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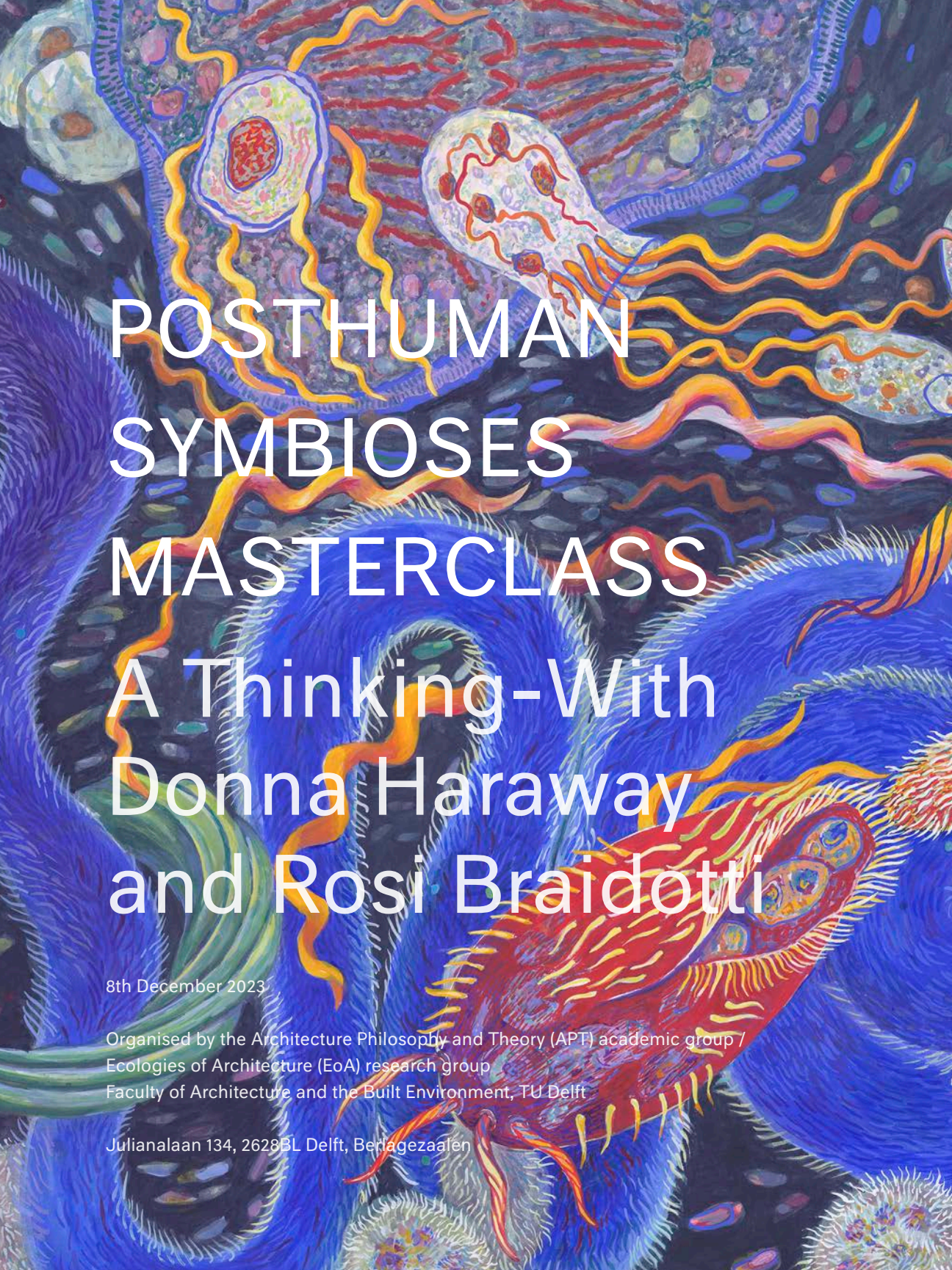
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POSTHUMAN SYMBIOSES MASTERCLASS

A Thinking-With Donna Haraway and Rosi Braidotti

8th December 2023

Organised by the Architecture Philosophy and Theory (APT) academic group /
Ecologies of Architecture (EoA) research group
Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment, TU Delft

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Focusing on the urgent question of our 'becoming-with' environments, the 'Posthuman Symbioses Masterclass' aims to find conceptual tools for redirecting future architecture and urban design towards a more sympoietic direction that may mitigate the increasingly complex crises in the Anthropocene.

