



Field philosophy and other experiments

Participants : **Maan Barua**, Oxford University, **Michelle Bastian**, University of Edinburgh, **Jérémie Brugidou**, Université de Paris 8, **Brett Buchanan**, Laurentian University/ENS, **Jeffrey Bussolini**, City University of New York, **Matthew Chrulew**, Curtin University, **Thibault De Meyer**, Université de Liège/Université libre de Bruxelles, **Vinciane Despret**, Université de Liège, **Ségolène Guinard**, Université de Paris 8, **Anna-Katharina Laboissière**, ENS/Curtin University, **Nicolas Lainé**, Collège de France, **Dominique Lestel**, ENS/JSPS, **Perig Pitrou**, CNRS, **Hugo Reinert**, University of Oslo, **Isabelle Stengers**, Université libre de Bruxelles, **Thom van Dooren**, University of New South Wales

23-24 juin 2017, 9h-18h
Amphi Rataud (45, rue d'Ulm, Paris)

Organisation : Dominique Lestel (École normale supérieure, France), Brett Buchanan (Laurentian University, Canada), Matthew Chrulew (Curtin University, Australia), Michelle Bastian (University of Edinburgh, Scotland), Mare Crépon (École normale supérieure, France)

Contact : Brett Buchanan (bbuchanan@laurentian.ca)

Programme détaillé : www.ens.fr (rubrique agenda)

École normale supérieure
45 rue d'Ulm, 75005 Paris



Edinburgh Environmental
Humanities Network

Field Philosophy and Other Experiments

École normale supérieure, Paris, France, 23-24 June 2017

New interdisciplinary methodological practices have emerged within the environmental humanities over the last decade, and in particular there has been a noticeable movement within the humanities to experiment with *field* methodologies in order to critically address environmental concerns that cross more-than-disciplinary concepts, theories, narratives, and practices. By exploring relations with (and between) human communities, nonhuman animals, plants, fungi, forests, microbes, scientific practices, and more, environmental humanities scholars are breaking with traditional methodological practices and demonstrating that the compositions of their study subjects – e.g., extinction events, damaged landscapes, decolonization, climate change, conservation efforts – are always a confluence of entangled meanings, actors, and interests. The environmental humanities methodologies that are employed in the field draw from traditional disciplines (e.g., art, philosophy, literature, science and technology studies, indigenous studies, environmental studies, gender studies), but they are (i) importantly reshaping how environmental problems are being defined, analyzed, and acted on, and (ii) expanding and transforming traditional disciplinary frameworks to match their creative methodological practices.

Recent years have thus seen a rise in new methodologies in the broad area of the environmental humanities. “Field philosophy” has recently emerged as a means of engaging with concrete problems, not in an ad hoc manner of applying pre-established theories to a case study, but as an organic means of thinking and acting with others in order to better address the problem at hand. In this respect, field philosophy is an addition to other field methodologies that include etho-ethnology, multispecies ethnography and multispecies studies, philosophical ethology, more-than-human participatory research, extinction studies, and Anthropocene studies. All of them share similar starting points: beginning in the field, in the midst of a material problem or question, working with both experts and nonspecialists, and proceeding with genuine curiosity and openness in listening, observing, and exchanging stories, anecdotes, science fictions and speculative fabulations, all for the hope of a better common world.

This colloquium will bring together leading and emerging scholars to discuss, share, and analyze what similarities and differences there are between their respective humanities research projects, as conducted in the field, and to experiment with what new field practices might emerge from the humanities. How are field practices in the environmental humanities methodologically different from those in cultural anthropology, geography, or sociology? How might field research in philosophy reshape traditionally text-based disciplinary boundaries? The objective is not to aggregate all of the methodological approaches into one unified and universal theory, but rather to learn from and disseminate what practices and approaches have been particularly helpful in learning to live ethically with other creatures in our “compromised times.”

