



## Conference: Poetry - a Genre in Expansion

5th - 6th of December 2013, Aalborg University

*Poetry - a Genre in Expansion* is the first conference of CERCOP (Centre for Research in Contemporary Poetry) and the project “Contemporary Poetry between Genres, Art Forms and Media”, which was established in 2013 with a grant from the Danish Council for Independent Research | Humanities (FKK). The project seeks to identify contemporary poetry within three different fields of tension: Between the traditional notion of the poetic genre and a genre-decomposing notion, between literature and other art forms (visual art, music, film, performance etc.), and between the book medium and other media (Internet, oral etc.). The aim is to develop new interdisciplinary methods for reading contemporary poetry, and to discuss the literary-historical, art-historical, social and political implications of the expansion of poetry as a genre. In this first conference, focus will be on a wide range of topics in this field. Broader issues will be discussed, such as the boundaries of the poetic genre, the relation between poetry and the literary field, and the concept of poetry in general, but also more specific topics will be subject to investigation, such as poetry’s relationship to music, performativity, book objects, conceptualism, and photography.

**(the conference will be held respectively with one day in Danish language and one day in English language)**

### *Lyrisk – en genre i ekspansion*

5. og 6. december 2013, Aalborg Universitet

*Lyrisk – en genre i ekspansion* er den første konference inden for det det FKK-finansierede projekt Samtidslirikken mellem genrer, kunstarter og medier og CERCOP. Projektets formål

er at undersøge de seneste års eksplosive udvikling inden for lyrikkens produktion, distribution og reception. Projektet sigter mod at diskutere samtidslyrikken i tre primære spændingsfelter, nemlig mellem en traditionel opfattelse af den poetiske genre (centrallyrik) og en genreopbrydende (interaktionslyrik), mellem litteraturen og andre kunstarter (billedkunst, musik, film etc.), og mellem bogmediet og andre medier (internet, mundtlig performance etc.). Der sættes i denne forbindelse også på at udvikle nye interdisciplinære metoder til læsning af samtidslyrikken samt at diskutere de litteratur- og kunsthistoriske, sociale og politiske implikationer af lyrikkens ekspansion. I denne første konference vil der være fokus på en bred vifte af emner inden for dette felt. Der vil blive diskuteret både mere overordnede problematikker som den poetiske genres grænser, poesibegrebets betydning samt poesiens relation til det litterære felt som helhed, og mere specifikke emner som poesiens forhold til musik, performativitet, bogobjekter, konceptualisme og fotografi.

### **Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> of December**

- 9.00 - 9.15 Welcome and introduction
- 9.15 - 10.15 Peter Middleton (University of Southampton): The Language Beneath Our Feet: Experimentation in Contemporary British Poetry
- 10.15 - 11.15 Peter Dayan (University of Edinburgh): On the danger of pushing poetry towards music: the successes and failures of Hugo Ball, René Ghil, and Stéphane Mallarmé
- 11.15 - 11.30 Coffee Break
- 11.30 - 12.15 Morten Søndergaard (Copenhagen): A Wordpharmacist confessions
- 12.15 - 13.15 Lunch
- 13.15 – 13.45 Birgitte Stougaard Pedersen (Aarhus University): Analyzing the performing voice –in between the audiobook and contemporary poetry performances.
- 13.45 - 14.15 Peter Stein Larsen (Aalborg University): Poetry as Ideal – or Expanding Genre
- 14.15 - 14.25 Break
- 14.25 - 15.10 Ole Karlsen (Hedmark University College): 882 Norwegian Poetry Collections 2000 – 2012: Overview, historical trends, formal categories
- 15.10 - 14.40 Dan Ringgaard (Aarhus University): Post-literature
- 15.40 - 16.00 Summary and Discussion
- 19.00 Conference Dinner

