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Contemporary Arts Practice and Outer Space: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach (3)

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COSMOPOLITICAL BODIES: AN ARCHITECTURE OF SPACE

Abstract

Geobiologists argue that the future of space exploration lies in the understanding of mineral-microbe interactions. Considering putative microbes, stromatolites and other mineral-microbial compounds allows us to question our claim to nature as non-human, object, commodity.

This work is considering how a motif of the 'Chtulucene' (Donna Haraway), an imagination of the world and critique to the Anthropocene, can convey a reflective image of human concerns on Earth, considering the scale, multiplicity and trajectory of our mediation of the environment. The work of theorists such as Haraway, Isabelle Stengers and Karen Badar grant social claims to scientific theory which used a catalyst for the production of images. The work of science fiction is inspirational in the concept of constructing a rigorous imagination, taking Ursula Le Guin's method of destabilising fiction, the project seeks to portray images reimagining modes of living.

This research has considered how art practice can be mobilised as a tactical tool to convey an image of space exploration that conveys a multiplicity of nature. Understanding an urgency to recompose the rights of nature, and what the image of it is. Disrupting the biotic/abiotic boundary and our claim to nature as something to master or protect, are important processes to engage a collective expression of scientific practice. This work considers the topic of planetary health from the micro to the macro; concerns from climate change, resource depletion, and biopiracy, to gender fluidity and our relationship with machines. The bodies that understand the political claim to scientific problems are those that have traditionally had restricted access: women, minorities. By claiming for rights of nature, multispecies, we can disrupt binary thinking, and call forward processes of encounter or settling, not mastery.

The first curation of this research is taking place in the project of 'Cosmopolitical Bodies: An architecture of Space', where tools of image production, curation and design research are being used to argue that the encounter between people and the planet should be recomposed in a compositional view of bodies; cosmopolitical bodies. It is not a question of the human agent being replaced by the environmental agent; but one of creating a new alliance that allows a balance or symbiosis of living. The body is considered as an ecology of processes and this work is interested in the animation of composite, indeterminate bodies considering the female and indigenous gaze.