

# ***After Growth: A Symposium on Post-Capitalist Imaginaries***

**Nottingham Contemporary, online and in-person at  
The Space**

**Saturday 19th and Sunday 20th March**

*After Growth* is a symposium, a gathering of bodies and minds, but it is also an invitation to construct another future. At its core is the belief that prosperity does not depend on economic growth, and that – in the face of ongoing climate catastrophe – there is an urgent need to find new ways of living within planetary boundaries.

The concept of ‘degrowth’ emerges from the confluence of activism, ecology and economics, though it also sits within a larger cultural field of creative and artistic practice. Rather than producing blueprints of utopian visions, many of the contributors to this symposium work towards the creation of spaces where post-capitalist forms of life can be incubated.

Taking place both online and in-person, *After Growth* assembles a diverse array of visions, organisations and initiatives. Together, they will speculate on the possibility of life after growth, placing these at the heart of a city with increasingly green ambitions.

Programmed by Theo Reeves-Evison and Canan Batur. Funded by the University of Nottingham, Nottingham Trent University, Birmingham City University, and the Leverhulme Trust.

This symposium is part of our research strand *Emergency & Emergence*.

## Programme

Saturday 19th March, online:

2 – 2.10pm Opening remarks from Canan Batur and Theo Reeves-Evison

Canan Batur is Curator of Live Programmes at Nottingham Contemporary.

Theo Reeves-Evison is a Leverhulme Fellow at Birmingham School of Art, where his research focuses on the critical imbrications of art, ecology and speculation. Prior to taking up a Leverhulme fellowship he worked as a Senior Lecturer in Theoretical and Contextual Studies. He holds a Ph.D. in Philosophy from Goldsmiths College and an MA in Critical Theory from the University of Nottingham. He is the editor, together with Jon K. Shaw, of *Fiction as Method* (Sternberg, 2017), and has published in magazines and journals such as *Frieze*, *New Formations* and *Critical Inquiry*. In 2018 he edited a special issue of the journal *Third Text* on the theme of 'ethico-aesthetic repairs' with Mark Rainey, and his second monograph, which focuses on the tools that have shaped how environmental futures are constructed as objects of experience, is currently under review with Duke University Press.

2.10-3pm *Degrowth and Climate Justice*; presentations by Giorgos Kallis and Tonny Nowshin, followed by a Q&A

Giorgos Kallis is an ecological economist and political ecologist working on environmental justice and limits to growth. He has a Bachelors degree in chemistry and a Masters in environmental engineering from Imperial College, a PhD in environmental policy from the University of the Aegean, and a second Masters in economics from the Barcelona Graduate School of Economics. He is an ICREA professor since 2010. Before coming to Barcelona, Giorgos was a Marie Curie International Fellow at the Energy and Resources group at the University of California-Berkeley.

Tonny Nowshin is an economist, climate justice and degrowth activist. Tonny grew up in Bangladesh. Along with social movements in Bangladesh, she mobilised to save the world's largest Mangrove forest, the Sundarbans. She is an international development

professional and has worked for German and international climate NGOs. Professionally at the moment, her work focuses on fossil fuel finance. In her activist work, she focuses on centering the concept of climate justice at the core of the climate movement by putting forward antiracist and decolonial perspectives and networks.

3 – 3.10pm

Break

3.10-4pm

***Beyond Ecological Pasts and Radical Futurisms***; presentations by Fernando García-Dory and Pinar Yoldas, followed by a Q&A

Fernando García-Dory's work engages the relationship between culture and nature, as manifested in multiple contexts, from landscape and the rural, to desires and expectations in relation to identity, crisis, utopia and social change. Interested in the harmonic complexity of biological forms and processes, his work addresses connections and cooperation, from microorganisms to social systems, and from traditional art languages drawing to collaborative agro-ecological projects and actions. He studied Fine Arts and Rural Sociology, and is preparing his PhD on Art and Agroecology. He was granted the Socially Engaged Award by Creative Time New York, the Chamberlain Award and finalist of the Rolex Prize, He is fellow of Council of Forms (Paris) and board member of the World Alliance of Nomadic Pastoralists. He has developed projects and shown his work at Tensta Konsthalle, Van Abbe Museum, Reina Sofia Museum, SFMOMA, Pompidou Museum, Documenta 12 and Biennales of Gwangju, Istanbul and Athens. Since 2010 he has been developing a project about a para-institution called INLAND, in which to dissolve his authorship. For 2022, he is preparing exhibitions at BALTIC Newcastle, Serpentine Galleries London, Madre Napoli, Biennales of Istanbul, Kosovo and Urals, and for Documenta 15. He is also coordinator of the European network on Rural Arts called *Confederacy of Villages*, supported by Creative Europe program and Carasso Foundation.