## **Fredag d. 6. december**

- 9.30 - 10.00 Louise Mønster (Aalborg Universitet): En genreløs generation? Om ny dansk litteratur på kanten af lyrik
- 10.00 - 10.30 Krista Stinne Greve Rasmussen (Københavns Universitet): Når lyrikken tager form
- 10.30 - 10.45 Kaffepause
- 10.45 - 11.15 Rasmus Dahl Vest (Aalborg Universitet): Konceptuel folkelighed – konceptuel litteratur mellem poesi og poetisk funktion
- 11.15 - 11.45 Thomas Hvid Kromann (Københavns Universitet): Den konkrete poesi, den konkrete bog – reaktualiseringen af litteraturens udvidede felt
- 11.45 - 12.15: Martin Glaz Serup (Københavns Universitet): Konceptuelle vidnesbyrd – Statement of Facts
- 12.15 - 13.15 Frokost
- 13.15 - 13.45 Hans Kristian Rustad (Hedmark University College): Om poesi og fotografi hos Paal-Helge Haugen
- 13.45 - 14.15 Rikke Andersen Kraglund (Aarhus Universitet): At være udsat i Ursula Andkjær Olsens forfatterskab
- 14.15 - 14.25 Pause
- 14.25 - 14.55 Stefan Kjerkegaard (Aarhus Universitet): Performance, Pablo, poesi?
- 14.55 - 15.25 Jakob Schweppenhäuser (Aarhus Universitet): *tba*
- 15.25 – 16:30 Møde for projektgruppens medlemmer

## **Abstracts:**

### **Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> of December**

#### **Peter Middleton: The Language Beneath Our Feet: Experimentation in Contemporary British Poetry**

Contemporary British poets who work with late modernist, avant-garde, experimental, or international forms of poetic practice, have developed interesting new ideas about language. Emerging from a confluence of concrete poetry and performance arts in the 1960s, and then later contending with neglect and sometimes outright hostility from mainstream reviewers and funders, these poets have had to think hard about the principles of their practice. Guiding their reflections has been the belief that language is both landscape and action. Over the past

few decades they have dug down into what they think of as the sedimentations of discourse, and tested out ways of exhibiting its material contours and repressed potentials in print, image, and performance. To explain their practice they often resort to metaphors of soil, landscape, and ground. Caroline Bergvall writes in *Meddle English* (2010) that ‘language is its own midden ground’: ‘one discovers surprising varietals of soil, ancient yet compilable language bones, pressed word-fossils, collapsed layers, mineral toil’. Peter Riley has written an entire long poem, *Excavations* (2004), in which he re-imagines the constituents within the ‘rich brown loam’ of language. Maggie O’Sullivan’s style in *Palace of Reptiles* (2003), which she wittily calls ‘clinamacaronic’ (playing on *clinamen*, *macaronic*, and the German *kleine*), writes poems in which old words and new, as well as semantic and phonetic shards, are all piled up into rich sonic patterns. She writes as if she were a shamanic archaeologist of language digging through a spoil heap of modern Britain. Each of these poets believes that poetry can reactivate damaged, eroded, and corrupted language by releasing its energy into hybrid aesthetic forms. They project text across an array of concrete, visual, performative, and bibliographic practices. My talk will map this history of recent poetry, and discuss the tensions around the implicit models of language as the ground of action.

**Peter Dayan: On the danger of pushing poetry towards music: the successes and failures of Hugo Ball, René Ghil, and Stéphane Mallarmé**

My paper will begin with a careful analysis of Hugo Ball’s Dada manifesto, in which he presents Dada as a word that belongs to no one language and is therefore not to be read as signifying within a stable context. Ball is here examining how words can function as the building-blocks for art when their relations with other words are, like the relations between musical notes, not determined by their signifying function. I will then examine his “Lautgedichte”, and ask in what ways they are more like music than traditional poetry. Finally, I will look forward in Ball’s career, and ask why his Dada phase was so short and so unstable, suggesting that music is the reason why Ball’s Dadaism was unsustainable.

