**Global Fables**

September 12-13, 2024 (Online)

A painting of a spider web on a world map

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**September 12**

**9-11am (UK time) Welcome & Fables from Asia**

Shonaleeka Kaul (Jawaharlal Nehru University) The ‘Antinomic Didactic’: Rethinking Fable in the Indic Tradition

Kelsey Granger (Ludwig Maximilians University) Till Debt Do Us Part: Medieval Chinese Buddhist Tales of Human Debt and Animal Rebirth

Tangiku Itsuji (Hokkaido University / CAIS), Characteristics of Ainu Fables

Shreyasi Sharma, What the Bird Had: Noticing Nonhuman life and Writing through Fables

**1-2:45 pm (UK time) Anansi and Bre’r Rabbit: Transatlantic fables**

Rachael Pasierowska (Lincoln University), Bre’r Rabbit and Buh Fox in African American Storytelling as Education of Enslaved Children in the Antebellum U.S. South to Linguistic Approaches in Pedagogy Today

Emily Zobel Marshall (Leeds Beckett University), Postcolonial Tricksters: African Diasporic Folklore in Contemporary Culture

Winsome Monica Minott (University of Kent), You can Bet on Ananse

**3:00- 4:45 (UK time) African Fables**

Elleke Boehmer (Oxford), Narrative intervention and the African hyena folktale

Luan Staphorst (Oxford), Storying Contiguity: |xam poetics of the animal and questions of reading

Tinashe Mushakavanhu (Oxford), Fabled up histories: an archive against censorship

**5:00-6:00 (UK time)**

Josie Rae Turnbull, The Fabled Fortunes of A Fish: Sunset of the Arowana Industry

**September 13**

9: 45-10:00 (UK time)

Beatrice Gründler, Kalīla and Dimna – AnonymClassic / Arabic Literature Cosmopolitan

**10.00 - 11.45 am (UK time)**

**Continuity and Circulation of Fables in the Circum-Mediterranean**

Mariagrazia Portera (University of Florence / MESH), Fables for the Anthropocene: birds, sprites and sylvan roosters in Giacomo Leopardi’s ‘Small Moral Works’

Heidi Mohamed Bayoumy (Cairo University), Revisiting Ecological Fables: An Ecocritical Reading of Selected Arabic Animal Stories and Plays for Children

Kevin Blankinship (Brigham Young University) Al-Maʿarrī’s Ultra-Short Ascetic Animal Stories

**2-4pm (UK time) Future global fables**

Gro Birgit Ween (University of Oslo), Mythical origins to contemporary conversations with salmon

Carrie Dohe (Cologne, MESH), Bees for Peace

Hadar Elyashiv (Israel Oceanographic & Limnological Research) and Camila Neder (IDEA-CONICET/Universidad Nacional de Córdoba), Once upon a time ... a scientific fairy tale

Cameo Marlatt, Guillem Rubio-Ramon, and Shawn Bodden (University of Edinburgh), Future fables: Re-learning to live with animals through place-based writing workshops

**Abstracts /bios**

**Shonaleeka Kaul**, The ‘Antinomic Didactic’: Rethinking Fable in the Indic Tradition

This paper explores the representation of animals in a seminal, dedicated textual tradition in premodern India that is regarded as belonging to the genre of ‘fable’. Composed in the classical language Sanskrit, this tradition known as niti shastra (teachings of prudent conduct) is best identified with the iconic 2nd century Panchatantra, and its later retelling, the 9th century *Hitopadesha*. This paper will focus on the latter, less known text to argue that this witty, multi species, epigrammatic literature challenges the global understanding of fable as the “moralizing subjection” (Jacques Derrida) of animals by and for humans. Rather than seeing literary animals as human surrogates or as phantasmagorical talking creatures, I argue for reclaiming anthropomorphism from the thrall of the anthropocentric. I show how the Sanskrit fable could reflect on ‘true’ animal experiences, and while at it, critique, disturb and displace the human rather than subserve it. Hence I coin the phrase 'antinomic didactic' to rediscover the fable as instruction with a difference that questions human exceptionalism.

