



**University Club of Western Australia**

**18-19 October 2018**

"Once I falsely hoped to meet with beings who, pardoning my outward form, would love me for the excellent qualities which I was capable of unfolding."

— **Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein***

"I find no shame in acknowledging my egalitarian relationship with non-human material Being; everything emerges from the same matrix of possibilities"

— **Susan Stryker, *My Words to Victor Frankenstein Above the Village of Chamounix – Performing Transgender Rage\****

**Call for papers:**

We are looking for papers, panels, and artistic and scientific provocations for the Quite Frankly conference, 18-19 of October 2018.

Abstracts due 31 March 2018.

Submit abstracts: <http://www.symbiotica.uwa.edu.au/activities/symposiums/quite-frankly-2018>

2018 marks 200 years since the publication of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein: or, The Modern Prometheus*. Shelley's "Creature" is usually conceived as a human creation, the stitched-together, tragic victim of scientific and technological experimentation. We rupture these stitches, revealing that the Creature is more than the sum of its parts. SymbioticA and Somatechnics join forces to present *Quite Frankly: It's a Monster Conference*. We invite you to explore the dynamic ecosystems evolving within and from the gaps between the Creature's fragments.

Life has become a raw material for re-assembling organisms, tools and consumer products. We are firmly entrenched in a "[bio]informatics of efficiency," where both biology and technology are subjected to control, optimisation, computation and surveillance at ever decreasing and increasing scales. In light of current ecological and bio-political devastation, we induce extinction.

Keep calm and contaminate. There is hope, there is resistance; the Creature offers the potential to escape control and fight back.

*Quite Frankly* invites explorations that (re)form kinships and provide niches of refuge and asylum for explorations at the limits of precarity. We encourage liberations of Frankenstein's Creature from its anthropocentric singularity to an intra-active entanglement; from the living-dead to the compost-

able. We revel in re-craftings of biotechnical industrialisations and commodifications and managerial aesthetics. As Karen Barad reminds us, “the political potential does not stop with regeneration, for there are other wild dimensions within and without that rage with possibilities.”

Join us to unpick the Creature’s stitches and liberate its companion species - we are calling for all voices to provide critical re-examinations of diverse re-creation stories.

Topics may include but are not limited to:

- Animal studies
- Biological Arts & Biodesign
- Biological/biomedical Law
- Biopolitics
- Biotech and life sciences
- Biotech consumer products
- Cultural and literary studies of new life
- Environmental humanities, posthumanism and extinction studies
- Feminist, queer, race, post-colonial and disability studies
- Frankenstein Studies
- History of (life) science
- Indigenous Futurisms
- Indigenous scientific literacies
- Managerial aesthetics
- Neolife
- Non-Human biopolitics & bioethics
- Science fiction and speculative fabulations
- Synthetic biology
- Transhumanism and AI

#### **Keynote Speakers:**

- **Karen Barad Ph.D., Theoretical Particle Physics, SUNY Stony Brook**

Karen Barad is Professor of Feminist Studies, Philosophy, and History of Consciousness at the University of California at Santa Cruz. Barad's Ph.D. is in theoretical particle physics and quantum field theory. Barad held a tenured appointment in a physics department before moving into more interdisciplinary spaces. Barad is the author of *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Duke University Press, 2007) and numerous articles in the fields of physics, philosophy, science studies, poststructuralist theory, and feminist theory. Barad's research has been supported by the National Science Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Hughes Foundation, the Irvine Foundation, the Mellon Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Barad is the Co-Director of the Science & Justice Graduate Training Program at UCSC. Barad received an honorary doctorate from Gothenburg University in 2016, and is on the faculty of the European Graduate School.

See also: <http://people.ucsc.edu/~kbarad/> and <http://egs.edu/faculty/karen-barad>

- **Ambelin Kwaymullina**

Ambelin Kwaymullina is an Aboriginal law academic, illustrator and speculative fiction writer. Her dystopian Young Adult series, *The Tribe*, is a work of Indigenous Futurisms, a form of storytelling whereby Indigenous creators use the speculative fiction genre to challenge colonialism and imagine Indigenous futures. Ambelin's academic and creative work is grounded in her standpoint as a Palyku woman, and as such, she understands reality to be holistic, non-linear and animate in nature. Ambelin works across the academic, business and literary sectors to explore the means by which non-Indigenous peoples can ethically engage with Indigenous peoples so as to create the as-yet unrealised possibility of a just future. <http://www.web.uwa.edu.au/person/ambelin.kwaymullina>

- **Fiona Wood**

Winthrop Professor Fiona Wood is a Plastic & Reconstructive Surgeon specialising in the field of burn care, trauma and scar reconstruction. Wood is the Director of the WA Burns Service of Western Australia and a Consultant Plastic Surgeon at Princess Margaret Hospital and Fiona Stanley Hospital. Her research through the Burn Injury Research Unit UWA and the Fiona Wood Foundation is focused on scarless healing. In bringing basic science to the bedside the aim is to build a unique capacity to facilitate direct research collaborations between researchers and practitioners across basic science, population health, clinical care and clinical outcomes. Fiona Wood has also been involved in a number of education and disaster response programmes associated with her interest in burns and has presented and published a variety of papers over the years. Fiona and Marie Stoner, co-founders of Clinical Cell Culture, now Avitamedical, won the 2005 Clunies Ross Award for their contributions to Medical Science in Australia. Wood received the honour of being named Australian of the Year in 2005. <http://www.fionawoodfoundation.com/about-us/professor-fiona-wood/>

- **Kira O'Reilly**

Kira O'Reilly is an artist currently based in Helsinki where she leads a pilot masters programme in Ecology and Contemporary Performance at the Theatre Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki. Her practice, both willfully interdisciplinary and entirely undisciplined, stems from a visual art background; it employs performance, drawing, makings, biotechnical practices and writing with which to consider speculative reconfigurations around *The Body*. But she is no longer sure if she even does that anymore. She writes, teaches, mentors and collaborates with humans of various kinds, technologies and non-humans of numerous divergences including mosses, spiders, the sun, pigs, cell cultures, horses, micro-organisms, bicycles, rivers, landscapes, tundras, rocks, trees, shoes, food, books, air, lichen, green glitter, moon and ravens.

Since graduating from the University of Wales Institute Cardiff in 1998 her work has been exhibited widely throughout the UK, Europe, Australia, China and Mexico. She has presented at conferences and symposia on both live art and science, art and technology interfaces. She has been a visiting lecturer in the UK, Australia and U.S.A in visual art, drama and dance. A forthcoming monograph on her practice, *Kira O'Reilly: Untitled Bodies* will be published winter 2017 in the Intellect Live Series by Live Art Development Agency and Intellect Books.

<http://www.kiraoreilly.com/>