

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

"The Arts, Culture, and Environment in a Technological Society: Revisiting Jacques Ellul"

Thomson House Ballroom, McGill University, Montreal

July 8-9, 2022

Thursday, July 7

Pre-conference symposium: "Music and Antifascism: Reflections on the Past and Possibilities in the Present"

8:30am – 5:30pm, Thomson House Ballroom, McGill University

7:30pm – IJES welcome reception at La Sala Rossa, 2nd floor restaurant
4848 Saint-Laurent Blvd.

9:00pm – Concert at La Sala Rossa (3rd floor venue)

Sunk Heaven (noise, NYC)

Nick Schofield (environmental electronic music artist, Montreal)

The Egyptian Cotton Arkestra (free improvisation, Montreal)

Friday, July 8

9:00am – Registration

Coffee, tea, croissants, and fruit provided
Thomson House Ballroom

9:30-9:45 - Opening remarks, Allyson Rogers & David Gill

9:45-10:45 –Session #1: **Art and Technology Beyond Idolatry**
Chair: Peter Fallon

"Does the end of Art signify the end of man? Beyond the technical system: the place of lyricism in our conception of water"

Justine McIntyre, HEC Montreal

"Beyond Technological Idolatry: Jacques Ellul and the Potential Iconoclastic Aesthetic of Wind Power"

Richard Kover, University of Alberta

10:45-11:00 – break

11:00-12:00 – Session #2: Culture in a Contested Media Landscape

Chair: David Lovekin

"Art as Propaganda in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict"

Ron Schleifer, Ariel University

"Jacques Ellul: Technology and the Problem of Art"

Peter Fallon, Roosevelt University

12:00-1:15 – Lunch provided on-site

1:15-2:45 – Keynote address

"Re-Imagining the Image and Refocusing the Word"

David Lovekin, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, Hastings College

2:45-3:00 – break

3:00-4:30 – Session #3: Artistic Practice Between Word and Image

Chair: Lisa Richmond

"La dimension éthérique du réseau par Anton Bequii"

Benoît Aquin, contemporary artist, Montreal

"The Word Made Image: Applying Ellul to Artistic Practice"

J. W. Wood, author

"The saddest songs are often the most beautiful': The Secret Centrality of the Poetic in the Sociology of Jacques Ellul"

Al Moritz, professor/poet, University of Toronto

6:30pm– Banquet dinner, Thomson House Ballroom

After-dinner program: **R. Bruce Elder** presents his experimental film *1857 Fool's Gold* (1981, 25 min.), drawing on Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year* and Pound's *Cantos*.

R. Bruce Elder is a filmmaker, critic. Retrospectives of his work have been presented by Anthology Film Archives (NY), the Art Gallery of Ontario, Cinéma-thèque Québécoise, Il Festival Senzatitolo (Trento), Images Festival (Toronto) and Paris' Festival des Cinémas Différents, EXIS (in Seoul, Korea), Circulo de Bellas Artes (Madrid) and Cineteca nacional de México. In announcing their "Tribute to R. Bruce Elder" Cinéma-thèque Ontario proclaimed: "R. Bruce Elder is not only one of Canada's foremost experimental filmmakers, he's one of

our greatest artists, thinkers, critics, and filmmakers, period." He was an early user of digital image processing techniques in filmmaking and was awarded a Council/NSERC New Media Initiatives grant, a Ryerson Research Chair, and grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada to apply machine learning to filmmaking. Other awards include the Governor General's Award in Media Arts, a Canadian Screen Award, Los Angeles Film Critics Award. In 2007, Elder was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. He has published many articles and books, including *Harmony & Dissent* (2008), which received the prestigious Robert Motherwell Book Prize from the Dedalus Foundation, was named a Choice Outstanding Academic Book and was shortlisted for the ASPP's Raymond Klibansky award (now the Canada Humanities Award).

