

Exploring Aesthetic Practices conference

University of Jyväskylä, 23.–25.10.2024

Programme

Wednesday 23.10.2024

- 10:00–10:45 Registration (C-building, lobby)
- 10:45–11:15 **Pauline von Bonsdorff:** Welcome and Introduction (C1)
- 11:15–12:30 Keynote: **Alessandro Bertinetti**
[Habits and Improvisation in Everyday Aesthetic Experience](#) (C1) Chair: Pauline von Bonsdorff
- 12:30–13:30 Lunch
- 13:30–15:00
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| Structures of Aesthetic Practice (C411) Chair: Martta Heikkilä | Embodied and Dialogic Aesthetic Practices (C417) Chair: Kaisa Mäki-Petäjä | Making and Connecting Through Aesthetic Practice (C311=C4) Chair: Judith-Frederike Popp |
| Francesca Camilla Mattioli
Medit/Improvis-Ation: How Meditation Informs the Understanding of Improvisation as Practice | Susanne Ylönen
Capoeira: Expressive Bodily Dialogue and the Beauty of Cheekiness | Anu Besson
On the Importance of Making Things |
| Johan Kalmanlehto
The Relevance of Style in Aesthetic Practices | Maria Ruotsalainen
Walking With Rescue Dogs as an Aesthetic Practice | Filippa Kier Droob
Knitting as a Public and Staged Aesthetic Practice; a Case Study on the Danish Knitting Festival “Knitting by the Sea” |
| Uday Kanungo
The Texture of Time: De-Familiarization and the Experience of Temporality in Everyday Aesthetics | Ida Jørgensen and Harun Kaygan
Towards a Design Aesthetics of Embodied Care in Play | Matti Tainio
Aesthetic Practices in Running |
- 15:00–15:30 Coffee and snack (C-building, 3rd floor)
- 15:30–16:30
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| Transformation of Self in Aesthetic Practice (C411) Chair: Anu Besson | Music and Embodiment in Gameplay (C417) Chair: Johan Kalmanlehto | Aesthetic Practices of Resistance I (C311=C4) Chair: Susanne Ylönen |
| Jaakko Rintala
The Aesthetics of Transformation: Force, Work, and The Iliad in Simone Weil's Writings | Oskari Koskela
Considering the Role and Meaning of Music in Videogames Through “Thinking in Movement” | Janne Vanhanen
On Unwholesome Artistic Life |
| Anttoni Kuusela
Aesthetic practice as a Holistic Activity Through the Way of Tea | Alesha Serada
Practices of Play in Rocksmith | Vir Pratap Singh Gautam and Utkarsha Negi
Exploring the Aesthetic Practices in the Ambedkarite Buddhist Community in India |
- 16:30– Drinks and canapé (Villa Rana)

Thursday 24.10.2024

- 9:15–10:30 Keynote: **Feng Zhu**
[The Reflexive Askēsis of Computer Gameplay as Ethico-Aesthetic Practice?](#) (C1) Chair: Johan Kalmanlehto
- 10:30–11:00 Coffee and snack (C-building, 3rd floor)
- 11:00–12:30 **Aesthetic Practices in and with Language** (C411) Chair: Johan Kalmanlehto
Visual Perceptual Practices I (C417) Chair: Jussi Saarinen
Collaborative Aesthetic Practices (C311=C4) Chair: Pauline von Bonsdorff
- Jussi Pentikäinen**
[Poetry as an Aesthetic Practice and a Practice of Aisthesis](#)
- Kaija Mäenpää**
[Lived Thinking within the Transitional Space of the Painting](#)
- Doris Posch**
[The Connectivity of Lived Experience in Space and Time: Collaborative Filmmaking Process and Collective Agency](#)
- Martta Heikkilä**
[Artwork as Practice of Language: Derrida on Making Drawing Speak](#)
- Kaisa Mäki-Petäjä**
[Drawn Life: Illustrated Journaling as an Aesthetic Practice and Examined Life](#)
- Anna-Kaisa Koski**
[A Multiplicity of Alternative Universes: World-Building in the Social Aesthetic Practice of Fan Fiction](#)
- Ulla Pohjanoro and Juha Ojala**
[Metaphoric Language as Conveyor of Aesthetic Practices in Musical Instrument Pedagogy](#)
- Renata Pekowska**
[Drawing attention: Multimodal Drawing Workshops as Sites of Attention Care, in the Context of Attention Economies of Digital Platforms](#)
- Rebecca Rouse and Lars Kristensen**
[Understanding the Role of Game Aesthetics in Media Performance Practice](#)
- 12:30–13:30 Lunch
- 13:30–15:00 **Aesthetic Practices in Mediation** (C411) Chair: Pauline von Bonsdorff
Visual Perceptual Practices II (C417) Chair: Kaisa Mäki-Petäjä
Moving in a City: Appropriation and Alienation (C311=C4) Chair: Anu Besson
- Virpi Kaukio**
[Aesthetic Practices as Tools for Experiential Publishing in the Museum](#)
- Xiao Sheng**
[Poetic Moments: Painting, Traveling, and Friendship as Aesthetic Practices](#)
- Katrin A. Schamun**
[Children's Appropriation of \(Urban\) Landscapes as an Aesthetic Practice](#)
- Riikka Talvitie and Ulla Pohjanoro**
[Aesthetic Practices in Music Composition Pedagogy](#)
- Päivi Leinonen**
[Aesthetic Practice by the Kitchen Window](#)
- Yevheniia Butsykina**
[Exploring the Topography of Uncertainty and Forgetting: The Aesthetic Experience of Walking in a Ukrainian City](#)
- Marcella Zoccoli and Anne Eskola**
[The Beauty and Extravaganza of the Mask: Learning How to Solve Complex Business Cases with Commedia dell'Arte](#)
- Hanna Timonen**
[Photography as a Daily Habit](#)
- 15:00–15:30 Coffee and snack (C-building, 3rd floor)
- 15:30–16:45 Keynote: **Filipa Wunderlich**
[Temporality, Rhythm and Place: A New Temporal Approach to Urban Aesthetics](#) (C1) Chair: Anu Besson
- 19:00–22:00 Dinner (Restaurant Vesilinna)

Friday 25.10.2024

9:15–10:45	Delineating Aesthetic Practice I (C411) Chair: Pauline von Bonsdorff Esa Kirkkopelto Artistic Research and Aesthetic Practices: Toward a Phenomenology of Participation Alex Arteaga Aesthetic Research Practices: Rethinking Aesthetic Practices as Frameworks of Sense-Making	Gender and Identity in Games (C417) Chair: Maria Ruotsalainen Tom Legierse Exploring Challenges to Hegemonic Aesthetic Practices in Esports Brando Ratti Playing at Work. The Reproduction of Labor in Video Games Between Aesthetic Dimension and Social Satisfaction	Aesthetic Practices of Resistance II (C311=C4) Chair: Janne Vanhanen Sarah Postema-Toews Activated Objects: A Material Analysis of Activist Aesthetics in China's White Paper Protests Lucy Wowk Counter-Signifying Practice in Martine Syms' Mundane Afro-Futurisms
10:45–11:15	Coffee and snack (C-building, 3rd floor)		
11:15–12:45	Delineating Aesthetic Practice II (C411) Chair: Johan Kalmanlehto Shuning Diao Is an Aesthetic Practice Pleasant for Its Own Sake? Alonzo Heino Who Needs Aesthetic Practices when there's the Concept of Art? Nat Trimarchi Reviving the Principle of Art (video presentation)	Practices of the Particular in the Everyday (C417) Chair: Kaisa Mäki-Petäjä Tuuli Lukkala and Helena Kupari On the Beauty of Orthodox Christian Worship: Religious Ritual as Aesthetic Practice Moirika Reker Gardening as Aesthetic Practice Anna Talasniemi Finnish Sauna Bathing as an Aesthetic Practice	Mediating Nature Through Aesthetic Practice (C311=C4) Chair: Anu Besson Niina Uusitalo and Jenni Niemelä-Nyrhinen Redistributing the Sensible: Exploring Aesthetic Practices in a Climate Change Photography Course Ahmet Emin Bülbül More-than-Human Rhythmics: Choreographic Thinking in Jodie Mack's The Grand Bizarre Neylan Ogutveren Aular Microplastics Aesthetics – A Phenomenological Approach to the (In)Visibility of Plastic Waste
12:45–13:45	Lunch		
13:45–15:00	Keynote: Jussi Saarinen Painting, Grieving, and Existential Transformation (C1) Chair: Kaisa Mäki-Petäjä		
15:00–15:30	Ending remarks (C1)		

Abstracts

Keynote lectures

Alessandro Bertinotto, University of Turin

Habits and Improvisation in Everyday Aesthetic Experience

Despite the variety of positions, theorists of "everyday aesthetics" argue that aesthetic experience has a pervasive dimension and is not confined solely to the extraordinary encounter with masterpieces of art but rather deeply permeates everyday life. Recently, it has been proposed on this basis that aesthetics thus has an existential dimension – not in Kierkegaard's sense, where the aesthetic is a stage of life opposed to other stages, but rather in the sense that the "aesthetic self" is a constitutive aspect of the self in general.

Starting from this consideration, in this talk, I intend to support two theses:

1. The everyday and existential dimension of aesthetic experience is due to an exercise that we can call "improvisational" of perceptual, emotional, agentive, and cultural habits, and conversely, the improvisational aesthetic productions and receptions are based on perceptual patterns and behavioral rituals that constrain and regulate them.

2. The experience of art – both at the productive and appreciative levels – can rightly be understood as an everyday aesthetic experience that contributes to our "aesthetic self", also in the sense of existential aesthetics. Indeed, we mostly live art in this way, and the purpose of aesthetic education seems to be precisely to integrate the extraordinariness of artistic masterpieces into the ordinariness of our aesthetic life without leading us to an aestheticist conception of life as a work of art.

Through these two theses, I will extend to aesthetic experience as a whole the idea defended in my book *Aesthetics of Improvisation*, according to which improvisation offers the paradigm of art and its experience: in fact, the interplay between habit and improvisation can explain the aesthetic dimension of the everyday, understanding our encounter with artistic phenomena as a particular expression of a more general aspect of ordinary experience – a conception that can also be compared with the proposal recently advanced by Alva Noë in his book *The Entanglement*.

Feng Zhu, King's College London

The Reflexive Askēsis of Computer Gameplay as Ethico-Aesthetic Practice?

