

Common Knowledges Symposium 2014

In conjunction with the 2014 Binder Lecturer Prof. Serenella Iovino

Sponsored by the IICAS, the UCSD Center for the Humanities, and the Department of Literature



SEEING THE FOREST AND THE TREES: CULTURE, THE ENVIRONMENT, AND LABOR

WEDNESDAY MAY 14, 2014

4:30-7:30 PM

De Certeau Room, Lit 155

Presentations by Prof. L. Stern, Prof. M. Lollini, and L. Ryan

Prof. Serenella Iovino, Respondent

Prof. Pasquale Verdicchio, Moderator

PROF. SERENELLA IOVINO, Respondent

Prof. Iovino is Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Turin in Italy. Her research focuses on all aspects of environmental literary criticism, endangered landscapes and cultural biodiversity. Her recent works include *Material Ecocriticism* (forthcoming), and *Ecologia Letteraria, una strategia della sopravvivenza* (2006). Iovino's current book-project is *Ecocriticism and Italy: Ecology, Resistance and Liberation* and is under contract with Bloomsbury Academics.

PROF. LESLEY STERN, Dept. of Visual Arts, UC San Diego **Tyres and Tomatoes: Writing the landscape.**

Los Laureles Canyon runs between Tijuana and San Diego. The canyon connects and divides two countries, connects an informal settlement with a protected estuary, urban congestion with a restored natural habitat. Los Laureles Canyon has served as a laboratory for various disciplinary investigations—ethnography, ecology, urban planning, border studies. Drawing on these approaches the presentation asks how might we write the story of the canyons and their inhabitants in that space where ideas of 'landscape' and conceptions of 'the garden' intersect? How do we write ecocriticism?

Writing in the interstices between cultural studies, memoir, and environmental history, Lesley Stern expands the ways we see multispecies worlds. Stern will read from her genre-bending book-in-process, in which

a natural/social landscape on the southern California-Mexico border comes to life as both cosmos and microcosm. Her dream-like work *The Smoking Book* (1999) has been described as “an innovative, hybrid form of writing...at once intensely personal and kaleidoscopically international.” She is Professor Emeritus in the Visual Arts Department UC San Diego.

**PROF. MASSIMO LOLLINI, Dept. of Romance Languages, University of Oregon
Sicilian Ruins from Vittorio De Seta’s Documentaries to Vincenzo Consolo’s
Cityscapes.**

Vittorio De Seta's documentaries are considered masterpieces of world cinema. These films were shot in Sicily between 1954 and 1955 to document, with a certain urgency, the work of the tuna and sword-fishermen whose world was thought to be fast disappearing. Prof. Lollini will discuss these documentaries, along with De Seta's later piece *Sicily Revisited*, made for Italian television in 1980, to address the dramatic ecological and cultural consequences of the ruins of that material culture. The filmic analysis will be complemented with a reading of essays by Vincenzo Consolo, another great witness to contemporary Sicilian ruins in our globalized world. In conclusion Prof. Lollini will consider how De Seta's documentaries and Consolo's essays speak to contemporary environmental debates and the search for a sustainable human relationship to the environment.

Prof. Lollini is a graduate of the University of Bologna, Italy. He earned his M.A. and PH.D. in Italian from Yale University. In 1992, he joined the faculty of the University of Oregon where he is now Full Professor. His publications include *Le Muse, le Maschere e il Sublime: G.B. Vico e la Poesia nell'età della Ragione Spiegata* (Naples: Guida, 1994) and *Il vuoto della forma. Scrittura, testimonianza e verità* (Genoa: Marietti, 2001)

**LESLIE RYAN, Dept. of Ecosystems and Society, Oregon State University
Ecological Forestry and the Honorable Harvest:
The Blue River Landscape Study, Willamette National Forest, Oregon**

Forest production and management practices have long focused on removing the complex diversity and fullness of the forest, replacing the mosaic of forest with monocultural tree farms that greatly advantage one species to the disadvantage of others. Ecological forestry is a new model of timber harvest that uses fire and leaves biological legacies of mature trees, which in turn can seed the next forest. The Blue River Landscape Study in Oregon's Central Cascade Range is an example of Ecological Forestry in practice. The existing, mature Douglas-fir forest was harvested with some trees left standing, and then using historical records of regional fire regimes as a guide, the logged landscape was burned. Dr. Ryan's talk will examine the Blue River Landscape Study through the eco-cultural framework of Traditional Ecological Knowledge and the concept of an honorable harvest. Indigenous knowledge of the honorable harvest has the potential to ground our relationship with productive landscapes such as the forest and the more-than-human world in empathy and the particularities of place.

Ryan received a research degree (M.E.D.) from Yale University's School of Architecture. She is in the Forest Ecosystems and Society Ph.D program at OSU where her research focuses on science-art interactions. Ryan is the recipient of the Rome Prize in Landscape Architecture (1995), and a Graham Foundation grant.

PROF. PASQUALE VERDICCHIO, Moderator

Prof. Verdicchio is Professor of Italian and Comparative Literature at UC San Diego. He teaches Cultural Studies, Film, and Environmental literature. He is a member of the Mobile Knowledge and Cultures of the Commons Research Group.