



## THE ART PRESS TODAY: TOWARDS A RECONFIGURATION OF A MEDIA GENRE?

**9-10, May 2022**

Université Paris II Panthéon-Assas,  
391, rue de Vaugirard, 75015 Paris  
Paris, France

Nowadays, the cultural press can take a variety of formats and aspects, depending on the angle chosen, the readership or the specific issues being tackled: a well-reputed journal like *Arforum*; a generalist magazine like *ArtNews*, a cultural guide such as *Time Out* or a single medium-targeted publication like *Film Quarterly*. Going beyond those paper publications, one also has to encounter the great variety of online publications, from blogs to podcasts and e-magazines or cultural pure players (such as *ArtViewer*).

This international symposium has the ambition of shedding light on this broad spectrum and outline the different ways in which media (both traditional and digital) can examine and write about visual arts, architecture, graphic design, cinema, music, literature, and so on. Papers may also focus on cultural industries (video games, movies, television shows...).

Furthermore, the art press, whose print runs are often low and readership somewhat specialized, deserves to be analysed through the scope of media studies and with the help of info-communicational tools. Indeed, this particular segment of the media has a lot to teach us about collective representations, beliefs and values given to contemporary art, cultural practices and ways of debating in society around it. Papers may tackle any aspect of artistic or cultural activity.

Our goal in this conference is to implement an interdisciplinary approach to the matter of the artistic and cultural press. This conference also intends to encourage exchanges between researchers and actors from the media and artistic fields, in order to allow for discussions at the intersection of practical and theoretical viewpoints. Scholars and practitioners from various disciplines and approaches (history, media and communication studies, art history, literature, sociology, etc.) are welcome to submit abstracts for papers dealing critically with one or several of the following topics.

## 1 – Historical models and influences

This first line of research intends to question the variety of editorial forms that the “art journal”, the “cultural magazine” or the “cultural news magazine” can adopt. If a very rich bibliography is devoted to artistic and cultural periodicals of the XIX<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the XX<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>1</sup>, the more recent period is often excluded from these studies that are privileging a chronological and diachronic approach. Periodicals that focus on the contemporary art world is thus a territory that is yet to be explored. This first axis intends to encourage reflections on the filiation of this rich editorial heritage by insisting on the contemporary period.

It is then necessary to take a deeper look at examples of magazines that are currently being published, so as to wonder which models they derive from, which filiation they are the fruit of. Studies on long lasting periodicals such as *Art in America* (founded in 1912) are welcome. Papers in this section might take a monographic and historical perspective, question art journals over time, or consider memorable titles that have been decisive for more recent journals. Papers may also engage a transnational or trans-media perspective.

## 2 – Diversification of online editorial forms

How do art journals manage to explore new territories, especially digital ones? Cultural magazines are nowadays extended by blogs, webzines, accounts on social networks, collaborative platforms, audio-visual formats such as podcasts or filmed interviews, and so on. Art journals and magazines are thus rapidly moving away from the traditional paper model and heading towards a greater variety of formats, starting with the exploration of a digital/paper complementarity. Let us mention the French blog *Jeunes Critiques d'art* (Young Art Critics), podcasts such as *Le bruit de l'art*, webzines like the Italian *Cura* or the American *Triple Canopy*, amateur websites such as *Sens critique* for movies. We can also mention hybrid formats offered by certain social networks and digital platforms such as the Twitch channels ("The Blank Contemporary Art"), Instagram accounts, YouTube channels, etc.

To what extent are digital devices the result of editorial experiments? Papers in this section might focus on case studies and rely on the analysis of socio-technical devices that allow a diversification of cultural consumption. Papers may also focus on the reconfiguration of journalistic practices of art criticism and the adaptability of magazines to the digital world, their editorial line and the formats they use.

---

<sup>1</sup> See in France scholars seminars dedicated to that matter, such as "PÉLIAS : Les périodiques comme médiateurs culturels (Littérature, arts, sciences)" :

<http://msh-paris-saclay.fr/event/seminaire-pelias-periodiques-litterature-arts-sciences-les-periodiques-comme-mediateurs-culturels/> organized by Alexia Kalantzis, Norbert Verdier et Hélène Védrine", or "[TIGRE \(Texte-Image, groupe de recherche à l'École\)](#)", chaired by Evangelia Stead, online collaborative projects and databases like the "[Modernist Journals Project](#)". See also Scholarly Societies like "[Research Society for Victorian Periodicals](#)" or "[ESPRit – European Society for Periodical Research](#)".

### 3 – Editorial and discursive norms: from specificity to adaptation

The specificity of the terms "review", "journal" or "magazine" when considered through the lens of art press is yet to be determined, especially in a context where the obsolescence of art criticism is more and more often pointed out. However, this type of press is remarkably vivid, on a local as well as on an international scale. Although the art world is facing important mutations and issues (financial speculation, globalization, or more recently the Covid-19 crisis), the most established formats – starting with the exhibition review or the interview with an artist – are remarkably resisting and adapting to this moving context. How does the art press position itself *vis-à-vis* other genres of the press, and other types of discourse on art (institutional, academic)? Are there specificities inherent to cultural media?

