

**description**

approaches to collaboration  
and value from anthropology,  
art, science & technology

**creativity**

conference programme

3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> July 2005  
King's College, Cambridge  
Convener: James Leach

# timetable

	Sunday July 3rd	Monday July 4th	Tuesday July 5th	
9.00				
9.30				
10.00		panel 1: art/science collaborations  (Runcie Room, Divinity Faculty)	panel 3: ethnographic description and repatriation  (Runcie Room, Divinity Faculty)	
10.30				
11.00				
11.30				
12.00				
12.30				
13.00	registration and coffee  (Chetwynd Room, King's College)			
13.30			panel 4: what is the point of description?  (Runcie Room, Divinity Faculty)	
14.00		panel 2: codes & modes of description  (Runcie Room, Divinity Faculty)		
14.30				
15.00				
15.30				
16.00				
16.30	opening plenary  (Keynes Hall, King's College)			
17.00				
17.30				
18.00	opening plenary (continued)		closing plenary: commentary and reflection  (Runcie Room, Divinity Faculty)	
18.30				
19.00				
19.30	drinks  (Saltmarsh, King's College)		drinks	
20.00		Alejandro Viñao concert  (Recital Room, Faculty of Music)		& dinner  (Great Hall, King's College)
20.30				
21.00				

social	plenaries	panels
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## foreword

Welcome to King's College, and to Cambridge.

This conference has been planned to examine issues of description in collaborative and interdisciplinary endeavour. This theme, although rendered in a particular way, will hopefully hold interest for many different people.

The initiative has its roots in at least three places. Firstly, King's College has had an ongoing project on 'Description' for several years now. As description is so central to what social scientists undertake, this seems an invaluable opportunity for conversations about how these descriptions are already part of social worlds, and how they can be understood as both particular creations, and as potentially creative in effect. Secondly, a major impetus has been the work of Bronac Ferran and the Interdisciplinary Arts Dept. at Arts Council England. Their championing of the idea of collaborative work that will find value in both art and science, and perhaps open up new contexts in which value can be recognised, has been inspirational. Finally, the conference extends concerns about ownership addressed in the Cambridge Social Property Seminar and its attendant Interdisciplinary Design Workshops, convened by Marilyn Strathern, Alan Blackwell and James Leach in 2003/4.

We seem to be very good at isolating producers, or authors, or inventors, and indeed crediting them (or someone who takes their position). But there is much less opportunity to register the importance of other inputs and of the social context as generative. Habits of thought and speech, institutional structures, and entrenched systems of ownership all contribute to this.

Anthropology has some ideas to offer in this context. One is that we may learn from others' understandings of the social and relational basis for creative and productive activity. In my own case, sophisticated mechanisms for acknowledging and rewarding particular inputs to wider creations are apparent among people from Madang Province in Papua New Guinea. How might social science make these ideas available? The



obvious answer is through social scientific description: description as the outcome and endpoint of analysis. Indeed the motivation for the conference relates to this directly. Artists and Scientists, engaged in collaborative endeavour, face issues of recognition outside their normal disciplinary or institutional contexts. Collaboration itself implies there is an essentially social and relational basis to making new knowledge and new combinations. Yet this understanding is undermined by those habits of thought and institutional context mentioned above.

In simple terms, is it possible that the endeavours of the artists and scientists involved in the Arts Council England/Arts and Humanities Research Council Arts and Science Research Fellowships might be advanced through incorporating ideas and thinking about collaboration from Madang? And if so, what would the reciprocation look like? What might be of interest in social scientific descriptions of either their own social world, or even of collaborations between artists and scientists, to Madang people?

Of course, people are always particular people, and value is always realised in specific ways. For this reason, the conference draws together not only anthropologists concerned with how their descriptions figure in the projects of other people, but also practitioners from many different fields in which the social, relational nature of knowledge and value production are apparent in different ways.

I thank the generous funders of the conference, The Arts and Humanities Research Council, Arts Council England, and King's College for the opportunity to pursue this initiative. I also wish to thank my colleagues on the Description Project, Simon Goldhill, Judith Green, Niklaus Bacht, Stefan Hossel-Uhlig, Soumhya Venkatisan, and Robin Osborne for their invaluable input. And finally, Rohan and Katie at Nomad IT for their efficiency and good humour in organisation.

**James Leach**

Conference Convenor



## theme

How does 'Description' relate to 'Creativity'? The issues this conference will address are wider than discovering appropriate descriptions of creative processes as social action. We will investigate the inter-relation of kinds of description and of creativity.

Creativity is something of a ubiquitous term in the contemporary world. From infant education policies to discussions of the value of indigenous culture, from thinking behind Intellectual Property attribution to Government initiatives intended to foster and develop the 'knowledge economy', 'creativity' has come to be a sign of value. For social scientists, an interest in creativity must at some level be to do with setting out (describing) the social and relational aspects of its mechanisms, appearance, and instantiation.

Description figures prominently in approaching creativity. For one thing, it is the starting point for communication among actors. Communication, reliant upon description (successful or not) may be a prerequisite for collaboration as it offers the possibility for different social actors to utilise diverse knowledge and expertise in making novel or innovative interventions. How then do we think of description of social action as different to description of art works, or of the natural world?

Ethnographic description is already theorised, never neutral, and therefore always engaged in one way or another with its subjects and audiences. But such engagement is rarely recognised as such. What would a descriptive social science, concerned with making such engagement an explicit aspect of its reach, look like? And how different is this endeavour to explicitly collaborative projects such as those between artists and scientists, or architects and clients?

Description and creativity are problematic terms. The speakers at the conference are asked to meet these problems head on. With both terms currently in circulation, it seems pertinent to ask questions of each, and of their interrelation, especially in the context of collaborative working. Speakers will look to a variety of instances where description and creativity are allied: be that in relations between anthropologists and their subjects/informants, or of artists and scientists, performers and facilitators, designers and users, originators and commentators.

What are the ancillary or unintended results of description? And can we chart instances where descriptions themselves have been used creatively/as aspects of non-descriptive creative projects? Some might want to distinguish description from related terms (such as translation) because of the 'creativity' built into any description from the outset. Far from being removed from the world, can we theorise how description thus implies engagement? Participation through description relies upon the understanding that description is both theoretically informed, and is always situated.

I hope we can have discussions which open up both the terms to scrutiny, and at the same time, look to make interventions that might reclaim one or both for positive effect.

**Some questions that speakers will be asked to think around are:**

- How do particular descriptions get taken up and used in ongoing projects, in framing and directing investigation?
- Does it make sense to think of a relational or dispersed creativity when the dominant models we have available tend to locate creativity in individual minds?
- Are we right to see binary code or mathematics as 'description' of the world? What indeed is the interrelation between description and action, or description and generative process? (A question made particularly pertinent when thinking about software, dance and architecture.)
- If creativity is seen in collaborations and innovative combinations, then is the role of description one of making combination possible through agreement about the form of existing and potential knowledge? What of dispute, critique and contradictory descriptions?
- What are the problems a focus on description, an inherently open-ended and enabling enterprise, generate when knowledge must always be made useful and useable?



## practical information

### **location**

We are using two sites for this conference: the first day's events (Sunday), along with accommodation and conference dinner will take place in King's College, Cambridge. This is situated on King's Parade in the heart of Cambridge. The panels on Monday and Tuesday will take place at the Divinity faculty, off West Road - a short walk out of the back of the college, across the Queen's Road, and up West Road, which is the road opposite the back gate of King's.

### **college/city map**

Please see the inside back cover for a map of the King's College / Divinity Faculty area.

### **taxis**

Call Panther on 01223 715715.

### **parking**

Car parking is limited, and we do not encourage you to drive. However, there is a car park that conference delegates can use, which is situated by Garden Hostel, just off West Road. As you turn into West Road from Queen's Road, it is the first entrance on your right. To enter, drive up to the barrier which will release. Tokens to allow you out of the King's College car park are available from the main Porter's Lodge - explain that you are a conference delegate.

### **contact**

During the conference, messages for delegates can be texted to 07917 450302, or emailed to [dnc@nomadit.co.uk](mailto:dnc@nomadit.co.uk).

### **assistance**

If you have any queries please ask members of the conference team, who you will meet on registration.

### **mail access**

Delegates will have access to computers in the Turing Room in the Gibbs' Building - basement of first staircase. Swipe cards for room entry, along with usernames and passwords for net access, can be 'signed out' from the registration desk/conference team.



**breakfast**

Breakfast is served in the main dining hall at 8am, and is included with accommodation.

**teas/coffee breaks**

A range of teas, herbal teas, coffee and water will be served in the foyer of the Divinity Faculty, half-way through all sessions.

**lunch**

Lunch is at 1pm on Monday and 12.30pm on Tuesday. Lunch bags will be distributed in the foyer of the Divinity Faculty.

