Welcome to the third Centre for the GeoHumanities newsletter. Please get in touch with us on geohumanities@rhul.ac.uk if you have news you would like to share or would like your work featured.
Some upcoming dates for your diary
(more info below)

10th July: Expand and Contract: Navigating Undergrounds

28th September: Listening: Field, Voice, Body

18th October: Global Challenges and the 'Creative Turn'

Upcoming GeoHumanities Events

Expand and Contract: Navigating the Underground
10th July, 11am, Chisenhale Dance Sapce

This event experiments with conference formats through a combination of talks, introductions to LARP (live-action role play), sound works and a co-created shifting diagrammatic workspaces.

The participants have been assembled from across a range of backgrounds, including artists, geographers and humanities scholars to bring together disparate approaches to thinking with the underground.

This event builds on a series of events, exhibitions, workshops and publications produced by Flora Parrott and Harriet Hawkins.

Indicative themes will include:
Light, dark, visible, invisible; dwelling; law, ownership, control and boundaries beneath the surface; blank space, negative space and the imaginary; underground imaginaries and new world orders

If you would like to attend please email harriet.hawkins@rhul.ac.uk for further information
Listening: Field, Voice, Body
TECHNE Conflux Event
September 28th 2018, 6-8pm at the Chisenhale Dance Space.

The conflux comprises three preparatory workshops over the course of the academic year 2018-2019 that culminate in a week-long Summer School in July 2019 at the site of a GCHQ-NSA operated “Listening Station” at Bude, Cornwall.

The Conflux is aimed at TECHNE funded students, but all are welcome to attend the first workshop. Registration is free via Eventbrite. In the event of any queries please get in touch with Sofie Narbed, Cecilie Sachs Olsen or Sasha Engelmann.

Global Challenges and the 'Creative Turn': a workshop

18 October 2018
9.30 am- 5pm, Woburn Room, Senate House, University of London

One of the goals of the UK’s Global Challenges Research Fund is to stimulate cross-research council research practices that see social and physical scientists collaborating with arts and humanities researchers, and bringing methods and practices from the arts and humanities to bear on urgent problems in the Global South.
Yet for many social scientists – from Geographers to Development Scholars – the possibilities but also the challenges of using arts and humanities, and specifically creative research methods and practices are not always clear.

In this workshop a series of activities, talks, and panels aim to explore the possibilities, challenges and practicalities of what has been called the ‘Creative Turn’, for research focused on the Global South addressing key global challenges. It will explore projects that commission and collaborate with creative practitioners; projects that use creative research methods and that incorporate creative practitioners as part of research teams.

The workshop will also include a visit to the exhibition: Blood Bricks: Untold Stories of Modern Slavery and Climate Change from Cambodia.

For further details including to sign up please see the Blood Bricks project website.

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**Update: Centre for the GeoHumanities Creative Commissions**

**In the Future Perfect**

Julian Weaver and Jol Thomson’s plasma/fusion field work as part of their project ‘In the Future Perfect,’ has so far brought them to Europe’s leading experimental fusion research sites; the UK’s Fulham Centre for Fusion Energy (CCFE) and France’s **ITER** where joint European and International governments are developing and testing the world’s largest experimental reactor.

The possibility of nuclear fusion has only ever existed *in the future perfect*, a dream of abundant, clean energy that has, since the 1950s, always been 30 years away - and remains there still. This collaboration nevertheless aims at a polyvalent understanding of what fusion energy, a theoretically clean and unlimited energy source, could mean for the future global environment and economy. In their fieldwork Thomson & Weaver combine the poetics of a ‘pataphysical state of fusion research with para-ethnographic methodologies to elaborate a media ecological map which may help us to navigate “the vast field of nuclear culture within which we are all embedded” (Carpenter, 2017) and which marks the age of the Anthropocene. Containing and holding a man-made star is a wicked problem, but these experimental sites dot our planet, producing a sort of terrestrial-constellation we have yet to name.
Matterlurgy – Terra-Technological Methods of Signaling

How can global environmental change be sensed and signaled otherwise?

What new vocabularies are required?

What assemblages and structures might induce a practice of noticing?

Matterlurgy are currently developing a series of sculptural prototypes that speak to these questions. These assemblages will be composed from found materials, hi and low tech, vegetation and manufactured elements. They will be placed in a variety of specific sites, outdoors and indoors, that speak to issues of global environmental change.

Images and text Courtesy of Helena Hunter & Mark Peter Wright
Congratulations to Danielle Sands and her team. Under the direction of Dr Danielle Sands (Royal Holloway), the 'How Like a Leaf: Nature, Art and World' Conflux will be an interdisciplinary programme of workshops and roundtables taking place on the Bedford Square and Egham campuses from June 2018 until April 2020, where participants’ contributions will culminate in an exhibition.