Papers may explore the editorial norms most commonly adopted by art journals, whether printed or online, as well as their evolution in order to question the values that underlie them. Graphic design, layout, rubric, editorial line... What are the formats, the editorial standards most characteristic of the art journal? In what ways do they evolve, in the face of the adaptation of titles to digital formats and to economic and social imperatives? In what ways do these norms adapt to such a diversification?

### 4 – The art press in the "expanded field"<sup>2</sup>

The cultural press seems to be torn between, on the one hand, a democratization of its contents and a hybridization of its forms (with, in particular, news magazine, fashion magazine, news bulletin...), and on the other hand an increasing fragmentation. This is made evident with the great increase of periodicals more and more specialized, dedicated to specific mediums even within the field of visual arts, such as drawing (*Roven*), amateur practices (*Profane*), or the youth of renown artists (*L'incroyable*). Increasingly strong constraints weigh on the exercise of cultural criticism, and consequently on the editorial production of reviews: increase in the number of exhibitions and art shows, internationalization of artistic trajectories, financial pressure, lack of means for public institutions, etc. Those are some of the many elements which come to complicate the task of art critics, who face important issues of payment and independence. Art criticism as a whole is threatened by the pitfall of "cultural promotion"<sup>3</sup>: when advertisers (art galleries, foundations, etc.) finance a publication by the purchase of advertising spaces, the critic, as well as the magazine in which he/she publishes, can experience pressure to value and promote the advertiser in question. Moreover, with reviews financed and published by institutions as *Palais* (Palais de Tokyo in Paris) or *Les Cahiers du MNAM* (published by the MNAM-Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris), the art review appears as essential to uncover mechanisms and networks structuring the artistic network and the values which determine its organization. However, in spite of these various pitfalls, the sector of the cultural press is dynamic and

<sup>2</sup> This concept of "expanded field" is derived from Rosalind Krauss in her famous article "Sculpture in the Expanded Field", p. 277-290 in Rosalind Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* [1984], Cambridge, MIT Press. This term was then used in different contexts. See for instance its appropriation by the art critics of the german magazine *Texte zur Kunst* : Catherine Chevalier, Andreas Fohr (dir.), *Une anthologie de la revue Texte Zur Kunst de 1990 à 1998*, Dijon, Les Presses du réel, 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Matthieu Béra, « Critique d'art ou promotion culturelle ? », *Réseaux*, n°117, 2003/1, p. 153-187.

diversified, constitutes an attractive pole for journalists and often arouses professional aspirations. The vitality of free magazines, such as in France *Zérodeux* or *Le Châssis*, is a good witness of this phenomenon.

Papers in this section could focus on the economic models of the art press and the strategies deployed to ensure its sustainability, as well as the different factors that allow the cultural press to fight against competition, especially that of the general press. Submissions may also underline the relations of collaboration, competition, or even “coopétition”<sup>4</sup> of the art magazines with each other, as well as in their networking within the art world (galeries, museums), and beyond: mainstream media, creative industries.

Last but not least, the recent Covid-19 crisis calls to question the ways critics from the cultural sector have accommodated their practices with the mutations of cultural agenda during quarantine.

## Bibliography

ALLEN Gwen (dir.), *The Magazine*, London, MIT Press « Documents for Contemporary Art », 2016

BAUDOIN Jean et HOURMANT François (dir.), *Les Revues et la dynamique des ruptures*, Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2007

BOIVENT Marie, *La Revue d'artiste, enjeu et spécificité d'une pratique artistique*, Rennes, Incertain sens, 2015

BONACORSI Julia et CROISSANT Valérie, « "Votre mémoire culturelle" : entre logistique numérique de la recommandation et médiation patrimoniale. Le cas de *Sens Critique* », *Études de communication*, 2015/2, n° 45, p. 129-148

BOURE Robert, « Sociologie des revues de sciences sociales et humaines », *Réseaux*, n° 58, 1993, p. 91-105

BOURGATTE Michaël, « Pour une analyse informatisée de la critique de cinéma. Ce que dit la critique de la structure du champ cinématographique », *Questions de communication*, 2017/1, n° 31, p. 315-333

CHÈVREFILS-DESBIOLLES Yves et FROISSART-PEZONE Rossella (dir.), *Les revues d'art*, Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2011

COLOMINA Beatriz, *Clip, Stamp, Fold: The Radical Architecture of Little Magazines, 196X to 197X*, Barcelone, Actar, 2010

---

<sup>4</sup> This term combining "competition" and "cooperation" was coined by the businessman Ray Noorda and gained popularity throughout the 1990s. See for instance: Nalebuff & Brandeburger, *Coopetition, A Revolution Mindset that Combines Competition and Cooperation*, New York, Crown Business, 1996.

