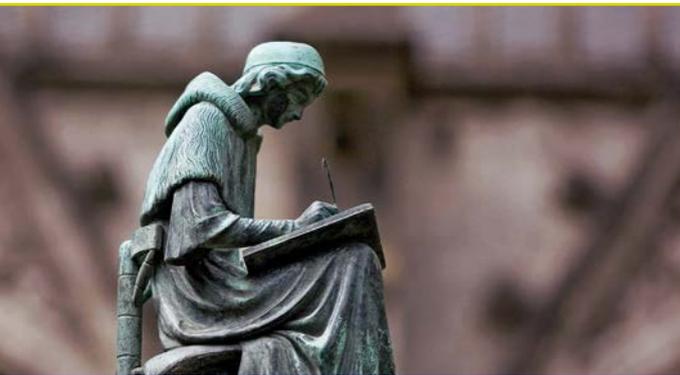




# The Update

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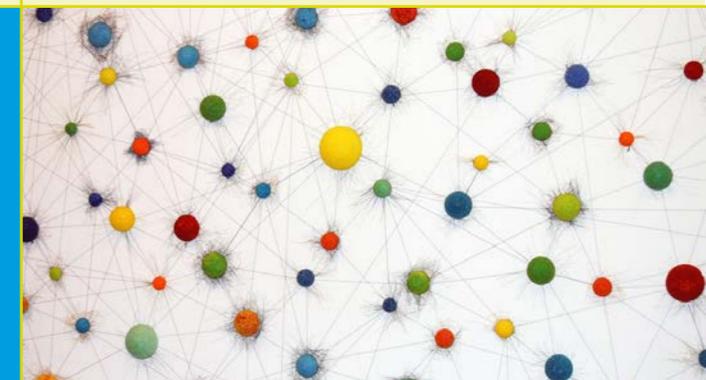
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# Forward Looking

This is the last issue of Centre for the Humanities Update that I will edit, as I am not entering the last semester of tenure as director. I started setting up the Centre from scratch in 2006, had it approved by the Faculty Board for a first pioneering phase in 2007-8 and then funded for the first official term from 2008-12. I was then renewed as director for a second four-year term, which saw the successful implementation of the [Treaty of Utrecht programme](#) and will come to an end on September 1, 2016.

CfH has by now found its place as a platform for interdisciplinary and interfaculty dialogue both in our faculty and at Utrecht University in general. It is internationally known as a critical think-tank not only about academic scholarship but also about

the social relevance and the value of the Humanities in the contemporary world. The Centre has never tired of stating that academic excellence is built through and with a sense of social responsibility. As the different reports in this issue clearly show, CfH has developed into a flexible and fast-moving platform for interaction with the City of Utrecht and its province and with other actors in the public sphere. But we have also explored new paths of thinking and teaching in the field, according to two main lines of reflection: the social and cultural analysis of citizenship within the Humanities and the 'new' Humanities with special emphasis on the relationship to contemporary science and technology and on sustainability issues. We are convinced that CfH functions as the

incubator, the academic interlocutor and the disseminator for pioneering, innovative interdisciplinary research and research training activities in the Humanities as a supra-disciplinary area.

I am especially proud of the network of active collaborations we were able to establish over the years, with individual researchers, teaching programmes, institutes and centers in the Faculty and across Utrecht University, with a special word of thanks to the Descartes Centre. CfH has also managed to work closely with the Strategic Area 'Institutions for Open Societies' (IOS) and the focus group 'Cultures, Citizenship and Human Rights' (CCHR). Moreover CfH has also built an extensive network of non-academic partners in society at

large, notably in the cultural sector: we have successfully held joint fellowships and residencies with the main Festivals in the city of Utrecht, notably Early Music, City2Cities, SPRING and Impakt for several years and plan to continue doing so.

CfH's work is structured around the conviction that mediation is central to twenty-first century thinking, to contemporary social movements and cultural inquiry. We have asked the question of what kind of research is art and media practice and have implemented this line of research through a successful multi-annual collaboration with BAK – the platform for contemporary arts (basis voor actuele kunst). Investigating the role that cultural images and representations play in the production of the social imaginary, of scientific scholarship and human interaction has been for us a major priority. CfH over the years has produced a regular string of visual documents, documentaries, films, internet applications and even one graphic novel for children. We also have an updated and state-of-the-arts archive of all the lectures and public events we have run throughout our existence: we hope that you and your students will visit it.

The international and especially European dimension of our work is and will remain capital. CfH is a founding member of and has till now

held the secretariat of ECHIC, the European Consortium of Humanities Institutes and Centres. In that capacity we have played a crucial role in setting up the European Alliance for Social Sciences and Humanities (EASSH), which is lobbying the European Commission. CfH was also a founding member of the recently formed European Environmental Humanities Alliance (EEHA), which is coordinating this fast-growing field. In the next phase we are planning to work more closely with the Humanities group within LERU (League of European Research Universities) so as to increase synergy and lobbying power.

I am extremely proud of our work and I want to thank the different teams of managers, secretaries and coordinators that have co-constructed CfH throughout the years. I look forward to the next phase of my professional life, which will be more focussed on research, and will support the incoming director fully. It is our shared hope that CfH will continue operating as a curiosity-driven, content-based, socially responsible, critical platform to explore the immense resources of the Humanities in the twenty-first century. It has been a pleasure to participate and an honour to serve.

**Rosi Braidotti**  
Director CfH



# CfH in 2015: Impact and Knowledge Transfer Through Arts and Culture

This year for the Centre for the Humanities (CfH) has been one of strong focus on impact and knowledge transfer within the main themes of activities: *The Academic and the Civic*; *The Idea of the University and the New Humanities*; and *International activities and fellowships*. Special attention was placed on collaboration not only with academic partners, but also cultural and arts institutions, as well as strengthening the ties with the city of Utrecht.

Within the theme of the New Humanities, we have actively collaborated with art manifestation [Hacking Habitat](#) and [BAK, basis voor actuele kunst Utrecht](#), in bringing renown scholars and artists to share their knowledge with the community in Utrecht. Saskia Sassen, a Dutch-American sociologist, gave a masterclass and a lecture on expulsions and invisibility in contemporary societies on April 9 as part of Hacking Habitat Lifehack marathon series. The explorations of the current economic, environmental and social predicament were continued with a public lecture of one of the most famous 'anthropocene thinkers' of today – Bruno Latour, in collaboration with BAK on April 18. The lecture attracted over 700 people, and is also available online on [CfH Lectures website](#).

The highlight of this year's activities within the New Humanities theme was a cutting-edge collaborative seminar series 'Posthuman Glossary' in May-June 2015, co-organised

together with BAK as part of the Future Vocabularies research programme. Over 20 established scholars and artists gathered to interrogate the concepts such as Anthropocene/Capitalocene, Ecosophies, Digital Activism, Algorithmic Cultures and Security – the markers of the 'posthuman predicament' that characterizes contemporary transformations. All seminars were recorded and are available [online](#), and a publication resulting from the series is to be published in 2016. Read more about the series on page 15.

The New Humanities activities in 2015 were finalized with a symposium on Green Citizenship, and a public lecture of Ursula Heise (UCLA), organised in cooperation with [Cultures, Citizenship and Human Rights](#) research area (CCHR). During the symposium three international speakers – Marcus Andreas (CfH fellow), Cecilia Åsberg (Linköping University) and Sherilyn Macgregor (Keele University) – addressed the

role of individuals in relation to environmental change and explored what is the potential of citizens as agents of change facing the sustainability challenge. Ursula Heise closed the symposium with her talk on 'Multispecies Justice' (see [lecture online](#)). Read more about our Environmental Humanities activities on page 13.

We have also continued our engagement with the theme of the Idea of the University. Together with the Utrecht University Humanities

Faculty Board we have continued the series of Faculty Debates by organising a debate on Wetenschapsvisie ('Vision of Science') in February. Read more about this event and Idea of the University theme on page 10.

Another strong focus this year has been the theme of the Academic and the Civic. Within it we have continued our Festival Fellowships as well as Artist-in-Residence programme, and established collaboration with the [Residencies in Utrecht programme](#) in

relation to Festival Fellowships. A Parisian writer Thomas Clerc was appointed as a writer-in-residence during the [City2Cities](#) festival in May – we invite you to read more about his residency in Utrecht on page 5. This year we also renewed our collaboration with the [Utrecht Early Music festival](#): a series of eventalks – short intellectual interventions – accompanied by music of Vox Luminis – were organised during the festival, in cooperation with Residencies in Utrecht. More about these inspirational talks can be found on page 6.





Our own Artist-in-Residence Janina Pigaht has filmed a series of interviews 'The Humanities in Europe', conducted by Rosi Braidotti, with leading figures in the Humanities today (see more on page 20).

Janina Pigaht has also been involved in leading one of our new programmes this year: talent development programme [Camera Interactiva](#). This initiative, implemented together with university and city partners, brings together students from the university and from the arts (or young professionals in creative industries) to develop creative interactive stories related to the various aspects of contemporary citizenship. Working in pairs, participants of this programme developed 5 interactive pilot stories, 3 of which have been awarded seed money to be developed further and

presented during the Cultural Sunday dedicated to Utrecht University Lustrum celebrations in 2016. Read more about this project on page 8.

This year the Centre has also added one more guide to its historical series of walking guides: *Utrecht en de Joden* ('Utrecht and the Jews'). The publication, written by Joost van der Lijn, has been presented during a Cultural Sunday in May, dedicated to the history of World War II, at a cultural centre MerkAz. The guide explores the traces of Jewish life and culture in Utrecht, its history and contemporary situation. Next year we hope to complete the historical walking guide series with a publication of 'Famous Women of Utrecht' guide.

Another publication that has recently been presented to the public is a book

for children 'Aan de Andere Kant van Vrede' ('On the Other Side of Peace'), written by a team of alumni of Utrecht University within the framework of Redrafting Perpetual Peace project. This book marks the completion of Centre's participation in an international [Perpetual Peace Project](#), the aim of which was to re-think peace from a contemporary perspective and encourage wider societal debates about this important concept. Read more about our activities within this project on page 7.

