

KTH Environmental Humanities Laboratory in collaboration with Teater Reflex:

## Detailed Programme

### Rupturing the Anthro-Obscene!

### The Political Promises of Planetary and Uneven Urban Ecologies

17-19 September, 2015 :: Teater Reflex in Kärrtorp :: Kärrtorpsplan 14, T-bana Kärrtorp, Stockholm

This meeting is about democratic practices and political movements in the age of urbanisation and ecological crises. What are the political promises that we can and must articulate to again build societies on the notion of equality? What new socio-ecological organisational forms exist that can challenge current status quo? What new terrains of the political is being invented and connected—from climate change, food security and ‘de-growth’ movements, to struggles of non-authorized immigrants, anti-austerity and insurgent citizenship—and that re-thinks equality and freedom in socio-ecological terms?



During Thursday and Friday our invited guests will respond to this task and present their draft chapters. These will be discussed in an open seminar style where the audience can intervene and engage. Interwoven with this, we will also make use of the theatre as a space with experiences and practices of how to intervene and explore topics from new angles. In total we will have 13 talks divided in 7 sessions. Each speaker will have 30 minutes and each session will be followed by roughly 20 minutes of open discussion. There will be one evening session on Thursday. On Friday afternoon a longer open discussion will be held to conclude this part of the event. Saturday has a separate programme and will be held mostly in Swedish. It will include panels organised by cultural workers, activist organizations and panels with event speakers. The focus will be to explore democratic practices and the meaning of political movements today. NB: Minor changes could happen.

#### THURSDAY 17 September

**09:00-09:30** Welcome/Välkommen! **Kent Ekberg**, director of Teater Reflex.

**09:30-10:50** **Henrik Ernstson and Erik Swyngedouw** will foreground the framing and the task of the ‘Anthro-Obscene’ event. They will also present their own paper contributions to the discussions.

- 1) *The Anthro-Obscene: Interrupting AntropoScenic Urbanization* — by Erik Swyngedouw and Henrik Ernstson
- 2) *“Hic Rhodus, Hic Salta!”: Off-staging Violence and the Politics of the Anthro(bs)cene* — by Andrés Henao Castro and Henrik Ernstson

**11:00-12:30** **Marco Armiero and Malini Ranganathan**

- 3) *Of Ghosts, Waste, and the Anthropocene* — by Marco Armiero
- 4) *The Performativity of Urban Anti-corruption Politics* — by Malini Ranganathan

**12:30-14:00** **Lunch**

There will be soup and sandwich sold in the theatre. There are other simpler restaurants and a supermarket close by.

Map and more information at: <http://anthro-obszene.situatedecologies.net/>

Contact: Kajsa Nordin (+46-70-4610940, [kajsa@teaterreflex.se](mailto:kajsa@teaterreflex.se)) or Henrik Ernstson (+46-70-0448204, [ernstson@kth.se](mailto:ernstson@kth.se))

**14:00-15:30 Jason Moore and Richard Walker**

- 5) *Capital in Nature: The Unending Vortex of Exploitation* — by Richard Walker and Jason Moore  
6) *Theory and Global Ecological Politics* — by Richard Walker

**16:00-17:30 Nik Heynen and Garth Myers**

- 7) *Why Urban Political Ecology Needs an Abolitionist Ethos* — by Nik Heynen  
8) *Radical Incrementalism and Grassroots Politics in Africa-Centered Urban Political Ecology* — by Garth Myers

**19:00-c.21:00 Evening Public Debate** (Adapted to a Wider Audience)

**“Thinking With Greece and Africa: Articulating Political Possibilities from two So Called Peripheral Locations”** — This evening will have two talk by Edgar Pieterse on African and Global South urbanization and by Maria Kaika on experience from Greece. Henrik Ernstson will serve as moderator and with time for discussions. See longer description further below.