Saturday, July 9

8:30am – Coffee, tea, croissants, and fruit provided

9:00-10:00 – Session #4: Musical Performance Between Tradition and Technology
Chair: Allyson Rogers

**"The Irish Traditional Session and Improvisational Musical Gatherings as
Opposition to Technique"**

Chad Elwell, independent researcher/musician, Chicago

"Technique and Unsustainable Aspects of Sacred Harp Singing Culture"
Virginia Landgraf, ATLA Religion Database

10:00-10:15 – break

10:15-11:15 – Session #5: The Ambivalence of Art in a Technological Society
Chair: Christian Roy

"Technique et désincarnation : Approches de l'esprit du technicisme"
Daniel Cérézuelle, independent researcher, Bordeaux
(paper will be read by Christian Roy)

**"Modern Art in Technological Society for the Toronto School
and the Bordeaux School: Probe or Drug?"**
Christian Roy, independent researcher, Montreal

11:15-12:45 – Lunch off-site

1:00-2:30– Session #6: Potentials and Prospects of Culture and Technology

Chair: Al Moritz

"Psychopedagogic Technique, the Art of Teaching, and the Fight for the Soul of the University"

Adam Stewart, Crandall University

"Where is the Fiction? Art's Audience in a World of Technique"

Mark Honegger, University of Louisiana

"One Must be Absolutely Hypermodern: Reflecting on Jacques Ellul, Teilhard de Chardin, Marshall McLuhan, Simone Weil, Anne Carson"

B. W. Powe, professor/poet, York University

2:30-2:45 - break

2:45-3:45 – Session #7: Institutional Space and Issues of Scale

Chair: Allyson Rogers

"Art, Architecture, and the Limits to Technology"

Almantas Samalavicius, Vilnius Gediminas Technical University

"E. F. Schumacher and Jacques Ellul on Economics and Technology"

Robert Leonard, Université du Québec à Montréal

3:45-4:00 - break

4:00-5:30 – Keynote address and closing remarks

"The Two Orders and the Appearance of the World"

Samir Younès, Professor of Architecture, University of Notre Dame

6:30pm - Dinner out downtown

Sunday, July 10

10:30am – Guided tour of the exhibition: "Feedback #6: Marshall McLuhan and the Arts"
(curator: Baruch Gottlieb, for West Den Haag contemporary art institute, The Hague)
Fonderie Darling, 745 Ottawa Street (near Old Montreal)

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

"Re-Imagining the Image and Refocusing the Word"

David Lovekin, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, Hastings College

In "Re-Imagining the Image and Re-Focusing the Word," I consider Ellul's claim that in the technological society symbols were no longer possible. I view this in relation to his notion of the humiliated word in its reduction to the image. I discuss the way in which technological consciousness produces a world of images as technical phenomena. These images do not function as images that allowed the unseen as the other side of the image. Thus, these images are humiliated along with words. The tension between the dimensions of the image and the word make the symbol possible. Fundamental to human experience is the tension between subject and object, spirit and body in symbolic production. Here, I bring in Ernst Cassirer's notion of the symbolic form, which is the work the spirit performs as it enters the material world. A view of an object benefits from a feeling of "symbolic pregnancy," a calling out for respect, attention, and a name. To deprive nature, culture, and those beings within those domains of such pregnancy is to commit symbolic suicide, a death perhaps not noticed by those adrift in the seas of images. I then show some of my photographs that attempt to reveal the presence of absence in the world around me and to challenge the reality before me.

David Lovekin is Professor of Philosophy Emeritus at Hastings College, Hastings, NE USA. He is the author of *Technique, Discourse, and Consciousness: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Jacques Ellul*, co-editor with Donald Phillip Verene of *Essays in Humanity and Technology*, co-editor with David Gill of *Political Illusion and Reality* (2018) and co-translator with Samir Younès of Jacques Ellul's *The Empire of Non-Sense*, a critique of modernist art. He has published numerous essays on Ellul and Giambattista Vico that deal with technology as a problem for the philosophy of culture in the spirit of Ernst Cassirer with the idea of technology as a symbolic form. He is contributing editor of *The Ellul Forum* and serves as a member of the International Jacques Ellul Society. Lovekin has been a recipient of five National Endowment for the Humanities Grants. His photography has been published in numerous books and periodicals; his most recent work appears on covers of the *Prairie Schooner*, the literary magazine of the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, and in the Modern Arts/Midwest, Midtown gallery in Omaha, Nebraska. He paints abstractions in acrylics and is currently doing ink painting in the sumi-e style.

