

Kimberly Mair

Kimberly Mair

Volume 12, Number 1, 2021

Structures of Anticipation

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1077905ar>

[See table of contents](#)

Publisher(s)

York University

ISSN

1918-8439 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this document

Mair, K. (2021). Kimberly Mair. *Imaginations*, 12(1), 51–53.

© Kimberly Mair, 2021



This document is protected by copyright law. Use of the services of Érudit (including reproduction) is subject to its terms and conditions, which can be viewed online.

<https://apropos.erudit.org/en/users/policy-on-use/>

This article is disseminated and preserved by Érudit.

Érudit is a non-profit inter-university consortium of the Université de Montréal, Université Laval, and the Université du Québec à Montréal. Its mission is to promote and disseminate research.

<https://www.erudit.org/en/>

IMAGINATIONS

REVUE D'ÉTUDES INTERCULTURELLES DE L'IMAGE • JOURNAL OF CROSS-CULTURAL IMAGE STUDIES



SARAH BEVERIDGE

TALYSHA BUJOLD-ABU

FIONA COUILLARD

LINDSEY A. FREEMAN

KRISTEN GALLERNEAUX

FAEGHEH (VICTORIA) KALANTARI

RANDY LEWIS

ANDRIKO LOZOWY

KIMBERLY MAIR

BRENDA FRANCIS PELKEY

DOMINIC PINNEY

KATE SCHNEIDER

MONTI SIGG

SAHAR TE

IMAGINATIONS
REVUE D'ÉTUDES INTERCULTURELLES DE L'IMAGE • JOURNAL OF CROSS-CULTURAL IMAGE STUDIES

STRUCTURES OF ANTICIPATION

Guest Editors: Yoke-Sum Wong, Karen Engle, Craig Campbell

Issue 12-1, 2021

IMAGINATIONS:

JOURNAL OF CROSS-CULTURAL IMAGE STUDIES |
REVUE D'ÉTUDES INTERCULTURELLES DE
L'IMAGE

Publication details, including open access policy
and instructions for contributors:

<http://imaginations.glendon.yorku.ca>

Structures of Anticipation

Guest Editors: Yoke-Sum Wong,
Karen Engle, Craig Campbell

April 30, 2021

Image Credit:

Karen Engle (photography) and
Craig Campbell (digital production), 2019

To cite this article:

“Kimberly Mair.” *Imaginations: Journal of Cross-Cultural Image Studies*, vol. 12,
no. 1, April 2021, pp. 51-53,
doi: 10.17742/IMAGE.SA.12.1.10.

To link to this article:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.17742/IMAGE.SA.12.1.10>



The copyright for each article belongs to the author and has been published in this journal under a [Creative Commons 4.0 International Attribution NonCommercial NoDerivatives](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/) license that allows others to share for non-commercial purposes the work with an acknowledgement of the work's authorship and initial publication in this journal. The content of this article represents the author's original work and any third-party content, either image or text, has been included under the Fair Dealing exception in the Canadian Copyright Act, or the author has provided the required publication permissions. Certain works referenced herein may be separately licensed, or the author has exercised their right to fair dealing under the Canadian Copyright Act.

KIMBERLY MAIR



In Eugène Ionesco's 1959 play, *Rhinoceros*, a single rhinoceros makes a senseless interruption to routine village life, and townsfolk speculate about the dangers. As they debate whether it should be permitted that a rhinoceros should run through the streets, one by one they, themselves, transform into rhinoceroses as though via thought-contagion, and Berenger, the protagonist, anticipates and struggles against the potential for his own transformation. After WWII, some thinkers proposed that information had "lost its body," become weightless and unencumbered by material and meaning, but we still had bodies.¹ Now, information baits its prey —its counterparts are data points attached to flesh and anxious presentiment. Per-

haps anticipation has always grappled with a poorly grasped temporality. “There is a scenography of waiting,” Barthes insisted, “I organize it, manipulate it, cut out a portion of time.”² The structure of anticipation might be time itself, but not with one moment following another as its reference or cause. Not like H.G. Wells’s narrator puts it: “For years even quite bold and advanced thinkers were chased by events [...] They only realized what had really occurred long afterwards. And so they never foresaw.”³ If they had, they could put to work a negative anticipation, a kind of security against something that might be emerging but remains stubbornly inchoate or isn’t quite here now. Maybe “[t]he being I am waiting for is not real”⁴—yet. There is still time to organize security for unnoticed emergencies. Anticipation would operate “like a sixth sense,” something to which attempts at explanation and preparation give a sketchy outline, turning “a potential into a threshold to the real,”⁵ until it grew a solid border, a body, and could move by itself. Or, the thing against which anticipation mobilizes its defences was already there before you heard the faint ring of the glasses clinking on the table. At that time, it might have still been nothing, barely perceptible, nearly empty, like the glasses that wait to be refilled with apprehension. Because it was there, somewhere beyond the corner, before you heard the galloping footsteps, picking up their pace, coming around towards you, like Ionesco’s rhinoceros crashing through the morning. By then, it was already too late. Even though it had already thundered past, and could no longer get us, people had taken the shape of their fear and wore it around, like you said they would. But, perhaps, “You didn’t predict anything. You never do. You can only predict things after they’ve happened.”⁶

NOTES

1. N. Katherine Hayles. *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*. University of Chicago Press, 2008, pp.19-24. ↵
2. Roland Barthes. *A Lover’s Discourse: Fragments*. Translated by Richard Howard. London: Vintage, 1978/2002, p. 37. ↵

3. H.G. Wells. "The Shape of Things to Come." In *H. G. Wells: The Complete Novels*, 171699-171701. Book House Publishing, ebook, 2017, location 170545.↵
4. Barthes, *A Lover's Discourse*, p. 39.↵
5. Kathleen Stewart. "Atmospheric Attunements." *Rubric 1* (2010): 1-14; p. 4.↵
6. Eugène Ionesco. "Rhinoceros." In *Rhinoceros and Other Plays*, pp. 1-107. Translated by Derek Prouse. New York: Grove Press, 1960, p. 99.↵