

Event



Description

There is a growing realization that human and humanistic knowledge is necessary to respond to societal challenges and complex problems.

Such responses are almost always going to engage with infrastructure one way or another. Infrastructures make up a

also a way of thinking about the world, which comes with certain predispositions and values.

The day and a half Humane Infrastructures event *Humane Infrastructures* brings together leading scholars, experts, artists, university administrators, politicians, and community members to consider and outline how we can build long-term human/humanities-driven capacity to collaboratively critique, imagine, design, and build civic and academic infrastructures at scale. The workshop will be both content-driven (specific research projects, ideas, practices, cases, challenges, perspectives) and high-level (strategy, policy, capacity, leadership). It will draw on the strengths of UCLA.

A central concern for *Humane Infrastructures* is how to mobilize humanistic/human knowledge at scale, particularly in relation to the socio-technological systems and infrastructures – including AI, search engines, urban infrastructure, supply chains, academic infrastructure, medical technology and environmental data – that play such an important role in our lives and societies. The workshop has a national and

The program will be structured around 1) major challenges (e.g. homelessness, climate change) and themes (e.g. AI, ‘smart’ cities, the quantified human, online platforms, the academic lifeworld, innovation logic), 2) a toolbox (e.g. critical making, designing for difference, algorithmic intervention/auditing, terraforming, mutualistic systems design, and staying with the trouble), and 3) a set of concrete examples and theoretical issues.

These challenges and themes are all impacted by resolutely humanist concerns, i.e. the relations between what we make, build, and transform as humans, and how we make, build, and transform ourselves. The practices and perspectives in the toolkit speak explicit to these relations, and give us new ways to acknowledge, denaturalize, respond, and impact them.

Background

The event draws on a series of conversations that have taken place over the past five years, among scholars and

Humane Infrastructures

contemporary surge of relevant scholarship and practice.

Events such as [“Critical Visualization: Unflattening and Enacting Visualization”](#) (The Graduate Center, CUNY, 2016), [UCLA Digital Humanities Seminar Series](#) (UCLA, 2016-2017), [Making Change through the Humanities: Institutes, Ideas and Infrastructures](#) (KTH Royal Institute of Technology, 2018), and [Humanities Tech Seminars](#) (KTH Royal institute of Technology, 2018-2019) fostered dialogue across disciplines, institutions, and industries that has laid critical groundwork and built a globally engaged collective.

Extended Rationale

The shape and aim of *Humane Infrastructures* is derived from the participants, their practices, and their perspectives. These individuals and their work relate to a wide-spread critique of “tech,” the inability to deal with global threats like climate change, and developments like the ongoing datafication of our society. They bring deep knowledge across a range of disciplines and areas, including environmental history,

humanities. They also bring an interest in concretely making civic and academic infrastructure better and more humane.

As such, the workshop is structured around a key set of concerns and developments:

1) The need for a more humane society and for human/humanistic driven capacity to collaboratively respond to grand challenges and complex problems. Such capacity must necessarily be collaborative inside and outside the academy, and be part of a different logic for innovation. It also needs to be critical and constructive, curiosity and challenge driven, and create action-rich contact zones with integrity, respect, and sharpness. This complex work requires engaging intellectually, materially, and creatively with the issues at hand and to assume complicity in socio-technological systems.

2) The critical, imaginary, and interventionist power of the emerging field of experimental humanities – environmental, digital, medical/health, and urban – and related fields such as disability studies, queer studies, information studies, ethnic

With societal engagement and a direct relation to infrastructures and socio-technological systems. They also tend to have a strong connection to traditional humanities disciplines, which provide grounding, symbiotic interplay (and tension), and contribute to a wealth of research trajectories, methods and perspectives.

3) Infrastructure as a pervasive framing of modern life, as evidenced by the way we understand and build the world (e.g. the [D- Infrastructure Report Card](#) by the American Society of Civil Engineers Engineering), civic infrastructure as a key political concern and ideological manifestation, research infrastructure as a way of organizing higher education (e.g. the [European Roadmap for Research Infrastructures](#)), and the expansion of infrastructure studies and of infrastructure as a theoretical framework. Infrastructure is a site for a conventional societal and technocratic logic (technology-driven, big, costly, long-term, systemic and essentially neutral), but also – arguably – a place for change, resistance and shifting logics.

(solution) to societal challenges, it is also quite as often part of the problem. AI, for example, is often presented as a solution to a whole range of problems (including the ones generated by AI), and institutional efforts to make AI more ethical/human are often driven by the same logic. Data becomes central, usually at the expense of other considerations, as illustrated by the intended commodification of data in the Google Quayside (Sidewalk Lab) project in Toronto ([*The Intercept*, Nov 13, 2018](#)) and the LAPD dismantling of some of their data-driven crime programs after substantial criticism ([*LA Times*, April 5, 2019](#)). How do we engage both critically and constructively with the socio-technological systems that structure our much of our lives and that are inseparable from the challenges and problems we need to tackle?

