

The Experience of Translation | The Translation of Experience

Curated by Ricarda Vidal and Madeleine Campbell

The works in this exhibition are the result of international collaborations between artists, writers, translators and academics. And more often than not, they also draw on the vibrant inspiring atmosphere of public participatory workshops where we invited people to join us in the exploration of embodied translation between media via creative methods (e.g. writing, performance, artmaking, etc.). These workshops were conducted online or in person in the many different places we live in.

Many of the works were created by members of the **Experiential Translation Network**, which brings together scholars and practitioners from around the world. We are interested in embodied translation within and between media as a process of creation and communication, as well as a method for learning and teaching, collaboration and participation within multilingual, multicultural settings. This includes understanding the many verbal and non-verbal modes and modalities that contribute to meaning-making in cross-cultural communication (online & offline), language learning and translation, and embracing the role of individual imagination and artistic creation in education and arts institutions (e.g. libraries, galleries, museums).

The exhibition includes video art, performance, (interactive) installation, sound art, poetry, painting and photography, and it is hosted by CREA Cantieri del Contemporaneo, through a collaboration with Giuseppe Sofo and the Dipartimento di Studi Linguistici e Culturali Comparati, Università Ca' Foscari Venezia, in the context of the conference "La Traduction augmentée: Approches interdisciplinaires, indisciplinées et expérientielles de la traduction" and of Venise pour la francophonie 2025.



Scan for more
info about the
Experiential
Translation
Network

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Arts and
Humanities
Research Council



Films on Small Projector

John London, trailer for *Another Time This Time*, 2022

animated power point, 2 min

This 2-minute animated powerpoint was initially created as a teaser to advertise the interactive workshop and collaborative performance "Another Time This Time", which took place during the physical exhibitions in Ledbury and London in 2022. "Another Time This Time" draws on existing texts and images (curated by John London and Chris Danowski) from various historical times of pandemic and panic as well as original contributions from the present. With a focus on words and how they fare in isolation, "Another Time This Time" proposes a ludic exploration of what it means to perform experience and to experience performance. The trailer gives an idea of the central concerns of the workshop and performance.



Scan for more about
John's research.

Ricarda Vidal and Madeleine Campbell, *Knowing Anna Blume*, 2022

Multilingual film collage, 4:40 min

In this *forme brève*, we juxtapose previous translations with sound, recitations and multimodal re-translations of Kurt Schwitters' poem "An Anna Blume" (1919). We pay homage to his typographical genius and re-imagine Schwitters' sense of *Merz*, "gluing or nailing bits [of garbage] together" in the digital age. Projecting the past onto the future and drawing on our own subjectivities, we raid historical archives and enlist Dadaist and surrealist memes in a 21st century *mêlée* of the poem's many iterations. This film collage is linked to an eponymous workshop in which we examine Schwitters' performative aspiration for the '*Gesamtkunstwerk*', or total work of art, as an illustration of the affinity of the practice of translation with the practice of performance.

The film collage is accompanied by Ricarda Vidal's concertina book of translations.



Scan for more about
Madeleine and
Ricarda's research.

Zeina Dghaim, *The State of The Soul*, 2022

Animation, 2 min

Visual interpretation of the seven stages of spiritual ascension revealed by St. Teresa de Avila in the Interior Castle (1588). The seven illustrations (gouache, acrylic, and calligraphy ink on paper) are animated and projected digitally with music. Each illustration represents a mansion. In her work, St. Teresa describes the journey as the soul's mission to unite itself to God through meditation, prayers, and acts of service. She describes mansions 1-3 as the purgative stage of the journey, 4-5 as the illuminative stage, and mansions 6-7 as the unitive stage.

Ludivine Bouton-Kelly, 2022

Video, 1:41 min

My translation of Una Marson's poem "The Stone Breakers" into French stands as the result of a long process. As I wanted the poet's original voice, in Patois, to be literally heard, I experimented with several protocols before engaging in a translation enterprise which turned out to be a video, allowing readers to experience a visual and auditory reading of "The Stone Breakers". Indeed, this video supports both the original poem and my translation into French, which makes it possible for the reader to listen to the "The Stone Breakers" in Patois, voiced by Tamika Phillip, while reading the translation of it in French almost at the same time. My intention was literally to make 'audible' a language that colonial history has neglected and to offer a breakage experience through language, echoing the stones breakers of the poem as well as the experience of translation itself - a breakage of a language into another.



Scan for more about
Ludivine's research.

Big Projection

Tomasz Wochna, "Intersemiotic Space-Time Composition", 2022

Animation, 2 min.

