

MAC-CORRY HALL, B125

CULTURAL STUDIES
GRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

CREATIVE CONNECTIONS

NOVEMBER 16TH

2:30PM

You are invited to an afternoon showcase of academic excellence while graduate students from the Cultural Studies program present their ongoing research and creative endeavours, and showcase the breadth of research being performed within our program. Refreshments will be provided. Please join us!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to respectfully acknowledge that the land upon which we convene for this event, and that which Queen's University is situated on, is the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee, covered by Treaty 57. We are grateful to those who carefully and lovingly stewarded this land, and those who continue to do so. As many of us are visitors to this land, we are honoured to be here and have this space to join together as a community to share our thoughts and our time with each other.

THANK YOU to the Creative Connections organizing team- Baraa Abuzayed, Samia Khan, Brenna MacDougall, and Emily Veysey. Their hard work and dedication to bringing the Cultural Studies community together after a difficult few years of pandemic separation made this all possible. Thank you to Dr. Jeffrey Brison, Dr. Laura Murray, Carrie Miles, Susanne Cliff-Jungling, and Lisa Sykes for their help with the conference and their hard work keeping our program running, bringing together a diverse and exciting group of people and ensuring that we can gather together as a community and share in each others' work. Thank you to all of the Cultural Studies faculty affiliates, the Faculty of Arts and Science, the School of Graduate Studies, and all other members of the Cultural Studies community who have supported the research of the presenters, and the presenters themselves! And of course thanks to all of those who came to present during Creative Connections, we are excited to have you all here.

SCHEDULE

The question period for each panel will occur at the end of all presentations. Please hold your questions until this time.

2:30–2:40PM: Opening Remarks

Opening remarks and land acknowledgement

2:40–3:40PM Panel #1

Naimul Karim, PhD: “Exploring the role of arts in the world’s largest refugee settlement in Bangladesh”

Toleen Touq, MA: “Temporalities of Artist Gatherings Under Capitalism”

Baraa Abuzayed, PhD: “Embroidering Life: Palestinian Traditional Dresses and Storytelling”

Jill Price, PhD: “From Unsettling to UN/making – A Critical Methodology for Un/making Anthropogenic Perspectives and Gestures Towards Land”

Moderated by Brenna MacDougall

3:40–3:50PM Refreshment Break

3:50–4:35PM Panel #2

Devon Ostrom, PhD: “Public installations and Projects”

Brenna MacDougall, PhD: “Publics: Community Performed”

Francisco Zepeda, PhD: “Failed Aspirations: Modernity, Religion and the Evolution of Social and Political Imaginaries in Mexico from 1917 to 2017”

Moderated by Emily Veysey

4:35–5:00PM Refreshment Break

SCHEDULE CONTINUED

The question period for each panel will occur at the end of all presentations. Please hold your questions until this time.

5:00–5:45PM Panel #3

Alanna Stuart, PhD: “Rewind/Forward”

Adesoji Babalola, PhD: “Decolonial Noise: Translanguaging as Protest Practice in Nigerian Hip Hop Music”

Samia Khan, PhD: “Nationalism Against Language: The Case of Urdu on the Verge of Exile”

Moderated by Baraa Abuzayed

5:45–6:00PM Refreshment Break

6:00–6:45PM Panel #4

Evalyn Parry, MA: “Citation-in-Song”

Emily Veysey, MA: “(Re)producing the Machine: Reproductive Technologies and Artificial Reproduction in Science Fiction Narratives”

Jessica Sealey, PhD: “A Visible Woman: Sexuality, Surveillance, and Suicide Under the Contagious Diseases Acts in Britain, 1875”

Moderated by Samia Khan

7:00 Symposium Closing

THE PRESENTERS

Naimul Karim, PhD

Biography:

Naimul Karim is a first-year phd student at Queen's University. Prior to joining the university, Naim worked as a journalist for more than a decade covering issues related to marginalized groups in south Asia such as refugees, workers in the clothing industry, sex workers. His work has been published for media organizations such as Reuters, The Guardian and The Globe and Mail. He completed his M.A. in Journalism from Cardiff University with a special focus on the role of protest music in the different political phases of Bangladesh.

