



PERSONS ARE RELATIONAL

ART & CARE: STUDY DAY (RESUMED)

8 April 2022 4:00-6:30pm GMT

Including a series of thematic conversations across care ethics and arts, considers how we can look at the world from new, acquired critical, creative and poetic perspectives.

The event is led by:

Dr. **Elena Cologni**, Senior Research Fellow, Cambridge School of Art, Anglia Ruskin University

Dr. **Merel Visse**, Director Medical and Health Humanities, Drew University (US), and University of Humanistic Studies, Utrecht, NL

HR Mag **Eveline Wandl-Vogt**, Director of Ars Electronica Research Institute Knowledge for Humanity, Austria

image: Mother's tools (detail) Elena Cologni



PROGRAM 8 April 2022 4:00-6:30pm GMT

4-4:05

Introduction by Elena, Merel and Eveline.

4:05-4:30 (including short Q&A)

Key note

MOTHER ART

Mother Art (Deborah Krall, Suzanne Siegel and Laura Silagi)

4:30-4:40: **Taking Care: A Feminist Slow Practice of Relational Listening**, Dr. Rachel Epp Buller

4:40-4:50: **What is the value of using participatory photography methods to support people with mental health issues?** Julia Johnson

4:50-5:00: **Ecological Intimacy**. Keren Moscovitch

5:00-5:10: **Like Failure: post-modern feminist approaches to algorithmic dysfunctions and practices of care**. Giulia Taurino

5:10-5:20: **Radical Togetherness: the artistic experience of Atelier dell'Errore and Wurmkos**, Gabi Scardi

5:20-5:30: **Art in a caring society; an auto ethnographic narrative**, Truus Teunissen

5:30-5:40 -BREAK

5:40-5:50: **Radicalizing Care: Maintenance as Resistance**. Prof. Dr. Elke Krasny,

5:50-6:00 : **Today (and Possibly Tomorrow)**. Ryan Woodring

6:-6:10: **Needlework as resistance: Care ethics and Palestinian embroidery**, Pieter Dronkers

6:10-6:20: **WAVE: The potential of outsiders' perspectives in complex residential care for people with (severe) intellectual disabilities and challenging behavior**. Gustaaf Bos

6:20-6:30: **The Ancestors and the Phoenix of My Ukrainian Family Through the Lens of an Ecofeminism**
Marta Stefanyshyn



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MOTHER ART

Mother Art (Deborah Krall, Suzanne Siegel and Laura Silagi)

Our presentation will survey the history of the Mother Art collective's installations and performances, the evolution of our practice to include political concerns, and how the implication of that work is relevant to today's world.

In the 1970s when we founded Mother Art, second wave feminism was flourishing, explicated by women artists, authors and theorists. Mother Art grew out of this milieu, but with an emphasis on women artists who were also mothers. We were concerned with creating nurturing environments for present and future generations; we demanded that other feminists recognize our concerns.

For our first collaborative project Mother Art constructed a playground at the Los Angeles Woman's building as a community space for mothers and their children. We then used art to explore the values of motherhood by curating exhibitions of women artists on the theme, and by creating a series of performances in laundromats to bring the private realm of women's lives into the public sphere. In the late 70s and 80s our work expanded to focus on a number of social and political topics that revolved around issues of care that particularly affect women. As our work evolved to include political concerns, so did the depth of our collaboration. Our performance and installation practice included the right of women to choose whether to be mothers (reproductive rights), the needs of homeless women, the complexities of immigration, and threat of (nuclear) war. We used personal stories we gathered to humanize and contextualize these subjects.

Since the founding of Mother Art more than 40 years ago, we have seen positive changes in the United States, such as a generation of nurturing fathers and growing movements for universal childcare and medical care, but there are still many problems, locally and worldwide that negatively impact mothers and children. Mother Art sees the need for artists to confront these issues in the effort to ensure the well being of women, children and future generations.

Mother Art: Deborah Krall, Suzanne Siegel and Laura Silagi.

