

# ***Æstetisk Seminar***

## ***Forår 2024***

*Alle seminarer afholdes,  
torsdage kl. 14.15–16  
Institut for Kommunikation og Kultur, AU  
Langelandsgade 145, 8000 Aarhus C  
Bygning 1584, lokale 112*

*Alle er velkomne/All are welcome*

*Æstetisk Seminar er tilrettelagt af  
Morten Kyndrup og Thomas Rosendal,  
Institut for Kommunikation og Kultur  
Aarhus Universitet*

7. marts 2024

**From Studio to Academia and back again.  
On the interfaces between two kinds of knowledge  
production and the possibility of a third place for  
research**

Mikkel Bogh

Over the last twenty years, a growing number of artists and curators have received PhD degrees with 'theses' that combine practice-based and theoretical research. The trend is a divisive one. While more artists and curators see opportunities to explore and delve deeper into aspects of their own practice through a PhD program, the development is met with resistance and concern from both academic and artistic quarters: Won't it lead to poorer scholarship by people without academic training and/or to a more boring and academic art practice devoid of the unevenness and unpredictability that we value most in art? In this lecture, I will look at the relationship between (artistic, curatorial, and other) practice and knowledge production based on concrete examples of practice-based research from recent years, not to take sides in a battle, but to better understand the basis for talking about knowledge grounded in practice, or perhaps about something like a new humanistic knowledge practice.

21. marts 2024

**A Cry in the Desert! Slavery and the Forensic Theatricality  
of Human Rights in Atrocity Tales, Stories and Plays from  
the Spanish Empire**

Karen-Margrethe Simonsen

How do you speak about rights when you have none? How do you speak about rights, when you are oppressed, in the midst of ongoing atrocities, on the brink of dying, or you are socially dead? Taking my point of departure in forensic aesthetics (Eyal Weizman, Thomas

Keenan, Matthew Fuller), and recent theatrical jurisprudence (Marett Leiboff), I will argue that forensic theatricality plays a contested but significant role in making rights claims both in literary and non-literary texts. I distinguish between five forms of theatricality: allegorical, carnivalesque, tragicomic, melodramatic and tragic. The Spanish context is particularly interesting because of its early and radical tradition of human rights thinking in the Salamanca School (especially Bartolomé de Las Casas), – more radical than later liberal human rights thinking, and because of its long history (400 years) of double enslavement of both Africans and indigenous people in America. The talk will present and discuss a couple of examples from the beginning and the end of the Spanish empire, taken from my recent book about this topic (see bio-note).

4. april 2024

## **Vil du med? – På opdagelse i dansk litteraturs dufortællinger**

Pernille Meyer

Dansk litteratur rummer, til de flestes overraskelse, et væld af dufortællinger. Naja Marie Aidt, Niels Henning Falk Jensby, Lone Hørslev, Maria Gerhardt, Caroline Albertine Minor, Thomas Lagermand Lundme, Kristina Stoltz, Liv Nimand Duvå, Rasmus Daugbjerg og Kirsten Thorup er alle eksempler på forfattere, der i de senere år har eksperimenteret med duformen på forskellig vis og forskelligt omfang; i alt fra romaner og noveller over kortprosattekster til mere lyriske fremstillinger og selvbiografiske værker. Vi skal imidlertid tilbage til 1961 for at finde dansk litteraturs første dufortælling: Cecil Bødkers novelle "Trapperne". Trods et markant voksende dufortællings-felt fra 1960'erne og frem er der i en dansk sammenhæng stort set ingen forskning på området. I dette foredrag sætter jeg fokus på dansk litteraturs mange dufortællinger og forener et teoretisk, historisk og analytisk perspektiv ved at udforske 1) hvad en dufortælling er, 2) hvordan brugen af duformen har udviklet sig, og 3) hvilke funktioner brugen af duformen kan have.

11. april 24

## **'Artivism' in post-colonial spaces**

### **A socialist-materialist aesthetics of resistance**

Bishnupriya Dutt

Deeply entrenched in the conjunctural (Hall, Gramsci) moment of transition from a colonial to a post-colonial moment, Indian theatre and theatre-makers, belonging to the Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA) plunged into an agit-prop mode of direct interventionist strategy, participating in the democratic processes as citizen artistes. The initial impulse developed into the dominant genre of the post-colonial political theatre exploring a new socialist materialist aesthetics. Focused on questions of intersectionality, subjectification and overcoming a deep sense of alienation due to colonial conditions, the theatre made critical disjuncture from the colonial model, explored alternate paradigms and drew on the international impulse around socialist realism. The question which the talk intends to probe is how do we look at such practices in terms of its political aesthetics – which Tony Fisher has coined as an 'aesthetic exception' (Fisher 2023).

25. april 2024

## **Reconsidering Musical Genre: Assemblage, Abstraction and Digital Terms**

Mads Krogh

In the wake of recent decades' digitization, a myriad of techniques has emerged for mapping musical life, discerning patterns in sound or musico-cultural practices, and compiling labels, tags, categories, and classes on an unprecedented scale. Proliferating genre catalogs in the context of digital platforms and the conjunction of genre with notions of, for example, mood and activity are among the consequences, which challenge prevailing scene-based and identificational understandings in musical genre studies. In this presentation, I answer to this

challenge by suggesting two conceptual developments. First, the concept of *musico-generic assemblage* is introduced to probe the complexity of genre formation. Specifically, the concept allows for reconsidering genres' dynamic constitution in heterogenous milieus (e.g. contexts of everyday consumption meshed with music-industrial, techno-scientific apparatuses) and their association with other 'types' of music (related musico-generic terms such as style, format, aesthetic, or mood and activity). Second, the concept of *abstraction* is considered to suggest how musical genres (and related types) form as generic categories, in part, via processes of decontextualization, which may explain the potential of categories to travel. The changing scale and pace of processes of abstraction are among the major ways in which digitization impacts current conditions of musical life.