This short animation tries to explore the process of translating poetry into visual language. It was inspired by the creative workshops on intersemiotic translation for MA students, which Joanna Kosmalka and Tomasz Wochna designed and carried out in Łódź, Poland. The predominant technique here is the graphic synthesis of the basic mediums of expression such as a point, line and plane.

Films on Screen 1

Anna Dot, *Translating from the Shore*, 2022

Digital video HQ, 13 min

Translating from the shore is the continuation of a broader project which, based on the animist cultures and the new tendencies of environmental law, defends the river as a living entity that has its own right to exist, develop and reproduce independently of human activities. From this perspective, a question is opened: as a living entity, has the river a language? *Translating from the shore* takes the river Ter, which goes through northern Catalonia, as a subject of study with the goal of speculating about different ways in which this river could be expressing itself, such as taking its waves as excerpts of an infinite asemantic writing, or its colours as a form of non-verbal communication, among others.

Dealing with otherness and extralinguistic translation from a postanthropocentric point of view this project resonates with the aims of the Experiential Translation Network. It uses art practice to be able to imagine other possibilities in which a river could be expressing itself, even if we don't understand what it may be communicating.

Cinzia Delorenzi, *Ospitare*, 2022.

Curated by Gaia Del Negro and Silvia Luraschi. Video by Filippo Michelangelo Ceredi

6 min

Starting from two poems and balls of string, the workshop "*Ospitare*/Hosting others" translates some suggestions from a previous artistic performance by transforming it through the action of the participants and the proposal to the group of embodiment experiences of the immune system.

The video is a trace of this path: the video maker and the video camera enter into a participatory relationship, translators of the experience in body language and audiovisual.

The "*Ospitare*/Hosting others" workshop is an example of research on how somatic and artistic languages can offer other "ways of knowing", proposing a reflection on intercultural education and stimulating ideas or actions for professional practice.

In die Natur

Poem by Ulrike Almut Sandig | Music by Grigory Semenchuk & Ulrike Almut Sandig

Directed by Sascha Conrad | Produced by Poesiekollektiv Landschaft, Germany / Ukraine 2021,

3:35 min

In the form of a sounding anagram, this poetry film reflects on the rising levels of the world's oceans. An anagram is a poem formed by rearranging the letters of a different word or phrase.

The tongue is a needle. And I am true North. Telling lies. This core line is quoted from the poem *Magnetic* by Emma McGordon, a spoken word poet from Cumbria, in which she explores her own origins.

The three Gili Islands, which belong to Indonesia, are only a few metres above sea level. Endangered turtle species lay their eggs on the beaches.

Spoken word collective Landschaft blend multilingual poems with hip hop, electropunk and video art. This trio present an exhilarating fusion of techno, poetry and film that crosses language boundaries. (Hayfestival, UK)



Scan to read a chapter
by Delphine Grass about
"In die Natur".

Film on Big Screen

Kate McMillan, *Never At Sea*, 2023

video documentary of an immersive artwork, 20 min

Never at Sea was a multi-disciplinary immersive artwork that explored the embodied experiences of forced migration and climate change. The work was developed via collaboration between the artist, Kate McMillan, Composer, Cat Hope, and Sivan Rubinstein, Choreographer who spent 18 months developing an interdisciplinary dialogue between their methods, which articulated the outcomes of a series of arts-based workshops with women refugees. The experiences of the refugees who had fled from Syria and Lebanon, were typified by loss, loneliness and shared storytelling. ***Never at Sea's*** final moment of translation and communication was with audiences who were invited to a thirty-minute performance that included dancer Lydia Walker, soprano Marica Lemke-Kern and percussionist Louise Devenish. The performers interacted with the two-channel film projection, sculptures, and the audience, who were seated in pews that had been turned to face the back of the church. Objects included a ceramic listening bowl, ceramic ears, a waterphone, transistor radios, and handmade costumes and kneelers that were printed with stills from the films.



Scan for more about
Never at Sea.

Sound Works

Outranspo, *Outransmesse: On/Off*, 2022

Poème sonore et choral, 6 min

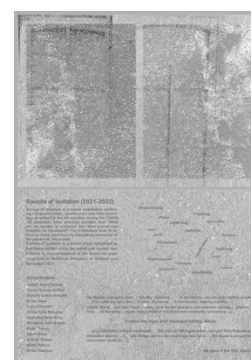
This work was created through a ludic, participatory process using literary, literal, homophonic and intersemiotic translation into multiple languages and forms of expression. The Outranspo, a group of multilingual translators/ scholars/ artists, who have adapted elements from the Oulipo to their own creative take on translation, refer to this process of expansion as 'messe', which, resonating with the English 'mess' and the French 'messe' (religious mass), evokes both chaos and order. Here instability and change appear as opportunity. Thinking about the inspiration for the messe, Outranspo co-founder Lily Robert-Foley names 'all of the invisible choices that weren't made, ... the potentials that weren't explored' but that haunt any translation. In the messe all the choices are present, all the potentials are there ready to be explored.