During the 1970s and into the 1980s, eight women artists participated at various times as members of Mother Art. As activists, artists and mothers, we collectively created exhibitions, events and performances dealing with social issues for the betterment of us all. Currently, three Los Angeles based artists: Deborah Krall, Suzanne Siegel and Laura Silagi continue our practice together.

Taking Care: A Feminist Slow Practice of Relational Listening

Dr. Rachel Epp Buller

We are living in a world of converging crises--COVID, climate, and war--and we desperately need to "take care" and "repair" our world if we hope to "live in it as well as possible" (Tronto and Fisher 1990). I propose that an important place to start is by listening, specifically by facilitating and enacting relational listening through artistic practice.

I offer my participatory project Taking Care (2018-present) as a case study through which to consider listening as an orientation, a reciprocal gesture that invites being in relationship. In Taking Care, participants write stories about a time in which they felt cared for. In exchange, I listen to the stories by embroidering selected passages onto fabric in public performances, making visible these often

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unseen labors of care. The work is long and physically taxing, as care work often is. Through the material process, I enact a form of bodily listening and move toward attunement with the often-anonymous writer. In this provocation, I contextualize Taking Care within histories of feminist listening, the Slow movement, and intergenerational, matrilineal sharing of artistic knowledge. Each of these elements, I propose, are vital tools for the repair work needed as we seek to live differently and create "as well as possible" worlds.

Dr. Rachel Epp Buller (US) is a feminist art historian, visual artist, professor, and mother of three. Her books include *Reconciling Art and Mothering* and *Inappropriate Bodies: Art, Design, and Maternity*, the latter edited with Charles Reeve. She exhibits and curates widely and her Taking Care project has been staged in the US, UK, Germany, and the Netherlands. She is currently a Fulbright Canada Research Chair at the University of Alberta. Her current book in progress is titled *Acts of Listening: Art and Relational Attunement*.

Radicalizing Care: Maintenance as Resistance **Prof. Dr. Elke Krasny**

Our historical moment is defined by structural carelessness and violent attacks on the planet and all its human and non-human beings as well as its so-called non-living matter. Ruthlessly warring, the colonial patriarchal mindset does not care about the consequences of destruction. Forced to live with the material, epistemic, and semantic aftermath of such violence, care has long been held to be invisibilized and the caring classes are those who cannot afford not to care.

Starting from the analysis of such crisis conditions and what it means to care about them and to care for changing them, the first part of the lecture shares reflections and insights from the curatorial practices collected together in the 2021 volume *Radicalizing Care. Feminist and Queer Activism in Curating*, edited by Elke Krasny, Sophie Lingg, Lena Fritsch, Birgit Bosold, and Vera Hofmann.

The second part of the lecture thinks about maintenance as a form of resistance. Caring for change is conventionally understood to mean revolutionary actions, taking to the street, or organizing strikes. Connecting change to the idea of maintenance as resistance invites thoughts about maintenance as a way of using the given differently and of inhabiting the planet more care-fully.

Elke Krasny is Professor for Art and Education at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. She is a feminist cultural theorist, curator, and author. Krasny's scholarship addresses questions of care, ecological and social justice, critical memory work and emancipatory practices at the present historical conjuncture marked by ecocidal and genocidal pasts. Together with Angelika Fitz, she edited *Critical Care. Architecture and Urbanism for a Broken Planet together* (MIT Press, 2019). She co-edited the 2022 volume *Radicalizing Care. Feminist and Queer Activism in Curating* (Sternberg Press, 2021). Her forthcoming book *Living with an Infected Planet. Covid-19 Feminism and the Global Frontline of Care* develops a feminist perspective on imaginaries of war and realities of care in pandemic times.

Ecological Intimacy **Keren Moscovitch**

The crises of our time demand an ecological intimacy. In her studio practice and scholarly research, Keren Moscovitch investigates the role of intimacy in social and political upheaval and suggests that radical intimacy can help reframe our relationship to ecology, the body, and Nature. In this Art & Care

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session, Moscovitch explores object-oriented philosophical frameworks through the lens of contemporary ecological art practice. According to Timothy Morton, "[e]cology includes all the ways we imagine how we live together. Ecology is profoundly about coexistence." By questioning subjectivity through the tenets of object-orientation, and inviting us into close, radically intimate contact with the object world, the ecological thought—"a thinking that is ecological, a contemplating that is a doing"—requires a praxis of subversion, perhaps even of perversion, of ideological thinking. Moscovitch will present a selection of contemporary artworks, ranging from land art to ecosexuality to body art to artificial intelligence, through which feminists subvert ideological notions of Nature while maintaining an ethos of radical care towards the ecological. These anarchic gestures subvert the archic ideologies of subjectivity and Nature in favor of radical ecological intimacy.

