ICONO|GRAPHY: INTERACTIONS OF IMAGE AND TEXT

Fall term 2023/24 | Tuesdays 15:40-17:20 | Credits: 2.0 | Visual Theory and Practice: mandatory elective | History: elective

Instructor: Ulrich Meurer

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The instructor will be available for individual questions/discussions immediately after every class. You can also book additional OFFICE HOURS via email.

Access to all readings, videos, web-resources via e-learning platform MOODLE:

https://ceulearning.ceu.edu/login/index.php

Link for selecting a date/topic for your PRESENTATION (*see also below: section on 'assignments'*):

https://nuudel.digitalcourage.de/j8HK17Z2cTYTZVVT

Link for participation via ZOOM (*only from other countries, in case of visa/residency issues*) :

https://ceu-edu.zoom.us/j/92530019052?pwd=RktsVDJUZVdsb1lrOVNwYklscDYvUT09

Meeting-ID: 925 3001 9052 / Passcode: 668795

Find a trailer video for the course here:

https://vimeo.com/722627347

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Baroque allegory and urban graffiti, scientific illustration and captioned press photo, music video and typographic film, ancient pictogram and digital hypertext … the intersections of image and writing are numberless. The course will explore this heterogeneous field of cultural practices and media techniques by focusing on selected instances of 'textual imagery' or 'pictorial script' from prehistory to contemporary software.

On the one hand, it addresses the genealogy of mechanic, photographic, electronic, and digital devices (stone tablet, typewriter, video, computer code …) as a series of material operators that pass on immaterial information and cultural knowledge in ever-changing *icono/graphic* forms. On the other hand, the course links this techno-history of image and letter to wider theoretical reflections on the two modes of representation. We will discuss their philosophical foundations, their conceptual contact zones, and their impact on cultural discourses with reference to semiotics, post/structuralism, media archaeology and the history of science & knowledge.

Finally – and apart from analyzing how the dynamic rel(oc)ations of image and letter are inevitably entangled in issues of politics, power, gender, memory and identity – the course will deepen the students' awareness of their own media reception and output, including their use of academic text and image sources.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students will be introduced to a variety of ▶ IMAGE-TEXT-RELATIONS, especially with respect to their use in historical, cultural, social, and political contexts. They will ▶ establish connections between specific MEDIA TECHNOLOGIES AND THEORETICAL CONCEPTS. The discussion of texts, images, and web-resources will contribute to their ▶ ABILITY TO EVALUATE DISCURSIVE AS WELL AS VISUAL ARGUMENTS in a structured and critical manner. The participants will train their ▶ SKILLS OF SYNTHESIS AND COMMUNICATION through discussion, in-class presentations and written papers. They will have the opportunity to ▶ APPLY THEIR PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE in the form of audio/visual research works.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE + READINGS:

▶ PARTICIPANTS PREPARE MANDATORY READINGS, VIDEOS AND WEB-RESOURCES (PRINTED IN BLACK IN THE LIST BELOW) PRIOR TO THE RESPECTIVE CLASS.

▷ GREY FONT INDICATES OPTIONAL READINGS AND MATERIAL: IT SERVES AS ADDITIONAL BASIS FOR STUDENT PRESENTATIONS, FURTHER EXPLORATIONS OF THE TOPIC, AND AS INSPIRATION FOR THE FINAL COURSE WORKS.