The Centre has also been active on an international level. Apart from the yearly participation in the conferences of European Consortium of Humanities Centres and Institutes ([ECHIC](#)) in May and a global Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes ([CHCI](#)) in July, the Centre also became a founding

member of [GALA](#) – the Global Academy of Liberal Arts, led by Bath Spa University. Being dedicated to promotion of interdisciplinary education and research, we also hosted 7 international short-term fellows, and the Director of the Centre gathered an audience of 94 students from 19 different countries for her annual Summer School course. If you would like to find out more about our international activities and experiences of our fellows, go to page 17 and 19 of this Update.

After a rich year of 2015, the team of the Centre is already looking forward to new challenges and inspiration in 2016. Not only will we celebrate the 380th anniversary of Utrecht University by bringing three Artists-in-Residence with City2Cities, SPRING festival and Early Music festival, but we will also present the final stories of

Camera Interactiva programme, as well as invite you to explore the new developments and pressing questions in higher education during the Idea of the University conference in September 2016. We hope that you have enjoyed taking part in our events and programmes, and we encouraged you to stay tuned in for our next year's activities!

**Goda Klumbyte**  
Programme Manager at the Centre for the Humanities

# Festival Fellowships

Since its establishment in 2007, the Centre has worked closely with the city festivals: apart from our own Artist-in-Residence, we have hosted 6 City2Cities Writers-in-Residence, 2 fellows of the Springdance festival and one fellow from each of the following festivals: Holland Animation Film Festival, Utrecht Early Music Festival and Impakt. The Festival Fellowship programme is an initiative designed by the Centre for the Humanities to bring together researchers, practitioners, students, Utrecht citizens and others interested, and to stimulate the discourse around the arts today. The goal of the Festival Fellowship is to address the social responsibility of both academia and the arts, with the city of Utrecht taking centre stage for this exiting encounter. Implemented together with leading Utrecht festivals, CfH Festival Fellow scheme involves appointing a fellow – selected by the organising partners – and organising a well-balanced programme designed for each of the fellows to engage both on an academic and an artistic level before, during and sometimes even after the festival.

## City2Cities Writer-in-Residence Thomas Clerc

The festival fellow in 2015 for [City2Cities](#) festival was a critically acclaimed Parisian writer Thomas Clerc, who visited Utrecht on 11-17 May. Thomas Clerc (1965) has written several narratives, among which: *Paris, Musée du XXe siècle* (2007) – a sort of a stroll through the tenth arrondissement; *L'homme qui tua Roland Barthes* (2010), which received in 2011 the French Academy award; and *Intérieur* (2013), which is said to be reminiscent of Georges Perec's style.

The latter books, following a story of a 21st century Parisian trapped in his apartment (*Intérieur*) and a classical flaneur (*Paris, Musée du XXe siècle*), earned Thomas Clerc an unofficial title of the 'writer of the city'. Clerc also teaches at Paris X University, where he specialises in the 20th century French literature, and is also interested in contemporary art and performance. This year the academic activities were put together by the [French Language department](#) at Utrecht University and other partners. The programme, apart from poetry performance and talk at the City2Cities festival, included a masterclass-*flanerie* through the city, and a lecture on contemporary French literature.

## And now...Le Festival d'Utrecht



Thomas Clerc. Photo credits: ©Jean-Baptiste Millot / Gallimard

By Thomas Clerc, City2Cities and CfH Writer-in-Residence 2015. This article originally appeared at 'Libération' on 13 May 2015. See original article [here](#).

### Writer Thomas Clerc shares his vision of the Cannes Festival every day - wherever it is.

*Mr Parvulès-Kahn, can you tell us - why do you love the festival?*

> Yes, I can! Ha ha ha! I love the festival because everybody loves it. Local festivals, national or international, it eclipses them all. And what's more - you've seen the lovely weather.

*Can you tell us about the selection?*

> Rich, and strongly Nordic-oriented...

*A tribute to Ingrid Bergman?*

> Hmm, yes, why not? Danish Jens Christian Grøndahl is here with *Portret van een Man*, Polish Olga Tokarczuk, Belgian Annelies Verbeke with *Dertig Dagen*... The Dutch are here in droves, needless to say.

*And the French selection?*

> Aging! Marie Darrieussecq, born in 1969, Thomas Clercq, 1965, and Michel Houellebecq, 1956. All the "ecq"s and nobody else! Ha ha ha! And they've come armed, too: the first has brought her books along, the second has his fiancée and the third has two bodyguards.

*Excuse me, but are you talking about Cannes?*

> Cannes? No, Utrecht! I'm in Utrecht, in the Netherlands! I'm talking about the literature festival City2Cities, which brings Utrecht together with another city every year. Cannes? No, Paris. The literary school of Cannes is still in its infancy, despite Prosper Mérimée...

*When does it start?*

> Come on, it starts tomorrow! This is the eighth time it has been on, and it's sure to be a great success as ever. The Dutch love reading. They don't do cinema. Besides Verhoeven, of course.

*Why did you prefer to come to Utrecht than to Cannes?*

> All these questions in English! It's known that Louis XIV's assumption of power ended at Utrecht. You wouldn't understand, you're too young. The population of Utrecht is young too, but they support the festival; they take part, not like on the Coast where young people clear off in festival season. The stars are more accessible here: They do readings, autographs, interviews, meetings... It's all very physical. For me, Cannes is old news. Literature is younger than cinema these days, or, if you like, cinema has gotten older. Literature was born old, do you see what I mean? No? Oh, that's all right.

*As a conclusion, what is the relation between Cannes and Utrecht?*

> The relationship between Utrecht and Cannes can be summed up in two letters: S.K. You don't get it? I'll tell you about it tomorrow. <

## Eventalks at the Utrecht Early Music Festival



Akwasi (left) and Ingmar Heytze. Photo: Residencies in Utrecht

The Utrecht Early Music Festival was delighted to work together this year with the Centre for the Humanities to create a new concert form for our 2015 festival edition, which we have dubbed *Eventalk*. The idea is to encircle provocative speech about today's society with evocative music of the past. This should not seem

far-fetched, for throughout the 20th century Early Music was used as a tool of non-violent protest against artistic and even societal restraints.\* With the Eventalk series we playfully remind ourselves of the complex relationship between music and speech, between belief, emotion and reason.

Our Early Music community has organized itself around a genre: music composed before 1800. Over the years it has developed traditions of performance and rituals of listening that help define the community, but which are constantly under pressure from the world around, and which consequently have morphed with time. The speakers of the Eventalk series have picked up on these ideas by presenting short (10 minute) but pungent talks on various topics relating to man, society and art. Each talk was fitted with a halo of music by the festival's Artists in Residence, vocal ensemble Vox Luminis. The audience was challenged and cajoled, and we hope, has left the hall refreshed and energized.

The Centre for Humanities has chosen the speakers from diverse disciplinary backgrounds: the opening talk was delivered by world-famous performer Jordi Savall; philosopher Rosi Braidotti talked about music, drugs and emancipation; religious studies scholar Ernst van den Hemel explored the rebellious history of classical Dutch children songs; musicologist Barbara Titus spoke about the recent student protests; literature professor Wiljan van den Akker enquired into the relationship between improvisation and creativity; English professor David Pascoe talked about the specificity of mourning music; the scholar of the Classics Josine Blok asked whether music leads to good citizenship; art historian Wessel Krul explored music as a time machine. The final talk was delivered by Dutch poet

Ingmar Heytze, who wrote a poem especially for the festival, and closed the series with Vox Luminis magnificent performance of Thomas Tallis 'Spem in Allium'.

It was a fruitful cooperation, leading to incredibly successful talk series (the talks were visited by over 4000 people), and we look forward to the next year's edition in 2016!

**Jed Wentz**  
Artistic Advisor of the Early Music Festival

\*See, for instance, the work of Dr. Kailan R. Rubinoff on the relationship between Early Music and the provos in the Netherlands: 'The Grand Guru of Baroque Music: Leonhardt's

Antiquarianism in the Progressivist 1960s' in *Early Music* 42(1), 1914.

The eventalks were organised as a cooperative effort of the Early Music Festival, Centre for the Humanities and Residencies in Utrecht programme. The audio recordings of the talks are available online at the [CfH Lectures website](#)

Upon the invitation of Residencies in Utrecht, the famous rapper Akwasi has visited the closing eventalk. Listen what he had to say about early music, roots, performance and more [here](#) (in Dutch).



Vox Luminis ensemble performing during an Eventalk



Universiteit Utrecht

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## Lustrum Residencies in 2016

Next year Utrecht University will be celebrating its 76th Lustrum, and on this occasion the Centre will host three festival fellows with renown festivals in the city: the Utrecht Early Music festival, City2Cities literary festival and SPRING performing arts festival. Part of the residencies will also be implemented with Residencies in Utrecht programme, bringing the artists-in-residence in touch not only with the academic, but also with broader city community. For more updates, follow our [website](#) and [newsletter](#)!

# Redrafting Perpetual Peace: An Archive of Thought and Conversation

Since 2011, the Centre for the Humanities has been a key actor of the [Perpetual Peace Project](#): an international research and cultural program of the Syracuse University Humanities Center in partnership with the Slought Foundation, the International Peace Institute (IPI), the United Nations University and the European Union Institutes of Culture (EUNIC). This initiative, which took the start from Immanuel Kant's historic essay *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch* (1795), aspired to re-think the idea of international peace in the 21st century, in conversation with theorists and practitioners around the world.

As the Perpetual Peace Project activities of the Centre are coming to a close, and also as a showcase of the work that we have done through the years, we are proud to present the updated and renewed website [Redrafting Perpetual Peace](#). Intended as a complement to the original website dedicated to the first phase (2008-2011) of the *Perpetual Peace Project*, the new website allows readers to learn more about phase two (2012-2013) and three (2014-2017) of the project, mainly implemented by Syracuse University Humanities Center and the CfH.

The website is not just a chronological record of the important initiatives organized by the CfH and the Syracuse University Humanities Center over the years. Redrafting Perpetual Peace also contains valuable written and audio-visual resources that can be fruitfully used to spark reflections about peace in the contemporary world both in classrooms and personal research.

Alongside with Kant's original six preliminary articles, readers will have access to contemporary re-elaborations of Kant's message such as the [Defining and Practicing Peace film](#), featuring interviews with various prominent philosophers and practitioners like Hélène Cixous, Achille Mbembe, Saskia Sassen, Rosi Braidotti and Anthony Appiah among others; the [redrafted six preliminary articles](#) as rewritten by contemporary academics and the related videos problematizing the relationship between academia and the arts in the dialogue for peace; and finally the ebook 'Aan de Andere Kant van Vrede' ('On the Other Side of Peace'), a translation of Kant's six preliminary article into a children-friendly terminology.

