

CONNECT /CUT

Infrastructures
and collective
activity

Shannon Mattern
Carolina Rito
Siegfried Zielinski

april
6–8
2022

**University of
Copenhagen**



KØBENHAVNS UNIVERSITET

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ART AS FORUM

The conference is organized by
the New Carlsberg Foundation
research centre Art as Forum at the
Department of Arts and Cultural Studies.

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Cover: Helen Eriksen, *Throwing stones and hatching* (2020)
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Connect/Cut. Infrastructures and collective activity

“All artistic work, like all human activity, involves the joint activity of a number, often a large number, of people. Through their cooperation, the artwork we eventually see or hear comes to be and continues to be.” (*Becker, H. S. (1982). Art Worlds. Berkley & Los Angeles: University of California Press., p. 1).*

If artworks come about through collective activity within “art worlds”, as American sociologist Howard Becker describes, this means that the production, reception, and distribution of any form of art is (also) a matter of social concern and sensuous reality. With ongoing discussions on the need to rethink the protocols and classifications that regulate museums, (digital) archives, collections, and public spaces to better reflect the concerns of diverse populations, this focus on art as a social, material, and foremost collective activity, is as urgent now as in 1982. This conference insists on the importance of ongoing interdisciplinary discussions of how such activity is imbricated in spatial, temporal, formal, and distributive networks that can all be analyzed under the heading of infrastructure.

Not only art worlds but all social environments are conditioned by infrastructural processes enabling and disabling movement. And crucially, such infrastructures will not only connect and distribute access and availability across the commons but also cut off the passage, withhold supplies, and contain populations. Like Deleuze and Guattari’s desiring-machines, infrastructure operates via the simple processes of ‘connect’ and ‘cut’, turning the varying politics of distribution of contemporary societies into material reality. As Sara Ahmed has shown, such infrastructural processes are often regulated according to racialized, gendered, and classed categories, privileging the movement of some bodies and stopping others. During the conference, formations of socially engaged art from Hong Kong over Russia to Poland will be discussed, asking how aesthetics are implied in the resistance of those who have been cut off. Just like more hidden, but no less institutionalized inequalities regarding gender and race will be approached from the perspective of affects like shame and loneliness.

Inspired by feminist sociologist of information Susan Leigh Star’s call for an “infrastructural inversion” in all scholarly disciplines, this conference attempts to bring such asymmetries to the fore. It proposes a transposition of our attention in the aesthetic field from the auratic art object, the heroic artist, and the interiorized recipient, towards the material, logistical and social micro-processes that immerse, support and condition the production, distribution and reception of art and cultural activity. Accordingly, reflections on different figures of collaboration in artistic creation – from professional networks to friendly brotherhood – are presented alongside critical inquiries of contemporary exhibitionary practices and the need for alternative epistemologies in times of crisis.

The conference Connect/Cut thus explores the infrastructures that mediate space, time, visibility, and access in the arts and beyond. In this context, we ask how a range of social phenomena are put to work by the material, technological, and historical processes that undergird different modernities. How can an investigation of the networked distribution of marble adjust the way we do art history, and how can the gendered hierarchies of a sculpture workshop be rethought in the case of Camille Claudel and Auguste Rodin? Further discussions will hone in on the technologies at work in contemporary art informed by digital culture and the way in which such approaches reflect current financial conditions on the art market. How, in other words, does new media and new so-called platform economies transform the ecology of the artworld? At the same time, these questions provide an invitation to ask how artworks in turn effect the environments they are integrated in and the technologies they appropriate. It is an invitation to ask how theoretical and methodological insights from the aesthetic field can be put to use in other contexts. And finally, it opens the question of how to conceptualize the historical, political, and aesthetic implications of repair or maintenance work in situations where a stable connection proves more vital than a radical cut. With this conference we hope to explore and critically engage with the spatial epistemologies that collectively inform lifeworlds; the temporal implications of the way media arranges sensations and make different forms of communication possible; how infrastructural orderings – from affect to archives and from whiteness to walls – distribute political and/or aesthetic visibility and opacity; and how such figurations are founded in the inclusion of some and exclusion of others, thereby making the aesthetic foundations of public appearance and political agency a site for conflict.

Connect/Cut. Infrastructures and collective activity is organised by the New Carlsberg Foundation's Research Centre Art as Forum, Department of Arts and Cultural Studies at the University of Copenhagen.

Solveig Daugaard, postdoc (Art as Forum)

Emma Sofie Brogaard Jespersen, research associate (Art as Forum)

Rasmus Holmboe, postdoc (Art as Forum & Museum of Contemporary Art, Roskilde)

Mathias Overgaard, PhD candidate (Art as Forum)

Frederik Tygstrup, professor and director (Art as Forum)

Ida Albert, coordinator (Art as Forum)

PROGRAM

6–8 April 2022

Wednesday 6 April

- 13:00–13:20 Welcome by the organisers
- 13:30–15:00 **Keynote:** Siegfried Zielinski *From the Unconditional „Me“ to an Unconditioned We? Modes of Coming Together in Artistic Activities* (moderated by Daniel Irrgang)
- 15:00–15:30 Break
- 15.30–17:00 **Session 1:**
- Panel 1A (4A.0.69), moderated by Solveig Daugaard:
- Eivind Røssaak *The Environmentalization of Infrastructure: A Hacker-Artist's Point of View*
Aslak Aamot Helm *Deep Risks Exploring Futures for Art, Science and Advanced Technologies*
Kristoffer Gansing *Homegrown, Outsourced, Organized: The Techno-Aesthetics of Infrastructure*
- Panel 1B (4A.0.68), moderated by Rasmus Holmboe:
- Zahra Bayati, Helen Eriksen and Gry O. Ulrichsen *Pluralist Proximity to Articulate Racialising Silence*
Anne Kølbaek Iversen *Desiring Objects. Shame as an Infrastructural Affect*
Jonas Kellermeier and Jamie Allen *Hustle, Grind & Flow*
- 17:00 Reception

Thursday 7 April

- 9:00–10:30 **Session 2:**
- Panel 2A (4A.0.69), moderated by Emma Sofie Brogaard Jespersen:
- Kristine Ringsager and Katrine Wallevik *Noises on the Borders of the Separatist Artist Community Musikbevægelsen af 2019*
Matthew Macaulay *Escaping the Straitjacket: Art School Influences on*

the Development of Forums and Magazines in the 1970s
Cecilie Ullerup Schmidt *Infrastructural Production of Racial Loneliness*

Panel 2B (4A.0.68), moderated by Knut Ove Eliassen:

Per Israelson *Art of Recursion: Labor and Creativity as Technical Individuation*

Johan Woweren Hundrup *The Poet and the Bacterium: Making, Exchanging and Appraising Information*

Jan Løhmann Stephensen *Infrastructures of Post-Creativity: Two Perspectives*

10:30–11:00

Break

11:00–12:30

Session 3:

Panel 3A (4A.0.69), moderated by Daniel Irrgang:

Birgit Eriksson *Crafting and Crossing Borders – In and Beyond the Art World*

Dorte Bjerre Jensen *Challenging the White Cube through the Performative Score Sharing Perspectives*

Yvette Brackman *Composition with Whip and Stick on Three Planes*

Panel 3B (4A.0.69), moderated by Cecilie Ullerup Schmidt:

Anne Ring Petersen *How to Dismantle ‘Homeland’ as a Nationalist Infrastructure? The Maxim Gorki Theatre’s 4. Berliner Herbstsalon*

Karen Grøn *Useful Art?*

Noa Roei Art *Infrastructure, and the Image of War*

12:30–13:30

Lunch

13:30–15:00

Keynote: Carolina Rito *The Infrastructures of the Exhibitionary: Reimagining the Epistemic and Aesthetic Functions of Exhibition Practices*

(moderated by Rasmus Holmboe)

15:00–15:15

Break

15:15–16:45

Session 4:

Panel 4A (4A.0.69), moderated by Nina Danilova:

Matilde Balatti and Helen Eriksen *The Tenthaus Collective*

Ohad Ben Shimon *WYGINWYS (What You Get Is Not What You See)*

Knut Ove Eliassen *“Arts and Culture” in the Age of the Platform Economy*

Panel 4B (4A.0.68), moderated by Carolina Rito:

Amalie Skovmøller *Moving Marble*

Ida Retz Wessberg *Camille Claudel – a Sculptress. Re-writing Art History, Gender Roles on the Art Scene and the Sculpture Workshop as an Example of Collective Making*

Sebastian Ørtoft Rasmussen *Infrastructures of Earthly Love: Geophilia in Contemporary Art*

17:00–18:30 **Session 5** (4A.0.69), moderated by Siegfried Zielinski:

Fabian Ebeling *Ephemeral Mediality: Place-making Qualities of the Cybernetic Tower in Liège*

Mathilde Rouiller *On Landscapes and Bodies. Portraits Composites, a Performance and Study made from the Hospital*

19:30–22:00 Dinner @ Spiseloppen, Christiania, Bådsmandsstræde 43, 1407 København (see p. 34 for further details)

Friday 8 April

10:30–12:00 **Keynote:** Shannon Mattern *The Repair Manual*
(moderated by Solveig Daugaard)

12:00–13:00 Lunch

13:00–14:00 **Session 6**, (4A.0.69), moderated by Mathias Hindkjær Overgaard:

Maria M. Rijo Lopes da Cunha *Artistic Power, Influence and Community beyond Infrastructural Frameworks in the Arab world: Possibility or Delusion?*

Hanna Grzeńkiewicz *Looping Arts, Archives and the Streets: The Role of the Artist and the Archive in 2020/21 Polish Pro-abortion Protests*

14:00–14:30 Break

14:30–16:00 **Session 7**, (4A.0.69), moderated by Frederik Tygstrup:

Nina Danilova *Infrastructure of Discontent: State, Institutional and Guerilla Art in Contemporary Russia*

Steyn Bergs *(An)aesthetics of Infrastructure: Jumana Manna's Thirty Plumbers in the Belly*

Mai Corlin Frederiksen *Infrastructures of Reciprocity: Socially Engaged Art in Contemporary China and Hong Kong*

16:00–16:30 Closing Remarks

ABSTRACTS & BIOS

Wednesday 6 April

13:30–15:00 **Keynote:** Siegfried Zielinski *From the Unconditional „Me“ to an Unconditioned We? Modes of Coming Together in Artistic Activities*

Cogito ergo sum – The ego of European Modernity as well as the multitude I (I am the many) from the first Western Avantgarde (Whitman, Schiele, Artaud, Valeska Gert etc.) are described as historically slow-fading models of constructing/creating the World. Their most important challenge is the projected subjectivity in contemporary Chinese culture (as the re-activated unconditioned We from their deep time civilization (Confucius, Mao Zedong). Which concept of subjectivity we will choose for the future presences is essential with regard to the existential challenges of the 21st century: nature/climate – macro-/micropolitics – economics – Arts–Science–Technology–Relations.