Shonaleeka Kaul is a cultural and intellectual historian of India, specialising in Sanskrit literature. She is Professor, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, and has also been the Malathy Singh Distinguished Lecturer in South Asian Studies at Yale University, USA, the Jan Gonda Fellow in Indology at Leiden University, The Netherlands, and Visiting Professor of History at Heidelberg University, Germany.

She is the author of *Imagining the Urban: Sanskrit and the City in Early India* (2010), *The Making of Early Kashmir: Landscape and Identity in the Rajatarangini* (2018) and *Bharata Before the British and Other Essays: Towards a New Indology* (2024). She has edited another four volumes, most recently *Myths and Places: New Perspectives in Indian Cultural Geography* (2023). *Translations with critical introduction by her include Looking Within: Life Lessons from Lal Ded, the Kashmiri Shaiva Mystic* (2019) and *Hitopadesha by Narayana* (2022).

**Kelsey Granger**, Till Debt Do Us Part: Medieval Chinese Buddhist Tales of Human Debt and Animal Rebirth

This talk explores a collection of Buddhist-inspired narratives which circulated in seventh- to tenth-century China. Despite the variations in circumstances, outcomes, and animal species involved, these tales are all tied together by the concept of ‘debt’. Debt, mostly purely financial in nature, can be seen to extend across lifetimes. Death was therefore no obstacle to repayment, meaning those who died in debt must be reborn to repay their loans, crimes, or wrongdoings. Moreover, the type of animal one was reborn as mattered, with each animal species entailing a specific narrative trope. To be reborn as a goat or pig was to be ‘reborn to die’, with the person often facing imminent slaughter. To be reborn as an oxen was a source of humiliation. And to be reborn as a horse was to be sold as a valuable commodity. This talk thus reveals how story-tellers interpreted and described the imagined experience of animals to convey both moral messaging and ghoulish terror.

Dr. Kelsey Granger is a historian of China and the wider Silk Roads, specialising in material culture, gender, and environmental history. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge in 2022 with a thesis focusing on lapdog-keeping among elite women in seventh–tenth century China. She was then awarded a Humboldt Research Fellowship at LMU, Munich where she is working with excavated documents to access the lives of postal horses on the fringes of China’s Han empire. Her research has been published in several peer-reviewed journals, including the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* who awarded her the 2023 Sir George Staunton Prize for an outstanding article by an early-career scholar.

**Tangiku Itsuji**, Characteristics of Ainu Fables

The fables of the Ainu people, whose population is approximately 50,000, in the northern region of the Japanese archipelago, were traditionally conveyed through oral traditions. The use of metaphorical rhetoric, particularly in the form of allegorical fables, was regarded as a crucial tool for both discourse and education. However, with the linguistic shift from Ainu to Japanese in the 20th century, this tradition of fable-telling was nearly extinguished. Despite this, valuable insights can still be gleaned from preserved written texts and audio recordings. Notably, unlike the fables of their Japanese neighbors, Ainu fables seldom include themes of betrayal and deception. Instead, they primarily aimed to instruct children on conflict resolution and ethical decision-making.

Tangiku Itsuji is an Associate Professor of Folklore Studies and Linguistics at the Center for Ainu and Indigenous Studies (CAIS), Hokkaido University. His scholarly research primarily focuses on the Ainu language and literature, as well as the Nivkh language and literature. He is actively involved in the CAIS project dedicated to the study of indigenous languages. Currently, his research centers on the verse and recitation of Ainu epic narratives, exploring their potential for revitalization in the future.

**Shreyasi Sharma**, What the Bird Had: Noticing Nonhuman life and Writing through Fables

What would it be like for a bird to take on a king through a unique (chattering) conversation?

In my presentation, I will be retelling an old fable about a bird confronting a King through her unique chattering and explore how such a fable enriches the communication about nonhuman life. Thereby, making us pay attention to nature and its voices – a practice which has transcended in my creative writings about nonhuman entanglement with everyday life.

