

Ecocriticism and Performance Today: Reflections on Slow Dramaturgy

Peter Eckersall (City University of New York)

CONVERSATIONS (at the end of the world) by Kris Verdonck/A Two Dogs, photo by Kurt van der elst.

October 10, 2023
Time 17:30-20:30 JST
Room 301,
3F, Building 10,
Sophia University

Hybrid Format / Please register.

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In a time of ecological crisis, how does theatrical performance respond to existential planetary challenge? Performance has engaged with such crises since the 1960s. Ecological praxis and ecocriticism are now at the forefront of scholarship, activism, science, politics, and art. Artists now create performances in terms of new media dramaturgy, assemblages, non-human forms, and “slow dramaturgy” (Eckersall and Paterson 2011).

This paper considers three artists confronting ecology and extinction: Kris Verdonck (Belgium), Okada Toshiki (Japan), and Eiko Otake (US/Japan). The lecture frames slow dramaturgy as a way of seeing contemporary performance as a climate catastrophe response. By exploring slow dramaturgy, the lecture addresses how performance is not only ecologically themed but creates novel ecological systems. Are these artworks foundations for new epistemologies in the age of extinction?

(Reference: Peter Eckersall and Eddie Paterson, “Slow Dramaturgy: Renegotiating Politics and Staging the Everyday,” *Australasian Drama Studies*, No. 58 (Apr 2011): 178-192)



Peter Eckersall is professor of performance studies in the PhD Program in Theatre and Performance at the Graduate Centre, City University of New York. Eckersall holds a PhD in Japanese Studies and an MA in Asian Studies from Monash University, Australia. His research interests include Japanese performance, dramaturgy, and theatre and politics. His new monograph, *Dramaturgy to Make Visible*, will be published by Routledge in 2023. Other publications include, *Okada Toshiki and Japanese Theatre*, (ed. with Barbara Geilhorn, Andreas Regelsberger, Cody Poulton, 2021), *Curating Dramaturgies* (ed. with Bertie Ferdman, 2021), and *Performativity and Event in 1960s Japan* (2013). He is dramaturg and cofounder of the Melbourne based performance group Not Yet It's Difficult. Recent freelance dramaturgy includes, *Sheep #1* (Sachiyo Takahashi, Japan Society), *Phantom Sun/Northern Drift* (Alexis Destoop, Beursschouwburg, Riga Biennial).



This event is organized by Mari Boyd (Professor Emerita, Sophia University) with David Laichtman (PhD candidate, GPGS, Sophia University)

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Eraser Mountain by Okada Toshiki/chelfitsch, photo by Peter Eckersall