Art Education Research No. 18/2020

Sophie Lingg, Helena Schmidt

IT'S ABOUT TIME. Critical Art Education in Digital Times

Editorial

The 18th edition of the *Art Education Research e Journal* was created in the first half of the year 2020. In addition to the steadily worsening climate crisis, the extent of which is already noticeably affecting the lives of local populations on a daily basis in some regions of the world, people are being hit by a global pandemic that has already cost hundreds of thousands of lives. Following the murder of George Floyd, who, though unarmed, was asphyxiated by a police officer in Minneapolis, the #blacklivesmatter movement has gained strength in recent weeks. A young woman captured the murder on video, thus enabling its viral distribution. Since then, people around the world have been protesting against racism, police violence and white supremacy. As the editors of this issue, we, Sophie Lingg and Helena Schmidt, would like to express our solidarity with the protests against racism and police violence, always and everywhere.

As the #blacklivesmatter protests show, activists as well as their *allies* and interested civil society are organizing and informing themselves to a large extent on the Internet; on social networks, to be precise. Twitter, Instagram and Facebook are important tools for coordination and information. Via hashtags, posts are arranged and made findable for third parties–all users can be recipients and producers simultaneously. Established media often cannot compete with this immediacy, speed and efficiency. Due to the conditions within their institutional frames they are inevitably less flexible in terms of time. In addition, it can be observed that of the large number of videos created

by witnesses, not all get the necessary attention: the media do use scenes captured in these videos and published on the internet for their reports, but do not distribute them in the correct form. The video material from social networks is sometimes shortened or published in fragments in order to create narrations outside the realm of 'objective' reporting.

IT'S ABOUT TIME — Contributions

With the title *It's about time*, we as editors want to cast our attention on *time* as a defining factor for digital and social media and technologies. The title addresses *time* in a double sense. On the one hand, as a unit of measurement that shapes our digital everyday and, as a result of the short intervals between online action and reaction (according to Schütze 2016), determines both the activist practices mentioned above and quite banal online situations–one need only to think of the abundance of posts that must be orchestrated by algorithms during rush hours in the timelines of social networks. On the other hand, *It's about time* stands for the necessity, in the field of education and especially art education, to describe digital platforms as spaces in which communication, mediation and education take place, and furthermore to investigate digital technologies as potential tools in these contexts. When we chose the title of the issue, we could not yet imagine how much the everyday life of contemporary society, and of art educators, would change as a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Various technologies make it possible to react digitally to the altered conditions nearly in real time.

Based on the question of how these rapid reactions in the digital space affect projects in the context of art education, this issue combines experimental, techno-feminist, queer feminist, decolonial and activist approaches to the use of digital media in the fields of art, mediation and education in schools, public spaces, museums, on digital platforms and in research. It is important to us to look at digital technologies and their use in education and beyond in the context of the respective specific power-political and materialist conditions under which technologies are developed (Sollfrank 2018: 16). The members of the *Feige Collective* put

it aptly in their contribution—"mediation is attitude." In light of the theoretical background, this is particularly true for the mediation of and via digitality. In addition to the technological conditions of the digital, the resulting (power-political) effects must also be discussed.

The positions selected for the *e Journal #18* are closely linked to the respective artistic-educational practices of the authors, which are anchored in universities, schools, institutions and independent scenes and range from mediation, education, visual art and theory to curating and activism. In order to come anywhere near a representation of the many dimensions of the different digital practices in the zone between art and art education, we have decided to include not only theoretical debates, conversations and project analyses, but also artistic contributions in the form of GIFs, memes, comics and videos in *e Journal #18*. We are convinced that publications such as the *SFKP e Journal* are the right places to advance the scientific debate in the field of art education beyond classical methods, in digital spaces and with digital technologies.

􀀀 􀀀􀀀**Konstanze Schütze's** exploration of digital images and time was an important starting point for the conception of this issue. In the category *3 questions for ...* she answers questions about her work in art education and the relationship between digitality and time.

􀀀􀀀􀀀􀀀􀀀􀀀 􀀀􀀀􀀀 **Die Tiefe Kümmernis** also answered three questions for us on video, about herself and her work as a mediator, as well as about queer visibility in art history and art mediation in drag.

􀀀􀀀􀀀􀀀􀀀􀀀 In their dialogical text, *"Oh, suck it" was just too much for them!,* members of the ***Feige Collective*** discuss the 2018 video series *Love, Sex and Straight Talk,* in which young women* contend with themes surrounding bodies, sexuality and feelings. They provide insight into their content work, the production process of the videos, and the resonance after publication. They also talk about distribution mechanisms on the internet and other discussion spaces affiliated with it, and their potential.

􀀀􀀀􀀀 In *SOMEWHERE OFF the REAL*, **Malin Kuht** engages with smart devices and their connection to gender and race (for

example in the assignment of certain voices and faces). She relates her theoretical considerations to her own artistic work *OFF-REAL*, which deals with the beauty ideals of avatars. In so doing, she uncovers (political) power relations that are related to digital technologies.

􏰀􏰀􏰀􏰀􏰀􏰀􏰀􏰀 **Ariana Dongus** describes how images become 'operative' based on Harun Farocki's artistic works in *The living pixel*. This operativity of images exists only because (precarious) human work was initially invested in order to enable mechanical or so-called 'artificial' intelligences.

􏰀􏰀􏰀􏰀􏰀􏰀􏰀􏰀􏰀􏰀 In the article *Coming back from Ibiza*, the editors **Helena Schmidt** and **Sophie Lingg** write about the Instagram account *Ibiza Austrian Memes* of the activist Anahita Neghabat and link their activist mediation work with questions of youth culture, media competence and school.

􏰀􏰀􏰀􏰀􏰀􏰀 **Helen Stefanie's** comic *journey to :)* deals with the microblogging platform tumblr, its users, and the content circulating on it, which has been shaped to a large extent by (female, queer/trans*, POC) teenagers and millennials.

􏰀􏰀􏰀􏰀􏰀 The artist duo ***BIGLERWEIBEL*** has created a series of GIFs especially for our issue, which criticizes common body norms and beauty ideals on social media channels.

THANKS

ching and we are very pleased to be able to unite your diverse and meaningful voices in this e Journal.

Sophie Lingg and Helena Schmidt
Vienna, June 2020

————————————————

Literatur:

Schütze, Konstanze (2016): Where the *pragmatics happens. Über die Ästhetik der leeren Hände und die Arbeit am Magischen. In: Meyer, Torsten/Dick, Julia/Moormann, Peter Moormann/Ziegenbein, Julia (Hg.), Where the magic happens. Bildung nach der Entgrenzung der Künste. München, Kopaed, S. 85-91.

Sollfrank, Cornelia (2018): Die schönen Kriegerinnen. Technofeministische Praxis im 21. Jahrhundert. Wien, Transversal Texts.

CV

Sophie Lingg lives and works in Vienna. As a freelance curator she initiates collaborative exhibition projects, develops and implements educational formats and is involved in collaborative artistic projects and exhibitions. She studied art education at the Institute for Education in the Arts (IKL) of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, where she is currently writing her dissertation and teaching.

Helena Schmidt Dr., (*1990) is an art educator and specializes in theory and practice. She teaches at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, where she completed her doctorate supervised by Elke Krasny with the thesis "Vom poor image zu den poor images. Didactics of digitality in art education". She leads the mediation program of the VIENNA DESIGN WEEK together with Sophie Lingg. Her work focuses on digital imagery, poor images in art education, and didactics of digitality. helenaschmidt.com[a]

Links

a)http://helenaschmidt.com/