Originally heard in Western Uttar Pradesh, India, *Mere Hai, Raja Ke Nahi* [What I Have, The King Doesn’t], in many ways is a lost tale of the region but it is well preserved in my family’s oral conversations. The fable symbolises climate crisis. It also satirises the politics and power dynamics of current times. The interplay of indirect and direct conversation between the Bird and the King could also be read to think about what we have been doing to our environment and the ways in which climate crisis has been showing up in the stories.

By sharing this fable in both Hindi and English, I will be reflecting on how fables have been affecting my practice as a creative writer. I will explore how the fable, through its unique interplay of words from local dialect, rhythm and humour, is showing pathways of understanding and writing about nonhuman life.

Shreyasi Sharma is a writer and educator in Delhi. She was the 2023 Charles Wallace India Trust Creative Writing Fellow at University of Kent. She writes poems and essays on transforming spaces. Her words have appeared in many journals, and in 2022 Red River Press published her poems and narrative non-fiction about the city in an anthology titled *Of Dry Tongues and Brave Hearts*. Her recent essay, [‘Crows in this part of New Delhi’](https://therumpus.net/2024/04/02/crows-in-this-part-of-new-delhi/) was published in Rumpus, 2024. She is currently working on a climate fiction.

**Rachael Pasierowska**, Bre’r Rabbit and Buh Fox in African American Storytelling as Education of Enslaved Children in the Antebellum U.S. South to Linguistic Approaches in Pedagogy Today

Bre’r Rabbit and Buh Fox in African American Storytelling looks at the multiple cultural meanings contained within the renowned Bre’r Rabbit stories in the nineteenth and twenty-first centuries through education. In the first instance, the presentation explores the centrality of African-rooted animal stories and their importance in shaping enslaved children’s identity formations; for instance, the cultural continuity of African storytelling practices. Further, such tales employed animals as a medium to teach enslaved children lessons, such as covert resistance.

Second, I look at the role of Bre’r Rabbit stories in the twenty-first century education system, first as a lens to study children identity formations in the United States; and second, the challenges encountered by educators in teaching such stories with respect to linguistics and presentation of primary documents.

Dr. Rachael Pasierowska holds a dual Ph.D. in History and Atlantic World Slavery from Rice University, Houston, USA and the Universidade Estadual de Campinas (UNICAMP) in São Paulo, Brazil. Dr. Pasierowska has taught American History at Sam Houston State University in Texas and just completed a two-year Visiting Assistant Professorship in African American History at The University of Iowa, USA. She recently accepted a tenure-track post as Assistant Professor in History at Lincoln University, a HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) in Missouri. Dr. Pasierowska’s research looks at enslaved persons’ identity formations and cultural connections in African American slavery through the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and animals. Her work further includes interactions between Africans, Europeans, and Indigenous Americans in Brazil, Cuba, and the U.S. South with a focus on travel narratives, images, folklore, interviews and autobiographies with former enslaved persons. Recent publications include comparative studies on enslaved children and animals in addition to an article that posits a linguistic reconfiguration of the term ‘The Middle Passage’, which was published in Slavery and Abolition over the summer.

**Emily Zobel Marshall**, Postcolonial Tricksters: African Diasporic Folklore in Contemporary Culture

**Winsome Monica Minott**, You can Bet on Ananse

Caribbean writers constantly transgress boundaries with respect to standard English language dictates, separating themselves from stereotypes through the use of subversive language and radical stylistic movements on the page. Using this as a backdrop I reimagine Ananse, a character often associated with cunning that over time has also been associated with negative images of laziness and greed. I highlight Ananse’s cunning through positive storytelling hoping that same will counter the Euro-centric insistence on reporting African history through a negative lens. Ananse’s need to overcome runs parallel to the lives of Caribbean people who have been trafficked and displaced. Adaptations present Africa’s timeless moral lessons and vibrant characters through a powerful storytelling tradition that resonates with the Caribbean's own rich storytelling oral culture. By modifying these fables to reflect Caribbean landscapes, language, and social practices, this presentation aims to create a product that honours origins while making stories more relevant to Caribbean audiences. I hope Ananse stories will educate Caribbeans and others by creating trust and understanding regarding Africa, Africans, and African traditions while showcasing the Caribbean and the storytelling traditions of both regions.

