



**London
South Bank
University**

**Motherhood and
creative practice:**
Maternal structures
in creative work

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Welcome to Motherhood and creative practice: Maternal structures in creative work

Dear participants,

We are delighted to welcome you to our conference: Motherhood and creative practice: Maternal structures in creative work which brings together artists and academics from around the world to discuss hospitality, solidarity and encounter as concepts in creative practice, and how they relate to contemporary issues of mothering.

We are honoured to have as our keynote speakers Prof Bracha Ettinger, Professor of Psychoanalysis and Art at the European Graduate School, Prof Faith Wilding, Professor Emerita of Performance at SAIC and Prof Irina Arishtarkova, Associate Professor, School of Art & Design, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Our programme is rich and varied with three keynote speakers and two discussion sessions lead by our discussant Prof Griselda Pollock. We have around sixty papers and presentations split between six panels, each with three parallel sessions. Besides, there is an evening of creative work that brings artists from diverse backgrounds and we are excited to host the “Alternative Maternals” exhibition curated by Laura Gonzales.

As a conference organisers, we know that the success of the conference depends ultimately on the many people who have worked with us in planning and organizing both the academic programme, the creative events and supporting social arrangements. In particular, we would like to thank Janet Jones, Phillip Hammond, Alison Jones, Richard Fenn, Jon Grant and Alan Power. Big thank you to Lara Gonzalez for designing the programme and the poster for the conference. And last but not least, our gratitude to the LSBU Drama students and graduates who helped everything run smoothly.

Sincerely,

Elena Marchevska and Valerie Walkerdine

London South Bank University

LSBU and how to get here

The Southwark Campus is situated in central London and the nearest London Underground station is Elephant & Castle. We recommend that you use public transport rather than taxis, as these can be very expensive. If you do use a taxi make sure you only use a London 'black' cab and not a private car taxi service.

Public Transport

London South Bank University's main campus is based in Elephant and Castle, central London. Known as our Southwark campus, it can be easily reached via the Underground on the Northern or Bakerloo lines, and we are in walking distance of Elephant and Castle, Waterloo and London Bridge over ground stations. The campus is also well served by bus services.

Edric Theatre

The conference venue is Edric theatre and it is situated in Borough Road building. The Borough Road building is located on 103 Borough Road SE1 0AA which runs just off Saint Georges Circus roundabout. You can also access the building via the Student Centre.

Edric Theatre is the place to catch the young and upcoming talent that is coming from the Drama Students of London Southbank University and we also host external companies for rehearsals, workshops and more - past companies include British Youth Opera, Frantic Assembly, ThickSkin Theatre Company and Rough Fiction Theatre Company.

Eating and Drinking

There are two coffee breaks each day and they will be in the Green Room, adjunct space to Edric Theatre.

The lunch will be served in Edric theatre and you can eat your lunch there or outside, in the sun.

If you need anything else, you can use the Grads Caffé in the Student Centre.

Grads Café info

Open Monday to Friday 08.30am to 4pm

The cafe is located on the upper floor of the student centre where there is a mixture of seating styles, from booths to bench style tables. It is open to students, staff and visitors. The Grads cafe offers a range of hot and cold fresh hand held snacks, delicious salad and deli sandwich bar. Also supported by a range of hot and cold drinks.

Schedule

Monday 1 June 2015

Time	Programme	Venue
9:30 am	Welcome and introduction by the organisers	Edric Theatre
10 - 11 am	Bracha Ettinger – Keynote	Edric Theatre
11 - 11:15 am	Coffee/Tea break	
11:15 - 12:30 am	Panel 1: Everyday life, art and parenthood Duska Radosavljevic Townley and Bradby Kim Dhillon and Andrea Francke	Edric Theatre
Session 1 Performing everyday and motherhood	Panel 2: Mother and child creating Cultural ReProducers Lena Simic Samantha Lippett	BR301

	Panel 3: Performing motherhood	Studio 3
	Nathalia Yakubova Prms in Hall Helen Grime	
12:30 am-1:45 pm	Panel 4: Troubling maternal ideal	Studio 1
	Anna MacDonald Louise Wallace Lizzie Thynne	
Session 2 Troubling maternal	Panel 5: Challenging parental pedagogy	BR301
	Deborah Dudley Maud Pierrier Freddie Robins	
	Panel 6: The mOther	Studio 3
	Lulu Le-Vay Penelope Mendoca Joanna Callaghan	
1:45 - 2:45 pm	Lunch break	Edric Theatre

2:45- 4 pm	Panel 7: Childbirth	Edric Theatre
Session 3 Mothers body	Rosalind Howell Mila Oshin Project After- Birth Emma Finucane	
	Panel 8: Breastfeeding	BR301
	Rachel Epp Buller Jeca Rodriguez-Colon Jill Miller	
	Panel 9: Performing mothers body	Studio 3
	Andrea Liss Victoria Bianchi Natalie Loveless	
4- 4:15 pm	Coffee/Tea break	Green Room
4:15 - 5pm	Discussant session Number 1	Edric Theatre
5- 7 pm	Film screening + Q&A	Edric Theatre
Practical presentations	Emily Underwood-Lee Whitney McVeigh Tracey Kershaw Mieke Vanmechellen	

5 - 7 pm

Performance +Q&A

Studio 3 and 4

Lizzie Philps
Oriana Fox
April Munson
Prms in Halls

Video screening 1 + pres-
entation + Q&A

BR470

Katarzyna Kosmala and
Hanna Nowicka
Mo-Ling Chui

Video screening 2 + pres-
entation + Q&A

BR471

Barbara Sternberg
Terri Hawkes
Joanna Callaghan
Laurel Terlesky

7 - 8:30 pm

**Exhibition “Alternative
maternals” opening and
Conference Reception**

Digital Gallery ,
Edric Theatre and
Studios

Tuesday June 2015

Time	Programme	Venue
9:30 am	Coffee/Tea	
10 - 11 am	Faith Wilding and Irina Aristarkhova Keynote	Edric Theatre
11 - 12:15 am	Panel 10: Autobiographical encounters	Edric Theatre
Session 4 Practicum of Mothering	Tracy Evans Nethery Wylie Helen Sargeant Anna Kell	
	Panel 11: Practicum of Mothering	B101
	Clare Qualmann Margaret Morgan Martina Mullaney	
	12: New Aesthetic of Motherhood	Studio3
	Eti Wade Myrel Chernik Lise Haller Ross	

12:15 am-1:30 pm

Panel 13: Maternal memory

Studio1

Laura Reynolds
Paula Chambers
Nikolina Nedeljkov

**Session 5
Memory and grief**

Panel 14: Grief

B101

Ehryn Torrell
Linda Duvall
Jules Findley

Panel 15: Ambivalence and sorrow

Studio3

Dimitra Douskos
Catriona McAra
Laura Gonzales and Eleanor Bowen

1:45 - 2:45 pm

Lunch break

Edric Theatre

Session 6
Maternal herstories

2:45 - 4pm

Panel 16: Death and reflection

Edric Theatre

Angie Voela
Miriam Schaer
Rosy Martin

Panel 17: Child (less)

B101

Alice O'Neill and Jo Paul
Lois Tonkin
Sally Sales

Panel 18: Maternal herstories

Studio3

Jiřina Šmejkalová
Tina Kinsella
Margarida Brito Alves and Patrícia
Rosas

4:00- 4:15 pm

Coffee/Tea break

Green Room

4:15 - 5 :15pm

**Mary Kelly keynote screening with
Q&A led by Dr. Lisa Baraitser**

Edric Theatre

5:15 - 6pm

**Final Discussant summary Professor
Griselda Pollock**

Edric Theatre

Motherhood and creative practice: Maternal structures in creative work

Keynote Speakers

Faith Wilding is Professor Emerita of performance art at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, a graduate faculty member at Vermont College of Fine Arts, and a visiting scholar at the Pembroke Center, Brown University. Wilding was a co-initiator of the Feminist Art Programs in Fresno and at Cal Arts, and she contributed “Crocheted Environment” and her “Waiting” performance piece to the historic Womanhouse exhibition. Her artwork have been featured in major feminist exhibitions including WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution. Wilding cofounded and collaborates with subRosa, a cyberfeminist cell of cultural producers using BioArt and tactical performance in the public sphere to explore and critique the intersections of information and biotechnologies in women’s bodies, lives, and work, and she is the co-editor of “Domain Errors! Cyberfeminist Practices!”. She is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, Creative Capital grant, and NEA artist grants.