**Perpetual Peace Project activities at the Centre for the Humanities** CfH's partnership within the project started in with their hosting the [Perpetual Peace exhibition](#) and symposium on *The Idea of Perpetual*

*Peace* in 2011. From then on, CfH became a driving force in the project by successfully launching and running two important international initiatives.

In 2013, CfH launched the [Redrafting Perpetual Peace Project](#) in the occasion of the 300th anniversary of the [Treaty of Utrecht](#), an initiative that invited academics to engage in re-writing *Perpetual Peace* and re-framing it for the contemporary world. The six original preliminary articles of Kant's document were revisited by contemporary academics according to current geo-political, economic and social realities. Within the framework of this initiative, a series of six short films exploring the question of how to foster a productive conversation between the academic and the artist on the issue of peace, was realized by CfH's Artist-in-Residence Janina Pigaht to complement the revisited six articles. The films feature performances by spoken-word artists Quinsy Gario and Bright Richards.

The following year, CfH launched the [Kant for Kids](#) initiative, which resulted in a book for children 'Aan de Andere Kant van Vrede' ('On the Other Side of Peace'). The project aimed to translate the concept of perpetual peace, and namely Kant's six preliminary articles, into a terminology accessible and understandable for children. The



completely incomprehensible? The project was carried out by a team of by now alumni of Utrecht University: Toa Maes, Ruben van den Mark, Brandon Pakker and Yvette Wijnandts, with the help and supervision of CfH's Artist-in-Residence Janina Pigaht, and in consultation with scholars such as Gregg Lambert (Syracuse University), Rosi

Braidotti (Utrecht University), Jolle Demmers (Utrecht University) and experts of philosophy for children – Richard Anthone, Rob Bartels and Maria Jante Postema.

The book is now available in a small number of print copies and also downloadable online on [Redrafting Perpetual Peace website](#).

The Centre hopes that this archive will not only serve as a record of thoughts and conversations on peace, but will also inspire further discussion on a concept that continues to be crucial in contemporary societies.

*Elisa Fiore, editor of the Redrafting Perpetual Peace archive*

*Toa Maes, co-author of the book 'Aan de Andere Kant van Vrede' and Office Coordinator at the CfH*

translation thus entails not only adapting Kant's text but also linking it to a contemporary political, social and economic context. In other words, the project took Immanuel Kant's monumental work as an inspiration for a creative and playful take on peace. The book thus widens the scope of the *Redrafting Perpetual Peace Project* by inviting children to take part in the conversation as active interlocutors, by asking what kind of stories they have to share about the idea of peace and how they can actively contribute to peace. This book invites children to read it from left to right, back to front, upside down and to actively take part in the search for another side of peace! We ask who Immanuel Kant was and what he wrote about peace, but also: are tomatoes vegetable or fruit? Why was grandpa so quiet about his past? And what do you do if something is

# Camera Interactiva: Through Arts and Research Towards Knowledge and Creativity



This year the Centre for the Humanities, together with University and City partners, has launched the pilot edition of the Camera Interactiva talent development programme. The programme, built on the idea that arts is a form of research, and knowledge is a source of creativity, invited students from academia and the arts to co-create an interactive story related to the topic of Citizenship.

For 6 months five teams, each consisting of a student from the academia, and a student from the arts (or a young professional from creative industries), have been working together to develop their creative interactive stories, ranging from the topics of refugee crisis and migration, to digital citizenship and imaginaries of future societies. The teams undergone intensive training week with lectures and workshops by professionals from film and creative industries as well as academics on topics such as authorship, data visualization, design, citizenship and impact. They were also coached and counselled by film makers and producers, as well as activists and scholars.

In December the teams have pitched their pilot projects to a jury of professionals from different backgrounds, and 3 most promising teams have been awarded seed money to fully develop their projects. The three final stories will premiere during the Cultural Sunday on April 3, 2016, as part of the UU Lustrum celebration. The finalists will be awarded a Young Creative Talent Award and their stories will be further used to inspire debate on socially relevant topics in the city. In this way the programme aims to promote young talent and foster the links between the academic, the civic and the cultural life of the city, stressing the need for collaboration between those domains.

Apart from the stories themselves, part of the end result of Camera Interactiva will be a toolkit for socially-responsible and knowledge based interactive storytelling. This toolkit will be freely accessible on the [website](#), where already now visitors can find podcasts from the intensive training week, reflections about the programme, and more.

Camera Interactiva is initiated by the [Centre for the Humanities](#) (Utrecht University) and implemented together with partners from the University ([Descartes Centre](#) for the History and Philosophy of the Sciences and the Humanities; [Institutions for Open Societies IOS](#), [Institute for Cultural Inquiry ICON](#)) as well as non-academic partners in the city of Utrecht ([Utrecht University of the Arts – HKU](#), [Dutch Film Festival – NFF](#)). The programme is driven by the Centre for the Humanities' Artist-in-Residence [Janina Pigaht](#). It is also funded as part of [Religion, Secularism and Political Belonging](#) project, supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. *CfH: You are quite a multifaceted*

## CfH Interview with Janina Pigaht: On Artistic Practice and the Mechanics of Theory

*person. You did two masters (Comparative Women's Studies and Film Studies), you are a documentary film maker and your latest documentary, 'The Diaries of an Elephant', won the Dutch Film Festival Newcomer's Award, and you also recently became an impact producer. What kind of role does research play in all these diverse practices of yours?*

> Research has always played a really important part in my work. My films deal with politics of memory and how we appropriate history. To be able to say that I needed to rely on research. There are pros and cons of working this way. The pros are that I acquire a deeper, more rounded view of the subjects that I am exploring through researching the cultural and political context that they are part of. I want to show that things are often not as simple as they might seem. At the same time that complexity becomes a difficulty because very often in documentary film making you have to present a story that is approachable to others. The real challenge thus is how to create a story with a clear narrative

line, yet without losing the nuance.

*I suppose this is where the art of documentary film making comes in?*

> Yes, and it also has a lot to do with knowing what it is you want to say and who you are as a person, what is your own background that you bring into the story. The latter is really important for me personally: I try to ask myself why is it that I feel so drawn to a subject? How do I approach it? What is particular about this approach? I believe that it's crucial to know what is the place that you are speaking from and how does it affect the story that you tell.

*One of the premises of Camera Interactiva is that art is also a form of research practice. How do you approach this statement?*

> For me personally art becomes a form of research practice when it utilizes some of the academic research methods and when these methods, such as situatedness, critical thinking, etc., are taken as an integral part of your work. So I would actually also state the same in

reverse: academic research can also become a form of art practice. However, arts and academic research employ different languages and therefore convey information differently. For instance, visual language can present very different information or in different ways than a written text, which is the medium of academia. I believe that in programmes such as Camera Interactiva you need both those who understand what is artistic practice, and those who also have a grip on the mechanics of theory – in other words, you need both people who speak artistic and academic language.

*This then brings us to collaboration, which is another important element of Camera Interactiva. What are the benefits of it, for you personally and in general?*

> Before I decided that I wanted to become a documentary film maker, I went to South Africa where I worked as a camera and production assistant. We went out into the field and filmed wildlife. However, the thing about wildlife filmmaking is that you, as a director, don't really have a lot of control: you sit and wait. So we sat and waited for elephants, and at some point this bull came towards us and there was nothing we could do – just watch each other, both depending on what the other will do. For me this was the moment when I decided how I want to approach documentary film making, which is: in co-creation with

my subject. I don't mean to say that I would give them authorship over the documentary, but I try to be really aware of how the subject that I am portraying is part of the visual and narrative choices that I make about my film. You need to be open to this influence – it makes things more complicated but it also enriches your story. Because in my opinion you are truly an author only if you can collaborate: you have to have a clear vision that withstands influence, but also need to be able to constantly shift and change your take on the narrative.

*But isn't that different in the case of*

*Camera Interactiva, where both people in the team have an equal standing in the project, they are both authors of the stories? Do you think this creates specific challenges?*

> Learning to speak each other's language and to meet each other half-way is important as an end in itself. But I think this is also crucial because through collaboration you arrive at a responsibility in a sense of 'responsibility'. You are literally training to be able to respond to the difference of the other. And it also allows you to reflect more on yourself: if you have the skillset of an academic, can you

really call yourself an artist? And vice-versa? When do you feel like it is your place to talk and be heard? When is it someone else's?

*What do you think is the next big skill that is going to be important in the future of film and storytelling?*

> I think non-linear forms of storytelling and the ability to construct a story out of fragments will be the next big thing. And also of course collaboration, the ability to work together in practice. Learning to collaborate without losing your voice, your sense of authorship – this

will be crucial in the years to come, and I hope that Camera Interactiva will be able to contribute to teaching that.

*J. Pigaht's films:*

[\*Delfts Blauw meets Hijab\* \(2010\)](#)  
[\*The Daries of an Elephant\* \(2012\)](#)

[Read more about J. Pigaht here](#)



*Camera Interactiva Pitch, December 10, 2015.*

*From left to right, top row: Janina Pigaht, Rosi Braidotti, Giovanni Campbell, Marlou Rutten, Frank Kessler, Hans Goedkoop, Sander Biemans, Daan van Doremalen, Gisela Garrasco-Miro, Lowi Willems, Goda Klumbyte.*

*Bottom row: Pien den Hollander, Lillian Dam Bracia, Omar Daou, Anna les Willems, Floor de Bie, Eva van Roekel.*

# Idea of the University: Faculty Debates and Beyond

The 'Idea of the University and the New Humanities' theme at the CfH interrogates the social relevance of the Humanities and, through them, focusses on the public perception of the university as a humanistic institution today. It studies the new emergent field of the interdisciplinary Humanities in the contemporary world, with special emphasis on the changing relationship of the Humanities to contemporary science and technology.

The Humanities in today's university have attempted to strike a balance between the forces of tradition and those of innovation, in an increasingly globalised research

world. The field accordingly cultivates not only scientific excellence but also a high level of social awareness and responsibility, as it has to respond to the demands made by the labour

market and the corporate world. At the same time, the Humanities want to remain loyal to their century-old mission of pursuing scholarship for its own sake. CfH thus promotes reflection on theories and practices of the Humanities today in a comparative international perspective: on the methodology and the epistemology of the Humanities, and on issues that stimulate the public perception of the value and relevance of the Humanities.

