



*“We have our foot at the accelerator  
driving towards the Abyss.”*

Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations

# **GEO-AESTHETICS IN THE ANTHROPOCENE**

May 24-26, 2010

**Salisbury**  
UNIVERSITY  
Salisbury, Maryland

# Geo-Aesthetics in the Anthropocene

## Conference Theme:

What do the ecological humanities have to say in time of species extinction unprecedented in human history? How might the ecological arts address living in the emergence of a geological era to be defined primarily by the human impact upon the living world? These questions are the axis around which the various papers and artworks being presented at the conference revolve. The conference seeks to go beyond a scholarly discussion of these important questions to stances of public engagement. What exactly do the ecological humanities and arts have to offer our fellow humans and more-than-human fellow creatures living in a time of planetary ecological devastation? How do we find the proper or improper terms by which to bring a crisis of such magnitude into perspective? The conference theme is in part inspired by the inauguration of the Kangaloon Group, a gathering of predominantly Australian artists and scholars in the eco-humanities who are working to address the long term issues raised by the emergence of the Anthropocene. The conference theme is also, in part, inspired by a symposium in Geo-Aesthetics held last April at Towson University and directed by John Murungi and Gary Backhaus, co-directors of the International Association for the Study of Environment, Space and Place.

**International Association for Environmental Philosophy.** IAEP, established in 1996, offers philosophers in the continental tradition opportunities to share their thinking on a wide range of environmental questions. In addition to its annual fall meeting in conjunction with Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy, IAEP currently sponsors a conference each June in collaboration with the International Society for Environmental Ethics, as well as holding sessions at the annual eastern regional meeting of the American Philosophical Association. IAEP is also associated with the *Journal for Environmental Philosophy*.

“Geo-aesthetics in the Anthropocene” is the second in a new series of biennial summer conferences initiated by the IAEP, the first of which took place at the University of Oregon in summer 2008. These conferences are to be open to a wide range of scholars in the humanities, arts and sciences, as well as making use of the particular location in which they are held to offer field trips or other learning opportunities focusing on environmental themes. At the 2010 conference, we are offering a special talk by Joan Maloof at the Nassawango Field Station in order to introduce the conference participants to unique ecosystems found on the Eastern Shore.

## Campus Academic Sponsors:

The Charles R. and Martha N. Fulton School of Liberal Arts, the Department of Philosophy and the Environmental Studies Program.

**Peer Review Committee:** Michael Lewis (History), Joan Maloof (Biology), James Hill (Art), Derek Bowden (Music), James Hatley (Philosophy).

**Conference Co-Directors:** Derek Bowden, Department of Music; James Hatley, Department of Philosophy, Faculty Affiliate in Environmental Studies and member of the Kangaloon Group

## Keynote Speaker: Dr. Irene J. Klaever

Dr. Irene J. Klaver is founder and director of the Philosophy of Water Project, as well as an associate professor of the Philosophy and Religious Studies Department at the University of North Texas. Klaver is also a member of the UNESCO-IHP Expert Advisory Group on Water and Cultural Diversity.

The Philosophy of Water Project sponsors biennial conferences gathering together scientists, politicians, philosophers, artists, managers and specialists from both the public and private sector so that water issues can be explored across disciplinary, as well as political, social and geographic boundaries. Klaver also works with the Center for Water Law & Policy of the School of Law of Texas Tech University to organize symposia about ethics and water in order to foster compromise, cooperation and sustainable management of fresh water resources.

With Dr. Natarajan Ishwaran, Klaver is currently developing an initiative titled “River Cultures – Ecological Futures” to address the social-cultural dimensions of integrated water resource management along river basins. This initiative has in turn inspired the “Global Rivers Project,” a series of documentary films examining the environmental, political and cultural impacts on five major world rivers—the Amazon, Danube, Ganges, Rio Grande and Mississippi. These films were given their world premier in Beijing, China in 2008.

## Plenary Speakers:

**Dr. John Murungi**—Cofounder of the International Association for the Study of the Environment, Space and Place.

**Dr. Joan Maloof**—Author of the internationally recognized natural history *Teaching the Trees: Lessons from the Forest*.

