

(Re-)Imagining New Media Cultures in Art and Popular Culture at the End of the 20th Century

WORKSHOP

11th/12th October 2019

Department for Media Studies
DFG-Research Project »Van Gogh-TV.
Cataloguing, Multimedia Documentation and
Analysis of their Legacy«
(Hochschule Mainz, University of Applied Sciences &
Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-University Bonn)

The workshop (Re-)Imagining New Media Cultures in Art and Popular Culture at the End of the 20th Century deals with the interdependence between social imaginaries and new media technologies in the 1980s and 1990s.

The era at the end of the 20th century was characterized by the simultaneity between traditional mass media such as newspapers, radio and television and the emerging development of digital media. By the beginning of the 1980s, using the »computer as a medium« became a central topic of social imagination. Discussions about »digital images«, »hypertext«, »interactivity« or »multimedia« are emblematic for the emergence of new media practices in those years. Keywords like »virtual reality«, »simulation«, »network« or »cyberspace« marked a transformation of the public sphere. In connection with political events (end of the Cold War etc.) new ways of thinking about the effects on media on society emerged. This thinking was influenced by computer-based media technologies and found its expression in terms such as »post-industrial society«, »information society«, or »network society«.

Of particular importance are discourses in popular culture

and media art, which were a primary context for negotiating the effects of digital technologies on society. Historically very important is e. g. the project *Piazza Virtuale* by the media artist group Van Gogh TV, which will be given special consideration as a case study during the workshop. The project was the attempt to develop an interactive television, thus re-shaping relation between television and the public sphere. Unique in the history of television, it is an excellent example to analyze the question how artistic and performative aspects of media practices are intertwined not only with various ideas about the future of the public sphere but also with opposing concepts and agencies of media use, the factual realities of available technologies and different facets of (media-)theoretical reflections on the possibilities of »old« and »new« media.

The talks of the workshop will ask how the imaginaries around »new« media developed in the 1980s and 1990s, how the connection between »new media« and social imaginaries of that era can be grasped and how a historical reconstruction of the corresponding imaginative practices and discourses can succeed.

TIMETABLE

Friday, 11th October

09:15–09:30 Introduction

Session 1: Sociotechnical Imaginaries and the Question of New Media

09:30–10:20 **Sally Wyatt:**
Past and present metaphors and imaginaries of the internet. What they mean for future research and policy

10:20–11:10 **Simone Natale:**
Of things and thoughts: Imagining new media through artefacts and discourse

Coffee break

11:30–12:20 **Eric Kluitenberg:**
Travellers between the imaginary and the actual

Lunch break

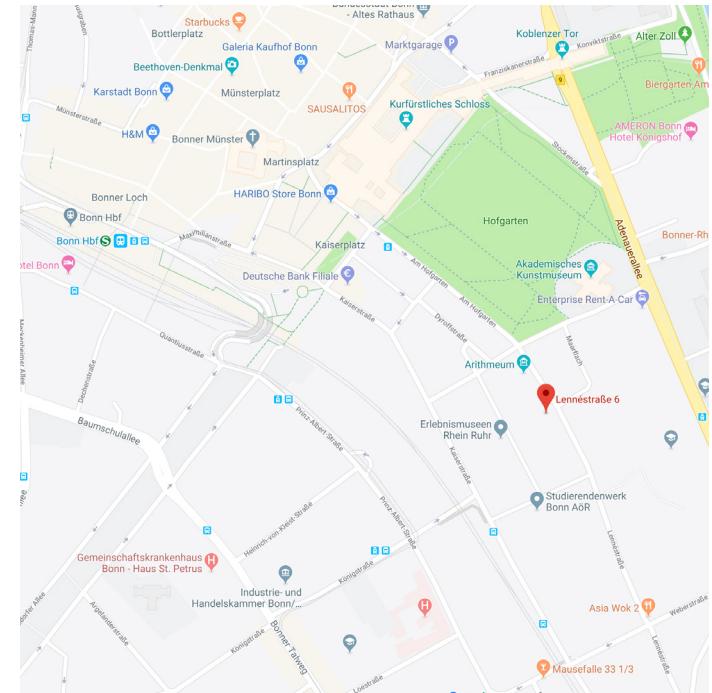
Session 2: Imagining New Media in Media Art and Popular Culture of the 1980s & 1990s

14:00–14:50 **Oliver Fahle:**
TV 1990s. Imagination and virtuality

14:50–15:40 **Till Heilmann:**
Computer images and imaginations – CGI in the early 1990s

Coffee break

16:00–16:50 **Christoph Ernst & Jens Schröter:**
Imagination via performance – Demonstrating new media in the 1980s and 1990s



Location

University Bonn
Lennéstraße 6
Room 4.001 (4th floor)

Saturday, 12th October

Session 3: Interactive Television? – The Case of »Van Gogh-TV«

10:00–12:00 **Discussion with members of Van Gogh-TV**
(Karel Dudesek, Benjamin Heidersberger, Mike Hentz, Salvatore Vanasco) on their project »Piazza Virtuale« and the media culture of the early 1990s.

Coffee break

12:20–12:50 **Final discussion & concluding remarks**



Organisation

Prof. Dr. Jens Schröter (schroeter@uni-bonn.de)
PD Dr. Christoph Ernst (cernst@uni-bonn.de)

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Please register for the event at

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Further Information
<https://www.medienwissenschaft.uni-bonn.de/re-imagining-new-media-in-art-popular-culture-at-the-end-of-the-20th-century>