Dr Winsome Monica Minott is the author of two collections of poetry, *Kumina Queen* and *Zion Roses*. She was awarded first prize in the inaugural Small Axe poetry competition and her poems have been published in *The Caribbean Writer*, *Small Axe*, *Cultural Voice Magazine*, *SX Salon*, *Jubilation*, *Coming Up Hot: featuring Eight New Poets from the Caribbean*, *The Squaw Valley Review*, and *BIM magazine*. Monica Minott is also a Chartered Accountant. *Zion Roses* was selected as one of the top three Poetry collections entered for the 2022 Bocas Prize. Also ‘BBC News on The Verandah’ made the short list for the 2022 prestigious Bridport Prize in the United Kingdom.

**Elleke Boehmer**, Narrative intervention and the African hyena folktale

The paper will talk through some of my recent work on the [Accelerate Hub](https://www.acceleratehub.org/), looking at how narrative can operate as a form of social intervention with focus on a particular case study from Zimbabwe of the hyena folktale.

**Elleke Boehmer** is Professor of World Literature in English in the English Faculty, University of Oxford, and Executive Director of the Oxford Centre for Life-Writing. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and of the Royal Historical Society. She is the author of a number of books, including fiction and two short story collections. Southern Imagining, a literary history of the far southern hemisphere, her seventh monograph, will be published by Princeton University Press, in 2025. Her work has been translated into many languages, including German, Dutch, Portuguese, Italian, Arabic, Thai and Mandarin.

**Luan Staphorst,** Storying Contiguity: |xam poetics of the animal and questions of reading

Against the dominant frame of the animal-as-metaphor that has come to define how the beast fable is read, I analyse the poetics of the animal tale in the |xam oral tradition. With reference to the conceptualisation of the animal on the one hand and the |xam's linguistic imaginary on the other, I argue the |xam beast fable tradition engages with the animal not through metaphor, but metonymy. This poetics shapes a particular form of reading that is slow, anti-instrumentalist, and creating contiguity between human and non-human animals.

Luan Staphorst is reading for his DPhil in English at the University at Oxford under the supervision of Elleke Boehmer. His research interests include South African literature, translation studies, and the influence of poetics on approaches to reading. His doctoral research is supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, Clarendon Fund, Lincoln College Kingsgate Fund, and the Oppenheimer Memorial Fund.

**Tinashe Mushakavanhu,** Fabled up histories: an archive against censorship

The rabbit. The baboon. The lion. The hare. These characters are the mainstay of canonical Shona literature published in the 1950s through the Rhodesia Literature Bureau, a colonial government institution that supervised what black writers could write. The fable became a perfect medium to circumvent censorship and promote nationalist ideas. In this presentation I intimate on the political use of the fable by the first generation of Zimbabwean writers, and how they evoke the relationship between humanity and nature. I will also look at how contemporary writers have taken up the fable as a way to critique the authoritarian establishment through the novel, but also, through mixed media such as collage and zine making.

Tinashe Mushakavanhu is a Junior Research Fellow in African & Comparative Literature at St Anne’s College, Oxford. He is currently working on a monograph called Oxford, Black Oxford establishing a genealogy of African writers who were students in Oxford in a century.

**Josie Rae Turnbull,** The Fabled Fortunes of A Fish: Sunset of the Arowana Industry

*The Sparkle of the Kin* employs my concept of ‘Factual Fable’ to investigate the complex relationships between humans and the Arowana fish, contextualising these interactions within the colonial histories of Malaysia and Singapore. By casting Arowana fish as Actant, this ongoing visual art project critiques their transformation into ‘lively commodities’ within the luxury ornamental fish industry, where their value is constructed through manufactured scarcity, and enhanced through cosmetic surgeries.

