

# UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

**The Society for Artistic Research  
Spring Event  
April 30–May 1, 2015**

**Chelsea College of Arts/  
University of the Arts London**

The SAR 2015 spring event brings some **Unconditional Love** via artistic research to London at the University of the Arts London. The SAR General Assembly will be held on 2nd May at Double Tree Westminster Hotel, 30 John Islip Street, London SW1P 4DD

## **Programme**

**Unconditional Love will explore how caring and attention is expressed in such practices as artistic research, open access, auditing, peer-reviewing and critique, as well as the tug of war between science, magic and art on the issue of love.**

Four sessions: two per day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon are curated by invited artists and researchers. They offer different formats and examples of artistic research and discussions on the role and impact of artistic research. Central to the event is the notion of *unconditional love*, which could mean a commitment to the dynamics of open and engaged exchange, or an obsessive pursuit of the unattainable.

## **Venue**

*Unconditional Love* will take place at the Chelsea College of Arts next to Tate Britain at Millbank, centrally situated on the River Thames.

**Prices, payment and registration details can be found here:**

<http://tinyurl.com/oh2aqdq>

**Program:**

***Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April***

***9.30-10.00***

***Welcome***

*Chris Wainright / Gerhard Eckel*

***Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April***

***Session I 10.00-13.00***

*Care + Attend* comprises a constellation of fragments and extracts - of different intensities and durations - where the exposition of research emerges as poetic and performative, generating moments of potential resonance and dialogue. We explore the theme *Unconditional Love* through the principles (perhaps even methodologies) of care and attention, as applied within specific (artistic) practices of both the everyday and of the self. Beginning with the observation that both *curate* and *curiosity* have shared etymology in the term 'care', *Care + Attend* seeks to develop a research vocabulary based on receptivity, openness, fidelity, integrity, intimacy, friendship and commitment (whilst not ignoring the parallel principles of distraction, inattention, the act of closing one's eyes or of looking away). Cocker and Lee have invited a range of artists & writers to share and reflect on their own processes, philosophies and politics of care and attention, and to present these through live performance, screenings and spoken word. Contributors include Kate Briggs, Daniela Cascella, Belén Cerezo, Emma Cocker, Steve Dutton + Neil Webb, Victoria Gray, Rob Flint, Mark Leahy, Joanne Lee, Martin Lewis, Sarat Maharaj, Brigid McLeer, Hester Reeve, and Lisa Watts.

*Emma Cocker, Joanne Lee*

***Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April***

***13.00-14.30***

***Lunch***

***Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April***

***Session II 14.30-17.30***

*Research Catalogue – (Re)launch*

The presentation will focus on the current state, functionality, and the future of the Research Catalogue. We will highlight key areas of development and give an outlook on planned features concerning new social web aspects, the help system, and the roadmap for 2015/16.

Luc Döbereiner

*The Artistic Research Library.*

The aim of this session is to introduce and launch the process of collecting international publications in the field of artistic research. The ***Artistic Research***

**Library** is a new analogue and a digital repository documenting and providing the artistic research community with access to the ever-growing bibliography. Everyone is invited to contribute with material books and texts and thereby making it available to a larger audience and supporting the quality and the visibility of artistic research.

This is an initiative by the Society for Artistic Research supported by the Library of the University of Applied Arts Vienna. The Library of die Angewandte will serve as the host for hardcopy books and bibliography and be connected to the online depository of the research catalogue.

At the event we will present and discuss the initiative and we already now ask all to consider what and how they want to contribute with publications and references.

Alexander Damianisch, Julie Harboe

*From Art Criticism to Peer Review and Back;*

Is, as Djuna Barnes says, to love without criticism to be betrayed? Where is the demarcation line between art criticism and peer review in the context of artistic research? JAR takes the peer review processes to a new level that both adds to the knowledge around the articles and creates a layer of discussion and individual responsibility which is different from the tradition of writing in more detached and distant review processes.

This 'slot' at 'Unconditional Love' seeks to focus on the balance and advantages of open review and blind review through the unique experience of JAR and asks whether and how being attentive and open towards a mode of transparent *criticism* or *sounding* might further a content orientated form of discourse in artistic research.

The implications of a more public, practice based 'review process' with a focus on exchange among peers (practitioners) could entail a promise of additionally optimizing the dialogues around art and provide an engaged form of writing about research practices and their consequences.

It remains relevant to ask what the interfaces are with review traditions in other research fields and to include the questions of the quality of reviewing in the context of both application and evaluation processes.

Could it be one of artistic research's contributions to an intensified debate about both current forms of academic evaluation and review formats in general to focus on a) a stronger and more visible peer exchange and on b) being more courageous and colourful in terms of opinion and language. Invited to this both open discussion and workshop session are Henk Borgdorf, Raimi Gbadamosi, Jon Cook, Sarat Maharaj, Michael Schwab, Dame Janet Ritterman, Walter Ysebaert.

