

PROGRAMME

Fertile Imaginations: Reproductive Health in Literature

University of Fribourg
27-28 August 2026

Organised by Honor Jackson and Julia Straub

SCAN ME
FOR THE
BOOK OF
ABSTRACTS



Swiss Academy
of Humanities
and Social Sciences

SAUTE

Swiss Association of University Teachers of English



**Swiss National
Science Foundation**

Thursday, 27 August 2026		
09:00	Registration opens, Hall Mosaïque	
09:30	Welcome MIS 03 3115	
09:45	Isabel Davis (National History Museum, London): “The Cylindrical, Catoptrical, Rotundo-Concavo-Convex Machine: The Metaphor of Wind in Imagining Conception” MIS 03 3115 Chair: Kristen Curtis	
11:00	Coffee break, Hall Mosaïque	
11:30	Jennifer Heller (Lenoir-Rhyne University): “‘Great with childe to speak’: Maternal Metaphor and Material Culture in Early Modern Literature” MIS 03 3115 Chair: Honor Jackson	
12:45	Lunch at Mensa	
14:15	Panel 1, MIS 03 3014 Motherhood, Genre and Form Panel Chair: Julia Straub	Panel 2, MIS 03 3016 Maternity and Mortality Panel Chair: Marion Buchs
	Alice Hall (University of York), “Disability, Animality and Transformation: Collaboration in Claire Oshetsky’s <i>Chouette</i> ”	Rahel Orgis (University of Bern), “Fertile Absences? Mary Wroth’s representation of childbed death and its consequences in the <i>Urania</i> ”
	Roberta Garrett (University of East London), “Brave ‘Girls’ and Angry Women: The Affective Economies of Motherhood in Domestic Noir and Literary Fiction”	Laura Lazzari (The Sasso Corbaro Foundation for the Medical Humanities (Bellinzona) and Georgetown University), “Spiraling Narratives: Stillbirth and Grief in Two Contemporary Memoirs, <i>An Exact Replica of a Figment of My Imagination</i> and <i>Ghost Belly</i> ”
	Emily Anderson (University of Constance), “Motherhood and Other Magical Transformations in Rachel Yoder’s Magical Feminist novel <i>Night Bitch</i> ”	Orlagh Woods (Vilnius University), “The one that matters”: Reproductive Loss and Narrative Resistance in Emilie Pine’s <i>Notes to Self</i> (2018)
15:45	Coffee break, Hall Mosaïque	
16:15	Elizabeth Podnieks (Toronto Metropolitan University): “Postmaternal Memoirs: Motherhood, Aging, and the Rise of ‘Empty Nest’ Narratives” MIS 03 3115	

	Chair: Julia Straub
18:00	Welcome reception, Hall Mosaïque
19:30	Dinner at restaurant Molino, rue de Lausanne 93

Friday, 28 August 2026			
09:30	Lisa Smith (University of Essex): “Thinking with herbs: fertility in eighteenth-century England” MIS 03 3115 Chair: Rahel Orgis		
10:45	Coffee break, Hall Mosaïque		
11:15	Panel 3, MIS 03 3014 Non-Normative Parenthood Panel Chair: Alice Hall	Panel 4, MIS 03 3115 The Biological Clock Panel Chair: Honor Jackson	Panel 5, MIS 03 3016 Fertility and Literary Form Panel Chair: Michael Boyden
	Jennifer Cooke (University of Loughborough), “Surrogacy, Genetics, and White Supremacy in Contemporary Literature”	Honor Jackson (University of Fribourg) Securing Generation Reproductive Uncertainty in Charles Cotton's <i>Erōtopolis</i>	Leila Michelle Vaziri (University of Constance; <i>online</i>), “Pregnancy’s Affordances in Early 20th-Century Narrative Literature”
	Jemma Walton (Birkbeck College, University of London), “‘I was it. Both. All. The lot’: Surrogacy and Solo Fatherhood in Ian Mucklejohn’s Memoirs”	Jessica Edwards (Goldsmiths University), “Imagining a Reproductive Lifecycle through Premature Menopause”	Julia Straub (University of Fribourg), “Contemporary Motherhood Writing as Literary Criticism”
	Sabine von Rütte (University of Bern), “Trans/Parent Bodies: Normativity, Visibility and Trans Parental Embodiment in Krys Malcolm Belc’s <i>The Natural Mother of the Child</i> (2021)”		Marion Buchs (University of Fribourg), “Exposing the Script of Motherhood – Tactical Turn to Drama in Claudia Rankine’s <i>Plot</i> (2001) and Erica Hesketh’s <i>In the Lily Room</i> (2025)”

12:45	Lunch at Mensa	
14:15	Panel 6, MIS 03 3014 Motherhood in Perspective Panel Chair: Sabine von Rütte	Panel 7, MIS 03 3016 Abortion Stories Panel Chair: Honor Jackson
	Magdalena Rozenberg (University of Uppsala), “Mother is ill. A daughter’s intersubjective illness in the Norwegian novel ‘Mothers gift’”	Ella Berny (Queen Mary, University of London), “Bringing abortion to writing: can poetry help us tell new abortion stories?”
	Valerie Heffernan (Maynooth University), “Literary Representations of Maternal Ambivalence and Regret”	Ina Batzke (University of Augsburg), “Literary Imaginations of Abortion in Early 20th-Century US Literature”
		Ida Aaskov Dolmer (University of Southern Denmark), “Discovering Danish Abortion Literature”
15:45	Coffee break, Hall Mosaïque	
16:15 – 17:30	Final roundtable with Caroline Rusterholz, Isabel Davis and Jennifer Cooke, Room: MIS03 3115 Chairs: Honor Jackson and Julia Straub	

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