Theory: How Machines Think, I: Cybernetics (gLV)

History and presence of cybernetics in art and society

Angebot für

Bisheriges Studienmodell > Hochschulweites Lehrangebot > Geöffnete Lehrveranstaltungen
Bisheriges Studienmodell > Fine Arts > Bachelor Fine Arts > Theorie

Nummer und Typ	BKM-BKM-Th.19H.011 / Moduldurchführung
Modul	Theorie
Veranstalter	Departement Fine Arts
Leitung	Felix Stalder
Anzahl Teilnehmende	maximal 11
ECTS	3 Credits
Voraussetzungen	Ability to read theoretical texts and contribute to discussions in English
Zielgruppen	Interested students of other study programmes can contact studium.dkm@zhdk.ch and will be informed at the end of calendar week 36 about a possible participation.
Lernziele / Kompetenzen	Learn about the history and continuing relevance of cybernetics in art and culture. Read and discuss key theoretical texts and artists works.
Inhalte	In the late 1960s, a series of landmark performances, such as Robert Rauschberg's "Open Score" (1966, NYC), exhibitions such as "Cybernetic Serendipity" (1968, London) and books, such as Marshall McLuhan's Understanding Media, marked a turning point in popular culture. Once esoteric notions of "information", "openness", "feedback", and "media" began to reach wide audiences and shaped new ideas about art and artistic processes. Indeed, to understand art as an open-ended process was a direct consequence of cybernetic thinking. Cybernetics as discipline emerged after the second world war, as an attempt to rethink the changing relationships between people, animals, and machines. The latter were no longer perceived as fundamentally different from each other, but as being coupled in "open systems" and interacting with one another through "feedback". "Thinking" and "intelligence" were no longer seen as the exclusive domain of self-conscious human beings, but were redefined as the ability to read and react to the environment. Thus, now also machines could be seen as thinking. While cybernetics as a term fell out of fashion in the 1970s, its basic assumptions and ideas provide much of the common sense of today's techno-social worlds and remains crucial to understanding both artificial intelligence and social media. In this module we want to investigate the origins, transformations and continuing relevance of cybernetics and the productive, yet problematic ways in which it established an equivalence between humans and machines. We will read texts, watch movies and analyze art from the last 50 years. We will discuss all of this as it relates to the experiences of our own daily lifes and our own artistic positions. Felix Stalder is a professor for Digital Culture in the department Art & Media. His work focuses on the intersections of cultural, political and technological dynamics, in particular on new modes of common-based production, control society, copyright and transformation of subjectivity. He not only works as an academic, but

	also as a cultural producer, being a moderator of the mailing list <nettime> and a member of the World Information Institute as well as the Technopolitics Working Group (both in Vienna). Among his recent publications are “Digital Solidarity” (PML & Mute 2014) and “The Digital Condition” (Polity Press, 2018). ? https://fs.zhdk.ch http://felix.openflows.com
Bibliographie / Literatur	Will be handed out at the beginning of the module.
Leistungsnachweis / Testatanforderung	Mandatory attendance (minimum 80%); active participation.
Termine	Time: 09:15 - 17:00 Uhr CW 43 (Monday to Friday): 21 - 25 October
Bewertungsform	bestanden / nicht bestanden
Bemerkung	The module will be held in English.