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Drones in Society: New Visual Aesthetics
8th and 9th September 2022, Halifax Hall, Sheffield, UK

Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/drones-in-society-tickets-318517513457>

Conference Programme

8th of September 2022	
5:30-7:00	Welcome, wine reception and visit of the drone visuals exhibition
9th of September 2022	
8:45-9:15	Arrival Refreshments
9:15-10:00	<p><i>Drone art and creative practices</i></p> <p><u>Speakers:</u> Dr Richard Carter, University of Roehampton <i>Drone Art and Ecological Concerns—Towards a Speculative Drone Aesthetics</i></p> <p>Kathryn Brimblecombe-Fox, Curtin University <i>Imaginational Metaveillance, Creative Painting Practice and The Airborne Drone</i></p> <p>Dr Adam Fish, University of South New Wales <i>'Organic Machine' screening</i></p>
10:00-11:00	<p><u>Keynote:</u> Dr Julia Hildebrand, Eckerd College <i>Between Air and Aura: Vertical Views and Powerful Play with Civilian Drones</i></p>
11:00-11:15	Coffee break
11:15-12:15	<p><i>Drone activism, conflict, migration and war</i></p> <p><u>Speakers:</u> Dr Michael Richardson, University of New South Wales <i>How to Witness a Drone Strike</i></p> <p>Hendrik Bender and Max Kanderske, University of Siegen <i>The Good, the Bad and the Ugly: How DIY Drone Practices in Contemporary Conflicts are Changing the Drone Discourse</i></p> <p>Dr Beryl Pong, University of Sheffield <i>The Politics of the Faceless: Proliferated Drone's Eye Views of the Migration Crisis</i></p> <p>Dr Will Andrews, Keele University <i>Drones in UK Policing: Visibility, Presence & Justice</i></p> <p>Professor David Taylor, University of Arizona <i>COMPLEX - A visual index of the Immigrant detention industry</i></p>
12:15-13:00	<i>Drones in cinema, films, and storytelling</i>



	<p><u>Speakers:</u> Dr Nick Jones, University of York <i>Aerial Bayhem: The Aesthetics of New Urban Anxiety in Ambulance (2022)</i></p> <p>Dr Zoe Shacklock, University of St Andrews and Dr Charlotte Stevens, Birmingham City University <i>Monstrous Mobilities and Predatory Perspectives: Drone Shots and the Gaze of Monsters in Cinema</i></p> <p>Professor Jill Walker Rettberg, University of Bergen <i>Controlling Drones in Contemporary Science Fiction</i></p> <p>Elina Fokiceva, University of Leicester <i>Drones in Storytelling: Creating News Visuals</i></p>
13:00-14:00	Lunch break
14:00-14:45	Workshop with a drone professional: Paul Stinson
14:45-15:00	Coffee break
15:00-16:15	<p><i>Drone aesthetics, sensing and mapping</i></p> <p><u>Speakers:</u> Mauro Augustin, Southampton University, Dario Sandrone, Eugenia Mackinson, Loreta Magallanes and Sebastian Torrez , University of Cordoba <i>Global South Dronification: Mapping drone techniques and aesthetics from Cordoba (Argentina)</i></p> <p>Giulio Galimberti, State University of Milan <i>Thermal Aesthetics. Beyond Visuality in Drone Technology</i></p> <p>Dr Anna Jackman, University of Reading <i>Drone Sensing: Lively and Deathly Visuals and Volumes</i></p>
16:15-16:45	Conclusion: Drones: A new visual culture?



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Abstracts

Keynote: **Julia Hildebrand**, Eckerd College *Between Air and Aura: Vertical Views and Powerful Play with Civilian Drones*.

Dr. Julia M. Hildebrand is Assistant Professor of Communication at Eckerd College, Florida. Originally from Germany, she earned her PhD in Communication, Culture, and Media at Drexel University. Her research lies at the intersections of critical media studies and mobilities research with a special interest in mobile technologies, visual communication, and human-machine interactions. Her work has been published in journals such as *Media, Culture, & Society*, *Digital Culture & Society*, *Mobile Media & Communication*, *AI & Society*, *Transfers*, and *Mobilities*. In her book *Aerial Play: Drone Medium, Mobility, Communication, and Culture* (2021, Palgrave Macmillan), she draws on extensive ethnographic research into recreational drone communities to discuss camera drones as mobile media for meaningful play. For her research on consumer drones, she was honoured with the 2020 Harold A. Innis Award in the Field of Media Ecology, the 2018 Emerging Scholar Research Award by the Mobile Communication Interest Group of the International Communication Association, and several top paper awards by the American Association of Geographers and National Communication Association. Her collaborative work in media ecology won the 2019 Walter Benjamin Award for Outstanding Article and the 2019 John Culkin Award for Outstanding Praxis in the Field of Media Ecology.

