



Around the Fire Symposium Programme - 31 May 2024

Organised by the Centre for Creative Ethnography, Queen's University, Belfast

All times in Irish/British summer time (GMT+1)

Session 1

9.00-9.05 Welcome

Kayla Rush (Dundalk Institute of Technology), Maruška Svašek, Ioannis Tsioulakis
(Queen's University, Belfast)

9.05-9.20 Artist at Work

Ana Ayuso, Universitat de Barcelona / Esade Business School

9.20-9.30 Voyager Two

Tristan Sparks, free-lance composer, Tokyo

9.30-9.45 Diasporic Theatre: An Investigation Across the Diaspora.

David Ferreira Alves, Trinity College Dublin

9.50-10.00 Discussion in breakout rooms

Session 2

- 10.00-10.15 Untitled
Eva van Roekel Cordiviola, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
- 10.15-10.30 Embodied Land-Body Intimacies: Applying Ethnographic Filming, Poems and Photography in Aotearoa / New Zealand Migrants' Placemaking
Yi Li, University of Otago
- 10.30-10.45 The Bridge
Nguyen Vu Tu Hang, Hanoi Grapevine; Cao Trung Vinh, VICAS Art Studio Hanoi, Nguyen Hoang Hiep; Maruška Svašek, Queen's University Belfast
- 10.45-11.00 Discussion in breakout rooms

Session 3

- 11.00-11.15 'Were you born with it?': Understanding the Influence of Formative Childhood Experiences on Creative Endeavour
Daithí Kearney, Dundalk Institute of Technology
- 11.15-11.30 Dragonja FootNotes
Dragonja Footnotes Collective: Martina Bofulin, Nataša Gregorič Bon, Ana Jelnikar, Urša Kanjir, Lucija Klun, Špela Ledinek Lozej, Jernej Mlekuž, Primož Pipan, Ana Reberc, Igor Rogelja, Nataša Rogelja Caf, and Nick Shepherd
- 11.30-11.45 Learning about Mp3s in *Galerie 7*, Forming Stories in/of the City of Tunis
Susannah Knights, King's College London
- 11.45-12.00 Discussion in breakout rooms
- 12.00-12.30 Break**

Session 4: Ursula K. Le Guin Creative Performance

12.30-13.30 Cross-pollination: Poetic Speculations on Climate Emotion
Susan Wardell, University of Otago

Session 5

13.30-13.45 Serendipity at the Brink of a New Era: A Piece of Metafiction
Noel B. Salazar, KU Leuven

13.45-14.00 Wayward: Reframing Captours and Commitments to Marronage
Emma McKeever, Queen's University Belfast

14.00-14.15 Writing Ethnographic Portraits
Nataša Rogelja Caf, Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts

14.15-14.30 Discussion in breakout rooms

Session 6

14.30-14.45 We Meet on Cupar Way
Maruška Svašek, Queen's University Belfast

14.45-15.00 Untitled Poem
Prashant Khattri, University of Allahabad

15.00-15.15 Where Wild Strawberries Grow
Helena Wulff, Stockholm University

15.15-15.30 Discussion in breakout rooms

Session 7

15.30-15.45 Kal-Baffi Chronicles; Unravelling the Threads: Kashmiri, Muslim, Woman*
*Janees Lanker, ShikarGah Collective, Indian-administered-Kashmir [*part of Offstream Futures Grant 2023 (India-based arts collective)]*

15.45-16.00 Walking Hanoi 2024 - Reflections on Improvisation, Listening and Being Attached
Franziska Schroeder, Queen's University Belfast

- 16.00-16.15 No Man's Land: The Confessions of Theodore D. Wiseman, Adoptee
Dominic Rubin, writer, UK
- 16.15-16.30 Discussion in breakout rooms

Session 8

- 16.30-16.45 *Aunticipating. A Eulogy, of Sorts.*
Alicia Sliwinski, Wilfrid Laurier University
- 16.45-17.00 *The Night Falls, the Light is Brazen*
Silvy Panet-Raymond, Tangente / Concordia University
- 17.00-17.15 Genocide, Arts and Justice
Raminder Kaur
- 17.15-17.30 Theology for Witches
Kayla Rush, Dundalk Institute of Technology
- 17.30-17.45 Discussion in breakout rooms
- 17.45-18.00 Closing remarks

Around the Fire 2024

Contributors and Abstracts

Ana Ayuso (anaayuson@gmail.com)

Artist at Work

Artists were one of the first to experience the absence of barriers between life and work; something that happens today to most cognitive workers. How does what we work on affect the way we understand ourselves, our relationships with others and the world? Based on my own work experiences (and those of others) I try to trace an autoethnography that addresses these questions through artistic research. In 2022, I was awarded a residency that provided me with a workspace in a former textile factory in Barcelona. During that year I went from being unemployed, to teaching a few classes, to getting a full-time job. This left me (like many other artists) with little time to spend on art. My proposal is to share the installation/performance made for the collective exhibition presenting the results of the residency: four full-size pictures of some artist's empty desks, next to one real desk and chair. Each Friday during the time of the exhibit I will work remotely from there for my teaching job - which is something I (and other artists as well) did during our residency. Working from the exhibition space is a way of documenting and re-enacting my experience of that year.

Ana Ayuso is a PhD candidate at the School of Fine Arts at the Universitat de Barcelona. Her research is on the representations of the self in the context of cognitive work, more particularly she is interested in how fiction, debt, and affects are mechanisms that inform our subjectivity. This research is the result of turning to the arts after not fitting into the corporate world she was meant to inhabit after graduating with a BBA. Ana is also a Teaching Fellow at Esade Business School, where she teaches courses on ethnography, sociology, and other liberal arts.

