

# W.H A:T T:I M:E I:S I:T

## TECHNOLOGIES OF LIFE IN THE CONTEMPORARY

14th - 16th December, 2017  
Sarai-CSDS, Delhi and Goethe-Institut/  
Max Mueller Bhavan, New Delhi

#whattimeisit

Have we finally entered the End of History? (e-flux, Journal #57, Sept 2014). Recent media technological transformations have thrown into confusion many existing political and social theories: art, media philosophy, politics, biology — in fact all ideas of life presented in the last century. Are these the jumbled signs of 'our' contemporaneity? The idea of the contemporary has been around for a few decades, seen variously as a period, a critical gesture, and a disciplinary frame for literature and art. We believe the time is right to revisit the idea of the contemporary from a different lens, outside the closeted frameworks of a Euro-American debate where contemporaneity appears as an unstable successor to modernity and postmodernity.

In the past decade we have seen the worldwide spread of media and information networks. Since value is now gained from experience, new corporations and political parties deploy strategies of agglomeration

using digital media technologies. Growing computational grids inaugurate storage and surveillance technologies that are affecting fields like the environment, finance and law. Machine time disturbs historical continuity and sequence. Genetic engineering and life storage technologies disrupt the idea of the biological life span. Media memory and recording technologies have transformed the lives of mobile phone users in the world. Media-enabled populations in Asia, Africa and Latin America are now part of a new infrastructure of the senses.

Since 2000, digital infrastructures have produced a new generation of art and media practitioners. Like the West, capitalist enterprises in Asia, Africa, and Latin America are facing new challenges and opportunities with informational networks. Like everywhere, such transformations have set in motion a sense of indetermination and flux, providing opportunities, shadow zones, and critical discourses.

This conference seeks to explore experience from the vantage point of these media-informational transformations. We will be debating art practice, cultural theory, media aesthetics, social theory, forensics, urbanism, and the landscape of the political. Time horizons, and its philosophies, are a major concern of the conference as we seek to displace the idea of the contemporary as (just) a 'present' without limits.

Conference Convenors:  
Ravi Sundaram, Ravi Vasudevan (Sarai, CSDS) + Raqs Media Collective (Monica Narula, Jeebesh Bagchi, and Shuddhabrata Sengupta)

Sarai-CSDS is a part of the Leverhulme International Network for Contemporary Studies (LINCS). This conference is supported by the Leverhulme Trust and the Goethe-Institut/Max Mueller Bhavan, New Delhi.

## PROGRAMME

### Day One :

14th December, Thursday, 2017  
@ Sarai-CSDS, 29 Rajpur Road, Delhi

#### Landscapes of the Digital

11:00 AM Tea

#### 11:30 AM

##### Introduction I

Ravi Sundaram with  
Leverhulme Network Partners

##### Introduction II

Conference Conveners

#### 12:00 Noon

##### The "Smart" Mandate: Infrastructure, Responsive Environments, and "Preemptive Hope"

Orit Halpern, Concordia  
University, Montreal  
Interlocutor: Ravi Sundaram,  
Sarai-CSDS, Delhi

1:00 PM Lunch

#### 02:00 PM

##### Video and Post-Cinema

Mochu, Artist, Chennai  
Pallavi Paul, Artist, Delhi  
Lantian Xie, Artist, Dubai  
Interlocutor: Monica Narula,  
Raqs Media Collective, Delhi

3:30 PM Tea

#### 4:00 PM

##### The Missing Pistol: Notes on Impossible Museological Objects in Palestine

Lara Khaldi, Curator, Jerusalem  
Interlocutor: Santhosh Sadanandan,  
School of Culture and Creative  
Expressions, Ambedkar University

#### 5:00 PM

##### AI is Full of Love: Human-Machine Libidinal Transference & the Automation of Love

Mohammad Salemy, The  
New Centre for Research &  
Practice, New York  
Interlocutor: Shuddhabrata Sengupta,  
Raqs Media Collective, Delhi

6:00 PM Tea

#### 6:30 PM

##### Liquid Traces: The Left-to-Die Boat Case, 17 min, 2014 Directed by Charles Heller and Lorenzo Pezzani

### Day Two :

15th December, Friday, 2017  
@ Goethe-Institut/Max Mueller  
Bhavan, Kasturba Gandhi Marg,  
New Delhi

