



// OPEN CALL  
// OCEAN / UNI

***How to Wade Through Water?  
Storytelling as a Method***

6 October – 15 December 2021, biweekly sessions

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*Online or hybrid events held in different venues / online via  
Zoom and on Ocean-Archive.org*

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**ACADEMIC PARTNERS**

**2021/2022**

Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy

Columbia University, NY, USA

GEO—DESIGN, Design Academy Eindhoven, The Netherlands

Hochschule Mainz: University of Applied Sciences, Germany

Institut Kunst, FHNW Academy of Art and Design, Basel,  
Switzerland

Salon Swiss / Bern University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland

## // OCEAN / UNI: How to Wade Through Water? Storytelling as a Method // CURRICULUM

The fall semester of OCEAN / UNI 2021 begins by asking not why or what to research, but *how*. To wade through water, to walk through a fluid substance—the current of a shallow river, the edge of a littoral zone, or the heart of a lagoon—requires slowing down and adapting one's way of moving to the pressure of a thick and liquid medium. This means we need to think through careful and continuous observation of the world, rather than after it.<sup>1</sup> Wading is an act that brings awareness of tidal or seasonal temporalities, touching and haptic ways of knowing, of feeling through water and the overflow of experience.

An oceanic existence implies a constant state of becoming that thrives on open trails of exploration instead of appropriation or conquest. To conceive, tell, and hear stories is to engage with contexts and lifeways in relation<sup>2</sup>—it is a viscous form of research, a mode of learning by doing and engaging with existing conditions. It entails thinking of a place as an intricate net of the relations and forms of knowledge that populate it, rather than something pristine to conquer and box into fixed categories<sup>3</sup>. It is an approach to exploration that implies crossing the same path over and over again and never exhausting the possibilities that unfold along this itinerary.

By making space for stories that unwind the logics of accumulation and extraction pervading the Ocean, OCEAN / UNI welcomes perspectives that are intertwined with alternative ways of knowing, of organizing communities and modes of living together, attentive to non-binary, feminist, Indigenous, and decolonial approaches in ocean observation and conservation.

Storytelling opens up paths for scientific knowledge and traditional ecological knowledge to intersect and pollinate each other. The series unfolds through six methodologies, offered as live possibilities for storytelling to generate knowledge, put it to use, and pass it along. We ask ourselves which modes of **listening, archiving, narrating, playing, locating, and translating** can be employed to reimagine and rewrite our histories, to stay present and attentive, and to create possibilities for other worlds to come into being.

In this impulse resonate the words of feminist writer Ursula K. Le Guin in *The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction*, an essay-tale where Le Guin imagines technology and science as a carrier bag, a container to bring food home. In her eyes, a story is a bag, a belly, a box, a house or a medicine, a container for things contained<sup>4</sup>, a tool that serves to sustain life and memory and to resist and replace the "killer story," a trajectory of human progress centered around the heroic narrative of violence and domination.

Hegemonic systems of knowledge have manifested actions of asymmetry, exploitation, and violence over and through the Ocean. We are seeking mutual methodologies for wading through the littered histories of these murky waters—to train ourselves into the unease of immersion in an unfamiliar medium, to slow down and find other currents.



## // OCEAN / UNI

Initiated by Daniela Zyman, OCEAN / UNI is a collaborative project developed by TBA21–Academy for higher education institutions, independent researchers, practitioners, and Ocean enthusiasts that encourages building a far reaching network and developing a transdisciplinary methodology. Established in the fall 2020 as part of the activations around the exhibition *Territorial Agency: Oceans in Transformation* curated by Daniela Zyman, OCEAN / UNI is conceived as a pedagogic space that invites thinking with the oceans as a way to move towards more amphibious formulations, beyond land-sea binaries.