01 19.09.	Intro: Icons & Symbols [+ DISCUSSION OF COURSE SUBJECT / SCHEDULE / ASSIGNMENTS …] ▶ Alex Gopher: *The Child* (Music Video / Antoine Bardou-Jacquet, 1999): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=URbFjz4hWMY  ▶ Charles Sanders Peirce: "The Icon, Index, and Symbol", in: *Collected Papers* Vol. 2, Book 2, Ch. 3, Membra Ficte Disjecta: electronic edition, n. p. ▷ Arthur W. Burks: "Icon, Index, and Symbol", in: *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 9/4 (1949), 673-689. ▷ Jørgen Dines Johansen, Svend Erik Larsen: *Signs in Use: An Introduction to Semiotics*. London, New York: Routledge 2002, 31-44.
writing/imaging HISTORIES	
02 26.09.	Inventing Writing ▶ Vilém Flusser: "Inscriptions", "Notation", "Letters of the Alphabet", in: *Does Writing Have a Future?* Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press 2011, 11-35.  ▶ Marshall McLuhan: "The Written Word: An Eye for an Ear", in: *Understanding Media. The Extensions of Man*. London, New York: Routledge 2002, 89-96. ▷ Claude Lévi-Strauss: "Writing Lesson" in: *Tristes Tropiques*. New York: Criterion 1961, 286-297; *esp. 288-293*. ▷ Claude Lévi-Strauss: "The Birth of Historical Societies" (Audio), Charles M. and Martha Hitchcock Lecture, University of California, Berkeley (September 24, 1984): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2hzHdPm5-rQ
03 03.10.	Drawing Truth # THE MIDDLE AGES / VICTORIANISM / MODERNISM ▶ Wolfgang Scheppe: *Done.Book: Picturing the City of Society – An Inquiry into the Depth of Visual Archives*. Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz 2010, 8; 26-42; exemplary plates.

▶ Wolfgang Scheppe (curator), Andrea Buran (web design): *Done.Book*: Website of the Installation at the *Biennale*, Venice 2010:
https://arsenale.com/done-book/

ARCHIVE

On Notebooks:

▷ Vera John-Steiner: *Notebooks of the Mind: Explorations of Thinking*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press 1997, 83-139.
▷ Michael Taussig: *I Swear I Saw This: Drawings in Fieldwork Notebooks, Namely My Own*. Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press 2011, xi-xii; 11-20.

On John Ruskin:

▷ Stephen Kite: "'Examining the knots ... counting the bricks': John Ruskin's innocent eye", in: Gerald Adler, Timothy Brittain-Catlin, Gordana Fontana-Giusti (eds): *Scale, Imagination, Perception and Practice in Architecture*, London, New York: Routledge 2011, 45-53.

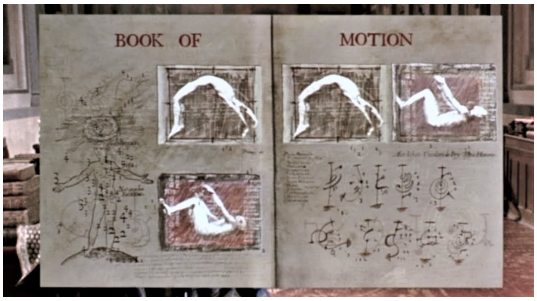
04

10.10.

Filming Allegories

RENAISSANCE / BAROQUE / POSTMODERNISM

▶ *Prospero's Books* (Peter Greenaway 1991):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rp6ZYCSiPhA [Trailer // Full movie is available via MOODLE]



▶ James Tweedie: "Caliban's Books: The Hybrid Text in Peter Greenaway's *Prospero's Books*", in: *Cinema Journal* 40/1 (Fall 2000), 104-126.
▶ Bridget Elliott, Anthony Purdy: "For the Sake of the Corpse: Baroque Perspectives", in: *Peter Greenaway: Architecture and Allegory*. Chichester: Academy Editions 1997, 8-26.

▷ Paula Willoquet-Maricondi: *"Prospero's Books*, Postmodernism, and the Reenchantment of the World", in: P. Willoquet-Maricondi, Mary Alemany-Galway (eds): *Peter Greenaway's Postmodern/Poststructuralist Cinema*. Lanham, MD, Scarecrow Press 2008, 177-201.
▷ Christina Ljungberg: "Unbinding the Text: Intermedial Iconicity in Peter Greenaway's *Prospero's Books*", in: Pascal Michelucci, Olga Fischer, Christina Ljungberg (eds): *Semblance and Signification*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins 2011, 369-388.