Bracha L. Ettinger, Ph.D., is the Marcel Duchamp Chair & Professor of Psychoanalysis and Art at the European Graduate School EGS, artist, senior clinical psychologist, practising psychoanalyst, and groundbreaking theoretician working at the intersection of feminine sexuality, psychoanalysis, and aesthetics. Bracha L. Ettinger has been forging for the last twenty years a new ‘matrixial’ theory and language with major aesthetical, analytic, ethical and political implications. Bracha Ettinger’s ideas offer the hope that identities might not have to be achieved either sacrificially or at someone else’s expense.



Mary Kelly is known for her project-based work, addressing questions of sexuality, identity and historical memory in the form of large-scale narrative installations. She studied painting in Florence, Italy, the sixties, and then taught art in Beirut, Lebanon during a time of intense cultural activity known as the “golden age.” In 1968, at the peak of the student movements in Europe, she moved to London, England to continue postgraduate study at St. Martin’s School of Art. There, she began her long-term critique of conceptualism, informed by the feminist theory of the early women’s movement in which she was actively involved throughout the 1970s. In 1989 she joined the faculty of the Independent Study Program at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. Since 1996, Kelly has been Professor Art and Critical Theory Art in the School of Art and Architecture at the University of California, Los Angeles where she has established an Interdisciplinary Studio area for graduate students engaged in site-specific, collective and project-based practices.



Abstracts and Biographies

Session 1 Performing everyday and motherhood

Panel 1: Everyday life, art and parenthood

Speaker: Dr Duška Radosavljević

Title: The Mums and Babies Ensemble: Theatre-making with the Early Years

Abstract: The paper reflects on an AHRC-funded dramaturgical project The Mums and Babies Ensemble - a series of participatory performances which will culminate in a published script by September 2015. Created by three mums/theatre-makers, the project drew on materials the makers had collected during the development period, but also had an element of spontaneity responding to the babies' needs during the live performance (feeding, changing, playing etc) - as well as incorporating audience responses and contributions. The performance had the format of a mums and babies group, but allowed for a deeper artistic engagement with particular themes. Similarly, the script resulting from the process has been envisaged as a 'porous' script. The Mums and Babies Ensemble was initiated by Duska Radosavljevic and baby Joakim, Annie Rigby and baby Nina and Lena Simic and baby James, but the idea is to pass it on to future parents theatre-makers and their babies.

Bio: Duška Radosavljević is a writer, dramaturg and lecturer at the Univeristy of Kent. She has worked at the Northern Stage ensemble, the RSC, and as a reviewer for the Stage Newspaper. Recent publications include Theatre-Making: Interplay Between Text and Performance in the 21st Century (Palgrave, 2013), The Contemporary Ensemble: Interviews with Theatre-Makers (Rouledge, 2013) as well as numerous academic articles in book collections and academic journals.

Speaker: Townley and Bradby

Title: All Over Again



Abstract: Sharing space is a feature of most family homes. Our own living room is a space for drying the laundry, for playing energetically, for displaying drawings (ours and our children's), for working (it houses our computer, printer and filing system), and for relaxing. Often several of these activities are going on simultaneously.

Multiple uses of space create both conflict and the potential for influence. Sociologist Kate Pahl writes of the way adults and children 'weave in and out of one another's space' in the home ('Ephemera, mess and miscellaneous piles: texts and practices in families', *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 2002, p144). Pahl stresses that children's communicative practices (visual, textual and artefactual) in the home depend on 'the way the home is structured and the cultural resources the home draws upon'.

Bio:

Townley and Bradby are a collaborative practice. They make work in spaces that are already being used by someone else. This work has included games, picnics, public conversations and site-specific drawings. Currently Townley and Bradby are making a series of drawings concerned with ways to maintain a creative practice whilst bringing up children and earning a living.

website: <http://www.axisweb.org/p/townleyandbradby/>

Presenter: Kim Dhillon and Andrea Francke (Invisible Spaces of Parenthood)

Title: Politicising Motherhood: Creative Practice, Activism, and the Mother

Can motherhood be a lens for radical consciousness? Western society's infrastructural support for parenting lags behind the ideals of those brought up after the Second Wave of the gender revolution. In this paper, we explore experiences of motherhood that present a counter-narrative to the dominant model of the mother, to examine politicisation in relation to, and as a result of, mothering. This paper argues the potential for motherhood to incite an engagement in a radicalisation of politics, through a brief survey of contemporary and art historical references. We pose the resulting question: what happened to the ideals and infrastructure of the Second Wave?

Bio: Since 2009, Invisible Spaces of Parenthood (ISP) has developed as an on-going artistic research project and collaboration between Peruvian artist Andrea Francke (b. 1978) and Canadian writer and artist Kim Dhillon (b. 1980), exploring non-representational politics of motherhood and the labour of caring for children.

Session 1 Performing everyday and motherhood

Panel 2: Mother and child creating

Speaker: Cultural ReProducers – Christa Donner

Title: Reimagining Cultural ReProduction

Abstract: Cultural ReProducers is an ongoing creative platform initiated in 2012 in collaboration with an evolving group of artists, critics, and curators raising young children. As a community Cultural ReProducers

explore the intersection of artmaking and family life through a diverse range of projects that include an on-line resource, a childcare-supported art event series, a speculative certification program, and a risographed zine of experiments in artist-parenthood. These activities propose new models for institutional support while building networks of exchange, visibility, and dialogue to realize our collective needs and desires.

Bio:

Christa Donner is an internationally-exhibited artist, writer, and curator. In 2012 Donner initiated Cultural ReProducers, a creative platform supporting cultural workers who are also working it out as parents, and in 2014 curated the exhibition Division of Labor with Thea Liberty Nichols for Glass Curtain Gallery, examining the intersection of contemporary art and family life. More information: www.culturalreproducers.org and www.christadonner.com

Presenter: The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home-Lena Simic

Title: Four Boys

Abstract: This creative presentation will take form of a performative lecture including video film. I will chart the Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home's history of participation at various political demonstrations with children. Four Boys will be narrating my four boys' first ever demonstrations: anti-globalization May Day Monopoly in London 2001 (Neal); Stop the War Coalition protest against Iraq war in February 2003 (Gabriel); Financial Fools' Day G20 summit protest and Climate Camp on Bishopsgate, London in April 2009 (Sid) and The National Demonstration for Gaza in August 2014 (James). Whilst the piece functions as a reflection on the shifting political landscapes the family have been enmeshed in in the UK from becoming parents in 2000, it is also about a moment in our family history now, in 2015, a time when we need to fight, as parents and as activists, for ecological justice.

Bio: Dr Lena Simic, art activist, pedagogue and performance practitioner, from Dubrovnik, Croatia, living in Liverpool, UK. Co-organizer of The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home, an art activist initiative, part of a family home, which is concerned to bring up the children: Neal (14), Gabriel (12), Sid (7) and James (1) critically and lovingly. The Institute is funded by 10% of the family's income: lecturers' salaries, child benefit and any other fees the family receives from performances. Lena's maternal arts practice has been concerned with everyday living, lived experience, repetition, boredom and politicized anger.

Speaker: Samantha Lippett

Title: 'on a (m)other's watch'

Abstract: Drawing upon the ideas of Baraitser, Ussher and others, 'on a (m)other's watch' brings into question the censorship and re-appropriation of three maternal artists work in both the physical and online space. Eti Wade, Lyla Rye and Amy Jenkins present the moments of maternal life that contradict the social construct of the Madonna. They present the physical intimacies, immaterial labour and conflicted emotional experience of maternal life that have confused and at times repulsed viewers causing the removal of these works from the public domain. This project questions to what extent the new public visibility of home-life and the growing hypersensitivity around the protection of children plays in the policing, censoring and corruption of subjective maternal art.