After this I'll sketch out 7 different modes/variations of working together in the field of arts. They build a hierarchy of dependency:

1. Corporations/Semi-Factories – working for the global market, art as a luxurious and extremely expensive commodity; precarious economies of exploitation... (Tomás Saraceno, Olafur Eliasson, Wolfgang Tillmans u.a.)
2. Collectives/Cooperations/Workshops – ideological-strategical, representative, pragmatic, longer time perspective, strengthening the weak individual in the organized communality, sharing technology and resources, supporting weaker groups through bigger institutions with binding rules for action (Medienoperative, transmediale Berlin, Black Audio Film Collective GB, Raqs Media Collective, India), Ant Farm, Guerilla Television, Raindance Corporation...
3. Collaboration – strictly project oriented, common ground within heterogeneity, limited time, subversive potentiality, transdisciplinary (Ponton : van Gogh TV, Knowbotiq and KRCCF, V2 Interface project, Rotterdam)
4. Friendly networks – manifoldness, inter-cultural, non-binding, useful, colorful, mundial (Alliance of European Art Academies and other institutions)
5. The Band/the Ensemble – tuning heterogeneity; priorities for listening & playing, a model of a hierarchy-free reality of joint creation and its limits (e.g. Einstürzende Neubauten: Geniale Dilettanten), the Ephemeral, the border crossing...
6. Brotherhood/Sisterhood/Couples – love/passion/affect, respect, reliability, labour without exploitation, family structures as utopian models (Sommerer & Mignonneau, The Quay Brothers) & their failings in legal fights (EXPORT/WEIBEL, Ulay/Abramovicz)
7. Economy of friendship – the impossible, the paradoxical, the transgressive, the anarchic, the radically transversal. Economies of Excess and Expenditure.

The different models are briefly presented in a pointed form and demonstrated with very few examples. My focus will be on the blueprint for an economy of friendship, which works without contracts and binding agreements. Often it is not even visible. This could include

three projects as examples: Banu Musa (Baghdad, 9th cent), KINOKI (Moscow, 1920s) or VARIANTOLOGY (present : mundial), Radio FM (St. Petersburg). I'll end with a plead for poetic activity as a model of a future economy within the field of arts. Dreaming forward (insisting on utopia – beyond macro-politics).

Siegfried Zielinski is Michel Foucault Professor of Media Archaeology & Techno-Culture at the European Graduate School (CH), guest professor at Tongji University in Shanghai, honorary doctor and professor of the Budapest University of Arts, and Professor emeritus of media theory at Berlin University of the Arts. He was founding rector (1994–2000) of the Academy of Media Arts Cologne, director of the Vilém Flusser Archive (1998–2016) and rector of the Karlsruhe University of Arts & Design (2016–2018). Zielinski has published numerous books and essays mainly focusing on the archaeology and variantology of the relations between art and media. In cooperation with Peter Weibel he is also a curator of large format exhibitions at the ZKM Karlsruhe, such as Vilém Flusser and the Arts, Allah's Automata (both 2015), Dia_Logos – Ramon Llull and the Combinatorial Arts, Art in Motion – 100 Masterpieces with and through Media (both 2018).

15.30–17:00 **Session 1**, panel 1A:

Eivind Røssaak *The Environmentalization of Infrastructure: A Hacker-Artist's Point of View*

The environmentalization of infrastructure has become particularly urgent with ubiquitous computing. Digitization as a process of all-encompassing cybernetization has rendered infrastructure more fluid and opaque and into a stronger biopolitical force. Philosopher Erich Hörl (2018) has suggested that artists need to discover new ways and sites of becoming-environmental as a counter-force.

I will use Cory Arcangel's recent solo-show Century 21 in New York as an example. He has for a long time worked as a hacker with a peculiar infrastructural sensibility, perhaps along the lines of exploring how "infrastructure operates via the simple processes of 'connect' and 'cut'," as suggested in this conference's CFP. In his early works, such as Super Mario Clouds (2002), he explored what happened to game systems the moment their interactive flows were cut and the output modified and looped. In his later works, he uses AI and bots to merge with or hijack the flow of computational systems.

What can these art strategies teach us about the becoming-environmental of infrastructure? I will discuss how his hacks foregrounds the processes of environmentalization of infrastructure, i.e. he uses the language of computation (codes, programming, algorithms, AI, bots etc.) to explore the material, logistical and micro-temporal processes that support and condition the forces of becoming-environmental of infrastructure.

Dr. Eivind Røssaak, Associate Professor at Department of Research, Media Section, National Library of Norway. Former Visiting Associate Professor at the Cinema and Media Studies at the University of Chicago. Recent publications: "Infrastruktur" in Jacob Lund and Ulrik Schmidt: *Medieæstetik: En introduktion*. København: Samfundsliteratur, 2020; *Mangfold i spill: Digitalisering av kultur og medier i Norge*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2021. Open access: <https://www.universitetsforlaget.no/mangfold-i-spill> ; *Kunst som deling: delingens kunst* Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2020. Open access: <https://www.kulturradet.no/vis-publikasjon/-/kunst-som-deling-delingens-kunst>

Aslak Aamot Helm *Deep Risks Exploring Futures for Art, Science and Advanced Technologies*

This presentation will outline three infrastructural artistic strategies across practice, organization and language.

Firstly, the presentation will draw on the practice of Primer to outline a group-based approach to inverting commercial and scientific settings to artistic ends and vice versa. Since Primer was initiated in 2016 the platform has changed its organizational form several times in search for different entry points, modes of existence and results. The most recent step in this search is the artwork *Series*, that will be briefly presented as professional background and context for discussion in the presentation.

Secondly, the presentation draws on research trajectories from editorial work within the [Future Art Ecosystems](#) report series. The series is an annual publication providing concepts, language, references and arguments for operationalizing new ecosystems of arts organizations and practices working and dealing with advanced technological infrastructures. In the presentation I will outline my interests behind this work including the blurring of front end / back end binaries, modular approaches to building infrastructural capacity in the art world and what a 21st century art ecosystem could be built from.

Thirdly, I will present a techno-philosophical narrative from Mediterranean philosopher Federico Campagna. Campagna locates a pressing infrastructural task residing outside the counting of historical time and mapping of knowable space – one of delivering cultural narratives to peoples belonging to worlds existing radically outside western modernity in time or space. This widens the scope of western ‘art and technology’ imaginaries from a widespread focus on experimental and interventionist methods and radical democratic ideals.

Across the three cases I want to end by discussing what risk-taking means for working critically with emerging infrastructures in and beyond the art world. I will end by conceptualizing deep risk as a term for sustaining long term focus on shifting underlying aesthetic imaginaries and theories of change.

Aslak Aamot Helm is a co-founder of the transdisciplinary studio [Diakron](#) and the platform for artistic and organizational development [Primer](#). Aslak is a Ny Carlsberg postdoctoral researcher with Medical Museion, Diakron and Serpentine Galleries. In the project titled “Re-energizing art institutions at the intersection of art, science and technology” he is working on para-organizational missions and strategies across a selection of art organizations and practices.

Kristoffer Gansing *Homegrown, Outsourced, Organized: The Techno-Aesthetics of Infrastructure*

In the context of the contemporary discussion of infrastructure, Gilbert Simondon’s briefly outlined notion of techno-aesthetics can be of assistance in understanding the embodied, practice-oriented and organizational capacities of subjects and collectivities within technologized environments. This presentation will explore a series of shifts in the techno-aesthetics of network infrastructure, with Internet based/related art practices as the starting point (but with repercussions for organizationally entangled art practice in general). My thesis here is that we in the recent three decades have seen at least three significant shifts in how

artists engage with the Internet as infrastructure, what I call a homegrown approach, an outsourced approach and an organized approach. These approaches are not linearly succeeding each other, as they are not following a teleological developmental model, rather they are techno-aesthetics that overlap and intensify in contingency with socio-political developments. The advancement of a concept of the techno-aesthetics of infrastructure, here serves as a conceptual tool for both analyzing and operationalizing the infrastructural turn that we have seen happen in so many disciplines over the past decade. This means that I am interested in techno-aesthetics as a motor for artistic research on and in infrastructure, fostering artistic modes, of not only reflecting on, but also other ways of engaging and critiquing infrastructure.

Kristoffer Gansing is professor of Artistic Research and director of the International Center for Knowledge in the Arts at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts. Between 2011 and 2020, Gansing was artistic director of the art and digital culture festival, transmediale, in Berlin.

15.30–17:00 **Session 1**, panel 1B:

Zahra Bayati, Helen Eriksen and Gry O. Ulrichsen *Pluralist Proximity to Articulate Racialising Silence*

In this dialogical performance lecture with the emergent Solmaz Collective we will bring you closer to our longitudinal processual research creation. The process entitled pluralist proximity is founded on the understanding of the human as non-binary or singular. We consider the construction of boundaries between different knowledge and subject areas as entangled in the dominating patriarchal and colonial power structures. We have allowed the symbolic and discursive power of the image to challenge our entangled positions within the colonial racially stratified systems of power. We are subject to same destructive colonising images and mindsets irrelevant of our racial, national, gender identities and not least privileges of power. We tweak Spivak's question – How does the subaltern speak? What should we be listening for and to? How do we enter the silence of coloniality that suppresses the decolonising impulse for freedom?

(...) in spite of the strong traditional, nationalist and colonial discourses and structures that exist – and which benefit the existing systems – there are many agents willing to embark on the transcending approach (...) stakeholders from teacher training call for conscious system-wide, progressive structural changes. This with the goal of changing the unequal conditions of study and creating a multi-dimensional, or with another word cosmopolitan, learning environment where the many can identify their knowledge interests in the contemporary era of globalization. (Bayati, 2014, p. 225)

Pluralist proximity is an ongoing challenging process of unlearning through the porous human with inner and outer conflicts, a commonality in all collective endeavors. It can be considered a method, practice and ongoing process for the everyday work of decolonisation from dominating mindsets. Differing positions stemming from differing historical narratives are contested as they converge. As the different positions emerge silence dominates. It is in those silences that the need for pluralist proximity prevails.