Alexander Damianisch, Julie Harboe

**Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April**

**17.30-19.00**

**Reception**

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**Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May**

**Session III 10.00-13.00**

*How to love research online*

Stephanie Meece will explain how and why she cares for an institutional open access repository of artistic research.

In 2010, University of the Arts London launched UAL Research Online, one of the first open access institutional repositories specialised for research in arts and design. In doing so, we found ourselves providing a *de facto* definition of 'open access' for research that was often not textually communicated, and regularly practice-based, site specific and time-limited.

The place of the institutional repository in art and design infrastructure remains insecure, however; those caring for the collection are unaccredited outsiders, asking admission to a space into which unaccredited outsiders are rarely admitted. A fundamental issue is trust; can researchers trust repository staff to care for their artistic research in the same way they trust publishers, galleries and web designers to do so? Can funders trust the researchers and their repositories to fulfil the Open Access requirements they impose on recipients of research funding? Who owns the repository, and who owns what's in it?

Stephanie Meece

*Auditing Research in the Arts*

So which is it? Is research a mistake for art or is art a mistake for research? These two questions complement each other. They both encourage the view of a compromise or limitation in the maintenance of art as we know it or research as we know it. The former position, that 'research is a mistake for art' is most usually expressed from within the art and design sector. The latter position, that 'art is a mistake for research' from outside the art and design sector. Neither of these positions accepts the idea of research as part of a national or global apparatus of art and design, in other words as a part of the totality of social, material, economic, discursive and institutional determinants of a practice. My talk will examine whether government audits of practice led research, in which research in the art and design sector is examined in tandem with research in other academic sectors, discloses or conceals the elements of that totality.

Malcolm Quinn

*The Open Access University: Exploring an Oxymoron*

This talk explores some of the dilemmas facing the Open Access imperative as, after a long struggle for recognition, it becomes enshrined in significant elements of the higher educational landscape (e.g. in the UK, post Finch report). Building on the recent study *Open Education: a Study in Disruption* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2014), which discussed a variety of open access learning initiatives inside and outside the university, I will aim to take stock of the contradictory tendencies at play as 'OA' fuses with the ascendant 'financialised university', asking whether there is such a thing as a politics of open access and, if so, if it is necessarily progressive. *Open Education* placed particular emphasis on the impact of self-organised efforts emerging out of the anti-austerity and Occupy

movements. It also discussed their roots in the techniques and discourses of Peer to Peer, and their cavalier (often openly hostile) attitude to copyright. Here I pursue these discussions further to ask whether the necessary locatability of the university – as a formal, legal entity – and its necessary tendencies towards centralisation, fatally constrains any hope for a practice of solidarity with more horizontally structured or distributed projects working outside it (e.g. by sharing syllabi, materials, etc.). I will ask whether, before we even consider the political import of the open access imperative, we must ask whether there is a *de facto* incompatibility between the institutional form of the university and those of the 'grassroots' and self-organised alternative with which some of its scholars seek an alliance. My aim will not be to merely 'expose' contradictions, however, rather to think proactively about the feasibility and possible tactics of collaboration.

Pauline van Mourik Broekman

*Archive Love in the Age of the Internet*

This paper discusses the changing nature of archives in the age of the Internet. It begins by explaining the ideas behind the Semantic Web and the importance of archives in supplying good data for art historical research. The paper emphasises the value of per-item descriptions and identifies types of information which may prove useful in a semantic context when extracted from archival documents. The paper continues with proposing a framework for the artist to decide on the kind of evidence required to best convey own ideas captured in artistic outputs. It explains the capacity of new tools for multiple interpretations of archives as organised by archivists with particular reference to unique identifiers. It concludes with some guidelines for researchers on the correct use of semantic archival resources for the development of well-supported arguments in publications intended for peer-review.

Athanasios Velios

**Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May**

**13.00-14.30**

**Lunch**

**Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May**

**Session IV 14.30-17.30**

**"Rose-tinted spectacle syndrome or How to explain unconditional love to a living dog"**

*People who are in love are less able to focus and to perform tasks that require attention. Researcher Henk van Steenberghe concludes this, together with colleagues from Leiden University and the University of Maryland.*

*\*\*\*\* The article has appeared in the journal Motivation and Emotion.*

A lot of my artistic practice and research deals with the fact that I am unaware of how unaware I am. That I in fact have little idea why I act or think the way I do. Despite this, I continue to generate narratives to explain my own feelings,

thoughts, and behaviours, and these storylines, no matter how incorrect, become the story of my life.

There's a certain unconsciousness while being in love, a way of treating everything around one as being in a hazy, slightly pinkish fog, all centred on The Object of One's Desire. This altered state of consciousness, this **trip** (which it in fact is, due to radically changed brain chemistry), fascinates me.

