Presented by

EcoLit Research Project (2024-2026)

Prof. Dr. Roman Bartosch, Prof. Dr. Christian Rolle,
Dr. Linus Eusterbrock, Sara Walther &
Tanya Gautam

Funded by

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UNIVERSITÄT ZU KÖLN · mesh · Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend · EcoLit

Wondrous Relations

MONDAY, 7.09

	THEATER	GARDEN	FOYER
11			
12			
13			REGISTRATION
14	ECOLIT WELCOME MARTIN ULLRICH UTE HÖRNER *Moderated by: Roman Bartosch*		
15			BREAK
16	GRAHAM HARVEY ELENA LANDINEZ *Moderated by: Tanya Gautam*		
17			
18			BREAK
19	ECOLIT ZINE LAUNCH w/ Kirk Junker & Kate Rigby		
20	PERFORMANCES BY David Biespiel Moonlit Brooks & Moses Yoofee Alice Boyd Zainab Lax, Joel Joao, Faira, Wolfgang Pérez & workshop participants		
21			
22			

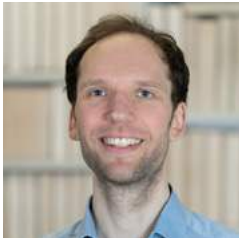
TALK DISCUSSION PERFORMANCE

Food and drinks available onsite

EcoLit Welcome Address 14:00 - 14:15

Prof. Dr. Roman Bartosch

Prof. Dr. Christian Rolle



Dr. Linus Eusterbrock

Sara Walther

Tanya Gautam

Martin Ullrich

Professor of Interdisciplinary Music Research

Nuremberg, Germany

Animal Voices: More-Than-Human Vocalizations in Interspecies Music and Sound Art

14:15 - 14:45

Animals have voices. This seems to be a simple biological fact, but becomes more complicated from the perspective of human-animal studies, implying phenomenological, aesthetic and political consequences. The vocalizations of non-human animals are emanations of their subjectivity and at the same time, animal song is the carrier of other-than-human aesthetic production and experience. Moreover, having a voice stands for political agency — those who have no voice are in constant danger of objectification.

This presentation analyzes practices of interspecies musicking in the Anthropocene and traces back its historical origins. I understand such musical encounters between humans and other animals as sounding examples of what Rosi Braidotti has called medianaturecultures. Sound art that involves animal voices and multispecies music performances start out from different artistic disciplines, but meet in more-than-human soundscapes that counter anthropocentrism with listening and singing.

Ute Hörner

Professor of Multispecies Storytelling

Cologne, Germany

Songs for More-than-Humans: The Practice of Interspecies Song Writing

15:00 - 15:45

Millions of years before humans entered the world's stage, birds were already singing. Song is perhaps the oldest form of communication across species boundaries; the morning concert of birds presumably touched not only other birds, but also more-than-avian beings — such as insects, trees, the wind, and, once we came along, us. Singing together is reciprocal: one gives an impulse, another responds. In the now almost-forgotten Corona years, we began improvising together at the kitchen table with our companions Clara, Karl, Theo, Giselle and Casper — making "Hausmusik". In this, observations, joy, mishaps and situational comedy, expressed in human language, resonate with their avian voices. In this talk, I speak about how songs develop across species boundaries. Starting from our artistic practice, I move on to other interspecies practices, such as those of the Sámi, who sing for their collaborators, the mosquitoes — songs so old they might have come from the mosquitoes themselves.

Sep
7
Theater

Graham Harvey

Emeritus Professor of Religious Studies

The Open University, UK

Restoring Good Relations with Our Wondrous Kin

16:00 - 16:45

Our other-than-human kin are waiting for us to return towards Earth, our earthiness and our multi-species relationships. Too much of our contemporary culture ("Modernity", "late capitalism" or "most-colonialism") is divisive and destructive. It is a human separatist project. But we are not aliens. We are wonderfully relational beings who are only alive thanks to animals, plants, fungi, bacteria, sun, moon, dirt and other relations (including other humans).

In recent decades there has been a rethinking about animism. A previously derogatory term (accusing people of believing foolish things) has been reclaimed as a celebration of kinship between all that exists. This presentation draws on both recent scholarship and Indigenous ways of knowing that emphasize living and thinking with "all our relations." It will encourage reflection and re-acting towards Earth as a vibrant community which is ready for us to hear the voices, value the creativity and join the festivities and conversations of the wider-than-human world.

