

# FEMINIST STUDIES COLLOQUIUM SERIES FALL 2016

A monthly speaker series hosted by the UCSC Feminist Studies Department  
2-4 pm in HUM 1, room 210

October 13

## Ethnofuturism and the Archeology of the Future

Sara Mameni, UC President's Postdoctoral Fellow



In her video project, "In The Future They Ate From The Finest Porcelain" (2014), Larissa Sansour enters the fictional world of a resistance group who bury porcelain remains of an imaginary civilization to influence history and support their claims to land and sovereignty. Shuttling between past and future, the film uses science fiction aesthetics and speculative language to re-write the history of the future and lay claim to home. Similarly, Morehshin Allahyari's ongoing project titled "Material Speculation" (2015) reconstructs archeological artifacts destroyed by ISIS in 3D format, archiving lost objects by including a digital memory card inside each newly constructed artifact. Sansour and Allahyari use the science of past-making to enter into the future. Yet unlike archeology's attachment to stable land, they propose a virtual archeology of lands and artifacts already lost. I argue that artists such as Sansour and Allahyari launch an ethnofuturist aesthetic geared towards a sustained relationship with otherness, defying temporality by claiming their politics in the imaginative space of the future and the speculative space of hope

**Sara Mameni** received her PhD in Art History at UC San Diego with a dissertation titled "On Persian Blues: Queer Bodies, Racial Affects." Her research, publications and curatorial work have engaged gender, race and sexuality in art and visual culture in Iran and the Arab/Muslim world.

November 3

## Rethinking Gender, Art & Geopolitics through Post-national War Rhetoric

Redi Koobak, Assistant Professor, Linköping University, Sweden



After its 50-year occupation by the Soviets, current political discourse in Estonia revolves around the importance of proving that despite being small, Estonia is a courageous and highly reliable NATO ally to defend against the historically perceived threat from Russia. For example, Estonia's participation in Afghanistan missions was presented as self-evident and largely unquestioned both in parliament and in the media. In this context, it is difficult to find counter-narratives to war in public discourse, with implications for understandings of gender, geopolitics and nationalism. In search of voices that question the general consensus about Estonia's participation in NATO missions, I zoom in on the artworks of Estonian artist Maarit Murka who was invited to visit Estonian troops in Afghanistan on the commission of the Estonian Military Museum. Pondering upon three exhibitions she made as a result of her trip, I explore how artistic interventions might denaturalize gendered and nationalized notions of violence and justifications for war.

**Redi Koobak** is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Thematic Studies – Gender Studies at Linköping University, Sweden, where she also defended her dissertation, *Whirling Stories: Postsocialist Feminist Imaginaries and the Visual Arts* (Linköping University Press, 2013). She is a visiting scholar and lecturer in the Feminist Studies Department at UC Santa Cruz during Fall 2016.

December 1

## Queer x Trans x Feminist x Ecology: Toward a Field Science Practice

Cleo Woelfle-Erskine, UC President's Postdoctoral Fellow



Ecologists are on the front lines of the sixth mass extinction, as intimates die at alarming rates. What radical politics and transformative potentials can arise from witnessing these transgressive intimacies, even or especially among more-than-human others dying because of human (in)action? I search for signs of resistant 'world making' (Muñoz) in ephemeral moments where scientists were able to speak their grief at extinction and love for their study species, through three cases: (1) scientists' field photos and captions circulated during a twitter #cuteoff, (2) my own encounters with dead salmon during ecological field studies, and (3) "Tell A Salmon Your Troubles," an interactive performance in which scientists confessed their troubles about data, habitat loss, and extinction to a silent yet responsive salmon character. I explore resonance between queer and trans theory and indigenous theory that foregrounds multispecies ethics and relational practices, and consider how field ecologists can challenge settler ontologies and epistemologies embedded in scientific and environmental management practices.

**Dr. Cleo Woelfle-Erskine** is an ecologist, hydrologist, writer, and scholar of water, working with mentor Karen Barad to explore queer, transgender, and decolonial possibilities for ecological science. In July 2017, he will join the faculty of the School of Marine and Environmental Affairs at the University of Washington, Seattle as Assistant Professor of Equity and Environmental Justice.