

Theory: Kunstgeschichte(n): Art & Technology (gLV)

From Bauhaus to Experiments in Art & Technology

The seminar will explore the utopian and progressive, as well as the dystopian strands of the 20th century technology discourse in art with special focus on its effect on performance art and new avant-garde experimentation. We will investigate the expansive potential of new technology for art production, as well as its critical limitations and implications.

Angebot für

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

Nummer und Typ BFA-BFA-Th.20F.011 / Moduldurchführung

Modul Theorie

Veranstalter Departement Fine Arts

Leitung Anke Kempkes

Anzahl Teilnehmende maximal 16

ECTS 3 Credits

Voraussetzungen Course language: English

Zielgruppen Open for exchange students.

Interested students of other study programmes can contact studium.dkm@zhdk.ch and will be informed at the end of calendar week 06 about a possible participation.

Lernziele /
Kompetenzen 20th Century Avant-Garde History: Art and Technology Discourse

Inhalte The early 20th century avant-garde induced an 'aesthetic upheaval' in the ideas of technology and art, inspired and dynamized by the forces of modern industrialization and urbanization, and the destructive machinery of World War I. From the Futurists to the Russian Constructivists, from the Surrealist machines of Duchamp and Picabia to the functionalism of the Bauhaus, a "New Vision" - the utopian thinking about technology, art and the new human - was on the rise. Bauhaus pioneer Laszlo Moholy-Nagy was one of the most ardent advocates of a visual technology embracing an art that could—like city lights, X-rays, and telephony—radically reconfigure our sensory experience of the world. Former engineer Man Ray's airbrush painting showing a set of wheels that cannot turn in "Dancer/Danger (L'Impossible)", 1920, contrasted the "uninspired rationality" of the zeitgeist that surrounded him with an existentially dramatized dysfunctionality: "Three cogwheels locked together is a mechanical atrocity". This work also points at the intense relation between dance performance and the new technology centrism of the 20th avant-garde that was further explored in the 1960s which saw a next wave of a new technology embraced by artists. Pontus Hulten's seminal 1969 MoMA exhibition "The Machine as Seen at the End of the Mechanical Age" marked this shift. The exhibition was two-fold with one part relating to the prewar avant-garde and the second focusing on the neo-avant-garde scene with particular focus on the New York organization "Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.)". Founded in 1966 by Robert Rauschenberg, Robert Whitman and Swedish "artist engineer" Billy Klüver, E.A.T. facilitated for artists to collaborate with the engineers of the New Jersey Bell Laboratories think tank to experiment with the newest technologies, such as early computer art, laser, electronic sound technology, and robotics. In the same year E.A.T. held the legendary "9 Evenings:

Theatre and Engineering" at the 69th Regiment Armory. "9 Evenings" was the first large-scale collaboration between artists, engineers and scientists developing many 'firsts' of technological innovations. The artists that participated were among the brightest of the Manhattan dance, performance, music, poetry and experimental art scene: John Cage, Lucinda Childs, Öyvind Fahlström, Alex Hay, Deborah Hay, Steve Paxton, Yvonne Rainer, Robert Rauschenberg, David Tudor, and Robert Whitman.

For the Expo '70 in Osaka E.A.T. created the collaborative 'Gesamtkunstwerk' for the Pepsi Pavilion which marked the last focal point of the organization. The Buckminster Fuller-esque pavilion was produced by the Pepsi company. This first joint venture with commercial industry created instant conflict for the E.A.T. members who in reaction clouded the dome with the fog installation "Fog Sculpture" by Japanese E.A.T. collaborator Fujiko Nakaya.

Anke Kempkes (*1968) is an international curator, scholar and art critic currently based in Warsaw. Since her studies at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London in 1991/2 she has contributed to international art publications, magazines and conferences. In 2004 she held the position of Chief Curator at Kunsthalle Basel, Switzerland where she curated the exhibition "Flesh at War with Enigma". From 2005-17 she ran an independent curatorial space, research centre and gallery in New York. The program focused on the reintroduction of female avant-garde artists and on New York's experimental music and performance art of the 1960s and 70s. She represented in this context the archive of "Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.)" and David Tudor & Composers Inside Electronics (CIE)'s sound art installation pioneer "Rainforest". In 2010 she became Curator of the Estate of Swiss-born Polish-Jewish Bauhaus artist Xanti Schawinsky. Since 2017 Anke Kempkes is an independent curator of exhibitions in Europe with focus on 'Female (Post)Minimal Art', Queer Theatre and Performance Art.

Bibliographie / Literatur

"The Machine as Seen at the End of the Mechanical Age", curated by Pontus Hulten, MoMA, New York, 1969 (cat.)

"E.A.T.: Experiments in Arts and Technology",

by Kathy Battista (Author), Simone Forti (Author), Billy Klüver (Author), Michelle Kuo (Author), Catherine Morris (Author), Zabet Patterson (Author), John Tain (Author), Sabine Breit (Author), Sabine Breitwieser (Editor), Walther Koenig Verlag, 2016
„Pavilion: Experiments in Art And Technology“, by Billy Klüver (Editor), Julie Martin (Editor), Barbara Rose (Editor), A Dutton Paperback – 1972

Leistungsnachweis / Testatanforderung

Mandatory attendance (minimum 80%); active participation

Termine

Time: 09:15 - 17:00 o'clock

CW 17: 20 / 21 / 22 / 23 / 24 April

Bewertungsform

bestanden / nicht bestanden