What happens in my body and mind while swimming in this powerful torrent of passion? Why do I seem so distraught, so hypersensitive, so stammering in a conversation while simultaneously being able to author fantastic text messages or love mail to my beloved?

I have invited two experts to the SAR/*Unconditional Love* conference at Chelsea School of Art in order to teach us artistic researchers something about these domains of cognitive swoon: Tom Stone, a master magician involved in research at The Choice Blindness Lab, Lund University, and Malena Ivarsson, Senior Lecturer and supervisor of Psychology, Department of Social Science, Södertörn University, who'll tell us what happens to us during that particular phase of infatuation with an other being, when our brains become filled with a more or less toxic mix of very particular signal substances.

I will also try to explain the notion of Unconditional Love to a dog, a creature hopefully filled with embodied knowledge on the matter.

Bogdan Szyber

***Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May***

**17.30-18.00**

Wrap Up & see you tomorrow at the SAR General Assembly!

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## **Curators & Contributors**

**Emma Cocker** is a writer-artist and Reader in Fine Art at Nottingham Trent University. Operating under the title *Not Yet There*, Cocker's research often addresses the endeavour of creative labour; examining models of (art) practice and subjectivity that resist the pressure of a single, stable position by remaining willfully unresolved. *Not Yet There* unfolds as a hybridized enquiry that operates restlessly along the threshold of writing/art, involving performative, collaborative and creative prose approaches to writing in dialogue with, parallel to and as art practice. Cocker's recent writing has been published in *Failure*, 2010; *Stillness in a Mobile World*, 2010; *Drawing a Hypothesis: Figures of Thought*, 2011; *Hyperdrawing: Beyond the Lines of Contemporary Art*, 2012; *On Not Knowing: How Artists Think*, 2013, and *Reading/Feeling*, 2013. She has presented performance-lectures and video works internationally: including Flattime House,

London; M\_HKA, Antwerp; NGBK, Berlin; Stadtpark Forum, Graz, and AGORA: The 4th Athens Biennale. Cocker is currently a key researcher on the PEEK funded project *Choreo-graphic Figures: Deviations from the Line* (2014 – 2016) in collaboration with Nikolaus Gansterer and Mariella Greil. <http://not-yet-there.blogspot.com>

**Joanne Lee** is an artist, writer and publisher with a curiosity about everyday life and the ordinary places in which she lives and works. Much of her activity emerges through a serial publication, the Pam Flett Press, which explores the visual, verbal and temporal possibilities of the 'essay', and via the opportunities for production that arise in dialogue with creative and critical friends. During 2014 she presented aspects of her research at conferences including The Popular Life of Things: Material Culture(s) and Popular Processes, University of Silesia, Poland and Art of the Edgelands at Spacex Gallery / University of Exeter, UK, and the Pam Flett Press was shown in PROGR-Fest, PROGR - Zentrum für Kulturproduktion, Bern, Switzerland and KALEID London, an exhibition showcasing the best books by European-based artists. She is Senior Lecturer in Fine Art at Nottingham Trent University and Associate Lecturer in Graphic Design at Sheffield Hallam University.  
[www.joannelee.info](http://www.joannelee.info)

**Julie Harboe** is an art historian & art critic. After completing her studies at the University of Copenhagen, she co-founded and co-managed the interdisciplinary artspace forumclaque in Baden CH 1993-1999. 2001-2005 she worked at Collegium Helveticum and the ETH Zürich. From 2007-2012 she developed and coordinated the new unit for artistic research at Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts (LUASA), Department of Art and Design from 2012-2014 heading the CC Arts Materials Research there. Currently she is associate researcher at Zurich University of the Arts at the **Research Focus Transdisciplinarity** and Lecturer at LUASA School of Business, Institute of Management and Regional Development. She is a founding member and 2011-2014 president of Swiss Artistic Research Network, **SARN** and since 2011 she is a core team member of FutureLaboratory/**CreaLab**, at LUASA. She is a founding member and has been part of the Executive Board of the Society for Artistic Research since 2012.

**Alexander Damianisch** leads the department for Support Art and Research at the [University of Applied Arts Vienna](http://www.univie.ac.at), organising research activities with focus on artistic research projects, as well as engaging in strategic, conceptual and administrative tasks.

Previously he taught German literature at the University of Durham (UK) and the Lomonossov University Moscow (Russia). He has worked at the New Synagoge Berlin and the Akademie Schloss Solitude Stuttgart, where he was responsible for the programme art, science & business. This was followed by his work at the Austrian Science fund, where he developed and led the PEEK Programme for

Arts-based Research until 2011. Since 2012 he is member of the Executive Board of the Society for Artistic Research.