## Faculty debate in 2015

This year we have continued the Faculty Debate series by organising another debate on *Wetenschapsvisie 2025* (Vision of Science 2025) on February 18. The goal of this debate was to discuss the vision of scientific research, presented by the Dutch minister for Education, Culture and the Sciences, Jet Bussemaker. The vision proposed a new direction for organisation of scientific research, including setting a coherent national research agenda, led by socially-relevant questions, which left open the question of how the Humanities will position themselves in this policy, and in relation to cooperation with Social Sciences (SSH).

The debate series, co-organised by the CfH and the Humanities Faculty Board, already inquired into topics such as: *Science in Transition* initiative (12 February 2014), Open Access (17 September 2014) and *the value of the Humanities* (film screening of *The Value of the Humanities* on 14 October 2014). In 2016 we hope to continue the series with an inquiry into scientific and research integrity.

## Idea of the University conference in 2016

Next year the CfH and *Descartes Centre* for the History and Philosophy of the Sciences and the Humanities are planning to co-organise a bi-annual Idea of the University conference. The first conference took place in 2013 as part of the Treaty of Utrecht Commemoration events ([see video archive here](#)). The

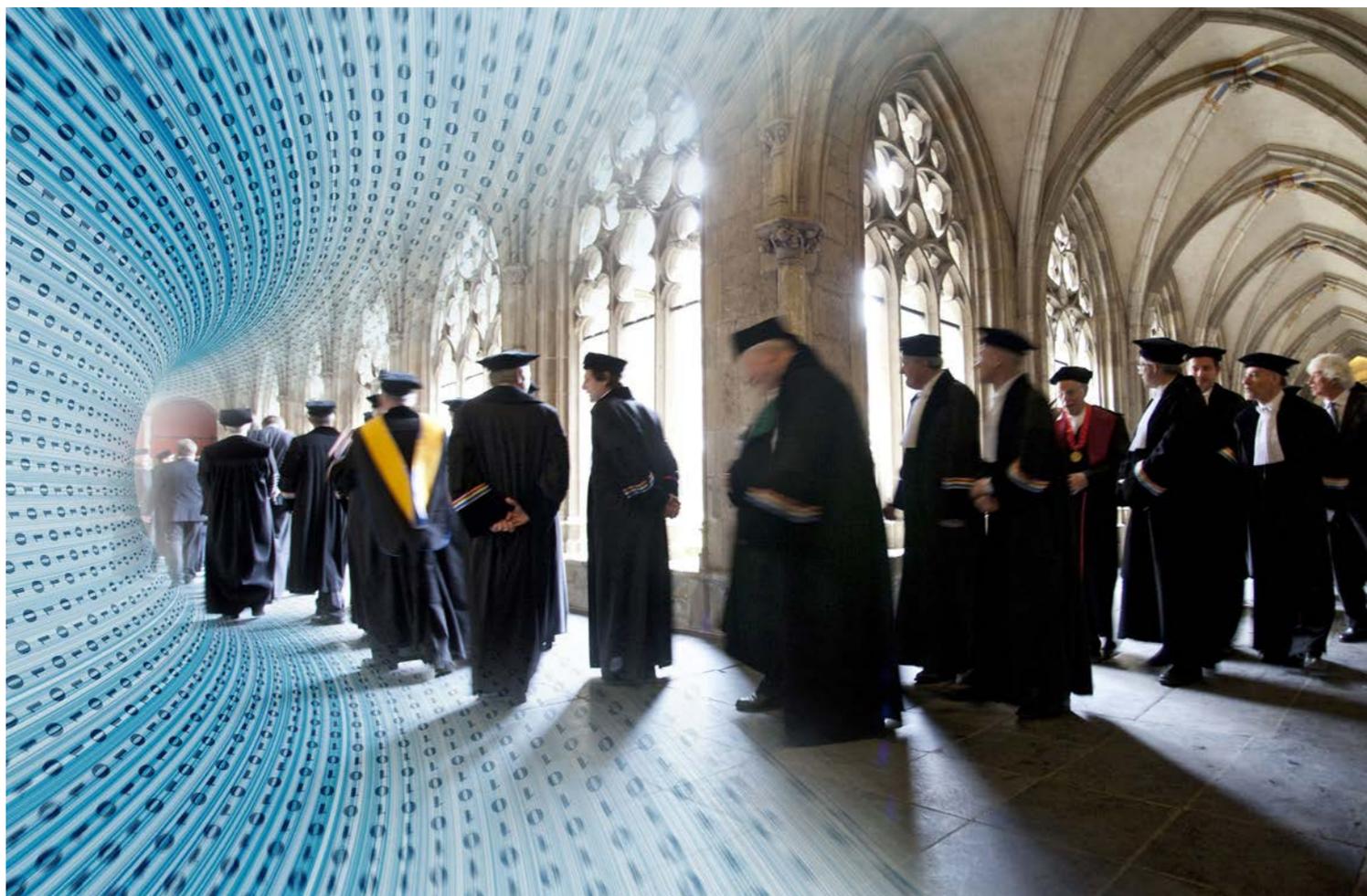
conference in 2016 will investigate the changing relations between the university as the location of academic and scientific excellence and its civic environment, i.e. its social, cultural and political contexts, by foregrounding the social responsibility of the university in the contemporary world. It also raises the question of what it means to be a learned and critical citizen of the world today and what the university's role ought to be in forming the citizens of the future. The conference in 2016 will also place special emphasis on the concept of valorization in the Humanities and future visions of the University.

*Listen to Prof. Wiljan van den Akker's welcome speech during the Idea of the University Conference 2013 on [what are universities good for](#)*

*Check the panel on 'A Critical Analysis of the University', with talks by Prof. Joan Scott, Prof. Chris Lorenz and Prof. Wendy Brown, from the Idea of the University Conference 2013.*

*Watch the panel on 'Scenarios for the Humanities of the Future', including talks by Prof. Paul Gilroy, Prof. Rosi Braidotti and Prof. Wijnand Mijnhardt from the Idea of the University Conference 2013.*

*See documentary 'The Value of the Humanities' (dir. Shanti van Dam, 2014).*





## Lessons Learned: *Religion, Secularism and Political Belonging*

In the years 2013-2015 the Centre for the Humanities participated in the [\*The Religion, Secularism, and Political Belonging Initiative \(RELSEC\)\*](#), led by five centers located in North America, Europe, the Middle East, and China, and funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. This project investigated how religious and secular formations organize the practices of political belonging across the globe. RELSEC brought together scholars from across a wide variety of fields, with the ultimate goal to move beyond a mere 'comparative study approach' – whether of religion or secularism – and toward a translocal mapping of the global networks of religious and secular discourse. Throughout the years we have provided short reports on the project in the Update, and this time we would like to share some insights on what we learned throughout the project.

### Religion and Secularity

The activities undertaken at the Centre for the Humanities concerning religion and secularity were inspired by debates around the return of religion, islamophobia, and concerns about the increasingly untenable normative version of Western secularity. This approach was and remains inspired by the work of the director of CfH, Rosi Braidotti, the variety of scholars who – in the years leading up to RelSec – have worked with CfH in its Postsecular Programme, as well as by the many scholars who have visited CfH. Thinkers like Engin F. Isin, Judith Butler, Joan Scott and Charles Taylor have provided the inspiration for a critical approach to religion and secularity in contemporary societies.

Specifically, the notions of gender, citizenship and emancipation were recurring concerns. What, for instance, to paraphrase Rosi Braidotti, does it mean to be a feminist in a time when feminism is taken up in an opposition between the secular, tolerant and feminist West, and its non-secular, non-tolerant, non-feminist religious Others? Similarly, to paraphrase an important chapter in Engin Isin's *Acts of Citizenship* (Isin & Nielsen, 2008), what alternative modes of conceptualizing 'the citizen' are there, when the categories upon which this notion is traditionally built (a secular, geographically defined nation state) are in a process of rapid

change? Finally, to build upon the field of studies opened up by Charles Taylor's *A Secular Age* (2007), how are our contemporary 'social imaginaries' informed by a long history of religious and secular currents? Besides these fundamental questions, a recurring goal of our work was not only to contribute to a process of critique, but also to provide a constructive contribution based on affirmative and dialogue-oriented scholarly work.

### CfH in RELSEC: local and global

The RELSEC project allowed CfH to continue its role as a platform for interdisciplinary approaches to religion and secularity, and it enabled the Centre to set up and maintain a debate with scholars working at the other participating centres. Altogether, this created an impetus to innovate and provide new approaches that incorporate a variety of perspectives.

The outline of some of the questions that were explored at the Centre for the Humanities, can help us to both illustrate and focus on the research projects that we undertook. In a series of research meetings that aimed to explore contemporary Western European controversies concerning national identity, CfH invited a thinker who played a central role in the rise of Dutch nationalist political party: Partij Voor de Vrijheid' (eng. 'Party for the Freedom'). A dialogue with someone who was crucial for crafting a political programme allowed researchers to test

their theories concerning religion and secularity against the litmus of current affairs, which are often kept out of academia, and also connect them to the local realities of the Dutch context.

A second example is the work of many international visitors that the Centre brought in conversation with local research team. For instance, UC Berkeley's Saba Mahmood, a recurring guest of CfH, who presented her work on the novel *Azazeel* by Youssef Ziedan during RELSEC project. Mahmood's earlier research focused on secularity and Islamic religious sensibilities (e.g. in the case of the Danish cartoon crisis), and her current work is aimed at applying a critical approach to literary work that discusses offenses towards the Coptic Christian dimension in Egypt. This brought together work that focuses on literary analysis, social theory concerning secularity and religiosity, as well as analysis of contemporary political controversies.

In a similar vein, the works of CfH guests Stathis Gourgouris, Tariq Modood and Simon Critchley have created occasions to stage interdisciplinary debates concerning secularity, multiculturalism and religious dimensions of citizenship. The Utrecht team was able to engage postdoctoral researchers who could actively put these various dimensions of research to work in their own

thought. Researchers such as Markus Balkenhol, Pooyan Tamimi Arab, Eva Midden and Ernst van den Hemel, who have worked respectively on colonialism, gender and nationalism, were able to respond to these scholars, thus setting up a network and exchange of thought.

These postdoctoral researchers also worked together locally under the header of this project. In particular, collaboration with the department of Philosophy and Religious Studies has been very productive. For instance, for the duration of RELSEC project, the Utrecht team has organized an on-going series of workshops, inviting local researchers from a variety of backgrounds. Contributors to these seminars included scholars from religious studies, gender studies, anthropology, theology, sociology, philosophy as well as literary studies.