Abstract: "Exploring the Role of Arts in the World's Largest Refugee Settlement in Bangladesh"

Despite vast research in the field of arts and refugee studies globally, little is known about the role of arts in the world's largest refugee settlement in Bangladesh, where nearly a million Rohingya refugees have been living since 2017 after they escaped persecution in Myanmar. With internet restricted in these camps and a majority of the Rohingya depending upon offline sources of information, art-based projects – in the form of community theater and musicals – play a key role in educating the refugees on key issues such as the dangers of human trafficking or the importance of vaccination. These projects have also helped refugees form an unconventional form of resistance. The literature in this field largely deals with the use of arts to overcome trauma and integrate refugees in the West or in some of the older refugee camps in Africa and the Middle East. But research on the influence of art on Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh has been rare. This study intends to fill that gap by exploring the role of art as a tool for communication, as a mode for activism and education, as a modality to keep one's culture alive in exile and as a means for healing from trauma in the Rohingya refugee camps. This study will undertake a qualitative and ethnographic approach. Interviews will be held with an array of Rohingya refugees who have encountered art-based activities. Key stakeholders such as NGO and government officials will also be interviewed.

Toleen Touq, MA

Biography:

Toleen Touq is currently an MA candidate in Cultural Studies at Queen's University. Her research is concerned with decolonial temporalities, specifically looking at the creative and artistic strategies employed by artists that break and unsettle the hegemonic linearity of colonial and capitalist time. Toleen is also a curator with over a decade of experience initiating and facilitating multi-disciplinary art exhibitions and happenings, residency programs, and pedagogical platforms, most often in collaborative and communal settings across the Arab world and Turtle Island.

Abstract: "Temporalities of Artist Gatherings under Capitalism"

Under capitalism, time and temporality have been rearranged in the service of the means of production, achieved through the mechanisms of standardization, transportation and industrialization; eschewing in a period of synchronized clock time and protracted working hours. In late capitalism, time itself is commodified, and our time is spent in productive labor that is deemed "useful". Within the global arts economy, the art is commodified, exchanged in transactional forms similar to any other product, with artists and art institutions focused on creating and facilitating these transactions. In my MA project, I position alternative artistic/curatorial practices such as residency programs, pedagogical platforms and conversations with artists are deemed "useless" and "unproductive" under the capitalist temporal paradigm; they cannot be quantified in material value, and they serve no end in the global economy of things. Such alternative practices center hanging out, brainstorming, conversing, and studying together; they are anti-capitalist in their essence because they require a refusal of productive time, and rather embody a dedicated communal time without a foreseeable result. These practices are centered on the unexpected, the unknowable, and the unfinished. What possibilities and potentials do these ways of thinking and being offer us under mainstream, capitalist temporality that pressures us into a never-ending cycle of production? Similarly to rest and play, my proposition is that by taking these projects seriously, we place value in the intangible as a way of being outside of the constraints of mainstream temporality, and as a way of reclaiming agency over our own time. In this presentation, I will share some of my research findings, and discuss the intersections of study and knowledge exchange activities we partake in with these notions of temporality.

Baraa Abuzayed, PhD

Biography:

Baraa Abuzayed is a textile artist and researcher currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Cultural Studies. Baraa's research interests include material culture, oral history, heritage, visual representation of culture and more. Her current research focuses on textiles and the ways in which their creation plays a role in decolonizing practices, and as ways of storytelling that can manifest a culture of survival in the context of the Palestinian people.

Presentation: "Embroidering Life: Palestinian Traditional Dresses and Storytelling"

Brenna MacDougall, PhD

Biography:

Brenna MacDougall is a Ph. D Candidate in cultural studies. She has a background in studio art and English Literature, with particular interests in political philosophy, critical theory, and one of the world's strangest books, James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*. Her current research is situated in the realm of political theory where she is working to develop a non-anthropocentric conception of the public that recognizes more-than-human life as members and constituent components of its creation and maintenance.

Presentation: "Publics: Communities Performed"

Samia Khan, PhD

Biography:

Samia Khan is a PhD Candidate in Cultural Studies Program at Queen's University (Canada). She has an academic background in History and Visual Studies, with a focus on Muslim women in South Asia. Her current research explores the intersection of language, religion, identity, and politics, in post-colonial India

Presentation: "Nationalism Against Language: The Case of Urdu on the Verge of Exile"

Jill Price, PhD

Biography:

Jill Price is an interdisciplinary artist, curator and educator grateful to be living on the traditional territory of the Wendat Nation and Anishinaabeg, in Barrie, Ontario. Working at the intersections of art, ecology and ethics, Price her SSHRC PhD research-creation thesis investigates how acts of unmaking, *From Unsettling to Unmaking*, imagines an UN/making Methodology that helps to disrupt and slow anthropogenic perspectives and gestures towards land.