**dinner**

**restaurants**

Gardenias	Rose Crescent	take-away for kebabs, chips, pizza etc
Sala Thong	Newnham	Thai
Dojo	Mill Lane	Japanese fusion noodle bar; 01223 363471
Teri Yaki	6-7 Quayside	Japanese fusion noodles and sushi
Don Pasquale	Market Square	good pizza and calzone; 01223 367063
Pizza Express	Regent Street	pizza
Pizza Express	Jesus Lane	pizza

**eat-in pubs**

The Castle	Castle Hill
Kingston Arms	Kingston Street, off Mill Road
The Vine	East Road (where the boat race used to be)

**more upmarket restaurants**

Fitzbillies	Trumpington Street	01223 352500
Bruno's	Mill Road	01223 312702
Peking Rest.	Burleigh Street	01223 354755



## events

## exhibitions

### sunday july 3rd

7.30pm – 9pm

Saltmarsh, King's College

#### **Drinks**

Drinks and canapes will be offered to help you continue the afternoon's discussion. Thereafter, some may search out more food in the centre of Cambridge, while for others, the discussion can adjourn to the college bar.

### monday july 4th

You are free to make your own dining arrangements for Monday evening. The college cafeteria will be open on a cash basis, from 6.30pm to 7.15pm. Alternatively, please refer to our restaurant list in the preceding section.

8pm

Recital Room, Faculty of Music, West Road

#### **Fiction and culture: humans and computers in concert**

This concert of music by composer Viñao, and others, is linked to the talks held earlier in the day on the use of technology in contemporary composition, the human voice, mimicry and description. (Please see map for concert location.)

### tuesday july 5th

7.30pm

Great Hall, King's College

#### **Drinks**

While you gather for the conference dinner, you will be offered a pre-prandial wine in the Great Hall.

8pm

Great Hall, King's College

#### **Dinner and close**

As part of the conference we will have two exhibitions in the foyer of the Divinity Building.

#### **Wendy Gunn, Mads Clausen Institute Learning is understanding in practice**

gunn@mci.sdu.dk

The exhibition brings together photographic documentation and publications from the three year interdisciplinary research project, 'Learning is understanding in practice: exploring the interrelations between perception, skill and creativity'. Central to the entire project is the idea of practice-based exploration conceived as a way of enhancing collaboration between the disciplines of art, architecture, anthropology and archaeology. The project aimed to break down the divide between teaching (as the communication of pre-existing knowledge) and research (as its application) and between theory and practice. See <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/creativityandpractice/>

#### **Sarah Jacobs, Colebrook Publications**

sarah.jacobs@britishlibrary.net

In December 2004, *Nature* published *The sequence and analysis of duplication-rich human Chromosome 16* by Joel Martin and 119 others. Sarah Jacobs' on-going project celebrates the achievement and places it in context. The artist's book, *Deciphering human chromosome 16: from fugu to human*, is published under the name of the Fishbone Initiative by Colebrooke Publications. The wall-work shows, among other things, some of the 9,800 mentions of the chromosome found by Google on 19 June 2005.

# plenary and panel detail



# plenaries and panels

## opening plenary

Sunday July 3rd, 4.30 - 7pm

James Leach

### **Welcome and introduction. Why Description and Creativity?**

Please refer to theme pages.

Bronwyn Parry

### **Enframing the body: the role of description, collaboration and performativity in the creation of new anatomical portrayals.**

Able, potentially, to be characterised simultaneously as descriptions, representations, performances and technologies, this paper focuses on the genesis and fate of two newly created pedagogical tools. The first, a new form of interactive anatomical scan, the second, a library of live feed DVDs of paediatric cardiac operations have recently been created at Great Ormond Street Hospital for use by surgeons in domestic and virtual environments. In here exploring the status of these new entities I pose a series of enframing ontological questions: Are descriptions always textual or linguistic – or can they be communicated visually? Can descriptions ever arrive in the world free of interpretation? How can describing or re-presenting a lived bodily experience in a new technological or performative mode make knowledge of that experience available for wider use? How are conceptions of value transformed through this process of transmogrification?

tea/coffee break

Debbora Battaglia

### **Ethnography between the lines**

This paper considers the problem of "writing culture" coherently, when the coherence of self and society has a negative value for subjects. The case in point is the Raelian Religion, which finds its culturally natural environment in the gaps between social orders, and within a network-fused modernity. Raelians' ventures to connect to mainstream culture, and to one another, find expression in diverse forms of social practice, including political protests, occult artwork, and hetero-science projects. Often, however, these send conflicting messages about the Raelian understandings as a system of beliefs. I argue that social movements such as the Raelians', who know themselves only as an emergent, anti-programmatic response to official culture, turn gaps in social power to creative purpose by claiming a value for hypothesis-making and other forms of creative action in "outerspaces" that expose the practical limits of "the powers that be".

Peter de Bolla

### **The inner life of aesthetic forms**

We lack anything like a sophisticated discourse for talking about - describing - the phenomenology of aesthetic experience. Historically this can be explained in a number of ways. Firstly, some question whether anything intelligibly called the 'aesthetic realm' exists at



all. Others question the distinctness of experiences which might be termed 'aesthetic'. Secondly, the tasks of phenomenology have been variously welcomed or refused - some questioning the 'subjective' basis for philosophical enquiry, others proposing ways in which subjective knowledges attenuate or even enhance 'rational' epistemic models.

This paper will not dwell for long on the failings of this skeptical and at times antagonistic historical tradition since it sets out to proceed from an example of aesthetic experience. This will provide me with an opportunity to investigate some beginning moves in a descriptive architecture for aesthetic forms and, at the same time, present something of the inner life of a particular artwork.

Simon Goldhill

### **Using descriptions and valuing knowledge of the Classical world**

This paper will look first at the development of the discourse of description in the Greek texts of the Roman Empire and secondly at an extraordinary archive of a large collection of poems all claiming to describe the same statue. This is a major period for the practice and theory of description, which has a fundamental impact on the long western philosophical and poetical tradition. I will be concerned with the ancient interest in the psychology of description and specifically with how description can become a dazzling blind to clear understanding - a rhetorical deception as much as a rhetorical tool - and secondly with how the theory and practice of description is concerned with the construction of the viewing subject. With what eyes and words is description constructed?

## panel 1: art/science collaborations

Monday July 4th, 9am - 1pm

Convenor: James Leach

The 'creative industries' have a higher profile, and perceived worth, than ever before. Research Councils, Universities, and Government are all in the way of promoting novel interdisciplinary activity with the explicit goal of fostering creativity and nurturing new social and institutional forms to generate innovation. In this environment, what descriptions do we have available of creativity itself? How do different actors in these processes learn from one another, and what kinds of descriptions make knowledge of another practice or world available for use? How do translations of knowledge or approach retain value across domains? Collaboration: the quintessence of description as enabler?

Gron Tudor Jones

### **Complementary descriptions in 20th Century physics**

A discussion of what was recently voted 'the most beautiful experiment in physics' - the interference of single electrons in a Young's double slit - will be used to introduce one of the deepest (and most disturbing) realizations of 20th century physics: (Bohr's) wave-particle complementarity. It will be seen that this has forced physicists to change their ideas about causality and reality.

Alan Wall

### **Extremities of perception**

This paper will look at how how radical pattern recognition and metaphor are at the root of much intellectual inventiveness. Thomas Young's double-slit experiment will be the starting



point. This will then be linked to verbal and visual metaphor, and the economies of thought (both scientific and artistic) with which we decode the world about us.

Alejandro Viñao and Ian Cross

### **Chant d'Ailleurs: the unforeseeable adventure of Art and Science**

This paper discusses the music composition Chant D'Ailleurs for soprano and computer by Alejandro Viñao which will be heard in the conference's concert. Two central aspects of the piece are presented:

- a) The way in which the scientific concept and technological procedure of interpolation (sound morphing) inform the creative process, more specifically, the development of a new type of melodic discourse which forms the basis of the piece.
- b) The invention of an imaginary culture by the artist as a way of providing a coherent context for new ideas and techniques in music composition. For example, the imaginary language used in the 1st and 2nd movements of the piece will be presented as invention out of necessity: existing languages are not flexible enough to articulate the new melodic approach of the piece described in a).

From this perspective, Chant d'Ailleurs illustrates how a scientific process coupled to a specific aesthetic speculation may produce an unforeseeable results such as the invention of an imaginary vocal tradition.

The paper will also consider some broad implications for relationships between art and science of AV's use of sound interpolation. It will suggest that in making use of a technologically enabled scientific description of physical world as a tool for artistic creation, AV poses problems for a set of sciences that are distinct from the science, acoustics, that underpins the technologies that he's using. Those sciences are the human sciences, and the problems that are posed concern the scientific description of the nature of human experience. It will be proposed that the relationship between art and science is inevitably cyclical and is better thought of in terms of relationships between arts and sciences, sciences which are mutually irreducible one to the other but are bound together through their mutual commensurability. The notion that the sciences are mutually irreducible may help to guarantee the irreducibility of art to science and offer a context for fruitful interaction between artists and scientists.

tea/coffee break

Robert Whittle and Heather Barnett

Robert Whittle (fruit fly geneticist) and Heather Barnett (artist) recently collaborated on an AHRB/ACE funded science/art fellowship entitled Metamorphosis & Design. The project explored aspects of design and transformation in biological systems across four research groups that had different interest, within The School of Life Sciences at the University of Sussex. Notions of creativity, visualisation and description were of key interest to the project, both during the process of engagement with the scientists and in the final outcomes produced. In this presentation, Robert and Heather will share some observations of 'creative acts' from the perspectives of both science and art, through visual illustration, verbal description and live visual interpretation. The presentation itself will therefore be an experiment in 'description and creativity' across disciplines.