Pinar Yoldas is an intradisciplinary designer/artist/researcher currently based in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Her work develops within biological sciences and digital technologies through architectural installations, kinetic sculpture, sound, video and drawing with a focus on post-humanism, eco-nihilism, anthropocene and feminist technoscience.

She holds a Ph.D. from Duke University where she was affiliated with



Duke Institute of Brain Sciences and Media Arts and Sciences. She holds a Bachelors of Architecture from Middle East Technical University, a Master of Arts from Bilgi University, a Master of Science from Istanbul Technical University and a Master of Fine Arts from University of California, Los Angeles where she worked at the ArtSci Center and the UCLA Game lab. Her book *An Ecosystem of Excess* was published by ArgoBooks in 2014. Pinar is a 2015 John Simon Guggenheim Fellow in the Fine Arts and a 2016 FEAT Future Emerging Arts and Technologies Award recipient. She holds a bronze medal in organic chemistry in the national science Olympics and had her first solo painting exhibition when she was five.

4 – 4.10pm

Break

4.10-5pm

*Civic Practices and Architectural Eco-Fiction*; presentations by Thandi Loewenson and Frances Whitehead, followed by a Q&A

Thandi Loewenson (b.1989, Harare) is an architectural designer/ researcher who operates through design, fiction and performance to interrogate our perceived and lived realms and to speculate on the possible worlds in our midst. Mobilising the 'weird' and the 'tender', she engages in projects which provoke questioning of the status-quo, whilst working with communities, policy makers, artists and architects towards acting on those provocations. Thandi is a tutor at the Royal College of Art, London, a Visiting Professor at the Aarhus School of Architecture and a co-foundress of the architectural collective BREAK//LINE.

Frances Whitehead is a civic practice artist bringing the methods, mindsets, and strategies of contemporary art practice to the process of shaping the future city. Connecting emerging art practices and the discourses of climate change, post-humanism, counter-extinction, and culturally informed sustainability, she develops strategies to deploy the knowledge of artists as change agents, asking, What do Artists Know?

Questions of participation, sustainability, and culture change animate her work as she considers the surrounding community, the landscape, and the interdependency of multiple ecologies.

Whitehead's cutting-edge work integrates art and sustainability, as she traverses disciplines to engage citizens, municipalities, and other communities of practice, in order to hybridise art, design, science, conservation, and civic engagement, for public and planet. Whitehead has worked professionally as an artist since the mid 1980's and has worked collaboratively as ARTetal Studio since 2001. She is Professor of Sculpture + Architecture at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago where she founded the SAIC Knowledge Lab. She explores Experimental Geography and other trans-disciplinary topics that engage the aesthetic, technological and geo-political dimensions of artmaking as a component of spatial practice. A long term resident of the Great Lakes region, she has recently relocated to the high desert of New Mexico to focus on xeric landscapes for the future.

5 – 5.10pm      Closing remarks

## Sunday 20th March, in-person at The Space:

11 – 11.15am      Opening remarks from Canan Batur and Theo Reeves-Everson

11.15am – 12.30pm      *Land and Solidarity*; presentations by Ez North (Landworkers' Alliance), and Kathrin Böhm, chaired by Rebecca Beinart

Ez North (online) helps to coordinate Cultivating Justice, a collaborative project between Land In Our Names (LION), the LandWorkers' Alliance LGBTQIA+ organising group, and Farmerama. Ez's background is within NHS healthcare, but he's spent the past few years doing food growing and other land-based work in the South West.

Kathrin Böhm (online) is a London-based artist working internationally whose practice focuses on the collective re-production of public space; economy as public realm; and the everyday as a starting point for culture. Since the mid-nineties, Böhm has expanded the terms of socially engaged practice to an unprecedented scale and breadth of operation in which she co-produces complex organisational, spatial, visual and economic forms.

