



Organizing committee:
Lucio De Capitani, Alessandro Cabiati, Carolina
Celeste Granini (Ca' Foscari University of Venice)

(Un)natural Stevenson

Wild Transgressions across Literature,
Ecology, Science and Gender

11-12 May 2026

Aula Mario Baratto, Ca' Foscari
Dorsoduro 3246 - Venezia

Monday 11 May 2026

8.30-9.00 **Registration**

9.00-09.10 **Opening Remarks**

9.10-11.00 **PANEL 1: Waters, Oceans & Blue Humanities**

Chair: **Shaul Bassi** (Ca' Foscari University of Venice)

Julie Gay (Université du Littoral Côte d'Opale), *(Un)natural Shores: Stevenson's Amphibian Coastal Poetics and their Wild Transgressions*

Jean-Pierre Naugrette (Université Sorbonne-Nouvelle), *"Like A Doubtful Bather": Stevenson and the Ethos of Swimming*

Matthew P. M. Kerr (University of Southampton), *Wasted Stevenson: Shipwrecks, Champagne Bottles and Tinned Salmon in R. L. Stevenson's South Sea Writings*

Paola Della Valle (Università di Torino), *R.L. Stevenson's In the South Seas: A Study on the Pacific Ecosystem*

11.00-11.30 Coffee break

11.30-13.20 **PANEL 2: Landscape, Setting and Ecology**

Chair: **Nathalie Jaëck** (Université Bordeaux Montaigne)

Martin White (Independent scholar), *The Geopoetic Stevenson – An Unnatural Marriage?*

Burkhard Niederhoff (Ruhr University Bochum), *Stevenson's Natural History: Settings in Kidnapped, "The Pavilion on the Links" and Weir of Hermiston*

Mafalda Cipollone (Independent scholar), *"Only for the moment during which the effect endures": Ecology and Impressionism: 'An Inland Voyage'*

Richard Dury (Università di Bergamo), *Ecology and Impressionism: Stevenson's 1870s essays*

13.20-14.50 Lunch Break

14-50-16.40 **PANEL 3: Travelling, Travelogues and Crossings**

Chair: Emma Sdegno (Ca' Foscari University of Venice)

Peter Arnds (Trinity College Dublin), *Wild Transgression and Slow Travel with a Donkey in Stevenson's Journey in the Cévennes*

Kate Ashley (Acadia University), *Stevenson's Uncouth Beginnings in the Cévennes*

Vanessa Smith (University of Sydney), *The Volcano and the Insect: High and Low Islands in Stevenson's In the South Seas and Island Nights' Entertainments*

Caroline McCracken-Flesher (University of Wyoming), *The Surveillance of Things: Looking Back at Stevenson, from the Cévennes to the South Seas*

16.40-17.10 Coffee break

17.10-18.40 **PANEL 4: Unnatural Communities**

Chair: **Burkhard Niederhoff** (Ruhr University Bochum)

Lee Spinks (University of Edinburgh), *Inhospitable Nature: Kith, Kin and Monstrosity in Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*

Glenda Norquay (Liverpool John Moores University), *'Beholding with your natural eyes': Robert Louis Stevenson and Communities of Perception*

Penny Fielding (University of Edinburgh), *Enmity and Fraternity in The Master of Ballantrae*

20.00 Social Dinner

Tuesday 12 May 2026

8.30-9.00 **Registration**

9.00-10.50 **PANEL 5: Hauntings**

Chair: **Penny Fielding** (University of Edinburgh)

Lesley Graham (Université Bordeaux Montaigne) - *The Shadow of Henley in Stevenson's 1888 Writing*

Emlyn David (Université Bordeaux Montaigne), *Folklore and the Unnatural in Stevenson's Scottish Fiction*

Elena Zavaglia (Università Cattolica Milano), *"Terrors of the Conscience": The 'Unnatural' as the Embodiment of Post-Murder Guilt in "The Merry Men" and "The Body Snatcher"*

Shari Sabeti (University of Edinburgh), *Kindred Spirits: Living with the Dead in Robert Louis Stevenson's Sāmoa.*

10.50-11.20 Coffee break

11.20-13.10 **PANEL 6: Transgressing Categories, Dichotomies, Identities**

Chair: **Lesley Graham** (Université Bordeaux Montaigne)

Robert-Louis Abrahamson (University of Maryland) - *"The Gross, Coloured and Mobile Nature at Our Feet": Impossible to Impose Order on Nature*

Robert Irvine (University of Edinburgh), *Violence and Tact in "The Story of a Lie" (1879)*

Struan McCorricken (University of Glasgow), *Dichotomies of Wellness in RL Stevenson's Treasure Island (1883): Healthy Heroes and Sickly Seadogs*

Benjamine Toussaint (Université Sorbonne), *"Of all Mysteries of the Human Heart, This Is Perhaps The Most Inscrutable:" The (Un)naturalness of Scottish Identity in The Master of Ballantrae*

13.10-14.40 Lunch Break

14-40-16.30 **PANEL 7: Queerings**

Chair: **Carolina Celeste Granini** (Ca' Foscari University of Venice)

Theodore Leane (Cornell University), *Inventing the Addict and the Homosexual: 'Unnatural' Victorian Bodies*

Michael Shaw (University of Stirling), *Homosexuality and Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde in Press Discourse at the Fin de Siècle*

Clara Battiston (Università di Torino), *Jekyll's Case: A Liminal Dual-gendered Generation*

Nathalie Jaëck (Université Bordeaux Montaigne), *"Oh frolic Fellow Spookist": Spookism and De-identification in R. L. Stevenson's (and Conan Doyle's) De-naturalizing Fiction*

16.30-17.00 Coffee break

17.00-18.30 **PANEL 8: Technologies: Education, Machines and Cyborgs**

Chair: **Alessandro Cabiati** (Ca' Foscari University of Venice)

Mario Valori (Università di Pisa), *Naturally Wild, Properly Schooled: Stevenson, Boyhood, and the Making of the Imperial Subject*

Angelo Riccioni (Università degli Studi di Cassino e del Lazio Meridionale), *Robert Louis Stevenson and the Language of Fiction: A Diachronic Investigation of Fin-De-Siècle AI*

Debalina Banerjee (Vidyasagar Metropolitan College, Kolkata), *Cyberpunk and the Neo-Victorian Double: The Afterlife of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*