



# CAPS

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR POSTCOLONIAL STUDIES

**Conference Program**  
**Reckonings and Re-Imaginings**  
**June 12 – 14, 2024**  
**McGill University, Tiohtià:ke/Montréal**

PLEASE NOTE: Due to the ongoing Association of McGill Professors of Law strike and the student encampment occurring at McGill University, CAPS will exceptionally be held at Concordia University, on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the the **Webster Library LB Building at Concordia University, at 1400 Maisonneuve Blvd W (link to map)**. Please find out more about CAPS' position on these events [on our website](#). Our departure from McGill is an act of solidarity with both the striking professors and protesting students. While we will hold no meetings on McGill's campus, we encourage members to participate as they wish alongside the students and professors by visiting picket lines or meeting with students at the encampment between panels.

We acknowledge that this year's CAPS Conference will be held on the unceded lands of the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation. Concordia University is on land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations. We acknowledge and thank the diverse Indigenous peoples whose presence marks this territory on which peoples of the world now gather, as well as the lands and waters sustaining our gathering.

Conference convened and organized by Jesse Arseneault (President, CAPS), J. Coplen Rose (Executive Officer, CAPS), Prabhjot Parmar (Treasurer, CAPS), Anindo Hazra (Early Career Representative, CAPS), and CAPS Executive members (Arshad Said Khan, Stephanie Oliver, Susan Rajendran, Jason Sandhar, Alexander Sarra-Davis, and Asma Sayed).

## Summary of Events

### Conference Schedule

#### **June 12 – 14: CAPS Parallel Sessions on 6<sup>th</sup> floor of Library Building of Concordia University (LB)**

- Session/Room A: LB 646
- Session/Room B: LB 649
- Session/Room C: LB 659.04

#### **June 12 Special Events**

- **9:00 – 10:00:** CAPS Welcome Hour (LB 646)
- **15:00 – 17:00:** Graduate Student Presentation Plenary Panel (LB 646)
- **17:00 – 19:00:** Opening Reception and Poetry Reading featuring Liz Howard and Gillian Sze – co-sponsored with hosts SpokenWeb and ACCUTE (Location TBA)

#### **June 13 Special Events**

- **15:30 – 17:00:** Keynote address with Caroline Levine, “Studying Literature in the Climate Crisis, or a Tale of Three Pipelines,” co-sponsored by ACCUTE, RhetCanada, and ESAC (Location TBA)

#### **June 14 Special Events**

- **15:00 – 17:30:** AGM and Book Launch (LB 646)

**9:00 – 10:00**

**CAPS Welcome Hour Social (LB 646)**

*10:00 – 10:30: Break (LB 646)*

**10:30 – 12:00**

**Session A (LB 646)**

**Power and Simulated Worlds**

- Nadège Paquette, “Troubling a *\*Sea of Tranquility\**”
- Qazi Mustabeen Noor (Queen's), “Revolutionary by Day, Huntress by Night: The Post/colonial Vampire Hunter in *Castlevania: Nocturne*”
- Kris Singh (KPU), “Chatbots, Tyrannies, and Nalo Hopkinson’s *Midnight Robber*”

**Session B (LB 649)**

**Critiques in Higher Education**

- (virtual) Maab Al-Rashdan (Waterloo), “Revealing Racism in Higher Education: A Counterstory of a Discriminating Diversity”
- Sabujkoli Bandopadhyay (Regina), “Postcolonial Ethics, and Sustainable Relationships in the Context of Canadian Higher Education”
- Susan Spearey, “From Sustaining Violence to Embodied Practices of Regeneration”

**Session C (LB 659.04)**

**Outbreaks and Aesthetics: Art in the Context of Illness**

- Azza Harras (RMC), “Decolonizing Disease Narratives: A Comparative Study of Anthropocentrism and Ecocentrism in Ebola Literature”
- Rūta Šlapkauskaitė (Vilnius), “Mother Hubbard Goes Viral: The Outbreak Narrative in Laura Jean McKay’s ‘The Animals in That Country’”
- Veronica Austen (St. Jerome's/Waterloo), “The Present and Presencing: Word/Image Relations in Olive Senior’s Pandemic Poems”