Drone artist: Charlotte Graham is a professional photographer based in the north of England. Her unique combination of technical and creative photographic talent are combined with a desire to create the very best image possible.

Drone Art and Creative Practices

Speakers:

Dr Richard Carter, University of Roehampton *Drone Art and Ecological Concerns—Towards a Speculative Drone Aesthetics*

Richard A Carter is an artist and senior lecturer in Digital Media at the University of Roehampton. Carter is interested in examining the more-than-human within digital activities, objects, and environments. Carter's research is embedded within his artistic practice, meditating on the potentialities of sensing, knowing, and writing at the intersection between human and machinic actors

Kathryn Brimblecombe-Fox, Curtin University *Imaginational Metaveillance, Creative Painting Practice and The Airborne Drone*

Kathryn Brimblecombe-Fox is an Australian, Brisbane-based visual artist and researcher. She is currently undertaking a creative practice-lead PhD, Curtin University, Western Australia. She is the recipient of the Strategic Project Scholarship Investigating the contemporary aesthetic of militarisation. In 2017 Kathryn completed a Master of Philosophy (Cultural Studies/Art History), University of Queensland. She is currently an Honorary Research Fellow, School of Communication and Arts at UQ. Kathryn has exhibited her paintings, and presented about her research and creative practice, in national and international arenas.

Dr Adam Fish, University of South New Wales *'Organic Machine' screening*.



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Drone activism, conflicts, migration and war

Speakers:

Dr Michael Richardson, University of New South Wales *How to Witness a Drone Strike*

Michael Richardson is writer, researcher, and teacher living and working on Gadigal and Bidjigal country. He is an Associate Professor in Media and Culture at UNSW Sydney, where he co-directs the Media Futures Hub and the Autonomous Media Lab, and an Associate Investigator with the ARC Centre of Excellence on Automated Decision-Making & Society. His research examines technology, power, witnessing, trauma, and affect in contexts of war, security, and surveillance. Alongside articles, essays, and book chapters, he is the author of *Gestures of Testimony: Torture, Trauma, and Affect in Literature* (Bloomsbury 2016) and is completing a book currently titled *Nonhuman Witnessing: War, Climate, and Data After the End of the World*.

Hendrik Bender and **Max Kanderske**, University of Siegen *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly: How DIY Drone Practices in Contemporary Conflicts are Changing the Drone Discourse*

Hendrik Bender works as a scientific assistant at the project "Agentic Media: Formations of Semi-Autonomy" which is part of the Collaborative Research Centre "Media of Cooperation" at the University of Siegen. His current research focuses on the analysis of spatial and media practices of sensor-based actors by the example of flying cameras.

Max Kanderske is a research assistant at the chair for Science, Technology & Media Studies at the University of Siegen. As a member of the project "Navigation in online/offline spaces" within the Collaborative Research Center "Media of Cooperation", he works on his PhD thesis titled "Navigating the noise - A Geography of Self-Locating Interfaces".

Dr Beryl Pong, University of Sheffield *The Politics of the Faceless: Proliferated Drone's Eye Views of the Migration Crisis*

Beryl Pong is a Vice-Chancellor's Fellow at the University of Sheffield. From September 2022, she will be a UKRI Future Leaders Fellow based at the Centre for the Future of Intelligence, University of Cambridge. She is the author of *British Literature and Culture in Second World Wartime: For the Duration* (Oxford University Press, 2020), the co-editor of *Drone Aesthetics: War, Culture, Ecology* (forthcoming with Open Humanities Press), and the editor of a special issue on 'The Art of Drone Warfare' for the *Journal of War and Culture Studies* (forthcoming 2022). She holds a British Academy Rising Star Engagement Award.

Dr Will Andrews, Keele University *Drones in UK Policing: Visibility, Presence & Justice*

Will is a human geographer with research interests in mobilities, technology and policing. Will currently works at Keele University as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow, on the INTERACT project, exploring the ways in which technology impacts on police-public encounters, drawing on the conceptual context of Procedural Justice Theory. The technologies explored in this project include body-worn video, mobile data terminals, online reporting and drones".

Professor David Taylor, University of Arizona *COMPLEX - A visual index of the Immigrant detention industry*.

David Taylor's artwork examines place, territory, history and politics. Exhibited widely, his projects reveal how borders can function not only as spatial demarcations, but also as an amplifying device particularly attuned to changing geo-political, environmental and social conditions. Recent exhibition venues include the Boise Art Museum, Nevada Museum of Art, Joslyn Art Museum, the MFA,



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Houston and Museo de las Artes Universidad de Guadalajara. Taylor's work can be found in numerous collections including the Library of Congress, the Phoenix Art Museum and the Nelson-Atkins Museum. The Guardian, Places Journal, Gizmodo and Arquine have all recently featured his projects. In 2019 Taylor was awarded a residency at Proyecto Siqueiros: La Tallera in Cuernavaca, Mexico and an Arizona Commission on the Arts Research and Development Grant. A 2008 Guggenheim Fellow, Taylor is a member of the Photography, Video and Imaging faculty in the University of Arizona School of Art.