Day 1: Friday, June 23, 2017

Venue: École normale supérieure

Amphi Rataud (45 rue, d'Ulm)

- 9:00-9:15 **Welcome**
Brett Buchanan, Laurentian University (Sudbury)
Dominique Lestel, ENS (Paris)/JSPS (Tokyo)
- 9:15-10:00 **Dominique Lestel**, ENS (Paris)/JSPS (Tokyo)
"What Do Concepts Smell Like? The Challenge of Doing Field Philosophy"
- 10:00-10:45 **Vinciane Despret**, Université de Liège (Liège)
"Out of the Books: How Can Philosophers Do Fieldwork?"
- 10:45-11:00 Break
- 11:00-11:45 **Michelle Bastian**, University of Edinburgh (Edinburgh)
"What's a Philosopher Like You Doing Here?"
- 11:45-12:30 **Thibault De Meyer**, Université de Liège (Liège) / Université libre de Bruxelles (Bruxelles)
"How to Study Perspectivism? A Comparison Between Philosophy and Etho-ethnology"
- 12:30-13:45 Déjeuner
- 13:45-14:30 **Brett Buchanan**, Laurentian University (Sudbury)
"Are We Out of the Woods Yet? Performing Field Philosophy in a Remediated Landscape"
- 14:30-15:15 **Hugo Reinert**, University of Oslo (Oslo)
"The Haunting Cliffs: Entangled Absence in a Silenced Landscape"
- 15:15-16:00 **Thom van Dooren**, University of New South Wales (Sydney),
"Provisioning Crows: Ecologies of Hope in the Mariana Islands"
- 16:00-16:45 **Sékolène Guinard**, Université de Paris 8 (Paris)
"Of Space Gardeners and Space Gardens"
- 16:45-17:00 Break
- 17:00-18:00 Panel Discussion: What is at Stake in Field Philosophy?
Featuring: **Isabelle Stengers**, Université de Bruxelles (Bruxelles)
Vinciane Despret, Université de Liège (Liège)
Thom van Dooren, University of New South Wales (Sydney)
- 18:30-22:00 Dîner (Restaurant TBD)

Day 2: Saturday, June 24, 2017

Venue: École normale supérieure

Amphi Rataud (45 rue, d'Ulm)

- 9:15-10:00 **Anna-Katharina Laboissière**, ENS (Paris)/Curtin University (Perth)
"The Trouble with Lethal Entanglements"
- 10:00-10:45 **Matthew Chrulw**, Curtin University (Perth)
"My Place, My Duty: Zoo Biology as Field Philosophy in the Work of Heini Hediger"
- 10:45-11:00 Break
- 11:00-11:45 **Perig Pitrou**, CNRS (Paris)
"The Contribution of Anthropology of Life to Environmental Humanities"
- 11:45-12:30 **Isabelle Stengers**, Université libre de Bruxelles (Bruxelles)
"Sapere Aude: Dare to Taste"
- 12:30-14:00 Déjeuner
- 14:00-14:45 **Maan Barua**, Oxford University (Oxford)
"Tracking Animals's Geographies: Space, Ontology, Method"
- 14:45-15:30 **Nicolas Lainé**, Collège de France (Paris)
"Multispecies Labour in the Anthropocene"
- 15:30-15:45 Break
- 15:45-16:30 **Jeffrey Bussolini**, City University of New York (New York)
"Feline Artmaking and Ethology: Gesture, Expression, Intention, Order, Disorder"
- 16:30-17:30 **Jérémie Brugidou**, Université de Paris 8 (Paris)
"Film: Poacher's Moon"
- 17:30 Thank you! Close of colloquium
- 18:00 Departing festivities (TBD)

Speakers

Mann Barua (University of Oxford)

“Tracking Animals’s Geographies: Space, Ontology, Method”

Maan Barua is British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow at the School of Geography and the Environment, University of Oxford. Maan’s research is focused on the politics, spatialities and governance of the living and material world, engaging political ecology and posthumanist thought. Of particular interest are nonhuman ecologies and processes pertaining to production, landscape and knowledge, and situations in which different ecological epistemologies are brought into conflict. Maan’s past and ongoing research projects include work on urban political ecology, nonhuman labour and capital, and animals’ geographies. He has an MSc and DPhil in Geography from the University of Oxford, and will be taking up a University Lectureship in Human Geography at the University of Cambridge in 2018.

Michelle Bastian (University of Edinburgh)

“What’s a Philosopher Like You Doing Here?”