Abstract: "From Unsettling to UN/making – A Critical Methodology for Un/making Anthropogenic Perspectives and Gestures Towards Land"

Starting from the perspective that the Anthropocene is a colonial, capitalist, industrialist, patriarchal and petrol phenomena that began with early global exploration, *From Unsettling to Unmaking* is a research-creation PhD inspired by the important writing of American author Jane Bennett, in which the author describes how waste is a "lively" actant that lingers and seeps across time and space. (Bennett, 2010). In coming to acknowledge how "all art is land art", as it from the earth all materials come, atop all art occurs, and eventually, to which all art returns, Price begins by briefly outlining how long European traditions of material use, image making and modes of presentation and distribution carry forward anthropogenic values and aesthetics. Embracing a research-creation methodology as defined by Stephanie Springgay and Sarah E. Truman, Price proceeds by summarizing how a research-creation methodology is integral to up taking a culture or methodology of UN/making so that the definition of unmaking becomes more aligned with creative gestures of care and repair rather than associated with acts of destruction. Also revealing how she selected research methods that would echo or reflect theories and processes of unmaking, Price concludes by sharing how looking to other artists working in and around dematerialization, relational aesthetics and eco art have helped to inform a creative and generative praxis that has led to activities and engagements that are reparative and/or restorative.

Emily Veysey, MA

Biography:

Emily (she/her) is a 2nd year MA candidate in Cultural Studies, and a 2022 recipient of the SSHRC CGS-M scholarship for her research project at Queen's University. She holds a BA (Hon) and BAA from the University of New Brunswick (Fredericton), as well as a Graduate Certificate and Dipl. Fine Craft/Design (Ceramics) from the New Brunswick College of Craft and Design. Emily's research focuses on the body, gender, and technology, as well as popular culture and media. A sci-fi buff and lover of all things robot, her favorite films include the cult classic Metropolis, as well as virtually all iterations of the Star Trek universe. She currently resides in Kingston, Ontario with her human partner Raymond and her furry companion Toki.

Abstract: "(Re)producing the Machine: Reproductive Technologies and Artificial Reproduction in Science Fiction Narratives"

This presentation will be an introduction and general overview of my thesis research regarding artificial life and artificial reproduction in science fiction film narratives, specifically the films *Alien: Covenant* and *Bladerunner 2049*. Science fiction has long proved to be an invaluable space for humanity to explore its existence with the technological, and can often be a sounding board for fears and anxieties surrounding certain technological developments. Read against the social politics of new reproductive technologies and their role with technologically mediated reproduction, the films that I have selected to analyze portray complex human relationships with artificially produced life, which themselves are involved in processes of reproduction. Reproductive technologies play a critical role in the lives of many humans wishing to reproduce, however, they are not a technology developed for popular consumption- therefore, it is critical to understand how popular visual media such as film, particularly within a genre like science fiction which has become prominent in today's media landscape, can provide commentary on these technologies and have the potential to impact the perception and understanding of them in our lives. Utilizing the figure of the cyborg postulated by Donna Haraway, and read through a framework of posthuman technological embodiment, this research explores the complicated intersections of the body and technology, media and gender.

Francisco Zepeda, PhD

Biography:

Francisco researches the intersection between culture, religion and politics in Mexico's 20th century. Specifically, he studies the interaction and evolution of political and social imaginaries, both religious and secular, and their role in building national identity. Additionally, he investigates non-state actors in Cultural Diplomacy across North America.

Abstract: "Failed Aspirations: Modernity, Religion and the Evolution of Social and Political Imaginaries in Mexico from 1917 to 2017"

This research explores the role and evolution of political and social imaginaries, both religious and secular, in building Mexico as a modern nation. By promulgating Constitutions and laws and implementing public policies, political leaders have greatly influenced social life and shaped the Mexican identity. However, national culture has also resulted from how ordinary people understand themselves, their social existence, values, traditions, attitudes, expectations, and religious views. Political and social imaginaries can reinforce each other, coexist peacefully or contradict, and clash. I investigate these interactions and contradictions by identifying significant political and social actors in crucial moments of Mexican history and using archive research and critical discourse analysis to examine the evolution and role of their imaginaries in modernizing Mexico. First, I explore legislative processes that led to the promulgation or amendments of political constitutions in Mexico regarding religious matters in 1917, 1992 and 2017. Second, I investigate the imaginaries of social movements surrounding those processes, such as those of the Cristeros (1926-1929), the Zapatistas (1994) and religious groups around the Constitution of Mexico City (2017), which exemplify voices traditionally excluded by the political elites that have contested the hegemonic narrative. I argue that the Mexican state's attempts to impose one particular imaginary, excluding others, resulted in a dysfunctional or "distorted modernity." By institutionalizing views of life and society disembodied from the lifeworld of society, the economic and political systems failed to achieve the goals and objectives they pursued. Consequently, the national ideals consecrated in constitutional texts turned into failed aspirations.

