

Women on Earth

As part of the symposium series

Women in the Arts and Leadership

Master symposium & Workshop

9.–11. October 2019

Tower Building, Aula D 1.04

Art Institute, FHNW Academy of Arts and Design in Basel

Guests:

Rosella Biscotti, Neha Choksi, Ingela Ihrman, Sophie Jung, Lysann König, Janne Nora Kummer (Institute of Queer Ecology), Agnes Meyer-Brandis, New Mineral Collective (Tanya Busse and Emilija Škarnulytė), Katrin Niedermeier, Heather Philipson, Mathilde Rosier, Lena Maria Thüring

Moderated by Chus Martínez & Quinn Latimer

Research Assistants: Marion Ritzmann, Alice Wilke

The symposium will be held in English.

As a sequel to *Women in Space*, the second symposium at Art Institute HGK FHNW in 2019 will be dedicated to Earth, its ideas, its spin, its possible dark futures. “Women who seek to be equal with men lack ambition.” This infamous quote attributed to Marilyn Monroe, among others, was paraphrased years later by feminist scholar Luce Irigaray in her critique of the often constraining and unallied aspirations of equality and equity. But what does it mean? Simply: men are not—and cannot continue to be—the measure of social justice. Following on from this complex argument the symposium will be dedicated to understanding the relations between feminism and species coexistence. *Women on Earth*, and all those it is might be composed by, will consider the question of how environmentalism has been variously represented or nonrepresented in women’s and gender studies curricula, through the fields and ideas of ecofeminism, yes, but also others. Indeed, the symposium will go beyond the entanglement of gender and environmental issues to encompass other threads of the tight knot of ecocide: extractive capitalism, the movements and struggles of the Indigenous, and environmental racism in all its iterations.

The issue of nature—and of all that is naturalized or deemed unnatural by hegemonic discourses and policy—is of particular importance to gender issues, as is science. But a scientific and technical approach to the climate emergency cannot be accurate without taking into consideration how gender, racial, and economic violence foster our emergent ecocides, nor by how women—often poor and Indigenous women—are overwhelmingly at the forefront of this violence as the very first recipients of. What kind of political and cultural transformation must occur to make these entanglements obvious and of vital concern? How to counter this violence in all its manifold forms?

Feminists and global feminisms have always shared a critical concern for science, being that this has long been the field on which the subjugation of women—and all the world's others—has rested, in part. The inferiority of women—physical, intellectual, emotional, sensorial—has been extensively theorized and the subject of intensive scientific discourses since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, at least in the West, and certainly in the modernity that developed alongside emergent imperialisms. This critique of a patriarchal pseudoscience is built into feminism, by its very nature—and what is *that*? By addressing questions of a female “nature” (whatever that is) and by addressing the question of human “nature” (another ringing question), and then deconstructing both, we not only lay open the question of the power of knowledge—who decides what, and in which situational or discursive contexts—but also the more epistemological questions: what to do with objectivity; what to do with certain notions of distance or neutrality; what to do with an increasing quantification of what we call scientific knowledge. How do we beat the regular and systematic recurrence of exclusion, of the same others, who recur and repeat across history and its power struggles, and the persistence of this process of othering itself?

The symposium *Women on Earth*, moderated by Chus Martínez and Quinn Latimer, is a public event within the framework of the Women's Center for Excellence, a long-term research project initiated by the Art Institute, together with Instituto Susch, a joint venture with Grażyna Kulczyk and Art Stations Foundation CH.

A further outcome of this collaboration is the podcast series *Promise no Promises!*, an ongoing endeavor originating from the first series of symposia initiated in October 2018 in Basel, also moderated by Chus Martínez and Quinn Latimer. The podcast, and the symposia from which it emerges, aims to develop different teaching tools, materials, and ideas to challenge more normalized and traditional curricula around ideas of gender, culture, power, and language, but also to create a sphere in which to meet, discuss, and foster a new imagination. The notion of the voice is a crucial one in the historical development of women's consciousness and their position and agency in society. We need a chorus!

Program (in English)

DAY I

Part 1

10 am Welcome: Chus Martínez & Quinn Latimer

10.15 am Reading by Quinn Latimer

10.30 am Performance by Lysann König: *Songs for Two Suns*

11 am Presentation by Mathilde Rosier: *Alone, all alone, nobody, but nobody, can make it out here, alone.*

11.45 am Performance by Ingela Ihrman: *The Toe*

noon Lunch break

Part 2

2 pm Reading by Quinn Latimer

2.15 pm Performance by Sophie Jung: *Earth, my dearest, you no longer need your springtime's to win me over...*

2.30 pm Presentation by New Mineral Collective (Tanya Busse and Emilija Škarnulytė): *What are we to rocks and mountains?*

3.15 pm Presentation by Rosella Biscotti: *The clearest way into the future is through a forest wilderness*

4 pm Round up by Chus Martínez & Quinn Latimer

4.30 pm End the day with *Octopussy*, a song by Lena Maria Thüring

DAY II

Part 3

10 am Welcome by Chus Martínez & Quinn Latimer

10.15 am Reading by Quinn Latimer

10.30 am Presentation Neha Choksi: *Flowers are more courageous than almost all human beings.*

11.30 am Presentation by Agnes Meyer-Brandis: *Who knows? Perhaps all the birds sing for us.*

12.30 pm Lunch break

Part 4

2 pm Video screening by Katrin Niedermeier: *Transarcadia 5.1*

2.30 pm Presentation by Heather Phillipson: *The Age of Love*

3.30 pm Presentation by Janne Nora Kummer (affiliated to the Institute of Queer Ecology): TITLE tba

4 pm Reading by Quinn Latimer

16.15 pm Round up by Chus Martínez & Quinn Latimer

17.00 pm End of the public event

DAY III

(not open to the public)

11 October 2019

10 am – 4:30 pm Workshop with Thomas Lempertz
Tower Building, Aula D 1.04: