

# THE FACTUAL ANIMAL:

Audiovisual Representations of  
Real Other-than-Human Animals

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

Paula Casal

Randy Malamud

Jo-Anne McArthur

Brett Mills

Claire Parkinson

Facultat de Filologia, Traducció i Comunicació  
Universitat de València  
Nov. 29 - Dec. 1, 2023

Photo by Jo-Anne McArthur  
Courtesy of We Animals Media

VNIVERSITAT (E) VALÈNCIA (E) Facultat de Filologia, Traducció i Comunicació



Departament de  
Filologia Anglesa i Alemanya

Departament de  
Filologia Francesa i Italiana

**Organized by:**

- CULIVIAN Research Group
- The CIGE/2021/100 Research Project (Conselleria d'Educació, Universitats i Ocupació – Generalitat Valenciana)
- Departament de Filologia Anglesa i Alemanya – Universitat de València
- Departament de Filologia Francesa i Italiana – Universitat de València

**We Animals Media's Exhibition, *Hidden: Animals in the Anthropocene***, sponsored by the Friends of Thoreau Program (Benjamin Franklin Institute, Universidad de Alcalá)

**Organizing/Scientific Committee:**

Claudia Alonso Recarte  
Margarita Carretero González  
María Teresa Lajoinie Domínguez  
Brett Mills

**Local Organizing Committee:**

Claudia Alonso Recarte  
María Teresa Lajoinie Domínguez  
Ignacio Ramos-Gay  
Vicent Cucarella Ramón

**ATTENDANCE:** all talks and presentations are free and open to everyone and anyone wishing to attend. Should attendees, however, require or request a certificate of attendance to the conference, please sign up first. In order to sign up, please write an email to [patrycja.chuszczyk@edu.uni.lodz.pl](mailto:patrycja.chuszczyk@edu.uni.lodz.pl) and include your full name. In order to collect the certificate of attendance, attendees must attend at least 80% of the talks.

**ASISTENCIA:** todas las charlas y presentaciones están abiertas al público. No obstante, si el/la asistente necesita o quiere solicitar un certificado de asistencia, entonces habrá de inscribirse previamente. Para ello, ha de mandar un correo a [patrycja.chuszczyk@edu.uni.lodz.pl](mailto:patrycja.chuszczyk@edu.uni.lodz.pl) e informar de su nombre completo. Para obtener el certificado de asistencia, es necesario asistir a por lo menos el 80% de las charlas.

## Conference Program

- The Sal3n de Grados, Sala de Juntas and Espai Cultural are all located on the first floor of the Facultat de Filologia, Traducci3 i Comunicaci3 (Universitat de Val3ncia), in Avenida Blasco Ib3ñez 32.
- The Centro Cultural La Nau is located in the city center, in Calle de la Universidad 2.

### Wednesday, Nov. 29

9.30	Registration	
10.00-10.30	Opening ceremony <span style="color: red;">Sal3n de Grados</span>	
10.30-11.30	<p><b>KEYNOTE 1 – RANDY MALAMUD (Georgia State University):</b>          Seeing Real Animals: What Is Real? What Is an Animal? What Is Seeing? What Is Seen?  <span style="color: red;">Sal3n de Grados</span>          Chair: Claudia Alonso</p>	
11.30-12.00	Break	
12.00-13.00	<p><b>1. DOCUMENTARY (I)</b>  <span style="color: red;">Sal3n de Grados</span></p> <p><b>Borb3la L3szl3 (University of Debrecen, Hungary):</b>          Phantosmeik3n: The Ghostly Corporealities of Urban Strays in Elsa Kremser and Levin Peter’s <i>Space Dogs</i></p> <p><b>Zs3fia Nov3k: (University of Debrecen, Hungary):</b> Speaking for Nonhumans: The Voices of Advocacy in <i>Our Planet</i>, <i>Earthlings</i> and <i>Dominion</i></p> <p style="color: red;">Chair: Ina Karkani</p>	<p><b>2. LOOKING AT (I)</b>  <span style="color: red;">Sala de Juntas</span></p> <p><b>Bianca Friedman (Edge Hill University, UK):</b> Mastering the Representation, Mastering the Horse: Reflections on Control and Its Unsteadiness in <i>The Silver Brumby</i> Film Adaptation</p> <p><b>Olimpia Mailat (Universitat de Val3ncia, Spain):</b> The Absence of Limitations: A Recount of Nonhuman Animal Exploitation in Art Installations</p> <p style="color: red;">Chair: Sof3a Duarte</p>

13.00-14.00	<p><b>3. ZOO</b> Salón de Grados</p> <p><b>Vesna Liponik (ZRC SAZU, Institute of Philosophy, Slovenia):</b> What Counts Is the Music, the Sex and the Understandable Self-Evidence of Zebras Crossing the Savannah</p> <p><b>Betlem Pallardó Azorín (Universitat de València, Spain):</b> The Narratives of the Zoo with a Case Study of Bioparc</p> <p>Chair: Oliver Hochadel</p>	<p><b>4. WILD</b> Sala de Juntas</p> <p><b>Jack Harrison &amp; Joanna Ziarkowska (University of Warsaw, Poland):</b> Modern Tricksters: An Analysis of Media Representations of Coyotes in Northeast US</p> <p><b>Camille Lavoix (University of Würzburg, Germany):</b> Reclaiming the Lion's Share: In Search of Reality and Diversity in the Representation of Lions</p> <p>Chair: Camellia Biswas</p>
14.00	Lunch	
17.00-18.00	<p><b>KEYNOTE 2 – JO-ANNE McARTHUR (Animal Photojournalist, We Animals Media):</b> Animal Photojournalism in the Anthropocene Centro Cultural La Nau (Aula Magna) Chair: Margarita Carretero</p>	
18.00-19.00	<p>Visit to the HIDDEN: ANIMALS IN THE ANTHROPOCENE exhibition Centro Cultural La Nau (Sala de Bigas)</p>	
19.00	<p>Welcoming reception &amp; vegan cocktail Centro Cultural La Nau (Claustro superior)</p>	

## Thursday, Nov. 30

9.00-10.30	<p><b>5. ENGAGEMENT</b> Salón de Grados</p> <p><b>Olivia Badoi (Saint Louis University, Spain):</b> From Giraffes to Ghost Foxes: How “Real” Animals Influence Viewer</p>	<p><b>6. SHOT IN CAPTIVITY: AUDIO-VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF ANIMALS IN SPANISH ZOOS (1892-2003)</b> Sala de Juntas</p>
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	<p>Engagement and Enchantment in Screen Media</p> <p><b>Justyna Włodarczyk (University of Warsaw, Poland):</b> Naturally Cute: Wildlife Cameras and Friendly Interspecies Interactions</p> <p><b>Margarita Carretero González (Universidad de Granada, Spain):</b> Animal Sanctuaries on Social Media: Zoopolitical Narratives of Care and Activism</p> <p>Chair: Patrycja Chuszcz</p>	<p><b>Oliver Hochadel (CSIC, Spain):</b> Between Postcards and Cages. The Visual Representations of Animals in the Barcelona Zoo Around 1900</p> <p><b>Carlos Tabernero (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain):</b> Zoos in the NO-DO: Visual Spaces for Natural History in Franco's Regime</p> <p><b>Josep Reyné Vergeli (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain):</b> Copito de Nieve. Su imagen entre animal colonial y celebridad del Zoo de Barcelona</p> <p>Chair: Vicent Cucarella Ramón</p>
<p>10.45-11.45</p>	<p><b>KEYNOTE 3 – CLAIRE PARKINSON (Edge Hill University, UK):</b> Dangerous Dogs: A Politics of Canine/Human Relationship</p> <p>Salón de Grados</p> <p>Chair: Claudia Alonso</p>	
<p>12.00-13.30</p>	<p><b>WORKSHOP: Patrycja Chuszcz (University of Łódź, Poland), Bianca Friedman (Edge Hill University, UK), Michał Matuszewski (University of Warsaw, Poland), Friederike Zenker (University of Basel, Switzerland):</b> Animal Film and Education Across Disciplines: A Collaborative Workshop on Interspecies Learning and Teaching</p> <p>Espai Cultural</p> <p>Chair: Brett Mills</p>	
<p>13.30</p>	<p>Lunch</p>	
<p>15.00-16.30</p>	<p><b>7. AUDIOVISUAL REPRESENTATIONS OF NONHUMAN ANIMALS IN SPANISH ANIMAL INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX LOBBYING – COMPASS PANEL</b></p> <p>Salón de Grados</p> <p><b>Laura Fernández (Universitat de Barcelona, Spain), Núria Almiron (Universitat Pompeu</b></p>	<p><b>8. VISUAL CULTURE</b></p> <p>Sala de Juntas</p> <p><b>Mylène Ferrand (Observatory for Research on Animal Condition; National Centre for Scientific Research):</b> Challenging Animal Representations through Contemporary Art: How Real Animals Reshape the Human Gaze and Are World-Building</p>

	<p><b>Fabra, Spain) &amp; Miquel Rodrigo-Alsina (Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain):</b> Happy Smiles, Animal Heroes and Scientific Footprints: The Spanish Industry's Visual Depiction of Nonhuman Animals Used for Experimentation</p> <p><b>Olatz Aranceta-Reboredo (Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain):</b> Beyond the Spectacle: Exploring Audiovisual Representations of Other-than-Human Animals in the Lobbying of the Animal-Based Entertainment Industry</p> <p><b>Estela Díaz Carmona (Universidad Pontificia Comillas Spain), Antonio Núñez Partido (Universidad Pontificia Comillas) &amp; Amparo Merino de Diego (Universidad Pontificia Comillas):</b> Unveiling Visual Discourse on Non-human Animals in the Food Sector: A Content Analysis of Spanish Lobbies</p> <p><b>Chair: Sofía Duarte</b></p>	<p><b>Pauw Vos (Utrecht University, Netherlands):</b> The Avian Photography of Jean Mylayne</p> <p><b>María Teresa Lajoine Domínguez (Universitat de València, Spain):</b> Templo du présent – Solo pour Octopus</p> <p><b>Chair: Vicent Cucarella Ramón</b></p>
<p>16.45-17.45</p>	<p><b>KEYNOTE 4 – BRETT MILLS (Edge Hill University, UK):</b> The Factual Animal: The Animal as Fact <b>Salón de Grados</b> <b>Chair: Margarita Carretero</b></p>	
<p>18.00-19.30</p>	<p><b>BOOK PRESENTATIONS</b> (Jo-Anne McArthur, Gordon Meade, Catia Faria, Paula Casal, Claire Parkinson, Richard Twine) <b>Salón de Grados</b> <b>Chair: Claudia Alonso</b></p>	
<p>21.00</p>	<p>Conference dinner - OSLO</p>	

## Friday, Dec. 1

<p>9.30- 11.00</p>	<p><b>9. EMPATHY</b> Salón de Grados</p> <p><b>Patrycja Chuszcz (University of Łódź, Poland):</b> Empathy and Other-than-Human Facial Expressions in Film</p> <p><b>Friederike Zenker (University of Basel, Switzerland):</b> Schools of Seeing: The Audiovisual in Animal-Assisted Education</p> <p><b>Branislava Vičar (University of Maribor, Slovenia):</b> Representation of Subjectivity in the Artist Film <i>Green</i></p> <p>Chair: Michał Matuszewski</p>	<p><b>10. LOOKING AT (II)</b> Sala de Juntas</p> <p><b>Sofía Duarte (Universitat de València, Spain):</b> An Analysis of Nonhuman Animals in Natural History Museums – A Place of Domination and Deceit</p> <p><b>Hannele ‘Lumi’ Kauppinen (Tampere University, Finland):</b> Finnish News Media’s Ambivalent Discourse on Nonhuman Animals Used for Food and Openings for Alternative Representation</p> <p><b>Daniel López-Fernández (Universitat de València, Spain):</b> “Something’s gone wrong”: la taxidermia en el arte contemporáneo</p> <p>Chair: Olimpia Mailat</p>
<p>11.15- 12.15</p>	<p><b>11. DOCUMENTARY (II)</b> Salón de Grados</p> <p><b>Irene Rihuete-Varea (Brown University, USA):</b> Empathy, Interobjectivity and Ethnography in Maddi Barber’s <i>Gorria</i></p> <p><b>Navaneetha Suresh (BITS Pinali, India):</b> Re-searching the Elephants: Finding the Real Other-than-Human Animal in the Documentary <i>The Elephant Whisperers</i></p> <p>Chair: Patrycja Chuszcz</p>	<p><b>12. SENSES</b> Sala de Juntas</p> <p><b>Camellia Biswas (IIT Gandhinagar, India):</b> Sensing the Wild: Exploring Socio-Cultural and Ecological Dynamics of Wild Animals in Sundarban</p> <p><b>Ina Karkani (Freie Universität Berlin, Germany):</b> What Do We Hear When We Hear with Animals: “Listening Positionalities” in <i>Stray</i> (2020) and <i>Gunda</i> (2021)</p> <p>Chair: Olimpia Mailat</p>

12.30- 13.30	<b>KEYNOTE 5 – PAULA CASAL (Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain):</b> Captive Apes, Elephants and Dolphins Salón de Grados Chair: Brett Mills
13.30	Closing Ceremony Salón de Grados

### **FURTHER INFORMATION:**

- Internet may be accessed through eduroam.
- The Cafeteria at the Facultat de Filologia, Traducció i Comunicació is located on the ground floor. There are vegan options for lunch. Please keep in mind that the conference does not include complimentary coffee or snacks during the breaks.
- Please remember that the conference dinner at Oslo will be 31 euros (aside from the conference fee) and must be payed by each person at the restaurant (cash or credit card). If you intend to come but have not informed the organizers about this yet, make sure you let them know at the registration desk no later than Nov. 29.
- For more information on the **Hidden: Animals in the Anthropocene** exhibition, please visit:  
<https://www.uv.es/uvweb/culture/en/activity-list/hidden-animals-anthropocene-1285871673078/Activitat.html?id=1286330541396>

## CONFERENCE VENUES:

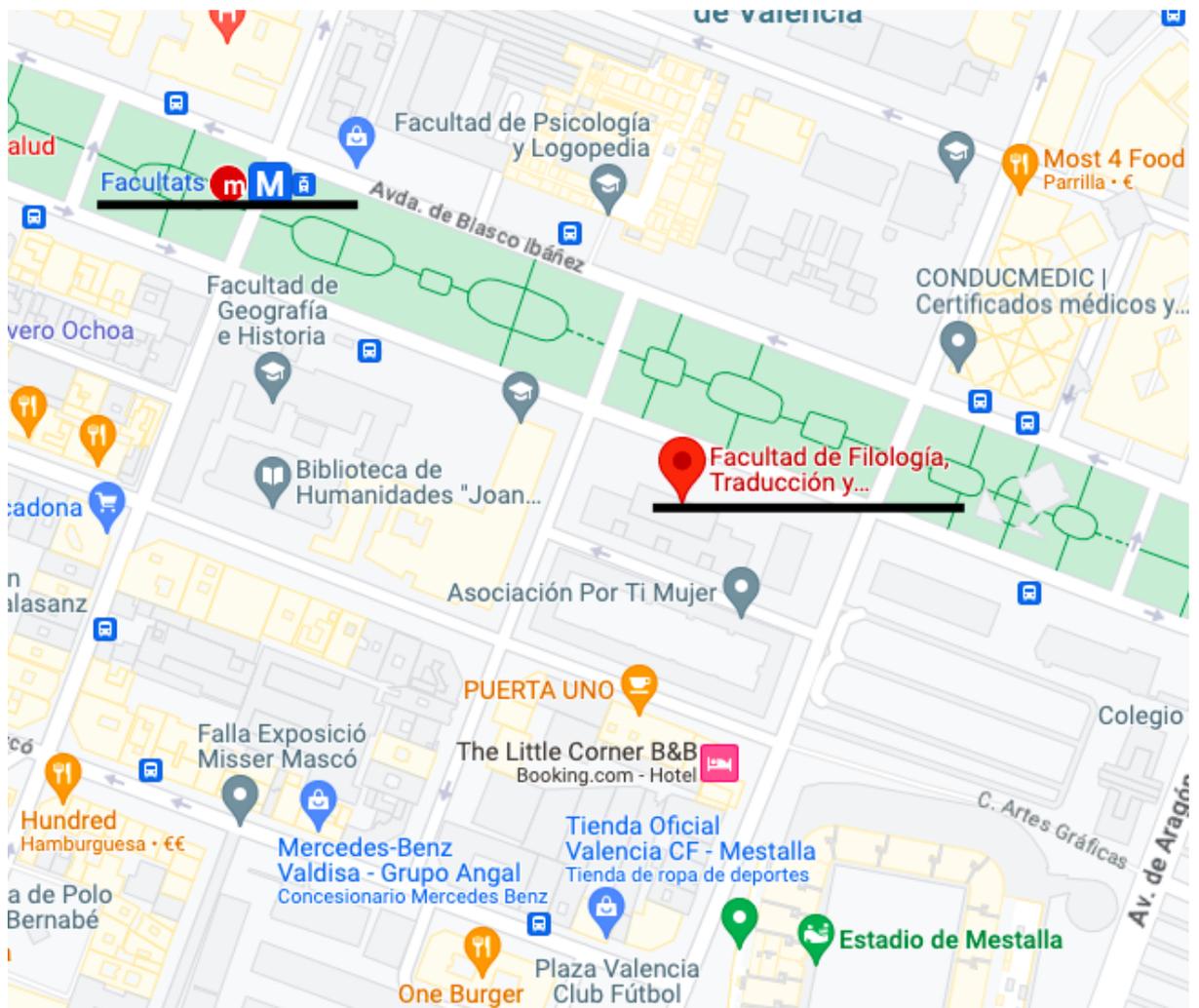
### The Faculty of Philology, Translation and Communication (FFTIC)

The Faculty of Philology, Translation and Communication is located in the Blasco Ibáñez Campus on **Blasco Ibáñez Avenue number 32**, Valencia.

Most of the Conference will take place in the FFTIC building.

How to get to campus by public transport:

- Bus: lines **12, 30, 31, 71, 80, 81**
- Metro: line 3, **Facultats** stop



## La Nau (Universitat de València)

La Nau is located in **Carrer Universitat, 2, 46003 Valencia**.

La Nau is the venue for the afternoon of Nov. 29, and is located in the city center.

How to get to La Nau by public transport:

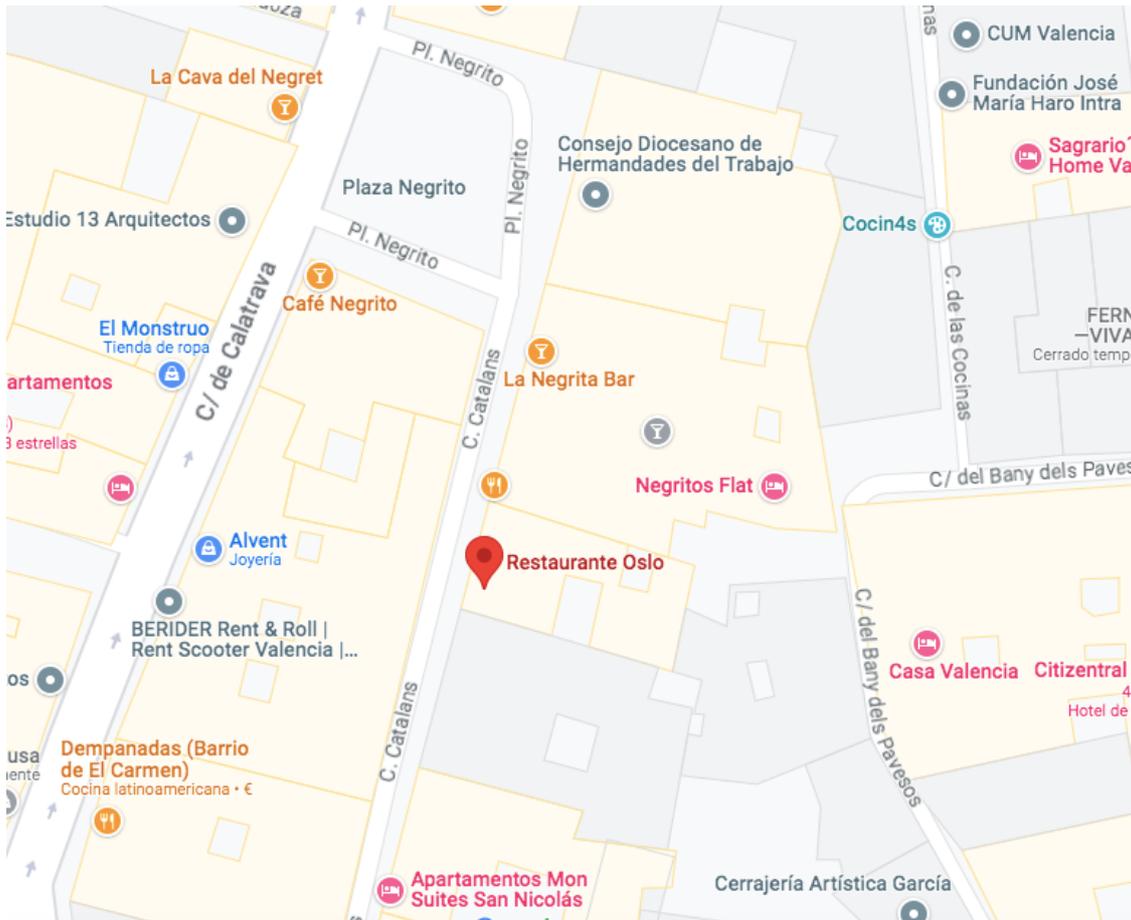
- Bus: lines **31, 32, 81**
- Metro: lines 3,5, 9 **Colón** stop



## Conference dinner (Nov. 30, 9 PM): Oslo

Oslo is located in the old part of town, in **Calle dels Catalans, 8, 46001 Valencia**

Website: <https://restauranteoslo.com/>



# BOOK OF ABSTRACTS & BIONOTES

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

**KEYNOTE 1: Wednesday, Nov. 29, 10.30-11.30, Salón de Grados**

**Randy Malamud (Georgia State University)**



**“Seeing Real Animals: What Is Real? What Is an Animal? What Is Seeing? What Is Seen?”**

This talk will be about ethics, aesthetics, sentience: ours (Malamud, Mills, Alonso Recarte, McArthur, et al.), not theirs (mice, jellyfish, ants, starlings, etc.) I am not being anthropocentric (I assert warily, defensively, anthropocentrically), but if we’re talking about actual factual animals, there’s little more to be said. They are facts! I take that at face value. The question we humans need to be investigating is, how do we grapple with those actualities? Can we accept the facts? Or are we blindered? (Like we blinder horses – contrapasso!) Are our wings clipped, so to speak? Are we imprisoned in our own cages? Are we overly domesticated? Dumb as donkeys?

Do we imagine the factual animal as singular or plural? (Note my syntax: not is the factual animal singular or plural? But, do we imagine him/her/them/it as such?) Do we prefer factual animals to be present or absent? Easily perceptible and comprehensible, or elusive, exotic, and even confusing? Is it possible to encounter actual animals without eating them, or exploiting them, or killing them, or culturally appropriating them, or ecocritically theorizing them? Naming them, touching them, framing them? If they are easily and profitably commodified, like chickens, like mink, like peacocks, like polar and panda bears, then their reward will be more of the same, expanded at increased scale ad infinitum (which we now know means, perversely, ad nihilum). If they taste good, too bad for them. If their fur, or their teeth, or bones, or tusks, or shells, or feathers, are at all useful (desirable, profitable) for human markets, that’s their bad luck. I have written elsewhere: Whenever a human and

nonhuman animal come into contact, that other animal ends up the worse for it. Are there facts that be found and disseminated to mitigate or remediate this unfortunate nexus of power?

**Randy Malamud** is Regents' Professor of English at Georgia State University, where he has taught since 1989. He is the author of 11 books, including *The Language of Modernism* (1989), *Reading Zoos: Representations of Animals and Captivity* (1998), *Poetic Animals and Animal Souls* (2003), *The Importance of Elsewhere: The Globalist Humanist Tourist* (2018), and *Email* (2019). He has appeared on BBC, CNN, and NPR, and has written 150 articles, essays, and reviews, in scholarly journals as well as such venues as *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Times Higher Education*, *Salon*, *Truthout*, *In These Times*, *The Atlantic*, *Film Quarterly*, *Senses of Cinema*, *The Point*, and *The Conversation*. He is a Fellow of the Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics.

**KEYNOTE 2: Wednesday, Nov. 29, 17.00-18.00, Centro Cultural La Nau (Aula Magna)**

**Jo-Anne McArthur (Animal Photojournalist, We Animals Media)**



**“Animal Photojournalism in the Anthropocene”**

Animal Photojournalism is an emergent genre of photography that captures, memorializes, and exposes the experiences of other-than-human animals who are kept among us but who we fundamentally fail to see. The images of this pioneering field document the broad human-animal conflict and its resultant ecosystems of suffering. As global societies collectively awaken to the realities of our unjust exploitation of animals, these photo works, films, and investigations are of increasing interest. In particular, animal photojournalism emphasizes the inclusion of animals who have been historically underrepresented in photos, the media, and the public conscience: those we eat and wear, the animals used in research, and the animals we use for entertainment, work, and in religious practice. Animal photojournalism aims to encourage swift and necessary change on behalf of the beings in the frame, and demands our self-awareness and empathy. *Who should have to look at painful images?* posits Susan Sontag, in her book *Regarding the Pain of Others*. *Anyone who can help*, is her conclusion. When it

comes to animals, that is all of us, and animal photojournalism asks that we look, and not turn away.

We Animals Media founder Jo-Anne McArthur has documented animals in the Anthropocene in over 60 countries during the last 25 years, and her animal-centric NGO now includes the contributions of over 100 photographers. In this presentation, McArthur introduces us to animal industries and the individuals caught within, and shares examples of how these works are creating real-world change for animals by contributing to campaigns, media, legal efforts for animals, academia, and more.

**Jo-Anne McArthur** is an award-winning photographer, author, photo editor, and sought-after speaker. Through her long-term body of work, We Animals, she has documented our complex relationship with animals around the globe. Since 1998, her work has taken her to over sixty countries. In 2019 she founded. McArthur's books include *Hidden: Animals in the Anthropocene* (We Animals Media, 2020), with co-editor Keith Wilson; *Captive* (Lantern Books, 2017); and *We Animals* (Lantern Books, 2014). Thousands of her images are available at the We Animals Media stock site. She has also been a jury member for World Press Photo and Mont Photo.

### KEYNOTE 3

Thursday, Nov. 30, 10.45-11.45, Salón de Grados

**Claire Parkinson (Edge Hill University, UK)**



#### **“Dangerous Dogs: A Politics of Canine/Human Relationship”**

Breed specific legislation (BSL) is now common across the Global North with pit bulls particularly being identified as a type of dog which presents an increased risk to humans. This talk will give an account of BSL and the cultural narratives that have framed the topic of dangerous dogs in the UK. Using newspaper archives and specialist breed texts, I trace historical connections between dog breeds, social class, and masculinity in British culture. The focus here is on the nineteenth and twentieth century origins of the pit bull terrier and Staffordshire bull terrier, and the dogs' links to masculine identity, working class culture and practices. With reference to the current media-driven debate over the extension of dangerous dogs legislation to include American Bully XLs, I argue that BSL is inherently flawed, based on

identity politics and a nineteenth century conception of 'breed'. Media discourses continue to shape the public debate and governmental decision-making about dangerous dogs legislation. This presentation concludes with an overview of the impacts of BSL on the material reality of dogs' lives and argues for an alternative multispecies approach.

Professor **Claire Parkinson** is founding director of the Centre for Human Animal Studies (CfHAS) and Associate Head of the English and Creative Arts Department at Edge Hill University. She works in critical animal studies where her research interests focus on socio-cultural and political-economic aspects of animal/human relationships. Claire has been involved in research on animals and culture for over 27 years and her work has been published widely in books, reports and journals. She is the author or editor of eight books including *Popular Media and Animals* (2011); *Beyond Human: From Animality to Transhumanism and Animals* (2012); *Anthropomorphism and Mediated Encounters* (2020) and *Animal Activism On and Off Screen* (2024). She has led funded research projects that include 'Pathways to Veganism' (2018-2019), the Arts and Humanities Research Council funded 'Multispecies storytelling: more than human narratives about landscape' (2019-2021) and 'Multisensory multispecies storytelling to engage disadvantaged groups in changing landscapes' (2020-2022), and 'Public perceptions of dangerous dogs and dog risk' (2021-2023).

#### **KEYNOTE 4**

**Thursday, Nov. 30, 16.45-17.45, Salón de Grados**

**Brett Mills (Edge Hill University, UK)**



#### **“The Factual Animal: The Animal as Fact”**

In what ways are animal bodies, rendered within a variety of media forms, used by humans as evidence? Throughout certain human histories, humans have repeatedly situated images of animals as productive resources when attempting to make sense of the world. In these ways animals become objectified as tools with no value other than their suitability for evidencing particular ideas. In this conference where we aim to examine how factual, real-world animals are represented in media, my aim here is to think about the ways in which animals are used within media as markers of the factual. Looking at early photography, cinema and television, I intend to highlight how humans have consistently employed animal imagery for truth-making

claims, and to examine the conventions of such imagery, with the additional purpose of highlighting persistent human-animal power hierarchies which such media normalises and upholds.

**Brett Mills** teaches and researches in television, media and film at Edge Hill University, UK, and is an Honorary Professor of Media and Cultural Studies at the University of East Anglia, UK. His key foci include: the politics of popular culture, especially television; critical animal studies, particularly in terms of animal representations in popular culture; and comedy, as a powerfully disruptive social force, in forms such as sitcom and stand-up. He is the author of *Television Sitcom* (2005), *The Sitcom* (2012), and *Animals on Television: The Cultural Making of the Non-Human* (2017). He is the co-author (with Erica Horton) of *Creativity in the British Television Comedy Industry* (2017) and (with David Barlow) of two editions of *Reading Media Theory: Thinkers, Approaches, Contexts* (2009, 2012). He is a member of the team who undertook the two Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded (AHRC) projects on multispecies storytelling: *Multispecies Storytelling: More-Than-Human Narratives About Landscape* (2019-22) and *Multisensory Multispecies Storytelling to Engage Disadvantaged Groups in Changing Landscapes* (2020-22). He was the Principal Investigator on the AHRC-funded research project *Make Me Laugh: Creativity in the British Television Comedy Industry* (2012-15). He has undertaken Research Fellowships at Animal Charity Evaluators (2021) and the Future Matters Project (2022), is a Senior Fellow of the UK's Higher Education Academy, is an affiliated researcher for the Centre for Comedy Studies Research, Brunel University, UK, and is a member of the Centre for Human-Animal Studies at Edge Hill University. From 2016-19 he was the resident television expert for BBC Radio Norfolk, and since 2014 has been a reviewer of stand-up comedy for *Fest* magazine.

## KEYNOTE 5

Friday, Dec. 1, 12.30-13.30, Salón de Grados

**Paula Casal (Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain)**



### “Captive Apes, Elephants and Dolphins”

When a product, accompanied by images of perfect citruses and berries, is advertised with the caption “made with real fruit juice and other natural ingredients”, reasonable consumers do not suspect that it only contains 5% fruit. Though the statement is not entirely false, such

adds are unethical because they deceptively encourage us to act impudently. Zoo, circus and aquariums advertising performing animals are worse because they deceptively encourage us to act wrongly. They present performing animals as “fierce” and “dangerous” to inhibit compassion, or, if the animals are still from panic or depression, they are described as “napping” as if they had enviable lives of leisure. And when captivity kills them prematurely, the illusion of longevity is perpetuated calling Chita or Samu a whole series of animal actors. These misleading representations of animals encouraging wrongdoing should be prosecuted at least as much as those encouraging we act against our own interests.

**Paula Casal** works at UPF's Law Department, having held positions at Reading University (2004-8) and Keele University (1996-2004). She was also Fellow in Ethics at Harvard University (1999-2000), a Keele Junior Research Fellow, also at Harvard (2000-1), Hoover Fellow at Université Catholique de Louvain (2001-02), Leverhulme Research Fellow at the University of Oxford (2002-4) and Christopher Family Fellow at Stanford University (2018). Her work has appeared in journals like *Ethics*, *Economics and Philosophy*, *Journal of Medical Ethics*, *Journal of Moral Philosophy*, *Journal of Political Philosophy*, *Hypatia*, *Political Studies* and *Utilitas*. She is Associate Editor of *Politics, Philosophy & Economics*, *Law, Ethics and Philosophy*, Director of the UPF Center for Animal Ethics, and President of the Great Ape Project-Spain.

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PAPERS (please note that these are ordered following the conference schedule and panel structure)

## 1. DOCUMENTARY (I)

Culturas Literarias y Visuales del Animal

Wednesday, Nov. 29, 12.00-13.00, Salón de Grados

- **Borbála László (University of Debrecen, Hungary):**  
**“Phantosmeikón: The Ghostly Corporealities of Urban Strays in Elsa Kremser and Levin Peter’s *Space Dogs*”**

The ever-increasing number of cultural representations using Laika as a metaphor for human heroism, sacrifice and resilience overshadow the memory of the actual Soviet space dogs with abstract images of the canine pioneer. Laika is therefore the epitome of the (post)modern spectralisation process, where – as John Berger, Randy Malamud, and Akira Mizuta Lippit argue – symbolic associations are projected on screen animals so that they gradually become “less” than their real-life counterparts: less mysterious, lively, and autonomous, until they only

bear a ghostly resemblance to the actual creatures. Furthermore, this implies that “animals are always the observed. The fact that they can observe us has lost all significance. They are the objects of our ever-extending knowledge” (Berger 1980, 16). Recognising the pessimism of former thinkers, Jonathan Burt and Anat Pick nevertheless claim that the real creatures always exceed their symbolic associations, and Pick specifically states that films can also disclose different creaturely life-words or *Umwelten*. Relying on Burt’s and Pick’s corrective arguments, my presentation focuses on Elsa Kremser and Levin Peter’s *Space Dogs* (2019): a film that resists the forces of spectralisation by engaging with the obscure actions, inscrutable inner lives and subjective perceptual experiences of Moscow street dogs. I propose that rather than “spectral animals” (Lippit 2000, 1), the documentary thus summons phantosmeikón: creatures whose specifically canine corporealities appear yet elude human understanding, thereby haunting the anthropocentric gaze with the presence of wholly different ways of being in and making sense of the world. By foregrounding the bodily experiences of urban strays, the documentary not only requires that we let ourselves be troubled by the presence of other animals’ *Umwelten*, but they also demand justice for the actual dogs who were forcibly used in the Soviet space program and have been erased from human cultural memory ever since.

**Borbála László**, PhD student at the University of Debrecen, Hungary, is engaged in animal studies, reading cinematic and literary texts from a more-than-human perspective. In her doctoral research she attempts to map the cinematic traces and transformations of human-canine relationships in documentary and fiction films. Her work on textual creatures has appeared in edited volumes and scholarly journals including *Humanimalia*.

- **Zsófia Novák: (University of Debrecen, Hungary)**  
**“Speaking for Nonhumans: The Voices of Advocacy in *Our Planet*, *Earthlings* and *Dominion*”**

As cognitive film theorist Carl Plantinga asserts, “emotion and affect are fundamental to what makes films artistically successful, rhetorically powerful, and culturally influential” (2009, 5). While his oeuvre dominantly focuses on narrative cinema, his claims concerning the power of films to move audiences may be easily and usefully extended to the realm of documentary moving images. Generally considered by the public as recording and decoding reality, documentaries are often seen as comprising a category fundamentally different from fiction films (Eitzen 2007). However, Alexa Weik von Mossner (2014), Derek Bousé (2000), and Gregg Mitman (2009) all make convincing claims as to the tools of fiction being widely employed by filmmakers dealing in nonfiction genres such as environmental documentaries and wildlife films. In agreement with these critics, my aim in this paper is to explore David Attenborough’s *Our Planet* (2019), as well as Shaun Monson’s *Earthlings* (2005) and Chris Delforce’s *Dominion* (2018) in order to illustrate how wildlife cinema and eco-documentaries often resort to a set of strategies similar to that of narrative cinema in order to provoke and maintain certain moods and affective responses. Constructing a comprehensive understanding of the vulnerability of “earth’-others” (Braidotti 2013) via educational commentary, these films present sentimentalised and (in the case of Attenborough’s series) sensationalised accounts of nonhuman lives, with the explicit purpose of cueing empathic reactions. Dedicated to environmental issues and/or a vegan ethical agenda, *Our Planet*, *Earthlings* and *Dominion*

resort to the strategy of becoming a voice for the voiceless, revealing intimate – and often unsettling – details of wildlife and the workings of industrial animal agriculture; however, as I shall suggest, in that process they risk effacing, to differing degrees, the “significant otherness” (Haraway 2003) of non-human lives and sounds. Thus, in this paper I shall dissect the (filmic) techniques these movies employ in promoting empathic engagement, and I shall also look at how the fluctuation of (anti-)anthropomorphic and (anti-)anthropocentric tendencies relates to the potential evocation of empathic responses in the audience.

**Zsófia Novák** is a PhD student at the University of Debrecen, Hungary. Her research interests include posthumanism, ecocriticism, animal studies and affect studies. Her dissertation explores the implications of empathy in contemporary literature and cinema, focusing on relations between animals, humans, and (bio)technological entities. She was co-organiser of “The View from the Anthropocene,” a multi-disciplinary, international conference. Her reviews and articles have been published in scholarly journals including *HJEAS*, *Filológiai Közlöny* and *The European Journal of English Studies* (forthcoming).

## 2. LOOKING AT (I)

Wednesday, Nov. 29, 12.00-13.00, Sala de Juntas

- **Bianca Friedman (Edge Hill University, UK)**  
**“Mastering the Representation, Mastering the Horse: Reflections on Control and Its Unsteadiness in *The Silver Brumby* Film Adaptation”**

Many films have depicted human-horse bonds, which may be based on mutual respect but also on asymmetries of power. This paper focuses on *The Silver Brumby* (1993) film adaptation, which tells the story of a wild brumby stallion living in the Australian mountains and coping both with horse and human rivals. This case study is part of my ongoing research that investigates the aesthetic, theoretical and material implications of the representation of horse characters’ point of view in live-action film adaptations. The combination of Film Analysis, Human Animal Studies and Critical Animal Studies will allow me to discuss how factual horses and human-horse relationships have been relevant to produce this film. In a live-action film like *The Silver Brumby* where horses freely move and act with no visible human coercion, it becomes fundamental to reflect on real horses involved in the film production. I argue that considering real horses’ agency allows us to further reflect on human control and its unsteadiness. My analysis will consider the link between the film thematisation of the failure of human dominance and the problematic human-brumbies relationship in contemporary Australia, and the role of real horse actors, whose involvement requires a degree of human mastery through training practices. However, seeing horses as social agents (Birke and Thompson 2018) allows for an ethical consideration of their influence, if not control, on the achievement of the representation itself.

**Bianca Friedman** has an MA in Comparative Literatures (Università di Pisa). She enrolled as a Graduate Teaching Assistant and a PhD student at Edge Hill University in October 2021. She is developing a project on the representation of horse characters’ point of view in live-action

films and she is a member of Edge Hill Centre for Human Animal Studies (CfHAS). Within the PGCTHE programme, she has become Associate Fellow of Higher Education Academy and is currently working to be a Fellow. She has always been a horse lover and used to practice horse jumping.

- **Olimpia Mailat (Universitat de València, Spain)**  
**“The Absence of Limitations: A Recount of Nonhuman Animal Exploitation in Art Installations”**

It is no secret that nonhuman animals have been, and still are, regularly used as artistic props and as performers for our entertainment. However, considering all the accounts on their mistreatment that have been reported throughout the years, the lack of attention and action towards them is staggering. Even though the boundaries of art are not always easily defined, the use of animals and the ethical transgressions for the sake of it invite to a particularly interesting debate regarding the purpose of their presence in an artistic display, the reasoning behind the choice of a specific animal, and the treatment and potential physical suffering or, in some cases, even the death of the animal object. I argue that, in face of these issues and keeping in mind the rights of nonhuman animals, there is a need for a discussion to be had regarding what can and should be done to protect them. In some instances, the corpses of animals have also been used as artistic objects, a practice which conveys some messages worthy of discussion as well. Therefore, my main aim is to examine the ethical and philosophical implications of such artistic choices, analysing the symbolisms and ideas that the artists claim to portray through the use of these animals and offer an overview of the legal and protective measures – or lack thereof – that have been taken to ensure their welfare. In order to do so, I have based my study on several art installations by notable artists such as Damien Hirst’s *In and Out of Love* (1991), Navin Thomas’s *Its Sound Sculpture* (2012), and Guillermo Vargas’s *Exposition #1* (2007), all of which rely on the use of living nonhuman animals as artistic objects and conveyors of ideas, and do so from an anthropocentric artistic perspective. They provide a ground for discussion not only on the limitations and ethics of art, but also on what the factual animal is versus the human-centered representation of animals that these artists exhibit, as well as the moral implications of such artistic displays.

**Olimpia Mailat Gurghian** finished her degree studies in Translation and Interlinguistic Mediation in 2019, specializing in French and English as her source languages. For her degree thesis she chose to explore the use of humor and comedy in audiovisual advertising, as well as the challenges and restrictions that their translation usually entails. Consequently, she decided to pursue a master’s degree in Audiovisual Translation: Localisation, Subtitling and Dubbing, offered by the University of Cádiz and the ISTRAD, and a master’s degree in advanced English Studies offered by the University of Valencia. In her MA dissertation, “Cultural and Political Importance of Animals in Science Fiction: From Key Concepts to Frank Herbert’s *Dune*,” she analyzed the figure of sandworms in the *Dune* novels. Currently, she is a PhD Student at the University of Valencia, and her aim is to further examine the relationships between nonhuman animals and humans in science fiction.

### 3. ZOO

Wednesday, Nov. 29, 13.00-14.00, Salón de Grados

- **Vesna Liponik (ZRC SAZU, Institute of Philosophy, Slovenia)**  
**“What Counts Is the Music, the Sex and the Understandable Self-Evidence of Zebras Crossing the Savannah”**

The title of this contribution is borrowed from a poem titled National Geographic (*The Best Have Fallen*, 2011, Beletrina) by contemporary Slovenian poet Katja Perat. The verse effectively sums up three key elements of mainstream nature documentary production that I will focus on. The highlighted verse and the poem as a whole will be one of the starting points of the analysis, in which I will pay particular attention to the connection between nature documentaries and zoos.

Despite some differences, it is possible to draw significant parallels between zoos and nature documentaries, especially in terms of their purpose, origin, development and power structures. Nature documentaries can thus be seen as an intensification of the zoo sentiment, as one of the capitalist products of the accelerated marginalisation of animals and their co-optation, with John Berger, into the family or the spectacle. Both nature documentaries and zoos feed into and contribute to the reproduction of anthropocentrism, which, as Donna Haraway points out, always "reeks of race and gender".

To the civic museum and educational function that the zoo has adopted as an imperialist institution, a new monumental function has been added over time: the protection of endangered species, which is also paramount in the contemporary production of nature documentaries. Key to this is the image of Noah's Ark, the first organised animal assembly in the Judeo-Christian tradition. But Noah's Ark is no longer imaginable without the concept of biodiversity. And there is only room on a biodiversity ship for one representative of his or her species, because Noah's Ark is the heteronormative vessel *par excellence*.

**Vesna Liponik** completed her MA in Comparative Literature and Literary Theory and Slovene Language at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana. Her MA thesis *Anthropomorphisation: a critical analysis of a (non)trope* was awarded the Nahtigal Faculty Prize for the best final thesis. She works as a Junior Research Fellow at ZRC SAZU, Institute of Philosophy and is a PhD student at the Postgraduate School ZRC SAZU. She is also a poet. Her first poetry collection *roko razje (eats away the hand)* was published in 2019 by Škuc-Lambda and nominated for the Critical Sieve award, Veronika award and Best Debut award. Her second book will be published this year by the same publisher. She collaborates with For the Animals!, society for assertion of animal rights.

- **Betlem Pallardó Azorín (Universitat de València, Spain)**  
**“The Narratives of the Zoo with a Case Study of Bioparc”**

This presentation critically examines the narratives of the zoo, using Bioparc (Valencia) as a case study. Drawing upon the perspectives of Critical Animal Studies and Museum Studies, I analyse several elements of this zoo, including its institutional characteristics and its relation to its predecessor, the Zoo of Valencia. Additionally, I investigate the zoo's opening devices

(sculptures), the selection criteria for the animals on display, and the spatial semantics, including the zoogeography and the immersion design. I emphasise the carceral nature of the enclosures by applying the concept of the zoöpticon, coined by Acampora.

Furthermore, I examine the anthropomorphisation of other-than-human animals within the zoo and explore how they are portrayed. The feeding spectacle is analysed as a display of power, while the zoo signs are examined as rhetorical devices shaping visitor perceptions. The closing device, represented by the gift shop, is also studied from a critical perspective.

Throughout the analysis, I unravel the narratives employed to legitimise the zoo, paying particular attention to the conservationist, educative, welfare, and Edenic narratives, as well as their relation to the visual and commercial exploitation of animals and the Foucaultian pastoral power. To complement the study, I analyse non-fiction cultural products, including the book *Memorias del zoo de Valencia* (2001) by Ignacio Docavo, the former Zoo of Valencia director, and the docuseries *Los herederos del arca* (2008) directed by Fernando González Sitges, who is also the director of Rainforest, the company managing Bioparc. By exploring the ethical and aesthetic implications of these cultural representations alongside the study of Bioparc, this research contributes to broader discussions on the complex relationship between human and other-than-human animals in the context of zoos.

**Betlem Pallardó Azorín** is a predoctoral researcher within the PhD Programme in Advanced Hispanic Studies at University of Valencia, supported by the FPU (Formación del Profesorado Universitario) grant. She holds a degree in Hispanic Studies and a Master's in Advanced Hispanic Studies, both from University of Valencia. She is the recipient of the Bachelor's Degree Extraordinary Award for Hispanic Studies and has also been honoured with the Captaincy General Award for achieving the best academic records at University of Valencia in the fields of Arts and Humanities and Social and Legal Sciences. She also contributes to the academic community as a member of the editorial team at the academic journal *Kamchatka. Revista de análisis cultural*. Her research interests are centred on the cultural representation of sites of violence towards other-than-human animals. Her recent work focuses on the analysis of zoos and their cultural portrayals through the lenses of Critical Animal Studies, Cultural Studies, and Museum Studies.

#### 4. WILD *Culturas Literarias y Visuales del Animal* Wednesday, Nov. 29, 13.00-14.00, Sala de Juntas

- **Jack Harrison & Joanna Ziarkowska (University of Warsaw, Poland)**  
**“Modern Tricksters: An Analysis of Media Representations of Coyotes in Northeast US”**

In 2016 the affluent community of Newport (Aquidneck Island) grew increasingly concerned by numerous sightings of coyotes—and especially by the presence of one individual, known by the name of Cliff. Cliff, in time, became a local celebrity after he had been seen lounging in people's backyards, prowling trashcans, and patiently awaiting busses at Middletown bus stops. According to Dr. Numi Mitchell, Head of the Conservation Agency and Assistant Professor of the University of Rhode Island, Cliff was transformed into an urban animal, due

to either the intentional or inadvertent feeding of coyotes, and now lived too close to the city's residents, having lost his instinctual fear of humans. The contentious case, fought between proponents of Cliff's elimination and those willing to find less extreme solutions, received much media attention, as discussed in Julie Marron's documentary *American Bolshevik* (2023).

In this presentation, we analyze TV representations of Cliff in order to draw attention to the inherent contradictions contained in the cultural image of the coyote species, lacking protection under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), as somehow lesser than the wolf; as clever and resilient; and, yet, in Native American stories, as someone who is often naive and hence easily outsmarted. Moreover, the coyote's "lower" status often situates him as an animal feeding on leftovers and trash, and therefore, media coverage on coyotes in Newport reveals thinking and fears about difference not only with regard to the human versus coyote but in terms of social class. To better illuminate these dynamics, we intend to read such representations of Cliff through Anishinaabe writer and critic Gerald Vizenor's take on trickster figures in Native American cultures. In his work, Vizenor rejects interpretations that equate powerful animal characters with humans, thus dismissing the cult of mythical tricksterism. Instead, he connects tricksters, e.g., coyotes, with the networks of discourse and powers that create them, including settler colonialism, capitalism, etc.: "here the trickster is a sign that becomes a comic holotrope, a consonance of sentences in various voices, ironies, variations in cultural myths and social metaphors" (*Narrative Chance* 190). Similarly, we see Cliff the coyote's representation by the media as a convergence point of different interest groups, stereotypes, and expectations about wild animals in the 21st century.

**Jack Harrison** is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Warsaw where he works as a member of the "Figurations of Interspecies Harmony" research team funded by the Polish National Science Centre. His research sits at the intersection of music and animal studies and considers what might be revealed about music's relationship to sociality when society is framed in terms of multispecies entanglements. Before moving to Warsaw in 2021, Jack studied at the University of Toronto where he completed his PhD in ethnomusicology. His doctoral dissertation examines how rhythm, melody, choreographic form and musical recordings help to configure more-than-human relations in British interspecies sports.

**Joanna Ziarkowska** is an Associate Professor at the University of Warsaw, Poland. She is the author of *Indigenous Bodies, Cells, and Genes: Biomedicalization and Embodied Resistance in Native American Literature* (2021) and the co-editor of *In Other Words: Dialogizing Postcoloniality, Race, and Ethnicity* (2012). She has published several articles on Native American literature.

- **Camille Lavoix (University of Würzburg, Germany)**  
**"Reclaiming the Lion's Share: In Search of Reality and Diversity in the Representation of Lions"**

How have lions been depicted in western and hegemonic audiovisual representations in the last 100 years? My main hypothesis is that it is still a (neo)colonial construct, far from the "reality" that lion bodies have been factually experiencing. After a deep dive in archives, documentary databanks, YouTube, etc., the homogenous results show a lack of diversity

regarding lions' representations. One of the findings is that real lions are very much affected by the stereotypical portrayal of fictional ones. To illustrate this point, I probe a media report by local Arizona TV in the safari-theme park *Out of Africa*, paying attention to the cuddling and hugging of lions, treated like pets. Indeed, such scenes are reminiscent of colonial images of Joy Adamson hugging Elsa, "her" adopted lion in the bestseller *Born Free* (1960) whose success was largely due to the dozens of photographs of Elsa and Joy. Elsa was orphaned after George Adamson killed her mother in "self-defense", another topos observed in early representations of lions as constantly threatening humans. Finally, I turn to recent representations of lions in Sir David Attenborough's landmark series asking what their ethical implications are. Taking cues from Brett Mills's statement that "it is important to place a programme such as *Planet Earth* within the broadcasting system that produced and distributes it" (2015), I emphasize how lions have been and are consistently depicted by Anglophones, in particular English conservation celebrity Attenborough (Graham Huggan). Ultimately, such results call for more diverse representations of lions to emerge (Emma Marris), outside of "pastoral idylls" or "worlds in danger" (James Secord).

**Camille Lavoix** is a PhD candidate in Environmental Humanities, her project is entitled "Re-imagining the West Sudanian Savanna". She teaches at the English department (Literature and Cultural Studies) of the University of Würzburg in Germany. Her research is at the intersection between African literatures and ecocriticism and seeks to "unsafari the savanna". Camille was previously a journalist and contributed to various media such as *Le Monde*, *Mediapart*, *El Pais*, *Arte*, *The Guardian* and the BBC. She has conducted environmental investigations mainly from West Africa and South America where she also earned a master's degree in Journalism in Buenos Aires (Argentina). She is the author of several books in French (stories, poems, non-fiction) about more-than-humans ranging from baobabs to ants, for children and adults. Following very positive experiences in Ramon Llull, Cordoba and Granada Universities, Camille is particularly eager to participate in projects located in Spain (research stays, guest lectures conferences, postdoc, etc.).

## 5. ENGAGEMENT

Thursday, Nov. 30, 9.00- 10.30, Salón de Grados

Culturas Literarias y Visuales del Animal

- **Olivia Badoi (Saint Louis University, Spain)**  
**"From Giraffes to Ghost Foxes: How 'Real' Animals Influence Viewer Engagement and Enchantment in Screen Media"**

Season finales of acclaimed TV shows typically garner substantial attention, and *The Last of Us* is no exception. However, the intrigue for this series' first-season finale was stirred not by a plot twist, but by the on-screen presence of a real animal. Social media buzzed with the question: "Was that a real giraffe in the season finale of *The Last of Us*?"

This paper explores the implications of real versus computer-generated animal representations in visual media by using the theoretical framework of affective ecology. The central research questions are: "How does the distinction between 'real' versus non-factual (computer-generated or imaginary) animals in visual media shape the story and the affective

relationships that viewers form with the animals on screen? In the age of AI, do animals still have the power to re-enchant us?"

Drawing from the example of *The Last of Us*, this research delves into the affective ecological potential of real animals on screen. It further investigates more liminal representations of other-than-human animals, such as the computer-generated creature Tuunbaq from the award-winning show *The Terror*, perceived as a real polar bear intradiegetically. A similar narrative unfolds in the 2014 film *Wild*, where the protagonist repeatedly encounters a fox while hiking the Pacific Crest Trail. Even though the ending suggests that the fox inhabits the protagonist's psyche rather than the external world, its assumed authenticity, given the film's memoir basis, the animal remains suspended between the real and the non-real. I argue that it's precisely this liminal position that creates an opportunity for viewers to forge a deeper relationship with the character.

To conclude, my paper aims to explore whether the perceived authenticity of animal representation in media influences viewers' emotional engagement, potentially affecting the viewers' broader ecological attitudes towards other-than-human animals. By investigating real animals and those that inhabit a liminal space, I aim to understand the capacity of such representations to engender affect and a sense of enchantment in the audience.

**Olivia Badoi** is Assistant Professor of English at Saint Louis University in Madrid. She is currently at work on her book *Arboreal Modernism*. The book proposes an original framework of "arboreal modernism" to illuminate how modernist artists used nonhuman networks such as trees and forests as a model for interconnectivity and a corrective for our own broken social system.

