



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

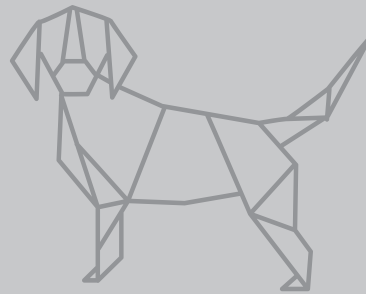
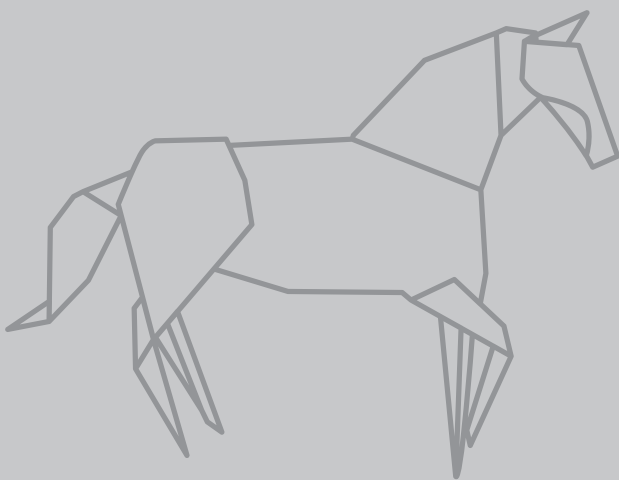
The animal on stage

cultural —
performances

15/16 XI 2022

THE ZBIGNIEW RASZEWSKI
THEATRE INSTITUTE

Jazdów 1 | Warsaw | Poland



ORGANIZERS:

- › The Zbigniew Raszewski Theatre Institute in Warsaw
- › Institute of Western and Southern Slavic Studies, University of Warsaw
- › Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, University of Warsaw

CONFERENCE PROGRAM



CONFERENCE PROGRAM

DAY 1 / November 15, 2022 / Tuesday

10:15 CONFERENCE OPENING

10:30-11:00 KEYNOTE SPEECH

Peta Tait, La Trobe University (Australia)
*Animal Action and Emotions in Circus Performance:
Nineteenth-Century Economic Opportunism*

11:00-11:20 DISCUSSION

11:20-11:30 COFFEE BREAK

11:30-13:00 SESSION I

- Dominika Czarnecka & Dagnostaw Demski, Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology, Polish Academy of Sciences (Poland)
Between the Wild Steppes Left Behind and the New Metropolitan Arenas. Animal Companions at Ethnographic Shows
- Jana Milovanović, Terra Vera NGO (Slovenia)
Experimenting with Otherness on the Habsburg Periphery: The Case of Carl Hagenbeck's 'Animal Acclimatization Station' in Brioni Islands
- Marianna Szczygielska, Institute of Ethnology, Czech Academy of Sciences (Czechia)
'Have You Seen Little Cohn?' An Elephant's Life on Display

13:00-13:15 COFFEE BREAK

13:15-14:25 SESSION II

- Antonio Giarola, CEDAC - Verona: Educational Center for Circus Arts Documentation in Verona (Italy)
The Central Role of the Horse in the Circus Show
- Katarzyna Szydłowska-Schiller, National Museum in Warsaw (Poland)
The Visual Representation of Animals in Circus Based on the Art Collections of the National Museum in Warsaw

14:25-16:00 LUNCH BREAK

16:00-17:30 SESSION III

- Anna-Sophie Jürgens, Australian National Centre for the Public Awareness of Science of the Australian National University (Australia)
Techno-Tentacles: Environmental Circus and the Visual Narratives of Animal Performances of the Future
- Justyna Schollenberger, Institute of Polish Culture, University of Warsaw (Poland)
Beast Comedy. Practices of Animal Humor Between Cruelty and Marvel
- Emilia Mazur, Faculty of 'Artes Liberales', University of Warsaw (Poland)
Animals as Companions in Video Games - a Chance for 'Staying with the Trouble'

18:00 DINNER

DAY 2 / November 16, 2022 / Wednesday

10:30-12:00 SESSION IV

- Stefanie Nathow, Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main (Germany)
Jumping Lions Instead of Dancing Bears: Animals in the Circus and Nazi Ideology
- Marta Bogdańska, visual artist, independent researcher (Poland)
SHIFTERS: Internet as a Cultural Spectacle of Animals in War and Espionage
- Anna Wiczorkiewicz, Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, University of Warsaw (Poland) & Sylwia Siedlecka, Institute of Western and Southern Slavic Studies, University of Warsaw (Poland)
Being a Hero. Animal Protagonists of Visual Narratives about 'Average Citizens' Confronting War

12:00-12:20 COFFEE BREAK

12:20-13:50 SESSION V

- Kalina Zahova, Institute for Literature, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (Bulgaria)
Zoos in Bulgarian Literature and Literature in Bulgarian Zoos
- Sabina Drag, independent researcher (Germany)
Odd Symbiosis - Parasites in Circus
- Zuzanna Kubiak, Doctoral School of Humanities at the University of Warsaw (Poland)
Animal Spectators. Non-human Gaze in the Theatre and Performance Arts