Palle Dahlstedt

### **Defining Spaces of Potential Art**

#### **The significance of representation in computer-aided creativity**

One way of looking at the creative process is as a search in a space of possible answers. One way of simulating such a process is through evolutionary algorithms, i.e., simulated evolution by random

variation and selection. The search space is defined by the chosen genetic representation, a kind of formal description, and the ways of navigating the space are defined by the choice of genetic operators (e.g., mutations). In creative systems, such as computer-aided music composition tools, these choices determine the efficiency of the system, in terms of the diversity of the results, the degree of novelty and the coherence within the material. Based on various implementations developed during five years of research, and experiences from real-life artistic applications, I will explain and discuss these mechanisms, from a perspective of the creative artist.

Discussants: Daniel Glaser and Roy Ascott

## panel 2: codes and modes of description in architecture, choreography and software

Monday July 4th, 2 - 6pm

Convenors: Bronac Ferran and Scott deLahunta

The panel will consider how description of a process can be communicated to others for implementation and interpretation, and how it then can become subject to adaptation and change. For example what use is description, in the formulation of a code or programming language or a blueprint in architecture or notation in dance? What kinds of descriptive languages are used across these disciplines? What are the modes and codes of communication to enable further creative work? Where does description sit - at what end of the process? Is it both an enabler and a result?

Scott deLahunta

2.00pm

### **Choreographic executables**

This short illustrated paper will draw on 20th century contemporary dance to bring into view the generation of **things**, other than the dancers themselves, that are carriers of choreographic information. These carriers may take the form of notation, software, markings, drawings, texts, video and audiotapes, artefacts, objects, sketches, concepts and systems. Often the theory regarding the creation of these things foregrounds their lack; what it is they are missing; their inadequacies as a means of capturing live presence and the ephemeral gesture. The concepts of disappearance and absence figure profoundly in this discourse. By focusing on creativity, this paper will consider another possibility; that these things are more than sufficient to capture and deliver moving ideas.

Thomas Lehmen

I will show aspects of work I did on choreographic thoughts and their representation in different forms like books as I developed in the last few years.

Of further interest will be the correlation of users like choreographers and dancers, author, environment, goal, creativity, conditions of production, effect, impact and feedback amongst these factors.

Among the pieces: *distanzlos*; *mono subjects*; *clever*; *Schreibstück*; *Stationen*; *Funktionen*; *Better to ...*; *Laughing - Crying*; from 1999 until 2005.

I will explain the development of my method to work between structure and artistic emergence. Cybernetics and Systemtheory as it is proposed by Niklas Luhmann will be thematised as systemtheory seems to be an interesting tool for me to observe and describe developments,



and set conditions of constituting factors through the conscious use of communication.

Jaromil

3.00pm

### **Semantics of code**

EXTRACTS:

*Semantics of code*

... Engages an exploration of the Semantics of Code and Creation, from Saussure to Knuth, considering linguistical, historical and social aspects, with a political consideration about the Rastafari notion of Creation as opposed to the Consumerist asset of capitalist society. Among the others are quoted Bruno Latour, Eben Moglen and Arthur Rimbaud.

*Digital Boheme...*

... Source codes, or rather algorithms and algebra, are the tools of the digital craftsman in the modern age with over a thousand years of mathematical theories behind them. Only for little more than a quarter of a century have they acted as software. Software is a means of creating art and communicating. It is a metaliterature which defines how meaning can be carried and (re)produced by multiplying the possibilities of communication. Just as software is a means of metacommunication, so it represents a "parole", deriving its execution from a "langue", i.e. the grammatical and linguistic universe of the code. This reference to the metaphysical is to the point here: although many see the source code as merely an obscure cryptogram, it has an indirect effect on the way we communicate and even more on the efficiency with which we do so.

For full abstracts see <http://lab.dyne.org/JaromilTalks>

tea/coffee break

Christopher Alexander

4.00pm

### **Human creation, creativity and collaborative creation of our home: the Earth's surface**

I believe the most important thing about the world, in order for us to be well in it, is that it should be made by us. By that I mean that it is made by us, slowly, in a personal way, from our instincts, our common sense, our visions, and our feelings, and from our moment to moment attention to the place where the creation is to happen. It is an ongoing creative task for individuals and communities, not a task of 'planning'. The world will not be alright for us to live in, unless it is, in this sense, a spontaneous creation of our collective and personal sense of life. A living world, can NOT be made for us as a product, by corporations or companies. Companies might, perhaps, maybe, be able to help, if they were to dedicate themselves entirely to helping us achieve a self-made world in harmony and delight, and were to remove the element of profit.

Given this point of view – and I think this point of view is sane and unavoidable for the future, not a fantasy or a dream – we have only to ask one question: HOW? How shall it be done? How it is possible for this to be done, by six billion people, working for themselves, and working together. This paper raises some of the key topics in answering this question. I am very excited about the opportunity to communicate both with anthropologists and artists. The opportunity of this conference is tremendously appealing for me.

I am intrigued especially by your question: Where does description sit – at what end of the creative and artistic process? I have been constructing descriptions of artistic production for a long time, in one particular context – that of buildings. As I think about the questions that frame



the session in which I will participate, I realize that for me it is the process that generates creativity initially, not only the description. I walk a piece of land to begin to understand what should be built there. I talk with the people there to begin to understand their culture, needs, hopes and deep feelings about where they live and what would enhance their lives. For years I have believed that virtually all people in society can make and shape and design and plan their own buildings and communities – and must do so in a reasonable world. I have worked with this idea in many cultures, including Japan, India, Mexico, Peru, etc – and hopefully am about to start something in Soweto in the near future. It is the process of getting to know the people who will use what I build, the process of helping them express themselves, and above all the creative joy and expression and inventiveness, that ensures the end results that may contribute to their lives, and stand as an expression of life, all around them, every day.

The descriptions that come out of these processes (in my experiments) take the form of pattern languages, rough sketches, and rough mockups, rather than blueprints. Moreover, these languages, and the process of using them, are fluid and can change and adapt as our understanding of what the land and people need develops, even while the last details of a building are completed. The descriptions capture decisions that are made as the processes proceed step by step, and my expectation (borne out by hundreds of examples) is that, at each step, adaptations will be necessary to make things right and harmonious, and they will grow out of the preceding steps (morphogenesis).

I have discovered that the sequences of action which my colleagues and I have invented for this purpose are also immensely helpful for artists, architects, builders and others, provided they are prepared to go into an egoless state while doing it (a bit different from some current ethos on artistic creativity).

Commentary and discussion led by Caroline Humphrey

Chair: Bronac Ferran

## panel 3: ethnographic description and repatriation: usability and creativity

Tuesday 5th July, 9am - 12.30pm

Convenor: Lissant Bolton

What are the uses of anthropological or social science descriptions as understood by the subjects of ethnographic research? In what ways can these kinds of descriptions fit into people's own projects, be made useful or useable? Should social scientists have this engaged focus? What other forms can description take, and how do they intersect with anthropological description. Can ethnographic writing be theorised as engagement.

Lissant Bolton

9.00am

### **Forms of knowledge: repatriating/constituting ethnographic description in Vanuatu, South Pacific**

Ethnographic description is itself part of a (western, academic) knowledge system. As the goal of anthropological research, it is constituted by a series of theoretical understandings, and takes a specific intellectual form. Repatriating ethnographic description can involve a process of translation and negotiation between divergent knowledge systems. In Vanuatu, knowledge can be bought and traded, and there are complex systems of rights which determine who may



know things. In response to the cultural and linguistic complexities of this small nation, the Vanuatu Cultural Centre has developed an extension worker program, which trains and encourages indigenous scholars to document and to revive local knowledge and practice through the archipelago. This programme has negotiated not only the diverse knowledge systems of the archipelago, but also distinct gender differences in the way in which knowledge is spoken and practiced. This paper discusses some of the negotiations necessary to the repatriation of ethnographic description in Vanuatu.

Mark Harris

9.40am

### **Recovering the history of peasantries in the Brazilian Amazon, and some of its problems**

This presentation considers two ways of mobilising the past amongst riverine peasants in the Brazilian Amazon. The first concerns my own use of unpublished documents in reconstructing a massive rebellion that took hold of the region in the mid to late 1830s. This project was prompted by one of my main informants who wanted me to write a 'real history of peasants'. In the contrast, the second examines the reclaiming of the indigenous Amerindian identities of peasants living in the Tapajós valley of the Lower Amazon in order to assert secure collective land rights. These identities are essentially derived from the ethnic terms found in colonial documents, predating the rebellion by some one hundred years. At the centre of the presentation is the question of how anthropologists, historians, and other outsiders such as NGO personnel, know their concerns match those of the people they work with and for. What are the culturally specific forms of social memory in these peasant societies and how can academics appreciate the non-written arts of generating knowledge? My aim is to challenge the hubris that has accompanied such efforts in the Brazilian Amazon. In opposition to calls in anthropology for more and better theory, I argue what is needed is more and better ethnographic descriptions in order to overcome the hubristic tendency.

