

STUDIO ROMA
RESEARCH SEMINAR

MICHAEL HAGNER
THE ORDER
OF THE BOOK

Rome, 19 – 21 March 2015
Istituto Svizzero di Roma, via Ludovisi 48
Biblioteca Casanatense, via di Sant'Ignazio 52

It is a truism in history of technology that the “printing revolution”, as the American historian of the French Revolution Elizabeth Eisenstein suggests, profoundly transformed the generation, representation and circulation of knowledge. In arts, humanities and sciences the printed book has been the authoritative medium of scholarly communication for more than fifty-five hundred years. Books are manageable individual objects with a long life span, and books are containers for preserving of what we think is part of the intelligibility of the world. However, since the advent of the World Wide Web in the 1990s, prophecies concerning the death of the book have been repeated again and again. There is no doubt that we are witnessing a retreat of paper, while digital publications are on the rise. This development is strengthened by political initiatives such as Open Access in the sciences and the humanities, and by new business models that push e-books and tablets.

All the changes concerning book do not only challenge our phantasy about the value of knowledge and the idea of the “readability of the world”, proposed by the German philosopher Hans Blumenberg, they also remind us of reflecting the role of the printed book in a digital environment. Does it have a future? Are we already witnessing changes in book culture that might lead into new directions? Could the book of the future serve as a kind of boundary object, which has lost the exclusive dominance of the Gutenbergian book, but gives way to integrate different cultures, practices and values ranging from the arts to the sciences? Or should we regard it as a vaccine against the arbitrariness of the web?

Questions like these pertain to arts and humanities, artists’ books, photography, visual culture and the relationship between artistic and scholarly work. The examination of the role of the book is subject of the research seminar at the Istituto Svizzero. We will tackle the history and ontology of the book, both from practical and theoretical perspectives. We understand this broad perspective as a kind of boundary work, by which we offer a fresh view on the book in a situation of conflicts between paper and the digital, quantification and narration, commons and commodities.

Michael Hagner is Professor of History of Science at the Department of Humanities, Political and Social Sciences at Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule (ETH) of Zürich. He is a leading historian of brain research in Humanities, studying as well the role of images in scientific research and the history of book in sciences.

Roger Eberhard is a Swiss artist and publisher, founder of the *b.frank book*.

Christoph Schifferli supervises *oScope Media*, a company specialized in digital archives, dynamic web solutions and intuitive applications for multimedia devices. He collects books of art and photography.

Dagmar Varady lives and works in Halle. She studied design at Burg Giebichenstein Academy of Arts and Design in Halle and media art with specialization in inter-media at the Academy of Visual Arts Leipzig. She belongs to the generation of artists working intensely on the borderline between art and science.

Research Seminar

**Michael Hagner, The order of the book
from 19 to 21 March 2015**

**Istituto Svizzero di Roma, via Ludovisi 48, Roma
Biblioteca Casanatense, via di Sant’Ignazio 52, Roma**

The conferences are free and open to the public
All the events will be English-spoken

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Program

Thursday, 19 March 2015 – Istituto Svizzero di Roma

- 10.00 Welcome by Michele Luminati (ISR Director)
- 10.15 Michael Hagner, *The Order of the Book: Paper, Digitalization, and Disciplines*
- 12.45 Ann-Kathrin Eickhoff, *Artists Books in the ‘Sammlung Marzona’*
- 17.30 Roger Eberhard, *(Self-)publishing Photobooks in the Digital Age*

Friday, 20 March 2015 – Biblioteca Casanatense

- 10.00 Christoph Schifferli, *The Dematerialization of the Art Book*
- 11.15 Stefan Scheidegger, *Writing in the age of machine translation*

Saturday, 21 March 2015 – Istituto Svizzero di Roma

- 10.00 Dagmar Varady, *Crafting Digital Art: Practices and Problems*
- 11.15 Fabian Grütter, *Visual Design in the Office: Standardizing Stationery Design*
- 12.00 Michael Hagner, *Books Unbound: Concluding Remarks*

Studio Roma, the transdisciplinary program on the contemporary, is the metropolitan artist’s studio. A place of production, transformation and work to explore the role and potential of art and knowledge.

For the complete program visit
www.studioroma.istitutosvizzero.it



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