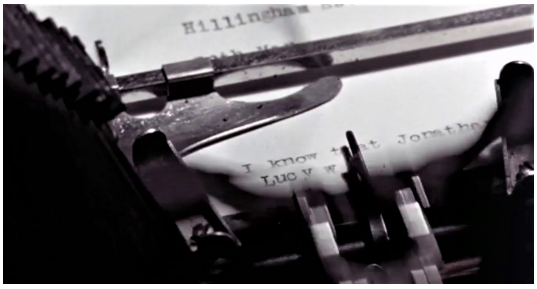
ARCHIVE

On Baroque Allegory:

▷ Bainard Cowan: "Walter Benjamin's Theory of Allegory", in: *New German Critique* 22 (Winter 1981), 109-122.
▷ Walter Benjamin: *Origin of the German Trauerspiel*. Cambridge, MA, London: Harvard University Press 2019, 165-202.

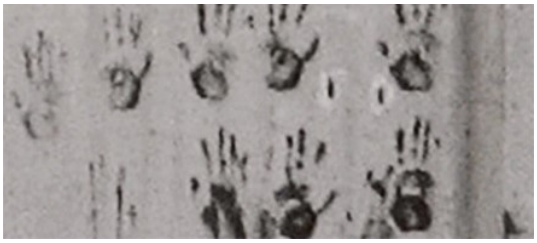
On Inter/Media:

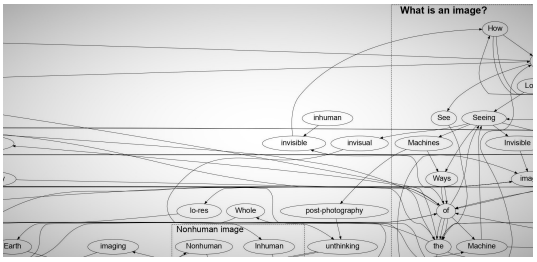
▷ Simon John Ryle: "Excavating loss: rebirth and new media in *Prospero's Books* and *The Tempest*", in: Tobias Döring, Virginia Mason Vaughan (eds): *Critical and Cultural Transformations: Shakespeare's The Tempest – 1611 to the Present*. Tübingen: Narr 2013, 209-233.
▷ Yvonne Spielmann: "Intermedia in Electronic Images", in: *Leonardo* 34/1 (February 2001) 55-61.

05 17.10.	Typing Gender # AROUND 1900 ▶ Friedrich Kittler: *Discourse Networks 1800/1900*. Stanford: Stanford University Press 1990, (192-196); esp. 347-368. ▶ *Dracula* (Francis Ford Coppola, 1992): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQSBKNA68NM [Relevant excerpts will be available on MODDLE]  ▷ "Too Marvelous for Words" – Excerpt from *Ready, Willing and Able* (Ray Enright, 1937): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YjTUnDlaNWs ▷ Marshall McLuhan: "The Typewriter: into the Age of the Iron Whim", in: *Understanding Media. The Extensions of Man*. London, New York: Routledge 2002, 281-288.
writing/imaging CULTURES	
06 24.10.	Writing the Other # JAPAN ▶ Roland Barthes: "Faraway" (pp. 3-4), "Water and Flake" (11-14), "Center-City, Empty Center" (30-32), "No Address" (33-36), "The Three Writings" (48-55), "Stationary Store" (85-87), "The Written Face" (88-94), in: *Empire of Signs*. New York: Hill & Wang 1982.  ▶ Pamela A. Genova: "Beyond Orientalism? Roland Barthes' Imagistic Structures of Japan", in: *Romance Studies* 34/3-4 (2016), 152-162. ▷ Diana Knight: "Barthes and Orientalism", in: New Literary History 24/3 (Summer 1993), 617-633. ▷ Peter Pericles Trifonas: *Barthes and the Empire of Signs*. Cambridge: Icon/Totem Books 2001. ▷ Jean-Michel Rabaté (ed.): *Writing the Image After Roland Barthes*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 1997.
07 31.10.	Filming the Other # MONGOLIA ▶ Lucien Castaing-Taylor: "Iconophobia: How anthropology lost it at the movies", in: *Transition* 69 (1996), 64-88. ▶ *State of Dogs* (Peter Brosens, Dorjkhandyn Turmunkh, 1998 / also accessible via MOODLE): https://vk.com/video-136471876_456241604 