13:50-15:00 LUNCH BREAK

15:00-16:00 SESSION VI

- Sara Kruszona, Interdisciplinary Doctoral School at the University of Warsaw (Poland)
Dog Frisbee Sports Competition as an Interspecies Spectacle
- Paweł Palcat, Wyspiański Academy of Theater Arts in Kraków - Wrocław Branch, Puppet Department (Poland)
Dog on the Stage - 'My Anxiety is Your Anxiety'

16:00-16:30 CLOSING REMARKS



ABSTRACTS | BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Peta Tait

Animal Action and Emotions in Circus Performance: Nineteenth-Century Economic Opportunism

This presentation considers the economic exploitation of nonhuman animals in emotionally stirring performance. Animals remained predominantly symbolic entities in theatrical performance even with novelty appearances until the invention of the circus. The equestrian dominated circus expanded on public menagerie exhibition by presenting animals in moving action framed by emotional narratives. In what ways were the emotions surrounding animals supporting economic opportunism? By the mid-nineteenth century, the circus business and its horses were travelling globally from Britain, Europe, and the USA to geographically remote colonial centres in India and the Asia-Pacific region. Around the same time, the purchasing power of EuroAmerican circus was driving the increased hunting of animals within these regions. Circus economics were based on audiences perceiving animal bodies in emotive action, the forerunner to animal action in cinema.

Professor Peta Tait, La Trobe University, is an academic and playwright and a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities. She has written 70 scholarly articles and chapters and recent books include: the authored: *Forms of Emotion: Human to Nonhuman in Drama, Theatre and Performance* (Routledge 2022); *Theory for Theatre Studies: Emotion* (2021); the co-edited *Feminist Ecologies: Changing Environments in the Anthropocene* (2018); the authored *Fighting Nature: Travelling Menageries, Animal Acts and War Shows* (Sydney University Press 2016); the co-edited *The Routledge Circus Studies Reader*; and the authored *Wild and Dangerous Performances* (Palgrave Macmillan 2012). Her current 'Towards an Australian Ecological Theatre' collaborative project is Australian Research Council funded.

Dominika Czarnecka & Dagnosław Demski

Between the Wild Steppes Left Behind and the New Metropolitan Arenas. Animal Companions at Ethnographic Shows

Unlike in a circus or a zoo, the animals accompanying ethnographic shows did not yet belong to the world of metropolises and European cities. They were still in a transitional state between the lands of their origin, with their caretakers also hailing from those countries, and being locked in cages in gardens and menageries, or 'tamed' in circus arenas. However, a large percentage of these animals never returned home, but died somewhere along the way or ended up in zoos or even natural history museums.

Cities, zoos gardens, circus and parade grounds are all "spatial categories that encompass normative orderings in which animals are both materially and semiotically placed" (Buller 2014). This presentation analyzes the role attributed to animals in colonial ethnographic shows in Europe. The animals were put on stage as co-creators of 'reality' in a developing ethnographic industry of a very specific nature. The main question is what social and cultural factors came into play as these spectacles unfolded. Nowadays, the circulation of images and remains of these animals in museums forms a new 'stage' for them, one on which they play yet another role.

Dr. Dominika Czarnecka is an Assistant Professor at the Center for Ethnology and Contemporary Anthropology at the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw. Her research fo-

cuses on the anthropology of the body, emotions, and senses; anthropology of sport; visual anthropology; the mechanisms of conceptualizing otherness and difference; and the post-Cold War military heritage of Central and Eastern Europe. Her previous publications include *Monuments in Gratitude to the Red Army in Communist and Post-Communist Poland* (L'Harmattan 2021) and the edited collection (with Dagnosław Demski) *Staged Otherness: Ethnic Shows in Central and Eastern Europe 1850–1939* (CEU Press, 2021). Currently she works on the project *Through body in motion. Anthropological study of embodied experiences and identity transition of female fitness culture participants*. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6841-9567>

Professor Dagnosław Demski is an Associate Professor at the Center for Ethnology and Contemporary Anthropology at the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw. His research focuses on visual anthropology, colonial complex, orientalism, peripherality, postcolonial studies, heritage of Central and Eastern Europe. The last publication is the edited collection (with Dominika Czarnecka) *Staged Otherness: Ethnic Shows in Central and Eastern Europe 1850–1939* (CEU Press, 2021). <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3977-0294>

Jana Milovanović

Experimenting with Otherness on the Habsburg Periphery: The Case of Carl Hagenbeck's 'Animal Acclimatization Station' in Brioni Islands