2. maj 2024

## **With, Across, Among, Between: Thinking Aesthetically about Aesthetics**

Maja Bak Herrie

In his 1994 book *Atlas*, Michel Serres aptly asks, "has not philosophy restricted itself to exploring – inadequately – the 'on' with respect to transcendence, the 'under', with respect to substance and the subject and the 'in' with respect to the immanence of the world and the self?" Has not philosophy fixated too much on static or fixative prepositions, you could ask? And does this approach not leave room for what could be termed a topological expansion: a call for the 'with' of communication, the 'across' of translation, the 'among' and 'between' of interferences? Although it is often seen as a subfield of precisely philosophy, the discipline of aesthetics offers something else. It engages with a kind of experience that does not result in rationally controllable knowledge but concerns a sensitivity to the individual appearance of things: a 'sensuous knowledge' (*cognitio sensitiva*), in Baumgarten's terminology, or simply a way of knowing *otherwise*. Including works by artists such as Marina Gadonneix, Stéphanie Solinas, Harun Farocki, and Elisa Giardina Papa, I will take my point of view in precisely this possibility of another way of knowing,

discussing the status of present-day aesthetics and its methods. A key argument will be that we should, indeed, think more aesthetically about aesthetic analysis.

## BIOGRAPHIES

**Mikkel Bogh** is a professor of art history and head of the Novo Nordisk Foundation Center for Practice-based Art Studies at the University of Copenhagen. From 2005 to 2014 he served as the Rector at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen and from 2014 to 2023 he was the Director of SMK, the National Gallery of Denmark. He is the author of *Closer. Intimacies in Art 1730-1930*, SMK 2016 and co-curated the 2023 exhibition *Baroque. Out of Darkness* at SMK.

**Karen-Margrethe Simonsen** is Associate Professor, Comparative Literature, AU. Research interests: world literature and literary history, Latin American literature, human rights and literature, literary history of slavery. Recent publications include: *Slavery and The Forensic Theatricality of Human Rights in the Spanish Empire*, Palgrave, 2023, Co.ed.: *A Comparative Literary History of Modern Slavery*, Vol. 1-2, John Benjamins, Forthcoming 2024. Co-ed.: *Discursive Framings of Human Rights. Victimhood and Agency*. London: Birkbeck Law Press, 2017, *Sugar and Modernity in Latin America. Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2014. "Heterogeneous Time. An Anachronistic and Transcultural Rethinking of Eurochronology", in *Arcadia* 53.2, 2018, 258-277.

**Pernille Meyer** er ph.d.-studerende og videnskabelig assistent ved Nordisk sprog og litteratur, Aarhus Universitet. Hun skriver ph.d.-afhandling om dansk litteraturs dufortællinger, og hendes forskningsområde spænder over dansk litteraturhistorie, narratologi og fikcionalitetsteori. Hun har blandt andet udgivet artikler i tidsskrifterne *Passage* og *Edda* og er medredaktør af antologien *Dangers of Narrative and Fictionality: A Rhetorical*

*Approach to Storytelling in Contemporary Western Culture* (under udgivelse), hvortil hun også selv bidrager. Herudover har hun flere gange præsenteret ved ISSN's internationale *Narrative*-konference og er medlem af forskningsgruppen *Narrative Research Lab*.

**Bishnupriya Dutt** is Professor of Theatre and Performance studies, in the School of Arts and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi India. Her area of research includes politics and theatre, feminist readings of Indian theatre, contemporary performance practices and popular culture. Her most recent publications include *Maya Rao and Indian Feminist Theatre* (Cambridge, 2022); 'Post-colonial imaginations: Afro-Asian dialogues in the past and present' in Miriam Haughton et al eds: *Theatre, Performance and Commemoration* (Methuen, 2023). She has also led a number of international project collaborations with University of Warwick, Freie Universität, Berlin, and University of Cologne. She is currently the President of the International Federation for Theatre Research. She was a distinguished fellow at Temporal Community, EXC2020 (2023), F.U. Berlin and at present a Leverhulme Distinguished Professor at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, London.

**Mads Krogh** is Associate Professor of Popular Music Culture at the School of Communication and Culture, AU. His research deals with issues of genre, mediation, and practice combining inspiration from cultural sociology, assemblage theory, affect theory, and actor-network theory. In recent years, he has been particularly concerned with genre formation and classificatory practices in digital contexts of musical life. Recent publications include *Music Radio: Building Communities, Mediating Genres* (co-edited, Bloomsbury, 2019), *Methodologies of Affective Experimentation* (co-edited, Palgrave, 2022), and *Musical Genre: Assemblage and Abstraction* (Bloomsbury, forthcoming).

**Maja Bak Herrie** is Postdoc at the School of Communication and Culture at Aarhus University. Currently, she is concluding her research project, *Perceiving a Pre-Filtered World: Anticipated Perception in a*

*Data-Driven Culture*, supported by the Novo Nordisk Foundation. Soon she will embark on a new venture alongside Lotte Philipsen and Lea Laura Nørregaard Michelsen titled *New Visions: Image Cultures in the Era of AI*, funded by Aarhus University Research Foundation. Her diverse publications span across aesthetics, media theory, and the philosophy of science, exploring themes such as computational technologies of vision, scientific imaging, photography, mediality, and artistic research. Additionally, she serves as the editor, together with Tobias Dias, of *The Nordic Journal of Aesthetics*.