**Thomas Horton**—Nationally recognized environmental journalist and author of *Bay Country* and *Island out of Time*.

## Other Noted Participants

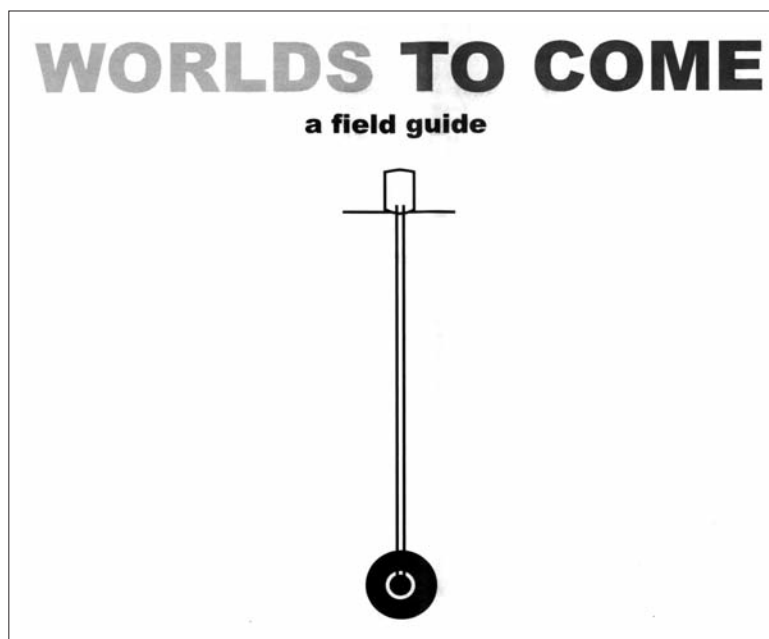
**Dr. Edmunds Bunkše:** Bunkše is a noted geographer from the University of Delaware who is also an adjunct faculty member at the University of Latvia and author most recently of *Feeling Is Believing: Landscape as a Way of Being in the World* (Sweden, 2007) and *Geography and the Art of Life* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004).

**Dr. Edward Mooney:** A philosopher who has written three books on Kierkegaard, including *Dialogue, Polemics, Lost Intimacy and Time* (2007), Mooney is also known for his work on revivifying the transcendentalist strand of the American philosophical tradition. In this regard he has published *Lost Intimacy in American Thought: Recovering Personal Philosophy from Thoreau to Cavell*, as well as having been the editor of Henry Bugbee's philosophical journal *Inward Morning* and a collection of essays on Bugbee's thought titled *The Heart of Wilderness*.

**Dr. David Rothenberg:** Rothenberg is an environmental philosopher and musician who is the author of *Why Birds Sing*, a philosophy of interspecies musicology that has been translated into 12 languages.

**Dr. Kumi Kato:** A scholar in the field of environmental studies holding faculty positions at both the University of Queensland and Wakayama University, Kato is currently collaborating with Dr. James Hatley to offer a wintermester course through Salisbury University on Environmental Spirituality in the context of the Kumano Kodo Pilgrimage Route. Kato has an impressive resume of publications—both written and audiographic—with titles such as “Prayers for the Whales: Spirituality and Ethics of a Former Whaling Community - Intangible Cultural Heritage for Sustainability,” “Addressing Global Responsibility for Conservation Through Cross-cultural Collaboration: Kodama Forest, a Forest of Tree Spirits” and “Nature as Cultural Heritage: A View from Tasmania.”

## Conceptual Artwork



**SMUDGE STUDIO**

**Artists: Jamie Kruse and Elizabeth Ellsworth**

Guide available throughout the conference at registration table.

# PROGRAM SCHEDULE

MONDAY, MAY 24

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8-8:50 a.m. . . . .Coffee and Light Breakfast - TETC Room 176

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**Session Topic: Conceptualizing Extinction**

**Session Location: TETC Room 151**

9-9:20 a.m. . . . .*Positive Aesthetics in the Anthropocene*  
Jonathan Parker—University of North Texas

9:25-9:45 a.m. . . . .*The Trunk and Not the Branch: Non-regenerative Extinction*  
Jeremy Bendik-Keymer—LeMoyne College

9:45-10:15 a.m. . . . .Discussion

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**Session Topic: Geo-Aesthetics in Theory**

**Session Location: TETC Room 152**

9-9:20 a.m. . . . .*The Fatal Conceit: Thoughts on the Ecological Calculus*  
Zachary Piso—Allegheny College

9:25-9:45 a.m. . . . .*The New Aesthetics of Nature and the Absence of the Sublime*  
Roger Paden—George Mason University

9:45-10:15 a.m. . . . .Discussion

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**Session Topic: Geo-Art in Sight**

**Session Location: TETC Room 156**

9-9:20 a.m. . . . .*Ontological Art; Glass as a Lens on Nature and Being*  
Alison Chism—Salisbury University