*12:00 – 13:00: Lunch Break*

**13:00 – 14:30**

**Session A (LB 646)**

**Migrations**

- Noor ul Ain (Brock), “Movement, Mobility & the Mother(land) in Moor”
- Jonathan Nash (Victoria), “Drawing Detention and Counter-Inscribing Migrant Invisibility in Tsing Chak’s *Undocumented: The Architecture of Migrant Detention*”
- Tyler Ball (Warwick), “The Extended Family: Filiation and Affiliation in Janika Oza’s *A History of Burning*”

**Session B (LB 649)****Revisiting and Revising the CanLit Canon**

- Glenn Deer (UBC), “‘Where Have All the Salmon Gone?’: Revisiting Daphne Marlatt and Robert Minden’s *Steveston*”
- Rachel Wong (York), “Sustaining Ruptures: Inalienable Rice and Decolonizing the CanLit Canon”
- Lindsay Diehl (Manitoba), “Field Notes on Creative-Critical Practice: Revisiting Chinese-Canadian Literature through my Grandmother's Stories”

**Session C (LB 659.04)****Botanical Relations**

- Maureen Moynagh (St. Francis Xavier), “Un/Natural Narration and Companion Species in a Conflict Zone: Elif Shafak’s *The Island of Missing Trees*”
- Helene Strauss (UFS), “Tumbleweed”

*14:30 – 15:00: Break (LB 646)*

<b>15:00 – 17:00</b>
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**Graduate Student Presentation Prize (LB 646)**

- Niru Raghavan (Alberta), “‘The Sound of Chains, Unlinking’: The Pleasures of Radicalisation in Kamila Shamsie’s *Home Fire*”
- Sydney Wildman (Queen's), “Ecological Actants and Anti-Colonial Agency in James De Mille’s *A Strange Manuscript Found in a Copper Cylinder* (1888)” (virtual)
- Jane Boyes (Dalhousie), “Imagining Temporal, Technological, and Representational Sovereignities in Skawennati’s Indigenous Futurisms” (virtual TBC)
- Linzey Corridon (McMaster), “‘When the guts of a nation spilled on us’: Vincentian Women’s Writing in Volcanic Times”

8:30 – 10:00

**Session A (LB 646)****Embodiment and Space**

- Chandrima Chakraborty (McMaster), “The spatialization of Difference in Thrity Umrigar’s ‘The World We Found’”
- Clara A.B. Joseph (Calgary), “The Gendered Religious Body as a Site of Postcolonial Development: The Case of Sr. Valsa John Malamel”
- Susan Rajendran (York), “Between the Sacred and the Profane: An Interplay in Modern Sinhala Drama”

**Session B (LB 649)****Generative Solidarities**

- Nabila Huq (Queen's), “Caught Between Post-colonial and Postcolonial, How Can We Work Towards a Sustainable Solidarity Between Muslim Diasporas and Indigenous Peoples in Canada?”
- Heather Smyth (Waterloo), “‘Get ready for the next world’: Collaborative Poetry, Futurity, Reworlding”
- Qazi Mustabeen Noor (Queen's), “‘Reaching brave in the skull hum of power’: Community Resilience in *Brother* by David Chariandy”

**Session C (LB 659.04)****Planetary Ecologies I**

- Heike Härting (UdeM), “Of Cars and Condoms: (Un)sustainability and Reproductive Planetary Health in Kim Thúy’s *Em* (2021)”
- Jill Planche (Brock and TMU), “Tracing the World in ‘Simultaneous Multiplicities’: Zakes Mda’s *The Whale Caller*”
- Amritha Anil Shiji Nair (Laurier), “A Memoir of Literary Ecology: Exploring the Infusion of Literature and Science in Madhur Anand’s ‘This Red Line Goes Straight to Your Heart’”