OCEAN / UNI 2021/2022 will host further conversations, case studies, and encounters. The program for the **Fall semester 2021, *How to wade through water? Storytelling as a Method***, draws on the works of artist Taloi Havini, resulting in the *The Soul Expanding Ocean #1* exhibition, as well as on Isabel Lewis' show *The Soul Expanding Ocean #2*, both on display at Ocean Space and curated by Chus Martínez as part of the program *The Current II*.

## // ACTS

The proposed format of study revolves around six biweekly sessions conceived as "acts", borrowing from the language of theatre and performing arts, introduced by a prologue intended as an introduction to the whole program. The program is open to a group of pre-registered public participants, university groups, guests, and moderators connected via Zoom, the ocean comm/uni/ty, and Ocean-Archive.org.



<sup>1</sup> Tim Ingold, "Anthropology Between Art and Science: An Essay on the Meaning of Research," *Field* issue 11 (fall 2018), <http://field-journal.com/issue-11/anthropology-between-art-and-science-an-essay-on-the-meaning-of-research>.

<sup>2</sup> Judy Iseke, "Indigenous Storytelling as Research," *International Review of Qualitative Research* (November 2013).

<sup>3</sup> Ingold, *ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction* (London: Ignota Books, 2019 [1986]).

## // ACTIVATIONS

In correspondence with the main acts, five activations, developed as workshops, are curated by the current Fellows of TBA21–Academy's 2021 Ocean Fellowship. By offering a space to employ the explored methodologies, the activations provoke advancement from theory to practice, and invite participants to engage and respond. Activations will open for registration in the preceding weeks.

## // PROGRAM

The full curriculum, details, and guests for each session will be announced shortly.

Guests are present live or pre-recorded on Zoom. All times in CET.

Main sessions (Acts) begin on 6 October and follow a biweekly rhythm.

Wednesday, 6 October, 6–7.30 pm

### **Prologue: Listening**

**"Keep awake, keep listening. / The tide comes in fast"<sup>5</sup>**

Thursday 14 October, 6–7.30 pm

### **Special Moment: Anthropocene Campus**

Session in collaboration with Institut Kunst, FHNW Academy of Art and Design, Basel, Switzerland  
– hybrid event: online and at Ocean Space, Venice

Wednesday, 20 October, 6–7.30 pm

### **First act: Archiving**

**"We need to tell and tell until all our stories are standing with us."<sup>6</sup>**

Wednesday, 27 October, time TBC

### **Activation: on Archiving**

Wednesday, 3 November, 6–7.30 pm

### **Second act: Narrating**

**"the story as i remember it"<sup>7</sup>**

Session in collaboration with Ca' Foscari University of Venice

Wednesday, 10 November, time TBC

### **Activation: on Narrating**

Wednesday, 17 November, 6–7.30 pm

### **Third act: Playing**

**"It matters what knots knot knots"<sup>8</sup>**

Session in collaboration with Institut Kunst, FHNW Academy of Art and Design, Basel, Switzerland

<sup>5</sup> Alice Oswald, *Dart*, 2002

<sup>6</sup> Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World*, 2015

<sup>7</sup> Alexis Pauline Gumbs, *three tries*, Fishing Fly, 2021

<sup>8</sup> Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*, 2016

<sup>9</sup> Julian Aguon, *We Have No Need For Scientists*, in *The Properties of Perpetual Light*, 2021

<sup>10</sup> Eva S. Hayward and Adela C. Licona, *Trans~Waters~ Coalitional Thinking on Art + Environment*, terrain.org, 2014

Wednesday, 24 November, time TBC

### **Activation: on Playing**

Wednesday, 1 December, 6–7.30 pm

### **Fourth act: Locating**

**"The inundated need no instruction in inundation"<sup>9</sup>**

Session in collaboration with GEO—DESIGN, Design Academy Eindhoven, The Netherlands