David Ferreira-Alves (david.ferreira2898@hotmail.com)

Diasporic Theatre: An Investigation Across the Diaspora.

Through creative expression, the human experience is mythologized and collectively understood. The stories we believe shape our perceptions of reality. We live our life according to these stories, and according to these stories we shape the world. Creation is really a

rereading and rewriting of reality—a rearrangement or reordering of pre-existing elements. Images are a gateway to imagination, the place where they take on body and life. In this conference, I aim to investigate the heated social atmosphere of several artistic productions, and highlight Black playwrights that portray social identity issues derived from their diasporic identity. The flourishing of the Black Theatre draws attention to the emergence of Black-led theatre companies devoted to the production of Black stories. One of my objectives is to explore the new ways of categorizing social identity as a Black Queer person, and how one reimagines the concept of eternal immigrant, memory, and culture. To do so it is important to understand the importance of notions of identity – embracing the personal and social identity. To locate oneself as belonging simultaneously to multiple communities and blurring the boundaries between disciplines.

David Ferreira-Alves is a theatre practitioner who discovered their love for reading long before acting and started writing at the age of eleven. Their research is an autoethnographic study based on the experience of devising, researching, performing and evaluating a performance art work combining theatre, dance, text and music. In 2023, they acted in Mark O'Rowe's *Terminus* for An Táin Arts Centre. Current research includes producing an acted and choreographed theatrical live performance to analyse stories about persons who are in the margins of society. Also, they have undertaken practice-based research projects since 2022, including collaborations with musicians, autoethnographers and anthropologists.

Dragonja FootNotes Collective (spela.ledinek@zrc-sazu.si)

Martina Bofulin, Nataša Gregorič Bon, Ana Jelnicar, Urša Kanjir, Lucija Klun, Špela Ledinek Lozej, Jernej Mlekuž, Primož Pipan, Ana Reberc, Igor Rogelja, Nataša Rogelja Caf, and Nick Shepherd (Camera: Špela Ledinek Lozej and Živa Caf; Script: Špela Ledinek Lozej and Nataša Rogelja Caf; Editing: Živa Caf)

Dragonja FootNotes

The video essay is a multifaceted work that reflects (on) the possibilities of the walking seminar, a research event that intertwines walking with writing, the sensorial with the discursive, the haptic with the reflective, video documenting with creative editing. Created as part of the

Routes Biographies project it documents the walk of twelve researchers along the course of the Istrian river Dragonja, revealing their steps and words, their thinking-through-writing. While walking, they encounter various lives along – and with – the river. The traces left by migrants, the remains of former settlers, farmers, their imprints on the landscape, the stories of artists and new urban settlers, as well as animal remains. The Dragonja route is in constant dialogue with borders, and their green or barbed wire materialities. Through these encounters, a complex and changing Dragonja-ness unfolds as a productive force: a muse, a border, a route, or a pernicious dragon that nurtures but also takes away human lives.

Špela Ledinek Lozej holds a PhD in ethnology and has been working at the Institute of Slovenian Ethnology of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (ZRC SAZU) since 2000. She is dedicated to the study of heritage and heritage processes, architecture, dwelling culture and the Alpine economy. Since 2019, she has headed the multidisciplinary research program Heritage on the Margins (see Heriscope, <https://dediscina.zrc-sazu.si/en/home2/>) and teaches at the Postgraduate School ZRC SAZU. She has been walking since childhood, with interlocutors for a quarter of a century and with fellow researchers for five years.

Raminder Kaur (rk39@sussex.ac.uk)

Genocide, Arts and Justice

In this presentation, we will consider how creative media may be used to raise more awareness on atrocities committed against minority groups in a public arena without seeming to objectify them merely as victims. I will show a part of our coproduced filmed drama called Mabruka's Lament by Marc Littman (produced by Sohaya Visions and Mukul and Ghetto Tigers). Mabruka's Lament tells the story of a young Yazidi woman trying to follow her dreams while all around her, family and community expectations hem her in. One day she meets a mysterious man. While they fall for each other, she also learns some disturbing truths. Touching upon Yazidi and Sunni tensions in the deserts of Iraq at a time before Da'esh (ISIL) terrorised the community from 2014, Mabruka's Lament is both a seductive romance and a dangerous tragedy.

Raminder Kaur is a writer and researcher based in the School of Global Studies at the University of Sussex. She has conducted extensive fieldwork in India, Pakistan and Britain researching

topics such as migration, race/ethnicity/gender, arts and heritage, public culture, censorship, religion and politics, human rights, nuclear issues, and 'cultures of sustainability'. She has (co)produced about 20 artistic projects including *breadth*, *Bodies*, *Kama Sci-Fi* and *Lalon: Heart of Madness*, for stage and film, some of which she wrote based on her research. She also coproduced an international scriptwriting competition and festival, RAFTA: Rise Against Fanaticism Through the Arts, with 15 readings and 5 staged dramas including *AGATHE* staged at Playground Theatre (April-May 2024). www.sohayavisions.com/agathe2

Daithí Kearney (daithi.kearney@dkit.ie)

‘Were you born with it?’: Understanding the Influence of Formative Childhood Experiences on Creative Endeavour

In this presentation, I reflect on the influence of my own formative experiences of culture through poetry, as I consider how these experiences not only inspired my creative writing but also encouraged my engagement with creative pursuits. Linking to the concept of ‘around the fire’, I focus on a particular fireside space, around which the sharing of music, song, dance and stories was the convention. This space, a cultural and training centre in Co. Kerry, was purposely constructed so as to sustain the practices of previous generations but with the aim of nurturing engagement in local culture for future generations. My presentation involves the reading of a series of interconnected poems, which were inspired by my experiences around the open fire in this space, and build on the metaphor of a spark. Reflections between these poems serve the dual process of demonstrating how an artist’s practice can be inspired by their childhood experiences and the broader recognition of how creative writing can facilitate understanding of milieu. In this manner, creative writing can aid mentorship and help inspire others, including students in academic contexts. By reflecting creatively on my own experiences, I strive to develop empathy with my students and audiences.