Ultimately, this event seeks to build on a critical-constructive engagement and deep considerations about how we can create collaborative capacity to make change. Our central question is: How can we use various critical perspectives, modes of engagement and methods to critique, imagine and

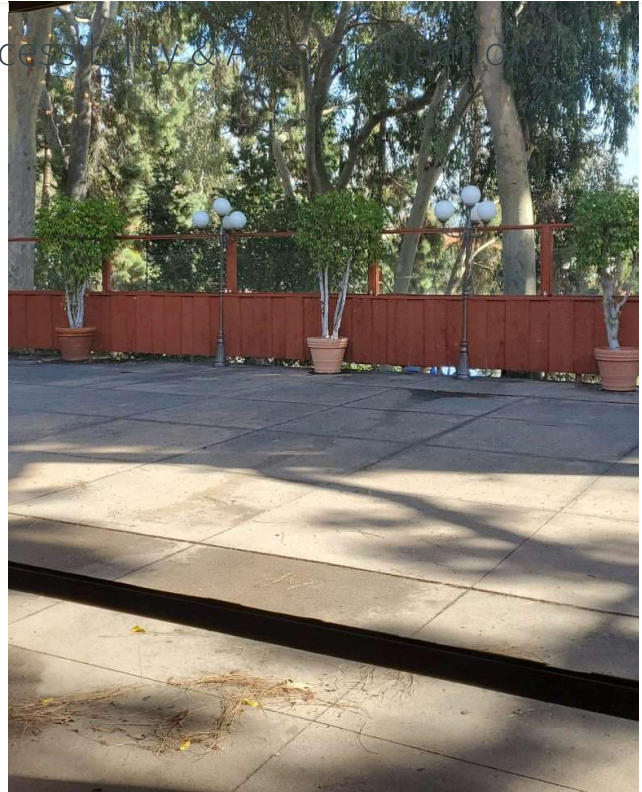
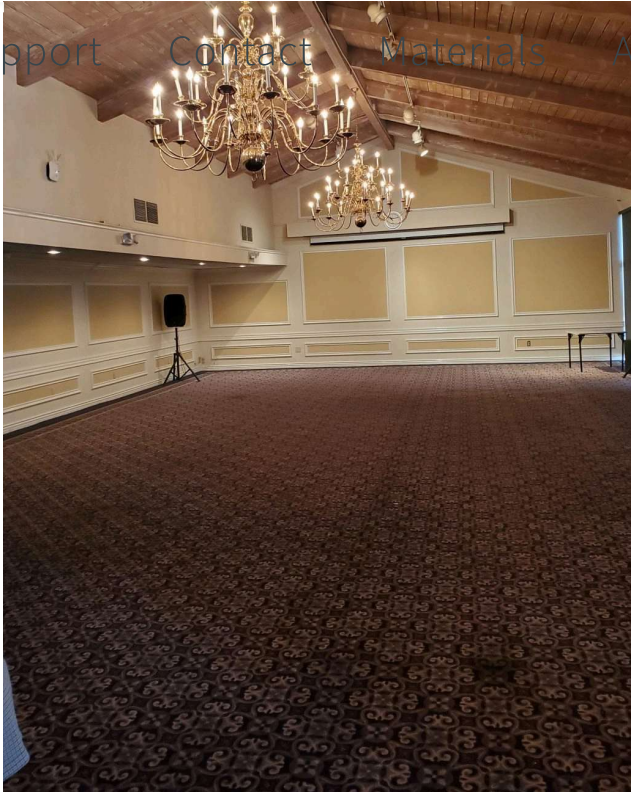
Humane Infrastructures

academic infrastructure. The event draws on the strengths of UCLA and relates to experimental humanities (urban, digital, environmental, medical) as well as areas such as disability studies but also across the whole campus – and will include international, national and local participants. It will be conversational (not focused on presentations). The event is not ready-made, but gets shaped by the individuals and the conversations – emergent.

Format and Venues

The workshop will be conversational and built around semi-structured conversations rather than ‘presentations.’ Most sessions will be slide-free. The format will be varied, including open discussion sessions, thematic sessions (not panels), pair conversations and workshops-in-the workshop. There will be a lunch at the start of the workshop, and coffee and tea breaks (fika) will feature LA-made Swedish pastries.

We will be in the beautiful California Room at the Faculty Center.



While we are hosted at the Faculty Center at UCLA, we would like to acknowledge the Gabrielino/Tongva peoples as the traditional land caretakers of Tovaangar (the Los Angeles basin and So. Channel Islands). Here at UCLA, as a land grant institution, we pay our respects to the Honuukvetam (Ancestors), ‘Ahihirom (Elders) and ‘Eyoohiinkem (our relatives/relations) past, present and emerging.