Michelle Bastian is a Chancellor’s Fellow in the Edinburgh College of Art at the University of Edinburgh. Her work focuses on the role of time in social processes of inclusion and exclusion. She is the editor of *Participatory Research in More-than-Human Worlds* and recent publications include articles in *New Formations*, *Journal of Environmental Philosophy*, and the edited collection *Extinction Studies: Stories of Time, Death, and Generations*.

Jérémie Brugidou (Université de Paris 8)

“Film: Poacher’s Moon”

Jérémie Brugidou is a French PhD researcher (ENS/Paris 8 ESTCA-EDESTA) in Humanities and filmmaker currently working on bioluminescence. After completing his scholarship with Ecole Normale Supérieure, he continued his Masters at Columbia University (NYC) where he also directed and shot a feature length sensory-ethnography film on nightwork in the Bronx with Fabien Clouette. This nocturnal documentary started his professional career as a filmmaker which he continued on land and underwater. Bioluminescence is explored as a radically novel experience of light for humans: how it affects our understanding of ocean ecologies and simultaneously boosts the necessary technological innovation in order to visualize these amazing phenomena. With a background in anthropology and ecology he aims to build a coherent methodological framework using ultrasensitive filmmaking in order to invent broad multispecies involvements and social engagement not limited to the human.

Brett Buchanan (Laurentian University)

“Are We Out of the Woods Yet? Performing Field Philosophy in a Remediated Landscape”

Brett Buchanan is Director of the School of the Environment and Associate Professor of philosophy at Laurentian University. He has authored *Onto-Ethologies: The Animal Environments of Uexküll, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Deleuze* (SUNY, 2008), translated Vinciane Despret’s *What Would Animals Say If We Asked the Right Questions?* (University of Minnesota Press, 2016), and coedited three *Angelaki* issues on the philosophical ethology of Dominique Lestel (19, no. 3 [2014]), Vinciane Despret (20, no. 2 [2015]), and Roberto Marchesini (21, no. 1 [2016]). He is currently visiting researcher in the Department of Philosophy at the ENS.

Jeffrey Bussolini (CUNY Staten Island)

“Feline Artmaking and Ethology: Gesture, Expression, Intention, Order, Disorder”

Jeffrey Bussolini is Associate Professor of Sociology-Anthropology at City University of New York; and Co-Director, with Ananya Mukherjea, of the Center for Feline Studies, which has conducted etho-ethnographic study of feline-human interactions since 1995. He is affiliated with the Scuola di Interazione Uomo-Animale (School of Human-Animal Interactions) in Bologna, Italy. He translated Dominique Lestel’s book on animal friendship *The Friends of My Friends* that will appear on Columbia University Press. Jeffrey wrote the articles “Toward Cat Phenomenology” in *Found Object* (Spring 2000, #8), and “Recent French, Belgian, and Italian Approaches to the Cognitive Science of Animals: Dominique Lestel, Vinciane Despret, Roberto Marchesini, and Giorgio Celli” in *Social Science Information* (2013, 52:2) and appeared as “Feline Sociologist” in the VICE Media film *Lil Bub and Friendz* (2013). Has been visiting scholar at Macquarie University (CRSI), UNSW (Environmental Humanities), and University of Copenhagen (CMSTS).

Matthew Chrulew (Curtin University)

“My Place, My Duty: Zoo Biology as Field Philosophy in the Work of Heini Hediger”

Matthew Chrulew is ARC DECRA Research Fellow in the Centre for Culture and Technology at Curtin University, where he leads the Posthumanism-Animality-Technology research program. He is an Associate Editor of *Environmental Humanities* journal. Recent publications include the edited collections *Foucault and Animals* (Brill, 2016, with Dinesh Wadiwel), *Substance* (with Chris Danta) on Jacques Derrida’s *The Beast & the Sovereign* lectures, *Animals in the Anthropocene* (Sydney University Press, 2015, with the HARN collective), and *Extinction Studies: Stories of Time, Death and Generations* (Columbia University Press, 2017, with Deborah Bird Rose and Thom van Dooren). With Jeffrey Bussolini and Brett Buchanan he has edited three issues of *Angelaki* on the work of Dominique Lestel, Vinciane Despret and Roberto Marchesini. His current

research focuses on the development of philosophical ethology, the history and philosophy of zoo biology, and conservation biology.