In 1893, Viennese industrialist and steel magnate Paul Kupelwieser bought uninhabited, malaria ridden Brioni archipelago at the entrance to the leading Austrian naval port of Pula. To realize his vision and transform the islands into an elitist holiday resort of the Habsburg monarchy, he invited the founder of modern microbiology and one of the most respectful scientists of the era, dr. Robert Koch, who consequently spent two years on the islands (1900 - 1902) and successfully eradicated the disease. In about the same period, Carl Hagenbeck - then a leading European dealer of 'wild animals and people' and producer of 'ethnographic shows' that featured people and animals from remote regions - visited the islands to set up 'acclimatization station' for the trade with exotic animals (and, possibly, people). The 'acclimatization station' was later turned into an amusement zoo and abandoned after Hagenbeck's death in 1913; however, many decades after the idea of safari-zoo had been resurrected and, in 1978, established as a part of Josip Broz Tito's private summer residency. By examining Hagenbeck's vast social and economic network as well as Koch's responsibility for numerous health experiments amongst African populations, my contribution explores possible (trading) connections between the two important and influential figures, both honored members of 'Berlin Society for Anthropology, Ethnology and Prehistory'. On the phenomenological level, it tackles the encounters with Otherness on the Habsburg periphery through the case of Brioni that offers the perspective on racializing the Other through systemic, dispersed, and multi-stakeholder network of agents.

Mrs. Jana Milovanović is an anthropologist working at the intersection of NGO sector and field research. Her research interests include writing about place, history, memoir, borders, and migration, as well as itinerant performative communities such as circus, world fairs and sideshows. She has experience in conducting research in Slovenia, Italy, and Ireland. In 2009 she has published a research monograph based on her experience of travelling with traditional Italian circus community. Since then, she has produced a number of articles and conference papers, while continuously engaging with diverse communities through Terra Vera NGO where she works as



a chair and senior expert. Her current work focuses on the politics and poetics of border lives in the context of Schengen border between Slovenia and Croatia. She is also a coordinator of Migrantour Slovenia, supporting migrants to become intercultural urban guides.



Marianna Szczygielska

'Have You Seen Little Cohn?' An Elephant's Life on Display

Many elephants transported to Europe at the turn of the twentieth century started their performing careers in circuses and ended them in zoological gardens. This presentation looks at the circulation of affect and knowledge between these two modern institutions specializing in the display of exotic animals. Building on the animal biography method, I follow an Asian elephant named Little Cohn on his journey between two German circuses and one Polish zoo. I ask what such reconstruction of a single elephant's story can tell us about the infrastructures of mobility that sustained various forms of animal captivity. In contrast to zoos, circuses have only recently started to be analyzed from the history of science and technology perspectives as venues both promoting and benefiting from innovations (Jürgens, 2020). The trajectories of trade in living animals highlight the role of travelling circuses in supplying zoos with specimens. However, apart from traffic in animals these institutional interconnections also facilitated the transfer of knowledge and affect. Zoo biology, that developed in the mid-twentieth century, advocated that zookeepers and veterinarians learn from circus dressage to improve animal welfare in captivity (Hediger 1968). This was amidst amounting critiques of the circus training of elephants as a violent practice based primarily on punishment. By following Little Cohn's life story, I will compare how circuses and zoos mobilized affective registers of elephant spectacle.

Dr. Marianna Szczygielska is a feminist researcher of human-animal relations. She graduated from the Central European University in Budapest and authored a doctoral dissertation on zoological gardens. She worked as a postdoctoral researcher at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin. Marianna's work engages queer theory, critical race studies, and science and technology studies to examine the history of zoos and animal collections from an intersectional perspective. Her articles were published in *Centaurus: Journal of the European Society for the History of Science, Cultural studies, Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience, Angelaki: Journal of Theoretical Humanities, Kultura Współczesna, and Praktyka Teoretyczna*. She is an associate editor of *Hum-animalia* journal. She currently works at the Institute of Ethnology of the Czech Academy of Sciences where she researches the development of veterinary sciences in Central Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries.



Antonio Giarola

The Central Role of the Horse in the Circus Show

The conference presentation will focus on the fundamental role of the horse in the circus world in Europe from the mid-1700s to the end of the 1800s, through the images preserved by CEDAC (Educational Center for Documentation of Circus Arts) in Verona. The comment on the images, all very suggestive, will describe the horse in the different disciplines in which it was used, highlighting the important role it had from an artistic, acrobatic,

and narrative point of view with many "impossible exercises" but also as the protagonist of great pantomimes equestrian events held in the most important European circus ensembles.

Mr. Antonio Giarola is a circus historian, poet and director specialized in circus and equestrian shows, he is the president of CEDAC (Educational Center for Documentation of Circus Arts). He graduated in dramaturgy at the DAMS University in Bologna and has worked as a professional in the field of entertainment since 1984, when he created the Clown's Circus, the first Italian experiment of a "classical" circus with a theatrical dramaturgy. His many activities are related to the circus, the theatre, and the equestrian environment. Co-founder of the Accademia d'Arte Circense in Verona. Director of many equestrian shows in Europe and of some editions of the famous Carnival in Venice. Director and artistic advisor to many circuses including Herman Renz (Netherlands), Ringling Barnum & Bailey (USA), Circus Nikulin (Moscow), Darix Togni, Embell Riva, Nando Orfei and art companies such as Holiday on Ice. He is often invited to sit on the judging panels of the world's leading circus festivals and, as a speaker, at international conferences related to live entertainment. He has written extensively on the history of the circus. Currently he is also the artistic director of the Salieri Circus Award.