Materials



Participants

Invited Participants Include:
(more to be added)

[[All bios](#)]

Nicole Anand

The New School

participatory design, mixed-
methods research, public

Shamell Bell

Dartmouth

ethnographic and
performance studies, street

Mike Bonin

Council member for the 11th
District of the City of Los
Angeles [\[bio\]](#)

Anne Burdick

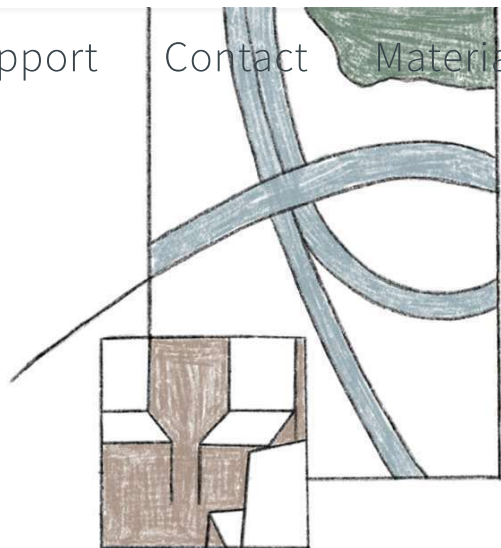
ArtCenter, UTS

design, digital publishing,
contemporary knowledge
production [\[bio\]](#)

Jeff Burke

UCLA

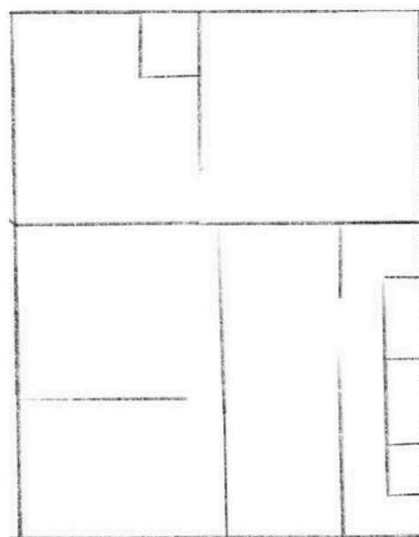
shaping digital technologies
for story telling, new genre art
installations, engineering-art
[\[bio\]](#)



Allison Carruth

UCLA

literature & science,
environmental narratives,
critical food studies,
artists/writers in US
environmental and food
justice movements; [[bio](#)].



Humane Infrastructures

Corbman

Wake Forest University

feminist and queer studies,
history of US social
movements, feminist and
LGBTQ activism [[bio](#)]

Taylor M. Cruz

**California State University,
Fullerton**

big data and health tech,
politics of measuring social
difference [[bio](#)]

Kate Elswit

University of London

Dana Cuff

UCLA

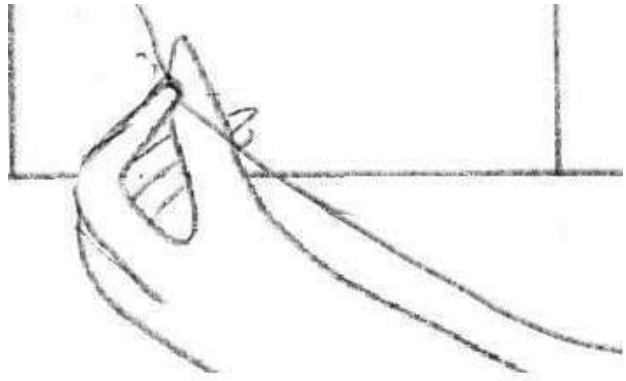
affordable housing,
modernism, suburban
studies, the politics of place,
tech and space [[bio](#)]

practice, data [[bio](#)]

Lori Emerson

**University of Colorado at
Boulder**

media archaeology, media
theory, history of computing,
labs, humanities
infrastructure [[bio](#)]



Mashinka Firunts Hakopian

UCLA

media studies, visual culture,
performance, contemporary

Anne Gilliland

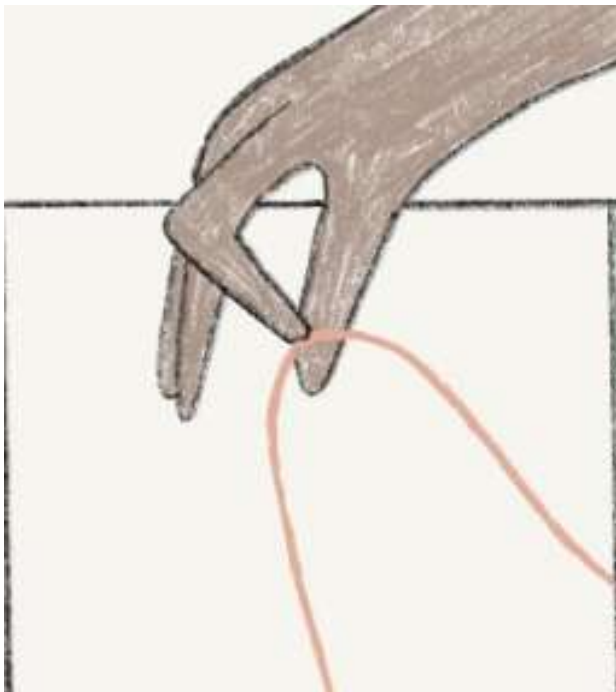
UCLA

archival studies, memory and
diaspora, bureaucratic
violence, politics of metadata
[\[bio\]](#)

