

## New Challenges in Media Art Education

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IAMAS is a pioneering educational center that educates scholars in media art and media technology since 1997. In the early 1990ies only very few people believed in digital art, but now 20 years later media art is everywhere and media technology has become ubiquitous.

These days it has become the norm to have almost all facets of our lives augmented by digital technologies. From smart phones, smart cloths, smart cities, ubiquitous computing devices, VR and AR technologies, media devices and services are part of many aspects of our lives. Being constantly connected is the norm and the amount of data we all generate is growing exponentially. Peter Weibel says that we as humans are in fact becoming data bodies<sup>1</sup>. Our daily life activities become more and more quantified, measured and commercially exploited. The Quantified Self Movement, data driven economies and Industries 2.0 are just a few keywords of what will come in the future. There will be significant societal changes when we all need to adapt to these new services and devices. Information overload and constant availability already now lead to a post-media world where nothing is ever finished and “update is the default setting”<sup>2</sup>. According to Herlander Elias we live in a screen civilization that is now so accustomed to interaction and connectivity that interfaces have become invisible and we do not even notice them.

But what do all these changes mean for artistic creativity and how does this impact media art education ? From our point of view the times of big technological breakthroughs seem to be over and a certain media saturation has becomes noticeable. While pioneers of media art, such as Paul DeMarinis, Peter Weibel or Lynn Hershman, and others have always critically reflected on the effects of digital technologies onto our society, young media artists now feel the need to reflect more about the effects of digital technologies onto their lives.

In media art education it has therefore become increasingly important to provide young media artists and technologists with know-how about the past techno-art movements such as Futurism, E.A.T, Gutai, Kinetic Art, Cybernetic Art and others. It is important for them to see the current technological developments on a larger time scale. It will help them to restate current artistic-scientific questions with a profound knowledge about the past. Now that the analog and the digital worlds increasingly merge and media art and contemporary art steadily approach each other, a profound education about the history of media art and its impact on today’s media society will be necessary. It will also be important to build bridges to contemporary art, which has remained somewhat disconnected from digital art until now. There is a great opportunity arising right now, as many creative disciplines (such as ceramics, fashion, industrial design, architecture and others) start

to use computers and discover the long tradition of digital art. This is also facilitated by the fact that digital technologies, programming and interface design are now becoming more accessible through increased courses and programs at universities, academies, online classes, workshops and the maker communities.

Since 10 years we are heading the Interface Cultures department at the University of Art and Design in Linz Austria now, our program was in fact very inspired by the IAMAS Institute of Media Art and Sciences in Gifu Japan. Since 8 years we have a very active student exchange program with IAMAS. So far around 20 students on both sides have used this excellent opportunity to engage with media art education in the other respective country, learn new methods and create networks in Japan and Austria. Many of our Interface Cultures students return from IAMAS with big enthusiasm and inspiration. We would like to thank all the professors and staff at IAMAS for the unique opportunity they provide to our students though personal advice, support and friendship. We look forward to keep reflecting and shaping media art education together with IAMAS and intensify the Japan-Austria exchange even further.

<sup>1</sup> Weibel, Peter (2015). Die Transzendierung des Menschen durch die Menschen- Globale Gespräch, *Kunstforum International*, Vol, 237

<sup>2</sup> Elias, Herlander (2012). *Post Web-The Continuous Geography of Digital Media*, Lisbon: Formalpress, p. 20.