Katarzyna Szydłowska-Schiller

The Visual Representation of Animals in Circus Based on the Art Collections of the National Museum in Warsaw

Circus was a scintillating and fascinating spectacle, a menagerie of marvels, a theatre of the improbable and even impossible, offering all a chance to escape the drabness of everyday existence. Early circus shows rarely used animals, except for horses and sometimes dogs or monkeys. With the 19th century came an ever-greater interest in exoticism, represented by wild animals from the furthest corners of the globe. Crowds flocked to see imported specimens. The circus triggered and fed colonial fantasies. Exotic animals first travelled in menageries, where they were displayed in cages. Later, these menageries were incorporated into the circus show, which eventually spawned the advent of acts like dancing elephants or taming displays. These were demonstrations of human courage, but also of domination.

In my proposed presentation I focus on the visual representation of animals in circus based on my research in the collection of the National Museum in Warsaw, whose modern and ancient holdings include about one hundred fifty objects of circus relevance. In what way animals were depicted on paintings, prints and drawings? The most common image is an animal used in a spectacle, trained by a tamer, behind bars in menagerie or being a symbol of circus. I will elaborate on what sort of art and cultural imaginary remained from the 19th century until late modern art. Inspiration for this speech was the CIRCUS exhibition that I curated this year at Królikarnia in Warsaw. Circus was not presented on the exhibition as a matter to be vivisected nor as a cultural phenomenon but as an element of the early modern and modern visual experience and in the same way I'd like to look at the animal representation in this works.

Mrs. Katarzyna Szydłowska-Schiller is a curator in the Collection of Modern Art at the National Museum in Warsaw. Holds an MA in Art History from the Warsaw University, diploma from postgraduate curating studies at the Jagiellonian University and an MA in Curating Contemporary Art at the Royal College of Art in London. She has curated shows in Warsaw, Berlin, and London



Anna-Sophie Jürgens

Techno-Tentacles: Environmental Circus and the Visual Narratives of Animal Performances of the Future

With the growing awareness that we need to address and act on the loss of species and biodiversity on our planet, non-human circus performers are becoming a symbol for our endangered world, which in turn is reflected in circus shows and circus-like performance formats. The German Circus Roncalli, for example, uses state-of-the-art holographic technology to show sparkling projections of non-human animal performers who seem to have agency of their own, which can be read as an expression of post-anthropocentric thinking, if not performance. Other circus shows, e.g., by Du Sol Productions and Corona Events, convey notions of environmental fragility through the exploration of a very different kind of technology-driven 'circus animal': LED-lit jellyfish, finessed by charm and humor. How exactly do these visual fictions of circus animals, created with the help of new technologies, critically negotiate our relationship with non-human animals to draw attention to the irreversible loss of entire ecosystems and their species? And what role does the technology play? Combining Circus and Popular Entertainment Studies with Environmental Communication and ideas from the Environmental Humanities, this presentation explores contemporary non-human animal performance as a testing ground for the cultural meanings of ecological crisis and as a kind of "pop culture ecology" (Pike). The presentation clarifies that a powerful fusion of the aesthetics of the deep sea and outer space, and their embodiment in the "tentacular" – which represents humanity's entanglement with nature (Haraway) – acts as a key metaphor for ecological thinking and environmental responsibility in contemporary 'animal acts'.

Dr. Anna-Sophie Jürgens is an Assistant Professor in Popular Entertainment Studies at the Australian National Centre for the Public Awareness of Science of the Australian National University (ANU) and the Popsiculist-in-Chief at the POPPICULE - [ANU's Science in Popular Culture and Entertainment Hub](#). Trained as a literary and cultural studies scholar, her research explores the cultural meanings of science, science and comic performance, and the intersections between science and art. Anna-Sophie has published on hyperbolic circus aesthetics in fiction, violent clowns and clown-scientists in comics and popular performance, comic parasites and Joker viruses in (animated) film, and environmental fragility in street art in numerous academic journals. Her recent books include *Circus and the Avant-Gardes: History, Imaginary, Innovation* (co-editor, Routledge 2022) and *Circus, Science and Technology: Dramatising Innovation* (editor, Palgrave Macmillan 2020). Her next book, co-edited with Dr Anne Hemkendreis, will investigate the power of popular art and aesthetics to communicate environmental urgency (Palgrave 2023). Anna-Sophie is the editor-in-chief of the peer-reviewed open access online journal *w/k - Between Science and Art* (English section) and Associate Editor of the *Journal of Science & Popular Culture*. You can find her on Twitter @AnnaSo_Jurgens and Facebook @AnnaSoJurgens.