Over the last two and a half decades she has, together with others, developed new infrastructures including *Culture is a Verb* 2018-21; *Company: Movements, Deals and Drinks*, 2014-ongoing; the *Haystacks Series*, since 2013; the *Eco-Nomadic School*, 2010-ongoing; and *International Village Shop with Myvillages*, 2007-ongoing.

Many of Böhm's works stem from long-lasting collaborations. She is a founding member of the international artist group *Myvillages*, since 2003; the art and architecture collective *Public Works*, 1999 – 2012; the *Centre for Plausible Economies*, since 2018; and a new workers cooperative *Uno Ino*, 2021.

Rebecca Beinart an artist, educator and curator, based in Nottingham. She develops research-based, collaborative and site-based projects that evolve through long-term engagement with places and people. She makes sculpture, installation and performance, and uses live engagement and public dialogue to reflect on collective histories and futures, social and environmental justice, knowledge-making, and the politics of public space. Rebecca is currently Engagement Curator at Primary, an artist-led space in Nottingham, running a public programme of commissions, workshops and events - centring co-production and community led processes.

12.30 – 1.30pm

Lunch break

Please see our hospitality pack for suggestions

1.30 – 2.45pm

*Speculative Fiction, Speculative Economics*; presentations by Bahar Noorizadeh and Ama Josephine B. Johnstone, chaired by Manuel Ángel Macía

Bahar Noorizadeh is an artist, writer and filmmaker. Her research examines the historical advance of speculative activity and its derivative politics in art, urban life, and finance and economics. Noorizadeh is the founder of *Weird Economies*, an online art platform that traces economic imaginaries extraordinary to financial arrangements of our time. Her work has appeared at the German Pavilion, Venice Architecture Biennial 2021, Tate Modern Artists' Cinema Program, Transmediale Festival, DIS Art platform, Berlinale Forum Expanded, and Geneva Biennale of Moving Images among



others. Noorizadeh has contributed essays to *e-flux Architecture*, *Journal of Visual Culture*, and forthcoming anthologies from Duke University Press and Sternberg Press. She is pursuing her work as a PhD candidate in Art at Goldsmiths, University of London where she holds a SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship.

Ama Josephine B. Johnstone is a scholar, speculative writer, artist and pleasure activist whose work navigates intimate explorations of race, art, ecology and feminism. Ama is a PhD candidate in Psychosocial Studies with Dr Gail Lewis and Dr Margarita Palacios at Birkbeck University of London. Her research takes a queer, decolonial approach to speculating and archiving interdependent, pleasurable Black climate changed futures in Ghana and across the Black diaspora. Ama's wider praxis thinks through sustainable economies and ecologies of care and survival for BIPOC womxn in the arts and academia.

Ama is a curatorial fellow with Frame Contemporary Art Finland and EVA International (Limerick), and was the 2020/21 Keith Haring Fellow in Art and Activism with BARD College (New York). She has had essays, short fiction and art writing published internationally, and has been exhibited across Europe.

Manuel Ángel Macía is Guest Associate Professor at the Art Academy of Latvia (Latvijas Mākslas Akadēmija), where he works on the fields of Curatorial Studies and Artistic Research. Manuel is also a researcher for the EU4ART Alliance, funded by European Commission's Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+ programmes and is an editorial board member of the Journal for Artistic Research. Previous to these appointments, Manuel was Senior Lecturer in Architecture and member of the Postcolonial Studies Research Centre at Nottingham Trent University in the UK. Manuel holds a PhD from the Art Department at Goldsmiths, University of London and is Fellow of the Higher Education Academy UK.

2.45 – 3pm

Break

3 – 4.30pm

*Repair and Remediation*; presentations by wild.NG and Asad Raza, chaired by Theo Reeves-Everson

wild.NG is a project founded by residents living in the Carrington, Sherwood, Basford and Mapperley areas of Nottingham City who are

passionate about the importance of connecting nature and connecting communities ‘street by street’. With the aim of aiding nature’s recovery and growing a wilder urban future across neighbourhoods, wild.NG, together with communities and affiliated advisors, programmes inspiring events, leading on creative campaigns and scientific research to influence positive action.