#### Unstable Archives

10:00 AM Tea

#### 10:30 AM

##### Welcome

Leonhard Emmerling,  
Goethe-Institut/Max Mueller  
Bhavan, New Delhi

##### Introduction

Conference Conveners

#### 11:00 AM

##### Technics and Forensics

Susan Schuppli, Centre for  
Research Architecture, Goldsmiths,  
University of London  
Lorenzo Pezzani, Goldsmiths,  
University of London  
Interlocutor: Ravi Vasudevan,  
Sarai-CSDS, Delhi

#### 12:30 PM

##### After 'Jukti, Takko ar Gappo': Across the Burning Track

Moinak Biswas, Department of Film  
Studies, Jadavpur University  
Interlocutor: Ashish Rajadhyaksha,  
Centre for the Study of Culture and  
Society, Bangalore

1:30 PM Lunch

#### 2:30 PM

##### Performance Speech Acts for Two Screenings

Lantian Xie, Artist, Dubai  
Interruption: Raqs Media  
Collective, Delhi

3:30 PM Tea

#### 4:00 PM

##### The Archive Object

Michelle Wong, Researcher and  
Curator, Asia Art Archive,  
Hong Kong  
Venkat Srinivasan, Archivist and  
Scientist, National Centre for  
Biological Sciences, Bangalore  
Sabih Ahmed, Archivist and  
Curator, Delhi  
Interlocutor: Jeebesh Bagchi, Raqs  
Media Collective, Delhi

#### 5:30 PM

##### Five Gardens

Introduction to the pavilion by Samir  
Raut, Architect, Mumbai  
Interlocutor: Rupali Gupte, School of  
Environment and Architecture, Mumbai

Sound Work in the pavilion by Ish S  
and DiFFuSed Beats

#### 6:30 PM

##### Public Lecture Medium Design

Keller Easterling, School of  
Architecture, Yale University

### Day Three :

16th December, Saturday, 2017  
@ Goethe-Institut/Max Mueller  
Bhavan, Kasturba Gandhi Marg,  
New Delhi

#### Aesthetics and Politics

10:15 AM Tea

#### 10:45 AM

##### Introduction

Conference Conveners

#### 11:00 AM

##### Spectre of the Political

Ravi Vasudevan, Sarai-CSDS, Delhi  
Prathama Banerjee, Centre for the  
Study of Developing Societies, Delhi  
Santhosh Sadanandan, School of  
Culture and Creative Expressions,  
Ambedkar University  
Interlocutor: Shohini Ghosh, AJK  
Mass Communication Research  
Centre, Jamia Millia Islamia

1:00 PM Lunch

#### 2:00 PM

##### Money, Media, Space

Aarti Sethi, Watson Institute,  
Brown University  
Prasad Shetty, School of Environment  
and Architecture, Mumbai  
Liu Tian, Curator, China Academy  
of Art, Hangzhou  
Interlocutor: Sumandro  
Chattapadhyay, Centre for Internet  
and Society, Bangalore

4:00 PM Tea

#### 4:30 PM

##### Cinema as a Migratory Form

May Adadol Ingawanij, University of  
Westminster, London  
Ashish Rajadhyaksha, Centre for the  
Study of Culture and Society, Bangalore  
Interlocutor: Ranjani Mazumdar,  
School of Arts and Aesthetics,  
Jawaharlal Nehru University

Closing Note: Conference  
Conveners

#### 6:30 PM

##### Two Screen, The Return of Tipoo's Tiger

Raqs Media Collective, Delhi

7:00 PM Tea

#### 7:30 - 9:00 PM

##### A Listening Experience Time Horizons and Sonic Worlds

Berno Odo Polzer, Berliner  
Festspiele-MaerZmusik (Festival for  
Time Issues), Berlin  
Introduced by Leonhard Emmerling,  
Goethe-Institut/Max Mueller  
Bhavan, New Delhi

Sarai is a program of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), Delhi. Sarai was initiated by Ravi Sundaram, Ravi Vasudevan, Monica Narula, Jeebesh Bagchi, and Shuddhabrata Sengupta in 2000.

Raqs Media Collective is a contemporary arts and curatorial practice based in Delhi.

The Leverhulme International Network for Contemporary Studies (LINCS) includes the University of Quebec at Montreal, Glasgow School of Art, University of Paris 8, Sarai-CSDS and University of St Andrews.

For queries, write to us at: contemporaryconference2017@gmail.com

Public Transport Metro Lines:  
Sarai-CSDS: Civil Lines  
Goethe Institut/Max Mueller Bhavan: Barakhamba Road