

ZeM Spring Lecture: Tuesday, May 28 2019

Gesture Aesthetics: Exploring Movement in Conversation, Film and Digital Arts

Gesture is felt and seen, performed and perceived, a statement and a response. Gesture is me but also you. Gesture is in thinking and in material. Gesture is form and flow. Gesture is salient, pointing and accompanying. Gesture is fluent and manifest. Gesture is verbal and goes beyond the verbal. Gesture is and goes with media. Gesture is obvious and ambivalent. Gesture is expressive and immersive. Gesture provokes, poses, highlights. Gesture is conceptual and historical. Gesture encounters with other expressive phenomena and refines those and itself.

Gesture aesthetics have been present within different disciplines over centuries. The importance of gesture for an inquiry on human expressivity was often congruent with the development of artistic forms: in aesthetic theory from the 18th century, emphasis was put on the temporal, aesthetic constructedness of affect expression in acting and theatre practices. Furthermore, art works and paintings of gesture shaped the way of how human affects were understood. With the invention of photography in the 19th century, scholars' investigation of human emotion expression changed due to new technical and aesthetic properties. In the context of the emerging moving image culture, human movement and gesture were highlighted by media-specific characteristics; film aesthetics focused and framed human conduct in a certain manner: gesture was no longer conceived of as something specific to the individual or actor only, but film itself became a gesture-like medium with the power to shape affects on the side of spectators. Ever since the beginning of the 20th century, however, research on gesture more and more diversified in terms of different disciplines, from psychology, philosophy and cognitive sciences to anthropological, phenomenological, and linguistic investigations. In most cases, this disciplinary diversification was paralleled by a focusing on particular (e.g., semantic, pragmatic, cognitive) aspects of gestures and body movements. Especially psychologically and cognitively informed approaches left the aesthetic dimension of dynamic hand and body movements out of consideration.

The ZeM-Spring Lecture *Gesture Aesthetics: Exploring Movement in Conversation, Film and Digital Arts* makes this aesthetic facet the starting point of basic reflections of embodiment, affectivity and intersubjectivity in face-to-face, media, and art contexts. The second Spring Lecture of the Brandenburg Centre for Media Studies (ZeM) is organized by and takes place at the **European University Viadrina on 28 May 2019 in Frankfurt (Oder)** in cooperation with the University of Rouen and the University Paris 8 in France.

The Spring Lecture takes place at the Gräfin-Dönhoff building, room GD 102, Europaplatz 1, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder). Contact: greifenstein@europa-uni.de



Its thematic focus is on the aesthetics of gesture. Gesture will be examined theoretically, analytically and also from a historical perspective and through digital artwork in performance and exhibition. The Spring Lecture involves theoretical and empirical talks and a digital exhibition that invites users to participate actively.

The following questions from linguistic, digital and film/media studies' perspectives, exploring gesture, aesthetics and movement are going to be addressed: How can we perceive and understand the movement of gesture in different situated language usages, multimodal discourses as well as in art and media contexts? How is expression made visible and tangible? How can we grasp expressivity and affectivity in gesture? A shared interest is the focus on gesture, interaction and embodiment. Gesture aesthetics are part of a face-to-face or mediated communication, which contains an intertwining of perceptive and expressive acts of sensing bodies.

Organized by Chair for Media, Culture and Communication, Chair for Language Use and Multimodal Communication, European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder), Sarah Greifenstein, Dorothea Horst, Cornelia Müller

Program - Tuesday, May 28 2019

- 15:00-15:05 Welcome
- 15:05-15:50 Talks: "**Body of the Gestures / Gestures of the Body**"
Vincent Meyrueis, Dominique Boutet, Jean-François Jégo, Judith Guez;
University of Rouen and University Paris 8 (room GD 102)
- 15:50-16:05 Q & A
- 16:05-16:15 Short break
- 16:15-16:45 Talks: "**Gesture in Interaction / Gesture in Film – The Film's Gesture**"
Cornelia Müller, Dorothea Horst, Sarah Greifenstein; European University
Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder) (room GD 102)
- 16:45-17:00 Q & A
- 17:00 Wine reception with snacks
- 17:00-20:00 **Exhibition "Pause Talking / Play Gesture!"**
Vincent Meyrueis, Dominique Boutet, Jean-François Jégo, Judith Guez
(room GD 102)

In the exhibition, participants are proposed to interactively explore what the characteristics of gesture are, combining both the abilities to perceive and to act at the same time with Augmented Reality, Virtual Reality, Intelligent objects. Thus, participants are invited to experience digital artworks, to exchange, to interact and to engage with gestures.

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