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Dialogues Across Human and More-Than-Human Worlds

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Dialogues Across Human and More-Than-Human Worlds

by prOphecy sun



About the Artist

prOphecy sun (PhD) is an interdisciplinary performance artist, queer, movement, video, sound maker, and mother of three. Her practice celebrates both conscious and unconscious moments and the vulnerable spaces of the in-between in which art, performance, and life overlap. Her recent research has focused on ecofeminist perspectives, co-composing with voice, objects, surveillance technologies, and site-specific engagements along the Columbia Basin region and beyond. She is the Arts Editor for *Ecocene: Cappadocia Journal of Environmental Humanities* and a sessional faculty member at Emily Carr University of Art + Design. She performs and regularly exhibits in local, national, and international settings, music festivals, conferences, and galleries and has authored several peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, and journal publications on sound design, installation, performance, and domestic spheres.

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In this camera-begot canid's haptic-optic touch, we are inside the histories of IT engineering, electronic product assembly-line labor, mining and IT waste disposal, plastics research and manufacturing, transnational markets, communications systems, and technocultural consumer habits.

—Donna Haraway

Co-presence describes a way of engaging with others that highlights shared time, space, and mutual influence rather than dominance, control, extraction, or unilateral authorship. It develops through close proximity to materials, environments, other beings, and the contextual conditions of creation. Instead of functioning as a specific technique, co-presence acts as an ethical stance—one that recognizes creation as fundamentally relational. In creative practice, this approach shifts the focus from fixed results to the ongoing processes involved, as illustrated in the quote above. Viewing from this angle reveals interconnected rhizomatic networks linking human institutions, knowledge systems, histories, and non-human materials; networks often hidden by the smooth operations of extractive capitalism. Materials and resources are taken, processed, and circulated through markets, technologies, and consumer habits, yet the underlying structures that support this circulation are often concealed. These infrastructures are complex and interconnected, made up of active participants with their own histories and agency: wood changed by insects, fibers shaped by domestic labor, or images created through interactions of light, weather, and time. Paying attention to these relations allows creative acts to emerge from responsiveness rather than mastery. In such cases, artworks tend to reflect what is already developing rather than dictating form. Co-presence is especially important because interruptions, constraints, and shared rhythms are not seen as obstacles but as conditions that shape the work's form, ethical considerations, and meaning.

The eleventh installment of Ecocene Arts features three contributions: *Let All Things Pass Through Me* (2025), *The Image as a Felt Thing: Ambivalent Gestures in Motherhood and Painting* (2025), and *Seeds Over Stems* (2025), which each explore co-presence and its role as a grounding force. Together, they demonstrate that co-presence is a way of being with landscapes, materials, and more-than-human beings, shaping not only outcomes but also the understanding of the creative process itself. Each artist in this issue approaches their work from a stance of proximity and coexistence, allowing their projects to develop through shared conditions rather than individual mastery.

In the first piece, **Boya Liang** expresses co-presence through ecological and atmospheric elements. The artist shares her experiences moving through sagebrush landscapes and encountering naturally shaped branches influenced by bark beetles—records of their life cycles and silent labor. By using burning incense to trace these natural patterns, Boya Liang engages in a collaborative gesture guided by ancient pathways that predate human intervention. The presence of wildfire smoke, wind, and shifting weather further emphasizes ecological interconnectedness and aims to breathe in harmony with the land. Small burnings complement larger cycles of combustion and renewal, demonstrating how creative acts are woven into broader ecological processes.

In the second piece, **Laura Rosengren**, situates co-presence within the domestic studio environment, where the rhythms of painting are shaped by interactions with children, caregiving duties, and household objects. In this setting, Rosengren's process involves shared time, repetitive gestures, interruptions, and the slow build-up of marks. By combining oil paint with needle-felted fibers and everyday items, the artist emphasizes the multiple histories and labors woven into each work. The resulting artwork acts as a hub where domestic life, craft traditions, and artistic practices converge, highlighting creativity as an ongoing, relational act.

Emma Pallay's work follows, examining the concept of co-presence, including relationships among different species. Walking through natural landscapes and observing mosses, lichens, porcupines, and caribou, the artist sees these beings as neighbors rather than objects. Her *photogravures*—close-up images viewed from above—encourage viewers to feel a sense of closeness, where even the smallest life forms become points of connection. Love and respect guide this approach: to honor an animal is to stay present with it, to recognize its individuality, and to allow its being to influence and inspire the artistic process.

Together, these practices position co-presence as an ethical way of creating art: to be with, rather than to act upon, dominate, or control; to listen, rather than impose; to

acknowledge how every mark is shaped by ecological, domestic, and interspecies forces beyond each artist. In more-than-human contexts, co-presence opens space for ethical relations. Working with animals, plants, or ecological systems is not about representing them from a distance but about recognizing them as co-inhabitants. Creative acts such as tracing, stitching, imprinting, or recording become ways of staying with another being—honoring its specificity without claiming ownership. Collectively, the artworks carry traces of encounter rather than claims of knowledge. By embracing this shared perspective, the pieces in this issue create a space where humans collaborate with the world, fostering an ongoing dialogue grounded in reciprocal presence.

References

Haraway, Donna. 2023. “When Species Meet.” In *The Routledge International Handbook of More-Than-Human Studies*, 42–78. London: Routledge.