



Society for Visual Anthropology

Visual Research Conference Schedule Toronto, 2023

Program Committee:

Liz Cartwright, Jerome Crowder, Stephanie Takaragawa, Gaurav Datta, Kate Hennessy

Tuesday, Nov. 14

9:30–9:45 **Introduction and Welcome**

9:45–10:25 **Rosemary Georgeson** (Coast-Salish / Sahtu Dene), **Jessica Hallenbeck** (Queen's U), and **Kate Hennessy** (Simon Fraser U) - *The Water We Call Home: Indigenous women's connections to fish, water, and family around the Salish Sea*

10:30-11:10 **Camilo Leon-Quijano** (Aix-Marseille U (IDEAS/ANFAA)). *La Cité*

11:10-11:25 **BREAK**

11:25-12:05 **Brandon Perdomo** (Columbia U) - */testimonyofthebody*

12:10-12:50 **Installation Talks 1**

1) **Chantal Meng** (Goldsmiths, U of London & NSSR) – *Shadow Typology*
2) **Sienna Ruiz** (Washington U. St. Louis, UCLA), **Dionisia Ruiz** (Independent), and **Jean Hunleth** (Washington U. St. Louis) – *Visualizing Public Anthropology: Zines and Extended Possibilities for Visual Methods*

1–2:30 **LUNCH**

Visual Research Conference Schedule

Toronto, 2023

Tuesday, Nov. 14 Contd.

2:30-2:50 Installation Talks 2

1) **Elin Linder** (Stockholm U) – *Sensuous Exploration of Local Arts Making Olive Oil from Millennial Trees*

2) **Emily Ragus** (U of Amsterdam) and **Jess Coldrey** (Independent) – *Injury and Healing Within Space: Representation of Flooding Impacts and South Africa*

3-3:40 **Maria Fernanda Carrillo** (Universidad Autonoma de Mexico UNAM) - *Reparation documentary as a process: archives and collaborative documentary at Bojaya, Colombia*

3:45-4:25 **Jennifer Su** (U of Toronto) - *“Paid per view”: YouTube monetization as digital piecework in Vietnam and the Vietnamese diaspora*

4:30-5:30 Installation viewing time and mixing

Wednesday, Nov. 15

9:30-9:40 Introductions

9:45-10:25 **VRC Discussion Forum** - *Visual Research Conference Futures*

10:30-11:10 **Reese Muntean** (Simon Fraser U) - *Photographic Explorations of the Multimodal*

11:10-Noon **BREAK and installation viewing**

12-12:40 **Anuja Mukherjee** (CUNY Graduate Center) - *Ghosts of the Future's Past : Documenting Photo Studios in Kolkata*

12:45-1:25 **Vineet Gairola** (Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad) - *Worship in Transition: An Encounter with the Rājrajeshwarī Devī of the Garhwal Himalaya*

Conclusion



Tracing Precarity. Jess Coldrey and Emily Ragus, 2023

Installations

Visual Research Conference + Film and Media Festival
Toronto, 2023





Shadow Typology

Chantal Meng, 2023

Photo prints, video (15 mins, loop)

This installation offers an insight into Chantal Meng's dissertation "Light at Night: What is the Matter with Darkness?". Through photographs and a video piece, she explores how artificial light shapes and sometimes obscures urban darkness. These visual explorations document and enact Chantal's search for shadows and darkness and provoke reflection on the intertwined presence of light and darkness in the nocturnal cityscape. The installation features selected photographs from the book "Shadow Typology" and the video "Skylights – Kosciuszko Bridge" (silent, 15 min., continuous loop), which together explore the appearance and perception of urban darkness. Through this comprehensive exploration of urban darkness, Chantal strives to redefine our perception and relationship with nighttime darkness in the urban landscape. Her work challenges us to reconsider and question the overly lit representations that dominate our spatial imagination.

Chantal Meng is a visual artist and researcher with a PhD from Goldsmiths, University of London (Stuart Hall PhD Scholar). Recipient of the 2020 Swiss National Science Foundation's Doc.Mobility Fellowship and a 2015 Fulbright awardee, she also earned an MA in Photography + Urban Cultures (2013) from Goldsmiths. Before her academic journey, she co-founded POL studio and the Grand Palais art space in Bern, Switzerland. She also initiated the participatory sketching exploration of the interplay of darkness and light in urban nights known as Night Drawing. Currently, Chantal is a visiting scholar at The New School (Parsons School of Design).



Visualizing Public Anthropology: Zines and Extended Possibilities for Visual Methods

Sienna Ruiz, Dionisia Ruiz,
and Jean Hunleth, 2023.