Asad Raza (online) (born Buffalo, USA) creates dialogues and rejects disciplinary boundaries in his work, which conceives of art as a metabolic, active experience. *Absorption*, in which cultivators create artificial soil, was the 34th Kaldor Public Art Project in Sydney (2019), shown at the Gropius Bau, Berlin (2020) and Ruhrtriennale (2021). In *Untitled (plot for dialogue)* (2017), visitors played tennis in a sixteenth-century church in Milan. *Root sequence. Mother tongue*, at the 2017 Whitney Biennial, combines twenty-six trees, caretakers and objects. *Schema for a school* was an experimental school at the 2015 Ljubljana Graphic Art Biennial. Raza premiered *Minor History*, a dialogue with his 91 year old uncle, at the International Film Festival Rotterdam in 2019.

Raza’s works often inhabit intimate settings such as *The Bedroom*, at the 2018 Lahore Biennale. For *home show* (2015), which took place at his apartment in New York, Raza asked artists and friends to intervene in his life, while *Life to come* (2019) at Metro Pictures featured participatory works and Shaker dance. Raza was artistic director of the Villa Empain in Brussels in 2016-7. With Hans Ulrich Obrist, he curates a series of exhibitions inspired by Édouard Glissant, including *Mondialité, Trembling Thinking* at the Americas Society in New York and *Where the Oceans Meet* at MDC Museum of Art and Design, Miami. Of Pakistani background, Raza studied literature and filmmaking at Johns Hopkins and NYU, where he helped organise a labor strike.

4.30 – 4.45pm

Break

4.45 – 6pm

*Visualising the Ends of Growth*; keynote presentation by TJ Demos, chaired by Angela YT Chan

T. J. Demos (online) is the Patricia and Rowland Rebele Endowed Chair in Art History in the Department of the History of Art and Visual Culture, at University of California, Santa Cruz, and founding Director of its Center for Creative Ecologies. Demos is the author of numerous books, including *Against the Anthropocene: Visual Culture and*



*Environment Today* (Sternberg Press, 2017); *Decolonizing Nature: Contemporary Art and the Politics of Ecology* (Sternberg Press, 2016); *The Migrant Image: The Art and Politics of Documentary During Global Crisis* (Duke University Press, 2013) – winner of the College Art Association’s 2014 Frank Jewett Mather Award – and *Return to the Postcolony: Spectres of Colonialism in Contemporary Art* (Sternberg Press, 2013). He recently co-edited *The Routledge Companion on Contemporary Art, Visual Culture, and Climate Change* (2021), was a Getty Research Institute Fellow (Spring 2020), and directed the Mellon-funded Sawyer Seminar research project *Beyond the End of the World* (2019-21). Demos was recently Chair and Chief Curator of the Climate Collective, providing public programming related to the 2021 Climate Emergency > Emergence program at the Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology (Maat) in Lisbon. He is presently working on a new book on radical futurisms.

Angela YT Chan is an independent researcher, curator and artist. Her work reconfigures power in relation to the inequity of climate change, through self-archiving, rethinking geographies and speculative fiction. Her recent research-art commissions span climate framings, water scarcity and conflict, and has held residencies with Arts Catalyst, FACT/Jerwood Arts’ Digital Fellowship and Sonic Acts environmental research residency. Since 2014, Angela has produced curatorial projects and workshops as *Worm: art + ecology*, collaborating with artists, activists and youth groups. She co-founded the London Chinese Science Fiction Group and co-directs the London Science Fiction Research Community. Angela is also a research consultant, having worked in international climate and cultural policy and on climate and sustainability projects for major cultural institutions. Angela holds a joint honours undergraduate in History of Art and Scandinavian Studies with Norwegian (UCL) and an MA in Climate Change: History, Culture, Society (KCL).

## Colophon

Organised by Nottingham Contemporary with support from Nottingham Trent University, University of Nottingham, Birmingham City University, and Leverhulme Trust.

Nottingham Contemporary

Organisers: Canan Batur and Theo Reeves-Evison.

Event Technicians: James Brouwer and Tom Harris.

Event Assistants: Tom Chamberlain, Craig Parr, Neil Dixon.

Programme Assistant: Helen Hamilton

Visual Identity: Peter Duffy

## Related Events

*Post Growth Prototypes, Post Growth Toolkit: Disnovation*

Nottingham Contemporary

Sun 20 Mar

*Vegetal Matrix: Decolonial Botany Workshop* by Patricia Domínguez

Nottingham Contemporary

Thu 31 Mar, 4 - 7 pm

Artists' Film: *Creatures of the Lines*

Nottingham Contemporary

Tue 12 Apr, 6.30 - 8.30pm