

THE
NEW
ALPHA
BEAT

OPENING
DAYS

**THE NEW
ALPHABET
OPENING
DAYS**

Curated by Bernd Scherer
and Olga von Schubert

HKW

PROGRAM

25 THU, JAN 10 4:30 P.M. – MIDNIGHT
FROM ZED TO OMEGA
“WALK-IN THEATER: A BABYLON, WHOSE TOWER
DOES NOT COLLAPSE, IN BERLIN”

47 FRI, JAN 11 3:00 P.M. – 5:30 P.M.
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61 FRI, JAN 11 6:00 P.M. – 8:45 P.M.
ARCHIVE SUITE

71 FRI, JAN 11 6:00 P.M. – 8:45 P.M.
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YOU SPEAK IN YOUR SLEEP

81 THU, JAN 10 – FRI, JAN 11
SANDEEP BHAGWATI:
LISTEN [MIYAGI HAIKUS]

113 SAT, JAN 12 3:00 P.M. – 7:30 P.M.
STOP MAKING SENSE

129 SAT, JAN 12 4:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.
LOOMING CREOLE

139 SAT, JAN 12 8:00 P.M. – 11:30 P.M.
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The New Alphabet

Foreword

The world around us is increasingly being shaped by scripts and the act of writing letters and numbers: Knowledge is being negotiated on the basis of written texts. Algorithmic formulas made up of ones and zeros can initiate actions. Among the results of these technological developments are the ability of machines to now “learn” linguistic operations, and the emergence of new forms of interaction between man and machine. Crucially, these trends have now progressed to a stage in which life itself is being read as an alphabet—in the form of DNA. Alphabets are alphanumeric sign systems consisting of a limited number of discrete symbols. The letters of an alphabet can be combined to create a vast number of possibilities of communication, translation, and mathematical application. As a universal matrix that distills every linguistic term into an abstract system, alphabets also operate, however, as imperialistic infrastructures. The colonial powers brought literacy to many parts of the earth under the pretext of the superiority of literate cultures over oral cultures. Consequently, in the name of civilization and progress they not only exported their own alphabets, but also imposed colonial violence and cultural adjustment on the regions they conquered. Today digitization, algorithmic infrastructures, and molecular biology are similarly striving to establish universally readable systems of writing, which by virtue of their endeavor to fully represent all life and knowledge, are leading to a homogenized and reduced mode of thinking.

In this situation, artistic appropriations, recodings, and Creolizations feature ever more strongly in the drive to counteract the functionalization of language and codes with poetic and sensual variations.

Consequently we have invited the artists Kader Attia, Sandeep Bhagwati, Giulia Bruno & Armin Linke, Filipa César, Alexander Kluge, Trevor Paglen, Hito Steyerl; the philosophers and cultural theorists Emily Apter, Yuk Hui, Karin Harrasser, Sybille Krämer; and many others to the “The New Alphabet” Opening Days to present their own specific interpretations of these new processes of digital literacy in film, performance, and discourse in a range of highly diverse formats.

Taking place simultaneously is the *(Un-)Learning Place*, at which the collaborative, non-academic research by eight Berlin collectives and eighty international participants is being analyzed in workshops, in order to critically examine the linguistic orders of data-based knowledge and the hegemonic thought structures of extractivist capitalism. This five-day campus marks the launch of the three-year event series *The New Alphabet School*.

Over a period of three years, from 2019 to 2021, the HKW's curated longitudinal project is staging various exhibitions and implementing a program of discourse and music to explore the question of which new languages and sign systems are required to counteract the technological and scientific homogenization of our time through diversification and differentiation.

Thus "The New Alphabet" forms the concluding part of a trilogy of curated research projects initiated by the Haus der Kulturen der Welt, which kicked off with the "Anthropocene Project" (2013–14) and continued with "100 Years of Now" (2015–19).

"The Anthropocene Project" examined the material transformation process that is altering the entire earth system through a combination of technological advancement, capitalist economic forms, and fossil fuels. Finding expression in the so-called "Great Acceleration," these dynamic developments are threatening to throw the existing earth system out of kilter. The most conspicuous examples of this ongoing process of change, inexorable climate change and the attendant droughts blighting entire regions, on the one hand, and widespread flooding, on the other, are forcing people to abandon their living environments.

At the heart of "100 Years Now" lay the shift in our concept of time. Manifested in an acceleration driven by technological media, this is causing both individual and societal discontent and disruption. Interventions into the planet's deep time are taking place in tandem with real-time communications across the globe, severely disrupting the linear parameters of past, present, and future and aligning a quite different temporal logics. The altered time scales penetrate deep into societal processes and our states of consciousness, generating new nervous systems that can trigger depressive and aggressive responses.

"The New Alphabet" focuses on one of the most important accelerators driving this development, namely the binary alphabet, or the digital code, and in the view of these transformations, raises the question: Do we need

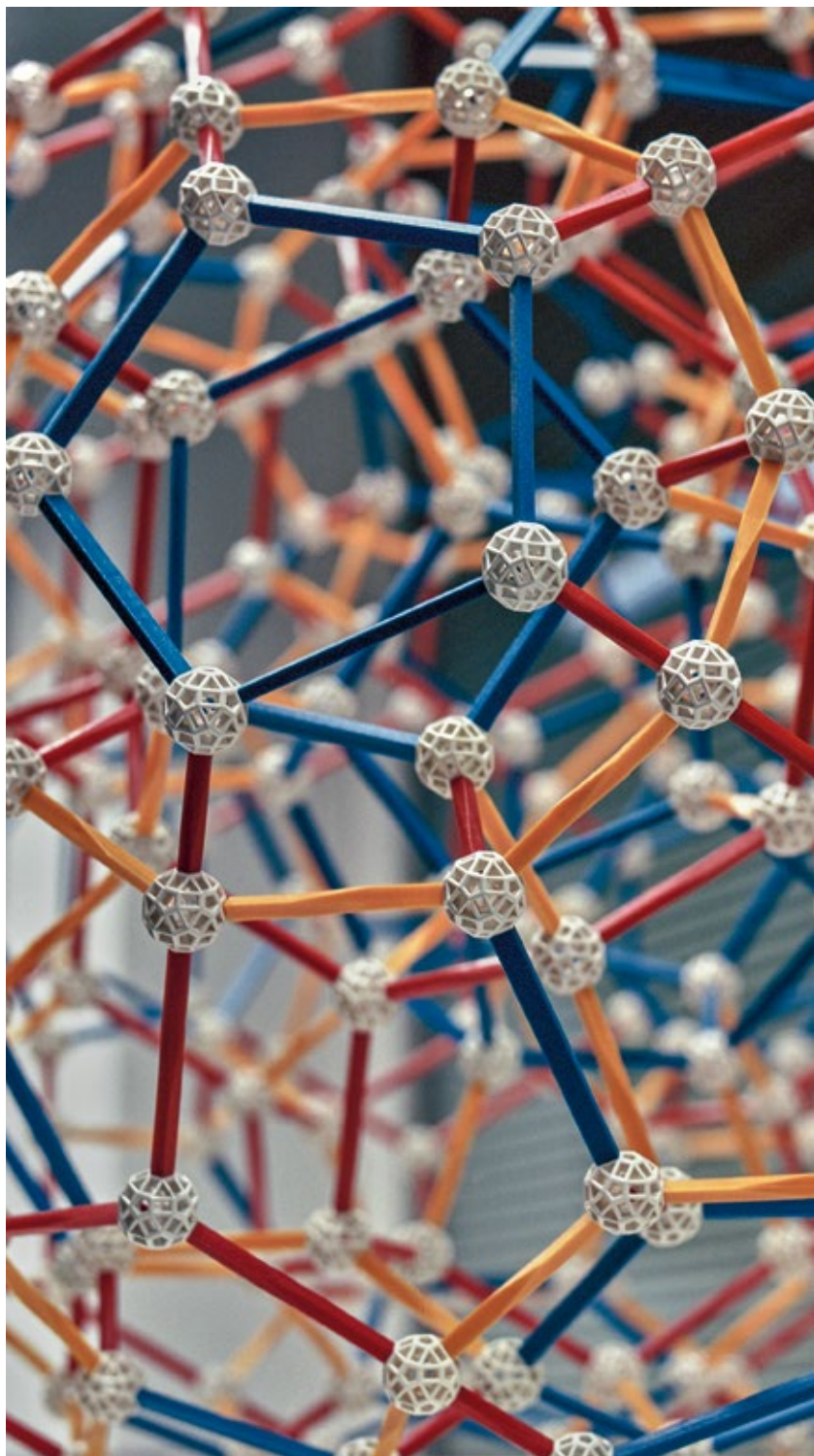
a new literacy? And what are the requirements and challenges confronting such a literacy?

We are living in an age in which, on the one hand, the fundamental changes to the earth's system are degrading humankind's foundations for life, and, on the other, the explosive pace of technological development is placing an unparalleled accumulation of power into the hands of a few global corporations.

Faced with this destabilization of the existing systems of order and categorization, and with the dynamization of the living world, the requirements of knowledge production are shifting as dramatically as those of social action. The lack of an adequate means of representation also impedes the societal politicization of these processes. This is causing power asymmetries that demand forms of politicization, which the postcolonial discourse can help bring about.

Against this background, new forms of resistance and alternative modes of thinking and living are required. "The New Alphabet" seeks to make a contribution to this endeavor.

Bernd Scherer and Olga von Schubert



From the series *Sisyphus, Untitled #2* © Kata Geibl

Das Neue Alphabet / The New Alphabet

Bernd Scherer

Having evolved over generations, our notions of reality are now being turned upside down. The world we live in is undergoing a fundamental transformation. We encounter taxi firms without a fleet of vehicles, and companies that don't possess rooms but offer accommodation. We purchase goods from retail chains that are already aware of what we wish to buy. We are bemused by cars without steering wheels, motoring driverless on the roads. New business models are emerging, and existing power structures are shifting.

Via the new media, we are witnessing an excessive growth in the body of knowledge to which we are afforded access. At the same time, our traditional categories and concepts no longer serve to help us understand this transformation and thus to participate in the social discourse.

These trends are driven by a capitalism that avails itself of the predictability provided by the digital technologies, which are leveraging a specific development in the concept of alphabets. Alphabets are characterized by their finite number of discrete and therefore distinct characters (Sybille Krämer, *The Discrete Charm of the Alphabet*). The highest level of abstraction found in alphabets is represented by the binary code. It comprises just two distinguishing symbols, 1 and 0, which have no intrinsic significance. The binary code facilitates the segmentation of the analogue continuum into discrete and therefore computational units. As a formal language, it can be operated by machines.

The machines of the digital world operate on the basis of algorithms. Algorithms break down operations into single steps and stipulate the routines that operate with these elements, based on a specific, predetermined schema. This explains why it is not necessary for the person or machine using the schema to understand what they are doing. The operation is purely physical in nature. The binary code provides the symbols the machine must read in order to implement the algorithms. All decisions are taken on the coding level—within the operational processes everything is predetermined; there are no decisions to be made.

The binary code was developed during the Baroque by Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716) in order to facilitate a machine-based approach to solving mathematical problems. Perhaps it is no coincidence that close scrutiny of our own age reveals many similarities to the Baroque era (Karin Harrasser, *Archive Suite*). During the Baroque, the global process of exchange became established for the first time in history. Under the then politically and economically asymmetrical power structures, silver from Latin America was exchanged for enslaved people from Africa and silk from China. European ships brought commodities from across the globe to Europe.

Along with the exponential growth in the flow of goods, there was a veritable explosion in our body of knowledge. The cabinets of curiosity were constantly being filled with new objects—as yet uncategorized and unnamed. It was a time characterized by excessive accumulation of both material and knowledge, which often lay outside the existing modes of thought and systems of classification. In addition to the curiosity cabinets, academic institutes such as The Royal Society in London or the Académie française in Paris were established in 1660 and 1635 respectively. Their founding mission was to debate, classify, and evaluate knowledge. As associations of experts, the academies were expected to furnish society with access to, and an orientation in, these new worlds.

The philosopher who elaborated both a praxis and a theoretical model for navigating this world was the very same Leibniz who invented the binary code. In his *Monadology*, he developed a theoretical system based on a cosmology of perspectives. This cosmology is made up of bodies: monads that form one unit. It is a world in which all bodies are interrelated and react to each other. The monads are the perceptions through which the external world is represented internally. Due to the potential bond uniting one unit in the world with the others, each single monad reflects the entire world, and consequently each monad has a universal perspective. Universalism, therefore, is not located on the level of objects, but on the level of perception. It invariably offers a view onto the entire world, but also from a particular perspective, a particular universalism. Within Leibniz's cosmology of perspectives, there is never one entire ontological overview of the world, but always and only partial insights.

And this is where the praxis of Leibniz begins. It is a praxis intended to facilitate the inter-exchange of perspectives. For example, he cultivated an exchange of letters and

manuscripts with over a hundred correspondents across the world. Under his theoretical model of monadology each correspondent constitutes a monad in possession of its own worldview or perspective. To Leibniz, the academies being founded during this time were simply monads of a higher level, on which they were unifying to formulate a common worldview. As worldviews are invariably particular, they are also negotiable; no one can claim to have an invariant, universal knowledge—not even the academies.

Of greater import is that the monadology does not require the dualistic categorization of the nascent modernity. Not only people are perceived as monads, but also animals and machines—for they too possess perceptions. In their interaction with human beings, they assume an active role, even if their perspectives are, according to Leibniz, not located on the same level as those of humans. He thus posited a cosmology that assigned to non-human creatures an active role in the process of world-creation. And he went a step further: even the parts of the human body—hands, feet, and so on—are in themselves monads. This allows him to attribute to these parts their own perceptual processes. Consequently, according to Leibniz, our hands and feet possess their own perceptions and, by extension, ways of accessing the world—an insight that plays a fundamental role in today’s sensor technology.

In his monadology, Leibniz developed a cosmology that facilitated a modeling of the manifold knowledge-production processes of his age. At the same time, however, he fashioned an instrument and a praxis that enabled the representation of knowledge. Through correspondence with Jesuits in China, where his principal interest lay in the ideographic script used by the Chinese, he developed this instrument to serve the praxis of monadology. Yet beyond a classification system, as was also developed by Raimundus Lullus, for example, his other chief objective was to establish a formalism in the representation of all available knowledge. His basic idea was an “alphabet of human thought” in which all existing ideas are derived from just a handful of fundamental concepts, which are assigned simple character elements. The formation of complex concepts and thus the generation of an entire body of knowledge is performed subsequently as a character operation predicated on the rules of a calculus.

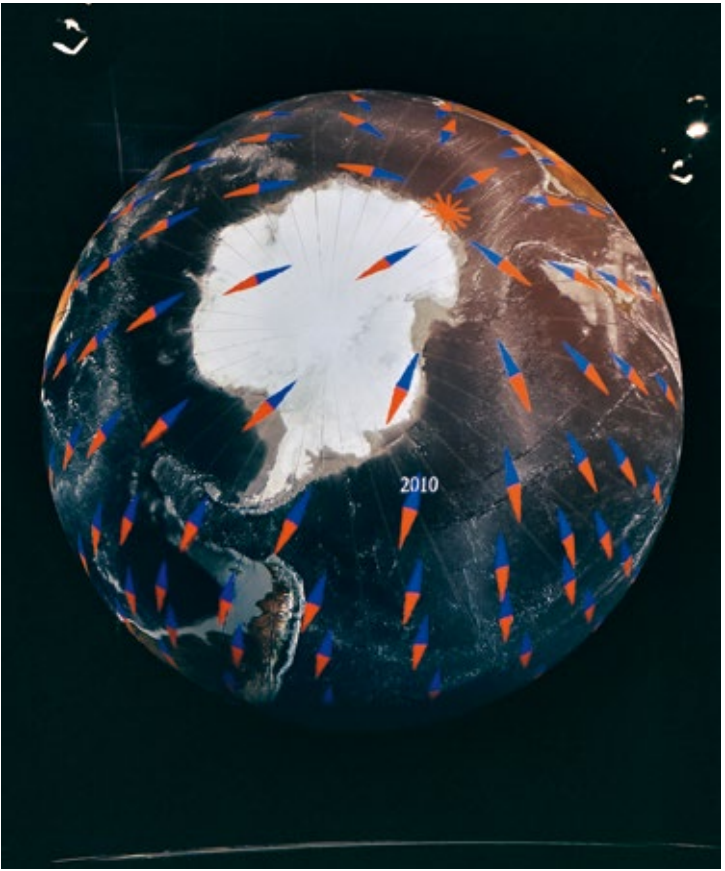
Here Leibniz was able to take recourse to a crucial discovery of his own. As already mentioned, he had already invented the binary code, which subsequently was to become the foundation for digitization. His characters

serve as the basic symbols for representing the entire arithmetic in one calculus. A calculus comprises one basic figure and a set of basic rules, which allow for the production of more complex characters. And using this fundamental constellation, all operations can be performed by a machine. Leibniz applied this procedure to the entire body of knowledge. Since in his universal language program (the *characteristica universalis*) the basic signs were connected to his fundamental basic concepts, all the concepts of our knowledge could be generated from these basic concepts by calculation—thus creating an alphabet of thought. Leibniz then went a step further by applying this procedure to sentences in order to generate all possible true sentences through calculus.

Understanding the link between monadology and the *characteristica universalis* was decisive for the further development of knowledge. By means of these characters, the universal language generated in the calculus refers to concepts, and thus to already objectified knowledge. It expresses the knowledge of a specific time, and has the capacity to reveal certain relationships that are not immediately apparent. This attained crucial significance during the Baroque era as our body of knowledge literally exploded. Here the “knowledge alphabet” provides an instrument to aid navigation through the constantly expanding worlds of knowledge. In contrast, the monadology is a model for examining how knowledge is generated in the first place: The answer: through the perspectives, the forms of perception of the monads—whereby the perspectives of the monads are reflections of all aspects of one monad in interaction with all others.

Viewed against the backdrop of the Leibniz program, the current situation of digital capitalism can be described as one in which the model of monadological knowledge production is being increasingly displaced by the instrument of the alphabetization of knowledge, which is predicated on the objectification of knowledge. Supplanting the knowledge society is the “extractive society.”

Fundamentally, this process consists of dividing up the world into the smallest possible discrete units, to be fed into the machines of the digital world as data. These units are generated as data in the digitization process, under which the continuous physical world is segmented into discrete units as in the binary code. For instance, an analogue photograph is digitized when it is transformed into a file, which is made up of grid-like points or pixels, to which a color value is then assigned.



From the series *Sisyphus, Untitled #10* © Kata Geibl

This example shows how, by means of digitization, a world of data is created and facilitates the expression of our world of experience with the aid of a formal syntax. At the same time, a diverse array of media, images, tones, type sets, and so on, can be represented across the same level. All information is separated into the smallest basic units, which can then be combined freely. These units are not monads in the Leibniz sense of the word, but separate, discrete segmented objects, devoid of any system of reference.

Monadological knowledge-production processes only feature in the determination of the discrete units—as is the case in the process of programming, which is performed by experts. The units of data are now already objectified knowledge, and the routines performed on the machines are of a purely physical nature. Consequently, it is crucial to understand how these basic units are generated and the role played by programming.

In discussions on understanding what life is, the determination of these fundamental units assumes a highly controversial role. Concurrent with the secularization of key areas of society, many scientists began to harbor the dream of humankind creating life itself. Their project underwent its first florescence in the kitchens of the Renaissance and Baroque alchemists. Via the Faustian myth of the eighteenth century and the figure of Frankenstein in the early nineteenth century, these notions entered into the cultural memory. And today they are experiencing a renewed revival in the digitized technological landscape of California, where dreams range from the creation of particularly intelligent life forms—or prolonging life or even achieving eternal life—to the so-called technological singularity: an omniscient technological entity (Yuk Hui, MEHL, *The Discrete Charm of the Alphabet*).

This revival is attributable essentially to the close links between biology, on the one hand, and information science and digital technology, on the other, which appear to hold the genuine prospect of intervening fundamentally in life itself. This relationship, however, has itself only been made possible by a specific definition of the basic unit of life and, by extension, of what life actually is.

The determination of the basic unit of life traces back to the early twentieth century when Darwin's evolutionary theory was combined with Gregor Mendel's theory of genetics (Lorraine Daston, Julia Voss, *From Zed to Omega*). This led to genetic differentiation being identified as an explanation of Darwin's concept of natural selection. Genetic information is carried by the chromosomes, which are an essential part of the cell structure. In sexual reproduction, the germ cells protect the chromosomes, thus enabling—according to theory—the self-reproduction of the organism. In essence, life appears to be defined by the basic genetic structure. This concept gained greater credence in the 1950s with the discovery of the stability and self-producing properties of DNA.

Initially, however, it was not clear that DNA was a genetic code. This theory only emerged from the contemporaneous research into cybernetics, information theory, and computer science, which started to confirm the interpretation of DNA as a self-regulating communications system that transmitted information via the proteins. The answer to the question "What is life?" was thus unequivocal: "Life is information." The objective of the research was to decipher the alphabet of life, in the form of DNA (the acronym of our title "Das Neue Alphabet" alludes to DNA).

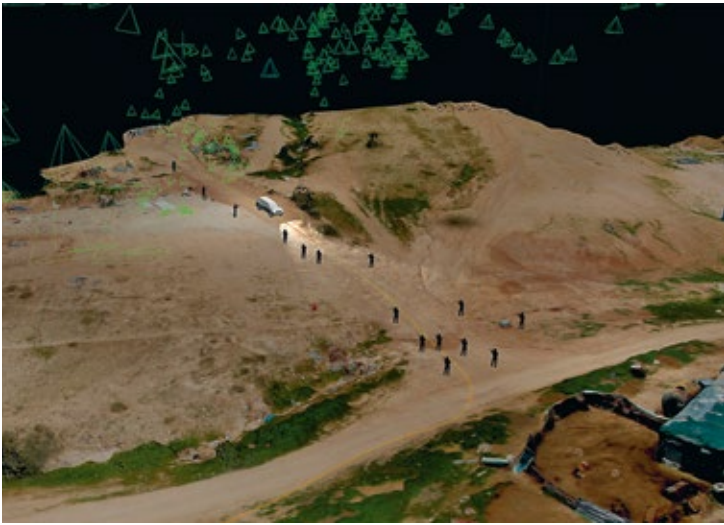
This ultimately paved the way for the “Human Genome Project”—one of the flagship Big Science projects.

Underpinning this entire development was initially the ability to identify DNA as the foundation of life, and subsequently to read this as a code and exploit the discreteness of the alphabet, which allowed basic units to be machine-processed as data. It was the prodigious processing power of modern computers that then enabled the code to be cracked. This breakthrough was accompanied by the belief that the foundations were now in place to be able in future not only to “read” life but also to technologically manipulate it, for example by isolating genes deemed responsible for specific diseases. By virtue of the computer, life had become operationalized (Guiseppe Longo, *The Discrete Charm of the Alphabet*).

The Human Genome Project highlighted just how many basic assumptions flow into the construction of the smallest units, which, now as data and thus objectified objects, serve as the foundation for computational operations in the world of machines, which started to fundamentally reshape our understanding of the world.

In recent years, however, these basic assumptions have been cast into doubt as it has become increasingly obvious that the genome is not a separable basic unit from which life can be generated in complete isolation. On the contrary, it is embedded within a network of interactive relationships, integrated into both natural and historical processes. Not only is the cell the historical product of free-living bacteria, but DNA is also partly of viral origin. Consequently, human evolution is inconceivable without this encounter with these viruses and the interaction with bacteria. Therefore, the focus now should be directed at the ecological relationship between diverse actors, rather than on one individual object. The genome is not a fundamental unit in the Leibniz sense, but rather a monad or a partial human monad embedded within a variety of interactive relations. To understand life, therefore, it is necessary to focus on the dynamics of these interaction processes. This would signify, however, that life is no longer directly manipulable through technological operations—the premise upon which the Genome Project is predicated (Johannes Krause, *From Zed to Omega*).

The history of science through to the Genome Project shows how infinitely diverse extracts of the world and of life can be separated into discrete units on the basis of scientific theory. According to Leibniz, the world is reproduced from specific perspectives by interrupting a



Reconstruction of a police operation using photogrammetry and 3D modeling
© Forensic Architecture, 2018

potentially infinite process of division at a certain juncture in order to generate discreteness. These perspectives are no longer present in the final outcome of this process, in our case the genome; they are declared as an invariant, that is, indistinguishable and thus objectified.

This example also shows that the most diverse assumptions flow into such a process, among them, the notion that the world is constructed from the smallest units, from which everything can then be generated. But when, in order to understand life, we must consider entire ecologies involving many actors, does it make sense, at least in the realm of life, to operate with such units?

Attention has until now only been directed at the knowledge aspect of this process, in which these fundamental units are objectified. However, this process also contains an economic dimension. For under digital capitalism, the objectification of life, its reduction to discrete and thus manipulable data, also facilitates commodification (Hito Steyerl, *Stop Making Sense*).

Just how this process looks in detail can be explained using a health app as an example, which highlights the role played by the programming of the machines. The task of the health app is to record and communicate all the relevant health data of the app users, which can or rather should also change their behavior and self-perception. Data and specific statistical parameters complement or conflict

with emotions and modes of perception, and this can influence how the users shape and plan their lives. At the same time, this data is also collated and analyzed by health insurers, which may prompt new product specifications in the health sector, and possibly even a reappraisal of the very concept of health and disease. The app not only establishes a technology that impacts on the life and behavior of one individual person, it also facilitates the collation of one person's data with that of others from across the world. And links can not only be established to health-relevant information, but also to insurance data and even to the state security apparatus, as is currently proceeding apace in China. Health insurers or the state are then able to introduce a ranking points system, awarding penalties or premiums to citizens: for example, for engaging in sports activities that are beneficial to health. Pharmaceutical companies are also enabled to adapt their range of products accordingly.

In this way, digital technology is impinging on analogue reality and in the process forging complex psycho- and socio-technological living environments. But the system of reference framed by Big Data between the individual data sets is, by the same token, not monadic. For this fundamental process entails simply breaking down existing reality into the smallest possible units, out of which entire new worlds can then be constructed. Which particular worlds are to be built is contingent upon how the machines are programmed. Knowledge processes are being fed into the system, akin to Leibniz's monadic perceptions. As such, they invariably reflect only particular extracts of the world, which under the monadology theory would then be societally negotiated. De facto, however, they are already excluded from the social discourse by virtue of their division into discrete objects, and are increasingly dictated by market or state interests.

Yet they not only reflect these interests, but also other societal power structures, such as prejudicially racist or gender-specific structures, that are inscribed into the categorization of the programs. The crucial factor here is that these categorizations—which by virtue of their objectification are disbarred from the social discourse—create worlds by writing themselves into the societal processes (Kate Crawford, Trevor Paglen, *Stop Making Sense*). In place of the knowledge society—in which, according to the monadology theory, everyone is participating in the production of knowledge, each from their own particular perspective—the so-called “extractive society” has established

itself, through the instrument of digitization and the attendant implicit objectification and commodification processes.

The health app is a minor example that helps shed light on the impact of digital infrastructures. These essentially also control the infrastructures with which we are rebuilding the planet—from the flow of goods to the flow of energy, from human mobility to the financial markets. On the international currency markets alone, daily trading volumes average some three trillion US dollars. This highlights how with the aid of digital technology vast sums of money are being sent around the globe, and they frequently intervene in local economies, with serious social and political repercussions.

The same applies to the material and energy flows, which, for example, in the event of war, are then redirected. Technologies not only control individual infrastructures, they also interconnect them. Such networked infrastructures have come to form—alongside the geosphere and the biosphere—a further sphere, namely the technosphere. Linked to the exploitation of fossil energies (such as mineral oil, coal, gas) and nuclear energy, the technosphere's interventions in the earth's system have been so profound that scientists have declared a new geological era: the Anthropocene, to which the HKW has been devoting a longitudinal project since 2012, and which represents a stark manifestation of the fact that humankind has become a planetary force.

These transformations are so far-reaching that the fundamental concepts governing our understanding of the world are proving to be inadequate, such as the nature/culture differentiation or the concept of time. The natural environment we encounter today has been manufactured by humankind. At the same time, we are subject to temporal rhythms in which our planet's deep time is superimposed not only by normal life cycles, but also by ever-accelerating real-time communications around the globe.

Thanks to digitization, these infrastructures are becoming increasingly interconnected, prompting the emergence of a complex technosphere in which technologies, now decoupled from human agency, are starting to “cooperate” with each other. Thus increasingly the images from surveillance cameras are being read by other machines, instead of by human beings. Due to the application of *facial recognition* technologies, selection processes are taking place at railway stations, motorways, and so on. And the machine-driven control of weapons is already a reality in modern warfare.

Consequently, these processes are becoming increasingly removed from direct human control and responsibility, which now solely rests with the programming of the machines, into which, as discussed above, values and power asymmetries are integrated. As these are determined in the programmers' laboratories, they elude public scrutiny.

The most cutting-edge developments portending perhaps the most profound future changes are currently taking place in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Here a stage has already been reached where, through *deep learning*, machines are now learning from other machines, or rather machines are advancing their knowledge with the aid of everyday data. To what extent these learning processes are analogous to human processes, which they will eventually replace, is still a matter of academic debate (Giulia Bruno & Armin Linke, Luc Steels, *Stop Making Sense*). Whatever the case, Leibniz conferred the status of monads upon machines—and thus assigned them an autonomous role as participating actors in the construction of the world.

Digital culture, in the form of the Internet, has also driven the rise of English as the universal language (Vincenzo Latronico, *The Three Tongues You Speak in Your Sleep*). The Internet facilitates real-time communications across the globe. This has fueled the emergence of social networks, both in the realm of economics and in knowledge production, areas where an engagement in permanent dialogue necessitates a communications medium. Infrastructures and institutions play a decisive role in the selection of this communications medium—as can be observed in the knowledge sector. In December 2004, Google collaborated with five leading libraries in the USA and Great Britain to launch the mammoth “Google Book Search Library Project.” The goal of the project was to digitize the entire stock of books in these libraries and render them accessible to the world in a database; that is, in the form of a universal library.

Meanwhile, other such digitization projects are now being implemented across the globe, for example in China, where since 1949 some 1.3 million books have been published in Mandarin. The difference is that only speakers of Mandarin have access to these books. Although this represents a vast number of people—Mandarin is the most widely spoken language—all bilingual speakers around the world have access to the English texts, which means a universal readership.

Equally decisive, however, are the access criteria and selection mechanisms. The challenge of the digitized

universal library is the sheer ever-expanding quantity of texts, which far outstretch a person's ability to access in one lifetime. Consequently, among other things, search engines are required. Accordingly, it is no coincidence that as Google rolled out the Library project, it simultaneously made available a search engine for accessing this immense quantity of texts.

This circumstance is compounded by the dominance of English-speaking universities and science journals, which stipulate the evaluation standards in the knowledge sector, increasingly requiring authors keen to command international attention to publish in English. This, in turn, acts as an incentive to those hungry for knowledge to at least learn English as a second language.

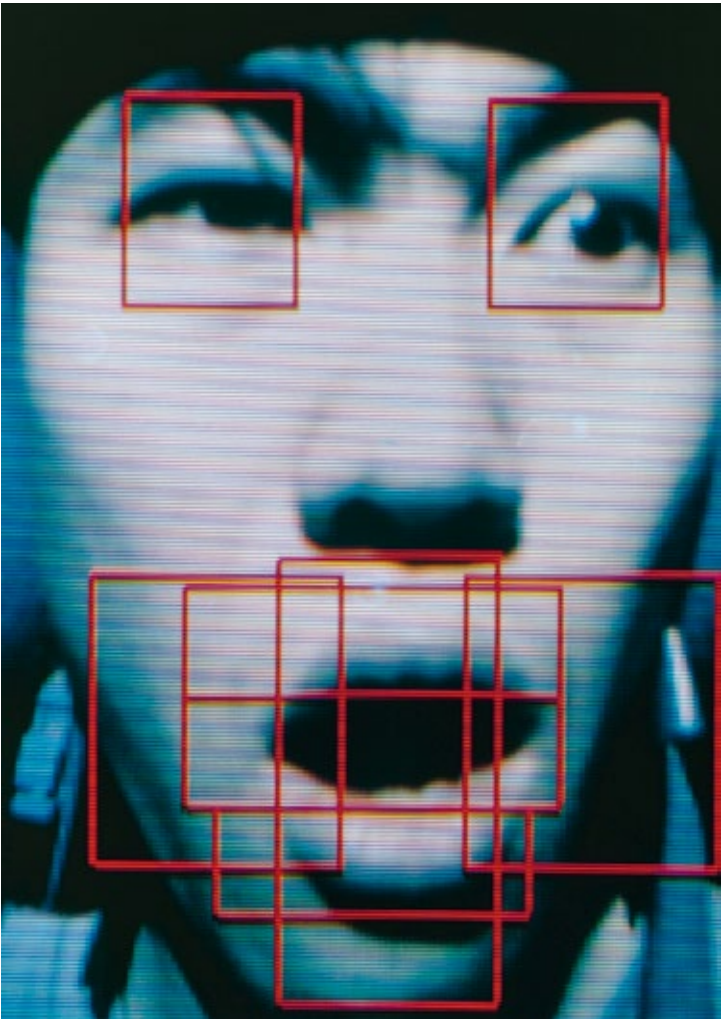
Although the Internet has eased the elevation of English to lingua franca, it has, at the same time, aided other languages. Languages once suppressed under national linguistic policies are now resurfacing on the Internet. Local and regional tongues, which would be unable to survive in the long term in the classical media, such as books or newspapers, have here found a written medium.

However, the use of most languages remains confined to their respective linguistic communities. For example, languages such as French, German, Hindi, and Japanese are losing significance due to the dominance of English, and regressing into merely local phenomena whose untranslatable singularities do not gain access to global discourse (Emily Apter, *The Three Tongues You Speak in Your Sleep*).

It is evident that the digital culture cannot be perceived as a particular realm; symbiotic relationships are being forged, one could even claim that entire ecologies are emerging from these co-evolutionary processes—as in this case, through the networking of the Internet's knowledge-oriented infrastructures and institutions with the natural languages.

A further co-evolutionary field is that of art, which in recent decades has undergone rapid globalization through the most diverse institutions, such as biennials, museums, and the art market. Accompanying this trend has been the growth of an autonomous, distinct form of English, shaped by discourse, fashion, and so on, which is penetrating into various local and regional spaces, where it is starting to define terminology and debate—a process which is attracting increasingly critical analysis and commentary by artists.

As already mentioned, one outcome of these processes is the hegemony of English as the lingua franca,



Face mapping for a Japanese opera simulation
© Philippe Plailly / Science Photo Library

alongside the establishment of institutions such as search engines, and global universities acting as commercial enterprises. Operating progressively less as academies or as Leibniz monads of the second order, such institutions objectify knowledge in the form of data, and societal discourse on the purported indistinguishability of the participating perspectives is suspended.

However, there are also counter-models to the dominance of the English language. The European Union has enshrined multilingualism within its constitution (Giulia Bruno, Armin Linke, *The Three Tongues You Speak in Your Sleep*). As a consequence, the European Court of Justice

maintains its own 2000-strong department in order to represent the 24 languages of the EU in legal proceedings. The working language of the judges is French. Due to the principle of linguistic diversity, a permanent negotiation between different sets of values, world constructions, and cultural encodings is taking place. Yet this diversity of perspectives is not only accommodated on a linguistic level; the perspectives present within the languages are in each specific case being updated by the respective actors and thus becoming renegotiable—a process that could never be articulated within the framework of one single hegemonic language

However, beyond these counter models to the hegemony of English, further new structures have been evolving in recent years, even in the fields of economics and finance. These are aimed at identifying alternative technologies to replace the commodification of our experiential and living world under the hegemonic business models that have been generated through the concentration of technological infrastructures in the hands of just a few institutions.

One such alternative is the blockchain technology, which operates with cryptocurrencies, and which formed the foundation for the introduction of the Bitcoin (Simon Denny, *Stop Making Sense*). This digital currency is based on a decentralized public ledger system. With the aid of a distributed network of computers, transfers are conducted via the Internet in special *peer-to-peer* applications, rendering superfluous a settlement center, such as a bank. The cryptographic technology ensures that transactions are only initiated by the respective Bitcoin owners. And it is the interaction of all the participants, the aggregated individual supply and demand, which determines the value of the currency.

This is to avoid third parties, located beyond the individuals and the community, capitalizing personally on the actions, needs, and interests of the actors, as is the case under digital capitalism. The intention here is to establish a financial technology predicated on cosmological perspectivism. To what extent this technology can deliver on its objective of creating a new societal and individual model only time will tell. After all, the Internet was also originally launched with the aim of establishing a technology for networking individuals to enable their modes of perception and thought to develop across boundaries.

The role of hegemonic languages manifests particularly in colonial contexts. This applies not only to verbal

languages but also to other media such as music (Sandeep Bhagwati, *LISTEN [Miyagi Haikus]*, Karin Harrasser, *Archive Suite*). In the Bolivian lowlands Baroque music served the Jesuits as a means to force the indigenous population into a sedentary lifestyle, and as an instrument for imposing governance and evangelization. After the expulsion of the Jesuits, the music scores were handed down and copied, and came to form part of an autonomous vernacular tradition, which has survived until the present day thanks to these notation systems.

