

Panel Proposal
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Transmedial (Un)Archiving: Poetry Transpositions into New Media

Lyric poetry exists across media, even though the industry’s prime vehicles for canon building remain predominantly page-based: the print anthology as well as major online repositories. Songs, short films, live performances, visual essays, and music albums have lifted poems from the page and given lyricism instantiations in almost every new media format. In 1966, artists Stan VanDerBeek and Kenneth Knowlton experimented with the IBM 7004 to create what they called “Poemfields”—poetry transposed into early computer animation, or early computer animation transposed into poetry. More recently, Warsan Shire’s poetry has been shaping Beyoncé’s visual album *Lemonade* (2016) and the Disney+ feature film *Black Is King* (2020). Poet Claudia Rankine collaborated with filmmaker John Lucas on the *Situation Videos* (since 2008), “a multi-genre response to contemporary life in the twenty-first century” (<https://claudiarankine.com/situations/>) addressing issues such as climate change, 9/11, or racial profiling by bringing into lyric dialogue archival tv footage, film material, language, and sound. Rankine’s page-based poetry in turn taps deeply into visual cultural repositories to interrogate archival practices through her poetic language, asking the reader to re-approach them with novel perspectives, to question who and what has predominantly been paid attention to, excluded, reduced, or de-contextualized. The transmedial shifts of poetry thus provide a key format for interrogating existing archives (of other media and other materialities) but also create new archives in their own right. Transpositions of poetry into audio-visual and digital contexts push the boundaries of a canonical understanding of what poetry can be and do but also allow features of poetry that have been more subliminal to become accentuated (again). In other words, not only the digital but any transposition into new media “raises new issues about memory and knowledge production/transmission in the so-called ‘era of the archive’” (Taylor 2010: 2), and poetry comprises an exemplary arena to deliberate these. Topically, in *Dialogues on Poetry: Mediatization and New Sensibilities* (2017), Dan Ringgaard and Stefan Kjerregaard offer the following question: “[We ask,] first, how the perspective or consciousness of media can renew our understanding of poetry; and second what kind of new sensibilities are produced by and within contemporary poetry” (9)? In other words: What are the vectors that run between poetry, media, and archival practices?

In this panel, we seek contributions addressing the ways such new media transpositions of poetry tackle both its existing archive and the dominance of the page form, as well as allow for the interrogation of other archives in a different mode. Keeping our scope intentionally interdisciplinary and exploratory, we are interested in such questions as:

- In what ways do the sensory and experiential aspects of media transpositions of the lyric reshape and reform the aesthetic, affective, and emotional archives in general and of poetry specifically?
- How do these incite new interest in memorization and recitation of lyric forms to invite expansions of a person's archive as a container for emotions, memories, and ideas?
- What kind of print poetry is being transposed into non-page-based media and thereby made accessible (again) or newly accessible to audiences?
- How is a Western middle-class poetry canon perpetuated or made more elastic?
- Considering the increased instability of digital media as well as the sheer mass of production, what consequences will this have for archiving new media poetry?

Please submit short (300 words) proposals for a 20-minute contribution and a brief bio note by Jan 15, 2025. In addition to conventional conference papers, proposals for experimental, creative, or multimedia contributions are actively encouraged. Please send all paper proposals to both hannah.schoch@protonmail.com and marcel.hartwig@uni-siegen.de.

Confirmed speaker:

Andrin Albrecht (FSU Jena) – Elegies for a Dying Mode: Video Game Poetry and the Long Shadow of Romanticism