Daithí Kearney is an ethnomusicologist, geographer and performer, a lecturer in music, theatre and tourism and co-director of the Creative Arts Research Centre at Dundalk Institute of Technology. He is widely published in academic books and journals, as well as being a published poet and songwriter, commissioned composer and experienced performer. Albums include *A*

Louth Lilt (2017), featuring new compositions with his wife Dr Adèle Commins. In 2023, Daithí was the recipient of the DkIT President's Prize for Established Researcher in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences and a Bardic Award from Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann for contribution to Irish traditional music.

Prashant Khattri (prashant_khattri2002@yahoo.co.in)

Untitled Poem

Through my poem, I wish to capture the plight of people who are affected by recurrent floods in a district of Eastern Uttar Pradesh in India. The poem will be based on first hand ethnographic work among the people of Bahraich district. I wish to capture the structural vulnerabilities of people in the context of floods. Issues of inequality, reproduction of inequalities during floods, migration, loss of livelihood, life and livestock will be captured through creative writing. Bahraich is one of the most backward districts in the state of Uttar Pradesh and ranks very low on the Human Development Index. The once flood dependent economy of the area has been transformed over a period of time into flood vulnerable landscape on the pretext of controlling the flow and direction of the river in order to prevent floods and increase revenue. Rivers are considered as sacred in Indian civilization, and folk narratives of rivers consider it either as mother or as a married/unmarried female who is either fickle or volatile. People therefore either urge the rivers to retreat and do not harm them or threaten them (symbolic as depicted in myths and legends) in case they become very destructive. I wish to attempt a creative write-up within such an understanding of rivers and associated recurrent floods.

Prashant Khattri is Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology, University of Allahabad, Prayagraj, UP, India. He obtained his master's and Ph.D. from the department of anthropology, University of Delhi. He researches on Social Impacts of Disasters, Livelihood Issues in Disaster Context, and people's movements in environmental crisis. He was the Charles Wallace Fellow at Queen's University, Belfast for the session 2022-23 and is one of the founder members of The Centre for Creative Ethnography at Queen's. More recently he has been unanimously appointed as the member of the governing body of the Society for Indian Medical Anthropology,

Mysore for a period of two years till 2025. He has also been involved in the advocacy of rights for the internally displaced people in the Bahraich district of Uttar Pradesh.

Susannah Knights (susannah.knights@kcl.ac.uk)

Learning About Mp3s in Galerie 7, Forming Stories in/of the City of Tunis

During my doctoral fieldwork, I was interested in the ways that sound is organised through layers of sonic archives in the city of Tunis, and in what this might tell us about the political organisation of sensory environments in the post-revolutionary city. I was interested in diverse forms of archives, from radio studios and YouTube to cassette shops. One of the archival spots in question was the stall *Planète Technologie*, situated in the corner of a shopping centre called Galerie 7 which specialises in pirated technologies. Over several years I went there to wonder: what is the significance of the circulation of Mp3s, and the place of Galerie 7, in the formulation of alternative sound worlds in an environment that shifts between post-colonial, authoritarian, and revolutionary? But in the process, linear narratives and chronological histories were not forthcoming. How might the stops and starts in the descriptions of time given to us during ethnographic fieldwork actively inform our understanding of relationships between recordings, memory and history? I will take this opportunity to experiment with techniques of storyboarding and collage, combined with narration and ethnographic recordings, in attempts to explore the fragmented nature of histories given to me in Galerie 7.

Susannah Knights recently completed her PhD, entitled *Tunis's Archival Situation: on the organisation of sound, music and bodies in a post-revolutionary capital*, at KCL, where she was supervised by Martin Stokes. Previous to this, she completed a Master's in Anthropology at the EHESS, Paris, and a degree in History of Art from the University of Cambridge, where she was also a choral scholar. She is working on a collaborative exhibition with visual artist Lotfi Ghariani which aims to further explore and communicate findings from her PhD. She also experiments with storyboarding and stop-motion animation.

Janees Lanker (lankerjanees@gmail.com)

Kal-Baffi¹ Chronicles; Unravelling the Threads: Kashmiri, Muslim, Woman

Kashmir. Paradise? Many envision meadows, mountains, and beauty. But for Kashmiris, it's a complex tapestry of identities. Kal-Baffi Chronicles, a solo feminist ethnography performance, shatters the stereotype of the Kashmiri Muslim woman. Envisioned as a solo feminist autoethnographic performance, it dismantles the stereotypical "Kashmir ki kali" (The Blossom of Kashmir) - fair, silent, beautiful. The Project derives from personal turmoil. Kal-Baffi Chronicles is a fight for memory and agency. It utilises ethnography as a powerful tool, transforming it from a research method into a creative wellspring. Through the character of Nazia, I make use of storytelling, unveiling the desires, struggles, and the weight of history borne by Kashmiri Muslim women. It marks a sincere endeavour of keeping memory, safe-guarding personal narratives, and preserving anecdotes that alone serve as a testimony to the times we witnessed. Here, 'autoethnography' plays a crucial role as both a research tool and a creative device.