Taking inspiration from the hybrid work of Donna Haraway, ‘How Like A Leaf’ is focused on discussing, producing work on and investigating the possibility of an aesthetics that bridges the human and nonhuman, as well of cross-species relations - as well as the variety of tools and discourses with which we have addressed these relations.

The programme is split into four consecutive parts; Encountering, Writing, Performing and Thinking. Bringing together students from across disciplines - literary studies, philosophy, geography, visual arts, music, dance and so forth - the Conflux is an extremely exciting opportunity to examine the relations of art, nature and world with the assistance of world-renowned practitioners and theorists across the field.

The organisers of the Conflux are Dr Danielle Sands (Royal Holloway), Dr Nick Foxton (Kingston University), Dr Adeline Johns-Putra (University of Surrey), Dr Daniel Whistler (Royal Holloway), Dr Libby Worth (Royal Holloway), Dr Sara Upstone (Kingston University), Lucy Mercer (Royal Holloway) and Flora Parrott (Royal Holloway).

Interested parties should contact howlikealeaf@gmail.com for further information.
Centre for the GeoHumanities European Network Event

The CGH has been awarded RHUL Research Strategy Fund money for an event in Autumn 2018 that will bring together key figures in the GeoHumanities from across Europe to brainstorm on the current state and future directions of the GeoHumanities. We hope this will form the foundation for a longer term European Network for the GeoHumanities.

More information will be announced in late Summer 2018.

Audio recording of the 3rd Denis Cosgrove Lecture by Prof Joan Schwartz now available.

The audio recording of the 3rd Denis Cosgrove lecture given by Prof Joan Schwartz ‘Lives and Afterlives: The Photographic Lens and Legacy of Frederick Dally’, is now available online at the Centre for the GeoHumanities webpage. The recordings for the first two lectures, given by Prof Jerry Brotton and Prof Dee Heddon are also available on the same page.
In 380 CE, the Emperor Theodosius (d. 395) ordered all Roman subjects to follow Catholic Christianity and limited imperial patronage to the Catholic Church. Theodosius was the last ruler to reign over a united empire. At his death the realm was divided into two halves, and by the end of Gregory the Great's papacy (d. 604), a mosaic of independent kingdoms had replaced the western part of the empire. Yet despite the political division, during this period western clerics built a supra-regional ecclesiastical structure with substantial levels of hierarchy and cohesion. How was a ‘universal’ church built at such a time of political fragmentation, and how did the transition from informal mutual aid to more formal hierarchical structures of law- and policy-making come about?

With innovative methods of social inquiry this project seeks to offer new answers to these historiographical questions. In CONNEC, we use social network analysis and new institutional theory to trace four processes: how clerical networks adapted to the new secular contexts, how these interactions shaped the development of ecclesiastical laws, how clerics constructed and disseminated discourses that supported different structures of the church, and how networks fostered compliance and a sense of accountability among clerics. Our use of state-of-the-art methods is enhanced by the implementation of new digital technologies. CONNEC’s team is developing the digital platform OpenAtlas to facilitate the analysis and geographical visualisation of dynamic historical networks. By bringing together digital tools with qualitative textual analysis, this project seeks to provide a more nuanced understanding of a key process of world history.

This five-year project (2018-2022) is funded by the ERC-Starting Grant scheme (€1,465,316) and hosted at Royal Holloway, University of London and at the Austrian Centre for Digital Humanities (Vienna). Our team comprises three postdoctoral researchers, two PhD students, two software developers and one project officer & dissemination coordinator.
Sending Jumpers in the Place of Soldiers: Stitching together a Geopolitics of Care and Comfort
Laura Shipp, PhD Candidate, Departments of Geography and Information Security

This project was the basis for my MSc dissertation in which I investigated how people try to make political impact through alternative, creative and taken-for-granted means – in this case knitting. My methodology was based on ethnographic work and interviews conducted at a charity that collects donated knitting to send to needy causes. I also taught myself to knit and one of my early attempts can be seen in the pictures. Through the project, I found out how ‘maker bodies’ (Price and Hawkins, 2018) embed in knitted object hopes, intentions and emotions about what it can do in the world. This is seen in the pictures of sewn in notes and emblems of peace. These ‘maker bodies’, however, through the size, design and colour choices they make in their objects, dictate who is able to receive their objects, ultimately producing an imagined recipient that differed from the lived reality of the need. Overwhelmingly, the objects received at the charity were for small children, raising questions about who is thought of as requiring care and comfort work.