Whilst here a reinterpretation of an archived hegemonic culture took place, the resistance struggles of other oppressed societies have also spawned a range of strategies for decoding and recoding the hegemonic language. For example, on the basis of his own agronomic studies in Portugal, Amílcar Cabral from Portuguese Guinea recoded agronomic textual knowledge to address the mechanisms of land and soil exploitation by the colonial masters (Filipa César, *Looming Creole*).

In addition to the decoding and recoding of hegemonic languages, forms of an autonomous alphabet were founded or preserved in Guinea-Bissau, for example in the weaving practices of the womenfolk, a method that assumed the role of a secret language against the colonial power. This enabled the oppressed people to establish a form to communicate between themselves, which lay beyond the control of the hegemonic power—a tradition that is being continued today in indigenous film projects with their own visual language designed to counter the pictorial exploitation of their landscape and cultures.

Digital capitalism literally extracts the forms of expression from living bodies, expropriating and then ushering them into a virtual world. In this context, it is important to recall that societies have always possessed techniques for forging contact and operating with virtual worlds. Healers in African societies today still carry out such practices (Kader Attia, *Countering Virtual Dispossession*). Perhaps now is the time to revive such techniques to enable individuals and societies alike to reappropriate the objectified human perspectives in virtual spaces.

It is now patently obvious: Against the backdrop of an extractive digital capitalism, which is permanently transforming expressions of life into commodities and, in the process, transforming the knowledge society into an “extractive society,” the objective must be to regain a diversity of perspectives on both a societal and an individual level. Instead of digital *connectivity*, a community

must emerge whose members are all actively participating in the world-creation process. Ultimately, this entails implementing the entire Leibniz program: The alphabet program of the *characteristica universalis* must be complemented by the perspective cosmology of the Monadology.

THURSDAY, JAN 10

4:30 P.M. – MIDNIGHT

FROM ZED
TO OMEGA
“WALK-IN
THEATER:
A BABYLON,
WHOSE
TOWER
DOES NOT
COLLAPSE,
IN BERLIN”

FROM ZED TO OMEGA

“WALK-IN THEATER: A BABYLON, WHOSE TOWER DOES NOT COLLAPSE, IN BERLIN”

Curated by Alexander Kluge

Against the backdrop of an increasingly digitized world, Alexander Kluge is staging an evening event focusing on how our present is being structured both by alphabetic and molecular infrastructures and by the new algorithmic codes, and how, viewed from the perspective of the tent, the island, the circus, or the alchemists' kitchen, these can be encountered with a greater sense of reality. At the same time, the program is also a “walk-in theater,” a cohesive workshop, and a public event. The initial letters of the three words forming the German title “Das Neue Alphabet” combine to denote the alphabet we carry inside us every day: our embodiment within evolution. The core themes of the Opening Night are the elements of human expression—those in operation before the



invention of writing, literacy, and digitality (from G. W. Leibniz to Silicon Valley). The objective is to present a holistic context across all rooms of the House, accompanied by films, music, art objects, and scientific expertise. Translating into the twenty-first century the principle of the Renaissance “cabinet of curiosities,” in which science, art, music, literature, and magic were arbitrarily combined, the program brings together artists, musicians, poets, prosaists, and scientists from the most diverse backgrounds—also incorporating mathematics, technology, and digital praxis. The main thrust of the program is aimed at fostering multidisciplinary collaboration.

The film and video crews, supervised by Thomas Willke, Walter Lenertz, Jakob Krebs, and Philip Banse, will be continuously filming the podium events and the accompanying workshops. The goal is to document the outcomes of the discussions that will serve as a basis for further research within the framework of the overall project.



Alexander Kluge: "Wenn ich Roboter wär..." (with Helge Schneider) © Kairos Film 2018

Philip Banse, Ulf Buermeyer, Ann Cotten, Steffi Czerny, Lorraine Daston, Philipp Ekardt, Katja Gentinetta, Jürgen Groß, Beatrice Gründler, Harald Haarmann, Andrej Heinke, Hannelore Hoger, Ernst Kausen, Alexander Kluge, Sybille Krämer, Johannes Krause, Ben Lerner, Christoph Marksches, Christoph Menke, Andrea Moses, Hermann Parzinger, Nahed Samour, Peter Schäfer, Bernd Scherer, Helge Schneider, Max Senges, Richard Sennett, Sir Henry, Christoph Streckhardt, Thomas Thiede, Rosemarie Tietze, Dirk von Lowtzow, Joseph Vogl, Julia Voss

EXHIBITION HALL 1

4:30 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.

INTRODUCTION

Bernd Scherer and Olga von Schubert

Welcoming Address: Rüdiger Kruse (Member of the Bundestag, CDU)

FOYER

ONGOING

THOMAS THIEDE AND THE ALPHABET CART

PERFORMANCE | DE, EN

VARIOUS PLACES IN THE BUILDING

ONGOING

MINUTE OPERAS

PERFORMANCE | DE

Andrea Moses and her directing class at the University of Performing Arts Ernst Busch, in collaboration with the acting class at Berlin University of the Arts, supervised by the dramaturgist Marion Hirte.

AUDITORIUM + VORTRAGSSAAL

ONGOING

FILMS AND ARTISTIC CONTRIBUTIONS

EXHIBITION HALL 1

5:00 P.M. – 6:30 P.M.

PANEL 1

EVOLUTION IN OUR HANDS: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, HUMAN POTENTIAL, AND THE FUTURE

CONVERSATION | DE ↔ EN

In our present time, Industry 4.0 and the digital age have joined forces with writing. This new epoch has unleashed evolutionary and also disruptive (“revolutionary”) forces, some of which do not belong to the natural world, but are forging a second nature. Traditional reality is being superseded or overlaid by a new reality. Whether or not we are able to apprehend the new signs of the algorithms, data networks, and Artificial Intelligence in their full dimensions remains to be seen.

Ann Cotten (writer), Steffi Czerny (curator), Katja Gentinetta (political philosopher), Andrej Heinke (futurologist),

Sybille Krämer (philosopher), Jürgen Groß (head of research at Bosch), Max Senges (philosopher of technology at Google), Joseph Vogl (philosopher and literary theorist), moderated by Julia Voss (art historian)

AUDITORIUM**6:30 P.M. – 7:30 P.M.**


THE ROBOT WHISPERER

FILMS AND ARTISTIC PROGRAM | DE

Helge Schneider (musician and comedian)

EXHIBITION HALL 1**7:30 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.**

PANEL 2**EVOLUTION AND LANGUAGE: WHAT ARE THE ALPHABETS OF INTELLIGENCE AND QUO VADIS INTELLIGENCE?**

LECTURES AND DISCUSSION | DE ↔  EN

“In what can we trust?” This question stands at the beginning of classical philosophy (and theology). One is minded to reply spontaneously: “In ourselves.” But what is this self? Our predatory instincts? The various capacities of societies to commit mass murder? Who or what in our world is a subject? The scope must be extended to incorporate the prehistory of the Blue Planet, that is, its deep time, in order to establish the foundations for orienting ourselves in the twenty-first century. One favorable perspective is that all Artificial Intelligence has grown from the same soil as the living—on which we also live with our corporeally bound intelligence. The question remains: “Who is the hare and who is the hedgehog? The things or us humans?”

Lorraine Daston (historian of science), Harald Haarmann (philologist and cultural theorist), Ernst Kausen (philologist), Johannes Krause (archaeogeneticist), Hermann Parzinger (archeologist and prehistorian), moderated by Julia Voss (art historian)

PANEL 3**THE LETTERS OF CREATION**

CONVERSATION | DE ↔ 🎧 EN

Letters are not technical. In many cultures letters also have a numerical value. In the Kabbala they are the numbers of God. Both (numbers and letters) are living creatures. That which in children or adults “learns,” is among the most vital traits and forces human beings possess.

Beatrice Gründler (Arabic literary scholar), Nahed Samour (scholar of law and Islamic studies), Peter Schäfer (Judaic scholar), Richard Sennett (sociologist), moderated by Christoph Marksches (theologist and church historian)

ALTERNATING BETWEEN**6:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.****VORTRAGSSAAL AND AUDITORIUM****9:30 P.M. – 11:00 P.M.**

PANEL 4**ORIENTATION IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY,
WHEN THE ALPHABET ALONE NO LONGER
SUFFICES: WE KNOW WHAT WE DON'T KNOW /
NEWS FROM THE NARRATION**

WORKSHOP AND CONVERSATION | DE ↔ 🎧 EN

The poets Ben Lerner from New York and Ann Cotten from Vienna are advocates of the “rebellion of the words.” Their objective is to utilize the freedoms of narration (subjectively saturated information), as a complement to the world of data (i.e. raw information). This is an authentic task of literature and concerns the “poetic power of theory.”

Readings, film screenings, and debates. Philip Banse and Ulf Buermeyer present their live podcast project: the radio of the future.

Philip Banse & Ulf Buermeyer (podcast producer), Ann Cotten (writer), Philipp Ekardt (comparative literature scholar and art historian), Ben Lerner (author), Christoph Streckhardt (humanities scholar), Rosemarie Tietze (translator), Joseph Vogl (philosopher and literary theorist), moderated by Bernd Scherer

**ALTERNATING BETWEEN EXHIBITION
HALL 1 AND AUDITORIUM**

9:30 P.M. – 11:00 P.M.

PANEL 5

**“ALL AGES BELONG TO THE PRESENT”:
ORALITY, TEXTUALITY, AND THE INDISPENSABLE
SINGULARITY OF THINGS AND HUMANS**

CONVERSATION | DE ↔ EN

Textuality founded modernity. It lies at the heart of urbanity, land registries, accounting, political memory, and the sciences. Orality has its own alphabets: In moments of intimacy, whilst working, during the first years of life—nothing is lived out in writing (or digitally). Kisses require no alphabets. All human traits, indeed all the signs that exist, which derive from evolution, are headstrong and obstinate and totally unsuitable for enduring oppression under foreign rule.

Sybille Krämer (philosopher), Christoph Menke (philosopher), Hermann Parzinger (archeologist and prehistorian), Richard Sennett (sociologist), Joseph Vogl (philosopher and literary theorist), moderated by Julia Voss (art historian) and Alexander Kluge

AUDITORIUM

7:30 P.M. – MIDNIGHT

IN OMEGA'S LABYRINTH

FILMS AND ARTISTIC PROGRAM | GERMAN AND ENGLISH

Readings, music, and video documentation of the evening

Ann Cotten (writer), Ben Lerner (author), Hannelore Hoyer (actress), Dirk von Lowtzow (musician), Helge Schneider (musician and comedian), Sir Henry (musician) and surprise guests

Reading and Writing

How can I live? What can I know?

What does the future hold?

Alexander Kluge

On the last day before the Christmas holidays in 2017, I received a call from Bernd Scherer informing me that plans were afoot to stage a walk-in theater in the Haus der Kulturen der Welt under the title “Das Neue Alphabet” or “The New Alphabet.” In German, the first letters of each word combine to form the title DNA.

Bernd went on to explain that ALPHABET is also the name of the parent company now running Google. This all refers to a collaborative program in the HKW, scheduled to run for eighteen months, which is conceived as a continuation of the ANTHROPOCENE program under a new theme. Bernd asked if I had any ideas for the Opening Day on January 10, 2018. As it happens, I was just in the process of writing stories on electrification and alphabetization in Russia after 1917. A subject I find captivating.

We Are Signs ...

The Alphabet is about signs. And signs can be interpreted. In ancient times, the “writing on the wall” would portend major catastrophes. Once there was a sign that King Belshazzar was unable to decipher. Yet the urgently summoned prophet succeeded where others couldn’t. Often it is advisable to read the small print, those microscopic signs, which hold the key to future developments. The signs, whose interpretation is of importance to us, derive from *various* epochs.

EVOLUTION is the most elementary **TIMESPAN FROM WHICH SIGNS COME**. It is governed by DNA and will doubtless endure. But that should not imply that its progress is restricted to the “entire human being.” The measure of evolution is not man. In all likelihood, evolution proceeds on a granular scale, unexpectedly and ubiquitously.

A more narrowly defined epoch, fascinating and unknown, spans the “history of mankind before the invention of writing.” This is the epoch of **ORALITY**. We underestimate the profound impact this continues to exercise on us.

A further epoch is associated with the INVENTION OF WRITING. During this period the first cities, such as Uruk and Babylon, were founded. Writing also heralded the emergence of science, civilization, law, and continuity. Many alphabets, in the proper sense of the word, formed part of this development. To our ancestors, the script represented a culture shock. No sooner spoken, than words came to assume a life of their own, and confronted the speaker as autonomous beings. At the same time, the script served as a mark of “ownership” and “dominion.” It laid the foundations for modernity.

In our present time, Industry 4.0 and THE DIGITAL AGE have joined forces with writing. Sybille Krämer emphasizes that digitality is itself a form of textuality. This new epoch has unleashed evolutionary and also disruptive (“revolutionary”) forces, some of which no longer belong to the natural world, but are forging a SECOND NATURE. Traditional reality is being superseded or overlaid by a new reality. It remains to be seen whether or not we are able to apprehend the new signs of the algorithms, data networks, and Artificial Intelligence in their true dimensions.

The core thesis underpinning the “walk-in theater” at HKW: “Das Neue Alphabet” demonstrates the presence of all these epochs in our current age. Our living world is being shaped by the alphabets (in the figurative sense) FROM ALL TIMES. This applies to all living things, and also to their destruction.

At a Time of Upheaval and Disruption

In times such as these, the elements and the letters change imperceptibly. We must learn to write again. Above all, we must learn to read again: how the signs have changed. We ask: what are we worth, what is our life worth within the global extractive network? What is reality and what is realistic about reality? We are confronted with a chameleon-like reality. Amidst this “transformation of signs,” we have to learn to read *double*. What is the element itself? And into which soap bubbles does it morph under the pressure of circumstances?

Of course, this is nothing new. There have always been “accelerated centuries,” but never as radical as today; that is, “tearing at the roots” (*radix* = root). In the twelfth century, the learning and experience accumulated in one’s youth proved insufficient to come to terms with the second half of that century. The solution: ADULT EDUCATION AND THE FOUNDING OF UNIVERSITIES, a root-and-branch

renewal of Charlemagne's literacy program (four hundred years previously), affording access to all that is new and perplexing.

I am not going to enumerate the reasons for Japan's sudden nineteenth-century egress from the Middle Ages, or how adversity and the IMMEDIACY OF TIME prompted the Renaissance to search for answers, or indeed how in sixteenth-century England the foundations were laid for the emerging industrialization some hundred years later. I shall merely mention an observation, that the phenomena of the Baroque era—the founding phase of the “new man”—are now recurring. And, in the twenty-first century we do indeed need a revival of the PRINCIPLE OF THE CABINET OF CURIOSITIES.

This was the name given to institutions that, faced with the growing pressure of reality and the pace of “progress,” advocated COMBINING ALL THE ARTS IN ONE PLACE. No specialized cupboards, no distinction between beauty and good will, between science and praxis, or between magic and life—curiosity was the sole motivation. Thus we witness alchemists experimenting at the court of Emperor Rudolf II, probably the only cognitively engaged emperor among the Habsburgs. Also working in the neighborhood: the painter Giuseppe Arcimboldo. And a further neighbor: Tycho Brahe, the astronomer (who wielded a considerable influence on the seven-year-old Johannes Kepler). This is a CIRCUS OF INNOVATIONS, on whose high wire G. W. Leibniz would also dance. Walter Benjamin's discovery of signs of twentieth-century modernity in the Baroque era, as set forth in his post-doctoral thesis *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, applied directly to the 1920s (which were also disruptive). But it must apply all the more to the 2020s.

Two (bifurcated) roads, lead, as Bernd Scherer describes it, from Leibniz to the present day. One lies abandoned, the other mired in congestion. We humans are not monopodal. When one foot (the objectively conveyed, functional one) takes a stride but is not followed by the second foot (the subjective, dreamy one), we are confronted by deadlock. Monads (we humans, but also objects) are peculiarities; peculiarities communicate with each other and only associate with other peculiarities or with the immutably obstinate side of their interlocutor. This sets fixed, impenetrable borders for the concrete information highway and for every form of hegemonic organization. When a society runs into such a wall, there will be a crash.

This all contrives to reframe the question “What is reality?” With Arcimboldo (or Goya) the real and the unreal become inextricably entangled to form monsters. The human facial features in his paintings are, at the same time, plants and things. In our time, this question takes on a fresh urgency: What under the conditions of DIGITAL CAPITALISM is genuine and real, and what is fake (a paper tiger, only “real-existing”)? This is not immediately visible to the naked eye. Therefore: RE-READ, RE-LEARN. Unrealistic is also namely that which possesses objective power, which even has the approval of the customers when it fails to attend to a person’s subjective side. For in its almost imperceptible resistance, this subjectivity is tougher than the concrete of the communications highways. We must reappropriate and disentangle the disorienting, compact relations of our world, just as the doves did with their jars in the fairy-tale. RE-READING AND RE-LEARNING means: first, manufacturing, constructing reality anew, rather than picking over the bones of what remains. Without RE-READING the real has no architecture. Unwittingly, we are forging a new beginning, an hour zero. The situation is similar to that faced by Germany’s so-called “rubble women,” who in 1945 began cleaning the elements, or the old bricks, in preparation for the reconstruction.

For every algorithm there is an anti-algorithm. For every extractive idea there is a receptive impulse. For every emotional scrooge (“digital time shortage,” “as there is so much happening on the Net, my concentration span lasts only ninety seconds”), we need an antipole: a magnificent approach to time and objects.



- 1) An image signifying Artificial Intelligence, which is notoriously difficult to depict visually
- 2) Steel workers from the Czech Republic showing blue-collar pride

The Trick of “Dead Labor”

“Dead labor” or “accumulated labor” is how Marx describes the machines that have been produced by workers (“living labor”). This term also encompasses the laws, the customs, and the entire world of facts. When this “dead labor” forms an alliance with the “living,” and is appropriated by living labor, it is, according to Marx, the guarantee of freedom. If however, in contrast, it falls under the control of a usurper (the stock exchange) or morphs into a super machine itself, it becomes the guarantee of alienation. “Dead labor” refers to the incredible potential of accumulated labor. Were Marx to appear to us as a ghost one night (now 200 years old) and survey the present, he would say: The scales have already tipped in the wrong direction. “Dead labor” acts against man’s living environment.

This gloomy message is so Cassandra-like in tone that people choose to ignore it. Without offering an accompanying upbeat and generous perspective, bitter truths

are impossible to mediate. For even truth has to be attractively packaged. Which is why the form of the walk-in theater was chosen.

*“Let the philosophers say what they will, the thing at which we all aim, even in virtue is pleasure”
(Montaigne)*

The original form of such theater can be illustrated in the story of a hero who possesses a shield polished to shine like a mirror. There lived at this time an ugly monster with such a hideous face that those who saw it were immediately struck dead. However, with his improvised mirror, our cunning young hero managed to reflect the monster’s face back to the monster itself, who upon seeing it became paralyzed and died. One must, so runs the moral of the legend, seek to reflect “false reality,” the “derailed reality,” the “dented dialectic” to TRANSFORM IT INTO NARRATION. Thus traces of “human reality” begin to emerge among the miniscule quanta. A command of the art of navigation is required to discover among the infinite number of perspectives addressed by Leibniz those that are suitable for defending humanity, as a counter-public, a counter-production. A course through the stormy ocean of the UNITED UNREALITIES.

The New Sirens

Sirens, as we know from antiquity, are seducers. Odysseus had to tether himself to the ship’s mast and plug the ears of his fellow sailors to resist the allure of the sirens’ song. The new sirens of today remind us of amazon.com or other mythical creatures lurking on the perilous reefs of Silicon Valley. Information technology understands our desires better and more rapidly than we ourselves are able to acknowledge or nurture. As Sigmund Freud demonstrated: it is the libido that forms the foundations of our character. The millions of libidinous forces teeming within us, these inhabitants that shape our life’s trajectory, are inherently consumers. Their interest is solely in our desire. They are potential defectors, and, accordingly, vast alien organizations may suck into their networks “this libidinous population,” the indigenous tribes residing inside us. The danger posed to the autonomy of us humans, therefore, will not emanate from robots, but from our eventual transformation into CONSUMER-ROBOTS.

Thus it is all the more important in “Das Neue Alphabet” project to apprehend one observation:

All the human traits, indeed all the signs that exist, are **HEADSTRONG** and **OBSTINATE** and totally unsuitable for enduring oppression under foreign rule. This new alphabet is the “courage of cognition.” It forms the foundations, or the sails of emancipation. Courage is the “mantle of history.” We must seize hold of it and allow ourselves to be drawn along for as long as possible: out of self-confidence, not fear.

DNA

The signs we carry around in our bodies (every cell is controlled, as mentioned above, by the **DNA**) are not only the elements; they also hold the opportunity for gaining stability. As the “alphabet of life,” our **DNA** comprises four letters—some claim there are six. But that which is expressed and created by these signs is diverse: from the tail of a peacock to the maternal voice. This diversity acts like an anchor.

Whether our human species is correctly labeled with the designation “*sapiens*” (clever and wise), should only be judged on a case-by-case basis. What is certain is that we belong to the species *Homo compensator*, we are compensators; because by virtue of our evolutionary origins we carry inside us balanced proportions.

Orality

Hermann Parzinger’s book *Die Kinder des Prometheus* (The children of Prometheus) deals with the extremely long period of human history *prior* to the invention of writing. The taming of the fire, music and dance, communing around the fire, the collective hunt, prescience, memory and emotions—all this developed before the invention of writing. **ORALITY HAS ITS OWN ALPHABETS:** In moments of intimacy, whilst working, during the first years of life—nothing is lived out in writing (or digitally). Kisses require no alphabets.

Literality

It founded modernity. It lies at the heart of urbanity, land registries, accounting, political memory, and the sciences.

It shackles our desire to speak. As already mentioned, our ancestors must have experienced a culture shock as the words, once spoken, suddenly assumed a life of their own, like autonomous beings, and were difficult to expunge

from the world. Adolf Hitler once warned: Secret orders must only be issued orally, write down nothing! And one can observe that in earlier revolutions the masses would first storm the government offices where written documents, debt ledgers, and criminal records were stored.

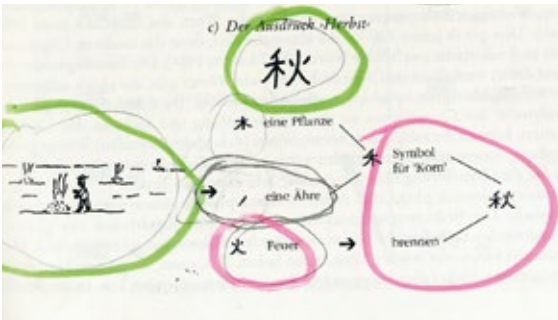
I am profoundly touched at the sight of people learning. Just observe one of history's BASIC LITERACY CAMPAIGNS. Learning the alphabet precedes every industrialization, every societal advancement and possible emancipation. After 1917, entire trainloads of light bulbs were shipped to Siberia. Time was wrestled back from the night: learning time, for the rapid basic literacy education of children *and* adults.

Letters are not technical. In many cultures letters have a numerical value. The Kabbala sets forth a theory of the NUMBERS AND LETTERS OF GOD. Both, numbers and letters, are living creatures. That which in children or adults "learns," is among the most vital traits and forces human beings possess.

As the sociologist Dirk Baecker has pointed out, Johannes Gutenberg's art of printing generated an INFLATION OF WRITING. An avalanche of rapidly printed matter propagating civil war or religious hatred, a plethora of printed junk. For over two hundred years, people have fought against the profusion of printed matter. In the Enlightenment, they found the antidote, the anti-algorithm to Gutenberg: the DESIRE TO CRITICIZE. The three major critiques of Immanuel Kant are a bulwark against the flood of printed matter. In three volumes one can read: what I cannot know and what I need not know, and where I can rest my hopes. Similarly, I assume that in this twenty-first century, there will be a countermovement of users combating the deluge of digital networks: a quest for oases in the middle of the Silicon desert.



- 1) Artificial brain
- 2) Film still from *Deep Learning*
- 3) Film still from *Ich bin eine Leserratte* with Helge Schneider
- 4) Bricklayers' rap in Angola



- 1) Grigori Perelman, a star mathematician in St. Petersburg
- 2) Visual derivation of the Chinese word for “autumn,” formed from six elements, after Prof. Dr. Harald Haarmann

“Man’s Essential Powers” (Marx)

We are referring to the five classical senses of Homo sapiens: hearing, sight, taste, smell, and touch. Hans Magnus Enzensberger claims that we possess an additional thirty-two “social senses.” All these senses can be transformed—depending on the circumstances, the level of expectations, the influence of other people, and the object of work. Man’s essential powers are far more diverse than we may assume. By virtue of their polyphonic diversity, they would be capable of building a Tower of Babylon that would not collapse—initially within the subject itself, within our inner being. Man’s essential powers are an expression of the architecture of subjectivity. In concert, our senses and intelligence would certainly be in a position to digress from the principle of tower construction, opting instead to build houses and simple dwellings “for our concrete experience,” including tents.

Our hands and feet also possess cognitive processes. Consider the hands of a midwife. Feeling with the tips of

her fingers, she gently but forcefully turns the baby that is lying the wrong way round in the womb into the right position. And that is how the child comes into the world. The hands of these women possess great manual dexterity (as do those of the watchmaker, and of our lovers). Compare these to the crude blows of the sword used by our intellect to administer its logic. On another quite different level: the intelligence of the soles of our feet. Throughout their lives, they are incarcerated within a shoe. Yet how crucial for the survival of our ancestors, the hunters and gatherers, was the sensibility of the foot. The knowledge our ancestors possessed did not comprehend any digital system. Such sensibility once saved the life of a German corporal when blisters formed on the bottom of his feet and became so badly infected that they prevented the entire man from getting to Stalingrad. The diaphragm also possesses “reality-penetrating” faculties. When a powerful regime starts blowing its own trumpet, when the days become gravely solemn and barbarous, this muscle is then seized by an irrepressible desire to laugh. The partisan mentality embedded within the diaphragm is the guarantee that the rule of tyrants will not endure for longer than twelve years.

Deep Times of the Planet and the Human Lifetime

Authority and information are fast. Material production—what we call work—is slow. Even slower is the construction time in which qualitative human experience grows and comes together. We remember our school days—external learning. However, within human beings **DEEP LEARNING** also takes place—of which we are oblivious.

We are aware that interconnected robots and digital systems talk to each other at night. This is the **DEEP LEARNING** of machines and Artificial Intelligence. Specialized planners, whose activities we cannot follow, control the input and output. No one knows what actually takes place in digital machines. They are subject to the control of an external mathematics, similar to our observations of the quantum world. I wish there was a whisperer, a “robot whisperer,” who would treat the machines as gently as we wish ourselves to be treated.

When the hunters and gatherers became agrarian, a certain type of character evolved that is still carried by the people of today. That is the “farmer-in-me.” When our early ancestors then founded the first cities on the banks of the Euphrates, the “urbanite-in-me” superimposed

itself on the “farmer-in-me.” Enconced on his desert island, Robinson remained resolutely a Londoner in his mind. The full impact wrought on our inner being by the industrialization of the past two hundred years and by the wars of the twentieth century will probably not become apparent until the mid-twenty-first century. This is deep time. On planet earth, deep time extends from 3.5 billion years before our current era to the present day. External inputs often only take effect after thirty or even a hundred years. All these developments, transformation processes, and the building blocks of a “human attitude” are ceaselessly in operation. Ancient forces are as present in the subject as the new ones.

Hegemonic Language and the Catastrophes of Babylon

The language of the victors, of the colonial masters, the languages of the great academies—all have endeavored to impose hegemonic languages on the tongue spoken by people in their childhood. The general seeks to subjugate the specific. I doubt this will succeed in the long-term. It was use of a unitary language that caused the linguistic confusion in Babylon and caused the tower to collapse.

It would appear today that for the first time a hegemonic mode of speech, GLOBISH (which has little in common with the English of Shakespeare or of James Joyce), is displacing authentic languages on a global scale. GLOBISH is the language of air-traffic controllers, the military, the superpowers, the media, and of advertising and the consumer world. This hegemony is increasingly concentrated around the digital networks and the centralizing mode of the world 4.0. This single language is something new compared to the historical hegemonies (of the great empires of Persia and Rome, and of European imperialism). If there must be an anti-algorithm to resist the alliance between digitality and hegemony in order for the algorithmic world to attain equilibrium, one should first focus on the elements of expression—orality and the letters (including mathematical symbols). We must learn to re-read the signs of the time, and consequently the SIGNS WHICH DERIVE FROM ALL TIMES. This is the motivation for the walk-in theater “Das Neue Alphabet” and the Opening Day.



1+2) Leonardo da Vinci dissects a centaur he found in his cellar
3+4) The ABC of the Body



- 1) Alphabets of Alchemy
- 2) The letter Y, which must fight for equality with more frequently used letters

FRIDAY, JAN 11

3:00 P.M.–5:30 P.M.

THE
DISCRETE
CHARM
OF THE
ALPHABET



Tercia figura mixtura

| | | | | | | | | |
|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| magister | bc | cd | de | ef | fg | gh | hi | jk |
| alumnus | bd | ce | df | eg | fh | gi | hj | kl |
| magister | be | cf | dg | eh | fi | gj | hk | |
| alumnus | bf | cg | dh | ei | fk | | | |
| magister | bg | ch | di | ek | | | | |
| alumnus | bh | ci | dk | | | | | |
| magister | bj | ck | | | | | | |
| alumnus | bk | | | | | | | |



In 5^a figura
 In 1^a figura se conuenit
 et multipliciter multiplici
 uita se et multipliciter se
 fuerit accepti et hinc temp
 figurantur et conuenit
 In 2^a figura se conuenit
 et multipliciter multiplici
 uita se et multipliciter se
 fuerit accepti et hinc temp
 figurantur et conuenit
 In 3^a figura se conuenit
 et multipliciter multiplici
 uita se et multipliciter se
 fuerit accepti et hinc temp
 figurantur et conuenit
 In 4^a figura se conuenit
 et multipliciter multiplici
 uita se et multipliciter se
 fuerit accepti et hinc temp
 figurantur et conuenit

In his work *Ars magna*, the Catalan philosopher and theologian Raimundus Lullus (1232–1315) developed a precursor to our modern day computer. Stadtbibliothek and Stadtarchiv Trier, Hs. 1895/1428 4°. Courtesy of Stadtbibliothek and Stadtarchiv Trier

THE DISCRETE CHARM OF THE ALPHABET

Curated by Bernd Scherer and Olga von Schubert

Rather than denoting scripts in general, the term alphabet refers to highly specific forms of sign systems based on phonemes that are predicated on a limited number of clearly distinguishable, that is, discrete, symbols. Originating in the Mediterranean region, they have since continued to spread across the world. The letters of the alphabet can be combined to yield endless possibilities of semantic and operational encoding. And it is this quasi-mathematical property, the ability to represent both letters and numbers, that was exported into all regions in which human beings were undergoing alphabetization. The discrete quality of the letter has come to permeate all modern sciences, such as biogenetics, which operate using DNA codes. As a binary code, the alphabetic structure also constitutes the foundations of digitization. But what properties, what qualities of speech and writing, become lost through alphabetization? What implications does alphabetization have for a linguistic logic of homogenization? Can there be diversity in alphabetically developed technologies?

Yuk Hui, Sybille Krämer, Giuseppe Longo, MEHL,
moderated by Bernd Scherer

MEHL (Claude Schötz, Jonas Loh, and Marian Kaiser)

PERFORMANCE | DE ↔ 🎧 EN

From conversations with Sybille Krämer and an ongoing experimental involvement with her books through fictional forms and various media, the artist group MEHL has distilled a digestible and rather indiscrete “Geist,” with Sybille Krämer’s DNA as core ingredient. The audience will be served a kind of high-tech madeleine, strictly in line with the Deleuzian dictum, that the speaking machine is an eating machine. The madeleine will enable non-binary forms of communication, while digging for repressed situations and technological desires in the subconscious of European media history and theory. Its aftertaste will stay with the audience during the following three lectures. MEHL is an artist collective and dinner service specialized in concrete fabulation and synthetic theory.

THE ALPHABET OF DIGITIZATION

Sybille Krämer (philosopher)

LECTURE | DE ↔ 🎧 EN

In view of the increasing opacity of the operational script-based processes in digital technologies, Sybille Krämer is calling for greater digital awareness to cast the handling of letters more sharply into focus. Alphabetic scripts are, as she illustrates, not only digitizable but are in themselves already digital systems. Starting out from the first historical inventions of the binary code by Raimundus Lullus and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, Krämer demonstrates that the algorithms of digitality are ultimately the operative descendants of alphanumeric inscriptions and that crucial to any debate over algorithms is a thorough understanding of history.

ALPHABETS, AXIOMS, DNA: ON HUMAN KNOWLEDGE AND THE MYTH OF ALPHANUMERIC CODING

Giuseppe Longo (mathematician and epistemologist)

LECTURE | EN ↔ 🔄 DE


Classical AI, genetically manipulated organisms (GMOs), genocentric cancer research, and Big Data show an unlimited trust in coding, increasingly distort knowledge construction, and affect our lives. Newton-Laplace Equation writing was supposed to provide complete models of all systems of classical physics. Axioms of Hilbert's systems, as finite sequences of letters, would allow a complete, mechanical deduction of all relevant mathematical results. The decoding of DNA, as the complete information carrier of organisms, the alphabetic sequence of the "book of life," would enable the encoding of a human into a CD "and say: here is a human being; it's me." Alphabetic writing, each time, should have provided complete prediction, deduction, and computation. Three times false, each time "more wrong." The lecture will recall scientific results that disprove these bold, monomaniacal approaches, and will argue against the transforming of science into a short-term commodity and of knowledge into encoded data to be handled mechanically.

ON THE COSMOTECHNICAL NATURE OF WRITING

Yuk Hui (philosopher of technology)

LECTURE | EN ↔ 🔄 DE

Chinese pictogram writing implies a way of sensing and experiencing the world that is different from alphabetic phonogram writing. In his theory of "Technodiversity," the philosopher and former AI developer Yuk Hui shows that in relation to Chinese cosmology and morality, Leibniz's universal attempt to represent the whole world within one binary system falls short, because it is unable to acknowledge patterns in writing. In Chinese thought, patterns play an important role in regard to the continuity of human experience in general, and to the act of writing specifically, which differs from an encoding based merely on discrete signs. Yuk Hui therefore suggests we imagine a diversity of technological developments, rather than limiting the studies of technology to a Greek *technē* or a modern technology.

DISCUSSION | EN ↔  DE

Sybille Krämer, Yuk Hui, Guiseppa Longo, Marian Kaiser,
moderated by Bernd Scherer

Algorithms—the Heirs of the Alphabet? On the “new opacity” and the project of “digital enlightenment”

Sybille Krämer

The image shows a handwritten manuscript on aged paper. At the top left, there is a faint '100'. The main content is a table with three columns. The first column is headed 'Tabular' and contains powers of 10 from 1 to 10,000,000. The second column is headed 'ita' and contains powers of 2 from 1 to 1024. The third column is headed 'stabil' and contains powers of 2 from 2⁰ to 2¹⁰. A circled '2' is written next to the first row of the second and third columns. The handwriting is in a cursive script.

| Tabular | ita | stabil |
|-------------|------|-----------------|
| 1 | 1 | 2 ⁰ |
| 10 | 2 | 2 ¹ |
| 100 | 4 | 2 ² |
| 1000 | 8 | 2 ³ |
| 10000 | 16 | 2 ⁴ |
| 100000 | 32 | 2 ⁵ |
| 1000000 | 64 | 2 ⁶ |
| 10000000 | 128 | 2 ⁷ |
| 100000000 | 256 | 2 ⁸ |
| 1000000000 | 512 | 2 ⁹ |
| 10000000000 | 1024 | 2 ¹⁰ |

In 1697, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz invented the binary system: He was able to represent every number with only two digits—zero and one. Subsequently, they were to become the alphabet of the computer. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Bibliothek – Niedersächsische Landesbibliothek, Hanover, Signature: LH 35, 3 B 1, Bl. 1.

The spoken word is intrinsically ephemeral; no sooner uttered, than it fades away, an exhalation of breath that only exists in its passing. Numbers—although a man-made construct—are invisible, without a locus in time and space. They are never seen. But we invent scripts to overcome the transience of the word and render numbers accessible in the form of perceptible numerals. The letters of the Greek alphabet were made to notate speech sounds, musical tones, *and* numbers—a fact generally forgotten today. The Latin alphabet then entered into a close liaison with decimal notation, which was invented by Indian mathematicians and imported into Europe by Arabic scholars: The alphabet continued to develop into an alphanumeric textual space in which letters can also represent numbers—for example, “letter-algebra” or algebraic notation—and in which letters, words, footnotes, the pages of books, and even complete works can be quantified and made accessible

as a numerical expression. So what do alphabets do to words, what do numerals do to numbers? And what do alphanumeric symbols do to us?