"The Two Orders and the Appearance of the World"

Samir Younés, Professor of Architecture, University of Notre Dame

The visual arts have been deeply marked by the confluence of several phenomena that produced a crisis of long duration since the middle nineteenth century. Among these phenomena is a philosophy of history called historicism and incident concepts that were joined to it such as the association of teleology with progress, periodization and stylistic ruptures, the *zeitgeist(er)* and the *weltanschauung(en)*, and technological determinism. The merging of art theory with these philosophical concerns served to establish a cultural condition called artistic modernism which found its justification in the massive technological forces that stood outside the visual arts. Modernism was offered as the only form of modernity that is acceptable, indeed possible. It happened, we were told, as if by necessity. Although in *The Empire of Non-sense* J. Ellul engaged modernist art theory according to its own tenets, the essence of his argument explained that much in modernist art and the theories that justify it came from a technologically determined view of the world which was being brought to bear on the arts from the outside. Because the formidable technological processes and products are an empire of means, they plunged the arts into a crisis of long duration, as the protagonists of modernism came to consider the crisis itself as a necessary requirement for contemporary art. This cultural condition, although dominant, has been strongly criticized since the late 1970s, and solid reforms have been enacted —reforms that clarify the nature(s), the purpose(s), and the means of the visual arts as part of a poetic order that has been eclipsed by the technological one, but as all eclipses, this one is temporary.

Samir Younés is Professor of Architecture at the University of Notre Dame. His writings focus on architectural theory, aesthetics, and the intersecting areas of the philosophy of history and cultural philosophy. He was Director of Graduate Studies (1993-99) and Director of Rome Studies (1999-2009) at Notre Dame. Younés' books include: *The True, the Fictive and the Real*, *Quatremère de Quincy's Historical Dictionary of Architecture*; *The Imperfect City: On Architectural Judgment*; *The Intellectual Life of the Architect*. His most recent book, *Architectural Type and Character* was released in January of 2022. Younés' projects and essays on architecture, art, and aesthetics have appeared in *Architectural Design*, *The Journal of the Royal Institute of Philosophy*, *The Journal of Urban Design*, *Archi e Colonne International*, *Quadri e Sculture*, *Il Covile*, *American Arts Quarterly*, *The Bulletin of Science, Technology and Society*. Younés has lectured at many universities around the world including the École des Beaux-Arts, Paris; the Università degli Studi di Roma "La Sapienza"; the Università degli Studi di Bologna; the Universidad politécnica de Madrid; The Prince of Wales' Institute for Architecture, London; Yale University; Clemson University; the University of Miami; the University of Maryland.

CONFERENCE PRESENTERS

Aquin, Benoit. "La dimension éthérique du réseau par Anton Bequii"

For over three decades, Benoit Aquin has conducted photographic research on the modes of human existence and the tragic convergence of environmental and spiritual upheavals. At the turn of the century, he began a series of projects of a predominantly ecological nature. *La Chasse* (2002-2009) portrays the relationship between Quebec hunters and their environment; *Le Grand Nord* (2004) reveals the repercussions of climate change on the ancestral practices of the Inuit. *Le Dust Bowl chinois* (2006-2009), an investigation of anthropogenic desertification in northern China, was awarded the inaugural Prix Pictet in 2008. A monograph entitled *Far East Far West* (2009) closed the cycle. His attention then turned to the subject of agriculture and world hunger, as reflected in his documentary *Les Dépossédés* (dir. Mathieu Roy, 2016) and a series entitled *L'Agriculture au Québec, un photo-roman d'anticipation* (2015). His book *Mégantic* (2015) depicts the devastating shock waves that traversed the small Quebec community after the derailment of a train carrying crude oil. *La dimension éthérique du réseau par Anton Bequii* (2019) approaches the rise of the technological empire by means of a photo-literary fiction inspired by the theories of Jacques Ellul. Benoit Aquin is represented by Galerie Hugues Charbonneau (Montreal).