	▶ Michaela Schäuble: "The Ethnographer's Eye: Vision, Narration, and Poetic Imagery in Contemporary Anthropological Film", in: Rui Carvalho Homem, Maria de Fátima Lambert (eds): *Writing and Seeing: Essays on Word and Image*. Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi 2006, 301-311. ▷ Website of the *Sensory Ethnography Lab* SEL, Harvard University: https://sel.fas.harvard.edu/

writing/imaging POLITICS

08 07.11.	Letters of Complaint 1 # GRAFFITI ▶ Maria Boletsi: "From the Subject of the Crisis to the Subject in Crisis: Middle Voice on Greek Walls", in: *Journal of Greek Media and Culture* 2/1 (2016), 3-28. ▶ *Torment* (Ulrich Meurer, 2020): https://vimeo.com/591619694  ▶ Efthymios Gourgouris, Alexandros Kyriakopoulos (eds): *Ανησυχία. Μια καταγραφή του αυθόρμητου τον Δεκέμβριο του 2008* [Unrest: A Documentation of the Spontaneous in December 2008]. Athens: Kastaniotis 2009 (selected plates). ▷ Anna Marazuela Kim, Tara Flores: "Overwriting the City: Graffiti, Communication, and Urban Contestation in Athens", in: *Defence Strategic Communications* 3 (Autumn 2017), 9-39.
ARCHIVE ▷ Jean Baudrillard: "Kool Killer, or The Insurrection of Signs", in: *Symbolic Exchange and Death*. London 1998, 76-86. ▷ *The Subconscious Art of Graffiti Removal* (Short film / Matt McCormick, 2001): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dDCGkrnbSSw ▷ Martin Irvine: "The Work on the Street: Street Art and Visual Culture", in: Barry Sandywell, Ian Heywood (eds): *The Handbook of Visual Culture*. London, New York: Berg 2012, 235-278 (pre-print version: 1-48).	
09 14.11.	Letters of Complaint 2 # FINGER PRINTING ▶ *Erase Them! – The image as it is falling apart into looks* (Video / Brigitta Kuster, 2013): https://vimeo.com/59932817  ▶ Brigitta Kuster, Vassilis S. Tsianos: "Erase Them! Eurodac and Digital Deportability", Website of *eipcp – European Institute for Progressive Cultural Politics* (February 2013): http://eipcp.net/transversal/0313/kuster-tsianos/en ▷ Jacques Rancière: *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy*. Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press 1999, 21-42.
10 21.11.	Letters of Consent # EMOJI ▶ Zoe Beloff: *Emotions Go to Work*. Colchester, New York: Minor Compositions 2018, 16-43.

	▶ Zoe Beloff: *Emotions Go to Work* (Installation): http://www.zoebeloff.com/emotions/index.html ▶ Luke Stark, Kate Crawford: "The Conversation of Emoji: Work, Affect, and Communication", in: *Social Media & Society* I/II (July-December 2015), 1-11. ▶ Process Studio: *Almoji*. Installation in the exhibition *Uncanny Values*, MAK Vienna, 2019: https://uncannyvalues.org/works/aimoji/  ▷ Liz Stinson: "Facebook Reactions, the Totally Redesigned Like Button, Is Here", *Wired* (24.02.2016): https://www.wired.com/2016/02/facebook-reactions-totally-redesigned-like-button/ ▷ George Yule: "Pictograms and Ideograms", in: *The Study of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2010, 212-214.
the END of writing/imaging	
11 28.11.	After Writing: Code ▶ Vilém Flusser: "The Digital", "Recoding", "Subscript", in: *Does Writing Have a Future?* Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press 2011, 141-161. ▶ Lev Manovich: *Software Takes Command*. New York, London: Bloomsbury 2013, 4-10, 33-39, 101-106, 113-124, 147-157.  ▷ Vilém Flusser: "The Codified World", in: *Writings*. Minneapolis, London 2002, 35-41. ▷ Inke Arns: „Read_me, run_me, execute_me: Code as Executable Text: Software Art and its Focus on Program Code as Performative Text", in: *Media Art Net* 2004: http://www.medienkunstnetz.de/themes/generative-tools/read_me/scroll/
12 05.12.	Post-Script ▶ Winnie Soon, Geoff Cox: "What Is an Image?", in: *The Nordic Journal of Aesthetics* 61-62 (2021), 196-201.  ▶ *What Is an Image?* / full graphic: http://siusoon.net/projects/projects_mediaart/image/whatisanimage.svg ▶ *What Is an Image?* / Source code + references for the diagram: https://hackmd.io/@siusoon/diagram ▷ Winnie Soon, Geoff Cox: *Aesthetic Programming*. London: Open Humanities Press 2020, 13-24.

