

Poem for an Entangled Age

edited by Laura Watts

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Environmental Entanglements:  
Art, Technology & Natures

a symposium

*Det Kgl. Danske Videnskabernes Selskab*  
*Copenhagen*  
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Words compiled from the speakers and participants,  
written and edited during the event,  
performed at the end of the final day.

## 1. Provocation to the Ages

practicality:  
provocation.

modernity naturalised nature:  
necessary, whole, pristine.

norway.com  
“far from the bustle of the city”

anglers catch  
Big Fish.

Peasant traditions  
part of sublime places.

They found  
Dengue swamp fever  
in a Danish swamp.

Nature  
that we can set apart.

Conservation, in the past,  
a story of shepherding  
the species of our planet.

Living versus non-living,  
Biology versus geology,  
someone forgot the dead.

What mineral signature  
will I leave?

“Our survival is not at stake,”  
someone said.

Others (with an ‘O’)  
said not so.

corn, wheat:  
there is nothing natural  
in those plants  
any more.

does Nature always mean  
Life?  
does Life always mean  
Nature?

that damned hockey stick:  
Moore’s Law is kicking back.

The climate is now  
abstract, big,  
Big Data, big.

Revelation:  
the Grand Narrative abides.

the Future is over-flowing,  
the Flood is an Event  
(in certain places).

Power plants in the area  
do not serve the people.

You don’t see a  
Save the Wasp  
campaign.

factory smoke becomes  
a fist.

wild sensing:  
how do we engage  
with wild organisms?

How to sense  
the air?

Care about your air:  
problem solved.

Fraking,  
fracturing the Earth.  
But...

(...Frak me!)

dizziness,  
nose-bleeds:  
sub-clinical.

In the States...  
In the UK...  
In Denmark...

The red house  
in the centre of the green-  
brown field,  
burned out.

an imagined, ruined bank  
of england.

a chinese garden:  
a spiritual utopia.

how to draw the growth  
of a tree?

once we struggled  
to transmit  
electricity:  
so power plants stayed with us,  
its buildings responded to us.

Plastics travel  
all over  
the world.

## 2. Space Age



aliens came with:  
too much culture,  
culture too quickly.

aliens are things  
out of place.

wisdom of the rocks:  
pissed out of a penis.

we came from out there:  
we sent us back,  
as stone.

when a sample is taken  
90% of the materials die.

a whole community  
of organisms,  
sequenced.

a unit of survival  
is an organism and its environment.

Hubris  
of planetary engineering.  
(Nemesis  
wields her sword)

Burning Worlds  
(but before it was  
a Nuclear Winter)

The cosmic version  
of what the Earth may become.

Particle  
Falls.

Data makes a malleable space  
(and no place).

Energy  
    Harvest  
        System

At the End of the Day After Tomorrow  
the helicopters arrive  
like the end of a Western.

safe in a glass bowl,  
the nuclear power plant  
emits a mushroom cloud.

It's like a reverse mohawk:  
a pipeline through the trees.

Excavating  
Futures.

new Epoch:  
experiences do not fit  
with expectations.

he took a sterile airport  
and made it wet,  
    made it smell,  
        made it grow.

### 3. Age of Quality\*

*\*adjective, superior*

the smoothness  
of The Tube,  
both smooth  
and not at all.

Feral  
frontiers  
re-wilded.

Edges of living:  
that's what they say about life in the future.

The philosopher's stone  
turns out to be  
alive!

Novel ecosystems:  
the sudden crash,  
the abandoned glasshouse  
the un-tilled earth.

#### Rubble Areas

melted metal,  
rusted plane parts,  
reduced  
with each view.

It's cheaper to store the data  
in the organism itself.

Energy:  
something spiritual.

Mineral  
Evolution.

What is the exact colour of the sky?  
beautiful.

The barometer did not enter  
the black box.

gilt, gold, baroque:  
the barometer,  
in its surface,  
belief and disbelief,  
both reflected back.

Nephelometer:  
hardly the kind of instrument you want  
in your parlour.

Slow technology,  
bottled daily.

