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Border Ecologies

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Border Ecologies

THE CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE IN THE ARTS

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Letter FROM THE Guest Editor

Archipelagic Borders/Ecological Encounters

Borders, imagined or imposed, can frame, divide, and mark territory. This issue borrows Heather Nicol and Julian Minghi's definition of a border as 'a unique and specific place which is instrumental to the definition of globalization, integration, territorialization and reterritorialization' [1]. We examine this concept in the context of the unlikely pairing of two archipelagoes, the UK and the Philippines. Thinking about these inscribed borders alongside ecologies of landscape, seascape, and community, we trace the shared impacts of globalization and the climate crisis.

We begin by considering the effects of landscape and globalization on migrant domestic workers in Ella Parry-Davies' project Home-Makers which focuses on a soundwalk called *my garden*, where a Filipina domestic worker in Lebanon recorded the sounds of her employer's garden. This soundwalk is best listened to in a green space, or your own garden, if available. Joyce Veheary, founder of 'Lend and Tend', a UK-based garden sharing initiative, contemplates sustainability and her creative practice as an actor in London. Veheary demonstrates the impact green spaces and ownership have on globalization, labor, and cultural exchange. What started from a love of gardening and a desire for land access led to a community designed to 'democratize access to outdoor space.'

Zhiyue Hu examines multi-placedness through watercolor bleeding in her encounter with 'The Land's Heart is Greater than its Map', an audio walk guiding audience members in their exploration of Bristol. Co-created by Olivia Furber and Ramzi Maqdisi and performed for the city's Mayfest in 2022, Hu describes her experience as interrogated by borders. Similarly, Dominique La Victoria's reflections on Leeroy New's The Arks of Gimokudan focuses on the act of witnessing. La Victoria describes how the exhibition space conjures borders through ticketed territories, staging imagined utopias of a borderless world: integration between nations and peoples, if only for a moment.

The Artist Page features images of New's work which 'confronts us with the scale of plastic consumption... whilst also demonstrating the innovative and beautiful possibilities of reuse.'[2], a reminder of the effects marine pollution is causing in territories amidst the climate crisis. In contrast to the hopeful integration of La Victoria's vision, New uses the imagery of ships to depict fluid states and interconnected ecologies despite man-made borders. Finally, Dennis Gupa seeks to transcend borders, documenting his research transforming scientific data into poetry, choral pieces, and music videos. In doing so, he reterritorializes disciplines and nations to enact awareness for our stewardship of the world's oceans.

The contributors in this special issue expand upon geographies of (im)mobility and socio-spatiality through the reflections, processes and visions of artistic and community work that explore earth's palimpsestic layers of those who have walked, listened, planted, played, fought, and fled.

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1 Heather N. Nicol & Julian Minghi, "The Continuing Relevance of Borders in Contemporary Contexts," *Geopolitics*, 10:4 (2005): 680-687.

2 "The Arks of Gimokudan by Leeroy New." Somerset House, April 26, 2022. https://www.somersethouse.org.uk/whats-on/arks-gimokudan-leeroy-new.

***Giselle Garcia** *is a Lecturer in Dramaturgy and Performance Studies at the London College of Music, University of West London. Dramaturgies of space, place and performance are the key terms that capture her research area broadly yet accurately. Her PhD, a fully funded International Studentship at the University of Exeter, developed a new methodology for dramaturgical analysis, locating histories and contexts from translations and adaptations within landscape phenomenology. As a dramaturg, she is interested in contemporary Filipino theatre and performance.*