In the second part of my paper, I will go back to the well-known polemic between Mallarmé and René Ghil on the question of how, and to what extent, it is permissible for poetry to attempt to work like music. Mallarmé clearly won the argument with Ghil, in the sense that his poetry is still highly valued, whereas Ghil’s is considered unreadable; so Mallarmé’s definition of the proper relations between music and poetry has prevailed. I would then map that definition onto the work of Hugo Ball, previously examined. I think this will shed a peculiarly clear light on a subject that is often obfuscated: what, exactly, do we

mean by music, when we talk about the relations between music and poetry? In conclusion, I will attempt to show that if one accepts the definition of music that both Mallarmé and Ball work with, poetry can be like music in some ways, but not in others – and that as it moves towards the status of music, it threatens the conditions of its own production, inevitably tending either to silence the poet, or to become, like Ghil's poetry, not worth reading.

### **Morten Søndergaard: A Wordpharmacist confessions**

The Wordpharmacy consist of ten medicine boxes, each representing one of the ten word classes. Each box contains a leaflet that functions as an instructional poem, guiding the reader's ingestion of the given word class. If you lack verbs in your life or if you want to know whether you can use prepositions if you are pregnant or you are in desperate need of numerals, then help is at hand. The Wordpharmacy comes either as a medicine box - a linguistic first aid kit - or as a signed medicine cabinet in stainless steel.

<http://www.wordpharmacy.com/Start.html>

### **Birgitte Stougaard Pedersen: Analyzing the performing voice – in between the audiobook and contemporary poetry performances**

The paper wishes to discuss the present theoretical status of the voice comparing two contemporary phenomena that experiences increasing popularity, namely the digital audiobook and the performance practices of contemporary poetry.

The paper will suggest a four-step model for analyzing voice in both practices respectively focusing on: The materiality of the voice; dealing with voice quality, rhythm and auditory diction of the singular and unique voice, The rhetorical situation investigating how the reading voice is approaching the listener, unfolding an *intensified intentionality* carried out in a rhetorical setting, The enunciation of the text, concerning the narrator's or readers position in relation to the text and Ethnicity, gender, creating a general contextualization of the reading and listening situation.

### **Peter Stein Larsen: Poetry as Ideal – or Expanding Genre**

The paper is about the status of poetry in relation to literature and literary criticism – its starting point being the contemporary attack on poetry, which is in fact a vital genre. Poetry has the unique potential of being the outcome of a variety of forms and idioms, and of interacting with other art forms and media. The article emphasises how poetry is part of vital

and important interaction with literary criticism. There is a parallel development between new poetic experiments and the pluralism of schools of criticism, such as deconstruction, phenomenology, formalism, cognitive linguistics, studies of place, ecocriticism, studies of ekphrasis, and other interartial and intermedial studies. Finally, it is argued that the poetic genre is an extremely important part of the literary field, with poetry unopposed to the experimental prose but standing in contrast to the bestseller.

### **Ole Karlsen: 882 Norwegian Poetry Collections 2000 – 2012: Overview, historical trends, formal categories**

In my lecture I'll give a survey of Norwegian poetry during the the period 2000 – 2012. Altogether 882 poetry books will be discussed in relation to a historical framework and categorized through three different approaches to the material, all based on formal considerations. An underlying point in my discussion will be the viewpoint that the most recent Norwegian poetries are in direct continuance of poetical movements that became particularly conspicuous in the mid-sixties and onwards.

### **Dan Ringgaard: Post-literature**

I would like to suggest the term post-literature as a framing and a historical reflection of our subject, poetry and new media. By literature I mean the historically specific kind of language art that developed as a particular technology, writing, met with a particular media, the book, and developed under the influence of and as an influential part of European modernity, and through a number of new genres (the novel, lyric poetry, the novella, the essay, the written drama). By 'post-' I indicate that this triangulation of writing, book and modernity is challenged and with it literature in the strict sense that I have just indicated, but also that this idea of being already distinct has been a defining element in literature for at least two hundred years. I hope to show that the end of literature is also a beginning to the extent that it makes the phenomenon easier to circumscribe and therefore perhaps also easier to reactivate in a new media environment, especially since this reactivation is all ready such an integrated part of literature. The question being: How do we articulate the literary, or how does the literary articulate itself, within a contemporary media culture?