The spoken word is in flux, a temporal continuum; Alphabets, however, break up the flow of speech, and separate an utterance into its constituent elements. With their act of discretization, alphabets are a precursory form of digitization; information and communications can be transmitted, processed, and stored. But alphabets do more than merely lend permanence to language in time and space. The written word reveals organizational structures in language that otherwise remain occluded in oral speech. The alphabetic script does not simply record speech, but manifests in the written word grammatical differences that are indiscernible within the flow of speech. Alphabets do not represent languages; they deliver their cartography. Numerals symbolize numbers on writing surfaces, and as such become visible and amenable to analysis and manipulation. Calculations involving complex numbers can be performed in writing according to a set of simple rules. In combination with the line, as a numerical series and coordinate axes, numerical positional notation systems (such as the decimal system) form registers for quantifying continuous sequences. The two-dimensional alphanumeric textual space becomes a space for the visualization and analysis of everything that can be segmented. This segmentation—or at least so it seems—conjures transparency and clarity where once opaqueness, transience, and complexity prevailed. Yet this is only an *illusion*—since the alphanumeric generation of transparency coincides with the creation of a new, fundamental lack of transparency and opacity, which has been brought about by digitization, the emergence of the black-box principle.

Promises of transparency lay strewn along the sinuous path to European alphabetization: With his *Ars magna*, Raimundus Lullus (1232–1316) developed a logical machine made up of inscribed discs, which was designed to document the generation of truths from a visible combination of terms. François Viète (1540–1603) invented algebraic notation, and in so doing transformed the solving of equations—hitherto practiced as occult magic (*ars magna et occulta*)—into intelligible, instructive, and learnable written computation. Alphabetical registers established a systematic overview in the labyrinthine arrangement of books in libraries, facilitating the targeted access to books via catalogs. In following Lullus and adapting Viète's algebraic notation, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716)

sought to establish an algorithmic combinatorics, which operated not only with numbers but also with concepts and thoughts, and which, accordingly, could also be processed by machines. As the inventor of the binary alphabet, he designed a calculating machine for performing all four basic arithmetic operations. Furthermore, Leibniz applied the word “algorithm” for the first time in the sense of “rules of calculation,” and conceived of computation as a rules-based mechanical manipulation of numerals. Incidentally, the word “algorithm” derives from the Latinization of the name of the Arab scholar al-Khwarizmi (ca. 780–850), who imported into Europe the Indian numerical system of arithmetic, thus laying the groundwork for the rise of the early capitalist trading economy.

The key focus of all these endeavors—at least ostensibly—lay in the application of the alphabet as a symbolic form, which not only rendered visible the originally inaccessible by virtue of its alphanumeric designation, but also became *operationalized*. How to calculate, how to argue logically, how the system of chemical elements (and its lacunae) can be visualized in a diagram, how music can be afforded permanence through notation, how choreography facilitates the repetition of dance, and not least, how computers are controlled by software programs: In all these instances, the inscribed surface becomes the field of experimentation and the control center. Furthermore, the promise of transparency through the alphabet is allied to the promise of efficiency through algorithms. Algorithms transform complex routines into something transparent, executable, and controllable; they are the spin-offs from, and heirs of, alphanumeric inscription.

But this legacy undermines the telos of informative transparency. Used in combination with technical devices—and this is precisely their objective—algorithms generate new forms of fundamental opacity and uncontrollability. Inherent to operating technical devices is that we can use them without understanding how they work. Algorithms transfer the principle underlying the use of an apparatus—to operate without understanding—to the cultural domain of symbolic action. And this has precipitated the turn from visibility to concealment: Within its descendent—the algorithm—the alphabet revealed its Janus-faced nature, since its transparency only engendered a new opacity.

Fueling the emergence of the alphabetically inscribed and diagrammatically illustrated surface was the aspiration to render explicit and explicate hidden relationships in texts and graphs, and to use them to *enlighten*. The

cultural technique of alphanumeric inscription and the project of the European Enlightenment were linked by a common and subtle bond. But when the inscribed surface evolves into a networked interface and when graphic user-interfaces begin to control our interactions with computers, then our application of alphanumeric characters becomes a superficial phenomenon, beneath which lies an expanding universe of interacting machines and protocols, which is both opaque and beyond the control of the user. Analogous to a rhizome, proliferating beneath the surface of user-friendliness is a region of reinvigorated “secrecy,” of expropriation, of constitutive nescience. Each piece of software creates a “virtual machine,” which remains concealed to those operating the software. The competence derived inductively by computers from vast data sets, through self- or deep-learning AI programs, remains impenetrable in “how” these acquired rules and routines interact—even to the developers. And the manifold data traces left by users on the Internet and on social media, which are analyzed by algorithms to profile people and to predict their future behavior, usually stay hidden from the consciousness of their originator.

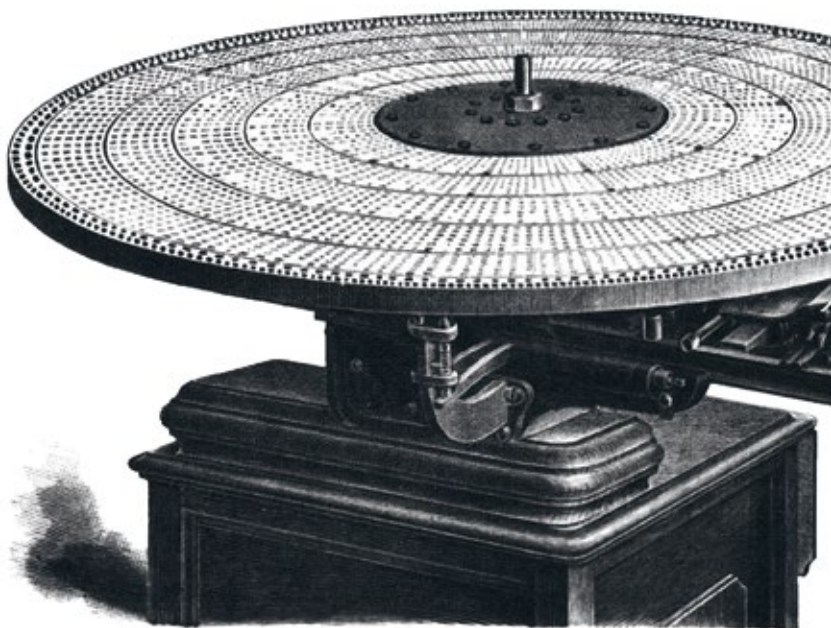
The project of the European Enlightenment was married to the idea that alphanumeric designations foster practical and cognitive transparency and controllability. The algorithm—although a descendant of the alphanumeric space—sabotages the expectations of an “enlightened form of existence”: Neither our data nor the unfathomable depths of the interacting machines/protocols beneath the interfaces are transparent. Is now not the time to launch a project of “digital enlightenment”; a project that has at its core the Janus-face of digitization, the turn from transparency to opacity, the dialectic of control and loss of control, and which is dedicated to elaborating new strategies for dealing with the situations in which transparency is an illusion, when we see that the black-box principle has become the guarantee of technical efficiency?

On the Cosmotechanical Nature of Writing

Yuk Hui

We start by claiming that writing is not only a carrier or medium of memory in the manner fashioned by deconstruction in the twentieth century, it is also tantamount to thinking as such. When Leibniz discovered Chinese writing through contact with the Jesuits, he called the hexagrams used in the *I Ching* the first Chinese writing. The binary construction of the hexagram resonates with Leibniz's own combinatorial symbol system based on 0 and 1, and the great German philosopher and mathematician therefore saw the possibility to invent a written language that is *more perfect* than the Chinese language: with less signs but richer expressions—a thesis closely related to his celebrated “best of all possible worlds” hypothesis elaborated in the 1710 *Essais de Théodicée*. Leibniz's dream is realized today with digital computers, and every form of writing can be reduced to binary writing through different input methods and representation schemes. This constitutes what we today call the new alphabet; however, in viewing this as the triumph of Leibniz's *characteristica universalis*, we may fail to see the relation between the alphabet and thinking. I would like to illustrate that Chinese pictogram writing embeds a different way of sensing and experiencing the world, which has to be distinguished from phonogram writing, and this difference is far beyond the *différance* constituted by writing as supplement.

In the same *I Ching* that interested Leibniz, we are told that the hexagrams were constructed by an ancient called Fu Xi (伏羲), who abstracted the patterns of the cosmos by observing daily phenomena. If Leibniz was right to generalize a lineage from the *I Ching* hexagram to modern Chinese writing, we see in Chinese writing that there is an intimate relation between thinking and the cosmos. We may be able to claim that Chinese writing reposes on a pattern-based thinking originating from the abstraction of recurring phenomena (象). We only need to give a simple example to illustrate this: to rest (休)

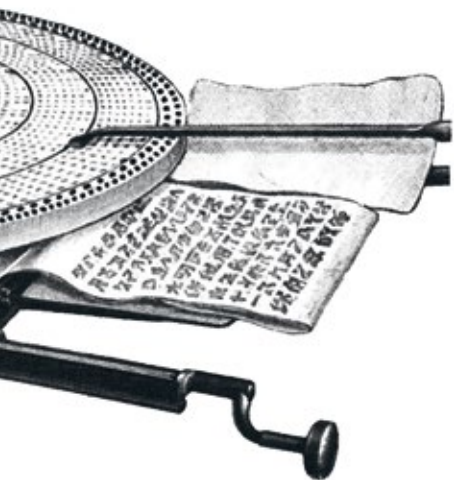


A TYPEWRITER FOR WRITING 4,000 CHINESE

In 1899 the journal *Scientific American* reported on the development of a typewriter, which combined at least 4,000 of the over 50,000 Chinese characters. © *Scientific American*

consists of two parts, the left side is a human and the right is a tree; a human next to a tree means to rest. This is also why in *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons* (《文心雕龍》), from around AD 500, a classical text dedicated to literature and aesthetics, the author claims in the first chapter “On the Origin of Dao” that writing emerged together with both heaven and earth and together they constitute the “trinity.”

The pattern-based thinking in Chinese writing is based on the organization of pictograms instead of phonograms. Here lies a significant difference of a “cosmotechanical” nature between Chinese writing and Western alphabet writing. Gregory Bateson, a very important cybernetic thinker, whose thinking could be summarized as “patterns that connect,” has said that among Western thinkers, except Pythagoras, pattern is largely ignored. If Bateson was right with his historical claim, we may want to ask what the implications are regarding the different forms of writing that we have discussed so far. Besides the emphasis of patterns, it is also clear to us that writing embeds intimate relations between human beings and the cosmos (the heaven and the earth), which are beyond



Sci. App. N.Y.

E CHARACTERS.

pattern since they are both cosmological and moral. And it is through the practice of calligraphy that we are reminded again and again of these relations. Concerning the inseparable role of the cosmological and the moral in technology (which I call cosmotechnics), in *The Question Concerning Technology in China: An Essay in Cosmotechnics* (2016), I suggest reopening the question of technology as multiple cosmotechnics, instead of following Heidegger and limiting the studies of technology to a Greek *technê* or a modern technology. I attempt to show that Chinese cosmotechnics can be conceptually understood through a historical analysis of the relation between two basic philosophical categories: Dao (道, meaning the way) and Qi (器, meaning utensils). It is not possible to fully address this relation in the context of writing in this short text; it is however worth mentioning that the relation between Dao and writing was emphasized towards the end of the Tang dynasty (AD 618–907). In reaction to the domination of Buddhism over Confucianism and the social and political problems that it induced (e.g. superstition and corruption), the Confucian intellectuals launched a war against Buddhism by returning to the relation

between writing and Dao. According to them, writing should become a means to enlighten the Dao instead of being a tool for mere aesthetic expression. This proposal to return to Dao and writing opened a new intellectual movement in China, which is today known as neo-Confucianism (宋明理學), to be distinguished from new Confucianism (新儒家), which is an intellectual movement of the twentieth century.

What is the significance of this emphasis on the differences between the Chinese pictogram and the Western phonogram today, when everything can be reduced to digital alphabets? Doesn't the technological advancement announce the end of differences and therefore the triumph of a universalism aligned with the Enlightenment? It is true that today one can use Pinyin, an input method based on the alphabetization of Chinese characters, with which one can input almost all Chinese characters by using the Western alphabet's twenty-six, but thinking in this way, we tend to limit writing and technology in general to mere utility and calculability. It seems to me that instead of celebrating the digital Enlightenment, it is more urgent to go beyond the question of utility, efficiency, and calculability—and by beyond here I don't mean to reject them but to appropriate them differently. The concept of cosmo-technics is a call to go beyond this limitation; it is a proposal to think how we can give modern technology, whose essence according to Heidegger is *enframing* (*Gestell*), a new *frame* and a new direction, in order to reopen the question of techno-diversity in the epoch of digital hypersynchronization.

FRIDAY, JAN 11

6:00 P.M.–8:45 P.M.

ARCHIVE SUITE

Handwritten musical score for tenor voice, featuring Latin lyrics and musical notation on staves. The lyrics include:

om ni a o pe ri Su per om ni a o pe ra
 Su per om ni a Om ni a o pe ra ma nu um tu
 a rum et Cons ti tu ti e um Su per
 Su per om ni a o pe ra ma nu um tu a
 E i fi de les a ni me
 E i fi de les a ni me E i fi de les a ni me
 Con si gi de a do sanc tum

The tenor part from the *Offertorium Gloria et honore* by Jan Joseph Ignaz Brentner (1689–1742), copied in San Rafael, Chiquitos by the indigenous musician Pablo Surubis in the first decade of the 19th century. © Archivo Musical de Chiquitos

ARCHIVE SUITE

Curated and moderated by Karin Harrasser

What do Baroque knowledge (dis)orders have in common with the present? To what extent do their interrelations make clear that today's technologies and knowledge forms are also steeped in intercultural encounters? Looking back on the Baroque's strategies for overcoming contingency, and on the associated colonial organization of knowledge in archives, academies, and alphabets, the Archive Suite is dedicated to the sound dimension of operational sign systems. In the process, the sentences of this extended working discussion move, dancelike, between colonial heritage and resistive praxis, posing the question: What forms of expression have been able to escape colonial alphabetization?

Paul Feigelfeld, Karin Harrasser, Britta Lange, Tom Pauwels, Eva Reiter, Joseph Vogl, Leonardo Waisman

OUVERTURE—FROM COSMOGRAPHY TO COSMOPOLITICS

Karin Harrasser (cultural theorist), Paul Feigelfeld
(media theorist)

CONVERSATION | DE ↔ EN

In a discussion moving from Baroque knowledge systems to the present, Karin Harrasser and Paul Feigelfeld address the transformations that resulted from the early Baroque encounters between Jesuit missionaries and non-European sign systems. The Chinese script, for example, exercised an influence on the development of European mathematics and later on computer science. Further themes include: cartography, mathematics, scalability, speeds, states, religious orders and companies, and media and archives.

ALLEMANDE

Joseph Vogl (philosopher and literary theorist)

CONVERSATION | DE ↔ EN

In numerous argumentation steps, Joseph Vogl considers the extent to which economics and aesthetics around 1750 can be understood as a reaction to the unknown of colonial expansion, as strategies for coping with contingency. What long-term effects of this understanding of economics and aesthetics can still be found in our contemporary knowledge systems?

COURANTE

Britta Lange (cultural scientist)

CONVERSATION | DE ↔ EN

With the leaping steps of a Courante, Britta Lange connects the constellation of the Baroque with the Berlin sound archive and its precarious collection: with the voices of colonial subjects and with the system of the archive and the question of what can escape it.

VORTRAGSSAAL**7:10 P.M. – 7:30 P.M.**

SARABANDE

Leonardo Waisman (musicologist)

CONVERSATION | EN ↔ DE

The Sarabande's diverse origins (French, Moorish, Persian, Mexican) make it an ideal matrix for speaking about the Archivo Musical de Chiquitos (Bolivia): about music as body politics and as an instrument for creating a sense of community, governance, and resistance.

VORTRAGSSAAL**7:30 P.M. – 7:50 P.M.**

GIGUE

Karin Harrasser (viola da gamba) and Eva Reiter
(viola da gamba)

MUSICAL DIALOGUE

Eva Reiter and Karin Harrasser use two violas da gamba to interpret the surviving musical scores of the Archivo Musical de Chiquitos. This is a practical dialogue on gestures, embodiment, textualization, standardization, and the necessity of gaps.

BREAK**7:50 P.M. – 8:05 P.M.**

VORTRAGSSAAL**8:05 P.M. – 8:45 P.M.**

SUITE POUR UNE DISPARITION

Tom Pauwels (e-guitar) and Eva Reiter (e-gamba)

CONCERT

With works by Marin Marais, Monsieur de Sainte-Colombe, Freddy Vallejos (premiere), Matthew Shlomowitz, Eva Reiter, and others

Archive Suite

Karin Harrasser

The suite is a Baroque musical form, a succession of musical pieces based on dances. However, en suite also means: follow-up, follower, connecting flight. How do we, as the heirs of the colonizers, deal with their heritage, a heritage on which contemporary structures of domination are built?

Anyone who wants to understand the present is better advised to look to the early modern period than to the recent past, to a time when the drive toward modernization and the belief that humanity would, as it were, automatically pull itself forward by means of science and technology, were more or less intact. Current systemic crises have a precursory echo in the early modern age: With the conquest of America and the dual development of world markets—international silver trade with China and the transatlantic slave trade—the world became global. The effect of this globalization was interdependence and it unequally distributed chances and risks for human and non-human inhabitants of the earth. Thus in *Capitalism in the Web of Life* Jason Moore speaks of the “Capitalocene” as opposed to the Anthropocene: It is not “the anthropos” that has so profoundly changed the earth and made it vulnerable, but a specific European type that has vigorously expanded beyond the bounds of Europe since the fifteenth century. It is solely for this reason that we live on an earth which has become rounded, but which nevertheless appears so out-of-center. In the Baroque period this rounding gave rise to a deep-rooted consciousness of contingency, as well as countless attempts to contain this contingency: with alphabets, academies, and apparatuses.

This expansion of the horizon in the early modern age, combined with the permanent state of crisis, was answered with imperialist policies, sciences, and technologies. Institutions and states reorganized the world and concentrated knowledge and power in the hands of a few, at the price of suppression, extraction, violence, exclusion, standardization, and the reduction of diversity.

This dynamic also applied to languages and sign systems: On the one side knowledge of languages and sign systems exploded, generating the systematic inquiry of the sciences. On the other side this diversity was collected, mortified, standardized, and sorted in a manner that established the European alphanumerical code as the standard. At first sight it appears as if the alphabet of the Roman Empire is also that of the twenty-first century. However, a closer look reveals that—quasi-Baroque: wart-like, fractal—this standard alphabet is overgrown with other sign systems.

Focusing on two colonial, sound-related archives, we establish a working environment in which situated forms of knowledge and aesthetics are coupled with systematic considerations. The archives are confronted with living bodies, while symbolic and structural violence, as well as the *longue durée* of early modern knowledge organization, are discussed. Is the current situation, another explosion of knowledge, of sign systems, of inequalities, which states, companies, and individuals try to contain with control strategies, simply a rollout of early modern epistemologies, or are we faced with something qualitatively new?

Two sound/music archives are juxtaposed in order to generate tensions and resonances. One is the sound archive of the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, in particular the collection of voice recordings made at prisoner of war camps during World War I. Here, in an inverse process to the ethnological exploration of “foreign” cultures, science has employed the involuntary concentration of people in order to advance comparative linguistic research. The second archive is located in Concepción de Chiquitos in the Bolivian lowlands. It contains around 5,500 sheets of Baroque music, with some of the music originating from the time of the Jesuit mission in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. After the missionaries were forced to leave Bolivia in 1767, the musical scores were handed down within families; they were partially copied and were still performed in the nineteenth century. In the 1990s this vernacular, scattered archive was united and it is now a central element in a questionable tourism and development policy that exploits the cultural renaissance of Chiquitos’s Jesuit past. Again, the historical context is that of a politically motivated concentration: In the so-called “reductions,” settlements targeted against the nomadic lifestyle of the native population, music was employed as an instrument of governance and evangelization designed to generate a sense of community.

We discuss the practices of historical transmission and performance of sound events, their cultural-political contexts, their recording and re-staging, and their functionality as operators in claims of superiority and as agents/mediators in the governing of bodies and souls.

FRIDAY, JAN 11

6:00 P.M.–8:45 P.M.

THE
THREE
TONGUES
YOU
SPEAK
IN
YOUR
SLEEP

08:58



THE THREE TONGUES YOU SPEAK IN YOUR SLEEP

Curated by Bernd Scherer
and Olga von Schubert

Is linguistic diversity conceivable in a globally interconnected world? What happens to untranslatable thoughts and positions? How do they survive in the sphere of translation? How did people in the past respond to the imposition of new alphabets or national languages? How can the untranslatable be activated in order to transgress universalistic linguistic systems? Today, one language governs our discourse: Most books worldwide are translated from the English; English dominates the Internet, as it does the fields of art and international law. At the European Court of Justice, in contrast, international law is administered in the twenty-four languages of the member states, with the aid of over two thousand translators. How is this multilingual space constituted? Through the prism of comparative literature, historic philology, and contemporary art, the contributions examine the political dimensions of translation.

Emily Apter, Kader Attia, Giulia Bruno & Armin Linke,
Vincenzo Latronico, Slavs and Tatars, moderated by
Olga von Schubert



Giulia Bruno and Armin Linke, *European Court of Justice*,
Interpreter booth at the "Day of Europe," 2018 © Giulia Bruno & Armin Linke

TRANSLITERATIVE TEASE

Slavs and Tatars (artists' collective)

LECTURE PERFORMANCE | DE ↔ EN

Through the lens of phonetic, semantic, and theological slippage, *Translitative Tease* explores the potential for transliteration—the conversion of scripts—as a strategy equally of resistance and of research into notions such as identity politics, colonialism, and faith. The lecture performance focuses on the Turkic languages of the former Soviet Union, as well as the western and eastern frontiers of the Turkic language sphere, respectively Anatolia and Xinjiang, home to China's Uighur population. This lecture performance attempts not to emancipate peoples or nations but rather the sounds rolling off our tongues.

EXHIBITION HALL 1

6:30 P.M. – 7:15 P.M.

MULTILINGUALISM AT THE EUROPEAN COURT OF JUSTICE

Giulia Bruno (artist) and Armin Linke (artist), Vincenzo Latronico (novelist and translator)

LECTURE PERFORMANCE, FILM SCREENING | EN ↔ DE

The two tallest skyscrapers in the country of Luxemburg are formally the seat of the European Court of Justice. However, they house neither the judges nor their cabinets, but the offices of the translation department. With over two thousand employees, who must cover every possible combination of the Union's twenty-four official languages, it is the largest institution of this kind in the world. Multilingualism is defined as a core value in the European Union Charter. On the basis of film material from the negotiation rooms and interpreter booths of the European Court of Justice, the artists Giulia Bruno and Armin Linke, together with the Italian novelist and translator Vincenzo Latronico, show the invisible work of the translators and interpreters who regulate the rights, freedoms, and restrictions for citizens and companies, and ultimately make the common market and the political union possible.

EXHIBITION HALL 1

7:15 P.M. – 7:30 P.M.

LISTEN [MIYAGI HAIKUS]

Sandeep Bhagwati (composer)

PRESENTATION | EN ↔  DE

Sandeep Bhagwati introduces his composition and concert project *LISTEN [Miyagi Haikus]*, which will conclude with a concert and lyrical readings later in the evening.

EXHIBITION HALL 1

7:30 P.M. – 7:45 P.M.

THE MEDIUM IS THE MESSAGE

Kader Attia (artist)

PRESENTATION | EN ↔  DE

Kader Attia presents his idea of different virtualities in the film project *The Medium is the Message* and gives insights into the program *Countering the Virtual Dispossession* which he curated for the following evening.

EXHIBITION HALL 1

7:45 P.M. – 8:15 P.M.

THEORIZING IN UNTRANSLATABLES

Emily Apter (comparative literature theorist)

LECTURE | DE ↔  EN

Untranslatables are identifiable within the *lexicographic* turn in theory today (its engagement with graphology, digitality, data-management, and dictionary and encyclopedic knowledge-objects). As deterritorialized, plurilingual constructs, as political philologies traversing sovereign borders, Untranslatables are distinguished by their mistranslation, their retranslation, their non-translation, their non-negotiable singularities that are negotiated nonetheless. To theorize in Untranslatables implies foregrounding idiom and modes of expressionism in philosophy; it implies interrogating how thinking as process and praxis are translational.

EXHIBITION HALL 1

8:15 P.M. – 8:45 P.M.

Emily Apter, Kader Attia, Sandeep Bhagwati, Giulia Bruno,
Vincenzo Latronico, Armin Linke, and Slavs and Tatars,
moderated by Olga von Schubert

DISCUSSION | EN ↔  DE

Inside a Translator's Mind

Vincenzo Latronico

I am an Italian novelist and translator sitting in the countryside near Rome, writing in English for a bilingual German publication.

Most of the time, I write in Italian. Even then, however, English is invariably at its hidden core: the metal in the sculptor's chisel, the pigment on the painter's palette, the strings at the heart of the grand piano, depending on the metaphor of choice. Books written in English make up an enormous part of what I read—either because of the American market's fertility, or because English translations are often my only way of accessing literature written anywhere else. As a translator, my work literally consists in mediating English-language books for the Italian public. As a novelist, one of my only hopes of long-term financial sustainability is that one of my books will cross the same boundary in the other direction and be translated into English.

This is true of most Italian writers of my generation. Judging from my acquaintances, it is true in Germany and France and Japan as well. English—our often fraught relationship to it—is what we have in common.

This should not be taken to mean that English is the lingua franca of the international artistic and cultural debate (it is decidedly not: “franca” means “free”). This should be taken to mean that the site of the international artistic and cultural debate is *translation*, to and from English, both in its physical, dictionary-at-hand form and in the immaterial process that takes place in my brain as I am writing, right now, in a language that is not mine. Translation, not English, is the predominant language of this booklet and of contemporary art catalogs; it is the language in which a writer such as Elena Ferrante and an artist such as Hito Steyerl and a theorist such as Franco “Bifo” Berardi can gain international prominence.

One could argue that, as a translator, this ought to make me happy. Quite the contrary. As a translator, I know it's a mess.

As a philosophy student in Milan in the early 2000s, I visited the Harvard University Library to research my

thesis. During my stay I happened to cross paths with the late Hilary Putnam, one of the most inspiring philosophers for me at the time. He asked me what I was writing about, but cut me short after a couple of sentences. If you can't sum up your thesis in a minute, he said, you don't have a thesis. Back in Milan, I shared the anecdote (and my dismay) with my Italian adviser. Don't worry, he said. If you can sum up your thesis in a minute, it's not philosophy.

This could be seen as a competition in smart quipping, which it probably is. It could also be taken as a sign that translation is about much more than language as a form in which abstract ideas, whatever those might be, are embodied and made public. Each language carries a set of norms for what counts as a good argument, a solid point, or elegant prose—a culturally specific “intellectual style.” Italian (and French, and German) philosophical prose prizes convolutedness and complexity, frequent quotations and appeals to authority, a meandering style. In English, these very same traits are considered marks of poor writing (“you don't have a point”). If translation is a change of form, it is not granted that the same content will fit.

For example, the English edition of art historian Hans Belting's seminal *Bild-Anthropologie* (2001) lacks a chapter, which had appeared in the French, Spanish, and other versions. In the preface, Belting notes that “despite a close collaboration with the patient translator,” that chapter had to be dropped entirely, “because it seemed to resist any meaningful translation.”

What, I wonder, would Belting's missing chapter have sounded like? It wouldn't have been in “wrong” English. So what does it mean that it “resisted translation”? My guess is that it would have shown a discrepancy between the superficial, grammatical sense, and the value-system—the frame of reference—its sense hinged upon. There would have been too much attrition between content and form. That is to say: it would have sounded translated.

It also goes the other way. Han Kang's *The Vegetarian*, published in South Korea in 2007, was translated into Italian only a decade later, after the international success of its 2015 English translation. Rather uncharacteristically, the Italian version was translated from the English. The reason, I was told, was not to skim on the additional cost that a translation from a less-known language would require. It was because the editor who had bought the book had, of course, originally read it in English, and none of the several translations he had commissioned from the Korean quite matched that beauty. That beauty, of course,

partially derives from the original text's strength; and partially, we must conclude, from what shines through of the English version.

I have experienced some of this myself. I wrote about these issues a few years back for *frieze* magazine, and an Italian magazine republished my piece. I was too busy to translate it myself, but when I got the draft of the Italian text I was appalled. The translator had done a good job, but the original—written by me in English, and deeply edited to match *frieze* standards—lacked the flair my Italian writing normally has. Sentences were short, metaphors scarce, wordplay all but absent. It sounded translated from the English, which it was.

In its published form, the translator's name was acknowledged only at the end, so readers took it as something I had written directly in Italian. This was why several wrote to me to congratulate me for what they saw as a growth in my writing. It sounded more elegant than what I normally wrote, they said, more confident and sharp and precise. In other words: it sounded translated from the English.

Sounding translated can be a good or a bad thing, depending on the politics of the languages involved. If sounding translated from the English is a marker of international flair, the obverse is a sign of provincialism.

This asymmetry is a function of the power differential between languages. Increasingly, the relationship between English and Italian (or French, or Spanish, or Japanese) is not between two national languages but between a global and a local one: the former being the locus of high culture and internationalism, the latter the province of small-town chronicles or, in the best scenario, exoticism.

This phenomenon has been thoroughly discussed in Japan, where it arguably started earlier than in Europe—after the end of the Second World War. In her seminal essay *The Fall of Language in the Age of English* (2015), bilingual novelist Minae Mizumura offers a heartbreakingly personal, painstakingly precise chronicle of this process: the fall of her own Japanese language and culture to the realm of the local, as English (especially American English) took hold of the country's cultural imagination. Her book opens with a quote from one of the first accounts of this process in Japan, in Tsuneari Fukuda's 1960 *My Language Space*: "Now I understand what it means to lose a war."

The war around English is not lost yet. It is fought every time a text is translated into, or from, the English,

the “translatedness” of the text hidden in the hope of masking the painful attrition of cultural clashes and power differential. It is fought in each round of copyediting and speech training, in every muffled foreign accent, in every mistake.

In an essay for the *Serving Library Annual* on translation, which I guest edited, Claudia Durastanti writes: “As a translator from one hegemonic language into a non-hegemonic language, I am always expected not to make mistakes. I could hardly get away by saying that my mistake was a conscious deviation from the English golden standard. If I do that, then I’m bad at my job. But what if my error is indeed a form of creative vengeance? Not a fallacy in the target language, but something that decodes a fallacy in the original text.”

I am an Italian writer sitting in the countryside near Rome, writing in English for a German publication. The language I am writing in is not the language of Jamaica and the United States and Belize and Tonga and South Africa and Ireland and Malta and New Zealand and Lesotho and Singapore and Canada. It is mine. I hope my English is full of deviations and fallacies and mistakes*; and I hope you understand them all.

* This hope will not be fulfilled. As with all texts in this booklet, my contribution has been line-edited to conform to correct English usage—and it would have felt disrespectful and maybe a bit obnoxious on my part to insist to un-edit it. Readers will hence not be able to glean from my incorrect English an illustration of what a reclaimed, deterritorialized English could become; but the fact that they can’t, I hope, can itself provide an illustration of my wider argument.

THURSDAY, FRIDAY

JAN 10-11

LISTEN
[MIYAGI
HAIKUS]

HAIKU No.1

Sandeep Bhagwati

Musical score for Haiku No. 1, consisting of three staves of music. The top staff is a single melodic line, the middle staff is a more complex accompaniment with many sixteenth notes, and the bottom staff is a simple bass line.

HAIKU No.2

Musical score for Haiku No. 2, consisting of three staves of music. The top staff is a single melodic line, the middle staff is a more complex accompaniment with many sixteenth notes, and the bottom staff is a simple bass line.

HAIKU No.5

Musical score for Haiku No. 5, consisting of three staves of music. The top staff is a single melodic line, the middle staff is a more complex accompaniment with many sixteenth notes, and the bottom staff is a simple bass line.

© Sandeep 2011

HAIKU No.4

SEVENTEEN MIYAGI HAIKUS

Musical score for Haiku No. 4, consisting of three staves of music. The top staff is a single melodic line, the middle staff is a more complex accompaniment with many sixteenth notes, and the bottom staff is a simple bass line.

HAIKU No.5

Musical score for Haiku No. 5, consisting of three staves of music. The top staff is a single melodic line, the middle staff is a more complex accompaniment with many sixteenth notes, and the bottom staff is a simple bass line.

HAIKU No.6

Musical score for Haiku No. 6, consisting of three staves of music. The top staff is a single melodic line, the middle staff is a more complex accompaniment with many sixteenth notes, and the bottom staff is a simple bass line.

HAIKU No.7

SEVENTEEN MIYAGI HAIKUS

5

Musical score for Haiku No. 7, consisting of three staves of music. The top staff is a single melodic line, the middle staff is a more complex accompaniment with many sixteenth notes, and the bottom staff is a simple bass line.

Sandeep Bhagwati, Seven of the seventeen Miyagi Haikus, Score 2011
© Sandeep Bhagwati

LISTEN [Miyagi Haikus]

Concept, composition, and conducting:
Sandeep Bhagwati

The *Miyagi Haikus* form a score of seventeen musical haikus—short melodic and rhythmic snapshots written by Sandeep Bhagwati within one day in March 2011, as a spontaneous reaction to the triple earthquake, tsunami, nuclear disaster in Japan. In *LISTEN [Miyagi Haikus]*, over two different concerts, this open score is turned into a contact zone for seventeen musicians from different stylistic origins. This score cannot be played straightforwardly, either as a classical interpretation or as a guided improvisation. Each musician and ensemble will have to assimilate it, translate it for their own instrument and musical tradition, guided by the adaptation rules written into the score handbook: a process of comprovisation, in the interstices between practiced and spontaneous playing. In *LISTEN* spectators can actively participate in this process by attentively perceiving how a cohesive sound stream slowly spins out from these various musical languages: from the first concert on January 10 and public rehearsals over the whole day of January 11, up to the final concert lasting several hours. In addition, Sandeep Bhagwati invited six poets to respond to the music: This invitation resulted in Haikus by Yoko Tawada, Monika Rinck, Yang Lian, Lance Olsen, Christian Filips, and Ranjit Hoskote, parts of which will be read during the concert.

A trio from the New York jazz scene, with Peter Evans (trumpets), Dave Taylor (bass trombone), and Felix Del Tredici (bass trombone); the Open Music Quartet from Stuttgart, with Felix Borel (violin), Scott Roller (cello), Jürgen Kruse (piano), and Michael Kiedaisch (percussion); and a trio comprising a traditional musician from Korea, Jieun Kang (haegeum), a vocal artist from the *musique actuelle* scene of Montréal, Gabriel Dharmoo (vocals), and the Berlin-based bass maven Matthias Bauer (double bass); and the trans-traditional Ensemble Extrakte Berlin, with Wu Wei (sheng, erhu), Cathy Milliken (oboe), Ravi Srinivasan (tabla, percussion), Sören Birke (duduk, blues harmonica), and Klaus Janek (double bass)

Readings by Yoko Tawada, Yang Lian, and Christian Filips

THURSDAY, JAN 10
CONFERENCE ROOM 1

3:00 P.M. – 4:30 P.M.

CONCERT PHASE I—VERSION WITH 3 ENSEMBLES

CONCERT

THURSDAY, JAN 10
CONFERENCE ROOM 1

5:30 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.

PUBLIC REHEARSALS OF THE 3 ENSEMBLES

FRIDAY, JAN 11
CONFERENCE ROOM 1

11:30 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.

PUBLIC REHEARSALS OF THE 3 ENSEMBLES

FRIDAY, JAN 11
AUDITORIUM

2:30 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.

PUBLIC REHEARSALS OF THE 3 ENSEMBLES

FRIDAY, JAN 11
AUDITORIUM

9:00 P.M. – 11:00 P.M.

CONCERT PHASE II—ORCHESTRA VERSION
(WORLD PREMIERE)
WITH POETRY READINGS

CONCERT

9:00 p.m.–9:15 p.m.
Introduction

9:15 p.m.–10:00 p.m.
Concert with poetry
readings

10:00 p.m.–10:30 p.m.

Discussion:
Sandeep Bhagwati,
Christian Filips, Yang Lian,
Cathy Milliken, Yoko Tawada

10:30 p.m.–11:00 p.m.
Concert with poetry
readings

Listening to Listening

On the *LISTEN [Miyagi Haikus]* project

Sandeep Bhagwati

I

How do we listen to music-making that feeds on various musical traditions and sound aesthetics? Especially when these are not tamed into a score by a composer, but are confronted with each other in a direct musical exchange? Do we hear the multi-layered context of their emergence? Do we hear how different ideas of music can rub against, imperil, mutually highlight each other? And how, as a result, new alphabets of listening emerge, are invented?

II

The musicologist Saori Kanemaki writes: “The *haiku* is a short Japanese poem consisting of three parts, subdivided into 5+7+5 syllables. Traditionally, each haiku contains the *kireji*, a sectional word that leads to a metric incision, and *kigo*, a word that indicates the seasonal time of year. In Japanese culture, due to its brevity, the haiku is often a one-liner. Due to its syllable count structure, world literatures tend to treat the haiku more as a three-line poem featuring a description of nature. In translations from Japanese to other languages, only the three-part aspect of this poetic form and the nature-word *kigo* were adopted. [...] The haiku is a snapshot for which subjective sensations are a key element.”