Informed by material experimentation, literary and historical research, my work delves into the legacy of British colonialism and extractivist industries such as rubber, tin, and palm oil in the region. The narrative of the Arowana—an endangered species subject to mass production and the fickleness of human taste, echoes the environmental and social impacts of these industries.

By reimagining the traditional didactic role of fables, *The Sparkle of the Ki*n challenges conventional ways of perceiving and constructing animals, questioning whether recent ethical advances truly protect animals that are still treated as marketable goods. I visualise the imagined fate of an Arowana fallen from grace – a former champion, now cast aside. Littered with the ephemera of success – rosettes, certificates, and branded merchandise – there is a sense of tragedy woven into the works, asking us to consider the true cost of our desires. My studio practice prioritises everyday consumer items; false nails, broken toys, doilies, juxtaposed with repurposed fast fashion garments and textiles – the aftermath of overproduction and consumption. The mediums mirror the rapid cycle of desirability familiar to the Arowana and much like the tragic arc of the fish’s stardom, reminds us of the daunting lifespan of consumer goods, that far exceeds their moment in the spotlight.

**Bio**: I am an interdisciplinary artist and freelance artist facilitator/educator based in London, with a practice that currently spans textiles, sculpture, printmaking, and lens-based media. I completed an MA in Fine Art and Science at Central Saint Martins in 2022, after spending several years working in Ho Chi Minh City. My recent work spotlights relationships between animate and inanimate ecosystems, driven by a fascination with chaotic systems and the uncanny by-products of various industries.

In my practice, I am particularly interested in the concept of the "absolute fake," using it as a tool to reveal latent truths about our excessive systems of extraction. Through bricolage and chance processes, I recode throwaway consumer materials, to create visual languages led by artificial colour relationships and material glitches. This exploration often leads to absurdist projects that interrogate the intersections of the animate, inanimate, artificial, and hyperreal.

Since 2021, my research has evolved into what I term ‘factual fables’ – narratives that blend real-world case studies with elements of science fiction to satirize human failings through specific animal protagonists. My current work, funded by the Arts Council DYCP grant in November 2023, focuses on creating visual fables for the Arowana fish, and a ‘mass produced endangered species.’

In September-November 2023, I presented a solo show, ‘Saline Shock!’ at Orleans House Gallery in Richmond, which expanded on my MA final project and subsequent large-scale installation commissioned by Vincom Centre for Contemporary Art in Hanoi (September-December 2022). This project was nominated for the UAL/Clifford Chance Graduate Sculpture Award 2022/2023.

**Mariagrazia Portera**, Fables for the Anthropocene: birds, sprites and sylvan roosters in Giacomo Leopardi’s “Small Moral Works”

Giacomo Leopardi, one of the most prominent figures in modern Italian literature, is an author whose poetic and philosophical reflections, predominantly composed during the first half of the nineteenth century (Leopardi passed away in 1837), anticipated many themes that are now central to contemporary discourse, including those that might today be encompassed within the interdisciplinary field of Environmental Humanities. Leopardi's work notably integrates scientific inquiry with literary practice to address issues such as anti-anthropocentrism, extinction, ecological crisis, and the role of humanity in relation to other living beings and to Nature as a whole. In this context, the *Operette morali* (Moral Fables or Small Moral Works), a collection of 24 short texts written between 1824 and 1832, are particularly paradigmatic. In this brief presentation, I aim to elucidate the contribution of Leopardi’s Operette morali to eco-literary discourse, with a focus on the role of animals within these texts, on the fable genre, and the ironic, satirical, and comic tones that Leopardi employs. I will specifically examine the "Dialogue between a Sprite and a Gnome," the "Eulogy of the Birds," and the "Sylvan Rooster Chant."