Elena Landinez

Visual artist

Salvador, Bahia, Brazil

Drawing More-Than-Human Relations for Rights of Nature

16:45 - 17:30

What becomes possible when artists, lawyers, scientists, Indigenous knowledge holders, storytellers and more-than-human beings come together in conversation? As an artist fellow with the MOTH (More-Than-Human Life) Project, I have been part of conversations where legal frameworks meet the agency of rivers and forests, where ecology listens alongside story and poetic imagination and where Indigenous worldviews reconfigure what it means to relate, to understand and to be held accountable.

In this talk, I trace how these encounters, especially those shaped by the Rights of Nature movement, have transformed my creative practice. Through selected examples, I will share how paying attention to the voices of rivers, forests, animals and elemental forces has opened my work toward new forms of listening, storytelling and artistic response.

Sep 7
Theater

Wondrous Relations Zine Launch

Opening words by **19:00**

Kirk Junker

Chair for US American Law,
Vice Rector for Sustainability,
University of Cologne

Kate Rigby

Alexander von Humboldt
Professor of Environmental
Humanities, MESH Director

Evening Performances

David Biespiel **19:15**
poetry reading

19:45

Moonlit Brooks
spoken word poetry

Moses Yoofee
piano

Alice Boyd **20:10**
live set

Alice Boyd presents a live performance inspired by her BBC Radio 4 documentary 'Shifting Soundscapes', where she revisited locations legendary field recordist Martyn Stewart, dubbed the David Attenborough of nature sounds, recorded in the 70s. Blending voice, synths and live looping with field recordings gathered across the UK, the show explores how our environments are changing, and what we hear when we take the time to listen.

The performance will be followed by a Q&A

Zainab Lax, Joel Joao, Faira, Wolfgang Pérez and participants of the EcoLit Songwriting workshop
solo and group performances