Keren Moscovitch is a New York City-based multimedia artist and scholar exploring radical intimacy through collaborations, scholarship and practice-based research. Her forthcoming book *Radical Intimacy in Contemporary Art: Abjection, Revolt and Objecthood* will be released by Bloomsbury Academic in 2024. Keren teaches at the School of Visual Arts and Parsons School of Design at the New School.

Like Failure: post-modern feminist approaches to algorithmic dysfunctions and practices of care. Giulia Taurino

In an article on *Camera Obscura*, Sarah Sharma (2020) presents a Manifesto for the Broken Machine. She speaks of male-centered techno-cultural epistemologies that often frame broken machines as dysfunctions in the system, in need to be replaced or dismissed. Yet, it is precisely the notion of brokenness that causes acts of disruption from biased epistemologies (Taurino 2022), as much as acts of care, repair, healing. This presentation will provide an over-view on innovative techniques grounded in critical-making (Ratto 2011) and speculative design (Dunne and Raby 2013). By taking as a case study the computational art project *This Recommendation System is Broken* (Taurino and Reyes, for the exhibition series *Curatorial A(i)gents*), this talk will introduce the participants to the practical applications of feminist, de-colonial, queer approaches to both acts of disruption and repair, particularly in relation to biases and errors found in contemporary algorithmic media. The aim is to foster critical, ethical, analytical reflection and methodological inquiry around the intersection between failures (Muñoz 2009; Halber-stam 2011) or uncertainties (Thylstrup et al. 2021) in algorithmic systems and practices of care, by asking how they might shape - or anticipate - alternative technological futures.

Giulia Taurino Postdoctoral Fellow Roux Institute / Khoury College of Computer Sciences, Northeastern University. Her research focuses on content organization in online platforms and digital archives, cultural implications of algorithmic technologies, AI applications in the arts, heritage and museums sectors. Present affiliations include metaLAB (at) Harvard, MIT Data + Feminism, NULab for Texts, Maps, Networks.

Radical Togetherness: the artistic experience of Atelier dell'Errore and Wurmkos Gabi Scardi

I'm driven to this by a coincidence: on the same day of this Art & Care study day a project by a group called Atelier dell'Errore, is being presented in Venice, at Procuratie Vecchie, Piazza San Marco. The presentation of another group project, *Coabitare l'Isola* by Wurmkos, is on the process



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of being organized in the small village of Malegno in a Northern Italian Valley, Val Camonica; in this case we are referring to a site-sensitive project in a local community.

The two artistic collectives and laboratories work in very different ways and places, but they have some characteristics in common: they arise from necessity and from the cogency of experience of people who personally live the idea of limit. I'm referring to limits depending on how physical, mental and relational interactions with the world can or cannot happen.

Both Atelier dell'Errore and Wurmkos are based on a radical and long term togetherness and collaboration which makes the laboratory a life project. The artworks of the two groups are, at the same time, the result of many hands and the expression of singularities without compromises. Such artistic contributions are a demonstration of a stubborn work in perennial evolution, but always of an inflexible rigor. Both of them are a proof of how internal vulnerability and strength, indissolubly intertwined, can manifest themselves externally in the most effective way. At the same time my assumption is that they can trigger societal changes.

Gabi Scardi is art critic, curator, educator and writer. Her main field of research covers the practices at the intersection between visual art, anthropology, architecture, urban culture, design and fashion design. She has organized many talks and public programs. The most recent ones is a series of talk scheduled within nctm e l'arte program 2021, dedicated to the topic of healthcare and the right to individual and collective health.