Karl Katschthaler, *Sounds of Isolation*, 2021-22

sound installation, 17 min

Sounds of Isolation is a sound installation combining composed music, spoken word and field recordings to reflect on the life situation during the COVID-19 pandemic. How does/did isolation feel? What are the sounds of isolation? Into what sounds can isolation be translated? The installation tries to reflect on these questions by translating memories of the pandemic into sound.

The sound piece was composed by Karl Katschthaler using the words and sounds contributed by participants of the sound art workshops held in Debrecen (Hungary) in October and November 2021



Noèlia Díaz-Vicedo & Hari Marini, Poetry in Action, 2022

Interactive poster

The "Poetry in Action" workshop explored poetic translation as a form of action by using poems in Catalan, Spanish and Greek about isolation and non-belonging. Taking the poems as a source, the participants worked with movement, voice, words, drawings and sounds. The process explored how embodied translation and action can allow us to go beyond the written word and expand the limits of artistic expression, thus leading to the creation of a poem in action.

Please use your phone to scan the QR codes on the poster to access the videos and sound recordings of poetic responses/ translations.



Harriet Carter, *Untitled*, 2022

Acrylic, oil, and chalk on canvas, 80 x 40cm

The making of *Untitled* explores the joyful uncertainty of not-knowing that takes place during translation. It develops research into translating both asemic writing and asemic texts through workshops conducted by Ricarda Vidal and myself in 2021-2022. Through the slippery language of painting (in both process and stilled work), *Untitled* uses colour, composition, and light to speculate on how and why we respond to things in the way we do. *Untitled* continues to question and interrogate the experience of physical



encounter, seeking to explore – and perhaps even translate – the performative tensions and humour that arises when grasping at the fringes of language.

Scan to read more about Harriet and Ricarda's research.

Zeina Dghaim, Data Art Creation: Text to Image Meditations

What if we can interact with the hidden dimensions of a text? The Data Art Creation project illuminates the universal language of art through text-to-image translation using natural language processing software. Though the data provides the blueprint for the artwork, it's the artist's imagination that weaves the stylization, rhythm, and tone. The role of the artist, inspiration, restraint, consciousness, and subconsciousness also emerge; they interrogate and provoke the reality of meaning-making and art creation.



Symposium I, Symposium II, Symposium III, 2022

Three Paintings depicting three Experiential Translation Network (ETN) symposiums.

Gouache, Acrylic, and Calligraphy Ink on Canvas 40.64cm x 50.8cm

In 2021 and 2022, the Experiential Translation Network held three

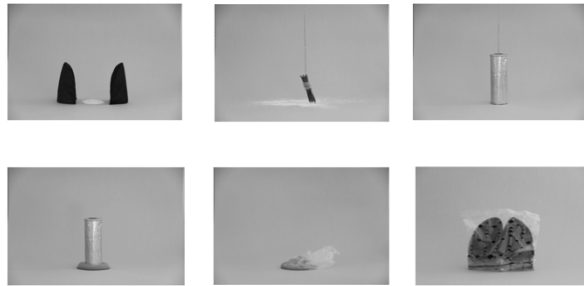
symposiums, which included talks, performances, workshops, and discussions about the conference, Performative & Experiential Translation – Meaning-Making through Language, Art and Media (King's College London, 13-15 July 2022). Each painting is a visual interpretation of a symposium guided by the data from discussions, chats, and workshop materials.