Paper, Zines

Public anthropology aims to connect anthropological research to advocacy and meaningfully relate findings to the lived experiences of participant populations. Recently, more anthropologists have become interested in mediums like zines (self-published magazines) and storymaps (websites that combine GIS data with narrative, photography, and illustration) as forms of public communication that incorporate multimodal works and counter the gatekeeping of traditional publishing networks. In this installation, we ask what such visual processes of zine and storymap production do beyond making anthropological work more accessible. The installation takes the zines and storymap created for the Photographing Health by Rural Adolescents in the MidwEst (PHRAME) study led by anthropologist Jean Hunleth as a case study in how visual methods can transform our interpretations of the data and incorporate art produced by marginalized populations – in this case, children from rural areas – into research dissemination. The zines and storymap illustrate three key analytical insights about the possibilities of visual methods. We will examine (1) how visuals that contextualize and foreground children’s drawings and photographs can challenge image positivism in research with children, (2) how the interactive features of each medium help draw readers in as both researcher and participant simultaneously, and (3) how our process of representing the data through collage, handwritten text, and originally drawn characters as child-participant analogs led to previously unforeseen theoretical connections to the data. Ultimately, we will discuss how these works were not simply visuals that complemented otherwise conventional academic writing but were rather a restructuring of our approach to research as a whole.

Sienna Ruiz is a first year PhD student in sociocultural anthropology at the University of California, Los Angeles. Her research interests include arts-based methods, critical medical anthropology, space/place, and Central American migration. She is also interested in experimenting with zines as research dissemination and textile art (specifically quilting) as ethnographic method and metaphor. Prior to graduate school, she was a public health research coordinator at Washington University School of Medicine. **Dionisia Ruiz** is a multimedia artist and zinester based in Oakland, CA.

Jean Hunleth is associate professor of surgery and anthropology at Washington University in St. Louis. She received her PhD in cultural anthropology and MPH from Northwestern University. Her work is at the intersection of the anthropology of care, childhood studies, and therapy management. She uses methods from the visual arts and is especially fascinated by the important social and political implications of children’s caregiving, fantasies, and play. She is the author of the book, *Children as Caregivers: The Global Fight against Tuberculosis and HIV in Zambia* (Rutgers University Press, 2017) and numerous articles published in anthropological, public health, childhood studies, and medical journals





Sensuous Exploration of Local Arts: Making Olive Oil From Millennial Trees

Elin Linder, 2023

Poster, QR-codes, Olive Oil

The trunk is grand, hollow inside but full in value. It features a massive canopy, lush in growth and filled with branches. Some are larger, others smaller, all cultivated, crafted, and cared for to grow. Up close, it forms; becomes explored and noticed as it occurs lived over multigenerations of cultivators. (I) take a step back, feel the dynamics, drone over the landscape in which it stands rooted. In place. Over time. Sensed, practiced, done; from near and afar, from within and above. Perspectives curiously intersect, correlate, and engage the phenomena of olivicoltura. Smell, taste, and become affected, not just by the receptors in your mouth and nose, but through a transition in time and place. Let yourself imagine another rhythm, one by which this ancient legacy, including its art and tradition, become from past in the current for the future. This installation narrates a creative exploration of DOP Collina di Brindisi. It invites to partake its making, legacy, and transition through (adaptions to currents of) time over generations. As a treasured symbol for the arts of olivicoltura in Southern Puglia, the oil epitomizes values beyond (monetary worths). As projects of passion, both the installation and the oil captures journeys of situated craft.

Elin Linder is a passionate doctoral student (Stockholm University) who currently explores the spatiotemporal making of olive oil from Southern Puglia, Italy. She is a curious soul and a feminist standpoint scholar that keenly practices sensuous and multimodal anthropology. She holds close to her heart the aim of anthropology to familiarize the unfamiliar while unfamiliarizing the familiar. While her research interests are as diverse as our discipline is varied, she is particularly prone to boundary-shake phenomena related to time, environment, infrastructure, values, food, and craftsmanship.



Tracing Precarity

Jess Coldrey and Emily Ragus, 2023

digital animation

"Tracing Precarity" is an abstract animation that uses sensory data to vividly depict the lived experience of floods and their impact on humans. The animation explores how climate change affects both the physical and social aspects of our world by showcasing the chaos and emotional turmoil brought on by increasingly frequent and severe flooding disasters. This research-based creative project draws from ethnographic case studies in the Northern Rivers of Australia and the informal settlement of Quarry Road West in Durban, South Africa. It highlights three key themes—precarity, hope, and the journey towards healing—and uses colors, sounds, and shapes inspired by community-based maps and interviews to convey these themes. The animation aims to connect the audience with the harsh realities marginalized communities face during floods, emphasizing the instability of changing landscapes. Through personal narratives of flood-affected communities, the animation offers a unique blend of art and anthropology, shedding light on the profound impact of climate-driven disasters. It reminds viewers of their role in the changing climate and the need for human intervention to prevent further damage. The animation immerses viewers in the confusion and chaos of flooding events, emphasizing the disorientation, insecurity, and loss that floods impose. Dark visuals represent the ongoing crisis and enduring social consequences. It calls for change by making the trauma of these communities a visceral experience for all. The animation shows the interconnection between humans and their environment, inspiring a deeper understanding of its impact on physical, social, and environmental aspects of our world.

