

**HUAS 7380-501 (87124)**

**Planet of the Apes: Art, Design,  
and the Anthropocene**

**Dr. Charissa N. Terranova**

**Fall 2017**

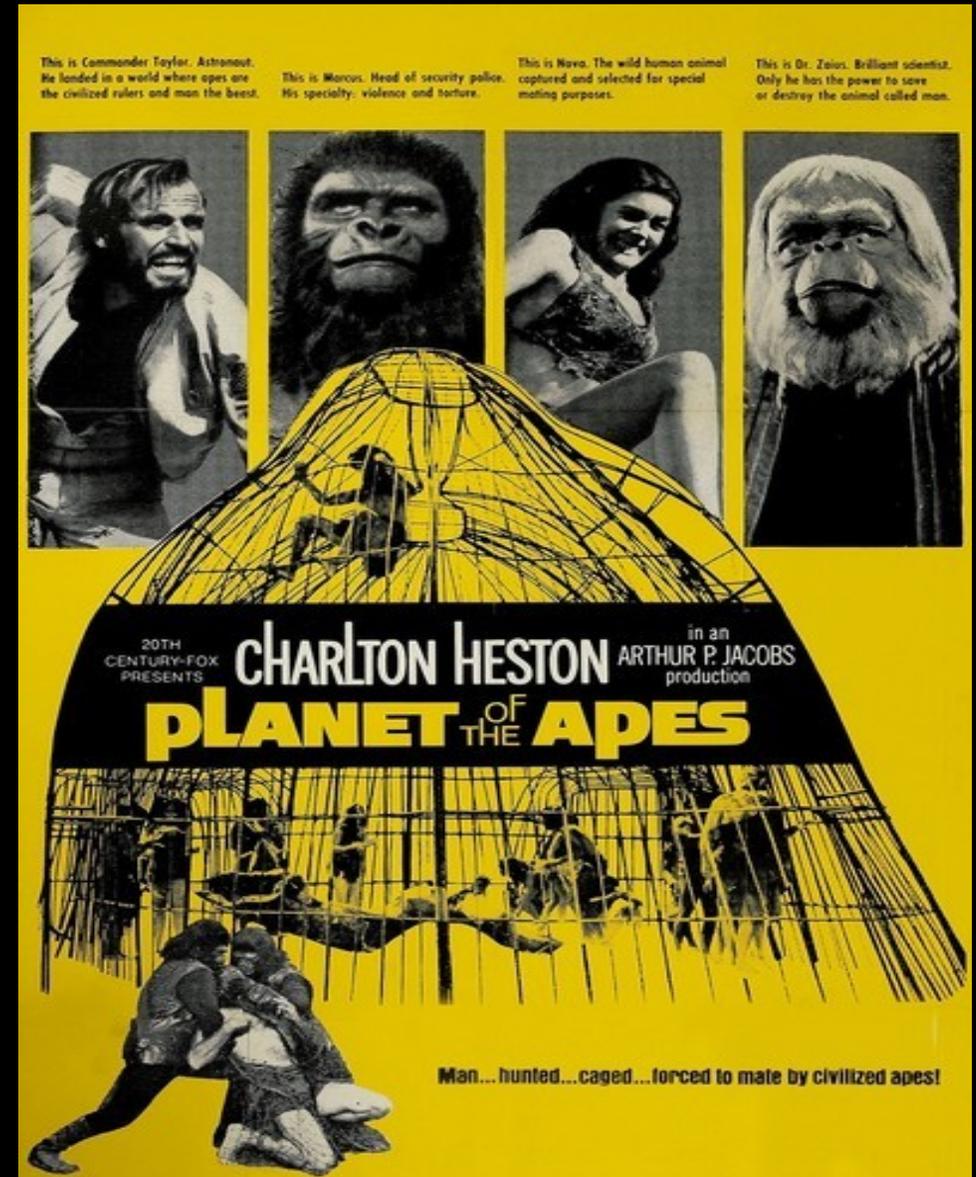
**Thursday 7:00-9:45 pm**

**JO 4.112**

**Office: ATC 2.704**

**Office Hours: Thursday 12-1 pm  
and by appointment**

**Contact: [terranova@utdallas.edu](mailto:terranova@utdallas.edu)**



## **Description:**

This course focuses on art and design connected to theories of evolution, co-evolution, the Anthropocene, and interspecies communication. The term “evolution” refers to Charles Darwin’s and Alfred Russel Wallace’s nineteenth-century idea that all life is related and has descended from a common ancestor. The term “co-evolution” describes cases wherein two or more species reciprocally affect each other’s evolution. The word “Anthropocene” names the current geological age in which human activity has become the dominant influence on climate and the environment. And, the area of science studies and critical theory called “interspecies communication” explores the exchange of information between different species of animals, plants, or microorganisms.