ASSIGNMENTS:

REGULAR ATTENDANCE and ACTIVE PARTICIPATION in discussions / close readings / image interpretations …
15% of the final grade

- ▷ Students are expected ▶ to TAKE PART in the discussions, comment on presentations, the instructor's input and questions, address relevant aspects of the topic, reflect on the readings and audiovisual material. ▶ Participation will be ASSESSED with respect to its relative QUANTITY AND QUALITY (targeted engagement with the topic and readings, conclusiveness of argumentation, contextualization).

1 in-class PRESENTATION
30% of the final grade

- ▷ Presentations ▶ assemble the MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS FROM THE READINGS (mandatory + optional) and ▶ give ADDITIONAL INPUT (e.g., on historical contexts). They ▶ engage with the topic in a CRITICAL WAY (*no mere text summaries*), present the material's main argument/s, reflect on its approach to the subject, assess its validity, ▶ give IMPULSES FOR DISCUSSION, and point out ▶ aspects which are PROBLEMATIC, remain opaque or raise further questions.
- ▷ Ideally, the student/s giving a presentation act/s as 'co-instructor' for the session, for example by ▶ preparing QUESTIONS OR ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION (which can be included in the handout [see below]).
- ▷ Every participant ▶ selects a DATE/TOPIC from the syllabus for presentation and enters their name in the respective poll until September 22:
  https://nuudel.digitalcourage.de/j8HK17Z2cTYTZVVT
- ▷ Depending on the number of participants, every topic can be ▶ presented BY 1 TO MAX. 3 STUDENTS (group presentation): in most cases, the list of readings will provide sufficient material for a general overview and the discussion of partial aspects of the topic.
- ▷ *If possible, please do not select a topic/date already assigned to another student as long as there are unallocated slots!*

1 concise PRESENTATION HANDOUT
10% of the final grade

- ▷ For their presentations, the participants are required to create a handout paper (1 page max.) which shows ▶ the ORDER of the presented points, the MAIN ARGUMENTS, CONCLUSION, and further QUESTIONS. It serves as ▶ preliminary INFO SHEET for the other participants and, after the presentation, as memory and learning aid.
- ▷ The handout should be ▶ structured in SHORT PASSAGES, KEYWORDS OR BULLET POINTS – no continuous text. Ideally, the structure and central ideas of the presentation become VISIBLE AT FIRST GLANCE.
- ▷ The ▶ handout is ASSESSED with respect to its STRUCTURE, ACCURACY, AND CLARITY (*visual material and critical statements can of course be included*).
- ▷ The handout ▶ should be SUBMITTED NO LATER THAN 24 HOURS BEFORE the respective class. Please, send it as .doc/.docx/.pdf document to the instructor who will upload it on MOODLE.

Final PAPER or final AUDIOVISUAL WORK

45% of the final grade

- ▷ Participants can produce either a written FINAL PAPER or an AUDIO/VISUAL RESEARCH WORK.
- ▷ The ▶ SUBJECT OF THE FINAL PAPER OR AUDIOVISUAL WORK is chosen by the student. A discussion of the subject with the instructor is not obligatory but recommended. ▶ It must not ADOPT A SUBJECT FROM THE COURSE SESSIONS AND SYLLABUS but should be connected to the overall theme of the course.
- ▷ Upon consultation, ▶ the final work CAN ALSO BE PRODUCED IN GROUPS OF TWO – in this case, students can opt for a SHARED OR INDIVIDUAL GRADE. For individual grading, they must clearly indicate who produced which part of the work.
- ▷ The final paper ▶ should have a LENGTH OF ~2.500 to 3.000 WORDS (*excl. cover sheet, list of contents, bibliography, etc.*). IMAGES should be inserted in the text (no separate part with illustrations). The STYLE FOR REFERENCING and quoting can be freely chosen but should be consistent throughout the paper. Papers should be in .doc, .docx or .pdf format.
- ▷ Papers are ▶ SUBMITTED VIA E-MAIL. The ▶ DEADLINE will be DECEMBER 24, 2023.