Justyna Schollenberger

Beast Comedy. Practices of Animal Humor Between Cruelty and Marvel

I want to reflect upon the anthropological and reflexive potential of comic representations of animals, primarily the repertoire of behaviors and appearance characteristics that are considered funny. It seems that one of the

main cultural roles, that an animal may have to play is that of the 'funny animal' – a creature that is comical despite its intentions.

At the same time, it is possible to grasp other - less obvious - dimension of animal humor, which would involve amusement rather than ridicule. Ursula Heise, discussing types of extinction stories, draws attention to comic narratives. She reflects on Joseph W. Meeker, who proposes that ecological thinking should be based on a pattern of comedy rather than tragedy, and the book and radio series *Last Chance to See* by Douglas Adams and Mark Carwardine. The natural world here is populated by creatures that are often marvelous, often funny, strange in appearance and customs and yet, as if against reason, able to survive. They become a mirror for humans, who are caught up in similar, seemingly absurd, conditions. It seems that animal humor can challenge the constancy of the human-animal border. I want to consider the possibility of interpreting "funny animals" videos in the context of theories of humor (Critchley, Bergson), but also the critical potential of recognizing the amusing, spectacular weirdness of the natural world in which humans are also included (Haraway, Heise, Meeker, Morton, Midgley, Darwin).

Dr. Justyna Schollenberger is an Assistant Professor at the Institute of Polish Culture, University of Warsaw. She obtained her PhD from the University of Warsaw. Author of the monograph *Stworzenia Darwina. O granicy człowieka-zwierzę* (Warszawa 2020) [*Darwin's Creations. On the Human-Animal Border*]. Her research interests include Charles Darwin's thought, posthumanism, animal studies.



Emilia Mazur

Animals as Companions in Video Games - a Chance for 'Staying with the Trouble'

My presentation will cover some examples of animal depictions in well-known titles from action games' genre with main research question focusing on interactive spectacle of the animal companion characters in video action games. The presentation will include some examples of popular problematic tendencies in depicting animal companions. I would describe the role of an in-game companion, their relationship with the player and player's character as well as the entanglement of agencies and tensions that arise on the line of real - virtual and game - player. Various ways in which meanings are conveyed by companion characters will lead to comparison of different rhetoric. Finally, basing on Ian Bogost's concept of procedural rhetoric I intend to present the unique possibilities of the video games as an interactive spectacle. I would like to argue that video games are worth consideration as a way of meeting the animal other.

Mrs. Emilia S. Mazur is interested in Animal Studies with a bachelor's degree in Anthropolzoology, currently pursuing master's degree on the University of Warsaw, Faculty of Artes Liberales. She is involved in exploring various interdisciplinary aspects of Animal Studies. Currently her work concentrates on representation of non-human animals in the world of video games. Apart from that she continues working on artistic projects in poetry and visual arts which remain highly influenced by her scientific background. *Animals as Companions in Video Games - a Chance for 'Staying with the Trouble'*



Stefanie Nathow

Jumping Lions Instead of Dancing Bears: Animals in the Circus and Nazi Ideology

In the circus, from its inception, animals have played an important role. The species of “performing” animals in the circus, the methods of training and aesthetics of performances have always reflected and symbolized the self-images and cultural codes of the respective human societies, as well as national politics and the varying definitions of animals and human-animal relations.

In Nazi Germany strict laws for animal welfare and against ritual slaughter and the performance of dancing bears were enacted. Nazi leaders presented themselves as animal loving people, at the same time, these laws were used to agitate against, oppress and persecute minorities. Still in 1944 various German circus companies travelled with high numbers of different animal species to entertain the general public of the German population, while simultaneously it deported, starved to death, and killed millions of people. What was considered so attractive about animals in the ring, that this was made possible? Do these circus performances reveal something about the Nazi concepts of domination, superiority, danger, and subjugation? Did certain species of animals have specific images? The common idea in Nazi Germany of man as predator in combination with widespread anthropomorphism in animal acts in the circus raise broader questions: what was defined to be “human”, and what was considered to be “natural”? And where and how were the boundaries between humans and animals defined?

The paper will offer some answers to these questions by giving examples from circus history in Nazi Germany and open the discussion for broader questions of animal studies.

Mrs. Stefanie Nathow is a PhD candidate writing her thesis on Circus in Nazi Germany. She has studied history, German literature, education and Jewish studies in Berlin and Jerusalem. Between 2011 and 2018 she worked for the educational departments of several sites of remembrance in Berlin, including the *Topography of Terror* and the Jewish Museum in Berlin. From 2018 to 2022 she headed the educational department of the Museum New Synagogue Berlin. Currently she is a member of the research team for Hesse's Synagogues memorial book at Goethe-University in Frankfurt am Main, Germany.