- **Justyna Włodarczyk (University of Warsaw, Poland)**  
**"Naturally Cute: Wildlife Cameras and Friendly Interspecies Interactions"**

This presentation looks at the types of wildlife camera footage that have "gone viral" on the internet in the past years. It is specifically focused on footage that shows cooperative and friendly interspecies interactions (e.g. 2020 footage in which a coyote and a badger use a culvert to cross a busy highway in California, 2023 footage of raccoons and a deer sharing a water hole in Wisconsin) and analyzes how such footage has circulated and continues to operate in public discourse. It suggests that the category of cute is key to understanding both the appeal of such footage of animals and its limitations. Most of the theoretical scholarship on the concept of cuteness, associated the concept with artifice. Cuteness is seen as constructed and much effort has been put into analyzing how this happens: from Konrad Lorenz's claim of neoteny, through Stephen Gould's analysis of the "cutification" of Mickey Mouse, to Sianne Ngai's contemporary linking of cuteness and violence – one core concept has remained intact; that is, that cuteness is constructed and that the power of cute lies in the concept's capitalization of the possibility of unveiling, at some point, the dual nature of cuteness – it appears natural, but the naturalness is a sham. The artifice associated with cuteness has also resulted in some ambivalence in using cuteness as a strategy among environmental activists (Genosko 2005, Heise 2014). In the case of interspecies interactions, the sham character of cuteness is linked to human-directed staging of interspecies interactions, which take place largely in captivity. Meanwhile, the emergence of captured footage of non-staged playful interactions between different species of animals seems to

suggest the possibility of what I term “natural cuteness,” which opens up the way for rethinking the strategic uses of cuteness within environmentalist discourse.

**Justyna Włodarczyk** currently heads the Department of North American Cultures and Literatures at the Institute of English Studies, University of Warsaw. In 2018 she published *Genealogy of Obedience: Reading North American Dog Training Literature 1850s-2000s*, in which she examines changing visions of the human-canine relationship in different dog training discourses. She is currently heading a project titled *Figurations of Interspecies Harmony*, which examines different representations of interspecies harmony in North American culture.

- **Margarita Carretero González (Universidad de Granada, Spain)**  
**“Animal Sanctuaries on Social Media: Zoopolitical Narratives of Care and Activism”**

Small microcosms where external legislation temporarily or permanently ceases to be operative, throughout history sanctuaries have provided a safe place for humans seeking protection from persecution. Anthropologist Linda Robben studies the evolution of sanctuary from its origins to the present day, observing an apparent universality in the human species – even if only terminologically exclusive to it - irrespective of the sociopolitical, economic situations in which sanctuary is provided. The altruistic nature of this practice is evident in the fact that sanctuarions have risked and often lost their lives in order to help sanctuary seekers, defying “powerful social, cultural, and political rules and norms [while] [t]hose who abided by the rules thought they were misguided, selfish, crazy, or criminal to act as they did” (Robben 2016, 4), a view that applies also to animal sanctuaries, designed to provide a safe space for animals raised for human use and/or consumption. In societies where so-called “farm animals” are mere commodities, only valuable as long as they can yield economic benefits, animal sanctuaries provide an interesting example of human-animal co-citizenship, one of the several zoopolitical landscapes discussed by Donaldson and Kymlicka (2011).

This paper looks at the Instagram feed of four Spanish animal sanctuaries and explores the techniques used to tell the shared lives of humans and other animals in an environment in which the other-than-human animal is the protagonist, and to appeal viewers to contribute to their ongoing project. Sanctuarions respond to animals’ pleas that are not verbally uttered but eloquently expressed by their physical state or particular living conditions. Rescued or surrendered, the stories of the animals living in sanctuaries are those of individuals who are named, acknowledged and cared for attending to the specific needs of the species they belong to. The humans who devote their lives to caring for those animals that are systematically excluded from any animal rights bill provide a safe, loving space for them to thrive according to their nature, or to die with dignity and the stories they share on social media constitute valuable instances of zoopolitical narratives of care and animal rights activism.

**Margarita Carretero González** is Senior Lecturer in English Literature at the English and German Department of the University of Granada (Spain) and Fellow of the Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics (UK). She coordinates the research group ENLI (Estudios de Narrativa en Lengua Inglesa-HUM-424 Junta de Andalucía) and is also a member of GIECO (Grupo de Investigación en Ecocrítica-Franklin Institute-UAH), CULIVIAN (Culturas Literarias y Visuales del Animal-University of Valencia), Red Iberoamericana de Humanidades Ambientales (University of

Córdoba, Argentina) and Animots. Carnet de Zoopoétique (Centre de Recherches sur les Arts et le Langage – EHESS-CNRS). She has published nationally and internationally on fantasy fiction, narratives by women, animal ethics and cultural representations of other-than-human nature, using the critical lens provided by ecocriticism and ecofeminism. One of her most recent publications is the collection of essays *Spanish Thinking about Animals* (Michigan State University Press, 2020). She was president of the European Association for the Study of Literature, Culture and Environment from 2020 to 2022, and coordinated the 9th Biennial conference of the association in September 2022, held at the University of Granada. She is a member of the advisory board of *Ecozon@. European Journal of Literature, Culture and Environment*, and consultant editor of the *Journal of Animal Ethics*.

## 6. SHOT IN CAPTIVITY: AUDIO- VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF ANIMALS IN SPANISH ZOOS (1892- 2003) [Preorganized panel]

Thursday, Nov. 30, 9.00- 10.30, Sala de Juntas

The three papers of this session will analyse the audio-visual representations of animals in Spanish zoos in three different time frames: around 1900, during the Franco dictatorship and during the “transición” and up until the turn of the millennium. Each paper will ask for the “visual politics” that produce certain kinds of images of animals in captivity and on public view. What kind of narrative of the zoo do these postcards, film clips and other audio-visual media attempt to convey? Is it possible to contrast these highly crafted and ideologically charged visualizations with the “factual animal” in the enclosures of the Barcelona Zoo and other institutions? Were (are) there ways to represent the “authentic” zoo animal?

- **Oliver Hochadel (CSIC, Spain)**  
**“Between Postcards and Cages. The Visual Representations of Animals in the Barcelona Zoo Around 1900”**

This paper focuses on the visualization of the animals in the Barcelona Zoo (founded 1892) in its first decades. It will contrast two kinds of images, “public” and “private” ones. By “public” I refer to the “official” images that were provided by the Zoo itself. “Public” also includes the photos and other images (drawings and caricatures) that appeared in the press. By “private” I refer to the photos taken by individuals with no connection to the zoo that were not meant for publication. In both cases we will ask how the animals are portrayed: in what setting, in what posture and (if discernible) in what state of mind?

In the early twentieth century the Barcelona Zoo commissioned a large number of postcards for sale. Many of these postcards depicted the highly popular elephant “Avi”. Apart from providing a certain income to the chronically underfunded budget of the Zoo these postcards portrayed the zoo as a child-friendly space of leisure and amicable interaction between animals and visitors. Recently, three boxes of unknown photos (over fifty in total) of the Barcelona Zoo from the same period came to light. They were taken by the well-known *modernista* cabinetmaker Gaspar Homar i Mezquida (1870-1953). In a monotonous and nearly documentary style, nearly all of these photos show the animals behind fences and iron bars, conveying a rather grim image of the zoo.

At the time, around 1900, it was not very common yet to denounce the zoo as an “animal prison”. Yet this paper will ask if the “postcard politics” of the Barcelona Zoo already tried to pre-empt such criticism and whether the cage photos such as the ones by Gaspar Homar already pointed to changing sensibilities on the part of the public with respect to the well-being of the animals.

**Oliver Hochadel** is a historian of science and since 2012 a tenured scientist at the Institució Milà i Fontanals in Barcelona for the Research in Humanities (CSIC – Spanish National Research Council). He works on the relationship between science and its publics in historical perspective, from the eighteenth century to the present. Case studies include electricity as a public science in the Enlightenment and the history of human origins research in the twentieth century. Most recently his research focus has been on the history of the zoological garden in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries from a global perspective. He is the PI of the research project “Exotic animals in the city. The history of the Barcelona Zoo in international context” (PID2020-112514GB-C21).

- **Carlos Tabernero (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain)**  
**“Zoos in the NO-DO: Visual Spaces for Natural History in Franco’s Regime”**

Animals have always been prominent protagonists in symbolic systems of all kinds that human beings use to produce explanations of the world, of ourselves, and of our spatiotemporal relationship with the context in which we live. The interventions of animals in human stories reflect at the same time that build the context in which they are produced, as well as their relationship with our ways of understanding, conceptualizing, and relating to what we call nature. These stories do not necessarily have to be in the form of a written text, but can be articulated through the image, always in relation to exhibition regimes that refer to both interspecific and intraspecific interactions. Zoos constitute a particularly explicit and controversial example. These institutions, deeply linked, in the contemporary world, to science, technology and the associated ideas of progress and power in contexts of construction and management of the societies in which we live, are essential constituents of the multilayered mechanisms of generation of visual and experiential sociocultural spaces for natural history in urban contexts.

In this sense, their long, multidimensional relationship with cinema illustrates the characteristics of its construction as spaces for natural history in direct connection with the audience to which the film products are directed. A particularly explicit example is the more or less continuous presence of zoos in the news produced for Franco’s regime exclusive and compulsory newsreel, NO-DO. As we will see, these pieces of news, whose narrative approach, notwithstanding significantly particular characteristics, was not exclusive to the regime, not only tell us about zoos, but also about the construction of a captive and infantilized audience through control narratives that essentially oscillated between the anecdotal and the officially educational.

**Carlos Tabernero**, PhD in Biology and originally a molecular biologist, he is currently an associate professor of history of science at the Institute for the History of Science (iHC) of the Autonomous University of Barcelona. His teaching and research fundamentally focus on the intersections between the history of life sciences, urban history, scientific communication, and

communication and media studies, particularly on urban narratives about nature, especially in relation to cinema and television.

- **Josep Reyné Vergeli (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain)**  
**“Copito de Nieve. Su imagen entre animal colonial y celebridad del Zoo de Barcelona”**

Entre 1958 y 1969 el parque zoológico de Barcelona recibió miles de animales del Centro de Aclimatación y de Experimentación Animal de Ikunde. Esta estación de investigación en (lo que hoy es) Guinea Ecuatorial era propiedad del Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, en la entonces colonia española. Este contexto de dominación colonial permitió el expolio impune de la fauna de la colonia.

El famoso gorila albino Copito de Nieve fue uno de los animales que el zoo obtuvo a través del centro de Ikunde. Jordi Sabater Pi lo envió a Barcelona dónde vivió expuesto hasta su muerte el año 2003. A causa de su albinismo, el joven gorila se hizo muy famoso en todo el mundo y se convirtió en un icono del zoo y de Barcelona. La cultura popular lo acogió con entusiasmo, su historia fue contada en revistas, periódicos, folletos y guías del zoo. Su imagen y su blancura se reprodujeron en toda clase de objetos como por ejemplo sellos, postales, juguetes y tazas. Fue protagonista de campañas publicitarias, de libros infantiles, de una novela, de documentales y de programas de televisión.

Durante los más de treinta años en que Copito fue exhibido se produjeron cambios fundamentales en el contexto político y social del país. Esta comunicación pretende explorar cómo se exhibió Copito a lo largo de estos treinta años y las tensiones entre su imagen y sus representaciones. También cómo se gestionó o no el aura del contexto colonial en el que fue capturado y si ésta suponía un problema o todo lo contrario, si se intentó invisibilizar o no y si tubo impacto en los discursos de los movimientos contra los zoos.

**Josep Reyné Vergeli**, Licenciado en Matemáticas (UAB) y máster en Historia de la Ciencia (UAB-UB). En el trabajo de fin de máster realicé un estudio sobre Copito de Nieve, el famoso gorila albino del parque zoológico de Barcelona, a través de la prensa. En la actualidad estoy cursando el programa de doctorado del Instituto de Historia de la Ciencia de la Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona. Estoy interesado en la historia del parque zoológico de Barcelona y actualmente centro mi investigación en la recuperación de historias nuevas sobre el Centro de Ikunde, una estación de investigación relacionada con el expolio de la colonia española de Guinea desde la que se enviaron miles de animales salvajes al zoológico y entre ellos Copito. Este proyecto se enmarca en los estudios de la historia colonial, la historia de los zoos y la del zoo de Barcelona desde una perspectiva global.

## WORKSHOP

Thursday, Nov. 30, 12.00-13.30, Espai Cultural

- **Patrycja Chuszcz (University of Lodz, Poland), Bianca Friedman (Edge Hill University, UK), Michał Matuszewski (University of Warsaw, Poland), Friederike Zenker (University of Basel, Switzerland)**  
**“Animal Film and Education Across Disciplines: A Collaborative Workshop on Interspecies Learning and Teaching”**

Film can be a powerful tool for academic teaching and learning about human-animal relationships. While the use of film across disciplines has great potential, we must also acknowledge its complexities and challenges. What are adequate theories for analyzing animal films, and how can we become critical of anthropocentrism in our analysis? How can we use film to explore ethical and political questions about nonhuman animals, such as the use of animals in industries? And how do we communicate well across boundaries of disciplines, e. g. when discussing animal film in a philosophy class?

We invite all students and teachers invested in using film to think about nonhuman animals to participate in this workshop. Our aim is to reflect collaboratively on the challenges of film as an educational tool and focus on possible solutions: on existing resources and on visions for academic infrastructures that consider factual nonhuman animals and pathways to a just interspecies society.

In this workshop, we will work in groups to reflect on your experiences with film as a tool for studying and teaching nonhuman animals and work together – across disciplines – to share our knowledge, experience, and resources to come up with productive and creative answers to current challenges. We will ask both abstract questions (e. g. on the ethics of animal film) and practical questions (e. g.: how to create a syllabus that is critical of anthropomorphism?). The result will be a digital documentation of this group work that can inspire all of us in future teaching and learning using animal films.

