

Feral Incursions

11-12 May 2018

Central European University, Budapest

A two-day intensive exploring the polyvalent theoretical and practical facets of the feral through art, politics and ecology organized by the Environmental Arts and Humanities Initiative (EAH) at Central European University, Budapest.



Christian Kosmas Mayer, *The Life Story of Cornelius Johnson's Olympic Oak and Other Matters of Survival*, 2017. Photo Klaus Pichler.

SCHEDULE

Friday 11 May

Popper Room

9.00 Introduction

9.30-11.30

The Life Story of Cornelius Johnson's Olympic Oak and Other Matters of Survival, 2017

Workshop leader: **Christian Kosmas Mayer**

EAH organisers: Maja and Reuben Fowkes

Coffee Break

12.00-14.00

Feral Citizenship: Roving the Democratic Terrain

Workshop leader: **Nick Garside**

EAH organiser: Alan Watt

Lunch break

15.00-19.00

Student rooftop garden

Feral in the City: Exploring the Wild Edges and Valuing the Marginal in a Human-made Environment

Workshop leaders: **Claude Oprea**, in collaboration with **Elina Drake**

EAH organiser: Guntra Aistara

Note: This workshop will take place both on the university site and around the city of Budapest and will involve walking. Rain or shine!

Saturday 12 May

10.00-12.00

Feral Trade

Workshop leader: **Kate Rich**

EAH organisers: Maja and Reuben Fowkes

Lunch break

13.00-15.00

Poetry, Birds, and the Feral from Medieval to Modern

Workshop leaders: **Clara Dawson** and **Petra Bakos Jarrett**

EAH organisers: Hyaesin Yoon and Marianna Szczygielska

15.00-16.00

Feral Intensive Roundup

16.00-17.00

Feral Tasting from "Terrapolis Tarcal" Permaculture Garden

N13: Rooftop Garden

Workshop leader: **Gabó Bartha**

EAH organizer: Guntra Aistara

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Friday 11 May

Popper Room, *Nádor utca 9*

9.00 Introduction

9.30-11.30

The Life Story of Cornelius Johnson's Olympic Oak and Other Matters of Survival, 2017

Workshop leader: **Christian Kosmas Mayer**

EAH organisers: Maja and Reuben Fowkes

In his work "The Life Story of Cornelius Johnson's Olympic Oak and Other Matters of Survival", Christian Kosmas Mayer deals with one of the "Olympic Oaks", little potted oak plantlets that were given to all gold medal winners of the 1936 Olympic Games that were organized by the Nazis in Berlin. Cornelius Johnson, gold medal winner in high jump, was the Games' first Afro-American champion that was awarded with one of these trees, and Adolf Hitler left the stadium to avoid a handshake with Johnson after the ceremony. 80 years later, Mayer started searching for this tree in Los Angeles and found it in the backyard of Johnson's former parental home, today inhabited by a Mexican family in the multi-cultural district of „Koreatown“. As part of his artistic work, the artist later created small offsprings of this oak in a laboratory and brought them to Europe, where they were presented in-vitro next to texts and images representing the history of their mother tree. This way, the work connected history with an animate present and a future, that is still open and undecided. In this workshop we will discuss possible continuations for the project: what could the future of these little oak plantlets be? Shall they be left as they are, in an artificial state and in need for care, or shall they be planted, and if so, where and in which context?

Christian Kosmas Mayer (b. 1976) works variously with photography, video, sculpture, installation and performance. Known for his engagement with questions of memory, preservation and rediscovery, the artist's solo exhibitions were hosted at venues like Centrum Kultury Zamek, Poznan (2017, PL), Galerie Mezzanin, Geneva (2015, CH), Galerie Nagel Draxler, Berlin (2014, DE), Belvedere, Vienna (2013, A) and Kunststiftung Baden-Württemberg, Stuttgart (2012, DE). He has participated in numerous group exhibitions in international institutions, amongst them mumok, Vienna (2017, A), Leopoldmuseum, Vienna (2016, A), Kunstmuseum Bonn (2016, DE), Camera Austria, Graz (2015, A), MAK Center, Los Angeles (2014, US).

COFFEEBREAK

12.00-14.00

Feral Citizenship: Roving the Democratic Terrain

Workshop leader: **Nick Garside**

EAH organiser: Alan Watt

This workshop involves the examination of the intersection between democracy, desire and disruption. Participants will learn about the disruptive promise of feral citizenship and explore feral citizenship as a hopeful and pleasurable way of occupying and creating democratic terrain.

Nick Garside biography:

I am currently a lecturer at Wilfrid Laurier University Brantford. I have taught at numerous universities in many disciplines and interdisciplinary departments. When in a good space I see myself as an anti-disciplinary freelance academic roaming around to wherever the temporary work is. In each place I dwell in and in each class I teach, I hope to learn, I hope to share my stories, and I hope to disrupt even if just a little.