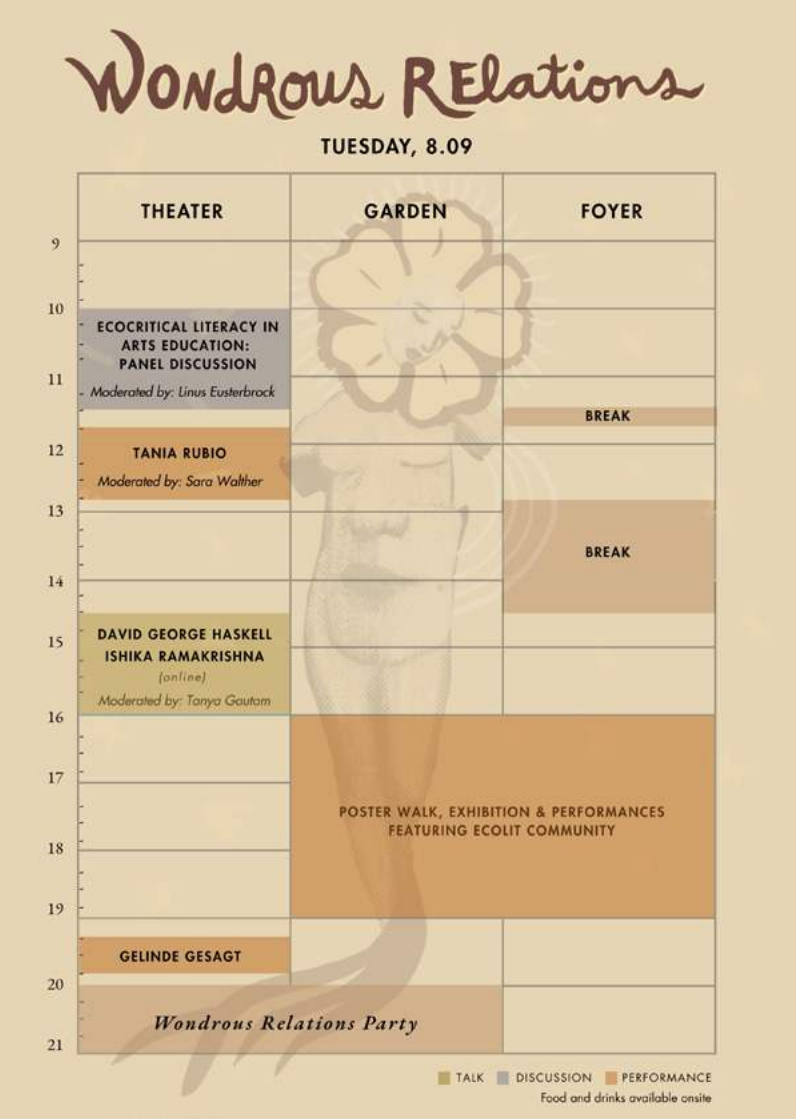
21:10

Zainab Lax

Joel Joao

Faira

Wolfgang Pérez



Panel 1

Sep 8

Theater

Ecocritical Literacy in Arts Education

10:00 - 11:30

How can artistic engagement with ecology be meaningfully situated within educational contexts? Three talks will explore the shifting terrain between art, ecology and education, followed by a panel discussion with the audience.

Amanda Bayley (Bath Spa University):

Listening for Ecological Futures

Combining environmental listening with sound-based creative practice connects arts, ecology and cultural knowledge, fostering ecological awareness, empathy and sustainable relationships with place. This presentation draws on research projects that develop environmental listening as a form of eco-literacy and eco-creativity, demonstrating how sound can support ecological awareness and regeneration.

Per Esben Svelstad (Norwegian University of Science and Technology):

Identifying with the Other-than-Human: Sketch for an Affirmative Anthropomorphism

While we often think of anthropomorphism as imposing humanity on other species, erasing difference, studying actual practices of reading might allow us to take an affirmative view of what function(s) anthropomorphism can have for readers, offering fresh perspectives on what ecocritical literacy can be.

Roman Bartosch, Linus Eusterbrock, Tanya Gautam, Christian Rolle, Sara Walther (University of Cologne):

Eco-critical Literacy as Educational Concept and Practice

How does eco-critical literacy differ from other approaches to sustainable education and what paths might lead to it? Among others, it is nourished by aesthetic experience, artistic practice and critical reflection; by interdisciplinary perspectives spanning art forms, academic disciplines and social institutions.

Panel Convenor: Dr. Linus Eusterbrock

Tania Rubio

composer, sound artist & researcher

Mexico City, Mexico

Sound, Listening, Recording: The construction/ re-construction/de-construction of Memory

11:30 - 12:30

The presentation explores audio culture as an interconnection of sound, listening and interpretation, grounded in the interdependence of nature-culture. Two acousmatic pieces will be introduced as a practice for reconstructing memory and ecological awareness. The pieces were made with field recordings from natural environments in Mexico and South America. The lecture-performance examines how sounds and words intertwine to construct narratives that shape our perception of place and reality.

How do we listen, perceive, relate, interpret and describe a place? How to create a memory of it? A recording is a construction of a sound memory. But who is recording? Who is taking part in that recording? What are the languages, who are the people and what living beings are taking part in history? And who has been left? Who is writing, recording and generating the history?

Sound could be a testimony of preservation and reconstruction of memory and a tool of resistance, but it can also be a narrative of power and privilege. Sound-listening-recording and interpreting invite deeper forms of ecological attention and reflection to co-create new narratives with responsibility for a common future.

Sep 8 Theater

Sep 8

Theater

David George Haskell

biologist & writer

Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Listening for connections across timescales.

14:30 - 15:15

We experience sound as ephemeral, a fleeting sensory impression. But sound has a history, one that shapes the present. This history lives in the forms of animal sounds, the materialities and diversity of human music and the sonic memories carried by listening beings. Attentive listening to sound's many "pasts" can reveal ecologies, histories, injustices and also future possibilities. These links across time suggest ways that we might, both individually and collectively, use listening to reconnect and defragment our lives.

Both talks will be live streamed at Orangerie Theater. If you would like to attend via zoom, please scan this QR code and register to receive the zoom link.