A recurring concern was embedding scholarly work in societal concerns. The Centre has organized a number of public events, and the postdoctoral researchers have published their findings in public media outlets. This resulted in frequent radio columns, opinion pieces in newspapers and blog posts on blogs such as *The Immanent Fame*. Additionally, one of the things that the Mellon-funded RELSEC project enabled locally was to provide a showcase for the added value of a Humanities Centre. Humanities

centres in the Dutch context are relatively rare, and projects such as RELSEC enabled CfH to function as a bridge between local scholars across disciplines and departments on the one hand, and connect with a global academic community on the other.

#### Conclusion

RELSEC project has made a lasting impact on the academic circumstances at Utrecht University. In particular, RELSEC has enabled CfH to continue developing a community of scholars that work on religion, secularity and political belonging. Particularly, it has inspired three research fellows of the Centre to set up a research network, entitled 'Postsecular Nationalism', which brings together local scholars to reflect on the validity of the categories of secularity and religion to make sense of contemporary developments in society. This will lead to a number of major grant proposals, as well as to a mutually supportive network of young researchers from a variety of disciplines.

The thinking that took place at the Centre for the Humanities under the header of RELSEC project is characterized by an interdisciplinary approach, which brought together scholars from a variety of backgrounds for a productive and inspiring exchange. This enabled a strengthening of academic work on this relevant field on two levels: firstly, it allowed CfH to continue being a meeting place for scholars from

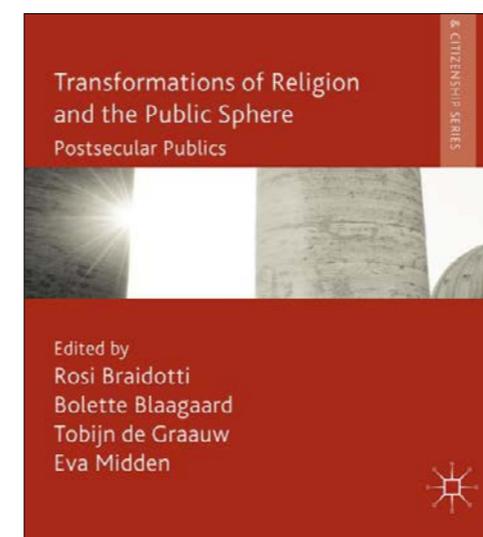


AN INITIATIVE OF THE CONSORTIUM OF HUMANITIES CENTERS AND INSTITUTES C·I·CI

different disciplines at Utrecht University. Secondly, it provided a platform for Utrecht-based scholars to present and situate their work in a global context. As a result, RELSEC not only strengthened the academic community in Utrecht University and enabled to showcase the proof-of-concept for the model of the Humanities Centres in the Netherlands, but also provided a promising model for global academic collaboration.

**Ernst van den Hemel**  
Research Fellow at the Centre for the Humanities

Would you like to know more about RELSEC? Visit the [website](#).



One of the results of RELSEC project was a volume *Transformations of Religion and the Public Sphere: Postsecular Publics* (Palgrave, 2014), edited by R. Braidotti, B. Blaagaard, T. de Graauw and E. Midden. The volume develops a range of critiques of the myth of secularity through discussions on the current political, social, and technological conditions in which we find ourselves. It explores the political implications of the myth, as well as exploring postcolonial relations, liberal-secularity and religious sentiments, and the mediated public sphere, with an in-depth focus on the Dutch case. You can purchase the volume [here](#).

Check out the lectures of Engin F. Isin, Judith Butler, Tariq Modood, Saba Mahmood and others on the topic of postsecularity on the [CfH Lectures website](#)

# The Green Humanities: Towards the Sustainable Imaginaries of the Future



During the last decade, a scientific consensus has emerged about the urgency to address the societal relationship to the natural environment. Human activities alter and shape the planet earth with a degree of complexity that defies the challenges our species had to meet at other points in history. This raises urgent questions about our shared understanding of the human conditions, human's place in planetary history and human's ability to self-destruct as well as to construct sustainable futures.

## Humanities and Environment

The project of 'Green Humanities', or 'Environmental Humanities' assumes firstly that the Humanities can bring to the debate a long tradition of scholarly research that is currently missing: issues of individual and collective identity, cultural memory and cultural practices, human values, (environmental) ethics and moral philosophy and studies of mediation as well as the historical perspective. Second assumption is that in the

Anthropocene as in other eras, modes of social belonging and participation are mediated by cultural representations and interpretations thereof. Because cultural representations serve to develop social imaginaries, they are crucial for the awareness of new patterns of interaction with social ecological systems and hence can be seen as one of the building blocks of sustainability issues. To enhance changes in patterns of individual and

social behavior that promote sustainability, it is therefore crucial to develop a better understanding of the cultural factors - from novels to documentaries, films, computer games and Internet applications - that shape the public representations of sustainability.

## Environmental Humanities at the CfH

The Centre for the Humanities started its activities in the field of Environmental Humanities by organizing a joint symposium with the Humanities Center at Harvard University in Utrecht in 2011 on *Sustaining Environments - Responses from the Humanities*. Over the following years CfH has organized several international seminars, focusing on eco-criticism, film, environmental history and collaboration with the social sciences. The main questions that we have explored during this research and events programme were: how can the cultural resources of the Humanities be enlisted to the task of developing both forms of consciousness-raising and alternative social scenarios that

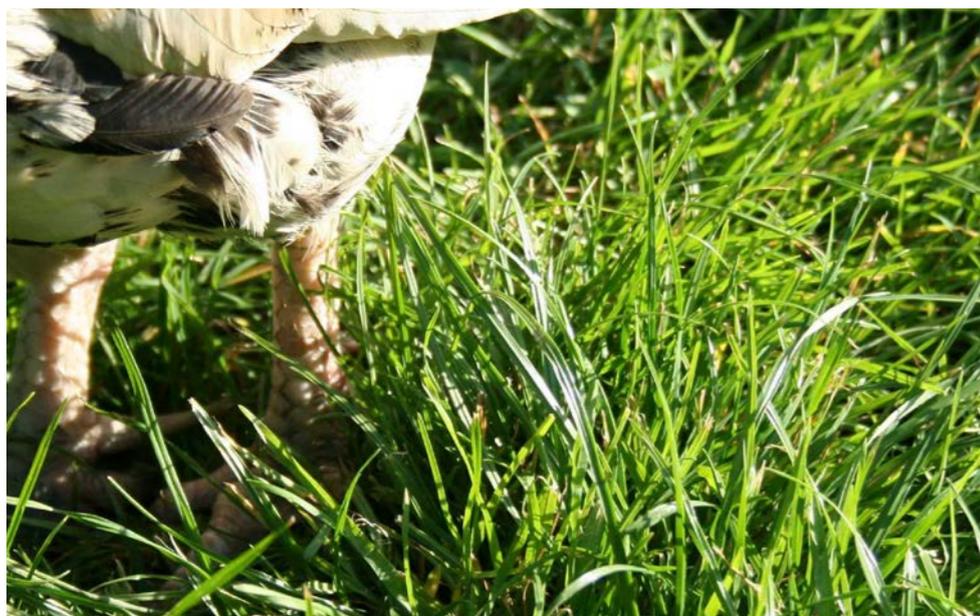
might sustain sustainable forms of behaviour and interaction? What institutional forms and structures can such interaction take? These questions were also addressed by our two research fellows: Rick Dolphijn (Utrecht University) conducted his research on 'Sustainable Humanities' in 2013, and Marcus Andreas (Rachel Carson Centre in Munich) researched 'Green Citizenship' in 2014. On 11 September 2015 we organized an international symposium on Green Citizenship, where M. Andreas' paper was presented during a panel consisting of international speakers: Sherilyn Macgregor (Keele University) and Cecilia Åsberg (Linköping). The symposium closed with a public lecture by Ursula Heise (UCLA) on '[Multispecies Justice](#)'.

The aforementioned questions were also highlighted in the ISSC World Social Science Report on Global Environmental Change, to which Prof Rosi Braidotti was invited to contribute in 2015. This edition of the World Social Science Report emphasized the social sciences'

indispensable contribution to human survival in the face of climate change. Prof. Rosi Braidotti submitted an article on the contribution of the Environmental Humanities to global environmental change, co-signed by Prof. Poul Holm (Trinity College Dublin, Ireland, Chair ECHIC), Prof. Hsuing Ping-Chen (Chinese University of Hong Kong) and Prof. Kum-Kum Bhavnani (University of California – Santa Barbara). Read the full report [here](#).

In 2016 the Centre will continue to support this pioneering field of research through appointing two research fellows. Chad Weidner will be appointed as a joint CfH/CCHR fellow in Environmental Humanities, with the support of the research focus area 'Cultures, Citizenship and Human Rights'. Later in the year a post-doc will be hosted as part of the Centre's participation in [The Seed Box: An Environmental Humanities Collaboratory \(EHC\)](#) – the Swedish project which recently received the MISTRA/ FORMAS grant and which is coordinated by Cecilia Åsberg at Linköping University.

Last but not least, it is our strong belief that Environmental Humanities as a whole would benefit from stronger international collaboration. To this end CfH co-founded the European Environmental Humanities Alliance (EEHA), which is a joint initiative by a wide range of European partners





## A field 'under construction': from environmental to green citizenship

working in the field of the Environmental Humanities. The aim of this alliance is to draw attention to and organize Environmental Humanities researchers in Europe and beyond to participate in setting the research agenda and structure of work programmes for Horizon 2020. The Alliance was launched in September 2013 at Horizon 2020 SSH conference in Vilnius.

The Humanities have well established theoretical and disciplinary traditions that provide distinct academic tools to stand up to the global environmental challenges of today. This wealth of knowledge and methodology shows that the Humanities are well-placed to contribute to our understanding of (socio-cultural) factors that are crucial in order to achieve social and environmental sustainability. It is time for the Humanities to fully live up to this challenge, and we hope that the Centre can be one of the places where such a challenge is met with academic rigor and passion for the sake of sustainable futures.