9:25-9:45 a.m. . . . .*Do Animals Need to Make Art?*  
David Rothenberg—New Jersey Institute of Technology

9:45-10:15 a.m. . . . .Discussion

10:20-10:40 a.m.. . . . .Break - TETC Room 176

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**Opening Address**

**Location: TETC Room 153**

10:45-Noon . . . . .*Callinectes Sapidus and the Art of the Chesapeake Bay*  
Tom Horton—Salisbury University  
Derek Bowden, Moderator—Salisbury University

Noon-1:15 p.m. . . . .Lunch - Location: Commons

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**Session Topic: Filming the Anthropocene**

**Session Location: TETC Room 151**

1:30-1:50 p.m. . . . .*“Planet Earth” and Eco-Sensitivity*  
Craig Condella—Salve Regina University

1:55-2:45 p.m. . . . .Discussion

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**Session Topic: Aesthetic Engagement and Critical Discourse**

**Session Location: TETC Room 152**

1:30-1:50 p.m. . . . .*Does Geo-Aesthetics, There Before We Arrive, Help in the Present?*  
Edward Mooney—Syracuse University

1:55-2:15 p.m. . . . .*On the Margins of Perception and Discourse: The Ineffable, Evanescent and Ethereal in Landscapes*  
Edmunds Bunkšć—University of Delaware

2:15-2:45 p.m. . . . .Discussion

**Session Topic: Geo-Practice**

**Session Location: TETC Room 156**

- 1:30-1:50 p.m. .... *The Seed Carrier's Embrace: The Gardener's Calling*  
Carole Collins—Catholic University of America
- 1:55-2:15 p.m. .... *Geo-Aesthetics and Mobility: Walking the Ambient Earth*  
David Macauley—Penn State University at Brandywine
- 2:15-2:45 p.m. .... Discussion
- 2:50-3 p.m. .... Break**

**Special Session: International Perspectives**

**Session Location: TETC Room 153**

- 3-4:15 p.m. .... *New Perceptions – Sacred Trees*  
Louise Fowler Smith—University of New South Wales
- ..... *Waiting for the Tide: The Sea Whistle of Ama Divers*  
Kumi Kato—Wakayama University and the University of Queensland

**Special Session: Film Screenings**

**Location: TETC Room 153**

- 4:30-5:45 p.m. .... *Tangitan*  
David Rothenberg—New Jersey Institute of Technology  
Jaanika Peerna—Estonian Visual Artist
- ..... *Walk/Rock*  
Beth Dynowski  
Sinead Young

**TUESDAY, MAY 25**

- 8-8:50 a.m. .... Coffee and Light Breakfast - TETC Room 176**

**Session Topic: Geo-Aesthetics in Time and Place**

**Session Location: TETC Room 151**

- 9-9:20 a.m. .... *Geo-aesthetic Impacts on Taiga and Tundra: Hearne's Journey (1769-72) and the Present*  
William Horne—Salisbury University
- 9:25-9:45 a.m. .... *Seasons as Sensible Ideas: A Phenomenology After Goethe and Merleau-Ponty*  
Luke Fischer—Independent Scholar
- 9:45-10:15 a.m. .... Discussion

**Session Topic: Geo-Poetics**

**Session Location: TETC Room 152**

- 9-9:20 a.m. .... *Poetry in the Anthropocene*  
Nancy Mitchell—Salisbury University
- 9:25-9:45 p.m. .... *The Waters of Metaphysics*  
Timothy Stock—Salisbury University
- 9:45-10:15 a.m. .... Discussion

**Session Topic: Music, Tragedy and the Earth**

**Session Location: TETC Room 156**

- 9-9:20 a.m. .... *Artistic Suicide Notes and the Anthropocene*  
Steven Sandbank—Independent Scholar
- 9:25-9:45 a.m. .... *Nietzsche on the Birth and Death of Tragedy*  
Christos Evangelou—Towson University
- 9:45-10:15 a.m. .... Discussion

- 10:20-10:40 a.m.. .... Break - TETC Room 176**

**Plenary Address**

**Location: TETC Room 153**

10:45 a.m.-Noon ..... *Traveling on the Way of Trees in Africa*  
John Murungi  
James Hatley, Moderator—Salisbury University

**Noon-1:15 p.m. .... Lunch - Location: Commons**

**Session Topic: Human Well-Being**

**Session Location: TETC Room 151**

1:30-1:50 p.m. .... *Imagining Intergenerational Ethics*  
Janet Fiskio—Oberlin College