The class consists of a combination of texts, moving-image works, and works of art. It requires students to closely read and discuss texts, carefully scrutinize and discuss art and design, write one short paper in conjunction with a weekly reading assignment, and make a final presentation in conjunction with a longer, final research paper. Students should focus their research on the expanded realm of ecology, art, and design. Readings will focus on the history of evolution, co-evolution, interspecies communication, symbiogenesis, and mutualist identity politics (mammalian and extra-mammalian selves and assemblages), including texts by Charles Darwin, Donna Haraway, Richard Lewontin, Stefan Helmreich, Scott Gilbert, Rachel Mayeri, David J. Depew, Bruce H. Weber, and others. Works of art explore evolution, co-evolution, the Anthropocene, and interspecies communication. Films depict human-primate interaction and come from the realms of Hollywood, documentary, and art. These include the Hollywood movie *Planet of the Apes* (1968), the documentary film *Project Nim* (2011), and an 11-minute art-film by Rachel Mayeri, titled *Primate Cinema: Apes as Family* (2011).

## Goals:

- Students will improve public speaking skills.
- Students will improve expository writing skills.
- Students will research in depth a topic pertaining to evolution, co-evolution, the Anthropocene, and interspecies communication.
- Students will learn theories of evolution, co-evolution, the Anthropocene, and interspecies communication.
- Students will learn about works of art and design connected to evolution, co-evolution, the Anthropocene, and interspecies communication.

## Assignments:

### 1.) Short Paper and Presentation

Students will write and present a 1000-word paper based on the week's reading assignment. The paper should summarize the reading, relating it to a film, work of art, architecture, fashion, design, an artist's or designer's practice, and/or an artist's or designer's oeuvre. Suggested films and works of art and design are listed in "Art and Design Banks" along with each week's reading assignments in the schedule section below. Students are advised to choose from these lists, but may choose other artists or designers per the professor's approval. Papers should be:

- 1000 words in length
- double spaced
- titled; title in italics centered at top of page one
- heading with course name and number, professor's name, and student's name left-hand justified
- paginated
- 12-pt font
- include footnotes and a bibliography
- Due – See sign-up sheet

## 2.) Long Paper and Final Presentation

Students will write a 15- to 17-page research paper on a topic discussed with and approved by the professor. The topic should both come from the material in class and, if possible, relate to the student's overarching research goals as at doctoral student at the university. Papers should be:

- 15- to 17-pages in length
- double spaced
- include a title page and a title
- paginated
- 12-pt font
- include footnotes and a bibliography with at least five sources
- Due Friday December 8

## **Readings:**

There are two books for purchase on-line:

- 1.) Pierre Boule. *Planet of the Apes*. New York: Random House/Del Rey Books, 1963.
- 2.) Charles Darwin. *The Darwin Reader*. Mark Ridley, Ed. New York: WW Norton, 1996.

The remaining texts are extracts or chapters from books or scholarly articles available through the following link and password at Docutek.

Docutek link: <http://utdallas.docutek.com/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=2180>

Password: planet

## **Attendance Policy and Requirements:**

Students are required to attend every scheduled seminar meeting, complete the assigned reading prior to class, and participate with verve and gusto in seminar discussions. Students are allowed one unexcused absence after which every unexcused absence will result in a deduction of ½ grade in the computation of the final mark.

**Standard UTD policies regarding classroom behavior, religious holidays, withdrawals, etc.:**

<http://www.utdallas.edu/deanofstudents/conductguidelines.html>

## **Schedule:**

### **Introduction to HUAS 7380 Planet of the Apes: Art, Design, and the Anthropocene**

Thursday August 24 Introduction and Screening of *Planet of the Apes* (1968)

### **Evolution and Co-evolution**

Thursday August 31

Reading Assignment:

Pierre Boulle, *Planet of the Apes* (New York: Random House/Del Rey Books, 1963).

Art and Design Bank: *Planet of the Apes* (1968), *Beneath the Planet of the Apes* (1970), *Escape from the Planet of the Apes* (1971), *Conquest of the Planet of the Apes* (1972), *Battle for the Planet of the Apes* (1973), *Rise of the Planet of the Apes* (2011), *War for the Planet of the Apes* (2017)

Thursday September 7

Reading Assignment:

David J. Depew and Bruce H. Weber, Chapter 1, Introduction: Darwinism as a Research Tradition, *Darwinism Evolving: Systems Dynamics and the Genealogy of Natural Selection* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997) 1-30.