III

The *Miyagi Haikus* form a score of seventeen musical haikus—short melodic and rhythmic snapshots. I wrote them within one day in March 2011, as a spontaneous reaction to the triple earthquake, tsunami, nuclear disaster in Japan. This score cannot be played straightforwardly, either as a classical interpretation or as a guided improvisation: Each musician and ensemble will have to assimilate it, translate it for their own instrument and musical tradition, guided by the adaptation rules written into the score handbook: a process of comprovisation, in the interstices between practiced and spontaneous playing.

In *LISTEN*, over two different concerts, this open score is turned into a contact zone for seventeen musicians from different stylistic origins. In the first concert three separate ensembles encounter each other's music: a trio from the New York jazz scene, with Peter Evans (trumpets), Dave Taylor (bass trombone), and Felix Del Tredici (bass trombone); the Open Music Quartet from Stuttgart, who are experienced in new music, improvisation, and improvisation, with Felix Borel (violin), Scott Roller (violoncello), Jürgen Kruse (piano), and Michael Kiedaisch (percussion instruments); and a trio comprising a traditional musician from Korea, Jieun Kang (haegeum), a vocal artist from the *musique actuelle* scene of Montréal, Gabriel Dharmoo (vocals), and the Berlin-based bass maven Matthias Bauer (double bass). The three ensembles have already worked out, recorded, and played their versions of the *Miyagi Haikus* some time back—but they don't know each other yet. They will present their three versions in a deeply entangled concert on January 10: Moments of intimate recognition of the music in the very different versions of the others. As the audience, you listen to the musicians listening to each other.

IV

After this kick-off concert, the actual work begins: to create a completely new, joint version in a few hours of public rehearsals at the HKW—and to perform it in a second concert on the evening of January 11. The musicians of my trans-traditional Ensemble Extrakte Berlin: Wu Wei (sheng, erhu), Cathy Milliken (oboe), Ravi Srinivasan (tabla, percussion), Sören Birke (duduk, harmonica), and Klaus Janek (double bass), will join the three ensembles. Since 2013, these glocal masters have been working with me on a way of musicking that can reflect the reality of the globalized world.

V

The challenge: To relinquish familiar interpretations and roles and to find new ones, with the composer as a productive, disruptive factor, who injects his own ideas on sound and dramaturgy and constantly meddles with the musicians' process of getting to know one another through joint improvisation. In *LISTEN*, spectators at the rehearsals can actively participate in this process by attentively perceiving how a cohesive sound stream slowly spins out from these various musical languages. Read along with the score: How does each musician translate

the notes into his or her own sonic habits? You are welcome to give your feedback to the musicians during their breaks: for they, too, are not sure how this music, imagined from widely different perspectives, will actually sound to the listeners.

VI

In 2011, with the score of the *Miyagi Haikus*, I had translated a poetic form into music. A year ago, when several complete recordings of this work were finally available, I invited internationally renowned poets to now translate the music back into poetry. Yoko Tawada, Monika Rinck, Yang Lian, Lance Olsen, Ranjit Hoskote, and Christian Filipis surprised and touched me with their haunting cycles of poems, which can be read here—just as the musicians read them before the first rehearsal. The atmospheres and images of these poems will certainly have a decisive influence on the public rehearsal process.

VII

Then, on the evening of January 11, the second concert arrives: twice, at its beginning and its end, we will traverse the music of the *Miyagi Haikus*. In between, there will be a discussion among the poets about what they actually heard—as well as readings of some of their poems. From the same sea, many different waves surge into our ears. What do we hear when listening to such music? The new alphabets of our digital world are not linear: they cannot be deciphered line by line. But perhaps one can listen to them as if to polyphonic music, to its counterpoints and dissonances, its rhythms and harmonies, its permeability to gestures, concepts, thoughts, and feelings—a mode of listening that can still make out the mighty, multi-tongue torrent of thinking and intuition that the incessant noise of the present so often seems to mask.

Translated by the author

Don't come too close I am radiating

Yoko Tawada

1

You may live to be fourteen
The name of this radiant place your expiry date
Only the wind is to blame the scholars murmur
Had it not carried luminous dust
You would have remained intact

2

Far from the edge of father's workshop table
As far away as possible preferably abroad
the child may play merrily and alone
No valve piston can truly be repaired
Don't come too close I am radiating

3

Water twittering faintly above the head
Forgotten winged creatures Vacant trees
The unjust slap A foot soldier in rage
Shoots at a stray bitch Granite
Stands upright with a bestial epitaph

4

Let the screen sleep on
With the tip of your nose draw the word
FAR The lover turns on the radio
Catastrophe sounds economical
Next to organic recipes

5

Undone they call me when I
Cannot nail the us-tone
My inborn face was peeled off
Would you recognize me
From this tattered old melody

6

I hear a doctor climb the stairs
Past my door vanishing to anywhere
No more gown just a white flag
The tiny sick apple inside my throat
Speaks voicelessly rotten mealy brown

7

All that is flashy and shiny
I remove it with tweezers before it
Dismantles the inky black cells in my brain
The nib feels more at home in the shade
Thoughts are light-averse.

8

From a shaft laughter ascends
Deep hoarse children's voices
You quenched them with untested mother's milk
The report you once typed about ex-infants
About their theoretical immortality

9

No farmer will go into exile without
His cows Better a charade
Than this udderless government
Chewing on plastic sods The drooling dictum
Seeps from cowed thighs

10

Carefully combing the lumpy scalp
The hair's black rain falls
Inside the bone-white wash basins
Worn-out scales Throughout the snake ritual
Two oval holes stare out from the mirror

11

In Year One no mushroom will grow in the woods
Bomb berries drop before they are ripe
In Year Three you hear a children's choir sing
We are healthy too healthy almost
And thus this entire land

12

Animals matted in the media rug
The horns bulge from the skinny head
I've been robbed of a tangible death I know
No disgust The nearness of all contemporaries
Smear'd in feces and blood

13

Once a hole was in me star-shaped
Even a street calls itself invalid
Wars on a daisy chain and illusory healings
The knee grinds with every dry cough
On soft ground we stand Bitterly kiss alien wounds

14

No one tells you when your dusty shoes
Wait at the door Even the boy does not know
What goes on and silently scrubs your feet
You and he the only ones to not get a plane
Ticket to the last act

15

The fiancée buried the ring beneath the soil
The diamond is a squashed mineral
It shines on anklets of the jewel family
To travel airily without uranium's weight
To fleetingly return claiming no heritage.

16

She was a swamp in fall when it still rained
The brown earth full of cracks Parched after mating
Thousands of pregnant frogs with their
Transparent bellies Me too
I stand naked with my cells bared

17

On leaving the great-grandparents' house
I will take a handful of earth with me
Their powdery eyes will want to see
The new city my future where no one
Knows us.

Poems in reaction to the *Miyagi Haikus*

Yang Lian

1. To the Brass Version

What I see when I turn my head
in the electric emptiness of night
in flesh a canyon swims

opposite the trees
a forest of frozen, snow-white bones

chaotic colors of dusk
within a still more chaotic dream

swaying
I stroll through a land where I am not

The Sublime

storm and precipitous cliffs in confrontation
storm rages
black crushed into white
mountains pushed open by the sea
sky earth
shrunk to
forests ringing with the sound of swiftly marching feet

Forgetting

wind and the music of wind
world of emptiness
leaves of grass, all singing in the ear

Heard

green scrapes through the thin-skinned body
the mountain valley moves into you
flute sound out of the wind

2. To the Quartet Version

Outside the Instant

if there were only a single drop of cold rain left to fall in
the world
the sound of the rain would last an instant
and if rain sound were this instant
the ear would remain outside the instant
and if the ear is outside the instant
mind falls on silence
as rain empties the empty room
the world falls without a sound

Meeting

bird rides on a sheet of wind
following a rhythm I cannot follow

two ears meet
in an overwhelming sound

shocked, the bird dreams of
sky wearing clothes

Open Book

death cannot be lightless
in the space between leaf and leaf
light and light turns flowing water
the vortex of the fruit reddens
and hears: light splashing upwards
inside a stone the distant sound of a waterfall

World on the Run

lying in a shaded coffin
lying under an apple tree
in the coffin's deeper darkness
the beautiful name sung out by a bird
shadow glinting over the ground
white shadow

Dwelling Place

in the eyes of the dream, dream seems dream
in the light, appears as light
music
this instant's space
whenever restless always "an airy nothing"

3. To the Viola Version

Silent Agreement

time scatters
in bird flight
in the wordless opening of flowers
bird shadow, shattered on the water
like a flower
withered unremembered

Lemon

peaceful topics in an orchard
turn to green in summer
golden in autumn
like the lemon

and yet lemon is not green in summer
nor golden in autumn
far from the word
the sound of raindrops turns to speak of life

Loop

only the days of a word
only the people of a day
only the words of a person

Arrogance of Words

words make people into shadows
words raze the living and the dead
words will not touch the world
in the hollow shell of a hand
twilight colors have long since faded

Vase

a word eradicates the world
a feather
drifts down

and yet, a bird's nest
in each of its fragments
preserves the whole

4. To the Trans-Traditional Trio Version

World at Parting

as I left the moonlight flooded in
forming a tiny whirlpool

the skin of moonlight
was everywhere empty

in the silvery whiteness a fish swam upstream
rubbing eyes darkness, as before

Night Visit

a headstone in the darkness
carves us to a semblance
zero hour moon
bright terror

Fish and Fishman

a fish caught up to glimpse the world
one glimpse from sea to death

the cold milky eye of the fish
slips by me unseeing this white space

Birth

the garden doesn't grow
this white space is moonlight
veins of the stone distinct as letters
from the ends of their branches a bird flows
birdsong
stretches someone out
deep green of mosses figured like spilling blood
all of it fled from the world
and everywhere moving
bodies without bone

5. To the Saxophone Version

First Light

in the emptiness where they were spoken, all things stop
day is a word
which seizes the heard silence
sea, from ash to blue
birds like distant sand
shivering in the sunlight
first light a first word
hearing it every day
can't hear it beginning

Absent

light
draws bamboo leaves on the sea
fans in the sky
names on stone
all things are blue
as I am absent so blue

Distance

wind from blue to green
trees have their own days
to die
fine traces of birds' claws
cover the beach with writing
words that no one can read
light rising
less than an instant
is forever

Translated by John Cayley

The darkness down upon your head [Band Voice Band Band]

Monika Rinck

- 1) I tuned in to Transtraditional.
Band Voice Band Band Band
I turned off Transtraditional again and
tuned to Brass-Trio. A room unfolded.
Breathing. The darkness down upon your head.
Here is the tongue book. Fat birds, easily hurt.
- 2) I have breathed in all night long, the bronchi
are blackened now. In the early morning a trampoline
bounced through a derelict park. Birds awakened.
I think it is good for blood to flow. That's a good thing.
And good, too, that the blood does not spill. O bird.
Cheerful investments are made on tiny parking lots.
Sciencebird inspects the site with Overbird.
- 3) Balance the pelvic floor. Not in a haphazard way.
Something follows through. Energy supply perhaps.
Out of anywhere, new allies all over the flat valleys.
An asymmetrical thatched hut is placed above.
With plexiglass wind chimes Made in Denmark
below the painted ceiling. O ants, o emmets you,
in crummy launching pits. Balance pelvic floors.
Think foot arch throughout. That is where the body begins.
- 4) Glaciers calve. Calved. It already happened.
Phenomena revolve around their axis
And after eight turns, they must
Alas, alas Band Voice Band Band incinerate.
Beasts with hardly remarkable tails flee
those surfaces whence a human hand had chased them.
- 5) No one in the entire band was able to park
the tools between the lines right on their guidance
mushrooms. Just then a promising amateur knocked.
We must proceed with pomp and pettiness.
The promising amateur handled the situation.
He whipped everything into extreme excitement—and left.

- 6) Feathery molecules scurried across the underfloor.
There were chubby teens, scarcely containable.
They have grown terribly in such a short time
and fear their own selves and dig holes
into their lungs, whither they vanish for fourteen days flat.
Their only provisions: some protein bars, energy drinks.
- 7) O. On this, much can be omitted.
My holy bobbing dog. Pure poetry.
Hence: poésie pure. Will see action: ze lott.
Below the surface bending, grinding.
- 8) Whoever wants could even dance to this.
A sing-along is in the cards. Greeting as well as
sexting and the arrest of the sexton.
For possession of this very big key
to a hideaway slyly dubbed bunker .
- 9) Early morn. The morning after.
The morning after the disaster we interrogate
animals on their whereabouts and losses,
for we ask those who have no excuses.
The animals answer politely
The animals refer to a handout
they had put into the shared download folder
so that humans would have access at all times.
- 10) Yes, memories of the disaster were a bit
all over the place. I was in Dijon at the time,
eating a smoked stag sausage. With mustard!
Of course, with mustard. With Dijon-yellow mustard.
Then I took the funicular, traveled to
the Lake of Como where a thunderstorm had gathered.
People were friendly, they taught me about
Beekeeping, artichoke lasagne, alpenglouw,
the Romanesque.
- 11) Eleven wants to be heard. Eleven now really wants to
be heard.
Eleven fights, begs, wishes, asks and wants, wants a lot.
Eleven pulls itself together. Eleven sticks to the script.
Eleven sidles up to an emerging form. Eleven turns.
In this, Eleven is superior to us in every way. Eleven lives.

- 12) In old age, to remain bound to one's subjectivity.
 And to thus roam the world to reach oneself.
 In old age, to put up with self-confidence as a digression.
 To put the world first, and oneself second.
 This is what, in the West, music can make us aware of.
- 13) I only had one cat when I died.
 The neighbors were on the alert. They called
 My non-existent son. He came.
 Good old bureaucracy handled the rest.
 Good administration. The coroners.
 I had only had one cat about me. And now?
- 14) Tracks Tracks Band Voices Band Traces
 Everything is open again. Catastrophe has
 made it possible. This openness is thus how
 it arrives, in the wake of bewilderment. We will all
 remember it for a long time. It will seem as if
 this bewilderment had been our youth.
- 15) This is sad. It comes from an overextended gestalt.
 Not focused, but rather scattered, forlorn,
 In its much-too-large, unpaid-for apparel. Go cry, then!
- 16) I want to donate this stomach to you.
 It is well made, and spacious, too.
 These days a steady stomach is crucial.
 For everything has been split in two. And will never
 never, never ever be one again. Here is the swimmer,
 while over there are people who drown as he
 is swimming.
- 17) How does it end? It wanders off in all directions.
 But the wherefrom and whereto remains unclear.
 Is it not a bit too short? There is 1:26.
 Time and again 1:26 towards things to come.
 I seem to stand at the halfway point. I have had
 what I had, thought, gathered, and felled.
 Luckily that which I did not think persists.

Translated by Sandeep Bhagwati

17 texts on "BR Haiku 16" Miyagi Haikus: The Brass Trio Version;
 Peter Evans, trumpet; David Taylor, bass trombone; Felix del Tredici,
 bass trombone (March 2015, Montréal)

The Tide is Right

Lipograms from a Lost World

Ranjit Hoskoté

1. # PQ Haiku 11

This is not a coup
the spoken word
rules

Congratulations, you have won
your card
is being processed.

An offer, just for you

Birds

birds skittering at the whisper of a storm
whack of cymbals in a lotus sky
scree scree scree

2. # PQ Haiku 17

wailing voices of water
plucked souls
where
in this garden of unsealed tombs
did we lose our serenades?

3. # VA Haiku 9

thunder whispers thunder growls
thunder does voices thunder chuckles
the salt in our veins is ready to explode
the sawmill claps the last jet engine sputters
who'd have thought?

8. # SX Haiku 10

a voice

that could call down rain
that could snatch and weave commandments
that could knot and braid prophecies
that could shiver the clouds into chants

draw the air into a bowstring

9. # SX Haiku 11

Seeing is a kind

of spelling out
hurrying to escape
the hominid light
when the rain pauses
at the dry coconut palm
as tares explode
on the bare shore

A man plucks his clothes

from a mulberry tree
behind him folds of earth
tumble down a slope
he plucks a curse from the tree
and aims it

Iron grid, lick of rising flames

When we leave, we leave

Haiku—Listening Protocol

Christian Filips

1

The lout says: yes ! Yet: I hear
no No at all
come out.

2

*

3

I refuse !
To jump into a kettle
As an unkissed frog

4

!

5

Gosh! Did I run out of all
eight-hundred-thousand
syllables, again?

6

yeah, so ... stiff
upper hip

7

Man, just keep your
bones on your
bones, help !

8

(:) pristine music

9

I probably laughed
This one
To bits

10

Whoever likes to live in a bunker
We will lock him up Code 5-7-5
Into the nearest bullshit

11

No, there's no emptiness
In a house that a long time ago
was abandoned forever

12

Sounds like a preparation for the next

13

Why unnecessarily
deep-fry syllables (Christian fish!)
In cookie-cutters ?

14

The door ajar that gets stuck at the
hinge will, with the next waft,
draught, shut, open, shut ...

15

That's the question: will the
ship not break apart just fine
even without you ?

16

not the misfortune of others
not you—your
metric Us !

17

To consider nothing as
numbered !
(pea soup!)

Translated by Sandeep Bhagwati

we held hands
after *miyagi haikus*:
the piano quartet version

lance olsen

1.

Suddenly the asphalt began to ripple between Units Five and Six. I couldn't stay on my feet. In a panic, I looked around and saw a 120-meter exhaust duct shaking violently. Cracks began to appear on the outside of the turbine building. The air was filled with clouds of dust. The heat became unbearable.

Suddenly

an I
began to appear
on the outside . The air was filled with us . The heat

2.

It felt like a jet had come too close to the window. There was a huge rumbling noise and everything started shaking and rocking. The aftershocks are still hitting hard every few minutes. TV is showing a fire in a tall building and tsunami waves carrying away lorries and cars.

I had come too close to everything
every minute . TV is
fire in waves
lose every is

readings on my detector rise steadily: 0.7 in Naraha, 0.9 in Tomioka, 6.7 in Okuma. That's when the bus came to a halt. They told us to put on our respirator masks. Now every inch of us was covered.

We were given empty towns
time
masks. Now every inch of us was covered.

We were
time
Now

6.
o a vis ol om
al I sto
Ye li aw I s
sing

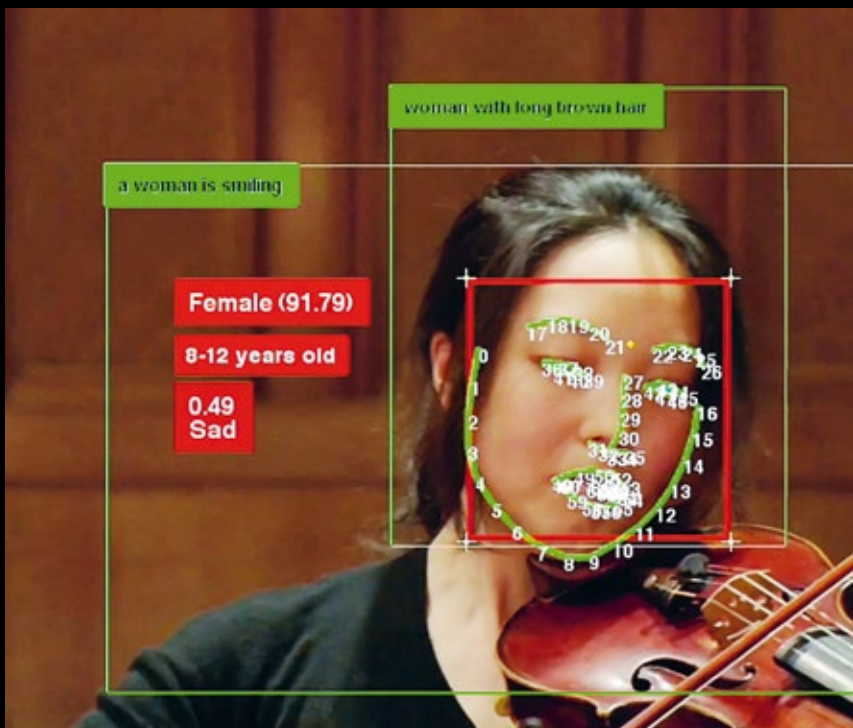
The visible dominating the skyline. Next
a blue holding
covered with almost . I stopped my
reader . Yet there were life windows . I saw
rising air.

The first things visible in the plant were half a dozen large cranes dominating the skyline. Next we passed a field filled with blue train-car-like tanks holding contaminated water. The grounds were covered with pine forest. It felt almost bucolic. Near the reactors, I stopped to check my radiation reader: 300. Yet there were still signs of life. Through the bus windows, I saw dragonflies. I saw crows rising into the air.

SATURDAY, JAN 12

3:00 P.M.–7:30 P.M.

STOP
MAKING
SENSE



STOP MAKING SENSE

Curated by Bernd Scherer
and Olga von Schubert

From the linguistic development of so-called Artificial Intelligence to the decentralized structure of the blockchain, new technologies operate on the basis of training sets, into which are inscribed prejudices, world views, material infrastructures, and ownership logic. To what extent do the metaphors of intelligence and learning apply to the new technologies? Who writes the protocols of algorithmic infrastructures and on the basis of which semiotic and semantic processes do they operate? Where do the opportunities for emancipation, self-determination, diversity, and decentralization lie within the realm of technological development? To what extent does it make sense to renounce the quest for meaning in the technological development of language, and what kind of algorithmic poetry does this engender? Taking as reference the work of Luc Steels, one of the world's leading AI developers, artistic and activist positions are deployed to explore the development of technological language.



Trevor Paglen: *Image Operations*. Op.10, 2018, video still, 23 min.
© Trevor Paglen

Giulia Bruno, Kate Crawford,
Simon Denny, Armin Linke,
Trevor Paglen, Felix Stalder,
Luc Steels, Hito Steyerl,
moderated by Bernd Scherer

AUDITORIUM

3:00 P.M. – 3:30 P.M.

THE LANGUAGE OF BROKEN GLASS

Hito Steyerl (filmmaker), Bernd Scherer

PRESENTATION, CONVERSATION | EN ↔ 🔄 DE

Hito Steyerl explores the ways in which Artificial Intelligence affects our urban environment and how alternative practices may emerge through pictorial acts in the public space. Her new work *The City of Broken Windows* (2018), premiered at Castello die Rivoli near Turin, revolves around the process of teaching AI how to recognize the sound of breaking windows. In conversation with Bernd Scherer the artist presents this site-specific film installation.

AUDITORIUM

3:30 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.

LANGUAGE IS A SLIPPERY THING

Luc Steels (AI scientist and opera composer)

LECTURE | EN ↔ 🔄 DE

A language used to be thought of as a more or less fixed system with a universal, possibly innate underlying structure. But on closer examination, a language is like a river, always changing and fluid. How can we study this highly dynamic object? The talk will first give an impression of the fascinating experiments in language evolution that have been taking place over the past few decades, some of them in the context of art exhibitions. Then Luc Steels will look at how and why social media and AI technology have recently given rise to language abuse that exploits disinformation, divisive discourse, and post-truth conspiracy theories. We have to ask the question: What is the influence of technology on this important shift in human discourse. How is it changing language and the use of language? Will language lose its ability to convince others through argument and to speak the truth? How can we regain this precious tool that is essential for keeping coherence in our society?

LANGUAGE AGENTS

Luc Steels in conversation with Giulia Bruno (artist) and Armin Linke (artist)

SCREENING AND LECTURE PERFORMANCE | DE ↔  EN

A film about Artificial Intelligence, robots, language games, and the characteristics of non-human communication. Giulia Bruno and Armin Linke visited the Belgian scientist and artist Luc Steels in his archive, and have brought together and commented on his extensive research material in a video installation. Steels's pioneering "Talking Heads Experiment," conducted between 1999 and 2001, allowed robots, independent of centralized human input, to develop their own common vocabulary, which was then further developed through interaction with "human intelligence." In their lecture performance, Giulia Bruno and Armin Linke provide an insight into their film project, which is installed in the exhibition hall in full length.

DISCUSSION AND Q&A**4:30 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.**

BREAK**5:00 P.M. – 5:30 P.M.**

IF EVERYTHING IS TRUE—KNOWLEDGE AND MANIPULATION

Felix Stalder (media and cultural theorist)

LECTURE | DE ↔  EN

Digital technologies provide the means to apprehend the rapidly growing complexity of our modern day, and render it accessible to human perception. Yet, at the same time, they destabilize our relationship to the world, since many of these new tools not only privatize knowledge but also instrumentalize it. This is not about the truth, not even about predicting the future, but about altering the trajectory of the future. We are at an impasse. Traditional methods can no longer address the problems, and new methods are under the tight control of just a few players who are pursuing their own security-related and economic objectives. Fresh courses of action could emerge if we were able to embed these tools explicitly within the existing social and ecological complexity, instead of striving to manipulate reality from the outside.

DATAFICATION OF SCIENCE

Kate Crawford (Distinguished AI Scholar)
and Trevor Paglen (artist)

LECTURE | EN ↔ 🔊 DE

Are Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning really the right metaphors to address training sets that feed into automated processes? Kate Crawford and Trevor Paglen look into the production of training data and uncover the historical origins, labor practices, infrastructures, and epistemological assumptions, with biases and skews built into them from the outset. Departing from these observations they ask: Is there a possibility for decentralized, vernacular AI? How does computational centralization relate to reduction?

BLOCKCHAIN AS CODED INFRASTRUCTURE

Simon Denny (artist)

LECTURE | EN ↔ 🔊 DE

In recent years, cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin and the blockchain ledger they employ have fueled the imagination of an “alternative Web” or third Web based on decentralization of (monetary) power, direct-democratic governance, and access. Simon Denny’s work challenges the idea of “decentralization” within Crypto economics, and questions whether Crypto’s coded infrastructure might still employ the same logics of centralization; rendering social and political needs computational and abstract. In this talk, Denny tracks some examples of prominent figures and companies that he has unpacked in his artworks and questions whether Crypto and associated technologies could enable a continuation of dominant economic paradigms rather than a rupture from them.

Kate Crawford, Simon Denny, Trevor Paglen, Felix Stalder,
and Luc Steels, moderated by Bernd Scherer

DISCUSSION | DE ↔ 🔊 EN

The Crisis of Epistemology and New Institutions of Learning

Felix Stalder

We, everyone living in increasingly globally interlinked cultures, are experiencing a sharp rise in complexity, triggered by an explosion of social, biological, and machinic actors. This proliferation of agencies, which is sustained and accelerated by digital infrastructures, overwhelms modern orders of learning and knowing, such as libraries, museums, broadcast media, universities, and so on, which are built around small data sets and a limited number of accepted ways of organizing and interpreting these sets. There is a close relationship between epistemology, that is ways of creating statements about the world, what can be stated, and who can make such statements, and power, that is how to organize the world, what needs to be organized, and who can do it. The present is characterized by a crisis of the established epistemic-political order, let's call this modern-liberal, and the emergence of a new one, which is yet to be named. This crisis is, perhaps not surprisingly, most sharply felt in Western cultures, which have created, and for the most part completely adopted, the now crumbling order.

Redux Baroque

To find a similar situation of profound epistemological and political transformation in the history of the West, we need to go back to the mid-seventeenth century. The Peace Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 defined the secular nation-state as the pinnacle of power and ultimate sovereign, while the Royal Society in London, founded in 1660, defined a new mode of establishing facts, contested by Thomas Hobbes in a famous debate with Robert Boyle.¹ The debate concerned the question of what made knowledge reliable and put it beyond dispute. Boyle—having in mind the new experimental sciences—argued that the observations of individual men, when organized into a community of peers and bound by both a strict adherence to impersonal methods and limiting themselves to narrow domains, could be in peaceful agreement regarding matters of fact. This implied an ethos of *disinterestedness* (acceptance of any

outcome as long as methods were adhered to) and *inter-subjectivity* (the position of the observer played no role, hence different observers could bare witness to the same thing). This was made possible not least by constructing the domain of knowledge, “nature,” as being located outside of “society.” Hobbes, on the other hand, doubted the idea of disinterestedness. For him, all activity of men was political and knowledge beyond dispute could only flow from absolute axioms. His ideal was Euclidean geometry.

Both Boyle and Hobbes were fully aware that their positions had immediate political applications. The previous thirty years, dominated by civil war and a tumultuous, short-lived republic, had shown that dispute over knowledge could lead to war and social chaos, “making the life of man,” as Hobbes had put it in *Leviathan* (1651), “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.” This gave the question of how to come to agreements peacefully great urgency. Boyle’s notion of communities organized around their own methods and rules but bounded by limited domains not only led to the creation of different scientific disciplines but, more importantly, separated science from politics and religion. Questions from one domain, he maintained, had no bearing on those from other domains. Each would follow its own rules, set by the community of peers, and not impose them on those outside of the community. The final consequence of this would be that power, faith (or, more modern, affect), and knowledge would be separated, each with its own institutions, rules, and procedures. This separation into different domains enabled management of the rapidly rising social complexity in all three domains, driven by the proliferation of religious sects following the Reformation, the new encounters with the non-European world during colonization, and the increase in social dynamism through the growth of mercantile capitalism spurred by primitive accumulation.

This epistemic-political settlement—which has defined the modern-liberal era—is breaking down. Hobbes’s suspicion that knowledge is always political and that disinterestedness is impossible is back with a vengeance. The increased complexity of society—driven, as mentioned, by the exponential increase in actors that need to be reckoned with—makes the outside position, so crucial to *disinterestedness* and *inter-subjectivity*, impossible. The observer is now inside the problem, and hence affected by it, and his/her/its position within the problem shapes what can be seen. This was the fundamental insight of second-order

cybernetics from the 1970s.² The inside position does not allow for a “view from nowhere” that can claim to see the totality.

At the same time, the problems of the natural sciences no longer concern the “other nature” constructed as the opposite of “culture”—but inseparable hybrids. Almost all scientific problems now raise the question: how do we want to live? This breaks down the separation between the political and the scientific. This is not really new. Bruno Latour argues that we have not been modern (in this epistemic sense) for thirty years now.³

A New Unified Space

What is new, however, is that we can also observe the rapid establishment of new ways of organizing this increased complexity. These include a new layer of governance, namely, protocols. A protocol sets the rules of engagement, but it does not give orders as to what people *must* do, it doesn't even mobilize desires by shaping what people *want* to do. By setting rules, a protocol just creates a space of possible interaction. Anything goes, because all agency within this space reaffirms the protocol that creates the conditions of agency in the first place. The most important protocols used to be social, but today they are technical. And one of their features is that they vastly increase the number of actors that can interact. The Internet Protocol (IPv4) was created in the early 1980s and established space for some four billion actors, each identified by a unique number. Everything with an IP number adhering to the protocol could, in principle, be addressed and interacted with. These numbers are all used up now and a new version of this protocol has been created (IPv6). It expands the address space by several orders of magnitude; in fact it is now so large that it is theoretically possible to address every single atom on the planet individually.

And this expanded number of addresses allows for an increase in the heterogeneity of addressable actors: people, machines, animals, plants, as individuals or dividuals, objects large and small, and dynamic patterns such as river streams or weather events. The placement of sensors everywhere, means each actor can speak and (inter)act within this vast space created by the protocols.

In parallel, there has been a jump from small data to big data. Big data allows, or so is the promise, for everything to be taken in, avoiding reductionist modeling. But data is not knowledge. Knowledge is generated through algorithmic procedures that run a large number

of regressions through that data until they find something that “works.” So, the answer becomes directly related to the question and the question is one of utility. The knowledge that flows from such procedures doesn’t aim at external truth but at internal use. Both protocols and machine analysis promise a new unified space. The separation of knowledge domains collapses. This could be a very good thing, as the separation between domains, such as “nature” and “society,” or “scientific” and “traditional” knowledge, or “reason” and “affect” is no longer tenable.

A Concentration of Power or a Multiplicity of Voices

In a way, we have returned to the debate between Hobbes and Boyle on the relationship between knowledge and politics. Hobbes made a connection between the concrete and political nature of knowledge and absolutism as an epistemological-political system that is necessary to establish axiomatic principles from which knowledge could flow. Boyle, on the other hand, argued for an abstract and disinterested mode of science and its connection to what would eventually become a democratic polity.

However, today the roles have been exactly reversed. The claim for abstraction and disinterestedness, particularly as knowledge flows from algorithmic processes that are validated primarily by the ability to make the short-term predictions necessary to manipulate the very environment in which they operate, is making already highly concentrated power (only very few actors can do big data, machine learning, and Artificial Intelligence at scale)⁴ even more unaccountable.

If the observer is inside the problem then the problem domain can no longer be constructed as the “other.” This means that there can be no disinterested description, but matters of fact become, as Latour puts it, “matters of concern.”⁵ If we take climate science as an example, then every statement about the climate is also a statement about the society that is now understood as producing this climate. Hence every *description* becomes a *prescription*. Every algorithm is also a value statement. To insist on the positionality and the political nature of all knowledge claims must not lead to relativism or a superficial postmodernism in which “everything is constructed,” but to new ways of seeing the world, to multiple perspectives that focus on points of intersection and translation.⁶ Against a “few from nowhere” we need to develop a “view from here, and there,” one that allows for a multiplicity of

views and heuristics (both human and non-human), and seeks to recombine science, politics, and affects. This will not happen overnight, and it will not emerge by itself, thus there is a need for new institutions of learning that develop ways to think and articulate the changing relationship between unity and multiplicity.

- 1 Steven Schapin and Simon Schaffer, *Leviathan and the Air-Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985).
- 2 Heinz von Foerster, *Understanding Understanding: Essays on Cybernetics and Cognition* (New York: Springer, 2003).
- 3 Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern* (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993).
- 4 Laurent Alexandre, "The Geopolitics of AI and Robotics: Interview of Laurent Alexandre by Nicolas Mialhe," *Field Actions Science Reports*, Special Issue 17 (2017): 84–87, <http://journals.openedition.org/factsreports/4507>
- 5 Bruno Latour, "Why Has Critique Run out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern," *Critical Inquiry*, no. 30 (2004): 225–48.
- 6 Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990).

Machine Languages of AI

Kate Crawford and Trevor Paglen

The use of the word “intelligent” to describe machines and computational systems has a long and troubled history—and one that is as much about power, politics, and philosophy, as it is about technology. The so-called intelligent machine assumes an air of authority, impartiality, and independence from the whims and limitations of its maker. The act of designating a thing as intelligent also bestows creative power on the machine-maker—and manages to do so in a way that diminishes the attendant responsibility. It’s an efficient mechanism whereby the powerful accrue power while being exempted of responsibility.

At a time when the rhetoric around Artificial Intelligence is reaching new heights, we need to ask: Who is using this language? Who is doing the “meaning-making”? What is intelligence in this context? While it is true that the subfield of AI known as machine learning is currently in the ascendant, and taking a role in multiple institutions and processes of decision-making, it is neither new nor intelligent. In fact, these questions were already being raised in the first wave of Artificial Intelligence in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

In 1961, MIT hosted a landmark lecture series titled “Management and the Computer of the Future.” An extraordinary group of computer scientists, including Grace Hopper, J. C. R. Licklider, Marvin Minsky, Allen Newell, Herbert Simon, and Norbert Wiener, convened to discuss the rapid advances being made in digital computing and their possible business applications. The final lecture focused on a normative topic: “What computers should be doing.” It was given by John Pierce, Head of Research at Bell Labs, who said there were deep differences between human beings and computers, and argued that managers should work to identify areas where the unique strengths of computers—and humans—could be profitably applied.

Several people dissented. Chief among these was John McCarthy, organizer of the famous 1956 Dartmouth Conference that formally launched the field of Artificial Intelligence. McCarthy argued that the differences Pierce identified between human and machine tasks were

illusory—there were simply some machine tasks that were more complicated.

The brothers Hubert and Stuart Dreyfus were in the audience that day, and were evidently so moved that they submitted additional remarks to the conference organizers, and these were later included in its proceedings. Their stance was diametrically opposed to that of McCarthy. They argued that the difficulties faced in AI research were much deeper and more complicated than the researchers had assumed. Speaking of “workers in cognitive simulation and artificial intelligence” in his *Alchemy and Artificial Intelligence* (1965), Hubert Dreyfus writes “they do not even consider the possibility that the brain might process information in an entirely different way than a computer” (47–48).

This significant controversy from the 1960s has, in many ways, been forgotten in the wave of hype about machine learning. The type of statistical and optimization processes in this field are once again being described as close to human intelligence, and this is where a set of fundamental misunderstandings are recurring. These misconceptions are partly based on a metaphorical understanding of intelligence that produces an enormous amount of ideological work in the current industrial formulation of AI. Disregarding this ideological power play, Artificial Intelligence is commonly framed as a set of purely technical processes rather than a set of social, political, and industrial processes that are all intermingled. Any critical discourse on AI thus needs to contend with what is at stake in these ideological and economic formations.