Many digital gameplay practices involve the player being reflexive about their own actions. They may attempt to bring non-conscious dispositions to awareness as part of transforming their own play – an essential aspect of the *askēsis* (training, practice, or development) involved in improving their play. If Foucault remarked that "it is the forms of reflexivity that constitute the subject as such", we may ask: what are the features of these forms of reflexivity and what kind of subject might they entrain? Could they hone a discerning familiarity with habit itself – a task that is arguably no less than the work of philosophy? Perhaps even in a way that the practitioner is able

to attend to their own habit-formation in other spheres of life? Or are they ultimately tied to a narrow habituation of the player into commodified practices that dispose them to be loyal consumers of a franchise? This talk will examine *Magic: the Gathering Arena* (2019) limited draft as a case study from which to explore these questions and to think whether the forms of player reflexivity and judgment involved may be thought to feature an aesthetic dimension.

Filipa Wunderlich, University College London

Temporality, Rhythm and Place: A New Temporal Approach to Urban Aesthetics

As cities' temporal crisis aggravates, accrued by unsustainable growth-led, creating estranged patterns of behaviour and the deterioration of mental-health, there is a need for a paradigm shift in the way we think and practice urban place design for contemporary urban environments.

This keynote is on an alternative approach coined *Temporal Urban Design* that challenges designers, decision-makers and researchers with a new aesthetics of city and place. This aesthetics shifts the focus from physical form and materiality onto time and rhythm, performance, performativity and affect in urban space. The focus is on "place-temporality" and "place-rhythms". Cities are seen as ephemeral and performative, where material urban elements such as buildings, streets, squares and parks are the visual and physical stage-sets for everyday rhythmic performances that create the quality of urban space.

Temporal urban aesthetics looks at urban places as an art form and its *temporal design* as experiential and performative, shaped through 'praxis', i.e. processes of co-production and practice. This place temporal aesthetics can be mapped and orchestrated, played and choreographed, and is as such analogous to the aesthetics of music.

Supported by theories of temporality as phenomenological time and distaff theories on temporal territoriality through rhythm and refrain, as well as by recurrent analogies between the aesthetics of everyday social-spatial realm, its temporality, and that of music, this alternative temporal aesthetics of place supports new forms of place analysis and design. Also, it is the lens through which urban designers can better understand and learn to actively influence or co-design the rhythmic condition in which we live. ie. how to design social place-rhythms of co-production to engender common temporal experiences.

Jussi Saarinen, University of Jyväskylä

Painting, Grieving, and Existential Transformation

Hans Maes (2022) has recently delineated an area of research called *existential aesthetics*, which investigates how art, aesthetic practice, and aesthetic experience can profoundly affect the course or quality of an individual's life and significantly illuminate or help to address personal existential questions. In my talk, I adopt this approach to explore how painting, as a sustained creative and aesthetic practice, can beneficially affect the trajectory of post-bereavement grieving. Based on phenomenological theorization on the structure of experience in general (Heidegger 1927; Køster & Fernandez 2023), and then on the experience of grieving in particular

(Køster 2022; Ratcliffe 2023; Higgins 2024), I specify what I mean by existential transformations and the shifts in one's sense of reality that such transformations entail. I then move on to discuss how painting can enable the bereaved individual to transition from a 'grief world' of disruption, uncertainty, and detachment to one of stability and meaningful connection. In doing so, I flesh out the ways in which painting contributes to grieving people's efforts to restructure (a) their sense of themselves and (b) their way of relating to the world and other people while (c) sustaining and renewing their relationships with the deceased. I conclude with some thoughts on the relevance and broader applicability of the suggested existential-aesthetic approach.

Session 1: Structures of Aesthetic Practice

Francesca Camilla Mattioli, Birkbeck College

Medit/Improvis-Ation: How Meditation Informs the Understanding of Improvisation as Practice

A reflection that approaches aesthetics as practice makes sure that we ask not about the object of experience as much as about the way in which experience occurs. I have decided to approach aesthetic practice from the idea of improvisation since "improvisation, as a specific artistic procedure, is to be understood as that kind of artistic production in which the human practices [...] come out into the open" (Bertinetto 2016). In improvisation, a state emerges that highlights the status of art and aesthetics as a practice in general: in fact, improvisation stimulates a high level of attention and receptivity (or surrender as Dewey defines it) by creating a nuanced and irradiated state in which the subject sinks into the object and vice versa, going beyond the traditional concepts of activity and passivity, subject and object. While improvisation traditionally arouses the idea of spontaneity, complete freedom and loss of control, it is actually the result of a skill developed through repetition and exercise: the ability to increase the range of one's sensitivity by becoming one with the perceived environment, a continuous flow in action which can also be found in meditation (Oliveros 1998; Schnee 2003). Therefore, my aim is to bring an original reading of aesthetic practice through the juxtaposition of improvisation and meditation. After a careful analysis of meditation as a practice in which the sense of agency is blurred as well as the boundary between subject and object (Sarath 2006; Min Zhu 2016), I will proceed to an understanding of improvisation in light of these findings. The importance of this juxtaposition will be not only demonstrated by firsthand accounts (Sol 2023), but also supported through reference to Dewey's aesthetics and contemporary neuroscientific studies (Sol 2021; López-González & Limb 2012).

Johan Kalmanlehto, University of Jyväskylä

The Relevance of Style in Aesthetic Practices

In this paper I investigate the meaning of style in aesthetic practices by considering its habitual and embodied nature. Instead of an aesthetic quality of an object, I approach style as the form of an action: how a practical action is done in contrast to what is done. Whereas habits and practices can be any kind of similarly repeated activities, style is the form of acting that makes the action aesthetically pleasing or

meaningful. All practices do not necessarily have aesthetic value but can transform into aesthetic practices through the development and variation of style. However, discernible stylistic differences do not necessarily define the aesthetic quality of a practice. Two persons might carry out a practice in identical manner, yet it could be aesthetic only for one of them. A tennis player might play in a certain style because it provides competitive advantage, whereas another player might play with similar style because playing in such a way is aesthetically pleasing for them. Style manifests itself in the way of doing things, but only the enactor's attitude towards style makes it aesthetically relevant. This also means that style is experienced aesthetically primarily by the subject, while the outward appearance of the action might be aesthetically irrelevant. Style has been described as a twofold concept in terms of passivity and activity. It can mean how something is done, a way of doing things, but can also imply a normative statement, something to be achieved. Individual style can be sought deliberately but can equally be imitated from others without conscious attention. Such understanding of style bears similarity to theories of habit, in which habit is seen as both active aptitude and passive inclination. Style itself is indeed a habitual phenomenon but also capable of transforming habitual practices and our relation to them.

Uday Kanungo, Arizona State University

The Texture of Time: De-Familiarization and the Experience of Temporality in Everyday Aesthetics

In his landmark essay 'Art, as Technique', the Russian formalist Viktor Shklovsky posited that a reliable sign of aesthetic experience is that it ensures that our 'perception reaches its greatest strength and length'. Two decades later, the pragmatist philosopher John Dewey, in his seminal work on aesthetics *Art as Experience*, similarly says how expression through an artwork "is itself a prolonged interaction of something issuing from the self with objective conditions, a process in which both of them acquire a form and order they did not at first possess." While the intensity and immediacy of perception in aesthetic experience has received ample focus in the history of aesthetics, the presence of a prolonged, extended engagement - or a *duree*, in Henri Bergson's terms - that also accompanies it and which potentially reconfigures our relationship with time, has been hitherto under-developed. In my presentation, I aim to argue that this common emphasis on the aspect of temporality stems in turn from Dewey's and Shklovsky's non-dualist perspectives. Both assume a continuity between everyday life and aesthetic experience, since temporal engagement and not essential or metaphysical difference becomes the grounds for judging between aesthetic and non-aesthetic. I show that in a case of remarkable coincidence, both Dewey and Shklovsky, use the exact same terms - 'seeing' and 'recognizing' - to rehabilitate the strange and unfamiliar existing among the routine or prosaic and make it a potential candidate for aesthetic attention by prolonging it temporally. In Shklovsky's terms, the familiar and everyday is 'de-familiarized' since seeing delays and decelerates our engagement, while recognizing is more algebraic and quickens it. Finally, I argue that an important repercussion of this framing is that it directly opposes aesthetic experience to professionalized or neoliberal practices, since prolongation of engagement temporally always undermines the latter and enables the former.

Session 2: Embodied and Dialogic Aesthetic Practices

Susanne Ylönen, University of Jyväskylä

Capoeira: Expressive Bodily Dialogue and the Beauty of Cheekiness

Capoeira is an afro-brasilian game in which two players enter a circle of spectators, and – under guidance of live music and call and response singing – perform improvised kicks, dodges, sweeps/tripping moves and acrobatics. The game's nature is ritualistic and dialogical rather than competitive, and the rules are comparably fluid: one of the players might be better, but there is no winner, and doing something elegantly is often more important than doing it effectively or by force. As a game that defies Western categorizations of dance/martial art capoeira is marked by what researchers term 'strategic ambivalence'. Many of the rules are negotiable, unspoken, or style/culture dependent. According to practitioners, a good game is characterized by, among other things, mood, expression, respect, fun, creativity, skill, risk, connection, and entertainingness. Creating good/beautiful games is, furthermore, a communal effort and depends on the music and active participation (attention, singing, commentary) of the people forming the circle as much as on the players within the ring. Capoeira is thus very much an aesthetic, communal practice, its beauty relating, for example, to questions of flow, rhythm, and appreciation of cheekiness, or "malicia", a playful to vicious cunningness associated with hustlers, con artists, and criminals. Tripping someone in a cheeky, elegant way is esteemed highly. But how can cheekiness be elegant? And how is cunningness related to respectfulness? To answer these questions, this paper relies on interviews of practitioners from different capoeira groups as well as research on capoeira and specifically its aesthetics.