**Practical info:** please bring your laptop or any other electronic device.

**Patrycja Chuszcz** is a PhD candidate at the Doctoral School of Humanities at the University of Lodz. She is working on a project on the ways of perceiving by viewers film representations of the so-called farm animals. Co-leader of NECS Film Animal Studies workgroup.

**Michał Matuszewski**, PhD candidate at the University of Warsaw where he is preparing a dissertation on Polish nature films from 1945 till 2005. He is a Head of the Essay Film Studio at the Visual Narratives Laboratory (vnLab) at Lodz Film School in Poland. Film curator, festival programmer, researcher, author, film essayist. Co-leader of NECS Film Animal Studies workgroup.

**Dr. Friederike Zenker** is research associate at “eikones – Center for the Theory and History of Images” at the University of Basel. Her first monograph, *Das Tier im Bild*, was published in 2023. She researches and teaches on the philosophy and ethics of human-animal relations.

**Bianca Friedman** is a PhD student and Graduate Teaching Assistant at Edge Hill University. She is developing a project on the representation of horse characters' point of view in live-action films and she is a member of Edge Hill Centre for Human Animal Studies (CfHAS).

## **7. AUDIOVISUAL REPRESENTATIONS OF NONHUMAN ANIMALS IN SPANISH ANIMAL INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX LOBBYING – COMPASS PANEL [Preorganized panel]**

**Thursday, Nov. 30, 15.00-16.30, Salón de Grados**

This panel will examine the proactive public relations strategies used by the Interest Groups (IGs) of the Spanish Animal Industrial Complex to support the exploitation of nonhuman animals. The panelists will bring the results of a critical examination of audiovisual resources created, shared and employed by these IGs, including educational materials, short tales, posters, and promotional videos. The panel's objective is to reveal the common power dynamics and underlying beliefs of these visual representations.

- **Laura Fernández (Universitat de Barcelona, Spain), Núria Almiron (Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain) & Miquel Rodrigo- Alsina (Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain)**  
**“Happy Smiles, Animal Heroes and Scientific Footprints: The Spanish Industry’s Visual Depiction of Nonhuman Animals Used for Experimentation”**

Animal experimentation is a practice that implies inflicting various psychological and physical harms, including death, on nonhuman animals in laboratories. Because of society's increasing social concern and compassionate response towards nonhuman animal suffering, the experimentation community has joined the compassion and care narrative towards nonhuman animals, reinforced with a set of colourful, "happy," and sanitised of violent visual representations.

Within the COMPASS Research Project (Lobbying and Compassion: Interest Groups, Discourse and Nonhuman Animals in Spain), we studied the discourse of the most prominent Spanish lobby defending animal experimentation in Spain: SECAL (the Spanish Society for the Laboratory Animal Science). Our research had an emphasis on how the animal experimentation industry negotiated compassion through strategic communication in public relations. During the critical discourse analysis, we realized that the visuals played a relevant role in shaping the compassion rhetoric. In this paper, we broaden our previous research on discourse by focusing on the visual depictions of nonhuman animals present in SECAL's materials, such as promotional videos and posters, the scientific journal, and the educational materials for children created by this interest group.

Results show that SECAL is manufacturing compassion and accompanying their care narrative on nonhuman animals with a set of idealized, softened, sanitized and caricatured visual representations that scholars J. Keri Cronin and Lisa A. Kramer (2018) have named the "iconography of oppression". These iconographies of oppression favour a symbolic distancing of nonhuman animals' embodied experiences. When the industry directs its message towards the youngest audiences, it uses the strategy of visual Disneyfication and "cutification" (Cole and Steward, 2016). This approach has been argued to be quite effective in promoting

affective feelings in children, parallelly distracting them from engaging with the actual realities of exploitation and suffering of other animals.

#### REFERENCES:

- Cole, Matthew and Kate F. Stewart. 2014. *Our Children and Other Animals. The Cultural Construction of Human-Animal Relations in Childhood*. Ashgate.
- Cronin, J. Keri and Lisa A. Kramer. 2018. "Challenging the Iconography of Oppression in Marketing: Confronting Speciesism through Art and Visual Culture." *Journal of Animal Ethics* 8 (1): 80-92.

**Laura Fernández** is a Juan de la Cierva postdoctoral fellow at Universitat de Barcelona, where she works with the Centre of Research in Information, Communication and Culture (CRICC) within the research lines of gender, inclusion and diversity. Laura's research interests include critical animal studies, strategic visual communication, social movements, fat studies and feminist media studies. She is the author of more than ten academic publications and the book *Hacia mundos más animales*, published by Ochodocuatro (Madrid, 2018) and Madreselva (Buenos Aires, 2019). She is a board member of the UPF-Centre for Animal Ethics and a team member of the research project COMPASS (Lobbying and Compassion: Interest Groups, Discourse and Nonhuman Animals in Spain).

**Núria Almiron** is co-director of the UPF-Centre for Animal Ethics and a tenured professor in the Department of Communication at Pompeu Fabra University (UPF). Her main areas of research include and combine the ethics and political economy of communication – particularly interest groups and persuasive communication – with critical animal studies, climate change, animal advocacy and interspecies ethics. Her work has been published in high-quality academic journals, and she is the author and editor of several books in various languages. She has been a visiting researcher at various universities, such as the University of Amsterdam, Université Paris 8, London School of Economics and Political Science, Lund University and Simon Fraser University. She is currently the coordinator of the research project COMPASS (Lobbying and Compassion: Interest Groups, Discourse and Nonhuman Animals in Spain).

**Miquel Rodrigo-Alsina** is Full Professor of Communication Theories at Universitat Pompeu Fabra. He has taught at a number of Spanish and foreign universities. He has been a Researcher at the University of Indiana, Saint Louis University, Université René Descartes, Paris V and the University of Westminster. He has published over 160 papers in books and professional journals in Catalonia, Spain and abroad. He is a member of the research project COMPASS (Lobbying and Compassion: Interest Groups, Discourse and Nonhuman Animals in Spain).

- **Olatz Aranceta-Reboredo (Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain)**  
**“Beyond the Spectacle: Exploring Audiovisual Representations of Other-than-Human Animals in the Lobbying of the Animal-Based Entertainment Industry”**

The representation of real other-than-human animals in the Animal Based Entertainment Industry (ABEI) encompasses various captive and exhibition settings, including moving and fixed spaces. The spectacle is a defining feature of this industry, manifested through “performances” and other modes of display. However, the range of spaces and representations extends beyond these. Currently, the influence of strategic communication of the ABEI on public compassion towards animal use remains underexplored. This research addresses this gap by critically examining the multimodal discourse employed by the prominent interest groups within the Spanish ABEI.

Among the multimodal discourse disseminated by these IGs, a significant focus is placed on stories, videos, and educational materials for children that feature depictions of other animals. Three main modes emerge from the analysis: (i) Animals as animals, presenting taxonomic information and objective behavior; (ii) Anthropomorphized animals, in a cartoon-like manner with voiced interests -mostly aligned with industry narratives; and (iii) Animals for animals, depicted as “iconic”, “ambassadors” and “symbols of pristine nature” (Desmond, 1999). The findings reveal that the IGs employ specific audiovisual content that might leverage the public's compassion, masking and justifying the exploitation of nonhuman animals under the guise of care and animal welfare. Nonhuman animals are commodified and instrumentalized within contexts of education and entertainment purposes, which normalizes the spectacle of confinement and domination by presenting it as necessary for learning about animals, reinforcing our social dependence on confinement and domination for education rather than challenging it (Montford, 2016).

This research contributes to our understanding of the ethics and aesthetics surrounding the representation of real other-than-human animals in nature and captivity within the ABEI. It highlights the importance of critically examining the messages conveyed through multimodal discourses, including how these compassion might mobilize and employ compassion.

#### REFERENCES:

- Desmond, Jane C. 1999. *Staging Toursim: Bodies on Display from Waikiki to Sea World*. The U of Chicago P.
- Montford, Kelly Struthers. 2016. “Dehumanized Denizens, Displayed Animals: Prison Toursim and the Discourse of the Zoo.” *philoSOPHIA* 6 (1): 73-91.

**Olatz Aranceta-Reboredo** is a PhD researcher in the Department of Communication at Universitat Pompeu Fabra (UPF), a member of the CRITICC Communication research group in the same university and UPF-Centre for Animal Ethics board member. Their areas of research include critical animal studies, interspecies ethics, interest groups and the representation of animals in media. They graduated in English Studies from the University of the Basque Country and hold an MA in Media, Power and Difference from the Universitat Pompeu Fabra. Olatz is the project manager of the COMPASS research project (PID2020-118926RB-I00), and they are conducting their PhD research titled “COMPASSION IN (S)PAIN: How Interest Groups’ Discourse Contributes to the Perpetuation of Animal Captivity and Exhibition” within this project and under the supervision of Dr Núria Almiron.

- **Estela Díaz Carmona (Universidad Pontificia Comillas Spain), Antonio Núñez Partido (Universidad Pontificia Comillas) & Amparo Merino de Diego (Universidad Pontificia Comillas)**  
**“Unveiling Visual Discourse on Non-human Animals in the Food Sector: A Content Analysis of Spanish Lobbies”**

Food is a significant factor in shaping cultures and identities, influencing our connection with the natural world and non-human animals (NHA, hereafter). In the last decades, the NHA-based food system has faced increasing scrutiny from civil society, public policy, and various stakeholders along the food value chain. Environmental impacts have become key concerns, including global warming emissions, deforestation, habitat loss, water pollution, waste, land inefficiency, soil erosion, and biodiversity loss (FAO, 2006; Morris et al., 2021). More importantly, ethical concerns regarding the treatment of NHA and the questioning of human rights to exploit them are also on the rise, driven by the recognition of their sentience and victimization within the current socio-economic order (Joy, 2020; Ruby, 2012).

In this context, organized corporate interests, such as interest groups, have exerted influence over decision-making, media, and public opinion through their discourse (Oreskes and Conway, 2010; McGann, 2016). However, research on visual representations of NHA by these interest groups remains limited in the literature. However, our understanding and perception of food and NHA are socially constructed through various discourses, including visual discourse. It is crucial to acknowledge that language reflects reality and shapes it, contributing to ideologies, social structures, and power relationships (Foucault, 1998).

To address this research gap, our proposal aims to investigate the role of Spanish interest groups in shaping discourses concerning NHA impacted by human interference. Adopting a qualitative approach, we will conduct a content analysis of the images used by five major Spanish interprofessional groups recognized by the Spanish Ministry as key representatives of the food industry in Spain (Avianza, Interporc, Interpalm, Provacuno, Intercun). This examination seeks to enhance our understanding of the influence of lobbies and strategic communication in contemporary societies regarding NHA. Additionally, it holds the potential to shed light on the impact of human action or inaction on critical issues, fostering a more compassionate approach towards NHA.

**Estela Díaz-Carmona** is a lecturer and researcher at Universidad Pontificia Comillas, activist for human and animal rights, NGO advisor, and humane educator. Estela holds a PhD in Economics and Business Administration (Universidad Pontificia Comillas), a master’s in Sustainability and CSR (UNED and UJI), a master’s in research in Economics and Business Administration (Universidad Pontificia Comillas), and a degree in Law (University of Granada). Her principal area of research focuses on Critical Animal Studies, ethical and transformative consumption, gender, sustainable transitions, theories of power, and education. She has presented papers at conferences and seminars, as well as published in high-impact journals, such as *Human Ecology Review*, *Psychology & Marketing*, *Macromarketing*, *Sustainability*, *Anthrozoös*, and *Society & Animals*.

**Antonio Núñez Partido**, PhD, is lecturer and researcher at Universidad Pontificia Comillas Business and Economics). Psychologist with a background in vulnerability and corporate

human resources. Profile: psychology, vulnerability, human resources, emotions. As well as published in high-impact journals.

**Amparo Merino de Diego**, PhD, is currently a researcher and professor in the Department of Business Management at the Universidad Pontificia Comillas (Madrid), where she teaches undergraduate and postgraduate courses related to Strategic Management, Social Entrepreneurship and Business and Sustainability. She also teaches Qualitative Research Methods to doctoral candidates. She is a member of the academic committee of the doctoral program at the Faculty of Business Sciences of the Universidad Pontificia Comillas. Her research career is part of the multidisciplinary research field of Sustainability Transitions. Her main focuses of interest are diverse economies and social enterprise, associations between sustainable behavior, the interconnection with nature and the sacred; and education for sustainability. She has participated in several funded research projects (national and international) on these topics and has published scientific articles in high-impact journals. She also supervises PhD students and participates in conferences related to sustainability transitions.

## 8. VISUAL CULTURE

Thursday, Nov. 30, 15.00-16.30, Sala de Juntas

- **Mylène Ferrand (Observatory for Research on Animal Condition; National Centre for Scientific Research)**  
**“Challenging Animal Representations through Contemporary Art: How Real Animals Reshape the Human Gaze and Are World-Building”**

The aim of this communication is to show and explore how some of the most cutting-edge contemporary artists are opening up new possibilities for animal-human relationships. Within these interspecific practices, the other animal is a subject *in* and *for* itself, a familiar figure with whom emotional relationships are maintained. Rachel Rosenthal (1926-2015) collaborated on many occasions with *real* living animals, usually her companion animals (cats, dogs). She is best known for her work with the rat Tatti Wattles (1980-1982). Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook (1957) founded a sanctuary for dogs in Thailand. With and starting from them, she has created a dreamlike artistic universe. Also working with dogs, Julie Andreyev (1962) has been developing what she describes as a “post-anthropocentric” artistic practice, based on her personal life experience and the relationships of mutual trust and emotional closeness that she grows with her two canine companions, social animal-persons, gently integrated into human society. Andreas Greiner (1979) offers a variety of works and some moving portraits based on Heinrich (2015-2016), a broiler chicken from a factory farm in Berlin. Then, I would like to introduce the brilliant cinema of Eija-Liisa Ahtila (1959) where non-humans occupy a central place in her images and posthumanist style of filming. Last but not least, Sheida Soleimani (1990) is an artist and an animal rehabilitator. How is her creative practice fuelled by her other activities and vice versa? The same could be asked of the artists and vegan activists Isabella & Tiziana Pers (1963/1976). The sisters run a sanctuary for rescued

animals which they open once a year to an artist-in-residence, invited to think directly *on* and *with factual* animals.