Wednesday, 8 December, time TBC

### **Activation: on Locating**

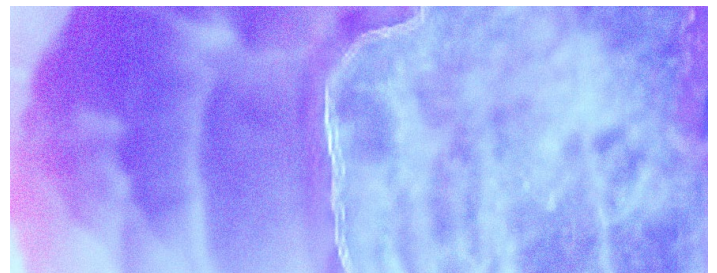
Wednesday, 15 December, 6–7.30 pm

### **Fifth act: Translating**

**"The prefix trans~ promises movements across"<sup>10</sup>**

Wednesday 16 December, time TBC

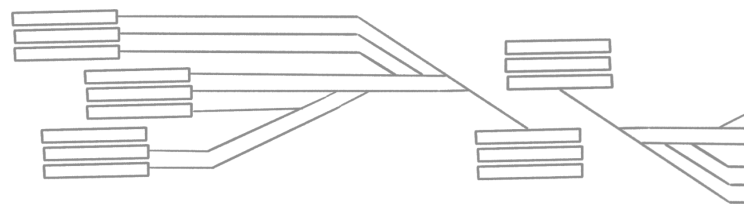
### **Activation: on Translating**



## // WHO CAN PARTICIPATE

The program is intended for adults from any background and eager to engage in ecological, political, aesthetic, ethical, and scientific conversations around the futures of the oceans. Lectures will be held exclusively in English, so a good listening and speaking level is recommended to ensure a meaningful learning experience.

The curriculum is open to anyone with an interest in deepening their knowledge, understanding, and experience of the research topics unfolded in the exhibitions *The Soul Expanding Ocean #1*: Taloi Havini, and *The Soul Expanding Ocean*: Isabel Lewis, both on display at Ocean Space until 17 October 2021 and curated by Chus Martínez as part of the program *The Current II*.



## // REGISTRATION

Participants are required to register for their attendance to the program online in a webinar format. Due to limited capacity applicants will be selected on a first-come, first-served basis. You are welcome to register in advance for more than one session. If you attend five sessions or more, you will receive an official certificate of attendance.

Registration form [here](#)

Access to the program is provided through the ocean comm/uni/ty platform.

Join ocean comm/uni/ty [here](#)



## // THE SOUL EXPANDING OCEAN

**The Soul Expanding Ocean #1** is the solo exhibition dedicated to the artist Taloi Havini, part of a two-year curatorial cycle entitled *The Soul Expanding Ocean* by [Ocean Space](#)'s 2021 and 2022 curator Chus Martínez.

**Taloi Havini** was born in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, in the South West Pacific Ocean. In November and December 2020, Havini was a resident of Schmidt Ocean Institute's Artist-At-Sea program, observing the mapping of the Great Barrier Reef with state of the art technology on the R/V Falkor. Current global ambitions to map the world's seafloor by 2030 are gaining momentum. This process uses multibeam sonar systems that produce never seen before high-resolution cartography. Representation of habitat in this form is considered mark-making - and it is a western scientific race for knowledge as seen by the artist. In response, Havini researches how sound and other senses are used beyond western science as tools for measuring space. The intention is to reveal diverse narratives from non-European cultures, asking audiences to attune the senses and reconsider current knowledge of the oceans.

**The Soul Expanding Ocean #2: Isabel Lewis** is an invitation to attune to our continuity with the Ocean to transform and articulate a different relation. Presented at Ocean Space, the exhibition showcases a newly commissioned work by artist and choreographer Isabel Lewis that invites participants and visitors to dance through the Ocean. Lewis asks participants to be careful with the language pertaining to the Ocean, be aware of the questions it poses and open to unexpected findings. The Ocean, then, appears in front of participants and visitors as a method, a pedagogy that leads individuals into another form of relating to nature. One that gives nature agency, one that acknowledges the differences of the lives that move and act and think and sense besides humans.

