

**ANTICIPATION 2019**  
Oslo, 9–11 November 2019  
Curated Session Proposal

*Thinking between making and analysing in Anticipation Studies.*

**Introduction**

One of the most valuable characteristics of anticipation studies, is that it orients itself to the future in order to create the present. This session seeks to highlight the ontological in this approach. The session will explore: how the possibilities of future being impacts what and how we become; how this is affected by, and affects, creative practices. This will require engagement with a number of things: first, that the future exerts a creative pressure on the present that can be uncovered through anticipation. Second, that in so doing, anticipation works as a creative practice, alongside others that may be more familiar: art, design, and so on. Finally, that philosophy as another creative practice can offer an angle on these relations between the future and the present, and an anticipation that works between them. Participants in this session develop some or all of these issues in a range of ways that highlight the impacts of philosophy, creative practice and anticipation upon each other.

The positions of ‘thinking’, ‘making’, ‘analysing’ (and others) are by no means stable or oppositional but are creatively and ontologically dynamic. This allows us to think through practice and create by thinking in ways that continually redefine present positions (as beings, perspectives, attitudes and so on) as a consequence of impacts from the future.

In the end, we will find that we have always been in-between, never quite belonging to a stable and identifiable position, with beginnings receding and possible ends multiplying and approaching quickly. Our anticipatory stance makes us disjunctive as well as modal: ‘or . . . or . . .’; and, ‘what if?’ This leads us to the places where – like Nietzsche’s ‘untimely’ and Agamben’s ‘contemporary’ – we are not aligned with a present we regard as archaic and that seeing its darkness gives us the courage to act; (Brassett & O’Reilly, 2018).

Philosophy, design and art practices are used by the participants in this session to explore these anticipatory attitudes to notions of necessity (Barron), strategy and love (Brassett) and policy and wallpaper (Kimbell). The moment around which these presentations revolve is creative ontology; this concept will provide the drive for an interrogation of anticipation along the different lines each approach takes.

**2. Presentations:**

(1) John O’Reilly  
*Introductory Comments*

(2) Nathaniel Barron  
*Ernst Bloch: on the Necessity of (Conceptual) Creativity*

This presentation will consider the nexus which obtains between necessity and creativity as these perennial ideas appear in the work of the 20th century German thinker, Ernst Bloch (1885–1977). By outlining Bloch’s innovative approach to teleology, that is, to the traditional idea that process is guided by a pre-determined goal, I show how, for Bloch, any process is born of an anticipation of necessity, the latter of which requires creativity for its existence.

(2) Jamie Brassett  
*An Ode to Venus. Love, Anticipation and Design*

Michel Serres (1977) highlights the value of love when considering creativity via a reading of Roman poet, philosopher and scientist Lucretius’s poem *De Rerum Natura*. This poem opens with a dedication to Venus, goddess of love, and Serres makes much of Lucretius’s declaration of the importance of love as a driver for the creative production of all things. What might happen, Serres wonders, if we were to value love over war, as Lucretius does when recounting the mythological defeat of Mars by Venus? With strategy being a word of Mars, of war, what might happen to our creative attitude to the future, I wonder, if we were to eschew strategy and embrace love instead?

(3) Lucy Kimbell  
*Inventive devices and data publics*

This presentation uses the lens of inventive research to examine the anticipatory practices associated with contemporary art. It draws on growing interest in sociology in rethinking the relations between research and action (or intervention) using Alfred North Whitehead’s concept of invention.

Researchers (such as Estelella, Criado and Marres) have developed accounts of inventive social research that re-articulate the relations between research, representation and intervention including using methods from design and the arts. The concept of inventiveness foregrounds the processual and unfolding nature of research that opens up new possibilities, whose value cannot be assessed by its antecedent frames and purposes. This is used to discuss the *Air Pollution Toile* (Kimbell 2018), a wallpaper that changes over time in response to air pollution. Rather than simply gathering and visualising data, this wallpaper can be seen as an inventive device which exceeds current ways of thinking about air pollution and its impacts. Through its emerging visual language caused by interior air pollution where it is installed, this toile wallpaper anticipates new ways of knowing and understanding air pollution and produces new publics for data about air quality.

### 3. Participant Affiliations:

Convenor & Session Chair

Dr John O'Reilly  
 Course Leader, MA Innovation Management  
 Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London  
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### Speakers

Dr Nathaniel Barron  
 Tutor  
 Bedford College, UK

Dr Jamie Brassett  
 Reader in Philosophy, Design & Innovation &  
 Programme Research Director  
 Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London

Professor Lucy Kimbell  
 Professor, Director of Innovation Insights Hub &  
 Director of Social Design Institute, University of the Arts London, UK

### 4. Session Format:

In this session, the chair gives an introductory overview of the key concepts in relation to the conference themes & then participants each giving a 10-minute positioning statement. These will be followed by up to 5 minutes for comments to each other, before opening up to the audience.

### 5. References:

Agamben, G. (2009) 'What is the Contemporary?' In *What is an Apparatus? and other Essays*. Trans. D. Kishik & S. Pedatella. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, pp. 39–54.

Brassett, J. & O'Reilly, J. (2018) 'Retour à 2078: Réflexions sur l'anticipation et le contemporain', *Revue de Prospective et Stratégie* 1, Édition Spéciale 'Voir Loin', (December), pp. 11–22.

Nietzsche, F. (1997) *Untimely Meditations*. Ed. D. Breazeale. Trans. R. J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.