**Tobijn de Graauw, Former Programme Manager at the Centre for the Humanities**  
**Rosi Braidotti, Director of the Centre for the Humanities**

By the end of the last millennium, citizenship and environmental discourses had created a fruitful new field in political ecology. Its most prominent concept, *environmental citizenship* had already been introduced in 1990 by the Canadian environmental ministry. Another outstanding concept is *ecological citizenship*, which was developed in particular by Andrew Dobson. Teena Gabrielson in turn, chose *green citizenship* as a generic term. This conceptual diversity reflects the complexity of the question of citizenship in relation to environmental issues. What do these concepts have in common, and how do they differ? And how can we move towards more sustainable forms of citizenship?

Environmental Citizenship is typically associated with the liberal tradition. 'Nature' herein tends to be understood as property and the ecological crisis as an endangerment of resources. Where citizenship is concerned, the focus lies on status and the rights of individuals, and it is assumed that if a transformation of society is desired, actors will build coalitions and lobby for change.

One way to meet the ecological (and social) challenge within this liberal paradigm is via the introduction of environmental rights. The recognition of the notion of environmental justice during the Clinton/Gore administration in the US in the 1990s provides an illustration. However, as authors such as Gabrielson have pointed out, because of the liberal state-bound and

individualistic notion of citizenship, neither "nature" nor citizens from countries whose environments are damaged by the actions of others (e.g. the Alliance of Small Island States) can claim rights, and this notion of citizenship also lacks a stronger conception of the 'common good'.

Ecological Citizenship in the meantime asks for a fundamental societal change and suggests a break with the liberal system of contemporary western societies. The focus lies on the virtues and obligations of citizenship—and the hope that deliberative democracy will lead to the profound change in people's mindsets and behaviour, necessary for transformation. Change again originates in citizens, but this republican tradition in particular introduces a more communal

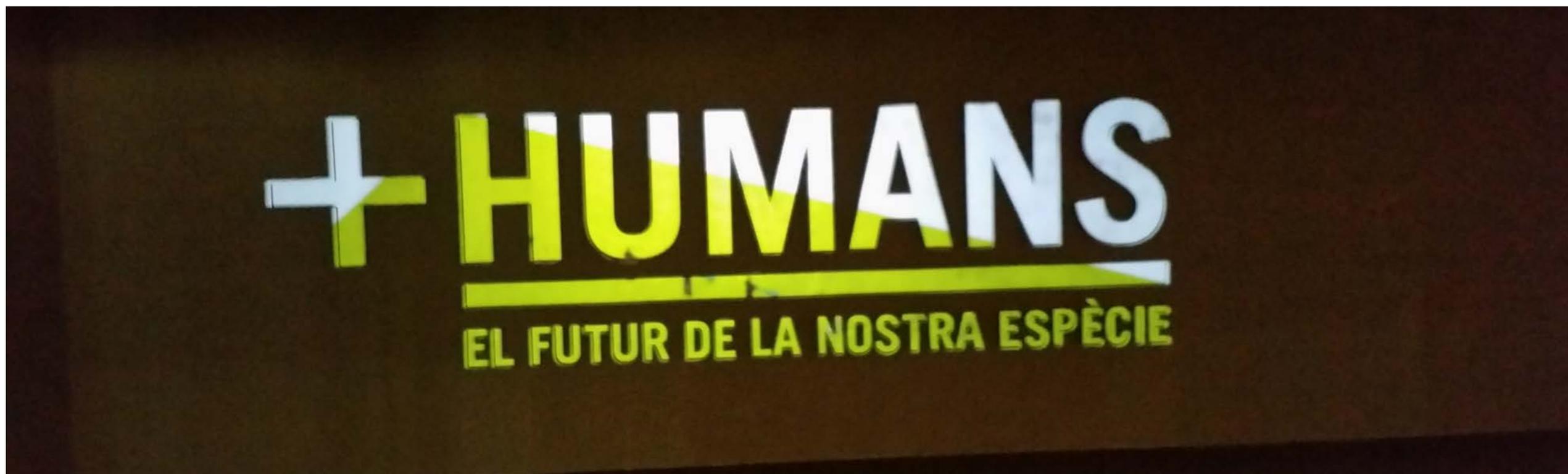
element. Still, the moral perfectionism and strong value base of ecological citizenship burden many, are hard to find empirically and maybe even harder to forge into a legalistic framework.

Dobson went on to develop more elaborate concepts based on the individual such as his version of post-cosmopolitan citizenship. However, the search for the individual (motivation) alone blocks the view on the systemic conditions, which hinder or help such citizenship to emerge. My suggestion therefore is, to consider with scholars like Dave Horton the 'green architecture' of environmental or ecological citizenship and, following Pnina Werbner and Nira Yuval-Davis, its 'cultural and associational life'.

Citizenship above all is a discursive space. This delivers the ball back to us – as individuals *and* as elements of arrangements, which produce this discursive space. If we want environmental (or ecological citizenship) to emerge as a decisive force in the global metabolism we not only need to transform our own behaviour, but also the cultural and institutional arrangements.

**Based on a white paper by CfH research fellow M. Andreas on 'Green Citizenship', 2015 (abridged by the Centre for the Humanities)**

# Posthuman Glossary: New Directions in Art and Theory



*Exposition at the Centre de Cultura Contemporànea de Barcelona, 2015.*

If art, science, and the Humanities have shared one thing, it was their common engagement with constructions and representations of the human at the center of their respective realms, as well as their mutual exploration into how people process, document, and analyze their human experiences. Under the pressure of new contemporary concerns, however - such as the neoliberal economics of global capitalism, migration, advanced technological developments, environmental destruction on a mass scale, the perpetual war on terror and extensive security systems, to name but a few significant markers of our time - the concept of the human as we had previously known it has undergone dramatic transformations. We take this development to mark a 'posthuman condition' that combines exciting new developments with a troublesome reiteration of old, unresolved problems.

In May-June 2015 the Centre for the Humanities and BAK, basis voor actuele kunst, organised a series of seminars Posthuman Glossary to explore critical issues of posthumanity

in present-day artistic and intellectual work. Four intensive two-day gatherings with artists, scholars, and activists focused on the topics of Anthropocene/Capitalocene,

Ecosophies, Digital Activism and Algorithmic Cultures and Security. The gatherings were shaped by intensive sessions lead by prominent thinkers and presentations and/or

discussions of artworks (films, performances, and other) that embody or actively negotiate the issues at stake.

*The Posthuman Glossary* series also addressed the interconnection between theory and artistic-curatorial practice. More specifically, we asked: what kind of research is artistic and curatorial practice? Which are its assumed subjects and presumed object-matters? In an era that is increasingly defined by the vitality of non-human agency, what new parallels are emerging between theory, science and the arts? *Posthuman Glossary* was part of a larger research, education, publication, performative, and

discursive program Future Vocabularies/Human-Inhuman-Posthuman, realized in collaboration with Director of the Centre for the Humanities at Utrecht University and BAK Research Fellow Rosi Braidotti and the BAK team led by Maria Hlavajova.

As a final step of this programme a *Posthuman Glossary* publication, edited by Rosi Braidotti and Maria Hlavajova, is being prepared to be published in 2016/2017 by Bloomsbury Academic. Taking a form of an actual glossary, this volume will provide an outline of the critical terms in posthumanity in present day artistic and intellectual context.

### Watch videos of the seminar series online

Anthropocene/Capitalocene, 21-22 May 2015:

- **Katerina Kolozova** (Ss. Cyril and Methodius University/ Institute of Social Science and Humanities, Skopje): [Humanism in a Post-humanist Era and its Communist Prospects: A Feminist Perspective](#).
- **Timotheus Vermeulen** (Radboud University Nijmegen): [The Anthropocene: Notes on a Cultural Dominant](#).
- **Jussi Parikka** (University of Southampton): [A Molecular Aesthetic: Smog, Media Cities and the Capitalocene](#).
- **Keti Chukhrov** (Russian State University for the Humanities): [Artist-led practice session](#).

### Ecosophies, 28-29 May 2015:

- **Rick Dolphijn** (Utrecht University): [The Art of Life](#).
- **Erich Hörl** (Leuphana Universität Lüneburg): [Technoecology. Environmental Media, General Ecologization of Thought and the History of Relationality](#).

### Digital Activism, 11-12 June 2015:

- **Geert Lovink** (Institute of Network Cultures/ HvA): [From Social Media Monopolies to Organized Networks Activist Strategies after Wikileaks, Anonymous and Snowden](#).
- **Mirko Tobias Schäfer** (Utrecht University): [Leaving the Comfort Zone. Criticizing the Critique of Social Media](#).
- **Manuel Beltrán**: [arts practice based session, in conversation with Timotheus Vermeulen](#) (Radboud University Nijmegen).

### Algorithmic Cultures and Security, 18-19 June 2015:

- **Matthew Fuller** (Goldsmiths, University of London): [Powerpoints in Favour of Humanity](#).
- **Matteo Pasquinelli** (independent scholar): [Anomaly Detection: The Mathematization of the Abnormal in the Metadata Society](#).
- **Luciana Parisi** (Goldsmiths, University of London): [Automated Cognition, Algorithmic Capitalism and the Incomputable](#).
- **Femke Snelting** (CONSTANT, Brussels): [arts practice based session, in conversation with Matteo Pasquinelli](#).
- **Interview with John Palmesino** on Anthropocene Observatory - a research exhibition that took place at BAK on February 7 - 26 April 2015.

## Why Posthuman Glossary?



### Why Posthuman Glossary?

*Transcript of an introduction to Posthuman Glossary seminars by Rosi Braidotti, BAK Research Fellow and Director of the Centre for the Humanities, 21 May 2015*

What kind of research is art practice? This is one of the missing links in our current approach to critical thinking. Gilles Deleuze in his work makes a parallel between theory, arts and sciences, as three distinct ways of coming to the same point. And the point is: how to learn to think differently about our current predicament. Not to think differently because of striving to be cutting-edge, but because the historical predicament that we are in requires new schemes of thought. Or as

Einstein, quoted extensively by my colleague Henk Oosterling, put it: we cannot solve the problems with the same language that created them in the first place. We need conceptual creativity. The question is: how?

This points to the second set of concerns: the situation of thinking in the contemporary university. A large portion of academic existence today seems to be not about critical thinking, but rather about management and related issues, not least of which is fundraising. This is quite problematic for the non-profit generation that I belong to – a generation that believed in academic space as a non-profit space of critical thinking and democratic criticism. There is something very worrisome about the contemporary university and its neoliberal setting, that should encourage us to think seriously about the conditions of production of thought today and ask: how can we create spaces where critical thinking can actually occur? With all the dangers involved, namely the risk of experimentation, the risk of expressing politically unwelcome things and the risk of losing profit.

