

## **CFP: Panel “Image and Fashion: Metaverse – KI and New Aesthetics?”**

### **The 17th international Congress 2024 of the German Semiotic Association “Signs.Cultures.Digitality“ (RPTU in Landau, 24.–28. September 2024)**

To achieve its goals, the German Semiotic Association organizes conferences, colloquia, workshops, courses, lecture series on core areas of its research fields. Moreover, every three years the association organizes an international congress.

Within the 17<sup>th</sup> international congress „Signs.Cultures.Digitality“ (Landau, 24.–28. September 2024), the section “Image and Fashion” has organized a panel on the topic “Metaverse – KI and New Aesthetics?” and invites for paper proposals.

### **Call for Papers**

"Artificial intelligence" in the most general sense is used in many ways in the field of art, fashion and design. Since the 2010s, particularly in fashion, functional applications (wearables) have developed on the one hand, and digital aesthetic strategies on the other. Artificial intelligence has also been used more recently as a means of saving material resources and thus increasing sustainability. After the success of AI in the field of aesthetics, for example in the collections and fashion productions of the designer Iris van Herpen, it is now above all those sustainable strategies that are gaining in importance. Especially the presentation within the framework of metaversal practices leads to the further question of whether the "language of fashion" could be fundamentally changed by the new technologies (since Roland Barthes still famously derived this language primarily from two-dimensional imagery).

Comparable considerations open up in the visual arts. For them, too, it is not so much the functionally relevant applications of AI that are revolutionizing their expressive languages. Rather, it seems to be the imaginary world of the metaverse as a parallel world that has a decisive influence here. For example, paintings realized with AI in the style of Vermeer prove to be less exciting. It is the new world of imagination and, in parallel, the potential for interaction that are currently initiating processes of change in aesthetics in the visual arts. The new forms show once again how their affective perceptual experience, appeals to aesthetic and at the same time reveals its importance for semiosis. Louisa Clement, for example, takes this step with her "mentally" evolving clones/avatars of 2022. Accordingly, the same idealized "Clements" change their respective "attitudes" through the participation of the audience. The Claire Bardainne & Adrien Mondot company have been achieving this effect with their AI dance project Hakanai since 2013, in that the audience helps to shape the highly artificial and at the same time form-reduced abstract "work" with its movements.

At this point, it should be asked whether pre-linguistic, affective modes of experience play a role in the "fashionable" and "pictorial" metaverse, as is the case in the research on artificial intelligence by Giuseppe Di Cesare's group of researchers (2020). Such (pre-symbolic) modes of experience would lie before the level of two- or three-dimensional imagery and propositional language (Sauer 2020). If this is true, new horizons open up both in the "old" real world and in the parallel world of the metaverse for the connection of imaginary images and their connection to processes of perception and design. This can be followed by new reflections on the ethical and political spheres with reference to the aesthetic (Sauer 2023 forthc.).

Among possible other questions, this results in open connections to be discussed, which are interesting for the joint panel of fashion and image and should, if possible, each be considered with examples, but do not have to be.

Possible thematic areas for contributions:

- The metaverse as a field of investigation of artistic-creative communication through AI in contrast to conventional media.
- The metaverse and AI as an artistic, creative and communicative framework that transcends previous modes of experience.
- The metaverse and AI as objects of study for the exploration of affective perception in the sense of pre-symbolic realms of experience.
- The metaverse and AI as a chance to reconceive aesthetics.
- The metaverse and AI as a chance to connect to the dimension of the ethical and political.
- The metaverse as a new tool in the field of fashion and the arts in relation to aesthetic or sustainable practices.

## Literature

ROLAND Barthes (2013), *The Language of Fashion*. Bloomsbury Revelations edition: London and New York.

Andrew Bolton (Ed.) (2016), *Manus x Machina. Fashion in an Age of Technology*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Giuseppe Di Cesare et al. (2020), The neuronal basis of vitality forms, in: *National Science Review* 7: 202-213.

Martina Sauer (2022), Abstract – Affective – Multimodal: Interaction between Medium and Perception of Moving Images from the Viewpoint of Cassirer's, Langer's and Krois' Embodiment Theories, in: *Multimodality: The Sensually Organized Potential of Artistic Works*, edited by Martina Sauer and Christiane Wagner, 25-46 [Art Style 10, 1]: DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.7020486.

Martina Sauer (forthc. 2023) Marshall McLuhan in a New Light. Old and New Methods of Influencing Emotions in Communities of the Electronic Age, in: *Beyond Media Literacy*, edited by Lars Grabbe, Andrew McLuhan, and Tobias Held, 14-32. Marburg: Büchner.

**Key words**

Metaverse and AI, aesthetics, affective perception, creativity and semiosis, new visual languages

**Information to the congress organization**

The congress will be held between 24. and 28. September 2024 at the Technical University (RPTU) in Landau.

Please send your proposals for papers in German or English (20 minutes) and a short academic CV by email to Dr. Martina Sauer (Section Image), Institut für Bild- und Kulturphilosophie, <https://www.bildphilosophie.de/> , [msauer@bildphilosophie.de](mailto:msauer@bildphilosophie.de) and Prof. Dr. Petra Leutner (Section Fashion), [pleutner@aol.com](mailto:pleutner@aol.com) no later than 30. November 2023. The document should include: Title, name of the author, summary of the topic (max. 300 words), affiliation, email address, short-bio, list of publications (max 5).

Talks (in exceptional cases also online) should not exceed 20 minutes in length. Selected contributions will likely be published. The panel language is English and German with English slides and discussions. Please note that other panels might be presented in German only.

**Contact**

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us: Martina Sauer (Section Image) [msauer@bildphilosophie.de](mailto:msauer@bildphilosophie.de) and Petra Leutner (Section Fashion): [pleutner@aol.com](mailto:pleutner@aol.com).

Conference conception and organization: Prof. Dr. Jan Georg Schneider (Chair of the DGS).  
Conference organization: Dr. Georg Albert, Anne Diehr und Rafaela Kastor.

For additional information please visit <<https://www.semiotik.eu/Kongresse>>. We also recommend the calls of the other sections.