Maria Ruotsalainen, University of Jyväskylä

Walking With Rescue Dogs as an Aesthetic Practice

"It means being with the subjects, seeing through their eyes, feeling through their bodies...seeing through their eyes... not standing apart as an outside observer but integrated into the same world as the observed." Josephine Donovan, 2016, 91-92. In my presentation I examine walking with rescue dogs as a form of aesthetic practice. Through this I enter dialogue with Donna Haraway's (2003) concept of companion animals and Josephine Donovan's (2018) critique of it through aesthetics of care (see also: Saito, 2022). I examine the intersubjectivity between the human-animal and the dog-animals, and forefront the inherent imbalance of power and the paradox of violence and care embedded in the practice of walking rescue dogs. By drawing attention to the different aesthetic rhythms part of this everyday activity, including tone of voice, bodily orientation and movement, and the sudden eruptions and breaks to these rhythms, I forefront the disruptive and transformative power of this practice. By attuning to the tensing and relaxing bodies of the dogs I walk with, to their eruptions of anger and displays of fear, I come to see the world around me differently: To understand bicycles as a form of danger and patches of forest as a source of joy and safety. I learn to avoid unruly materials to walk on, and discover new aesthetic practices of the everyday. References: Donovan, J. (2016). *The Aesthetics of Care*. Bloomsbury Publishing. Donovan, J. (2018). *Animal ethics, the new materialism, and the question of subjectivity*. *Critical Animal Studies*. Towards

Trans-Species Social Justice, 257-74. Haraway, D. J. (2003). The companion species manifesto: Dogs, people, and significant otherness. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press. Saito, Y. (2022). Aesthetics of care: Practice in everyday life. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Ida Jørgensen, University of Southern Denmark and Harun Kaygan, University of Southern Denmark

Towards a Design Aesthetics of Embodied Care in Play

Play is a central aesthetic practice not only in our everyday lives. Designed objects for play permeate our urban, domestic and virtual spaces, and structure our experiences with the world and with each other. But play not only offer aesthetic experiences, often design for play, and especially child's play, is motivated by an ethos of care for the health, safety, well-being and education of players. This presentation discuss the role of design for an aesthetics of embodied care in play practice. Elsewhere (anonymized) design for play has been theorized as a twofold arrangement of care. Here designers first practice care through their immediate design activities in order to then transpose their contextual understanding of care onto technologies that care for future users. In this presentation I aim to further develop this model by considering how aesthetics enter into this two-fold arrangement. This investigation draw from two theoretical sources: First, 'somaesthetics' (Shusterman 2012) emphasizes the role of the body as the locus of embodied experience, and calls for the development of somatic skills to cultivate aesthetic sensibilities. Soma design (Höök 2018), which emerged as a response to this call, aims to design experiences that foster bodily and sensory engagement to heighten users' somatic expertise. The second source is Saito's (2022) notion of an 'aesthetics of care', with which she theorizes sensual and material everyday engagements as driving or nurturing our caring commitments towards each other and the world. This presentation theorizes how care emerges in play from the design of equipment that prompts aesthetic experiences of relational embodied engagements. As such, it highlights the role of embodiment and care in the aesthetics of play, and call attention to the role of the designer in inscribing caring, embodied aesthetic interactions into designed objects.

Session 3: Making and Connecting Through Aesthetic Practice

Anu Besson, University of Jyväskylä

On the Importance of Making Things

Since the industrial revolution and the parallel gradual global urbanisation, a paradoxical double shift has occurred. Now, our species as a collective impacts the environment more than ever before. Also, individual consumption opportunities have exponentially expanded thanks to the internet and global markets. But, in certain ways our possibilities to interact with our physical environments have become more restricted due to privatisation, commercialisation and lack of access to natural spaces. For example, free roaming and access to (near)free resources such as natural materials are often limited in urban areas. Also, handcrafting skills are slowly and globally eroding due to the perceived lack of need of this traditional knowledge. Reflecting on qualitative data I collected among expatriate Finns, I explore how access to nature's materials and ingredients can offer an important pathway to

aesthetic expression and experience. Previously, urban foraging has been studied from the perspectives of food security, traditional/indigenous food and medicinal cultures, and supplementing livelihood. However, my data shows that the right to roam and freedom to collect materials for household purposes and handcrafting are experienced as intrinsically valuable for supporting creative expression and self- and cultural identity. They also support cultural and familial traditions, and a sense of belonging to a group or place. I explore how using self-gardened or natural ingredients and materials in cooking and crafting offers a sense of 'enhanced agency' or ability to directly utilise, influence or interact with one's environment. Such being-in-the-world is experienced as a healthy counterbalance to screen-based activities and the somewhat uncontrollable life outside of the home. Examining these activities as aesthetic practices highlights the intrinsic aesthetic relevance of making, doing and undergoing: aesthetic practices become intimately interwoven, even inseparable from practitioners' identity, and affect their outlook on life.

Filippa Kier Droob, Aarhus University

Knitting as a Public and Staged Aesthetic Practice; a Case Study on the Danish Knitting Festival "Knitting by the Sea"

In recent decades, knitting has experienced a resurgence, evolving from a domestic necessity to a leisurely pursuit. This shift has been accompanied by a growing trend of public knitting gatherings, ranging from regular club meetings to entire multi-day festivals. At a time characterized by challenges such as mass production, over-consumption, and waste in capitalistic production patterns understanding how aesthetic practices like knitting at festivals are staged, and thus contributes to ongoing discussions on aesthetics, sustainable production and consumption, and community-building, seems important. Taking the Danish knitting festival, "Knitting by the Sea", as a case study, this paper seeks to explore the potential of knitting as a staged and public aesthetic practice. Based on the festival's predominant focus on sustainable and traditional techniques in its broad range of workshops, it asks how such activities shape the participants' ongoing knitting practices and contribute to their engagement with broader societal and environmental concerns. Meaning, how does the festival design and frame such workshops, what motivates the participants' engagement with the themes herein, and how do they contribute to their personal narratives and worldly orientation? Through participant observation and interviews conducted within the knitting community at "Knitting by the Sea", this paper thus examines how the festival influences knitting as a practice and asks if this way of knitting creates room for transformation and impact, or if it simply represents a new form of commodity. The paper is theoretically grounded in concepts of new materialism and is situated within the framework of cultural studies, with additional insights drawn from discussions on craft economies. While much attention has been given to the psychological and mental health aspects of knitting in recent years, there remains a dearth of academic research on its potential to shape individual and collective orientations and lifeworlds.

Matti Tainio, University of Lapland

Aesthetic Practices in Running

Running Artfully Network (RAN) is an international group of scholars and artists, who have a passion for running. RAN has operated since 2021, it is an offspring of the RUN! RUN! RUN! biennial that was organized the first time in 2014. RAN advocates exploring and developing the possibilities of running outside the regular perspectives of health and fitness. This indicates understanding running as a means for aesthetic experiences, self-expression and art – in spite of the runners physical abilities. The presentation will explore the groups antagonistic approach on running through the examples presented in the two events organized by the network in 2021 and 2023. The first event was an online-meeting of twenty participant and it focused the various ways running adopted as an aesthetic practice during the pandemic. The network's second meeting was held at Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge (UK). This time the objective was to develop the ideas of running artfully through presentations, artworks and practical exercises. Running does not have a long history in art or as an aesthetic practice, but already there are various established methods of using running as a means to reaching outside its prevalent frame. It still requires some kind of ability to run or imagine oneself running. Running artfully can take multiple forms: one can perform or invite others to perform. The run can be physically challenging, playful, a staged act or poetic, slow and difficult. The participants of RAN events see running as a tool similar to a pencil. It is an open-ended vehicle for different ends. As there are various ways to use a pencil from, there are various cunning ways to employ running for aesthetic ends. The presentation focuses on presenting and analyzing the possibilities of running as an aesthetic practice open to everyone.

Session 4: Transformation of Self in Aesthetic Practice

Jaakko Rintala, University of Helsinki

The Aesthetics of Transformation: Force, Work, and The Iliad in Simone Weil's Writings

In this paper I will examine the relationship between the concept of force and labour in the writings of the French philosopher Simone Weil (1909–1943). For Weil, force is a central concept which carries manifold meanings. Force is encountered at all levels of human life, from one's own bodily needs to nature and social order. Its effects on humans can often be seen in various forms of social oppression such as war, work, and hunger. Weil's notion of force is ambiguous for she sees it at once as both constraining and dehumanizing as well as transformative and thus as a possible technology for liberating oneself. Though Weil is not a thinker often associated with art or aesthetics, her 1940 essay "The Iliad, or, The Poem of Force" offers an intriguing reading of Homer's epic poem which focuses on the notion of force. By a close reading of Weil's own interrogation of the concept of force in The Iliad I will then look at Weil's other writings to locate and present an aesthetic principle guiding her texts. In Weil's thought the reader finds an aesthetics of transformation which utilizes both the notion of force and manual labour as processes which can be used to transform oneself through suffering as well as to become attuned to the suffering of others. This is one of the crucial aspects of Weil's thought for us still today. For it carries within a

possibility for an aesthetics which is built on a strong foundation of ethics: courage, compassion, justice, and love.

Anttoni Kuusela, University of Jyväskylä

Aesthetic practice as a Holistic Activity Through the Way of Tea

When we think of aesthetic practices, one possible, albeit old-fashioned, view of practice to come to mind is an individual engaged in making one kind of art or the other, for example, paintings, sculptures, or pieces of music. This image of the solitary practitioner who engages in making of art is divorced from the other spheres of her life and from her everyday being. In such a view, art and aesthetic practice is thought of as a somewhat “transcendental” practice.

In my paper, I would like to explore and strengthen a more contemporary and cross-cultural view on aesthetic practice based on Japanese philosophy, especially that of tea. Taking the simple activity of serving tea, the so-called Way of tea (*chadō*, 茶道), as a starting point, I will investigate an aesthetic practice where the boundaries between the self and the other, and between a special aesthetic practice and everyday aesthetic practice are broken through. Furthermore, building on the philosophy of self-cultivation prominent in Japanese arts, I will argue that the practice of tea is not limited only to that sphere, but that through this single sphere we can gain an insight into aesthetic practices in various spheres, in addition to the insight we can gain into the interrelation of ourselves with the other.

For in the philosophies of Japanese arts it is held that the master of one artform can deeply understand other artforms too. Additionally, in the Way of tea it is said that “the taste of Zen and tea are one” – that is, through the practice of tea, insight into the meaning of Zen, namely, that of emptiness, can be gained. I will conclude my paper by examining the nature of this emptiness we can understand through the practice of tea.

Session 5: Music and Embodiment in Gameplay

Oskari Koskela, University of Jyväskylä

Considering the Role and Meaning of Music in Videogames Through “Thinking in Movement”

Perhaps the only defining feature of videogame music is that it is music intended to accompany gaming. This embeddedness has several consequences for how to approach game music as a subject of study. Most notable is the analytical challenge posed by the interactive and multimodal nature of game music: rather than being the sole focus of attention, game music is typically experienced as fused together with other aspects of the game as well as with the activity of gaming. The presentation aims to account for this challenge by outlining a common ontological framework for music and games through considering both fundamentally as bodily activities. The presentation begins with framing videogame music through the metaphor of dance, that is, in terms of active and bodily participation in the game. This movement-oriented view presents a third option for thinking about the pleasure and meaning of videogames alongside the traditional rule-oriented (ludological) and story-oriented (narratological) views: the gameplay is seen as being about rhythms, embodied

action and being involved in choreography set and regulated by the game. Within this view, music is not merely accompanying the gameplay but rather an integral part of the choreography of the involvement in the game, which is made meaningful, in a manner of “thinking in movement” (Sheet-Johnstone, 1999), through bodily capabilities for sense-making. In order to further substantiate the dance-metaphor and to investigate its implications, the presentation discusses choreography-based approach to human-technology interaction as well as Daniel Stern’s (2010) concept of vitality affects. The former provides a perspective for investigating the dynamics of the movement as the source of meaning and the way our actions are organized by technologies, whereas the latter aims to approach the multimodal “liveness” inherent in the movement qualities.