The Solmaz Collective is an artistic research group comprising:

Dr. Zahra Bayati is a senior lecturer in education science and advanced study programme for higher education art teachers, and gender studies at Gothenburg University. She has lectured

extensively, contributing at Nordic universities and international conferences. Her thesis *The Other in Teacher Education – A study of the racialized Swedish Student Conditions in the Epoch of Globalisation* (2014) has been the focus of her most recent lectures, contextualizing it in discussions of anti-racism, feminism, socio-economic relations and environmental issues.

Helen Eriksen is an artist research investigating aesthetic decision making in post colonial art practices at the University of Agder for her phd. She studied at the National Academy of Fine Art, Oslo, and as a researcher for art in public space at the Oslo School of Architecture. Eriksen is a founder member of, curator, and project developer for [Tenthaus](http://tenthaus.no). As an artist/educator, she focuses on the emancipatory and utopian potentialities within participatory art making. She also works with Germain Ngoma in Europe and Scandinavia. <http://tenthaus.no.s3-website.eu-north-1.amazonaws.com/about/>

Gry O. Ulrichsen is an educator/artist/researcher currently doing a PhD in teacher education at Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU). She explores productive entanglements between post humanist and decolonial critique/practices, and how they emerge through collaborative, participatory and socially engaged approaches in the fields of art and education. Gry has published articles in journals such as *Periskop*, *InFormation* and *JASED* and worked in the art collective <https://newmeaning.no/> for a decade.

Anne Kølbaek Iversen *Desiring Objects. Shame as an Infrastructural Affect*

In this paper I wish to interrogate the feeling of shame and how it is connected to the gaze and infrastructures of representation as articulated in a number of contemporary arts practices of Danish women artists. Contending that shame is fundamentally a socially constructed emotion (Büttner, Ahmed, Nussbaum) and thus distributed through social, cultural, and technical infrastructures, I ask in which ways shame “sticks” (Ahmed) to the female body – but also how this stickiness may be negotiated through a negotiation and redistribution of the positions of gazes and desiring subjects/objects. Through an analysis of selected works by artists Maja Malou Lyse and Kirstine Aarkrog and how each of them engages in experimentation with their own bodies as objects but also subjects of desires, the aim of this paper is twofold: to show how questions of the desired and desiring female body are articulated within contemporary art and to offer a framework for renegotiating the positions of bodies–desires–gazes–affects that these practices inspire to consider.

The analysis builds upon a feminist and psychoanalyst conceptualization of the “male gaze” (Berger, Mulvey, Kaplan) and ideas about objectivization of women as connected to the representation of women (Dworkin, Nussbaum) as well as theorizations of shame and media theoretical perspectives on the image in digital network culture (Easterling, Blom). Central to the investigation is the question of the infrastructure of the image as on the one hand a representational screen meant for contemplation and as a networked and distributed one on the other.

Anne Kølbaek Iversen is currently conducting the post.doc. project *Aesthetics of Shame, Infrastructures of Desire* (2021–23) at Aarhus University, funded by the Novo Nordisk Foundation. She obtained her PhD in Aesthetics and Culture from Aarhus University in 2019 as part of the research project *the Contemporary Condition*.

Jonas Kellermeyer and Jamie Allen *Hustle, Grind & Flow*

Of the many infrastructural relations and orderings which allow cultural, aesthetic and knowledge work to take place, it is this work itself, and the efforts toward value creation, media and material transformations within these worlds that have of late become of central importance. Contemporary discourses of critical infrastructure studies, media-materialism, institutional critique (in the arts and elsewhere), as well as projected crises and austerities, and a global pandemic, analyze the ways in which we work, for love and/or for money, together and alone and in new cut/connected configurations of alone-togetherness (Turkle) wrought by media technologies. As with Albert Camus' famous inversion — to regard Sisyphos as the prototype of a happy person, assured of certainty — the ways in which a 'good life' can be lead has substantially changed: modern institutions and media render it virtually impossible to avoid (idealistic, ambiguous) contradictions of "doing the work", "work life balance" and "working hard and hardly working".

Hustle, Grind and Flow will present these three concepts, wrought through online, urban, racialized and genderized, classist and pop-cultural forms. These three relations of work, time, labor, identity and production are not yet conclusive approaches, even as they seem concretised by technological, media and aesthetic forms and so without historical context and alternatives. As creative cultural workers, and informed by the analysis of thinkers like Wendy Chung (updating to remain the same), Mark Fischer (capitalist realism), Frithjof Bergmann (new work), Paul LaFargue (the right to be lazy), and Camus, it behooves us to imagine new media-aesthetic representations of work, as part of our critical cultural and media practices. The pressing challenge of the present: namely the existential relation between institutions and individuals as a creative, or artistic, relation to infrastructures of work.

Jonas Kellermeyer is a cultural critic and a junior researcher at the Institute of Experimental Design and Media Cultures. He is currently pursuing his PhD within the SNSF-funded project Paradigms of UbiComp. His interests lie in the field of translation between techno- and socio-logics. Interfaces – understood as fundamental translational structures that make it possible to bridge gaps and amplify them at the same time – and their relevance in relation to (human and non-human) perception, are his main concern.

Jamie Allen (PhD) is occupied with the ways that technologies teach us about who we are as individuals, cultures and societies. His work has been exhibited internationally, from the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin to the American Museum of Natural History in New York to the Nam June Paik Art Center in Korea. He teaches, lectures and leads workshops widely, engaging with and working to create collaborative contexts that acknowledge how care, attachment and love are central to knowledge practices like art and research. He likes to make things with his head and hands – investigations into infrastructural and material systems of media, energy, and information as public-making projects.

Thursday 7 April

9:00–10:30 **Session 2**, panel 2A:

Kristine Ringsager and Katrine Wallevik *Noises on the Borders of the Separatist Artist Community Musikbevægelsen af 2019*

Various international studies as well as Danish surveys have shown how people who identify as women face inequality in almost every area of the music industry. In Denmark, as a response

to experiences of gender inequality within the music industry, there have recently emerged several separatist communities for artists identifying as women, such as Musikbevægelsen af 2019, HUN SOLO, Eget værelse, 'Kvinder i Centrum', and also community-based educational music projects such as Beats by Girlz, Future Female Sounds and JazzCamp for piger. Exerted as alternative (safer) spaces for professional networking, knowledge sharing, promotion and learning processes, such communities are actively committed to facilitate (other) opportunities for their members and to reflect, challenge and potentially restructure the gendered infrastructural norms of the music industry.

In this paper we aim to examine the interactions on the borders of some of these separatist communities, particularly focusing on the (online) community Musikbevægelsen af 2019, an association for female-, trans- and non-binary identified music professionals. Our aim is to engage with the (often male) objections and debates about the exclusion of the male identified body in these communities. By investigating such objections in light of what Robin DiAngelo in her book *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard For White People to Talk about Race* (2018) has called "white fragility" or "weaponized white tears" we ask: Is it analytically useful – when it comes to negotiations on the borders of the gender separatist initiatives – to talk about a "male fragility"? How can we understand the objections towards the gender separatist communities in the light of DiAngelo's concepts? And what kinds of (patriarchal?) societal fragilities are the objections toward gender separatist communities an expression of?

Kristine Ringsager is tenure track assistant professor at the Department of Arts and Culture Studies, University of Copenhagen, and P.I. of the DFF-funded research project *Gendering Music Matter* (2022–2024).

Katrine Wallevik is postdoctoral researcher in the project *Gendering Music Matter* (2022–2024) at the Department of Arts and Culture Studies, University of Copenhagen.

Matthew Macaulay *Escaping the Straitjacket: Art School Influences on the Development of Forums and Magazines in the 1970s*

This paper explores the adoption of art school infrastructure by artistic networks that emerged in Britain during the 1970s. The paper focuses on a case study that highlights how structures experienced in education led to the creation of a series of events, Studio Forums (1975–1976), that in turn developed a network that encouraged collective activity between artists in London. It will then examine how this network resulted in the development of a collaborative zine-like artists' magazine titled *Artscribe* (1976–1991).

The exploration of the network behind Studio Forums and *Artscribe* will offer a consideration of how the British art world underwent repeated cycles of renewal where critics and institutions strived to redefine themselves to accommodate 'new art' and artists, but this often manifested in an oppositional identity that acted as a mechanism that side-lined areas of arts activities. The case study reveals how the structures encountered within education created a vital alternative forum for young artists to collaboratively work together. It particularly focuses on how this network allowed a new generation of non-representational painters to build on, transform and depart from the work done by previous generations artists. Finally, the paper will consider the reliance on models encountered in education, and how these models may have eventually imposed limitations upon artists as mature practitioners.

Dr Matthew Macaulay is a curator, researcher and painter based in Coventry. His current research examines shifts in educational approaches made by a network of painters who worked in British art schools between 1975 and 2005.

Cecilie Ullerup Schmidt *Infrastructural Production of Racial Loneliness*

At the entrance of the artworld of today – the art academy – resides an ideal of global mobility, relating to cognitive capitalism and competitiveness, but also repeating rationales of white privilege and a hidden structural racism. By analysing how Higher Education in the Arts in Denmark awards “free” mobility and encourages internationalisation, following neoliberal European policies of the Bologna Process aiming for competitiveness, while on the same time is having no official strategies of racial diversity and recruitment, I find biopolitical lines of demarcation and structural racism within the foundational infrastructures of the Danish artworld. Based on the findings of my analysis of both educational policy documents and understandings of “fair” representation of BIPOCs in the arts in Denmark, I demonstrate how racial loneliness resides as affective response to experiences of structural racism in the infrastructures of the arts. The structural analysis is supported by a collection of affects uttered by art students and alumnaes feeling isolated and tokenised in the classroom of the art academy. I suggest that racialised loneliness is an interdependent affect and a product of educational documents, reforms and policies.

Informed by the increasing number of separatist BIPOC collectives offering an ongoing infrastructural performance of being “too many”, the paper ends with a speculation on how to organise bodies otherwise in the infrastructures of the artworld by exceeding rationales of reasonable and adequate representability.

