

Open Graves,
Open Minds

University of
Hertfordshire **UH**

Sea Changes: The fairytale Gothic of mermaids, selkies, and enchanted hybrids of ocean and river.

Venue: The British Library, London, UK (and online)

6–8 September 2025 (6th online)

This conference engages with cultural representations of mermaids, selkies and kindred beings: fabulous, enchanted creatures from oceans, rivers, and lakes all over the world. We look at narratives of merfolk and their kin in the light of their Gothic aspects and their connection with folklore, dwelling on the enchantment of their 'sea changes into something rich and strange' (*The Tempest*).

Keynotes:

Betsy Cornwell, author of *Tides*, 'A reading from the memoir *Ring of Salt*, drawing on the Selkie myth'

Dr Katie Garner, University of St Andrews, "Forging the mermaid in Romantic Scotland"

Assoc. Prof. Sam George, University of Hertfordshire, 'The luck of the Ningyō: Hybridity and the rise of the fake museum mermaid'

Prof. Catherine Spooner, University of Lancaster, 'Mermaid glitter: Fish scales, queer plastic and vibrant femininities'

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#GothicMermaids #SeaChanges



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