Alesha Serada, University of Vaasa

Practices of Play in Rocksmith

The subject of this work in progress is the music game Rocksmith (Ubisoft, 2011). Based on my continuous autoethnographic account of mastering the game, I explore the intersection between musical and ludic concepts of mastery that it creates. Music games offer a unique mode of embodied play and interaction within the “affective territory between body and screen” (Ash, 2009, p. 2108). Most such games have little to do with the actual practice of playing a musical instrument: for instance, the goal of Guitar Hero (Harmonix Music Systems, 2005) is to make the player feel like a rock star (Collins, 2013, p. 67). In contrast, Rocksmith uses an electric guitar as a controller and provides actual guitar lessons with the goal to achieve music mastery in real life as well as in the game. For example, Mastery in the game is measured as a percentage, which can go above 100% in the case of a flawless performance. On the other hand, the digital interface and especially its idiosyncratic music notations inspired by Guitar Hero create additional challenges for players with a music background. Nevertheless, by physically interacting with the real-life music instrument in a gamified way, players acquire easily transferable skills, thus overcoming the paradox of context-dependant learning in games (see e.g. Linderoth, 2010). References Ash, J. (2009). Emerging Spatialities of the Screen: Video Games and the Reconfiguration of Spatial Awareness. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 41(9), 2105–2124. <https://doi.org/10.1068/a41250> Collins, K. (2013). *Playing with sound: A theory of interacting with sound and music in video games*. The MIT Press. Harmonix Music Systems. (2005). *Guitar Hero* [Computer software]. Linderoth, J. (2010). *Why gamers don’t learn more*. Nordic DiGRA. Ubisoft. (2011). *Rocksmith* [Computer software].

Session 6: Aesthetic Practices of Resistance I

Janne Vanhanen, University of Helsinki

On Unwholesome Artistic Life

In the discourse on aesthetics, there is a widespread understanding of aesthetic experience, artistic creation and the aesthetic dimensions of the everyday as fundamentally positive aspects of life. Arts and the aesthetic are often seen as life-enriching and, politically, even beneficial to public health. Therefore, aesthetic practices are to be supported individually and generally. However, this raises the

question of what kind of understanding of health lies behind this notion. As Jonathan M. Metzler notes, "health" as a term is replete with value judgments and hierarchies, and denotes an ideological position of implicit and naturalized values. In my view, this biopolitical aspect should be taken into account also in considering aesthetics and health. I approach this problematic from the point of view of an artistic response to the ideological imperative of wholesomeness. In particular, I consider the case of the Paavoharju collective, a Finnish music group that gained surprising international renown in the early 2000s. This was equally due to stories of their unconventional lifestyle as to the amateurishly otherworldly quality of the music that was produced on very meagre means. Living in a small provincial town of Savonlinna, they occupied various abandoned buildings and vagrant shacks, ending up in a dilapidated dairy, into which they built hidden living quarters. All this created a mythology around the group. When perusing the history of that scene, what stands out is the almost childish joy and affirmation of the unsanitary and unhealthy conditions of the group's chosen life at the time. It is not hard to view these life choices as resistance – also in aesthetic terms – to the norms of biopower, and I bring up the theoretical implications of this chosen insalubriousness, applying the Deleuzian concept of becoming-imperceptible, as well as Giorgio Agamben's idea of existence as potentiality, to these considerations.

Vir Pratap Singh Gautam, Indian Institute of Science Education and Research Mohali, Punjab, India and Utkarsha Negi, Indian Institute of Science Education and Research Mohali, Punjab, India

Exploring the Aesthetic Practices in the Ambedkarite Buddhist Community in India

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, also known as Babasaheb, carried on a lifelong struggle dedicated to eradicating caste-based discrimination and chose the path of conversion from Hinduism to Buddhism for the untouchables, or Dalits, who had long been relegated to the lowest rungs of the Hindu caste hierarchy. Ambedkar's teachings and writings played a crucial role in shaping the ideological foundation of the Dalit Buddhist movement. He interpreted Buddhism as a philosophy of liberation, emphasising its compatibility with democratic principles and its potential to empower the marginalised. The Ambedkarite Buddhist community attaches great significance to the religious conversion, which shapes their daily reality and aesthetic practices. Education and knowledge hold a high value in this community, as historically marginalised individuals were denied literacy. However, their indigenous knowledge catered to their artisanal and labour-intensive needs. This study explores the transformative potential of aesthetic practices within this community, drawing from Paulo Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed." By examining the intersection of aesthetics, activism, and empowerment, we seek to illuminate how these practices promote social justice and challenge oppressive power structures. The amalgamation of Buddhist iconography and Ambedkarite intellectual tradition is evident in art and material culture, such as house architecture, house names, prayer aesthetics, and the culture of books. These symbols do not counter-majoritarian aesthetics but rather represent a cultural movement rooted in the community's religious beliefs. The transformative nature of this aesthetic practice is embodied in the everyday lives of the community, as they display symbolism that reflects Buddhist philosophy and the teachings of Dr. Ambedkar.

Session 7: Aesthetic Practices in and with Language

Jussi Pentikäinen, University of Helsinki

Poetry as an Aesthetic Practice and a Practice of Aisthesis

Western philosophy has historically struggled to come to grips with the individual or particular thing. One formulation of this struggle is given by Maurice Blanchot, who (following the poet Stéphane Mallarmé) argues that to name a thing is to reduce it to the universality of the concept and thus to “annihilate” it. According to this line of thinking, philosophy cannot speak of the individual object without destroying that which makes it individual and unique in the first place. The possibility of coming to grips with individual things is left to sensation or “aisthesis” which resists being reduced to concepts.

I suggest that often the task of coming to grips with individual things falls to poetry. Poetry, or so the argument goes, can use language in a way which makes it possible to grasp the object in its individuality, be it the red wheelbarrow of William Carlos Williams or the piece of soap of Francis Ponge. This view is not unique to modern, 20th century poetry, however. Already Alexander Baumgarten suggested that poetry is a “sensate discourse” which takes as its object the individual things passed over by the clear and distinct discourse of science and philosophy. Poetry thus aims to grasp individual objects and retain their particularity while using the medium of language.

I argue that poetry can be approached as a practice which aims to put into words the dimension of sensation which is often seen as refractory to conceptualisation. Poetry is thus an *aesthetic practice* in the etymological sense of the word, one that takes as its task building a bridge between the universality of language and the particularity of sensation or “aisthesis”. A task which, furthermore, always verges on the impossible, as Blanchot’s theory of “annihilation” argues.

Martta Heikkilä, University of Helsinki

Artwork as Practice of Language: Derrida on Making Drawing Speak

In this paper, I consider what the practical aspects of the work of art are vis-à-vis the words that Jacques Derrida employs about them. How does a philosopher relate his practice to speaking of artworks that, as such, are mute?

Being material and having an irreducible thickness, the work of art is fundamentally non-linguistic. It is composed of traces left by the artist. Therefore, it is not a mere container of abstract signification, but it means the fact of presentation, a singular site of differences with a unique ground to which it belongs. I discuss the work of art as an instance of different practices: first, philosophical, and second, work’s materiality with a specific density that is even too subtle to be handled by philosophy.

For Derrida, the work of art is remarkable as an object of research because it shows the restrictions of philosophical interpretation. An example of the complex relation between image and language is provided by the book *Lignées* (1996), which features Indian ink drawings by Romanian-French artist Micaëla Henich. Below each drawing is a brief text written by Derrida. The drawings, all in a rectangular form and in uniform

size, two on each page of the book, are black and white, displaying deconstructed sceneries with architectural forms. The written texts never illustrate Henich's drawings. Yet, it is obvious that the drawings generate text, and Derrida's poetic writings add another layer to them: as he says, speechless drawings offer him language, since they make him speak. However, they do this without appealing to any given discursive truth. I shall refer to Derrida's reading of artworks by Henich: how to describe the praxis of writing of images that remain without words but still call for and produce them?

Ulla Pohjanoro, Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki and Juha Ojala, Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki

Metaphoric Language As Conveyor of Aesthetic Practices in Musical Instrument Pedagogy

The most fundamental meanings conveyed in musical activities such as listening, singing, playing an instrument, improvising, and composing are mostly ineffable. Musical qualities, matters of kinesthesia or proprioception in playing a musical instrument, or different forms of music information (sensory, iconic, symbolic) are not easily conveyed through spoken language. Musical discourse, in professional context, takes place in rehearsals between musicians and a living composer, when musicians rehearse a piece of music written in a score without the composer present, and when teaching musicians: Musicians speak about music and its qualities, how to interpret the music inscribed in the score, and what is their interpretation of the musical message in the score. This verbal discourse is learnt in music education institutes that form musical communities of practice). Musician speech often relies on the music theoretical-analytical terminology common to all professionally educated musicians. In music teaching, the use of metaphors is known to be significant. Metaphors are believed to convey, at least to some extent, meanings for which no words can be found, and which are therefore conveyed by means of melodies. In this presentation, we will examine the videoed metaphorical discourse on music by four expert music teachers. The teachers provide instructive feedback for their most advanced adolescent instrumental students aged 12-19. We conclude by drawing conclusions about the teachers' musical aesthetic goals, values, and even the ontological perceptions of music conveyed by their metaphorical language.

Session 8: Visual Perceptual Practices I

Kaija Mäenpää, Visual artist, KuM, FM

Lived Thinking within the Transitional Space of the Painting

Aesthetics often emphasize the viewer's point of view when examining the situation of encountering visual arts. Instead, this paper focuses on the working process of an artist: the topic is my own working process as a visual artist with the double meaning of space, which refers to paintings combining the three-dimensional object-like space and the two-dimensional pictorial space. Extending from the border of concrete space, through fragments painted on canvases and in the end to painterly gestures and colors, such a transitional space offers the painter an opportunity to reflect on the sediments of temporality and spatiality. The painting process is a

means of philosophizing in a visual non-verbal form. In this paper, I discuss some correspondences in structure and meaning between the kind of cupboard-like paintings with movable doors and Henri Bergson's concept of duration in the frame of the Bergsonian cone representing layers and movements of memory as the internal life of a person. Bergson's cone stretches the area between its base and tip, between time and space, memory and perception, verticality and horizontality, simultaneity and linearity as well as intuition and theory – in the same way as the stretched temporality and space-time of the cupboard-like paintings. One of the transitional spaces, the creation of which this paper portrays, is the combination of rooms constructed of layers and movements of recollections at the threshold of death. Finally, lived thinking as the nature of the painterly process means thinking with materiality and spirituality, gestures and rhythms, sorrow and care together – including an opening. The transitional space of the painting is a place for seeing differently.