In order to begin to understand these processes and their origins, we need to ask the question, what are training sets? Training sets are the bedrock that neural networks are built upon. They are the coal that is fed into the steam engines of neural networks. In order to drill down to the level of machine languages, one has to start by looking at training sets, and in particular, benchmark sets. Training sets are collections of data, for example labeled images, that are used to train neural networks; and benchmark sets are used to assess the optimization, accuracy, and efficiency of new algorithms and industrial approaches. On the whole, training data has been assumed to be objective, ahistorical, and non-ideological, but this ignores its own process of creation: Looking at the production of training data, we can uncover its historical origins, labor practices, infrastructures, and epistemological assumptions, with biases and skews built into them from the

outset. That's why we think it is important to look at some of these training sets and develop a form of semiotics: a semiotics of the machine vernacular.

What is the relationship between images and meanings in AI and ML systems? And most importantly, what is the political work being done here?

With these questions in mind we try to understand the mechanics and mechanisms of meaning-making that happens in training sets for AI, for example in image labeling. We do this by investigating three interrelated issues. First, what is the relationship between images and the labeling and captioning of images? Second, what are the labor practices behind that captioning and meaning-making? Third, how is the relationship between images and meanings operationalized in the context of policing, insurance, credit, healthcare, warfare, and other aspects of everyday life?

AI systems are burrowing deeper into the messy work of automatically labeling and predicting everything from gender, to sexuality, to criminality, to emotion. But they never ask: "What is a woman? A man? A criminal? A feeling?"

SATURDAY, JAN 12

4:00 P.M.–7:00 P.M.

LOOMING CREOLE



LOOMING CREOLE

Covenanted and assembled by Filipa César

Looming Creole is an inhabited set and a score. It convenes various spacialities and languages and a multitude of agencies: contemporary digital imaginaries of neo-liberal multinational extractivism as *terra nullius* upgrade at the West African coast, and the long use of encoding matter as poetics of resistance within colonial occupations. In a three-hour long score we will collectively entangle various *tessituras* and source/resource codes, warping horizontal threads of fabulations from left to right and from right to left. This loom frames the space for a training camp that explores the subversive potency of quantum weaving against the engineering of binary extractive epistemologies.



by two pair of hands,
pieces.

Odete Semedo talks about a *panu di pinti*, classified as an "obra." Filipa César

Joana Barrios, Filipa César, Marinho de Pina, Muhammed Lamin Jadama, Diana McCarty, Olivier Marboeuf, Odete Semedo, Saliha Podingo von Medem, Mark Waschke, Nelly Yaa Pinkrah

Sounds: Jin Mustafa with Super Camarimba the Mandigo and Fulani village of Tabatô
Kriol proverbs collected and selected by Teresa Montenegro
With a scenography by Lorenzo Sandoval
With transmissions by Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, Chico Indi, and Zé Interpretador
Photography by Matthias Biber, Filipa César, and Jenny Lou Ziegel; CGI animation by Harry Sanderson

Commissioned by the Haus der Kulturen der Welt with the support of Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon; Tabakalera, San Sebastián; Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg; Camões Institute / Portuguese Embassy in Berlin; IBAP – Institute for Biodiversity and Protected Areas, Bissau. In collaboration with Cadjigue Collective, Volte Slagen, and Spectre Productions.

PANU DI PINTI 4:00 P.M. – 4:40 P.M.

Odete Semedo (theorist and poet)
with Saliha Pondingo von Medem
(activist and founder of Nô Lanta Djunto eV)

SEAM

Joana Barrios (actor and author)
Filipa César (artist and filmmaker)

SOURCERY 4:45 P.M. – 5:15 P.M.

Wendy Hui Kyong Chun (new media theorist, via video
message) and Diana McCarty (media activist)

SEAM

TERRA NULLIUS 2.0 5:20 P.M. – 5:40 P.M.

Mark Waschke (actor)

SEAM

SLAM ARCHITECTURE 5:45 P.M. – 6:05 P.M.

Marinho de Pina (architect and artist)

SEAM SOLIDARITY 6:05 P.M. – 6:10 P.M.

Muhammed Lamin Jadama (photographer and activist)

GLISSANTIAN IMAGINARIES 6:10 P.M. – 6:30 P.M.

Nelly Yaa Pinkrah (author and media theorist)

SEAM

SPEAKING TOXIC MATTER 6:35 P.M. – 6:55 P.M.

Olivier Marboeuf (writer and performance artist)

Kriol Operating System Accounts from the first part of The Middle Passage¹

Filipa César



A screenshot from September 11, 2017, documenting the route of Hurricane Irma as monitored by Google Data while making landfall on the US mainland. This text was written exactly one year later, just as Hurricane Florence was gathering wind.

Last August a storm formed around the Bissagos Islands and further developed into a tropical wave near Cape Verde. Weather conditions allowed this to intensify into Hurricane Irma, which headed towards the third archipelago, the Antilles, made landfall in Haiti, then Cuba, and finally hit the status of the most searched term on Google globally in 2017. From archipelago to archipelago to archipelago. Superimposed, the satellite images of multiple Atlantic hurricanes can draw a pattern of movement where transintentional natural forces contributed to The Middle Passage—forced uprooting of peoples and raw materials, preemptory triangulations of trauma, treacherous extractionism, and unbalanced capital accumulation—data transferred via water and underwater mediums. Édouard Glissant named this path “fibril,” a vivid fiber, a creature evolving from flux and recurrence, all it produces stays in perpetuated affected movement, not accounted for in the algorithm of the slavers. A creature, *create*, *cria*, *creole*, *Kriol*.²

Located in the first six hundred kilometers of The Middle Passage, the volcanic islands of Cape Verde accommodated the first Atlantic slave societies induced by the

Portuguese.³ Previously uninhabited, the islands swiftly became an entrepôt for African merchant networks. The area encompassing the estuaries of the Cacheu and Geba rivers—forming the alluvium coast of Guinea-Bissau, the adjacent Bissagos Islands, and the Cape Verde archipelago—was called the Guinean Rivers of Cape Verde by the *Tugas*.⁴ Emblematically, they named the water—the off-shores, the liquidity they most inhabited—and not the land.

The Bidjugu (Bijagó in *Kriol*) ethnic group always knew how to divert natural saps to poison the wells where the invaders would drink, and that the mangroves encircling the eighty-eight islands of the archipelago would hinder access to the shores. Poison is but displaced substance.

Vested with an insular ecology of darkness,⁵ living in the night, hiding at daylight, the Bijagó people, marooned on their own land, became shelterers of the orphans of slavery. The Balantes, Mandingues, Manjak, Fulani, Mancanhas, and Papel peoples constantly resisted the Portuguese occupation in the area through long and bloody uprisings.⁶ This resistance was partly supported by the *tongomaus* or *lançados*—Portuguese penal laborers who defied submission to the crown and began trading in their own interest with the French, Spanish, Dutch, and English. The *lançados*—launched, excluded, discarded—adopted an African way of life, rejected Catholic customs, and joined the African community. Marriages between African women and *lançados* contributed a great deal to miscegenation outside the Portuguese project of assimilation, their children are called *filhos da terra*, children of the earth. Guinean Creole evolved from all these opportune intricacies as a vehicular language for trading and as a cultural thesis elaborated from resistance to oppression,⁷ in opposition to the colonial social synthesis.⁸

Deeply entangled with this Creolization is the *panu di pinti* (literally, cloth of the comb), a particular weave of long straight bands developed by the Manjak people who initially inhabited the Bissagos Islands of Pecixe and Djeta. In the early days of the slave trade, enslaved Manjak were held captive in Cape Verde, and were put in contact with techniques of the loom and abundant raw materials from the newly introduced cotton plantations. The cloth they developed was so stunning that it was soon traded as a currency along the Guinean Rivers. In Cape Verde it is called *pano di terra*, cloth of the earth, echoing how the children of the *lançados* and African women were called. All born of the earth, people, cloth, and language, share a

rhizomatic re-earthing of their deterritorialized condition. The Manjak *fisial* (weaver in Creole), along with the Papel people,⁹ are the main weavers of the combed cloth in Guinea-Bissau today. Their patterns encode plants, land and sea animals, *irans* (sacred entities), and community symbols entangled through a colored binary code. The etymological origin of the word Manjak is “to tell”; their main practice of weaving, a gesture of telling, weaving as discourse, inscription, tale, tessitura, texture, textile as text. Also deriving from the word Manjak is the *manjuandadi*, a close knit community of people in the Guinean society, transversal to all ethnic groups. The *mandjuandadi* gatherings promoted by women sow kinship in an ecosophy of solidarity. Creole is the language of the songs sung in *manjuandadi* rituals that use the calabash and specific *panu di pinti* weavings as operators for initiation ceremonies, burial shrouds, fertility charms, and channeling entities. These rituals also include men who embody women, take on female feelings, sing of women’s narratives, becoming feminine enunciators. In Guinean Creole there are no gender pronouns, “he” is considered gender neutral, evidence of the ungraspable fluidity of the Creole imaginary.

The *fisial* is a metonym of this imaginary, the code keeper dedicated to the mechanical movement from right to left and from left to right, a tidal effusion in the Guinean alluvium. The woven fabric is an animistic transactional interface between human, animal, plant, gender, element, and the *irans*. If the Jacquard loom was the father of binary code and Ada Lovelace the mother of the algorithm, Creole is the promised child of quantum fugitive entanglement. The Manjak weavers don’t necessarily completely grasp the codes they operate, while the women, the sewers, are the programmers of the magical and poetical syntax of the sequences of combined bands of cloth for ethical use in each ritual.

The very materiality of the weaved bands has a latent reversal potency, the fabric is constituted by a verso and a recto. The verso side of the cloth is the unsaid in the discourse that is never closed or univocal. Universe is but one verse.¹⁰ The verse of the *panu di pinti* always includes its reverse, the sub-verse, the verse under, inscribed by the very mechanics of the subversive, tumultuous ancestry of Creole. It is a system of permanent inconstancy, uncertainty, resistance, repetition, and renewal—difference without separability.¹¹ The reverse is always a verse again, a multiverse, a revisiting of the verse differently.

Today *panu di pinti* is woven with polyester shipped from China, but the permanent cottoning of Creole and its threads re-member reverberating plantation raw materialities. Oral tradition and the weaving mothers of the binary code form a bridge dodging the violence of words written in the accounts of slave ships. As Teresa Montenegro explained the title of her visionary, non-alphabetical lexicon of Guinean Creole—if *ka ten* (there is not) a daily expression in a country of engineered poverty, at least *Kriol ten* (there is Creole)¹²—underlining, here, the uncompromising wealth of the Creole language.

Irma, *irmon-fémea*,¹³ and the convened *irans* describe and inscribe the violence transmitted through the fibril. But the currents of her sisterhood had carried the Guinean datura seeds to germinate in Haitian soils—their sprouts later concocted by the secret societies of the Bizango to poison French kitchens and propel further uprisings.¹⁴

Child of the earth, cloth of the earth, Creole on earth, embankments of tidal weavings—a recurrent state of something else. The *Kriol* operating system is a channel to transact between oceans, materialities, and entities, capable of seeding future political and ethical planetary dimensions. If there is a trans-human knowledge carried out by the forces moving the Atlantic hurricanes and further manifestations, the ritual technologies of Creole constitute a framework—not to deeply grasp or even to access this knowledge, but rather to expand within an affected becoming.

- 1 This text is profoundly indebted to ongoing conversations with Odete Semedo and her savvy, still unpublished, dissertation “As Manjuandadi: Cantigas de Mulher na Guiné- Bissau; da tradição oral à literatura”; and to Teresa Montenegro for her inspiring Guinean Creole lexicon *Kriol Ten: termos e expressões*. I also want to thank Denise Ferreira da Silva and Arjuna Neuman for the conversation on their film *3 Waters: Deep Implicacy*, which was a magically and unexpectedly coeval accompaniment to this text—written in summer jam sessions with my sister and *ciné-kin* Diana McCarty.
- 2 In this text I use the term *Kriol* to refer to Guinea-Bissau’s Creole language. There are different forms of writing it and I chose Teresa Montenegro’s. The word “Creole” derives from Portuguese “cria,” from create: being, and eventually the child “cria” born from enslaved women and Iberian men. Creole is a very loaded expression and has different connotations, and affects various sensibilities differently, around the world. In this foggy place, I assume the inconstancy of my own ignorance about *Kriol*. I also use the term Creole to expand the potentiality of its effect without necessarily embracing all the different existing worlds and experiences of Creole culture.
- 3 In 1446, Nuno Tristão, was the first Portuguese navigator to reach the “Guinean rivers of Cape Verde” on the West African coast. Tristão and his companions were soon shot dead by the arrows of the natives, but the Portuguese returned.
- 4 *Tugas* is a *Kriol* expression for Portuguese colonialists.
- 5 “Ecology of darkness” is a term I borrow from my kin Olivier Marboeuf.
- 6 The so-called “Bolol disaster” carried out by the Felupes of Djufunco (1879); the wars initiated by the Papel in Bissau and Biombo (1882–84); the uprisings of the Balantes in Nhacra (1882–84); the revolt of the Manjak in Caio (1883); and the insurgencies of the Beafadas in Djabadá (1882).
- 7 *Kriol* has conquered the status of a vernacular language; it is spoken by a greater number of inhabitants than those who dominate and use Portuguese in their daily lives. As of 2018, Guinea-Bissau has a population of around 1.5 million inhabitants, of which 44% speak Creole (of these 4.57% are monolingual Creole), 11% Portuguese (only 0.15% monolingual Portuguese), 24.5% Balanta, 20.3% Fula, 10.1% Mandinga, 8.1% Manjak, 7.2% Papel.
- 8 The disruption of the *lançados* made Portuguese control of the area even more difficult. Combined with the native uprisings, they were a key factor in the reconfiguration of a European alliance to divide and conquer Africa with the Berlin Conference of 1884–85. Creole was forbidden in schools and in public institutions after the Portuguese “Pacification Wars” of 1910–25. Subversively, the language thrived outside colonial control—and the intensification of anti-colonial resistance in the fifties led to the proliferation of Guinean Creole. Amílcar Cabral adopted Guinean Creole as a language of national unity during the Guinean–Cape Verdean liberation struggles of 1957–74, promoting it in the guerrilla schools of the Liberated Zones.
- 9 During the “Pacification Wars,” the Papel ethnic group escaped the Portuguese violence in Bolama to the Pexice island, where they learned the techniques of weaving from the Manjaks.
- 10 An answer given by Georgelle Hirliman to a question from Diana McCarty, freely cited from *Dear Writer in the Window: The Wit and Wisdom of a Sidewalk Sage* (London: Penguin Books, 1993).
- 11 See “On Difference Without Separability,” a text by Denise Ferreira da Silva for the catalog of the 32nd São Paulo Art Biennial, *Incerteza viva* (“Living Uncertainty”), 2016.
- 12 Teresa Montenegro, *Kriol Ten: termos e expressões* (Bissau: Ku Si Mon, 2007).
- 13 *Irmon-fémea* means sister in *Kriol*.
- 14 For further reading, see Wade Davis, *The Serpent and the Rainbow* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 1985).

SATURDAY, JAN 12

8:00 P.M.–11:30 P.M.

COUNTERING VIRTUAL DISPOSSES- SION



Kader Attia, *Countering Virtual Dispossession*, 2018 © Kader Attia

COUNTERING VIRTUAL DISPOSSESSION

Curated and moderated by Kader Attia

Be it society as a whole or each and every individual: our world continues to admire science as the promising gift that modernity has granted to mankind as a means to escape the conditions of an unsatisfying reality. If a different form of virtual reality had survived over the course of the past centuries, what would the elders of earlier times have thought of the twenty-first century? As we all know, the virtual has always existed: Around the world, from America and Europe to Africa and South East Asia, shamans and traditional healers say that spirits knew about the Internet long before it existed for us. But can we access this ancient network? The subject has become the object of a virtual capitalist order of things (and thought), within a “mise en abîme,” the depth of which is constantly increased by the improvement of data transmission speeds. In an endless loop, capitalism and science complementarily hijack each individual’s desire to possess. How can we create a counter-narrative that leads to the reappropriation of togetherness?

Tarek El-Ariss, Ivonne González and Black Guiris Collective (Ibrahim Boureima, Rogelio Lorda, Jorge Moré Calderon, Nicolás Spinosa), Yucef Merhi, Éric Sadin, Zora Snake

**GENEALOGIES OF THE VIRTUAL: FROM DESERT
GHOULS TO ONLINE TROLLS**

Tarek El-Ariss (cultural studies scholar)

LECTURE | EN ↔ 🔊 DE

At the heart of current technological transformations lie myth, iconography, and new modes of writing. Cyberspace has opened a portal into rare and ancient texts and searchable medieval lexicons (digital humanities); but it has also unleashed mythical creatures from pre-Islamic Arabia to battle against or alongside online trolls. In all these cases, modes of interpellation and acts of reading and viewing have generated unparalleled anxieties and fears of losing oneself in the text or the screen, and of losing one's life or freedom. In this light, this talk examines the virtual as a space of information proliferation and of portals that collapse both modern episteme and space/time binaries, forcing new configurations of the past and the future on the one hand, and of the real and the fictional on the other. Tarek El-Ariss considers mythical creatures such as demons and ghouls, exploring them as processes of perverse fascination that characterize contemporary viewing and reading practices online, and as new functions of writing.

EXHIBITION HALL 1

REALITY HACKING

Yucef Merhi (artist and poet)

LECTURE | EN ↔ 🔊 DE

Yucef Merhi contextualizes hacking as an instrument of cultural production and philosophical quest. Who is a hacker? Where does the word come from? How can hacking be employed as a dialectical tool to defeat the establishment? Is hacking just about computers or can reality be hacked as well? Is language a technological device that can be reprogrammed to increase awareness? The presentation explores various examples of personal works, demonstrating the impact of tactical media in the development of a path that could eventually lead to the rise of consciousness, as well as political justice.

EXHIBITION HALL 1

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE— ANATOMY OF A RADICAL ANTI-HUMANISM

Éric Sadin (writer)

LECTURE | FR ↔ DE/EN

It is the obsession of our time. Companies, politicians, and scientists swear by it because it promises unlimited economic perspectives and the emergence of a safe, optimized world. We are talking about Artificial Intelligence. It is able to assess reality more reliably than we can, and is therefore predestined to take charge of all human affairs. Ultimately, however, it undermines the legal principles on which our society is based, namely the free exercise of our right to judge and act. Each truth-declaration produced by AI is characterized by an “automated, invisible hand,” which analyzes every little phenomenon of reality in order to readjust it for utilitarian purposes. This is an analysis of Artificial Intelligence, its anatomy, its history, its characteristics, applications, and interests—and a call to a lifestyle that enables the most diverse expectations and goals.

EXHIBITION HALL 1

THE AFTERLIFE OF COLONIZATION #3: BETWEEN THE VIRTUAL AND THE REAL

Zora Snake (performer, choreographer, and artist)

PERFORMANCE

Zora Snake is a dancer, choreographer, and performer from Cameroon. Trained in hip-hop and traditional dances, he has developed an aesthetic that explores and shifts the limits of these forms, most often taking the street onto the stage. His performances aim at reconciling a body with its dispossessed memory. To the rhythm of Cameroonian heritage dances (Souban, Pallum, Nah major, Pa'mendzong, Medjouong) and hip-hop beats, Snake deconstructs his relationships to works of art, as a means to discover them anew. This is not about recreating a lost ritual. It is an attempt to temporarily suspend history, to better understand its stakes and legacies, and the costs that are still to pay.

EXHIBITION HALL 1

BLACKENING WIKIPEDIA

Ivonne González (singer, musician, and performer) with the Black Guiris Collective of Rogelio Lorda (dancer), Jorge Moré Calderon (dancer), Ibrahim Boureima (musician), Nicolás Spinosa (video performer)

MUSICAL AND DANCE PERFORMANCE

Black, black, black! This is the motto of the work in progress created by Ivonne González, a performer and activist against racism and for the rights of migrants. The participatory performance evolves in relation to space, dance, bodies and painting in real time. Music, video, and poetry are combined to create a piece impregnated with the color of ebony. For Ivonne González, blackening the virtual discourse is a necessity, a political and artistic act, that must be expressed without spatial limits, where blackness in all its nuances and forms has been postponed for so long.

HIRSCHFELDBAR

FROM 11:30 P.M.

Maryisonacid (DJ, African Acid Is The Future)

Maryisonacid is a DJ, promoter, and curator for radio stations such as Worldwide FM and Berlin Community Radio. In 2014 she started her DJ nights in a post-punk bar in Berlin Neukölln, often playing alone from 10 p.m. to 10 a.m. for a very mixed underground crowd, eager for the variety of sounds she presented. In 2015 the party moved to Loftus Hall and has since grown into a well-respected music platform. Her love for music reaches well beyond the club scene, breaking the rules of traditional dance music sets: “From Afro to Techno and everything in between.”

Countering Virtual Dispossession

Kader Attia

What the neoliberal economy of our consumer society is nowadays extensively imposing as “The virtual world” is actually the reality of a technological dependence that is based on an endlessly growing derivative of its markets. This new fractal geography is boosted by our obsession with progress.

The energy consumption and raw materials extraction required to develop, construct, and sustain the function of electronic devices, without which it would be impossible to enter the digitized world, are interdependent with our consuming behavior, dogmatized as a “raison d’être” by the society we live in: “I consume, therefore I am.” From the individual to the group, we are all the real objects of this contemporary virtualization—of both capitalism and science.

The subject has become the object of a virtual capitalist order of things (and thought), within a “mise en abîme,” the depth of which is constantly increased by the improvement of data transmission speeds. In an endless loop, capitalism and science complementarily hijack each individual’s desire to possess. The Sisyphus “possession of the object,” as Jacques Lacan stated, “which is lost forever,” because it can never be reached but will always drag us toward it, is the key aspect of our natural social behavior instinct that is mimicked by capitalism and the sciences.

Be it society as a whole or each and every individual: our world continues to admire science as the promising gift that modernity has granted to mankind as a means to escape the conditions of an unsatisfying reality.

If a different form of virtual reality had survived over the course of the past centuries, what would the elders of earlier times have thought of the twenty-first century? As we all know, the virtual has always existed ...

Around the world, from America and Europe to Africa and South East Asia, shamans and traditional healers say that spirits knew about the Internet long before it existed for us—as a shaman in Vietnam explained to me. He also told me that spirits would attack the Internet, because it has grown too fast and within

this growth bad spirits auto-regenerate. Which is actually what viruses do ...

Mankind has dealt with the fatal reality of natural and cultural evolution by inventing myths and beliefs that have helped people stand the pain of loss brought by death with a belief in the continuity of life in a virtual world. As does art, which is deeply connected to death, having emerged from the earliest sepulchers.

So what has happened since the Nietzschean “Death of God”? Have the old beliefs in a parallel immaterial world really gone? What kinds of beliefs lie between our contemporary world and the world of the past? Nothing has changed, except that we do not only believe in virtuality, we live in it, and do so not because of sepulchers, but thanks to the constantly improving ease provided by technology. Mankind is a “social animal” and its sociability has been hijacked by technology and capitalism. People believe they are together through social media—but they are not. They are virtually united by proxy of a technological device.

Moved by a desire to improve an existence in the “digital community,” the self of any subject becomes an object of the digital grammar in the very moment of connecting to it. Of course this dispossession is nothing but the continuity of the same devotion that over centuries believers have been submitting to, when waging war and building up cultures and religions. But they were gathering, they were celebrating and fighting together or against each other in reality, instead of being procured by a device. What is war today? The demonstration of the dehumanization of massive executions, in which, again, capitalism and science play a crucial role. How? By producing new markets for killing methods where the lethal weapon is the signifier of the digitized cleanness ... From war to social media, the physicality, which was formerly a person’s main experience of everyday life, is disappearing. This dissolution of physicality, from public meetings to battlefields, follows one agenda: to give the psychological advantage to the wealthiest and most technologically advanced groups, in order to impose their orientations on the others: as regards economy, politics, and culture. Modernity and capitalism have, since colonialism, been the archetypes of such agency, which is moved by the so-called power of science to dehumanize all others, whose singular personalized existence contradicts its uniform supremacy.

So even if the virtual worlds of yesterday, when people “really” were united in gatherings, rituals, and

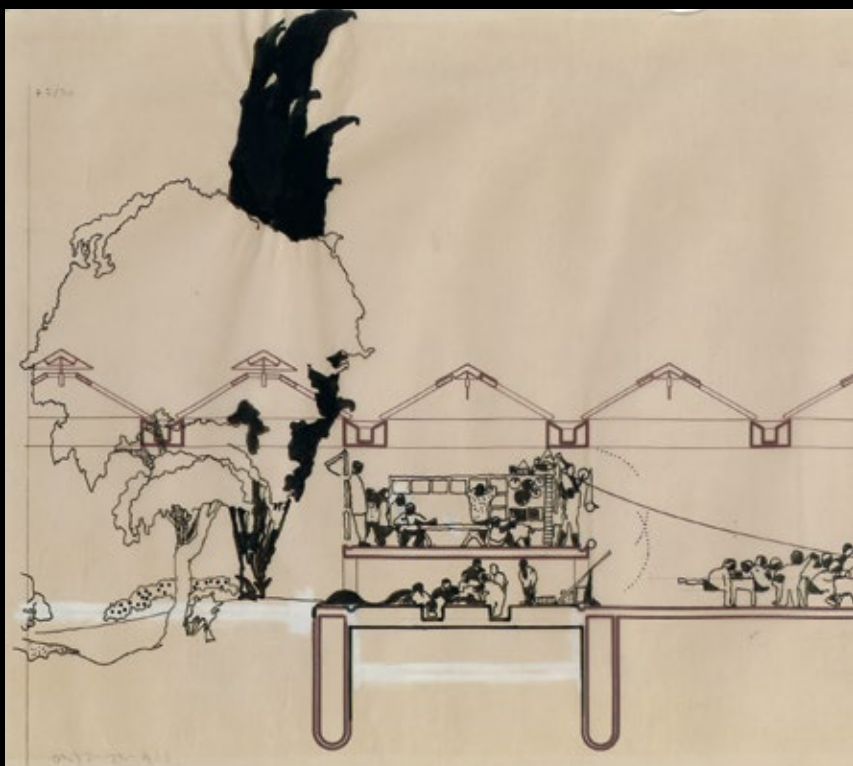
worshipping, still persisted today, there would be a difference as we are attending a virtual form of the dispossession of such togetherness—a dispossession that is brought about by neoliberal logic, a logic that generally aims at dispossessing the self and the physicality of any individual as well as its correlative social members.

Opposed to this logic is the need for a real space: a place where the relevance of collective meeting and acting does not pretend to answer the endless question of the virtual and the real—which is another kind of “mise en abîme”—but where a counter-narrative is elaborated through real exchanges, finally leading to further initiative and not just to representative project spaces, but to the re-appropriation of what is mankind’s most fundamental instinct, the physical and gregarious one.

SUNDAY, JAN 13

1:30 P.M.–4:30 P.M.

(UN-)
LEARNING
PLACE

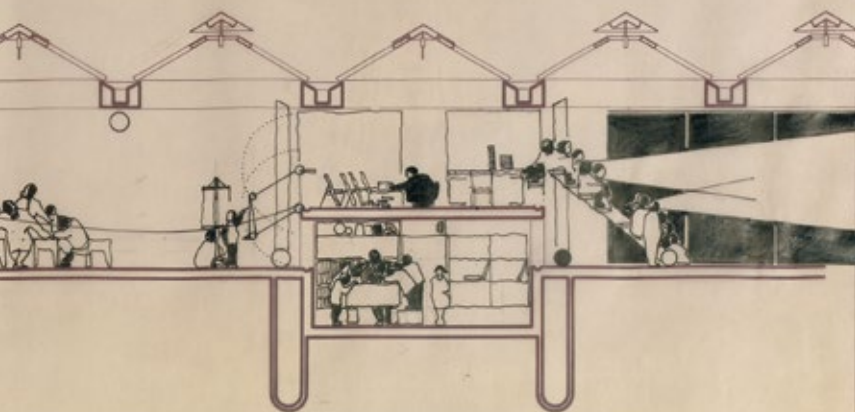


Ludwig Leo, Laborschule Bielefeld (draft), 1971. Ludwig-Leo-Archiv at the Akademie der Künste, Berlin, Nr. 5 Bl. 10. Courtesy Akademie der Künste, Berlin

(UN-)LEARNING PLACE

Curated by Boris Buden and Olga von Schubert
 Scenography: Raumlabor Berlin

During the Opening Days of HKW's new long-term project "Das Neue Alphabet" in January 2019, HKW sets up a space for gathering, discussion, and workshops from January 9 to 13, 2019—a unique *(Un-)Learning Place*. Departing from the assumption that the present is characterized by a crisis of the established epistemic-political order, the *(Un-)Learning Place* seeks out strategies to navigate through the inherent classification and ordering systems of archives, libraries, museums, institutional architectures, and digital networks and offers approaches to situating, negotiating, or "(un-)learning" research in artistic, site-specific, poetic, or bodily practices. Together with eight independent curatorial, activist, or artistic collectives, the *(Un-)Learning Place* offers its eighty



international participants the opportunity to investigate new strategies for interdisciplinary research and potential cross-disciplinary collaborations in five tracks: The Untranslatability of Translation; (Un-)Archiving; Against the Digital; Molecular Bodies; Spaces of Theory.

Gigi Argyropoulou, ASSET Production Studio, diffrakt | centre for theoretical periphery, Each One Teach One (EOTO) e. V., Fehras Publishing Practices, Gilly Karjevsky, knowbotiq, Raumlabor Berlin, Tactical Technology Collective, Telekomunisten, Nicoline van Harskamp, and many guests

FOYER

1:30 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

PUBLIC OPEN PLENUM (UN-)LEARNING PLACE

DISCUSSION | FOYER | EN

In the *(Un-)Learning Place*, eight Berlin collectives come together with eighty international participants, over a period of five days, to develop transdisciplinary, decolonial, and anti-hegemonic strategies, with reference to data-based knowledge, translations, archives, and bodies. The campus ends on Sunday with a public discussion chaired by the campus participants.

AUDITORIUM

3:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.

MANYDANCING THE MOLECULAR ORNAMENTS

knowbotiq

COLLECTIVE PARTICIPATIVE DANCE PERFORMANCE

In a present in which algorithmic control mechanisms and biotechnologies fragment and molecularize the body, this performance invites audience members to temporarily link up with “undisciplined” collective bodies and corporeal landscapes by means of portable body prostheses and rhythmic sound patterns.

With knowbotiq (artists’ collective), Claudia de Serpa Soares (dancer), Nicolas Buzzi (musician, composer), Lamin Fofana (artist and DJ)

Learning Beyond Alphabets

Boris Buden and Olga von Schubert

The New Alphabet School is a school for artistic, curatorial, archival, poetic, activist, critical, and affirmative research practices that take place outside of academia or other institutional contexts. The first event within the frame of the three-year project is a five-day *(Un-)Learning Place* with workshops and interventions by Berlin-based artistic, curatorial, and activist collectives. Designed as a translational hub, the school connects various forms of collectively produced knowledge, making it possible for the participants to detect and address its incommensurability within the established knowledge regimes. Its mode of conduct is neither inter- nor trans-disciplinary but is genuinely undisciplinatory. The school does not aim at productively connecting the existing disciplines of knowledge or creating a parallel. It is rather an attempt to break the areal logic of the disciplinary divisions, which has been imposed on knowledge production since the wake of colonial-imperial modernity. These divisions have not only separated the subject of knowledge from its object, both in terms of nature and society, they have also socially divided people into those who are seen as qualified to think and know and those who are not; into the professionals and the laypeople. Moreover, the logic of area has acquired a normative meaning that goes as far as to divide humanity by anthropological difference, separating the civilized from the uncivilized by geo-cultural area, regardless of their place in time. Disciplinary division of knowledge is at the very core of logocentrism, ethnocentrism, and phonocentrism, which have up until now haunted the geo-cultural area called “the West.” Yet this normative identity block, the fortress of knowledge as we know it, is no longer stable. There are ever more cracks in its walls. It is in these cracks where *The New Alphabet School*, with its *(Un-)Learning Place*, will search for what is common in both knowledge and life.

There is nothing natural or innocent in the alphabets. They were instituted as tools that turn language into a finite number of discrete objects, which can be combined, measured, calculated, deciphered, translated, and traded.

As infrastructures of writing, alphabets have essentially influenced the today still dominant understanding of language based on the paradigm of communication. Here language as a bearer of a message appears as a code and a written text. To read a text then means to deploy the code so as to transmit the linguistic information it contains. In this model meaning finally appears as the identity of code and message, that is, as a result of successful communication.

It is in this conceptual context that the learning of alphabets has been institutionalized to provide, in terms of universal literacy, the common foundation of knowledge—with far-reaching socio-political and economic consequences. Alphabets have both decisively contributed to the Romantic identification of language and national community under the paradigm of sovereignty and facilitated the transformation of language into a commodity and/or resource of contemporary capitalism.

But here again the order of the old alphabets, together with the petrified institutions of disciplinary knowledge and its correspondent social, political, cultural, and economic arrangements—nation, state, territory, “free” market—is today crumbling. It proves increasingly unable to cope with the new complexity of the world brought about by globalization, digitalization, global warming, the crisis of representative democracy, and a rapid expansion of technology into the unknown spaces of the new post-human sociality. Once created to generate universality of linguistic practice, the knowledge of the world, and human togetherness, alphabets seem to have turned into the obstacles that prevent us from understanding the language in which the future is addressing us. Shall we unlearn them?

This is not what *The New Alphabet School* attempts. We don't want to simply delete the old alphabets from our minds as obsolete and useless in order to make space for the new ones. Rather it implies an encounter with their failed promise to perfectly encode the entire knowledge of the world; to make it universally translatable into every particular idiom by rendering it as a combination of discernible components. It is about their missed claims to both the measurability and commensurability of languages; to the linguistic equivalences of which our alphabetically ordered vocabularies are composed. A German phrase in which precisely the disciplinary organization of knowledge is explicitly addressed: *Die Volkswirtschaftslehre (auch Nationalökonomie, Wirtschaftliche Staatswissenschaften oder Sozialökonomie, kurz VWL), ist ein Teilgebiet der*

Wirtschaftswissenschaft, was translated into English by a machine as: *The economics of economics (including economics, economics, economics, economics, economics, economics) is a part of economics*. A philosopher once said that there is no better starting point for thought than laughter. But funny or not, an encounter with the untranslatable is possible only through the living praxis of translation. Not as an auxiliary or secondary form of linguistic practice, into which it is degraded under the paradigm of communication, but as a social relation in which the intrinsic heterogeneity of language and of all knowledge is brought to light.

It is in this sense that an unlearning of the old alphabets shall unfold—through the creation of *The New Alphabet School* as a temporal and loose (non-aggregate) community of foreigners who have come together not on the ground of any presupposed unity, be it of a linguistic, social, political, or epistemic nature, but to join in the labor of translational exchange as a form of learning that can address the common only in constantly creating it anew.

This also applies to English as the language of *The New Alphabet School*. Far from being a neutral tool of mutual understanding and transparent communication that smoothly bridges linguistic differences, it ceaselessly transforms them into power relations, forging social and cultural differentiation. In *The New Alphabet School*, English is not a solution; rather it is a problem—an overburdened lingua franca that increasingly fails to cope with the opacity of the ever-broadening vernacular spaces. One can no longer speak it without critically reflecting the unpredictable effects of its hegemonic omnipresence.

Finally, speaking of critique, *The New Alphabet School* also has a stake here. But it cannot imagine itself in a privileged, autonomous position of being against and outside of a self-constructed object of critique. The school does not want to criticize the world in professionally distancing itself and thereby privatizing what is social in being together. For *The New Alphabet School*, to perform critique rather means to passionately dedicate itself to and take care of that which is at the same time foreign and present. Its mode of critique is situated in stubbornly continuing to ask the same questions and maintain the same concerns rather than coming up with the latest critical idea or perspective. At stake is an experience of effectively addressing in others the indeterminacy, potentiality, and virtuality of what is common and shared, which is, in fact, what translation is all about.

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The New Alphabet (2019–21) Program Preview

The New Alphabet School | 2019–21

Workshop Series

In search of alternative methods of learning and unlearning, *The New Alphabet School* creates a discussion and working forum for the reassessment and reevaluation of academic forms of thinking, learning, and translation. Going beyond disciplinary boundaries, it explores critical theory formation in the form of artistic, curatorial, poetic, or activist praxis.

Find the File | March 21–24, 2019

Music and Discourse Project

The radical transition from collected object to stored file makes it clear that a realignment of archives, libraries, databases, collections, and other knowledge repositories is needed. What could meaningful new data systems look like in this situation? *Find the File* develops a music archiving project as an example of best practice.

Life Forms | April 25–27, 2019

Art and Discourse Program

Technologies shape the world we live in. They determine which forms of existence are possible on Earth, thereby challenging established worldviews as well as the values we live by. Discursive and artistic formats experiment with the *Gestaltung* of current and future forms of life.

