2021 DRHA Digital Research in the Humanities and Arts

Digital Matters

Designing / Performing Agency for the Anthropocene.

25th Digital Research in the Humanities and Arts Conference

Reminder and Extended Deadline: May 30th!
Call for Papers
Digital Matters: Designing/Performing Agency for the Anthropocene

September 5-7, 2021 at the Humboldt University in Berlin, Germany

The Anthropocene highlights a fundamental fracture in contemporary culture between what we know and how we act. In the public sphere, this contradiction can be summarized by the overwhelming sense of apathy in the face of growing complexity and crisis. In scholarship the Anthropocene has been tied up with the experience of the unthinkable by thinkers including Timothy Morton, Donna Haraway, and Amitav Ghosh. Yet, the current COVID-19 pandemic—which as a crisis also exemplifies the human impact on and a reshaping of environments—challenges the pervasiveness of the key concepts of abstraction and unthinkability. Instead, the pandemic has turned the Anthropocene into a concrete, intensely lived, globally shared experience. In doing so, the pandemic asks us to reflect on and, more importantly, experiment with the borders between material and digital spheres and the shifting experiences they currently render.

Taking place from **September 5-7, 2021** in Berlin, the 25th Digital Research in Humanities and Arts conference invites contributions and interventions that focus on such transfers and interactions between digital and natural environments. Digital Matters takes on the challenge to explore new material and multi-species agencies, forms of embodiment, and interactions between the performing arts, the humanities and the natural sciences that engage the sense of relationality and expanded scale that the Anthropocene affords. We welcome contributions that create a sustained encounter between designers, hackers, performers, artists, and philologists to examine how these emerging ways of communicating and creating proximity and solidarity across distance can shape new responses to conceptualising life in and beyond the Anthropocene. We would like to generate new perspectives on any of these three interrelated spheres:

- What do we make of the various encounters between digital and embodied materialities across the cultural, creative, and scientific spectrum?

- How do we make perceivable the invisible dimension of environments in our cultural practices?

- How do we create new forms of agency to match the altered realities of the Anthropocene?

DHRA 2021 offers a creative platform for transdisciplinary exchanges in a variety of formats: it will be part academic conference, part curated programme of digital performances, workshops, and installations that seek to break new ground in how artists, digital makers and researchers can share knowledge and engage with each other.

Confirmed Keynote Speakers:

- **Dr. Nicholas Johnson** (Drama Department, Trinity College Dublin) & **Prof. Aljosa Smolic** (V-Sense Project, School for Computer Science and Statistics, Trinity College Dublin) on ***Performing Survival: Rethinking Interdisciplinarity and Adaptation through Beckett in XR***

- **Prof. Claudia Mareis** (Institute of Experimental Design and Media Culture, Basel/ EXC Matters of Activity, Humboldt University Berlin)

- **Dr. Etienne Turpin**(anexact office) **& Nashin Mahtani (**PetaBencana.id) on ***Just Enough for the City***

- **Prof. Joanna Zylinska on *Performing Planetarity*** (Department of Media, Communications and Cultural Studies, Goldsmiths, University of London)

Plus a Roundtable and Workshop series:

- A roundtable on ***The Non-Human in Artistic Practice and Research*** with **Kim Albrecht** (Harvard metaLab/Potsdam University**), Siobhan Leddy** (Institute for Theatre Studies, Free University Berlin) and **Prof. Annette Jael Lehmann** (Harvard metaLab/Free University Berlin)

- Featuring the ***Depth of Field*-workshop series** on the intersections between Indigenous art and activism, decolonising artistic research, and digitality and environmental justice

We are seeking submissions on topics including, but not exclusive to, the following:

- Performing the Anthropocene across the arts
- Sonic environments and the environmental politics of listening
- VR, AR, and AI in performance
- Renegotiating liveness in performance
- Creating digital narratives of scale: micro & macro-levels
- Configuring the non-human in digital and natural environments
- Negotiating scarcity and waste with digital media
- Designing nature in the digital/virtual sphere
- Digitality in protest/activism/public engagement
- Indigenous knowledge and digital media
- Visualizing scientific data in artistic practice
- Exploring Object-Oriented Ontology
- Possible futures and post-pandemic transformations of artistic practice

Please submit a 300-word abstract together with a short bio (ca. 75 words) and indicate the preferred format (digital or F2F) for your paper or presentation (15min), digital media provocation (up to 15min), workshop (30/60min), or alternative creative interventions (15min) on the theme of the 2021 DRHA conference. To submit your proposal via Easychair, please visit our website. All proposals will be reviewed and selected by a peer-review process.
Due to the complexities of planning during the pandemic, we have extended the deadline for submissions to May 30th, 2021. *Currently, we are planning this conference as a hybrid event in Berlin with social distancing measures in place. If the development of the pandemic does not permit any form of gathering, we will shift to a fully online event.*

Conference Organizers:
Dr. Lindsey Drury (EXC 2020 “Temporal Communities”, FU Berlin)
Dr. Ramona Mosse (EXC 2020 “Temporal Communities”: “Viral Theatres” Volkswagen Foundation Fellow, FU Berlin)
Dr. Christian Stein (EXC Matters of Activity, HU Berlin)

This year’s DRHA conference is hosted by the interdisciplinary Excellence Cluster (EXC) Matters of Activity at the Humboldt University and also supported through partnership with the Excellence Cluster (EXC) 2020 Temporal Communities at the Freie Universität-Berlin and the “Viral Theatres” Research Project, funded by the Volkswagen Foundation.