Kaisa Mäki-Petäjä, University of Jyväskylä

Drawn Life: Illustrated Journaling as an Aesthetic Practice and Examined Life

Our lives unfold as momentary experiences that are often fleeting and ambivalent, as all that mundane humdrum that hauls us forward without a second thought. Some moments are instinctively memorable, some reveal their particularity over time; many moments linger hidden in our minds affecting us daily. “[A] good life proceeds from [these] myriad daily activities,” writes psychologist David Schuldberg (“Living well creatively: What’s chaos got to do with it?” 2007), but it is often difficult to gauge if we are living a good life. The sense of meaningfulness is connected to the sense of life satisfaction, to the contentedness with how our lives have unfolded, and meaningfulness, in turn, is created through sense-making. In this presentation I will examine how keeping an illustrated journal – a regular habit of drawing from one’s personal life into a sketchbook or other type of journal – can be used to make sense of one’s presently unfolding and constantly changing day-to-day life. Based on personal accounts of keeping an illustrated journal, I will argue that while a single drawing might not be more than it is, the accumulation of journal entries has the potential to result in an examined life and a sense of meaningfulness as the patterns and the path of one’s life become visible and open for contemplation. Schuldberg argues that good life is a path, not an outcome. Anthropologist Tim Ingold describes living as wayfaring, as weaving a path through the world. This presentation endeavours to show that keeping an illustrated journal is both the record of the path taken and the making of a skilful wayfarer.

Renata Pekowska, Technological University Dublin

Drawing attention: Multimodal Drawing Workshops as Sites of Attention Care, in the Context of Attention Economies of Digital Platforms

As online platforms increasingly claim our attention, employing predictive algorithms to increase addictive engagement patterns, I argue for exhibition experience and drawing workshops as sites of attention care, retuning perception and reclaiming sensory nuance. I investigate exhibition related practices in the context of attention economies of digital platforms. I consider practices of adding multisensorial elements to exhibitions, through both their potential and their possible downfalls. I

consider exhibition related outreach events in the form of expanded workshop formats through design and facilitation of drawing events. I assemble and rearrange multimodal sequences as ways to stimulate non-ocular and non-explicit attention modes, through interpretation of non-visual input by processes and responses of mark-making. The expanded form of a drawing workshop is also considered in the context of three ecologies: individual, social and environmental. The workshops form an ongoing aesthetic practice, through their progression and iterative construction: no two workshops are the same, but all are related and are based on the facilitator's previous experiences and received verbal and written anonymous feedback from participants of the previous events. I see workshops as sites of presence and co-presence, generating sociable togetherness through liveness and embodiment. As outreach and education roles within exhibition practices become increasingly gendered and undervalued as creative endeavours, I reclaim them as research and artistic practice. In the age of AI generated imagery, I posit the process and the act of drawing as non-verbal communication which translates and expresses not only visual clues and concepts but other modal input and thought processes, while activating modes of creative attention crucial for critical perception and meaningful engagement, but less profitable and therefore not supported by attention economies of techno-capitalism.

Session 9: Collaborative Aesthetic Practices

Doris Posch, Karlstad University

The Connectivity of Lived Experience in Space and Time: Collaborative Filmmaking Process and Collective Agency

This paper focuses on the aesthetic practices that emerge from a collaborative filmmaking process. The analysis draws on Fernanda Pessoa's and Chica Barbosa's filmic dialogue entitled *Swing and Sway (Vai e Vem)* (BRA/USA 2022), a filmic collaboration of open authorship that is grounded in lived experience interwoven with reflections on the political and collective agency of cinema. In an audiovisual letter dialogue set in Brazil and the US in politically turbulent times, a cinematic correspondence of the two filmmakers rooted in a sensual approach to connectivity unfolds. The visual communication does not only tackle the filmmakers' longings for exchange between São Paulo and Los Angeles as a formal expression of the physical closeness of two friends that transcends the distance between the Northern and Southern Americas. In their attempt to overcome spatial distance, they also reflect upon temporal relationality in their 16mm-film: via a transgenerational approach to experimental feminist film practice, the two filmmakers engage with the works of further sixteen experimental women* filmmakers. The aesthetic practice adopted in *Swing and Sway (Vai e Vem)* unfolds the lived and shared experience of the self within collective agency by shifting the narrative not only from singular authorship to collaborative practices in the very present, but also by aesthetically negotiating artists' legacies of the past as a fundamental transgenerational influence in the present. Further, producing collective agency as an aesthetic practice demonstrates the entanglements of culturally coded spaces that emerge from a transcultural encounter, of historical and present feminist legacies through and within experimental filmmaking forms and formats. Given that the artistic aesthetic practices are being co-created by lived experience, this paper visualizes an

embodied aesthetic practice that unfolds as a multifaceted reflection of the world within a temporal and spatial multivocality.

Anna-Kaisa Koski, University of Jyväskylä

A Multiplicity of Alternative Universes: World-Building in the Social Aesthetic Practice of Fan Fiction

In this paper, I analyze the practice of world-building in fan fiction as an aesthetic practice. My general interest in the topic of world-building stems from recognizing the unsustainability of our current world, and a simultaneous awareness of the possibilities creative practices offer for imagining otherwise. Examining fan fiction practices that leisurely create clusters of fictional worlds provide an intriguing parallel to reflect the practices that construct the current “real” world.

Fan fiction is understood here as a social aesthetic practice, motivated not only by the pleasure of writing or reading stories, but of sharing both finished and unfinished works, ideas for new works, and the creative process. Through mutual support peer-feedback encourages new ideas to diversify a fandom’s AUs (alternative universes), while also spurring others on to pick up from where someone else has left off, adapting and co-opting, and co-creating the aesthetics of a specific fandom, through online social interaction. The social imagination integrated in fan fiction practices is constituted in relation to the immaterial worlds of previous cultural products.

I suggest that the “non-originality” of fan fiction is what encourages the nuanced world-building in it, AUs functioning simultaneously as repeated tropes and individual creations. Instead of a familiar world with original characters as is typical for most non-genre fiction, fan fiction AUs operate with familiar characters in original worlds. Recycling ideas, repeating storylines, and protagonists whose characteristics are already familiar to the reader community build creative space for testing the familiar elements in new surroundings.

Sources: Bonsdorff, Pauline von, et al. *Aesthetic Practices*. mongrel matter, 2023. Hellekson, Karen and Kristina Busse (Eds.). (2014). *The fan fiction studies reader*. University of Iowa Press. Yusoff, Kathryn and Jennifer Gabrys. “Climate Change and the Imagination”. *WIREs Climate Change*, Volume 2, July/August 2011. p. 516–534.

Rebecca Rouse, Högskolan i Skövde and Lars Kristensen, Högskolan i Skövde

Understanding the Role of Game Aesthetics in Media Performance Practice

This paper brings a unique disciplinary perspective on Games, based in the Swedish discipline of Media Arts, Aesthetics, and Narration (Medier, Estetik, och Berättande or MEB) to the understanding of game aesthetics in contemporary media performance practices. In the subject of MEB the technical, cultural and social forms and expressions of new media are studied. The focus is on how media forms and expressions are produced, distributed and consumed, as well as how storytelling and aesthetics are expressed in and influenced by technology. As the aesthetics of games and play come to be increasingly taken up by performing arts, it is important to understand the impacts of these aesthetics on performance practices. By practices we refer both to practices of making, which the creators of media performance work engage in, as well as practices of reception, which audiences

develop through their encounter with media performance works. To understand how game aesthetics appear in practices of making, we analyse a series of recorded conversations held online during the Future Media Theaters research project. This project brought together over sixty participants from around the world for a series of eleven informal salon-style meetings and more structured seminars. Participants included both professional artists and academics, all of whom shared a focus on practices with game aesthetics, game technologies, and other media in contemporary performing arts. By analysing these conversations we can share insights about how game aesthetics, and even more broadly the aesthetics of play, are implemented in practitioners' ways of working when developing media performance works. As a complement to this analysis, we also discuss audience reception with respect to game aesthetics in the context of recent performances presented at PlayLab, a research centre at University of Skövde (Sweden) dedicated to exploring the intersection of games, game technologies, and performing arts.

Session 10: Aesthetic Practices in Mediation

Virpi Kaukio, University of Eastern Finland

Aesthetic Practices as Tools for Experiential Publishing in the Museum

The presentation is part of a project focusing on how museums can serve as a platform for the experiential publication of research. The study explores ways to make visible information or research processes that are challenging or impossible to publish through traditional scientific publishing channels. It examines experiential or so-called tacit knowledge, which is difficult to verbalize and conceptualize, from the perspective of aesthetics and sensory research. My premise is that sensory and functional knowledge is more successful in communicating and producing a living intangible cultural heritage to its community members than conventional research publishing channels. Aesthetic communication practices are essential to the museum's experiential publishing activities. Museums are characterized by a three-dimensional and temporal approach, challenging all the senses. However, it is important to consider the nature of the knowledge produced in this way. The fact that the meanings of aesthetic practices are not necessarily articulated in words calls for a rethinking of how the knowledge they provide is communicated. In the recent years, museums have been involved in a lot of cooperation and experimentation with scientific and artistic research projects. In my presentation, I will analyze aesthetic practices through a case study of a project "Kadonnut kinnas ja ja muita tarinoita" (2018-2022) and the exhibition produced about it at the Museum of North Karelia. I use interviews with project actors and observation of the interactive performance (<https://www.360panorama.fi/360KadonnutKinnas/>) produced from the exhibition as research material, using theoretical perspectives from environmental aesthetics, sensory ethnography and theories of agency. The presentation is a part of the project "The Museum as a Forum for Experiential Publishing of Research" is carried out by PhD Virpi Kaukio at the University of Eastern Finland and funded by the Kone Foundation 2024-2025. <https://uefconnect.uef.fi/en/group/the-museum-as-a-forum-for-experiential-publishing-of-research/>

Riikka Talvitie, Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki and Ulla Pohjanoro, Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki

Aesthetic Practices in Music Composition Pedagogy

Musical composition, in the context of Western classical music tradition, can be viewed as the making of practical and artistic decisions. A substantial part of these decisions falls into the aesthetic realm. Professional compositional-aesthetic practices are acquired in higher education: in music universities and conservatories. The education of a composer comprises traditional subject areas in music education, such as theory and history, counterpoint, instrumentation, instrument skills—and, most fundamentally, composition skills. Composition pedagogy can be structured on two complementary but sometimes competing dimensions: The first dimension is built on artistic-musical tradition and mastering composition technical conventions. The second dimension focuses on developing aesthetic understanding and supporting compositional-aesthetic decision-making by composition students according to their individual aesthetic preferences. The substantial syllabus of composition teaching, be it more compositional technique oriented and less focused on aesthetic decision-making—or the contrary, is habitually conveyed in master-apprentice dyads of composition professors and their students. What happens in the black boxes of composition studios is rarely, if ever, described in the curriculum, and equally rarely investigated. Whilst knowledge of the syllabus and practices of composition teaching are lacking, distinct types of knowledge (playing, listening, shaping, and notating music, and music technological and ideological understanding) necessary in compositional practice have been disclosed. In this paper, we analyse, based on our practical and theoretical knowledge about teaching composing, what kind of aesthetic understanding the distinct compositional knowledge types necessitate and how aesthetic understanding and practices are conveyed within the two dimensions of composition pedagogy. We analyse differences between the two pedagogical dimensions in terms of compositional-aesthetic practices and explain them as tension between tradition and innovation: How to show respect for a long tradition while standing out from other composers in a personal and surprising way?