LUNCHBREAK

15.00-19.00

Feral in the City: Exploring the Wild Edges and Valuing the Marginal in a Human-made Environment

Workshop leaders: **Claude Oprea**

EAH organiser: Guntra Aistara

You are invited on a magical journey of discovery and connection with some of the wild plants in the city of Budapest. What can we learn from their untamed nature, resilience and healing powers to inform our present and write a better story for our futures?

Note:

This workshop will take place both on the university site and around the city of Budapest.

Claudiu Oprea is a Romanian born queer artist, linguist and permaculturist based in India and Europe. His work and artistic practice are informed by natural systems. The forest is his teacher. The scope of his work is reigniting the connection between humans with the magical kingdoms of plants and fungi with a view to heal and regenerate degraded human ecosystems. Claudiu's heart and current focus is in alternative education. He is running an experimental outdoor edible classroom project at Yogi Art School in Goa, India, where he created an interactive learning space with the kids as co-designers. The outdoor classroom is a safe space where soil, edible and medicinal plants are nurtured and grown with the stewardship of the kids and the forest as the mentor. For more information on his work please visit www.claudeoprea.com

Saturday 12 May

10.00-12.00

Feral Trade

Workshop leader: **Kate Rich**

EAH organisers: Maja and Reuben Fowkes

Artist and trader Kate Rich has been playing with the nature of the feral in business over 15 years, primarily through the Feral Trade project, an artist-run grocery business trading coffee and other goods over social networks and outside commercial systems (<http://feraltrade.org>). She will report on her findings and invite a conversation into how we might extend the notion of the feral into how we do business more broadly.

Kate Rich is a trade artist and feral economist, born in Australia and living in Bristol UK. She is co-founder of the Bureau of Inverse Technology (BIT), an international agency producing an array of critical information products including economic and ecologic indices, event-triggered webcam networks and animal operated emergency broadcast devices. The Bureau's work has been exhibited in academic, scientific and museum contexts. Since 2003 she has run Feral Trade, a long-range economic experiment and underground freight network, utilising the spare carrying capacity of the art world for the transportation of other goods, specifically groceries. Kate is senior lecturer in

DIY and activist media at the University of the West of England; volunteer finance manager at Bristol's artist-run Cube Microplex; system administrator for the Irrational.org art-server collective; and a founding member of the European Sail Cargo Alliance. Her ongoing preoccupation is to move deeper into the infrastructure of trade, administration, organisation and economy in the cultural realm. To this end she is currently establishing a Feral MBA for artists, positioned somewhere between the academy and the wild.

LUNCHBREAK

13.00-15.00

Poetry, Birds, and the Feral from Medieval to Modern

Workshop leaders: **Clara Dawson** and **Petra Bakos Jarrett**

EAH organisers: Hyaesin Yoon and Marianna Szczygielska

This workshop will take a series of poems across the centuries, including ancient Greek, classical Arabic, medieval and modern British poetry, which feature birds inhabiting the borderline between human and animal, between the civilised and the wild. What can these poetic birds tell us about how attitudes to the feral have changed across the centuries? The workshop will explore the questions raised by these poems and will invite participants to respond creatively, making poetic artefacts inspired by the poems and the challenges facing bird species in our current environmental crisis.

Dr **Clara Dawson** is Lecturer in Victorian Literature at the University of Manchester. My research focuses on poetry of the long nineteenth century, poetic form, and more recently, environmental humanities. I was a Visiting Fellow at the IAS of CEU in autumn 2017, working on a project called A History of Poetic Birds and Lyric Song.

Petra Bakos Jarrett is a Ph.D. Candidate in Comparative Gender Studies at CEU. Her research interests include critical environmental feminism, feminist theories of corporeality, gender relations in South East Europe (SEE), and SEE literature (20th century and current). Petra's doctoral project traces the interactions of SEE borderlands bodies and their environmental fiction, focusing on environmental pollution and social injustice embedded in a global grid of inequalities.

15.00-16.00

Feral Intensive Roundup

Collective reflections on the feral that have emerged from the various workshops

16.00-17.00

Feral Tasting from "Terrapolis Tarcal" Permaculture Garden

N13: Rooftop Garden

Workshop leader: Gabó Bartha

EAH organizer: Guntra Aistara

This workshop includes a tasting from Tokaj region: Sourdough bread, 3 tastes of the myrobalan plum tree: 'umebosh sauce and fruit leather, fermented tea from the leaves of wild shoots of the sour cherry tree and melissa tea, wild grape Terrapolis Tarcal (Terrapolistarcal.blogspot.com), and two kinds of goat cheeses from Kácsárd vineyard.

Gabó Bartha has been working with food for more than a decade in various ways from activism, gardening, foraging, to exhibiting. The totem plant of Terrapolis, her garden and table in Tarcal, Tokaj wine region, are orach and chard. <http://terrapolistarcal.blogspot.hu/>