**Dr. Mylène Ferrand** is an art historian and art critic. She worked for the French Ministry of Culture, the Palais de Tokyo in Paris and was director of the contemporary art gallery Galleria Continua, San Gimignano/Beijing/Les Moulins/Habana/Roma/Sao Paulo/Paris/Dubai. She is now conducting research on other animals and creative ecologies. She is a Doctor in Arts (history, theory, practice) and associate researcher at the University of Bordeaux Montaigne (MICA), in France. Her thesis subject is titled “The Animal Turn in Contemporary Art (from 1960 to today), an Ecofeminist Approach” (PhD defense December 2022). In this research, she developed what she calls an “aesthetics or art of care”. She is a member of ORCA (Observatory for Research on Animal Condition), a CNRS (French National Centre for Scientific Research) prospective network.

- **Pauw Vos (Utrecht University, Netherlands)**  
**“The Avian Photography of Jean Mylayne”**

The photographic work and practice of Jean-Luc Mylayne (1964) are characterized by a prolonged and contemplative interest in the relationship between humans, birds, and photography. Preparing for a photograph takes days, months, even years, and during this time Mylayne becomes intimately familiar with the landscape, observes the birds that are present and allows them to get used to his presence. This reciprocal accustomization is one of the prerequisites for a photograph and is at the basis of all his images. From this trust, Mylayne builds his scenes; an assemblage that considers the unavailability and autonomy of a moving creature.

In order to better situate Mylayne’s photography, it is important to realize that a large part of the contemporary images of animals has been subsumed within the genre of wildlife photography. Our understanding of animal imagery is shaped by the rhetoric of this genre, which is based on a strict separation of humans and animals that positions animals firmly and solely in the realm of nature. It is based on the belief that photography can provide us access to, or make visible, an otherwise inaccessible or invisible reality. Michael Brower has pointed out that animal photographs that go against the medium’s preference for visibility are particularly well suited to reveal “the extent to which that bias constrains animal photography” (*Developing Animals*, 136). Mylayne’s bird photos are unusual then, not only because of the invested process that surrounds their taking, but also because they tend towards an imperceptibility of their subjects and an unreadability of the images themselves.

Mylayne remains acutely attentive to the mutual regard birds and humans can have for each other, and of the birds’ contribution to the eventual meanings of the photograph, and I will argue that his photos open up the question of animal visibility and the relation of animals to photography. In doing so, his photos ultimately realize a different, less anthropocentric, way of looking and knowing that is enabled through the transformative potential of a mediated encounter.

**Pauw Vos** holds a research MA degree in Comparative Literary Studies from Utrecht University, a BA in English Language and Culture, and a BA in Photography. His research interests focus on human-animal relationships in the frayed edges and liminal spaces created by specific cultural

expressions, such as literature and photography. Besides being a founding editor of the student-run magazine *Paratext*, he is also a copyeditor of the journal *Humanimalia*.

- **María Teresa Lajoinie Domínguez (Universitat de València, Spain)**  
**“Templo du présent – Solo pour Octopus”**

El presente trabajo se propone abordar el estudio de los mecanismos a los que las artes escénicas contemporáneas recurren para la puesta en escena de animales no-humanos reales sobre las tablas, así como sus repercusiones éticas y estéticas. Para ello nos centraremos en la performance *Temple du présent – Solo pour octopus*, creada en el Teatro de Vidy-Lausanne en enero de 2021 por Stefan Kaegi (compañía Rimini Protokoll) en colaboración con Judith Zagury y Nathalie Küttel (ShanjuLab). En un primer momento analizaremos cómo el animal no-humano es presentado en calidad de co-creador del espectáculo. En un segundo tiempo, atenderemos a la noción de juego como metodología de trabajo y composición de secuencias teatrales en las creaciones interespecies. Por último, trataremos las vías de comunicación entre especies surgidas en el marco de la performance y que invitan a ampliar, incluso a reconsiderar, la definición tradicional de lenguaje. Derivado de todo lo anterior, concluiremos proponiendo al espacio teatral como zona de contacto.

**María Teresa Lajoinie Domínguez** holds a degree in French Philology and a Master's degree in Research in Languages and Literatures from the Universitat de València, Spain. She received her PhD in 2019 after defending her dissertation, “Zootextualité et zooscénographie: l'animal dans le théâtre de boulevard au XIXe siècle (1800-1862)”. She is currently Assistant Professor at the Department of French and Italian Philology at the same university. She has taught in the degrees in Modern Languages (major in French) and Translation and Interlinguistic Mediation. She has participated in national and international conferences and is the author of works published in national and international journals and leading international publishers. Her main research interests are animal studies and theatre studies.

## 9. EMPATHY

Friday, Dec. 1, 9.30-11.00, Salón de Grados

- **Patrycja Chuszcz (University of Lodz, Poland)**  
**“Empathy and Other-than-Human Facial Expressions in Film”**

The purpose of my presentation is to explore how viewers perceive and interpret other-than-human facial expressions in films, and whether this perception translates into empathy towards animal characters in movies. In my paper, I will present partial results from focus group interviews conducted for my PhD project on the reception of film representations of so-called farm animals.

Since the discovery of the mirror neuron system, we have learned about the connection between visual information and motor skills, enabling us to predict the intentions and understand the consequences of other human beings' actions (Gallese&Goldman, 1998). This

phenomenon is known as embodied simulation, which plays a role in recognizing emotions on others' faces and their affective reactions (Young, Khalil, Wharton, 2018). It is related to affective empathy/embodied empathy, experienced both in everyday life and in relation to film characters (Parkinson, 2018; Tobón, 2019; Ostaszewski, 2022). By tracking facial reactions, this type of empathy allows us to empathize with the character in a pre-reflective manner. I aim to examine whether mirror neurons react similarly when perceiving emotions in animal cinematic characters.

A pilot study I conducted shows that nonhuman facial expressions sometimes resemble those of humans, and it is primarily on this basis that viewers recognize emotions in animal characters. However, in many cases, viewers are unable to do so based solely on the film frame. In my presentation, I will discuss how narrative and stylistic cues influence the audience's ability to understand facial expressions of animal characters in films. Based on diversified footage of films (fiction, experimental, documentary), specially selected frames and the Kuleshov Effect test, factors such as framing, editing, context, plot, and dramatic structure will be examined. Finally, I will consider how viewers' reactions to non-human facial expressions in film contribute to empathy and the perception of real other-than-human animals.

**Patrycja Chuszcz** is a PhD candidate at the Doctoral School of Humanities at the University of Lodz. She is working on a project on the ways of perceiving by viewers film representations of the so-called farm animals. She published, inter alia, in *Zoophilologica. Polish Journal of Animal Studies* and *Images*. Co-leader of NECS Film Animal Studies workgroup.

- **Friederike Zenker (University of Basel, Switzerland)**  
**"Schools of Seeing: The Audiovisual in Animal-Assisted Education"**

How do we develop an understanding of ourselves as moral agents in relation to nonhuman animals? While it is argued that the improvement of human-animal relationships necessitates education and the refinement of our perceptual capacities (e. g. Gruen 2015), there is still a notable absence of an ethical framework for animal-assisted education (AAE) that integrates perception. This paper explores one aspect of moral perception in educational encounters: the role of the audiovisual for acknowledging nonhuman animals as irreplaceable individuals. Some animal ethicists argue that our focus should extend beyond the mere articulation of ethical principles: to ameliorate our relationships with animals, we must refine our capacity to *see* them more adequately, *listen* more attentively, and, fundamentally, cultivate our moral perception. (Panizza 2022a & 2022b, Gruen 2014 & 2015, Diamond 2003 & 1978) How can this aspiration be actualized within educational practices involving nonhuman animals? This paper introduces the notion of *animal singularity* (Zenker 2023) as a starting point for establishing an ethical framework for AAE. By delineating four essential criteria that characterize animal singularity, the intention is to elucidate the interconnectedness of AAE ethics and audiovisual perception.

This analysis is exemplified by an exploration of equine rewilding: To perceive equines involved in rewilding programs *as* singular animals, it becomes imperative to perceive them as distinct, transcending their mere taxonomic or functional representation (IRREPLACEABILITY). Furthermore, the refinement of our direct perceptual acumen concerning their emotional and cognitive lives becomes significant. (SUBJECTIVITY) This, in

turn, facilitates the cultivation of empathetic connections with these animals, thus engendering judgements and behavior that are in consonance with caring human-animal relationships (CONTEXTUALIZATION & RELATIONALITY).

**Dr. Friederike Zenker** is research associate at “eikones – Center for the Theory and History of Images” at the University of Basel. Her first monograph, *Das Tier im Bild*, was published in 2023. She researches and teaches on animal ethics, image theory and animal media studies. Friederike completed a doctorate in philosophy and film studies in 2020. During her doctorate, she was a stipendiary at eikones, visiting scholar at the UPF Center for Animal Ethics in Barcelona, and lecturer at the Department of Philosophy in Basel.

- **Branislava Vičar (University of Maribor, Slovenia)**  
**“Representation of Subjectivity in the Artivist Film *Green*”**

The paper deals with the representation of the dying orangutan in the artistic film *Green* (2011) by the Swedish-French director Patrick Rouxel. Green is the name of an orangutan who finds herself lonely in a world that does not belong to her, as her world has been destroyed by the brutality of corporate capitalist production. The film investigates the effects of deforestation in Indonesia due to oil palm plantations and in doing so exposes the dying orangutan as a central character. The paper explores the possibilities that the film opens up for the positive social and political change, and discovers the film's potential for non-anthropocentric critique of corporate capitalism. Using the theoretical and methodological tools of film semiotics and multimodal critical discourse analysis, the author focuses on establishing the subjectivity of the dying orangutan as a possibility for the transformation of human-animal relations. Through analysis of the typical structural elements of the film, the paper explores: 1) how the orangutan's subjectivity is established in the film, and 2) how the representation of the orangutan's death and her habitat transformation is positioned in the context of capitalist expansion and the global ecological crisis. Artistic film representation establishes the individuality of animals: ecological transformations as a consequence of neo-colonial plantations are presented as a threat to the life of each individual animal. However, the death of the orangutan caused by the destruction of her habitat, and that of other species, is not portrayed as an individual but as a global problem. It references the capitalist economic system and corporate globalization driven by western financial institutions, supported by the consumerist culture of global capitalism.

**Branislava Vičar** (she) is a linguist at the Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor, Slovenia. Her research interests include Critical Discourse Analysis, Critical Animal Studies, Sociolinguistics, Queer Linguistics, and Multimodality. Her recent publications include papers on trans-gender inclusive language, the semiotics of nationalism and racism in linguistic landscapes, reflections of anthropocentrism, conceptualisations of animal subjectivities, and intersections between nationalism and speciesism in the ways in which animals are incorporated into the imagery of national symbolism. In 2020, Vičar edited the monograph *Pojmovanje živalskih smrti: antropocentrizem in (ne)možne subjektivitete (Conceptualisations of Animal Deaths: Anthropocentrism and (Im)possible Subjectivities [Annales ZRS])* which presents different conceptualisations of animal deaths and their role in reflecting, reinforcing, or fostering anthropocentrism and speciesism. Vičar is associate professor of Slovene language and head of Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor.

She is also an animal rights activist and vice-president of Slovenian association Zaživali! (ForAnimals!).

## 10. LOOKING AT (II)

Friday, Dec. 1, 9.30-11.00, Sala de Juntas

- **Sofía Duarte (Universitat de València, Spain)**  
**“An Analysis of Nonhuman Animals in Natural History Museums – A Place of Domination and Deceit”**

In the groundbreaking book *Picturing the Beast: Animals, Identity, and Representation* (1993), Steve Baker contemplates how civilization has been built upon “a disregard for animals – a denial of their pain, a refusal to countenance it”, rendering them invisible (2001, 217). The process of invisibility that nonhuman animals endure can practically be found in all types of visual representation. Possibly one of the oldest places in which nonhuman animals have been framed and have generated great interest within society is that of natural history museums. This type of museum grants spectators the possibility of being face to face with nonhuman animals from all over the world and contemplating them for as long and as close as they wish, sometimes even touching them. However, what most visitors seem to disregard when they encounter these nonhuman animals is how they came to be in front of them: dead and taken from their original habitats. This paper will focus on how nonhuman animals are framed in the natural history museums of Liverpool, Dublin, and Valencia. Placing the focal point on mammals, it will analyse and compare how aspects such as their gender and origin condition whether and where they are displayed, underlining the dominant presence of the androcentric and colonial gaze. It will also reflect on these nonhuman animal’s individuality as it is erased and turned into an absent referent once it becomes part of the museum, being just another figure that is put on display for human pleasure. As Asma comments, the individuality of these beings appears to be “subjugated to the needs of scientific pedagogy” (2003, 3). Moreover, it will study how humans interact with the nonhuman animals that are displayed taking into consideration whether there is empathy and respect towards the stuffed corpses of these animals and how senses such as sight and touch play a fundamental role in their interactions.