Dastangoi² Drawing inspiration from the art of 'Dastangoi' that holds a significant place in Kashmir's oral traditions, I set out to undertake a journey that integrates my artistic practice as a theatre-practitioner, and* ethnographer. This 70-minute play is a testament to the power of storytelling, resilience, and memory. It's a commitment to inclusivity, feminism, and creating space for dialogue through the lens of autoethnography. It's a challenge to the stereotype, a question on the norm, and a fight for unheard voices. I shall present a 15-minute excerpt from the play for the presentation.

Janees Lanker is from Indian administered Kashmir. She has done her bachelors and masters in Anthropology from the University of Delhi, India. As a theatre practitioner-cum-facilitator, she has been involved in making activist and feminist theatre for the past seven years – a journey that has been complimentary with her academic and methodological training as an anthropologist. Janees' approach to theatre making is both dramaturgical and ethnographic, influenced by her personal experiences and that of her community. Her artistic compass points towards the Theatre of the Oppressed, which she sees as a fertile ground for anthropological interventions, bridging the realms of art and academia. Additionally, she is a co-founder at ShikarGah Collective – a Kashmir-based, cross-disciplinary platform for local artists and scholars.

Kalbaffi Chronicles was a product of India-based 'Offstream Futures Grants' awarded to Janees in 2023.

¹ The Kashmiri art of making hand-knotted carpets. Also considered the language/code of carpet-making.

² The 13th century oral storytelling art form having its origin in the Persian language. Dastangoi had made its way to India. This form of oral storytelling has found its impressions in Dardic language speakers, including Kashmiri.

Yi Li (liyi5704@student.otago.ac.nz)

Embodied Land-Body Intimacies: Applying Ethnographic Filming, Poems and Photography in Aotearoa / New Zealand Migrants' Placemaking

This immersive experience delves into the world of eco-creative practitioners through a sensory ethnography on migrants' placemaking in Aotearoa New Zealand. In this presentation, I will share ethnographic filming, poetry, and photography from my fieldwork, based on observational participation, co-creations, and phenomenological analysis. From 2019 to 2023, I had the privilege of exploring the migration experiences of 38 eco-creative individuals. Through activities such as walking, creating, tramping, foraging, soundscaping, and open-water swimming, landscape filming with participants in Dunedin, Christchurch, Wanaka, and Auckland, I captured their eco-creative practices in urban-natural spaces. Analysing reflexive materials, I discovered how participants harness their bodies to commune with the land amidst challenges such as climate uncertainty and social isolation. My study offers insights into how these migrant eco-creators' intentional living relates to the Aotearoa landscape, their pursuit of geographic happiness, and a regenerative future with hope through daily practices. These interactions transformed their sensuous engagements into collective cultural experiences, shaping their identity and belonging both physically and emotionally. Through artistic work, I tell a story about being home, and away.

Yi Li (Amber Lee) is a poet and visual arts producer with a background in film studies from China. She is a PhD candidate in Social Anthropology and Geography at the University of Otago. Utilising academic and artistic approaches in her work, she is transitioning from a screenwriter

to an anthropologist. Her current project, a multisensory ethnography, focuses on migrants' placemaking, happiness, and creativity through the lens of land-body dynamics in Aotearoa New Zealand. With a passion for multimedia storytelling, Yi delves into the intricate ties that connect people to their environments, including the emerging regenerative human-natural relationship and shared experiences involving more-than-human elements.

Emma McKeever (emckeeper12@qub.ac.uk)

Wayward: Reframing Captours and Commitments to Marronage

Setting a research question paves the way for an ideology to spread and become the "truth", as I write the sun emanates glimmers from my ring. It has got me thinking how sensuous experiences, enabled by our evolved tools of bodily reach (e.g. vision), have led people to choose the methodology of questions as their life's labour. As I think of how these moments of experience led us to research questions, it's not the ideological paths of the poets or the committed wanderers that trouble me, but those of the elite captours. Those who work to maintain extractive profit by constructing prisons of thought from the captive sensuous. Asking questions and dedicating yourself to research should be that of praise, commitment, and wonder not maintenance of extractive accumulating power. I am worried, as I know that even glimmers have been used in militarised defense research. In my journey with the School of Poetic Computation, I hope to do an ideological audit of how poets, committed wanderers, elite captours and others have given me my sight. I don't know what this audit will look like yet, but I would like to contribute my wayward path of documenting my sensuous experiences.

Emma McKeever is student/teacher in all things related to removing her labour from the job description of a loyal productive colonial continuation, with a specific focus of weaving liberation into the past/present/future misdeeds of the discipline of genetics. She is a [living & loving] (tired & struggling) lifelong un/learner and amateur environmental geneticist. While she is waiting for Universal Basic Services/Income, she is currently sustaining her life through a waged PhD programme at Queen's University Belfast. She daydreams of wayfaring towards liberation but while docked, she appreciates the sun on her cheeks and the hands that laid brick that hold a space to insulate before she becomes reflective.

Silvy Panet-Raymond (silvypr@me.com)

The Night Falls, the Light is Brazen

Première of a short animation film that lasts 3'27 seconds through the body's travelled memory. It is not so much the distance as the paths trodden, the moment of being fully within a world that remains as one moves on. Or does the world remain, or does it also continue to move? I had intended on doing a spoken performance with philosophers being *deus ex machina* in human affairs, virtually speaking from clouds above. But, instead, something shifted, entered my peripheral vision. Landscapes morphing within my pores, leaking out into colours, shaping and undoing themselves. Images of the world's birthing, twinned, yet distinct, where distance, time, place hold no hierarchy over each other. An object is a moveable force, a subject is an action, interior decorations with see-through walls, there are animated lives, unleashed elements and it is all moving, moving.

