

CALL FOR PAPERS & AUDIOVISUAL ESSAYS, “RE-SCALE” (PUBLICATION 2023)

Two forthcoming volumes of the journal [Interfaces](#), available on OpenEdition, will bring together written articles and video essays that explore the ways in which the production, circulation and reception of images today involves “rescaling” the visible, and, by extension, our experience of the visible, in increasingly radical ways. The two volumes will seek to explore the epistemic, philosophical, social, political, technological, and aesthetic implications of this phenomenon, both in contemporary visual culture and in its histories.

Recent advances in the fields of optics and visual technologies have radically opened up our access to the visible, as well as our visual sensorium: computer-generated imagery, VR, electronic microscopy, as well as electronic detectors imagery have all complexified visibility, by producing images which had hitherto been literally unimaginable. At the same time as the world was reshaping according to the dual logic of the local and the global, optics made it possible for us to see that which is normally inaccessible to the human eye: the very close and the very far, the infinitely small and immensely large. Although this phenomenon of “Gulliverisation” (Huhtamo 2009, 20) was already in evidence from the antiquity to the medieval era – in the disparity of scale between large murals and miniature paintings for instance – it is essentially concurrent with the development of an optic- and screen-based visual culture, which made it a defining characteristic of urban environments. From a European perspective, this epistemic change feeds on a long-lasting tradition of thought and shared imaginary that arguably anticipated some of the changes brought about by the industrial revolution (Winston 1996). In turn, the ubiquity of visual technologies generated by the advent of electronic, then digital media has intensified the effects of the phenomenon both in terms of imaging and of screening modes. Then, the COVID-19 pandemic made the domestic screens the central element of our access to the visible world, cutting it down to size as it were. Confinement and the dependency on personal viewing devices showed the potential as well as limits of a scalar logic relying on diminished scale and individual viewing, raising anew the question of the role of collective spectatorship, and of large-scale images, in fostering a different spatial, corporeal and visual experience as well as a specific imagining awareness (Hanich 2018; Kenderdine 2020). This evolution also involves a rescaling of time that started with modernity but intensified with the introduction of contemporary, digital, modes of production, distribution and reception of images – an issue that connects with recent debates on the economy of attention.

Rescaling thus involves formal and technical aspects of image production, but also the spatialization, massification, and temporal dimension of reception. From the massive advertising boards hung in city centers to the tiny mobile phones that most of us now carry through the same urban centers, from “binge watching” to flicking through Gifs, the ubiquity of scale-shifting technology works to normalize a practice of the “miniature and the gigantic” (Stewart 1992), and that practice in turn conditions much of our everyday perception of the world.

Today, shifts in scale routinely inform our access to the visible, the strangeness of their visual manifestation (as when we exchange through visio-conference with the frieze of match-box size talking heads that lines up our screen) absorbed by the increased speed of habituation. At the same time, visual rescaling still has the power to astonish us. From images gathered by space probes, to records of infra-cellular observations, advances in the fields of optics and digital technologies continue to expand the limits of the visible world. Together with the

proliferation of fixed and mobile screens of all sizes that systematically rescale images, such visual reformations work to further dis-anchor representation from natural perception.

This CFP concerns scholars in all fields of visual culture interested in art and popular culture as well as scientific imagery, including painting and graphic arts, photography, architecture, film and video, video games and immersive environments. It aims to historicize, as well as identify the impact and effect of scale on visual techniques and aesthetics, as well as on the re-mediation, circulation and reception of images.

We welcome articles and video essays that

- explore the ways in which rescaling alters the form of images (from framing to definition, to composition, depth, color, and the relationship of sound to image) and the conditions of their apparition, spatial and temporal.
- explore the phenomenon of rescaling in contemporary visual culture and/or integrate a historical dimension, both in terms of media-archaeology and in terms of “structures of feeling”, seeking to identify the ways in which scale has shaped our imaginary over a long period of time.
- create a dialogue between art and technology, or between art and sciences, considering art images and theorizations in relation to scientific visualizations including ‘operative’ images (made by and for machines).
- address the epistemics and politics of scale in visual culture, looking at the ways in which visual scale-shifting shapes our ways of viewing and knowing the world, how it underpins identification and self-representation, as well as how we configure the place we occupy in the world, in local and global, individual and collective, real and imaginary terms.

We welcome contributions in French and in English. All articles and video essays will be submitted to peer review by two anonymous reviewers. Publication will take place in 2023.

Abstracts for both written and audiovisual essays (300 words with a brief bibliography and bio) should be sent in **by January 10, 2022**.

Contributions (for written essays: between 30 000 and 45 000 characters, spaces and footnotes included; for audiovisual essays: 20 minutes max.) will be expected by **June 30, 2022**.

Editorial board: Martine Beugnet, Clémence Follea, Ariane Hudelet, Eliane de Larminat, Catherine Wheatley

Please send your questions and proposals to:

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