Birthe Jørgensen and Emil Lillo, "Home Where Home is Not - take two",

2021-22, photographs and text on card

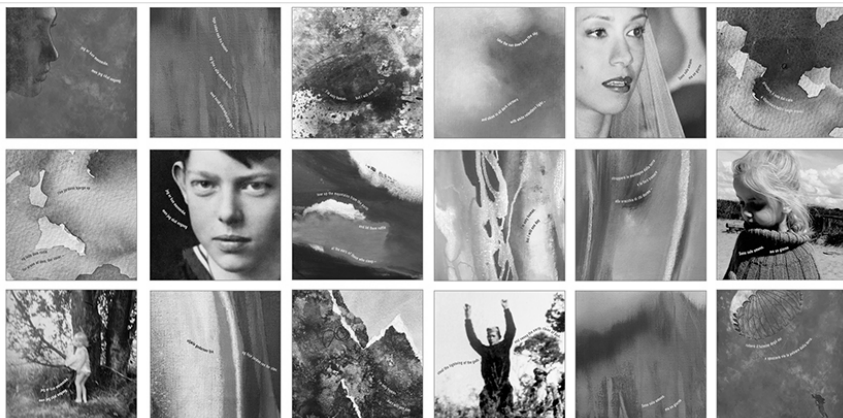
Artist Birthe Jørgensen and architect Emil Lillo have explored a collection of subjective accounts by a group of women of multiple cultural backgrounds living in an area of Glasgow dominated by austerity and the housing of refugees and asylum seekers from around the world. The women responded to how recent events have contributed to shifting fixed notions of 'home'.

Using methods of free association, and cut up techniques Jørgensen and Lillo have translated these accounts, into a photographic series portraying small, sensory, assemblages of everyday materials. The photographs are accompanied by a poetic text, that blends snippets of the women words, with references to the artist's process of translation, and to the objects in the photographs.



Sophie Clausen in collaboration with Manuela Perteghella, "I Am Only Human", 2022

interactive collage installation: paintings, photographs and rendered type on 18 aluminium panels (each panel 20 x 20cm)



Instructions: *panels can be repositioned by the viewer to recreate a multilingual collage installation. The original poem - and the two translated versions - will change meaning and expression as the panels change position, and new verbal and visual combinations will emerge.*

I Am Only Human subverts the idea of the (monolingual) reader-viewer, and instead invites them to become active participants engaging with the creation of new textual and visual possibilities. The source text is the Danish poem 'ideal' by Gustaf Munch-Petersen (1912–38), about the human condition. It is a timely poem for a post-pandemic world and a society increasingly challenged by both the climate emergency and divisive politics. Munch-Petersen himself was an artist, poet and translator, and died at the age of 26 during the Spanish Civil War, defending the ideals of freedom and democracy.

Sound recordings: Accompanying the installation are also three sound recordings of the poem in all its linguistic versions: 'ideal' read by Ursula Munch-Petersen (Danish); 'ideal' translated into English by Manuela Perteghella and Sophie Clausen, read by Sophie Clausen; 'ideale' translated into Italian and read by Manuela Perteghella.

Photo credits:

Detail of Manuela Perteghella's wedding. Photograph taken by Bellocchio srl.

Gustaf Munch-Petersen as a young boy. Copyright: Ursula Munch-Petersen, Denmark.

Defeated soldiers from The International Brigade, Ebro, Spain 5 November 1938. Copyright: The Worker Association's Library and Archive, Denmark.

Sophie Clausen as a young child. Photograph taken by Egon Clausen

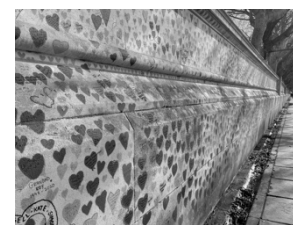
Naia. Photograph taken by Sophie Clausen

Mary Wardle, The National Covid Memorial Wall

Photographs, 2022

The National Covid Memorial Wall in London memorializes the loss of life during the pandemic through spontaneous personal dedications, translating the subjectivity of individual voices, forming an emotionally charged, choral text composed of images and micro narratives in a variety of languages and scripts.

This 500-metre-long public space is a site of experiential, embodied translation in that it transforms the grief of the contributors into a visual, textual reality, in constant evolution and, as such, for both creators and audience, is capable of transforming memory into a dynamic process rather than a static product.



Scan to read more about
Mary's research.

Muskan Dhandi and Suman Sigroha, Translation for Women, Women for Translation: Experiential Translation in North India's Sanjhi, 2021-22

Photographic series



Sanjhi is celebrated spectacularly once a year across Haryana, India. This festival has survived the test of time with goddess Sanjhi being translated across various spatio-temporal zones, rural and urban areas, and into varied sensory experiences. Sanjhi offers an opportunity to study and analyze the close affinities between the disciplines of ethnography and translation. Sanjhi is an event that is translated by participants, where translation takes place within the ritual, and through ethnography delivers a way of translating culture—through documenting and interpreting the enactment of the ritual, the two disciplines intersect and construct a space for conceptualizing actions and events as an act of translation on several levels.