**Stephanie Meece** is the Scholarly Communications Manager at University of the Arts London. She has managed UAL Research Online, the university's online collection of faculty research, since January 2010. Previously she was Digital Collections Officer at the University of Surrey, where she also managed the university's open access research archive. She is actively involved in the United Kingdom Council of Research Repositories and is a member of the Association of Research Managers and Administrators (ARMA). Stephanie was an integral member of the JISC-funded Kultur and Kultivate projects, and was the Project Officer for the Open Educational Resources-Arts Design and Media project (providing online access to teaching and learning objects in the creative arts and design sector), and partner for the KeepIt! project (digital preservation). She has excellent working knowledge of the issues involved in institutional repository management, including liaising with research staff and project partners, intellectual property issues, copyright and licensing, advocacy, policy development, research data management in the arts, and digital preservation. Her specific expertise is in arts/media/design research issues in repositories, and she has provided consultancy to specialist arts repository startups in the UK, Scandinavia, Ireland and North America, as well as speaking widely on arts research and Open Access at international conferences and workshops. Stephanie holds a B.A. from the University of Toronto, and an M.Phil. and Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge.

**Malcolm Quinn** is Professor of Cultural and Political History, Associate Dean of Research and Director of Camberwell, Chelsea and Wimbledon Graduate School, University of the Arts London. His current research engages with ideas that were foundational for state funded art education in England – utility, taste, wellbeing, cultural prejudice and social equity. The identification of this set of foundational concepts has developed from his historical work on how the state funded art school emerged from a utilitarian critique of the academy of art.

**Pauline van Mourik Broekman** is Visiting Professor at the CCW, UAL, London, as well as a research student at the Royal College of Art, in the School of Fine Art. Her practice based project, 'The Network Optic: Vision, Authorship and Collectivity after Vertov' investigates the legacies of Dziga Vertov for contemporary moving image authorship, particularly as regards the impacts of mobile and 'social' technologies, their notional tendency towards collective authorship, and networked production and distribution. Van Mourik Broekman is the founding co-publisher and editor of *Mute* magazine, and a founding member of MayDay Rooms; she continues to work as a member of the organising collectives of both organisations. As part of a long-standing collaboration with the Centre for Disruptive Media, Coventry, she has also contributed to a number



of projects dealing with the challenges of digital culture, anti-copyright and the Open Access movement for education and publishing, most recently as co-author of *Open Education: a Study in Disruption* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2014).

Metamute: [www.metamute.org](http://www.metamute.org)

MayDay Rooms: [www.maydayrooms.org](http://www.maydayrooms.org)

Open Education:

<http://www.rowmaninternational.com/books/open-education> &

<https://curve.coventry.ac.uk/open/items/c04530ce-d16a-46ca-b359-a905195a76cb/1/> (OA version)

**Athanasios Velios** is a Reader in Digital Documentation at CCW. He graduated from the Technological Educational Institute of Athens with a degree in Archaeological Conservation in 1998. He then moved to London to complete his PhD at the Royal College of Arts and the Imperial College. His PhD work focussed on Computer Applications to Conservation and more specifically Conservation Documentation. He has been a Principle Investigator and Co/Investigator in two large AHRC grants, including a project on the archive of the artist John Latham. He proposed "Creative Archiving" as a method for communicating archivists' expert knowledge through online archives. He is a member of the AHRC peer-review college, the webmaster for the International Institute for Conservation and an elected Council member of the Conservation Graduates Association in Greece. He has supervised and examined PhD research and contributed to departmental assessments in the field of Conservation. He is a keen supporter of open source software and open distribution of knowledge.

**Bogdan Szyber** Performance Artist PhD Candidate, Stockholm University of The Arts,

Bogdan Szyber has worked as an auteur with various hybrid forms in the performing- and visual arts since 1983. He has a background in performance and site-specific art, and has together with his collaborator Carina Reich created over 70 productions, a selection of which you can access on [www.reich-szyber.com](http://www.reich-szyber.com) under 'Portfolio'.

His work spans from large commissioned outdoor festival spectacles to reading poetry on behalf of farm animals in the Swedish countryside. Pointe shoe ballet for the Royal Opera ballet accompanied by live death-metal music, daily urban rituals with thousands of participants throughout Sweden, English teenagers pickled in the jelly, spitting mannequins at the exclusive Stockholm NK department store, audio voyages at sightseeing boats on the river Thames, opera productions at NorrlandsOperan, Folkoperan and The Gothenburg Opera; staging of plays for instance at The Royal Dramatic Theatre. He has toured and performed in Sweden, United Kingdom, Germany, France, Poland, United States, Denmark, Egypt, New Zealand and Belarus.

His latest non-commissioned work dealt with the commercialization of the arts as well as the feeling of guilt evoked by street beggars (Beggars Saturday / Persondesign, 2012), and at present he's devoted himself to the documentary *"The Anatomy of Vengeance"*, based on the concept of retaliation from a woman's point of view.