Cérézuelle, Daniel. "Technique et désincarnation : Approches de l'esprit du technicisme"

Daniel Cérézuelle was born in Bordeaux in 1948 to a family already long associated with Jacques Ellul and Bernard Charbonneau. He became close to both, serving as Charbonneau's literary executor. Cérézuelle studied philosophy and social sciences with Ellul at the University of Bordeaux, with Hans Jonas at the New School for Social Research in New York, and with Jean Brun at the University of Dijon, completing a PhD thesis on Technique as myth. He was founding secretary of the Société pour la Philosophie de la Technique, and in 1999, was invited by Carl Mitcham to the Colorado School of Mines as visiting professor. In 2017, he was also a visiting professor at Renmin University (Beijing). His current research deals with the philosophy of Technique on the one hand, and socialization through non-monetary economy on the other hand. He is the scientific director of Pades (Programme Autoproduction et développement social), whose mission is to spread actions that promote self-help and to integrate these in standard public policy. His two major books are being reissued this year by Éditions L'Échappée, i.e. *La Technique et la chair: Essais de philosophie de la technique* and *Nature et liberté : Introduction à la pensée de Bernard Charbonneau*.

Elwell, Chad. "The Irish Traditional Session and Improvisational Musical Gatherings as Opposition to Technique"

Chad Elwell worked as an engineer before receiving his master's degree in teaching. He has instructed students in math and physics, and currently teaches in a large suburban public secondary school. He spent six years as an instructor at an international school in Austria, and now lives in Chicago. A singer and multi-instrumentalist, he is particularly devoted to Irish and folk music, and can often be found performing and sharing music in pubs, bars, and on the street.

Fallon, Peter. "Jacques Ellul: Technology and the Problem of Art"

Peter K Fallon, Ph.D. is a Professor of Media Studies at Roosevelt University in Chicago. He received his Doctorate in Media Ecology from New York University in 1996. He is the author of two award-winning books, *Why the Irish Speak English* (Marshall McLuhan Award for Outstanding Book, 2007) and *The Metaphysics of Media* (Lewis Mumford Award for Outstanding Scholarship, 2010), and of a third book, *Cultural Defiance, Cultural Deviance*. He also contributed a chapter ("Propaganda as Psychic Violence") to the 2016 book *Jacques Ellul on Violence, Resistance, and War*. His fourth book, *Propaganda 2.1: Understanding Propaganda in the Digital Age* will be published in the Spring of 2022 by Cascade Press.

Honegger, Mark. "Where is the Fiction? Art's Audience in a World of Technique"

Mark Honegger is a linguistics professor and head of the Department of English at the University of Louisiana, Lafayette, where he also oversees the TESOL concentration. His current research interests focus on cross-cultural differences in semantics.

Kover, Richard. "Beyond Technological Idolatry: Jacques Ellul and the Potential Iconoclastic Aesthetic of Wind Power"

Richard Kover is an Assistant Lecturer at the University of Alberta in the departments of Philosophy and Psychology as well as in the Science, Technology and Society program. He is currently interested in the culture, psychology and aesthetics of energy systems and sustainable transitions.

Landgraf, Virginia. "Technique and Unsustainable Aspects of Sacred Harp Singing Culture"

Virginia W. Landgraf has been a Metadata Analyst at Atla since 2004. Her Ph.D. dissertation, at Princeton Theological Seminary under Max Stackhouse, was on Ellul's doctrine(s) of institutions, both on the theological and the sociological side. She has presented and published on various aspects of Ellul's work, including his interpretation of the Assyrian king Sennacherib in 2 Kings, a re-reading of the Ten Commandments based on his distinction between truth and reality, and how his doctrine of "dialogue with the sovereign" might be applied to Thai politics.

Leonard, Robert. "E. F. Schumacher and Jacques Ellul on Economics and Technology"

Robert Leonard is an intellectual historian based at the University of Quebec in Montreal (UQAM). A graduate of Trinity College Dublin, he holds a PhD from Duke University. His 2010 book, *Von Neumann, Morgenstern and the Creation of Game Theory* (Cambridge University Press) received the Spengler Prize of the History of Economics Society. In recent years, he has been working on an intellectual biography of renegade economist E. F. Schumacher, author of *Small is Beautiful* (1973). Related publications include "E. F. Schumacher and the Making of 'Buddhist Economics'" (*Journal of the History of Economic Thought*, 2019) and "Between the Hand-Loom and the Samson Stripper: Fritz Schumacher's Struggle for Intermediate Technology" (*Contemporary European History*, forthcoming).