## **Fredag d. 6. december**

### **Louise Mønster: En genreløs generation? Om ny dansk litteratur på kanten af lyrik**

Mit oplæg tager udgangspunkt i en iagttagelse af, at genreforholdet i ny litteratur er blevet mere flydende, komplekst og svært at afgøre. Mere specifikt vil jeg rette opmærksomheden mod, at megen ny dansk litteratur, der kategoriseres som lyrik, overskrider denne genres traditionelle konventioner og bevæger sig ud i mellemfelter til andre genrer og kunstarter. En del af de værker, der rubriceres som digtsamlinger, er det således langt fra i klassisk forstand, og ofte udfordres vores forståelse af, hvad lyrik er og kan være. Min hensigt er dels at optegne nogle af de forskellige måder, som genreoverskridelserne udfolder sig på, dels at diskutere bevægegrunde for og implikationer af den genretraderende tendens.

Min titel "En genreløs generation?" er bevidst spørgende og lettere provokatorisk. Mit synspunkt er ikke, at genrer aktuelt skulle være uden betydning, derimod mener jeg, at samtidslyrikken opererer med en *løser* og mere fleksibel genretilknytning, hvilket jeg vil belyse gennem en række forskellige danske værker fra de seneste fem år.

### **Krista Stinne Greve Rasmussen: Når lyrikken tager form**

I dette foredrag vil jeg med udgangspunkt i disciplinen boghistorie diskutere poesiens eksperimenteren med bogmediet. Jeg vil diskutere værker af bl.a. Mette Moestrup, Naja Marie Aidt og Christian Yde Frostholt og se på hvilken betydning forholdet mellem analog og digital spiller for lyrikken. Digitalt født litteratur indtager ikke nogen prominent plads på den lyriske scene i Danmark. Vi har dog set seriøse værker slå igennem, og i den forbindelse må websitet afsnit p nævnes som et af de vigtigste fora. Men afsnit p er ikke længere et aktivt site og samtiden præges snarere af trykte digtsamlinger, hvis æstetiske udtryk og materialitet i høj grad dyrker det analoge og taktile. Bogen som objekt er med andre ord ikke blevet trængt ud af digitale tekster, tværtom.

### **Rasmus Dahl Vest: Konceptuel folkelighed – konceptuel litteratur mellem poesi og poetisk funktion**

Konceptuel litteratur er folkelig litteratur. Konceptuel litteratur er ulæselig litteratur. Den er brobyggeren mellem høj- og lavkultur, der insisterer på, at ingen bro bygges. Den er fusioneringen og kulminationen på de sidste 100 års avantgarder i en tid, hvor avantgardens way of doing er blevet standard procedure. Den er kort sagt avantgarde i en tid, der for længst

har realiseret avantgardens projekt. Dette er dens paradoks og grunden til, at den bør påkalde sig akademisk interesse. I oplægget vil jeg præsupponere, at konceptuel litteratur kun eksisterer som litteratur ved at eksistere inden for den poetiske institutions rammer. Jeg vil med udgangspunkt i en sammenligning af meme-kulturens produkter og konceptuel litteratur argumentere for, at konceptuel litteratur bør forstås i lyset af populærkulturens nivellering af approprieringspraksissens kunstneriske radikalitet, og at konceptuel litteratur essentielt må være poesi for overhovedet at være. Den konceptuelle litteratur tematiserer derved noget inhærent folkeligt ud fra en aldeles ufolkelig kunstposition. En pointe som jeg i oplægget vil demonstrere gennem en læsning af Rasmus Graffs værker FOLKETS PROSA, Sprogbrugseksempler i oplæsning ved 29 individer og RE ACT OR (alle fra 2010).

### **Stefan Kjerkegaard: Performance, Pablo, Poesi?**

I mit oplæg vil jeg med udgangspunkt i Pablo Llambías' seneste tre bøger *Monte Lema*, *Hundstein* og *Sex Rouge* stille spørgsmålene: Er det digtsamlinger, og hvad er et litterært værk overhovedet i dag? Der synes i høj grad at herske tvivl om, hvor værkets grænser går, og hvordan bøgerne derfor skal læses. Er det overhovedet et værk, er det ikke snarere en performance? Er det overhovedet et lyrisk jeg, vi læser i sonetterne, er det ikke bare Pablo? Ja, er det overhovedet poesi?