

Editorial Necsus

2012

<https://doi.org/10.5117/NECSUS2012.2.EDIT>

Veröffentlichungsversion / published version
Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

NECSUS Editorial Board: Editorial Necsus. In: *NECSUS. European Journal of Media Studies*, Jg. 1 (2012), Nr. 2, S. 1–3. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5117/NECSUS2012.2.EDIT>.

Nutzungsbedingungen:

Dieser Text wird unter einer Creative Commons BY-NC-ND 4.0 Lizenz zur Verfügung gestellt. Nähere Auskünfte zu dieser Lizenz finden Sie hier:

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0>

Terms of use:

This document is made available under a creative commons BY-NC-ND 4.0 License. For more information see:

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0>

Editorial Necsus

NECSUS Editorial Board

NECSUS 1 (2):1–3

DOI: 10.5117/NECSUS2012.2.EDIT

Keywords: cinema, editorial, film, media, tangibility, television

In the second part of the much celebrated recent novel *2666* (Roberto Bolaño, 2004), a Chilean philosopher with an Italian surname teaching in a Northern Mexico university unexpectedly finds a book in his library: *Testamento geométrico*, a treatise on geometry written by a poet named Rafael Dieste. Amalfitano (the name of the philosopher) cannot recall having bought or borrowed the mysterious book. This presence deeply unsettles him, and he finds relief through a rather Duchampian gesture: he hangs the volume on a line in his backyard, exposing the treatise and its linear speculation to the action of the weather.

This short parable aims to pinpoint some oppositions at the core of the current *NECSUS* issue and of contemporary media culture overall: between abstract reading and material tangibility, then (at the turn of 20th century) between writing and image (Béla Balázs); but also between a linear, geometrical, and abstract perspective, and a much more blurred and concrete experience, between a subject-based and centripetal gaze and deterritorialized contact with the other (Deleuze & Guattari); or, finally, between a Euro-centric, classical, and hierarchical knowledge and a worldly, contemporary, and dispersed distribution of information (Laura Marks).

Tangibility is a key factor in our contemporary relationship with media – it is also the thematic focus of a special section in this issue of *NECSUS*. Its representation is evoked in such pivotal films as *Videodrome* (David Cronenberg, 1983), *eXistenZ* (David Cronenberg, 1999), and *Minority Report* (Steven Spielberg, 2002) – all very much indebted to Philip K. Dick's non-linear and centrifugal narratives. Indeed the science fiction genre is a key concern that is explored in this issue, by Stephen Zepke in his essay on cognitive estrangement and the future of science fiction cinema, Adriano

D'Aloia in his consideration of a neurophenomenology of the film experience with relation to space exploration movies, and Pepita Hesselberth in her deictic approach to the cinematic – also dealing with the future tense, as well as non-linear and centrifugal narratives – within the film *Source Code* (Duncan Jones, 2011).

When thinking of media tangibility, it suffices to occasionally take a look at a TV anchorman scrolling newspaper titles in any late night news edition, a *C.S.I.* episode, or to text our friends – either with an elaborate iPhone 5 or a rudimentary 'silly'-phone. The aporias of the handheld touchscreen are explored in this issue through an article by Timo Kaerlin, just as Wanda Strauven delivers a consideration of early cinema's touchscreens in her contribution. Tangibility, and more specifically touch, calls for a comprehensive reflection on media and their history. Just as in the past 20 years sound studies played a relevant role in shedding light on medial experience and processes, recent contributions on touch and hapticality (see work by Jennifer M. Barker or Antonia Lant) enhanced the importance and presence of senses other than sight in our relation with media, their products, and environments. Thus, the tangibility section enables media studies to reconsider its object within a broader framework, concerning wider anthropological and epistemological turns.

This perspective implies haptic perception – i.e., the role of touch in medial interaction. It considers the ways media technology and discourses address excluded senses through deceptive strategies, as in the case of stereoscopic vision or more recent theatrical 3D apparatuses. It traces and evaluates how narrative and representational strategies depict in (audio) visual texts otherwise neglected senses, from early cinema to contemporary products. It reflects upon how technological shifts affect sensory experience (for instance, the well-known analogical/digital one). It takes into account stylistic features as expressing overall epistemological transformations, as suggested at the turn of the past century in Alois Riegl's work and recently reconsidered in Marks' notion of haptic visuality. Do such medial processes enable us to detect and explore deep changes in our way to perceive and conceive experience? Do we need different phenomenological frameworks to understand and explain past and present objects? Can we trace and write a history of (changing) perception, as Walter Benjamin somehow asked for? As to some of these questions, in this issue Katharina Lindner ponders embodied difference as it relates to film and queer phenomenology; Caylin Smith identifies the analog/digital turn of history as the last ray of the dying sun (following the work of Tacita Dean); Barbara Flueckiger unspools the material properties of film in the digital age.

The opening section of issue #2 features innovative contributions from Anne Kustritz on Lady Gaga and digital commodity fetishism, James Zborowski on desire and British lifestyle television, Edward Shanken on investigatory art, and Erik Bordeleau on opacity and Tsai Ming-Liang. We would also like to draw your attention to a wonderful essay on the relocation of cinema by Francesco Casetti (author of the book *Eye of the Century*). This essay opens the issue and happens to exhibit relevant ties to the tangibility section, particularly with regards to tracing and writing a history of changing perception (and projection). Tacita Dean also becomes a crucial point of reference for Casetti and his sketching of our transitional age.

Please note that in this issue and moving forward, we introduce a dedicated film festival review section that will be edited by Marijke de Valck and Skadi Loist of the Film Festival Research Network. Readers can expect to find incisive critical explorations of a wide variety of festivals and festival culture around the world. In addition to an exhibition review section, we also feature a book review section. Beginning with issue #3 we will welcome the NECS Publication Committee (represented by Lavinia Brydon and Alena Strohmaier) as book reviews editors. We are very excited to have such dynamic editorial teams contributing their talents to *NECSUS*. Enjoy reading *NECSUS* #2. Prepare for more exciting and groundbreaking content in issue #3 and beyond.



© 2013 NECSUS Editorial Board / Amsterdam University Press.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.