

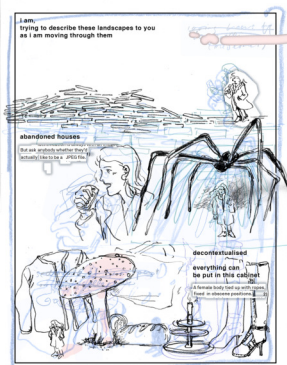
# Art Education Research No. 18/2020

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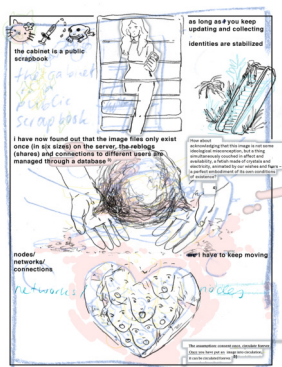
Helen Stefanie

## journey through :)

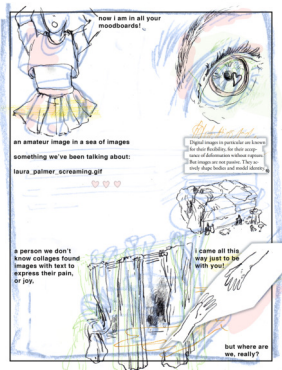
*The microblogging platform tumblr is known for a culture of image-collecting and curating that has been primarily influenced by (female, queer/trans\*, PoC) teenagers and twentysomethings. When browsing the site, works by feminist artists, paparazzi pictures of Britney Spears, snippets from works of theory, shitposts, or another user's selfies are all equally likely to pop up next to each other in an eclectic mix. In December 2018, a revision of the site's policies on adult content lead to a much stricter treatment of what was considered 'pornographic material', and tumblr lost more than a million active users. Despite cases of cyber-bullying, the pervasiveness of spambots and networks of nationalist users on the site, prior thereto tumblr was widely considered a safe space for queer-feminist and anti-racist politics, fandom activities, and the personal narratives and self-promotion of sex workers. Building on the argument Heather Warren-Crow puts forth in her book *Girlhood and the Plastic Image*, digital images on the Internet can be thought of as girlish: These plastic images are malleable, fluid, and can easily be enlarged or shrunk down as they circulate in the network. The tumblr-specific mode of archiving and curating digital images is exemplary of this relationship: Images are decontextualized, flattened, removed from their material conditions of production, while at the same time being assigned value as purely aesthetic image-objects in a collection. The meta-comic journey through :) stages an attempt at making contact with the image-collecting tumblr users and the images circulating through the network.*



- 1) Steyerl 2010
- 2) Dies.



- 3) Steyerl 2010
- 4) Chun 2016: 147
- 5) Warren-Crow 2014: 2



### Literature

Chun, Wendy Hui Kyong (2016): *Updating to Remain the Same. Habitual New Media*. Cambridge, MA, The MIT Press.

mikedidthis/approxiblue (2017): „What is the URL schema of Tumblr images?,, online unter: <https://stackoverflow.com/questions/16832963/what-is-the-url-schema-of-tumblr-images> [26.02.2020].

Steyerl, Hito (2010): „A Thing Like You and Me,,In: Julieta Aranda, Brian Kuan Wood, and Anton Vidokle, eds.: *e-flux Journal*, Nr. 15. <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/15/61298/a-thing-like-you-and-me/> [26.02.2020].

Warren-Crow, Heather (2014): *Girlhood and the Plastic Image*. Hanover, NH, Dartmouth College Press.

### CV

**Helen Stefanie** is a comic artist and works between the fields of comics, digital imagery, and theory. As part of the collective *Institute for Contemporary Cartooning*, Helen investigates the relationship

between cartooning and contemporary art and politics. Helen Stefanie is a student at The School of Art and Design in Kassel and is currently working on a thesis project in which images of cyborg-women are related to the construction of fictional narratives and made to speak.

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## Links

<sup>a)</sup><https://www.helenstefanies.com>