Bio: Samantha Lippett is a visual artist and researcher with a specific focus towards feminism and gender/body politics.

Session 1 Performing everyday and motherhood

Panel 3: Performing motherhood

Speaker: Nathalia Yakubova

Title: Troubled Motherhood: Life and Work of the Polish Actress Irena Solska

Abstract: Motherhood was consequently erased from the numerous representations of Irena Solska (1875-1958)– allegedly a femme fatal who influenced the life of many artists of her time. This kind of images created by the writers and artists is still the landmark for those who write about Solska today. What is still overlooked, for example, is the actress's decision to sacrifice the plans of international touring (her child turned dangerously ill right at the time which was supposed to become the turn of her career). Solska's numerous letters to her daughter written in her later years tend to be regarded mainly as a symptom of old age loneliness and „late repentance”.

Bio: Natalia Yakubova holds PhD in Theatre Studies. Since 1994 she has been a research fellow of State Institute of Art Studies, Moscow, Russia. Currently she is affiliated, as a Marie Curie Fellow, at the Institute of Literary Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences, carrying out the research project on gender-sensitive biography of the Polish actress Irena Solska (1875-1958). She is also active as a theatre critic, writing for periodicals in Russia and abroad. Author of the books: *O Witkacym* (About Witkacy, Warsaw, IBL, 2010) and *Teatr epoki peremen v Polshe, Vengrii i Rossii. 1990-e-2010-e* (Theatre of the transformation epoch in Poland, Hungary and Russia, the 1990-2010-s, Moscow, NLO, 2014)

Speaker: Prams in Hall

Title: The Inner Life of Sophie Taylor

Abstract: As artists and mothers ourselves, we are fascinated by the challenges and opportunities that having children creates. The Inner Life of Sophie Taylor is about the difficulty of trying to be both a good mother and a good artist, a balancing act our company members know too well. In fact, the piece itself is born out of us being mothers: if Roisin didn't have children would she have been able to write this? How does motherhood affect Anna's choices as a director and what are the differences between the cast members who do and don't have children in terms of investment, connection and contribution to the play? And what about it's audiences?

Bio: Working at the cutting edge of new theatre practice in the most unlikely of ways: Prams In The Hall create theatre while changing nappies. Established in 2012 by theatre practitioners who are all mothers, Prams In The Hall aims to create exciting theatre while exploring different working practices that are inclusive to creatives and audiences who may also be parents.

Speaker: Dr Helen Grime

Title: 'she breast feeds in the boardroom' - Working Mothers Onstage

Abstract: This paper sets out the beginning of an investigation into the comparative absence of representations of the working mother archetype on the British stage from the late C19th to the present day. The

investigation will survey examples of stage representations of working motherhood and attempt to categorise and contextualise them. This paper will consider some historical examples including Nora from *A Doll's House*, *Mrs Warren and Mother Courage*. However the focus will be on more recent representations of the working mother and debates around 21st motherhood in such plays as Lucinda Coxon's *Happy Now* (2008), Amelia Bullmore's *Mammals* (2007) and Gina Gionfriddo's *Rapture, Blister, Burn* (2014). The aim is to gain a fuller understanding of shifting attitudes towards, and debates around, the figure of the working mother. A figure who, despite her elusive presence onstage, is increasingly prevalent in the profession who embodies her, the audience who consumes her, and the wider socio-political context.

Session 2 Troubling maternal

Panel 4: Troubling maternal ideal

Speaker: Anna MacDonald

Title: Holding the art: Falling for everything

Abstract:

'[s]omething embraced becomes entirely different in quality'
(Symington, 2006:35)

This paper explores the role of the psychoanalytic notion of containment, in the production and reception of art, through an analysis of a practice as research project entitled *Falling for everything* (<https://vimeo.com/109223428>). Focusing on the idea of the 'mother as holder', I explore the way that spatio-temporal devices in the artwork act as forms of holding and suggest that it is the ability of the 'good enough' mother to contain, with all the rigour and endurance this demands, that makes for a 'good enough' artist.

Speaker: Louise Wallace

Title: Breeding Machine

Abstract:

Down at the bottom of the garden
Mother's little breeding machine whirs and ticks.
Deep in the mouldering mess, children are growing.
Leaves in their mouths, dirt in their eyes.
Fecund and fertile; feral and febrile.
They were made in earth.
They will be laid in earth.
Their toys are twitching too - shallow breaths in the yarrow, bloodless bone marrow.
A creeping cunning, a quickening wit,
And nothing good can come of it.

Bio: Louise Wallace's art practice is based upon a fictional mother's story. Through painting, collage and sculpture she visualises a rogue maternity and its feral progeny.

Speaker: Lizzie Thynne

Title: Imagining a maternal history: 'On the Border'

Abstract: This paper explores the performance of memory in *On the Border*, an experimental documentary by Lizzie Thynne looking at her Finnish mother's history and the lingering impact of war and exile. The structure is prompted by the letters, objects, and photographs left in her mother, Lea's, apartment. The film was begun after Lea's, final, forced admission to a psychiatric ward and then a care home in 2007. Completed after her death, the film works through melancholy to mourning and explores the dialogic making of self in relation to the other implied in the term 'auto/biography'.

Bio: Lizzie Thynne is Reader in Film at Sussex University, Brighton, UK. Her recent work includes ten short films for *Sisterhood* and *After: The Women's Liberation Oral History Project* (2013) and an experimental sound-led work exploring woman's stories of childhood, *Voices in Movement* (2014). Her research explores the narration of women's history and biography and encompasses writing and film practice. Her films have been shown at major venues and festivals including the *Jeu de Paume*, *La Virreina Centre de L'Imatge*, *National Film Theatre*, *MOCA*, Sydney.

Her work on the surrealist photographer, *Claude Cahun*, resulted in a widely shown film *Playing A Part* and several articles.

Session 2 Troubling maternal

Panel 5: Challenging parental pedagogy

Speaker: Deborah Dudley

Title: The Photo-mechanics of Adolescent Identity: A Collaboration of Mother and Daughter

Abstract: As a result of the proliferation of camera phones and social networking platforms focusing on image sharing, photography has become an influential vocabulary for American adolescents' self-expression. As an artist and mother of two girls, Deborah Dudley's art practice engages her daughters in the action and agency of self representation. These mother-daughter collaborations address the struggle and the strain of complicated physical and emotional transformations competing with the media lives of adolescents and attempts to empower girls as authors of their own identity, to claim greater agency in curating their sense of self.

Speaker: Maud Pierrier

Title: Making Mothers: The potential of Critical Making as Feminist Pedagogy

This paper presents the initial findings of an action research project with mothers and its attempt to develop a critical making pedagogy which identifies making as a key part of maternal empowerment. Critical making combines reflection on personal experience and critical thinking with the physical fabrication of an object. The *Making Mothers* workshops transform textile based work which is often devalued as unintellectual women's work into feminist knowledge experiments. Each workshop consists of an individual textile project accompanied by a conversation around feminist stories of motherhood using poems and images and how this relates to participants experiences, encouraging reflection on how unpaid work continues to be undervalued and the power of connections between women. Participants are encouraged to translate these discussions into the making of a textile based object which have so far included aprons and samplers. I will discuss the challenges faced in developing this pedagogy and its potential for transforming the way

academic knowledge about motherhood is produced and for redefining maternal empowerment.

Speaker: Freddie Robins

Title: Bad Mother

Abstract: My daughter's school class-room assistant loves to knit. Last December she said that she had knitted my daughter a cardigan, as she knew that I never would. On Christmas Eve her husband delivered it, as he handed me the package he said two words, not "Happy Christmas" but "Bad Mother". The exhibition of this piece, entitled *Bad Mother* (2013), elicited another surprising remark. A male visitor congratulated me on what he saw as a "very honest admission". My identity as a mother and the tumultuous emotions I have felt are the driving force behind an on-going series of knitted works.