The sound of a butterfly  
attractor.

Sonic Antarctica  
speaks in many tongues.

Biokitchen  
cocktail  
makers.

you should be able to smoke  
part of the book.

Air Walk  
in NXG  
(New Cross Gate)

Walking  
is a research method.

artist,  
    citizen science,  
        social science:  
practices that might not abide by  
the disciplinary rubric.

are there many versions  
of beauty?

Hotel Palenque:  
is it being built?  
is it falling apart?

the melting iron  
collected, creating  
a new centrality.

    hanging gardens  
        of heavy-metal earth.

“The Living Water  
Garden”

This might power  
    450 US homes,  
        (900 Danish homes).

Blossomings...  
    slide.

## 4. Cosmogramers

we are in:  
The Zone.

Exceptionality  
of a human being  
rethought  
as a participant.

The Romance of  
Photoshop.

a fudge of protocols,  
made a man a wolf,  
role-playing a lone ranger.

Bodies are temporary  
flows of chemicals.

We are assumed to be  
enhanced humans.

the Baltic sea  
swishes his tail,  
quite un-suspecting.

Just a poetic gesture...

“We are a true mirror  
of the skies  
above us...

Everybody...  
is meteorology  
itself”



White marks the uncertain  
edges of the climate map:  
here there be informatic dragons.

Red is risk.  
Red is danger.  
Red is...  
    joy, pleasure, luck...  
    the red spot on Jupiter.

Each person's memory  
constitutes data  
in a climate model.

People make weather  
meaningful.

is she becoming  
(are we becoming)  
radicalised?

Who should be the cosmogramers?

"I don't work in  
the answers department"

that you can imagine  
a given reality  
is vital.

creative artists depend on  
the machine of innovation.

we liked the colour  
green:

toxic factory /  
environmental factory?

Rayon Vert  
Crayon Green.

“You can’t illuminate our  
emissions”  
“But the air belongs to us  
all.”

The Data Cloud  
green washed  
through geothermal energy.

Black  
carbon accounting.

Green egg glows  
(one upgrade later).

Only by being There...  
... and it’s essential.

a sensibility towards the wonder  
in the world.

We created a fictional space.

the magic happens  
in the relationship  
outside...  
the lab.

They are about to enter  
The Zone:  
a fenced-off apocalypse.

We will show them:  
there can be this future  
of beauty.

## 5. Geas\*

*\*a mystical compulsion to act  
(Gaelic)*

a test site for  
a European ecology:

Money means  
keeping the forest back.

Sea eagles,  
vultures, peck  
forgotten flesh  
(in full view of the train).

Corridors  
for the wild, contained.

Lab conditions  
for a wild experiment.  
Pasteur made proud.

GoldToxicGold

Coral climbs  
from the sea depths  
whilst the city  
rises and sinks.

Re-habituate:  
how coral will live with  
our bones beneath  
the sea.

living bridges in India,  
living matter, manipulated.

Fly Printer flies  
ingest ink,  
print their bodies  
in fruity pixels.

an algae backpack  
makes energy, tiny:  
transduction is so tricky.

Let's Play  
The World Without Us

cloud machines,  
cloud busting.

Explore Possible Futures  
High Water Line

we follow the form  
of the flow, and  
make a laser flare.

the cloud is our interface.  
the cloud is communicating.  
the cloud binds us together.

Slow cloud studies,  
under water.

amphibious architecture  
for talking with the fishes.

The Nordic Pool:  
what is produce here  
[ f l o w s ]  
is not consumed here.

“He had touched nature  
too much”

Fresh Kills  
Park, Landfill  
now Land Art.

Solar Hourglass:  
“There is still time.”

Environmental Entanglements: Art, Technology & Natures  
<http://energyfutures.itu.dk/events/environmental-entanglements/>

This symposium brought together an interdisciplinary group of internationally acclaimed artists and academics in order to investigate how the arts, humanities and social sciences are responding to an increasing awareness of the complex environmental entanglements we are living in.

Book published by Sand14  
[www.sand14.com](http://www.sand14.com)

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