

Call for Papers

Engagements with Nature: a postgraduate workshop

16th June 2011

Trent Building, Room A46

In recent years there has been increasing interest in engagements with nature, and also a specific focus on the nature of those engagements. This area of work is currently high on the research agendas of many disciplines across the arts, humanities, and social sciences. Crucially, this shared field of study has led to recognition of a plurality of methods for engaging with nature and fostered reconsideration of critical vocabularies and understandings. This workshop aims to reflect this interdisciplinarity in bringing together postgraduate research from a range of academic disciplines.

Contemporary literary engagements with nature have flourished in prose and poetry alongside a rejuvenation of creative non-fiction. In art history, a long pictorial tradition of landscape has been joined by land art which stresses a direct experience of nature. Other representational mediums – musical, dramatic and also new technologies – have been combined in interdisciplinary work aimed at producing co-created site-specific performances. Such projects continue to self-consciously question what form 'engagement' itself should take.

Concurrent with these developments, recent geographical research has sought to reveal how ideas about nature take shape through cultural representations and immersive embodied experiences. A range of critical methodologies have been deployed to study the relationships between humans and nature's non-human agents, which manifest in contestations over space and in varying approaches to the design, management and conservation of the natural environment.

Papers are invited on, but by no means limited to, the following themes:

- Nature and the city, urban nature
- Edgelands, rural/urban borderlands
- The pastoral
- The poetics of place
- Wildness and wilderness
- Cultivation, conservation and sustainability
- Site-specific performances
- Embodiment, encounters with nature
- Human/non-human interfaces
- Natural history
- Labour, living and work in the natural world

Papers will be followed by a roundtable discussion with responses from leading academics in the field. This is the fifth annual postgraduate workshop to be supported by the Landscape, Space, Place Research Group at Nottingham. Papers from previous workshops can be viewed online at: <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/landscape/publications.php>

Abstracts of 250-300 words for 20 minute papers should be sent to Jenny Rich at lgxjr2@nottingham.ac.uk, by **21st April 2011**.