CORPET Olivier, FRANCK Thomas et GLORIE Caroline, « La revue comme discours d'intervention », *Cahiers du GRM*, 12/2017 [En ligne], URL : <https://journals.openedition.org/grm/1055>

CROISSANT Valérie (dir.), *L'avis des autres. Prescription et recommandation culturelle à l'ère numérique*, Éditions des archives contemporaines, 2019

CROISSANT Valérie et SPANO William, *Le journalisme en miroir dans la presse culturelle lyonnaise au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, *Le Temps des médias. Revue d'histoire*, vol 23, n° 2, 2014, p. 165-181

DA COSTA KAUFMANN Thomas, DOSSIN Catherine et JOYEUX-PRUNEL Béatrice (dir.), *Circulations in the Global History of Art*, Londres, Routledge, 2015

HEIN Fabien, « Le critique rock, le fanzine et le magazine ; ça s'en va et ça revient », *Volume*, n°5 , 2006, p. 83-106

JOYEUX-PRUNEL Béatrice, *Les avant-gardes artistiques. Une histoire transnationale. Volume 1 (1848-1918) ; Volume 2 (1918-1945)*, Paris, Gallimard, 2016 et 2017

LEENAERTS Danielle, *Petite histoire du magazine VU (1928-1940). Entre photographie d'information et photographie d'art*, Bruxelles, PIE Peter Lang, 2010

NEWMAN Amy, *Challenging Art: Artforum 1962-1974*, New York, Soho Press, 2000

REGIMBEAU Gérard, « Les index des revues d'art contemporain : outils documentaires et documents ». Actes du séminaire annuel « Les revues de sciences humaines et sociales : évolutions et figures », 1996, p. 37-50, [En ligne], URL : <https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-00605217v2>

STEAD Evangelia et VÉDRINE Hélène (dirs.), *L'Europe des revues (1880-1920). Estampes, photographies, illustrations*, Paris, Presses Universitaires Paris Sorbonne, 2008

STEAD Evangelia, *Sisyphe heureux. Les revues artistiques et littéraires : approches et figures*, Rennes, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2020

TRIGGS Teal, *Fanzines*, Londres, Thames & Hudson, 2010

WEBB Sheila, "Magazines and the visual arts: the ideal showcase", in ABRAHAMSON David et PRIOR-MILLER Maria R., *The Routledge Handbook of Magazine Research/The Future of the Magazine Form*, New York, Routledge, 2015, p. 347-361

## Guidelines

- On the first page of your document, please state your paper's title and a short bio (100 words) specifying your name, institutional affiliation and e-mail address.
- Your abstract (300 words) is to be sent in .doc or .odt format to [presseculturelle2022@gmail.com](mailto:presseculturelle2022@gmail.com), by **December 20th<sup>th</sup> 2021**.

Members of the scientific committee will anonymously peer-review the abstracts.

A peer-reviewed volume of a selection of papers will follow the conference.

## Agenda

<b>Launch for abstracts</b>	<b>20/10/2021</b>
<b>Last day to submit abstracts</b>	<b>20/12/2021</b>
<b>Notification of acceptance or refusal</b>	<b>20/01/2022</b>
<b>Symposium</b>	<b>9-10/05/2022</b>

## Organizing committee

Lucie ALEXIS, Assistant Professor, Université Grenoble Alpes, Institut de la Communication et des Médias, GRESEC, associate researcher with Institut national de l'audiovisuel and CARISM

Flore DI SCIULLO, PhD in Communication and media studies, ATER, Université Paris 2 Panthéon-Assas, Institut Français de Presse, associate researcher with CARISM

## Scientific committee

BLANDIN Claire (Professor, Université Sorbonne Paris Nord, LabSIC)

BOIVENT Marie (Assistant Professor, Université Rennes 2, laboratoire PTAC)

BULLICH Vincent (Assistant Professor, Université Grenoble Alpes, GRESEC)

CROISSANT Valérie (Assistant Professor, Université Lyon 2, ELICO)

DESEILLIGNY Oriane (Assistant Professor, Université Sorbonne Paris Nord, GRIPIC)

DESMET Nathalie (Curator, Assistant Professor, Université Paris 8, AIAC)

DEVILLARD Valérie (Professor, Université Paris 2 Panthéon-Assas, CARISM)

LAFON Benoît (Professor, Université Grenoble Alpes, GRESEC)

LAMBERT Frédéric (Professor, Université Paris 2, CARISM)

MOURATIDOU Eleni (Assistant Professor, Université Sorbonne Paris Nord, LabSIC)

STEAD Evangelia (Professor, USVQ, CHCSC)

RIEFFEL Rémy (Professor, Université Paris 2 Panthéon-Assas, CARISM)

RINGOOT Roselyne (Professor, Université Grenoble Alpes, GRESEC)

SAEMMER Alexandra, (Professor, Université Paris 8, CEMTI)

WRONA Adeline (Professor, Université Paris IV, GRIPIC)