Marta Bogdańska

SHIFTERS: Internet as a Cultural Spectacle of Animals in War and Espionage

SHIFTERS is an artistic project by Marta Bogdańska, consisting of an award-winning artist book, images, texts, video, and sound. It is a result of the multiple years spent on researching, collating, and editing together archival material related to the history of animal use by Western militaries, intelligence agencies, and police forces. All the images and materials come from the repository of the Internet and investigate the specific politicized spectacle that unfolds within the research: a spectacle of animals in war and spy programmes showcased online. It tries a new approach to historical discourse, changing its optics, looking at animal agent / actor, the animal gaze and the animal point of view.

Building on concepts such as Éric Baratay's 'history from the animal point of view,' Michel Foucault's 'biopolitics,' and Hito Steyerl's 'poor image,' as well as new materialist and feminist theories, Bogdańska leads the viewer on

an artistic and ethical exploration of the presence of animals within the machinery of Western defense institutions from the late nineteenth century to the 1970s. Along the way, she questions the Judeo-Christian legacy used to deny animals agency and justify their exploitation, and seeks to develop a more nuanced understanding of our inequitable coexistence with them. The project seeks to embrace profusion, arranging material into layered sequences of associations and visual narrations to showcase the scale and scope of animal work, the animals' courage and sacrifice, their exhaustion and suffering.

See: <http://www.martabogdanska.com/index.php/phtotography/shifters>

<https://photomonth.com/en/shifters>

Mrs. Marta Bogdańska is a visual artist, photographer, cultural manager, and filmmaker. She studied philosophy and gender studies at the University of Warsaw and at the Home Workspace Program in Beirut. She graduated from the Academy of Photography, the School of Looking and the Open Institute. She has implemented international artistic and cultural projects. She lived for over 8 years in Lebanon. She is currently attending the School of Ecopoetics. She is a Talent of the international platform FUTURES PHOTOGRAPHY, a member of the Archive of Public Protests and WOMEN PHOTOGRAPH. In 2021 she was awarded the Konrad Pustoła Scholarship and the Selma Lagerlöf Scholarship. Her book SHIFTERS was voted the Best International Photography Publication of the Year by the PHOTESPANA Festival, and was nominated for the Kassel Dummy Award, the Luma Rencontres Dummy Book Award Arles, & MACK First Book Award. Together with APP and 5 other artists, she won the SPO-JRZENIA AWARD 2021 and was nominated for the PASZPORTY POLITYKI 2021. As a winner of the PhotoMatch 2020 organized by Fotofestiwal Lodz & Month of Photography in Krakow, she had a solo exhibition at the Krakow Photomonth in 2021. As a winner of the PIX.HOUSE Talent of the Year 2020 competition, she produced the zine “PLAINTEXT”. Her works have been shown and published internationally. See: www.martabogdanska.com



Anna Wiczorkiewicz & Sylwia Siedlecka

Being a Hero. Animal Protagonists of Visual Narratives about 'Average Citizens' Confronting War

The aim of this paper is to interpret representations of animal protagonists and specific changes in the narratives of war, spanning from the post WWII period until nowadays. We assume that the narratives which include this type of protagonist give insight into the complexity of moral entanglements: both within human society and between the species. In fact, animal protagonists display behaviors and represent values that stay in accordance with the axiology that relates to the human society. When portrayed in a war situation, they tend to suggest patterns of exemplary behavior to be followed by “average citizens”. Hence, we pose questions: Why can animal biographies be so persuasive? Which attitudes towards the war are being exposed through them? Which ones are being blurred?

Our point of departure is the juxtaposition of two animal protagonists. A dog named Sharik from *Four Tank-Men and a Dog*: a Polish TV series shot in 1960s and 1970s is the first one. The second one is a contemporary cat Stepan from Ukraine, who “owns” his Instagram and TikTok accounts. The dog-hero is a team member and takes part in combat actions during the WWII; the cat, initially a cosmopolitical consumer, becomes a war refugee, and subsequently, “the face” of a fundraising campaign amidst the Ukrainian war. We believe that by interpreting meanings evoked by stereotypical representations of animal protagonists (*a prosocial dog and an individu-*



alistic cat) in a broader perspective we can get insight into the changing values, privileged in their specific and defined socio-cultural contexts.

Professor Anna Wiczorkiewicz is working at the Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Warsaw. She graduated from the Faculties of Polish Philology, and of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology. She completed her Ph.D. in literature at the Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw and completed her post-doctoral dissertation in philosophy (habilitation) at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Her research interests include conceptualization and representation of cultural diversity, anthropology of the body and embodiment, anthropology of travel and tourism, and anthropology of food. She has received the Visiting Research Scholarship at San Diego State University and Senior Fulbright Scholarship (Kościuszko Foundation Grant, 1996/1997), as well as the Senior Fulbright Research Scholarship at New School (New York, 2002). She is the author of seven books and numerous academic articles, having also co-edited five anthologies.