La nuit tombe, la lumière s'impose

Première d'un court film d'animation d'une durée de 3'27 secondes à travers la mémoire mobile du corps. Ce n'est pas tant la distance que les chemins parcourus, le moment où l'on se trouve pleinement dans un monde qui demeure alors que l'on avance. Ou bien le monde demeure-t-il, ou bien continue-t-il aussi à se déplacer? J'avais l'intention de faire une performance parlée où les philosophes joueraient le rôle de *deus ex machina* dans les affaires humaines, parlant virtuellement depuis les nuages. Mais au lieu de cela, quelque chose s'est déplacé, est entré dans ma vision périphérique. Des paysages qui se transforment à l'intérieur de mes pores, qui s'échappent en couleurs, qui se forment et se défont. Des images de mondes en train de naître, jumelés et pourtant distincts, où la distance, le temps, le lieu n'ont pas de hiérarchie les uns par rapport aux autres. Un objet est une force en mouvement, un sujet est une action, des décorations intérieures avec des murs transparents, il y a des vies animées, des éléments déchaînés et tout cela est en mouvement, en mouvement.

Silvy Panet-Raymond is an award-winning choreographer, performer, visual artist, pedagogue, professor emeritus. She is co-founder of Tangente, the first organization to specialize in dance presentation in the province of Quebec. Until Fall 2022, and was Chair of the Department of Contemporary Dance, Faculty of Fine Arts, Concordia University. Silvy has taught Creative

Process, Choreography courses and transdisciplinary workshops for dance makers as well as for practitioners, thinkers, and scholars. She developed Ensemble Ouvert, a creation/transmission project connecting artists and other doers across all continents, and is a member of CAPS Graduate School on Creative Approaches to Public Space at Université Rennes 2, France.

Dominic Rubin (dom_rubin@yahoo.co.uk)

No Man's Land: The Confessions of Theodore D. Wiseman, Adoptee

I will read an extract from my novel in progress, No Man's Land: the auto-diagnosis of Theodore Wiseman. The novel charts the life-story of Dr Theo Wiseman. It focuses mainly on his struggle to find an identity that has been shattered by the fact of his adoption. In the book, he seeks out his birth parents and then forms an uneven friendship with them over the years. In this extract from No Man's Land, I will read a passage in which Theo travels to the U.S. from Moscow – where he moved from London when relations with his adoptive parents hit an impasse – to give a lecture on a Russian-Jewish philosopher that he has just published a book on. After the birth of his third child, Theo's marriage is in trouble and the trip is a form of escape. The journey plunges him back into different layers of his past. A decade previously, Theo had taught at the small college where he is now speaking when his children were small. A decade before that, when he was a student, in a quest for self-identity, he had experimented with Hasidic Judaism. Now, on this trip, these strands of his life merge when he meets the family's old babysitter and then stays over with Sholom Ravitsky, an old Hasidic and university friend. As usual, his life is a tissues of secrets and lies but in this extract he comes to a limited form of liberation and self-forgiveness. I have chosen to focus on an academic slice of his life, given the university setting of Around the Fire. From this perspective, the extract ponders on the personal roots of the scholarly quest, and how the scholarly environment can contrast and clash with other spheres of being.

Dominic Rubin, a graduate of Oxford and London universities, is a writer and researcher who was based in Moscow for 18 years, and now lives and works in the UK. His work focuses on the political, theological and philosophical dimensions of Eastern Orthodoxy, Judaism and Islam in the Russian, Central Asian and Eastern European context and he has authored three books and

several articles on these topics. In addition to his research and teaching, he writes poetry and has completed a memoiristic novel called *No Man's Land*, which explores his own adoption and its effects on his life over the decades.

Nataša Rogelja Caf (natasa.rogelja@zrc-sazu.si)

Writing Ethnographic Portraits

During my seven years of anthropological exploration and wanderings across the blue spaces of the Mediterranean, it has been the stories of the people who live, travel, and work on sailing boats that have most fascinated me. Playful and soft, intense and emotional, distinct and absurd. The ethnographic portraits of sea nomads, capturing the moments that have left their marks on my interviewees and their journeys speak about individual stories but also reveal the privileged and anxious position of Western European middle classes. The events are sometimes based on real experiences, others on stories floating like invisible spawn over a community of briny spirits, waiting for some to be granted a new life, a new journey. Sometimes imagination has become interwoven with experiences, sometimes experiences have become interwoven with imagination, but the stories always follow my ethnographic records. After reading one ethnographic portrait from my creative non-fiction novel, *The Thirteen Month* (2017), I will bring to the fore several questions related to the representation of ethnographic knowledge and the use of writing as a full-bloodied method in its own right – an “art of knowing”, vital to broader methodological and epistemological concerns.

Nataša Rogelja Caf completed her PhD in Social Anthropology. Since 2011 she has been working as a researcher at the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Her work focuses on mobility studies, new forms of nomadism, women's work migrations, experimental ethnographic methodology, and creative non-fiction. Her publications include several anthropological monographs and articles, ethnographic photo-documentary exhibitions, lectures, children's books, ethnographic novels, and newspaper articles. Her latest book *FootNotes*, co-authored with Špela Ledinek Lozej (2023) is a collection of essays with methodological reflections on walking and writing.

