

Ecologies of Writing: Making a Mark, Marking a Place

Paris, 20-21 September 2019

A Symposium organized by UCL Institute of Advanced Studies & PSL Scripta programme as part of the Materialities of Writing Collaborative Research Project

Call for papers

For this Symposium we invite papers from UCL academics and PhD students that will address the overall theme of 'Ecologies of Writing' from multiple disciplinary perspectives including but not restricted to anthropology, archaeology, area studies, art history, art practice, education, film studies, gender studies, history, information studies, linguistics, literary studies, media studies and museum studies.

With the term 'ecologies', we wish to signal our specific interests in the materiality, embodiment, emplacement and interconnectedness of writing and writing systems in global and local environments. We are interested in how individuals and cultures physically inscribe and re-inscribe environments, platforms and places through 'writing', broadly conceived, and, in turn, how an inscribed place/ground 'makes a mark' on the way such surfaces and sites are used by human/non-human inhabitants. Key themes will include the architecture and ecology of the page, the block, the screen, the canvas, the site, the surface. In sum, the situatedness of writing.

Proposed themes:

Emplacement: places of writing; geopolitics of writing; marking out margins and borders; inscriptions of the sacred and profane; 'contact zones' of encounter between practices and systems of inscription (over time/through space); placement of script relative to support, ground, surface or layout; writing as the 'in-between';

Ecologies: inscriptions in natural environments; evolution, invention and disappearance of writing systems; writing as recycling, repurposing, borrowing, sharing and co-habitation; exposed writing and writing as visual pollution in urban spaces; script in the Anthropocene: the ecology of the tool, mechanization, industrialisation and resource extraction;

Embodiment: embodied practices/technologies of writing – the instrumentalisation and integration of the body as writing agent within ecological systems, networks and places; implements and actions of writing: tools, prosthetics, instruments, bodies and screens; experiences, processes and technologies of writing; body-scripting: scratching, tracing, inscribing, carving, swiping, writing as touch and other uncommon apparatuses.

Process of application:

Proposals for presentations should be no more than 300 words long and should indicate which of the proposed themes will be addressed. Papers to be presented in English will last approximately 20 minutes, and participants should be ready to engage in open discussion and dialogue around the theme of their session. We welcome proposals from multiple fields of inquiry and especially those that challenge disciplinary boundaries. **We wish to encourage the participation of early-career researchers (including research students) and to involve junior as well as senior scholars.**

Applications only from UCL and PSL will be supported by funds from the UCL-PSL research collaboration scheme made possible by the Global Engagement Fund. SCRIPTA is one of the principle themes of this collaboration. Each successful applicant will have accommodation in Paris and travel expenses covered.

Applications should be sent to IAS Administrator Catherine Stokes (c.stokes@ucl.ac.uk) and should comprise: 1. Proposal (300 words); 2. Abbreviated cv (1 page).

Deadline for submission of proposal is Thursday 25. April