Mariagrazia Portera is a researcher in Aesthetics at the Department of Humanities and Philosophy (DILEF) at the University of Florence. She has conducted postdoctoral research (2015–2019) at several institutions, including the Freie Universität Berlin, the universities of Zagreb and Rijeka, and the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities (IASH) in Edinburgh. She is the scientific coordinator of ABC-Lab, Interdisciplinary Lab for Aesthetics and Environmental Humanities at the University of Florence and member of the EUniWell Environmental Humanities Network. She has coordinated numerous national and international research projects focused on aesthetics, biodiversity conservation, and the philosophy of nature and the environment, including “Unveiling” (2021–2023), “Smart Beauty” (2021–2024), EUniWell “NatCult” (2023–2024), EUniWell “Human and Non-Human in the Anthropocene City” (2023–2024), “NatCult in the Botanical Garden” (2023), “UrBeauty” (2024), and the IRN WERA project “Education in the Anthropocene” (2024–2027). Her research primarily explores literature, the history of aesthetics (with a particular focus on English and German traditions), and the intersections between aesthetics and the natural/biological sciences, including evolutionary aesthetics, environmental aesthetics, the Environmental Humanities, and cognitive aesthetics. She has authored over 40 papers in national and international journals, as well as the books *L’evoluzione della bellezza*. *Da Darwin al dibattito contemporaneo* (Mimesis, Milan, 2015) and *La bellezza è un’abitudine. Come si sviluppa l’estetico* (Carocci, Rome, 2020).

**Heidi Mohamed Bayoumy**, Revisiting Ecological Fables: An Ecocritical Reading of Selected Arabic Animal Stories and Plays for Children

Fables have always held a significant position in Arabic literature. Influenced by the animal stories in the Holy Quran, and later by Kalilah and Dimnah, fables continued throughout the ages to be an important genre, not just for adults, but also for children. As an important source of values and moral lessons, Arabic literature is replete with animal stories for children. However, as we now live in the Anthropocene, the need for animal stories reflecting ecological themes is growing. Our children are not distant from climate change effects and/or natural and man-made disasters (earthquakes, hurricanes, fires, droughts, war.. etc.). Therefore, it is essential to revisit contemporary Arabic animal stories for children to scrutinize the environmental themes and ecological lessons they present to children. An equally important field to delve into is the representation of animals on stage. The centralization of animal voices in children’s theatre is a significant dramatic technique through which children learn more of the animal world and the constant human threats to it. My presentation will thus explore selected animal stories and plays for children from an ecocritical perspective, highlighting the representation of animals, as well as the ecological themes and lessons reflected in these works.

Heidi Mohamed Bayoumy is an Associate Professor at the Department of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Arts, Cairo University, Egypt. She is the author of research papers in the fields of environmental children’s literature, comparative literature, and drama. She has participated in several conferences and workshops. She is also a short-story writer for children. She teaches courses on drama, translation, and cultural studies. She is the author of several research papers published in national and international journals. Her recent works focus on children’s literature from the lens of ecofeminism and critical disaster studies. Her book *A Study of the Role of Creatures in Plays and Films for Children* offers a comparative approach to Arabic and world children’s literature from the perspective of semiotics, ecocriticism, and psychoanalysis. In 2019, she won Cairo University’s Incentive Award in recognition of her research papers and academic activities. During her years of work at Cairo University, she has held the following positions: interpreter to the President of Cairo University, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of the Faculty of Arts* (JFA), and Director of Grants and Projects at the International Relations Office.

**Kevin Blankinship**, Al-Maʿarrī’s Ultra-Short Ascetic Animal Stories

The medieval Muslim vegan, satirist, moralist, and witty man of letters Abū l-ʿAlāʾ al-Maʿarrī (d. 1057 AD) is best known in the West as the author of *The Epistle of Forgiveness*, a Dantean journey through heaven and hell featuring discussions of poetry, grammar, heresy, and more. What is less known but just as important is al-Maʿarrī's obsession with animals, whether as literary symbols, moral exemplars, or creatures deserving of mercy in their own right. In this talk, I introduce al-Maʿarrī's life and work, survey his writings on animals, and then focus on one such work in particular: *The Book of the Tracker*, which survives in fragments and features ultra-short talking animal fables with a single-minded pacifist agenda. All of al-Maʿarrī's talking creatures show an ascetic, pious bent, which speaks to the larger themes of al-Maʿarrī's thought and writing.