*10:00 – 10:30: Break (LB 646)*

10:30 – 12:00

**Session A****CAPS Now: Defining, Locating, Doing Postcolonial Studies in 2024 (LB 646)**

In light of our association’s recent name change—from the Canadian Association of Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (CACLALS) to the Canadian Association for Postcolonial Studies (CAPS)—this session asks how our members engage with debates about the field right now (some examples might be the status of humanism and Enlightenment reasoning after postcolonial studies’ ecocritical, animal, and anti-humanist turns; how form/aesthetics

figure into the political/social imperatives of postcolonial studies; or ongoing controversies about "world literature" as a genre in the literary marketplace). At the same time, we ask how CAPS's embrace of approaches beyond the strictly "postcolonial" (i.e. decolonial; anti-colonial; Indigenous studies; Black studies; diaspora studies) and the strictly "literary" (i.e. film; visual arts; geography; ecocriticism; cultural, area, transoceanic, and other "studies") raises pressing questions about how we might navigate the resonances and tensions between the diverse fields and approaches that CAPS engages with with.

We envision this session as a successor to "The Future of the Association," a 2022 discussion led by John C. Ball, Susie O'Brien, and Jason Sandhar. Held before the CACLALS AGM in which our membership ratified the name change to CAPS, "The Future of the Association" offered some reflections about what the shift from "Commonwealth" literatures and languages to "postcolonial" studies might signal for our membership moving forward. Bearing in mind this year's conference theme, "sustainability and shared futures," we are especially interested in how CAPS's engagement with interdisciplinarity speaks to the future of postcolonial studies and the association amidst the uncertainty and unsustainability of our economic, geopolitical, and ecological crises.

**12:00 – 13:00: Lunch Break**

**13:30 – 15:00**

### **Session A (LB 646)**

**Member-Organized Storytelling Panel, "Autoethnography and Memoir: Decolonial Narratives of Refuge and Belonging"**

- Dr. Jumoke Verissimo, TMU
- Dr. Jennifer Meness, TMU
- Dr. Juliane Okot Bitek, QUEENS
- Dr. Ashok Mathur, OCAD
- Dr. David Chariandy, SFU (TBC)
- Dr. Darcy Ballantyne, TMU

### **Session B (LB 649)**

**Feminist Writing Amid Times of Crisis**

- Shamika Shabnam (McMaster), "'The Bloodied Pond': Women's Testimonies of Environmental Risks and Wartime Atrocities During the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War"
- Linzey Corridon (McMaster), "'When the guts of a nation spilled on us': Vincentian Women's Writing in Volcanic Times"
- (virtual) Ifeoluwa Adeniyi (Winnipeg), "The Politics of Death in Nalo Hopkinson's *Brown Girl in the Ring*"

**Session C (LB 659.04) – TIME CHANGE: 14:00 – 15:00**

*Joint Panel with Rhetorical Society for the Study of Rhetoric*  
**Digital Visual Rhetorics of Feminist Pleasure**

- Anna McWebb (Waterloo) and Rency Luan (Waterloo), “Are We the Bimbos From Hell?”
- Shana MacDonald (Waterloo), “Pleasure Activism of Joyscrolling”
- Brianna Wiens (Waterloo), “The Siren Song of Feminist Rhetorical Refusal”

*15:00 – 15:30: Break (LB 646)*

**15:30 – 17:00**

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Caroline Levine, “Studying Literature in the Climate Crisis, or a Tale of Three Pipelines” (Location TBD)**

Co-sponsored by ACCUTE, RhetCanada, and ESAC

8:30 – 10:00

**Session A (LB 646)**

**Aesthetics and Activisms**

- Raphaela Pavlakos (McMaster), “Anishinaabe Activism and Artistic Potentialities: Unpacking Artistic Possibilities of Resistance in Rebecca Belmore’s Work”
- Tamara El-Hoss (Brock), “Drawing Protest: This is About Land”
- Gideon Umezurike (Saskatchewan), “Postcolonial Transilience and the Aesthetic Ambivalence of Hegemonic Shift in Ali’s *Twilight in Delhi* and Malgonka’s *A Bend in the Ganges*”