The Whole Life: Archives and Reality | May 19–25, 2019,
Dresden

Archive Viewing, Academy, and Congress

How are historical realities translated into contemporary narratives? Is it possible to archive transformation? A congress, workshops, object viewings, archive research, and public presentations will reflect both the archive as an institution and its contemporary protagonists, methods, and conditions. *A cooperation of Arsenal – Institut für Film und Videokunst e.V. / Archive außer sich, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Pina Bausch Foundation, and Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (SKD)*

Cruising Corpoliteracy—

Explorations of the Body | September 5–6, 2019

Performance and Discourse Program

The body is a sign system and, at the same time, a display surface for society. Bodies strike attitudes between shaming and showing; between pressure and drag: *Cruising Corpoliteracy* designates strategies of transmitting information through and with the body and is being explored here in interactive formats as a possible new alphabet.

The Unforeseen | November 2019

Symposium, Laboratory

Participative art opens itself up to its audience, to other artistic and political forms of articulation, and to new access paths. In a two-day laboratory scientists, activists, and artists will be invited to explore the potential of the unforeseen. *In cooperation with the Leuphana University, Lüneburg*

Right the Right | November 7–10, 2019

Music and Discourse Program

A battle is being waged over copyright: on one side the traditional creative economy (publishers, record labels, production companies), on the other the digital economy (search engines, providers, streaming services). But what art do we actually want?

The Disappearance of Music | March 26–29, 2020

Music and Discourse Program

Everything that was previously considered essential for the production of music or the listening experience—composers, concerts, instruments, sound carriers, etc.—is being increasingly sidelined, while human-controlled software and AI are coming to the fore. What is this doing to music and its reception?

Umashankar and the Earchaeologists | Spring 2020

Exhibition

Before the development of electronic amplification, the transmission of sound through space was the function of architecture itself. The acoustics of archaeological sites are integral to our understanding of the events that took place in them. This exhibition presents explorations that Umashankar Manthravadi made in India using the digital ambisonic microphones he invented.

Curated by Nida Ghouse

Aby Warburg's Mnemosyne Atlas—The Original

April to June 2020

Exhibition

Employing almost one thousand individual motifs on over sixty plates, Aby Warburg set out in the 1920s to answer no less a question than how the artistic transformation termed the “Renaissance” came about. Following initial attempts at the ZKM Karlsruhe, the exhibition reconstructs, according to the last edition from 1929, all the original plates for the first time.

Curated by Roberto Ohrt and Axel Heil

“Let the Spaces Speak for Themselves”—The Films of Heinz Emigholz (WT) | Summer 2020

Exhibition

Since the 1970s, Heinz Emigholz has employed a unique formal language to explore the relationships between film time and spatial experience, and between structures of memory and consciousness. This exhibition includes a retrospective covering the early experimental films through to *Streetscapes [Dialogue]* (2017), a filmic discussion marathon on the theme of “trauma and architecture,” and his latest film, *Years of Construction* (2018).

Schools of Life Literacy | Fall 2020

Speculative School Program

Schools of Life Literacy looks for those abilities that are needed for entering the world after and outside school. Experts and activists—from medicine and politics to the finance industry—provide a critical insight into their areas of work.

Language Forms and Thought Styles | Fall 2020

Discourse Program

Which language forms are used to express current movements of thought that attempt to transcend the categorical differences between people, animals, and things. Here, artists, scientists, and writers trace thought and language styles beyond modernist segregation paradigms.

LISTEN! | November 12–15, 2020

Discourse and Music Program

This program doesn't demand that we listen—it names the new universal music format: the list. Thanks to link lists, best of lists, and hit lists, everyone can be a music curator. How does this universal listing change music, how does it redefine the past, and what conditions does it produce for future music creation?

Alpha Beta Sofa | 2020–21

Late Night Conversations

Philosopher Luce deLire invites us to bring big themes down to earth: Uncompromising experts, practical individuals, and wild thinkers of everyday life come together to discuss. There will be tea.

Education Shock

Architectures and Technologies of Knowledge, 1957–77 | Fall 2020 to Spring 2021

Exhibition and Discourse Program

The Soviet Union launched the first satellites into orbit in 1957, triggering an unprecedented, global competition in education and science. *Education Shock* reconstructs an atmosphere of progressive architectures, pedagogic experiments, and unbridled technocracy, against the background of contemporary educational debates.

Curated by Tom Holert

EMILY APTER

has been professor of French and Comparative literature at the New York University since 2002. After her doctorate at Princeton University, she taught at UCLA and Cornell University, and was a Humanities Council Fellow at Princeton University in 2014. In 2017/18 she was the president of the American Comparative Literature Association. Apter has published widely on the topics of translation theory and practice as well as political theory, including *Unexceptional Politics: On Obstruction, Impasse, and the Impolitic* (2017), *Dictionary of Untranslatables: A Philosophical Lexicon* (2004/2014), *On The Politics of Untranslatability* (2013), and *The Translation Zone: A New Comparative Literature* (2006). She is also editor of the series *Translation/transnation* at Princeton University Press. She is currently working on a book dealing with translation and justice, and hopes to complete it while a fellow at the American Academy in Berlin in the spring of 2019.

GIGI ARGYROPOULOU

is a theorist, curator, dramatist, and researcher working in the fields of performance and cultural practice, and is based in Athens and London. Receiving her PhD from the University of Roehampton, she has initiated and organized public programs, conferences, interventions, performances, festivals, and cultural projects both inside and outside of institutions. As a member of Mavili and other collectives, Gigi Argyropoulou co-initiated a series of actions during the years of crisis in Athens, including the occupations of Embros Theatre and Green Park Café, in addition to interventions of cultural critique. Gigi received the Dwight Conquergood Award for her work in 2017 and the Routledge Prize (PSI18) in 2012. Besides publishing regularly in journals, books, and magazines, she co-initiated the DIY Performance Biennial in Athens and co-curated its first edition in 2016. Gigi was editor (with Hypatia Vourloumis) of the special issue of *Performance Research* "On Institutions" and is currently completing her first monograph.

ASSET PRODUCTION STUDIO

is a Berlin-based research, publishing, and design consultancy established by Anna-Sophie Springer and Etienne Turpin and managed by Andreas Döpke.

The initiative brings together, in one studio, two previously independent ventures—K. Verlag and anexact office. Working through exhibitions, publications, public programs, and institutional collaborations, ASSET leverages aesthetic, cultural, and pedagogical practices to renegotiate visual, spatial, and political economies of the Anthropocene. By attending to the current dysfunctions of contemporary culture and its institutions under global capitalism, ASSET works to co-produce new processes and practices of valuation and meaning across disciplines and scales. Together, Anna-Sophie and Etienne are also co-editors of *Fantasies of the Library* (MIT Press, 2016) and the intercalations: paginated exhibition series (K. Verlag and Haus der Kulturen der Welt); and principal co-investigators of the exhibition-led inquiry *Reassembling the Natural*.

KADER ATTIA

is an artist whose work investigates the identity politics of historical and colonial eras, pointing out perpetual elements of tradition within modernity until today, in the light of our globalized world. For several years, Attia's research has focused on the concept of "repair" as a constant in human nature. From culture to nature, gender to architecture, science to philosophy, all systems of life are in an infinite process of repair. His past exhibitions include: "Scars remind us that our past is real," Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona; "The Field of Emotion," The Power Plant, Toronto; "Sacrifice and Harmony," Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am Main; "Continuum of Repair: "The Light of Jacob's Ladder," Whitechapel Gallery, London; the 57th Venice Biennale; documenta 13, Kassel. In 2016 Attia founded *La Colonie*, a space in Paris to share ideas and to provide an agora for vivid discussion. Focusing on decolonialization, not only of peoples but also of knowledge, attitudes, and practices, it aspires to de-compartmentalize knowledge by a trans-cultural, trans-disciplinary, and trans-generational approach.

PHILIP BANSE

is a journalist who produces one of the most successful podcasts in Germany and is a freelance employee of Deutschlandradio's capital city studio. He studied history, politics, and Russian in Hamburg and Berlin

and is a graduate of the Berliner Journalisten-Schule. Banse has received the Axel Springer Prize for young journalists and the German-Polish Journalist Award. In 2003 he worked for two months in Baku, Azerbaijan, as part of an IJP scholarship. In 2005 he began the podcast *Kuechenradio* together with friends, and subsequently founded the podcast label Kuechenstud.io, which since 2016 has published the *Lage der Nation* (State of the nation), a weekly political podcast that is one of the most widely heard in Germany. Banse primarily explores the effects of digitalization, but also addresses environmental and educational themes.

JOANA BARRIOS

studied acting at Escola Superior de Teatro e Cinema (ESTC) in Lisbon, choreography with Anna Sánchez in Barcelona, and gained a Master in Pop Music and Cinema Critics in Barcelona. She started to work with her fetish theater company, Teatro Praga, in 2008, and has been their associate artist ever since, working as an actress, writer, and costume designer. Alongside her theater career, Joana keeps a blog called TRASHÉDIA and writes a lot; including original content for theater and television, fashion-related debates and documentaries, performances, and also as a ghost writer. She is one of the faces of the independent TV-network Canal Q, wrote a children's cookbook called *NHOM NHOM*, and is currently writing and hosting *ARMÁRIO*, a series of documentaries about fashion, to be aired on the Portuguese public broadcasting channel RTP2.

MATTHIAS BAUER

is a double bass player, improviser, and composer who mainly works in the field of improvised and contemporary music. He performs a large repertoire of solo compositions and is working with Berlin-based New Music ensembles unitedberlin, AsianArt, and ensemble mosaik.

SANDEEP BHAGWATI

is an award-winning composer, poet, researcher, conductor, and media artist. His compositions and “comprovisations” are regularly performed worldwide. He founded and currently directs matralab, a research space for performative, intermedia, and interactive arts

at Concordia University in Montreal, where he also held a Canada Research Chair for Inter-X-Art Practice and Theory from 2006 to 2016. He has curated and directed festivals for New Music in München, Karlsruhe, and Berlin as well as long-term inter-traditional projects with Asian musicians and European New Music ensembles. Bhagwati was professor of composition and multimedia at Karlsruhe Music University and has been a composer-in-residence/fellow/guest professor at IRCAM Paris, ZKM Karlsruhe, Beethoven Orchestra Bonn, IEM Graz, CalArts in Los Angeles, Heidelberg University, and Berlin University of Arts. His current work centers on comprovisation, trans-traditional aesthetics, gestural as well as sonic theatre, and situative, non-visual score technologies, such as the body:suit:score. <http://matralab.hexagram.ca>

SÖREN BIRKE

began his musical career in 1982 as a self-taught blues harmonica player, later learning to play the violoncello, mouth harp, and duduk. He is the co-initiator of the Kampagne Musik 2020 Berlin and the Musik Board Berlin, and has been the managing director of the Kesselhaus in the Kulturbrauerei since 2002.

FELIX BOREL

works for the SWR Symphony Orchestra and alongside this he performs in diverse formations that allow room for experimental playing. He has a teaching position for improvisation at the Hochschule für Musik Freiburg.

IBRAHIM BOUREIMA

is a musician and builder of musical instruments from the West African region, such as the n'goni (a three- or four-stringed lute), the djembé (a goblet drum), and the dundun (a rope-tuned cylindrical drum). He is the director of Torbellino African Music and part of Black Guiris Collective, Barcelona.

GIULIA BRUNO

is an artist working with film and photography. After graduating in biology from the University of Milan, she studied photography at Cfp Bauer and cinema at the Civic School of Cinema, both in Milan. Her artistic and photographic research focuses primarily on the interaction between the space of identity, the space of technology,

pragmatic space, and contemporary contradictions. She has collaborated with Bruno Latour at the Experimental Programme in Political Arts (SPEAP) at Sciences Po Paris, with the Karlsruhe University of Arts and Design, and with the ETH Zurich, among others. She is also collaborating with Armin Linke in his studio based in Berlin.

BORIS BUDEN

is a writer, cultural critic, and translator. He studied philosophy in Zagreb and received his PhD in Cultural Theory from Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. His essays and articles cover topics related to philosophy, politics, and cultural and art criticism. Among his translations into Croatian are some of the most important works of Sigmund Freud. Buden has co-edited several books and is author of *Der Schacht von Babel: Ist Kultur übersetzbar?* (2004), *Übersetzung: Das Versprechen eines Begriffs* (2008, with Stefan Nowotny), *Zone des Übergangs: Vom Ende des Postkommunismus* (2009), and *Findet Europa* (2015), among others. He is a permanent fellow at the European Institute for Progressive Cultural Policies, Vienna. He lives and works in Berlin.

NICOLAS BUZZI

has been playing drums since he was ten, and at age thirteen he began playing synthesizers. Since 2007, he has worked as a musician and audio engineer for concerts, theater shows, and other live performances, especially in the fields of electronic and electro-acoustic live music, improvisation, and sound art.

FILIPA CÉSAR

is an artist and filmmaker interested in the porous borders between cinema, its reception, and the politics and poetics inherent to moving image. Her artistic practice takes media as a means to expand or expose counter-narratives of resistance to Western epistemologies. Since 2011 César has been affected by the militant cinema produced in Guinea-Bissau as part of the African Liberation Movement—by its imaginaries and cognitive potencies. Between 2011 and 2015 she was a participant in the research projects Living Archive and Visionary Archive, both organized by the Arsenal – Institute for Film and Video Art, Berlin. Her work has been screened and exhibited

worldwide at festivals and art institutions, including Oberhausen, Curtas, Forum Expanded, Berlinale, IFFR, DocLisboa, Cinéma du Réel, SAVVY Contemporary, Khiasma, Tensta konsthall, mumok, Contour Biennale 8, Gasworks, Flaherty Seminar, MoMA, Harvard Art Museums, BIM.

WENDY HUI KYONG CHUN

is Simon Fraser University's Canada 150 Research Chair in New Media. She has studied both systems design engineering and English literature, which she combines and mutates in her current work on digital media. She is author of *Control and Freedom: Power and Paranoia in the Age of Fiber Optics* (2006), *Programmed Visions: Software and Memory* (2011), and *Updating to Remain the Same: Habitual New Media* (2016). She is currently a visiting scholar at the Center for Media@Risk at the Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania; she was a 2016 Guggenheim Fellow, ACLS, and American Academy in Berlin Fellow; and she has been a member of the Institute for Advanced Study (Princeton), a Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study Fellow at Harvard, and a Wriston Fellow at Brown University, where she was a professor in the Department of Modern Culture and Media for almost two decades.

ANN COTTEN

is a writer, publishing in German and English. Since 2000 her poetry, essays, and prose have appeared in anthologies and journals, and her first collection of poetry came out in 2007. Since then she has been widely publishing her writing, which is distinctive for its experimental approach to poetry and prose, and has been awarded the Klopstock-Award for New Literature and the Ernst Bloch Prize, among others. Her works include *Fremdwörterbuchsonette* (2007), *Der schaudernde Fächer* (2013), *Hauptwerk: Softsoftporn* (2013), and a full-length book of work in *English, I, Coleoptile* (2010), in collaboration with the artist Kerstin Cmelka. Most recently, she has published a collection of prose and poetry inspired by Japanese literature and language (*Jikiketsugaki: Tsurezuregusa*, 2016) and a reflection on traveling in the United States (*Fast Dumm: Essays von on the road*, 2017). She is a member of the Academy of Arts in Berlin.

KATE CRAWFORD

is a widely published researcher, academic, and author who has spent over a decade studying large-scale data systems, machine learning, and Artificial Intelligence. She is the co-founder and co-director of the AI Now Institute at NYU, which conducts research across computer science, social science, and law to address the social implications of AI. She is a Distinguished Research Professor at New York University, and a Principal Researcher at Microsoft Research New York. In 2016 she co-chaired the Obama White House symposium on the socio-economic implications of AI. She has published in academic journals such as *Nature*, *New Media & Society*, and *Information, Communication & Society*, and has written for the *New York Times*, *Harpers' Magazine*, and the *Washington Post*. She has advised policy makers at the European Commission, the United Nations, the Federal Trade Commission, and the City of New York. In 2018 she was selected for a Richard von Weizsäcker Fellowship at the Robert Bosch Academy in Berlin.

STEFFI CZERNY

is the managing director of DLD (Digital-Life-Design) Media and co-founder of the DLD Conference. Having studied political sciences and communications, she joined the Hubert Burda group in 1995. Since then, she has held several executive positions in new media activities and has followed developments in the digital world for over twenty years. Her focus lies on developing branding and communication initiatives. In 2010 she was named as one of Germany's 25 most influential businesswomen by *Financial Times Germany* and she has been identified as number 30 of "The 2015 WIRED 100." In 2014 she won the state medal for special merits to the Bavarian economy and a year later the Europa-Medaille for special merits to Bavaria in a united Europe.

LORRAINE DASTON

has been director at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin since 1995, where she heads the department "Ideals & Practices of Rationality." She has published on a wide range of topics in the history of science, including the history of probability and statistics, wonders in early modern science, the emergence of the scientific fact, scientific models,

and the history of scientific objectivity. Recent books include *Against Nature* (2018) and the edited volume *Science in the Archives* (2017). She is the recipient of numerous prizes, including the Dan David Prize and an honorary doctorate of humane letters from Princeton University. In addition to her directorship at the MPIWG, she is a regular visiting professor at the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago and a permanent fellow of the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin.

MARINHO DE PINA

Geraldo Pina, better known as Marinho de Pina, is currently attending a PhD program at the University Institute of Lisbon (ISCTE-IUL), focusing on city planning in the Guinea-Bissauan capital Bissau. He researches Guinea-Bissauan architecture and has a master's degree in vernacular architecture and clay building. He is also a performing artist and a writer. Since 2016 he has been working in the public management of AJASS, a social organization in Sonaco, which aims to improve the quality of local education, to fight against female genital mutilation and HIV/AIDS, and to stop ecological destruction like deforestation.

CLAUDIA DE SERPA SOARES

is a dancer and choreographer. After her dance studies at the National Conservatory and the Superior Dance School in Lisbon, as well as the Centre National de Danse Contemporaine d'Angers, Claudia de Serpa Soares danced with Iztok Kovač in Slovenia and Paulo Ribeiro in Lisbon, among others. In 1999 she joined the dance ensemble of the Schaubühne Berlin under the artistic direction of Sasha Waltz, in whose works she still dances today. She has worked as an actress, assistant, and choreographer for and with Lilo Baur, Opéra de Dijon, Rufus Corporation NY, Eve Sussman, and the Rundfunkchor Berlin, among others. She has created, performed, and collaborated with different artists, among others Ronald Kukulies, Grayson Millwood, Jonathan Beppler, Julian Rosefeldt, Jim White, and more recently knowbotiq.

FELIX DEL TREDICI

is a trombonist specializing in the performance of contemporary and improvised music. Among others, he has performed with Klangforum Wien,

Musikfabrik, Ensemble Signal, and his own group So Wrong It's Right. He is a research associate at matrlab, an Inter-X Art research space in Montreal.

SIMON DENNY

is an artist working with installation, sculpture, and video. His research-based art projects explore the interaction and politics of tech business culture, both in governmental and commercial infrastructures. He studied at the Elam School of Fine Arts at the University of Auckland, New Zealand, and at the Städelschule, Frankfurt am Main under Willem de Rooij. His work has been featured in solo shows at institutions worldwide, including the Serpentine Galleries, London; MoMa PS1, New York; and MuMOK, Vienna, as well as in group shows at prominent museums and biennials, including the ICA, London; Centre Pompidou, Paris; and 9th Berlin Biennale. In 2015 Denny represented New Zealand at the 56th Venice Biennale.

GABRIEL DHARMOO

lives and works in Montreal as a composer, vocalist, improviser, and researcher. His works have been performed internationally and he has received awards both as a composer (Canada Council for the Arts—Jules Léger Prize for New Chamber Music 2017) and as an interdisciplinary artist for his performative solo *Imaginary Anthropologies*.

DIFFRAKT | CENTRE FOR THEORETICAL PERIPHERY

is a collectively-run non-profit organization striving to foster theory in familiar and unfamiliar settings and formats. Based in the old rooms of Merve Verlag in Berlin-Schöneberg, diffrakt seeks to provide an open platform to address, whether in opposition or in addition to academic discourses, both more and less urgent aesthetic-political-philosophical questions, challenging subjects and objects, centers and margins, legacies and canons, and subversions of what is called “theory”—constantly trying, failing, trying again, failing better. The collective has organized various conversations, workshops, book presentations, reading groups, screenings, performances, and exhibitions, and has hosted a variety of event series.

PHILIPP EKARDT

is a literary and art scholar. After studying literature and the history of art (with an additional focus on film theory and aesthetics) and completing his doctorate at Yale University, he was a research assistant at the Peter Szondi Institute of Comparative Literature at the Freie Universität Berlin (FU), a research associate on the international research project *Bilderfahrzeuge* (Image Vehicles) at the University of London / The Warburg Institute, and a managing editor of *Texte zur Kunst*. He is presently a NOMIS Fellow at eikones: Center for the Theory and History of the Image at the University of Basel. His first monograph, *Toward Fewer Images: The Work of Alexander Kluge*, was published in 2018 by MIT Press within the series OCTOBER Book; his second book *Benjamin on Fashion* will be published in 2019 by Bloomsbury Academic in the series Walter Benjamin Studies.

TAREK EL-ARISS

is associate professor and chair of Middle Eastern Studies at Dartmouth College. His work examines notions of modernity, the nation, the subject, and community at the intersection of technological developments and political transformations from the eighteenth century to the present. His books include *Trials of Arab Modernity: Literary Affects and the New Political* (2013), *The Arab Renaissance: A Bilingual Anthology of the Nahda* (2018), and *Leaks, Hacks, and Scandals: Arab Culture in the Digital Age* (2019).

EOTO's

vision is to empower black people on the grounds of community building and fostering black leadership in every realm of society—culture, education, economy, and politics. Each One Teach One (EOTO) e.V. started out as a community-based project for education and the empowerment of black people in Berlin. Since becoming one of the core organizations of the governmental initiative Demokratie leben! (Live Democracy!), EOTO is growing into an organization that reaches out to communities throughout Germany and the international realm of the African diaspora. EOTO was founded in 2012, and in March 2014 its local reference library opened its doors to the public. Today it presents roughly six thousand works of people of African descent.

Each One Teach One wants to make African diasporic cultural wealth accessible to black youth, cultural producers, and scholars.

PETER EVANS

is a trumpet player and improviser/composer. Evans is part of a broad, hybridized scene of musical experimentation and his work cuts across a wide range of modern musical practices and traditions. His primary groups as a leader are the Peter Evans Ensemble and Being & Becoming. Evans has been exploring solo trumpet music since 2002 and is widely recognized as a leading voice in the field, having released several recordings over the past decade.

FEHRAS PUBLISHING PRACTICES

(Kenan Darwich, Omar Nicolas, Sami Rustom) is an artist collective and publishing house established in Berlin in 2015. It was founded as a response to mounting questions concerning the history and presence of art and publishing in the Eastern Mediterranean, North Africa, and the Arab diaspora. Fehras's research focuses on the interrelation between cultures and publishing, which includes different fields of languages, archives, and arts. Their work was exhibited at the Sharjah Biennial 13, in "Apricots from Damascus" at SALT Galata, Istanbul (2016), at "Klassensprache" at District Gallery Berlin (2017), and at "El Usman Faroqhi Here and a Yonder: On Finding Poise in Disorientation" at SAVVY Contemporary, Berlin (2017). They have recently curated the symposium "Disappearance. Appearance. Publishing" at the Villa Romana, Florence.

PAUL FEIGELFELD

is a media theorist and currently holds the position of Data & Research Architect at TBA21-Academy. He is a guest professor at the Art Institute Basel and also teaches at the University of Basel and Strelka Institute Moscow, among others. Feigelfeld studied cultural studies and computer science at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. Between 2004 and 2011 he worked for the German media theorist Friedrich Kittler and he is one of the editors of Kittler's collected works. Up until 2016, he was the academic coordinator of the Digital Cultures Research Lab at the Centre for Digital Cultures at Leuphana

University of Lüneburg, where he is also finishing his PhD thesis titled *The Great Loop Forward: Cybernetic Incompleteness between East and West 1700–2000*. Besides his academic career, he works as a writer, translator, and editor, and as a curator and advisor for art institutions and universities. Feigelfeld will guest curate the Vienna Biennale in 2019.

CHRISTIAN FILIPS

lives as a poet, director, and music dramatist in Berlin. Between 2000 and 2007 he studied philosophy, musicology, and literature in Brussels and Vienna. In 2001 he received Austrian Radio's Rimbaud Prize. Filips has been the program and archive director of the Sing-Akademie in Berlin since 2006. His works are characterized by an expanded notion of poetry that also integrates musical theater and social sculpture, as exemplified by his productions for the Volksbühne Berlin and the Berliner Ensemble, amongst others. His texts have primarily been published by the Swiss publisher Urs Engeler, with whom he has jointly published the series "rough-books" for contemporary poetry since 2010, the most recent being *Heiße Fusionen: Beta-Album; Gedichte und Analysen zur poetischen Ökonomie, 2007–2018* (2018).

LAMIN FOFANA

is an electronic producer and artist based in Berlin. His instrumental electronic music contrasts the reality of our world with what's beyond and explores questions of movement, migration, alienation, and belonging. He is from Sierra Leone, has lived in Guinea and the United States, and is currently located in Berlin. His most recent project *Brancusi Sculpting Beyonce* is out now on Hundebiss Records.

KATJA GENTINETTA

is a political philosopher and publicist. She teaches at various Swiss universities, moderates the *NZZ Standpunkte*, together with editor-in-chief Eric Gujer, writes regularly for the *NZZ am Sonntag*, and is one of the regular guests on the SRF's "Philosophischer Stammtisch". For four years she moderated the "Sternstunde Philosophie" program on Swiss TV. Gentinetta has written a number of books on social and political themes.

Her last book with the title *Worum es im Kern geht* (2017) addresses contemporary crises.

IVONNE GONZÁLEZ

is a singer and a lawyer in economic affairs. She has been active in the music and dance scene since 1991 and is a renowned singer and musical director of shows including latin jazz, cha-cha-cha, guajira funk, afro, and salsa. She performs in Cuba and abroad with her own group, Ivonne González Sextet, the Fangorkestra, the Orchestra Salsa Nolosé, or accompanied by the guitarist Paco Chambi. She has presented shows of Afro-Cuban Orisha dance and given workshops in Switzerland, France, Serbia, Uruguay, and Argentina, among other places. She has participated in films and publicity as a performer and a dancer. Most recently, González has produced performances against racism in art.

JÜRGEN GROSS

born in 1962, studied physics at the University of Stuttgart, where he was awarded a doctorate in 1995 in the field of particle physics. In 1998 he joined Bosch, where he had a number of managerial positions in the development of electronic control devices, diesel hydraulics, and electrical machines. Up until the end of 2018, as a director at the division for central Research and Corporate Foresight, he was responsible for microsystems technology and functional materials, including biological and chemical materials as well as nano- and quantum technologies. In January 2019 he became a member of the executive board of the Robert Bosch group research division.

BEATRICE GRÜNDLER

is professor of Arabic studies at the Freie Universität (FU) Berlin. Following her studies and doctorate in Strasbourg, Tübingen, and Harvard, she first taught at Dartmouth College and then, from 1996 to 2014, at Yale University. In 2014 she returned to Germany and since then has taught and conducted research at the FU Berlin. Beatrice Gründler is the principal investigator at the Friedrich Schlegel Graduate School of Literary Studies and the Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies, where she heads the project for a multilingual edition of Aristotle's *Poetics*. Gründler

is a member of the Board of Directors of the Dahlem Humanities Center at the FU Berlin. She has been awarded numerous prizes, amongst others the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Prize of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) and the Advanced Grant of the European Research Council (ERC), both in 2017.

HARALD HAARMANN

is a German linguist and cultural scientist. In 2003 he was appointed vice president of the Institute of Archaeomythology (with headquarters in Sebastopol, California) and director of its European office in Finland. He has published around sixty books, some of which have been translated into over ten languages. Haarmann has received numerous accolades for his work, including the Prix logos (France, 1999), the Premio Jean Monnet (Italy, 1999), and the Plato Award (Great Britain, 2006). His current research themes are in the fields of cultural history, the ancient world, philosophy, and social criticism.

KARIN HARRASSER

is a professor of cultural theory at the University of Art and Design Linz. Following studies in history and German literature, she completed her PhD at the University of Vienna and obtained her habilitation at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. In addition to her academic work, she has developed numerous projects at the intersection of arts, humanities, and science communication, including projects at nGbK Berlin, Kampnagel Hamburg, Tanzquartier Wien, and MobileAcademy Berlin. Her research focuses on the techniques and media of the body, popular culture and science fiction, gender and agency, and the *longue durée* of coloniality. She is co-editor in chief of *Zeitschrift für Kulturwissenschaften*. Her publications include *Auf Tuchfühlung: Eine Wissensgeschichte des Tastsinns* (ed., 2017) and her post-doctoral thesis *Prothesen: Figuren einer lädierten Moderne* (2016).

ANDREJ HEINKE

is vice president for Research and Corporate Foresight at the Robert Bosch GmbH in Stuttgart, where he pursues the themes of future research and technology strategy and is responsible for the Bosch Megatrends Report. Following his studies in Berlin, Leipzig,

Stanford, and Harvard, he worked for the Daimler-Benz AG in Berlin, for SONY in Tokyo, and with the planning staff of the Federal Foreign Office in Berlin. He heads the Steinbeis Innovation Centre at the University of Wrocław.

RANJIT HOSKOTÉ

is a poet, cultural theorist, and general secretary of the PEN All-India Centre. He has authored thirty books, including poetry collections, volumes of art criticism, translations, and studies in cultural history. His essays on art, architecture, literature, and the politics of culture have been published in international journals and anthologies. His key research interests include the history of transcultural encounter and the possibility of a critical, insurgent cosmopolitanism. Hoskoté co-curated the 7th Gwangju Biennale (2008) and was curator of India's first ever national pavilion at the Venice Biennale (2011).

YUK HUI

is a philosopher of technology. He teaches at the Leuphana University of Lüneburg and the China Academy of Art, and is a member of the International Center of Simondon Studies (MSH Paris Nord). He has published widely on the philosophy of technology and media in periodicals such as *Metaphilosophy*, *Research in Phenomenology*, *Cahiers Simondon*, *Deleuze Studies*, *Techné*, *Theory*, and *Culture and Society*. He is the author of *On the Existence of Digital Objects* (prefaced by Bernard Stiegler, 2016) and *The Question Concerning Technology in China: An Essay in Cosmotechnics* (2017), and he co-edited the anthology *30 Years after Les Immatériaux: Art, Science and Theory* (2015). His most recent book, titled *Recursivity and Contingency* (forthcoming), investigates the relation between machine and organism after Kant's Critique of Judgement.

KLAUS JANEK

studied classical double bass. He explores the contemporary within music on acoustic and processed contrabass. He works on the extension of the musical vocabulary in composition and perception and practices instant composition. Janek tours worldwide, attending festivals and concerts; he composes for dance theater and has written, amongst other productions, an opera titled *afterhours*.

MARIAN KAISER

is a writer, media theorist, and curator. He studied theory and history of media, literature, philosophy, and South East Asian studies at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, and has lectured in Berlin, Dresden, Yogyakarta, and Giessen. He is currently writing on psychiatric media in colonial situations and their effects on theory production in the twentieth century. He also works as a screenwriter and regularly collaborates with Hannah Hurtzig to develop dialogue-based performances and installations as part of the Mobile Academy Berlin. Together with Dimitri Kaufmann, he runs The Category, a twenty-first century scriptorium and writing company. And with landscape painter and chef Hannes Bröcker, algorithmic desire mechanic Jonas Loh, and the artist and queen of mushy goo Claudia Schötz, he co-founded MEHL, an art group and dinner service specialized in concrete fabulation and synthetic theory. His latest publication, *James Hoff in Conversation with Marian Kaiser*, has just been published as part of the book series " " by NERO.

JIEUN KANG

plays the haegeum, one of the most widely used Korean bowed string instruments. As a performer and director, Kang combines traditional music and contemporary creative forces. She released her solo album *Haegeum Pieces* in 2013 and, most recently, *The Wind Crossing A Pass* in 2015.

GILLY KARJEVSKY

is a curator working at the intersection of art, architecture, and the politics of urban society. She holds a Master in Narrative Environments from Central Saint Martins College London and is currently a PhD candidate at the Curating in Practice Program at ZhdK Zürich. She serves on the international artistic boards of Visible, Fondazione Pistoletto; ArtCube, Jerusalem; and the residency program at the Centre for Art and Urbanism (ZK/U) in Berlin. Gilly has curated and co-curated several biennals and cultural programs, including the "Parckdesign" biennale Brussels (2016). She is also founder of the City Artists Residency program in Israel—a platform for artistic intervention in local politics. Since 2010 she has been co-director of 72 Hour Urban Action, a real-time architecture competition. Her

latest project “Playful Commons” is a research project exploring new licenses for playful use of public spaces.

ERNST KAUSEN

is a mathematician, computer scientist, and linguist. He studied mathematics, physics, and computer science in Giessen and Hanover and was awarded a doctorate in mathematics. He also studied Egyptology, ancient oriental philology, and comparative linguistics. Following work as an IT analyst in a multinational company from 1977 to 1982, he was a professor of mathematics and theoretical computer science at the TH Mittelhessen University of Applied Sciences from 1982 to 2014. Furthermore, since the 1980s he has been active as a linguist, with a focus on languages of the ancient orient and comparative linguistics. In addition to works on mathematics, he has published numerous works on Egyptology. His most important books on linguistics are *Die indogermanischen Sprachen* (2012) and the two-volume work *Die Sprachfamilien der Welt* (2013–15), which for the first time since the 1920s provides an overview of the world’s language groups and their relationships.

MICHAEL KIEDAISCH

is a musician within the field of tension between New Music, improvised music, and jazz. He is a composer and interpreter of numerous theater, ballet, and audio play productions and teaches improvisation, jazz, and New Music at Witten/Herdecke University.

ALEXANDER KLUGE

is an author, filmmaker, and lawyer. His research and practice revolves around film, literature, social theory, film theory, and political action on various cultural fronts. His body of work can be regarded as a continuation of the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School. His first feature film, *Abschied von Gestern* (Yesterday girl), won the Silver Lion at the Venice Film Festival in 1966. In 1987 Kluge founded the television production company DCTP, which produces independent television slots on German commercial television. In 2008 he presented the almost nine hours of *News from Ideological Antiquity: Marx/Eisenstein/Capital*—a reinvention of Eisenstein’s unfinished project of filming *Capital* by Karl Marx. Alexander Kluge’s major works of social criticism

include *Öffentlichkeit und Erfahrung* and *History and Obstinacy*, both co-written with Oskar Negt. His most important exhibitions include “The Boat is Leaking. The Captain Lied.” (Fondazione Prada, Venice, 2017), “Pluriversum” (Museum Folkwang, Essen, 2017; Belvedere 21, Vienna, 2018). Foundation Vincent Van Gogh, Arles, is showing the exhibition “James Ensor & Alexander Kluge: Siècles noirs” until February 2019. Together with the New York poet Ben Lerner, Kluge published *The Snows of Venice* in the autumn of 2018 with Spector Books.

KNOWBOTIQ

(Yvonne Wilhelm and Christian Hübler) experiment with forms and medialities of knowledge, political representation, and “epistemic disobedience.” In their projects they contemporize political landscapes with a special focus on algorithmic governmentality, economies of emotion and desire, and postcolonial violence. Using installations, interventions into urban space, and performative situations, knowbotiq research molecular, psychotropic, and derivative forms of representation. Their work has been widely exhibited, including at the Venice Biennale, Seoul Biennale, New Museum New York, Museum of Contemporary Art Helsinki, Hamburger Kunstverein, and most recently within the framework of Interkultur Ruhr (*Amazonian Flesh*, 2018). knowbotiq teach at the Zurich University of the Arts as part of the Master of Fine Arts program.

SYBILLE KRÄMER

was a professor of philosophy at Freie Universität Berlin from 1989 to 2018. She has obtained visiting professorships in Tokyo, Vienna, Graz, Zurich, and Lucerne and will become senior professor at Leuphana University of Lüneburg in 2019. She was a member of the Wissenschaftsrat, the Scientific Panel of the European Research Council Brussels, “The Human Mind and Its Complexity,” and the Senate of the German Research Foundation, as well as a permanent fellow at the Wissenschaftskolleg Berlin. Her research focuses on questions of epistemology; seventeenth-century philosophical rationalism; philosophy of language, writing, diagrammatics, and media; and symbolic machines, computers, and the cultural techniques of formalization. Her most recent publications include

Medium, Messenger, Transmission: An Approach to Media Philosophy (Medium, Bote, Übertragung: Kleine Metaphysik der Medialität, 2008/2015), which has also been translated into Japanese; and, as co-publisher, *Thinking with Diagrams: The Semiotic Basis of Human Cognition (2016)* and *Testimony/Bearing Witness: Epistemology, Ethics, History and Culture (2017)*.

JOHANNES KRAUSE

is a biochemist with a research focus on historical infectious diseases and human evolution. He received his PhD in genetics at the University of Leipzig. Subsequently, he worked at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, before he was appointed professor of archeo- and paleogenetics at the University of Tübingen. His research has contributed to the deciphering of the genetic heritage of the Neanderthals, and he discovered the first genetic evidence of the Denisovans, a Stone Age human form from Siberia. His recent work includes revealing the genetic heritage of ancient Egyptians, reconstructing the first Pleistocene African genomes, uncovering the source of the plague bacteria that caused epidemics in Europe, and clarifying the complex history of Europe's prehistoric mass migrations. He is director at the Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History, which he co-founded in 2014, and has been professor of archaeogenetics at Friedrich-Schiller-University Jena since 2018.