Kayla Rush (kayla.rush@dkit.ie)

Theology for Witches

My performance for the symposium comprises a chapter excerpted from an ecofeminist fantasy novel. Set in Ireland, the novel follows the stories of a group of women given extraordinary powers following encounters with a Queer creation goddess, who is assembling an army to fight climate change. The chapter I will be reading recounts a dialogue among the goddess's followers, in which they try to determine the shape of her religion or theology. The chapter uses traditional anthropological ideas about religion, myth, magic and witchcraft to meditate on ideas, asking where we might find (and thus root out) heteropatriarchy in our received conceptions of religion and mythology – within anthropology, literature, and popular culture. Part novel of anthropological ideas and part autoethnographic cry of climate grief, this is simultaneously a playful and an angry work, one that attempts to centre the urgency of imagination in contemporary anthropological writing. It is a piece that suggests that ethnography need not only be an accounting of what is, but a bold narration of what might be.

Kayla Rush is an assistant lecturer in music at Dundalk Institute of Technology, where she teaches in popular music, social science, and theatre. An anthropologist of art, music, and performance, Kayla's current research examines private, fee-paying rock music schools in global perspective. She previously held a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowship at Dublin City University. She is the author of *The Cracked Art World: Conflict, Austerity, and Community Arts in Northern Ireland* (Berghahn, 2022). She is a recognized teacher and practitioner of creative ethnographic writing, with a particular interest in ethnographic science fiction and fantasy. She has written about and published on ethnographic science fiction ('The Last Funded Artist', *Etnofoor*, 2020).

Eva van Roekel Cordiviola (eva.van.roekel@vu.nl)

Untitled

May 2023, I was multitasking during fieldwork in Venezuela. While I was making a back-up of fieldwork materials and preparing for an interview, my five-year old son was playing next to me and asking many questions. As usual I checked my iPhone in an impulse. I noticed a strange WhatsApp message of an interlocutor who is a political opponent of the regime. He asked me to jot down a 6-digit number to create a safer WhatsApp environment. I followed suit without much questioning. After pressing the blue and white arrow I realized I had been tricked. In less than a second my WhatsApp account vanished and until today it is cloned by a Spanish speaking entity who still sends odd messages to my contact list. The incident brought back memories of the one-time my passport was stolen at the Colombo-Venezuela border in the early 2000s. In this creative writing performance, I will connect both identity thefts into one larger story about the workings of parallel worlds (online/offline and past/present) that interweave my current ethnographic research on the complex humanitarian crisis and long-gone memories while living in Venezuela with creative imagination. I will read parts from this work-in-progress that largely deals with identity, crisis, and loss.

Eva van Roekel became an anthropologist by accident. She films and writes short stories and sometimes a poem about life in Venezuela and Argentina, largely because she enjoys experimentation. Eva is currently an assistant professor at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and co-founder of the Creative Anthropologies Network. She publishes with Cordiviola when it comes to the fictional.

Noel B. Salazar (noel.salazar@kuleuven.be)

Serendipity at the Brink of a New Era: A Piece of Metafiction

This metafictional narrative follows Yolanda, a character grappling with personal and societal transitions at the turn of the millennium. Amidst the global Y2K panic, Yolanda embarks on a journey to Patagonia, seeking solace from her existential crisis. Her voyage leads to unexpected encounters, including a surprise meeting with a former university mate, Noel, and a new companion, Kjell. Stranded at an inn on New Year's Eve due to a boat breakdown, Yolanda

welcomes the new millennium at the literal end of the world. The journey profoundly impacts her, leading to a brief relocation to Norway with Kjell, and eventually a return to Belgium. She resumes her psychotherapy practice and enrolls in a master's degree in social and cultural anthropology, leading to another unexpected reunion with Noel. This narrative is a reflection of life itself, exploring the human condition through endings and beginnings, unexpected encounters, and journeys to the end of the world. It underscores that life, like a narrative, is full of twists and turns, and that the end is often just the beginning of a new chapter.

Noel B. Salazar is Professor in Anthropology at KU Leuven, Belgium. He is the author of numerous publications on travel, mobility, heritage, imagination, and endurance. Salazar conducted ethnographic fieldwork in Indonesia, Tanzania, Chile, and Belgium. He is executive committee member of the International Council for Philosophy and Human Sciences (CIPSH), past secretary-general of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES), and past-president of the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA). In 2013, Salazar was elected as member of the Young Academy of Belgium. He is a frequently asked keynote speaker and regularly appears in the (inter)national media.

Franziska Schroeder (f.schroeder@qub.ac.uk)

Walking Hanoi 2024 - Reflections on Improvisation, Listening and Being Attached

A narrative sound-walk, reflecting on notions of improvisation, identity, and a people-object-place-complex of attachments.

Franziska Schroeder is an improviser and a professor of music and cultures at the Sonic Arts Research Centre, Queen's University, Belfast. At Queen's she leads the "Performance without Barriers" Research group, which, for the last 10 years, has dedicated itself to exploring the role of technology in removing access barriers encountered by some disabled musicians in producing creative outputs.