Kian Goh

UCLA

urban ecological design,
spatial politics, social
mobilization, climate change,
global urbanization [\[bio\]](#)



Goldberg

UC Humanities Research Institute

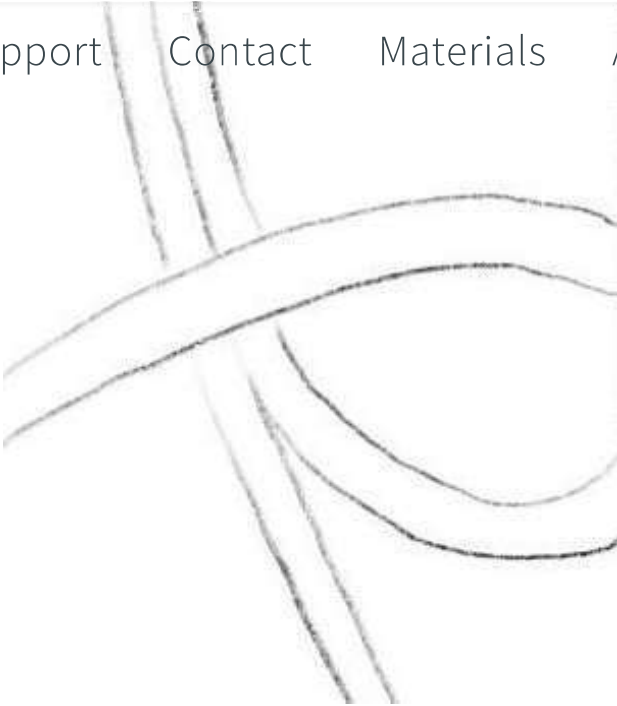
political and critical theory,
race, gender, dread, social
media racism, the humanities

[\[bio\]](#)

Cécile Guédon

UCLA

dance and media studies,
embodiment, twentieth
century culture and art [\[bio\]](#)



Guffey

SUNY, Purchase

art and design history,
material culture, critical
disability studies, designing
disability [[bio](#)].

Akhil Gupta

UCLA

contemporary capitalism,
development, postcoloniality,
globalization, and the state
[[bio](#)].

critical disability, race, and
feminist studies, architectural
history, and science and
technology studies [[bio](#)].

Ursula Heise

UCLA

contemporary literature and
environmental humanities,
multispecies storyworlds and
environments, terraforming
for urbanists [[bio](#)].

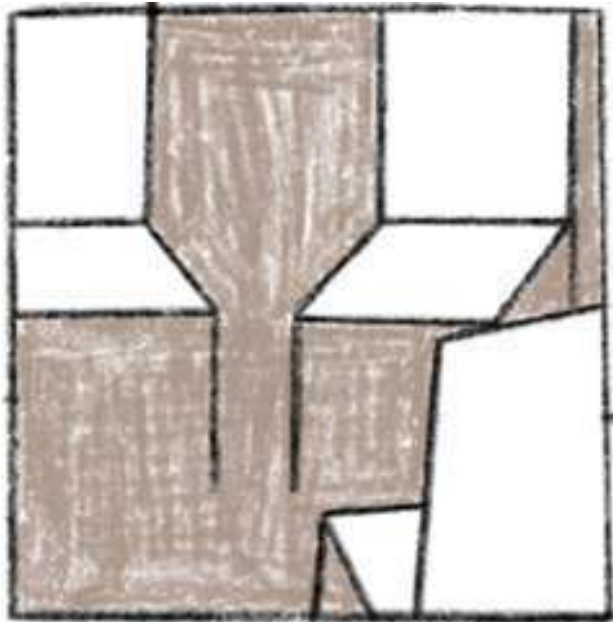
Theo Henderson

education, community,
unhoused [[bio](#)].

Natalie Jeremijenko

NYU

[Support](#) [Contact](#) [Materials](#) [Accessibility & Accommodations](#),
mutualistic systems design,
public socio-technological-
ecological experimentation
[\[bio\]](#).



ein
NYU

digital culture, surveillance,
media art/activism, and
queer politics [[bio](#)]



Christopher
Lee

UCLA

biochemistry, biophysics,
bioinformatics, genome
evolution, remix freedom
[[bio](#)]

Rachel C. Lee
UCLA

feminist studies,
(neo)colonialism,

Maya Livio
University of Colorado

STS, environmental media
studies, feminist theory,

Victoria Marks

UCLA

choreography, film, disability
and dance studies, politics of
citizenship, action
conversations, 10 questions
[\[bio\]](#)