**Sofía Duarte** is a PhD candidate in the Doctoral Programme in Language, Literature and Culture, and its Applications at the University of Valencia, Spain. Her research revolves around the interdisciplinary field of Animal Studies, a critical framework that in her PhD thesis she is applying for the interpretation of Margaret Atwood’s works and the presence of nonhuman animals in them. Accordingly, in order to grasp a better understanding of the works being studied, Speculative and Dystopian Fiction as well as Posthumanism, Ecofeminism and Canadian Studies are part of her research interests. Furthermore, having worked on the portrayal of animals in the *X-Men* in her Master’s thesis and analysing the graphic novels published by Margaret Atwood, Comic Studies is also an important part of her research line. She is part of the research group named Literary and Visual Cultures of the Animal (CULIVIAN).

- **Hannele “Lumi” Kauppinen (Tampere University, Finland)**  
**“Finnish News Media’s Ambivalent Discourse on Nonhuman Animals Used for Food and Openings for Alternative Representation”**

This critical analysis (Hall 1996) examines the representations of nonhuman animals used for food (NUF) in Finnish news articles published from 2018 to 2022. The study analyses how the news represents the interests of NUF and considers the need for non-anthropocentric discourses. The analysis is informed by a non-speciesist ethic and follows the suggestion that the ethics of journalism should include nonhuman animals (NHA) (Freeman, Bekoof & Bexell 2011).

Firstly, the preliminary findings correlate with previous studies which have concluded that news media construct NUFs primarily as bodies rather than sentient beings (Freeman 2009; Khazaal & Almiron 2016). Secondly, while some counter-discourses include the perspectives of NUF, the representations fail to challenge the status quo and reveal strong ambivalence in human-animal relationships. Thirdly, the findings show signs of culturally nuanced features and openings for representation that are less human-centred.

The study contributes to the literature on media representations of NHA within the field of critical animal and media studies. Furthermore, it calls upon media professionals to acknowledge their responsibility in addressing the conflicting issue of NUF and producing more balanced news content by incorporating NUF’s voices into stories.

**Lumi Kauppinen** is an activist and a photographer with decades of experience in the field of animal advocacy. She is passionate about creating a more compassionate world by harnessing the power of visual narratives. Lumi holds an MA in visual journalism as well as a BA in film. Presently, she is pursuing her doctoral degree at the Communication Sciences Unit in Tampere University. Her research focuses on exploring non-anthropocentric forms of visual representation of nonhuman animals and furthering the ethical practices of journalism. Lumi is an active member of CAS Network in Finland and currently serves as the president of the Finnish animal rights organisation Oikeutta eläimille.

- **Daniel López-Fernández (Universitat de València, Spain)**  
**“‘Something’s gone wrong’: la taxidermia en el arte contemporáneo”**

Angela Singer, Thomas Grünfeld, el grupo “Idiots”, Emily Mayer o Chlöe Brown son algunos de los artistas contemporáneos que emplean la taxidermia para generar nuevos discursos y prácticas acerca de la cuestión animal. Si la ironía constitutiva de la práctica tradicional de la taxidermia radica en la manipulación de la materia del animal muerto para crear una impresión de vida y de vivacidad, las obras de taxidermia creadas por estos artistas pueden ser catalogadas bajo lo que Steve Baker, en su libro *The Postmodern Animal*, denominó “botched taxidermy”, una práctica artística de la taxidermia “where things appear to have gone wrong with the animal”.

Las piezas taxidérmicas “estropeadas” o “chapuceras” de estos artistas plantean una nueva reflexión sobre el uso ético de la materia animal. Angela Singer, por ejemplo, concibe sus obras como lugares conmemorativos en los que honrar la vida perdida del animal; Singer recicla trofeos de caza que luego reconfigura para mostrar de forma abrupta las heridas de bala, las cicatrices o las heridas que la pieza original debía ocultar para satisfacer una práctica que

requiere la muerte animal para luego invisibilizarla. Por su parte la serie *Misfits*, de Thomas Grünfeld, consiste en híbridos imaginarios y esperpénticos de animales que conducen al espectador a una reflexión no solo sobre la voluntad humana de experimentar genéticamente con animales, sino también sobre la naturaleza del arte y de los objetos artísticos en general. Singer, Grünfeld y otros artistas contemporáneos subvierten la narrativa original de la taxidermia para mandar un mensaje acerca de la relación destructiva de los humanos con lo no-humano, sin por ello pasar por alto la paradoja inherente a la hora de tratar bruscamente la materia animal para comentar nuestro trato violento hacia los animales.

**Daniel López Fernández** es doctorando en el programa “Lenguas, Literaturas, Culturas y sus Aplicaciones” de la Universidad de Valencia, donde trabaja desde 2022 como Personal Investigador en Formación. Forma parte del grupo de investigación RIALE (Relaciones Interculturales Alemania-España) de la misma universidad. En 2021 recibió el Premio Extraordinario de Máster por su trabajo sobre las prácticas biopolíticas del nacionalsocialismo reflejadas en la novela de *El tambor de hojalata* Günter Grass. Su tesis doctoral versa sobre la representación de la transición del fordismo al postfordismo en la literatura de lengua alemana reciente. En su tarea combina la investigación en literatura alemana contemporánea con su interés por los campos de la ecocrítica y los estudios del animal, donde ha desarrollado reflexiones en torno a la materialidad del arte y su relación con la cuestión animal.

## 11. DOCUMENTARY (II)

Friday, Dec. 1, 11.15-12.15, Salón de Grados

- **Irene Rihuete-Varea (Brown University, USA)**  
**“Empathy, Interobjectivity and Ethnography in Maddi Barber’s *Gorria*”**

For the German philosopher Edith Stein, empathy “is a form of intuition to be separated from mental states we can doubt, such as perception or fantasy” (Aaltola, 81). Empathy is a prereflexive and corporal affect, since it arises from “an awareness of how bodies very different from each other still encompass key points of affinity, such as sentience and life” (Aaltola, 82). Cinema is an affective-sensorial apparatus that engages us as corporal beings, and that can be phenomenologically understood as a crucial locus for ethics and for the fostering of empathy and awareness. In this presentation, I explore the question of the representation of animal suffering through *Gorria* (2020), a short film by the Spanish filmmaker Maddi Barber. *Gorria* portrays the process of extensive sheep farming in the Valle de Arce (Navarra), and it presents us with a crude and observational perspective of the feeding, shearing and killing of animals in a local farm. I argue that the absence of voiceover and dialogue provokes an empathetic relation to the suffering of the sheeps, since it fosters a sensorial identification that precedes conceptual forms of ethics. In addition, the film presents an ethnographical approach to its subjects that is rooted in closeness and intimacy. Through a comparison of Barber’s approach to the killing of sheeps with photographer Graciela Iturbide’s work on goat slaughters in Oaxaca, I investigate the ways in which an aesthetics of proximity might help us come up with an ethical way to represent the suffering of the nonhuman other.

**Irene Rihuete-Varea** is a fourth year graduate student at Brown University, in the departments of Hispanic Studies and Modern Culture and Media. Her interests include Latin American and Spanish experimental nonfiction cinema, ecocriticism and the philosophy of technology.

- **Navaneetha Suresh (BITS Pinali, India)**  
**“Re-searching the Elephants: Finding the Real Other-than-Human Animal in the Documentary *The Elephant Whisperers*”**

*The Elephant Whisperers*, selected as the best short film documentary at the 93rd Academy awards, portrays the affectionate relationship of 2 orphaned elephants and their caretaker couple, Bellie and Bomman, who belong to the Kattunayakan tribe. Set in the Theppakadu Elephant camp of Tamil Nadu in India, the documentary surely pictures different ways in which the forest, its animals and its people co-exist. Though the documentary is successful in bringing to light the symbiotic relationship shared by the tribals and the forest, it compromises on the animal gaze and the ways they are looked upon. The documentary falls into the trap of anthropomorphism, even when not explicitly advocating or addressing it. Through this research paper, I would argue that by accentuating the relationship between the caregivers and the pachyderms, the film reduces the latter to human-like entities. This hypothesis would help me explore and establish that by contributing human-like characteristics to animals, we reduce their real agency to human characters instead of recognising them as other-than-human animals. This act of anthropomorphizing does not empower animals but rather sabotage their real self and undermine them into individuals we fail to fathom. The study would include content analysis to examine the human attributes proffered to the elephants in the documentary which hinders the ways of finding the real-other-than-human-animal behind the markers – Raghu and Ammu.

**Navaneetha Suresh** is a full-time PhD Scholar at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, BITS PILANI, GOA CAMPUS. Having pursued her post-graduate degree in English Literature and Language from Pondicherry Central University, she cleared UGC-NET JRF, GATE exams on the same. Her current research interests are Animal studies, Ecocriticism and Game studies. She has contributed as a translator to the book, *Ecocriticism in Malayalam* (2022). The translated chapter is titled “Soundaryapooja: An Aesthetic Interpretation”. She was selected as the Best Paper Presenter for the paper entitled “Re-imagining the Bacon on my Plate: Analyzing Sustainable Meat Production and Consumption through the Movie *Okja*”, National Conference RICERCA 2022. She co-authored a research paper titled, “Neither In, nor Out: Finding the Entangled Space Between Akam and Puram in the Feature Film *Akatho Puratho*” which was published in *Gnosis, An International Journal of English Language and Literature*.

## 12. SENSES

Friday, Dec. 1, 11.15-12.15, Sala de Juntas

- **Camellia Biswas (IIT Gandhinagar, India)**  
**“Sensing the Wild: Exploring Socio-Cultural and Ecological Dynamics of Wild Animals in Sundarban”**

This paper explores the socio-ecological and cultural relatedness through phenomenological and sensorial experiences between the marginalised communities in Sundarban and wild animals. The paper focuses on three animals: tigers, snakes, and wild boars, each occupying distinct positions and engendering hierarchies within themselves and the human world, thereby influencing the notion of sharing space.

We use an embodied sensory representation approach that includes sight, hearing, taste, and touch. In addition, we draw upon extensive ethnographic evidence that includes phenomenological representations of real and factual animals. For example, the sounds produced by a tiger, known locally as *daak*, have multiple meanings. A long roar, for example, indicates territorial marking and serves as a dialogue with other tigers, whereas many brief roars may signal agitation or the loss of prey. The flavour of wild boar meat is often regarded as exceptional when its source is not disclosed. However, once the animal's name is mentioned, people's psychological reactions shift, associating the taste with notions of filth and dirt instead of superiority. Animal relationalities are not only passed down orally through generations but are also enacted in rural folk theatre (*Jatra*), which serves as a means of knowledge dissemination entwined with religious epiphanies of folk deities such as *Manasa* (the Serpent Goddess) and *Bonbibi* (the Forest Goddess) influencing the local customary practices induced with fear and reverence. Likewise, within these folk theatres, actors adorned with masks and makeup imitating tigers or snakes embody a shape-shifting concept where humans transform into animals and vice versa, blurring the distinction between human and animal.

The paper concludes by bridging how localised animal representations contribute to the socio-cultural and ecological fabric of the region. Phenomenology helps us understand how people personally experience and are affected by these portrayals, while sensoriality reveals the cultural and sensory aspects of how animals are shown in a real and factual way in the community. This multifaceted approach reveals the intricate tapestry of beliefs, attitudes, and practices that shape the localized experiences of cohabitation/coexistence with wild animals in the Sundarban.

**Camellia Biswas** is a final year doctoral candidate in the Humanities & Social Sciences department at IIT Gandhinagar in Gujarat, India. With a focus on environmental anthropology, Camellia's research interests lie in the field of human-more than human/multispecies studies, political and cultural ecology, caste and climate disaster relationships, and digital humanities. Camellia has been the 2023 Earth Scholar fellow funded by SGSAH and British Council Scotland working at UHI, Scotland. Her PhD fieldwork was funded by the Inlaks-RS conservation grant in 2021-22 and has also been selected as one of the 100 women from the world for the Women Leadership programme in 2022 by the British Council. She has published in several reviewed journal articles in popular media and has presented her research at numerous conferences, seminars and workshops across the globe.

- **Ina Karkani (Freie Universität Berlin, Germany)**  
**“What Do We Hear When We Hear with Animals: ‘Listening Positionalities’ in *Stray* (2020) and *Gunda* (2021)”**

By investing in a sound design that includes nonhumans within our experience of the world, a group of recent animal cinema asks questions around the ontological and epistemological stakes of what animal experience and, particularly, what listening is. They raise the following questions: *What* but also how do we hear when we hear with animals? what do we feel and think as we listen to nonhuman creatures? The documentaries *Stray* (Elizabeth Lo, 2020) and *Gunda* (Victor Kossakovsky, 2021), for example, present us with alternative perceptions and relationships to the living world marked through spontaneity, liveliness, as well as non-anthropocentric and ontologically non-hierarchic aesthetics. They explore how the various aspects of film sound, be it diegetic sound, ambient sound or, a film’s composed soundtrack, draw connections between human and nonhuman subjects. By bringing into dialogue recent animal documentary with Dylan Robinson’s indigenous theory of perception on *listening positionalities*, this paper is interested in coming up with a vocabulary for describing a creaturely film experience from the perspective of the viewer. Taking into consideration the affective language that is employed to appeal to the emotions of the audience, it aims at working out metaphors that can describe relations of different axes of subjectivity, human and nonhuman, and different modes of textuality. Leading questions can be summed up as follows: What is the subject’s acoustic presence and how does sound reconfigure cinematic time and space and the boundaries between human and nonhuman bodies? More specifically, by addressing recent studies on nonhuman perception within the so called “animal turn,” how can film aesthetics and particularly sound negotiate ontological boundaries?

**Ina Karkani** is a cinema scholar and scientific researcher at the interdisciplinary institute “Normativity, Critique, Change” at Freie Universität Berlin, Germany. Her participating PhD project “Ontological Drifting in Contemporary Animal Cinema” addresses ontological normativities by focusing on the aesthetics of representation and reception in recent animal cinema. She also works as a film curator and writer at Berlin International Film Festival.

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Culturas Literarias y Visuales del Animal