the Sage King who holds sway over the vast imperial frontiers and remote foreign countries—but also over the realms of both natural and supernatural, as the appearances of wondrous beasts such as the mythical qilin indicated. Unlike Europe and Japan where in the eighteenth century there occurred an epistemological shift towards the overall rationalization of the natural world, eighteenth-century Chinese sources do not draw a conceptual distinction between real and “mythical” animals. The present study will additionally explore how this fact affected human-animal relationships in late imperial China as compared to those in other regions of the world.

Biography

Arina Mikhalevskaya is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History at Yale University. Her research interests include history of late imperial China as well as pre-colonial and early colonial Southeast Asia with a specific focus on the exchange and trade in exotic animals and animal parts between China and Southeast Asia. Arina is currently working at the intersection of political, environmental and intellectual history on a PhD project provisionally titled *Exotic Animals and other Natural Wonders in Qing China (1600–1800)*. Arina has presented papers in animal history, such as “Elephants from Yunnan and Southeast Asia in Late Imperial China” delivered at the AAS-in ASIA Conference 2017 in Seoul, Korea.

Kathryn A. Haley-Halinski

The humanity of hawks: Human-avian relations and the representation of birds of prey in Medieval Scandinavia

Abstract

Ascribing human-like mental characteristics, such as human emotions, to non-human companion animals is often considered to be a hallmark of sentimentalised present-day Western attitudes toward companion animals. This is not aided by conventional historical and archaeological approaches to medieval Scandinavian falconry, which treat the birds as little more than tools and focus upon the use of birds of prey as displays of wealth and status, what bird species were used to hunt, what prey was caught, and when falconry was introduced and popularised in Scandinavia. However, an interdisciplinary analysis of medieval Scandinavian sources through the lens of Human-Animal Studies reveals similar patterns of anthropomorphic thinking toward the hawks and falcons that were captured and trained for use in falconry.

In this paper, I will investigate the human-avian bonds and the anthropomorphic representations of birds of prey that grew around the practice of falconry in medieval Scandinavia. Taking into account the so-called “falconry burials”, where humans and falcons were interred together, multiple words that use hawks to metaphorically describe human character traits, literary sources where hawks’ behaviour reflects emotional states, and poetic lists of hawk-nicknames that enumerate hawks’ characteristics, I will argue that as they were raised and tamed individually, hunting birds were drawn from the sphere of “wild animals” and into the human household, and as a result were endowed with a kind of personhood that was unavailable to most wild birds. Through this, I hope to enrich understanding of human-animal relations in medieval Scandinavia.

Biography

Kathryn Haley-Halinski did their BA in English Literature at King’s College London, and did their MA in Viking and Medieval Norse Studies as a joint degree between the University of Iceland and the University of Oslo, where they wrote their thesis on cognitive literary approaches to Old Norse poetry. Between their MA and their PhD, they did a three-month research project at the History of Religions department at Aarhus University, where they investigated the portrayal of birds in Northern Europe in the Late Iron Age.

They are currently an Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded PhD student at the University of Cambridge, where they are investigating human-bird interactions in Viking Age and medieval Scandinavia, and their effects on literary and artistic portrayals of avian beings. This paper is based on a proposed chapter of their PhD thesis, which looks at falconry and how it shaped human perceptions of birds of prey.

Mare Groen

Acquaintances with 'the animal': cute, loveable, edible

Abstract

When I was a child, I used to eat a lot of 'kinderworst' – the so-called meat for children that appeals to them through their depiction of a bear on its slices – alongside regularly watching a lot of animation films featuring animals as its lead characters and possessing a major collection of stuffed animals. I was learning to love and embrace animals as funny, loveable creatures while simultaneously learning to eat them. Why did these things never seem contradictory to me? Through exploring kinderworst, I ask how our mass industries of animal suffering – marked, among others, by the daily slaughtering of 1,7 million(!) animals in the Netherlands – can co-exist, without major frictions, with the abundant visibility of loveable animals in our daily lives. This talk traces two different lines of thought concerning animals that 'make possible' such a product such as kinderworst, not as contradiction, but as viable and marketable product. By doing so, the talk unravels why my earlier conception of a contradiction is actually very much in line with the anthropocentrism that mediates the earlier-mentioned different lines of thought concerning animals. Ultimately, I will claim that different reconfigurations of anthropocentrism are always at the centre of our acquaintance with animals, or rather 'the animal'.

Biography

Mare Groen (1995, The Netherlands) received her Liberal Arts and Sciences bachelors' degree summa cum laude at Amsterdam University College, where she specialized in film and philosophy. Currently, she is completing the research master Cultural Analysis at the University of Amsterdam.