Captions for Photographs (Left to right):

1. Motifs created by Haryanvi women for composing Sanjhi's body.
2. Gobar (dung) being used as a backdrop for creating Sanjhi by Haryanvi women. The motifs will be pasted on top of the dung.
3. Instances of Sanjhi documented during the ethnographic fieldwork in Haryana, India in 2021 and 2022.
4. Instances of Sanjhi documented during the ethnographic fieldwork in Haryana, India in 2021 and 2022 (Cont'd).
5. A perforated matka (earthen pot) used for carrying Sanjhi's face for her Visarjan.
6. Women travelling through the neighbourhood for the Visarjan.
7. Sanjhi's Visarjan at the jhod (pond).



Scan to read more about
Muskan and Suman's
research.

Francesca Mirabile, "Of Wrenching Beauty",

2022-25, Book

This book was made as an experiential translation of an arts event and public sculpture, *Sanctuary* which occurred in Bedworth, UK, in May 2022, into a collection of short-stories. Follow the artist's instructions for reading to experience the work fully:

Dear Reader,

Welcome to a performative collection of short stories. This book is yours to experience in any way that feels right for you. You may choose to read the stories in any order—randomly, or following the chapter sequence. While you immerse yourself in the words, feel free to act, dance, laugh, or cry. Read quietly to yourself, or aloud.

At the end of the book, there are pages waiting for your personal expression—use them as you wish.

And most of all, don't hesitate to transform your role from reader to performer. As you do, this letter will start anew, welcoming you as...

"Dear Performer."

Caro Lettore,

Vorrei presentarti una raccolta di racconti performativa. Questo libro è a tua disposizione per poter essere usato nel modo che più soddisfa le tue esigenze. Puoi scegliere di leggere le storie in ordine sparso o secondo il suggerimento dei capitoli. Mentre ti confondi tra le parole e le varie trame, puoi recitare, danzare, ridere o piangere. Puoi leggere nella tua mente, sussurrando o ad alta voce.

Alla fine del libro, ci sono delle pagine bianche con le quali spero interagirai assecondando i tuoi desideri - usale come preferisci.

E soprattutto, spero che coglierai l'occasione per trasformarti da lettore in performer. Così potrò cominciare di nuovo questa lettera, indirizzandola come...

"Caro Performer"

Giuseppe Sofo, *Éléments*, 2025

Wood, glass jars and elements.

This work proposes a selection of the fundamental elements of Venice (the water of the lagoon and of the Adriatic sea, carnival confetti, plasters and salt falling off of its walls, the spices and foods of its tradition, and so on), in order to produce a synthesis of Venice, a translation of the essence of Venice, which could be used to reconstruct the city elsewhere, in space or time, to translate the city out of the lagoon or to reproduce it once its essence will be lost forever.



Giuseppe Sofo, *Through a Different Lens: (My) Father's Eyes*, 2025

Spectacles, spectacle stand

I theorized a lot on the human side of translation, until one day I saw my own human translation happen in the span of a few hours. I became the father of a son at the same time I stopped being the son of a father, when the imminent death of my father and the upcoming birth of my son were announced on the same day. Looking at my son for the first time instantly made me see my father (and myself) through a different



Scan to read more about
Francesca's creative
translation.

lens, as in translation. While emptying my father's apartment I found at least a dozen pairs of glasses, some never used, some entirely wrecked, others worn out by using them during his house-painting jobs. Looking through the lens of his glasses, both materially and metaphorically, I see my translation from son to father, and the translation of my father into the man I am becoming.

Giuseppe Sofo, *Translating the City: Venice 2.023, 2023*

Photographs, AI art, posters, mixed media



This section includes selected works from the exhibition “Traduire en archipel(s)” held in 2023 at CREA in collaboration with Stefania Becheanu. The works explore different forms of “translation” of Venice through a distorted use of artificial intelligence, to understand how the creative mistakes and fruitful misunderstandings at play in the collaboration between humans and AI can help us redraw the map of the city and imagine its present and its future differently. “Fernweh” (literally “longing for elsewhere” in German) is a series of 22 postcards consisting of photos taken in one city (the one in the caption) but depicting the name or a symbol of another city, because translating a city also means carrying it with us elsewhere, and returning to it even from afar.

The section “The Alphabet of the City”, consists of photos of words and sentences written on the walls and streets of Venice and translated through Google Translate’s real-time image translation feature. Errors, deviations of the translation allow for a double (or triple) reading, sometimes revealing the reality hidden behind the words, or generating alternative readings that can tell us about a different city than the one we read with our own eyes.

In the works of the series “Architectural Translation”, the app interprets the arches, windows, and shapes of Venice’s palaces and bridges as text, offering an “architectural” translation of the city.



Scan for a virtual version
of “Traduire en
archipels”



Scan to read more
about Giuseppe