1:55-2:45 p.m. .... Discussion

**Session Topic: Architecture Beyond the Anthropocene**

**Session Location: TETC Room 152**

1:30-1:50 p.m. .... *New Directions in Phenomenological Architecture: Balancing Environment, Society and Economics*  
Shane Epting—University of North Texas at El Paso

1:55-2:15 p.m. .... *Geoaesthetics and Geoarchitecture*  
Richard Wilson—University of Maryland, Baltimore County

2:15-2:45 p.m. .... Discussion

**Session Topic: Writing the Anthropocene**

**Session Location: TETC Room 156**

1:30-1:50 p.m. .... *To Have No Connection with the Earth: "To Build a Fire," Aesthetics and Anthropogeography*  
Adam Wood—Salisbury University

1:55-2:15 p.m. .... *Treading Lightly: Italo Calvino's "Invisible Cities" Read in the Anthropocene Era*  
Anne Ashbaugh—Towson University

2:15-2:45 p.m. .... Discussion

**2:50-3 p.m. .... Break**

**Special Session: Theatre Performance**

**Session Location: Black Box Theatre, Fulton Hall**

3-3:50 p.m. .... *Orchid Flotilla*  
Caroline Reck—Artist in Residence, Austin, Texas  
Shannon McPhee—Towson University

**Keynote Address**

**Location Fulton Hall Room 111**

4-5:15 p.m. .... *Water on the Edge: Thinking (with) Rivers*  
Irene Klaver—University of North Texas  
Director of The Philosophy of Water Project  
Brian Schroeder, Moderator—Co-director, IAEP

**5:30-6:30 p.m. .... Welcome Reception**  
**Location: Fulton Hall Lobby**

**Introduction**  
**Dr. Maarten Pereboom, Dean,**  
**Fulton School of Liberal Arts, Salisbury University**

**Evening Gathering .... Location: James Hatley's House**  
**712 Oak Hill Avenue**  
**Salisbury, MD**  
**443-614-8030**

WEDNESDAY, MAY 26

8-8:50 a.m. . . . .Coffee and Light Breakfast - TETC Room 176

**Session Topic: Sublime, Transience, Apocalypse:  
Aesthetics in the Era of Climate Change**

**Session Location: TETC Room 151**

9-9:20 a.m. . . . .*Climate Change and the Danger of Kant's Sublime*  
Iliana Zamorska—Oberlin College

9:25-9:45 a.m. . . . .*Ephemeral Artists: Conversation and Collaboration with Nature*  
Abby Halperin—Oberlin College

9:45-10:15 a.m. . . . .Discussion

**Session Topic: Human Well-Being, cont.**

**Session Location: TETC Room 152**

9-9:20 a.m. . . . .*Appalachian Aesthetics: Moonscapes and the Destruction of Social Capital  
in Communities Dominated by Old King Coal*  
Clint Jones—University of Kentucky

9:25-9:45 a.m. . . . .*Geo-Aesthetics in the Classroom: Promoting Children's Ethical Awareness through Environmental Awareness*  
Ellen Miller—Rowan University

9:45-10:15 a.m. . . . .Discussion

**Session Topic: Hearing the Earth**

**Session Location: TETC Room 156**

9-9:20 a.m. . . . .*The Gucin in the Anthropocene*  
Robert Nichols—Salisbury University

9:25-9:45 a.m. . . . .*Poetry Cycle*  
Dennis Skocz—Independent Scholar

9:45-10:15 a.m. . . . .Discussion

10:20-10:40 a.m.. . . . .Break - TETC Room 176

**Special Session: Poetry & Music**

**Session Location: Fulton Hall Room 112**

10a.m.-12:30 p.m.