**FRIDAY 18 September**

**09:00-10:30 Jodi Dean and Andy Merrifield**

- 9) *Exhibiting Division, Seizing the State: ‘The Natural History Museum’* — by Jodi Dean  
10) (title to be announced) — by Andy Merrifield

**11:00-12:45 Maria Kaika, Edgar Pieterse and Roger Keil**

- 11) (title to be announced) — by Maria Kaika  
12) (title to be announced) — by Edgar Pieterse (to be moved to first day)  
13) *Paved Paradise: The Suburb as the Chief Artifact of the Anthropocene and Terrain of New Political Performativities* — by Roger Keil

**12:45-14:00 Lunch**

There will be soup and sandwich sold in the theatre. There are other simpler restaurants and a supermarket close by.

**14:00-15:30 Concluding Discussion**

Moderated by Henrik Ernstson and Erik Swyngedouw. Given the task that all speakers had of foregrounding the political possibilities of uneven and planetary urbanization in the age of deep socioecological change, what have we received from the spekaers? With the help of the audience, this concluding discussion will sum up points that have been made, bring out tensions and assess how far we have come in the taks of thinking beyond gloom and doom. As we write in our position paper, this meeting is about democratic practices and political movements in the age of urbanisation and ecological crises. What are the political promises that we can and must articulate to again build societies on the notion of equality? What new socio-ecological organisational forms exist that can challenge current status quo? What new terrains of the political is being invented and connected - from climate change, food security and ‘de-growth’ movements, to struggles of non-authorized immigrants, anti-austerity and insurgent citizenship - and that re-thinks equality and freedom in socio-ecological terms? These thinkers have grounded their discussions in the varied experiences of urbanisation and struggle from the Global South to the Global North, from Athens, London and Stockholm, to Lagos and Cape Town. Here we take stock of what we have heard and assess this together with the audience. Where have we arrived?

**THURSDAY 17 September** (Evening)

**19:00-c.21:00** Evening Public Debate

**Thinking With Greece and Africa:  
Articulating Political Possibilities from two So Called Peripheral Locations**

Edgar Pieterse and Maria Kaika

Henrik Ernstson (moderator)

European and Swedish public debate has been filled with articles around the ‘greek crisis’, now surpassed by the ‘refugee crisis’, many of which are coming from the Middle East and Africa. We know less about African urbanization, and few might know that it is the fastest urbanization the world has witnessed, ever. In about 30 years, Africa’s urban population will go from 294 to 742 million, roughly the number of people living in the EU today. This poses enormous challenges, not only in terms of technology, but in how to think about these cities, challenging urban and social theory—and political theory. On this evening Henrik Ernstson has invited Edgar Pieterse and Maria Kaika to speak from their particular experiences from Greece and Africa, and help us foreground how lessons from these locations can bring us wider understanding on how to think politically in an age of uneven and planetary urbanization, rampant capitalism and ecological change. Each speaker will have 30 minutes followed by a longer moderated discussion.

**Edgar Pieterse**, urbanist from South Africa and the director of the African Centre for Cities at University of Cape Town will give a talk on *Political Prospects and Urbanization in the Global South*. The talk will explore the significance of increasing global awareness about the centrality of urbanisation to more inclusive and sustainable forms of city-making in the wake of the Sustainable Development Goals. In particular, the talk will explore the possible claims and coalitions that will have to be invoked and activated to give a transformative edge to some modest discursive gains. This includes re-thinking how we think about cities, which in turn means a challenge to current social and radical theory.

**Maria Kaika**, urban political ecologist from Greece and Professor at University of Manchester, will reflect on her experience of the ‘anti-austerity’ struggles and the so called ‘greek crisis’ to help us think through their political possibilities. This is an urgent task since what was proclaimed a ‘greek’ crisis is of course tightly bound up with European and global futures. With her historical and political ecological research on Athens and later London, and with her close contact with the greek anti-austerity struggle, she is in a unique position to help us see beyond the headlines and to think with political possibilities in a time of deep neoliberalism and anti-democratic behaviours from large institutions.