Thibault De Meyer (Université libre de Bruxelles / Université de Liège)

“How to Study Perspectivism? A Comparison Between Philosophy and Etho-ethnology”

Thibault De Meyer is a PhD student at the Free University of Brussels and the University of Liège. In his PhD project, *Perspectivism in action: An ethnography of ethology*, he wants to describe when, why and how the point of view of the animals are taken into account by scientists. In his PhD project, Thibault tries to connect his previous studies in anthropology and in philosophy. He wrote two master theses, the first was an ethnographic description of a genetics laboratory, the second was about the Monadology of Leibniz. In his PhD, he wants to explore perspectivism in ethology. He asks, among others, when and how the point of view of the animals are taken into considerations by the scientists. He has a wide array of interest, he regularly writes comments around his readings. Before turning to academy, he was a social worker helping adolescents in their schooling.

Vinciane Despret (Université de Liège)

“Out of the Books: How Can Philosophers Do Fieldwork?”

Philosopher, psychologist, and ethologist, Vinciane Despret is maître de conférences in the Department of Philosophy at the Université de Liège. Her first field work was in the Negev desert, in Israel, where she explored the possibility of making an “ethology of the ethologists.” Since then her fieldwork has looked at the relationships and practices between humans and animals. She has been scientific curator of the exhibition *Bêtes et Hommes* held at the Grande halle de la Villette, Parc de La Villette, Paris, (2007-2008). She is the author of *Naissance d'une théorie éthologique* (1996), *Our Emotional Make-Up* (1999/2004), *Quand le loup habitera avec l'agneau* (2002), *Hans, le cheval qui savait compter* (2004), *Penser comme un rat* (2007), *Women Who Make a Fuss* (with Isabelle Stengers, 2011/2014), *What Would Animals Say if We Asked the Right Questions?* (2013/2016). Her latest book, *Au bonheurs des morts: Récits de ceux qui restent* (La Découverte 2015), won the Prix des Rencontres Philosophiques 2016.

Sékolène Guinard (Université de Paris 8)

“Of Space Gardeners and Space Gardens”

I am a PhD student in philosophy at the University Paris 8 (Paris, France) and a young researcher at the Labex Arts-H2H. For my PhD dissertation, entitled “Building worlds within poor ecosystems – exploring extra-terrestrial ecosystems and space stations”, I use fieldwork to investigate multispecies communities in the context of space exploration. From there I intend to question and elaborate some of the philosophical concepts we can use to grasp the

meaning and consequences of noticing human and extra-human intertwined intentionalities despite a dominant western techno-scientific ethos. I recently published a paper in *artpress2*, and was invited in 2016 to spend one semester at UCI (University of California, Irvine) department of anthropology as a Junior Specialist. I work under the supervision of Pierre Cassou-Noguès (Paris 8) and Dominique Lestel (ENS), with whom I am to publish a paper entitled “Conspiring with birds (*Conspirer avec les oiseaux*)”, a speculative philosophical essay on the need to bring along singing birds as companions on our outer-space exploration journeys.

Anna-Katherina Laboissière (École normale supérieure / Curtin University)

“The Trouble with Lethal Entanglements”

Anna-Katharina Laboissière is a PhD candidate at the Centre for Culture and Technology at Curtin University and the Archives Husserl at the Ecole Normale Supérieure. Her doctoral research in environmental philosophy focuses on the intersection between the emergence of potentially novel ecosystems as a result of anthropogenic pollution and the question of the archive of and for biodiversity in times of ecological catastrophe.