Marcella Zoccoli, University of Helsinki and Anne Eskola, JAMK University of Applied Sciences

The Beauty and Extravaganza of the Mask: Learning How to Solve Complex Business Cases with Commedia dell'Arte

Learning to lead people effectively is an extraordinary challenge, and learning to lead people in complex business environments is a serious responsibility. The paper presents the learning experiences of international students at the School of Business at Jamk University of Applied Sciences (UAS) in Finland in solving complex business cases using the masks of Commedia dell'Arte. While playing the improvisational skills of Arlecchino, Colombina, Pantalone, Dottore and Pulcinella, they activate human skills and allow insight and intuitions to emerge spontaneously. The paper shows Commedia dell'Arte used in three dedicated workshops of research with practice during the fall of 2021, 2022 and 2023. They were set and delivered by the first certified SESS Trainer (sensorial, emotional, and spiritual skills trainer) at Jamk and performed by the students participating in the ProCESS Project, Erasmus+

Knowledge Alliances project titled "Processing Complexity with Emotional, Sensorial and Spiritual capacities" (January 2021–March 2024). The project included the participation of nine partners from four European countries. During the spring semester of 2023, the same teacher-trainer implemented Commedia dell' Arte as a pedagogical tool in two courses she designed: Co-Creative Organizational Leadership and Emotional Management of International Business Complexity. The creation of a dedicated safe space of action for the students encouraged them to explore self- and social awareness, create relations, connect, and understand the reality of life and complex business contexts, develop their human skills, understand paradoxes and contingencies, learn to read behind the lines, listen beyond the words, imagine new scenarios, and create solutions. The findings in all the learning instances highlight how the beauty and the extravaganza of the masks opened new creative dimensions and fostered students' epistemic curiosity and transformative experimentations. Emphasizing ensemble acting and personal engagement in improvisation practices increases the flow of natural human skills and aesthetic experiences of the art of leadership.

Session 11: Visual Perceptual Practices II

Xiao Sheng, Arizona State University

Poetic Moments: Painting, Traveling, and Friendship as Aesthetic Practices

Seeing the making of a painting as an aesthetic practice broadens the definition of this old art form. An examination of the artistic exchange between Wang Hui (1632-1717) and Yun Shouping (1633-1690) shows how artists in early Qing China were engaged in such aesthetic practices by making paintings to perceive and represent poetic moments, which allowed them a chance of escape from the triviality and sufferings of life and to focus on the pure pleasure of the moment. Although such practices can be seen before, it was during the Ming and Qing dynasties when the aesthetic practices regarding painting became essential activities in the literati's lifestyle and included artists outside of the literati. Through traveling, the artists saw natural scenes, painted them, and discussed art extensively. Such practices focused on the process of painting rather than merely the products. The paintings they created recorded the moments, amplified their poetry, and made them concrete and lasting. More than the duration of the process, particular moments of seeing nature and creating paintings were carefully captured and appreciated. In the end, the journal of the artists' friendship was also part of the aesthetic practices – it was never perfect, yet this life-long friendship indeed brought poetic moments that were memorable and fruitful products that suggest the value of aesthetic practices.

Päivi Leinonen, University of Turku

Aesthetic Practice by the Kitchen Window

In this presentation, I examine my own everyday aesthetic activity by the kitchen window. My window view has remained the same for twelve years, or rather, the geographical location of the view is the same. The view itself varies daily depending on the lighting conditions and weather, and, of course, according to the seasons. With asphalt roads and bushes, it is not particularly beautiful or interesting. However, watching this scenery repeatedly has brought about an appreciation that I consider

aesthetic. Occasionally, I take photos of my view. I aim to capture all the grey tones of November, when the only colored spot is the traffic sign, and the browns of the forest in spring before there's anything green. Sometimes, colorfully dressed joggers and dog walkers also end up in my camera roll. Sharing these photos in messages and social media is sharing my thoughts and moods with others. I examine my kitchen window activity using the concept of aesthetic engagement, as defined by Arnold Berleant in "Art and Engagement" (1991): aesthetic engagement emphasizes aesthetic experience as a situation of continuity, unity, and coherence between the perceiver and the object. Another relevant source is "Everyday Aesthetics" (2007) by Yuriko Saito, who posits that aesthetic experiences are not only positive but also negative and neutral, including boredom. Most importantly, I reflect on my window view as an identity confirmer. The view anchors me to a place and has become a part of me, and not only the view but also the practice itself. The window view may seem impersonal in all its everydayness, but on the other hand, it is something very intimate.

Hanna Timonen, Aalto University

Photography as a Daily Habit

This paper explores serial photography both as an art form as well as a quotidian activity. The digital online platforms have provided means for anyone with a camera to share their photographs. On the other hand they enable artists to publish their work in an informal setting. The presentation focuses on a case study, photographs by the Finnish artist Christina Holmlund. During eight years she took a photograph each morning when she was walking her dog, and shared them on social media. The paper discusses repetition and an intertwining of daily routines with photographic acts. Repetitive photography is both a form familiar from conceptual art as well as in everyday photographic practices. The presentation approaches repetitive photography through habit, as outlined, for example, by philosopher of photography Vilém Flusser as well as literary theorist Rita Felski. The discussion on the project ultimately illuminates how the habit of serial photography may evoke, through photo-sharing, an act of collaborative looking. In doing so, photographic repetition creates a sense of continuity and a shared social space. The presentation is based on one chapter of my recently published doctoral thesis, which uses everyday aesthetics, artistic research and photographic theories to examine serial photography. It marks a starting point for exploring further how photography as an activity gives support to the experience of everyday life.

Session 12: Moving in a City: Appropriation and Alienation

Katrin A. Schamun, Technical University Berlin

Children's Appropriation of (Urban) Landscapes as an Aesthetic Practice

Social-spatial and social-ecological transformation research acknowledges the significant influence of emotions and affect on shaping behaviors and relationships within our urban and non-urban environments, which constitute our lived world and lived environment. My project aims to investigate children's perceptions of and engagement with urban landscapes. As genuine experts in their own experiences, children inherently possess valuable insights into and connections with landscape

spaces. To capture the nuanced emotional dimensions of urban landscape experiences, this study employs a participatory research approach, involving children as active participants, integrating elements of serious gaming and qualitative interviews. Central to my methodology is the co-creation of research design and data collection techniques in collaboration with children through the medium of a game. Through this innovative methodological approach, both the researcher and participating children gain empirical insights into the emotional and affective dimensions of children's aesthetic practices during the appropriation process of urban landscapes. The research serves a dual purpose: firstly, it investigates the construction of aesthetic knowledge that emerges through children's engagement with urban or rural environments. Secondly, it explores the structure of children's spatial-related knowledge within predominantly urban landscapes, examining the meanings these environments hold for them, how these meanings shape their perspectives, and their subsequent impacts on their well-being. By focusing on children's experiences and perceptions, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between emotions, aesthetics, and urban landscapes.

Yevheniia Butsykina, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

Exploring the Topography of Uncertainty and Forgetting: The Aesthetic Experience of Walking in a Ukrainian City

Walking through the city as an aesthetic practice has been the focus of numerous scholarly inquiries, scrutinized through the lenses of such concepts as landscape, body, and place (Merleau-Ponty, Macauley), levels of perception, and strategies of interaction within urban settings (Lentinen). Scholars have delved into the notion of engagement with the city (Berleant, Blanc), the existential "Dasein" as situatedness, equipment, objectification, and alienation (Heidegger, Vihanninjoki), as well as the notion of presence (Heidegger, Gumbrecht, Leddy). These studies converge on the analysis of the urban walking experience as inherently aesthetic, characterized by synesthetic qualities that engage the subject's body dynamically within the cityscape. Drawing upon this body of scholarship, I endeavor to examine the localized experience of walking within Ukrainian cities often classified as "post-Soviet". I interpret such walking experience as negative aesthetic practice, rooted in the sensory apprehension of disparate textures from varying epochs, haphazardly amalgamated or juxtaposed, resulting in what may be likened to "scars" upon the urban fabric. On one hand, traversing such cityscapes elicits sensations of discomfort and unpredictability within the body: the incessant alterations in terrain and elevation foster a sense of distrust in one's own footing. Conversely, these scars bear witness to the collision of distinct epochs manifested within the city elements, construed as a superiority of forgetting over remembering, alienation over belonging, carelessness over care. To elucidate this experiential terrain, I employ the methodological and conceptual frameworks of phenomenological psychology and negative aesthetics (Berleant). Furthermore, I turn to the works of Ukrainian artists who grapple with the predicaments of the post-Soviet urban landscape—a realm characterized by alienation and forgetting (regulated during the USSR and unregulated after its ruination). These artists employ techniques of flaneurism, walking, and documentation (Nikita Kadan, Mitya Churikov, Ivan Melnychuk, Daniil Revkovskiy, and Andriy Rachinskiy) to illuminate these themes.

Session 13: Delineating Aesthetic Practice I

Esa Kirkkopelto, Tampere University

Artistic Research and Aesthetic Practices: Toward a Phenomenology of Participation

As aesthetic practices, as defined in the call, are considered from the point of view of artistic research in the performing arts, the focus shifts to the embodied and participatory aspects of these practices. Play is a common element between aesthetic practices and the performing arts, but play itself implies aspects that go beyond the current aesthetic scope or purpose of the activity. One of these aspects is participation. What does participation in aesthetic practices have in common with all other possible modes of participation, including its ethical, political, religious and mystical modes? I suggest that this question can only be meaningfully posed by focusing on the most intimate experiential and embodied aspects of this proto-act. Artistic research, as an embodied and participatory mode of inquiry, offers a primary method for investigating the phenomenon.

Drawing on evidence from embodied practice in the performing arts, the presentation aims to identify the basic features of the phenomenology of participation. Using Jean-Luc Nancy's philosophy of "taking part" or "partage", the presentation focuses on this transcendental event as a transitional and transformative movement, including its ethical and ontological implications. What happens to our bodies when they participate in something? What does participation mean as a bodily practice? How can participation be either attractive or repulsive, or both at the same time? How is it possible for me to belong to many 'parties' simultaneously and without contradiction?