Charles Darwin, Extracts from *The Origins of the Species* [1859], *The Darwin Reader*, Mark Ridley, ed. (New York: WW Norton, 1996) 84-135.

Art and Design Bank: Ernst Haeckel, Gabriel von Max, Fernand Cormon, Santiago Ramón y Cajal,

*Quest for Fire* (1981), Art Nouveau in architecture and design, including Victor Horta's Maison du Peuple (1899), Hôtel Tassel (1893)

Thursday September 14

Reading Assignment:

Richard Lewontin, “Gene, Organism, and Environment,” *Evolution from Molecules to Men*, D. S. Bendall, ed. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1983) 273–285.

Eva Jablonka and Marion J. Lamb, “Précis of *Evolution in Four Dimensions*,” *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, No. 30 (2007) 353-392.

Art and Design Bank: Anna Dumitriu, Sarah Craske, Simon Park, Whitefeather Hunter, Marta de Menezes, Adam Zaretsky

### **The Anthropocene**

Thursday September 21

Joseph Romm, “Climate Science Basics,” *Climate Change: What Everyone Needs to Know* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016) 1-30.

Heather Davis and Etienne Turpin, “Art & Death: Lives Between the Fifth Assessment & Sixth Extinction,” *Art in the Anthropocene: Encounters among Aesthetics, Politics, Environments, and Epistemologies*, Heather Davis and Etienne Turpin, eds. (London: Open Humanities Press, 2015) 3-30.

Art and Design Bank: Natasha Myers, Tomás Saraceño, Sasha Engelmann, Bronislaw Szersynski, Ilana Halperin

Thursday September 28

Naomi Klein, *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2014) 1-63.

Elizabeth Kolbert, *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History* (New York: Picador/Henry Holt and Company, 2014) 4-22.

Ada Smailbegovic, "Cloud Writing: Describing Soft Architectures of Change in the Anthropocene," *Art in the Anthropocene: Encounters among Aesthetics, Politics, Environments, and Epistemologies*, Heather Davis and Etienne Turpin, eds. (London: Open Humanities Press, 2015) 93-108.

Art and Design Bank: Rachel Armstrong, Terreform ONE, Philip Beesley, David Benjamin, Joe Dahmen, Amber Frid-Jimenez, Biosphere 2

Thursday October 5

Reading Assignment:

Noah Heringman, "Deep Time at the Dawn of the Anthropocene," *Representations*, No. 129 (Winter 2015) 56-85.

Donna Haraway in conversation with Martha Kenny, "Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Chthulhocene," *Art in the Anthropocene: Encounters among Aesthetics, Politics, Environments, and Epistemologies*, Heather Davis and Etienne Turpin, eds. (London: Open Humanities Press, 2015) 255-270.

Fabien Giraud & Ida Soulard, "The Marfa Stratum: Contribution to a Theory of Sites," *Art in the Anthropocene: Encounters among Aesthetics, Politics, Environments, and Epistemologies*, Heather Davis and Etienne Turpin, eds. (London: Open Humanities Press, 2015) 167-180.

Art and Design Bank: Ho Tzu Nyen, Jamie Kruse & Elizabeth Ellsworth of Smudge Studio, Karolina Sobecka, Mixirice (Cho Jieun & Yang Chulmo)

## Mid-Term Meetings and Film

Thursday October 12 Week of October 12: Mid-Term Meetings about Final Papers

Thursday October 19 Screening of *Project Nim* (2011)

## Interspecies Communication

Thursday October 26 Screening of Rachel Mayeri, *Primate Cinema: Apes as Family* (2011)

Reading Assignment:

Donna Haraway, "Introduction: The Persistence of Vision," *Primate Visions: Gender, Race, and Nature in the World of Modern Science* (New York: Routledge, 2013) 1-18.

Robert Zwijnenberg, "Stranger Connections: On Xenotransfusion and Art," *Institutional Critique to Hospitality: Bio Art Practice Now*, Assimina Kaniari, ed. (Athens, Greece: Aohna, 2017) 129-138.

Rachel Mayeri, "Nonhuman Kingdoms: Making Art with Primates and Microbes," forthcoming in *Interalia Magazine*, [www.interaliamag.org](http://www.interaliamag.org).

Art and Design Bank: Jules Adler, "Transfusion of Blood from Goat" (1892), Marion Laval-Jeantet and Benoît Mangin of Art Orienté Objet, Rachel Mayeri, "Primate Cinema" (or other works), Eduardo Kac, Vito Acconci "Zone" (1972) [with kittens], Hans Haacke, "Norbert: All Systems Go" (1970-71), *Project Nim* (2011)

Thursday November 2

Reading Assignment:

Donna Haraway, “When Species Meet: Introduction,” *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2007) 3-42.