Harri Englund

10.10am

### **Ethnographic description as witnessing: engaging with 'Human Rights' in Malawi**

Contemporary sociocultural anthropology involves a variety of methods and procedures that seek to correct the discipline's earlier tendencies towards reification and detachment. Collaborative Anthropology and Public Anthropology are currently popular labels for diverse intellectual and political standpoints. After a synopsis of these concerns, this paper considers some of the challenges that a strong official interest in Human Rights in Malawi presents to the ethnographer. After three decades of autocratic rule, Malawi has pursued a model of liberal democracy in which various authorities assert civil and political freedoms as the essence of Human Rights. The ethnographer's dilemma has been to engage with this apparent consensus over the meaning and scope of Human Rights. While endorsed by politicians, NGOs and donor agencies, rights as freedoms appear confining, even meaningless, to the country's impoverished majority. The paper examines how ethnographic description can become a form of witnessing that exposes highly particular interests in apparently universal dispositions. Complicity and self-indulgence, the two aspects of ethnographic witnessing that have so far received attention among anthropologists, turn out to be somewhat limiting notions when this mode of engagement is explored more fully. The paper concludes by arguing that the burden of witnessing can also be imposed on the ethnographer as a key existential and moral condition of knowledge production.

tea/coffee break

Soumya Venkatesan

11.15am

**You are skilled, we are knowledgeable: description, creativity and innovation in a 'traditional Indian craft'**

*'It is not easy to trace the origin of Pattamadai silk mats, a real work of aesthetics rather than the vision of the mat-weaver.'*

Syed Muthahar, *University bid to revive dying skill in The Hindu*, 23/11/1995

The term 'traditional Indian craft' glosses a complex trope involving material and discursive practices and objects, and, visions of the future and the past. This paper focuses on the making of craft mats in a South Indian town. Arguing that weavers who make the mats are only one kind of producer involved in their existence, the papers seeks to identify the others, at the same time focusing on the ways in which different inputs into the mats are masked by the overarching yet amorphous category of traditional Indian crafts. It asks how the mats are described at various points in their social lives and what different ethnographic approaches-whether concentrating on recovering an original meaning or production context; or thinking about the nexus between power and knowledge - can contribute to the understanding of their place they occupy in local, national and international networks. The paper hopes to emphasise the importance of a process-centred description, which focuses on objects not as exemplars but as things that engender relations between socially and physically distant people, and as instantiations of social relations, tensions and collusions.

David Mosse

11.45am

**Anti-social anthropology? objectivity, objection and the ethnography of public policy professional communities**

One consequence of Malinowski's legacy of fieldwork is that what anthropologists know is inseparable from their relationship with those they study; the epistemology is relational. However, ethnographic writing breaks fieldwork relations, cuts the network and erects boundaries; it is necessarily anti-social. As anthropologists turn their interest in what people believe, say and do (and the inconsistencies between these) to the inter-connected institutions that comprise the modern world, to policy and professional communities of which they may also be members, their method of entering and exiting social worlds becomes more difficult. Arguing for the particular importance of an ethnographic perspective on the practices of powerful institutions, the lecture will use recent research on international aid and development to show how influential informants object to ethnographic accounts, resist anthropological boundary making, and attempt to unpack academic knowledge back into relationships.

## panel 4: what is the point of description?

Tuesday 5th July, 1.30 - 5pm

Convener: Marilyn Strathern

Description as politics: An old contrast between descriptive versus normative approaches in social science rears its head again at the beginning of the 21st Century. There are 'new' reasons to find much knowledge worthless, and description incomprehensible as an end in itself. Impatience with ethnographic detail is part of a politics of knowledge concerned with what bits of social science really contribute to society.



Marilyn Strathern

1.30pm

### **Failing to describe**

Following a brief introduction to the panel theme, this paper abuts the general normative question (what is the point of description?) with a descriptive observation of a particular case (lack of interest in the labour of ethnography). The account begins with an institution of higher education deeply committed to a research ethos, but in any arena than itself. When it thinks of itself as an institution, it is deeply committed to a management ethos. And with management protocols about the best use for information already in place, research with an ethnographic intent could only have descriptive ends. Is the institution's failure to describe itself as a social object, and thus as a certain kind of object of knowledge, simply lack of interest? Too obvious, too arcane? Shortage of skill [to do so], absence of relevance [to have the will]? No time [to spend], no funds [to waste]? This is not the only area in which the scope of description is upstaged by the very axiom that knowledge should be useful. But what it might suggest about the creativity of description remains interestingly open.

Robert Thornton

1.50pm

### **How does a university create value?**

This paper explains the current vogue of managerialism in University governance in terms of what I call the 'Economist's As-if'. It asks whether universities can, in fact, be run 'like a business' as if they were market institutions. I argue that universities can be run in this way, but this entails certain costs. Comparing universities to other human endeavours that can be run 'as if' they were market institutions such as sex, war, and families, I conclude that while this is possible, it is not morally desirable, and has certain deleterious outcomes. The reason for this in the university has to do with the 'meta-knowledge' (implicit knowledge about how to gain and order knowledge) that universities embody. The aim of tertiary education should be to produce autonomous intellectual subjects who see themselves as citizens of a global community of knowledge and as masters of disciplinary 'meta-knowledge' which uniquely enables them to produce and evaluate knowledge, and to engage in critical conversation in the university, in the public domain and ultimately in the global community of knowledge. Since meta-knowledge is embodied in persons and practices, it cannot be 'marketed', and this is the reason why universities cannot (pragmatically), or should not (morally, normatively), be run 'like a business' and why their value is difficult to establish in economic terms of the market.

How to 'do description' is a fundamental part of this meta-knowledge, as is knowledge about how to construct good arguments. As other papers in this conference make clear, description is often ambiguous (its validity cannot be formally established) and many are ambivalent about its value. While Stephen Toulmin's *The Uses of Argument*, (Cambridge UP, 1958) revolutionised thinking about how to construct an argument by describing it (claim, evidence, warrant), we have yet to describe description.

Alberto Corsín Jiménez

2.10pm

### **Describing collaboration as public good in education**

This paper looks at the recent appearance of ethics as a vehicle for institutional reform in the management of knowledge in universities. The Council for Industry and Higher Education's 2005 proposal for mirroring businesses' ethical guidelines in universities is a case in point. The Council calls for making ethics a central aspect of all university education, echoing similar developments in industry, where an endorsement of corporate ethical behaviour is seen of utmost importance if trust in markets, following recent scandals, is to be restored. In this light, business and universities' diverse agendas converge at the point where the ethical is called to

make 'society' appear. Self-consciousness about the need for ethics (in management and education) summons an organisation's publics (students, customers, shareholders, research councils, etc.) under one general rubric (the public good) and a similar model of sociality (accountable relations). Society and the public good thus appear as coterminous, blurring the differences between higher education and business, and their distinctive knowledge regimes, in the name of ethics. A parallel development is seeing the rise of knowledge transfer schemes and collaborative ventures between universities and the private sector. The paper argues that though collaboration may indeed be beneficial, the new language of ethics and public goodness does very little to help understand the nature of the social processes at work. Moreover, normative (ethical) descriptions of how institutions organize and manage their knowledge relations to 'society' miss the mark, because of their failure to redescribe the very social theory that is implicit in their accounts. A revised social theory of contemporary institutional collaboration, then, would need to attend to the terms through which the organisations redescribe themselves, a project that is here illuminated by comparing ethnographies of ethics in business and academia. Ethnographic description, unlike its normative counterpart, allows us to see how social theory naturalises its assumptions.

tea/coffee break

Casper Bruun Jensen

3.30pm

### **Description as inquiry and experimentation: on the multiplicity of usefulness in/of ethnographic practice**

As part of an interdisciplinary research project, which has as a mandate both to carry out research and to use it to inform policy makers the pressures of prescriptive interdisciplinarity are palpable. The paper proposes that these pressures are linked to more general anxieties of the social sciences, which might be referred to as respectively "the problem of stepping into" explored practices and "problem of staying on the outside". Getting a purchase on the point and creativity of ethnographic description requires a de-dramatisation of these fears.

My studies suggest that the social scientist has need of both the repertoires of stepping into and staying outside to accomplish 'usefulness' in different settings. This requires a constant effort to sort attachments to various parts of the field, because the different versions of the useful do not always align. Making the problem of the useful ethnographer amenable to description in (more or less) ethnographic terms is a first step in getting away from the dramatic scenarios of contamination (stepping into) and irrelevance (staying outside).

The challenge to think about the relation between description and creativity also encourages an attempt to re-dramatise the capacities of ethnographic description. What might description look like if taken seriously as first of all a performative matter of partial connection and sorting attachments? I want to explore this issue by considering what happens if an understanding of ethnographic practice and description as always multiple and variable is connected to pragmatic notions as Dewey's "inquiry" and Deleuze's "experimentation". Emerging is a view of the risk and creativity of description as residing in the links, which are built as ethnographers (partially) describe practices and thereby (partially) make available different versions which to imagine future attachments and detachments.

Dr Monica Konrad  
**Travelling concepts**

3.50pm

Thinking productively about the conceptual issues of concepts cannot be the exclusive terrain of the philosopher. The dictum philosophy extracts concepts, science extracts prospects and



art extracts affects (Deleuze and Guattari) is an artificial condensation of knowledge forms that overlooks the agility of concepts as potential collaboration devices for a galvanized comparability. If concepts can indeed travel between disciplines, traditions, scholars, regions and historical time-shifts, what might an anthropologist have to say about such knowledge movements in the light of current theorising in science and society debates?

