

THE BEGINNING
OF AN EXCITING
ADVENTURE

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Editorial.

One of the characteristics of the Internet age is the creation and sharing of an incredible amount of information of every kind. The proliferation of content has not, of course, bypassed the academic community, especially the humanities, which, due to their close connection with various kinds of arts and popular culture, are strongly influenced by the society of spectacle, creative industries and the quantification of science in general. At the Academy of Arts and Culture at the Josip Juraj Strossmayer University in Osijek, we know very well what we are getting into and we do not want to promise a version of humanities and scholarly research that is created and developed under a glass bell, insensitive to the unrestrainable rhythm of the modern digital world. On the contrary, we want to show that only those arts and only those humanities that understand the time in which they are being created have the opportunity today to become relevant media of theoretical reflection.

In the last decade, we have witnessed a significant decline in interest in the humanities around the world, and that is especially true of American and Asian universities. On the other hand, there is a growing interest in art in all its forms, from fine art exhibitions to theatrical shows, from grand musical performances to independent initiatives. How can we explain such a discrepancy between interest in artistic practice and those sometimes critical forms of theoretical reasoning that help us understand the meaning of often very complex modes of expression in contemporary art? One reason for this is the fact that contemporary art has become part of the society of spectacle, and thus of the capitalist system of production; daily newspapers and specialized internet portals write about the most famous musicians, actors and visual artists; we find out about the lives of media stars by the information they share on Twitter and Instagram; and their concerts, films and exhibitions are visited and watched with admiration and a conviction that one is attending something important. However, contemporary theories of art, music, theater and film are still unable to establish a direct link between popularity and value, status and relevance, current infatuation and enduring significance.

Nowadays, the art world is overwhelmed with extremes, which make the works of art even more difficult to understand: extremely complex installations are found together with utterly banal artifacts, and it seems that the audience is equally indifferent to both, except for their spectacular value that is expressed in terms like notoriety, shock or personal glamour. But art has always been much more than that; more

than the amount that one has to pay for the artwork of a big-name artist and more than a name that can be exchanged for solid currency. The academic journal *New Theories* wishes to delve deeper into arts, deeper than the discipline of art history has done during its glorious history, that somehow coincided with the advent and rise of the capitalist economy that helped the creation of the aura of both old and new masters. *New Theories* will treat arts and its multifarious phenomena predominantly as objects of reflection and intellectual curiosity. We will not deal with old masters as a heritage of past times whose value is defined once and for all, and we will not deal with contemporary artists as if we were blinded by a society of spectacle and its legitimate offspring—the star system. The aim of *New Theories* is to publish original scholarly insights into various fields, spanning from art to popular culture, comprising the areas of theater and drama, fine arts theory, film studies, music studies, image studies and visual culture. Although it will primarily pay attention to topics which in the German-speaking area belong to the research domains of *Kunstwissenschaft* (art studies) and *Bildwissenschaft* (image studies), the journal will pay attention to original insights from the interdisciplinary fields of art, biopolitics, and cognitive science, as well as all other contributions, regardless of their field *stricto sensu*, that contribute in a theoretically relevant way to the understanding of visual and performing arts, music, theater, film and visual communication in general.

The editorial board will pay particular attention to articles that bring original insights into the scholarly study of artistic, visual and media phenomena, thus disrupting the status quo in a particular field or topic. We will also favor approaches that present classical art in a new light or from the perspective of the radically altered realities of new media, digital visualization technologies and techno-imagination. The journal will seek to examine the issues of image, sound, movement, body, art and artifactuality from interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and metadisciplinary perspectives. The traditional and/or innovative scientific methods applied will be viewed in the context of the results and originality of the research.

We are especially pleased that Professor W. J. T. Mitchell of the University of Chicago has responded to the editorial board's invitation to be the first guest author in *New Theories*, and we thank him most sincerely. His text on "Iconology 3.0" captures in the best possible way the position and

breadth this journal seeks to have in the years to come. From its very beginning, *New Theories* will try to occupy a critical stance in thinking about the various fields of art and visual culture based on clearly defined but unorthodox scholarly methodologies. First of all, this unorthodoxy refers to the use of interdisciplinary and nondisciplinary tools that allow known or seemingly well-studied artistic phenomena or discursive practices to be processed in new ways. We will always be interested in contributions showing audacious interventions in the established structures of the history and theory of art and representation, new performing practices, encounters of movement, sound and image, art research in the period of virtuality and biocybernetic reproduction, as well as the theories and practices of a body. We will always encourage new understandings of classical art in the era of simulated reality, fostering the recognition and recodification of artistic and theoretical paradigms, the role that art plays in the era of post-truth, and the moral, social and communication implications of creative thinking.

New Theories will alternate publications of thematic issues with those with open topics, and articles proposed outside the specific thematic scope of each issue will always be considered for publication. The “official” language of the journal is English, but we will also publish articles in other widely and less widely spoken European languages (German, French, Spanish, Italian, Polish, Czech and, of course, Croatian) with substantial summaries in English (approximately 500 words in length). This rather unusual policy of multilingualism is not just meant to encourage the intellectual exchange of brilliant scholars who would not normally be prompted to share their knowledge internationally, but also to try to create a kind of new norm where languages other than English may find a place in a radically international arena of the contemporary humanities. The editors will ensure that experts from all the above-mentioned linguistic and cultural backgrounds are always represented on the scientific board so that we can always make an initial assessment of the suitability of the received manuscript and eventually forward it to the relevant expert in that particular field and language.

The editors and the scientific board invite you to join this exciting adventure in the arts and humanities by submitting your original scholarly paper or a book or exhibition review. Information on how to do that can be found on the last page of this volume.