Alicia Sliwinski (asliwinski@wlu.ca)

Anticipating. A Eulogy, of Sorts

I come to the fire with a piece of creative writing about a raw experience of anticipatory grief. Over three months, I accompanied my French aunt in her decision to end her life through a Swiss organization that provides assisted dying services – but I did this from afar with the Atlantic “pond” between us. It has been a difficult time, a rollercoaster of mixed emotions because she was still so active, with undeniable vitality, and everyone around her thought this exit was precipitate. Different jurisdictions allow for different access to medical assistance in dying, and the Swiss is the most liberal, considering assisted dying as the last human right. There is scant literature examining the conflicting feelings that loved ones can experience during such liminal temporalities. Most testimonies recount sad, but ultimately relieving departures, where family and friends gather in solace around the person seeking release from the debilitating aches and pains of brutal diagnostics. In contrast, my involvement throughout my aunt’s curated exit has been solitary and unsettling. By the fire’s virtual warmth, I gather my feelings, hoping to voice quieting farewells.

Alicia Sliwinski is a social anthropologist based at Wilfrid Laurier University, in Waterloo, Ontario (Canada). Her research has focused on the moral economies of humanitarianism, disasters and reconstruction, anthropological theories of gift and exchange, and questions about hope, value, and utopianism as they manifest in humanitarian spaces. She is currently developing new research in Cuba on rural livelihoods. She worked for years as the French language editor for *Anthropologica*, the bilingual journal of Canada’s Anthropology Society (CASCA).

Tristan Sparks (tristan.sparks@protonmail.com)

Voyager Two

Voyager Two sonically maps the journey of the space probe of the same name. The piece, which was performed by Cronos in 2021, can essentially be viewed as having a linear timeline as its foundation, in which a day is represented by a 50th of a second. As such, this piece is given precise timestamps (in bold) for key events which are represented musically in this piece, and

should therefore ideally be conducted with the aid of a stopwatch. Further timestamps, not in bold, are given as guidance in the full score, for the purposes of ensuring that the piece remains temporally coherent.

This piece is divided into three separate movements: the first comprises of Voyager Two's travels to the four outer planets, the second comprises of the remainder of Voyager Two's travels inside the solar system, while the third considers Voyager Two having crossed the solar system's heliosheath boundary into the unknown. A central motivic theme in this piece is the emphasis on leaping intervals, taken as inspiration from their popular use to portray the magnitude of space. These motifs gradually increase in size as different planets are visited, before being employed simultaneously throughout the second and third movements.

The third movement is notable as it is mostly improvised. I believed that this would be a fitting technique to employ when attempting to portray the uncertainties and unknowns beyond our solar system. The movement first starts off with an improvisation on the note A alone, to emphasise this as a tonal centre. I have then included the first movement's motifs in each part to provide a source of inspiration from which inspiration can be derived. I would expect this improvisation to be sporadic to contrast with the denser writing of the second movement, while the parts are improvised independently of one another.

Voyager Two is performed by CHROMA (Julian Sperry, flute; Stuart King, clarinet; Caroline Balding, violin; Clare O'Connell, cello; Ben Dawson, piano).

Tristan Sparks is a British composer who studied musicology at Oxford University. Classically trained as a pianist, he performs jazz and scores for films and games. He is currently residing in Tokyo.

Maruška Svašek (m.svasek@qub.ac.uk)

We Meet on Cupar Way

This visual and poetic contribution explores an ethnographic teaching project where (mostly international) postgraduate anthropology students gathered by one of the peace walls in Belfast for a walk. Using a playful approach as mode of unlearning and experimentation, (Svašek 2019), the roll of a dice determined the route. The aim was to attune to the urban space through

randomly chosen and self-imposed sensorial tasks and think about the significance of bodily experience to knowledge production. We reflected on our positionality as we navigated and interpreted the surroundings in idiosyncratic ways. Starting off on Cupar Way, the game exposed us to material traces of the still ongoing conflict in Northern Ireland between Loyalist Protestants and Nationalist/Republican Catholics. Our 'skittish world of play' created a surreal world in which we produced a large number of images, songs, poems and narratives, which initially seemed to be only loosely related to the traumatic history of violence in the region. Further reflection, however, unveiled how our exposure to the legacy of the Troubles showed that the conflict has continued to impact placemaking processes in the city. *We meet on Cupar Way* intersperses a lengthy poetic reflection with a selection of photographs that I took during the walk. As 'experiment in picture-informed linguistic association' (Svašek 2023: 343), the words, rhythms, and rhymes that make up the poem were partially triggered by the visuals. (See also Svašek, Maruška 2019 'The Art of the Game: Photography, Ethnography and Spatial Engagement', *Irish Journal of Anthropology* 22(1): 205-223, and Svašek, Maruška 2023 [Pandemic times: Nine acts](#), *Anthropology and Humanism* 48(2).

Maruška Svašek is Professor of Anthropology at Queen's University Belfast, co-Director of the [Centre for Creative Ethnography](#), and Fellow of the Senator George J Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice. Her research interests include the affective relationality of humans, artefacts, and spaces in an era of connectivity and environmental change. Her publications include *Ethnographies of Movement, Sociality and Space: Place-Making in the New Northern Ireland* (2018, with Milena Komarova), *Creativity in Transition: Politics and Aesthetics of Cultural Production Across the Globe* (2016, with Birgit Meyer), *Emotions and Human Mobility: Ethnographies of Movement* (2012), *Moving Subjects, Moving Objects: Transnationalism, Cultural Production and Emotions* (2012), *Anthropology, Art and Cultural Production* (2007), *Postsocialism: Politics and Emotions in Central and Eastern Europe* (2006) and *Mixed Emotions: Anthropological Studies of Feelings* (2005, with Kay Milton). In the past five years, she has experimented with non-textual forms of representation, resulting in installations, poetry, paintings, short experimental films and a play.