Cecilie Ullerup Schmidt is an assistant professor in Performance Studies and Cultural Studies and the deputy director at The New Carlsberg Foundation research centre Art as Forum, based in the Department of Arts and Cultural Studies, University of Copenhagen. Her research is informed by materialist feminist scholarship and she examines how social, temporal and economic conditions both politicize artistic work and shape forms of living, particularly in cases of artists’ collectives. Recent publications include *Everybody Counts. The Aesthetics of Production in Higher Artistic Education and Performance Art Collectives* (2019) and “The Fall of Greatness: Toward an Aesthetics of Co-(re)production” (2021). c.u.schmidt@hum.ku.dk

9:00–10:30 **Session 2**, panel 2B:

Per Israelson *Art of Recursion: Labor and Creativity as Technical Individuation*

If cybernetic capitalism not only capture and reify behavior (Hörl 2017, Zuboff 2019), but also, in the media saturated environments of the contemporary techno-ecology, operate at a temporality prior to the formation of creative subjectivities (Hansen 2015), there seem to be very little room – or hope – for any future for creativity, as well as for any creative future. However, this presentation argues that by using Gilbert Simondon’s theory of individuation (Simondon 2017, 2020) and the neocybernetic concept of sympoiesis (Haraway 2016), the recursion of cybernetic systems is not merely a matter of control and command, but can also emerge in the form of a non-antropocentric co-creation in which the processes of technical individuation comprise a posthumanist creativity. By discussing conceptual comics artist Ilan Manouach’s interventions in the digital infrastructures of contemporary culture, primarily in the comic book projects *The Cubicle Island* (2020), this presentation argues that the postdigital aesthetic put into play by Manouach’s work can be framed as an articulation of a

neocybernetic and posthumanist conceptuality. The Cubicle Island–project employs the distributed labor of the Amazon Mechanical Turk–application (AMT) in a reconfiguration of a number of cartoons belonging to the desert island–genre. Following a given script, new captions have been provided by the microworkers of the AMT, some of which are algorithmic bots. The book comprises an edited reconfiguration of these cartoons and captions, critically layering different forms and hierarchies of labor: human, bot, editor, microworker, artist, and cartoonist, among others. The environmental and distributed agency of The Cubicle Island–project thus points to a posthumanist understanding of autonomy in which the recursive feedback loops of cybernetic systems participate in the emergence and technical individuation of a sympoietic subjectivity. Accordingly, the post–digital aesthetics of The Cubicle Island–project can be understood as an art of recursion.

Per Israelson defended his PhD thesis *Ecologies of the Imagination: theorizing the participatory aesthetics of the fantastic* in 2017. Currently he is working on a postdoctoral project at the Department of culture and aesthetics, Stockholm University. The project – “Postdigital comics: participation and materiality in contemporary Nordic comic book culture” – investigates the impact of digitalization on the production, dissemination and aesthetics of Nordic comic book cultures. Per Israelson’s research interests are comics studies, media ecology, posthumanist philosophy and the participatory aesthetics of the fantastic.

Johan Woweren Hundrup *The Poet and the Bacterium: Making, Exchanging and Appraising Information*

With Sianne Ngai’s revitalisation of the study of aesthetic judgement following Stanley Cavell’s numerous discussions of praise as a perlocutionary speech act, reception of art persists in being studied through a humanistic lens. The concept of intersubjectivity in aesthetic experience is central to aesthetic theory. But must the ‘us’ of the ‘sense community’ of praise consist of merely humans? Analysing conceptual poet Christian Bök’s experiment *The Xenotext*, I propose the possibility of a posthuman approach to aesthetic judgement centred around the ‘praise’ of informativeness. Information is found informative by not only humans but by nonhuman organisms as well. Encoding a sonnet as a gene, Bök has tried to give the bacterium *D. radiodurans* – through the poem/gene – an instruction for the creation of a protein in the form of a string of amino acids decodable as the mirror image of the original sonnet. This has, however, not succeeded. The bacterium has not read the gene properly and has therefore not produced the correct protein. What kind of rebuff of the poem’s informativeness is the bacterium’s refusal of incorporating the poem as gene, and what kind of multispecies collaboration and resistance to collaboration is at play in the experiment’s circulation of poetry as biological information? Using the figure of the apostrophe as my guiding figure of speech, I analyse Bök’s experiment and his collection of poetry revolving around the experiment, *The Xenotext: Book 1*, as a project exploring the possibilities of multispecies collaboration and communication that in its domineering relation to *D. radiodurans* ends up affirming the bacterium’s creative capabilities. Additionally, I analyse the bacterium’s way of responding to the poem as gene as its own form of praise/rebuttal based not on beautiful or interesting form, but on the aesthetic object as biological information.

Johan Woweren Hundrup holds a Master of Arts degree in comparative literature from the University of Copenhagen.

In this paper I will present 2 different versions of the notion of post-creativity, which I have been working on over the last years. The first one, post-anthropocentric creativity — which is inspired by perspectives such as Actor-Network-Theory, Science & Technology Studies and New Materialism that during the last decade have all become increasingly influential — at first glance seems most relevant in relation to the field of so-called artificial creativity, AI-assisted/computational creativity or simply AI-Art (cf. Zylinska 2020). Here, by taking also into account the co-productive role of (mostly digital) infrastructures, traditional conceptions of creativity and art-making as essentially human (and often heroically individual) endeavors are often claimed to be fundamentally challenged. I will briefly discuss the implications of applying this perspective in retrospect as well.

The other version, post-definition-game creativity, zooms in on how the so-called 'creativity complex' (or creativity-related 'sociotechnical ensemble' (Pinch & Bijker)) has emerged alongside – and as a precondition of – the 'invention of creativity' (Reckwitz). A regime of knowledge production and praxis that often revolves around researching, defining and theorizing creativity (and subsequently multiplying or computationally replicating creativity), which could also be thought of in terms of an expanded notion of infrastructure. Thus, I will briefly sketch the contours of what an 'infrastructural inversion' (Bowker & Star) of this creativity complex — and in extension: the greater 'sociotechnical imaginary' (Jasanoff & Kim) that relates to the prospect of an AI-assisted innovation economy — might look like. How has it emerged? Through the work of whom? Who does it benefit? And in accordance with which ideological and political cosmologies and assumptions? In a (hopefully still) convivial spirit of collectivity, the talk might end with us all voting on the better version of these 2 takes on 'post-creativity'.

Jan Løhmann Stephensen is associate Professor at Aesthetics & Culture, AU. His research interests are cultures and practices of participation, democracy and the public sphere, creativity and its diffusion into non-art related spheres like work life, economics, policy-making, university research agendas, new media technologies, etc. Co-editor and founder of *Conjunctions: Transdisciplinary Journal of Cultural Participation*.

11:00–12:30 **Session 3**, panel 3A:

Birgit Eriksson *Crafting and Crossing Borders – In and Beyond the Art World*

In 2020, textile designer and artist Iben Høj and 778 embroiderers co-created a major textile artwork at Trapholt museum for modern art and design. Høj developed the artistic design, and citizens contributed 713 embroideries, which Høj assembled in a huge mobile, exhibited at Trapholt 2020–21 and now part of the museum's collection.

The collaborative project, *Stitches Beyond Borders* (SBB), was part of a celebration of the centenary of the cession of North Schleswig from Germany to Denmark in 1920. Thematically, it addressed the national border, an important infrastructure. Formally, it emphasized the national focus by providing materials for the embroideries, which were inspired by Danish flags. But the project also went beyond the centenary by inviting the participants to embroider and reflect on physical borders and mental boundaries of their own choice.

Based on an analysis of a rich empirical material (including the participants' embroideries and texts, interviews and more), the paper explores the connections and divisions that SBB generated by combining a national celebration and materiality with a more open investigation

of borders – a topic, which in a world of increasing forced migration and violent bordering processes “have moved from the margins to the center of political and social life” (Yuval-Davis, Wemyss, and Cassidy 2019). More specifically, the paper asks: In what ways can Trapholt’s inclusion of vernacular embroidery practices and a collaborative borderscaping (Brambilla et al 2015) pluralize, complicate and intensify the collectivity of Becker’s “art as collective action” (1974)? How and to what extent can the participants’ voices, experiences and creative skills appropriate, question and transform established forms of “b/ordering and othering” (Van Houtum 2021), both in the socio-political and the art world? And what, more in general, are the socio-aesthetic potentials of collaborative art projects like SBB?

Birgit Eriksson is professor at the School of Communication and Culture, Aarhus University and co-director of the research program Cultural Transformations. She researches citizen participation in art, culture, society. Recent books include *Ny kulturteori* (2019), *Cultures of participation: Arts, Digital Media and Politics* (2020), *Kunst i almene boligområder* (2022). <http://au.dk/aekbe@hum>

Dorte Bjerre Jensen *Challenging the White Cube through the Performative Score Sharing Perspectives*

This paper report on the participatory performative score ‘Sharing Perspectives’ from the art/science research collaboration, Experimenting, Experiencing, Reflecting, consisting of researchers and artists from the Interacting Minds Centre at Aarhus University and Studio Olafur Eliasson in Berlin.

In the context of the Olafur Eliasson exhibition ‘In Real Life’ at the Tate Modern in London, a total of 37 participants took part in ‘Sharing Perspectives’, in which they explored and guided each other through the exhibition space. We highlight how the interactive performative score created a playful environment for participants to creatively explore the exhibition space, braking boundaries and protocols, allowing for intimate connections, and experiences of togetherness. By invoking a set of shared instructions for improvisation, ‘Sharing Perspectives’ facilitated a choreography for exploring interconnection and togetherness by disrupting habitual ways of moving through gallery spaces. This disruption helped participants to discover the space and the artworks in new and surprising ways, experiencing it as one total installation with a continuous surface, negating the usual hierarchies between matter present in art galleries.

Dancer, choreographer, performance artist and researcher Dorte Bjerre Jensen developed the score ‘Sharing Perspectives’ as an artistic participatory research practice, staging exploration and improvisation. Building upon choreography as a technology of scoring (Lepecki 2012), and the postmodern dance form Contact Improvisation, ‘Sharing Perspectives’ explores uncertainty, creativity, togetherness, and the relationship between bodies and between bodies and space and artworks. Based on questionnaires and qualitative interviews with participant, we explore how the performative score SP, as an art/science intervention, may challenge the contemporary art gallery as a ‘white cube’, where certain behavior and experiences are expected, and create experiences of interconnection between museum visitors, staff and between visitors, staff and artworks and space.

Dorte Bjerre Jensen: As director, creator, choreographer, and performer, my work is anchored in an evolving artistic inquiry into multisensory relations of ecological attention through movement, manifested as performance, participatory performative scores, live art

installations, workshops, and writing. I hold a Master of Fine Arts from the Danish National School of Performing Arts.