Irina Aristarkhova, “Hosting the Animal: The Art of Kathy High,” *Institutional Critique to Hospitality: Bio Art Practice Now*, Assimina Kaniari, ed. (Athens, Greece: Aohna, 2017) 171-190.

Kathy High, “Piper in the Woods,” *Routledge Companion to Biology in Art and Architecture*, Charissa N. Terranova and Meredith Tromble, eds. (New York: Routledge, 2016) 504-514.

Art and Design Bank: Kathy High, Eduardo Kac, Hans Haacke, “Chickens Hatching” (1969), Tomás Saraceño

Thursday November 9

Reading Assignment:

Scott F. Gilbert, Jan Saspp, and Alfred I Tauber, “A Symbiotic View of Life: We Have Never Been Individuals,” *The Quarterly Review of Biology*, Vol. 87, No. 4 (December 2012) 325-341.

Stefan Helmreich and Sophia Roosth, “What Was Life? Answers from Three Limit Biologies,” *Sounding the Limits of Life: Essays in the Anthropology of Biology and Beyond* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015) 1-18.

Günes-Hélène Isitan, “From Our Naturalness to Our Multispecies Humanness,” *Interalia Magazine*.

<https://www.interaliomag.org/audiovisual/gunes-helene-isitan-naturalness-multispecies-humanness/>

Art and Design Bank: Günes-Hélène Isitan, Ken Rinaldo, Anna Dumitriu, Sarah Craske, Simon Park, Whitefeather Hunter, Marta de Menezes, Adam Zaretsky, “Gut Instinct: Art, Design, and the Microbiome” an on-line exhibition

<http://www.sciartcenter.org/gut-instinct.html>

## **Final Presentations**

Thursday November 16 Final Presentations

Thursday November 23 Thanksgiving No Class

Thursday November 30 Final Presentations

## **Final Paper Due**

Friday December 8 Final Paper Due

# Ecology, the Anthropocene, Interspecies Communication – and Art and Design

Iris van Herpen

Douglas Aitken

Pierre Huyghe



Iris van Herpen,  
Dutch, b. 1984





Iris van Herpen and  
Philip Beesley



Phillip Beesley, Hylozoic Soil, 2007-8



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dzWWdFxG7gQ>



Douglas Aitken, American, b.  
1968

Sonic Pavilion, 2009, Inhotim  
Contemporary Art Center,  
Brumadinho, Brazil

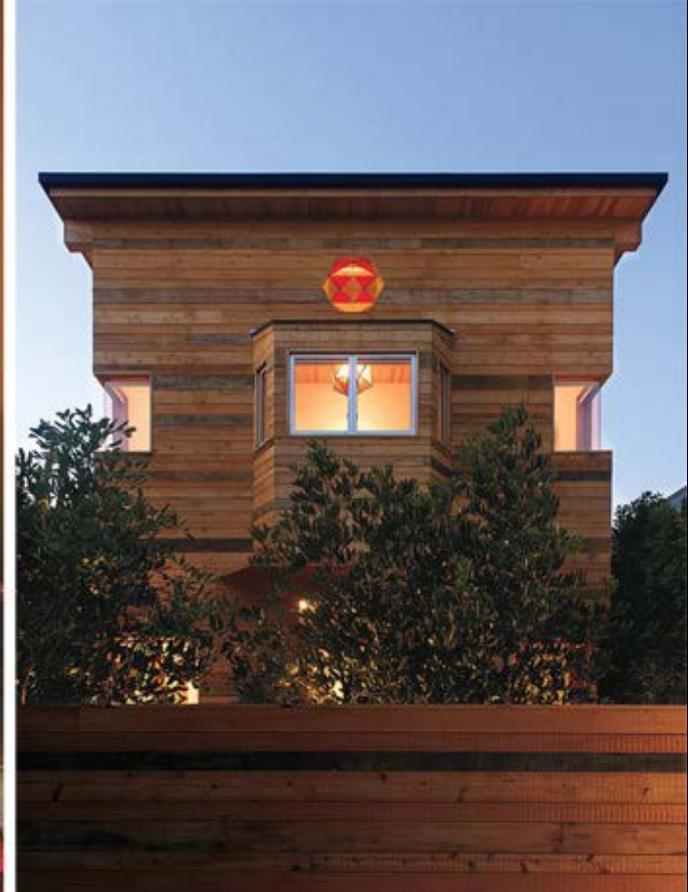
The piece, although it was complex to produce, is based on a simple, albeit ambitious principle. Its construction involved the boring of a 200-meter-deep well in the ground in order to install a set of microphones to capture the sound of the earth. By way of a sophisticated system of equalization and amplification, this sound is played in real time inside the empty circular pavilion, which was designed to create equivalence between the audio experience and one's relation to the surrounding space.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sUvWMJ9Samg>



