

Bodies of Water - From Wonders to Waste, from Currents to Currencies
A Guided Podcast-Tour Along the Vltava River

workhop

Water has been a source of wonder, myth and creation. Its absolute power as matter and metaphor seems to undo contained critical engagement. Water, whether creative or destructive, is abundance. Our thought is carried away, collapses, overflows, dissolves when reflecting on how water interweaves with every aspect of life. But oceanic currents also coincide with currencies of exploitation and waste, equally incommensurable with ideas of sustainability and care. Thinking of ethos, ethics and ethnography in today's world lead inevitably to considerations of global currents, wherein ecological and humanitarian crises converge. We would therefore like to propose a sonic collage of narratives from the imaginary to the scientific that deal with these tensions in the form of a podcast tour along the Vltava river that runs through the heart of Prague. The way in which the city becomes shaped by the water in an immediate geographic, economic and cultural way becomes mirrored by stories that make and unmake the world through water. We follow aural streams that allow us to travel from Scylla and Charybdis to the vortex of the Great Pacific Garbage patch, from Moby Dick to starving whales over-stuffed with pelagic plastics, from Aphrodite born on the sea foam to crushed bodies on migrant boats that have turned the Mediterranean into a floating graveyard. Water ultimately marks the necessary interconnectedness of these different *current* events. As an element and as a concept, water performs not only ecologically but also politically, economically and ethically.

Water as metaphor – water as infrastructure – and water as basic element: in this manner, we will aurally immerse the listener, drawing on the fact that the sense experience of hearing itself has traditionally been connected to metaphors of water and liquidity. Drawing on Hans Blumenbergs *Quellen – Ströme – Eisberge*, we will also reflect critically with the participants on the function and circulation of such metaphors in our culture and think about how they form a part of our collective knowledge base. By following the stream of thought water traces through mythology, literature, theology, philosophy, drama and performance, we will argue for an ethos that performs philosophically via immersion.

Logistics:

Participants will come equipped with headphones and a smart phone to join us on a 30-40min guided tour along the waters along the Vltava river, followed by a closing discussion on the audio-performance that gives the participants the chance to critically reflect on their experience.

Bio:

Mark Espiner is a theatre director and freelance writer. He is Co-Artistic Director of the theatre company Sound & Fury, where his directing credits include Christopher Logue's *War Music* (2000), *Ether Frolics*, *Kursk* (2009) and *Going Dark* (2012). Mark has contributed to the *Sunday Times*, *Independent*, BBC Radio 3, the *Guardian* and the *Financial Times* on music and the arts. He lives in Berlin.

Ramona Mosse is a Lecturer in the Department of Theatre and Performance Studies at the Free University Berlin and former Fellow of the International Research Center for Interweaving Performance Cultures. She has published on topics such as tragedy, metatheatre, and performance, and contemporary drama and is currently working on two book manuscripts, *Tragedy and Utopia in Cold War Culture*, and *Acts of Listening on Stage*. Ramona holds a PhD in English and Comparative Literature from Columbia University. She also works as a dramaturg and translator.

Anna Street is a double-doctoral candidate at the University of Paris IV - Sorbonne and at the University of Kent. Her thesis traces a parallel between the development of theories of comedy and philosophy's increasing reliance upon dramatic techniques. Anna is a member of the Sorbonne research laboratory VALE and very active within the Performance Philosophy network. She is also translator of seven volumes of *Les Petits Platons* collection and co-editor of *Inter Views in Performance Philosophy*, forthcoming with Palgrave.