Yvette Brackman *Composition with Whip and Stick on Three Planes*

This presentation will be a lecture with sculptural objects and performance that interweaves narratives around the artists Juliette Meyer and Edith Wessel the first and second wives of Jens Ferdinand Willumsen, best known as the pregnant in profile in Willumsen's etching Fertility from 1898 and The Mountain Climber, the painting from 1912. I will interweave these narratives with those of my maternal grandmother, Vera Tendler, a mother of eight, who arrived in Ystad, Sweden in 1969 at the age of 73 by boat as a refugee from the Anti-Jewish purges that were a result of the 1968 Polish Political Crisis. Vera and Juliette are intertwined, a haunting, as yet imprisoned in a closed circuit of othering. Juliette is represented art historically in Willumsen's narrative as mother, abandoned wife, and Jew's daughter and Vera as mother, survivor and widow. Weaving together histories and locations I will explore representations of the past and the future through depictions of women. The split away from the past that Juliette represents to the modernity, liberty and acceptance that Edith Wessel represents. Two other figures, Ecclesia and Synagoga personifications of the past and future, from medieval iconography are associated and allied and their stories are also included. Willumsen was one of the central figures in the Nordic art movement, Vitalism which was influenced by Henri Bergson's ideas of Elan Vital expressed in his book Creative Evolution around life's impetus and evolution. I will explore all these narratives as manifestations of tensions with time and displacement in this lecture performance.

Yvette Brackman's works address ideas involving the human subject's relationship to history, memory, and emancipation. She makes sculpture video installation, performance and writing. Her work is represented internationally in public collections. From 2000–2007 she was Professor of Fine Art at the Royal Danish Academy and is currently a Mads Øvlisen Postdoc Fellow at The Danish National Gallery.

11:00–12:30 **Session 3**, panel 3B:

Anne Ring Petersen *How to Dismantle 'Homeland' as a Nationalist Infrastructure? The Maxim Gorki Theatre's 4. Berliner Herbstsalon*

The notion of homeland is central to national imaginaries. However, the prevailing understanding of homeland as the place of ethno-cultural kin disregards the political, social and affective work that 'homeland' can do. What usually passes under the radar in the debates on 'homeland' is that it is part of the discursive toolkit of nationalism that draws the boundaries of national community and cultivates a sense of belonging among the resident population. It thus fulfils a gate-keeping function, dividing those who can claim a homeland as their own from those who are regarded as aliens who do not belong, even if they hold formal citizenship.

This paper adopts the idea of infrastructure as a lens that permits the exploration of homeland as an infrastructure that supports generative processes, especially collective identity formation – 'homeland' as part of the conceptual infrastructure sustaining the imagined community of the nation. The wager of this paper is that an infrastructural perspective can help us get a better grasp of what task makers of critical artistic and social form set for themselves when they interrogate traditional notions of homeland. To tests this proposition,

the paper zooms in on Germany. After briefly considering the debate on the contested notion of Heimat ('homeland') spurred by the renaming of the German Interior Ministry in 2018 as Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat, it turns to the Maxim Gorki Theatre's 4. Berliner Herbstsalon, held the following year under the headline DE-HEIMATIZE IT! The paper explores how the organizers and contributors sought to articulate a counter-discourse on 'de-heimatization' to challenge the discourse on Heimat and used the event as a platform for creating what I propose to call a postmigrant epistemic community as a countermodel to the dominant model of community based on the traditional 'Heimat idea'.

Anne Ring Petersen is Professor at the Department of Arts and Cultural Studies, University of Copenhagen. Her current research focuses on (post)migration and contemporary art. Publications include *Migration into art: Transcultural identities and art-making in a globalised world* (2017) and the co-authored book *Reframing Migration, Diversity and the Arts: The Postmigrant Condition* (2019).

Karen Grøn *Useful Art?*

Since 2014 Trapholt Museum of Modern art and Design has invited artists to design projects where between 300–1000 citizens participate. Since the first initial collaborative art projects the community of participants has grown big and the museum has increased ambitions to empower multiple voices, build and strengthen communities and stimulate creativity. In all projects there is a very fine line between the concept and rules that the artist defines and the space for participants to express themselves. The aim is to end up with an artwork in its own right. When a project starts, the artist has no experience with such processes, and nobody knows whether anyone will participate and what will come out of it. Risk acceptance and trust in the artist, the process and the participants is essential. The final artwork Trapholt exhibits for about 100.000 visitors. The projects at Trapholt are highly profiled and at the core of the identity of Trapholt. The projects are part of the exhibition programme and the final artworks are included in the Trapholt collection. Which new conversations about future roles for art museums can we explore through the Trapholt collaborative art projects? In 2021–24, Trapholt and Aarhus University received a grant for the research project CraftWorks from the Velux Foundation, to explore this. In this paper, I will discuss Trapholts collaborative art projects through the lenses of Useful Art presented by John Byrne, Liverpool School of Art and Design, director of "The Uses of Art Lab" at LJMU's School of Art and Design and editor of *The Constituent Museum*. The purpose is to widen the understanding of art, art museum, artist and participant and imagine museum futures, which also include Useful Art. Short bio: Karen Grøn has been director at Trapholt Museum of Modern Art and Design since 2010. Before she was curator of interpretation and audience development at Trapholt.

Karen Grøn is the curator of large-scale collaborative art pieces at Trapholt. 2014: *House of Stitches*, Isabel Berglund; 2015: *Monuments of Stitches*, Isabel Berglund; 2016–17: *Waste Time*, Anja Franke; 2019–20: *Thingstead*, Rasmus Bækkel Fex; 2020: *Stiches Beyond Borders*, Iben Høj; *LightHope*, Hanne G. & Rasmus Bækkel Fex; 2021: *Among the Trees*, Tina Ratzer; 2022, to be launched in February: *Data Mirror*, Astrid Skibsted.

Noa Roei Art *Infrastructure, and the Image of War*

In "Photography, War, Outrage" (2005) Judith Butler suggests to broaden our understanding of embedded reporting to include more than the situation in which journalists are being offered

access to war “on the condition that their gaze remained restricted to the established parameters of designated action” (822). Butler asks instead that we turn our attention towards the tacit way in which all authorized visual documentations actively structure the cognitive apprehension of the war that they depict. In my contribution to the Connect/Cut conference, I wish to follow this line of thought and inquire to what extent can it be given a visual form. To do so, I analyze two art projects that unpack the networks of relations that underlie the production and reception of the image of war. In the one (*The Day Nobody Died*, Broomberg and Channarin 2005), two embedded reporters expose photographic paper to sunlight in decisive moments during their stay in Afghanistan, and document the transportation of their photographic luggage by military personnel. In the other (*I will not find this Image Beautiful, I will not find this Image beautiful...* (an unfinished monument), Omar Mismar 2015), the artist-spectator interferes with a generic news image depicting an Israeli offense on the Gaza strip, inserting the name of the offense’s casualties into the image’s code until the image deteriorates into pixelated noise. Approaching the concept of embedded reporting from the opposite ends of its products’ modes of circulation, both works offer a poetic infrastructural exposition of the image of war, interpreting the visual image as a durational, collaborative event embedded in (infra)structures of power. Moreover, both works end up with an abstract image on display, suggesting that the ruination of the photographic document is inseparable from its infrastructural analysis. The image itself, I wish to argue, is thus addressed as an infrastructure of sorts, that through its ruination “draws our attention to the ongoing work of maintenance that is necessary in order to give infrastructure projects their appearance of solidity” (Akhil Gupta, *The Promise of Infrastructure* 62).

Noa Roei is Assistant Professor at the department of Literary and Cultural Analysis, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands. She has published material on Israeli visual culture in a monograph and in several edited volumes and journals. Her current project addresses the politics of spectatorship in contemporary art from the Middle East.

13:30–15:00 **Keynote:** Carolina Rito *The Infrastructures of the Exhibitionary: Reimagining the Epistemic and Aesthetic Functions of Exhibition Practices*

We must insist that the field of exhibitions encompasses much more than just the making or study of exhibitions in an art setting. This paper revisits the aesthetic and epistemic capacities of exhibition beyond exhibition-making in order to situate the infrastructures of the exhibitionary as the conditions from where the role of institutions of display can be reimagined and actualised. The *Infrastructures of the Exhibitionary* is part of an ongoing curatorial project exploring the critical tools for the future of institutions of display under an expanded notion of contemporary art and curating. This presentation acknowledges the current crises of institutions of display, from museums to galleries, and how it has affected their foundational value systems. The ongoing calls for the decolonisation of museums and galleries shed light on the colonial genealogies of these institutions and their role in consolidating the colonial/modern paradigm of knowledge production, disciplines, and discourses. The call for a more inclusive and plural approach to programming, workforce and audience development has collided with the increasing neoliberal imperative of business management in museums. This business model is premised on the imperative of entertainment, arguably pushing programming away from critical and exploratory practices. This business model has been also responsible for the increasing precarisation of the sector, the outsourcing of funding, and the imperative of growth in line with capital value system. In that way, the *Infrastructures of the Exhibitionary* asks the question: If the infrastructure of the exhibitionary is not limited to the space of the artwork, what are its aesthetic attributes? How

can the cultural sector mobilise its exhibitionary skills and tools to devise a decolonial and de-liberal response to reimagine its futures? To explore these questions, the presentation investigates the porosities at play between exhibition making – as the aesthetic gesture of making public – and the expanded field of the exhibitionary.

Carolina Rito Carolina Rito is a curator, researcher, and Professor of Creative Practice Research at the [Research Centre for Arts, Memory and Communities](#) (CAMC), at Coventry University; and leads on the centre's [Critical Practices](#) research strand. She is a researcher and curator whose work explores 'the curatorial' as an investigative practice, expanding practice-based research in the fields of curating, visual arts, visual cultures and cultural studies. Rito's latest publications include *Institution as Praxis – New Curatorial Directions for Collaborative Research* (Sternberg), *Architectures of Education* (e-flux Architecture), *FABRICATING PUBLICS: the dissemination of culture in the post-truth era* (Open Humanities Press).