McIntyre, Justine. "Does the end of Art signify the end of man? Beyond the technical system: the place of lyricism in our conception of water"

Justine McIntyre began her career as a classical pianist, receiving a gold medal in piano performance from the Conservatoire National Darius Milhaud (France). She holds a Bachelor of Music (Honours) in piano performance from McGill University and a certificate in Arts Management from the University of Washington. She served as a Montreal City Councillor from 2013 to 2017; during that time, she was also interim leader of Vrai Changement Montréal (2015-2021). Justine is currently completing a Master's degree in Management and sustainability from HEC-Montréal, where her work examines the tension between technical solutions and our lyrical relationship to the water resource. Justine McIntyre is a consultant with Espace Stratégies; she is also a political and current events commentator, and can be heard on CJAD-800 and on Radio-Canada ICI-Première.

Moritz, Albert F. "'The saddest songs are often the most beautiful': The Secret Centrality of the Poetic in the Sociology of Jacques Ellul"

Albert F. Moritz is the Blake C. Goldring Professor of the Arts and Society at the University of Toronto, Victoria College. He is the co-author, with Professor Theresa Moritz, of biographies of Emma Goldman and Stephen Leacock, and the author of studies of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century mass reproduction art and its convergence with picturesque art styles and theory. He is primarily a poet (A. F. Moritz). His poetry has been accorded the Guggenheim Fellowship, the Award in Literature of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Griffin Poetry Prize, the Ingram Merrill Fellowship, selection to the Princeton Series of Contemporary Poets, and other recognitions. A major retrospective volume, *The Sparrow: Selected Poems*, was published in 2018.

Powe, B. W. "One Must be Absolutely Hypermodern: Reflecting on Jacques Ellul, Teilhard de Chardin, Marshall McLuhan, Simone Weil, Anne Carson"

B.W. Powe is the author of over 14 books. These include works of poetry, fiction, non-fiction, philosophy. His primary works are *The Solitary Outlaw*, *The Unsaid Passing*, *These Shadows Remain*, *Marshall McLuhan and Northrop Frye: Apocalypse and Alchemy*, *Where Seas and Fables Meet*, and *The Charge in the Global Membrane*. His new work is called *Mysteria*. He has taught in the English and Humanities Departments at York University in Toronto for many years. He has taught in Spain at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya; his podcasts and online discussions have been popular. His work *The Charge* won the Marshall McLuhan Prize for best book in the field of Media Ecology in 2021. Recently he was nominated for the Media and Light Award through the Media Ecology Association in the United States. He lives with his family in Stouffville, Ontario, and in Cordoba, Andalusia.

Roy, Christian. "Modern Art in Technological Society for the Toronto School and the Bordeaux School: Probe or Drug?"

Christian Roy (PhD McGill 1993) is a cultural historian, a contemporary art critic, a film scholar, as well as a multilingual translator, e.g. of books by Carl Schmitt and Paul Tillich from German to French, and from French to English, of Jacques Ellul's posthumous *Theology and Technique* (forthcoming at Wipf & Stock) and of his friend Bernard Charbonneau's *The*

Green Light. A Self-Critique of the Ecological Movement (Bloomsbury, 2018). Since Ellul's mentor on the issue of technological society remains mostly unacknowledged even in the field of Media Ecology, Roy has undertaken to crowdfund (<https://www.patreon.com/christianroymedia>) his serialized English translation of Charbonneau's *La Société Médiatisée*, a timely work written in 1986 but only published in France in 2021. His research in intellectual history first identified Charbonneau and Ellul as the core of an overlooked Bordeaux School of technocritical thought, rooted in a Gascon variant of the French Personalist movement, of which he is a specialist. He has given online interviews on Ellul, Charbonneau and McLuhan on *The SymbolicWorld.com* and the *Hermitix* podcast. Since 2007, he co-leads film-based seminars on the anthropology of the contemporary world for Quebec psychologists. He is the author of *Traditional Festivals. A Multicultural Encyclopedia* (ABC-Clio, 2005). Website: roychristian.academia.edu.