Tara McPherson

USC

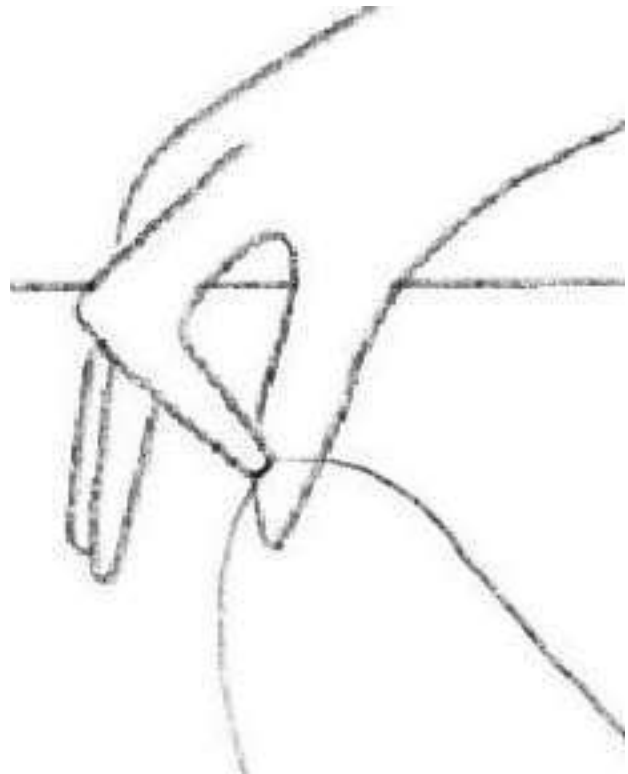
cinema studies, race, gender,
feminist technology studies,
platforms for hate, designing
for difference [\[bio\]](#)

critical race studies, women's
studies, academic labor
conditions, university studies,
complicity [[bio](#)]

Romi Ron Morrison

USC

artistic practice, critical data
studies, black feminist praxis,
cultural geography, social
infrastructure, community
technology [[bio](#)]



Harold Monbouquett

biochemical engineering,
microsensors for
neurochemical signaling
compounds, technology,
engineering, medicine [[bio](#)].

Darci Niva

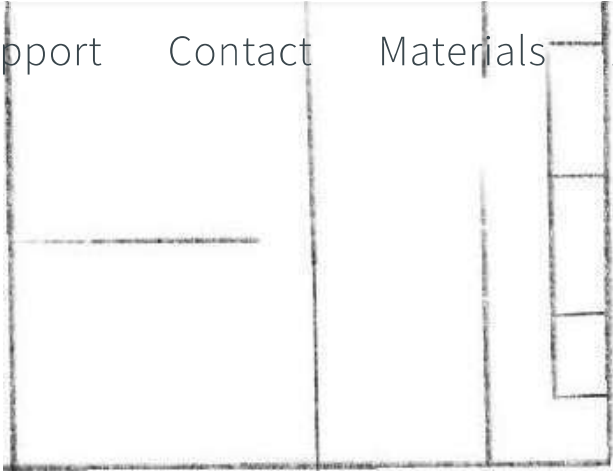
The Westside Coalition

housing, hunger, health,
community service
coordination, public
education, and advocacy
[[bio](#)].

Jane Nguyen

Ktown for All

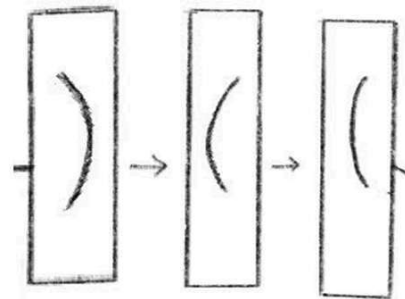
homeless advocacy, social
and community coordination,
neighborhood activism [[bio](#)].



Veronica Paredes

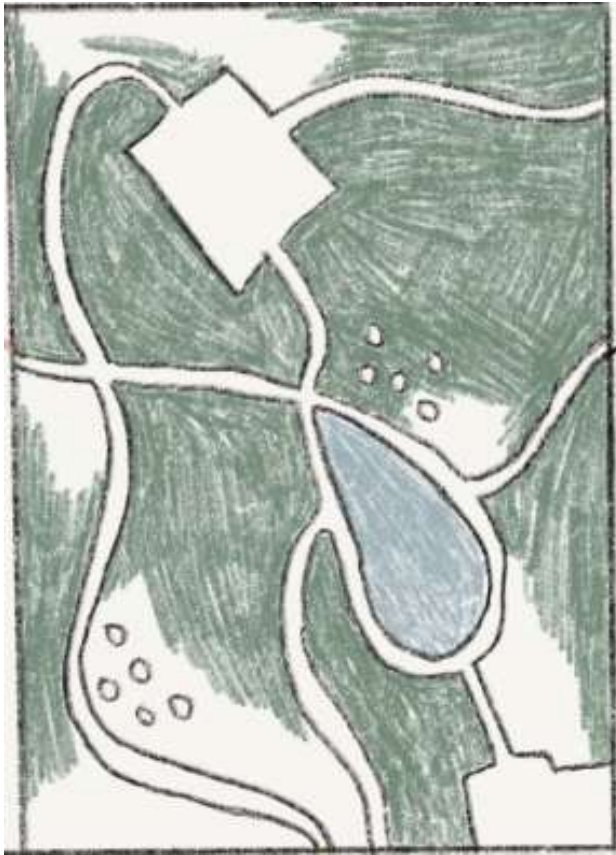
UCLA

urban media spaces, feminist
digital practices, critical race
and media studies [[bio](#)]