Adesoji Babalola, PhD

Biography:

Adesoji Babalola is a PhD candidate in Cultural Studies at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada. His research interests include linguistic anthropology, cultural studies, and Black studies. His two forthcoming articles are in *MUSICultures* (Canada) and *Journal of Asian and African Studies* (Sage, UK).

Abstract: "Decolonial Noise: Translanguaging as Protest Practice in Nigerian Hip Hop Music "

Nigeria, the largest Black nation on earth in terms of population, still harbours hegemonic language ideology that sustains racial and language hierarchy. This colonial legacy accords official status only to English and disregards the over 500 Indigenous languages in the country. School children are still being bullied by teachers for speaking African languages. English is configured as the only language for survival and status elevation for Nigerians. Millions of Nigerians who cannot speak English are configured to die because of this oppression. Yet, vast majority of Nigerians grapple with their daily linguistic struggle by engaging in resistance through their multilingual social practice of translanguaging (the use of multilingual resources as an integrated system). Drawing on lyrics of select Nigerian hip hop artists and the theoretical frameworks of translanguaging, raciolinguistics and decolonization, I argue that the profound multilingual practices evident in Nigerian hip hop music are not just protest practices but decolonial praxes. In this sense, these complex multilingual flows allow for ethnic and racial malleability and inspires the affirmation of both local and global identities in this youth culture. I conclude that translanguaging, if encouraged in all strata of life in Nigeria and other postcolonial sites, has the potentials of engendering self-consciousness in relation to Indigenous language revitalization.

Evalyn Parry, MA

Biography:

Evalyn Parry is a performance-maker, theatrical innovator, and cultural leader. Her award winning work crosses disciplines of theatre, music, and literary performance and has toured extensively both nationally and internationally. After five years as Artistic Director of queer theatre institution Buddies in Bad Times in T'Karonto / Toronto, she is pleased to be a student in Cultural Studies, researching the connections between leadership, creative practice, and decolonial / unsettled futures.

Abstract: "Citation-in-Song"

My research-creation MA project explores the connection between artistic leadership and artistic process/practice, with attention to the world-building capacities of the performing arts. The project uses songwriting as a primary methodology, and I am working toward the creation of a song cycle, to be performed by myself and a choir. Looking both forward and backward from the 'unsettled' space that research-creation scholar Stephanie Springgay calls "the speculative middle", I use this project to reflect critically on my time in leadership at Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, exploring key challenges I encountered and creative strategies that I used both in my artistic and leadership practice. Looking forward the project examines new, emergent, and experimental leadership and organizational structures arising in the performing arts sector, models that seek to disrupt deeply entrenched colonial and hierarchical models. I will share a look inside my process of songwriting-as-research, and my current exploration of "citation-in-song". There will be singing! And hopefully some laughs, and possibly audience participation. My presentation will definitely include a special rendition of my musical-tribute to Walter Mignolo's "Epistemic Disobedience" (as well as several other academic notions explored in CUST 803).

Devon Ostrom, PhD

Biography:

Devon is a culture worker with two decades of experience in creating projects that bridge sectors, cities and neighbourhoods. Involving assemblages of organisations, collaborations include a mural and research project in Kingston Penitentiary, Arrivals Canada, the PanAmPath.com and creating a levy on outdoor advertising that has raised over \$100m for art in Toronto, Canada. Greatest hits also include organising the first major exhibitions of Street Art at both the ROM and AGO. Devon holds a Masters of Public Administration from the London School of Economics with Merit and an MA in Creative Curating from Goldsmiths College. Certificates include Non-profit and HR Management from TMU and Fine Arts from OCAD. Devon has also taught Cultural Policy at UofT and Humber. Volunteer work includes materials and market research with Makermask and the Energy and Aerosols Lab at UBC. Currently, Devon works as a producer with the Provocation Ideas Festival and a co-founder of AccessArt.ca

Abstract: "Public Installations and Projects"

My presentation will be a review of select public installations and projects from 2002-2022, and will trace back to early research work in Kingston Penitentiary -- through the Beautifulcity.ca Alliance and diversifying access to public spaces -- to current works co-leading AccessArt and sensory / physical accessibility audits of public art spaces. Core questions will focus on how we create inclusive spaces and removing barriers to freedom of expression.