Kevin Blankinship is Associate Professor of Arabic Language and Literature at Brigham Young University. His current book project is about medieval Muslim freethinker Al-Maʿarrī and Islamic animal ethics. His work has been supported by the Fulbright-Hays Program, the American Institute for Maghrib Studies, the Danish Independent Research Fund (DFF), the University of Southern Denmark, and the University of Utah. He is a published poet, and his essays have appeared in popular press venues like The Atlantic, The Times Literary Supplement, Foreign Policy, and more.

**Gro Ween,** Mythical origins to contemporary conversations with salmon

Loke, a half-god and a trickster in the world of Norse gods, was in the habit of making himself into a salmon and hiding in a waterfall, whenever he needed to escape the wrath of the gods. One day, while preparing yet another escape, Loke absentmindedly played with a piece of string, making it a net. Realizing it could be used to catch him, he threw the net into the fire. Realizing that the gods were close, he quickly became a salmon, and threw himself into the river. The angry gods found the remnants of the net in the fire, and realised they could use it to catch him. They set the net, he jumped as high as he could, and narrowly avoided it, they set the net again, he attempted another jump, but this time, Thor, the god of Thunder, caught him by the tail. Relaying this story today, fishermen often pause to lovingly describe the space between the adipose fin and the tail fin, so perfect for the secure grip of a human hand. Loke did not get away with his tricks, contemporary uses of this story, however, naturalizes particular engagements with salmon, that stand in contrast to Sámi salmon worlds.

Gro Ween is professor in Anthropology at the University of Oslo’s Cultural History Museum, and Keeper of Arctic, North American and Australian Collections. Ween’s research concerns what could be described as ontological politics involving indigenous peoples, in relations to issues such as natural resource management conflicts, human-animal relations, and heritage.

**Carrie B. Dohe**, Bees for Peace

Bees for Peace is situated within the transdisciplinary field of Environmental Humanities, in the sub-fields of Religion and Ecology and Multispecies Studies. The project is also in conversation with Extinction studies, which considers not just the death of individual species, but entire ways and forms of life. As in this sub-field, the proposed project refuses to separate the cultural from the biological and the human from the natural – indeed, the project cannot, for it recognizes that the world in which humans have always lived is a world made possible by the plethora of pollinators and the pollinated. This project uses methods that help individuals recall their fundamental entanglement with other-than-human beings, such as bees and flowers. A gateway to that understanding is these beings’ co-createdness and co-becoming of the world humans have always inhabited. Recognition of these entanglements – from another perspective, this kinship – with other forms of life is the spur for participants to respond with attentiveness and act responsibly towards themselves and the web of relations in which they exist. For more information, see the project’s [website](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.beesforpeace.org%2F&data=05%7C02%7CK.Nagai%40kent.ac.uk%7Cfc8d284c92e846dbe43f08dcc81b90fd%7C51a9fa563f32449aa7213e3f49aa5e9a%7C0%7C0%7C638605267943181964%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=fh7xZXpFtU%2BUiu%2B3nrfE5XORxPEb7UgBwKWX8u%2BiKdg%3D&reserved=0):