Bio: Freddie Robins is an artist and Senior Tutor in Textiles at the Royal College of Art, London. www.freddierobins.com

Session 2 Troubling maternal

Panel 6: The mOther

Speaker: Luly Le Vay

Title: The New Normal: How surrogacy storylines on US TV sitcoms are turning gay characters straight

Abstract: This paper argues that representations of homosexuality on *The New Normal* and *Rules of Engagement* heterosexualise gay characters through the creation of families through surrogacy. It will be proposed that through this central plot device, ideologies of the heterosexual nuclear family and the patriarchal status quo are reinforced. Further, it will be argued that by the lead characters following the 'straightening device' of 'happiness scripts' (Ahmed, 2010), homosexuality is made more palatable to mainstream audiences. This paper concludes by proposing that the sitcom genre is ideological because it assigns value to and legitimizes not only heteronormativity, but practices such as surrogacy.

Speaker: Penelope Mendonça

Title: Mothers Storying the Absent Father: A Graphic Novel

Abstract: In recent years, the comics medium has increasingly been utilised to tell stories of social relevance, and feminist graphic narratives have been proved to be a powerful tool for bringing stories which represent female perspectives to a wide readership (Chute, 2013). My graphic novel, *Mothers Storying the Absent Father*, is a contribution to this trend, and this paper will explore its ongoing construction, and the unique methodology underpinning it.

Speaker: Joanna Callaghan

Title: Reproduction prohibited

Abstract: In the 'Envois' section of Jacques Derrida's *The Post Card* (1980), pregnancy and 'the child' keep 'coming back'. In 2014 I produced a feature film inspired by the book and made these themes present through five-year old Byron, whose genealogy remains open and the surprising number of pregnant women that inhabit the film. In this paper I will discuss how *Love in the Post: From Plato to Derrida*, reads *Envois* in relation to pregnancy, reproduction and infidelity. I'll also discuss more widely the representation of pregnancy on screen and issues around using one's own child in film.

Bio: Joanna Callaghan is a Senior Lecturer in Filmmaking at the University of Sussex. Her practice-based research explores the relation between film and philosophy through the production of fiction films.

Session 3 Mothers Body

Panel 7: Childbirth

Speaker: Rosalind Howell

Title: Love and Hate in Childbirth

Abstract: As women battle the over-medicalisation of their birthing experience we also face the continuing challenge (noted by Julia Kristeva in 1977) of the idealisation of birth: a discourse that suggests that for the experience of childbirth to be optimal for us and our baby it needs to be 'gentle' and 'pain free'.

Psychoanalysis tells us that all relationships are characterised by ambivalence and for Winnicott this begins with the mother's ability to appropriately hate her baby.

Childbirth has the potential to be transformative for women but this can be thwarted by our cultural attitudes to pain, violence, love and hate. To adapt a phrase by Winnicott, sentimentality is no good at all from a birthing woman's point of view.

Speaker: Mila Oshin

Title: Project AfterBirth

Abstract: This autumn, Project AfterBirth is presenting the first ever international exhibition of work made by contemporary parenting artists of any gender in response to their own pregnancy, birth and/or early parenthood experiences. The exhibition will mark the starting point of a new inter-disciplinary art and research initiative which aims to bring together artists, academics, the media, politicians and other key decision makers to investigate and tackle important issues surrounding pregnancy, birth and early parenthood in the 21st century. Founder and Curator Mila Oshin explains how Project AfterBirth came about, what the role of parenting artists is within it, and where it aims to go from here.

Bio: Project AfterBirth is a Joy Experiment initiative curated by Mila Oshin and White Moose gallery in partnership with representatives from the Museum of Motherhood (New York), Birth Rites Collection (Manchester) and The Photographers' Gallery (London).

www.projectafterbirth.com

Speaker: Emma Finucane

Title: Satellite Clinic

Abstract: My proposed presentation has developed from my experience of giving birth in Ireland in 2008 and 2010 which directly relates to my art practice investigating how connecting, communicating, listening and being listened to impacts on the quality of one's life.

These research interests led me to a residency at the UCD College of Nursing and Midwifery where I initiated an interdisciplinary project. I am currently on a research team with a midwifery lecturer Dr. Maria Healy (research interests include Women's experiences of childbirth & midwifery care; Promoting normal processes of birth and developing midwifery practice) and midwife, Teresa McCreery (Head of the Community Midwives) based at the National Maternity Hospital, Holles Street. Together we are working on the research initiative: An interpretive phenomenological study: Illuminating childbirth experiences of attending a

midwife-led service via visual art works. Insights from this research will highlight women's lived experiences of childbirth via visual artworks and academic publications. The artworks will be included in the UCD Health Sciences Library in book format as an educational tool alongside academic books.

Bio: Emma studied Fine Art in NCAD Dublin, where she received a first class honors degree in 1997 and a MFA in 2006. In 2014 she was awarded a residency in UCD School of Nursing and Midwifery. In 2013 she completed a public art commission for Carlow County Council and was appointed to the Board of Directors in Black Church Print Studio. From 2011 to date she continues to work on an interdisciplinary team of arts and health professionals to establish the Creative Well in Kildare.

Session 3 Mothers Body

Panel 8: Breastfeeding

Speaker: Dr Rachel Epp Buller

Title: Staging a Spectacle: Lactivist Art Intervention in the United States

Abstract: This presentation will examine the ways in which several contemporary North American artist-parents position themselves and their work as agents of cultural change around the topic of breastfeeding. Their socially engaged works challenge the increasing social divisions, particularly in the United States, around the breastfeeding body. By employing collaboration, intervening in institutional spaces as well as moving outside of them, and creating works that actively oppose societal treatment of the breastfeeding body, these artists raise critical questions and alter public and private spaces in ways that make visible and challenge one of the many taboos still surrounding motherhood.

Speaker: Jeca Rodríguez-Colón

Title: Mother Act-ivist, Mother Art-ists

Abstract: This presentation examines a series of performances and interventions by artists who are mothers and whose work could be considered activism (art and activist work). Through their performances they not only express their own politics, but reach out to some type of governmental or systematic issue related to the maternal. Some of the artists I examine in the paper are: the M.A.M.A. group and their 1998 piece Civil Code 43.3, the group intervene on a public space a year after such civil code was approved in California, U.S.A. The code protects a mother's right for breastfeeding in any location, the piece comments on the judgment beyond the code, the day to day stigma from non-breastfeeding individuals.

Speaker: Jill Miller

Title: Collaborative Practices in Art and Community-Making

Abstract: In the US, recent media coverage has focused on "mommy wars" and "tiger moms." TIME magazine featured a mother breastfeeding her 5-year-old on the cover. In parallel, socially engaged art focused on participatory practices has become institutionalized in the art world. In this presentation, Jill Miller will discuss the overlap of these communities, focusing on mother art that engages in participation and community building through public performance and social media. Miller contextualizes her two projects: The Milk Truck and ArtReach Studios.

Session 3 Mothers Body

Panel 9: Performing mothers body

Speaker: Andrea Liss

Title: A Revolutionary Promise of Justice: Diane Arbus' Self-Portrait Pregnant, 1945

Abstract: My critical musings on this little-known maternal self-portrait are meant to reconceive its meaning as an uncanny predecessor to contemporary feminist embodied knowledge. This knowledge holds the potential for articulating new strategies of respect for the maternal and for the real mother, in other words for thinking m(o)therwise. This portent photograph not only presented a non-normative concept of pregnancy during its cultural moment; it continues to challenge the deep patriarchal “embarrassment” that pregnancy carries. Arbus’ performance of the maternal was crafted within her creative practice and deeply embedded within a new maternal structure of projected work and self. Picturing herself as artist/photographer, other, lover and projected mother, she embodies a creative interplay between the passion of theory and the thinking body.