Dr. Sylwia Siedlecka is a researcher of Slavic cultures at the Institute of Western and Southern Slavic Studies, University of Warsaw, a writer, and an author of non-fiction literature. Her academic work is concerned with performance studies and social imaginaries that relate to the history of circus in Central and Eastern Europe. She is the author of the book *Lady Pagans, Lady Intellectuals* (2012) on the works of Bulgarian writer and politician Blaga Dimitrova, collection of short stories *Puppies* (2010), the novel *Moat*, and the collection of essays *Golden Sands* (2019). She is also the editor of the monograph *Changing Frames. Institutions after 1989 in Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans* (2019), as well as the deputy editor-in-chief of the journal *Zeszyty Łużyckie (Sorbian Studies). Journal for Minority Studies*. Together with Grzegorz Kondrasiuk, she is the co-editor of circus studies book series *Circusiana*, initiated at the Zbigniew Raszewski Theatre Institute.



Kalina Zahova

Zoos in Bulgarian Literature and Literature in Bulgarian Zoos

Zoos are the ultimate topoi of deprivation of freedom. In their core they actually represent undeserved (unlike in human prisons) holding into captivity of living creatures for show. This unfreedom is camouflaged with various masks, designed to legitimise the captivity and lull the individual and social empathy. Such masks include conservational function (preservation of endangered species *ex situ*), educational function (acquaintance of humans, and especially children, with nonhuman animals), and tourism (profitable attractions with alleged importance to local economies). Notwithstanding the normalizing discourses that are supposed to justify the holding of animals in captivity for show, it is still an unfreedom that is unacceptable from the point of view of critical animal studies. This is all the truer for zoos as those in Bulgaria, in which the living conditions of the animals are predominantly beyond poor. This paper's focus is the twofold interconnection between Bulgarian literature and Bulgarian zoos. The presentation will follow a few examples of how zoos are presented in Bulgarian literature – both as real zoological gardens and as figurative parallels with human issues. It will further explore the presence of literature in Bulgarian zoos – both as various types of narratives and as real presence of books and reading places.

Dr. Kalina Zahova is an Associate Professor at the Institute for Literature, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, and holds an MA in Bulgarian Philology and a PhD in Literary Theory. She is the author of the books *The Pieces That*

We Listen To. Functioning of the Song Text in Contemporary Culture (2018) and *Why Is the Laughing Cow Laughing? Relations between Humans and Other Animals* (2020). She has specialized in Austria and Slovakia and has lectured at the St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia, the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv, the Bulgarian Cultural Institute in Bratislava, the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan. Her research interests include critical animal studies, ecocriticism; interdisciplinary approaches to contemporary culture; popular music studies.



Sabina Drağ

Odd Symbiosis - Parasites in Circus

She can leap dozens of times the length of her body, carrying a weight many times her own. She is an inconspicuous athlete, an actress drawing her strength from the blood of her host/trainer. She entered the world of performance in the 17th century and has performed on the stages of Europe since then, up to and including today. She has transcended her physical manifestation to become a symbol of precision and craftsmanship. While one part of her family was busy decimating the human and animal population, spreading deadly typhus and plague, she was pulling golden chariots, with reins of the finest metal, across a miniature stage. The human flea, as she is referred to here, quickly found her place in the circus space, occupying an arena created especially for her, forcing the enthusiastic spectator to be particularly focused and attentive. The aim of this paper is to analyse the bizarre symbiosis between parasite and human that led to the creation of the Flea Circus, focusing on the history of the Flea Circus and changes in exploitation and interdependence as sociocultural practices related to hygiene and human-animal relations developed over time.

Mrs. Sabina Drağ is an artist, performer, and researcher. She is interested in circus in theory and practice, especially circus biographies from the 19th century and the history of clownery. She sees the circus as a litmus test that reacts to and reflects in its own way socio-cultural transformations and historical events. She is active in the field of movement theatre and pantomime (mime corporel and biomechanics). She trains the Chinese pole. Graduate of sociology (specialized in social anthropology) and contemporary culture at the Jagiellonian University (Cracow, Poland). Experienced circus and theatre pedagogue. Co-organizer of international circus projects and festivals. Since 2016 her base has been in Berlin.



Zuzanna Kubiak

Animal Spectators. Non-human Gaze in the Theatre and Performance Arts

Animals have been providing entertainment for humans for centuries. They have been present in rituals and spectacles since the early days of these theatrical forms until today. We are accustomed to seeing animals from the perspective of the spectator. Dogs, wild cats, or horses are often great performers, they can momentarily attract human attention and easily trigger emotions.

The aim of this presentation is to investigate selected attempts of reversing this perspective and to analyze some of the possibilities created by swapping the traditional roles in the performance structure assigned to human and non-human species. I will look at the transformations that occur in the space of theatre and perfor-



mance when animals are placed in the position of spectators and recipients of art.