This paper takes off from that point of exhaustive modernity where certain scientists and ethicists alike describe scientific breakthroughs as 'transparencies' - as effects beyond the social. It is said all too frequently, for example, that 'society' lags behind the pace of cutting edge innovations in the biosciences. The critical theorist might contend otherwise: instead of speeding up - ostensibly to catch up - it is incumbent upon the social sciences at the present time to 'slow down'. An anthropologically engaged form of 'slow-cook-thinking' might ask the following: how the value of concepts is to be kept under analytic vigilance - how the task of conceptual scrutiny is theorised through encounter with, rather than application to, the cultural objects under examination. A related issue is the formulation of an alternative vocabulary to the ideals of transparency and exhaustive coverage. What place is there [left] for the academic whose descriptions do not seek to make things explicit?

Georgie Born

4.10pm

### **Description as excess and evidence**

Description is never free of a driving analysis, whether explicit or implicit, coherent or inchoate. Ethnographic description - and even more reflexive ethnographic description - can both offend and seduce; it is accused of being both incomprehensibly detailed and richly suggestive. As much as ethnographic analysis, it has a history of evolving and contesting genres of description, which themselves belie any notion of neutral descriptive adequacy. If it attempts to refrain from the normative mode it often partly succeeds, but the normative can be glimpsed through the analytical ellipses which frame description. More problematic are uses of description which claim to eschew the normative. Today even anthropologists question the wisdom of rich description, which is accused of excess; while 'thick description' resounds as cliché. These issues will be discussed with reference to the chequered career of my recent, intensely descriptive and normative ethnography of the BBC. The interest of the study is its attempt to experiment formally with yoking 'excessive' descriptions to 'purely' evidential functions - an archive of events, practices, discourses - while offering them up also to satisfy the 'evidence-based' demands of policy, all the time allowing them to defy the latter demands in their unruly criteria of self-adequacy - which refuses reduction.

## closing plenary

Tuesday 5th July, 5.30 - 7.30pm

Commentary and reflection led by Eduardo Viveiros de Castro and Simon Schaffer.

This session will be an opportunity for Simon Schaffer and Eduardo Viveiros de Castro to reflect on what they have heard, and to add their own thoughts.

The conference brings together many diverse people and approaches. For this reason, license is given here for our commentators to draw whatever connections they see as interesting and important. This will then be a way for all participants to re-view the emergent themes of the conference. Given the brilliance of these commentators, we can expect a challenging, enlightening, and also highly entertaining finale.



# biographies



## panelists

### **Christopher Alexander**

American architect and planner, university professor, author and consultant; b. 4 Oct 1936, Vienna, Austria; ed. Oundle School, Trinity College Cambridge, Harvard University; mathematics, architecture; went to USA 1958.

Major Works include: Built works in four continents, including the 35 buildings of New Eishin College in Tokyo, the Linz Cafe, Linz, Austria, a village school in Gujarat, prototype low-cost housing in Mexicali, Mexico, Santa Rosa, Colombia, and Lima, Peru, Apartment buildings and public buildings in Japan and the United States, The Visitors Centre, West Dean, Sussex, Museum gallery for his early Anatolian carpets in the San Francisco Museum. Numerous private houses in California, Washington, Texas and Colorado. The Shelter for the Homeless in San Jose, California, was listed as one of the foremost American buildings of 1991. Under his direction The Center for Environmental Structure has undertaken some 200 projects, including town and community planning schemes, in many countries including Mexico, Japan, Austria, United Kingdom, Canada, Peru, Papua New Guinea, India, Colombia, Venezuela, Germany and the United States. Clients have included the United Nations, National governments (including Mexico, India and the UK), Cities (including Pasadena, California; Vancouver, British Columbia) and Industry (including Hoechst Pharmaceuticals and Sun Microsystems). Branch offices of CES have been maintained at different times in these different countries, and are currently active in the United States, Japan, and the UK.

Publications: Sixteen books include Notes on the Synthesis of Form (1964), The Oregon Experiment 1975, A Pattern Language 1977, The Timeless Way of Building 1979, The Linz Cafe 1981, The Production of Houses 1984, A New Theory of Urban Design 1984, A Foreshadowing of 21st Century Art 1992; The Mary Rose Museum 1994; The Nature of Order (four volumes): The Phenomenon of Life 2002, The Process of Creating Life 2003, A Vision of a Living World 2005, The Luminous Ground, 2004; over 200 articles in technical journals.

### **Roy Ascott**

Roy Ascott is Director of the Planetary Collegium <<http://www.planetary-collegium.net>>, Professor of Technoetics, University of Plymouth, and Adjunct Professor in Design|Media Arts at the University of California Los Angeles. Previous appointments include: Vice-President and Dean of the San Francisco Art Institute, California; Professor of Communications Theory, University of Applied Arts, Vienna; Chair of Fine Art, Minneapolis College of Art & Design; and President of the Ontario College of Art.

A pioneer of telematic art, Roy Ascott has shown at the Venice Biennale, Electra Paris, Ars Electronica Linz, V2 Holland, Milan Triennale, Biennale do Mercosul, Brazil, European Media Festival, and gr2000az, Graz, Austria. Originally a painter, he studied under Victor Pasmore and Richard Hamilton. His research is in art and the technology of consciousness. He is Editor of Technoetic Arts: a journal of speculative research, and serves on the editorial boards of Leonardo, Convergence, and Digital Creativity. He has advised new media centres



and festivals in the UK, the US and Canada, Brazil, Europe and the Far East, as well as the CEC and UNESCO, and convenes the annual international Consciousness Reframed conferences.

His publications, translated into many languages, include: *Telematic Embrace: Visionary Theories of Art Technology and Consciousness*, University of California Press (2003); *Technoetic Arts* (Korean trans. Won-Kon Yi), Yonsei University Press, (2002); *Reframing Consciousness*, Intellect Books (1999); *Art & Telematics: toward the Construction of New Aesthetics* (Japanese trans. E. Fujihara), Tokyo: NTT Publishing (1998). *Engineering Nature* will be published by Intellect late 2005.

### **Heather Barnett**

Heather is a visual artist and researcher whose work explores the territories of art, science and technology, often in collaboration with science professionals and processes. Heather's work is concerned with issues of society, technology and identity - with particular reference to medical science, interior space, and the limits of representation and recognition. Research projects include exploring issues of design within biological systems, the personal impact of surgical loss, physical intimacy and the doctor/patient relationship, and molecular identity through microbial and cellular portraiture. Heather has exhibited widely in the UK and abroad, and last year was commissioned by the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, for *The Other Flower Show. Cultured Colonies* (a photographic installation piece made in 2000) will be shown in Germany and Portugal later this year. She has been Artist in Residence in various settings including: Poole Hospital Pathology Department (2000), The National Botanic Garden of Wales (2001) and Infoterra: satellite imaging company (2002). Last year she was Research Fellow in Arts and Science (ACE/AHRB funded) at the University of Sussex exploring issues of Metamorphosis & Design with 4 research groups in Life Sciences. In addition to her art practice Heather also has considerable curatorial experience, and in 2000 brought contemporary art and medical science to a vast public audience by presenting *Invisible Body* at the Atrium Gallery, Whiteleys Shopping Centre in West London. She is also a regular Visiting Lecturer at universities across the country and has organised and facilitated numerous arts and film projects in gallery and community settings. Links: [www.heatherbarnett.co.uk](http://www.heatherbarnett.co.uk) [www.meta-art.info](http://www.meta-art.info)

### **Debbora Battaglia**

Debbora Battaglia is Professor of Anthropology at Mount Holyoke College, in Massachusetts. Professor Battaglia, who received her doctorate from Cambridge University in the field of Social Anthropology in 1981, specializes in issues of person and self, faith-based science, culture and power, and expressive culture. Professor Battaglia is the author of *On The Bones of the Serpent: Person, Memory, and Mortality in Sabarl Island Society* (University of Chicago Press) and the editor of *Rhetorics of Self-Making* (University of California Press) and *ET Culture: Anthropology in Outerspaces* (Duke University Press). Her current project is a collection of essays from the field, *Visits: An Anthropological Discourse*. Recent scholarly articles include "Multiplicities: An Anthropologist's Thoughts on Replicants and Clones in Popular Films," in the journal *Critical Inquiry*, and "Toward an Ethics of the Open Subject: Writing Culture 'In Good Conscience'," in Henrietta Moore, ed. *Anthropological Theory Today* (Cambridge: Polity Press). She is the recipient of fellowships from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities, and has delivered keynote addresses to the European Molecular Biology



Organization in Heidelberg, the Association for Social Anthropology Decennial meeting on Science and Society in Manchester, and the Cornell - St. Andrews University Knowledge Exchange Conference at Cornell University, on issues of faith-based human cloning. One needs to approach her recent work with Raelian Religion in the spirit of serious play.