*The Fire Escape*

Linda Ardito—Dowling College

*Gathering Dust: Sediment/Sentiment*

Jolie Kaytes & Samantha DiRosa

*EcoLogos*

Elizabeth Meacham—Ursuline College

Noon-1:15 p.m. . . . .Lunch - Location: Commons

2 p.m. . . . .Nassawango Field Station

**Location: Meet outside the Commons (lunch location) to board the SU bus.**

*Measuring the Beauty of the Forest: Are You Serious?*

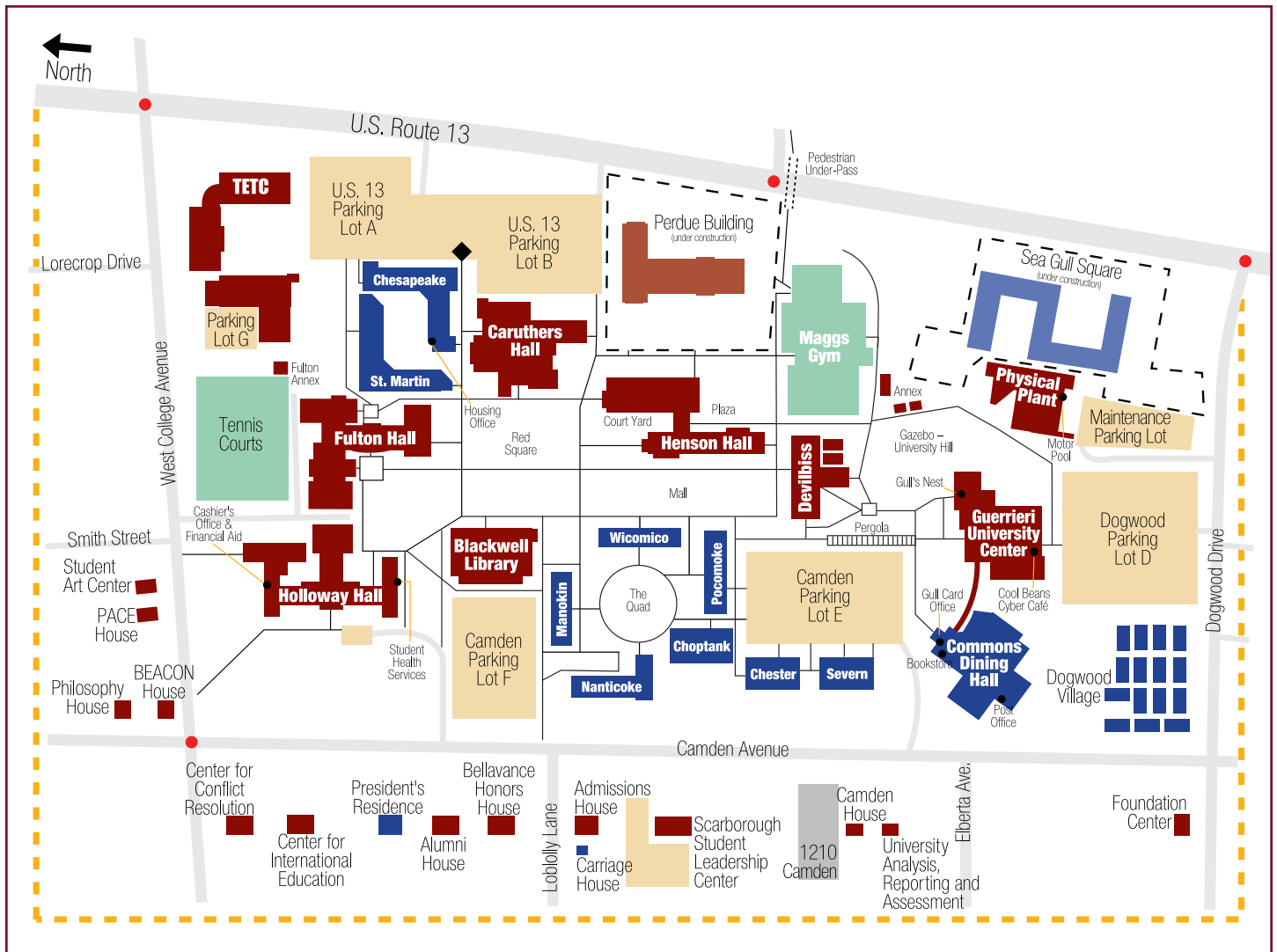
Joan Maloof—Salisbury University

Michael Lewis, Moderator—Director of Environmental Studies Program, Salisbury University

*Philosophy Panel*

Brad Warfield—Salisbury University

William Pomeroy—Salisbury University



### Hotel Information

Holiday Inn, Salisbury  
 410-546-4400  
 300 South Salisbury Blvd.  
 Salisbury, MD 21801  
 Special GeoAesthetics Rate: \$60/night;  
 request room for "Geo-Aesthetics at SU"

### SU Shuttle

Shuttle service will be provided from the Holiday Inn to the SU campus during the conference.  
 Shuttle schedule:  
 Monday, 7:45-9:45 a.m. and 5-7 p.m.  
 Tuesday, 7:45-9:45 a.m. and 4-6 p.m.  
 Wednesday, 7:45-9:45 a.m. and 2-4 p.m.