In the performing arts, the desire to change the object-subject relationship in which animals are the providers of entertainment and humans its beneficiaries, appears for example in the 1970s, in the form of an exhibition of paintings for dogs by Roth and Hamilton, or sensory sculpture for hounds created in Warsaw by Wolf Kahlen. Currently, the topic of performance for animals is being explored by artists from Vienna, Krööt Juurak and Alex Bailey, on the Polish ground the theme is being developed by Ola Osowicz, among others. These examples play with the traditional model of theatre and offer a different kind of performative experience, based on interspecies alliances and an appreciation of the influence that companion species have on us, as Donna Haraway would call them.

Mrs. Zuzanna Kubiak is a PhD student in the Doctoral School of Humanities at the University of Warsaw. Interested in investigating the changes in contemporary Polish theatre occurring in response to the climate catastrophe and the development of research on the Anthropocene, with the focus on interspecies relations and more-than-human connections. Culture producer, currently working at New Theatre in Warsaw.



Sara Kruszona

Dog Frisbee Sports Competition as an Interspecies Spectacle

Subject of the speech is dog frisbee as discipline of canine sports and spectacle. This form of play is sometimes an element of enrichment of common time during daily existence with dogs as part of satisfying their needs. One of the elements of dog frisbee competitions is the freestyle category, which consists in presenting a prepared in advance, choreographed performance of a human and a dog, combined with catching discs. During the performance, it is important for the partners to focus on each other, communicate and motivate the dog. This makes it possible to make dog frisbee an object of study for communication and interspecies relations. However, the choreography can also be viewed from the perspective of body anthropology - the bodies of two separate species must cooperate, the performers must show trust and a great awareness of both: their own body and the body of their partner. In addition to choreography, a dog frisbee show has such spectacle structure elements as script and direction, musical setting and in some cases costumes. The presence of an audience is quite a recognizable element of dog frisbee and it is some unique in canine sport, because in other disciplines, the most important thing is the effectiveness of man and dog, not the show. The subjectivity of animals in these shows is not an easy issue to resolve. However, dog frisbee is a show in which dogs have a degree of agency and subjectivity.

Mrs. Sara Kruszona is a PhD student at the Interdisciplinary Doctoral School at the University of Warsaw. A graduate of bachelor studies at the Faculty of Theatre Studies at the Adam Mickiewicz University and a graduate of master's degree at the Faculty of Interactive Media and Shows at the Adam Mickiewicz University. A practicing dog trainer and canine sports player. Scholarship holder of a grant Figurations of Interspecies Harmony in Literature, Film and Other Cultural Texts of the English-speaking sphere, from the mid-19th to the 21st centuries realized by Dr. Justyna Włodarczyk.

Paweł Palcat



Dog on the Stage – 'My Anxiety is Your Anxiety'

In August 2021 the jury of the ShakesperareOff Competition of 25th Gdańsk Shakespeare Festival decided to hand a special award to my female dog Mania and me for duodrama „My Anxiety Is Your Anxiety” for „negation of human hegemony towards other beings”.

This theatre performance inspired by Shakespeare's „The Tempest” portrays a relationship between non-human and human being based on a real understanding and partnership. It is a story of an outcast artist who finds a cave where a dog is the only living creature. Being given permission to stay the artist images a plan to fight back to the society. Creating a relationship with this female dog he realizes no revenge is needed. Only pure love can calm down all the anxieties.

During the conference me and my dog Mania would like to talk about the process of creating the performance. This is also a part of my doctoral dissertation at Academy of Theatre Arts in Wrocław. I am exploring the method of deep, intimate relationship with the animal in order to find ethical and fully equal working environment for both non- human and human actors. My goal is to expand ecocriticism from literature to theatre.

By sharing our history from the adoption day, trough months of learning each other's way of communication I would like to give you the opportunity to see how we have worked on this specific performance almost day by day. From creating bond till searching the way of not exploiting dog's commitment. All of our work is still in progress as our relationship evolves making the method more and more precise. This presentation will also be a part of this research which hopefully ends treating animals in theatre as an unaware of its creative powers, cold representation.

Mr. Paweł Palcat graduated from Wyspiański Academy of Theater Arts in Kraków, Wrocław Branch in 2005. Since then, he has been an actor in Modjeska Theatre Legnica and off theatre: Zakład Krawiecki. In 2017 he started teaching at Wrocław Branch of Wyspiański Academy of Theater Arts in Kraków. During over 20 years Paweł Palcat has co-worked with many theaters in Poland as an actor, playwright, and director (Wrocławski Teatr Współczesny, Bałtycki Teatr Dramatyczny w Koszalinie, Teatr Nowy w Poznaniu, Teatr Układ Formalny oraz Teatr Capitol in Wrocław). Honoured with several awards both for his acting, writing, and directing including m-teatr award for best young director, WARTO award for theatre achievement, Tukan OFF at Stage Songs Review in Wrocław. In 2021 he wrote and directed duo drama *My Anxiety is Your Anxiety* inspired by Shakespeare's *The Tempest* for 25th Shakespeare Festival in Gdańsk. In this play he acts together with his female dog- MANIA, exploring new way of working with dogs on the stage.



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