Speaker: Victoria Bianchi

Title: Pre-natal Performance: Motherhood, artistry and identity

Abstract: This performance-lecture reflects on motherhood in relation to two performances I created prior to my daughter’s birth in July 2014: in:utero (BuzzCut Festival) and ANTHEM: To A New One (National Theatre of Scotland). The presentation will include sections of both performances, followed by discussion of a perceived dichotomy between career aspiration and the condition of expectant motherhood. Drawing upon Stuart (2011) and Mitchell and Green’s (2002) explorations of motherhood, creativity and identity, this lecture will combine memories of pregnancy with feminist critique in order to analyse the anxieties and conflicts that arise from the relationship between motherhood and artistry.

Speaker: Natalie Loveless

Title: Maternal Ecologies

Abstract: Forty years after the intervention of feminist art, what is the experience of the daughters of that era who have since become mothers? How is that experience expressed in their artwork, and how does this artwork relate to the work done in the 70s? This presentation will describe and present), Maternal Ecologies, a research project that take the form of artistic practice. As well as offering description of a personal artistic research project, this presentation will discuss the role of performance in contemporary art exploring motherhood and the maternal, from the live body in a gallery space or collective bodies gathering in the streets to a mother and infant in the intimacy of their home.

Session 4 Practicum of Mothering

Panel 10: Autobiographical encounters

Speaker: Tracy Evans

Title: Building a story to contain us

Abstract: I am presenting a piece of performative writing that explores the beginnings of a creative collaboration with my sons, aged 8 and less than 1 month. We have just begun the process of making a performance about their births. We are looking to craft and tell a birth story together.

The paper will attempt to describe the 'container' within which we are working together, which is not fixed or permanent, and is filled with interruptions (Baraitser 2008; Simic 2014). I will also explore how a process of deep listening might inform our current collaboration (Merleau-Ponty 1962; Abrams 1996; Nancy 2007; Serres 2008).

Speaker: Helen Sargeant

Title: M(other) Stories: Failure and maternal imperfection

Abstract: M(other) Stories www.motherstories.co.uk is a daily blog that I intend to keep over the duration of a year. I will present a fifteen minute reading of autobiographical texts extracted from M(other) Stories presented against a projected backdrop of still and moving images from the project. The presentation will focus on locating failure and maternal imperfection. Producing this artwork often comes at an emotional and physical cost to myself and my family: my head and our home end up one big chaotic, dirty, unkempt mess, there are conflicts to settle between my children and my partner. I literally cannot keep up with it all.

Bio: Helen Sargeant is an artist and academic. Between 2002-2009, she lectured for the BA(Hons) Visual Arts Programme at The University of Salford. Her work has been published in *Studies in the Maternal* (Volume 4, Issue 1, 2012). In 2013, she instigated *The Egg, The Womb, The Head & The Moon*, an on-line, interdisciplinary, collaborative art project that lasted for a duration of 42 weeks, the time frame of a pregnancy. The project was presented at AHRC Motherhood in Post-1968 Women's Writing: Cross Cultural and Interdisciplinary Dialogues Conference at The University of London and culminated in an exhibition at Artsmill, Hebden Bridge, 2014.

Speaker: Anna Kell

Title: Drawn from the Breast: Reclaiming Time through Art-making

Abstract: "Nursing Drawings" is a series drawings made from observation while nursing my son. Breastfeeding is a very involved and time consuming part of early motherhood. I started this series when my son was two weeks old as a way to memorialize the process as well as to reclaim the time I felt was slipping away. While some use this time to read or play Candy Crush, as an artist I was interested in documenting these intimate experiences through the process of gesture drawing. The presentation will include images of this and related artwork and will explore the complex feelings surrounding breastfeeding, as well as the public reaction toward the work.

Session 4 Practicum of Mothering

Panel 11: Practicum of Mothering

Speaker: Clare Qualmann

Title: Perambulator



Abstract: Perambulator is a walking project that explores and reflects on the experience of walking with a pram (or pushchair). In the first months of my son's life, pushing his pram around the area that I had lived in for the previous 12 years, I was struck by the number of detours that I had to take – the route alterations, the small (and not-so-small) impediments to smooth passage. My very familiar routes through and to places were rudely disrupted, forcing a new relationship with the very physical details of the urban environment. Viewing the city through this new lens feels political. Losing the freedom of easy mobility – a freedom that I hadn't been aware of before – connects me to a massive group of people (predominantly women) in the same position, encumbered by wheels.

Speaker: Margaret Morgan

Title: Mothering artists live the avant garde.

Abstract: Mothering is my practicum and as such it reaffirms the value of the philosophy and critical thought I learn as an artist. This is not the simple delight in observing the infant's entering the mirror stage or abjecting bodily waste or her mildly phobic reaction to the plug hole of the bathtub but, more deeply, the way avant garde practice informs who I am as a mother. If art of the past one hundred and fifty years has yearned to be 'life', if the practice of artists has approached the dasein of daily life, then artists who are mothers have arrived. Thus mothering becomes durational performance, situationist *dérive*, post-studio conceptual art.

Speaker: Martina Mullaney

Title: Enemies of Good Art

Abstract: The term family is frequently appropriated for political goals, with its focus on the traditional heteronormative nuclear family. Family issues in the media rarely take into consideration alternative family models, and policy seldom considers the needs of precarious workers with families. Enemies of Good Art is a multi-disciplinary practice based research project interrogating the position of the artist in relation to the family. The project aims to identify and explore forms of everyday sociality that make the woman artist with children invisible.

Bio: Martina Mullaney is an Irish artist and PhD Candidate at University of Reading. She graduated with an MA in Photography from the Royal College of Art in 2004. After the birth of her daughter she initiated the project Enemies of Good Art in 2009. Enemies of Good Art is a multi-disciplinary project interrogating the position of the artist in relation to the family. The project is executed through a series of public meetings, performances, lectures and live radio discussions. Meetings have taken place at; Tate Modern, the ICA, The RCA, Southbank Centre and Chisenhale Gallery. Internationally at Tranzit Display Gallery in Prague, Czech Republic and Galerija Nova, Zagreb in 2015. Enemies of God Art has also broadcast on Resonance 1044FM.

Session 4 Practicum of Mothering

Panel 12: New Aesthetic of Motherhood

Speaker: Eti Wade

Title: Motherhood as Creative Context: New Aesthetic Forms out of Everyday Maternal Practice



Abstract: My presentation will survey the conditions under which mother artists operate and identify distinct categories of maternalist creative processes and the aesthetic forms that result. Titled new maternalist aesthetic forms, they include: Maternalist Materiality, Maternal Refraction, Intersubjective Maternalist Trace, Politicised Maternalist Multiplicity and Maternalist Performance and the Raw Everyday.

Speaker: Myrel Chernick

Title: Art, Motherhood and Maternal Ambivalence

Abstract: Here I briefly trace the development of my work, from my pre-maternal feminist work, to my decision to explore aspects of maternal ambivalence after my children were born, to the genesis and expansion of Maternal Metaphors, the exhibition developed from my exploration of the complexities of the maternal relationship. I will discuss the influences on my thinking of Susan Suleiman in *Playing and Motherhood* and Roszika Parker in *Mother Love/Mother Hate*, and will cover the discoveries I made and the experiences I had in proposing Maternal Metaphors and the subsequent publication *The M Word: Real Mothers in Contemporary Art*.

Speaker: Lise Haller Ross

Title: Motherism

Abstract: At the intersection of feminism, science fiction, and disco, Motherism aims to locate the mother-shaped hole in contemporary art discourse. If the proverbial Mother is perhaps perceived as a persona non grata in the art world, because her nurturing nature is at odds with the hyperbolic ideal of the singular artistic genius, Motherism amplifies her presence, channeling her energy, complexity, and sublime creative potential in a series of intimate and critical reflections. The resulting collection of letters — dedicated with love from one mother to her dear daughter, sister, mother, and reader — fuse biography, music, art, and history into an auto-theoretical testimony that recalls and redefines the future imperfect.