Alanna Stuart, PhD

Biography:

Alanna Stuart is Caribbean-Canadian music artist, researcher, curator. Her Polaris Prize-nominated duo, Bonjay, creates and performs a bass heavy, soul-driven hybrid sound that the New York Times hailed as 'Canadian Dancehall'. She is also a proud member of the Queer Songbook Orchestra. Outside of the studio, Alanna conducts research in 'diversity' and 'innovation', and explores how creative industries engage with socially marginalized cultural producers around the world. Stuart is a Toronto Arts Council Leaders Lab Fellow, Radio Starmaker Fund board member, and Queen's Cultural Studies MA student.

Abstract: "Rewind/Forward"

Toronto, the world's third largest Jamaican diaspora, is now home to Rewind/Forward, an online and in-person public art exhibition calling attention to the city's obscured soundsystem and bass music cultures. "I think that any sort of collective of people that are pushing a sound, pushing a culture, pushing [an] ethos around music, that's a soundsystem," says featured producer and DJ Bambii.

Rewind/Forward features monumental portraits, taken by Jamaican-Canadian photographer Jorian Charlton, of five notable Toronto selectors (DJs) and soundsystem owners: Heather "Live Wire" Bubb-Clarke, Tasha Rozez, Ace Dillinger, Nino Brown, and Bambii. Together, their individual experiences offer a fuller view of local bass music culture: Bubb-Clarke established one of the earliest femme-owned soundsystems in Canada after emigrating from Jamaica in the 70s, and Rozez is one of the district's only women soundclashers; meanwhile, DJs Ace Dillinger, Nino Brown, and Bambii have built more inclusive nightlife spaces centring queer Black, Brown and allied people.

Part-retrospective, part-forecast – the Rewind/Forward website hosts video shorts, custom music mixes, and audio documentaries with personal stories spanning pre-Independence Jamaica to Toronto rave futures. The project celebrates Jamaica's undeniable influence on Canada's own, while stimulating conversation on how Toronto typically engages with the Jamaican cultural forms – music, food, language, etc. – and legacies it adopted from Canada's 70s and 70s immigrant boom.

Jessica Sealey, PhD

Biography:

Jessica Sealey is a PhD candidate in Cultural Studies at Queen's University. Her thesis research focuses on nineteenth-century Britain and how ideologies of morality and sexuality constructed the discourses of medicine, sanitation, and moral reform, and shaped Victorian public health policies such as the Contagious Diseases Acts of 1864, 1866, and 1869. Jessica holds a Masters in the History of Art from the University of Western Ontario and has previously worked in Ontario's visual arts and tourism sectors.

Abstract: "A Visible Woman: Sexuality, Surveillance, and Suicide Under the Contagious Diseases Acts in Britain, 1875"

The Contagious Diseases Acts (C.D. Acts) of 1864, 1866, and 1869, allowed for the police surveillance, detention, and forcible medical examination of women who were assumed to be prostitutes in subjected garrison and port towns across the United Kingdom. The Acts were variously justified as both military and sanitary reform measures intended to stop the spread of venereal disease among Britain's army. However, these Acts were also a manifestation of complicated ideologies surrounding gender and sexual morality that served to regulate the presence of women in public. A movement of anti-Contagious Diseases Acts activists (referred to as "repealers") organized against the implementation of the Acts on the grounds that they reinforced the sexual double standard, amounted to a state sanctioning of vice, and infringed on the liberties of accused poor and working-class women. This thesis considers the C.D. Acts through the story of Jane Percy, an actress, singer, and widowed mother of three from the small garrison town of Aldershot, Hampshire in England. In the spring of 1875, Mrs. Percy was persecuted under the Contagious Diseases Acts until her death by an apparent suicide. Her story was seized upon by repealers as an example of the lengths to which working-class women were forced to go in order to escape the Acts' punitive, invasive, and dangerous medical examinations. In re-examining the circumstances surrounding the passage and enforcement of the C.D. Acts, and the resulting media coverage of "The Aldershot Suicide," narratives of surveillance and visibility become apparent. While Mrs. Percy may not have been a "public woman" (a Victorian euphemism for a prostitute) as police alleged, she was in fact, a "visible woman;" a woman who challenged traditional notions of femininity through her public life and career, friendships with and performances for soldiers, and unmarried living arrangements with men.