**Session B (LB 649)**

**Planetary Ecologies II**

- J. Coplen Rose (Toronto), “Aquatic Imaginaries, Transatlantic Trade: Reflections on Apartheid-Era Gold Mining in Xolisa Ngubelanga’s *Pieces of an African Drum*”
- Ruchini Abayakoon (McMaster), “Maanikkawatha: Unveiling the Colonial Legacy of Slow Grief through Postcolonial Sri Lankan Literature”
- Tathagata Som (Calgary), “‘Their Time Will Come’: Adivasi Resistance and the Future of Capitalist Modernity in Mahasweta Devi’s ‘Little Ones’”

**Session C (LB 659.04)**

*10:00 – 10:30: Break (refreshments provided)*

**10:30 – 12:00**

**Session A (LB 646)**

**Creative Presentations**

- Ruchini Abayakoon (McMaster), “*Api Yamu, Neda?: A Reading of 5 Poems*”
- Clara A.B. Joseph (Calgary), “Kevin, Son of Thomas”
- Haley Down (Waterloo), “W(ill)derness: Imagining Chronic Eco-poetics”

**Session B (LB 649)**

**Queer Postcolonialisms**

- Amer Al-Amry (Waterloo), “Problematizing Digital Queer Culture Through a Postcolonial Lens”
- Anindo Hazra (York), “Taking In By Breaking Out: Bhupen Khakhar’s *Plenitude*”

**Session C (LB 659.04) – TIME CHANGE: 11:15-12:45**

*Joint Panel with ACCUTE and Canadian Society of Renaissance Studies (CSRS)*

**Global Adaptations of Shakespeare**

Chairs: Alexandra Lukawski, Western; Alice Hinchliffe, Guelph; Mark Kaethler, Medicine Hat



- Abhimanyu Acharya, Western – Shakespeare and the Supernatural in Colonial South Asia
- Waed Hasan, Guelph – Private Romeo: Shakespearean Adaptation and the Discourse on 2SLGBTQIA+ Rights
- Katrina Vogan, York – “I speak to thee plain soldier”: *Henry V* and the Global Study Guide
- Matthew Rooney, Western – East of the Blasted Heath: The Post-Atomic Landscape of Kurosawa’s *Ran*

### 12:00 – 13:00: Lunch Break

### 13:30 – 15:00:

#### **Reckoning, Repairing, Reworlding Research Collective Workshop**

#### **Beyond the toxic university: towards connection, kinship, and care**

This workshop builds on work done over the past three years by the ‘Reckoning, Repairing, Reworlding Research Collective’ to “divest from unsustainable worlds and cultivate others,” as it is stated in the CAPS conference call. This iteration of our collaborative inquiry invites CAPS attendees to imagine forms of connection, kinship and care beyond the atomising futurity of the colonial university and its collusion with genocidal, ecocidal regimes of extraction. We are specifically interested in dismantling the nexus of the toxic university and the various forms of toxicity that saturate material relations under racial capitalism. As a collective that came together in part to strategize collaborative praxis beyond the distracted competitiveness of neoliberal self-improvement, unsustainable performance metrics, academic stardom, the individualisation of institutional dysfunction, and the interpersonal cruelties to which these give rise in our everyday working lives, we have from the outset been invested in building infrastructures of care at once interpersonal and collective. This panel responds in part to a growing call by many feminist, anti-racist, queer, decolonial, and indigenous writer-activists to build solidarities that outstrip the attention economy’s algorithmic fuelling of toxic divides (including adrienne maree brown, Ejeris Dixon, Alexis Pauline Gumbs, Naomi Klein, Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, Max Liboiron, Kai Cheng Thom). At a time when large-scale coalitional action is needed to build sustainable planetary futures, we invite attendees to consider ways of undoing the “de-collectivizing, de-mobilizing” forms of purism (Alexis Shotwell) that run the gamut of experience under corporate consumer capitalism, from toxic academia to digital mob cultures to health and wellness industries. We take the humility-building work of refusal to emerge from transformative justice movements across a range of sites as catalyst for investing in the micro- and macro-ecologies of interdependence upon which our survival depends.

### 15:00 – 17:00

#### **CAPS AGM and Book Launch**