Session 5 Memory and grief

Panel 13: Maternal memory

Speaker: Laura Reynolds

Title: I Do Some of My Best Work in the Kitchen and in the Bedroom - The Art of Motherhood



Abstract: Motherhood impacts and influences our creative output; the duality of language inherent in parenting, seduction and repulsion, being a good enough mother, fairy tales, maternal ambivalence, the bed and kitchen table lead us to the breaking point and with it the moments that define us. Looking at the experience of motherhood; through a primary evaluation of contemporary creative parenting, including a selection of the author's work, and that of Guido Reni, Mary Queen of Scots, Louise Bourgeois, Mary Cassatt and Tracey Emin, this study concludes that the things we submit ourselves to wholly can be both our salvation and destruction.

Speaker: Paula Chambers

Title: Transcendental Housework

Abstract: My mother was not a feminist, yet growing up in 1970s suburban London I was witness to, and complicit in, my mother's active refusal to conform to the expectations of a good housewife. Cleaning, tidying, washing up, were low on the list of my mother's priorities.

As a feminist artist and mother, I adopted my mother's domestic dissent, integrating it as philosophy into the processes and outcomes of my art making practice. I do not have a studio but make art in my kitchen, utilizing the space and the objects that inhabit it, as a temporalized site of domestic resistance.

Speaker: Nikolina Nedeljkov

Title: Mothership : (M)otherness and authorship in Tainted Love by Stewart Home

Abstract: The advent of anti-foundational / anti-essentialist discourse has engendered a belief that society based on immutable notions of cultural categories, self and political structures perpetuates conditions of social oppression and politics of exclusion. In the realm of letters, traditional concept of the subject is manifested in the idea of the aggrandised signification of author. These are some of the thematic foci of Stewart Home's cultural critique presented in his novel Tainted Love. It challenges autobiography as the genre reflecting dominance-subordination ridden societal relations. Home's ghost-written autobiography of his (m)other points out totalising tendencies toward normalisation and/of commoditisation of countercultures.

Session 5 Memory and grief

Panel 14: Grief

Speaker: Ehryn Torrell

Title: The Occurrence of You and Me

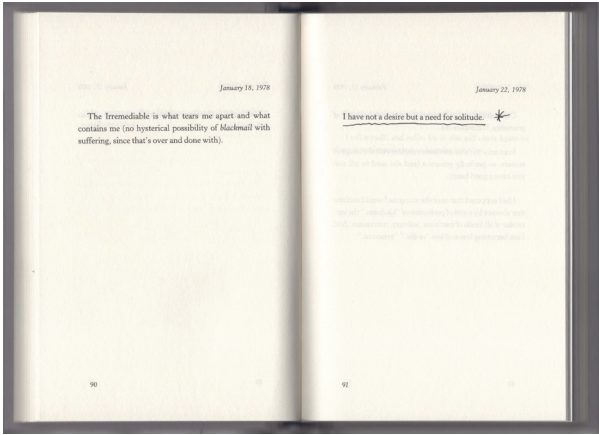
Abstract: London-based Canadian artist Ehryn Torrell will discuss a body of work called "The Occurrence of You and Me," which attempts to give visual language to the highly personal and multi-faceted process of grieving. Having worked predominantly in painting, Torrell uses a variety of different mediums in this work, including video and sculpture. In doing so, she expresses not only a new aesthetic in her practice, but her need for various paths of discovery within complicated subject matter. Sourcing from her family archive, handwriting plays a key role in this work and becomes a metaphor for longing and legibility within an illegible world of loss.

Speaker: Linda Duvall

Title: Motherhood, Grief, Art and Roland Barthes

Abstract: For the two years after Roland Barthes' mother died, Barthes took notes on index cards about his grief. These 330 cards eventually became the book Mourning Diary (2009).

In the years after the loss of my son, I responded to this complex and unbearable situation in the language available to me - a series of visual art projects. They ranged from very direct responses like She Can't Begin (2007), the first work that I created after my son's death to Where were the Mothers? (2010) a work that explored questions around maternal guilt. I will also contextualize the work in the accompanying exhibition Walking with the Trees that we Planted Together (2014), in which I removed language and responded through bodily gestures in an intimate environment.



Speaker: Jules Findley

Title: Edge of M'Otherhood

Abstract: In my practice led research, I am exploring the material of paper as a means of researching into bereavement. In hand made paper it leaves an uneven edge, raw edges remind us of the raw feelings we have in early bereavement. Torn edges, for those tears we weep for the loss of a baby, the ritual tearing of fabric or the urge to tear in anger. We feel torn and frayed around the edges in the mourning of our loss.

Session 5 Memory and grief

Panel 15: Ambivalence and sorrow

Speaker: Dimitra Douskos

Title: The m/Other's sex and the m/Other's unsex: Ruth Benedict and the sense of culture

Abstract: Ruth Benedict, a poet more widely remembered as a renowned social anthropologist of the culture and personality movement that often sought to analyze personality traits as an embodiment of cultural injunctions, had lost her father when she was hardly two years old. She has given several (and strongly differentiated) accounts of the impact this death had had on her life and thought and of her difficulty to cope with her mother's excessive –she felt - grieve. Yet, unless it is thought as containing elements of matrixial com-passion, in Ettinger's sense, her reaction to maternal pain may seem at least excessive too, in particular in a sentence as complex as the one that follows, that she writes, aged 48, to describe her extreme feelings on her mother's annual ritual weeping on the anniversary of her husband's death: "an excruciating misery with physical trembling of a peculiar involuntary kind which culminated periodically in rigidity like an orgasm".

Speaker: Catriona McAra

Title: Lactation Narratives: The Embodied Fairy Tales of Samantha Sweeting

Abstract: This illustrated paper explores embodied storytelling in the work of interdisciplinary artist Samantha Sweeting (b.1982). Sweeting's work is characterised by reference to biblical Madonna and child imagery, nursery rhymes and fairytales e.g. Perrault's 'Donkeyskin' which Sweeting visually rewrites from a feminist standpoint. In 2007-2011, Sweeting produced a controversial body of work in which she allowed various animals to suckle directly from her breasts. With reference to the legacies of French feminist theory (especially Kristeva and Cixous), I argue that Sweeting corporealises the fairytale in a way that opens it up

to contemporary debates around the maternal body as a political site.

Speakers: Laura Gonzales and Eleanor Bowen

Title: Mothers, Daughters and Cryptophores

Abstract: This paper explores our particular relation to the maternal figure in terms of cryptonymy (examining words that hide) and cryptophores (bearers of secrets), as defined by Nicholas Abraham and Maria Torok. Secrets play a significant part in consolidating mother-daughter relationships, especially when mediated by some kind of death or disappearance. The secrets these women carry have to be dealt with privately from within the mother-daughter relationship; public confession is not possible.

Session 6 Maternal herstories

Panel 16: Death and reflection

Speaker: Angie Voela

Title: Her Mother's Berlin: The City, Maternal Loss and Surprise

Abstract: Hildegard Basch started talking to her daughter Barbara about her childhood in pre-war Nazi Berlin when she was in her eighties and already suffering from memory loss. Gleaning her mother's story from fragmented narrations, archival research and several visits to Berlin, Barbara Loftus, a painter and film-maker, constructed a series of artworks which visualised Hildegard's childhood. In this paper I discuss Loftus's artwork and her documentary film *Lieder ohne Worte* (Songs without Words) which records the progress of the artwork and several visits to Berlin, culminating in the symbolic commemoration of the death of Hildegard's family by laying a plaque outside their former home in Keithstrasse.

Speaker: Miriam Schaer

Title: Biasing the Non-Maternal and Reverse Mothering

Abstract: A presentation examining two extremes of motherhood — society's bias against childless women, and what I call reverse mothering. Cultures around the world disparage childless women. Exploring this became part of my artistic practice. By reverse mothering, I mean the situation in which parents, aged past their ability to care for themselves, must be cared for by others; very often, their female children.

In caring for, or mothering, my own late, demented mother, I found myself in a dialogue with both motherhood and death that led to several projects, including one in the *Alternative Maternals* exhibit at this conference.

