SARN | Swiss Artistic Research Network

SARN – Swiss Artistic Research Network, www.sarn.ch, info@sarn.ch

SARN – *to conference* 2021, 23rd – 25th September 2021

The Swiss Artistic Research Network (SARN) is composed of artists and researchers from the seven Swiss Universities of the Arts as well as independent practitioners. SARN seeks to enrich conditions and contexts for artistic researchers through open exchange, work group activities, publications, workshops and symposia. It facilitates debate and dialogue between artistic research communities, institutions of higher education, foundations and public and private competence centers.

22. Januar 2021

Call for Contributions

Traversing Topologies: Imagining worlds and knowledge with/through artistic research

Topology, lexical definitions:
- the relationships between positions of geo objects
- an organizational principle of traffic-related spatial planning
- the philosophical theory of place or field
- in mathematics, the study of continuity and continuous deformation, of properties such as dimension, compactness, and connectedness

Topology is to an equal extent an over- and under-determined topos. It exists nearly independently in various individual disciplines, refers foremost descriptively to the arrangement of things in space-time, takes the surface as its point of departure and seems to be an optimal location for carrying out seemingly objective measurements, rather than being perceived as a formable matrix.

In addition to this unspecific array, in recent decades a number of metaphors and figures of thought committed to topology have emerged, whose omnipresence indicate the potentiality and actuality of the reference. Word pictures like 'mapping', 'contact zone' (Marie-Louise Pratt), 'network', 'traveling concepts' (Mieke Bal) and 'heterotopia' (Michel Foucault) have suggested ways in which topological relations could be productively, politically and speculatively oriented towards the future, rather than being thought strictly in analytical terms. These metaphors stand for the self-confident definition of figures of thought which proactively reach beyond disciplinary barriers in order to arrive at a more complex understanding of the arrangements that make up current societies; one which integrates different forms of knowledge. In fact, these space- and classification-traversing connections have long been a political reality: the phenomena of climate crisis and migration flows are just as closely interwoven as gigantic data stores with local working conditions, or global cartographies with economic profit.

The conference highlights the potential to develop thinking and acting in complex topological-relational networks. It seeks proposals, statements, perspectives and speculations for the intersection of existing knowledge spaces. Superficial cartographies of order are to be unsettled and re-mapped, subjectivized toward the layers that underlie them.

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WHAT WE OFFER

A landscape extending from Lucerne to Valais and Ticino, encompassing suburban, slightly urban, rural and alpine sceneries. Contributions/interventions can be positioned within or engage with this landscape, either in real terms on site or by taking these settings as a metaphor; an imaginary space or starting points for a narration that leads somewhere else. Proposals may suggest interacting with real locations from afar, relating to them physically or virtually.

We will carefully curate the three days of the event, support and implement your idea in close accordance with you, and develop tools that offer orientation for those on site and those joining in from far away. We can also offer financial support for selected projects. To this end we will construct a website before the conference, which can be used as a place to perform/participate and which will serve as a documentation via which the conference can become a starting point for further debates and exchanges.

WHAT WE WISH FOR

We invite you to create collaborative experiments and rituals in physical and virtual space, to respond to topological conditions together with real and virtual *others*, and to interact with the landscape that is offered. We encourage contributions that reach out and invite voices that would otherwise remain inaudible to us – voices from other disciplines, geographies, infrastructures or cultures.

We especially welcome contributions that play and experiment with forms and parameters specific to their subject, adapt current models in terms of content, form and structure to address thematic interests, wire diversities and cultivate hybridities, promote collaborative thought processes and design common areas of experience, ranging from the undisciplined to the transdisciplinary.

WHAT WE ASK

Specify your interest and a possible place where your intervention could take place. Describe how you would like to shape the situation you want to create: conceivable forms range from method excursions such as a workshop on a train journey, to excursions in the landscape: a digital walk, collective stroll, archaeological deep drilling, a picnic, a performative lecture (on site or online), a science fiction performance in the Swiss jungle or something else entirely.

Combine the "lure of the local" (Lucy Lippard) and the physical with the idea of culture as a space of global scale. Be specific, by taking into account the uncertain and complex constellations we actually face. Try thereby to envision and work on or with them in a productive and speculative way. Take into account the feasibility of your suggestion. The concrete setting will be settled in collaboration with the organizers, based on your needs and suggestions.

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WE INVITE ASSERTIONS, CONSIDERATIONS AND OBSERVATIONS SUCH AS

Rearrangements and conditions of digital and physical presence
(especially, but not only after Covid-19)

- Making spatial-relational conditions tangible
- Alternatives to territorial thinking
- Alternative modes of knowledge transfer
- The map is not the landscape
- What is local about your method?
- Multi-dimensionality as a research attitude
- Prerequisites and conditions of mental density
- Boundaries of the undisciplined
- Data storages (storage and safeguarding of intangible assets)
- The politics of heterotopia
- Decentralized is the new hegemony

TIMELINE / APPLICATION

Please send your suggestions in an abstract of no more than 400 words and a short note on your background (which might be in the arts, the cultural sector in general, the sciences or include transdisciplinary cooperations) to:

sarntoconference2021@sarn.ch

Application deadline: 31st of March 2021

Decisions about the contributions will be made by mid-May at the latest.
We hope to then be able to make a binding statement about the way the event will take place in light of the Covid-19 situation.

Organised by
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