Art in a caring society; an auto ethnographic narrative **Truus Teunissen**

Recently, the WHO endorsed the importance of expressing experiences through artistic expression in promoting health and well-being. Artistic expression offers people a way of expressing themselves other than with words, so that they can better express what worries or moves them. Using the narratives in this chapter, I explore the impact of art expression and caring in my own life and place them in the broader context of a caring society. Creating and experiencing art has been a part of my life for many years with multiple chronic illnesses and disabilities. I make art first of all as self-care (care receiving) to represent my emotions without words. In addition, by making a drawing or image for someone else, I can comfort or support them, and try to look after them in a difficult time (caring about & taking care of). Finally, I make art together with others, which creates a meaningful connection where we are creatively challenged and experience fun and also come into contact without words about what touches or moves us (care giving & taking care of, caring about). Both making art and experiencing art are ways of meaningful expression but also means of communication. Actively offering the resources for art expression, especially in a care context, is a very valuable form of looking after each other and caring for each other. The narratives show the possibility of connecting between art and caring in my own life and in a caring society. The importance of making art and experiencing art should be more recognized and acknowledged for the health and well-being of people.

Truus Teunissen (Ph.D.) is an artist and researcher affiliated with Leyden Academy and the University of Humanistic Studies in The Netherlands. Her work focuses on the arts and care, especially long-term chronic care.



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What is the value of using participatory photography methods to support people with mental health issues?

Julia Johnson

My PhD research at London College of Communication, University of the Arts London has engaged participants who access the mental health NHS services and other mental health public health services to consider the role of photography as a therapeutic tool and as a visual research method. An outcome of this includes the design and testing of a participatory photography toolkit for those facilitating future programmes and those conducting related research studies.

I am a researcher with lived experience of mental health issues. In collaboration with NHS participants, together we have approached the participatory space and claim a position as 'experts' by experience (Care Quality Commission 2021). Given that participatory arts is underpinned by a rich civil rights herstory/ history and its consequential activism, the research process has presented various complex challenges relating to the ethics and politics of representation, the therapeutic capacity of representing oneself and the current traditional parameters for research studies. These issues will be explored within this presentation / chapter.

Julia Johnson is an AHRC-funded PhD researcher who has analysed the efficacy of therapeutic photography in supporting people in mental health recovery. Julia leads on specific contextual studies modules and joint leads the BA photography programme at Cambridge School of Art. Julia is also currently a consultant for the BA photography team at London College of Communication.

Today (and Possibly Tomorrow)

Ryan Woodring

Today (and Possibly Tomorrow) is an ongoing series of individual 3D-printed candies; each a material record of an invisible chronic illness created from a ritualized 3D modeling exercise. Borrowing technical and pragmatic strategies from medical illustration and art therapy, each model is made while experiencing the sensation it attempts to exorcise. While advancements in medical imaging and artificial intelligence invite human eyes to scour the forms and processes that make up our inner constitution, the unlocatable subjective experiences that fall outside of this optical colonization call for different coaxing and coping strategies. Today (and maybe tomorrow) sets forth a methodology for establishing a hard scale for an otherwise all-consuming feeling; allowing it to coagulate as a singular object that rests, however momentarily, outside oneself.

Ryan Woodring's teaching provides a guide for reciprocity within Ryan Woodring's practice. After moving to Portland, Oregon to do visual effects on the award-winning film *The Boxtrolls* he co-founded a free low-residency called *Prequel*. Woodring holds an MFA from Rutgers University and is currently Assistant Professor of Digital Studies at Drew University.



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Needlework as resistance: Care ethics and Palestinian embroidery **Pieter Dronkers**

Despite its perhaps old-fashioned image, embroidery turns out to be a particularly productive field to study the interaction between artistic craftsmanship and care. Embroidered garments are, in Tronto's terms, boundary crossers: generally produced at home, they offer a way to publicly express individual identity and belonging. Embroidery techniques and patterns represent old traditions and they at the same time embellish and add value to modern commodified consumer products. This is especially the case for Palestinian (camp) embroidery that since 1948 has become a way to express memory and resistance, while also offering a deeply gendered source of income for poor families, and a way to express and purchase solidarity by the Palestinian diaspora and engaged citizens worldwide. Recently there is a renewed interest in embroidery activism through, for instance, Disarming Design from Palestine and the (due to COVID-19 cancelled) 2020 exhibition Material Power in Kettle's Yard in Cambridge. In my contribution, I want to explore how care for tradition, family, and a national identity are all interwoven in and expressed by Palestinian embroidery. In doing so, I explore the material, historical and geographical dimensions of Tronto's concept of care as interweaving a life-sustaining web.