Doug Aitken, Migration (Empire), 2008  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JZ6cJaGm79E>





Doug Aitken, Acid Modernism/Private Home, Venice Beach, CA, 2012

<https://vimeo.com/40903414>



## Doug Aitken, Underwater Pavilion, 2016

Seven years after he created an underground 'Sonic Pavilion' in Brazil, American artist Doug Aitken has made three 'Underwater Pavilions' off the coast of California. The three, swim-through geometric sculptures have been moored to the seabed on Catalina Island, 22 miles from Los Angeles. Each sculpture has 12 sides shaped like a pentagon. Part of each sculpture is mirrored to reflect the ocean and the fish, while other sides are sharp-edged and rock-like.

The temporarily-installed pavilions, suspended five, 10 and 50 feet underwater, can be visited by swimming, snorkelling and scuba-diving. The brightly coloured, moving reflections can create a kaleidoscopic viewing experience, providing visibility is clear enough.

<http://www.damnmagazine.net/2017/01/02/doug-aitkens-underwater-pavilions-off-california/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kPE5rHTr5qs>



Doug Aitken, *The Garden*, 2017: "It's a space of annihilation. It's a space where the viewer can perform, where the viewer can do whatever they want. It's a space for being in the moment. I want the viewer to be liberated." -- Doug Aitken

The Garden is a living artwork that embraces the dichotomy between the natural environment and a synthetic man-made experience. Aitken's *The Garden* is a new installation that brings the viewer into the center of the artwork and asks them to physically immerse, participate and become the subject of the installation. Inside an enormous bulletproof glass chamber each viewer can destroy a sterile modern environment. Set in a huge dark warehouse space the viewer walks inside, their eyes adjust, and they see a thick lush jungle growing under artificial grow lights. Walking closer, the viewer enters inside the jungle and discovers a huge rectangular glass cube. Inside the glass room is a man-made environment replete with generic elements of modern life: tables and chairs, a cabinet, and lights. In *The Garden*, the visitor both experiences the artwork from the outside while simultaneously becoming the subject when inside. One at a time they enter inside this perfect sterile room and can destroy absolutely everything. The Garden is a synthetic vision of the environment in direct conflict with the external view of the humid, thick natural greenery. The catalyst that activates the artwork is raw and brutal human expression and its release is at the core of this installation. Over the eight-week duration of this installation, the viewers will occupy the space and have the opportunity to obliterate every object in the interior. Each expression will be unique and personal to each viewer.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GmAPx9ukGZc>



Pierre Huyghe, French,  
b. 1962

Nasher Sculpture Center  
Laureate, 2017

From left: "Untitled  
(Liegender Frauenakt)",  
2012, which  
incorporates live bees,  
and "Zoodram 5 (after  
'Sleeping Muse' by  
Constantin Brancusi),"  
2011, a tank featuring  
live crabs



Huyghe, Zoodram 5,  
2011

A tank contains a hermit crab that occupies a copy of sculpture once made by Constantin Brancusi. Titled "Zoodram 5," it is one of many micro-environments made by the artist.



Huyghe, *Untilled (Liegender Frauenakt)* [Reclining female nude]. 2012. Concrete with beehive structure, wax, and live bee colony

Huyghe created *Untilled* in 2012 at Documenta in Kassel, Germany in a secluded site in a former compost of the city's main park. Inanimate elements, artifacts (including remnants of work by artists like Joseph Beuys and Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster) and living organisms, plants, animals, and bacteria are present, indifferent to the presence of visitors. As elements emerge, pollinate, grow, or collapse, *Untilled* transforms itself.



Pierre Huyghe. A Way in Untilled, 2012, Film, color, sound, 14 min.

Pierre Huyghe created Untilled, a compost site within a baroque garden, a non hierarchical association that included a sculpture of a reclining nude with a head obscured by a swarming beehive, aphrodisiac and psychotropic plants, a dog with a pink leg, an uprooted oak tree from Joseph Beuys' 7,000 Oaks among other elements. This growing system remained indifferent to the presence of the viewers that encountered the site.

The dog is called "Human".  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OGdanqNEpy4>