Drones in Cinema, Films, and Storytelling

Speakers:

Dr Nick Jones, University of York *Aerial Bayhem: The Aesthetics of New Urban Anxiety in Ambulance (2022)*

Dr Nick Jones is Lecturer in Film, Television and Digital Culture at the University of York, UK. He is the author of *Hollywood Action Films and Spatial Theory* (2015) and *Spaces Mapped and Monstrous: Digital 3D Cinema and Visual Culture* (2020), and his work has also appeared in a variety of journals and edited collections. He is currently researching the influence of the graphic user interface upon a wider range of visual media.

Dr Zoe Shacklock, University of St Andrews and **Dr Charlotte Stevens**, Birmingham City University *Monstrous Mobilities and Predatory Perspectives: Drone Shots and the Gaze of Monsters in Cinema*
Zoë Shacklock is a Lecturer in Film Studies at the University of St Andrews. Her research focuses on the body in contemporary television, with particular interests in movement, queerness and empathy. Her monograph *Television and the Moving Body* is under contract with Edinburgh University Press.

E. Charlotte Stevens is a Lecturer in Media and Communications at Birmingham City University. Her monograph, *Fanvids: Television, Women, and Home Media Re-use*, is published by Amsterdam University Press (2020). She has also published on videogame fan histories, screen vampires, and poetic television documentaries on the BBC.

Professor Jill Walker Rettberg, University of Bergen *Controlling Drones in Contemporary Science Fiction*

Jill Walker Rettberg is professor of Digital Culture at the University of Bergen, and leads the ERC project Machine Vision in Everyday Life. Rettberg's next book, *Machine Vision: How Algorithms are Changing the Way We See the World*, will be published by Polity in 2023

Elina Fokiceva, University of Leicester *Drones in Storytelling: Creating News Visuals*.

Elina Fokiceva is a doctoral candidate in Media and Communication at the University of Leicester, School of Media, Communication and Sociology. Elina's PhD research focuses on drone visuals production in the UK media. Elina is a member of IAMCR Journalism Research and Education and Emerging Scholars Network sections. In addition to research, Elina is involved in teaching, peer-reviewing, visual practice, and photography.

Drone aesthetics, sensing and mapping

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Mauro Augustin, Southampton University, **Dario Sandrone**, **Eugenia Mackinson**, **Loreta Magallanes and Sebastian Torrez**, University of Cordoba *Global South Dronification: Mapping drone techniques and aesthetics from Cordoba (Argentina)*

"Drone socio-technical networks in Córdoba (Argentina)" is an interdisciplinary research project that groups postgraduate researchers from the National University of Córdoba from the areas of humanities, social sciences and engineering. Its primary goal is to map networks formed around drone technology in the region of Córdoba. Since 2018 we have been analyzing institutional, cultural and corporate spaces and their different points of view, know-how, practices and imaginaries around drone technology. In this opportunity, we will present a theoretical analysis that engages with this empirical work and points towards an interdisciplinary understanding of the visual landscapes of drones in contemporary Argentina.

Giulio Galimberti, State University of Milan *Thermal Aesthetics. Beyond Visuality in Drone Technology*

Giulio Galimberti is a Ph.D. student in Philosophy and Human Sciences at the University of Milan. His research focuses on the aesthetic experience and performative processes at play in biomedical and military visualization devices and the images they produce. His research interests range from media theory to the philosophy of the image and human-machine interactions. His publications appear in scientific journals such as *Hermes*, *Journal of Communication* and *Danza e Ricerca*.

Dr Anna Jackman, University of Reading *Drone Sensing: Lively and Deathly Visuals and Volumes*

Dr Anna Jackman is a Lecturer in Human Geography at the University of Reading. Anna's research explores technological visibilities, volumes, relations and futures. Her work approaches these themes through the lens of the drone, examining how it (re)shapes military, urban, and everyday life. Anna's publications have explored drones and [everyday life](#), the speculation of [drone futures](#), the domestic [threat of drones](#), and the visual cultures of [military drones](#). Anna acted as Specialist Advisor to the Science and Technology Committee's Inquiry into 'Commercial and recreational drone use in the UK', and an expert witness to the Defence Committee's Inquiry into the 'Domestic threat of drones'. She can be reached at a.h.jackman@reading.ac.uk and found on Twitter at [@ahjackman](#).