Marisa Parham

Amherst College



Anne Pasek

University of Alberta

climate change, new media,
feminism, gender studies,
environmental humanities
[[bio](#)]

Todd Presner

UCLA

European intellectual history,
digital humanities, mapping,

Matt Ratto

University of Toronto

science and technology
studies, critical making,
critical theory, complicity,
innovation [[bio](#)]

Dylan Reibling

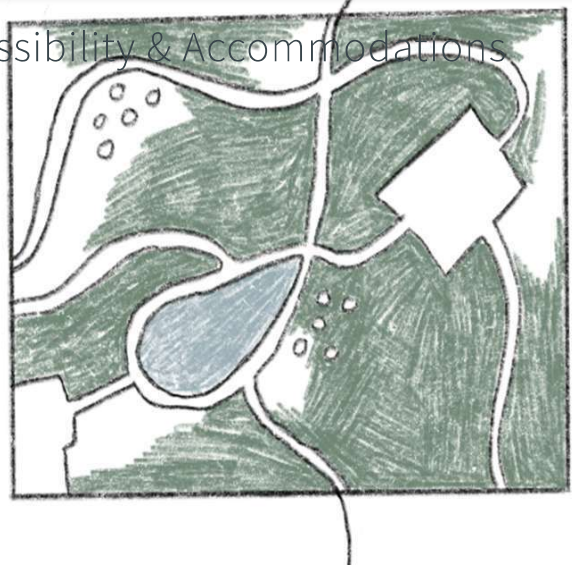
multi-media direction, short
films, documentaries,
interactive installations [[bio](#)]



Risam

Salem State University

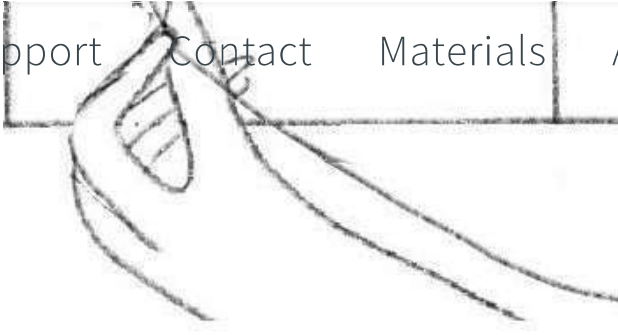
postcolonial and African
diaspora studies, humanities
knowledge infrastructures,
digital humanities, insurgent
academics [[bio](#)]



Sarah Roberts

UCLA

information studies,
information work and
workers, commercial content
moderation of social media,
Internet governance and
policy [[bio](#)]



Schaberg

UCLA

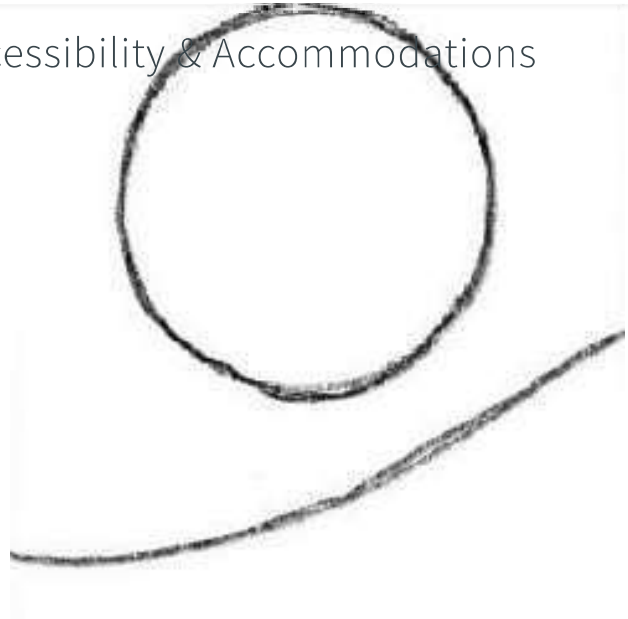
literary studies, comparative
studies, ancient Chinese
history and literature, the
humanities [[bio](#)]

**Nicholas
Shapiro**

UCLA

multidisciplinary
environmental studies,
chemical contamination and
climate change [[bio](#)].

media economy, cultural
digitization, media history,
algorithmic intervention [[bio](#)].



Marie Louise Juul Søndergaard

**KTH Royal Institute of
Technology**

interaction design, digital
women's health, critical-
feminist design of intimate
technologies, feminist
technoscience [[bio](#)].