Speaker: Rosy Martin

Title: Mother Daughter Dilemmas – when the balance shifts

Abstract: I used my photographic and video practice to work through and make visible the ambivalences of shifting mother-daughter dynamics, as the 'dutiful' daughter slowly but inevitably becomes the vulnerable widowed mother's carer. I visually reflected upon the feelings of being housebound and used audio to suggest increasing dementia. My intention was to place the audience into her position, evoking empathy. After my mother died, I used phototherapeutic performative re-enactments to embody her, re-imaging a lost past in 'Acts of reparation'. In these transformative acts of becoming, I reconsidered the complexities and contradictions of her life, inflected by loss. I was thus more able to introject the 'good mother' lost to me through her dementia.

Session 6: Maternal herstories

Panel 17: Child (less)

Speaker: Alice O'Neill and Jo Paul

Title: One For Sorrow: Imagined children, superstition and re-imagined futures.

Abstract: In this collaboration we are researching the infertility journey through creative practice. The imagined child, in this case a daughter, is one that is present from the first time we imagine our future selves as mothers. This child is seen and experienced in our imaginations. We will explore who this child is, where she came from and what it is she represents. We will look at Chodorow's *The Reproduction of Mothering* to help us analyse these first hand experiences and emotions.

Speaker: Lois Tonkin

Title: Articulating a "sense of myself as a mother": Drawing as a creative exploration of 'Circumstantial Childlessness'.

Abstract: 'Circumstantially childless' women hoped to become biological mothers but find themselves at the end of their fertility without having done so, for primarily social reasons. I discuss a psychoanalytically-informed psychosocial study of 26 women in which I used a participant-produced drawing method alongside interviews to explore their fantasies of both themselves as a mother, and of their potential child(ren); aspects of their experience of circumstantial childlessness that were often unconscious, unsayable, ephemeral, elusive, or difficult to express in verbal language. I illustrate the ways in participants' drawings made some aspects of their experience of 'circumstantial childlessness' visible and accessible.

Speaker: Sally Sales

Title: Identity through Injury: Contemporary adoption and the unfit mother

Abstract: This paper is an exploration of how a certain category of unfit mother has entered the narratives of adoption through a change in adoption practices in the contemporary era. Whilst these changes have led to a greater representation of unfit mothers lives and experiences, this representation has not so far produced a position from which their invisibility and exclusion can be reworked. The presentation will link the lack of social recognition that these mothers experience with the centrality of loss and depression that these women commonly report in their daily lives. For these women motherhood, far from being a source of creativity, is a source of enduring pain and stigma.

Bio: Dr Sally Sales has worked in the field of adoption as both a practitioner and as an academic researcher. She has many years experience of group work with mothers who have had children permanently removed under child protection measures. She is currently a visiting research fellow at University of West of England, undertaking a 3 year project on adoption, kinship and class. Her most recent publications are *Adoption, Family and the paradox of Origins: A Foucauldian History* (2012) and 'Contested attachments: rethinking adoptive kinship in the era of open adoption' (*Child and Family Social Work*, March 2013). She is also a psychoanalyst in private practice and a member of the Site for Contemporary Psychoanalysis.

Session 6: Maternal herstories

Panel 18: Maternal herstories

Speaker: Jiřina Šmejkalová

Title Anna Pammrová as mother

Abstract: Even for the most radical Central European feminists of the so-called first wave, the discourse of reproducing the nation and nursing its children was not just part of their strategy to gain (male) allies in defending women's agenda within the nationalist political battlefield, but also a matter of faith and commitment. By utilizing work by Anna Pammrová (1860-1945), an unique Austro-Bohemian feminist thinker, I explore voices which took the courage to challenge the nationalist myth of motherhood by revealing the (at least from their perspective) unsolvable conflict between the 'natural' commitment to reproduction on the one hand, and their creative and intellectual mission on the other.

Speaker: Tina Kinsella

Title: Shocks in the Maternal in the Work of Frida Kahlo and Bracha L. Ettinger

Abstract: Addressing the implications of maternal shocks in the first zone of pre-maternality — pregnancy, miscarriage, abortion, infertility — this presentation considers aesthetic processing of maternal shocks in the artwork of Frida Kahlo and the artworking to theoryworking of Ettinger. In Kahlo's oeuvre we find manifest pictorial-symbolic references to her personal embodied experience of the reality of gestation and child loss. In Ettinger's artistic work reference to such experience is less explicit and thus this investigation into the elaboration of the first zone of maternal shock in Ettinger's artistic practice is informed by personal testimony provided by the artist to the author. At stake in this investigation is a reconsideration of processes of feminine sublimation.

Bio: Dr. Tina Kinsella lectures in Visual Culture and Gender Studies at the National College of Art and Design, Dublin Institute of Technology, and the Centre for Gender and Women's Studies, Trinity College Dublin, She is visiting lecturer on the MA Art Process in Crawford School of Art, Cork Her research and publications institute conversations between philosophy, psychoanalysis and art practice to focus on intersections between performance, performativity, affect, aesthetic, ethics and subjectivity. Forthcoming publications include *Aesthetic Otherities in the Queer Aisthesis* series by Punctum Books, 'Sticky Subjects: from Crypt to Transcript' in *Interkulturnost Journal*. A commissioned catalogue essay, 'Painting the Feminine into Ontology', accompanies the exhibition of Bracha L. Ettinger's work in El Museo Universitario Leopoldo Flores, Mexico, in November 2014. For further information: <http://tinakinsella.wordpress.com/> and <https://ncad.academia.edu/TinaKinsella>

Speakers: Margarida Brito Alves and Patrícia Rosas

Title: Salette Tavares: On Positive Days and Playing with Children

Abstract: With a background in philosophy/aesthetics, Salette Tavares (1922-1994) was a Portuguese artist who first attracted attention during the 1960s, in the context of the Experimental Poetry movement. In connection with a continuous and committed theoretical reflection, her work combined literary production with artistic practice, creating a dually contaminated field — that extended to visual poetry, to the spatial occupation of that poetry by means of a three-dimensional investigation, and to the production of objects.

In the scope of her consistent research, Salette Tavares developed works that evidence a feminine, and even domestic dimension, creatively exploring — both on poetry and art — elements intimately connected to the house — such as doors, teacups, napkins, pillows, tables

or waste. Drawing from the artistic context that frames her production, it's this affective, familiar and domestic universe that this paper intends to problematize

Practical presentations Performance, Film and Video screenings

Film screening + Q&A

Artists: Emily Underwood-Lee

Title: *Patience (Installation): a reflection on Cancer and Maternity*

Running time: 20 minutes.

Description: I grew some lumps, I grew some lumps, I grew some lumps. One was a baby, two were something more sinister.

'Patience' is created from letters written during the period surrounding my daughter's premature birth. During this time I was also undergoing treatment for breast cancer. 'Patience' was initially conceived as a performance but as my health and body have changed over the last 8 years I have reconceived the piece as an installation and have removed my live body from the space leaving only traces of myself in projected images, sound and props. The piece now stands as a moment frozen in time and a reflection on the fragile nature of our bodies and relationships.

Artist Whitney Mc Veigh

Title: *Birth The origins of life Excerpt Screening*

Running time: 11 minutes

Description: Birth is an enquiry into how six women have embraced the physical and psychological changes that come with carrying and the birth of children. These are women at the end of their life who recount their memories to the camera. Do they ever forget birth? How does birth transform the ways in which we relate to life? The project is in collaboration with St Christopher's Hospice, Pulse Films and London College of Fashion and comes under Whitney McVeigh's research entitled Human Fabric, which looks at the human being as vessel and carrier of stories and memories.

Artists: Tracey Kershaw

Title: '50 things my son doesn't need me for'

Running time: 24 minutes



Description: The video explores the changing relationship between my son and myself, and speaks about issues of loss. My interest is with the details and familiarity of everyday events. I focus on unremarkable maternal experiences of daily life that relate to a particular time, but which to me articulate both the extraordinary and the momentous, and represent the more fundamental changes that will inevitably occur as my son grows older.