### **Peter de Bolla**

Peter de Bolla is Reader in Cultural History and Aesthetics in the Faculty of English, Cambridge University. The author of a number of books including *Art Matters* (Harvard, 2001), *The Education of the Eye* (Stanford, 2003), and *The Discourse of the Sublime* (Blackwell, 1989). His most recent publication, on the implications of the blush in relation to our insertion into the pictorial field, is *De anatomie van de schoonheid. Van de neus van Hogarth tot de bloes van Burgess*.

### **Lissant Bolton**

Lissant Bolton is Curator of the Pacific and Australian collections at the British Museum. She has worked in Vanuatu, South Pacific since 1989, and is the author of 'Unfolding the Moon: Extending Kastom to Women in Vanuatu' (University of Hawaii Press, 2003). She has also published both on the anthropology of Vanuatu and on issues relating to museums and indigenous people. She is an advisor to the Vanuatu Cultural Centre, working with ni-Vanuatu women concerned to record, and to sustain, women's knowledge and practice through the country.

### **Georgina Born**

Georgina Born is Reader in Sociology, Anthropology and Music in the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Cambridge. She is a Fellow of Emmanuel College and in 1997-98 was Senior Research Fellow at King's College. In 2002 she was a Fellow of the University of California Humanities Research Institute, engaged in collective research on improvisation. From 1996-98 she was Visiting Professor in the Institute of Musicology, Aarhus University, Denmark. She trained in Anthropology at University College London and uses ethnography to study cultural production, knowledge systems and music. Her books are 'Rationalizing Culture: IRCAM, Boulez and the Institutionalization of the Musical Avant-Garde' (California 1995), an ethnography of music-science collaborations at IRCAM, which features the composer Alejandro Vinaso; 'Western Music and Its Others: Difference, Representation and Appropriation in Music' (California 2000, ed. with D. Hesmondhalgh); and an ethnography of the BBC, 'Uncertain Vision: Birt, Dyke and the Reinvention of the BBC' (Secker and Warburg 2004). A current ESRC-funded project, 'Interdisciplinarity and Society: A Critical Comparative Study', maps the nature of interdisciplinarity between the arts and sciences, and natural and social sciences. Other current research analyses the changing modes of creativity and new ontologies attendant on music's digitization; and the transformation of public service broadcasting in the digital era. Articles have appeared in the journals *Screen*, *New Formations*, *Social Anthropology*, *Cultural Anthropology*, *American Anthropologist*, and the *Modern Law Review*. Her studies of the BBC and of PSB have led to involvement in media policy in Britain and Europe.

### **Casper Bruun Jensen**

Casper received his doctoral degree from Information- and Media Studies, University of Aarhus, Denmark, for a study of the visions, development, and implementation of the

electronic patient record. He is currently a Postdoctoral Fellow at the School of Communication and ACTION for Health Research Project, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada. He has recent publications in Social Studies of Science, Science, Technology and Human Values, and Qualitative Research. His present research deals with ethnographic studies of medical practice informed by non-humanist science and technology studies.

### **Alberto Corsín Jiménez**

Lecturer in the Anthropology of Organisations, Social Anthropology, University of Manchester. I read Economics in Madrid and worked for a couple of years as an economic analyst there and in London before switching to anthropology. In 1996 I completed an MSc in Social Anthropology at the London School of Economics and moved to Oxford to do my D.Phil. (2001), which involved two years of fieldwork (1997-1999) in Antofagasta, a mining town in the Atacama Desert, Chile. Between 2001 and 2003, I held a British Academy Postdoctoral Research Fellowship at St Hugh's College, Oxford, and did another 6 months of fieldwork in Chile, this time between Antofagasta and Maria Elena (a desert mining community). I joined the Department of Social Anthropology at the University of Manchester in 2003.

My interests are in theories of economy, personhood and sociality. I am also interested in how the social acquires ethical forms, especially under regimes of capitalist accountability and organisation. I am currently researching the emergence of the corporation as a social form in the Atacama desert in the first half of the 20th century, with particular attention to the forms of 'society' that it created and related to.

### **Ian Cross**

Initially a classical guitarist, since 1986 Ian Cross has taught and conducted research in music and science at the University of Cambridge where he is now Reader in Music & Science and a Fellow of Wolfson College. He has published widely, principally in the field of music cognition. At present, his main research focus is on the exploration of music as a biocultural phenomenon, involving collaboration with archaeologists, psychologists and engineers.

### **Palle Dahlstedt**

Palle Dahlstedt is a composer, performing artist and researcher, currently living in Göteborg, Sweden. He holds degrees in music composition from the Lund University and Göteborg University, and a PhD in computer-aided creativity from Chalmers University of Technology. His music ranges from piano improvisations to orchestral works, from electroacoustic music to interactive computer works and electronica. He has won several international prizes and his music has been performed all over the world. Dahlstedt's current research interest is the application of evolutionary algorithms to the creative process. He is also a co-founding lecturer at the Art & Technology program at the Faculty of Applied Information technology, Chalmers University of Technology / Göteborg University. In 2003-2004 he was an Art & Science Research Fellow at the University of Liverpool, Dep. of Computer Science. Home page: [www.id.gu.se/palle](http://www.id.gu.se/palle)



### **Scott deLahunta**

Scott began in the arts as a choreographer and dancer. He now works out of Amsterdam as a researcher, writer, consultant and organiser on a wide range of international projects bringing performing arts into conjunction with other disciplines and practices. He is an Associate Research Fellow at Dartington College of Arts and an affiliated researcher with Crucible, an interdisciplinary research network within the University of Cambridge. In 2005, he will be visiting Research Fellow at Kings College, Cambridge and Ohio State University (a joint appointment involving the Advanced Computing Center for Art and Design and the Dance Department). He co-founded and lectures on a new post-graduate course in Choreography at the Amsterdam School for the Arts and serves on the editorial boards of the International Journal of Performance and Digital Media and Performance Research. For materials and articles on line <http://www.sdela.dds.nl/>

### **Harri Englund**

Harri Englund began his ethnographic work in southern Africa by living with Mozambican refugees in the Malawi borderland in 1992-93. His relationships with villagers on both sides of the border have been sustained through several subsequent visits. His more recent ethnographic work has included, since 1996, research in a township of Malawi's capital, among Human Rights NGOs and in the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation. His books include *From War to Peace on the Mozambique-Malawi Borderland* and the edited volumes *Rights and the Politics of Recognition in Africa* and *A Democracy of Chameleons: Politics and Culture in the New Malawi*.

### **Bronac Ferran**

Bronac Ferran is Director of Interdisciplinary Arts at Arts Council England where she leads a team responsible for work at the intersection of the arts and other disciplines including science, technology, law and industry. She is a member of the DCMS Forum for Higher and Further Education and the Creative Industries and of the taskgroup on Research and Knowledge Transfer which is led by the Arts & Humanities Research Council for the Forum. She speaks regularly at and organises events and initiatives, here and internationally, which focus on the key issues emerging at the intersections between the arts and other fields.

### **David Mosse**

David is senior lecturer in social anthropology at the School of Oriental and African Studies. He is author of *The Rule of Water: statecraft, ecology and collective action* and *Cultivating Development*, and has worked in development for Oxfam and the Department for International Development.

### **Simon Goldhill**

Professor Simon Goldhill is Professor of Greek at Cambridge University and Director of the Research Centre at King's which is hosting this event. He has published widely on all aspects of Greek Literature and Culture. His books include 'Reading Greek Tragedy', 'The Poet's Voice', 'Foucault's Virginity', 'Who Needs Greek?' and most recently 'Love, Sex and Tragedy', and 'The Temple of Jerusalem'.

## Mark Harris

Mark Harris has carried out fieldwork with peasant river dwellers in the Brazilian Amazon. Recently he started archival research on the region, focusing on the origins of a massive rebellion in the 1830s. His interests are in partnering knowledge and history, hybridity and religion. His publications include 'Life on the Amazon' (Oxford, 2000), 'Some other Amazonians' (edited with Stephen Nugent, London, 2004), 'The child in the city' (edited with Anna Grimshaw, Manchester, 2000), 'Teaching rites and wrongs' (edited with David Mills, Birmingham, 2004).

## Caroline Humphrey

Professor Caroline Humphrey has carried out research in Siberia and Mongolia in the Soviet and post-Soviet periods, and has also worked in India, Nepal and China (Inner Mongolia and Manchuria). Her research interests include shamanism; theories of ritual; socialist/post-socialist economy and society; political forms; and the political imagination in east Asia. For recent publications see <http://www.socanth.cam.ac.uk/staff/publications/humphrey.html>

## Jaromil

Jaromil the Rasta Coder (RASTASOFT.org) is an italian GNU/Linux programmer, author and maintainer of three free software programs and a operating system: MuSE (for running a web radio), FreeJ (for veejay and realtime video manipulation), HasciiCam (ascii video streaming) and dyne:bolic the bootable CD running directly without requiring installation, a popular swiss army knife in the fields of production and broadcasting of information. All his creations are freely available online under the GNU General Public License (Free Software Foundation).

He is a featured artist in CODeDOC II (Whitney Museum Artport), Read\_Me 2.3 (runme.org software art), negotiations 2003 (Toronto CA), I LOVE YOU (MAK Frankfurt), Rhizome, P0es1s digitale poesie.

Artworks include the software for Sophisticated Soiree (ZKM/intermedium02 award), the net-art piece FARAH, the performance TUBOCATODICO.

