

## The Game of Kin – Multispecies Storytelling Workshop

### \_workshop

The Anthropocene has become a critical issue of contemporary debate. In this new geological era, humanity becomes a force of nature, inscribing itself in the geological depths of the planet. Geologists, biologists, scholars from humanities and social sciences, writers and artists are trying to describe what scenarios our human and non-human ways of life will take us to. But no specialist and no technology can confirm what the future of life on Earth will look like. *The Game of Kin* aims at simulating futures for all of us and to question who “we” are and what forms that “we” might have.

### \_guest

Constanza Mendoza from *Laboratorio de Pensamiento Lúdico (LPL)*, a collective dedicated to the development of playful formats that reflect on collective intelligence as a transforming force.

### \_activities

SHARING  
books and objects brought by each participant  
to get a glimpse into each other's worlds

READING  
collectively from the book *The Companion Species Manifesto. Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness* by Donna Haraway (2003)

PLAYING  
« The Game of Kin »

BUILDING  
habitats

EMBODYING  
different species

SPECULATING  
for survival to dramatic environmental changes

MOVING  
from and to habits and worldviews

REFLECTING  
on the workshop format

### \_encounters

Flavia Barragan  
chemist, biotech scientist and bio designer

Filippo Bertoni  
anthropologist of technoscience

Karine Bonneval  
artist

Alice Cannava  
history of science and technology editor and curator

Chiara Garbellotto  
PhD student (socio-cultural anthropology of museums)

Linus Günther  
behavioural ecologist

Lisa Jahn  
cultural studies postgraduate and museum practitioner  
(participation and public engagement)

Siri Kellner  
PhD student (microbiology, science communication and exhibition making)

Sybille Neumeyer  
artist

Constanza Mendoza  
artist

Debbie Onuoha  
visual anthropologist and filmmaker

Sina Ribak  
researcher for ecology & the arts

Wibke Rössig  
political scientist and museum practitioner  
(participation and public engagement)

Luis Valente  
evolutionary biologist

Mathias Zilch  
biologist and museum practitioner (education)

### ODDKIN°labs

ODDKIN°labs are experimental workshops exploring unexpected relations for more-than-human worlds.

The first labs series was situated in the Museum für Naturkunde Berlin, questioning objects, spaces and narratives with a trans-disciplinary approach.

In each session, a new ensemble of practitioners from different fields - including from the Museum itself - critically engaged with the themes of coevolution, taxidermy, and stone (hi)stories.

Each theme was set by a host through her art & science practice.  
Multispecies Storytelling – Constanza Mendoza  
Taxidermic Cinema – Debbie Onuoha  
Stratigraphic Storytelling – Sybille Neumeyer

This poster is a curated partial re-elaboration of the ODDKIN°-lab 0.0, which was held on May 21st 2019 in the Experimentierfeld at the Museum.

»Staying with the trouble requires making oddkin;  
that is, we require each other in unexpected  
collaborations and combinations, in hot compost piles.  
We become-with each other or not at all.«

Donna Haraway  
Staying with the troubles

### \_collective reading

## ODDKIN°labs

Unexpected relations for more-than-human worlds

Co-designed by Chiara Garbellotto and Sina Ribak in cooperation with the Museum für Naturkunde Berlin and Humboldt Universität.

Chiara Garbellotto is a doctoral researcher on the *Making Differences* Project at the Centre for Anthropological Research on Museums and Heritage (CARMAH). Her research focuses on how 'bio-diversity' and 'participation' are co-produced and how knowing and caring are mobilised in museum public engagement.

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Sina Ribak – researcher for ecologies and the arts – is an engineer in environmental management and nature conservation working at the interface of nature and culture. With her socio-ecological focus she engages in international collaborative projects contributing to transdisciplinary research. Since 2017 she is co-director of the Berlin based *'Between Us and Nature'* Reading Club.

