

**Curating & Editing
Between Museums and Media. Gestures of Image Knowledge**

Programme

VENDREDI 24/10

Luxembourg Learning Center - University Library (Belval)

Valérie Schafer (Histoire/Médias, Université du Luxembourg) présente :

- 9h00 **Erkki Huhtamo** (Media history/Visual studies, University of California, Los Angeles) *Media Archaeology as Topos Study, or Topos Archaeology: An Approach to Exploring Media Cultural Heritage*
- 9h30 discussion
- 9h50 **Ruggero Eugeni & Elisabetta Modena** (Visual Studies & Art History, Università Cattolica & IULM Milano) *Filterarts. Notes on Exhibition Displays and Filtering Theory*
- 10h20 discussion
- 10h40 Pause

Jean Lassègue (Philosophy/AI, EHESS Paris) presents:

- 10h50 **Enzo d'Armenio** (Sémiotique/Médias, Université de Lorraine) *Commissariat et montage d'archives personnelles : l'IA comme outil de figuration de l'imagination de soi*
- 11h20 discussion
- 11h40 **Aldo Gangemi** (Cognitive Science/Informatics/Cultural Heritage, Università di Bologna) *Neurosymbolic Tacit Knowledge Extraction: Human-centered Simulations*
- 12h10 discussion
- 12h30 **Pierluigi Basso Fossali** (Sémiotique/Université de Bologne) : mot de conclusion
- Buffet

Abstracts & Biographies

Media Archaeology as Topos Study, or Topos Archaeology: An Approach to Exploring Media Cultural Heritage

For over thirty years the presenter has applied the term *topos* (*locus communis*) to analyzing the gradual becoming of media culture. A topos is a formula that keeps migrating within culture, gaining new meanings and interpretations in the contexts where it is activated. Topoi are discursive textual or visual elements, but they need material carriers or “transporters” to manifest themselves and move from one context to another. Some of the scholars who have influenced the approach are Ernst Robert Curtius, Aby Warburg, Ernst Cassirer, and Roger Chartier. After working for over a decade, the presenter has finished a huge monograph, which will be published by The MIT Press in 2026. Titled *Fairy Engine: Media Archaeology as Topos Study*, it presents the theoretical foundations of the approach and demonstrates what it can be used for through numerous case studies. This richly illustrated presentation forms a kind of preview of the book. The example selected for closer demonstration is the topos “finger pointing at you,” which will be excavated and illuminated from numerous disciplinary perspectives.

Erkki Huhtamo is Professor of Design Media Arts and Film, Television, and Digital Media at University of California Los Angeles (UCLA). He is a world renowned pioneering media archaeologist, whose numerous writings have been published in 11 languages. These works include the first monograph on media archaeology in the Japanese language (2015), used widely at universities in Japan. Huhtamo edited with Jussi Parikka *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications* (University of California Press, 2011), which has become a standard reference to media archaeology. His most important book to date is the large monograph *Illusions in Motion: Media Archaeology of The Moving Panorama and Related Spectacles* (The MIT Press, 2013), which is considered a modern classic. Beside *Fairy Engine: Media Archaeology as Topos Study* (The MIT Press, forthcoming 2026), Huhtamo’s books on “Screenology, or Media Archaeology of the Screen” and “Mechanics, Marionettes, and Media,” a book on mechanical theaters and their history, are at advance stages of preparation. Huhtamo has also curated numerous exhibitions and directed television programs.

Filterarts.

Notes on Exhibition Displays and Filtering Theory

The algorithmic technological revolution has contributed to the multiplication of forms of mediation between the works of art and their viewers. Traditional modes of thematic contextualization, such as exhibitions, as well as established communication strategies, including captions and brochures, are now complemented by a variety of interpretive proposals based on digital technologies that can be produced by the institution or freely added by visitors within the exhibition space. The presentation proposes considering the exhibition display as a system for filtering the work of art experience, poised between excessive rarefaction that renders it incapable of communication and a thickening of the filters that risks masking and obscuring it. In particular, the intervention will identify three major filtering dispositives, which we will call “learning”, “correlation”, and “substitution”. For each of these dispositives, the intervention proposes and analyses some concrete cases.

Elisabetta Modena, PhD, is a tenure-track researcher in contemporary art history at IULM University in Milan (Italy). Her research interests lie at the intersection of visual arts, media theory and history, exhibition display theory and history, as well as digital and video game culture. In recent years, her work has focused on the relationship between art and virtual reality, the cultural applications of this immersive technology, and the concept of “immersiveness” as a defining motif of contemporary culture. Since 2012, alongside these studies, she has conducted extensive research on unrealised art projects. Together with Marco Scotti, she co-founded MoRE. Museum of Refused and Unrealised Art Projects (www.moremuseum.org), a digital museum and archive dedicated to unrealised contemporary art projects from the 20th and 21st centuries. Modena has held research positions at the University of Pavia (2023-24) and was a postdoctoral fellow at the Department of Philosophy “Piero Martinetti” at the University of Milan (2020-23). She was also a research fellow at the CSAC - Center for Studies and Archives of Communication at the University of Parma (2017-18). She is the author of several monographs, including: *Nelle storie. Arte, cinema e media immersivi* (Carocci, Rome

2022), *Immersioni. La realtà virtuale nelle mani degli artisti* (Johan & Levi, Milan 2023), and *Display. Luoghi Dispositivi Gesti* (Einaudi, Turin 2024).