Nicolas Lainé (Collège de France)

“Multispecies Labour in the Anthropocene”

Docteur en Ethnologie de l'Université Paris-Ouest Nanterre (2014), dans ma thèse, j'ai interrogé les conditions et les implications du vivre-ensemble entre les Tai-Khamti et les éléphants dans le Nord-Est indien. Différents aspects de ces relations ont été considérés : depuis l'intégration d'un éléphant de forêt au village (qui passe par sa capture et sa socialisation), jusqu'à l'évolution des liens au travail. À la suite de cette recherche, j'ai poursuivi mes travaux en menant une enquête sur les relations entre les soigneurs et les éléphants en parc animalier, dans le cadre du projet ANR COW. Dans le cadre de mon postdoctorat au LAS (2015-2016), intitulé *Représentations sociales des pathogènes à la frontière entre les espèces* (financé par le fonds Axa), sous la direction de Frédéric Keck, j'ai mené une recherche sur les représentations et le traitement de la tuberculose des éléphants au Laos. Aujourd'hui mon objectif est d'étendre mes recherches à l'échelle de l'Asie, afin de mesurer l'influence des différents contextes écologiques, politiques, sociaux, économiques, sur la nature des liens et des modalités d'interactions parmi les communautés interspécifiques homme-éléphant. Dans la perspective d'une anthropologie 'désanthropocentrée', mon projet a l'ambition de montrer comment dans une communauté interspécifique se construit un monde intelligible commun, en tenant compte des bases de la communication établie, des influences réciproques, mais aussi des représentations issues des différents contextes dans lesquels elles s'expriment.

Dominique Lestel (École normale supérieure / Japan Society for the Promotion of Science)

“What Do Concepts Smell Like? The Challenge of Doing Field Philosophy”

Dominique Lestel is an Associate Professor in Contemporary Philosophy at the École normale supérieure of Paris and a member of the “Archives Husserl”. He is currently Visiting Professor and Fellow with the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) in the Robotic Lab (GVLab) of Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology. He is animating there a “Performative Robotic Project” where he is designing a “robot-philosopher” and a “robot-comedian” in the context of field research in philosophy around living and weird artifacts. He has been doing extensive field researches in philosophy since 1984. His publications include *Paroles de singes* (1995), *L’animalité* (1996), *Les origines animales de la culture* (2001), *L’animal singulier* (2004), *Les animaux sont-ils intelligents?* (2006), *Friends of My Friends* (2007), *L’animal est l’avenir de l’homme* (2010), *Apologie de carnivore* (2011), and *À quoi sert l’homme?* (2015).

Perig Pitrou (Centre national de la recherche scientifique)

“The Contribution of Anthropology of Life to Environmental Humanities”

Perig Pitrou is a researcher in the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Laboratoire d’Anthropologie Sociale, Paris. He is the author of *Le chemin et le champ. Sacrifice et parcours rituel chez les Mixe de Oaxaca (Mexique)* and the co-editor of the book *La noción de vida en Mesoamérica* (CEMCA-UNAM, 2011). In 2013-14, he conducted the research programme ‘Of Living Beings and Artefacts: The Interrelation of Vital and Technical Processes’ (Fondation Fyssen). He is now Deputy Director of the interdisciplinary programme ‘Domestication and Fabrication of the Living’ (CNRS-PSL).

Hugo Reinert (University of Oslo)

“The Haunting Cliffs: Entangled Absence in a Silenced Landscape”

Hugo is a senior research fellow in environmental humanities at the University of Oslo, based in the Geological Times research group of the Department of Cultural Studies and Oriental Languages. His work focuses broadly on environmental change and shifting human-nonhuman relations in the Norwegian Arctic, including topics such as reindeer pastoralism, land-use change and migratory species conservation. His current project is an ethnographic study of field geology and geological knowledge, focused on their role in resource extraction conflicts.

Isabelle Stengers (Université libre de Bruxelles)

“Sapere Aude: Dare to Taste”

Isabelle Stengers is Professor of Philosophy at the Université libre de Bruxelles. She trained as a chemist and philosopher, and has authored and co-authored many books on the philosophy of science. In 1993 she received the grand prize for philosophy from the Académie Française. She is the author of books on chaos theory, with Ilya Prigogine, the Russian-Belgian physical chemist and Nobel Laureate (*Order Out of Chaos*, 1984; and *The End of Certainty: Time, Chaos, and the New Laws of Nature*, 1987). Other books translated into English include *Power and Invention* (1997), *The Invention of Modern Science* (2000), *Cosmopolitics I* (2009), and *Cosmopolitics II* (2010). Her most recent book, *In Catastrophic Times: Resisting the Coming Barbarism* (2015), appeared in Open Humanities' Press's Critical Climate Change series.

