

2014 MÉDIAS* GRADUATE CONFERENCE
PERMEABILITIES OF THE IMAGE
CALL FOR PAPERS

From Dawkins' theory of memes to Baudrillard's simulacra, many have studied the rapid reproduction of image(s) and its (their) effects on the world. From the stand point of numerous theoreticians and artists, that phenomenon has often been presented and represented as having virus like form, contaminating the quiet world of everyday life, such as *The Matrix* and Cronenberg's *Videodrome*, to name only two of the most influential oeuvres to come out of this phenomena. In a world where digital technologies are everywhere as are the multifold and invasive screens that surround us, circulation, hybridisation and contagion are three key concepts that play fundamental roles in the work and process of artists. The screens are more and more part of our lives, and, on their luminous bodies, new codes are being revealed. Representation or reality ? Image and body influence each other in a mysterious equilibrium. Representation changes our perception of the body ; while democratisation of media lets users modify these norms, thus altering it's reality.

Contagion

Images circulate in a viral manner throughout digital media. But more importantly, our computerised culture stimulates the visual rendering of propagation phenomena in its own right: information clouds, Twitter feed mapping, etc. This information overload does not show us stable bodies and forms which are seen through a fixed medium, instead it focuses on the energies that emerge from and between their « tendencies » and « movements ». Viewed in that optic, video games and other such digital media objects, exemplify this pheno-mena perfectly. How does such an abundance of data (data which is often uninterested in any anthrop-ocentric preoccupations) change the way we perceive our everyday life ? For example, how should we approach and understand experiences like «boundary objects» (Leigh Star) or «furious media» (Galloway) which put social realities in contact with each other ?

Hybridisation

Hybridisation stems from new shared spaces, emerging from the multiplication of interfaces. These new spaces quickly become ludic, playing and interacting with one another. It then becomes possible to regard the systemic object (a video game, for example) as a representation (Grodal). Intermedial convergence challenges and calls into question all categorisation, codes and conventions. Art breaks free from the safe and predictable realm of classical institutions, its territories expanding to the streets and other open and unconventional spaces. Hybridisation is also this crossing between multiple representations, explored by a myriad contemporary digital technologies. This new junction is a special zone where the real and the virtual merge and unite. This fusion causes confusion to the point where we lose sight and track of what is real and what is not.

Circulation

The erratic acceleration of the traffic of images, combined with their ever growing and torrential volume, generate new theories : the notions of actor-network theory (Latour) or that of remediation of the body (Bolter & Grusin), to name only two. The purpose of these is to transform the world of possible experience, help articulate multifarious realities and facilitate the connection between them. From Youtube to Facebook, the representation of the self is crafted in a virtual milieu that is neither private, nor public. New ways of being come into being. The concept of extimacy (Tisseron) and other contemporary theories explore this with great depths. Lastly, the transition from physical to digital in video games and other such media fundamentally changes both their production and marketing, radically reshaping their circuits and community.

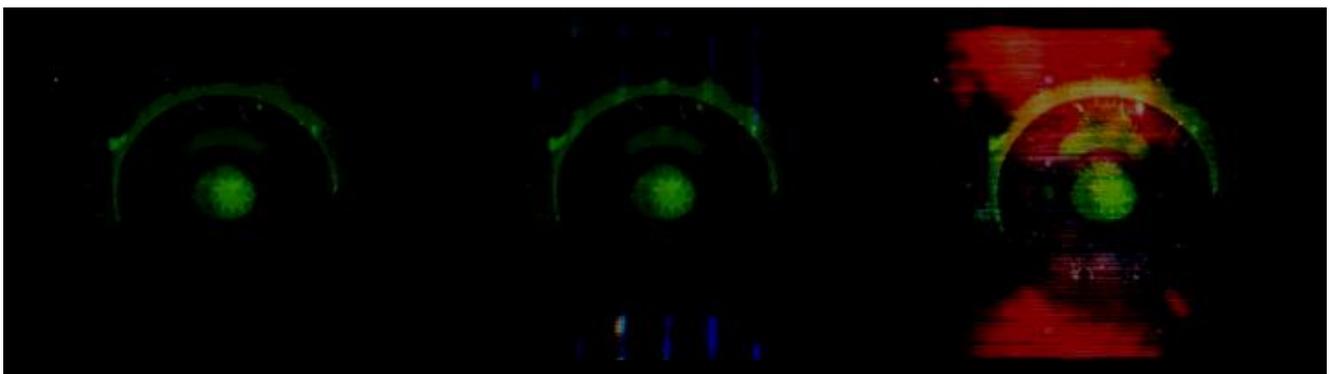


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A few lines of thoughts

- *Fictional representation and the setting-in-play of contagion phenomena.*
- How images of social and political crisis circulating on the web define the limits between regional and worldly concern, private from public matter.
- The imaging of various contagion phenomena concerning public information and scientific data.
- Proliferation and prominence of motifs and signature in visual arts.
- Ideological and religious representations in the public space.
- The influence of historical context within the representation of recurring figures such as superheroes and mythological characters.
- The ever growing power of retroaction (judgment, opinion, evaluation) from multiple fan bases on the production and creation of games and movie, the popularity of crowdfunding (Kickstarter, Steam Greenlight), for example.

Criteria

- **Deadline** : July 14th for reception of propositions.
- Send your suggestions at colloquemedias@gmail.com
- Participants must be registered in an advanced studies program.
- The colloquium is open to all disciplines.
- The proposition must be 300 to 400 words, including the title, and must include a brief bibliography. The proposition must clearly exhibit the problematic and its links with the themes of the conference.
- The proposition must be accompanied by a brief presentation of the participant : Name, university or institution, faculty, discipline of study, academic cycle and e-mail adress.
- The event will take place on september 19th and 20th at the Carrefour des arts et des sciences of the University of Montreal.

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