15:15–16:45 **Session 4**, panel 4A:

Matilde Balatti and Helen Eriksen *The Tenthau Collective*

Precarity is seemingly less evident in the Scandinavian cultural field due to generous stipends for artists and art institutions. However, relying on governmental funds, cultural production becomes politicized and institutions receiving funding have to strive to uphold the expectations of the funders. In this presentation we examine infrastructure as a generator of relationships and processes based on trust and on collective understanding. There is a gap between the administration and cultural production in funded institutions and a strong relation between political and cultural processes. How to invert this dynamic is the core of this research whose aim is two-sided:

- to propose administration and cultural production as a collective practice where administration is the connection between the artistic and the infrastructural practice. In doing so creative administration is the engine for a fair production chain, equality in artists rights and innovative distribution of resources (Verwoert 2010);
- to propose administration as a tool to shift the political expectations of the funders. Thus the creative administrator can stand between the artists and the expectations of the funders by ensuring sustainable art production in a time of budget cuts (Hadley & Belfiore 2018).

In this discourse we take the case study of Tenthau collective as the starting point of an approach to a shared economy and an organizational model which acknowledges conditions of precarity in a new form of solidarity rooted in a collective and holistic managerial paradigm.

Helen Eriksen is a visual artist and doctoral candidate investigating aesthetic decision making in post colonial art practices at the University of Agder. She studied at the National Academy of Fine Art, Oslo, and as a researcher for art in public space at the Oslo School of Architecture. Eriksen is a founder member of, curator, and project developer for [Tenthau](#). As an artist/educator, she focuses on the utopian potentialities within participatory art making. <https://www.tenthau.no/about/>

Matilde Balatti is a MA student in Art and Cultural Management at Leuphana University in Lüneburg, Germany and is currently project leader, curator and main researcher at Tenthau. She studied art history at the University of Milan with a focus on contemporary art. In her practice she focuses on artists economies and art structures including artists rights and

cultural labour. <https://www.tenthaus.no/about/>

Ohad Ben Shimon *WYGINWYS (What You Get Is Not What You See)*

In a series of short vignettes, my presentation will explore the role of embodiment in cultural institutions by intersecting “multi-situated” (Rajan, 2021) ethnographic fieldwork with new-materialist theoretical concerns. Below an excerpt of one such vignette.

9.11.21 Location: Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam

Upon entering the in-between corridor space before the security desk I see the by-now familiar covid-era floor-stand attached to a touchless spray dispenser meant to disinfect hands. I put my hands below the infra-red smart sensor of the touchless alcohol spray dispenser to disinfect my hands after the bike ride across the city to get here. I tell the security guard at the desk that I am here to help in the buildup of one of the prize exhibitions opening on Friday. The security guard asks me to write down my name in a list. The guard looks at the list document and suddenly asks me if I have been drinking. “Excuse me?” I say completely surprised. **“Have you been drinking?”** she asks again. She says she smells the smell of alcohol coming from me. It is 14:00 in the day and I don’t drink much these days or in general. After my first bewilderment I realize that the smell she is smelling is probably from the alco-spray dispenser that I used before approaching her security desk. I tell her (a bit offended) that it's probably from the alcohol spray dispenser.

The apparatus of the floor stand with the alcohol spray dispenser together with the security guard and her desk and the entrance/exit door behind me and the barrier in front of me constitute (together with me) a physical/legal assemblage of power being exercised within the modern institution/organization of the contemporary art museum. In a very real sense, it is one of its main arti-facts, one which the museum cannot do without. The dispenser dispenses, distributes, shares, provides, ‘hands-out’, supplies, or extracts alcohol-based spray or gel but it does much more than that. Firstly, it dispenses or exempts (in a ‘legal’ sense) its user from the need/advice to wash hands with soap in a sink and ‘purifies’ the person entering the public space of a shop, school, hairdressing salon, fitness center, catering, etc. Secondly, as a modern mobile object it can be moved around, pushed, and pulled back and forth to delineate entrances and exits to public spaces, much like a security barrier or the body of a security guard or bouncer would function in the entrance to a club. The dispenser is a body-thing that doesn’t in fact have to be there and then, it is a ‘convenience article’, an article or body of convenience that also gives or dispenses convenience and comfort amongst other things, and in that sense the dispenser is also a sign of excess. It excesses (spray, gel) beyond its material boundaries while being itself an excess of a sort and so in a sense it is a symptom or ill-symptom of both an invisible body being pushed around/demanded perfect performance of, and of WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) = in this case alcohol dispensed in the form of spray.

I see that the security guard is not entirely convinced by my explanation but lets me enter the museum after giving me a pass card.

Ohad Ben Shimon (1978) is a writer, researcher and educator with a background in cognitive sciences, psychology, cultural analysis, international business education and art. He is currently Senior Lecturer Critical Thinking/ Researcher of Change Management at The Hague University of Applied Sciences and PhD candidate at the Research Institute for Cultural Inquiry

(ICON) of the Faculty of Humanities at Utrecht University. His PhD research funded by the NWO Doctoral Grant for Educators focuses on the role of embodiment in knowledge-based organizations.

Knut Ove Eliassen *“Arts and culture” in the Age of the Platform Economy*

In «The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction», Walter Benjamin once famously argued that the advent of photography, not only changed the conception and value of painting but modified both the art system and the audience aesthetic sensibilities. With the rise of “Platform Capitalism” the art system and its accompanying aesthetics is undergoing a transformation of an even more fundamental nature. What was once referred to by the moniker “Arts and culture” is being migrated from the physical expressions of its public nature – theatres, museums, galleries, and bookstores – to an electronic sphere under the purview of companies as Alphabet, Amazon, Apple, and Meta, the leading actors in the world of communication governance.

While the ongoing transformations of the cultural sector’s infrastructure provides the immediate backdrop of this paper, its ambition much more modest. I will present a tentative four-fold model for an analysis for a possible analysis of the cultural sectors’ temporal and spatial embeddedness in a both highly mediated and thoroughly capitalized media environment. As a second step, I will briefly explore the three concepts of network, infrastructure, and platform, and try to identify some of the uses they might serve so as to provide a modicum of analytical distance to the flurry of new media technologies and software we are confronted with daily. I deem such a strategy to be of the utmost importance, critical even, if we want to find some bearings on the historical positions – the now and here – from where we experience, articulate and eventually also attempt to change our everyday reality.

Knut Ove Eliassen. Professor in comp. lit., NTNU. Scholarly interests span from modern French philosophy and mediaarchaeology to maritime literature and Enlightenment studies. Presently dividing my time between working on literary geography, the literary history of maritime representations and the aesthetic impact of platformisation of the cultural sector.

15:15–16:45 **Session 4**, panel 4B:

Amalie Skovmøller *Moving Marble*

For over 2000 years, white marble has been central to the production of sculpture. Today, the marble industry makes up a wide-reaching web circulating white blocks of heavy stones from mountain quarries in multiple regions of Europe, the USA, Thailand, and India to sculptor’s workshops and onto display. Yet, the infrastructures supporting such activities are rarely admitted in the traditional art historical research. Instead, 300 years of scholarship have foregrounded the genius of the sculptor-artists and their creative processes transforming hard stone into works of art. Detaching the stones from their geological formations and displacing them within an academic discourse nursing an abstract and uniform sculpture-concept, the legacy of neo-classical aesthetics celebrates the pristine whiteness and timelessness of marble. While 18th and 19th centuries academic displacement of white marble is being critically addressed today due to its socio-aesthetic exclusiveness rejecting diversity in preference of a monochrome whiteness, the infrastructures sustaining marble-sculpting activities remains to be explored. How have artists and other agents collaborated, logistically and socially, on moving thousands of cubic meters of hard stones from quarry to workshop

and onto display? Exploring this question, this paper will present a research-project in its early stages. Focusing on the marble connections of Danish sculptor Johannes Wiedewelt (1731–1802), who created hundreds of white marble sculptures for his Danish clientele, including King Frederik V, the project explores the infrastructures of 18th and 19th century marble-industry. Introducing this project, developed within the frames of the research project “Moving Monuments: The Material Lives of Sculptures from the Danish Colonial Era”, funded by the Novo Nordisk foundation and directed by professor in art history, Mathias Danbolt, this paper references research into white marble industries developed since the Roman Empire, de-centering the approach to understanding the impact of white marble from revolving on artistic genius to collaborative networks.

Amalie Skovmøller is a tenure track assistant professor in art history, University of Copenhagen. Trained as classical archeologist, she has studied white marble as material for sculpture, including the painted sculptures of antiquity, the monochrome whiteness of the neoclassical period and the confrontations of the inherent whiteness of classical sculptures of today.

Ida Retz Wessberg Camille Claudel – a sculptress. Re-writing Art History, gender roles on the Art Scene and the sculpture workshop as an example of collective making

Since 2017 I have done artistic research on the French Sculptor Camille Claudel (1864–1943). Claudel studied at Académie Colarossi, one of the few Art Academies that accepted female students in 1882. Later she became an assistant to sculptor Auguste Rodin. Claudel was one of the leading forces behind a library of plaster casts (Abattis); a collection of casts of moulded body parts, which were used in the making of the Assemblage-sculptures. The process behind these sculptures heralds in many ways the modern sculpture and the conceptual thinking in contemporary sculpture.

Although Claudel was one of the only confidants of Rodin – and they undoubtedly had artistic collaborations – it is only Rodin's art which is described in detail in Art History. The movies and texts describing Claudel's life are mostly concerned with the love affair she had with Rodin, ending dramatically with her forced hospitalization. The narrative of Claudel and Rodin's relationship is generally very romanticized, and does not leave much room for Claudel's own development as an artist, nor her artistic imprint on Rodin's art. In my presentation I will start with a short introduction to Claudel's original sculptural approach and a description of the collective processes in both Rodin and Claudel's studio (and the necessity of assistants in the sculptural processes).

Furthermore I wish to shed light on some of the mechanisms behind the gender-discrimination that is still present on today's art scene. Exactly those mechanisms which have impacted the description of the female artists – including Claudel – in the global art history. In the light of recent years' #metoo scandals on the art- and culture scene, I will put forward a nuanced way of seeing those underlying structures that enable such abuses – then and now. Finally, I wish to discuss new ways of constructing an artistic narrative.