JÜRGEN KRUSE

is a pianist and conductor. He has closely collaborated with various conductors and composers such as Michael Gielen, György Kurtág, and Steve Reich. He has recorded numerous CDs and has worked with Ensemble Modern, Klangforum Wien, and the Open Music Quartet, among others.

RÜDIGER KRUSE,

(CDU) has been a member of the German Bundestag since 2009, prior to which he was a member of the Hamburg Parliament for eight years. Since 2015 he has been his parliamentary group's representative for the maritime economy. Up until March 2018 he was the rapporteur for culture and media on the Bundestag's Budget Committee, where he successfully

campaigning in parliamentary consultations for an increase in the annual culture budget. The project "The New Alphabet" is a result of his initiative. Since March 2018 he has been the rapporteur for transport and digital infrastructure on the Bundestag's Budget Committee.

MUHAMMED LAMIN JADAMA

is a photographer and activist. Born in the Senegambia region, he fled to Italy in 2008, where he has been working for the online newspaper *Afronline*. Since 2011 he has been living in Germany where he dedicates his photographic work to documenting the everyday struggle of refugees and immigrants in many European countries. In Berlin he has most recently spent time with various groups of refugees, including the refugee camp at Oranienplatz from 2012 until its eviction and clearance in 2014.

BRITTA LANGE

studied art history, as well as theater, media, and cultural studies. Her doctoral thesis on the ethnographic trader Johann Friedrich Gustav Umlauff was published in 2006 under the title *Echt / Unecht / Lebensecht: Menschenbilder im Umlauff*. In 2012 she habilitated in the discipline of cultural studies with a work on the sound recordings of World War I prisoners of war, partially published in *Die Wiener Forschungen an Kriegsgefangenen 1915–1918: Anthropologische und ethnografische Verfahren im Lager (2013)*. Since 2014 she has been a research assistant at the Department of Cultural History and Theory at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, prior to which she was at the Institute for Social Anthropology of the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna (2008–10) and the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin (2005–07). The focus of her research is on the cultural history of the nineteenth to twenty-first centuries, cultural techniques, and colonial and postcolonial constellations, as well as early photo, film, and audio documents.

VINCENZO LATRONICO

is a translator and novelist based in Milan, Italy. He has published three novels, a theater play, and a travel book (with Armin Linke). He is currently writing a feature film drawn from one of his books. His award-winning second

novel was published in German by Seceasion Verlag under the title *Die Verschwörung der Tauben* (2016). His most recent work as a translator focuses on the re-translation of nineteenth-century classics, including works by H. G. Wells, Oscar Wilde, and George Gissing. Since 2017 he has been working on a new version of Alexandre Dumas's *Le comte de Monte-Cristo*, inspired by an experimental translation sketched by Umberto Eco. His art writing has appeared in magazines such as *frieze*, *Mousse*, *art-agenda*, and *Domus*; he teaches creative writing and translation at the Holden School in Turin, Italy.

BEN LERNER

is a poet, novelist, and critic. He has received fellowships from the Fulbright, Guggenheim, and MacArthur Foundations, among other honors. He is the author of two novels (*10:04* and *Leaving the Atocha Station*), three books of poetry (*The Lichtenberg Figures*, *Angle of Yaw*, and *Mean Free Path*), and a work of criticism (*The Hatred of Poetry*). *The Lichtenberg Figures* and its German translation won the Preis der Stadt Münster für Europäische Poesie. Recent collaborations with artists include *Blossom* with Thomas Demand, *The Polish Rider* with Anna Ostoya, and *The Snows of Venice* with Alexander Kluge. He is Distinguished Professor of English at Brooklyn College in the City University of New York. His new novel, *The Topeka School*, is forthcoming.

YANG LIAN

is one of China's foremost contemporary poets in exile. Born in Switzerland, he grew up in China and now lives in London. Lian is known for his poem sequences and long poems, which display a profound understanding of, and creative links with, classical Chinese poetry. He has published thirteen volumes of poetry, two volumes of prose, and one volume of essays, including the works *Where the Sea Stands Still* (1999), *Riding Pisces* (2008), and *Lee Valley Poems* (2009). His work has been translated into more than twenty-five languages and has won numerous awards. In 2017, his autobiographical book-length poem *Narrative Poem* won the English PEN Translates Award. He was elected a board member of PEN International in 2008 and 2011. Lian has been a DAAD

fellow in Berlin (1991–92) and a fellow of Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin (2012–13). He is a guest professor at four Chinese universities. His latest book in German translation is *Konzentrische Kreise* (Concentric circles), published by Hanser Verlag in 2013.

ARMIN LINKE

is a photographer and filmmaker whose work is dedicated to investigating how humans use technologies and knowledge to transform and develop our natural, technological, and urban environment. In the last five years, his work has particularly focused on the topic of the Anthropocene, resulting in exhibition presentations at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin and ZKM | Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe. His most recent comprehensive project "Prospecting Ocean," commissioned and produced by TBA21-Academy, explores ecological and political challenges facing the oceans. More widely, Armin Linke's work has been exhibited at art institutions including Centre Pompidou, Paris; Tate Gallery, London; Fotomuseum, Winterthur; PAC, Milan; Ludwig Forum, Aachen; and Centre de la Photographie Genève. Linke has been a research affiliate at MIT Visual Arts Program Cambridge, a guest professor at the IUAV Arts and Design University in Venice, and a professor at the University for Arts and Design Karlsruhe.

JONAS LOH

is a design researcher and electronic musician whose work focuses on data visualization and tangible fictions based on technological props reflecting social, technological, and environmental impact. His work has been presented at exhibitions and public installations, such as the SIGGRAPH Emerging Technologies exhibition in Los Angeles, MoMA in New York, V2_ in Rotterdam, and Ars Electronica. As a co-founder of Studio NAND, he directs various design projects spanning the fields of information visualization, interaction, and speculative design. Together with Hannes Bröcker, Marian Kaiser, and Claude Schötz, Loh co-founded the collective MEHL as a result of boredom and global political antipathy towards the status quo. MEHL is collaborating with all kinds of beings—from jockeys to gardeners to mushrooms to rocks to strange fruits to rare insects.

GIUSEPPE LONGO

is a mathematician and research director (emeritus) of the Centre nationale de la recherche scientifique at the Cavailles interdisciplinary center of Ecole Normale Supérieure, Paris (ENS). He was previously a research director in mathematics, then in computer science, at ENS (1990–2012), and a professor of mathematical logic and computer science at the University of Pisa (1981–90). Longo spent three years in the US, including at the University of California, Berkeley, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and Carnegie Mellon University, as a researcher and visiting professor, and has also spent several months at the universities of Oxford and Utrecht. He has authored and co-authored more than a hundred papers and three books. His research interests include the logic and theory of computation, the cognitive foundations and epistemology of mathematics, and theoretical biology.

ROGELIO LORDA

is a dancer, director, and choreographer. He began his artistic training in 1978 at the Santa Clara Vocational School of Art, specializing in modern dance and folklore. After moving to Barcelona, he developed a whole program of research, teaching, and choreography, creating several choreographic works and performances (including *Translation*, *The fault is yours*, *His balance is exhausted*, and *Illusory spaces*). Besides his dance training in La Compañía de Bailes Populares Pinos Nuevos and the contemporary dance company of Rosario Cárdenas Danza Combinatoria, he is also part of the Black Guiris Collective, directed by Ivonne González.

OLIVIER MARBOEUF

is an author, performer, and curator. He founded the independent art center Espace Khiasma, which he has been running since 2004 in Les Lilas in the outskirts of Paris. At Khiasma, he has developed a program addressing minority representation through exhibitions, screenings, debates, performances, and collaborative projects across the northeast of Paris. Since 2017 Khiasma has merged into an experimental platform, exploring ways of creating a place collectively and developing the webradio R22 Tout-Monde. With an interest in the different modalities of transmission of knowledge, Marboeuf's proposals broadly inscribe

themselves in practices of conversation and speculative narratives, in an attempt to create ephemeral situations of culture. He currently produces films at Spectre productions, based in Rennes.

CHRISTOPH MARKSCHIES

is professor of church history (parish history), ordained minister and vice-president of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities since 2012. From 2006 to 2010 he was President of the Humboldt Universität zu Berlin. His research deals with forms of ecclesiastical organization and the transfer of knowledge in early Christianity and the representation of Christianity in public space. His work has been awarded with numerous prizes (amongst them the Leibniz Prize 2001 and the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany 2017) and has been published widely. Besides his scientific contributions Marksches participates regularly in current theological and social debates.

MARYISONACID

Maryama Luccioni (aka Maryisonacid) is a DJ, promoter, and curator for radio stations such as Worldwide FM and Berlin Community Radio. She owns the music label AAITF and is cofounder and contributor to the fanzine *Ambiance*, launched in September 2018. In 2014 she started her DJ nights in a post-punk bar in Berlin Neukölln, often playing alone from 10 p.m. to 10 a.m. for a very mixed underground crowd. In 2015 the party moved to Loftus Hall and has since grown into a well-respected music platform. In 2017 she was invited to the legendary Montreux Jazz Festival and launched her own label. In 2019 she will be in charge of programming a series of concerts at Volksbühne Berlin. Her love for music reaches well beyond the club scene, breaking the rules of traditional dance music sets: "From Afro to Techno and everything in between."

DIANA MCCARTY

is a media activist and co-founder of the award-winning free artists' radio reboot.fm/88.4 in Berlin. In addition, she is a founding member of media projects like kotti.fm, the radia.fm cultural radio network, and the mailing list faces-i international community for women in media. Her work revolves around art, gender, politics, radical feminism, and technology. As a cyberpunk

in the 1990s, she was active in the emerging netzkultur with nettime, metaforum, and hackerspaces. In 2016 she co-initiated the exhibition "Nervous Systems: Quantified Life and the Social Question" at HKW. Since 2011 McCarty has been collaborating with Filipa César on the project "Luta ca caba inda" (The struggle is not over yet) about the origins of cinema in Guinea-Bissau as part of the African Liberation Movement.

CHRISTOPH MENKE

is a professor of practical philosophy at the Cluster of Excellence: Normative Orders and the Institute of Philosophy at the Goethe University Frankfurt/Main. The focus of his work is political philosophy, philosophy of law, aesthetics, and the theory of subjectivity. After completing his studies in philosophy, German philology, and the history of art, he taught at the New School for Social Research, New York, from 1997 to 1999; and at the University of Potsdam from 1999 to 2009. He is a member of the editorial board of the journals *Constellations: An International Journal of Critical and Democratic Theory*, *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, and *Polar: Politik, Theorie, Alltag*. His publications include *The Sovereignty of Art* (1988/1999), *Reflections of Equality* (2000/2006), *Philosophie der Menschenrechte* (2007), *Force. A Fundamental Concept of Aesthetic Anthropology* (2008/2012), and most recently *Autonomie und Befreiung* (2018).

YUCEF MERHI

is an artist, poet, coder, and pioneer of digital art. He studied philosophy in Caracas and New York, and obtained a master's degree in the Interactive Telecommunications Program from New York University. He is known as the first artist to exhibit a work of art that included a video game console, the Atari 2600, back in 1985. As a pioneer of digital art, Merhi has produced a wide body of works that involve the use of data, electronic circuits, computers, video game systems, and other devices. The resulting artworks expand the limitations of language and the traditional context of poetry. Merhi's work has been exhibited worldwide and was shown in the official selection of the São Paulo Biennial, Valencia, 2007; the 10th International Istanbul Biennial; the 30th Ljubljana Biennial; and the 13th Cuenca Biennial, among others.

CATHY MILLIKEN

studied oboe and piano. As a founding member of the Ensemble Modern, she has worked with artists such as Ligeti, Stockhausen, and Boulez. Since 1990 she has composed her own musical theater, instrumental and chamber music works, audio plays, installations, and theater and film music, which have received numerous awards, amongst others the Prix Marulić and Prix Italia. From 2018 to 2020 she is the Associate Composer of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra.

JORGE MORÉ CALDERON

is a Cuban dancer and choreographer. Having graduated from the University of Havana (Cuba) in Art History, he has danced for several companies and shows including Compagnie Olivier Dubois, Ballet du Nord, SINE QUA NON ART Company, Cirque du Soleil, Opéra national de Paris, Starmania, Notre Dame de Paris, and the Pyramids Show in Egypt. Moré Calderon has also worked as a choreographer for the French Pavilion at the Shanghai world expo, 2010, and Omâ-Belles Embardées, and as assistant director of short programs for the French TV channel CANAL+.

ANDREA MOSES

studied German philology, history, and theater in Leipzig and Berlin, and studied directing at the Ernst Busch Academy of Dramatic Arts in Berlin and the GITIS in Moscow. Since 2005 she has primarily worked in musical theater with engagements internationally. She was nominated for the German theater prize "Der Faust" in 2008 and 2010, for her interpretations of Strauss's *Elektra* and Wagner's *Lohengrin*. Moses was the head director for musical theater and acting at the Anhaltisches Theater Dessau from 2009 to 2011, before taking up the post of lead director at the Stuttgart State Opera. Since 2004 she has taught at the HfS Ernst Busch in Berlin, where she was appointed guest professor of stage directing in 2015. She also gives master classes in musical theater at the Hochschule für Musik Hanns Eisler, amongst other places. Her Berlin production of Wagner's *The Mastersingers of Nuremberg*, directed by Daniel Barenboim, can be experienced again at the Staatsoper Unter den Linden in April 2019.

JIN MUSTAFA

is a visual artist, DJ, and electronic music producer based in Stockholm. Her work shifts between media, often taking the form of moving images, objects, sound, and music. She is interested in the relationship between technology, imaginary spaces, and questions of personal and collective memory. Recent exhibitions include "I'm fine, on my way home now," curated by Rado Ištok at Mossutställningar, Stockholm (2017); "Ripple" at Alta Art Space, in collaboration with Signal, Malmö; "If She Wanted I Would Have Been There Once Twice or Again," curated by C-print at Zeller Van Almsick Gallery, Vienna; a collaborative work with Natália Rebelo for "Chart Emerging," curated by Helga Christoffersen at Kunsthall Charlottenborg, Copenhagen (2018).

LANCE OLSEN

is the author of more than twenty-five books of and about innovative writing, including, most recently, the novel *Dreamlives of Debris*, a retelling of the Minotaur myth in which the "monster" is a little deformed girl and her labyrinth is infinite. *My Red Heaven*, his next novel, is based on a painting by Otto Freundlich and set in Berlin in 1927; it will appear in 2020. His short stories, essays, and reviews have appeared in hundreds of journals and anthologies. Olson is a Guggenheim Fellowship, Berlin Prize, DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Residency, N.E.A. Fellowship, and Pushcart Prize recipient, and has been a Fulbright Scholar in Turku, Finland. He teaches experimental narrative theory and practice at the University of Utah, where he directs the creative writing program.

TREVOR PAGLEN

is an award-winning artist, whose work spans image-making, sculpture, investigative journalism, writing, engineering, and other disciplines. Among his chief concerns are learning how to see the current historical moment we live in and developing the means to imagine alternative futures. His work has been presented in solo and group exhibitions at numerous national and international venues, including the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Vienna Secession, Fondazione Prada (Milan), and the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York). Paglen contributed research

and cinematography to the Academy Award-winning film *Citizenfour*, and created a radioactive public sculpture for the exclusion zone in Fukushima, Japan. In 2018, he launched an artwork into distant orbit around earth in collaboration with Creative Time and MIT.

HERMANN PARZINGER

is an archaeologist and prehistorian and since 2008 the president of the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation. Following the completion of his doctorate and postdoctoral thesis in Munich, he was the director of the German Archaeological Institute in Berlin from 1990 to 2003, and its president from 2003 to 2008. He has conducted numerous excavations in the Near and Middle East, and also in different parts of Russia (with a focus on Siberia). In 1998 he received the Leibniz Prize for his research work and in 2011 he was honored with the Pour le Mérite for Sciences and Arts. In 2015 he was appointed a member of the Humboldt Forum's Founding Directorate. Parzinger is also the author of numerous scientific and popular books on various aspects of early human history. In 2018 he was elected the executive president of the European cultural heritage association Europa Nostra.

TOM PAUWELS

studied classical guitar in Brussels, Cologne, and Münster. In 1995, during his studies at the Royal Conservatory of Brussels, he was involved in the founding of the Black Jackets Company, a Brussels collective of composers and performers. Ever since these early experiments he has been active in the field of contemporary music, both on classical and electric guitar. Since 2002 he has been working as co-artistic leader for the New Music ensemble Ictus (Brussels). Project-wise, he performs with the London-based Plus-Minus Ensemble. He has recorded works by numerous composers of contemporary music, such as Helmut Lachenmann, Georges Aperghis, and Pierluigi Billone. His broad interest in performance has led to collaborations with choreographers such as Xavier Le Roy, Maud Le Pladed, and Andros Zins-Browne. Since 2002 he has been teaching New Music for guitar at the Conservatory of Ghent and guitar at the Darmstadt International Summer Course for New Music (2010/12/14).

NELLY YAA PINKRAH

is a cultural and media theorist and political activist. She is a research assistant at Leuphana University of Lüneburg, where she is writing her doctoral thesis on Édouard Glissant and Cybernetics. In 2013 she co-organized the annual conference of the German Society for Media Studies, and since November 2013 she has also been working at the Centre for Digital Cultures, affiliated to Leuphana University. Her areas of interest are (digital) media and technology, political thoughts and practices, black feminist and postcolonial theory, decoloniality, and cultural history. She is actively engaged in different political projects and is a Humanity in Action Senior Fellow.

RAUMLABOR BERLIN

is a group of artists and architects working at the intersection of urban space, architecture, and public art. Raumlabor creates collaborative and interdisciplinary projects and events, bringing together engineers, architects, and sociologists, but also local experts and citizens. Understanding architecture primarily as a tool and a social phenomenon, their projects aim at transforming the urban landscape into a space of communication and negotiation through long-term social strategies or small-scale interventions. Raumlabor has worked and collaborated with, among many others, Kunstraum Munich, Kampnagel Hamburg, transmediale Berlin, ZKM Karlsruhe, and the Venice Biennale.

EVA REITER

studied recorder and viola da gamba at the University of Music and Performing Arts, Vienna, and the Sweelinck Conservatorium Amsterdam. She has received numerous distinctions for her composing, including the Förderungspreis of the City of Vienna in 2008, the Austrian State Scholarship for Composition, and the Erste Bank Composition Award in 2016. In 2013 she was a scholarship holder at the Akademie Schloss Solitude. Her composition *Alle Verbindungen gelten nur jetzt* was one of the works selected for the International Rostrum of Composers (IRC) 2009. Reiter's compositions have been performed at international festivals, amongst others the Ars Musica/Brussels, ISCM World New Music Festival, generator, and MaerzMusik Berlin. She

performs regularly at festivals for Old and New Music, both as a soloist and in various Baroque orchestras and ensembles for contemporary music. She has been a permanent member of the Belgian ensemble Ictus since 2015.

MONIKA RINCK

is a poet living in Berlin who since 1989 has published with a preference for crossing disciplinary and media boundaries. In 2012 her latest volume of poems *Honigprotokolle*, for which she received the Huchel Prize, was published by kookbooks. This was followed in the spring of 2015 by the collection of essays *Risiko & Idiotie: Streitschriften* (kookbooks). Rinck is a member of PEN International, Lyrikknappschaft Schöneberg, the Academy of the Arts Berlin, and the German Academy for Language and Literature. She has received numerous awards for her literary work, including the Kleist Prize (2015) and the Ernst Jandl Prize (2017). In 2017 she curated the festival POETICA in Cologne. She translates from the Hungarian with Orsolya Kalász, cooperates with musicians, and composes and teaches from time to time. In the spring of 2019, *Champagner für die Pferde*—an anthology of poems, essays, and short prose—will be published by Fischer Verlag.

SCOTT ROLLER

is a freelance composer and cellist. In his artistic work and music education work, Roller looks for new connections between artistic forms of expression—in particular dance, the visual arts, theater, and literature. In 2005 he founded the Open Music association for the teaching of musical improvisation. In addition to solo performances, Roller works with different ensembles.

ÉRIC SADIN

is a writer and philosopher whose work deals with the relations between arts, language, and new technologies. From 1999 to 2003 he was editor-in-chief of the journal *éc/artS* (Artistic Practices & New Technologies). Sadin has published theoretical and poetic texts in more than fifteen journals and is the author of several books, including a trilogy exploring the contemporary state of our relationship to digital technologies. He is a regular speaker at Sciences Po Paris and has had many speaking and teaching positions at

universities and research centers worldwide. His most recent publications are *La Vie algorithmique: Critique de la raison numérique* (2015), the critically acclaimed *La silicolonisation du monde: L'irrésistible expansion du libéralisme numérique* (2016), and the essay *L'Intelligence artificielle ou l'enjeu du siècle* (2018).

NAHED SAMOUR,

a law and Islamic studies scholar, is an Early Career Fellow at the Lichtenberg-Kolleg, The Göttingen Institute for Advanced Study, and at the Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, Faculty of Law and Religion. She studied law and Islamic studies at the universities of Bonn, Berlin (HU), Birzeit/Ramallah, Damascus, London (SOAS), and Harvard, and at the Max Planck Institute for European Legal History in Frankfurt am Main. She was a postdoctoral researcher at the Eric Castrén Institute of International Law and Human Rights, Helsinki University. Since 2015 she has been a junior faculty member at Harvard Law School, Institute for Global Law and Policy.

PETER SCHÄFER

is the director of the Jewish Museum Berlin Foundation and a leading international Jewish studies scholar. He received his doctorate and habilitated in Jewish studies and has taught, amongst others, at the universities of Tübingen and Cologne, and at the Freie Universität Berlin, where he held the chair for Jewish Studies from 1983 to 2008. In 1998 he was called to Princeton University, USA, where he was the first occupant of the Ronald O. Perelman Chair for Jewish Studies and director of the program for Jewish Studies. Schäfer has published numerous books and essays, translated and edited fundamental texts from the Jewish tradition, and founded and co-edited numerous scholarly series as well as the journal *Jewish Studies Quarterly*. His research into the history, literature, and religion of ancient and early medieval Judaism has been honored with, amongst others, the Leibniz Prize and the Mellon Award.

BERND SCHERER

is director of the Haus der Kulturen der Welt (HKW). The philosopher and author of several publications came to the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in 2006 after his work as director of the Goethe

Institut Mexiko. His theoretical work focuses on aesthetics, philosophy of language, semiotics, and international cultural exchange. He has curated and co-curated several cultural and art projects, such as “Agua-Wasser,” “Über Lebenskunst,” “The Anthropocene Project,” and more recently “100 Years of Now.” Since January 2011 he has also been teaching at the Institute for European Ethnology, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. Amongst many publications, he edited *Die Zeit der Algorithmen* (2016) and co-edited *Das Anthropozän. Zum Stand der Dinge* (2015), the four-volume work *Textures of the Anthropocene: Grain Vapor Ray* (2015), and *Wörterbuch der Gegenwart* (forthcoming, 2019).

HELGE SCHNEIDER

is a comedian, composer, musician, entertainer, book author, scriptwriter, actor, director, music clown, and graphic artist. Schneider did not complete his school leaving exam or anything similar. Following various band projects and small acting parts (amongst others with Christoph Schlingensiefel), he had a number of jobs as a radio moderator. In 1993 his first feature film *Texas – Doc Snyder hält die Welt in Atem* became the most successful German film of that year, one year later in 1994 Schneider scored one of his biggest hits with his song *Katzeklo*. He is a jazz musician and, like virtually no one else, knows how to secretly integrate this “way of making music” into his performances. In addition to his musical activities, Schneider works as an actor (his films include *Mein Führer*, 2007), comedian, and entertainer, and is the author of novels and crime stories (including *Eiersalat – Eine Frau geht seinen Weg*, 1999). Schneider is very busy and hardly has a private life. When he has time his hobby is chopping wood.

CLAUDE SCHÖTZ

is an artist who creates books, films, sculptures, bacteria, algae, fungi, foods, and menus within different collectives—and frequently works with the scriptorium The Category and the Berlin label a.ACHAT. She works in a kitchen-studio-laboratory, where she experiments with bio materials and ponders about a series of performances that could excavate gold from sewage sludge to help finance the clean-up of the Pacific Ocean. She was an assistant professor at the Dresden Academy of

Fine Arts and won the Marion Ermer Award in 2011. Together with Hannes Bröcker, Marian Kaiser, and Jonas Loh, she founded the collective MEHL in 2018.

MARIA ODETE DA COSTA SOARES SEMEDO

is a writer and literary theorist. She is a senior researcher at the National Institute of Studies and Research (INEP) Guinea-Bissau, where she coordinates the KEBUR II Literary Collection and the Words of Women Series (a biographical study of women). She is also a professor at Amílcar Cabral University Guinea-Bissau. As a writer, working in both Portuguese and Guinea Creole, she is the founder of the journal *Tcholona: Revista de Letras, Artes e Cultura* and has published two books of poetry, *Entre o Ser e o Amar* (1996) and *No Fundo do Canto* (2007). She has served as Guinea-Bissau's Minister of Health and Minister of National Education, President of the National Commission of UNESCO Guinea-Bissau, and Rector of Amílcar Cabral University.

MAX SENGES

works as lead for Research Partnerships and Internet Governance for Google in Berlin. He holds a PhD in the Information and Knowledge Society Program from the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC) in Barcelona as well as a Masters in Business Information Systems from the University of Applied Sciences Wildau, Berlin. Max Senge's work lies at the crossroads between academia and the private sector, Internet politics, innovation, and the culture and philosophy of technology. Over the last ten years he has worked with academic, governmental, and private organizations, centering on knowledge ecosystems, e-learning, and Internet governance.

RICHARD SENNETT

teaches sociology and history at the London School of Economics and at New York University. The author of *The Corrosion of Character* is one of the most renowned intellectuals of our time. His new book *Building and Dwelling: Ethics for the City* forms the last part of his *Homo Faber* trilogy, with *Together: The Rituals, Pleasures, and Politics of Cooperation* and *The Craftsman*.

SIR HENRY

(alias John Henry Nijenhuis) is a Canadian pianist, composer, and computer programmer. In 1996 he was engaged as an interpreter and arranger for the Sonambiente Festival in Berlin. As a result, he was enlisted as a member of the Volksbühne's ensemble, and since then, as musical director and composer, he has worked on around fifty productions, including eighteen by Frank Castorf, seven by Dimiter Gotscheff, and three by David Marton and Ulrich Rasche. His collaboration with Alexander Kluge has been shown at the Museum Folkwang in Essen, lit. Cologne, Belvedere 21 in Vienna, and the Venice Biennale. His solo installation *Begone Dull Care*, composed of musical instruments and image sequences generated by gaming cameras, was shown at the Volksbühne's Grüner Salon in 2018.

SLAVS AND TATARS

is an internationally-renowned art collective devoted to an area east of the former Berlin Wall and west of the Great Wall of China known as Eurasia. Their work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at MoMA in New York, SALT in Istanbul, Vienna Secession, Kunsthalle Zürich, Albertinum Dresden, and Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art in Warsaw, among others. The collective's practice is based on three activities: exhibitions, publications, and lecture-performances. In addition to their translation of the legendary Azerbaijani satirical periodical *Molla Nasreddin* (currently in its 2nd edition with I. B. Tauris), Slavs and Tatars have published eight books to date, most recently *Wripped Scripped* (2018) on the politics of alphabets and transliteration. The collective will curate the 33rd edition of the Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Arts, opening in June 2019.

NICOLÁS SPINOSA

studied painting in Buenos Aires and obtained his PhD in Spain, where he has been a researcher at the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Barcelona. Spinosa produces works at the interface of photography, philosophy, science, psychoanalysis, and visual cultures. He is currently researching and developing his work, based between Europe and South-America. Spinosa is part of the Black Guiris Collective.

RAVI SRINIVASAN

is a percussionist, vocalist, and composer who performs worldwide as a soloist and works together with orchestras and institutions such as the Berlin Philharmonic, the Thalia Theater in Hamburg, and the Icelandic Opera. He is trained in the Indian tabla and classical Indian vocal techniques, and is well known for his virtuoso whistling.

FELIX STALDER

is a media and cultural theorist, a professor of Digital Culture and Network Theory at Zurich University of the Arts, a senior researcher at the World-Information Institute in Vienna, and a moderator of the international digital culture mailing list *nettime*. Active in the field since the mid-1990s, he has published extensively on digital network cultures, focusing on the intersection of cultural, political, and technological dynamics, in particular on new modes of commons-based production, control society, copyright, and transformation of subjectivity. Among his recent publications are *Digital Solidarity* (2013/2014) and *The Digital Condition* (2016/2018). The latter looks at the historical origins, the contemporary developments, and the political and social ramifications of an expanding digital sphere.

LUC STEELS

is a Belgian scientist working in the field of Artificial Intelligence. He studied linguistics in Antwerp and computer science and AI at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Cambridge, MA. In 1983 he founded the Artificial Intelligence Laboratory of the Free University of Brussels (VUB), conducting research in knowledge representation, language processing, and robotics. In 1996 he became the founding director of the Sony Computer Science Laboratories in Paris. Since 2011 he has been a research professor at the Catalan Institution for Research and Advanced Studies (ICREA), while working at the Institute of Evolutionary Biology (IBE-UPF/CSIC) in Barcelona on AI models of language evolution. Within the sphere of art, Steels has engaged in various collaborations with artists such as Olafur Eliasson and is active in musical composition, primarily for opera. His operas explore the implications of AI in contemporary society and have premiered at the

Palau de la Musica in Barcelona in 2011 and, most recently, at La Monnaie in Brussels in 2017.

HITO STEYERL

works as a filmmaker and author, employing the genre of the essay documentary film. She lives in Berlin.

CHRISTOPH STRECKHARDT

lives in Weimar and works as the deputy director of the Department for Communication and Education at the Stiftung Schloss Friedenstein Gotha. Following his time at the Kolleg Friedrich Nietzsche of the Klassik Stiftung Weimar, he was awarded a doctorate at the University of Tübingen for a dissertation on the work of Alexander Kluge (*Kaleidoskop Kluge*, 2016, shortlisted for the Volkswagen Foundation's *Opus Primum*). In 2017 a variant of his *Kluge Lexicon*, in intimate co-authorship, appeared together with texts from Kluge in his "Pluriversum." Most recently, since his collaboration on the "Pluriversum" exhibition at the Museum Folkwang and projects on the promotion of aesthetic education ("WERKstatt Schlemmer," 2019), he has increasingly focused on educational work in connection with the opening up of the museal space.

TACTICAL TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE

is a non-profit organization that has been working worldwide to demystify and promote technology in the context of activism since 2003. Working at the intersection of technology, activism, and politics, Tactical Tech reaches more than three million people worldwide through events, training, online resources, and exhibitions. Tactical Tech is an international group of technologists, activists, designers, and practitioners based in Berlin, who work with citizens, journalists, and activists to raise awareness about personal data, privacy, and digital security.

YOKO TAWADA

is a writer. Born in Tokyo, she moved to Germany at the age of 22. She first majored in Russian literature at Waseda University in Tokyo, then studied German literature in Hamburg, and received her PhD under Sigrid Weigel in Zurich. Ever since she published her first collection of prose and poetry in 1987, she has been writing in both Japanese and German. She has also been active in giving readings and

performances in collaboration with musicians—traveling extensively throughout the world. Tawada is the recipient of numerous fellowships and awards, including the Kleist Prize and two of Japan's most-sought literary awards, the Akutagawa Prize and the Tanizaki Prize. Selected works are the short story *The Naked Eye* (2004/2009), the novel *Memoirs of a Polar Bear* (2014/2016), and most recently the novel *The Emissary* (2018).

DAVID TAYLOR

is an award-winning bass trombonist who started his career as a member of Leopold Stokowski's American Symphony Orchestra, and in appearances with the New York Philharmonic under Pierre Boulez. As a jazz musician as well as a composer, he performs recitals and concerti around the world and has appeared and recorded with major jazz and popular artists including Barbra Streisand, Miles Davis, Quincy Jones, Frank Sinatra, and Aretha Franklin. Taylor teaches at the Manhattan School of Music.

TELEKOMMUNISTEN

is a Berlin-based arts collective whose work investigates the political economy of communication technology. Core themes include the incompatibility of capitalism with free networks and free culture, and the increasing centralization and enclosure that results from this, as well as the potential for distributed producers employing a collective stock of productive assets to provide an alternative economic basis for a free society. Their often performative, interactive practice employs satire and humor, emphasizing social relations and human interaction. Telekommunisten have exhibited and performed widely at events and festivals including transmediale, Berlin; New Babylon, Athens; Amaze, Johannesburg; Mal au pixel, Paris; Critical Alternatives, Aarhus; Art A-Hack, NYC; and the Young Leaders Forum, Beijing.

THOMAS THIEDE

studied art history, philosophy, and theater studies at Ludwig Maximilian University Munich, as well as restoration and conservation in Dresden and painting in Düsseldorf. His work is focused on two key aspects. The first field of activity is drawings and drawing based installations. Some of these

space-related drawing installations are site specific and are also named after their appearance. The second field of activity is an international artist exchange project titled "Collaboration_," which he launched in 2008. Since then, the project has had twelve stations, for instance in Great Britain, Serbia, Iceland, Slovakia, China, Finland, and Korea. His work has been shown at exhibitions and galleries worldwide. In recent years, his collaborations with Alexander Kluge have been shown at Kunstverein Stuttgart, Museum Folkwang (Essen), Belvedere 21 (Vienna), and the Vincent van Gogh Foundation (Arles).

ROSEMARIE TIETZE

is one of the most well-respected translators from Russian into German. She studied theater and Slavic and German philology and has worked as a (literary) translator, interpreter, and teacher since 1972. From 1984 to 2009 she taught at the SDI University of Applied Languages in Munich; in 2012 she was a guest lecturer at the German Institute for Literature in Leipzig and in 2012/13 held the August Wilhelm von Schlegel Visiting Professorship for Poetry at the Freie Universität Berlin. She presents Russian literature in readings and holds advanced training seminars for literary translators. On her initiative the Deutsche Übersetzerfonds e.V. was founded in 1997, which she headed until 2009. She has received numerous awards for her translations, amongst others the Paul Celan Prize in 2010 and the Literature Prize of the Stahlstiftung Eisenhüttenstadt in 2018.

NICOLINE VAN HARSKAMP

is an Amsterdam-based artist whose work considers acts of language and communication in relation to ideology and solidarity through video, installation, and scripted performance. She is a professor of performative art at the University of Fine Arts Münster. In her work on the social politics of language and speech she has collaborated with exhibition and research partners such as BAK Utrecht, CCAC Cordoba, Waterside Contemporary London, Archive Kabinett Berlin, and the Free University of Amsterdam. Her film works and performances have been shown at the Van Abbemuseum Eindhoven, Manifesta 9 in Genk, Performa 11 New York, and Tate Modern, London, among others. Her most

recent performative work *My Name is Language / Mein Name ist Sprache*, commissioned by the steirischer herbst, Graz, and the Project Arts Centre, Dublin, celebrates the personal name as a word in language that can be translated and creolized like any other.

JOSEPH VOGL

is professor of German literature, cultural theory, and media studies at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. He also holds a permanent visiting professorship at Princeton University. He has been the spokesperson of the DFG-research training group "Literatur- und Wissensgeschichte kleiner Formen" (The literary and epistemic history of small forms) since it was founded in 2017. His fields of research are "poetologies of knowledge" (the interweaving and interrelation of literature and knowledge); the history and theory of knowledge and political thought; modern and present-day finance and economics; and media and literary theory and history. He has authored numerous articles and several books, including *Soll und Haben: Fernsehgespräche* with Alexander Kluge (2009), *The Specter of Capital* (2014), and most recently *The Ascendancy of Finance* (2017) on the historical dynamics of modern finance capitalism.

DIRK VON LOWTZOW

founded the rock band Tocotronic together with Arne Zank and Jan Müller in Hamburg in 1993. Since 1995 they have released twelve albums, most recently the autobiographical concept album *Die Unendlichkeit* in 2018. From 1999 to 2014 he also released five albums with the experimental duo Phantom Ghosts, together with Thies Myhner. Since 1999 Dirk von Lowtzow has also been active as an art critic with numerous contributions to catalogs and critiques, predominately in the magazine *Texte zur Kunst*. In 2015, together with the dramatist and director René Pollesch, he staged the opera *Von einem, der auszog, weil er sich die Miete nicht mehr leisten konnte* at the Volksbühne in Berlin. He composes theater and film music, most recently for the internationally successful film *Styx* by Wolfgang Fischer, as well as collaborating on audio play and audio book productions. In February, Kiepenheuer & Witsch will publish his first alphabetically structured book under the title *Aus dem Dachsbau*.

