

Events

Remediating Distances Presentation of IMG Journal 3/2020

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IMG Journal (<https://img-journal.unibo.it>) is an emerging scientific journal part of the network of IMG initiatives (<http://www.img-network.it/img-conference/>) (accessed 2021, May 14),—inaugurated by the first international conference held in 2017 at the University Campus in Bresanone. It represents a meeting point and an interdisciplinary academic exchange aimed to explore and discuss, from different points of view, the intersectional space between *images*, *imagery* and *imagination*. The six-monthly open-access scientific journal, born from the joint initiative of Alessandro Luigini, professor of Drawing at the Faculty of Education Sciences of the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, editor-in-chief, together with Chiara Panciroli, professor at the Department of Education Sciences of the University of Bologna in the field of General Education and Educational Technologies, has recently closed the call for the fifth issue: *Imaging peripheries*.

The seminar organized online on 18 February 2021 was the occasion to officially present IMG Journal starting with the third issue: *Remediating Distances*, released on 31 October 2020. A “dense” volume—more than five hundred pages, although it is a digital format—composed, in addition to the editorial and the final *Composite* section, of 23 wide-ranging essays. The two editors, Matteo Treleani,

professor at the Université Côte d’Azur, EUR CREATES Arts et Humanité, Sic. Lab and Francesco Zucconi, currently researcher at the Department of Architecture and Arts of the IUAV in Venice, associate member of the Centre d’Histoire et de Théorie des Arts, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris and formerly a Lauro de Bosis Fellow at Harvard, have, in fact, been able to give the topic an international perspective by offering an articulate and choral overview at the same time. The contributions include those by Emanuele Arielli, Kris Belden-Adams, Iain Chambers, Marianna Charitonidou, Francesco Casetti, Pietro Montani, Olga Moskatova, Nicola Perugini, Karen Pinkus, Paola Puma, to name but a few of those cited in the debate. The theme of *Remediation of distances* seemed more topical than ever, in a time still suspended between emergency and *new normality*. In that space, mediation and media are the scenarios and, at the same time, the means of our daily interactions. Technology has been the place where the dichotomies of distance/closeness, mediation/proximity have been theorized and explored. The place, not of interconnected remote points, but instead of constructing and setting up environments and media configurations that made us experience with our senses—

separate bodies, synchronized minds as Bruno Bachimont puts it—the “*not here and now*” of co-presence practices.

Whether it be images (Luca Acquarelli) or migrations between the shores of the Mediterranean (Iain Chambers), proximity and distance become the structural and paradigmatic elements, the keys to ontological interpretations, of contemporaneity. The spatial dimension corresponds to the emotional, relational and social dimension experienced in co-presence—‘isolated together’ as underlined by Pauline Chevalier—or in the alienating encounter mediated by *virtuality*—the Pietro Conte’s ‘reuniting’ concept. In the transversality of the topic proposed by the curators, themes emerge like conceptual interpretations which are aggregated and recomposed around recurring keywords, such as images, death and mourning, bodies, digital (virtual) technologies. The presentation also focuses on hitherto implicit and, perhaps, intentionally ignored aspects, with respect to the relationship between connection infrastructures, tools, access and practices, digital processes, in other words, the ‘digital divide’ as a measure of social imbalances, which, especially in the case of distance learning, have become dramatically visible.

The February event, coordinated by Alessandro Luigini and Chiara Panciroli, was divided into several moments, start-

ing with institutional greetings sent by Maurizio Fabbri, Director of the Department of Educational Sciences 'Giovanni Maria Bertin' of the University of Bologna, with which the magazine has strong links, also in editorial terms. The speech of Rossella Salerno, Vice-President of UID-Unione Italiana per il Disegno (Italian Union for Drawing)—in confirming the close collaboration between IMG and the scientific society—underlined the tangency between the theme of the 3/2020 issue and that of the 42nd International Conference of Teachers of the Disciplines of Representation *Connettere. Un disegno per annodare e tessere (Connecting. Drawing for weaving relationships)*, where *distance* and *technology* will be two of three leitmotifs of discussion and debate.

The second moment saw the two editors-in-chief officially presenting the IMG Journal, born in 2019 as a meeting point between different perspectives and converging interests on *visuality*, with a strong vocation for interdisciplinarity and as a choral and collective work, as far as the activities of the editorial board are concerned. The theme of the third issue, introduced by the two curators, is, in fact, an overview of the voices that are transversally animating the scientific community and practice in the various areas ranging from design to pedagogy, from psychology to media studies, from historical research to project culture.

The debate was opened and animated as discussant by the member of the Scientific Committee Alessandra Cirafici, professor at the University of Campania 'Luigi Vanvitelli' and Pier Giuseppe Rossi, member of the Scientific Committee Pier Giuseppe Rossi, professor at the Department of Education, Cultural Heritage

and Tourism Sciences at the University of Macerata, who contributed to bring the topic into sharper focus.

In the multi-voice debate, which also involved some of the authors—including Pietro Conte, researcher in Aesthetics at the Department of Philosophy and Cultural Heritage of the University Ca' Foscari of Venice and Luca Acquarelli of the University of Lille—some reflections emerged above all on the relationship between 'representing' as a process of image construction and 'visuality', as a form of visual action—as also recalled by Calvino in his fourth *American Lecture*—but also as the primacy of Western *ocularità* and the fixity of the point of view. The latter has now been undermined by the digital revolution. The relationship between vision, perception, (co)presence or 'elsewhere'—also in terms of time—becomes a central issue, when the point of view is replaced by a mediating tool, i.e. by the simulative and immersive possibilities of Virtual Reality (VR), hybrid or Augmented Reality (AR). What was previously a territory become then a 'border' in which the body itself from mediator becomes mediated. The perceptive analogies generated by technology clash, however, with the experience of a dislocated space, on the one hand, and with the fragmentation of temporality, on the other. An 'exhausted' space in which everything possible seems to run out or in which the rhetorical polarities of virtuality are questioned.

Remediating Distances thus offers a 'fresco' in progress of contemporaneity and an articulate and critical mapping of the underlying dynamics that are materializing in our *new normality*.

The seminar was also an opportunity to present the third edition of the biennial



Fig. 1. Cover of issue No. 3/2020 of IMG journal.

international IMG Conference, which—after those in Bressanone in 2017 and Alghero in 2019—will be held on 25-26 November in Milan. Daniele Villa, professor of Drawing at the DASTU of the Politecnico di Milano and Franca Zuccoli, professor of Special Didactics and Pedagogy at the Department of Human Sciences for Education 'Riccardo Massa' of the University of Milano-Bicocca, coordinators of the event, recalled how the title of the conference—*Image Learning*—stems from the desire to culturally and scientifically hybridize the fields of *visuality*, so that learning from/with images ultimately leads us back to the relationship of *re-mediation* between the subject and space.

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