DEEP TIME LAB / CURRENT INQUIRY

ESTUARY

DTL 501 - BODIES OF WATER
Artist-Led Study / Field Seminar / Studio Practicum
Fifth House / Libra / Venus Time Lord

Working Framework

Estuary is an artist-led research and studio practice unfolding across a year. Situated along Nishisakawick Creek and the Delaware watershed, it follows water as ecosystem, medium, body, livelihood, boundary, archive, and keeper of time.

The work moves between shoreline observation, reading, mapping, material experiment, sound, ritual, the personal web, and the body. Knowledge takes form in objects, images, recordings, writing, performances, and pages within Deep Time Lab.

Water, time, technology, gender, domestic space, and artistic practice remain in contact here. The work gathers through sustained encounter and carries its questions forward as it goes.

THE INQUIRY

Where Waters Meet

Estuary attends to places where waters meet and alter one another: creek and river, freshwater and saltwater, body and weather, household and network, myth and material fact, inherited time and lived time.

Deep Time appears through sediment, tides, erosion, animal life cycles, blood, lunar rhythm, geological scale, and the long accumulation of handmade work. Cyberfeminism appears through the body's relationship to technology, domestic space, labor, illness, reproduction, access, publishing, and self-authored worlds. The Internet Bedroom is a living interface for collecting, linking, learning, transmitting, and making a world from available materials.

Ritual theater carries research into action. A gesture, score, costume, spoken text, or performed encounter can hold knowledge differently from an essay or map. Art practice becomes an expression of Deep Time when the work bears the duration, pressure, repetition, and accumulated relations that made it.

GOVERNING RULE

> *New knowledge gets priority over symbolic confirmation.*

What water, materials, animals, archives, and encounters reveal may complicate or refuse the ideas that first brought the work into being.

QUESTIONS CARRIED INTO THE WORK

Open Questions

- How does a watershed become perceptible through the body?
- What does water know about boundary, permeability, contamination, care, and relation?
- How do tides, moon cycles, menstruation, and planetary movement create forms of time that can be felt as well as measured?
- What kinds of knowledge live in bedrooms, kitchens, message boards, personal websites, field notebooks, and handmade archives?
- How can ritual theater make research experiential, collective, and strange?
- What forms can emerge when ecological study, mythic study, cyberfeminist thought, and material practice remain in conversation?

WAYS OF WORKING

Methods

Field Study	Walking the creek and river, visiting bays and shorelines, observing weather and tide, recording sound, gathering permitted material, and learning the ecology of the watershed.
Research / Close Reading	Reading scientific, historical, mythological, astrological, feminist, and vernacular sources. Following citations, images, contradictions, and returning questions.
Material Experiment	Working with fiber, netting, mesh, knotting, weaving, twining, plaiting, paper pulp, slurry, deposition, joining, permeability, photographic process, drawing, and found material.
Internet Bedroom	Building Deep Time Lab as an accumulating personal web for research, image, correspondence, reference, play, memory, and worldbuilding.
Ritual Theater	Developing gestures, scores, scripts, installations, recordings, adornments, and participatory situations that give research a body and duration.
Blood Time / Return	Attending to menstruation, illness, sensation, lunar rhythm, rest, repetition, and the body’s record of passage. Revisiting sites, materials, questions, and earlier work.

PRACTICES / TRACES / REMAINS

Practice Archive

Field Notebook / Observatory

A record of encounters, conditions, drawings, questions, observations, and changing vocabulary. It can hold tide, weather, body, place, beings present, and the question produced by an encounter.

Material Structures Lab

A growing body of samples in netting, mesh, weave, twining, plaiting, paper pulp, slurry, deposition, joining, permeability, hybrid structures, and failure.

Internet Bedroom / Site Accumulation

The changing Deep Time Lab / Estuary website: pages, links, scans, graphics, fragments, diaries, source files, and structures produced while inhabiting the inquiry online.