Carrie B. Dohe is a Research Fellow and Affiliated Researcher at MESH with a Ph.D. in the History of Religions from the University of Chicago. She held postdoctoral research positions at the University of Marburg, Germany (2017-2021) and the University of Toronto School ofthe Environment (2021-2023). Her current research focuses on Bees for Peace, a project she initiated during an Interfaith Nature Conservation Week in Cologne, Germany. Recognized as an “Official Project of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity” in Germany in 2020, Dr. Dohe transferred Bees for Peace to the University of Toronto in 2021. In 2023-2024, she collaborated with the United Church of Canada to run Buzzin’ Bees Summer Camps across Southern Ontario, where children were encouraged to empathize with bees through stories and other activities. The goal of these camps was to test strategies to encourage children to identify with bees so much that they are deeply moved to protect them. One of the strategies is a daily story that is read to camp participants. In this story, child characters encounter bees, who instruct the children about themselves, their lifestyles, and the challenges that they face. Through the bees talking about food insecurity, their different housing styles and family formations, and the multiple obstacles humans place in front of them, the stories help children to see the bees as agents, with their own subjectivities, and as friends and members of the children’s’ own community of life. Dr. Dohe plans to expand Bees for Peace back to Germany, adapting the program for the country's wild bees and native flowers.

**Hadar Elyashiv and Camila Neder**, Once upon a time ... a scientific fairy tale

The Once Upon a Time Project aims to communicate scientific concepts and themes through short stories that encourage a dialogue between scientists and public audiences – mainly targeting children-our future generation. The project brings together young researchers, artists and writers from around the world mainly to convey clear messages regarding climate change, dangers of pollution and the importance of our oceans. The first set of stories have been translated into many languages and are available for free download. The project is ongoing with new members and the 3rd volume is in the making! The project, awarded a prize by the German Ministry of Education, was established by early career researchers mainly PhD students and posdocs from the MARUM Center for Marine Environmental Sciences at the University of Bremen.

Dr Hadar Elyashiv, is a marine geoscientists, a writer and a science communicator. She earned her PhD from the Universities of Bremen and Haifa (cotutelle) studying how the physical properties of marine sediments affects submarine landslides. During her doctoral studies, she became a founder and a coordinator of the Once Upon a Time Project – a book of scientific fairy tales with a message for young and adults. While being frustrated from her own research progress (as many PhD students...) she channeled her passion for marine sciences into storytelling. She then went on to gain different experience specializing in science communication and digital media for laboratories and scientific associations. As of September 2024 Hadar will be the spokesperson of the Israeli National Oceanographic Center.

Dr. Camila Neder is a marine ecologist, writer and science communicator. She achieved her Doctorate at her hometown University, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina but her academic journey spans numerous locations where she completed internships. Her research focuses on the distribution of Antarctic benthic animals, examining how these species respond to climate change—facing both potential habitat expansion and the risk of extinction, a small wording difference with significant ecological implications. She is currently the co-coordinator of OUAT Book III.

**Cameo Marlatt, Guillem Rubio-Ramon, and Shawn Bodden**, Future fables: Re-learning to live with animals through place-based writing workshops

The climate crisis has precipitated many new practices of storytelling about humans, non-human animals, and the ways they might (need to) live together differently in uncertain, climate-changed futures. Drawing inspiration from the fable as a familiar form of storytelling and moralising about human and animal life, the Future Fables project seeks to investigate how human-animal relations are fabled within urban rewilding and greening initiatives – and to invite communities to compose their own local fables to share alternative lessons for better multispecies living through participatory walking-and-writing workshops. Our paper will share some preliminary reflections and results from the project’s pilot workshops exploring human-animal relationships with communities along the Water of Leith in Edinburgh and the Besòs in Barcelona. Our participants’ fables explored how future environmental changes could impact their local lives with animals and helped to reveal the moral and political dimensions of human-animal interactions in urban settings. In our presentation and future work within the project, we will share fables as a way to collectively ask and answer the question: how do we re-learn to live with animals in new and more neighbourly ways?

Cameo Marlatt is a poet and independent creative researcher with an interest in zoopoetics, lyric nonfiction, and arts-based participatory research.

Guillem Rubio-Ramon is a Postdoctoral Research Associate at the University of Edinburgh’s School of GeoSciences. His research integrates more-than-human geographies and political ecologies to study the reciprocal influence of animals and humans on each other’s socio-cultural, economic and political lives.

Shawn Bodden is a Research Fellow at the University of Edinburgh in the School of Social and Political Science. His research focuses on community experiences of environmental change, with a particular interest in multispecies interaction.