Samalavičius, Almantas. "Art, Architecture, and the Limits to Technology"

Almantas Samalavičius holds a PhD in architectural history and theory and is a professor in the Department of Architectural Fundamentals, Theory and Art, Vilnius Gediminas Technical University, Lithuania. He is the author of more than ten books including *The Idea of a University and Academic Industry* (2002, in Lithuanian), *Ideas and Structures: Essays in Architectural History* (Wipf and Stock, 2011), *Lithuanian Architecture and Urbanism* (Cambridge Scholars, 2019), etc. He has edited more than a dozen of collections of essays and anthologies, including *Dedalus Book of Lithuanian Literature* (Dedalus, 2013), *Rethinking Modernism and the Built Environment* (Cambridge Scholars, 2017) and *Site, Symbol and Cultural Landscape* (Cambridge Scholars, 2022). He is an editor in chief of the *Journal of Architecture and Urbanism* and the Chicago-based *Lituanus Quarterly*. He has been a visiting professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago (US), Kyungpook National University (South Korea), Diponegoro University and Bandung Institute of Technology (Indonesia). In addition, he has served as president of PEN Lithuania and continues to sit on its board.

Schleifer, Ron. "Art as Propaganda in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict"

Dr. Ron Schleifer specializes in the connected disciplines of communications, history of propaganda, and the Middle East. He is a senior lecturer at the School of Communication Ariel University. He founded the Ariel Research Center for Defense and Communications (ARCDC) which deals with issues concerning the role of image in modern warfare and specifically in the Middle East. His articles deal with the manipulation of target audiences in current information wars. His recent book on *Psychological Warfare in the Arab-Israeli Conflict* was published at Palgrave Macmillan.

Stewart, Adam. "Psychopedagogic Technique, the Art of Teaching, and the Fight for the Soul of the University"

Adam Stewart holds a PhD from the University of Waterloo, and is an Associate Professor of Sociology at Crandall University, Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada, where he teaches mainly in the area of social justice. He is the author of *The New Canadian Pentecostals* published by Wilfrid Laurier University Press, as well as of several peer-reviewed articles

and book chapters in the areas of religious diversity, information science, and teaching and learning.

Wood, James W. "The Word Made Image: Applying Ellul to Artistic Practice"

J. W. Wood's work has appeared widely in magazines, newspapers, anthologies and journals worldwide, including *The Times Literary Supplement*, *Poetry Review*, *AGNI (US)*, *The South-West Review (US)* and *The Boston Review (US)*. The author of a novel and six books of poetry, in Spring 2022 Terror House Press will publish his satire, *By Any Other Name*. He has been nominated or shortlisted for many literary awards, including the T. S. Eliot Prize for Poetry, the Michael Marks Award from the British Library and the Bridport Prize. In 2018, he was the recipient of a career-level Award from the British Columbia Arts Council.

RESTAURANTS, CAFÉS AND PUBS

There are countless places to discover in Montreal for great local food, coffee, beer, and more. Here are a few suggestions near McGill and surrounding neighbourhoods.

DOWNTOWN MONTREAL

RESTAURANTS

Le Parmigiano (1015 Sherbrooke St. W., corner of Peel), basic Italian
Lola Rosa (545 Milton St.) vegan/vegetarian
Le Taj (2077 Stanley St.) Indian, good lunch buffet
Universel (2055 Peel St.) all-day breakfast, large variety
Biiru (1433 City Councillors St.) Japanese, small plates
Upstairs Jazz Bar & Grill (1254 Mackay St.), live jazz every night during the festival

CAFÉS

Café Castel (1015 Sherbrooke St. W., corner of Peel)
Pikolo Espresso Bar (3418b av. du Parc)
Humble Lion (904 Sherbrooke St. W)
La Finaca (1067 rue de Bleury)
Cafe Parvis (422 Mayor St.)

PUBS/BRASSERIES

Benelux (245 Sherbrooke St. W) microbrewery
Le Sainte-Elisabeth (1412 rue Sainte-Elisabeth) hidden garden terrasse, Latin Quarter
Bar George (1440 rue Drummond) modern British, upscale

L'Express (3927 rue Saint-Denis) classic French bistro