Ishika Ramakrishna

primatologist

Bangalore, India

India's Singing Apes and the Tales they Tell

15:15 - 16:00

What does it mean for music, song and rhythm to be a species' fundamental mode of communication? The Endangered western hoolock gibbon, Hoolock hoolock, India's only nonhuman ape species that lives in nuclear families, have evolved to fill their ecosystems with loud, synchronised and individually-unique songs. While all species of gibbons across Southeast Asia sing, the Hoolock gibbons were the first to develop this need and ability.

In this talk, we will understand all that is encoded in the lengthy duets of these gibbons, including social dynamics, pair-bonding, indications of culture and life stages and the noticeable effects of a life lived in proximity to people. And more importantly, it will ask, can we really ever know what a gibbon knows?

Sep 8

Theater

Sep
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Poster Walk, Exhibition and Performances feat. the Ecolit Community

16:00 - 19:00

At four different locations in the Orangerie, projects and people who responded to our open call or have been part of EcoLit's research, workshop and community network will present their work. The detailed program, including information about the individual exhibitors, can be found at www.ecolit.cologne.

Short Films and Video Pitches:

Carrie Dohe — Bees for Peace

Claudia Günther & Friederike Hofmann — Waldluftleben: Forest Bathing and Artistic Practice (GER)

Pascal Rudolph — Multispecies Music Memes

Ian Boes, Fedora Hartmann, Daniela Kinateder & Susanna Schoenberg — Compost as a Pluriverse

Jashen Edwards — Elements

Sound Installations:

MONAScollective — MoorReaktor: an artistic exploration of moors

Jürgen Herreiner, Pooneh Orimi & Sydney Reimer — Sounding Associations

Chris Kattenbeck, Annabelle Fuchs, Anna Schik, Ara Schäfer & Leonie Willen — A Study of Drops for a Fading Archive (GER)

Posters:

Sep
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Lucy Allen — Bodenlabor Kalk: A pop-up living lab

Moritz Kuck & Students — Soundscapes and Acoustic Ecology (GER)

Amanda Bayley, Nick Clough, Jane Tarr — Trees of Hope

Ralf Peters — Vocal Ecotism

Sarah Lopper — Planetary Pedagogy (GER)

Teresa Becker —Live Music Concerts as Spaces for Negotiating Sustainable Development (GER)

Mark Porter — The Forest Church Movement

Maria Sappho — Listening Playgrounds

Cornelia Wild — The Art of Atmosphere (GER)

Jonas Völker, Jonas Spieker & Students — Sounding Loss

Andrea Bießmann & Students — Music Education as a Space for Resonance (GER)

Katharina Anzengruber, Vanessa Friedl, Maria Kalleitner-Huber, Christine Neudecker, Caroline Neudecker & Elke Zobl — CreART-Lab (GER)

Sep
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Performances:

16:15—16:30

Monica van der Hagen-Wulff & Students —
Planetary Justice (GER)

16:45—17:00

Kölner Klimachor —
Sing-Along Climate Songs from Cologne (GER)

17:10—17:40

Martino —
Fingerstyle Guitarist and Singer-Songwriter (GER)

17:50-18:20

Songs of Belonging —
Circlesongs with Nina, Leyla and Noraa from the Circlewise Institute

18:30—19:00

Die Beutel —
Songs and Stories about Change (GER)