Snelson

UCLA

digital poetry, material text
studies, media theory [[bio](#)]

Sörlin

**KTH Royal Institute of
Technology**

environmental history,
research and innovation
policy, the science politics of
climate change, ‘the
environment’ as a governable
object [[bio](#)]

Louis Tse

JPL

thermal engineering,
community organizing,
student homelessness [[bio](#)]



Program

Please note that the program is subject to change, and will be updated continuously up to the conference.

March 9, 2020

12:00 **Lunch (open from 11:45)**

Introduction and Opening Discussion

12:30 Led by Patrik Svensson (UCLA), with special guests, including Emily Carter, Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost (UCLA), David Schaberg, Dean of the Humanities (UCLA), Harold Monbouquette, Associate Dean of the School of Engineering (UCLA), invited participants, and registered attendees.

1:00 **Challenge: (In)humane Infrastructures of Homelessness**

Mike Bonin, City Council of Los Angeles
Dana Cuff, UCLA
David Theo Goldberg, UC Humanities Research

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[Contact](#)
[Jane Nguyen, Ktown for All, UCLA Activist-in-Residence](#)
[Materials](#)
[Accessibility & Accommodations](#)

Louis Tse, Co-Founder Students 4 Students
 Co-convener Darci Niva, Executive Director,
 Westside Coalition

2:00 **10 Questions (Case)**
 Victoria Marks, UCLA

Pair Conversations x 2: Imagination and Action
Environmental Futures: Imaginaries and Action
 Allison Carruth, UCLA
 Natalie Jeremijenko, NYU

2:10
Catastrophes, Checklists, and Choreographies: Tenerife 1977 and Krakatoa 1883
 Cécile Guédon, UCLA
 Christopher Lee, UCLA

3:00 **Swedish-Style Fika**
 Coffee, tea, princess cake and more on the adjacent patio

3:30 **Feminist/Queer Conferencing as Knowledge Production and Social Movement (Case)**

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Critical Tools for Action: Terraforming, Critical Making, Crip Technoscience, Staying with the Trouble in Design, Generative Unassimilation, Mutualistic Systems Design

3:40

Aimi Hamraie, Vanderbilt

Ursula Heise, UCLA

Marie Louise Juul, KTH Royal Institute of Technology

Matt Ratto, University of Toronto

Romi Ron Morrison, USC

4:40

Experimental Humanities at UCLA (Case)

Todd Presner, UCLA

4:50

Challenge: A University for the 2020s

Taylor Cruz, CSUF

Harris Kornstein, NYU

Maya Livio, CU Boulder

Nick Mitchell, UC Santa Cruz

Danny Snelson, UCLA

Co-convener: Francesca Albrezzi, UCLA

5:50

The dWeb

Dylan Reibling, multimedia director

Challenge: Creating and Implementing Humane Policies

Climate and History

Sverker Sörlin, KTH Royal Institute of Technology

The Disabilities Act

09:00 Elizabeth Guffey, SUNY Purchase

Commercial Content Moderation

Sarah Roberts, UCLA

Co-convener: Nicole Anand, The Residency, Parsons School of Design.

Fika

10:00 Swedish Cinnamon and Cardamom buns on the adjacent patio.

The UCLA Task Force on Research Infrastructure Report (Case)

10:30 Lisa Snyder, UCLA

Challenge: *Infrastructural Regimes*

10:40 Zoe Borovsky, UCLA

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[Contact](#)
[Materials](#)
[Accessibility & Accommodations](#)

Akhil Gupta, UCLA
 Veronica Paredes, UCLA

11:40

Pair Conversations x 2: *Innovating Systems*
The Low-Carbon Academy and Detoxified Futures
 Anne Pasek, University of Alberta
 Nicholas Shapiro, UCLA

Art and Humane Innovation
 Jeff Burke, UCLA
 Mashinka Firunts Hakopian, Berggruen Institute

12:30

Lunch
 On the adjacent patio.

1:30

Insurgent Academics (Case, remote participation)
 Roopika Risam, Salem State University

1:40

Challenge: Building Institutional Capacity for Change – Challenges and Configurations
 Kate Elswit, The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama
 Anne Gilliland, UCLA
 Rachel C. Lee, UCLA
 Tara McPherson, USC

Co-convener: David Theo Goldberg, UCHRI

2:40

Street Dance Activism in South Central Los Angeles (Case)

Shamell Bell, Dartmouth

2:50

Creating Humane Infrastructures

Workshop co-convened with Anne Burdick, UTS and the Art Center

2:50-3:00 Introduction to the session - the design brief, the topics, the schedule

3:00-3:10 Transition (coffee, fruit), choose table

3:10 Meet your visualizer, determine working method, get started, etc.

4:00

Group Presentations

5:00

End of Day 2



Register

The workshop is open to anyone interested, but registration is required and there is limited seating. While there is no cost for the event, registered participants are expected to be present for the entirety of the proceedings or cancel their reservation in good time before the event.

Please register by 5 pm PST, March 5, 2020!