In this respect creating alliances with those who are outside of the university, insofar as art platforms like BAK are outside of the university, seems to me a lifeline. I therefore would hope that these kinds of collaborations will continue in the future, facilitating the invention of structures that would ferry the

university back towards critical thinking, non-profit work, and democratic criticism. Spaces where risks can be taken. For the younger generation I hope this would help to bring together bits of their existence that are rather segregated. Almost all of them today lead a double life of an artist of sort, mostly in visual and musical practices, and we need to bring the creativity of those 'other lives' to the day job of doing research and thinking critically and creatively.

This leads me to the third set of challenges: our ideological systems call for 'creativity and innovation' but we have no idea how to train creative people. I think that the arts, and particularly places like BAK, curators and critical thinkers are trainers for creativity in the 'risk-taking innovation', not only in the 'profit-making innovation' sense of the term.

These are some of the concerns that motivated the process of starting up the Posthuman Glossary series. The Posthuman is not a concept – it is a navigational tool that emerges at the intersection of posthumanism with post-anthropocentrism. It is a compass that helps us zoom in on a number of issues that are pressing, of historical events that are resonating in the scholarship today. And I hope that these seminar series allow us to explore the multiplicity of issues that we are facing in order to find new languages to address them both critically and creatively.

# International activities of the CfH: ECHIC, CHCI and GALA

All the work of the CfH cultivates an international dimension, with which the CfH aims to profile the Faculty of Humanities and the university and to raise funds through targeted European and international joint activities. In 2015 the Centre has continued its participation in European Consortium of Humanities Centres and Institutes (ECHIC) as well as global Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes (CHCI), and joined a new initiative: Global Academy of Liberal Arts (GALA), together with other UU partners.

CfH is a founding member and the elected secretariat of ECHIC - the European Consortium of Humanities Institutes and Centres - which is a branch of the international Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes (CHCI). These international activities aim at boosting the outstanding quality of research in the Humanities at Utrecht University and increase their visibility. This was implemented also in high-level intensive research training courses in 2011-12, gathered in the Utrecht School of Critical Theory, which was funded by the European Commission and jointly taught with a number of selected partners.

Within the CHCI the Centre has been participating in the CHCI Mellon RelSec Consortium: Religion, Secularism and Political Belonging (RELSEC), which is coming to a close this year. This project was funded by the participating institutions and by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and linked five humanities centers— at The University of Arizona, Portland

State University, Utrecht University, Tel Aviv University, and the Chinese University of Hong Kong—through a mutually coordinated set of research programs. Over the three years of the project (2013 to 2015), each participating center convened a research team to conduct investigations anchored to each site along the main thematic lines. The researchers from all centres convened 4 times for an academic exchange: In Arizona, Hong Kong, Utrecht and Tel Aviv.

The Centre also holds the Secretariat of European Consortium of Humanities Centres and Institutes (ECHIC), and participates in its annual conferences. This year the conference took place on 25-27 March 2015 in Pamplona, Spain, hosted by the University of Navarra. The main themes discussed during the conference were the so-called 'civic humanities' (with a focus on aspects of the humanities related to human capacity to create commonality) and the funding of humanities' research.

The aim was to expose and share specific cases and further discuss how ECHIC may serve to aid the financing of humanities research. The programme included keynotes, panel discussions and workshops that explored both the challenges and concrete strategies to tackle them. The conference ended with the Annual ECHIC Meeting. The next year's conference, on the topic of global encounters within the Humanities and impact, will take place on 21-22 April 2016 in the University of Macerata, Italy.

The Centre also became a founding member of the Global Academy of Liberal Arts (GALA) – a global network of creativity spanning national and

cultural boundaries. The network currently has 17 partners, of which CfH is one of the founding partners. The inaugural meeting of the Global Academy of Liberal Arts was held on 5-6 June 2014 at Bath Spa University. Delegates were welcomed by Professor Christina Slade, Vice-Chancellor of Bath Spa University and founder of GALA. CfH is currently representing the UU partners within GALA: University College Roosevelt, Liberal Arts and Sciences and Language and Culture Studies (TCS).

GALA brings together a group of leading Liberal Arts providers from around the world to explore the relationship between creativity and social engagement. The activities span

international, interdisciplinary and inter-generational perspectives to broaden the experience of students and staff. The founding partners represent a range of international approaches to the liberal arts and will share a commitment to raising students' global awareness.

We hope that through this network, as well as through other international activities that the Centre carries out, we can build a strong profile of Utrecht University as a place of excellence in Humanities research and knowledge transfer for the years to come.

**Goda Klumbyte, CfH Programme Manager**

Watch the videos of keynote lectures and panel presentations from ECHIC conference 2015:

- [Susan Manning Memorial Lecture by Prof. Naomi Segal, Birkbeck College](#)
- [Prof. Leijf Moos, Aarhus University: 'Horizon 2020 and the Humanities'](#)
- [Interview with Poul Holm, President of ECHIC: 'Humanities in the 21st Century'](#)
- [Interview with Leijf Moos, Aarhus University](#)
- [Prof. Montserrat Herrero, University of Navarra: 'Humanities and Communities of Interpretation' \(panel on Civic Humanities\)](#)
- [Prof. Marisa Ronan, Trinity College Dublin \(panel on Civic Humanities\)](#)
- [Prof. Paolo Monti, Sacro Cuore Catholic University: 'Humanities and Citizenship' \(panel on Civic Humanities\)](#)



*From left to right:  
Barbara Oomen,  
Ian Gadd,  
Rebecca McGuire-Snieckus,  
Laelia Dard-Dascot at UCR*



### **GALA Postcard from the Netherlands**

Our first GALA visit as Academic Director and Assistant Academic Director took us to the Netherlands, where we met with partners at University College Roosevelt (UCR) and Utrecht University. First stop was the picturesque Middelburg in the southwest, where we met with Professor Barbara Oomen, Dean of UCR and Laelia Dard-Dascot, Project Manager. UCR offers a broad and interdisciplinary three-year bachelor programme in Liberal Arts and Sciences—a relatively new concept to

Europe, but widely used in the United States. That evening we dined with international delegates attending the following day's [Going Glocal](#) Symposium, where pedagogical practice in the field of education for global citizenship, theoretical reflections and practical experiences of the assessment of global citizenship constructs, and transformative learning experiences of students were shared.

Next stop was Utrecht University, where we met with Professor Rosi Braidotti, Director for the Centre of

Humanities (CfH), Professor Berteké Waaldijk, Education Director of the School of Liberal Arts—Language and Culture Studies, Professor Iris van der Tuin, incoming director of the Liberal Arts programme, and Tobijn de Graauw, general manager of the Centre of Humanities. Amongst the possible collaborative themes, topics and activities identified were: the Environmental Humanities (CfH as the main partner); Student mobility (University College Utrecht (UCU) and UCR); Global Citizenship (UCR); books and media (with writer in residence at Utrecht); and public humanities (CfH).

Overall a thoroughly productive and enjoyable visit with two very impressive GALA partners—and a lot of opportunities to follow up.

**Rebecca McGuire-Snieckus**  
**Associate Academic Director of the**  
**Global Academy of Liberal Arts**  
**(GALA)**

*From left to right: Tobijn de Graauw,  
Rebecca McGuire-Snieckus, Rosi  
Braidotti, Ian Gadd at Utrecht*



# Visiting Fellowships at the CfH

Since its establishment in 2007, the Centre for the Humanities (CfH) has hosted 6 professorial fellows and 7 post-doc and senior fellows as well as 3 visiting senior fellows for various lengths of time. The Centre also has 8 affiliated fellows and has hosted 7 visiting professors for the [Treaty of Utrecht Chair \(2009-2012\)](#). We have also worked closely with the city festivals and hosted around 12 fellows and artists-in-residence. This makes an average of 5 fellows per academic year (in 2007-2015).

In the past year the Director of the Centre alone has supervised 6 visiting post-doc and doctoral researchers from Hong Kong, Spain and South Africa, who worked closely with her and the academic staff of the Faculty on their research project. Prof. Braidotti also hosts an annual summer school course (part of [Utrecht Summer School](#)) on critical theory. The intensive one-week course in 2015, entitled 'Human/Inhuman/Posthuman', was attended by more than 90 students from 17 countries. Next year's edition on 'The Posthuman Glossary', co-taught with Maria Hlavajova (BAK), Dr. Rick Dolphijn and Dr. Jolle Demmers, will take place on 22-26 August. Registrations for the course are already open on the [Utrecht Summer School website](#).

Next year Prof. Braidotti will also accept visiting fellows for short visits concentrated in the months of August-September-October 2016. The fellows are invited to also register for the summer school. Apart from regular consultations with Prof.

Braidotti, there will be special visiting fellows' seminars organised for peer-to-peer exchanges and feedback. For more information, see [CfH website](#) and check out our previous fellows' testimonials below.

#### CfH Visiting Fellows in 2015:

- Virginia Fusco (Universidad Carlos III)
- Frans Kruger (University of Free State)
- Carolyn Lau (Chinese University of Hong Kong)
- Siddique Motala (Cape Peninsula University of Technology)
- Carolina Núñez Puente (Universidad de la Coruna)
- Benjamin Schewel (Institute of Advanced Studies in Culture, University of Virginia)
- Linda Stewart (North-West University)

## What do our previous fellows have to say?



**Carolyn Lau, PhD Candidate,  
Chinese University of Hong Kong**

As a Visiting Research Fellow at the Center for the Humanities (CfH) from March-August 2015, I had the invaluable experience of working closely with Prof. Rosi Braidotti to develop my thesis project. We met twice every month to delineate and clarify the arguments and premises of my work. I was also introduced to emerging interdisciplinary trends of new Humanities that I seek to develop and promote in the local and regional academic community. Under the supervision of Prof. Braidotti, I examined the possibilities of posthuman literary criticism that locates literature as the point of reconciliation of the current split

between science and the Humanities. Above all, we discussed the ways to integrate these emerging fields with literary studies while taking into account the situatedness of knowledge production in Hong Kong and East Asia. I also had the honor of meeting many likeminded and supportive young scholars at intellectually stimulating events organized by CfH and its partners, including the Posthuman Glossary series at BAK and the annual summer school sessions. I am forever thankful for the boundless patience, kindness and generosity of Prof. Braidotti and her team at CfH for this memorable residency.