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With kind support of:



excerpt #02

[...]  
The big, wide world is full of bumpy life. For example, Margaret McFall-Ngai has shown that the light-sensing organs of the squid Euprymna scopes develop normally only if the embryo has been colonized by luminescent Vibrio bacteria. Similarly, human gut tissue cannot develop normally without colonization by its bacterial flora. The diversity of earth's animal forms emerged in the oceans' salty bacterial soup. All stages of the life histories of evolving animals had to adapt to eeger bacteria colonizing them inside and out. Developmental patterns of complex life forms are likely to show the history of these adaptations, once scientists figure out how to look for the evidence. Earth's beings are prehensile, opportunistic, ready to yoke unlikely partners into something new, something sym-biogenetic. Co-constitutive companion species and co-evolution are the rule, not the exception. These arguments are topic for my manifesto, but flesh and figure are not far apart. Tropes are what make us want to look and need to listen for surprises that get us out of inherited boxes.

[...]



excerpt #01

[...]  
Co-evolution has to be defined more broadly than biologists habitually do. Certainly, the mutual adaptation of visible morphologies like flower sexual structures and the organs of their pollinating insects is co-evolution. But it is a mistake to see the alterations of dogs' bodies and minds as biological and the changes in human bodies and lives, for example in the emergence of herding or agricultural societies, as cultural, and so not about co-evolution. At the least, I suspect that human genomes contain a considerable molecular record of the pathogens of their companion species, including dogs.

[...]

Donna Haraway . » The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness « p.31  
Prickly Paradigm Press, Chicago  
2003

2003

- o Quotes
- x Questions
- > Feedback

o Honeybee: » So you think also hybrids are allowed, so that for example if we breed and form hybrids you get wings for example. «  
 Bedbug: » Yeah. «  
 Honeybee: » Ok. «  
 Bedbug: » I think that's possible. «  
 -laughs-  
 Bedbug: » No? Why not! «

x What does the contraposition between 'science fiction' and (evidence-based) 'scientific epistemic' do? What differences does it produce? Between whom and what?

> » Sometimes I had to suppress my scientific side thinking 'this cannot happen, there need to be more steps between one event and the other'. But because of the fiction side I also thought 'everything is possible'. «

Luis Valente



x  
 Q > You have to evolve radically; there is no option to stay the same. «  
 Mathias Zilch  
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x What kind of stories do 'chance' and 'adaptation' tell about group dynamics?



o Linus: » Me as a biologist I have problem to hybrid for example the (genus) platypus and the bed bug. «  
 Flavia: » You have knowledge. «  
 Alice: » I think so, too. «  
 Flavia: » The knowledge is the difference. Because of your different background you see the limits of that and that's why I think you didn't go through. «

x Which specific biological theories are applied in current research and which not?



> » We were all 'experts' so the conversation was quite serious even though it was a game and the atmosphere was relaxed. Even if we were laughing, we took the mission quite seriously to find solution to the critic scenarios. «

Karine Bonneval

> » Doing science outreach depends on the personality of the scientists as well and on the condition and motivation with which they do their work: is it a passion or 'just a job'? «

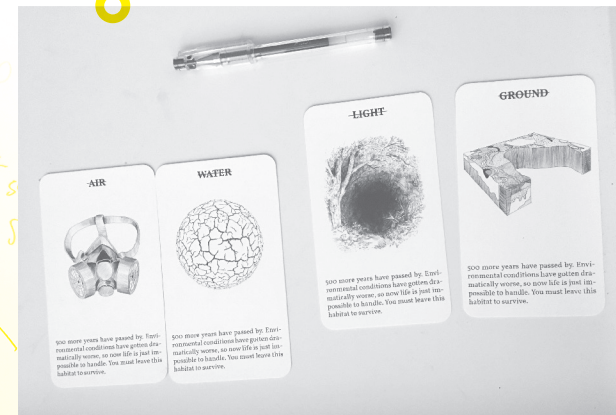
Linus Günther

x Whose job is 'outreach' in a museum?

x Where do we want to go to?

> » The rules of the game focus on survival but then there is freedom where to go to, depending on the expertises. «  
 Mathias Zilch

> » Everyone wants to be more engaged in public communication but struggle in front of their laptops doing their research. «  
 Luis Valente



> » While speculating the survival story, different 'times' were present in the group, something like classical music and improvisation times. «

Alice Cannava

o » When we started, I never thought that our environment would become the place people come to survive. «  
 Karine Bonneval



500 more years have passed by. Environmental conditions have gotten dramatically worse, so now life is just impossible to handle. You must leave the habitat to survive.