Ida Retz Wessberg (B. 1986, DK) holds an MFA in sculpture from The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts. Beside her artistic practice she is doing Artistic Research on the French Sculptress Camille Claudel and her contemporary Art Scene. Among others she is collaborating with The Musée Rodin Research Center. www.idaretz.com

Through the lens of contemporary studies in affect and representation my ongoing research project, tentatively titled, *Geological Encounters: The Affective Substructures of our Anthropocene Age*, studies how new conceptions of the material world – from both the literary field at large, natural science and political discourse – affect our sentimental bearing towards that which is not human. More precisely I herein explore iterations of what I suggest calling a geological sensibility in artistic representations of the geological world from the early 19th century till today: A special awareness of, and critical engagement with, the temporal and spatial epistemologies that inform and arrange how we make sense of the world around us. Focusing on current times, this paper presents my ongoing work on instances of such a sensibility in contemporary Scandinavian art. More to the point I investigate what I suggest calling geophilia – a particular fascination with the “nourishing” qualities of the material world – in four qualitatively different cases: A collection of short stories by Maja Schwaner: *Tærskel* from 2021, a music video by electronic artist Toxe: *Determina* from 2015, an art book by Andreas Holm: *I de levende jordlags tidsalder* from 2018, and an installation currently running at Kunsthal Charlottenborg: *The World is In You*. Interpreted as renderings of shared affective vibrancy, rather than of solitary artistic disposition, such instances of geophilia, this paper argues, both reveal something about, and critically engage with, the affective infrastructures that set the boundaries for the way we make sense of our world. The first, because they so to speak provide us with a prism in which the relationship between the contemporary Anthropocene landscape and the sociocultural experience of the material world are rendered visible; The second because they actively seek to expand these infrastructural orderings by reframing and remapping our relationship with the geological world.

Sebastian Ørtoft Rasmussen is a Ph.D. fellow in Comparative Literature at AU. His research studies how the immense changes in our perception of the geological world from the late 18th century till today, have affected our sensorial relationship to the world around us, by looking closer at representations of the material world of rocks, mountains, caves, and crystals in Western European art and literature.

17:00–18:30 **Session 5:**

Fabian Ebeling *Ephemeral Mediality: Place-making Qualities of the Cybernetic Tower in Liège*

The French–Hungarian artist Nicolas Schöffer (1912–1992) had a plan for humanity: New, cybernetically programmed cities would ease mobility, work and life in general. Informed by fears of over–population and intellectual mediocrity, Schöffer would take care of the betterment of the people by surrounding them with pleasing aesthetic spectacles and environments.

In the 1960ies, he envisioned a more than 300 meter tall cybernetic tower that would sit in La Défense, Paris. This tower was intended as a larger than life sculpture and art installation that would pick up noises, light and other inputs from the urban environment. In turn, it would emit sound, light and movement itself. *Tour Lumière Cybernétique* (TLC) would also pick up and process information about train departures, flight plans and even the stock market, serving as an electronic brain that measures the city’s pulse. Favored by French president Georges Pompidou initially, the tower never materialized after the president’s death in 1974.

However, a small version of the tower sits in the Wallonian city of Liège at Parc Boverie, right next to the Palais des Congrès. It was built in 1961 but soon decayed as Schöffers never thought of maintenance. The tower was restored in 2016 and today serves as a site of enquiry into what Schöffers's vision for future cities was. At the time of its inception, I argue, the tower mediated a will to concretize and to re-materialize fleeting relations in urban environments. By picking up inputs from its environment and emitting outputs in return, this structure would hint at the connectedness of all beings and materialities in the urban context. In doing so, at the same time, it anticipates smart city control centers we are now seeing in places like Rio de Janeiro or Incheon.

Fabian Ebeling is a PhD candidate with the research training group „Practicing place. Socio cultural practices and epistemic configurations“ at KU Eichstätt-Ingolstadt. His research focuses on aesthetic and experimental practices, their mediality and place-making qualities. Currently, he is researching a genealogical approach towards practices of responsiveness that resonate with discourses about smart cities today. Fabian holds a Master's degree in Media Studies from Bauhaus-University Weimar.

Mathilde Rouiller *On Landscapes and Bodies. Portraits Composites, a Performance and Study made from the Hospital*

As a multi-disciplinary artist-researcher and art worker, my practices have mostly been informed and produced through collective networks, that sometimes cross over and other time disconnect from one another. From the creative and research to the production and diffusion of objects in the art world, I explore how the performative process blurs the boundaries and highlight social and political matters. I am currently focusing on the notion of landscape (being shaped by bodies, culinary arts, migrations, or climate) as an ever evolving in-making movement and a pattern of imagination able to inform and transform an established panoptical world into in-between visions, allowing bodies and what they create to re-flow inside of this « infrastructural process » and play on inversions and enactments.

To illustrate those thematics, I will present Portraits composites, a study and creation I made in collaboration with the violinist Charlotte Chahuneau and the cinema critic Antonia Girardi on patients at the Bichat hospital in Paris. It explores the notions of bodies liminality, technical workers and living elements invisibility, and how the organization of the medical diagnosis hides liminal spaces for new visions.

Mathilde Rouiller is a French artist-researcher and art worker living in Paris. Graduated in research in dance from EHESS Paris, she has been following hybrid paths of creativity through scenography, staging, dancing and curating. In 2021, she graduate from Bruno Latour's Experimental Program in Political Arts, in where she developed new forms of her work.

Friday 8 April

10:00–11:30 **Keynote:** Shannon Mattern *The Repair Manual*

In this talk we'll survey the history, politics, and aesthetics of the repair manual as a didactic genre and creative form. We'll examine how the manual functions as a means of "infrastructural inversion," calling attention to the systems that enable infrastructures to

function; and, through the work of various artists and designers, we'll explore how the genre might allow us to translate between the individualized refurbishment of objects and the collective maintenance of systems and societies.

Shannon Mattern is Professor at The New School for Social Research. Her writing and teaching focus on media architectures and infrastructures and spatial epistemologies. She has written books about libraries, maps, and urban intelligence, and she contributes a column about urban data and mediated spaces to Places Journal. You can find her at wordsinspace.net.

12:00–13:30 **Session 6:**

Maria M. Rijo Lopes da Cunha *Artistic Power, Influence and Community beyond Infrastructural Frameworks in the Arab world: Possibility or Delusion?*

This paper explores the notion of 'infrastructure(s)' emerging, hiding and/or overshadowed with the rise of economic and cultural capitals in Arab Gulf as new centres of power of the 21st century Middle East. It examines these as 'connective blindspots' of by the finalization of the music and the arts sector (Hesmondhalgh 2013, 2011, Laing 2003, O'Brien Bernini, L.M. 2016) cutting-across artistic disciplinary practices in the intersections of music with fashion design which questions current delineations of material, immaterial and digital cultures.

Drawing upon ethnographic material collected in Kuwait at the dawn of the COVID pandemic, (February – March 2020) and digital ethnography (2020–2021), this paper examines the case of DJ Nuggets (Amin Farid), performer, music producer and self-titled 'music broker' in the global popular music scene of Kuwait's capital city. It examines how musicians negotiate their performance spaces in the absence of physical infrastructures that can host global popular or alternative musical genres. Furthermore, it examines how social media 'leverages' musical practices in such contexts and the conditions afforded to musician– brand or corporate partnerships. Lastly, it questions the types of infrastructures emerging 'at the margins', at the intersections of music, social media, corporate partnerships.

This paper will draw upon cultural studies literature (Leigh Star and Ruhleder 1999, Leigh Star 1996, Becker 1982, Claviez 2016) economic ethnomusicology literature (Negus 1999, Taylor 2015, Leon 2014) digital media studies (Papacharissi 2010, 2014, Turner and Tollinson 2021) and global popular music studies (Kjus 2018, Kruger 2021, Negus, Kian, Fung 2019) following the complex nature wealth of issues offered by this case study.

Maria M. Rijo Lopes da Cunha is an Ethnomusicologist and a Danish Institute in Damascus (D.I.D.) Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Art as Forum Centre of University of Copenhagen (2019 to 2021 and Feb– June 2022). She is working on an edited volume entitled "Music and Cultural Diplomacy in the Middle East: Geopolitical Re-Configurations for the 21st Century" co-edited with Jonathan H. Shannon, Virginia Danielson and Søren Møller Sørensen. Her scholarship broadly examines the role of music revival in the creation of contemporary, traditional, and cosmopolitan music genres between the Arab Levant and the Arab Gulf, with emphasis on the intersections of cultural economy, postcolonial, decolonial and center–periphery dynamics as well as cultural and economic sustainability and climate change. Maria Rijo has been an active musician in both Arabic traditional and free-improvised electro–acoustic music scenes and since 2019 has been on the nomination committee for the Aga

Khan music awards. She is also a keen dancer and food lover.

Hanna Grzeńkiewicz *Looping Arts, Archives and the Streets: The Role of the Artist and the Archive in 2020/21 Polish Pro-abortion Protests*

Using the case study of the 2020/21 Strajk Kobiet [Women's Strike] protests in Poland, this paper explores the relationship between research(ers) and social movements through the role(s) of the artist/activist and archives.

When the Polish Constitutional Tribunal voted on a de facto abortion ban on 22 October 2020, hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets across the entire country – making this one of the most visible and socially broad protest movements in Poland's recent history. Sustaining protests for over one hundred days takes creativity. Spontaneous artistic interventions were a key element of this period – such as the famous repurposing of Erik Prydz's dance classic 'Call On Me' with the chant 'J**** PiS'/'F*** PiS'. The protests were also archived in real-time – both by artists/activists on the ground such as the photographers' collective, Public Protest Archive, or by institutions, as exemplified by the Gdańsk Museum's open call for 'souvenirs' from the demonstrations.

The interweaving of artistic interventions and parallel archiving, spontaneous and collective uses of art, and the reclaiming of national(ist) arts, were all key in forming the sense of collective during this time – despite deepening political differences, and tensions between art created for the movement and art created (and profited from) off the back of the movement. This is a potent case study in 'strike art', and this research looks at the shaping of the visual and aural culture of social movements in Poland and the integration of artists within them. It asks what can be the role of art during a social movement: to disseminate and inspire, to be a tool for knowledge making? And what forms of archiving serve the needs and aims of social movements?

Against a backdrop of digitised–mediatised politics and a fascistisation of politics globally, this research looks to address an urgent need for dynamic renderings and more structured looping of research, arts, archiving and the streets as a tool for developing political strategies. This paper is being developed as part of transmediale festival's (Berlin) 2022 research group, Rendering Research.

Hanna Grzeńkiewicz is a Berlin-based independent curator, writer, researcher and activist. Her research and curatorial work focuses on the contextualisation of artistic practice in broader socio-political issues, alternative forms of collaboration and collectivity, and the relationship between the arts and social movements. She has degrees from the University of Cambridge and Humboldt University in Berlin and regularly speaks and writes on topics relating to feminism, social movements, (new) music, and the political use of the arts. She has recently written for the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, Analyse & Kritik, jungeWelt and Open Democracy.