**Virginia Fusco, PhD Candidate,  
Universidad Carlos III, Spain**

Being a visiting scholar at the CfH from May to September 2015 has been an amazing and extremely intense experience. The heterogeneity of the participants and the constant dialogue with my supervisor, Prof. Rosi Braidotti, has allowed me to re-think some of the key issues I had approached in my PhD such as the cultural representations of Otherness, its relations to the monster-imaginary and the forms in which 'mediation' has impacted on contemporary neo-gothic literature. In particular, I have found the international seminars

with other fellows and Future Vocabularies programme in BAK deeply stimulating. I am grateful for this inspiring and productive time for my research activities, which allowed me to complete my dissertation within the set time-frame.

# The Humanities in Europe Interview Series

Director of the project: Prof. Rosi Braidotti, Utrecht University

The Centre for the Humanities at Utrecht University proudly present an initiative 'The Humanities in Europe Interview Series' that builds a cartography of the European landscape of the humanities today.

The idea for the project originated during the Annual Conference of the European Consortium of Humanities Centres and Institutes (ECHIC) in Oporto in 2014. When discussing the public humanities and strategies to showcase the value of the humanities as well as the wealth of their expertise and research of the field, the membership discussed the idea of a visual oral history project: making a cartography of short statements by humanities scholars and uploading them online.

Following this idea, Prof. Rosi Braidotti and the Centre for the Humanities' team have developed 'The Humanities in Europe Interview Series', filmed by the award-winning documentarist Janina Pighat. The idea is simple: by making a series of portraits of leading figures and promising scholars in the humanities in our part of the world and by asking them all the same set of questions, we pursue a double aim. Firstly, we provide sources of inspiration and role models for practitioners and students alike. Secondly, we aim to trace a genealogical portrait of where the humanities have been, where they are at today and where they could go, since each person we interviewed was

asked to trace their own itinerary, past, present and future.

The different itineraries that emerge from these interviews highlight the semantic, institutional and theoretical transformations the field has gone through in the last decades. Through this we are also able to measure both the extent of the changes and the enduring vitality of the field.

We hope that viewing this mini-series, as practitioners but also as spectators, we can express our trust in the humanities at a time when they are coming under attack in the public debate, in the press, in policy making and in terms of financial resources. Our hope is to show that the humanities in the 21st century are a vital, vibrant, critical and creative field by show-casing humanities scholars from country to country and recording their career and research.

Over 15 grand figures in the humanities have already been interviewed, among which: **Henrietta Moore**, **Michel Serres**, **Tariq Modood**, **Ursula Biemann**, **Frans de Waal**, **Françoise Balibar**, **Peter-Paul Verbeek**, **Ursula Heise** and **Saskia Sassen**. The

series also include interviews with the upcoming generation of young promising scholars, such as **Iris van der Tuin** (Utrecht University), **Ernst van den Hemel** (Utrecht University), **Timotheus Vermeulen** (Radboud University Nijmegen), **Rick Dolphijn** (Utrecht University) and **Mirko Tobias Schäfer** (Utrecht University).

We hope that you will enjoy watching the interviews and will draw inspiration from the for the future!

A preview is available online [here](#).

Watch full series on the [CfH Lectures website](#).



Michel Serres



Françoise Balibar



Henrietta Moore

# CfH Archives: Publications and Resources

## Consolidating the Archive

Throughout the years the Centre has not only organised numerous events and public activities, but also made a point, whenever possible, to have a digital record of it. Now we are delighted to present to you a collection of our visual archives in one website: the [CfH archive of video lectures](#). This video archive reflects the interdisciplinarity that is proper to CfH's activities and to the humanities today. It is an accessible platform for a broad audience and will serve as a flexible instrument to assist users in the task of addressing contemporary questions. The humanities are everywhere and for everyone!

The archive is a sizable collection of videos recorded during the successful academic and public events organized by the Centre over the years. This impressive material is now gathered in one single and easily accessible platform, designed by the Digital Humanities Lab of our faculty. Built around the main research lines and leading themes of CfH's activities, the archive allows users not only to look back into the rich academic history of the Centre, but also to re-visit the ideas of great contemporary thinkers, including Judith Butler, Michel Serres, Paul Gilroy, Étienne Balibar, Moira Gatens, Donna Haraway, Bruno Latour, Charles Taylor, and many others. In so doing, the archive aims to become a valuable learning tool for

the Utrecht academic community, offering material that can be used in courses and classrooms, or as a resource for personal research and analysis.

The events featured in the archive range from international initiatives such as the Edward Said Memorial Conference in 2013, the Treaty of Utrecht Visiting Professors (2009-13); the Philosophy After Nature Conference in 2014, as well as the regular annual events like the School of Critical Theory (2011-12) and other symposia and lecture series. It also includes the most recent series of seminars: the Posthuman Glossary (co-organized with BAK in May-June this year), and Eventalks (co-organized with Utrecht Early Music Festival and Residenties in Utrecht in August 2015). The archive also contains videos from the ongoing project The Humanities in Europe Interview Series, filmed by the award-winning documentarist and CfH artist-in-residence Janina Pigaht, and an interview with Mariam Said filmed in 2013.

Visit the archive at <http://cfh-lectures.hum.uu.nl>  
We hope that you will enjoy it!

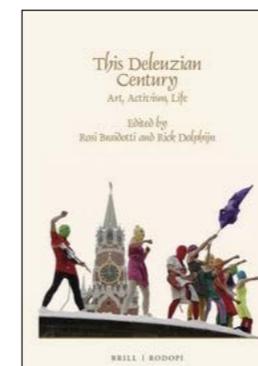
## Publications resulting from the activities of CfH, 2007 – 2015/6



**Posthuman Glossary**  
Edited by Rosi Braidotti and Maria Hlavajova  
Forthcoming in 2016



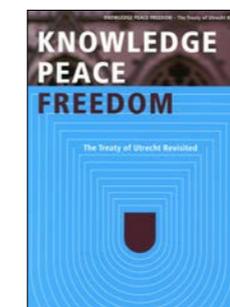
**Aan de Andere Kant van Vrede**  
Toa Maes, Ruben van den Mark, Brandon Pakker and Yvette Wijnandts.  
Published by the Centre for the Humanities, 2016  
[Further information](#)



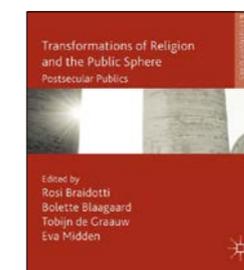
**This Deleuzian Century**  
Art, Activism, Life  
Edited by Rosi Braidotti and Rick Dolphijn  
Brill, 2014  
[Further information](#)



**Conflicting Humanities**  
Edited by Prof. Rosi Braidotti and Prof. Paul Gilroy, a volume generated by the Edward Said Memorial Conference that was held in Utrecht in 2013.  
Forthcoming in 2015.



**Wandelgids Utrecht en de Joden**  
Author: Joost van der Lijn, published by the Centre for the Humanities, 2014  
Available in bookstores, via author and the Centre for the Humanities  
[Further information](#)



**Transformations of Religion and the Public Sphere: Postsecular Publics**  
Editors: Prof. Rosi Braidotti, Bolette Blaagaard, Tobijn de Graauw and Dr Eva Midden  
Palgrave Macmillan, 2014  
[Further information](#)

**Knowledge, Peace, Freedom - The Treaty of Utrecht Revisited**  
A collection of essays published by the Centre for the Humanities, 2013



### After Cosmopolitanism

Editors: Prof. Rosi Braidotti, Patrick Hanafin and Bolette Blaagaard.

New York: Routledge, 2013

[Further information](#)

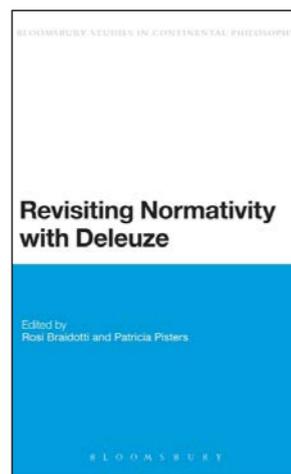


### Wandelgids sporen van slavernij in Utrecht / Traces of Slavery in Utrecht: A Walking Guide

Authors: Esther Captain and Hans Visser

Centre for the Humanities, 2013

[Further information](#)



### Revisiting Normativity with Deleuze

Editors: Prof. Rosi Braidotti and Patricia Pisters

London, New York: Bloomsbury, 2012

[Further information](#)

#### Online resources

CfH lectures: [video archive](#)

#### *Camera Interactiva*

talent development programme website, including podcasts on creation of interactive stories, collaboration between artists and academics, and more.

#### Documentary *The Value of the Humanities*

(dir. Shanti van Dam, 2014), featuring Treaty of Utrecht Chair visiting professors as well as speakers of the Idea of the University conference – [watch video on demand here](#).

#### *Redrafting Perpetual Peace*:

archive of Perpetual Peace Project activities in Utrecht and Syracuse, 2012-2015, including films and video interviews, as well as kids book 'Aan de andere kant van Vrede'.

#### *Philosophy After Nature*,

Joint Annual Conference of the Society for European Philosophy and Forum for European Philosophy, 3-5 September 2014: conference archive, including visual material.

#### *Treaty of Utrecht commemoration events*

archive (including videos) of Visiting Professors of the Treaty of Utrecht Chair 2009-2012, and three major conferences – The Colonial Legacy Conference (21-22 June 2013), Edward Said Memorial Conference (15-17 April 2013), The Idea of the University and the Future of Knowledge Conference (19-20 September 2013).

#### Downloads

#### *Aan de Andere kant van Vrede*

– a book for children, inspired by Immanuel Kant's monumental work 'Perpetual Peace' (1975).

[Download in Dutch here](#).

#### *Affirmation versus Vulnerability: On Contemporary Ethical Debates*

Author: Rosi Braidotti

[Download](#)

#### *Genre and Gender: The Case of George Eliot*

Author: Moira Gatens

[Download](#)

#### *Political Normativity and Poststructuralism: The Case of Gilles Deleuze*

Author: Paul Patton

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#### *Seduction, Gender and Genre: Derrida/Cixous, Cixous/Derrida*

Author: Claire Colebrook

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#### *War, race and Europe's postcolonial melancholia*

Author: Paul Gilroy

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#### Colophon

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