Pieter Dronkers is an assistant professor in Care Ethics at the University of Humanistic Studies, and Research Coordinator of the Care Ethical Evaluation of Covid-19 policy in The Netherlands. His Ph.D. research focused on belonging to a civic community, a key issue in liberal democracies that undergo drastic changes through the processes of globalisation and secularisation.

WAVE: The potential of outsiders' perspectives in complex residential care for people with (severe) intellectual disabilities and challenging behavior **Gustaaf Bos**

Over recent years, a great deal of knowledge and skills have been developed in the counselling of people with severe intellectual disabilities and challenging behaviour. Unfortunately, these are not always sufficient, and healthcare professionals regularly find themselves out of their depth. In the 1990s, the sector has become increasingly professionalised, and support workers are discouraged from using implicit tools such as emotions, imagination, intuition, and moral knowledge in their daily work. This is remarkable, because these sources of knowledge can be of great value when dealing with challenging behaviour, which is nowadays seen as the result of interactions between the person and their environment.

The WAVE project (2019-2022) seeks to create more room for this implicit set of instruments. We want to find new answers to the meaning of challenging behaviour and what good care provision entails. Our aim is to equip all those involved in this quest so that they feel supported and able to think and act in new ways. People with severe intellectual disabilities and challenging behaviour are dependent on others, who 'read' them, attune to them, and interpret what they mean. This interpretation is often challenging, especially when they cannot speak, and it is often necessary to work with other professionals and relatives to gain more insight into what they mean. These stakeholders must recognise that their knowledge and experiences are formed in a specific context and within a familiar environment, thus these perspectives are partial – and might be enriched by people with another relevant background.

From this starting point, WAVE deploys 'outsider researchers', with no experience of professional care,



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but with an extraordinary career or personal background that strongly influenced their standing in life and how they relate to others. Outsider researchers look at the professional care context through different eyes, and do not take for granted things that seem logical to care professional. As a result, they challenge them to think and talk about practices, routines, and assumptions in entirely different ways.

Gustaaf Bos is an assistant professor in Care Ethics at the University of Humanistic Studies, Utrecht, Netherlands. He is principal investigator of WAVE, together with dr. Vanessa Olivier-Pijpers.

The Ancestors and the Phoenix of My Ukrainian Family Through the Lens of an Ecofeminism **Marta Stefanyshyn**

"An ecofeminism perspective propounds the need for a new cosmology and a new anthropology which recognizes that life in nature (which includes human beings) is maintained by means of cooperation, and mutual care and love," these are the words of Vandana Shiva, an ecofeminist and physicist, who is quoted by Betty Roszak (1995) in "The Spirit of the Goddess." In this presentation I will explore Betty Roszak's essay alongside with the poetic play "The Forest Song" which was written by a Ukrainian poetess, Lesya Ukrainka in 1911. Both Roszak and Ukrainka explore the themes of existential phenomena in the nature such as interrelatedness of all beings on the Earth, embodied living, cycles of life and death, change, and renewal, and the value of each being's life. Both writers highlight the importance of recognition and celebration of these seemingly ordinary ways of nature and everyday happenings. I will share an excerpt from Ukrainka's poem, which is an example of celebration of re-birth and renewal. Another common theme for Roszak and Ukrainka is the theme of wholeness, which includes the union between the matter and the spirit, the "feminine" and "masculine," and the ancestors and the individual. Roszak states that because each person interprets the world through their personal experience, the phoenix within each of us is "born anew every morning." I will share the photos of my family tree as well as the image of my personal phoenix, the Character of embodied strengths, as examples of co-existence of family heritage and individuality within a person.