Jaromil is a component of the theatre company Giardini Pensili since 1998, having partecipated to the realization of Animalie, Metamorfoosi, Affreschi, Il Cartografo. Artist in residence: makrolab (Venice Biennale), medien.kunstlabor and Nederlands Instituut voor Mediakunst / Montevideo Time Based Arts.

Wired to the matrix since 1991 (BBS point on CyberNet 65:1500/3.13), co-founded in 1994 the non-profit organization Metro Olografix for the diffusion of telematic cultures, in 2000 opened the software atelier dyne.org; he is member of the FreakNet, sub-root for autistici/inventati.org, active with italy indymedia, Radio Onda Rossa (Roma 87.9FM), Streamtime and ASCII.

Collaborations include: Ars Electronica Center / Futurelab, PUBLIC VOICE Lab, digitalcraft.org, 01001.org, August Black, [epidemiC], Florian Cramer, 92v2.0, LOA hacklab, CandidaTV, the Mitocondri, the HackMeeting and TransHackmeeting communities. See <http://rastasoft.org> and <http://dyne.org>



### **Monica Konrad**

Monica Konrad teaches at the Department of Social Anthropology, University of Cambridge and is a Bye-Fellow of Girton College. She directs PLACED-O' (Partners Linked Across Collaborations in Ethics and the Biosciences), a Research Orbital bringing together scholars inside and outside of Cambridge to explore various aspects of collaborative practice. Her current research addresses the relevance of contemporary anthropology for global governance in science, international ethics, and interdisciplinary studies. She is the author of *Nameless Relations* (Berghahn, 2005) and *Narrating the New Predictive Genetics: Ethics, Ethnography and Science* (Cambridge University Press, 2005) and currently acts as anthropological advisor to bioethics councils in the UK and for the UN.

### **James Leach**

James Leach is Research Fellow and Director of Studies in Anthropology, King's College Cambridge and an Associate Lecturer in the Dept. of Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge.

Field research: Madang Province, Papua New Guinea 1994-5, 1999, 2000-2001. Published works on kinship and place, creativity, artistic production, ownership and cultural/intellectual property. (*Creative Land. Place and Procreation on the Rai Coast of Papua New Guinea*. 2003 Berghahn Books, *Rationales of Ownership. Transactions and Claims to Ownership in Contemporary Papua New Guinea*, (ed with Lawrence Kalinoe), 2004 Sean Kingston Publishing.)

Field Research U.K.: 2002 to present, as an 'Attached Observer' with participants in Art-Science collaborations. 'Attached Observer' refers to a dual role: both facilitator for a network among collaborators, and a commentator on the social and conceptual relationships influencing the collaborations. The former role is fed by understandings gained through the latter. James is also directing research on constructions of gender among Open Source software programmers. Publications focussing on knowledge production, collaboration, interdisciplinarity, multiple authorship and models of ownership (*Social Analysis*, Cambridge Anthropology).

Awarded the Royal Anthropological Institute JB Donne Prize in the Anthropology of Art for 1999, and The Philip Leverhulme Prize in 2004.

### **Thomas Lehmen**

1963 born in Oberhausen/Germany; 1986-90 studies at the S.N.D.D. (School for New Dance Development) Amsterdam; Working in Berlin/Germany since 1990; Touring world wide since 1999. [www.thomaslehmen.de](http://www.thomaslehmen.de)

Pieces:

1995 "Brainsand" (Fabrik Potsdam)

1997 "EXTENDED VERSION" (Theater am Halleschen Ufer, Berlin)

1998 "friendly fire" (Theater am Halleschen Ufer, Berlin)

"No Fear" (Theater am Halleschen Ufer, Berlin)

1999 "Baustelle, Einfahrt Freihalten" (comission of the Goethe Institute, Tallinn)

"distanzlos", Solo (Theater am Halleschen Ufer, Berlin)

2001 "mono subjects", Trio (TanzWerkstatt, Berlin)

"clever" (comission of Dance Northwest and the University of Lancaster)

"One Two One" (Internationales Tanzfest Berlin)

2002 "Schreibstueck", score  
 "Dialogues", with artists on-site (Rio de Janeiro)  
 2003 "Kaffee Kuchen Menschen Arbeit" (first working phase of "STATIONEN<sup>3</sup>) (Berlin)  
 "STATIONEN - Station 1, Berlin<sup>3</sup> (TanzWerkstatt/Podewil, Berlin)  
 "Operation<sup>3</sup> (video lecture) (HAU, Berlin)  
 2004 "Ali<sup>3</sup> (video lecture) (HAU, Berlin)  
 "FUNKTIONEN<sup>3</sup> (Zagreb, Kuusiku, Sofia, Berlin)  
 "It's better to..." (IMDT, Dublin)  
 2005 "laughing - crying" (Laban London)

Publications:

2002 Thomas Lehmen "Schreibstueck" (German/English), ISBN 3-00-009996-4.  
 2003 Thomas Lehmen "STATIONEN<sup>3</sup>, Magazine (German/English), ISSN 1612-7161.  
 2004 Thomas Lehmen "FUNKTIONEN tool box" (English), ISBN 3-00-014990-2.

**David Mosse**

David Mosse is Reader in Social Anthropology at SOAS. Current interests are the anthropology of international development, environmental history, and south Indian Christianity and the politics of caste and religious identity. He is author of *The Rule of Water: Statecraft, Ecology and Collective Action* (OUP, 2003) and *Cultivating Development* (Pluto 2005) and has worked in development for Oxfam and DFID.

**Bronwyn Parry**

Bronwyn Parry is an economic and cultural geographer whose primary interests lie in investigating the way human-environment relations are being recast by technological, economic and regulatory changes. Her special interests include the rise and operation of the life sciences industry, informationalism, the commodification of life forms, bio-ethics, and the emergence of intellectual property rights, indigenous rights and other regulatory knowledge systems. She has just completed a three year Wellcome Trust funded project on the creation and use of human tissue collections in the UK and is the author of "Trading the Genome: Investigating the commodification of bio-information" recently published by Columbia University Press.

**Simon Schaffer**

Simon Schaffer is Professor of History of Science in the University of Cambridge. He coauthored *Leviathan and the air pump: Hobbes, Boyle and the experimental life* (1985) and has edited work in the history of science, philosophy and systems of thought in the early modern and Victorian periods. he has recently published papers on William Rivers and the relations between anthropology and the sciences.

**Marilyn Strathern**

Marilyn is William Wyse Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge and Mistress of Girton College. In 2001 she received a DBE for services to social anthropology. While she is increasingly preoccupied with administration (the edited book, *Audit Cultures* (2000), subtitled *Anthropological studies in accountability, ethics and the academy*, touches on the institutionalisation of good practice), her research remains a lifeline. Starting in 1964, she has carried out fieldwork over several years in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea (Melanesia), the most recent field visit being in 1995. Her research



interests have for some time been divided between Melanesian and British ethnography. Investigations in gender relations in PNG (*Women in Between*, 1972) and kinship in the UK (*Kinship at the Core*, 1981) together led to a critical appraisal of ongoing models of Melanesian societies (*The Gender of the Gift*, 1988), and of British consumer culture (*After Nature*, 1992). Debates around legislation following the Warnock Report stimulated an interest in reproductive technologies; a collaborative research project (1990-91) that examined some of the issues in the context of kinship was published as *Technologies of Procreation* (Edwards et al, 1993). Most recently she has been involved with colleagues, in PNG and the UK, in another collaborative study, this time of debates over intellectual and cultural property under the general title *Property, Transactions and Creations* (*Transactions and Creations*, ed with E Hirsch, 2004). Common elements in these projects come from an ongoing curiosity about languages of description.

### **Robert Thornton**

Professor Robert Thornton studied at Stanford University and Makerere University, Uganda, from 1967 to 1972 (BA Stanford 1972), and The University of Chicago (PhD 1978), before teaching at University of Cape Town, South Africa from 1979-1989. He spent a year at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, 1989-90, then at Rutgers University (NJ, USA) in 1990-91, and has been a member of the Anthropology Department of the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 1992 to the present. He has published two books: *'Space, Time and Culture among the Iraqw of Tanzania'* (Academic Press 1980) and *'The Early Writing of Bronislaw Malinowski'* (Cambridge U Press, 1992), 21 articles in refereed journals, 17 chapters in edited books, 19 major consultant reports, and 20 reviews and other articles. He was a member of the seminar at American School of Research that resulted in the book *'Writing Culture'* (1986, edited by J Clifford and G Marcus), and has conducted ethnographic research in East Africa and South Africa. Current active research areas include HIV/AIDS and medical anthropology (in Uganda and South Africa), and ethnography of traditional healers, traditional authorities, land and landscape, ecology and tourism in Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. Other interests include intellectual history of anthropology, political anthropology of southern Africa, study of time, and linguistics.

### **Goronwy Tudor Jones**

Goronwy Tudor Jones, DSc FInstP, is a Reader in High Energy Physics at the University of Birmingham. He established the Neutrino Physics Group which for about 20 years was involved in deep inelastic experiments at CERN in Geneva and Fermilab in Chicago, probing the quark-gluon substructure of neutrons and protons. More recently he has been a member of the Heavy-Ion Physics group which hopes to study the properties of the Quark-Gluon Plasma at the Large Hadron Collider at CERN in 2007.