The Bridge Collective (hang.nvt12@gmail.com; caotrungvinh@gmail.com;
hoanghiepng99n@gmail.com; m.svasek@qub.ac.uk)

The Bridge

The short film comprises sounds, photographs and film fragments made during an experimental playful walk over a bridge in Hanoi. Tasked to turn the environment into a musical instrument, we all recorded and created sounds, took photographs, and filmed the process. Listening to the voice of the bridge, Nguyễn Tú Hằng wrote a poem in Vietnamese which she later translated into English. Cao Trung Vinh produced and edited the film.

Nguyễn Tú Hằng is Managing Partner at Hanoi Grapevine - a leading platform for supporting artists' ecosystem and has been engaging in communication consulting and research with different roles in various cultural projects in Vietnam. From 2014 to 2021, Hang published several short stories and poem books under the pen name Zelda. In 2020-2023, Hằng was the Curator of Education at Vincom Center for Contemporary Art (VCCA). In 2023, Hằng co-founded Artist-in-Residence Vietnam Network (AiRViNe) - dedicated to exchange residency programs for cultural practitioners and ddur.production - an open collective providing special assistance for exhibition projects.

Cao Trung Vinh is currently a researcher at the Vietnam National Institute of Culture and Arts. He is interested in cultural heritage, visual anthropology and ethnic issues in Vietnam. His research focuses on preserving and promoting cultural heritage in contemporary life. Cultural heritage must be considered a strategic resource in development, especially cultural industry development. Recently, he accompanied the “Cultural Heritage for Inclusive Growth Project” - a program sponsored by the British Council - as a program coordinator. The program has supported many communities in Vietnam in preserving cultural heritage and them to improve livelihoods and community development.

Nguyen Hoang Hiep studies at the Faculty of Literature, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University and is studying and practicing creating traditional cultural events.

Maruška Svašek (see above)

Susan Wardell (susan.wardell@otago.ac.nz)

Cross-pollination: Poetic Speculations on Climate Emotion

Creative practices can be used in any part of the ethnographic research process. They are valuable not only to represent findings, but also in earlier stages, as tools for investigating, analysing, and theorising; often inviting us to do this via more embodied and subjective modes of being. In this performance I present a selection of ethnographic poems, film clips, and paintings, related to my ethnographic and autoethnographic explorations of ecological distress and climate emotion, in Aotearoa New Zealand. These texts tap into topics such as the moral complexities of parenting in the anthropocene, multispecies relationality through the lens of whiteness, affective socialisation of beekeepers, and the role of the screen in mediated epistemologies of climate change. They use various (sonic, visual, and narrative) techniques to evoke affective structures within and beyond the human, both forwards and backwards in time, and moving through global and local registers of meaning. Reflecting on how these texts were created, and what role they served in my research, I explore the idea of the 'speculative' as fundamental to the ethnographic endeavour...but accompanied by its own ethical and epistemological risks and possibilities. I consider also how shifting or translating ideas *between* different creative mediums can be a fertile and generative process.

Susan Wardell is an anthropologist, writer, artist, and poet, based at the University of Otago, in Aotearoa New Zealand. Her research interests cluster around care, affect, embodiment, health and disability, and digital worlds. Most recently this has generated recent projects focused on online medical crowdfunding, and on ecological emotions and climate grief. As well as being committed to writing and communicating to the public, Susan publishes across multiple literary genres. She has been awarded nationally and internationally for poetry, essay, and flash fiction. She is the current Poetry Editor for the *Anthropology and Humanism* journal, and chair of the prize committee for the SHA Ethnographic Poetry Prize. Her recently published children's book has a number of accolades. Susan incorporates experimentation with visual mediums (photography, film, drawing, painting, and stained glass) into her creative practice alongside the written word. She has begun to explore cross-disciplinary and collaborative spaces, to produce multimodal installations and performance works.

Helena Wulff (Helena.Wulff@socant.su.se)

Where Wild Strawberries Grow

The story is forthcoming in *A Collection of Creative Anthropologies: Drowning in Blue Light and Other Stories*, edited by Fiona Murphy and Eva van Roekel for Palgrave. While this story draws on real events, the setting, a town outside Stockholm, is fictionalized. The story features 10-year old Marion who is lonely, but precocious. One day, there is a new girl, Rosa, at school whose hair is almost as dark as Marion's and her eyes the same brown. Marion feels an affinity with Rosa. They become friends. Marion takes Rosa to the spot in the forest where wild strawberries grow. Since these small red berries are rare and extra sweet, the spot is a secret gem to share with special friends only. One afternoon they come across a big sandpit opening up in front of them. A red sign warns "Danger – Keep off!" Their eyes lock in cheeky agreement. They throw themselves down the slope at high speed stirring up the sand. Down on the bottom, they realize, panicking, that they cannot get up. But they are spotted by a security guard who pulls them up with a rope. The next day at school, Rosa tells Marion that her parents have forbidden her from seeing Marion again: "because you are Jewish." To this, Marion replies, "and my parents say I cannot see you anymore – because you are Roma."

Helena Wulff is Professor Emerita of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University. Her research interests include expressive cultural form – dance, art, images, text. Key engagements are in the anthropologies of literature and writing. Current research evolves around migrant writing in Sweden. Among her publications are *Ballet across Borders* (1998), *Dancing at the Crossroads* (2007), and *Rhythms of Writing* (2017), and the edited *The Anthropologist as Writer* (2016), as well as *Exceptional Experiences* (with Petra Rethmann, 2023). See also [Writing Anthropology](#) (2021) and "[Gifts, Unwanted and Ungiven](#)" (2022).