12:00–13:30 Session 7:

Nina Danilova *Infrastructure of Discontent: State, Institutional and Guerilla Art in Contemporary Russia*

Networks that facilitate production and distribution of art are constrained to exist within a given political context, even if they label themselves as independent or position themselves outside of a certain socio-political frame. In my paper, I would like to suggest an analysis of infrastructure that forms the field of art production inside a hybrid (Guliyev, 2012) political regime of contemporary Russia, where the democratic system collides with autocratic methods

and institutions. My paper argues that the current political framework has led to co-existence of separate systems of production and distribution of art that cater to diverse groups of populations and reflect a deep conflict of worldviews that is typical for Russian society nowadays. These systems can be roughly devised as state, institutional, and partizan. Through a reading of several case studies pertaining to each “system” (e.g. The Kronstadt rebellion memorial (2021), Christmas Tree with Little Questions by A. Marakulina, and Poop by I. Volkov (2022)), I analyze the dynamics of power relations, methods that are employed by the state in order to control narratives and representations in the domain of public art, expressions of mild institutional disagreement as well as nonconforming strategies of resistance that are used by independent actors of the field in order to challenge the ruling ideology.

Nina Danilova is a Russian curator and PhD candidate in Culture Studies at the Catholic University of Portugal. Her research interests lie in the area of memory, archive, and time-perceptions as sources of everyday life documentation in contemporary art. Her thesis project *Watching Oneself Live: Tempo-Mnemonic Transformation in Contemporary Art* examines contemporary practices of image-making as a mediation for the ways we perceive and handle time.

Steyn Berghs *(An)aesthetics of Infrastructure: Jumana Manna's Thirty Plumbers in the Belly*

Scholarly accounts of infrastructure routinely assert that infrastructure is an elusive object due to its tendency to remain below the threshold of conscious perception. Infrastructures, when operative, are claimed to recede into the unexamined background, to remain below the threshold of sensuous apprehension, and therefore to withdraw altogether from aesthetic availability. While it is frequently conceded that these assertions are biased toward (predominantly Western) contexts where malfunction remains exceptional and infrastructures can ordinarily be relied on to smoothly fulfill their expected functions, these concessions rarely amount to anything more than a minor qualification of how infrastructures are generally thought about and studied. Partly in response to this, I will argue in my conference paper that Jumana Manna's installation *Thirty Plumbers in the Belly* (2021) is an artistic meditation on the conditions under which infrastructure may appear, and how. Consisting of ceramic sculptures of sewage pipes and decaying bread, as well as of large screens in scaffolding gauze, Manna's work evokes a situation informed and shaped less by pre-given (infra)structures than by ongoing processes of material, and materialist, improvisation. Pitting the seeming stillness of its various objects against itself, *Thirty Plumbers in the Belly* sounds out on the possibilities for infrastructure (as well as the lack thereof) to manifest in and through such processes of improvisation—to leap back into the realm of the aesthetic by way of a trembling in the form, fabric, and frequencies of the everyday. But while *Thirty Plumbers in the Belly* attends to the undeniable poetic qualities as well as the political potential of what might be called infrastructural improvisation, it also gestures toward its entanglement with issues of social justice. Here, too, there is a subtle interplay of appearance and non-appearance, as the referent in the installation is nowhere explicit yet always felt.

Steyn Berghs is an art historian and a critic. He is currently a lecturer in the art history department of Utrecht University. Previously, he obtained his PhD from Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam with a dissertation on the interrelations between digital reproducibility and valorization in contemporary art, supervised by Katja Kwastek and Sven Lütticken. His writing has appeared in books, publications, and journals internationally.

Mai Corlin Frederiksen *Infrastructures of Reciprocity: Socially Engaged Art in Contemporary China and Hong Kong*

This talk is concerned with a group of long-term socially engaged art projects in contemporary China and Hong Kong that place particular importance on creating and maintaining infrastructures of reciprocity – that is they place particular attention on forming reciprocal social relations and on producing alternate ways to connect groups in networks of reciprocity. Based in the idea of mutual aid, they propose work–study groups, learning and sharing sessions and develop practices of how to organize in common as collectives. They promote smaller units, such as the autonomous youth house, the independent art space or the collectively run farm. They plant seeds, they host each other, they maintain networks of people in China, Hong Kong and East Asia. As I will present in this talk, in all their diversity, I see the thinking of Guangzhou’s SoengJoengToi, Shanghai’s Dinghaiqiao Mutual Aid Society and the person-to-person distribution network Light Logistics working out of Hong Kong (but in essence spanning the entire world), as examples of this type of practice. Through these examples, I will show how they use mappings and handbooks as guides to the disruption of the existing social relations and thus reveal reciprocity as vehicle for the formation of new social bonds. In this sense, they map and trace their social relations and use these mappings to engage in the production and maintenance of infrastructures of reciprocity. I propose to understand the practice of these projects as what Gerald Raunig termed “instituent practices.” That is they create infrastructures for the formation of new institutions to support new visions for the social.

Mai Corlin Frederiksen has done extensive research into socially engaged art practices in China and Hong Kong. She is the author of *The Bishan Commune and the Practice of Socially Engaged Art in Rural China* (Palgrave, 2020). Currently she is Carlsberg Foundation postdoctoral fellow with the Department of Cross–Cultural and Regional Studies at the University of Copenhagen.

Session formats

Panels and keynotes

The conference is organized around paper panel sessions and keynote lectures. During paper sessions, which are 1,5 hours long, 3 participants present their papers (each have 20 minutes) followed by a 30-minute moderated plenary discussion. Please note that some sessions are parallel and that the organisers encourage participants to not swap rooms during parallel sessions. Keynote sessions are 1,5 hours and consist of a lecture followed by a moderated Q&A session.

We encourage that discussion is both respectful and dynamic and hope that the conference will be a site of edifying discussion, new connections and fruitful collaborative work that enhances our understandings of the intersection of art, infrastructure, and collective activity.

Practical information

Locations

Connect/Cut venue:

All panels and keynotes take place in:

Room 4A.0.69 and 4A.0.68 (building 4A, see map below or [click here](#))

Karen Blixens Vej 8

South Campus

University of Copenhagen

2300 Copenhagen S

Lunch, coffee, tea & refreshments

Will be provided throughout the days.

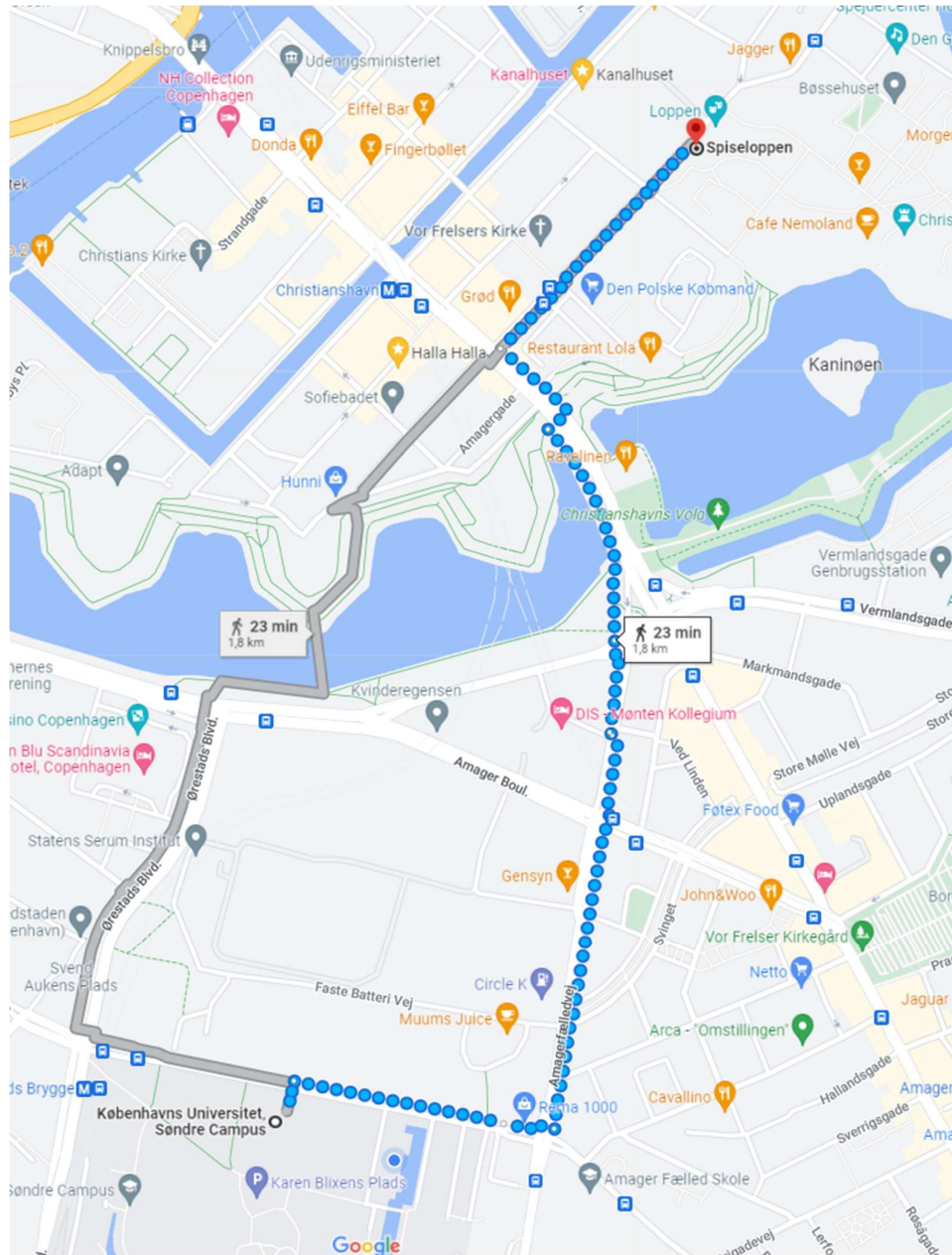


Dinner:

Thursday evening, we invite all participant for dinner at Spiseloppen – situated at Christiania. If you have special dietary needs, allergies, or would like a vegetarian or vegan option, please contact Ida Albert: ida.albert@hum.ku.dk

Address:

Spiseloppen, Christiania, Bårdsmandsstræde 43, 1407 København
(walking distance from campus or one stop via metro “Christianshavn M”)



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