- ▷ Instead of a written paper, ▶ students may also prepare an AUDIO/VISUAL WORK (PHOTO ESSAY, VIDEO, SCRAPBOOK, INSTALLATION, PODCAST, WEBSITE, ETC.): the work can be ▶ composed of SELF-PRODUCED MATERIAL AND/OR FOUND FOOTAGE. ▶ Formal and technical issues, extent or intended length should be coordinated with the instructor.
- ▷ Final audio/visual works will ▶ not be graded according to technical criteria but based on the ORIGINALITY OF THE APPROACH AND THE POTENTIAL TO VISUALIZE OR CONVEY THE MAIN ARGUMENT.
- ▷ Audio/visual ▶ works MAY BE COMPLEMENTED BY A WRITTEN COMMENT to elucidate their conceptual or theoretical approach.

- ▷ Deadlines are the SAME FOR WRITTEN AND AUDIO/VISUAL works.

FURTHER READINGS:

- Brian S. Baigrie (ed.): *Picturing Knowledge. Historical and Philosophical Problems Concerning the Use of Art in Science.* Toronto 1996.
- Christopher Bush: *Ideographic Modernism: China, Writing, Media*. New York 2010.
- Claus Clüver, Matthijs Engelberts, Véronique Plesch (eds): *The Imaginary: Word and Image*. Leiden, Boston: Brill 2015.
- Thomas Elsaesser: "Freud as Media Theorist: Mystic Writing-Pads and the Matter of Memory", in: *Screen* 50/1 (March 2009), 100-113.
- Vilém Flusser: *Writings*. Minneapolis, London 2002.
- William Guynn: *Writing History in Film*. London, New York 2006.
- Michèle Hannoosh, Eric Haskell, Martin Heusser, Leo Hoek, Peter de Voogd (eds): *On Verbal/Visual Representation.* (Word & Image Interactions 4) Amsterdam, New York 2005.
- Mary E. Hocks, Michelle R. Kendrick (eds): *Eloquent Images: Word and Image in the Age of New Media*. Cambridge, MA, London: MIT Press 2003.
- Rui Carvalho Homem, Maria de Fátima Lambert (eds): *Writing and Seeing: Essays on Word and Image*. Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi 2006.
- Ricard Huerta: "Disease's Calligraphies: Doctors' Handwriting as an Aesthetic Argument for Heritage Education", in: *Acta Didactica Napocensia* 7/2 (2014), 49-60.
- Friedrich Kittler: *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*. Stanford 1999.
- Sybille Krämer, Eva Cancik-Kirschbaum, Rainer Totzke (eds): *Schriftbildlichkeit. Wahrnehmbarkeit, Materialität und Operativität von Notationen*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag 2012.
- Catriona MacLeod, Véronique Plesch, Charlotte Schoell-Glass (eds): *Elective Affinities: Testing Word and Image Relationships*. Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi 2009.
- Simon Morley: *Writing on the Wall: Word and Image in Modern Art*. Oakland, CA 2005.
- Véronique Plesch, Catriona MacLeod, Jan Baetens (eds): *Efficacité/Efficacy: How to Do Things with Words and Images?* Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi 2011.
- Sean Pryor, David Trotter (eds): *Writing, Medium, Machine: Modern Technographies*. London 2016.
- Johanns Riquet, Martin Heusser (eds): *Imaging Identity: Text, Mediality and Contemporary Visual Culture*. London: Palgrave Macmillan 2019.
- Laura M. Sager Eidt: *Writing and Filming the Painting: Ekphrasis in Literature and Film*. Amsterdam, New York: 2008.
- Ray Siemens, Susan Schreibman (eds): *A Companion to Digital Literary Studies*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell 2013.
- Mitchell Stephens: *The Rise of the Image, the Fall of the Word*. New York, Oxford: Oxford UP 1998.
- Katrin Ströbel: *Wortreiche Bilder. Zum Verhältnis von Text und Bild in der zeitgenössischen Kunst*. Bielefeld: Transcript 2013.