[Click here to register](#)



Support

The workshop is generously sponsored by:

UCLA Humanities Division

The Office of the UCLA Vice Chancellor of Research

The Institute for Digital Research and Education

UCLA Bedari Kindness Institute

UCLA Samueli School of Engineering

UCLA School of the Arts and Architecture

The UC Humanities Research Institute

UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information

UCLA Library

The workshop “Humane Infrastructures” is carried out together with the UCLA Royce Humanities Group.



Contact

Patrik Svensson, Curator, psvensson@ucla.edu
patrik.svensson@umu.se.

Patrik Svensson (<http://patriksv.com>) is Visiting Professor of Digital Humanities at UCLA, Professor of Humanities and

Francesca Albrezzi, Event Team Leader, falbrezzi@ucla.edu.

Francesca Albrezzi (bit.ly/albrezzi) is an art historian, curator, and digital humanist. She currently works as a Digital Research Consultant specializing in helping faculty with XR technologies at UCLA's Institute for Digital Research and Education.

Materials

More materials and references will be added until the end of February, 2020. Please also follow this [twitter thread](#) (where new materials will be added and where anyone can add suggestions).

[Support](#) [Contact](#) [Materials](#) [Accessibility & Accommodations](#),
[Movement on the Move](#), *Current Research in Digital History*,
2019:2.

Changing the Conversation (Jeff Olivet), [“Fighting Homelessness in Los Angeles”](#), Changing the Conversation, 2019: Jane Nguyen and Jeff Olivet (host) discuss homelessness in LA and ways neighborhood activists are supporting people who are homeless and advocating for solutions.

[“Dana Cuff, Founding Director of cityLAB on Urban Design, Changing Planning Policies, & Smart Architecture”](#), Midnight Charette, 133, 2019. (podcast interview)

Juul Søndergaard, Marie Louise. [Staying with the Trouble through Design: Critical-Feminist Design of Intimate Technology](#), Ph.D. dissertation, Aarhus University. 2018.

Mattern, Shannon. [“A City is Not a Computer”](#), *Places*, February 2017.

Noble, Safiya U., and Sarah T. Roberts. [“Out of the Black Box.”](#)

Support, Contact, [Materials](#), [Accessibility](#), [Accommodations](#)

Ratto, Matt. “[Making at the End of Nature](#)“, *Interactions*, 23:5, 2016.

Risam, Roopika. “[Academic Generosity, Academic Insurgency](#)“. Public Books, 2019.

Romi Ron Morrison on “[Residual Black Data](#)” at Eyeo 2019.

Roy, Ananya. “[The Infrastructure of Assent: Professions in the Age of Trumpism](#)“, *The Avery Review*, 21, 2017.

Schwartz-Weinstein, Zach. “[The Fantasy and Fate of Ethnic Studies in an Age of Uprisings: An Interview with Nick Mitchell](#)“, *Undercommoning*, 2016.

Sörlin, Sverker. “[Reform and Responsibility: The Climate of History in Times of Transformation](#)“. *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 97, 1, 2018.

Accessibility & Accommodations

We want this to be an inclusive and welcoming event for all who participate. We strive to make the workshop as accessible as possible to all attendees. There is a small conference team who can provide general assistance (but not medical or personal care). Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have concerns or questions.

Venue

The [UCLA Faculty Center](#), 480 Charles E Young Dr E, Los Angeles, CA 90095, is ADA Accessible.

Wheelchair-accessible pathways, building entrances, and

Audio and Visual Accessibility

[Support](#) [Contact](#) [Materials](#) [Accessibility & Accommodations](#)

We will be using an AV system provided by the faculty center for the event. We are aware that everyone will need to use a mic when speaking in order to make sure people don't have to self-identify if they are having trouble hearing. Visual materials will be provided in an online folder for those who wish to use a personal device to view them. Please contact us if you would like to request an alternative format for files.

Fragrance-Free Event

We encourage participants to make this a fragrance-free event. However, please note that the Faculty Center is not scent-free for those with sensitivities. We hope that participants will refrain from wearing scented products such as perfumes/colognes, hair products, cosmetics, and scented lotions while attending this event, and avoid using scented soaps, shampoos, and detergents prior to the event. These products can trigger serious health issues for those with fragrance allergies and/or chemical sensitivities.

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More information on being fragrance-free can be found on the [CSW Event Accessibility page](#).

Smoking

Please be aware that UCLA is a smoke and tobacco free campus. More information can be found on the [BreatheWell website](#).

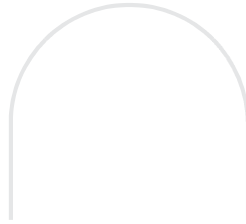
Support Animals

Support animals may be present at the event, per [UCLA Policy 135](#).

Dietary Preferences and Restrictions

We will be offering a lunch for those who register for the event. We strive to offer healthy options that are vegetarian and vegan friendly. If you have any serious allergy concerns or questions regarding the menu, please feel free to contact the event leaders.

Health and Safety



Website by Francesca Albrezzi. Artwork by Danielle Morgan.

| theme: [WP Big Picture](#) based on [HTML5 UP](#) modded by [cog.dog](#)