Gelinde Gesagt

Poetic Protest Music
19:15 - 19:45

Sep
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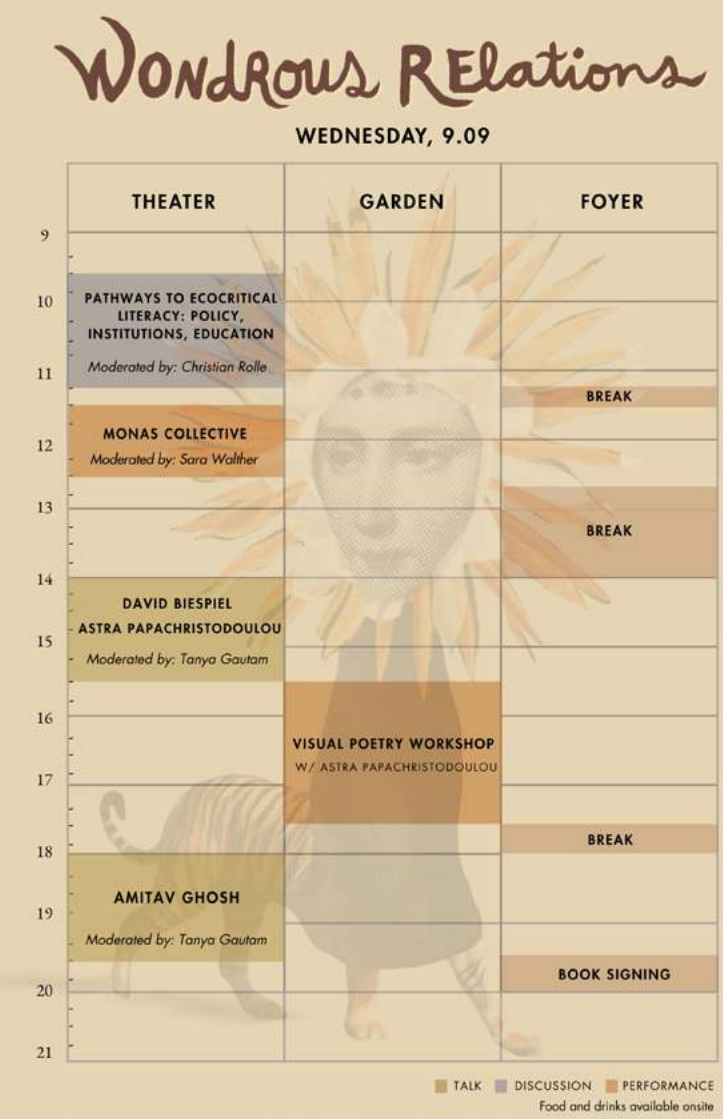
When a song journeys inward, uncovering what seemed long forgotten, bringing it to the surface, and giving it new form, something happens that "gelinde gesagt" loves to sing about most: transformation. Rooted in folk, jazz, and chanson, the Mainz- and Cologne-based singer-songwriter trio combines subtle everyday utopias with catchy melodies, never lingering in shallow waters for long. Sometimes rowdy, sometimes contemplative, their songs explore life's existential questions while drawing freely from an endless ocean of maritime imagery. For them, the horizon is less a destination than a direction of travel. They know that change may begin quietly—but it need not stay that way.

Vocals, guitar, lyrics, composition: Sara Walther
Double bass: Fritz Cat Höß
Drums: Leon Senger

Wondrous Relations Party w/ Savsannah

20:00 - 00:00

Savsannah's colorful world-building bounces between bubbly uk garridge, earth-resonant bass, sun-soaked house, harmonious r&b, and iridescent contemporary pop. With a passion for bringing people together, her creative process orbits between DJing, collaborative projects and writing.
IG: @savsannah



Panel 2

Pathways to Ecocritical Literacy: Policy, Institutions and Education

9:30 - 11:15

Sep
9

Theater

How can arts education contribute to eco-critical literacy? And what kinds of educational policies and institutional transformations are needed to enable such learning?

This panel brings together researchers, arts educators, representatives of higher arts education, and experts from educational policy and administration to explore pathways towards eco-critical literacy. It asks how arts-based research, educational practice, and policy can be brought into closer dialogue in order to foster ecological learning and support transformative change across formal and non-formal educational contexts.

The session begins with a series of short impulse talks in which the panelists share perspectives from research, educational practice, artistic practice, and policymaking, alongside examples from music and literary education. Together, these contributions explore artistic approaches to ecological education and ask how arts education can foster new forms of ecological awareness and response-ability. They reflect on educational and cultural institutions as spaces of negotiation, where artists, educators, researchers, policymakers, communities, and more-than-human perspectives can enter into dialogue. In doing so, the panel considers how ecological thinking may transform not only educational practices but also the institutional conditions and value systems that shape arts and cultural education.

The second part of the panel is conceived as an open discussion with the audience. Together, we will critically discuss and further develop a first draft of a policy brief prepared by the EcoLit project team. The final document will synthesise key insights from the project and formulate recommendations for cultural and educational policy. It will subsequently be disseminated to policymakers and educational stakeholdersand presented to UNESCO in the context of a UNESCO/MOST BRIDGES Assembly in Paris.

We warmly invite all participants to contribute their perspectives and experiences so that the policy brief becomes a genuinely collaborative document, developed through dialogue, participation, and co-creation.