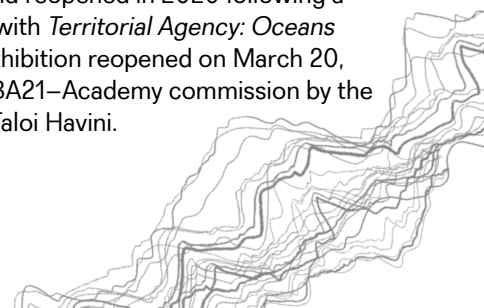
Art and artists are guiding humanity into the recovery and rehabilitation of its current relation to the Ocean. For this reason, a reprogramming of bodies is necessary to become more saliently cognizant of the human potential to be oceanic. Hands, skin, eyes, noses, ears, all organs need to learn to feel the Ocean even when the Ocean is not there, yet.

**Ocean-Archive.org** is a digital organism for a living ocean; a platform in the making, an archive and framework for collaborative research. It brings together the multitude of voices and stories around the Ocean and connects those striving to nurture and protect it. Designed as a storytelling and pedagogical tool, the Ocean-Archive.org translates current knowledge about the Ocean into a shared language that enables us to make better decisions for urgently needed policies. Created to stimulate action and systemic change, Ocean-Archive.org fosters synergy among art, science, policy, and conservation to make a range of perspectives visible, discoverable, and understandable.

**ocean comm/uni/ty** is a new feature of the Ocean-Archive.org, a meeting place for diving deep and crossing disciplines. In concert with OCEAN / UNI and Ocean-Archive.org, ocean comm/uni/ty forms an immersive three-pronged ecosystem for learning, discovering, and gathering. As the online portal to access the ongoing and past programs of OCEAN / UNI, ocean comm/uni/ty harbors collaboration and offers a space for researchers, practitioners, and ocean lovers of all stripes to exchange knowledge and seek inspiration; to share and promote their work; to spark and maintain collaborations.

**TBA21–Academy** is a contemporary art organization and cultural ecosystem fostering a deeper relationship to the Ocean through the lens of art to inspire care and action. For a decade, we have been an incubator for collaborative research, artistic production, and new forms of understanding by combining art, science, and other knowledge systems, intertwining imagination and possibility in regenerative relationships, resulting in exhibitions, research, and policy interventions.

Located in the Church of San Lorenzo in Venice, **Ocean Space** opened in March of 2019 as a new planetary center for catalyzing critical ocean literacy, research, and advocacy through the arts. Established and led by TBA21–Academy and building on its expansive work over the past nine years, this new embassy for the Ocean fosters engagement and collective action on the most pressing issues facing the Ocean today. Conceived as a platform for collaboration and exchange, Ocean Space provides flexible facilities for installations, performances, workshops, archives, and research, overseen by TBA21–Academy and its network of partners, including universities, NGOs, museums, government agencies, and research institutes from around the world. In 2019, Ocean Space exhibited Joan Jonas's *Moving Off the Land II* and reopened in 2020 following a period of refurbishment with *Territorial Agency: Oceans in Transformation*. The exhibition reopened on March 20, 2021, alongside a new TBA21–Academy commission by the Bougainville-born artist Taloi Havini.



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Salon Swiss / Bern University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland

### 2020/2021

AA Architectural Association School of Architecture, London

Brera Academy, Milan, Italy

Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy

GEO—DESIGN, Design Academy Eindhoven, The Netherlands

NTNU Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway

## //CREDITS

The OCEAN / UNI curriculum 2021/2022 is curated and developed by **Barbara Casavecchia**, Leader of The Current III; **Beatrice Forchini**, Research and Education Programmer; **Fiona Middleton** and **Pietro Consolandi**, former Ocean Fellows; alongside **Petra Linhartova**, Head of Digital & Development, and **Markus Reymann**, Director of TBA21–Academy; in collaboration with Ca' Foscari University of Venice, GEO–Design at Design Academy Eindhoven, Institut Kunst HGK FHNW in Basel; and produced with care by the TBA21–Academy team.

Graphic design: **Lana Jerichova**