Ruggero Eugeni is a Full Professor of Media Semiotics at Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan, where he also serves as Head of the Department of Communication and Performing Arts. He has held visiting professorships at Université Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris 3, Sorbonne Université – Paris 4, and Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main. Among his most recent works: *Semiotica dei media. Le forme dell'esperienza* (*Media semiotics. Forms of Experience*, Rome, 2010); *Neurofilmology. Audiovisual Studies and the Challenge of Neurosciences* (edited with Adriano d'Aloia, Milano 2014); *La condizione postmediale* (*The Postmedia Condition*, Brescia, 2015); *#Intelligence*, Special Section of *Necsus. European Journal of Media Studies*, (edited with Patricia Pisters, Spring 2020); *Algorithmic Images. Postmedia dispositives and the new political economy of light* (Amsterdam University Press, forthcoming). Further information about his research and academic contributions can be found on his website: [Media | Experience | Semiotics](#).

Commissariat et montage d'archives personnelles : l'IA comme outil de figuration de l'imagination de soi

Cette intervention propose une utilisation alternative des procédures de commissariat et de montage, propres au travail d'exposition dans les musées, en les réorientant comme outils de narration personnelle assistée par l'IA générative. Le postulat de départ est que les IA génératives (ChatGPT, Midjourney, Runway), plutôt que d'être conçues comme des substituts qui menacent le travail humain, peuvent au contraire être envisagées comme des outils collaboratifs permettant de traduire l'imagination en figures. La littérature sémiotique et esthétique a déjà formalisé certaines différences entre l'image « interne » et les figures inscrites sur un support : si la première relève d'une faculté esthétique-cognitive — étant privée, positivement indéterminée et perpétuellement active dans la perception, le souvenir et l'imagination — les secondes sont stabilisées, intersubjectives, dotées d'une composition et reliées à une tradition ou à une culture visuelle. Mon hypothèse est que la production d'images à l'aide de l'IA générative permet d'explorer et d'opérationnaliser l'écart entre imagination et figuration. En s'inspirant du modèle des expositions biographiques ou monographiques au musée, cette intervention entend présenter les fondements théoriques d'un usage patrimonial et thérapeutique des procédures de curatelle (au sens du commissariat d'exposition) et de montage assistées par l'IA. Elle s'intéresse en particulier au potentiel de ces pratiques dans des contextes non strictement artistiques, comme celui de la mémoire autobiographique à un âge avancé. En effet, la génération d'images par l'IA peut servir à configurer en images des souvenirs dépourvus de témoignages iconiques, offrant ainsi aux individus l'opportunité de raconter, reconstruire et partager des moments significatifs de leur vie. Dans cette perspective, il ne s'agit pas de produire un résultat esthétique satisfaisant, mais bien d'activer un processus narratif et affectif, d'édifier et d'explorer un *atlas* personnel, et de configurer une manière de penser avec les images.

Enzo D'Armenio is a semiotician and works as a junior professor at the University of Lorraine. He has previously carried out three post-doctoral projects at the University of Liège, including the Marie Curie (Individual Fellowship) project *IMACTIS – Fostering Critical Identities Through Social Media Archival Images* (www.imactis.eu), which focused on identity-related images on digital social networks. His recent research studies, published in international journals such as *Visual Communication*, *Semiotica*, and *Games and Culture*, focus on generative AI and the semiotic study of identities. He is also the author of the monograph *Mondi paralleli. Ripensare l'interattività nei videogiochi* (Unicopli, 2014).

Neurosymbolic Tacit Knowledge Extraction: Human-centered Simulations

I will introduce implemented Neurosymbolic AI methods (Logic-Augmented Generation, Polanyi Implicit Knowledge Extraction) as an operational platform to control Generative AI models in humanistic research. Methods for designing grounded world models and using them to condition Generative AI will be exemplified and discussed, with respect to perspectival pluralism and vertical domains including cultural heritage, experimental cognitive science, creativity, and architecture.

Aldo Gangemi is Full Professor at the Department of Philosophy of University of Bologna, where he coordinates the HumanisticAI branch of [AlmaAI](#) (Alma Mater Institute for Human-centred Artificial Intelligence). He is Associate Researcher (Director from 2019 to 2023) at [ISTC-CNR](#) the Institute of Cognitive Sciences and Technologies of the Italian National Research Council. He co-founded ISTC's [Semantic Technology Lab](#) in 2008, a key group in hybrid knowledge engineering and semantic tech. His research focuses on Neurosymbolic Artificial Intelligence as an integration of methods from Knowledge Representation and Reasoning, Machine Learning, and Cognitive Science. Recent research concentrates upon the representation, discovery and reasoning on knowledge patterns across data, ontologies, natural language and cognition, using neurosymbolic methods for extraction and automated reasoning on knowledge graphs. Applications domains include: Cultural Heritage, Public Administration, Medicine, Law, Industry, eGovernment, Agriculture and Fishery, eLearning. He is Editor or EB member of international journals (Semantic Web, Web Semantics, Applied Ontology), and has been Conference Chair for LREC2006, EKAW2008, WWW2015 and ESWC2018. He has published more than 300 papers in international peer-reviewed journals, conferences and books.