As the posthumanist philosopher Rosi Braidotti argues, the environmental, social, and technological transformations that define the present can no longer be addressed separately by the sciences, humanities, and engineering. This disciplinary separation along divisions of nature, culture, and technology prevents the approach of these immense and irreversible problems as processes that are created, co-constituted, and co-individuated by design. The concept of sympoiesis elaborated in Donna Haraway's well-known work critically extends autopoietic notions of self-organising systems by attending more closely to the forms of co-evolution in which things always 'become-together-with' other things.

Held in conjunction with Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam, the host of 'An Evening With Donna Haraway, Bruno Clarke and Rosi Braidotti' on Thursday, 7th December, the 'Posthuman Symbioses Masterclass' on 8th December at BK/TU Delft is open to a maximum of 100 participating MSc students and PhD candidates.

The Masterclass is organised around two sessions where a total of 12 selected students will be given the opportunity to deliver a brief pitch presentation of their research (maximum of 5 slides, 10 minutes) with a following discussion round. The event is conceived as an intergenerational experience of 'learning-with' Haraway and Braidotti as leading (eco)feminist/posthumanist theorists, and (PhD) students with a keen interest in adopting and adapting their approaches in their own research and designerly work. The wider intention is to generally foster inter- and trans-disciplinary approaches to architecture and urban design that embrace the life sciences or humanities, and especially posthuman/sympoietic approaches, situated forms of knowledge, and 'minor' angles.

Cover Art: Shoshanah Dubiner, Endosymbiosis: Homage to Lynn Margulis. A six-foot wide reproduction of the painting occupies a hallway in the Morrill Science Center at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, MA, USA where Lynn Margulis was a Distinguished Professor from 1988 until her death in 2011. (Image courtesy of the artist).

Víctor Muñoz Sanz

“Cowborgs in the polder: how the design of farm buildings, animal bodies and technologies transformed Dutch dairy landscapes”

Automated and reproductive technologies have driven the transformation and growth of the Dutch dairy industry. Today, this sector is questioned for its adverse effect on ‘nature’. To better address environmental problems caused by farming, it is important to understand how the use of technology in this sector is affecting those places where food is produced. This transdisciplinary research study is examining the interactions between designed animals, humans, robots, data technologies, and farm architecture in the industrialized large-scale Dutch dairy landscapes, from 1992 to the nitrogen crisis. Ultimately, the project will broaden our conception of how technology and industrial capitalism shape the built environment.

Keywords:

Dairy industry and animal industrial complex; automation technologies; reproductive technologies; cows

Bio:

Víctor Muñoz Sanz is a Spanish-Mexican researcher and educator, currently an assistant professor of urban design at the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment of TU Delft. His work examines the design and socio-spatial implications of the past, present and future of work. He is the co-editor of *Automated Landscapes* (Nieuwe Instituut, 2023), *Roadside Picnics: Encounters with the Uncanny* (2022), *Habitat: Ecology Thinking in Architecture* (NAI010, 2020).

Alina Paias & Catherine Koekoek

“Sympoietic conditions for change”

At a time when (bio, social, technological) diversity is threatened, spatial designers have a key role to play in imagining and establishing the conditions for urgent change. Simultaneously, architectural practices are often complicit in and even reliant on exploitation, extraction and the suppression of difference. This double diagnosis is the point of departure for the International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam 2024, themed Nature of Hope . What conditions are needed in architecture for the design of spaces and practices affording sympoietic and response-able action towards the crises of our time? In this talk we focus on the coordination of the CEDEC programme by Mayumi Watanabe in São Paulo. This project for building primary schools in the periphery of the city linked the material conditions for the production of architecture to experimental institutional forms. The integration of systems for fabrication and construction, graphic design, community outreach, and a pedagogical programme is here presented as an instance of sympoietic, response-able architecture.

Keywords:

Conditions; sympoiesis; response-ability; production of architecture; institutions

Bio:

Alina Paias is an architectural worker and independent researcher based in Rotterdam. Catherine Koekoek has a background in architecture and philosophy and is a PhD candidate at Erasmus School of Philosophy, Rotterdam. They are both part of the curatorial team for the International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam 2024.