As two distinguished Sir John Monash scholars, **Jess Coldrey** and **Emily Ragus** are at the forefront of addressing global challenges related to climate change. Coldrey, is an artist and humanitarian engineer, with an impressive array of accolades, including recognition from the Australian French Association for Innovation and Research, UNLEASH Global Talent, and being named one of the Top 50 Women in Engineering. Ragus is a humanitarian and helicopter trauma retrievalist with extensive experience working in disasters and conflict zones for the International Committee of the Red Cross. Currently, she is pursuing her PhD in anthropology at the University of Amsterdam.



Winner of the John Collier Jr. Award
for Still Photography, 2022

La Cité

Camilo Leon-Quijano, 2023

Photo wallpaper, printed photos, text, QR code.

Sarcelles is a city located 15km to the north of Paris. Symbol of French banlieues, Sarcelles is a heterotopia of modern French society. Laboratory of "vivre ensemble" (living together), Sarcelles represents both hope and despair of the urbanistic utopia of a post-war society. From 2015 to 2018, as part of my doctoral research (EHESS, 2020), I explored the social life in this marginalized city following a photo ethnography of ordinary experiences. I studied how the people of Sarcelles live and to which extent their everyday interactions socially define the image of the city. Based on a creative and multimodal photographic activity, I explored a variety of discourses and representations in this complex social space. Photographing was a way to capture the sensitive experiences of daily life through a poetic approach. This work examines how city dwellers see, perceive themselves, and embody the city through an anthropology of and with pictures. Supported by Wenner Gren Foundation, I made an exhibition and a photobook. These objects encourage new creative photographic practices based on multimodal experimentations mixing sounds, videos, archives, and texts. La Cité shows to which extent photographic storytelling might expand anthropological knowledge and engage with new publics through sensorial and multimodal practices.

Camilo Leon-Quijano is an anthropologist and photographer, postdoctoral researcher at Aix-Marseille University (IDEAS/ANFAA). Ph.D. from the EHESS, he explores the relationship between photography and anthropology in urban settings through multimodal, creative, and participatory methods. His work has received multiple scientific and photographic recognitions. Widely exhibited and featured in several media (Le Monde, British Journal of Photography, Washington Post, Fisheye Magazine, Liberation, Paris Match, VICE), his latest book *La cite : une anthropologie photographique* (Editions de l'EHESS, 2023) explores the social life of pictures in a French banlieue (<https://www.camilo-leon.com/>).



Award for Best Interactive Media, 2023

The Chicago Archive and Storytelling Project

**Chris Walley, Chris Boebel, Jeff Soyk, and
The Southeast Chicago Historical Museum, 2023**

Interactive Media, Web Browser

What can the objects people save tell us about their lives? Explore the history of a multi-racial former steel mill community through donated objects and the stories residents told about them. The Southeast Chicago Archive and Storytelling Project (sechicagohistory.org) is a collaboration between an all-volunteer community museum and an anthropology/design team.

For a quick glance in the Archive: From the menu, check out one of the 13 “featured curations” that highlight donated objects on topics such as: “Black Experience in the Mills,” “Women at Work,” “Union Life,” etc. Or conduct searches with filters from the browse bar. To experience the innovative “i-docs” (interactive mini-documentary experiences): From the menu, go to the “Storylines” and explore immersive narratives such as Mexican-American Journeys; The Memorial Day Massacre of 1937; and The Closing of the Mills. The i-docs run at the pace of your choosing (approx. 20 mins). Teachers: Go to study guide on main menu for ideas on how to incorporate into teaching. Problems viewing? The experiences are media-intensive, so please be patient while they load. If you encounter difficulties hit “hard refresh” (command + shift + r)

Chris Walley is a Professor of Anthropology at MIT and Director of SECASP. Born and raised in Southeast Chicago, she is the author of *Exit Zero: Family and Class in Post-Industrial Chicago* (University of Chicago Press, 2013) and a co-creator of a documentary film *Exit Zero: An Industrial Family Story* (2017).

Chris Boebel is Director of Media Development at MIT Open Learning and Co-Director of SECASP. A filmmaker by training, he has produced and directed award-winning feature films, documentaries, and television, including work shown at more than 50 film festivals. He is the director of *Exit Zero: An Industrial Family Story* (2017).

Jeff Soyk is an award-winning media artist and MIT Open Doc Lab fellow alum. He is the Creative Director of SECASP. His interactive work includes *Hollow* (2013 Peabody Award winner), PBS Frontline’s *Inheritance* (2016 News & Documentary EMMY winner), and *Zeki Müren Hotline* (2017 RIDM exhibit selection).

The Southeast Chicago Historical Museum is an all-volunteer community museum created in 1985 as the region’s steel industry was dying. Residents donated countless items documenting the history of the region including oral histories, photographs, objects, albums, documents, home movies, letters, newspapers, clothing, and more.