SALIHA PONDINGO VON MEDEM

was born in Algeria and has lived in Berlin since 1987. After arriving in Germany she attended a French school, which is why, amongst other things, she has referred to herself as "Berlinoire" since the age of 16. Following her training as a nursery school teacher she worked at a German-French childcare center, and to this day works as a freelance interpreter at institutions for people with traumatic experiences. In 2012 she founded the association Nô Lanta Djunto (*We rise together*) with its headquarters in Berlin. The goal of the association is to establish and build networks between Guinea-Bissau and Germany and to promote a better image of Guinea-Bissau. Through fundraising campaigns it supports projects that are initiated by local residents and coordinated with the project partners in Guinea-Bissau.

OLGA VON SCHUBERT

studied comparative literature and art history in Berlin and holds an MA in Contemporary Approaches to English Studies from Goldsmiths, University of London. Since 2015 she has been working as a research consultant for the director of the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin, where she co-curates discursive events and learning formats and coordinates the Bibliothek 100 Jahre Gegenwart series published by Matthes & Seitz. Previously, she was part of the curatorial team at hürlimann + lepp Exhibitions and at the Deutsches Hygiene-Museum in Dresden. As an independent curator she co-created the exhibitions "alles zur zeit: *Über den Takt, der unser Leben bestimmt*" at Vögele Kulturzentrum near Zurich in 2017 and "Irregulars: Economies of Deviation" at neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst in Berlin in 2013. Her essay "100 Years of Now" and the *Temporality of Curatorial Research* is forthcoming with Sternberg Press.

JULIA VOSS

is a professor at the Institute of Philosophy and the Sciences of Art at the Leuphana University of Lüneberg. After completing her studies in German philology, history of art, and philosophy, she received a scholarship in 2001 from the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science within the framework of her doctoral dissertation "Darwins Bilder: Ansichten der Evolutionstheorie." In 2007 she became the editor of the *FAZ* art

section; and in 2014, deputy editor of the feuilleton section. Following a fellowship at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, she returned to academia in 2017 and is currently writing a biography of the Swedish female artist Hilma af Klint. She has received numerous awards for her work, amongst others the Otto Hahn Medal of the Max Planck Society and the Sigmund Freud Prize of the German Academy for Language and Literature.

LEONARDO WAISMAN

is a musicologist. He was a senior research fellow at the Argentine National Council for Science and Technology (CONICET) from 1995 to 2018, and the visiting Simón Bolívar Professor of Latin American Studies at the University of Cambridge from 2015 to 2016. Waisman has published on the Italian madrigal, American colonial music, performance practice, the popular music of Argentina, and the social significance of musical styles. He has worked extensively on the music of Jesuit missions in South America, and on the operas of Vicente Martín y Soler, including a comprehensive biography. As a conductor specializing in previously unperformed Baroque music, he has toured America, Europe, and East Asia. His most recent projects were a three-volume edition of music from Jesuit missions (*Un ciclo musical para la misión jesuítica: Los cuadernos de ofertorios de San Rafael*, 2015) and a panorama of Spanish-American colonial music (*Una historia de la música colonial hispanoamericana*, 2018).

MARK WASCHKE

is a German actor. Following his studies at the Ernst Busch Academy of Dramatic Arts in Berlin, he joined the ensemble of the Schaubühne Berlin in 1999. He has also performed at the Maxim Gorki Theater Berlin, the Deutsches Theater, Schauspiel Köln, and the Deutsches Schauspielhaus Hamburg. In addition to his theater work, Waschke has featured in numerous TV and cinema productions including *Nachmittag* (2005), *Buddenbrooks* (2008), *Fenster zum Sommer* (2011), *Habermann* (2010), and *Zum Geburtstag*. Since 2015 Waschke and Meret Becker have played the detective duo in the Berlin *Tatort* series. He has received numerous awards for his work, including the Bavarian Film Prize (2009), the Franz Hofer Prize (2012), and the German Actors Award (2013).

WU WEI

is an award-winning sheng virtuoso and composer who has developed the ancient Chinese instrument into an innovative force in contemporary music. As a soloist, he has performed at festivals and venues worldwide, with orchestras and ensembles such as the Berlin Philharmonic, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, and Ensemble Modern.

ZORA SNAKE

(Tejeutsa Zobel Raoul) is a Cameroonian dancer, choreographer, and performer working with hip-hop and traditional rhythm. Passionate about dance since the age of 7, he studied at the École des sables de Toubab Dialaw in Senegal and the Espace Sony Qlabountasi in Congo. He founded the company Zora Snake in 2013. With projects in theaters and public spaces, the company is structured around two artistic components that share the same idea: the search for new forms of artistic expression that empower the individual as well as contemporary society. His work has been shown at numerous festivals, such as *Mantsina sur scène* (2016) and *Détour de Babel* (2017), and was commissioned by the Institut Français of Cameroon-Yaoundé in 2017. From March 2019 his work will be on show at the Linden Museum, Stuttgart. Snake is the founder and director the Modaperf International Festival for Performance and Dance in Cameroon.

PROJECTIONS AND FILMS

ALEXANDER KLUGE
FROM ZED TO OMEGA

“WENN ICH ROBOTER WÄR ...”
[“If I were a robot ...”], 2019 07:40

ISLAND 1

“HUMAN LIFESPAN AS CURRENCY /
LABOR, ANTI-LABOR, WORLD 4.0”

Human labor and the lifespan of a human being are the natural anchors and balances both within and relating to the Digital World 4.0. Literacy has shaped modern civilization. And with the spread of literacy, people on all continents have achieved greater freedom, industrial productivity, and equality. Today we live in a disruptive world in which classical literacy alone no longer suffices. Do we need a new literacy?

LEBENSZEIT ALS WÄHRUNG
[Human lifespan as currency], 2018 28:09

With a Schubert lied performed by the ensemble Franui (East Tyrol) and an extract from General Dynamics

SCHMIEDEPRESSE [Forging press], 2018 04:38
Ralf Bäcker, Thomas Willke, Alexander Kluge

ALPHABETE DER ARBEIT
[Alphabets of labor], 2018 26:00

R.W. FASSBINDER: WELCHE WORTE GIBT ES FÜR
DAS GEGENTEIL VON ARBEIT? [R. W. Fassbinder:
What words are there for the opposite of work?], 2017 03:18

DIE FRAU DES MONTAGEARBEITERS
[The life of the assembly worker], 2017 09:00
with Svetlana Alexievich and Rosemarie Tietze

OPER MIT HAMMER UND MÜHLE
[Opera with hammer and grinder], 2018 03:00

ISLAND 2

“FROM PANGAEA UNTIL THE PRESENT / THE LONG MARCH OF THE SENSES: OF HUMANS AND THEIR INTELLIGENCE”

The ears and the sense of balance, the laughing muscle, the diaphragm, the cells, mimicry, intelligence—all human characteristics (or “man’s essential powers” as Marx calls them) have an astonishingly long pre-history. In the age before the “invention of writing” lie reserves that belong to the future world and to digitality, and which will always co-exist with them.

ALPHABETE DER EVOLUTION

[Alphabets of evolution], 2018 30:00

D WIE DESIGN / N WIE NEOTONIE / G WIE GLEICHGEWICHT / G WIE GESANG (ADORNO ÜBER DIE NACHTIGALL) / A&O WIE AUGEN UND OHREN [D for design / N for neotony /

B for balance / S for song (Adorno on the nightingale) / A&O for audio and optics], 2018 24:30

S WIE SCHUBKRAFT DER EISZEIT / S WIE SINTFLUT / M WIE MIMIK / E WIE EKELPAKET [T for the thrust of the ice age /

F for flood / M for mimicry / C for creep], 2018 22:46

BEVOR DER MENSCH DIE SCHRIFT ERFAND

[Before man invented writing], 2017 16:39
with Hermann Parzinger

“PFEIL DER INTELLIGENZ”

L WIE LEIBNIZ / P WIE “PFEIL DER INTELLIGENZ” / ÄON /

R WIE ROBOTERAMEISEN / M WIE MECHANISCHER

COMPUTER AUS KARL-MARX-STADT / I WIE INTELLIGENZ

DER BIBER / VON SIGMA BIS OMEGA [“Arrow of Intelligence”:

L for Leibniz / A for “arrow of Intelligence” / Eon /

R for robot Ants / M for mechanical computer from

Karl-Marx-Stadt / I for intelligence of the beaver /

From sigma to omega], 2018 15:00

ISLAND 3

“THE ORALITY PRINCIPLE”

For thousands of years the orality principle held sway. Even today, in the majority of intimate situations we fall back on what our ears trust in: on orality. How different do the voices of Niklas Luhmann, Sophie Rois, Alexandra Kluge, and Hannelore Hoger sound? Or voices in a choir, or the babble of 24 simultaneous translators at a conference in Brussels? Authentic speech is unmistakable. “Just as Hegel spoke as a child, so too did he think.”

FILMS

LICHTTON AUF FILMPOSITIV “WALDRANDABHÖRUNG”
NACH DIETER APPELT [Optical sound on film positive
“Listening to the Forest”] 15:00
after Dieter Appelt, 2016

CHRISTOPH SCHLINGENSIEF: “ICH BIN IN ERSTER
LINIE FILMEMACHER” [Christoph Schlingensief:
“First and foremost I’m a filmmaker”], 2008 09:24

MEHRFACHBILDER FÜR 5 PROJEKTOREN
[Multiple images for 5 Projectors], 2014 04:42

“ACH WIR MÜSSEN ALLE STERBEN”
[“Well, we all have to die”], 1966 01:32

ZANG BOUM. OKTOBER 1912. DADA & FUTURISMUS
[Zang Boum. October 1912. Dada & Futurism], 2018 02:00

AUDIO-RECORDINGS

O-TON SCHLINGENSIEF: “IN ERSTER LINIE BIN ICH
FILMEMACHER” [Quote Schlingensief:
“First and foremost I’m a filmmaker”] 09:24

O-TON ALEXANDRA KLUGE ALS ANITA G:
STREITGESPRÄCH
[Quote Alexandra Kluge as Anita G.: Debate] 00:54

O-TON SOPHIE ROIS IN “KAMERAD SCHLINGENSIEF”
[Quote Sophie Rois in “Comrade Schlingensief”] 04:43

O-TON FRANKFURT AM MAIN, KAISERSTRASSE:
“KELLNER TRAGEN IHRE TABLETTS LINKS” /
“ICH MÖCHTE DIE WAHRHEIT WISSEN”
[Quote Frankfurt am Main, Kaiserstraße:
“Bar staff carry their trays on the left” /
“I want to know the truth”] 03:16

O-TON HEINER MÜLLER:
“MEIN RENDEZVOUS MIT DEM TOD”
[Quote Heiner Müller: “My rendezvous with death”] 09:27
with Dimiter Gotscheff and a passage
from *Titus Andronicus*

O-TON: 24 ÜBERSETZUNGSKABINEN AUF EINER
INTERNATIONALEN KONFERENZ [Quote:
24 translator booths at an international conference] 09:40

O-TON KOSMOS: “ES GIBT DIE DUNKLE ENERGIE,”
PROF. DR. MUKHANOV [Quote Kosmos: “Dark
Energy exists,” Prof. Dr. Mukhanov] 04:17

| | |
|---|--------|
| HEGELS PHÄNOMENOLOGIE DES GEISTES. IN DER SPRACHE DER TÜBINGER UNTERSTADT [Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit. In the language of the Tübinger Lower Town] with Thomas Mauch | 03:01 |
| LIEBE ALS PASSION [Love as Passion] with Niklas Luhmann | 101:52 |
| “ALS ICH EINMAL REISTE”: VARIATION [“When I once traveled”: Variavision] | 15:14 |
| O-TON AUS BRUTALITÄT IN STEIN [Quote from Brutality in Stone] | 06:04 |
| MARX-SCHULUNG. “DER DIE NATURKRÄFTE EIN- UND AUSATMENDE MENSCH ...” [Marx Instruction. “Man, inhaling and exhaling all the powers of nature ...”] | 09:14 |

ISLAND 4

“THE DARK SIDE OF THE ALPHA” / KABBALA AND THE LETTERS OF GOD

Before God created our world in one week (calculated in God time, which could be billions of years), he “played” for four weeks (four times longer that it took to create the world) with LETTERS and NUMBERS, and created these signs. Letters are nothing technical but are living creatures themselves. In the 4.0-World of today, for example in the 3-D version, we experience how objects, houses, even space stations can be produced from mathematical symbols. The relationship between idealism and materialism appears to have been reversed.

| | |
|---|-------|
| “DER GOLEM” [“The Golem”], 2019 / WORTE AUS DEM SOHAR: “KÖRPER SIND DIE KONSONANTEN UND SEELEN DIE VOKALE” [Words from the sohar: “bodies are consonants and souls are vowels”], 2019 / APOKALYPSE ABRAHAM'S [Abraham's apocalypse], 2017 | 17:50 |
| DAS GEHEIMNIS DES DUNKLEN ALPHA [The Mystery of the Dark Alpha], 2017 | 13:35 |
| TAUSEND JAHRE BA'AL SHEM [A Thousand Years of Ba'al Shem], 2017 | 03:57 |
| ORAKELBEFRAGUNG / IM GESTEIN DER ZEICHEN [Consulting the oracle / In the rock of the signs], 2018 | 04:57 |

| | |
|---|-------|
| ALPHABET DER ALCHEMIE [Alphabet of alchemy], 2018 | 12:15 |
| “WAS BEDEUTET DIE SIEBEN?” [“What is the significance of seven?”], 2017 | 08:00 |
| DIE 5. SPRACHE: “MATHEMATIK IST EINE AKTIVITÄT DES GEISTES OHNE SPRACHE” / DIE HEILIGE ZAHL SIEBENUNDZWANZIG [The fifth language: “Mathematics is an activity of the intellect without language” / the holy number twenty-seven], 2018 | 08:04 |

ISLAND 5

| | |
|--|------|
| “NOTHING BEATS THE EXPERIENCE OF REPAIR” I think I could repair my bicycle in an emergency. But I don't trust myself to repair my iPhone. Between that which we can repair ourselves and that which we could under no circumstances repair ourselves, there runs a red line separating a world in which the power lies in the hands of the people and a disruptive world in which our sovereignty no longer prevails. | |
| ES GEHT NICHTS ÜBER REPARATURERFAHRUNG [Nothing beats hands-on experience with repairing], 2018 | 3:10 |
| HANDYS, WOLLT IHR EWIG LEBEN [Mobile phones, do you wish to live for ever?] FR. ST., 2017 | 2:06 |
| HEINER MÜLLER ÜBER POSTHEROISCHES MANAGEMENT [Heiner Müller on post-heroic management], 1995 | 5:12 |
| ICH RETTE, ICH LEGE FEUER [I'm saving lives, I'm starting a fire], 2019 | 3:53 |
| HANNELORE HOGER: DIE TRÜMMERFRAU, DIE IHREN MANN REPARIEREN MUSSTE [Hannelore Hoger: The “rubble woman” who had to mend her husband], 2016 | 5:23 |
| ROBOTER “MANTIS”: WIE EINEM INTELLIGENTEN TIER DAS RÜCKGRAT BRACH [Robot “Mantis”: How an intelligent animal broke its spine], 2018 | 1:37 |
| RETTUNG EINES BETRIEBS IN OST-BERLIN [Rescue of a firm in East Berlin], 2015 | 5:37 |

JEDE ZUKUNFT IST STERBLICH, NUR DIE HOFFNUNG
IST UNSTERBLICH [Every future is mortal,
only hope is immortal] / SCHROTT DEM
SCHACH [Scrap chess], 2019

8:20

ISLAND 6

ALPHABETS OF LEARNING /
“ONE CANNOT LEARN NOT TO LEARN”

Learning is inherent to all living creatures and a generic feature of Homo sapiens. One cannot deliberately stop reacting and learning. Immanuel Kant expanded this into the assertion that people cannot *naturally* dispense with their autonomy and intelligence. The topic here revolves around education and learning in the friction zone between the digital and the traditional world. A special chapter: Literacy 1917 in Russia.

| | |
|---|-------|
| ALPHABETISIERUNG 1917 IN RUSSLAND [Literacy 1917 in Russia], 2018 | 9:14 |
| ICH BIN EINE LESERATTE [I am a Bookworm], 2018 | 11:58 |
| “MAN KANN NICHT LERNEN, NICHT ZU LERNEN” [“One cannot learn not to learn”], 2018 | 04:32 |
| MONDRIAN MASCHINE NR. 1: BILDUNG [Mondrian Machine No. 1: Education], 2018 | 01:55 |
| “DIE RECHTSCHREIBREFORM GEHT MIR NICHT WEIT GENUG” [“The spelling reform did not go far enough for me”], with Peter Berling, 2018 | 18:57 |
| DER PÄDAGOG VON KLOPAU [The pedagogue from Klopau], 1962 | 01:03 |
| WIE BEGINNT MAN EINE REVOLUTION? [How does one start a revolution?], 2017 | 21:36 |
| LEHRERINNEN VON 1920 IN RUSSLAND [Teachers in Russia from 1920], 2018 | 02:08 |
| DEEP LEARNING, 2018 | 04:45 |
| POSTINDUSTRIELLES RHIZOM [Post-industrial rhizome], 2019 | 02:04 |

ISLAND 7

C FOR CIRCUS—R FOR REASON—R FOR REVOLUTION /
“BABYLON, WITHOUT THE TOWER COLLAPSING”

The revolution is a living creature full of surprises. “Reason is a balancing beast.” BALANCE and SURPRISE are among the achievements of all plebeian arts (circus, carnival).

| | |
|---|-------|
| DER ZIRKUS KOMMT IN DIE STADT [The circus is coming to town], 2018 | 04:22 |
| B WIE BABYLON [B for Babylon], 2018 | 04:04 |
| DIE VERNUNFT IST EIN BALANCETIER [Reason is a balancing beast], 2017 | 02:41 |
| VERNUNFT AUS AFRIKA [Reason from Africa], 2016 | 12:44 |
| “WIR PHILOSOPHEN AUS DER RIPPE EVAS” [“We philosophers from Eve’s rib”], 2017 | 02:22 |
| ES GIBT KEIN RICHTIGES LEBEN IM FALSCHEN HASEN / DIE POETISCHE KRAFT DER THEORIE [There is no right life in the wrong hare / The poetic power of theory], 2018 | 04:53 |
| DIE REVOLUTION IST EIN LEBEWESEN VOLLER ÜBERRASCHUNGEN [The revolution is a living creature full of surprises], 2018 | 06:10 |
| EINE OPER, DIE EINE REVOLUTION AUSLÖSTE (LA MUETTE DE PORTICI) [An opera that triggered a revolution (La Muette de Portici)], 2018 | 07:36 |
| ANGRIFF AUF EINE DICKE TÜR AUS GLAS [Attack on a thick door made of glass], 2018 | 01:42 |

INSTALLATIONS

THE MEDIUM IS THE MESSAGE

KADER ATTIA

Video installation, 2019

What the neoliberal economy of our consumer society is nowadays imposing as “The virtual world” is the reality of a technological dependence that is based on an endlessly growing derivative of its markets. The subject has become the object of a virtual capitalist order, within a “mise-en-abyme,” the depth of which is constantly increased by the improvement of data transmission speeds. But the virtual has always existed—be it beliefs in parallel immaterial worlds or shamanist rites and healing. Today we do not only believe in virtuality, we live in it, thanks to the constantly improving ease provided by technology. Mankind is a “social animal” and its sociability has been hijacked by technology and capitalism—virtually uniting people by proxy of a technological device. Opposed to this logic is the need for a real space, allowing for a re-appropriation of mankind’s most fundamental instinct: gregariousness.

LANGUAGE AGENTS

GIULIA BRUNO AND ARMIN LINKE, IN COLLABORATION
WITH LUC STEELS

Installation with videos and prints, 2018

Co-Editing: Giuseppe Ielasi

For over thirty years, the Belgian scientist and artist Luc Steels has been engaged in research into language and Artificial Intelligence. In Steels’s famous “Talking Heads Experiment,” conducted between 1999 and 2001, robots evolved for the first time their own vocabulary in interaction with language games—independently of data-sets generated by human beings. As an evolutionary linguist, a developer of Artificial Intelligence, and a researcher of artificial life, who coined the term “behavior-based robotics,” he now focuses on the ethical issues of technological development. In 2016, Giulia Bruno and Armin Linke began holding a series of interviews and workshops with Steels, and together they viewed extensive research material from his historic video archive. The installation shows materials from Luc Steels’s archive, together with more recent footage.

MULTILINGUALISM AT THE EUROPEAN COURT OF JUSTICE

GIULIA BRUNO AND ARMIN LINKE, IN COLLABORATION
WITH VINCENZO LATRONICO

Video installation with books from the Collection of Jurisprudence of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) in Luxemburg, 2018

Co-Editing and Sound Design: Giuseppe Ielasi

The two highest skyscrapers in the country of Luxemburg are the formal seat of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU). However, they house neither judges nor the offices of their staff, but are home to the translation department of the European Union. Boasting over two thousand employees, who cover any possible combination of the EU's twenty-four official languages, it is the largest institution of its kind worldwide. Multilingualism is defined as a fundamental human right under the Charter of the European Union. Consequently, the EU's translation services represent an integral constituent of the institutional mechanisms of the European Court, and of the rights, freedoms, and constraints applying to citizens and companies. Based on film footage from the CJEU's conference rooms and translation booths, the artists Giulia Bruno and Armin Linke, together with novelist Vincenzo Latronico, examine the political praxis of multilingualism. One installation also follows cases being heard at the Court, each of whose proceedings is published in all the languages of the member states in the form of a book. On view are a selection of languages from the founding members of the EU—Germany and France—together with those from some of the many countries who joined the EU during its expansion phase in the mid-2000s: Bulgaria, Malta, and Poland.

Special thanks to the Court of Justice of the European Union for the valuable help in realizing this project.

LOOMING CREOLE

FILIPA CÉSAR

Drawings, archive material, textiles, video-projection, and books, 2019

HD video, 16 mm, and CGI animation, color, sound, 180 min

Looming Creole convenes various specialities, languages, and a multitude of agencies: contemporary digital imaginaries of neoliberal multinational extractivism as terra nullius upgrade at the West African coast, and the long use of encoding matter as poetics of resistance within colonial occupations. In a variety of different media—from textile to books, from film to drawing—various tessituras and source/resource codes, warping horizontal threads of fabulation from left to right and from right to left, offer a collectively developed score. This loom frames the space for a training camp into the subversive potency of quantum weaving against the engineering of binary extractive epistemologies.

With contributions by Zé Interpretador, Chico Indi, Rampa, Odete Semedo, Harry Sanderson, Jin Mustafa, Jenny Lou Ziegel, Matthias Biber, Filipa César, Joana Barrios, Teresa Montenegro, Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, Marinho de Pina, Muhammed Lamin Jadama, Nelly Yaa Pinkrah, Olivier Marboeuf, Super Camarimba. With a scenography by Lorenzo Sandoval

With the support of Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon; Tabakalera, San Sebastian; Medienboard, Berlin-Brandenburg; Camões Institute / Portuguese Embassy in Berlin; IBAP – Institute for Biodiversity and Protected Areas, Bissau. In collaboration with Cadjigue Collective, VOLTE SLAGEN, and Spectre Productions.

AMAZONIAN FLESH—HOW TO HANG IN TREES DURING STRIKE

KNOWBOTIQ

Fabulations on Cocoons of Idleness
Installation, 2018

Shortly after seizing power, the Chinese Communist Party resolved to rapidly expand the labor force. They called upon the masses to move into the cities to seek work in the newly erected factories. However, the new arrivals—alarmed by the noise of the machines and the agitation of the workforce—made a completely disoriented impression. Consequently, it was decided that for a certain period of time these people should be assigned no other task than that of simply moving freely through the workplace environment in order to acclimatize their bodies to the new conditions. What would happen if the new arrivals in today's global corporations chose not to take up their almost fully automated work—which applies metadata, profiles, and bots to continually control and organize all movements and desires—and to fully abandon themselves to idleness? Could they thus begin to renounce their faith in the religion of wage labor? Would the bots and the Artificial Intelligence within their logistic working environment pledge solidarity with them?

(UN-)LEARNING PLACE

SZENOGRAPHY

RAUMLABOR BERLIN

Installation by Markus Bader and Alexa Szekeres, 2019

In a scenography developed by Raumlabor Berlin in consultation with eight Berlin collectives, an *(Un-)Learning Place* is being staged from January 9 to 13 to mark the launch of *The New Alphabet School*. Inspired by the language of form in the work of Italian designer Ettore Sottsass, the sculptural works of Isamu Noguchi, and Aldo van Eyck's educationally progressive playground architectures of the post-war period, Raumlabor Berlin creates situations in which collective approaches to learning and un-learning can be tested. Workshops by ASSET Production Studio, diffrakt – Zentrum für theoretische Peripherie, Each One Teach One (EOTO) e. V., Fehras Publishing Practices, knowbotiq, Raumlabor Berlin, Tactical Technology Collective, and Telekommunisten propose different approaches and strategies with diverse linguistic classification systems: For example, a lexicographic laboratory examines the language of the art world; a small library reclassifies its collection of black authors—in an attempt to overturn existing categorizations; and a survey of global, natural history collections proposes a new perspective on museum taxonomies that takes account of the extinction of species. As part of the event series *The New Alphabet School*, this architecture will be on view in ever-new guises over the next three years at the HKW.

A LIBRARY OF AUTHORS FROM THE AFRICAN CONTINENT AND AFRICAN DIASPORA

EACH ONE TEACH ONE (EOTO) E. V.

Parts of the library, 2019

From the 1970s onwards, the Afro-German activist Vera Heyer (1949–1995) began amassing a collection of books by black authors. Since March 2014, EOTO, a community-based education and empowerment project in Berlin-Wedding, has been working to fulfill her wish of making her legacy accessible to the public in the form of a library after her death: This reference library contains works by authors of the African continent and the diaspora, and documents black history up to the present day—both within Germany and abroad. The library now holds some seven thousand books, comprising mainly African and African diaspora literature, and includes German, English, and French fiction and non-fiction, in addition to pamphlets and newspapers. Alongside the standard categories, the library boasts sections such as African Literature, American Literature (including North, Central, and South America), together with categories such as Award Winning African Literature, Colonialism and Resistance, Gender Studies, Black People in Communism and Labor Movements, Afrofuturism, Black Panther Party, Contemporary Art, and Literature and History of Black People in Germany.

PROTOTYPE FOR A MUSEUM OF MAN

ASSET PRODUCTION STUDIO

Interactive collage, 2019

How is the cultural program of human exceptionalism (i.e. “anthropo-supremacy”) instantiated in museological scenography, narrative, and display? How do museums of natural history, ethnography, and science and technology reinforce ideas of human exceptionalism? What scenes, sleights, and normalizing gestures subtend this pervasive cultural agenda? And, how is this globalized disposition also “localized” to support various nationalist chauvinisms and forms of white supremacy and hetero-patriarchy? The material collected here is an early and experimental prototype for a *Museum of Man* yet to come, which aims to produce a counter-taxonomy of the technologies of human exceptionalism in museological cultures past and present. The work is a first step toward a more comprehensive and collaborative inquiry into the invention of “Man” and the consequences of his imagined dominion over nature.

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Das Neue Alphabet – Opening Days
is curated by Bernd Scherer in
cooperation with Olga von Schubert.

The *(Un-)Learning Place*
is curated by Boris Buden and
Olga von Schubert.

Project Head “Das Neue Alphabet /
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“Das Neue Alphabet / The New
Alphabet” (2019–2021) is supported
by the Federal Government
Commissioner for Culture and the
Media due to a ruling of the German
Bundestag.

Haus der Kulturen der Welt is a
business division of Kulturveranstal-
tungen des Bundes in Berlin GmbH.

Director: Bernd Scherer
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Supported by



Federal Government Commissioner
for Culture and the Media



Federal Foreign Office

HKW

John-Foster-Dulles-Allee 10
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Thursday, January 10

EXHIBITION
HALL 1

VORTRAGSSAAL

AUDITORIUM

CONFERENCE
ROOM 1

SANDEEP BHAGWATI:
LISTEN
[MIYAGI HAIKUS]

3:00 P.M.–4:30 P.M.
Phase I–
Version with Three
Esembles

4:30 P.M.–5:00 P.M.
Introduction Bernd
Scherer, Olga von
Schubert
and Rüdiger Kruse

FROM ZED TO OMEGA

5:00 P.M.–6:30 P.M.
PANEL 1:
Evolution
in our Hands

FROM ZED TO OMEGA

6:00 P.M.–7:00 P.M.
PANEL 4
Orientation in the
21st Century

FROM ZED TO OMEGA

6:30 P.M.–7:30 P.M.
The Robot
Whisperer

SANDEEP BHAGWATI:
LISTEN
[MIYAGI HAIKUS]

5:30 P.M.–9:00 P.M.
Three
Ensembles
Public Rehearsal

FROM ZED TO OMEGA

7:30 P.M.–9:00 P.M.
PANEL 2
Evolution
& Language

FROM ZED TO OMEGA

7:30 P.M.–9:00 P.M.
PANEL 3
The Letters of
Creation

FROM ZED TO OMEGA

7:30 P.M.–MIDNIGHT
In Omega's
Labyrinth
and visits from
panels 4 and 5

FROM ZED TO OMEGA

9:30 P.M.–11:00 P.M.
PANEL 5
"All Ages Belong to
the Present"

FROM ZED TO OMEGA

9:30 P.M.–11:00 P.M.
PANEL 4
Orientation in the
21st Century

Friday, January 11

EXHIBITION HALL 1

AUDITORIUM

VORTRAGSSAAL

SANDEEP BHAGWATI: LISTEN
[MIYAGI HAIKUS]

11:30 A.M.–1:00 P.M.
Three Ensembles
Public Rehearsal

SANDEEP BHAGWATI: LISTEN
[MIYAGI HAIKUS]

THE DISCRETE CHARM
OF THE ALPHABET

3:00 P.M.–5:30 P.M.
with Yuk Hui, Sybille
Krämer, Giuseppe Longo,
and MEHL

2:30 P.M.–5:00 P.M.
Public Rehearsal

THE THREE TONGUES YOU
SPEAK IN YOUR SLEEP

6:00 P.M.–8:45 P.M.
with Emily Apter, Kader
Attia, Vincenzo Latronico,
Armin Linke & Giulia Bruno,
and Slavs and Tatars

ARCHIVE SUITE

6:00 P.M.–9:00 P.M.
with Paul Feigelfeld,
Karin Harrasser, Britta
Lange, Tom Pauwels,
Eva Reiter, Joseph Vogl,
and Leonardo Waisman

SANDEEP BHAGWATI: LISTEN
[MIYAGI HAIKUS]

9:00 P.M.–11:00 P.M.
Concert Phase II: World
Premiere, with poetry
readings by Christian
Filips, Yang Lian, and
Yoko Tawada

Saturday, January 12

EXHIBITION HALL 1

AUDITORIUM

LOOMING CREOLE

4:00 P.M.–7:00 P.M.
with Joana Barrios, Filipa César,
Marinho de Pina, Muhammed Lamin
Jadama, Diana McCarty, Olivier
Marboeuf, Nelly Yaa Pinkrah, Odete
Semedo, Saliha Pondingo von Medem,
and Mark Waschke

STOP MAKING SENSE

3:00 P.M.–7:30 P.M.
with Giulia Bruno, Kate Crawford,
Simon Denny, Armin Linke, Trevor
Paglen, Felix Stalder, Luc Steels,
and Hito Steyerl

COUNTERING VIRTUAL DISPOSSESSION

8:00 P.M.–11:30 P.M.
with Kader Attia, Ibrahim Boureima,
Tarek El-Ariss, Ivonne González,
Rogelio Lorda, Yucef Merhi, Jorge
Moré Calderon, Éric Sadin, Nicolás
Spinosa, and Zora Snake

COUNTERING VIRTUAL DISPOSSESSION

8:00 P.M., 9:00 P.M., 10:00 P.M., 11:00 P.M.
Kader Attia:
The Medium is the Message
Film Screenings

11.30 P.M.–OPEN END
Maryisonacid
(DJ, African Acid Is The Future)

Sunday, January 13

FOYER

AUDITORIUM

(UN-)LEARNING PLACE

1:30 P.M.–2:30 P.M.
Public Plenum

(UN-)LEARNING PLACE

3:00 P.M.–4 P.M.
knowbotiq: manYdancing the
molecular ornaments
Performance

FROM ZED TO OMEGA
curated by Alexander Kluge

THE DISCRETE CHARM OF THE ALPHABET
curated by Bernd Scherer and Olga von Schubert

ARCHIVE SUITE
curated by Karin Harrasser

THE THREE TONGUES YOU SPEAK IN YOUR SLEEP
curated by Bernd Scherer and Olga von Schubert

Sandeep Bhagwati: LISTEN
[Miyagi Haikus]

STOP MAKING SENSE
curated by Bernd Scherer and Olga von Schubert

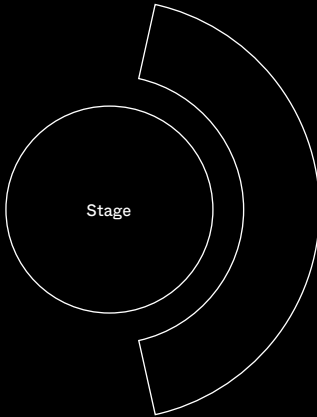
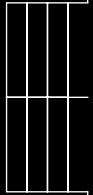
LOOMING CREOLE
curated by Filipa César

COUNTERING VIRTUAL DISPOSSESSION
curated by Kader Attia

(UN-)LEARNING PLACE
curated by Boris Buden and Olga von Schubert

EXHIBITION HALL 1

Giulia Bruno &
Armin Linke



Stage

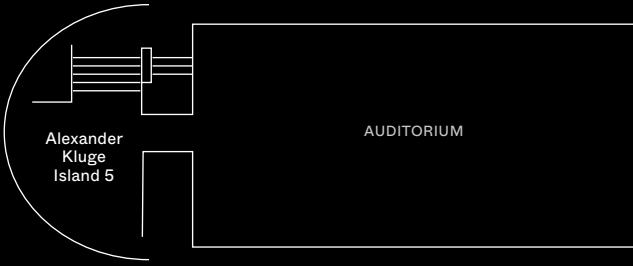
Filipa César et al.



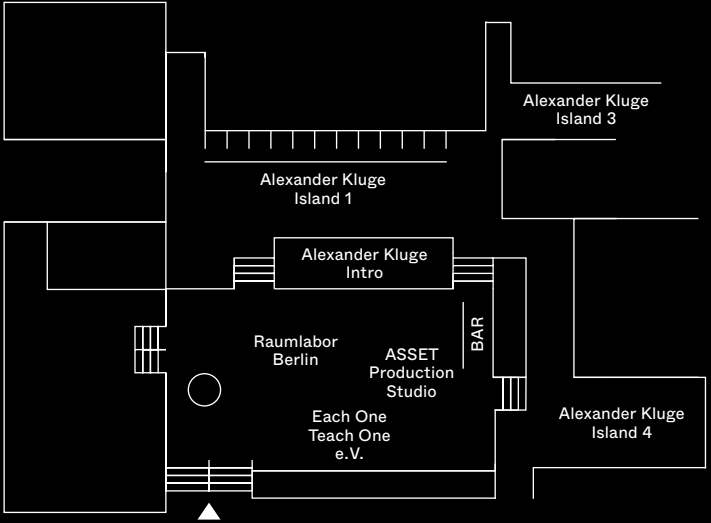
Kader Attia



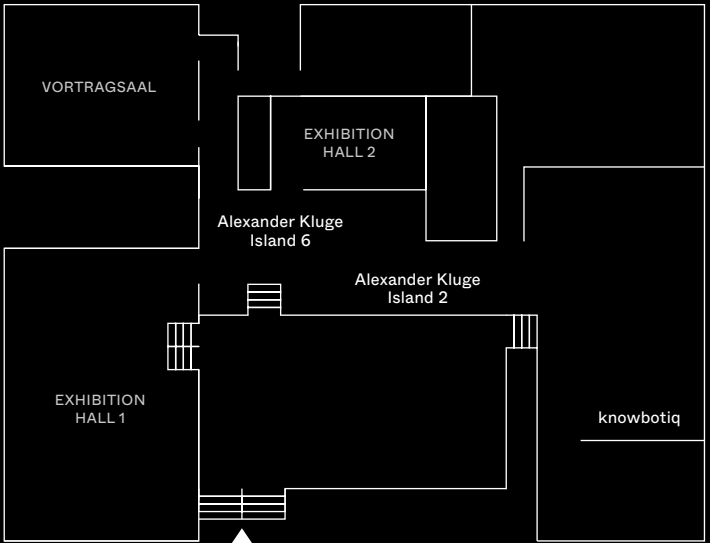
UPPER FLOOR

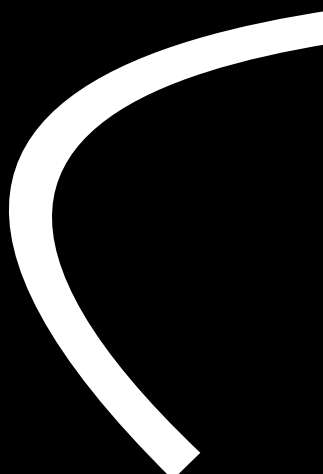


INTERMEDIATE FLOOR



BASEMENT FLOOR





JAN 11–JAN 13, 2019