

## **Awkward multi-being actions and abstractions in performance**

### **Conjuring eco-queer atmospheres with butterflies and moths**

I attune to the knotty and awkward sensations and reflections occurring when directing attention to the more-than-human, asking: how can sound art and extended voice - play a part in conjuring eco-queer atmospheres and invite embodied imaginations of perspectives/perceptions of species very different from us? In this presentation, I will share/discuss sound and images from my PhD with a focus on experiences of 'making-with' Lepidoptera insects.

As part of my practice-based doctoral research, I explore and manifest the ideas of radical environmental philosophy through live multi-layered performance (and/or installation) experiences for audiences. Drawing on thinkers such as Catriona Sandilands, Donna Haraway and Anna Tsing and through a practice-as-research methodology I seek to challenge dichotomies of human/nature and self/world: to think (and attend to) that which is beyond the human. Specifically, I develop multi-dimensional artworks that interrogate and challenge the aforementioned human/nature split, while embracing playful tentacular thinking and trans-disciplinary practices. My hope is that this practices to inspire others to consider our intricate relationship(s) with other species.

I will share examples from SPEAKING IN WINGS, created and performed with movement performer Claus Otto, and sound artist Alistair MacDonald in Copenhagen ZOO, in 2024. During a six month residency in the zoo's tropical butterfly house, I learned from and directed attention to the winged insects and our complex, entangled (human/lepidopterological) relationship. Collaboration with the zoo's specialists and scientists from the Danish Entomological Society informed the piece that consists of field recordings of the insects and their life cycles, as well as corresponding abstracted sonic motifs and vocalisations. The residency concluded with a meditative sound art piece where audiences were invited to roam around surrounded by actual fluttering butterflies, lepidopterous persona performers and other animals, like free-ranging birds, turtles, West African crocodiles and the rare Java mouse-deer.

Additionally I will touch on MOTH MUTTERINGS, which I am currently developing with data of moth-monitoring from the Eco-science department, at Aarhus University. This research presentation will aim to discuss how these Lepidoptera performance experiments explore dimensions of multi-being interdependence and cooperation.

Research Presentations

I propose a solo presentation and attach a letter of support from my supervisor Dr. Laura Bissell.



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Working in the cross-currents of sound/performance/installation and bio art, the work of Copenhagen-based artist Maria Brænder explores and manifests the ideas of quirky radical environmental philosophy. For over a decade, she has worked with various animals, insects, fungi, bacteria, zoo plankton and other matters to engage deeply with more-than-human agency through installation (and/or live performance) experiences for audiences.

Currently, Brænder is a practice-based doctoral researcher at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS) and St. Andrews University. Brænder enjoys collaborations with a wide variety of artists and researchers and her work has been presented across Denmark, the UK and Canada. Most recently she was artistic researcher at the Scottish Association of Marine Science, at the Danish Medical Museum and at Copenhagen ZOO. She has received various grants among others by the RCS, New Carlsberg Foundation, Cryptic (art house) and the Danish Composers Society.

- On this link can be found a short audio/photo reel of SPEAKING IN WINGS followed by a video excerpt of my multi-species piece SPECTRAL CHASINGS, composed in collaboration with John Lemke:  
<https://www.swisstransfer.com/d/4e5389ac-354f-4a01-ac54-9148ec415199>
- The technical requirement for this presentation is an A/V system with a screen.