FORMS OF EVIDENCE

The work may leave behind field notebooks and observatory pages; watershed and ocean maps; sound recordings and listening notes; shoreline collections and species records; reading and media commonplace books; fiber studies and material structures; paper experiments and deposited forms; drawings, photographs, cyanotypes, and image archives; ritual scores, scripts, costumes, and performance documentation; Internet Bedroom pages and site accumulations; studio-body observations; focused research records; finished works, installations, and field reports.

> *A small sample that teaches one structural behavior is sufficient evidence of study.*

WHAT THE WORK DEVELOPS

Estuary develops:

1. A working literacy of estuarine ecology: tides, freshwater flow, salinity, sediment, habitat, food webs, erosion, deposition, and rates of change.
2. A more specific way of reading local waterways and their shifting conditions.
3. A continually revised understanding of the relation among Nishisakawick Creek, the Delaware River, the Delaware Estuary, Delaware Bay, the Atlantic, and the world ocean.
4. Species knowledge that keeps symbolic thinking accountable to the lives of blue crabs and Atlantic horseshoe crabs.
5. A material vocabulary of netting, mesh, weaving, twining, plaiting, pulp, slurry, deposition, joining, permeability, and failure.
6. An ocean-centered cartographic orientation, including sustained attention to the Spilhaus projection.

WHAT THE WORK DEVELOPS / CONTINUED

7. A working constellation of hydrofeminism, trans-corporeality, blue humanities, oceanic media, geological time, intersectional cyberfeminism, and Internet Bedroom culture.
8. A source-based vocabulary for Libra, Aphrodite/Venus, Cancer/Karkinos, and related astrological traditions.
9. A deeper understanding of early-2000s girlhood, bedroom culture, and personal-web publishing as sites of cultural production, self-making, collecting, linking, and worldbuilding.
10. Deep Time Lab as an artistic medium: a place where research can gather publicly over time.
11. A practice of holding scientific, cartographic, vernacular, mythological, bodily, digital, and artistic knowledge in relation without flattening their differences.
12. A repertoire of ritual-theater forms that carry research through body, space, image, sound, and encounter.
13. Work that bears the duration, materials, observations, questions, and relations of Estuary.

A WORKING RHYTHM

Field encounter → read / watch → make → synthesize → return.

The sequence can begin anywhere. A field encounter may make a text necessary; a material experiment may create the next question; a media reference may alter what is noticed at the shoreline. The practice follows what the research asks for.

FIELD NOTE

Record the conditions that matter to an encounter: place; tide or lunar condition when relevant; weather and recent weather; water appearance and movement; shoreline condition; what is moving, accumulating, or deposited; beings present; human intervention; one observation; one question. Measurements and clock time are welcome when they answer an actual question.

COMPANIONS

Reading / Watching / Listening

Core Reading

- Astrida Neimanis, *Bodies of Water*
- Rachel Moss, *The Internet Is Our Bedroom*
- Kenneth W. Able, *Beneath the Surface*
- Melody Jue, *Wild Blue Media*
- Marcia Bjornerud, *Timefulness*

Supplemental Reading

- Rachel Moss, *In the Girls' Room: Essays on Bedroom Culture from the 90s to Now*
- *Thinking with Water*; Stacy Alaimo, *Exposed*; Alexis Pauline Gumbs, *Undrowned*
- Rowan Jacobsen, *The Living Shore*; Rachel Carson, *The Edge of the Sea*; Robert Macfarlane, *Underland*
- *Saturation: An Elemental Politics*; *Estuarine Ecology*, third edition
- Hesiod, *Theogony*; *Homeric Hymns to Aphrodite*; Hyginus, *Astronomica*; Aratus, *Phaenomena*

Audio / Video

- *Water Makes Us Wet*; *River*; *Aquarela*; *Leviathan*; *Crash: A Tale of Two Species*
- Deep Look and PBS Terra: horseshoe crab spawning
- Spilhaus maps and ocean-centered visualizations
- Field recordings from the creek, river, bay, shore, bedroom, and studio

ESTUARY / STUDIO REFERENCE