Panelists: Martina Fladerer, Albi Odendaal & Beatrix Jankowski

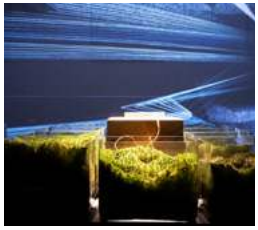
Panel Convenors: Prof. Dr. Roman Bartosch & Prof. Dr. Christian Rolle

Sep 9
Theater

Monas Collective

Listening Closely: Swamp Sounds

11:30 - 12:30



The MONAScollective operates at the intersection of art and science and of man and nature. On the one hand, it explores new soundscapes in the depths of moors and the resulting compositional possibilities of the hidden. On the other hand, for science, it represents a challenge to integrating these methods and translation possibilities of complex processes—such as climate change—into the presentation of scientific findings. Science and art meet at eye level, triggering mutual impulses.

This co-creative approach will be demonstrated in the lecture performance using specific works by the MONAScollective (amongst others: Expo Japan, MozartFest Würzburg, MoorReaktor).

Speakers: Kurt Holzkämper — Sound Artist / Musician and Prof. Dr. Hubert Wiggering — Land Sciences / Geoecology
www.monascollective.com

David Biespiel

poet, critic, writer & educator

Portland, Oregon, USA

Lyric Thinking **14:00 - 14:45**

Let's imagine that, to write a poem, a poet begins with a line or image, a memory or murmur, perhaps, a projection, or fantasy, maybe, a dream, a disturbance of some sort, at least, that transports the poet from one time to another time. It's like an expedition that takes you by surprise through occasions of time.What might we call this way of thinking? Metaphoric thinking, where one thing dramatizes another? Myth-thinking, perhaps, where the mystical, cosmological, sociological and psychological functions of existence are explored in the consciousness of the poet? William Wordsworth says this sort of thinking is echo-locating "spots of time," and these spots have a "fructifying virtue." That is, spots lead to other spots. That's what lyric thinking is. Simultaneity becomes sequence, so that the shape of that sequence is like a spiral. In this talk, we'll quietly walk through one or two gorgeous short poems as time permits to experience lyric thinking and then ask the question: can you do this, too?

Astra Papachristodoulou

poet, visual artist & educator

London, UK

Imagining Futurity: Sculptural poetry, mourning and bees

14:45 - 15:15

This talk will present mourning as a productive topic in poetry, allowing the poet and reader to reevaluate their standing and be more empathetic towards other humans or nonhuman beings who may encounter injustices. The talk will be bringing together cultural and contemporary poetic responses to bees, a species struck by decline, to highlight our interconnectedness to this species.

Textual Materialities: Protest banner poems

15:30 - 17:30

The essence of protest banners boils down to a mix of language, matter, action, context and environment. What tangible elements make protest banners recognisable as opposed to ordinary banners? What is transformative about protest banners? How would you apply the intersection of protest banners and poetry in practice? Come and experiment with textiles and text and create messages that matter to you.

Sep
9

Theater

Amitav Ghosh

writer

New York, USA

Ghost Eye: A Novel **18:00 - 19:15**

Varsha Gupta wants fish for her lunch. Her family can't understand it; the three-year-old has never tasted fish in her life. The Guptas are strict vegetarians and don't allow it inside their Calcutta mansion. But Varsha claims she can remember another life, a mud house by a river where she caught and cooked fish with a different mother.

Perplexed, the Guptas turn to Dr. Shoma Bose, a psychiatrist who has been investigating what are known as 'cases of the reincarnation type' for years. But her understanding of the world is changed forever by Varsha's revelations.

Half a century later, Varsha's therapeutic case file catches the attention of a group of environmental activists, and Shoma's nephew Dinu is drawn inexorably into their plans. And as Dinu finds himself caught up in the search for Varsha, buried memories of his own past begin to surface.

Travelling between late-sixties Calcutta and present-day Brooklyn, Ghost-Eye is an urgent and expansive novel about family, fate and our fragile planet.

Festival Artwork by Elena Landinez

Organising Team:

Tanya Gautam, Sara Walther,
Martha Steinhoff, Eileen O'Grady,
Linus Eusterbrock, Christian Rolle
Georgy Radchenko and Roman Bartosch

www.ecolit.cologne

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