

A Toolkit for the Future

Friday 29 June 2018, 10.30–17.00

Hochhauser Auditorium, Sackler Centre

With support from the London College of Fashion



Registration from 10.00

10.30 **Introduction**

Mariana Pestana, Rory Hyde and Zara Arshad

11.00 **Where are Technologies Produced?**

Can objects be memes? **An Xiao Mina**, writer, technologist and researcher, will discuss the merging of object culture with digital meme culture as facilitated by the internet, and consider how this connects makers, manufacturers and shippers across supply chains.

Matt Jones, Principal Designer at Google AI, will argue that technologists and designers need to get more intelligent about intelligence. He believes that we can learn from zoologists, philosophers, writers and cognitive scientists – and be more critically aware of the gendered and anthropomorphised pop-cultural interpretations of artificial intelligence.

12.10 **Politics of Ground and Skies**

Jonas Staal, artist and founder of the New World Summit, will focus on the relationship between art and power. He will advocate researching contemporary propaganda art while also creating experimental forms of ‘emancipatory propaganda art’. Jonas’s recent co-design of the People’s Parliament of Rojava with the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria is central to his proposal.

Kei Kreutler, artist and researcher, will present the Open Space Observatory project, in relation to her interest in the politics of technological constellations. She has worked with groups including the Libre Space Foundation in Athens to reveal the movements and behaviours of satellites, spacecraft and space junk for public observation and scrutiny.

13.10 *Lunch break*

14.10 **Should We Democratise Technology?**

Artist and programmer, **Heather Dewey-Hagborg**, will discuss her use of phenotyping processes to translate DNA information into facial portraits. By representing strangers as well as Chelsea Manning, Heather has developed a discourse around the ethics of genetics and their use in the field of criminal investigation in the US. Her presentation will question the widespread availability of scientific tools by private companies such as Oxford Nanopore and start-ups like Bento Bio.

Bethan Wolfenden, co-founder of Bento Bio, will explore the democratisation of genetics and the future of Do-It-Yourself Biology. Bethan is one of the creators of Bento Lab, a portable kit that allows anyone to experiment with simple DNA analysis. But what ethics should guide the increasingly common access to genetics, the fundamental technology of life?

15.10 *Refreshments*

15.40 **Imagining Alternative World Models**

Luiza Prado, artist and co-founder of A Parede and Decolonising Design, asks: 'Whose future starts where?' Responding to recent critiques of speculative design, Luiza will consider its political alliances and the insistence of coloniality.

Anab Jain, co-founder of Superflux, will advocate designing imaginary prototypes and imagining possible futures. Anab has developed speculative models of worlds that exaggerate contemporary technology, providing critical and often dystopian views of the future that encourage audiences to think critically about their present-day experience.

16.40 **Closing Remarks**

Mariana Pestana, Rory Hyde and Zara Arshad

17.00 Close

Programme subject to change without warning

Image: *Radical Love*, DNA portrait of Chelsea Manning, by Heather Dewey-Hagborg, 2015. Courtesy of Heather Dewey-Hagborg and Fridman Gallery, New York City.

A Toolkit for the Future continues with a day of speculative design workshops in partnership with the London College of Fashion's Arts Programme at their East London project space, Arcade East. This day also acts as the starting point for a summer season of exploratory workshops and speculative installations and discussions by artists, designers and students around the theme of Sustainability and Innovation at Arcade East.

Saturday 30 June 2018, 12.00–18.00

All workshops are free, but spaces are limited

Please sign up on arcade-east.com to avoid disappointment

FERMEN-TOUR or How to Stop Burning Your Onions

Mare Street gardens

12.00–18.00

FERMEN-TOUR or How to Stop Burning Your Onions is a performative, edible installation by Inês Santos, exploring fermentation and other food processes as a metaphor for collaborative practices, community living and autonomy. Through a virtually carbon neutral process, the project expands upon concepts of locality, seasonality and pre-digestion: using millennium-old techniques to question our current and future relationship to food.

Impossible Methods

Digital Learning Lab

13.00–17.00

In this workshop by Brazilian collective A Parede, participants are asked to bring one or two human-made artefacts signifying WORK and LABOUR according to their own, subjective interpretations of these words. Participants will start by unpacking and mapping the networks that inform the existence of these artefacts in the world, with particular focus on colonial power structures, followed by speculating on how possible re-contextualisation could alter these relationships, and for whom.

Body Ecosystems

Mare Street cutting room

13.00–17.00

Advancements in biotechnology are providing us with a new perspective on what it is to be human – that we are in fact an ecosystem made up of trillions of micro-organisms, which live within and on our bodies. Not only that, they extend beyond our skin forming invisible clouds of microbes, called microbial plumes. The microbial plume is unique to each of us. As we interact with our surroundings, we leave behind parts of it, making it possible to trace it back to each person's unique identity, where we have been, who have we been with, and our microbial make-up. Participants in this workshop, led by LCF's Fashion Space Gallery Designers in Residence Nestor Pestana and Deborah Tchoudjinoff, will explore how fashion practices can be used to instigate new forms of interaction based on how this information is shared.

Satellogy: A Map for Future Use

Arcade East

14.00–16.30

The Open Space Observatory is an initiative for gatherings and infrastructure for the observation of satellites, spacecraft and space junk. Satellites encircle our skies and critically support our infrastructure. While we've read the position of the stars for centuries, satellites and their relation to one another have remained opaque. In the Satellogy workshop hosted by Kei Kreutler, Louis Center and Cory Levinson of Open Space Observatory, we will explore and invent different methodologies to read the history behind satellites, writing speculative fictions and producing a collaborative wiki of satellite constellations and their rumoured origins.

About LCF's Arcade East Summer Season

Arcade East, London College of Fashion's new project space, was developed to host a themed season of events and installations with a focus on digital practice and innovation each summer as part of a new LCF Arts Programme. From June to September, we invite the public to join us for a wide range of activities that playfully look at provenance, space junk, speculative biodesign, non-western narratives and the future of fashion at large. For more information, please visit arcade-east.com.

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