Looking at aesthetic practices from the proposed perspective helps us to liberate them from the classical Schillerian paradigm in which the aesthetic provides a propaedeutic playground for ethical practice. Instead, the latter can be seen in a new way, as an embodied practice in which the way we participate contributes directly to the (re)configuration of the world.

Alex Arteaga, University of the Arts Helsinki

Aesthetic Research Practices: Rethinking Aesthetic Practices as Frameworks of Sense-Making

This paper proposes a reconceptualization of aesthetic practices according to the enactive approach to cognition and, on this basis, the outline of a specific notion of aesthetic research practices. Enactivism defines cognition as the transformative dynamics of life, understanding life thus as a meshwork of processes of "sense-making". Living beings make sense of themselves and their environments through the unfolding of their embodied and situated live-sustaining dynamics. More precisely, living beings provide through their interaction with their environments enabling conditions for the co-emergence of selves and worlds as expressions of sense-making processes. As a specification of this theoretical framework, this paper proposes to understand aesthetics fundamentally as a specific form of interaction between living beings and environments—"aesthetic interaction"—and therefore as a variety of sense-making: "aesthetic sense-making". Aesthetic interaction is

characterized by an intensification of sensorimotor and emotional skills and a temporarily neutralization of will-, logic-based and target-oriented forms of action. This variety of interaction induces a redistribution of agencies among living beings and environments that enables radical and unforeseen transformations of the emergent selves and worlds. "Aesthetic practices" can be conceived as systemic organizations of aesthetic interactions that facilitate their iterative and reflective performance. "Aesthetic research practices" mobilize the transformative agency of aesthetic practices in order to disclose new intelligibilities and enable new and open trajectories of sense to arise. Complementarily with a theoretical elucidation, this paper will exemplify this approach with a case study: the practices activated within the research project "the Sense of Common Self", denominated generically "aesthetic practices of reflective co-involvement". "The Sense of Common Self" is an artistic research project in the framework of "How to Live Together in Sound? Towards Sonic Democracy", founded by the KONE foundation and hosted by the University of the Arts Helsinki (<https://www.uniarts.fi/en/projects/the-sense-of-common-self/>).

Session 14: Gender and Identity in Games

Tom Legierse, University of Bergen

Exploring Challenges to Hegemonic Aesthetic Practices in Esports

Esports as a space have been cultivated to reproduce notions of men's 'natural' superiority. This has partly been done through aligning its core organizational structures and aesthetic practices with those regularly used in traditional sporting contexts. But how does this apply for spaces that deliberately present themselves as different, more inclusive kinds of esports? Women and marginalized gender initiatives are supposedly breaking with 'regular' esports contexts, presenting themselves differently and therefore potentially appealing to a different idealized body. Various studies have highlighted the importance of the body in esports, pushing back against notions of the irrelevance of the body in esports and the inclusive potential that would come with that irrelevance. A more thorough understanding of exactly how bodies become relevant is necessary, especially in relation to the aesthetic practices in esports that have been identified to reproduce ideals of masculine superiority. This understanding of bodies concerns the physical, social and cultural construction of bodies. My presentation builds on 2 months of ethnographic fieldwork with (semi-)professional esports organizations involved in League of Legends competitions in Germany. The methodology of this study includes participant observations at training facilities and competitive events and in-depth interviews with interlocutors. In my sample I focus on esports organizations and individuals that are involved in women and marginalized gender initiatives as well as 'regular' initiatives. Their involvement in both contexts will highlight the contextual nature of identity construction and branding in esports, allowing for an understanding of the ways in which women and marginalized gender initiatives can and/or cannot fundamentally change the aesthetic hegemony that predominantly functions to reproduce ideals of masculine superiority. Pointing toward the future, I will cautiously highlight what this could mean for inclusivity in esports.

Brando Ratti, University of Turin

Playing at Work. The Reproduction of Labor in Video Games Between Aesthetic Dimension and Social Satisfaction

My research aims to analyze the reproduction of work activity and its aesthetic dimension in video games, focusing in particular on the game “Grand Theft Auto V” played in Role Playing mode on unofficial servers and subject to modding. Drawing from the ideas of the Italian sociologist Romano Alquati (1935 - 2010) and his conception of *residuo irrisolto* (“unresolved residue”), which refers to any activity that does not produce objective value, I will seek to demonstrate how this residue is industrialized not to produce objective value but to allow players to experience fulfillment through their virtual work activity. In this perspective, the aesthetic characterization of work activity is crucial to make the gaming experience fully satisfying. With the conception of work as a source of identification (identity, personal, political, sexual relationships, etc.) fading for the “hyperproletarians” (R. Alquati, *On the Reproduction of Living Human Capacity*) and life becoming increasingly precarious, the “ideal work” is carried out in video games and is aesthetically characterized to provide the player with a psychological reward. At the same time, engaging in satisfying work activity allows the player to continue to produce objective value through their real work activity. Through the “construction” of the ideal work, the player can thus create what the French philosopher Bernard Stiegler defines as the self-other: a work that diverges from the self but, at the same time, remains part of it. Satisfaction is thus achieved not only by reproducing work activity but also by reproducing its aesthetic aspects (police officer, doctor, lawyer, mechanic, mail carrier, judge, emergency responder, etc.), creating a continuous tension between the work frustration experienced in the real world and the satisfaction experienced in the virtual one.

Session 15: Aesthetic Practices of Resistance II

Sarah Postema-Toews, University of Amsterdam

Activated Objects: A Material Analysis of Activist Aesthetics in China’s White Paper Protests

This paper delves into the intricate relationship between everyday objects and aesthetics of resistance. My analysis centres on the activated object, a concept through which I theorise the convergence of everyday aesthetics and material culture within activism. Activated objects are banal objects that become ‘activated’ through their interaction with or proximity to political protest. Through activation, objects retain significant political meaning and are implicated in political action. Materials can act as a kind of floating signifier, capable of performing both their ordinary function and hijacking ordinary aesthetics to transmit political messaging. A key case study of this process is the blank paper protests in China in 2022, against the government’s lockdown policy. These protests were notable for their strategic use of blank pieces of paper, which became a symbol both for the government’s draconian lockdown policy but also for their heavy media censorship. In addition, examples of blank paper being used in protests in Russia and the UK for unrelated political causes after these initial protests highlight the object’s ability to adapt to changing sociopolitical contexts. I also explore the role of the internet in catalysing the spread

of activated objects, emphasizing the adaptability and resilience of these icons in response to evolving political spaces and circumventing censorship. In this case, activists used the blank paper to tactically bypass the Chinese government's digital censorship AI. Through a close reading of media coverage surrounding the blank paper protests, I aim to map out a visual language through which activists use activated objects as a form of tactical media to navigate repressive power. Ultimately, I aim to illustrate how material objects can serve as dynamic agents of political expression and solidarity.

Lucy Wowk, York University

Counter-Signifying Practice in Martine Syms' Mundane Afro-Futurisms

My paper considers the artistic work of Martine Syms as a counter-signifying practice which reconfigures the aesthetic grounds upon which onto-epistemological determinants of hierarchical being are founded. Following Sylvia Wynter, I examine how counter-signifying practices utilize aesthetics as a method of critique, engaging at the level of form in order to deconstruct and reconstruct onto-epistemological structures that foreclose particular bodies from the order of humanity. To these ends, I draw on Syms' concept of mundane Afrofuturism: a strategy which takes seriously the need for an ordinary, everyday restructuring of humanisms as central to liberation under a current aesthetic regime. This project offers an alternative entry-point to fantasies of post-racial worlds, and insists upon a fundamental restructuring of being within and without a world that is at odds with one's access to being-itself. Martine Syms' works engage with mundane expressions of being, using the Black female figure in order to play with, yet always move beyond, the association of Blackness and femininity with suffering. I present Syms' work as a vital contribution to establishing new grammatical and aesthetic ordering, which reframes the central subject of modernity, and uses an unstable sense of 'self' in the construction of formal objects that function in a public sphere to re-work imposed signifiers of existence. Syms represents the world aesthetically as for/against the figure of the Black woman, and demonstrates her characters' reactions to/against this world, as they manifest in linguistic and affective registers, ultimately exceeding the parameters of the world as represented by the work itself. I argue that this work simultaneously refuses, accepts, and derives pleasure from a toxic and intoxicating world, while being at once elated and depleted by it—a paradoxical multiplicity that vibrates as hallucinogenic, thrilling, depressive, and ultimately, functions to reorganize existing conceptions of the aesthetics of being.

Session 16: Delineating Aesthetic Practice II

Shuning Diao, University of York

Is an Aesthetic Practice Pleasant for Its Own Sake?

What is an aesthetic practice? Here is a possible proposal: an aesthetic practice's initial aim is to gain pleasure from the activity of doing and making for its own sake. There are three questions I plan to discuss. First, does this doing and making activity need to be carried out initially for its own sake to be an aesthetic practice? For example, Dave is paid to paint a portrait for his customer, and his customer asks him to draw a specific style, so Dave must try to satisfy his customer during this

commission. Is this an aesthetic practice or merely an art practice for economic benefits? Second, does the practitioner's pleasure need to be gained from the activity for its own sake in an aesthetic practice? Still, in the same example, when Dave paints this portrait for his customer, he feels happy only because he is going to be paid a lot. His pleasure is for economic benefits instead of for this making activity itself, so is this practice still an aesthetic one? Tentatively, I would argue that an aesthetic practice needs to be carried out and be pleasant for its own sake and not for other instrumental benefits, and I will give detailed arguments later. Third, what kinds of activities can be pleasant for their own sake besides aesthetic practices, and what are the differences between them?

Alonzo Heino, University of Helsinki

Who Needs Aesthetic Practices when there's the Concept of Art?

My argument is that quite a bit of what the notion of 'aesthetic practices' seeks to address is already covered by the concept of art – provided that it is understood in its original broad sense which corresponds with the ancient understanding of *techne*. To illustrate my point, consider the following definition of *techne*, which is Stoic in origin, but which came to be widely known and accepted in its day. According to this definition, an art is a system made up of items of knowledge that have been jointly exercised in the interests of some objective that is of good use in life (SVF I 73). Instead of pointing to the experience of the beholder of a work of art – the frame of reference of much, though not all, modern Western philosophy of art – this definition of *techne* is articulated from the artist's point of view. And since this conception of art is pre-modern, it can encompass things like crafts, engineering, and sports, along with those arts we now label as "fine". Given this, it is my view that the former, broader conception of art already points to many of the proposed 'aesthetic practices' – things like learning a set of skills through bodily practice; the discourse within a professional community regarding which things are vital for an art/craft; what the process of applying one's know-how (one's art) entails, etc. I agree that modern aesthetics could do more to deepen our philosophical understanding of such activities. But, in my estimation, such a pursuit does not necessitate a new concept. Instead, I propose we revisit our understanding of how we employ the concept of art.

