

Events

IMG2021 Image Learning 3rd International and Interdisciplinary Conference on Image and Imagination

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The III Convegno Internazionale e Interdisciplinare su Immagini e Immaginazione/3rd International and Interdisciplinary Conference on Image and Imagination, *IMG2021 Image Learning*, was held in the presence, on 25 and 26 November at the Politecnico of Milan. This edition of the traveling conference, coordinated by Daniele Villa and Franca Zuccoli, involved the Department of Architecture and Urban Studies (DA-StU) of the Politecnico of Milan and the Department of Human Sciences for Education of the Bicocca University of Milan, confirming the main objective of the IMG network, that is promote transdisciplinary reflection on the macro-themes proposed.

The call included fifteen keywords that identify generic research topics with the aim of involving large and diversified disciplinary fields. During the two intense days of work, on the theme of the image as a means of teaching and learning, about seventy groups of scholars met. In the twenty-four sessions, three of which exclusively in English, coordinated by as many chairs, groups of scholars belonging, among others, to the disciplines of drawing, history of art, human sciences, social sciences, sciences exhibited their research. *Image Learning* is the link that exists between imagination and forms of

expression in the real world, a multi-form and multidisciplinary territory, and the research presented has revealed that “paradigm of complexity” that Franca Zuccoli expresses in the opening speech and which reveals the gaze of different cultural worlds on common themes.

The international speakers presented research and experiments whose common synthesis leads to the projection of a future in which the visual perception

of reality, transformed into images, is projected towards new digital creativity, both as a purely technical analysis, and as combinations of existing alternatives. The conference is kicked off by Willian Kentridge, Bronwyn Lace and Phala Ookeditse extraordinary performance. A duet of harmonious and synchronized exchanges between the Rogers room, where Bronwyn Lace is present, and the Johannesburg studio in which Willian Kentridge and Phala Ookeditse

Fig. 1. Flyer of the conference.



alternate in rhythmic cadences. It retraces the process of a creative project in which different people, coming from different cultural backgrounds, collaborate in the production of a common image. The *Less Good Idea* is an experimental, collaborative and interdisciplinary project, a physical and immaterial space that manifests itself in the staging, in the representation of an idea that is transformed into a common image. The animation is made concrete by the energy of space, the power of music and the modulation of the human voice. Physical performance becomes the created image, illusion and metaphor of the real world. *The Less Good Idea* is also a free thought of natural acts and moving images, of mixing of senses and actions for the creation of images. Immaterial experiences and self-production of coordinated images in sequences that emulate episodes of everyday life. The afternoon session is introduced by Maria Nadotti who invites you to 'learn to unlearn'; unlearning from clichés, banalities. With erudite narratives, she 'transport' important figures of international literature towards the construction of unprecedented imaginations. On the

screen scroll the author's portraits of the 'eight figures' (John Berger, Susan Sontag, Ryszard Kapuściński, Grace Paley, Svetlana, Aleksieciê, Toni Morrison, Bayo Akomolafe, Donna Haraway) that Maria Nadotti has chosen to connect words that they carry stories, which intertwine, overlap, mix and change into images that carry other stories, other images.

The second day is opened by Stefano Moriggi who introduces Lev Manovich, scholar of cognitive sciences and visual arts, Presidential Professor at the Graduate Center in New York (CUNY) and director of the Cultural Analytics Lab.

Lev Manovich, for some decades, has introduced the concept of 'new media object' within which human-computer interfaces fall and the multimedia language expresses the vision of the world of contemporary society.

Manovich illustrates his research based on a specific question: a single image can be a source of knowledge; but what can we learn from a billion images? When these are contained inside a 'machine' automatically and without supervision?

Manovich's research contemplates models of cultural analysis in which the set

of millions of images in a combination of existing alternatives lead to new forms of knowledge capable of increasing human cognitive and visual culture.

Daniele Villa introduced the conference by quoting Gotard: "*Ce n'est pas une image juste, c'est juste una image*" and at the request of a brief final consideration he expressed the following: "This third edition of the conference was a great opportunity to push the scientific approach of our academic network towards further experimentation. We were born around the idea of overcoming disciplinary barriers to rethink the role of images in the contemporary construction of knowledge: what better opportunity than joint work with colleagues from the Bicocca University. With *Image Learning*, the issues of training and visual thinking have been investigated in a constant effort to de-compartmentalize knowledge and I believe that the quality and quantity of the interventions demonstrates how these ideas are increasingly arousing the interest of the academic world and research".

The purpose "of making disciplines dialogue" therefore has been accomplished.

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