Thom van Dooren (University of New South Wales)

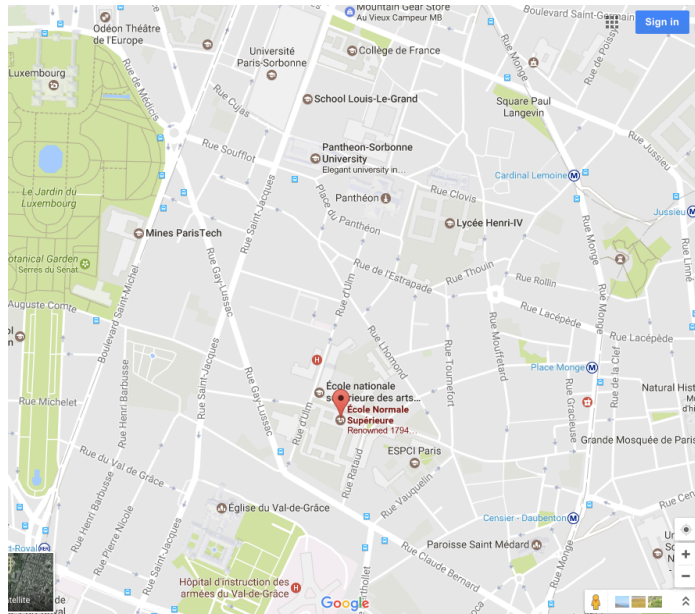
“Provisioning Crows: Ecologies of Hope in the Mariana Islands”

Thom van Dooren is a Senior Lecturer in Environmental Humanities at the University of New South Wales in Australia and co-editor of the international, open-access journal *Environmental Humanities* (Duke University Press). His most recent book is *Flight Ways: Life and Loss at the Edge of Extinction* (Columbia University Press, 2014). He has held visiting positions at the University of California at Santa Cruz (2005, 2010), the KTH Environmental Humanities Laboratory in Stockholm (2014), and has been a Humboldt Research Fellow at the Rachel Carson Centre, Munich (2014-2016). www.thomvandooren.org

Colloquium website hosted by ENS: <http://www.ens.fr/agenda/field-philosophy-and-others-experiments/2017-06-23t070000>

Practical Information

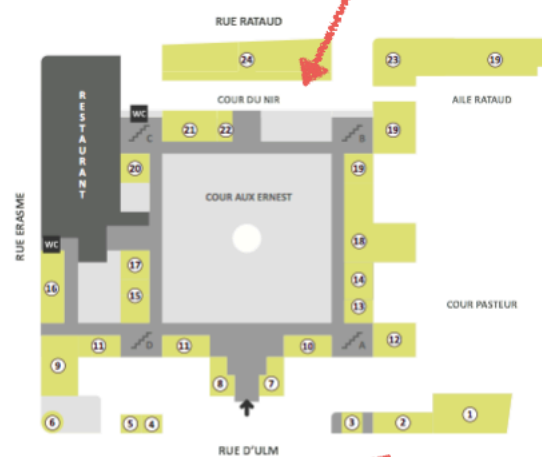
The colloquium will be held at the École normale supérieure, at 45, rue d'Ulm, Paris, 75005. For information, please contact Brett Buchanan (bbuchanan@laurentian.ca) or 06 41 07 96 90



Entrance to Amphi Rataud: Beside the library doors, descend stairs to basement level. Amphitheatre is straight ahead and on the left.

45 RUE D'ULM, 75005 PARIS

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- ㉒ Bibliothèque
- ㉓ Département Informatique
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Entrance to ENS from 45, rue d'Ulm

NB. You need to ring at the door and sign in to enter the ENS campus.

FIELD PHILOSOPHY AND OTHER EXPERIMENTS

LA PHILOSOPHIE DE TERRAIN ET LES AUTRES EXPÉRIENCES

Special Thank You To:



LaurentianUniversity
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CENTRE FOR CULTURE
AND TECHNOLOGY

Edinburgh Environmental Humanities Network

Organized by:

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