



Posthuman Aesthetics, Aarhus University, presents:

## **Aesthetics, Ethics and Biopolitics of the Posthuman**

**Conference 10– 11 December 2015, Aarhus University, Denmark**

The research project “Posthuman Aesthetics” invites proposals for its first conference “Aesthetics, Ethics and Biopolitics of the Posthuman”, 10 – 11 December 2015, at Aarhus University, Denmark.

The idea of the posthuman has emerged as a term that describes various ideas (and realities) of possible radical changes in human existence. Technological advances have made nature increasingly malleable, and the boundaries between humans, animals and machines are challenged and destabilised in various ways. New technologies have enabled us to provide therapy and life improvement for individuals, but the same technologies could also result in a demand for enhancements of people not otherwise in need of treatment. As a consequence of these technological developments, a number of philosophical, ethical and biopolitical questions arise.

The conference wishes to address aesthetic, ethical and biopolitical aspects of the posthuman condition. The use of new technologies are often discussed at the intersection of philosophy and medicine, but this ignores how large a role aesthetics play in human existence and how it guides desires and choices ranging from bodily changes to visions of life narratives. The conference welcomes proposals that reflect upon such issues from various disciplines.

The conference furthermore invites contributions that address the ways in which art and literature thematise philosophical, ethical and biopolitical implications of the development in the life sciences, for instance in science fiction literature and in art-science collaborations.

### **A non-exhaustive series of topics include:**

- Art-science collaborations
- Notions of subjectivity and identity
- Biopolitics in relation to biotechnology
- The idea and uses of the concepts of the normal, the perfect, and the improved
- The imperfect in art and literature
- The ways in which art and literature investigate the implications of the technological development
- The aesthetic sensibility of intelligent machines
- The importance of the face: face transplants and robotic faces

## Keynote speakers

### **Lori B. Andrews, Distinguished Professor of Law and Director of the Institute for Science, Law and Technology, Illinois Institute of Technology**

*Professor Andrews is distinguished professor of law at IIT Chicago-Kent and director of IIT's Institute for Science, Law and Technology. She has been a visiting professor at Case Western Reserve University School of Law and at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University. She received her B.A. summa cum laude from Yale College and her J.D. from Yale Law School.*

Professor Andrews is an internationally recognized expert on emerging technologies, including genetics and social media, and has been an adviser on genetic and reproductive technology to the US Congress, the World Health Organization and others. She has served as a consultant to the science ministers of 12 countries on the issues of embryo stem cells, gene patents and DNA banking. She also served as chair of the federal Working Group on the Ethical, Legal and Social Implications of the Human Genome Project. She is author of 11 nonfiction books, including *The Clone Age: Adventures in the New World of Reproductive Technology* (1999); *Future Perfect: Confronting Decisions About Genetics* (2001); *Body Bazaar: The Market for Human Tissue in the Biotechnology Age* (2001) (with Dorothy Nelkin); *Genetics, Ethics, Law and Policy* (2015, 4th edition, co-authored with Maxwell Mehlman and Mark Rothstein); *I Know Who You Are and I Saw What You Did: Social Networks and the Death of Privacy* (2012). Furthermore, she has published articles on art in the art-science field, urging policymakers to identify and remedy social problems by understanding the work of artists and novelists. She is also the author of a series of mystery novels: *Sequence* (2006), *The Silent Assassin* (2007), and *Immunity* (2008).

Website: <https://www.kentlaw.iit.edu/faculty/full-time-faculty/lori-b-andrews>

### **Peter Boxall, Professor of English, Centre for Creative and Critical Thought, University of Sussex**

*Professor Boxall finished his doctorate at the University of Sussex in 1997, and has been teaching English there since 1999. He has also taught for the universities of New York and Gothenburg.*

His research focuses on the relationship between aesthetics and politics in modernist and contemporary writing, and more recently on the longer history of the novel. His works broadly cover literature and theory in the modern and contemporary period. He has written books on Samuel Beckett and Don DeLillo, and a broader work on the contemporary novel, entitled *Twenty-First Century Fiction*. He is currently working on *The Value of the Novel*, a book project for Cambridge University (due in 2015) and in the early stages of a project on the history of the novel, *The Prosthetic Imagination: A History of the Novel as Artificial Life*. He has also edited a wide range of works, including *Thinking Poetry* (co-edited with Peter Nicholls) as well as volume 7 of the *Oxford History of the Novel* (with Bryan Cheyette), and the UK journal, *Textual Practice*.

Website: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/profiles/16276>

**Paul Vanouse, Professor of Art, Co-Director of Emerging Practices MFA, and Director of Graduate Studies, University of Buffalo**

*Professor Vanouse has been working in emerging media forms since 1990, and leads a professional double life as an interdisciplinary researcher and artist. He holds a BFA from the University at Buffalo (1990) and an MFA from Carnegie Mellon University (1996).*

Paul Vanouse is an artist and Professor of Art at the University at Buffalo, NY, where he heads the program in Emerging Practices. Interdisciplinarity and impassioned amateurism guide his art practice. His biological and interactive media projects have been exhibited in over 25 countries and widely across the US. Recent solo exhibitions include: Schering Foundation in Berlin (2011), Kapelica Gallery in Ljubljana (2011), Muffathalle in Munich (2012), and Beall Center at UC Irvine, California (2013). He has received numerous awards at festivals such as Prix ARS Electronica in Austria and VIDA in Spain. His recent projects, "Latent Figure Protocol", "Ocular Revision" and "Suspect Inversion Center" use molecular biology techniques to challenge "genome-hype" and to confront issues surrounding DNA fingerprinting, particularly the idea that the most authoritative image of our time, the DNA fingerprint, is somehow natural.

Website(s): <http://www.paulvanouse.com/info.html>  
<http://art.buffalo.edu/people/full-time-faculty/paul-vanouse/>

### Information

**Location: Aarhus Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS)**

Høegh-Guldbergs Gade 6B, DK-8000, Aarhus, Denmark - Buildings 1630-1632

**Dates and deadlines**

Deadline for abstract submission: 15 June 2015

Deadline for registration: 11 November 2015

**Submission of abstract**

Please submit 400 word abstracts to: [posthuman@dac.au.dk](mailto:posthuman@dac.au.dk)

**Prices**

Admission fee: 75€ (faculty), 30€ (PhD/Postdoc)

The admission fee covers the entire conference, including a conference dinner and light refreshments during breaks.

**Contact**

Ass. Prof. Mads Rosendahl Thomsen: [litmrt@dac.au.dk](mailto:litmrt@dac.au.dk)

Postdoc Pernille Leth-Espensen: [ple@dac.au.dk](mailto:ple@dac.au.dk)

Please direct practical questions and other inquiries to conference assistant,

Jakob Gaardbo Nielsen: [stud201204607@hum.au.dk](mailto:stud201204607@hum.au.dk)

**Registration**

Online registration platform will follow on our website

**Website**

See more about the Posthuman Aesthetics project, its research group, project outline and individual projects at <http://posthuman.au.dk/>