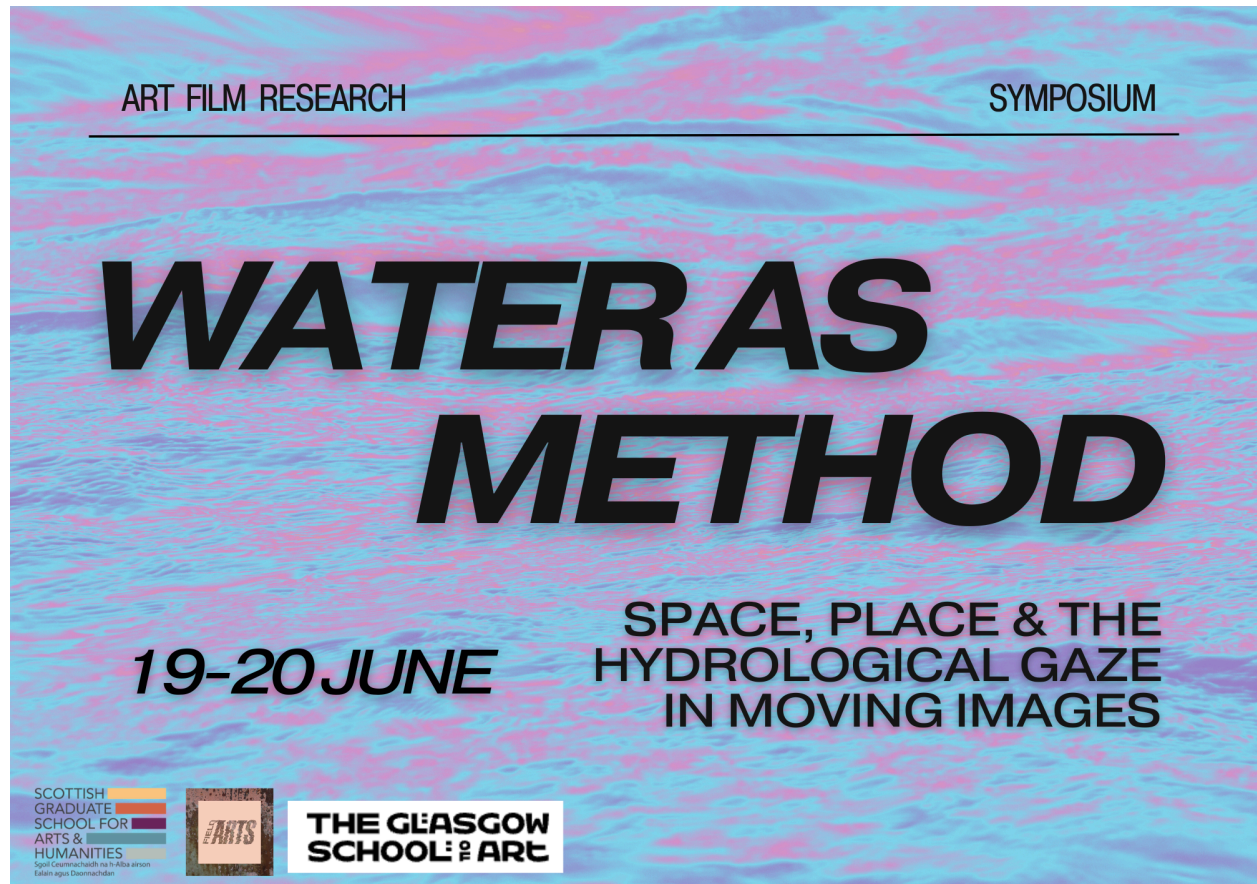


Water as Method

Space, Place & the Hydrological Gaze in Moving Images

19 & 20 June, 2025

<https://waterasmethod.cargo.site/>



Water as Method: Space, Place & the Hydrological Gaze in Moving Images is a two-day symposium exploring the poetics and politics of water in contemporary artist moving image (AMI) practice and methods. The symposium reflects on innovative approaches emerging in AMI, that respond to intersecting planetary crises of climate catastrophe and geopolitical conflict through the lens of water. Hosted by the Glasgow School of Art's (GSA) School of Fine Art and organised by curator and researcher Kelly Rapple, in collaboration with FieldARTS, the research programme of the Infrastructure Humanities Group (University of Glasgow), the symposium will take place across 19 and 20 June, 2025 at GSA's Reid Building.