Artist: Mieke Vanmechellen

Title: The Bee and the Great Mother

Running time: 2 min

Description: During the summer of 2014, I made several treks over a hillside to a mysterious and remote location in order to document a site specific performative work. Set within and around the maternal structure of the home, at first glance it depicts the interchanging generations of mother/daughter/grandmother while the underlying narrative structure evokes sentiments of sorrow, transience and emphasises the energy of the mother instinct. Simultaneously the work manifests the concept of co-emergence, enabling 'wit(h)nessing' and 'fragilising' which heals the inherent trauma of those involved while giving a sense of hope to the observer.

Performances + Q&A

Artist: Lizzie Philps

Title: The Pilgrimage of the Prodigal Daughter

Running time: 20 min

Description: The path has been trodden over 6 billion times before, but it's still pretty rough in places. In 2013, I carried my daughter 50 miles to my mothers' house. Humbled by new motherhood, walking seemed to express the inexpressible about stepping into the shoes of the next generation. With 24 hours of footage and stories, a collection of leaves and flowers, photos, tweets and GPS tracks, I have an excess of "maternal memorabilia" (Kelly, 2010) to document what we did, but not a clue how I will begin to tell my daughter why we didn't just go to Tumble-tots instead.

Artist: Oriana Fox

Title: The Funeral Oration for Traditional Womanhood

Running time: 15 min

Description: This performance is based on Kathie Amatniek's speech "Funeral Oration For The Burial of Traditional Womanhood", which was read during the first protest of the women's liberation movement. During a Vietnam War protest in Washington D.C. in 1968, a group of women called the Jeanette Rankin Brigade broke away from the mass of protesters and gathered in Arlington Cemetery to hold this symbolic burial. This speech explains the necessity of laying to rest this out-dated feminine ideal, that is, the submissive woman whose function is solely biological and whose only power – that of being a wife and mother – the speaker decries as 'amounting to nothing politically'. I present the remains of this archetypal figure – an old brassiere and some pearls in a pile of ash and read aloud the original speech. Then I show another ash-covered group of objects: a pair of high heels, a dummy and an iphone, which represent the vestiges of 'Have it All' Womanhood, whose funeral oration I have written, echoing the content and turns of phrase of the oration by Amatniek. The new eulogy answers the question of which contemporary female identity feminists would want to inter now.

Artist: April Munson

Title: Untitled Woman

Running time: 20 min

Description: This performance explores the multiple realities that are born from a family tree rooted in mental illness. Generational views of female identity, motherhood, and the role of daughter are explored. Survivors of the relationships share their creative escape for physical, emotional and spiritual survival. Told from the view of the oldest granddaughter, we learn about the fragmentation of realities, the safety in denying the truth, and ultimately examine the role of education in the space where the worlds begin to reconnect.

Artist: Prams in Halls

Title: Medea and her Daughters

Running time: TBC - under 15 minutes.



An extract from Prams In The Hall's work in progress exploring the mythologizing of the role of mother. 'Medea and her Daughters' takes a fresh look at Euripides' Medea, as well as the protestations of 'modern Medeas' who don't behave as perfect mothers should.

Video Screening 1 + Presentation + Q&A

The interdisciplinary panel offers a forum for reflection on sites for the emergence of a new episteme in critical art writing and cultural production, born out of experiences of contemporary motherhood and explorations of mothering imaginaries.

Title: Becoming Imperceptible M/other: Negotiating Porous Multiple Selves
Speaker: Katarzyna Kosmala

This paper discusses porous boundaries of contemporary motherhood and reflects on a construction of a particular episteme born out of being in-between. Drawing on the examples of Polish artist Hanna Nowicka's video works *Initiation*, *Swinging* and *Shelter* that could be read both through the lens of gender and psychoanalytic methods, with representation suspended somewhere between memory and imagination, childhood experiences and the unconscious, the paper addresses some of the challenges associated with contemporary living, based on continuous negotiations of multiple selves that make up 'nomadic' motherhood, and drawing on Rosi Braidotti's nomadic subjectivity.

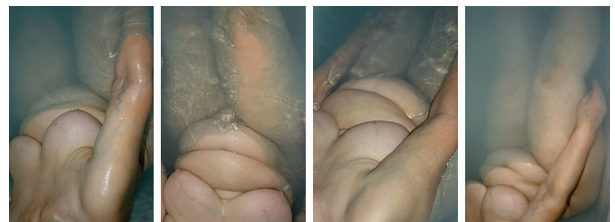
Video screenings: *Initiation*, *Swinging*, and pre-premiere trailer of *Shelter*
Curated by Katarzyna Kosmala



Title: Encountering M/other

Speaker: Hanna Nowicka

The Sanctuary of My Mother and Mummy and I are One installations confront the viewer with emotional and optical deformations resulting from an attempt to look at someone (the m/other) too closely. The longer we are together, the closer is our perspective, and consequently, the more fragmented becomes the image. A fragmentary image not only strips the body of subjectivity, but also signals a way of recording reality in its refusal to create a distance between the 'viewer' and the 'scene', mother and a child, or between the 'artist' and the 'object'.



Artist: Mo-Ling Chui

Title: Accidental Oriental: Chapter 2, Motherhood

London sketches: a work-in-progress

Running time: 15 minutes

Description:

This personal experimental documentary piece is part of an ongoing series entitled Accidental Oriental, based on intimate conversations with creative contemporary Asian women, living and working in rapidly changing urban and social contexts. This screening will present sketches of a work-in-progress talking to London mothers of Asian descent - reflecting on motherhood, shifting identities, changes in creativity and work, having mixed children, cross-cultural relationships, ethnicity, spirituality, childcare, education, inspirations and challenges.

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Video screening 2 + Q&A

Artist: Barbara Sternberg

Title: Proximity and Distance

Running time: 20 minutes

Description: Three 16mm. films, “A Trilogy”, “in the nature of things”, and “Far From” have been edited into this 20’ minute piece on the theme of motherhood and separation- closeness and distance- from the first separation, cutting of the umbilical cord, to the last, death of one’s mother. However, generational links remain.

The first segment shows Silbury Hill near Avebury which, first thought to be a burial tomb, is a Neolithic mound depicting the pregnant womb of the earth. The Great Goddess, the universal mother, was Mistress of Life and sovereign of Death.

Artist: Terri Hawkes and Storey Wilkins

Title: Being Fourteen

Running time: 17 minutes

Description: Part documentary and part autoethnography, this practiced based, creative presentation has combined the filmmakers’ art and mothering in a project focused on their children and their kids’ friends. “Part II” of Being Fourteen examines themes from a unique stage of childhood development – “in between” childhood and adulthood. Play and conversation illuminate puberty, school, friends, love, family, fears, and dreams while allowing a glimpse into a small global north group of boys drawn from the Yonge Street corridor of “North Toronto” -- predominantly Caucasian, anglo, heteronormative, and middle class. Interviews were conducted in Toronto, Canada, in April, 2015.

Artist: Joanna Callaghan

Title: Bia

Running time: 30 minutes

Description: “Bia” was the name my son gave to breast milk. In 2007, when he was four months old I undertook a residency at a gallery in Sydney where I made the first video. The second video two years later took place at my home.

I wasn’t sure what, if anything I would produce from these recordings. At the time, I felt compelled to record the experience of breastfeeding for myself. I wanted to remember and relive temporally an act which appears to both suspend and stretch time and during which one feels a range of emotions; joy, boredom, frustration, happiness, enslavement, love, laughter.

Artist: Laurel Terlesky

Title: Reverb

Running time: 16 min

Description: Evidence is gathered from ten motherless daughters on how a mother's influence will echo and reflect inside us by moving in our shadow, both consciously and unconsciously, until it cannot be seen, heard or felt anymore. Our (mis)remembered past leaves a residue that leaks through our skin. When we penetrate this space by connecting with others who have endured a family disconnection, we will find we are not alone. A sense of interdependence can be found among the many voices, ours and others, who are lost in the conflicting notions of presence and absence that the body endures.