1. Würzburg Summer School for Cultural and Literary Animal Studies, Funded by VolkswagenStiftung

In the Humanities and in Cultural Studies, animals have increasingly become the focus of interest in recent years. In its interdisciplinary approaches, Cultural and Literary Animal Studies (CLAS) assembles research disciplines as different and distinct as Philosophy, History, Art History, Film Studies, Literary Studies, the History of Science, Cultural Studies, Biology, Psychology, Anthropology, Geography, Sociology, and Jurisprudence. The "Würzburg Summer School for Cultural and Literary Animal Studies" brings together the relevant questions from these fields and maps the historical and systematic position of animals in our culture in the form of three consecutive annual themes, designed to build up on one another while still defining their unique and independent focal points. The first Summer School of 2012 was entitled "Nature, Culture, Agency," and the second Summer School 2013 focused on “Political Zoology”. This year's final Summer School will devote itself to the annual theme of "Zoological Aesthetics". Each year, the respective theme will be investigated in keynote lectures, workshops on animal theory and animal themes, panel discussions, artistic presentations, and open formats on project development and project networking. The Summer Schools predominately aim at providing a platform to junior researchers who are working on projects that address the relevant issues within the context of CLAS and wish to explore and develop the field of CLAS together with the workshop facilitators and the speakers – young academics who have laid the foundations for CLAS.

2. Summer School 2014: Zoological Aesthetics

The central theme for the third year will be the question as to an aesthetics of animals, in a twofold sense: For one matter, animals pose fundamental questions of Aesthetics: How do animals appear within the space of a form-conscious perception? How may this perception be translated into a representation that will both remain object-oriented and sound realms of possibility? And how, in the face of the animal as paradigm of the Natural, may something akin to aesthetic autonomy be implemented? Investigations will focus on such artworks (pictures, films, texts, etc.) that do not merely depict animals, but at the same time use animals to bring up questions of aesthetic theory. In this way, animals can be grasped as reflection figures of the Aesthetic. On the other hand, animals are also to be contemplated as active agents of an aesthetics in its own right. Categories such as beauty, magnificence, design, etc., are discussed in Zoology time and again. This creates an investigative horizon which may be linked to aesthetic theory: Which function does form-conscious perception perform in animals? Where in the animal kingdom do mechanisms of imitation become effective which go beyond the mere matching of behavior by exploratively testing new options? Where does animal behavior not simply restrict itself to pure functionality, but exhibits playful licence? Of interest here are ethological studies that do not only describe animal behavior but also reflect on their own categories of description. After
three years of working together on methodological and substantive issues, the question of a cross-disciplinary theory of Cultural and Literary Animal Studies, challenging Cultural Studies as well as Natural and Social Sciences, now looms largely on the horizon of the 2014 Summer School.

The keynote lectures of the CLAS Summer School 2014 are each directed towards one prominent position from Film Studies (Akira Mizuta Lippit, University of Southern California/USA) and Literary Studies (Eva Geulen, Universität Frankfurt a. M./Germany). The Natural Sciences/Cultural Studies debate will be conducted by evolutionary biologist Volker Sommer (University College London/UK) and art and culture historian Julia Voss (Frankfurt a. M.). For an Evening of Animal Art, philosopher and interspecies composer David Rothenberg (Newark/USA) will devote himself to the music of animals; his presentation will be introduced and moderated by musicologist Martin Ullrich (Hochschule für Musik Nürnberg). In the Theory Workshops, fundamental positions on “Zoological Aesthetics” will be open to discussion. Three parallel Theme Workshops will finally elaborate on exemplary approaches:

A) Zoo/Film (Christina May, Sabine Nessel): In Zoos and film, living wild animals become viewable to a wide public, up close and without danger. Zoo landscapes and animal films contextualize animals motivically and mediate relationships between humans and animals via the formal organization of gaze, movement, and sound. Apart from the reception options for the human observers, the question arises as to the transposition of the animal habitat into constructed film spaces or zoo buildings. The workshop will analyze and discuss the medialization of zoo and film animals and the authenticity of their bodies and environments on the basis of filmic and architectonic example cases.

B) Savage/Image (Jessica Ullrich, Mareike Vennen): Wildness as something uncivilized, unrestrained, alien, belongs among the basal cultural assignations of animality – either as a negative figure of demarcation and marginalization or as the positive trait of an animality with a productive efficacy. Proceeding from the aesthetic modes of representation of “Wildness,” and from the material and medial conditions and practices of this image-creation, the workshop addresses our gaze at and our view of “wild” animals in the image or in (performative) viewing arrangements, as well as their object, respectively subject, status. This will also involve considering “Wildness” as a form of animal resistance against representational dispositifs: How do animals look back at us from out of the image, and how do they, if they do, refuse to participate in the creation of their image?

C) Writing/Poetizing (Roland Borgards, Martina Wernli): The workshop will look for animals where they appear in their constitutive role for literature: in writing with a quill (both in material practice and in literary stagings of quill-writing); in theriological poetics that think poetry and metaphor in terms of the animal (from Aristotle to Hofmannsthal to Coetzee); in fictive animal autobiographies in which authorship and animality intertwine (from Kater Murr to Rotpeter). Lastly, it will have to be asked whether beyond this there can be such a thing as an autonomous animal authorship (e. g. in keeping with political animal theory according to Derrida or Donaldson/Kymlicka).

3. Application

33 fully-funded scholarships, covering travel expenses as well as accommodation, are available for the Summer School of 2014. Young academics (advanced students, doctoral candidates and post-docs) from all relevant fields entertaining projects of their own in CLAS are requested to submit a two-page Letter of Motivation, outlining both their general interest
in CLAS (research connections, personal projects) and their specific interest in the workshop selected (first choice). The application must also include the completed application form, available for download on our website (see below), where the program for the 2014 Summer School may also be found. Please do not send any other documents or materials! Applications (via e-mail only) may be submitted until May 30. Invitations will be sent mid June. Attendance of the Summer Schools in 2012 or 2013 does not constitute a precondition for a successful application. We seek to attract an interdisciplinarily and internationally oriented field of participants.

**Workshops and keynotes will be partly in English and partly in German.** Participants may speak in their preferred language, but must be able to understand each other. Therefore, language skills (at least passive) in both German and English are required. Please specify your level of German on the application form if submitting your application in English.

In the interest of intensive collaboration, scholarships can only be awarded to applicants who will be resident in Würzburg for the entire duration of the 2014 Summer School.

**Deadline for applications: May 30, 2014.** Please e-mail to: netzwerk-clas@germanistik.uni-wuerzburg.de

Application form, program, and further information may be found at: www.summerschool-clas.de

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