He is the 'collaborating scientist' with the novelist Alan Wall in an ACE/AHRB Arts and Science Research Fellowship entitled *'Extremities of Perception: Imagery, Beauty and Understanding in Cosmo-Quark Physics'*.

### **Soumhya Venkatesan**

Soumhya Venkatesan's research among Muslim craft weavers in Pattamadai town South India involved learning how to weave the mats for which the weavers are known throughout India. This has given her a unique perspective from which to think about the making of the Indian craft object. Soumhya's publications include *Crafting culture: Pattamadai mats from*



South India (2002). This accompanied an exhibition she curated at the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. She is currently preparing her doctoral thesis for publication. Soumhya will be leaving King's College, Cambridge, where she is a Post-Doctoral Research Associate in Anthropology, for Manchester University to take up a lectureship in the Department of Social Anthropology.

### **Alejandro Viñao**

Born 4/9/1951, Buenos Aires, Argentina. British citizen since 1994. Alejandro Viñao studied composition with the Russian composer Jacobo Ficher in Buenos Aires. In 1975 he moved to Britain where he continued his studies at the Royal College of Music and later at the City University in London where in 1988 he was awarded a Ph.D. in composition.

Viñao has received a number of international prizes and awards including the 'Golden Nica' Prix Ars Electronica (1992), 1st Prize at The International Rostrum at the Unesco World Music Council (1984) and many others.

Viñao's music has been played and broadcast throughout Europe and the U.S.A and has been featured in international festivals such as the Tanglewood Festival, the Warsaw Autumn Festival and the London PROMS. He has received commissions from various performing groups and institutions around the world such as I.R.C.A.M, in France, MIT in the USA, the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the Kronos quartet.

During the 80's Viñao worked at Ircam at regular intervals and in 1987 he was composer in residence at M.I.T. in the U.S.A. In 1994 Alejandro Viñao was awarded the Guggenheim fellowship in composition. His piece Apocryphal Dances was premiered by the BBC Symphony Orchestra in London in 1997. The same year Viñao was invited to Japan to present his music in a Portrait Concert. Later that year, his chamber opera Rashomon was premiered in Germany. This work was commissioned by ZKM for the opening of their new building in Karlsruhe. Since then Rashomon has been produced in Paris, London and Gothenburg.

Following the success of his choral work Epitafios, Viñao was commissioned a new piece 'La Trama' for mixed choir and computer by the German Südwestrundfunk. This latest work was premiered in February 2003 by the SWR Vokalensemble Stuttgart.

Alejandro Viñao's music is characterised by the use of pulsed rhythmic structures to create large scale form, and by a melodic writing which -as in the case of much non-European music- develops through rhythm rather than harmony. In addition to instrumental and Electroacoustic compositions he has also been involved with the creation of multimedia works, has composed music for some 20 films and produced several radio programmes for the BBC.

During 2004 Viñao was Research Fellow at the Music Faculty of Cambridge University. See [www.vinao.com](http://www.vinao.com)

### **Eduardo Viveiros de Castro**

Eduardo Viveiros de Castro teaches anthropology at the Museu Nacional of Rio de Janeiro. He was Simon Bolívar Professor of Latin American Studies at the University of Cambridge (1997-98) and Directeur de Recherche at the CNRS in Paris (1999-2001). His publications include *From the Enemy's Point of View: Humanity and Divinity in an Amazonian Society* (1992) and *A Inconstância da Alma Selvagem* (2002). He is currently the director of the "Núcleo de Transformações Indígenas" (NuTI), a project/research group sponsored by the



National Research Council of Brazil. [www.nuti.scire.coppe.ufrj.br/index.php](http://www.nuti.scire.coppe.ufrj.br/index.php)

### **Alan Wall**

Alan Wall is a novelist and short story writer. His books include *Bless the Thief*, *The Lightning Cage*, *The School of Night*, *China* and *Richard Dadd in Bedlam*. His volume of poetry *Jacob* was shortlisted for the Hawthornden Prize. He has taught at various universities and was for two years a Royal Literary Fund Fellow in Writing at Warwick and Liverpool John Moores. In 2003 he was awarded an AHRB/Arts Council Fellowship to research and write *Extremities of Perception* with the particle physicist Gron Tudor Jones. This book examines the sources of creativity in both science and art.

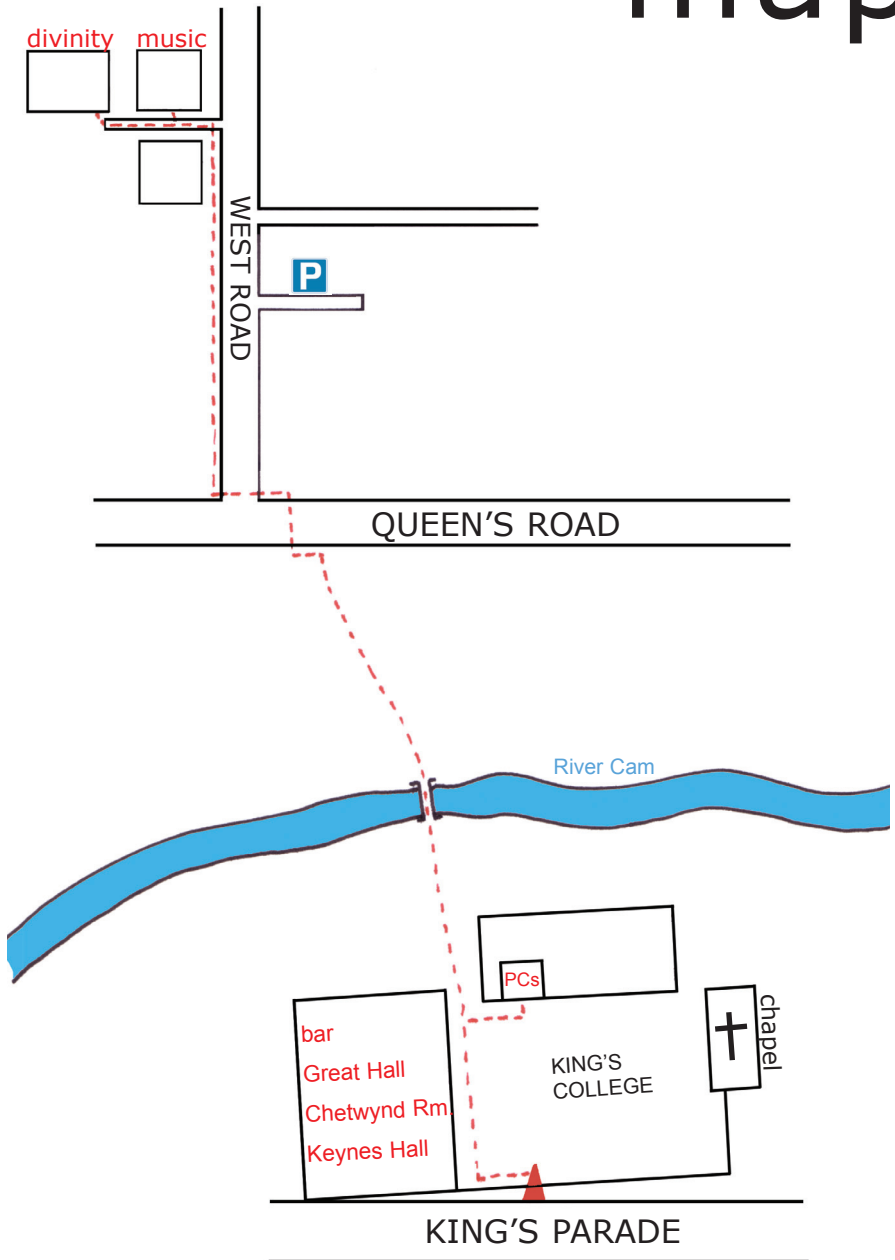
Alan Wall is Senior Lecturer in English and Creative Writing at University College Chester.

### **Robert Whittle**

Research Reader at the University of Sussex, is a geneticist whose research over 30 years has concentrated upon cellular and molecular mechanisms underlying animal and human development, during the emergence of spatial patterns. More recently, he has become curious about possible reciprocal benefits from collaborations between artists and scientists, in particular to see whether the science base benefits from such exploratory practice. In 2003 he held a Leverhulme Research Fellowship to pursue depictions of developmental genetics in art and in the public understanding of science, and in 2003/4 was a participating scientist and manager of a Fellowship awarded by the AHRB/ACE to Heather Barnett for a project entitled *Metamorphosis and Design*. In 2000, he was a participating scientist in *Invisible Body* at the Atrium Gallery, London, after being a runner-up in the Wellcome Trust Sci-art competition in 1998. With support from the Wellcome Trust, he staged a science-art exhibition in 2002 for the British Society for Developmental Biology at their annual conference. In 2004 with a local poet, he conducted open-access creative writing workshops, funded by the city and the local NHS Trust in Brighton, on themes from the 'new genetics'. This latter activity reflects his interest in the use of metaphor in portraying insights from science by scientists as well as by writers more generally.

Links: [www.meta-art.info](http://www.meta-art.info) and <http://www.zenadsl5348.zen.co.uk/>

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