

Un/Predictable Environments: Politics, Ecology and Agency

This digital conference (May 2021) was organised by

- John Barry (Politics, Queen's University Belfast, UK)
- Maruška Svašek (Anthropology, Queen's University Belfast, UK)
- Prashant Khattri (Anthropology, University of Allahabad, India)
- Tracey Heatherington (Anthropology, University of British Columbia, Canada)

All keynotes and papers were recorded and are available [here](#)

Two of the four keynotes dealt specifically with themes central to CFCE.

Hilary Cunningham Scharper (University of Toronto, Canada) presented 'Dear Forest: Writing Across Breaking-Points with More-Than-Human Worlds'

Bio: Dr Hilary Cunningham Scharper is both a cultural anthropologist and a Canadian novelist. Her academic interests encompass multi-species ethnography, critical animal studies, sentient landscapes and land ethics. Her ethnographic practice engages with visual, sensory and arts-based methodologies. Writing as Hilary Scharper, she also publishes literary fiction. Her recent novel *Perdita* is the first of a series of “eco-gothic” stories set in the Great Lakes.

Abstract: Critically addressing issues of authorial power and the asymmetries of representation has a long tenure in anthropology. But what if that experimentation is extended to more-than-human worlds? What kinds of conversations might evolve, especially those informed by the unpredictability, urgency and escalation of anthropogenic climate chaos? With human/more-than-human relationships stretched to breaking-points, what forms of collaboration might ensue? *Dear Forest* is a walk-in-a-dark-woods—both ethnographic and fictional—and explores “author-ity,” and “relational-research” in a world where the possibility of unlimited human/nonhuman “co-constitutions” can no longer be taken-for-granted.

Susanne Pratt (University of Technology Sydney, Australia) presented *Compassionate Metabolism: Caring for Un/Predictable Futures*

Bio: Dr Susanne Pratt lectures at the Faculty of Transdisciplinary Innovation, University of Technology Sydney. Her work focuses on art, digital storytelling, futures studies, innovative social research methods, public engagement, environmental humanities, feminist politics of care, transdisciplinary pedagogy and science & technology studies. She explores how creative practices of care can both enact and problematize engagement with environmental health concerns.

Abstract: As the aftermath of the 2019-20 fires in Australia smolder under the headlines of a global pandemic and other evolving disasters, various ecologically focused visions of the future are being imagined, predicted, exhausted and enacted. In this performative presentation, I will provide a transdisciplinary perspective, as an artist and researcher, on metabolising un/predictable futures. I offer the notion of “compassionate metabolism” as a

means of exploring how activist-artists and artful-activists are shifting extractive imaginaries into more regenerative futures.

Various sessions explored creative dimensions of Un/Predictable Environments:

Paper Session 6: Artistic Expression, Activism & Technological Imaginaries

Paper Session 8A: Exhibiting and Performing the Environment

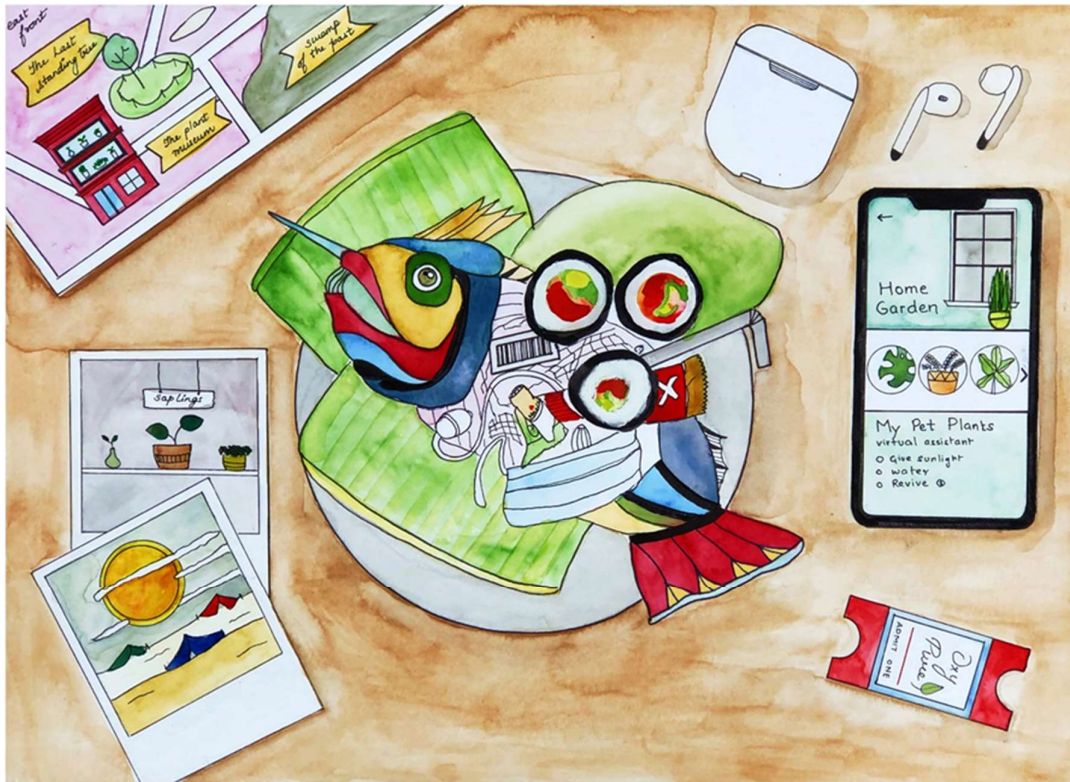
Paper Session 9A: Environmental Aesthetics

Paper Session 12B: Urban Ecological Art in COVID-19

The conference also included an art competition



First prize: Vijeta Khattri



Artwork by : Surabhi Kesarwani
Title : Vacation
Masters of Anthropology, Sem - I
University of Allahabad

Second prize: Surabhi Kesarwani