Situated in Glasgow's hydrocolonial landscape—shaped by flows of imperialism, climate extraction, militarism, and urban dispossession—the programme examines how hydrocentric approaches can cultivate new solidarities of watery connectivity and wet resilience. Through two days of film screenings, workshops and interdisciplinary dialogue, participants will examine hydropoetics and artistic hydro-imaginaries in moving image to reframe and reimagine entrenched narratives of place, memory, and belonging.

Context:

Bringing together artists and scholars working with hydrocritical practices in the moving image, this symposium extends ongoing research into how *hydropoetics* (Ryan, 2021) offers new methodological and epistemological frameworks for researching place. The presence of water in both urban landscapes and film operates as a material and poetic carrier of memory and history, capable of holding multiple and overlapping narratives and subjectivities. Urban waterways, river basins, coastal zones, port areas, and hydrological infrastructures reveal situated material, historical, cultural, and political conditions of the urban, demanding new creative and critical strategies of situated fieldwork.

Emerging dialogues in arts and humanities research—foregrounding *geologic* (Litvintseva, 2022), *topological* (Mansfield, 2016; Costantin, 2021), *infrastructural* (Davies, 2024), *tidalectic* (Brathwaite, 1994; DeLoughrey, 2020; Hessler, 2020), and *oceanic* (Syperrek & Wade, 2020) approaches—have increasingly shaped contemporary artistic practices. These practices often draw on postcolonial philosophy, decolonial feminist imaginaries, and ecocritical, hydrofeminist methods emerging from the *blue humanities* (Hofmeyr & Lavery, 2022). This is reflected in a burgeoning field of AMI that deploys hydropoetics to interrogate urban coastlines, canals, and riverways. Such works frequently engage the archive to narrate submerged maritime histories of migration, extraction, and diaspora—revealing speculative watery archives and unseen infrastructures of climate colonialism embedded in urban waterscapes.

Water in urban environments produces spatial and temporal states of permeability, spectrality, stagnation, and decay, enabling reflections on the presence of multiple pasts and layered histories. Moving image representations of watery poetics in urban landscapes often enact forms of *multidirectional memory* (Rothberg, 2009) and transnational place-memory, illuminating how traumatic legacies of colonialism, conflict, and displacement continue to structure the present.

Considering water as an *affective infrastructure* (Bosworth, 2023) in moving image practice opens further questions around how hydropoetics represent, mediate, or narrativise affective relationships to water infrastructures—and how these shape processes of remembrance, memorialisation, and place-memory (Knox, 2017; Bosworth, 2023). As a method, hydropoetics may also disrupt the visual regimes and epistemologies of colonial modernity, subverting the logics of legibility and photographic representation that structure dominant Western traditions of history-telling (Quijano, 2000; Wynter, 2003; Gaztambide-Fernández, 2014).

Symposium Programme:

Water as Method: Space, Place & the Hydrological Gaze in Moving Images will unfold over two days, combining academic dialogue, artistic presentation, fieldwork practices, and film screenings. Day One (hosted at GSA's Reid Auditorium) will open with research panels on 'Liquid Landscapes of Memory', featuring presentations on spectral landscapes and post-conflict film, convened by post-conflict film scholar Struan Gray (Falmouth University). Organiser Kelly Rappleye (GSA, PhD) will present on hydropoetics in Scottish moving image. The afternoon will take us to the Clyde & Forth canals with two participatory workshops,

including a canal sounding workshop by Moira Salt, reflecting on diasporic canal mythologies and her archival film *The Dark Mirror* (2025) commissioned by Hippfest silent film festival. Maria Howard (GSA, PhD) will lead a creative site-writing workshop considering cyclical canal ecologies. **Day Two** (in collaboration with FieldARTS, University of Glasgow) will centre on practice-led and work-in-progress contributions. The day will open with *The Submerged Image*, a joint presentation by Ifor Duncan (Goldsmiths) and Sonia Levy (RCA), examining submerged perspectives in moving image. The symposium concludes with *River as Method*, an evening event screening works by Duncan, Levy, and Hope Strickland, crossing different riverine geographies.

Organisers:

[Kelly Rapple](#) (School of Fine Art, Glasgow School of Art)

[Struan Gray](#) (Senior Lecturer, Falmouth University)

[FieldARTS](#) research residency, Infrastructure Humanities Group (University of Glasgow);

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