Map and more information at: <http://anthro-obscene.situatedecologies.net/>

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*Under lördagen skiftar vi språk till svenska. En av programpunkterna kommer dock vara på engelska.  
During Saturday most discussions will be in Swedish.*

**SATURDAY/LÖRDAG 19 September  
In Swedish/På svenska**

*Öppet forum för aktivister, artister och alla andra  
Open Forum for Activists, Artists and Everybody Else*

*10:00-16:30*

*Musik och teaterbar från 18:30*

*Teater Reflex, Kärrtorp*

**Demokratisk praktik:  
Utmaningar och lärdomar kring stadsdemokratiska  
och politiska rörelser i vår tid**

Vi bjuder in kulturarbetare och aktivister i Stockholm för att lära av och arbeta med de erfarenheter av mobilisering som vi bär på. Hur byggs sociala och politiska rörelser idag? Även studenter, forskare och alla andra är välkomna. Under dagen kommer Kent Ekberg och Henrik Ernstson att arbeta med frågor kring sociala rörelser och politisk mobilisering. Med utgångspunkt från den folkliga teaterns erfarenhet om att bygga kontinuerlig verksamhet på människors individuella och kollektiva erfarenheter, så tar vi inspiration och lärdom från Linje 17 och andra nya sociala rörelser som kommer till teatern för att berätta om deras arbete och erfarenhet. Detta kommer också varvas med teoretiska perspektiv och internationella erfarenheter av stadspolitiska rörelser från Grekland och Sydafrika. Vi har tre programpunkter som kommer varvas om vartannat. Vi kommer inte bara lyssna och prata—utan också agera. Dagen avslutas med reflektion kring utmaningar som rörelser i Stockholm och Sverige står inför. På kvällen är det musik och teaterbar.

**10:00-10:15 Välkommen!**

**10:15-12:00 Linje 17 och Kent Ekberg delar med sig av sina erfarenheter av mobilisering.**

Linje 17 och vänner kommer bidra med sin berättelse om hur de vuxit fram och organiserat sig. Med avstamp i dessa nya rörelser, kommer Kent Ekberg öppna för tanke och handling baserat på sin långa erfarenhet om att använda den folkliga teatern som form för kunskapande, mobilisering och bygga jämlika relationer och verksamheter, från kuskande 'barfotaforskning' till Asylteatern, Sydafrika, och förortsteater i Skarpnäck och Kärrtorp. Gammalt och nytt om du så vill, kommer mötas.

**12:00-13:00 Lunch**

Enklare restauranger och mataffär finns i närheten.

**13:00-14:15 Every Revolution Needs A Square (In English)**

To contribute to the discussion, and departing from Erik Swyngedouw's question of *what does the political mean*, Henrik Ernstson will stage a dialogue with Erik Swyngedouw and Maria Kaika around how to understand the political in our time of neoliberalism and deep social and environmental change. Based on their research in Greece, Europe and South Africa, they will provide examples of movements and mobilizations to contribute to discussions in Stockholm and Sweden.

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**14:15-14:30 Kulturtidskriften Paletten släpper sitt senaste nummer. Och reflekterar.**

Kulturtidskriften Paletten med sin chefredaktör Fredrik Svensk och skribenter reflekterar över hur man kan länka samman kritisk debatt, konst och politisk tänkande och organisering. Palettens nya nummer finns att köpa efter dagen. Fredrik Svensk är lektor på Akademin Valands, Göteborgs universitet. Paletten fokuserar på samtida konst, dess politiska villkort och funktioner och grundades i Göteborg 1940.

**14:30-16:30 Kulturarbete och demokratisk praktik—hur går vi vidare?**

Från Occupy, Los Indignados, klimat, stadsmiljörelser, immigration, djurrätt, feminism och anti-rasism, så går en tråd om att vi vill ha en annan värld baserat på jämlikhet, frihet och hållbarhet. Dessa former av politisk organisering tar olika former. Baserat på det arbete vi gjort tillsammans under dagen vilka lärdomar tar vi med oss hem. Hur går vi vidare? Hur lär man sig mellan personer och organisationer och rörelser? Vad gör man mellan demonstrationerna? Hur bygger man verksamhet och kontinuerlig aktivitet? Vilken roll kan kulturen och kulturarbetaren och förtortens teater spela?

**18:30- Party!**

Artister och teaterbaren kommer vara öppna. Music performance and the bar will be open. **Ellen Pontara** och **Eric Steen** bjuder på flamenco och bandet **Hustle** med **Josette Bushell-Mingo** spelar.