

*Call for Papers*

## **Environments and the Ecological Self**

*11th Visual and Cultural Studies Graduate Conference*

*at the University of Rochester*

*April 6-7, 2017*

**Keynote: Rosalyn Deutsche, Barnard College**

<http://humanities.lib.rochester.edu/vcsconference/>

An environment, by definition, denotes the surroundings in which we and other organisms live and develop. This conference invites interrogations of what an environment is while anticipating alternative understandings of the concept and its physical referent. Our current failure to effectively respond to the planetary crisis is in part due to an antiquated notion of the environment. Moreover, it also results from the available ways in which we can represent and experience an environment. Rooted in Western imperialism and capitalist modes of production, the anthropocentric notion of nature and the environment needs to be interrupted in order to accommodate and sustain new futures.

How are perceptions of spatial contexts affected by existing sensory and affective capabilities? What theoretical frameworks inform our understandings of the environment? This conference invites emerging scholars and practitioners in the humanities, arts, and social sciences to present work that broadens our current understandings of the environment and how it mediates both human and non-human experiences. Hosted by the University of Rochester's Graduate Program in Visual and Cultural Studies (<http://www.rochester.edu/college/vcs/index.html>), this conference aims to foster an environment for interdisciplinary communication, knowledge exchange, and collaboration. Possible topics may include and are by no means limited to:

- Spatial politics and critical geography

- Institutional critique and social practice
- Subjectivity, spectatorship, and visualization
- Environmental aesthetics, the picturesque, and the sublime
- Affective media, intermediality, and eco-philosophy of the moving image
- New materialisms and temporalities
- Afrofuturism, post-humanism, and alternative futures
- Virtual, augmented, and immersive technologies
- Neocolonial practices of sustainability, carbon trade, and the “Green Movement”
- Ecosystems and the body
- Ecocriticism

We invite individual submissions as well as pre-constituted panels (of 3-4 presenters) in the form of 300 word abstracts (for 20-minute paper presentations) and 100 word bios for each presenter. All materials are to be submitted to the conference website (<http://humanities.lib.rochester.edu/vcsconference/index.php/submit-an-abstract/>) by **January 15, 2017**.

Select presenters may be invited to revise presentations for publication at *InVisible Culture: An Electronic Journal of Visual Culture* (<http://ivc.lib.rochester.edu>).

Successful applicants will be notified of acceptance by the end of January 2017. Final papers are due **Feb 20th, 2017**.

This conference is organized by PhD students in the Graduate Program in Visual and Cultural Studies at the University of Rochester. Please email the conference co-chairs, Mimi Cheng and Peter Murphy, at [vcsconference@gmail.com](mailto:vcsconference@gmail.com) with any questions.

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