Nat Trimarchi, Swinburne University, Australia

Reviving the Principle of Art (video presentation)

An aesthetic practice is indeed a continuous, repeatedly performed activity of engaging with – not one artform - but Art 'as principle'. Individual artform/work construction, at its optimum, involves the productive semiosis of the exemplar of this single unified principle of art which F. W. Schelling revived, reconnecting Art with normative aesthetics. Artmaking is not just any 'cultural practice'. It is not a form of popular culture, crafts, sports, etc., whereby one's experience of the 'general aesthetic' can be merely mimicking Nature elicit familiar empathic responses reflectively. Nor is Art-making's fundamental motivating factor the pleasure gained through the activity, but rather what Aristotle deemed the 'higher' pleasure of making Reason (merging knowledge with action). The former merely produces the simple pleasure gained from crafting. All fields of 'cultural artefact' production purportedly encompassing "the arts" in modernity (psychology,

cultural/gaming/sport/sociology/history/media, etc.) in fact now mostly promote what Andrew Bowie calls 'anti-art'. Artefact-making is not meaningless, but making art is about the higher meaning of self-actualisation (defining the Principle): merging Beauty and Truth, and balancing Freedom with Necessity. Schelling's construction of 'art in the particular' thus shows why Art shuns empiricism, even though its 'absolute' Object (the Person) is an "empirical object". However, false 'poesy' (like false philosophy) he says 'is empiricism, or the impossibility of recognising anything as true or real except that which derives from experience'. This, under Kant's reflective aesthetic paradigm, produced the 'experientialism' which dominates modern/postmodern "art" and what Bernard Stiegler called the 'catastrophe' of modern aesthetic experience (in the rise of 'technicism'). I argue Schelling's 'productive', 'dialectical' aesthetics instead redefines Art's 'subject-objectification' as, in Max Scheler's words, a 'phenomenological experience' energising the reproductive imagination. And this distinguishes art from artefact, as Aristotle did, in the phenomenology of the artwork itself (irrespective of an artist's explicit intentions).

Session 17: Practices of the Particular in the Everyday

Tuuli Lukkala, University of Eastern Finland and Helena Kupari, University of Eastern Finland

On the Beauty of Orthodox Christian Worship: Religious Ritual as Aesthetic Practice

How can the concept of aesthetic practice help scholars understand religious believers' collective and/or private engagement with religious materiality? What theoretical insights may be gained by applying the concept of aesthetic practice to the context of religion? In this presentation, we explore these questions through research material pertaining to Orthodox Christianity in Finland. Our discussion combines two sets of ethnographic material consisting of interviews, field notes, and observations. One focuses on the soundscapes of Orthodox Christian worship and the other on conversion to Orthodox Christianity, both within the Orthodox Church of Finland. While religion can be argued always to involve an aesthetic dimension, in Orthodox Christianity this dimension is particularly prominent. Participants in Orthodox Christian collective worship portray beauty as an important part of it and, for example, commonly emphasise its sensory elements, although few would ascribe it aesthetic meaning only. Beauty in liturgical worship is also significant in Orthodox Christian theology, which gives a collective frame of reference and authorisation for aesthetic interpretations of worship. The focus of our presentation is Orthodox Christian collective worship as aesthetic practice. We address the topic from the perspective of different kinds of participants: regular lay attendees as well as people with more pronounced roles as priests, choir singers, etc. Moreover, we also touch on believers' aesthetic practices related to everyday (religious) rituals. In Orthodox Christianity, engagement with religious materiality is not limited to the church space or to collective ritual but often extends to daily life. With respect to both themes, we ponder on the role of aesthetic production in recurring religious practice, including how it can contribute to spiritual enrichment and transformation of both self and world.

Moirika Reker, University of Lisbon*Gardening as Aesthetic Practice*

The aim of this paper is to reflect upon gardening as an aesthetic practice. One that is developed through a continuous engagement with an object in continuous formation: the garden. In this practice, a specific form of pleasure is obtained through the development over time of a specific set of actions (gardening activities), that are involved in designing and creating a certain result (the garden), but that in themselves become object of aesthetic consideration and fruition. Gardening as an aesthetic practice draws attention to the aesthetic qualities inherent to the very activity of working the soil with seeds, seedlings, plants, water, over time and under different weather conditions. The gardener becomes a companion of time: the practice of gardening requires and develops openness and attentiveness to the changes that occur daily, cyclically, over the season's (the passage of time as a transformative agent not only of the plants but also of the gardeners); an alertness to the vegetal and animal life, as well as to oneself and the fellow-gardeners. In fact, this is a practice that is both individual and communal: one may engage in it in solitude — developing an array of virtues, like patience and care —, or as a communal, intersubjective practice, done together with neighbours or fellow gardeners through common actions, shared experiences and knowledge, fostering a sense of care, belonging and of participation in the community — the garden taken as a communal space of (political) action becomes a place of encounter, of active democracy, promoting social interaction, environmental education and well-being. By focusing on the practice, on the process of engagement with the garden, gardening becomes a form of active contemplation, of beauty in action, strengthening the (shared) aesthetic experience of the everyday.

Anna Talasniemi, University of Jyväskylä*Finnish Sauna Bathing as an Aesthetic Practice*

The majority of Finns engage in sauna bathing at least once a week, many even multiple times. When aesthetic practice is defined, as in the conference call, as a continuous, frequently performed activity involving engagement for example with some aspect of one's everyday environment, and where a primary motivating factor is the pleasure derived from the activity then sauna bathing fits this definition aptly. However, Pauline von Bonsdorff, in her blog post, suggested that while sauna can indeed be considered an aesthetic practice, it is not aesthetic practice for everyone. In my presentation, I aim to delve into the features of sauna as an aesthetic practice, drawing upon the data obtained in my doctoral research. I intend to elucidate how individuals describe the different rhythms of sauna bathing and the diverse array of actions and activities associated with sauna, encompassing both material and social surroundings. Central to my analysis is the recognition of sauna as a multisensory and embodied experience. Within the sauna, individuals encounter an inner landscape that extends beyond the confines of physical space, fostering connections across various temporal and spatial dimensions, as articulated by Laura Seesmeri (2018).

Session 18: Mediating Nature Through Aesthetic Practice

Niina Uusitalo, Tampere University and Jenni Niemelä-Nyrhinen, Tampere University

Redistributing the Sensible: Exploring Aesthetic Practices in a Climate Change Photography Course

In Western industrialised contexts climate change has come largely to be known through media representations which have contributed to constructing climate change as an abstract and remote phenomenon, separate from lived everyday experience. In this paper, we consider aesthetic practices as a concept for understanding the ways in which the visual sensible world is continuously distributed. Our understanding of aesthetics stems from Jacques Rancière's writings on 'the politics of aesthetics'. In Rancière's thinking the term aesthetics does not only refer to art or beauty but to the organising of a common sensible world. Furthermore, we study photography as a pedagogical means to redistribute the sensible. Our data is gathered from a photography course in which participants explored four different alternative aesthetic practices: revealing connectedness, recognising agency, compromising the attractions of consumerism, and illuminating alternatives. Through their photographic explorations participants were encouraged to intervene in two problematic consensual frameworks: human-centredness and consumption-centredness. The framework of human-centredness refers to the view of humans as unique world-dominating agents who are separate from nature. Whereas the framework of consumption-centredness deems consumption as a central human activity and an inherent purpose of life. We found that exploring aesthetic practices through photography helped our course participants to redistribute the sensible in two significant ways: participants recognised visible traces of consensual frameworks in their surroundings and shifted the emphasis of perception beyond their personal viewpoints.

Ahmet Emin Bülbül, Istanbul Nisantasi University

More-than-Human Rhythmics: Choreographic Thinking in Jodie Mack's The Grand Bizarre

It all started with a distant, long overview of a British village in Joanna Hogg's *Archipelago* (2010). Stood still, the concrete buildings' attempt to found a mode of stasis was constantly disrupted by swaying trees in the wind. Gradually, the shot gained a metrical, if not a musical quality, despite its ordinary outlook. And suddenly, an anthropomorphic, prevalently human-centered word popped into my mind: dance. Inspired by that strange feeling conveyed by the unruly dance of trees, this paper explores the experiential and aesthetic aspects of multiple movement possibilities in Jodie Mack's experimental documentary *The Grand Bizarre* (2018). In my analysis of the performative aspects of more-than-human beings, I create a dialogue between Erin Brannigan's idea of dancefilm, Erin Manning's new materialist concept of mobile architectures, and Jordan Schonig's notion of the framed contingent motion. Having a background in abstract film and animation, Mack meticulously studies forms of light and reflection as well as configures shapes, fabrics, patterns, and textures in both consonant and discordant ways that strongly resonate with the relational, rhythmic ecologies Manning foregrounds. Neutralizing

the tension between subject and object, the choreographic manifestations and dynamics of things in *The Grand Bizarre* are co-emergent and contrapuntal rather than withdrawn; self-generating, free-flowing, and contingent rather than predetermined. My main argument is that in Mack's filmic performance, the dance of more-than-human forces recomposes the anthropocentric ideas of body and kinesphere through becomings, micromovements and microperceptions.

Neylan Ogutveren Aular, Lund University

Microplastics Aesthetics – A phenomenological Approach to the (In)Visibility of Plastic Waste

This research explores the aesthetics of microplastics in climate art – art specifically produced to point up issues related to climate change or perceived as addressing these issues – and reflects on the perceptual challenge posed by the often invisible presence of microplastics despite their profound environmental impacts. The study focuses on how two artworks, [Pyroplastics](#) and [Plastic Air](#) render microplastics both visible and comprehensible, aiming to bridge the gap between scientific information and public engagement. This study introduces the idea of the **microplastic gaze**, an analytical framework that examines how microplastics interact with their environments through artistic representations. The approach transcends visual analysis, engaging the senses and intellect to illuminate the usually unseen prevalence of microplastics. Employing a phenomenological understanding grounded in vital materialist and object-oriented aesthetics, this study integrates sensory experiences with theoretical insights. The study divulges that *Plastic Air* and *Pyroplastics* not only make the invisible microplastics visible and tangible but also profoundly alter perceptions through the microplastic gaze. This interpretative framework demonstrates that by using this lens it becomes possible to grasp the interconnectedness of all entities, human, nonhuman and objects, as active contributors within the mentioned artworks. The findings suggest that integrating artistic expression with scientific research and a broadened perceptual stance provides a powerful tool for communicating multifaceted environmental issues.